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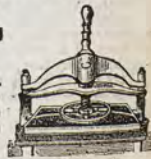
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DEFORMITIES OF THE CHEST AND SPINE.

ENGLAND'S newly-invented INVISIBLE SPINE SUPPORTERS will be found well deserving the attention of the medical profession, and of persons suffering under Spinal deformity and its consequences. As any attempt at a description must needs fall short of giving a correct idea of the plan itself, Mr. ENGLAND solicits an inspection. They are beautifully simple and eminently successful, quite imperceptible, and conceal the deformity from the keenest observer. Mr. E. has the pleasure to add, that he is empowered to refer to ladies of the highest respectability as to the remedial effects produced by their use.

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STOOPING OF THE SHOULDERS & CONTRACTION OF THE CHEST

Are entirely prevented, and gently and effectually removed in Youth, and Ladies and Gentlemen, by the occasional use of the **IMPROVED ELASTIC CHEST EXPANDER**, which is light, simple, easily applied, either above or beneath the dress, and worn without any uncomfortable constraint or impediment to exercise. To Young Persons especially it is highly beneficial, immediately producing an evident IMPROVEMENT in the FIGURE, and tending greatly to prevent the incursion of PULMONARY DISEASES; whilst to the Invalid, and those much engaged in sedentary pursuits, such as Reading or Studying, Working, Drawing, or Music, it is found to be invaluable, as it expands the Chest and affords a great support to the back. It is made in Silk; and can be forwarded, per post, by Mr. ALFRED BINYON, Sole Manufacturer and Proprietor, No. 40, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London; or full particulars, with Prices and Mode of Measurement, on receipt of a Postage Stamp.



THE GENTLEMAN'S REAL HEAD OF HAIR, or INVISIBLE PERUKE.

The principle upon which this Peruke is made is so superior to everything yet produced, that the Manufacturer invites the honour of a visit from the Sceptic and the Connoisseur, that one may be convinced and the other gratified, by inspecting this and other novel and beautiful specimens of the Perruquian Art, at the establishment of the Sole Inventor, F. BROWNE, 47, FENCHURCH-ST.



F. BROWNE'S INFALLIBLE MODE OF MEASURING THE HEAD.

Round the head in manner of a fillet, leaving the Ears loose	As dotted 1 to 1.	Inches, Eighths	
From the Forehead over to the poll, as deep each way as required	As dotted 2 to 2.		
From one Temple to the other, across the rise or Crown of the head to where the Hair grows	As marked 3 to 3.		

THE CHARGE FOR THIS UNIQUE HEAD OF HAIR ONLY £1 10s.



Brown 4s. 6d. per bottle,
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10s. per doz. large bottles
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exclusive of carriage from
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"THE STANDARD OF COGNAC,"

WHICH IS THE BEST FOREIGN BRANDY,

THE PATENT BRANDY, AND THE GENUINE SELTERS WATER,
protected by the Patent Metallic Capsule, the only sure and self-evident safeguard against adulteration, can be obtained throughout the Kingdom at the respective prices above mentioned, or at
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NUNN'S MADE MUSTARD.

In Pots, price 1s. and 1s. 6d. each.

THIS excellent Article is prepared by a peculiar process, by which the pungent properties of the Essential Oil are fully retained, and the flavour of the Mustard is just as fresh to the palate after the lapse of years as if it were made on the instant.

Setting aside the great superiority it possesses over anything of the kind now in use, it has great claims on the score of economy, as it is a notorious fact that one half the consumption of Mustard is wasted from its turning bad both before and after mixing for use.

Captains of Vessels and Residents in the Tropics will find it an invaluable acquisition, as it is guaranteed to keep for years in any climate.

Prepared only, and sold Wholesale and Retail, by THOMAS NUNN and Sons, upwards of 37 years Purveyors to the Hon. Society of Lincoln's Inn, 19, Great James Street, Bedford Row, London. Sole Wholesale Agents, Messrs. SUTTON and Co., Bow Church Yard; and retailed by all Chemists and Druggists throughout the Kingdom. Shipping Agents: Messrs. J. G. ANTHONY and Co., 27, East India Chambers, Leadenhall Street.

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Infant's Cloaks, Hoods, Hats, and Bonnets, Long and Short Robes, French Cambric Caps, Day and Night Gowns, Lawn and Cambric Night Caps, Robe Blankets, Nursery Baskets, Bassinets, with every other requisite in Baby Linen, at SHEARMAN'S, 5, Finsbury Pavement. Several hundred of Children's Dresses constantly on view, from the useful in-door at 1s. 11d.; Medium 5s. 6d., 7s. 6d., 10s. 6d.; Handsome ditto, 15s., 20s., 25s., up to the richest goods made; with every other article usually required for a young family—thus completely obviating the trouble and inconvenience so long complained of in going from shop to shop, when juvenile clothing is required.—An Illustrated Pamphlet, affording additional information, sent free on receiving a paid letter.



NEW PATENT OIL.

G. M. CLARKE begs respectfully to call the attention of the Nobility and Gentry to his NEW PATENT OIL, called "The Patent Albany Oil," price 5s. 6d. per gallon. This Oil will be found superior to the finest Sperm, at little more than half the cost. It will burn in any lamp, is very pale, free from smell, and, from its extreme purity, lamps burning this oil will not require half the cleaning of any other, and warranted never to injure the lamps. Can be obtained only at the Patentee's Lamp and Candle Manufactory, 55, Albany Street, Regent's Park. Orders, by post, executed within two hours after receipt. A large assortment of Oil and Candle Lamps, Candelabra, &c., of the newest patterns, always in stock.

KING'S RESPIRATORY LOZENGES

Afford a safe, easy, and immediate relief, in all cases arising from a deranged state of the Respiratory Organs, produced by exposure to cold and other causes. They effect a Rapid Cure in cases of **HOARSENESS**, and **DIFFICULTY** in **BREATHING**. **COUGHS**, arising from whatever cause, and however violent and distressing, obtain speedy mitigation; and, if the Lozenges are used patiently for a short time, they will effect a Complete Cure.

ASTHMA, in its most obstinate form, will be cured if due patience be but exercised.

In cases of **SORE THROAT** they are of great value.

In **OLD CONSUMPTIVE DRY COUGHS**, they afford the greatest comfort by producing free expectoration; and, in the early stages of Consumption, their demulcent qualities yield a delightful solace, and tend to allay the provoking tickling in the throat which excites Coughing. In fact, in all Complaints affecting the Organs of Respiration, these **LOZENGES** will yield relief; and, if persevered in, the Patient may, in most cases, rely on obtaining a Cure.

In **HOOPING COUGHS**, these **LOZENGES** are of the greatest service; they loosen the Phlegm, and speedily effect a Cure; moreover, Children are very fond of them. It is important to add that the **LOZENGES** are perfectly harmless, each constituent being innocuous, and, when compounded, are really wholesome; neither will they interfere in any way with Food, Drink, or Exercise, or any Medicine the Patient may be taking. No Opiate of any kind enters into their Composition.

To **PROFESSIONAL SINGERS, BARRISTERS, CLERGYMEN** and all **PUBLIC SPEAKERS**, the **LOZENGES** are of the greatest value, as they remove the dry sensation which produces huskiness, consequent on long speaking. They also soften all the organs called into action, and thus produce a greatly increased flexibility of voice, which is of the utmost importance to Singers.

KING'S RESPIRATORY LOZENGES

Have been but partially made known to the Public. It is now about four years since the Proprietors introduced them in their own locality, viz., the Towns of Derby, Sheffield, Newark, Nottingham, and their Neighbourhoods, and the immediate good resulting from their use in cases above-mentioned, rapidly obtained for them a deserved celebrity. It is a Remedy become so popular where known, that to all persons complaining of **COLD, COUGH, ASTHMA, &c., &c.**, the listener to the complaint generally replies, "Oh, try a Box of **KING'S RESPIRATORY LOZENGES**, and you will soon be all right again."

The Proprietors of the **LOZENGES**, from having so long witnessed their beneficial effects in all cases where a fair trial has been made, have determined to give them a more extended introduction, and they feel assured that in so doing, they will afford a Remedy for some of the most distressing Complaints which afflict Humanity.

IMPORTANT CAUTION.

All persons desirous of using **KING'S RESPIRATORY LOZENGES**, are requested particularly to observe the **GOVERNMENT STAMP**, which is pasted round each Box, and on which is engraved, in **WHITE LETTERS** on a **RED** ground, the name **GEORGE B. KING**. This is a safe guarantee of their being Genuine.

In Boxes, at 13½d., 2s. 9d., and in Tin Cases 11s., with Full Directions.

N.B.—THE LOZENGES MUST BE KEPT DRY.

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DAKIN AND COMPY., TEA MERCHANTS.

ONLY some few years have elapsed since DAKIN and COMPY. founded **NUMBER ONE, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,** during which time Prosperity and Public Favour have attended it.

When they began, they said they would make it "the interest of all who wanted good and pure Teas to purchase from them." That they have done, and continue doing so, must be manifest from the fact, that their business is now, if not the very largest in the Metropolis, most certainly in extent and magnitude surpassed by few.—That "Number One"

HAS MADE RAPID ADVANCES IN THE FAVOUR OF THE PUBLIC

may in some measure be accounted for, when it is considered that it was based on rectitude and liberality, and had for its object public as well as private advantage.—Another, and

ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL CAUSES

of the great success that has attended "Number One," is the interest so many people have taken in kindly recommending their friends to purchase their Teas and Coffees at Number One, St. Paul's Church Yard, where all buy their Teas with confidence and afterwards drink them with satisfaction.

So anxious are DAKIN and COMPY., that all should be aware of the truth and of the reality of their pretensions that if any course save the one they pursue, namely, that of soliciting a trial, lay open for them, whereby they could prove their assertions, they would willingly avail themselves of it; but such not being the case, they can only again request that

THE QUALITY OF THE ARTICLES

may be tested, when the truth of what they say will be manifested. So convinced are DAKIN and COMPY. of the result, when comparison once is granted them, that they will willingly forward samples, *free of charge*, to all parts of the country, in answer to an application for the same. They pledge themselves that the excellence of the goods shall

BEAR OUT ALL THAT CAN BE SAID IN THEIR PRAISE.

They sell a quarter of a pound of Tea; and certainly to purchase a quarter of a pound cannot do much harm either way, and will be sufficient to prove how much can be saved, and what a superior article obtained, by patronising the **TEA MERCHANTS**

AT NUMBER ONE, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD.

Again, for the convenience of those resident in the country

THE FOLLOWING SAMPLE-PACKAGES WILL BE FORWARDED

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London to its destination, on a receipt of a Post-office Order for £2; 3d. being allowed as the cost of the Post-office Order.

	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>£ s. d.</i>
3 lbs. Finest True Rich Congou Tea	at 4 6	0 13 6
1 lb. Very Fine Hyson or Gunpowder	at 5 6	0 5 6
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¼ lb. Finest Bencoolen Cloves	at 3 0	0 0 9
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£2 0 3

It may be well, to observe, that those who wish to obtain good and pure Teas on liberal terms must purchase from a direct source of supply, and that DAKIN and COMPY., being themselves Tea Merchants, are in immediate communication both with the growers of Teas in China, and the consumers of Teas in England.

The usual overweight, being about one pound on every thirty pounds, as granted to the Trade by the Merchants and Her Majesty's Customs, will be allowed to all purchasers of original packages.

The visitors to London are fearlessly assured, that they may save a considerable portion of their Railway expenses by purchasing their Teas and Coffees at

NUMBER ONE, SAINT PAUL'S CHURCHYARD,

which is in the very centre of England's Metropolis, and a position more easily identified than any in

LONDON.

COFFEE AS IN FRANCE.



IT is a fact beyond dispute, that in order to obtain really fine COFFEE, there must be a combination of the various kinds; and to produce strength and flavour, certain proportions should be mixed, according to their different properties; thus it is we have become celebrated for our delicious COFFEE, at 1s. 8d., which is the astonishment and delight of all who have tasted it, being the produce of Four Countries, selected and mixed by rule peculiar to our Establishment, in proportions not known to any other house.

From experiments we have made on the various kinds of COFFEE, we have arrived at the fact, that no one kind possesses strength and flavour; if we select a very strong COFFEE, it is wanting in flavour, by the same rule we find the finest and most flavorful are generally wanting in strength; and as they are usually sold each kind separately, quite regardless of their various properties, the consumer is unable to obtain really fine COFFEE at any price. There is, also, another peculiar advantage which we possess over other houses—our roasting apparatus being constructed on decidedly scientific principles, whereby the strong aromatic flavour of the COFFEE is preserved, which in the ordinary process of roasting is entirely destroyed; and as we are COFFEE roasters, we are enabled to keep a full supply fresh roasted continually, after the Parisian and Continental method.

