

*The Twelve Adventurers
and Other Stories* ❖ ❖ ❖



By **CHARLOTTE BRONTË**

*Hodder and Stoughton
Limited*

London

The Project Gutenberg eBook of The twelve adventurers, and other stories

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: The twelve adventurers, and other stories

Author: Charlotte Brontë

Editor: C. W. Hatfield

Clement King Shorter

Release date: June 18, 2024 [eBook #73858]

Language: English

Original publication: London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/73858

Credits: Lauren Prichard

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE TWELVE
ADVENTURERS, AND OTHER STORIES ***

THE TWELVE ADVENTURERS
AND OTHER STORIES

Transcriber's Note:

Every attempt has been made to preserve the original formatting, along with inconsistent spelling, hyphenation, and italicization. However, footnotes have been changed to endnotes or renumbered and moved closer to their anchor, and some obvious typographical errors have been corrected; see the [ERRATA](#) for a complete list.

New original cover art, which features a pencil drawing by Charlotte Brontë of an unknown woman, included with this eBook is granted to the public domain.

*The Twelve Adventurers
and Other Stories* ☞ ☞ ☞
By CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Hodder and Stoughton
Limited London

Made and Printed in Great Britain
T. and A. CONSTABLE LTD., Printers, Edinburgh

NOTE

It would be quite easy to maintain that these twelve fragments which come to us from the childhood of Charlotte Brontë should not be perpetuated for the public in the printed page. They were written between the ages of twelve and twenty-one, and it was certainly never for a moment contemplated by the author that they would ever see the light. They were handed to me in a little house in Banagher in Ireland, nearly thirty years ago, by the Rev. Arthur Bell Nicholls, the husband of Charlotte Brontë, who in a letter before me explains that they would have been burnt had I not come upon the scene. The ever-increasing fame of Charlotte Brontë in the intervening years has gone on side by side with an immense literature devoted to child psychology. It is as a contribution to that science that I have been frequently exhorted to publish them. A natural indolence would have prevented this had not my friend, Mr. C. W. Hatfield, come to the rescue by diligently transcribing the minute handwriting and preparing the volume with certain useful notes for publication.

CLEMENT SHORTER.

August 1925.

CONTENTS

<u>*THE TWELVE ADVENTURERS</u>	1
<u>AN ADVENTURE IN IRELAND</u>	19
<u>*THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS</u>	25
<u>THE ADVENTURES OF ERNEST ALEMBERT</u>	45
<u>ALBION AND MARINA</u>	75
<u>*THE RIVALS</u>	95
<u>THE FAIRY GIFT</u>	105
<u>*LOVE AND JEALOUSY</u>	121
<u>*NAPOLEON AND THE SPECTRE</u>	137
<u>*THE TRAGEDY AND THE ESSAY</u>	145
<u>*A PEEP INTO A PICTURE BOOK</u>	161
<u>*MINA LAURY—I</u>	181
<u>*MINA LAURY—II</u>	193

The stories marked with an asterisk () are now
published for the first time.*

I AM alone; it is the dead of night;
I am not gone to rest, because my mind
Is too much raised for sleep. The silent light
Of the dim taper streams its unseen wind,
And quite as voiceless, on the hearth, burns bright
The ruddy ember: now no ear can find
A sound, however faint, to break the lull
Of which the shadowy realm of dreams is full.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

THE TWELVE ADVENTURERS

‘THE Twelve Adventurers’ is the first of two stories in the earliest of Charlotte Brontë’s manuscripts, and was written by her when she was only twelve years of age.

Her early admiration for the hero of the story, the ‘Great Duke,’ was first noted by Mrs. Gaskell in *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, 1857, vol. i. p. 94, where she says:

All that related to him (the Duke of Wellington) belonged to the heroic age. Did Charlotte want a knight-errant, or a devoted lover, the Marquis of Douro, or Lord Charles Wellesley, came ready to her hand. There is hardly one of her prose writings at this time in which...their ‘august father’ does not appear as a sort of Jupiter Tonans, or Deus ex Machinâ.