The rapid and still increasing demand for this COFFEE has caused great excitement in the trade; and several unprincipled houses have copied our papers, and profess to sell a similar article. We therefore think it right to CAUTION the Public, and to state that our superior mixture of Four Countries is a discovery of our own, and therefore the proportions are not known, nor can it be had of any other house, and that in future we shall distinguish it from all others as

SPARROW'S CONTINENTAL COFFEE, at 1s. 8d. per lb.

Packed in Tins of all sizes, perfectly air-tight, for the Country.

••• We have also Strong and Useful COFFEES, from 1s. to 1s. 4d.

TEAS of the true old-fashioned kind, as formerly imported by the East India Company, and with which the name of SPARROW has for many years been identified, at the following reduced scale of prices:—Strong and full flavoured Congou, a most economical Tea for large consumers, 3s. 8d.; Sterling Congou, of superior strength and flavour, 4s.; Finest Congou, strongly recommended, 4s. 4d.; Fine Ripe Old Pekoe, Souchong flavour, one of the finest specimens imported, 4s. 8d.; Strong Green, 3s. 8d. to 4s.; Genuine Hyson, or Young Hyson, 5s.; the Finest Cowslip Hyson, or Young Hyson, very fragrant, 6s.; Strong Gunpowder, 5s. 4d. to 6s.; and the Finest Gunpowder, heavy pearl leaf, 7s.

NO BOHEA OR INFERIOR TEAS KEPT.

Orders, by post or otherwise, containing a remittance, or respectable reference, will be dealt with in a way that will insure recommendations. The carts of this establishment deliver goods in all parts of town free of expense.

TEA ESTABLISHMENT, 95, HIGH HOLBORN,

Adjoining Day & Martin's, leading through into 22, Dean Street.

HENRY SPARROW, PROPRIETOR.

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN EDWARD CUTTLE, MARINER.

TIME, sure of foot and strong of will, had so pressed onward, that the year enjoined by the old Instrument-maker, as the term during which his friend should refrain from opening the sealed packet accompanying the letter he had left for him, was now nearly expired, and Captain Cuttle began to look at it, of an evening, with feelings of mystery and uneasiness.

The Captain, in his honour, would as soon have thought of opening the parcel one hour before the expiration of the term, as he would have thought of opening himself, to study his own anatomy. He merely brought it out, at a certain stage of his first evening pipe, laid it on the table, and sat gazing at the outside of it, through the smoke, in silent gravity, for two or three hours at a spell. Sometimes, when he had contemplated it thus for a pretty long while, the Captain would hitch his chair, by degrees, farther and farther off, as if to get beyond the range of its fascination; but if this were his design, he never succeeded: for even when he was brought up by the parlour wall, the packet still attracted him; or if his eyes, in thoughtful wandering, roved to the ceiling or the fire, its image immediately followed, and posted itself conspicuously among the coals, or took up an advantageous position on the whitewash.

In respect of Heart's Delight, the Captain's parental regard and admiration knew no change. But since his last interview with Mr. Carker, Captain Cuttle had come to entertain doubts whether his former intervention in behalf of that young lady and his dear boy Wal'r, had proved altogether so favourable as he could have wished, and as he at the time believed. The Captain was troubled with a serious misgiving that he had done more harm than good, in short; and in his remorse and modesty he made the best atonement he could think of, by putting himself out of the way of doing any harm to any one, and as it were, throwing himself overboard for a dangerous person.

Self-buried, therefore, among the instruments, the Captain never went near Mr. Dombey's house, or reported himself in any way to Florence or Miss Nipper. He even severed himself from Mr. Perch, on the occasion of his next visit, by dryly informing that gentleman, that he thanked him for his company, but had cut himself adrift from all such acquaintance, as he didn't know what magazine he mightn't blow up, without meaning of it. In this self-imposed retirement, the Captain passed whole days and weeks without interchanging a word with any one but Rob the Grinder, whom he esteemed as a pattern of disinterested attachment and fidelity. In this retirement, the Captain, gazing at the packet of an evening, would sit smoking, and thinking of Florence and poor Walter, until they both seemed to his homely fancy to be dead, and to have passed

away into eternal youth, the beautiful and innocent children of his first remembrance.

The Captain did not, however, in his musings, neglect his own improvement, or the mental culture of Rob the Grinder. That young man was generally required to read out of some book to the Captain, for one hour every evening; and as the Captain implicitly believed that all books were true, he accumulated, by this means, many remarkable facts. On Sunday nights, the Captain always read for himself, before going to bed, a certain Divine Sermon once delivered on a Mount; and although he was accustomed to quote the text, without book, after his own manner, he appeared to read it with as reverent an understanding of its heavenly spirit, as if he had got it all by heart in Greek, and had been able to write any number of fierce theological disquisitions on its every phrase.

Rob the Grinder, whose reverence for the inspired writings, under the admirable system of the Grinders' School, had been developed by a perpetual bruising of his intellectual shins against all the proper names of all the tribes of Judah, and by the monotonous repetition of hard verses, especially by way of punishment, and by the parading of him at six years old in leather breeches, three times a Sunday, very high up, in a very hot church, with a great organ huzzing against his drowsy head, like an exceedingly busy bee—Rob the Grinder made a mighty show of being edified when the Captain ceased to read, and generally yawned and nodded while the reading was in progress. The latter fact being never so much as suspected by the good Captain.

Captain Cuttle also, as a man of business, took to keeping books. In these he entered observations on the weather, and on the currents of the waggons, and other vehicles; which he observed, in that quarter, to set westward in the morning and during the greater part of the day, and eastward towards the evening. Two or three stragglers appearing in one week, who "spoke him"—so the Captain entered it—on the subject of spectacles, and who, without positively purchasing, said they would look in again, the Captain decided that the business was improving, and made an entry in the day-book to that effect: the wind then blowing (which he first recorded) pretty fresh, west and by north; having changed in the night.

One of the Captain's chief difficulties was Mr. Toots, who called frequently, and who without saying much seemed to have an idea that the little back parlour was an eligible room to chuckle in, as he would sit and avail himself of its accommodations in that regard by the half-hour together, without at all advancing in intimacy with the Captain. The Captain, rendered cautious by his late experience, was unable quite to satisfy his mind whether Mr. Toots was the mild subject he appeared to be, or was a profoundly artful and dissimulating hypocrite. His frequent reference to Miss Dombey was suspicious; but the Captain had a secret kindness for Mr. Toots's apparent reliance on him, and forbore to decide against him for the present; merely eyeing him, with a sagacity not to be described, whenever he approached the subject that was nearest to his heart.

"Captain Gills," blurted out Mr. Toots, one day all at once, as his

manner was, "do you think you could think favourably of that proposition of mine, and give me the pleasure of your acquaintance?"

"Why, I'll tell you what it is, my lad," replied the Captain, who had at length concluded on a course of action; "I've been turning that there, over."

"Captain Gills, it's very kind of you," retorted Mr. Toots. "I'm much obliged to you. Upon my word and honour, Captain Gills, it would be a charity to give me the pleasure of your acquaintance. It really would."

"You see, Brother," argued the Captain slowly, "I don't know you."

"But you never *can* know me, Captain Gills," replied Mr. Toots, steadfast to his point, "if you don't give me the pleasure of your acquaintance."

The Captain seemed struck by the originality and power of this remark, and looked at Mr. Toots as if he thought there was a great deal more in him than he had expected.

"Well said, my lad," observed the Captain, nodding his head thoughtfully; "and true. Now looke'e here: You've made some observations to me, which gives me to understand as you admire a certain sweet creature. Hey?"

"Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots, gesticulating violently with the hand in which he held his hat, "Admiration is not the word. Upon my honour, you have no conception what my feelings are. If I could be dyed black, and made Miss Dombey's slave, I should consider it a compliment. If, at the sacrifice of all my property, I could get transmigrated into Miss Dombey's dog—I—I really think I should never leave off wagging my tail. I should be so perfectly happy, Captain Gills!"

Mr. Toots said it with watery eyes, and pressed his hat against his bosom with deep emotion.

"My lad," returned the Captain, moved to compassion, "if you're in earnest—"

"Captain Gills," cried Mr. Toots, "I'm in such a state of mind, and am so dreadfully in earnest, that if I could swear to it upon a hot piece of iron, or a live coal, or melted lead, or burning sealing-wax, or anything of that sort, I should be glad to hurt myself, as a relief to my feelings." And Mr. Toots looked hurriedly about the room, as if for some sufficiently painful means of accomplishing his dread purpose.

The Captain pushed his glazed hat back upon his head, stroked his face down with his heavy hand—making his nose more mottled in the process—and planting himself before Mr. Toots, and hooking him by the lappel of his coat, addressed him in these words, while Mr. Toots looked up into his face, with much attention and some wonder.

"If you're in earnest, you see, my lad," said the Captain, "you're a object of clemency, and clemency is the brightest jewel in the crown of a Briton's head, for which you'll overhaul the constitution, as laid down in Rule Britannia, and, when found, *that* is the charter as them garden angels was a singing of, so many times over. Stand by! This here proposal o' you're takes me a little aback. And why? Because I holds my own only, you understand, in these here waters, and haven't got no consort,

and may be don't wish for none. Steady! You hailed me first, along of a certain young lady, as you was chartered by. Now if you and me is to keep one another's company at all, that there young creetur's name must never be named nor referred to. I don't know what harm mayn't have been done by naming of it too free, afore now, and thereby I brings up short. D'ye make me out pretty clear, brother?"

"Well, you'll excuse me, Captain Gills," replied Mr. Toots, "if I don't quite follow you sometimes. But upon my word I—it's a hard thing, Captain Gills, not to be able to mention Miss Dombey. I really have got such a dreadful load here!"—Mr. Toots pathetically touched his shirt-front with both hands—"that I feel night and day, exactly as if somebody was sitting upon me."

"Them," said the Captain, "is the terms I offer. If they're hard upon you, brother, as mayhap they are, give 'em a wide berth, sheer off, and part company cheerily!"

"Captain Gills," returned Mr. Toots, "I hardly know how it is, but after what you told me when I came here, for the first time, I—I feel that I'd rather think about Miss Dombey in your society than talk about her in almost anybody else's. Therefore, Captain Gills, if you'll give me the pleasure of your acquaintance, I shall be very happy to accept it on your own conditions. I wish to be honourable, Captain Gills," said Mr. Toots, holding back his extended hand for a moment, "and therefore I am obliged to say that I *can not* help thinking about Miss Dombey. It's impossible for me to make a promise not to think about her."

"My lad," said the Captain, whose opinion of Mr. Toots was much improved by this candid avowal, "a man's thoughts is like the winds, and nobody can't answer for 'em for certain, any length of time together. Is it a treaty as to words?"

"As to words, Captain Gills," returned Mr. Toots, "I think I can bind myself."

Mr. Toots gave Captain Cuttle his hand upon it, then and there; and the Captain, with a pleasant and gracious show of condescension, bestowed his acquaintance upon him formally. Mr. Toots seemed much relieved and gladdened by the acquisition, and chuckled rapturously during the remainder of his visit. The Captain, for his part, was not ill pleased to occupy that position of patronage, and was exceedingly well satisfied by his own prudence and foresight.

But rich as Captain Cuttle was in the latter quality, he received a surprise that same evening from a no less ingenuous and simple youth, than Rob the Grinder. That artless lad, drinking tea at the same table, and bending meekly over his cup and saucer, having taken sidelong observations of his master for some time, who was reading the newspaper with great difficulty, but much dignity, through his glasses, broke silence by saying—

"Oh! I beg your pardon, Captain, but you mayn't be in want of any pigeons, may you, Sir?"

"No, my lad," replied the Captain.

"Because I was wishing to dispose of mine, Captain," said Rob.

"Aye, aye?" cried the Captain, lifting up his bushy eyebrows a little.

"Yes; I'm going, Captain, if you please," said Rob.

"Going? Where are you going?" asked the Captain, looking round at him over the glasses.

"What? didn't you know that I was going to leave you, Captain?" asked Rob, with a sneaking smile.

The Captain put down the paper, took off his spectacles, and brought his eyes to bear on the deserter.

"Oh yes, Captain, I am going to give you warning. I thought you'd have known that beforehand, perhaps," said Rob, rubbing his hands, and getting up. "If you could be so good as provide yourself soon, Captain, it would be a great convenience to me. You couldn't provide yourself by to-morrow morning, I am afraid, Captain; could you, do you think?"

"And you're a going to desert your colours are you, my lad?" said the Captain, after a long examination of his face.

"Oh, it's very hard upon a cove, Captain," cried the tender Rob, injured and indignant in a moment, "that he can't give lawful warning, without being frowned at in that way, and called a deserter. You haven't any right to call a poor cove names, Captain. It an't because I'm a servant and you're a master, that you're to go and libel me. What wrong have I done? Come, Captain, let me know what my crime is, will you?"

The stricken Grinder wept, and put his coat-cuff in his eye.

"Come, Captain," cried the injured youth, "give my crime a name! What have I been and done? Have I stolen any of the property? Have I set the house a-fire? If I have, why don't you give me in charge, and try it? But to take away the character of a lad that's been a good servant to you, because he can't afford to stand in his own light for your good, what a injury it is, and what a bad return for faithful service! This is the way young coves is spiled and drove wrong. I wonder at you, Captain, I do."

All of which the Grinder howled forth in a lachrymose whine, and backing carefully towards the door.

"And so you've got another berth, have you, my lad?" said the Captain, eyeing him intently.

"Yes, Captain, since you put it in that shape, I *have* got another berth," cried Rob, backing more and more; "a better berth than I've got here, and one where I don't so much as want your good word, Captain, which is fort'nate for me, after all the dirt you've throw'd at me, because I'm poor, and can't afford to stand in my own light for your good. Yes, I *have* got another berth; and if it wasn't for leaving you unprovided, Captain, I'd go to it now, sooner than I'd take them names from you, because I'm poor, and can't afford to stand in my own light for your good. Why do you reproach me for being poor, and not standing in my own light for your good, Captain? How can you so demean yourself?"

"Look ye here, my boy," replied the peaceful Captain, "Don't you pay out no more of them words."

"Well, then, don't you pay in no more of your words, Captain," retorted the roused innocent, getting louder in his whine, and backing into the shop. "I'd sooner you took my blood than my character."

"Because," pursued the Captain calmly, "you have heard, may be, of such a thing as a rope's end."

"Oh, have I though, Captain?" cried the taunting Grinder. "No I haven't. I never heard of any such a article!"

"Well," said the Captain, "it's my belief as you'll know more about it pretty soon, if you don't keep a bright look-out. I can read your signals, my lad. You may go."

"Oh! I may go at once, may I, Captain?" cried Rob, exulting in his success. "But mind! *I* never asked to go at once, Captain. You are not to take away my character again, because you send me off of your own accord. And you're not to stop any of my wages, Captain!"

His employer settled the last point by producing the tin canister and telling the Grinder's money out in full upon the table. Rob, snivelling and sobbing, and grievously wounded in his feelings, took up the pieces one by one, with a sob and a snivel for each, and tied them up separately in knots in his pocket-handkerchief; then he ascended to the roof of the house and filled his hat and pockets with pigeons; then, came down to his bed under the counter and made up his bundle, snivelling and sobbing louder, as if he were cut to the heart by old associations; then he whined, "Good night, Captain. I leave you without malice!" and then, going out upon the door-step, pulled the little Midshipman's nose as a parting indignity, and went away down the street grinning triumph.

The Captain, left to himself, resumed his perusal of the news as if nothing unusual or unexpected had taken place, and went reading on with the greatest assiduity. But never a word did Captain Cuttle understand, though he read a vast number, for Rob the Grinder was scampering up one column and down another all through the newspaper.

It is doubtful whether the worthy Captain had ever felt himself quite abandoned until now; but now, old Sol Gills, Walter, and Heart's Delight were lost to him indeed, and now Mr. Carker deceived and jeered him cruelly. They were all represented in the false Rob, to whom he had held forth many a time on the recollections that were warm within him; he had believed in the false Rob, and had been glad to believe in him; he had made a companion of him as the last of the old ship's company; he had taken the command of the little Midshipman with him at his right hand; he had meant to do his duty by him, and had felt almost as kindly towards the boy as if they had been shipwrecked and cast upon a desert place together. And now, that the false Rob had brought distrust, treachery, and meanness into the very parlour, which was a kind of sacred place, Captain Cuttle felt as if the parlour might have gone down next, and not surprised him much by its sinking, or given him any very great concern.

Therefore Captain Cuttle read the newspaper with profound attention and no comprehension, and therefore Captain Cuttle said nothing whatever about Rob to himself, or admitted to himself that he was thinking about him, or would recognise in the most distant manner that Rob had anything to do with his feeling as lonely as Robinson Crusoe.

In the same composed, business-like way, the Captain stepped over to Leadenhall Market in the dusk, and effected an arrangement with a private watchman on duty there, to come and put up and take down the shutters of the Wooden Midshipman every night and morning. He then called in at

the eating-house to diminish by one half the daily rations theretofore supplied to the Midshipman, and at the public-house to stop the traitor's beer. "My young man," said the Captain, in explanation to the young lady at the bar, "my young man having bettered himself, Miss." Lastly, the Captain resolved to take possession of the bed under the counter, and to turn-in there o' nights instead of up stairs, as sole guardian of the property.

From this bed Captain Cuttle daily rose thenceforth, and clapped on his glazed hat at six o'clock in the morning, with the solitary air of Crusoe finishing his toilet with his goat-skin cap; and although his fears of a visitation from the savage tribe, Mac Stinger, were somewhat cooled, as similar apprehensions on the part of that lone mariner used to be by the lapse of a long interval without any symptoms of the cannibals, he still observed a regular routine of defensive operations, and never encountered a bonnet without previous survey from his castle of retreat. In the mean time (during which he received no call from Mr. Toots, who wrote to say he was out of town) his own voice began to have a strange sound in his ears; and he acquired such habits of profound meditation from much polishing and stowing away of the stock, and from much sitting behind the counter reading, or looking out of window, that the red rim made on his forehead by the hard glazed hat, sometimes ached again with excess of reflection.

The year being now expired, Captain Cuttle deemed it expedient to open the packet; but as he had always designed doing this in the presence of Rob the Grinder, who had brought it to him, and as he had an idea that it would be regular and ship-shape to open it in the presence of somebody, he was sadly put to it for want of a witness. In this difficulty, he hailed one day with unusual delight the announcement in the Shipping Intelligence of the arrival of the Cautious Clara, Captain John Bunsby, from a coasting voyage; and to that philosopher immediately dispatched a letter by post, enjoining inviolable secrecy as to his place of residence, and requesting to be favoured with an early visit, in the evening season.

Bunsby, who was one of those sages who act upon conviction, took some days to get the conviction thoroughly into his mind, that he had received a letter to this effect. But when he had grappled with the fact, and mastered it, he promptly sent his boy with the message, "He's a coming to-night." Who being instructed to deliver those words and disappear, fulfilled his mission like a tarry spirit, charged with a mysterious warning.

The Captain, well pleased to receive it, made preparation of pipes and rum and water, and awaited his visiter in the back parlour. At the hour of eight, a deep lowing, as of a nautical Bull, outside the shop-door, succeeded by the knocking of a stick on the panel, announced to the listening ear of Captain Cuttle, that Bunsby was along-side; whom he instantly admitted, shaggy and loose, and with his stolid mahogany visage, as usual, appearing to have no consciousness of anything before it, but to be attentively observing something that was taking place in quite another part of the world.

"Bunsby," said the Captain, grasping him by the hand, "What cheer my lad, what cheer?"

"Shipmet," replied the voice within Bunsby, unaccompanied by any sign on the part of the Commander himself, "Hearty, hearty."

"Bunsby!" said the Captain, rendering irrepressible homage to his genius, "here you are! a man as can give an opinion as is brighter than di'monds—and give me the lad with the tarry trousers as shines to me like di'monds bright, for which you'll overhaul the Stanfell's Budget, and when found make a note. Here you are, a man as gave an opinion in this here very place, that has come true, every letter on it," which the Captain sincerely believed.

"Aye, aye?" growled Bunsby.

"Every letter," said the Captain.

"For why?" growled Bunsby, looking at his friend for the first time. "Which way? If so, why not? Therefore." With these oracular words—they seemed almost to make the Captain giddy; they launched him upon such a sea of speculation and conjecture—the sage submitted to be helped off with his pilot-coat, and accompanied his friend into the back parlour, where his hand presently alighted on the rum-bottle, from which he brewed a stiff glass of grog; and presently afterwards on a pipe, which he filled, lighted, and began to smoke.

Captain Cuttle, imitating his visiter in the matter of these particulars, though the rapt and imperturbable manner of the great Commander was far above his powers, sat in the opposite corner of the fireside observing him respectfully, and as if he waited for some encouragement or expression of curiosity on Bunsby's part which should lead him to his own affairs. But as the mahogany philosopher gave no evidence of being sentient of anything but warmth and tobacco, except once, when taking his pipe from his lips to make room for his glass, he incidentally remarked with exceeding gruffness, that his name was Jack Bunsby—a declaration that presented but small opening for conversation—the Captain bespeaking his attention in a short complimentary exordium, narrated the whole history of Uncle Sol's departure, with the change it had produced in his own life and fortunes; and concluded by placing the packet on the table.

After a long pause, Mr. Bunsby nodded his head.

"Open?" said the Captain.

Bunsby nodded again.

The Captain accordingly broke the seal, and disclosed to view two folded papers, of which he severally read the indorsements, thus: "Last Will and Testament of Solomon Gills." "Letter for Ned Cuttle."

Bunsby, with his eye on the coast of Greenland, seemed to listen for the contents. The Captain therefore hemmed to clear his throat, and read the letter aloud.

"My dear Ned Cuttle. When I left home for the West Indies"—

Here the Captain stopped, and looked hard at Bunsby, who looked fixedly at the coast of Greenland.

"—in forlorn search of intelligence of my dear boy, I knew that if you were acquainted with my design, you would thwart it, or accompany me; and therefore I kept it secret. If you ever read this letter, Ned, I am likely to be dead. You will easily forgive an old friend's folly then, and will feel for the restlessness and uncertainty in which he wandered away on such a wild voyage. So no more of that. I have little hope that my poor boy will ever read these words, or gladden your eyes with the sight of his frank face any more." No, no; no more," said Captain Cuttle, sorrowfully meditating; "no more. There he lays, all his days—"

Mr. Bunsby, who had a musical ear, suddenly bellowed, "In the Bays of Biscay, O!" which so affected the good Captain, as an appropriate tribute to departed worth, that he shook him by the hand in acknowledgment, and was fain to wipe his eyes.

"Well, well!" said the Captain with a sigh, as the Lament of Bunsby ceased to ring and vibrate in the skylight. "Affliction sore, long time he bore, and let us overhaul the wollume, and there find it."

"Physicians," observed Bunsby, "was in vain."

"Aye, aye, to be sure," said the Captain, "what 's the good o' *them* in two or three hundred fathoms o' water!" Then, returning to the letter, he read on:—"But if he should be by, when it is opened;" the Captain involuntarily looked round, and shook his head; "'or should know of it at any other time;" the Captain shook his head again; "'my blessing on him! In case the accompanying paper is not legally written, it matters very little, for there is no one interested but you and he, and my plain wish is, that if he is living he should have what little there may be, and if (as I fear) otherwise, that you should have it, Ned. You will respect my wish, I know. God bless you for it, and for all your friendliness besides, to SOLOMON GILLS.' Bunsby!" said the Captain, appealing to him solemnly, "what do you make of this? There you sit, a man as has had his head broke from infancy up'ards, and has got a new opinion into it at every seam as has been opened. Now, what do you make o' this?"

"If so be," returned Bunsby, with unusual promptitude, "as he 's dead, my opinion is he won't come back no more. If so be as he 's alive, my opinion is he will. Do I say he will? No. Why not? Because the bearings of this obseruation lays in the application on it."

"Bunsby!" said Captain Cuttle, who would seem to have estimated the value of his distinguished friend's opinions in proportion to the immensity of the difficulty he experienced in making anything out of them; "Bunsby," said the Captain, quite confounded by admiration, "you carry a weight of mind easy, as would swamp one of my tonnage soon. But in regard o' this here will, I don't mean to take no steps towards the property—Lord forbid!—except to keep it for a more rightful owner; and I hope yet as the rightful owner, Sol Gills, is living and 'll come back, strange as it is that he an't forwarded no dispatches. Now, what is your opinion, Bunsby, as to stowing of these here papers away again, and marking outside as they was opened, such a day, in presence of John Bunsby and Ed'ard Cuttle?"

Bunsby, deservyng no objection, on the coast of Greenland or elsewhere, to this proposal, it was carried into execution; and that great man, bringing his eye into the present for a moment, affixed his sign-manual to the cover, totally abstaining, with characteristic modesty, from the use of capital letters. Captain Cuttle, having attached his own left-handed signature, and locked up the packet in the iron safe, entreated his guest to mix another glass and smoke another pipe; and doing the like himself, fell a musing over the fire on the possible fortunes of the poor old Instrument-maker.