The country ‘discovered’ by the twelve adventurers became the scene of nearly all the stories written by Charlotte Brontë during the following eleven years. Originally named ‘The Country of the Genii,’ the fairies deserted it after Charlotte’s school-days at Roe Head (1831-1832), and the country was re-named ‘The Kingdom of Angria.’ The ‘great city’ became ‘The Glass Town’ or ‘Verreopolis,’ which was afterwards changed to ‘Verdopolis,’ the chief city of Angria.

C. W. H.

CHAPTER I

THE COUNTRY OF THE GENII

THERE is a tradition that some thousands of years ago twelve men from Britain, of a most gigantic size, and twelve men from Gaul, came over to the country of the genii, and while here were continually at war with each other; and, after remaining many years, returned again to Britain and Gaul. In the inhabited parts of the genii countries there are now no vestiges of them, though it is said there have been found some colossal skeletons in that wild, barren sand, the evil desert.

I have read a book called *The Travels of Captain Parnell*, out of which the following is an extract:

About four in the afternoon I saw a dark red cloud arise in the east, which gradually grew larger till it covered the whole sky. As the cloud spread the wind rose and blew a tremendous hurricane. The sand of the desert began to move and rolled like the waves of the sea. As soon as I saw this I threw myself on my face and stopped my breath, for I knew that this was a tornado or whirlwind. I remained in this situation for three minutes; at the end of that time I ventured to look up. The whirlwind had passed over and had not hurt me, but close by lay my poor camel quite dead. At this sight I could not forbear weeping; but my attention was soon diverted by another object. About one hundred yards further off lay an immense skeleton. I immediately ran up to it and examined it closely. While I was gazing at the long ghastly figure which lay stretched upon the sand before me the thought came into my mind that it might be the skeleton of one of those ancient Britons who, tradition tells us, came from their own country to this evil land, and here miserably perished. While I was pursuing this train of meditation, I observed that it was bound with a long chain of rusty iron. Suddenly the iron clanked and the bones strove to rise, but a huge mountain of sand overwhelmed the skeleton with a tremendous crash, and when the dust which had hid the sun and enveloped everything in darkness cleared away, not a mark could be distinguished to show the future traveller where the bones had lain.

Now, if this account be true—and I see no reason why we should suppose it is not—I think we may fairly conclude that these skeletons are evil genii chained in these deserts by the fairy Maimoune.*

There are several other traditions, but they are all so obscure that no reliance is to be placed on them.

CHAPTER II

THE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

In the year 1798 the *Invincible*, 74 guns, set sail with a fair wind from England; her crew, twelve men, every one healthy and stout and in the best temper. Their names were as follows:—

Marcus O'Donell,
Ferdinand Cortez,
Felix de Rothsay,
Eugene Cameron,
Harold FitzGeorge,
Henry Clinton,
Francis Stewart,

Ronald Tragnain,
Ernest Fortescue,
Gustavus Dumally,
Frederick Brunswick
(Duke of York), and
Arthur Wellesley.

Well, as I said before, we set sail with a fair wind from England on the 1st of March 1798. On the 15th we came in sight of Spain. On the 16th we landed, bought a supply of provisions, and set sail again on the 20th. On the 25th, about noon, Henry Clinton, who was in the shrouds, cried out that he saw the Oxeye.

In a minute we were all on deck and gazing eagerly and fearfully towards the mountain over which we saw hanging in the sky the ominous speck. Instantly the sails were furled, the ship tacked about, and the boat was made ready for launching in our last extremity.

Thus having made everything ready, we retired to the cabin, and every one looked as sheepish as possible and noway inclined to meet our fate like men. Some of us began to cry; but we waited a long time and heard no sound of the wind, and the cloud did not increase in size.

At last Marcus O'Donell exclaimed: 'I wish it would either go backward or forward.'