And now a surprise occurred, so overwhelming and terrific that Captain Cuttle, unsupported by the presence of Bunsby, must have sunk beneath it, and been a lost man from that fatal hour.

How the Captain, even in the satisfaction of admitting such a guest, could have only shut the door, and not locked it, of which negligence he was undoubtedly guilty, is one of those questions that must for ever remain mere points of speculation, or vague charges against destiny. But by that unlocked door, at this quiet moment, did the fell Mac Stinger dash into the parlour, bringing Alexander Mac Stinger in her parental arms, and confusion and vengeance (not to mention Juliana Mac Stinger, and the sweet child's brother, Charles Mac Stinger, popularly known about the scenes of his youthful sports, as Chowley) in her train. She came so swiftly and so silently, like a rushing air from the neighbourhood of the East India Docks, that Captain Cuttle found himself in the very act of sitting looking at her, before the calm face with which he had been meditating, changed to one of horror and dismay.

But the moment Captain Cuttle understood the full extent of his misfortune, self-preservation dictated an attempt at flight. Darting at the little door which opened from the parlour on the steep little range of cellar-steps, the Captain made a rush, head-foremost, at the latter, like a man indifferent to bruises and contusions, who only sought to hide himself in the bowels of the earth. In this gallant effort he would probably have succeeded, but for the affectionate dispositions of Juliana and Chowley, who pinning him by the legs—one of those dear children holding on to each—claimed him as their friend, with lamentable cries. In the meantime, Mrs. Mac Stinger, who never entered upon any action of importance without previously inverting Alexander Mac Stinger, to bring him within the range of a brisk battery of slaps, and then sitting him down to cool as the reader first beheld him, performed that solemn rite, as if on this occasion it were a sacrifice to the Furies; and having deposited the victim on the floor, made at the Captain with a strength of purpose that appeared to threaten scratches to the interposing Bunsby.

The cries of the two elder Mac Stingers, and the wailing of young Alexander, who may be said to have passed a piebald childhood, forasmuch as he was black in the face during one half of that fairy period of existence, combined to make this visitation the more awful. But when silence reigned again, and the Captain, in a violent perspiration, stood meekly looking at Mrs. Mac Stinger, its terrors were at their height.

"Oh, Cap'en Cuttle, Cap'en Cuttle!" said Mrs. Mac Stinger, making her chin rigid, and shaking it in unison with what, but for the weakness of her sex, might be described as her fist. "Oh, Cap'en Cuttle, Cap'en Cuttle, do you dare to look me in the face, and not be struck down in the herth!"

The Captain, who looked anything but daring, feebly muttered "Stand by!"

"Oh I was a weak and trusting Fool when I took you under *my* roof, Cap'en Cuttle, I was!" cried Mrs. Mac Stinger. "To think of the benefits I've showered on that man, and the way in which I brought my children up to love and honour him as if he was a father to 'em, when there an't a 'ousekeeper, no nor a lodger in our street, don't know that I lost money by that man, and by his guzzlings and his muzzlings"—Mrs. Mac Stinger used the last word for the joint sake of alliteration and aggravation, rather than for the expression of any idea—"and when they

cried out one and all, shame upon him for putting upon an industrious woman, up early and late for the good of her young family, and keeping her poor place so clean that a individual might have ate his dinner, yes, and his tea too, if he was so disposed, off any one of the floors or stairs, in spite of all his guzzlings and his muzzlings, such was the care and pains bestowed upon him ! ”

Mrs. Mac Stinger stopped to fetch her breath ; and her face flushed with triumph in this second happy introduction of Captain Cuttle’s muzzlings.

“ And he runs awa-a-a-ay ! ” cried Mrs. Mac Stinger, with a lengthening-out of the last syllable that made the unfortunate Captain regard himself as the meanest of men ; “ and keeps away a twelvemonth ! From a woman ! Sitch is his conscience ! He hasn’t the courage to meet her hi-i-i-igh ; ” long syllable again ; “ but steals away, like a felon. Why, if that baby of mine,” said Mrs. Mac Stinger, with sudden rapidity, “ was to offer to go and steal away, I’d do my duty as a mother by him, till he was covered with wales ! ”

The young Alexander, interpreting this into a positive promise, to be shortly redeemed, tumbled over with fear and grief, and lay upon the floor exhibiting the soles of his shoes and making such a deafening outcry, that Mrs. Mac Stinger found it necessary to take him up in her arms, where she quieted him, ever and anon, as he broke out again, by a shake that seemed enough to loosen his teeth.

“ A pretty sort of a man is Cap’en Cuttle,” said Mrs. Mac Stinger, with a sharp stress on the first syllable of the Captain’s name, “ to take on for—and to lose sleep for—and to faint along of—and to think dead forsooth—and to go up and down the blessed town like a mad woman, asking questions after ! Oh, a pretty sort of a man ! Ha ha ha ha ! He’s worth all that trouble and distress of mind, and much more. *That’s* nothing, bless you ! Ha ha ha ha ! Cap’en Cuttle,” said Mrs. Mac Stinger, with severe re-action in her voice and manner, “ I wish to know if you’re a-coming home.”

The frightened Captain looked into his hat, as if he saw nothing for it but to put it on, and give himself up.

“ Cap’en Cuttle,” repeated Mrs. Mac Stinger, in the same determined manner, “ I wish to know if you’re a-coming home, Sir.”

The Captain seemed quite ready to go, but faintly suggested something to the effect of “ not making so much noise about it.”

“ Aye, aye, aye,” said Bunsby, in a soothing tone. “ Awast, my lass, awast ! ”

“ And who may you be, if you please ! ” retorted Mrs. Mac Stinger, with chaste loftiness. “ Did you ever lodge at Number Nine, Brig Place, Sir ? My memory may be bad, but not with me, I think. There was a Mrs. Jollson lived at Number Nine before me, and perhaps you’re mistaking me for her. That is my only ways of accounting for your familiarity, Sir.”

“ Come, come, my lass, awast, awast ! ” said Bunsby.

Captain Cuttle could hardly believe it, even of this great man, though he saw it done with his waking eyes ; but Bunsby, advancing boldly, put his shaggy blue arm round Mrs. Mac Stinger, and so softened her by his magic way of doing it, and by these few words—he said no more—that she melted into tears, after looking upon him for a few moments, and observed that a child might conquer her now, she was so low in her courage.

Speechless and utterly amazed, the Captain saw him gradually persuade this inexorable woman into the shop, return for rum and water and a candle, take them to her, and pacify her without appearing to utter one word. Presently he looked in with his pilot-coat on, and said, "Cuttle, I'm a-going to act as convoy home;" and Captain Cuttle, more to his confusion than if he had been put in irons himself, for safe transport to Brig Place, saw the family pacifically filing off, with Mrs. Mac Stinger at their head. He had scarcely time to take down his canister, and stealthily convey some money into the hands of Juliana Mac Stinger, his former favourite, and Chowley, who had the claim upon him that he was naturally of a maritime build, before the Midshipman was abandoned by them all; and Bunsby, whispering that he'd carry on smart, and hail Ned Cuttle again before he went aboard, shut the door upon himself, as the last member of the party.

Some uneasy ideas that he must be walking in his sleep, or that he had been troubled with phantoms, and not a family of flesh and blood, beset the Captain at first, when he went back to the little parlour, and found himself alone. Illimitable faith in, and immeasurable admiration of, the Commander of the Cautious Clara, succeeded, and threw the Captain into a wondering trance.

Still, as time wore on, and Bunsby failed to reappear, the Captain began to entertain uncomfortable doubts of another kind. Whether Bunsby had been artfully decoyed to Brig Place, and was there detained in safe custody as hostage for his friend; in which case it would become the Captain, as a man of honour, to release him, by the sacrifice of his own liberty. Whether he had been attacked and defeated by Mrs. Mac Stinger, and was ashamed to show himself after his discomfiture. Whether Mrs. Mac Stinger, thinking better of it, in the uncertainty of her temper, had turned back to board the Midshipman again, and Bunsby, pretending to conduct her by a short cut, was endeavouring to lose the family amid the wilds and savage places of the city. Above all, what it would behove him, Captain Cuttle, to do, in case of his hearing no more, either of the Mac Stingers, or of Bunsby, which, in these wonderful and unforeseen conjunctions of events, might possibly happen.

He debated all this until he was tired; and still no Bunsby. He made up his bed under the counter, all ready for turning in; and still no Bunsby. At length, when the Captain had given him up, for that night at least, and had begun to undress, the sound of approaching wheels was heard, and, stopping at the door, was succeeded by Bunsby's hail.

The Captain trembled to think that Mrs. Mac Stinger was not to be got rid of, and had been brought back in a coach.

But no. Bunsby was accompanied by nothing but a large box, which he hauled into the shop with his own hands, and as soon as he had hauled in, sat upon. Captain Cuttle knew it for the chest he had left at Mrs. Mac Stinger's house, and looking, candle in hand, at Bunsby more attentively, believed that he was three sheets in the wind, or, in plain words, drunk. It was difficult, however, to be sure of this; the Commander having no trace of expression in his face when sober.

"Cuttle," said the Commander, getting off the chest, and opening the lid, "are these here your traps?"

Captain Cuttle looked in, and identified his property.

"Done pretty taut and trim, hey shipmet?" said Bunsby.

The grateful and bewildered Captain grasped him by the hand, and was laughing into a reply expressive of his astonished feelings, when Bunsby disengaged himself by a jerk of his wrist, and seemed to make an effort to wink with his revolving eye, the only effect of which attempt, in his condition, was nearly to overbalance him. He then abruptly opened the door, and shot away to rejoin the Cautious Clara with all speed—supposed to be his invariable custom, whenever he considered he had made a point.

As it was not his humour to be often sought, Captain Cuttle decided not to go or send to him next day, or until he should make his gracious pleasure known in such wise, or, failing that, until some little time should have elapsed. The Captain, therefore, renewed his solitary life next morning, and thought profoundly, many mornings, noons, and nights, of old Sol Gills, and Bunsby's sentiments concerning him, and the hopes there were of his return. Much of such thinking strengthened Captain Cuttle's hopes; and he humoured them and himself by watching for the Instrument-Maker at the door—as he ventured to do now, in his strange liberty—and setting his chair in its place, and arranging the little parlour as it used to be, in case he should come home unexpectedly. He likewise, in his thoughtfulness, took down a certain little miniature of Walter as a schoolboy, from its accustomed nail, lest it should shock the old man on his return. The Captain had his presentiments too, sometimes, that he would come on such a day; and one particular Sunday, even ordered a double allowance of dinner, he was so sanguine. But come, old Solomon did not; and still the neighbours noticed how the seafaring man in the glazed hat, stood at the shop door of an evening, looking up and down the street.

CHAPTER XL.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS.

It was not in the nature of things that a man of Mr. Dombey's mood, opposed to such a spirit as he had raised against himself, should be softened in the imperious asperity of his temper; or that the cold hard armour of pride in which he lived encased, should be made more flexible by constant collision with haughty scorn and defiance. It is the curse of such a nature—it is a main part of the heavy retribution on itself it bears within itself—that while deference and concession swell its evil qualities, and are the food it grows upon, resistance, and a questioning of its exacting claims, foster it too, no less. The evil that is in it finds equally its means of growth and propagation in opposites. It draws support and life from sweets and bitters; bowed down before, or unacknowledged, it still enslaves the breast in which it has its throne; and, worshipped or rejected, is as hard a master as the Devil in dark fables.

Towards his first wife, Mr. Dombey, in his cold and lofty arrogance, had borne himself like the removed Being he almost conceived himself to be.

He had been "Mr. Dombey" with her when she first saw him, and he was "Mr. Dombey" when she died. He had asserted his greatness during their whole married life, and she had meekly recognised it. He had kept his distant seat of state on the top of his throne, and she her humble station on its lowest step; and much good it had done him, so to live in solitary bondage to his one idea. He had imagined that the proud character of his second wife would have been added to his own—would have merged into it, and exalted his greatness. He had pictured himself haughtier than ever, with Edith's haughtiness subservient to his. He had never entertained the possibility of its arraying itself against him. And now, when he found it rising in his path at every step and turn of his daily life, fixing its cold, defiant, and contemptuous face upon him, this pride of his, instead of withering, or hanging down its head beneath the shock, put forth new shoots, became more concentrated and intense, more gloomy, sullen, irksome and unyielding, than it had ever been before.

Who wears such armour, too, bears with him ever another heavy retribution. It is of proof against conciliation, love, and confidence; against all gentle sympathy from without, all trust, all tenderness, all soft emotion; but to deep stabs in the self-love, it is as vulnerable as the bare breast to steel; and such tormenting festers rankle there, as follow on no other wounds, no, though dealt with the mailed hand of Pride itself, on weaker pride, disarmed and thrown down.

Such wounds were his. He felt them sharply, in the solitude of his old rooms; whither he now began often to retire again, and pass long solitary hours. It seemed his fate to be ever proud and powerful; ever humbled and powerless where he would be most strong. Who seemed fated to work out that doom?

Who? Who was it who could win his wife as she had won his boy! Who was it who had shown him that new victory, as he sat in the dark corner! Who was it, whose least word did what his utmost means could not! Who was it who, unaided by his love, regard, or notice, thrived and grew beautiful when those so aided died! Who could it be, but the same child at whom he had often glanced uneasily in her motherless infancy, with a kind of dread, lest he might come to hate her; and of whom his foreboding was fulfilled, for he DID hate her in his heart.

Yes, and he would have it hatred, and he made it hatred, though some sparkles of the light in which she had appeared before him on the memorable night of his return home with his Bride, occasionally hung about her still. He knew now that she was beautiful; he did not dispute that she was graceful and winning, and that in the bright dawn of her womanhood she had come upon him, a surprise. But he turned even this against her. In his sullen and unwholesome brooding, the unhappy man, with a dull perception of his alienation from all hearts, and a vague yearning for what he had all his life repelled, made a distorted picture of his rights and wrongs, and justified himself with it against her. The worthier she promised to be of him, the greater claim he was disposed to ante-date upon her duty and submission. When had she ever shown him duty and submission? Did she grace his life—or Edith's? Had her attractions been manifested first to him—or Edith? Why, he and she had never been, from her birth, like father and child! They had always been estranged.

She had crossed him every way and everywhere. She was leagued against him now. Her very beauty softened natures that were obdurate to him, and insulted him with an unnatural triumph.

It may have been that in all this there were mutterings of an awakened feeling in his breast, however selfishly aroused by his position of disadvantage, in comparison with what she might have made his life. But he silenced the distant thunder with the rolling of his sea of pride. He would hear nothing but his pride. And in his pride, a heap of inconsistency, and misery, and self-inflicted torment, he hated her.

To the moody, stubborn, sullen demon, that possessed him, his wife opposed her different pride in its full force. They never could have led a happy life together; but nothing could have made it more unhappy, than the wilful and determined warfare of such elements. His pride was set upon maintaining his magnificent supremacy, and forcing recognition of it from her. She would have been racked to death, and turned but her haughty glance of calm inflexible disdain upon him, to the last. Such recognition from Edith! He little knew through what a storm and struggle she had been driven onward to the crowning honour of his hand. He little knew how much she thought she had conceded, when she suffered him to call her wife.

Mr. Dombey was resolved to show her that he was supreme. There must be no will but his. Proud he desired that she should be, but she must be proud for, not against him. As he sat alone, hardening, he would often hear her go out and come home, treading the round of London life with no more heed of his liking or disliking, pleasure or displeasure, than if he had been her groom. Her cold supreme indifference—his own unquestioned attribute usurped—stung him more than any other kind of treatment could have done; and he determined to bend her to his magnificent and stately will.

He had been long communing with these thoughts, when one night he sought her in her own apartment, after he had heard her return home late. She was alone, in her brilliant dress, and had but that moment come from her mother's room. Her face was melancholy and pensive, when he came upon her; but it marked him at the door; for, glancing at the mirror before it, he saw immediately, as in a picture-frame, the knitted brow, and darkened beauty that he knew so well.

"Mrs. Dombey," he said, entering, "I must beg leave to have a few words with you."

"To-morrow," she replied.

"There is no time like the present, Madam," he returned. "You mistake your position. I am used to choose my own times; not to have them chosen for me. I think you scarcely understand who and what I am, Mrs. Dombey."

"I think," she answered, "that I understand you very well."

She looked upon him as she said so, and folding her white arms, sparkling with gold and gems, upon her swelling breast, turned away her eyes.

If she had been less handsome, and less stately in her cold composure, she might not have had the power of impressing him with the sense of disadvantage that penetrated through his utmost pride. But she had the

power, and he felt it keenly. He glanced round the room: saw how the splendid means of personal adornment, and the luxuries of dress, were scattered here and there, and disregarded; not in mere caprice and carelessness (or so he thought), but in a stedfast, haughty disregard of costly things: and felt it more and more. Chaplets of flowers, plumes of feathers, jewels, laces, silks and satins; look where he would, he saw riches, despised, poured out, and made of no account. The very diamonds—a marriage gift—that rose and fell impatiently upon her bosom, seemed to pant to break the chain that clasped them round her neck, and roll down on the floor where she might tread upon them.

He felt his disadvantage, and he showed it. Solemn and strange among this wealth of colour and voluptuous glitter, strange and constrained towards its haughty mistress, whose repellent beauty it repeated, and presented all around him, as in so many fragments of a mirror, he was conscious of embarrassment and awkwardness. Nothing that ministered to her disdainful self-possession could fail to gail him. Galled and irritated with himself, he sat down, and went on, in no improved humour:

“Mrs. Dombey, it is very necessary that there should be some understanding arrived at between us. Your conduct does not please me, Madam.”

She merely glanced at him again, and again averted her eyes; but she might have spoken for an hour, and expressed less.

“I repeat, Mrs. Dombey, does not please me. I have already taken occasion to request that it may be corrected. I now insist upon it.”

“You chose a fitting occasion for your first remonstrance, Sir, and you adopt a fitting manner, and a fitting word for your second. *You insist! To me!*”

“Madam,” said Mr. Dombey, with his most offensive air of state, “I have made you my wife. You bear my name. You are associated with my position and my reputation. I will not say that the world in general may be disposed to think you honoured by that association; but I will say that I am accustomed to ‘insist,’ to my connections and dependents.”

“Which may you be pleased to consider me?” she asked.

“Possibly I may think that my wife should partake—or does partake, and cannot help herself—of both characters, Mrs. Dombey.”

She bent her eyes upon him steadily, and set her trembling lips. He saw her bosom throb, and saw her face flush and turn white. All this he could know, and did: but he could not know that one word was whispering in the deep recesses of her heart, to keep her quiet; and that the word was Florence.

Blind idiot, rushing to a precipice! He thought she stood in awe of *him!*

“You are too expensive, Madam,” said Mr. Dombey. “You are extravagant. You waste a great deal of money—or what would be a great deal in the pockets of most gentlemen—in cultivating a kind of society that is useless to me, and, indeed, that upon the whole is disagreeable to me. I have to insist upon a total change in all these respects. I know that in the novelty of possessing a tithe of such means as Fortune has placed at your disposal, ladies are apt to run into a sudden extreme. There has been more than enough of that extreme. I beg that Mrs. Granger’s very different experiences may now come to the instruction of Mrs. Dombey.”

Still the fixed look, the trembling lips, the throbbing breast, the face now crimson and now white; and still the deep whisper Florence, Florence, speaking to her in the beating of her heart.

His insolence of self-importance dilated as he saw this alteration in her. Swollen no less by her past scorn of him, and his so recent feeling of disadvantage, than by her present submission (as he took it to be), it became too mighty for his breast, and burst all bounds. Why, who could long resist his lofty will and pleasure! He had resolved to conquer her, and look here!

"You will further please, Madam," said Mr. Dombey, in a tone of sovereign command, "to understand distinctly, that I am to be deferred to and obeyed. That I must have a positive show and confession of deference before the world, Madam. I am used to this. I require it as my right. In short I will have it. I consider it no unreasonable return for the worldly advancement that has befallen you; and I believe nobody will be surprised, either at its being required from you, or at your making it.—To Me—To Me!" he added, with emphasis.

No word from her. No change in her. Her eyes upon him.

"I have learnt from your mother, Mrs. Dombey," said Mr. Dombey, with magisterial importance, "what no doubt you know, namely, that Brighton is recommended for her health. Mr. Carker has been so good——"

She changed suddenly. Her face and bosom glowed as if the red light of an angry sunset had been flung upon them. Not unobservant of the change, and putting his own interpretation upon it, Mr. Dombey resumed:

"Mr. Carker has been so good as to go down and secure a house there, for a time. On the return of the establishment to London, I shall take such steps for its better management as I consider necessary. One of these, will be the engagement at Brighton (if it is to be effected), of a very respectable reduced person there, a Mrs. Pipechin, formerly employed in a situation of trust in my family, to act as housekeeper. An establishment like this, presided over but nominally, Mrs. Dombey, requires a competent head."

She had changed her attitude before he arrived at these words, and now sat—still looking at him fixedly—turning a bracelet round and round upon her arm; not winding it about with a light, womanly touch, but pressing and dragging it over the smooth skin, until the white limb showed a bar of red.

"I observed," said Mr. Dombey—"and this concludes what I deem it necessary to say to you at present, Mrs. Dombey—I observed a moment ago, Madam, that my allusion to Mr. Carker was received in a peculiar manner. On the occasion of my happening to point out to you, before that confidential agent, the objection I had to your mode of receiving my visitors, you were pleased to object to his presence. You will have to get the better of that objection, Madam, and to accustom yourself to it very probably on many similar occasions; unless you adopt the remedy which is in your own hands, of giving me no cause of complaint. Mr. Carker," said Mr. Dombey, who, after the emotion he had just seen, set great store by this means of reducing his proud wife, and who was perhaps sufficiently

willing to exhibit his power to that gentleman in a new and triumphant aspect, "Mr. Carker being in my confidence, Mrs. Dombey, may very well be in yours to such an extent. I hope, Mrs. Dombey," he continued, after a few moments, during which, in his increasing haughtiness, he had improved on his idea, "I may not find it necessary ever to intrust Mr. Carker with any message of objection or remonstrance to you; but as it would be derogatory to my position and reputation to be frequently holding trivial disputes with a lady upon whom I have conferred the highest distinction that it is in my power to bestow, I shall not scruple to avail myself of his services if I see occasion."

"And now," he thought, rising in his moral magnificence, and rising a stiffer and more impenetrable man than ever, "she knows me and my resolution."

The hand that had so pressed the bracelet was laid heavily upon her breast, but she looked at him still, with an unaltered face, and said in a low voice:

"Wait! For God's sake! I must speak to you."

Why did she not, and what was the inward struggle that rendered her incapable of doing so, for minutes, while, in the strong constraint she put upon her face, it was as fixed as any statue's—looking upon him with neither yielding nor unyielding, liking nor hatred, pride nor humility: nothing but a searching gaze.

"Did I ever tempt you to seek my hand? Did I ever use any art to win you? Was I ever more conciliating to you when you pursued me, than I have been since our marriage? Was I ever other to you, than I am?"

"It is wholly unnecessary, Madam," said Mr. Dombey, "to enter upon such discussions."

"Did you think I loved you? Did you know I did not? Did you ever care, Man! for my heart, or propose to yourself to win the worthless thing? Was there any poor pretence of any in our bargain? Upon your side, or on mine?"

"These questions," said Mr. Dombey, "are all wide of the purpose, Madam."

She moved between him and the door to prevent his going away, and drawing her majestic figure to its height, looked steadily upon him still.

"You answer each of them. You answer me before I speak, I see. How can you help it; you who know the miserable truth as well as I? Now, tell me. If I loved you to devotion, could I do more than render up my whole will and being to you, as you have just demanded? If my heart were pure and all untried, and you its idol, could you ask more; could you have more?"

"Possibly not, Madam," he returned coolly.

"You know how different I am. You see me looking on you now, and you can read the warmth of passion for you that is breathing in my face." Not a curl of the proud lip, not a flash of the dark eye, nothing but the same intent and searching look, accompanied these words. "You know my general history. You have spoken of my mother. Do you think you can degrade, or bend or break, *me* to submission and obedience?"

Mr. Dombey smiled, as he might have smiled at an inquiry whether he thought he could raise ten thousand pounds.

"If there is anything unusual here," she said, with a slight motion of her hand before her brow, which did not for a moment flinch from its immoveable and otherwise expressionless gaze, "as I know there are unusual feelings here," raising the hand she pressed upon her bosom, and heavily returning it, "consider that there is no common meaning in the appeal I am going to make you. Yes, for I am going;" she said it as in prompt reply to something in his face; "to appeal to you."

Mr. Dombey, with a slightly condescending bend of his chin that rustled and crackled his stiff cravat, sat down on a sofa that was near him, to hear the appeal.

"If you can believe that I am of such a nature now,"—he fancied he saw tears glistening in her eyes, and he thought, complacently, that he had forced them from her, though none fell on her cheek, and she regarded him as steadily as ever,—"as would make what I now say almost incredible to myself, said to any man who had become my husband, but, above all, said to you, you may, perhaps, attach the greater weight to it. In the dark end to which we are tending, and may come, we shall not involve ourselves alone (that might not be much) but others."

Others! He knew at whom that word pointed, and frowned heavily.