At this Stewart reproved him, and Ferdinand gave him a box on the ear. O'Donell returned the compliment; but just then we heard the sound of the wind, and Ronald shouted out:

'The cloud is as big as me!'

Brunswick pulled Ronald away from the window, and ordered him to hold his tongue. Ronald said he would not and began to sing. Felix de Rothsay put his hand over Ronald's mouth. Harold FitzGeorge got Rothsay behind the throat. Ernest Fortescue held his fist in O'Donell's face, and Marcus floored Ernest. Cameron kicked Clinton to the other end of the cabin; and Stewart shouted so loud for them to be quiet that he made the greatest noise of any.

But suddenly they were all silenced by a fierce flash of lightning and a loud peal of thunder. The wind rose and the planks of our ship cracked. Another flash of lightning, brighter and more terrible than the first, split our mainmast and carried away our foretop-sail; and now the flashes of lightning grew terrific and the thunder roared tremendously. The rain poured down in torrents, and the gusts of wind were most loud and terrible. The hearts of the stoutest men in our company now quailed, and even the chief doctor was afraid.

At last the storm ceased, but we found it had driven us quite out of our course, and we knew not where we were.

On the 30th, Gustavus Dumally who was on deck cried out: 'LAND!'

At this we were all extremely rejoiced. On the 31st we reached it, and found it was the island of Trinidad.

We refitted our ship and got in a store of provisions and water, and set sail once more on the 5th of May. It would be endless to describe all our adventures in the South Atlantic Ocean. Suffice it to say that after many storms, in which we were driven quite out of our course and knew not in what part of the world we were, we at last discovered land.

We sailed along the coast for some time to find a good landing-place. We at last found one.

We landed on the 2nd of June 1793. We moored our battered ship in a small harbour and advanced up into the country. To our great surprise we found it cultivated. Grain of a peculiar sort grew in great abundance, and there were large plantations of palm-trees, and likewise an immense number of almond-trees. There were also many olives and large enclosures of rice.

We were greatly surprised at these marks of the land being inhabited. It seemed to be part of an immense continent.

After we had travelled about two miles we saw at a distance twenty men well armed. We immediately prepared for battle, having each of us a pistol, sword, and bayonet. We stood still and they came near. They seemed greatly surprised at us, and we heard one of them say: 'What strange people!'

The Chief then said: 'Who are you?'

Wellesley answered: 'We were cast up on your shores by a storm and require shelter.'

They said: 'You shall not have any.'

'We will take it, then!'

We prepared for battle; they did the same.

It was a very fierce encounter, but we conquered: killed ten, took the Chief prisoner, wounded five, and the remaining four retreated.'

The Chief was quite black and very tall; he had a fine countenance and the finest eyes I ever saw. We asked him what his name was, but he would not speak. We asked him the name of his country, and he said: 'Ashantee.'

Next morning a party of twelve men came to our tents bringing with them a ransom for their Chief, and likewise a proposition of peace from their King. This we accepted, as it was on terms most advantageous to ourselves.

Immediately after the treaty of peace was concluded we set about building a city. The situation was in the middle of a large plain, bounded on the north by high mountains, on the south by the sea, on the east by gloomy forests, and on the west by evil deserts.

About a month after we had begun our city the following adventure happened to us:—

One evening when all were assembled in the great tent, and most of us sitting round the fire which blazed in the middle, listening to the storm which raged without, a dead silence prevailed. None of us felt inclined to speak, still less to laugh, and the wine-cups stood upon the round table filled to the brim. In the midst of this silence we heard the sound of a trumpet which seemed to come from the desert. The next moment a peal of thunder rolled through the sky, which seemed to shake the earth to its centre.