"I speak to you for the sake of others. Also your own sake; and for mine. Since our marriage, you have been arrogant to me; and I have repaid you in kind. You have shown to me and every one around us, every day and hour, that you think I am graced and distinguished by your alliance. I do not think so, and have shown that too. It seems you do not understand, or (so far as your power can go) intend that each of us shall take a separate course; and you expect from me instead, a homage you will never have."

Although her face was still the same, there was emphatic confirmation of this "Never" in the very breath she drew.

"I feel no tenderness towards you; that you know. You would care nothing for it, if I did or could. I know as well that you feel none towards me. But we are linked together; and in the knot that ties us, as I have said, others are bound up. We must both die; we are both connected with the dead already, each by a little child. Let us forbear."

Mr. Dombey took a long respiration, as if he would have said, Oh! was *this* all!

"There is no wealth," she went on, turning paler as she watched him, while her eyes grew yet more lustrous in their earnestness, "that could buy these words of me, and the meaning that belongs to them. Once cast away as idle breath, no wealth or power can bring them back. I mean them; I have weighed them; and I will be true to what I undertake. If you will promise to forbear on your part, I will promise to forbear on mine. We are a most unhappy pair, in whom, from different causes, every sentiment that blesses marriage, or justifies it, is rooted out; but in the course of time, some friendship, or some fitness for each other, may arise between us. I will try to hope so, if you will make the endeavour too; and I will look forward to a better and a happier use of age than I have made of youth or prime."

Throughout she had spoken in a low plain voice, that neither rose nor fell; ceasing, she dropped the hand with which she had enforced herself to be so passionless and distinct, but not the eyes with which she had so steadily observed him.

"Madam," said Mr. Dombey, with his utmost dignity, "I cannot entertain any proposal of this extraordinary nature."

She looked at him yet, without the least change.

"I cannot," said Mr. Dombey, rising as he spoke, "consent to temporise or treat with you, Mrs. Dombey, upon a subject as to which you are in possession of my opinions and expectations. I have stated my *ultimatum*, Madam, and have only to request your very serious attention to it."

To see the face change to its old expression, deepened in intensity! To see the eyes droop as from some mean and odious object! To see the lighting of the haughty brow! To see scorn, anger, indignation, and abhorrence starting into sight, and the pale blank earnestness vanish like a mist! He could not choose but look, although he looked to his dismay.

"Go, Sir!" she said, pointing with an imperious hand towards the door. "Our first and last confidence is at an end. Nothing can make us stranger to each other than we are henceforth."

"I shall take my rightful course, Madam," said Mr. Dombey, "undeterred, you may be sure, by any general declamation."

She turned her back upon him, and, without reply, sat down before her glass.

"I place my reliance on your improved sense of duty, and more correct feeling, and better reflexion, Madam," said Mr. Dombey.

She answered not one word. He saw no more expression of any heed of him, in the mirror, than if he had been an unseen spider on the wall, or beetle on the floor, or rather, than if he had been the one or other, seen and crushed when she last turned from him, and forgotten among the ignominious and dead vermin of the ground.

He looked back, as he went out at the door, upon the well-lighted and luxurious room, the beautiful and glittering objects everywhere displayed, the shape of Edith in its rich dress seated before her glass, and the face of Edith as the glass presented it to him; and betook himself to his old chamber of cogitation, carrying away with him a vivid picture in his mind of all these things, and a rambling and unaccountable speculation (such as sometimes comes into a man's head) how they would all look when he saw them next.

For the rest, Mr. Dombey was very taciturn, and very dignified, and very confident of carrying out his purpose; and remained so.

He did not design accompanying the family to Brighton; but he graciously informed Cleopatra at breakfast, on the morning of departure, which arrived a day or two afterwards, that he might be expected down, soon. There was no time to be lost in getting Cleopatra to any place recommended as being salutary; for, indeed, she seemed upon the wane, and turning of the earth, earthy.

Without having undergone any decided second attack of her malady, the old woman seemed to have crawled backward in her recovery from the first. She was more lean and shrunken, more uncertain in her imbecility, and made stranger confusions in her mind and memory. Among other

symptoms of this last affliction, she fell into the habit of confounding the names of her two sons-in-law, the living and the deceased; and in general called Mr. Dombey, either "Grangeby," or "Domber," or indifferently, both.

But she was youthful, very youthful still; and in her youthfulness appeared at breakfast, before going away, in a new bonnet made express, and a travelling robe that was embroidered and braided like an old baby's. It was not easy to put her into a fly-away bonnet now, or to keep the bonnet in its place on the back of her poor nodding head, when it was got on. In this instance, it had not only the extraneous effect of being always on one side, but of being perpetually tapped on the crown by Flowers the maid, who attended in the background during breakfast to perform that duty.

"Now my dearest Grangeby," said Mrs. Skewton, "you must positively prom," she cut some of her words short, and cut out others altogether, "come down very soon."

"I said just now, Madam," returned Mr. Dombey, loudly and laboriously, "that I am coming in a day or two."

"Bless you, Domber!"

Here the Major, who was come to take leave of the ladies, and who was staring through his apoplectic eyes at Mrs. Skewton's face, with the disinterested composure of an immortal being, said:

"Begad, Ma'am, you don't ask old Joe to come!"

"Sterious wretch, who's he?" lisped Cleopatra. But a tap on the bonnet from Flowers seeming to jog her memory, she added, "Oh! You mean yourself, you naughty creature!"

"Devilish queer, Sir," whispered the Major to Mr. Dombey. "Bad case. Never *did* wrap up enough;" the Major being buttoned to the chin. "Why, who should J. B. mean by Joe, but old Joe Bagstock—Joseph—Your slave—Joe, Ma'am? Here! Here's the man! Here are the Bagstock bellows, Ma'am!" cried the Major, striking himself a sounding blow on the chest.

"My dearest Edith—Grangeby—it's most trordinry thing," said Cleopatra, pettishly, "that Major—"

"Bagstock! J. B.!" cried the Major, seeing that she faltered for his name.

"Well, it don't matter," said Cleopatra, "Edith, my love, you know I never could remember names—what was it? oh!—most trordinry thing that so many people want to come down to see me. I'm not going for long. I'm coming back. Surely they can wait, till I come back!"

Cleopatra looked all round the table as she said it, and appeared very uneasy.

"I won't have vistors—really don't want vistors," she said; "little repose—and all that sort of thing—is what I quire. No odious brutes must proach me 'till I've shaken off this numbness;" and in a grisly resumption of her coquettish ways, she made a dab at the Major with her fan, but upset Mr. Dombey's breakfast cup instead, which was in quite a different direction.

Then she called for Withers, and charged him to see particularly that word was left about some trivial alterations in her room, which must be

all made before she came back, and which must be set about immediately, as there was no saying how soon she might come back; for she had a great many engagements, and all sorts of people to call upon. Withers received these directions with becoming deference, and gave his guarantee for their execution; but when he withdrew a pace or two behind her, it appeared as if he couldn't help looking strangely at the Major, who couldn't help looking strangely at Mr. Dombey, who couldn't help looking strangely at Cleopatra, who couldn't help nodding her bonnet over one eye, and rattling her knife and fork upon her plate in using them, as if she were playing castanets.

Edith alone never lifted her eyes to any face at the table, and never seemed dismayed by anything her mother said or did. She listened to her disjointed talk, or at least, turned her head towards her when addressed; replied in a few low words when necessary; and sometimes stopped her when she was rambling, or brought her thoughts back with a monosyllable, to the point from which they had strayed. The mother, however unsteady in other things, was constant in this—that she was always observant of her. She would look at the beautiful face, in its marble stillness and severity, now with a kind of fearful admiration; now in a giggling foolish effort to move it to a smile; now with capricious tears and jealous shakings of her head, as imagining herself neglected by it; always with an attraction towards it, that never fluctuated like her other ideas, but had constant possession of her. From Edith she would sometimes look at Florence, and back again at Edith, in a manner that was wild enough; and sometimes she would try to look elsewhere, as if to escape from her daughter's face; but back to it she seemed forced to come, although it never sought hers unless sought, or troubled her with one single glance.

The breakfast concluded, Mrs. Skewton, affecting to lean girlishly upon the Major's arm, but heavily supported on the other side by Flowers the maid, and propped up behind by Withers the page, was conducted to the carriage, which was to take her, Florence, and Edith to Brighton.

"And is Joseph absolutely banished?" said the Major, thrusting in his purple face over the steps. "Damme, Ma'am, is Cleopatra so hard-hearted as to forbid her faithful Antony Bagstock to approach the presence?"

"Go along!" said Cleopatra, "I can't bear you. You shall see me when I come back, if you are very good."

"Tell Joseph, he may live in hope, Ma'am," said the Major; "or he'll die in despair."

Cleopatra shuddered, and leaned back. "Edith, my dear," she said. "Tell him—"

"What?"

"Such dreadful words," said Cleopatra. "He uses such dreadful words!"

Edith signed to him to retire, gave the word to go on, and left the objectionable Major to Mr. Dombey. To whom he returned, whistling.

"I'll tell you what, Sir," said the Major, with his hands behind him, and his legs very wide asunder, "a fair friend of ours has removed to Queer Street."

"What do you mean, Major?" inquired Mr. Dombey.

"I mean to say, Dombey," returned the Major, "that you'll soon be an orphan-in-law."

Mr. Dombey appeared to relish this waggish description of himself so very little, that the Major wound up with the horse's cough, as an expression of gravity.

"Damme, Sir," said the Major, "there is no use in disguising a fact. Joe is blunt, Sir. That's his nature. If you take old Josh at all, you take him as you find him; and a de-vilish rusty, old rasper, of a close-toothed, J. B. file, you *do* find him. Dombey," said the Major, "your wife's mother is on the move, Sir."

"I fear," returned Mr. Dombey, with much philosophy, "that Mrs. Skewton is shaken."

"Shaken, Dombey!" said the Major. "Smashed!"

"Change, however," pursued Mr. Dombey, "and attention, may do much yet."

"Don't believe it, Sir," returned the Major. "Damme, Sir, she never wrapped up enough. If a man don't wrap up," said the Major, taking in another button of his buff waistcoat, "he has nothing to fall back upon. But some people *will* die. They *will* do it. Damme, they *will*. They're obstinate. I tell you what, Dombey, it may not be ornamental; it may not be refined; it may be rough and tough; but a little of the genuine old English Bagstock stamina, Sir, would do all the good in the world to the human breed."

After imparting this precious piece of information, the Major, who was certainly true-blue, whatever other endowments he may have possessed or wanted, coming within the "genuine old English" classification, which has never been exactly ascertained, took his lobster-eyes and his apoplexy to the club, and choked there all day.

Cleopatra, at one time fretful, at another self-complacent, sometimes awake, sometimes asleep, and at all times juvenile, reached Brighton the same night, fell to pieces as usual, and was put away in bed; where a gloomy fancy might have pictured a more potent skeleton than the maid, who should have been one, watching at the rose-coloured curtains, which were carried down to shed their bloom upon her.

It was settled in high council of medical authority that she should take a carriage airing every day, and that it was important she should get out every day and walk if she could. Edith was ready to attend her—always ready to attend her, with the same mechanical attention and immovable beauty—and they drove out alone; for Edith had an uneasiness in the presence of Florence, now that her mother was worse, and told Florence, with a kiss, that she would rather they two went alone.

Mrs. Skewton, on one particular day, was in the irresolution, exacting, jealous temper that had developed itself on her recovery from her first attack. After sitting silent in the carriage watching Edith for some time, she took her hand and kissed it passionately. The hand was neither given nor withdrawn, but simply yielded to her raising of it, and being released, dropped down again, almost as if it were insensible. At this she began to whimper and moan, and say what a mother she had been, and how she was forgotten! This she continued to do at capricious intervals, even when they had alighted; when she herself was halting along with the joint support of Withers and a stick, and Edith was walking by her side, and the carriage slowly following at a little distance.

It was a bleak, lowering, windy day, and they were out upon the Downs

with nothing but a bare sweep of land between them and the sky. The mother, with a querulous satisfaction in the monotony of her complaint, was still repeating it in a low voice from time to time, and the proud form of her daughter moved beside her slowly, when there came advancing over a dark ridge before them, two other figures, which, in the distance, were so like an exaggerated imitation of their own, that Edith stopped.

Almost as she stopped, the two figures stopped; and that one which to Edith's thinking was like a distorted shadow of her mother, spoke to the other, earnestly, and with a pointing hand towards them. That one seemed inclined to turn back, but the other, in which Edith recognised enough that was like herself to strike her with an unusual feeling, not quite free from fear, came on; and then they came on together.

The greater part of this observation, she made while walking towards them, for her stoppage had been momentary. Nearer observation showed her that they were poorly dressed, as wanderers about the country; that the younger woman carried knitted work or some such goods for sale; and that the old one toiled on empty-handed.

And yet, however far removed she was in dress, in dignity, in beauty, Edith could not but compare the younger woman with herself, still. It may have been that she saw upon her face some traces which she knew were lingering in her own soul, if not yet written on that index; but, as the woman came on, returning her gaze, fixing her shining eyes upon her, undoubtedly presenting something of her own air and stature, and appearing to reciprocate her own thoughts, she felt a chill creep over her, as if the day were darkening, and the wind were colder.

They had now come up. The old woman, holding out her hand importunately, stopped to beg of Mrs. Skewton. The younger one stopped too, and she and Edith looked in one another's eyes.

"What is it that you have to sell?" said Edith.

"Only this," returned the woman, holding out her wares, without looking at them. "I sold myself long ago."

"My Lady, don't believe her," croaked the old woman to Mrs. Skewton; "don't believe what she says. She loves to talk like that. She's my handsome and undutiful daughter. She gives me nothing but reproaches, my Lady, for all I have done for her. Look at her now, my Lady, how she turns upon her poor old mother with her looks."

As Mrs. Skewton drew her purse out with a trembling hand, and eagerly fumbled for some money, which the other old woman greedily watched for—their heads all but touching, in their hurry and decrepitude—Edith interposed:

"I have seen you," addressing the old woman, "before."

"Yes, my Lady," with a curtsey. "Down in Warwickshire. The morning among the trees. When you wouldn't give me nothing. But the gentleman, *he* give me something! Oh, bless him, bless him!" mumbled the old woman, holding up her skinny hand, and grinning frightfully at her daughter.

"It's of no use attempting to stay me, Edith!" said Mrs. Skewton, angrily anticipating an objection from her. "You know nothing about it. I won't be dissuaded. I am sure this is an excellent woman, and a good mother."

"Yes, my Lady, yes," chattered the old woman, holding out her avaricious hand. "Thankee, my Lady. Lord bless you, my Lady. Sixpence more, my pretty Lady, as a good mother yourself."

"And treated undutifully enough, too, my good old creature, sometimes, I assure you," said Mrs. Skewton, whimpering. "There! Shake hands with me. You're a very good old creature—full of what's his name—and all that. You're all affection and et cetera, an't you?"

"Oh, yes, my Lady!"

"Yes, I am sure you are; and so's that gentlemanly creature Grangeby. I must really shake hands with you again. And now you can go, you know; and, I hope," addressing the daughter, "that you'll show more gratitude, and natural what's its name, and all the rest of it—but I never *did* remember names—for there never was a better mother than the good old creature's been to you. Come, Edith!"

As the ruin of Cleopatra tottered off whimpering, and wiping its eyes with a gingerly remembrance of rouge in their neighbourhood, the old woman hobbled another way, mumbling and counting her money. Not one word more, nor one other gesture, had been exchanged between Edith and the younger woman, but neither had removed her eyes from the other for a moment. They had remained confronted until now, when Edith, as awakening from a dream, passed slowly on.

"You're a handsome woman," muttered her shadow, looking after her; "but good looks won't save us. And you're a proud woman; but pride won't save us. We had need to know each other when we meet again!"

CHAPTER XLI.

NEW VOICES ON THE WAVES.

ALL is going on as it was wont. The waves are hoarse with repetition of their mystery; the dust lies piled upon the shore; the sea-birds soar and hover; the winds and clouds go forth upon their trackless flight; the white arms beckon, in the moonlight, to the invisible country far away.

With a tender melancholy pleasure, Florence finds herself again on the old ground so sadly trodden, yet so happily, and thinks of him in the quiet place, where he and she have many and many a time conversed together, with the water welling up about his couch. And now, as she sits pensive there, she hears in the wild low murmur of the sea, his little story told again, his very words repeated; and finds that all her life and hopes, and griefs, since—in the solitary house, and in the pageant it has changed to—have a portion in the burden of the marvellous song.

And gentle Mr. Toots, who wanders at a distance, looking wistfully towards the figure that he dotes upon, and has followed there, but cannot in his delicacy disturb at such a time, likewise hears the requiem of little Dombey on the waters, rising and falling in the lulls of their eternal madrigal in praise of Florence. Yes! and he faintly understands, poor Mr. Toots, that they are saying something of a time when he was sensible of being brighter and not addle-brained; and the tears rising in his eyes when he fears that he is dull and stupid now, and good for little but to be laughed at, diminish his satisfaction in their soothing reminder that he

is relieved from present responsibility to the Chicken, by the absence of that game head of poultry in the country, training (at Toots's cost) for his great mill with the Larkey Boy.

But Mr. Toots takes courage, when they whisper a kind thought to him; and by slow degrees and with many indecisive stoppages on the way, approaches Florence. Stammering and blushing, Mr. Toots affects amazement when he comes near her, and says (having followed close on the carriage in which she travelled, every inch of the way from London, loving even to be choked by the dust of its wheels) that he never was so surprised in all his life.

"And you've brought Diogenes too, Miss Dombey!" says Mr. Toots, thrilled through and through by the touch of the small hand so pleasantly and frankly given him.

No doubt Diogenes is there, and no doubt Mr. Toots has reason to observe him, for he comes straightway at Mr. Toots's legs, and tumbles over himself in the desperation with which he makes at him, like a very dog of Montargis. But he is checked by his sweet mistress.

"Down, Di, down. Don't you remember who first made us friends, Di? For shame!"

Oh! Well may Di lay his loving cheek against her hand, and run off, and run back, and run round her, barking, and run headlong at anybody coming by, to show his devotion. Mr. Toots would run headlong at anybody, too. A military gentleman goes past, and Mr. Toots would like nothing better than to run at him, full tilt.

"Diogenes is quite in his native air, isn't he, Miss Dombey?" says Mr. Toots.

Florence assents, with a grateful smile.

"Miss Dombey," says Mr. Toots, "beg your pardon, but if you would like to walk to Blimber's, I—I'm going there."

Florence put her arm in that of Mr. Toots without a word, and they walk away together, with Diogenes going on before. Mr. Toots's legs shake under him; and though he is splendidly dressed, he feels misfits, and sees wrinkles, on the masterpieces of Burgess and Co., and wishes he had put on that brightest pair of boots.

Doctor Blimber's house, outside, has as scholastic and studious an air as ever; and up there is the window where she used to look for the pale face, and where the pale face brightened when it saw her, and the wasted little hand waved kisses as she passed. The door is opened by the same weak-eyed young man, whose imbecility of grin at sight of Mr. Toots is feebleness of character personified. They are shown into the Doctor's study, where blind Homer and Minerva give them audience as of yore, to the sober ticking of the great clock in the hall; and where the globes stand still in their accustomed places, as if the world were stationary too, and nothing in it ever perished in obedience to the universal law, that, while it keeps it on the roll, calls everything to earth.

And here is Doctor Blimber, with his learned legs; and here is Mrs. Blimber, with her sky-blue cap; and here Cornelia, with her sandy little row of curls, and her bright spectacles, still working like a sexton in the graves of languages. Here is the table upon which he sat forlorn and strange, the "new boy" of the school; and hither comes the distant cooing of the old boys, at their old lives in the old room on the old principle!

"Toots," says Doctor Blimber, "I am very glad to see you, Toots."

Mr. Toots chuckles in reply.

"Also to see you, Toots, in such good company," says Doctor Blimber.

Mr. Toots with a scarlet visage, explains that he has met Miss Dombey by accident, and that Miss Dombey wishing, like himself, to see the old place, they have come together.

"You will like," says Doctor Blimber, "to step among our young friends, Miss Dombey, no doubt. All fellow-students of yours, Toots, once. I think we have no new disciples in our little portico, my dear," says Doctor Blimber to Cornelia, "since Mr. Toots left us."

"Except Bitherstone," returns Cornelia.

"Aye, truly," says the Doctor. "Bitherstone is new to Mr. Toots."

New to Florence, too, almost; for, in the schoolroom, Bitherstone—no longer Master Bitherstone of Mrs. Pipchin's—shows in collars and a neck-cloth, and wears a watch. But Bitherstone, born beneath some Bengal star of ill-omen, is extremely inky; and his Lexicon has got so dropsical from constant reference, that it won't shut, and yawns as if it really could not bear to be so bothered. So does Bitherstone its master, forced at Doctor Blimber's highest pressure; but in the yawn of Bitherstone there is malice and snarl, and he has been heard to say that he wishes he could catch "old Blimber," in India. He'd precious soon find himself carried up the country by a few of his (Bitherstone's) Coolies, and handed over to the Thugs; he can tell him that.

Briggs is still grinding in the mill of knowledge; and Tozer, too; and Johnson, too; and all the rest; the older pupils being principally engaged in forgetting, with prodigious labour, everything they knew when they were younger. All are as polite and pale as ever; and among them, Mr. Feeder, B.A., with his bony hand and bristly head, is still hard at it: with his Herodotus stop on just at present, and his other barrels on a shelf behind him.

A mighty sensation is created, even among these grave young gentlemen, by a visit from the emancipated Toots; who is regarded with a kind of awe, as one who has passed the Rubicon, and is pledged never to come back, and concerning the cut of whose clothes, and fashion of whose jewellery, whispers go about, behind hands; the bilious Bitherstone, who is not of Mr. Toots's time, affecting to despise the latter to the smaller boys, and saying he knows better, and that he should like to see him coming that sort of thing in Bengal, where his mother has got an emerald belonging to him that was taken out of the footstool of a Rajah. Come now!

Bewildering emotions are awakened also by the sight of Florence, with whom every young gentleman immediately falls in love, again; except, as aforesaid, the bilious Bitherstone, who declines to do so, out of contradiction. Black jealousies of Mr. Toots arise, and Briggs is of opinion that he an't so very old after all. But this disparaging insinuation is speedily made nought by Mr. Toots saying aloud to Mr. Feeder, B. A. "How are you, Feeder?" and asking him to come and dine with him to-day at the Bedford; in right of which feats he might set up as Old Parr, if he chose, unquestioned.

There is much shaking of hands, and much bowing, and a great desire on the part of each young gentleman to take Toots down in Miss Dombey's good graces; and then, Mr. Toots having bestowed a chuckle on his old

desk, Florence and he withdraw with Mrs. Blimber and Cornelia; and Doctor Blimber is heard to observe behind them as he comes out last, and shuts the door, "Gentlemen, we will now resume our studies." For that and little else is what the Doctor hears the sea say, or has heard it saying all his life.

Florence then steals away and goes up stairs to the old bed-room with Mrs. Blimber and Cornelia; Mr. Toots, who feels that neither he nor anybody else is wanted there, stands talking to the Doctor at the study-door, or rather hearing the Doctor talk to him, and wondering how he ever thought the study a great sanctuary, and the Doctor, with his round turned legs, like a clerical pianoforte, an awful man. Florence soon comes down and takes leave; Mr. Toots takes leave; and Diogenes, who has been worrying the weak-eyed young man pitilessly all the time, shoots out at the door, and barks a glad defiance down the cliff; while 'Melina, and another of the Doctor's female domestics, look out of an upper window, laughing 'at that there Toots', and saying of Miss Dombey, "But really though, now—ain't she like her brother, only prettier?"

Mr. Toots, who saw when Florence came down that there were tears upon her face, is desperately anxious and uneasy, and at first fears that he did wrong in proposing the visit. But he is soon relieved by her saying she is very glad to have been there again, and by her talking quite cheerfully about it all, as they walk on by the sea. What with the voices there, and her sweet voice, when they come near Mr. Dombey's house, and Mr. Toots must leave her, he is so enslaved that he has not a scrap of free-will left; when she gives him her hand at parting, he cannot let it go.

"Miss Dombey, I beg your pardon," says Mr. Toots, in a sad fluster, "but if you would allow me to—to—"

The smiling and unconscious look of Florence brings him to a dead stop. "If you would allow me to—if you would not consider it a liberty, Miss Dombey, if I was to—without any encouragement at all, if I was to hope, you know," says Mr. Toots.

Florence looks at him inquiringly.

"Miss Dombey," says Mr. Toots, who feels that he is in for it now, "I really am in that state of adoration of you that I don't know what to do with myself. I am the most deplorable wretch. If it wasn't at the corner of the Square at present, I should go down on my knees, and beg and entreat of you, without any encouragement at all, just to let me hope that I may—may think it possible that you—"

"Oh, if you please, don't!" cries Florence, for the moment quite alarmed and distressed. "Oh, pray don't, Mr. Toots. Stop, if you please. Don't say any more. As a kindness and a favour to me, don't."

Mr. Toots is dreadfully abashed, and his mouth opens.

"You have been so good to me," says Florence, "I am so grateful to you, I have such reason to like you for being a kind friend to me, and I do like you so much;" and here the ingenuous face smiles upon him with the pleasantest look of honesty in the world; "that I am sure you are only going to say good bye!"

"Certainly, Miss Dombey," says Mr. Toots, "I—I—That's exactly what I mean. It's of no consequence."

"Good bye!" cries Florence.

"Good bye, Miss Dombey!" stammers Mr. Toots. "I hope you

won't think anything about it. It's—it's of no consequence, thank you. It's not of the least consequence in the world."

Poor Mr. Toots goes home to his Hotel in a state of desperation, locks himself into his bedroom, flings himself upon his bed, and lies there for a long time; as if it were of the greatest consequence, nevertheless. But Mr. Feeder, B.A., is coming to dinner, which happens well for Mr. Toots, or there is no knowing when he might get up again. Mr. Toots is obliged to get up to receive him, and to give him hospitable entertainment.

And the generous influence of that social virtue, hospitality (to make no mention of wine and good cheer), opens Mr. Toots's heart, and warms him to conversation. He does not tell Mr. Feeder, B.A., what passed at the corner of the Square; but when Mr. Feeder asks him "When it is to come off," Mr. Toots replies, "that there are certain subjects"—which brings Mr. Feeder down a peg or two immediately. Mr. Toots adds, that he don't know what right Blimber had to notice his being in Miss Dombey's company, and that if he thought he meant impudence by it, he'd have him out, Doctor or no Doctor; but he supposes it's only his ignorance. Mr. Feeder says he has no doubt of it.

Mr. Feeder, however, as an intimate friend, is not excluded from the subject. Mr. Toots merely requires that it should be mentioned mysteriously, and with feeling. After a few glasses of wine, he gives Miss Dombey's health, observing, "Feeder, you have no idea of the sentiments with which I propose that toast." Mr. Feeder replies, "Oh yes I have, my dear Toots; and greatly they redound to your honour, old boy." Mr. Feeder is then agitated by friendship, and shakes hands; and says, if ever Toots wants a brother, he knows where to find him, either by post or parcel. Mr. Feeder likewise says, that if he may advise, he would recommend Mr. Toots to learn the guitar, or, at least, the flute; for women like music, when you are paying your addresses to 'em, and he has found the advantage of it himself.

This brings Mr. Feeder, B.A., to the confession that he has his eye upon Cornelia Blimber. He informs Mr. Toots that he don't object to spectacles, and that if the Doctor were to do the handsome thing and give up the business, why, there they are—provided for. He says it's his opinion that when a man has made a handsome sum by his business, he is bound to give it up; and that Cornelia would be an assistance in it which any man might be proud of. Mr. Toots replies by launching wildly out into Miss Dombey's praises, and by insinuations that sometimes he thinks he should like to blow his brains out. Mr. Feeder strongly urges that it would be a rash attempt, and shows him, as a reconciliation to existence, Cornelia's portrait, spectacles and all.

Thus these quiet spirits pass the evening; and when it has yielded place to night, Mr. Toots walks home with Mr. Feeder, and parts with him at Doctor Blimber's door. But Mr. Feeder only goes up the steps, and when Mr. Toots is gone, comes down again, to stroll upon the beach alone, and think about his prospects. Mr. Feeder plainly hears the waves informing him, as he loiters along, that Doctor Blimber will give up the business; and he feels a soft romantic pleasure in looking at the outside of the house, and thinking that the Doctor will first paint it, and put it into thorough repair.

Mr. Toots is likewise roaming up and down, outside the casket that

contains his jewel; and in a deplorable condition of mind, and not unsuspected by the police, gazes at a window where he sees a light, and which he has no doubt is Florence's. But it is not, for that is Mrs. Skewton's room; and while Florence, sleeping in another chamber, dreams lovingly, in the midst of the old scenes, and their old associations live again, the figure which in grim reality is substituted for the patient boy's on the same theatre, once more to connect it—but how differently!—with decay and death, is stretched there, wakeful and complaining. Ugly and haggard it lies upon its bed of unrest; and by it, in the terror of her unimpassioned loveliness—for it *has* terror in the sufferer's failing eyes—sits Edith. What do the waves say, in the stillness of the night, to them!

"Edith, what is that stone arm raised to strike me. Don't you see it?"

"There is nothing mother, but your fancy."

"But my fancy! Everything is my fancy. Look! Is it possible that you don't see it!"

"Indeed mother, there is nothing. Should I sit unmoved, if there were any such thing there?"

"Unmoved?" looking wildly at her—"it's gone now—and why are you so unmoved? That is not my fancy, Edith. It turns me cold to see you sitting at my side."

"I am sorry, mother."

"Sorry! You seem always sorry. But it is not for me!"

With that, she cries; and tossing her restless head from side to side upon her pillow, runs on about neglect, and the mother she has been, and the mother the good old creature was, whom they met, and the cold return the daughters of such mothers make. In the midst of her incoherence, she stops, looks at her daughter, cries out that her wits are going, and hides her face upon the bed.

Edith, in compassion, bends over her and speaks to her. The sick old woman clutches her round the neck, and says, with a look of horror,

"Edith! we are going home soon; going back. You mean that I shall go home again?"

"Yes mother, yes."

"And what he said—what's his name, I never could remember names—Major—that dreadful word, when we came away—it's not true? Edith!" with a shriek and a stare, "it's not *that* that is the matter with me."

Night after night, the light burns in the window, and the figure lies upon the bed, and Edith sits beside it, and the restless waves are calling to them both the whole night long. Night after night, the waves are hoarse with repetition of their mystery; the dust lies piled upon the shore; the sea-birds soar and hover; the winds and clouds are on their trackless flight; the white arms beckon, in the moonlight, to the invisible country far away.

And still the sick old woman looks into the corner, where the stone arm—part of a figure off some tomb, she says—is raised to strike her. At last it falls; and then a dumb old woman lies upon the bed, and she is crooked and shrunk up, and half of her is dead.

Such is the figure, painted and patched for the sun to mock, that is drawn slowly through the crowd from day to day; looking, as it goes, for

the good old creature who was such a mother, and making mouths as it peers among the crowd in vain. Such is the figure that is often wheeled down to the margin of the sea, and stationed there; but on which no wind can blow freshness, and for which the murmur of the ocean has no soothing word. She lies and listens to it by the hour; but its speech is dark and gloomy to her, and a dread is on her face, and when her eyes wander over the expanse, they see but a broad stretch of desolation between earth and heaven.

Florence she seldom sees, and when she does, is angry with and mows at. Edith is beside her always, and keeps Florence away; and Florence, in her bed at night, trembles at the thought of death in such a shape, and often wakes and listens, thinking it has come. No one attends on her but Edith. It is better that few eyes should see her; and her daughter watches alone by the bedside.

A shadow even on that shadowed face, a sharpening even of the sharpened features, and a thickening of the veil before the eyes into a pall that shuts out the dim world, is come. Her wandering hands upon the coverlet join feebly palm to palm, and move towards her daughter; and a voice—not like hers, not like any voice that speaks our mortal language—says, "For I nursed you!"

Edith, without a tear, kneels down to bring her voice closer to the sinking head, and answers:

"Mother, can you hear me?"

Staring wide, she tries to nod in answer.

"Can you recollect the night before I married?"

The head is motionless, but it expresses somehow that she does.

"I told you then that I forgave your part in it, and prayed God to forgive my own. I told you that the past was at end between us. I say so now, again. Kiss me, mother."

Edith touches the white lips, and for a moment all is still. A moment afterwards, her mother, with her girlish laugh, and the skeleton of the Cleopatra manner, rises in her bed.

Draw the rose-coloured curtains. There is something else upon its flight besides the wind and clouds. Draw the rose-coloured curtains close!

Intelligence of the event is sent to Mr. Dombey in town, who waits upon Cousin Feenix (not yet able to make up his mind for Baden-Baden), who has just received it too. A good-natured creature like Cousin Feenix is the very man for a marriage or a funeral, and his position in the family renders it right that he should be consulted.

"Dombey," says Cousin Feenix, "upon my soul, I am very much shocked to see you on such a melancholy occasion. My poor aunt! She was a devilish lively woman."

Mr. Dombey replies, "Very much so."

"And made up," says Cousin Feenix, "really young, you know, considering. I am sure, on the day of your marriage, I thought she was good for another twenty years. In point of fact, I said so to a man at Brooks's—little Billy Joper—you know him, no doubt—man with a glass in his eye?"

Mr. Dombey bows a negative. "In reference to the obsequies," he hints, "whether there is any suggestion——"

"Well, upon my life," says Cousin Feenix, stroking his chin, which he

has just enough of hand below his wristbands to do; "I really don't know. There's a Mausoleum down at my place, in the park, but I'm afraid it's in bad repair, and, in point of fact, in a devil of a state. But for being a little out at elbows, I should have had it put to rights; but I believe the people come and make pic-nic parties there inside the iron railings."

Mr. Dombey is clear that this won't do.

"There's an uncommon good church in the village," says Cousin Feenix, thoughtfully; "pure specimen of the early Anglo-Norman style, and admirably well sketched too by Lady Jane Finchbury—woman with tight stays—but they've spoilt it with whitewash, I understand, and it's a long journey."

"Perhaps Brighton itself," Mr. Dombey suggests.

"Upon my honour, Dombey, I don't think we could do better," says Cousin Feenix. "It's on the spot, you see, and a very cheerful place."

"And when," hints Mr. Dombey, "would it be convenient?"

"I shall make a point," says Cousin Feenix, "of pledging myself for any day you think best. I shall have great pleasure (melancholy pleasure, of course) in following my poor aunt to the confines of the—in point of fact, to the grave," says Cousin Feenix, failing in the other turn of speech.

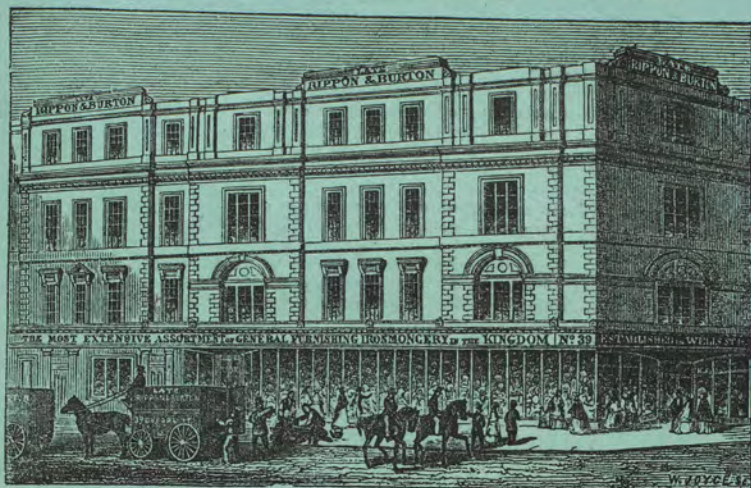
"Would Monday do for leaving town?" says Mr. Dombey.

"Monday would suit me to perfection," replies Cousin Feenix. Therefore Mr. Dombey arranges to take Cousin Feenix down on that day, and presently takes his leave, attended to the stairs by Cousin Feenix, who says, at parting, "I'm really excessively sorry, Dombey, that you should have so much trouble about it;" to which Mr. Dombey answers, "Not at all."

At the appointed time, Cousin Feenix and Mr. Dombey meet, and go down to Brighton, and representing, in their two selves, all the other mourners for the deceased lady's loss, attend her remains to their place of rest. Cousin Feenix, sitting in the mourning-coach, recognises innumerable acquaintances on the road, but takes no other notice of them, in decorum, than checking them off aloud, as they go by, for Mr. Dombey's information, as "Tom Johnson. Man with cork leg, from White's. What, are *you* here, Tommy? Foley on a blood mare. The Smalder girls"—and so forth. At the ceremony Cousin Feenix is depressed, observing, that these are the occasions to make a man think, in point of fact, that he is getting shakey; and his eyes are really moistened, when it is over. But he soon recovers; and so do the rest of Mrs. Skewton's relatives and friends, of whom the Major continually tells the club that she never did wrap up enough; while the young lady with the back, who has so much trouble with her eyelids, says, with a little scream, that she must have been enormously old, and that she died of all kinds of horrors, and you mustn't mention it.

So Edith's mother lies unmentioned of her dear friends, who are deaf to the waves that are hoarse with repetition of their mystery, and blind to the dust that is piled upon the shore, and to the white arms that are beckoning, in the moonlight, to the invisible country far away. But all goes on, as it was wont, upon the margin of the unknown sea; and Edith standing there alone, and listening to its waves, has dank weed cast up at her feet, to strew her path in life withal.

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