By this time we were all on our legs, and filled with terror, which was changed to desperation by another blast of the terrible trumpet. We all rushed out of the tent with a shout, not of courage, but fear; and then we saw a sight so terribly grand that even now when I think of it, at the distance of forty years from that dismal night, my limbs tremble and my blood is chilled with fear. High up in the clouds was a tall and terrible giant. In his right hand he held a trumpet; in his left two darts pointed with fire. On a thunder cloud which rolled before him his shield rested. On his forehead was written: 'The Genius of the Storm.' On he strode over the black clouds which rolled beneath his feet and regardless of the fierce lightning which flashed around him.

The hoarse voice of the storm was hushed, and a gentler light than the fire of the elements spread itself over the face of the now cloudless sky. The calm moon shone forth in the midst of the firmament, and the little stars

seemed rejoicing in their brightness. The giant had descended to the earth, and approaching the place where we stood trembling he made three circles in the air with his flaming scimitar, and then lifted his hand to strike. Just then we heard a loud voice saying: 'Genius, I command thee to forbear!'

We looked round and saw a figure so tall that the Genius seemed to be but a diminutive dwarf. It cast one joyful glance on us and disappeared.

CHAPTER III THE DESERT

The building of our city went on prosperously. The Hall of Justice was finished, the fortifications were completed, the Grand Inn was begun, the Great Tower was ended.

One night when we were assembled in the Hall of Justice, Arthur Wellesley, at that time a common trumpeter, suddenly exclaimed, while we were talking of our happiness:

'Does not the King of the Blacks view our prosperity with other eyes than ours? Would not the best way be to send immediately to England, tell them of the new world we have discovered and of the riches that are in it; and do you not think they would send us an army?'

Francis Stewart immediately rose and said: 'Young man, think before you speak! How could we send to England? Who would be found hardy enough to traverse again the Atlantic? Do you not remember the storm which drove us on the shores of Trinidad?'

Arthur Wellesley answered: 'It is with all due deference that I venture to contradict the opinions of older and more experienced men than I am; and it is after much consideration that I have ventured to say what I have said. Well do I remember that storm which forced us to seek refuge amongst foreigners. I am not so rash as to suppose that we of ourselves could cross the ocean on the damaged and leaky vessel we possess, or that we could build another in time to avert the danger which I fear is coming. But in what a short time have we built the city we are now in! How long has it taken to rear the Grand Hall where we now are? Have not those marble pillars and that solemn dome been built by supernatural power? If you view the city from this Gothic window and see the beams of the morn gilding the battlements of the mighty towers, and the pillars of the splendid palaces

which have been reared in a few months, can you doubt that magic has been used in their construction?’

Here he paused. We were all convinced that the genii had helped us to build our town. He went on:

‘Now, if the genii have built us our city, will they not likewise help us to call our countrymen to defend what they have built against the assaults of the enemy?’

He stopped again, for the roof shook and the hall was filled with smoke. The ground opened, and we heard a voice saying:

‘When the sun appears above the forests of the east be ye all on the border of the evil desert, for if ye fail I will crush you to atoms.’

The voice ceased, the ground closed, and the smoke cleared away. There was no time for us to consult; the desert lay ten miles off, and it was now midnight. We immediately set off with the Duke of York at our head. We reached the desert about 4 A.M., and there we stopped. Far off to the east the long black line of gloomy forests skirted the horizon. To the north the Mountains of the Moon seemed a misty girdle to the plain of Dahomey; to the south the ocean guarded the coasts of Africa; before us to the west lay the desert.

In a few minutes we saw a dense vapour rise from the sands, which gradually collecting took the form of a Genius larger than any of the giants. It advanced towards us and cried with a loud voice: ‘Follow me!’

We obeyed and entered the desert.

After we had travelled a long time, about noon the Genius told us to look around. We were now about the middle of the desert. Nothing was to be seen far or near but vast plains of sand under a burning sun and cloudless sky. We were dreadfully fatigued and begged the Genius to allow us to stop a little, but he immediately ordered us to proceed. We therefore began our march again and travelled a long way, till the sun went down and the pale moon was rising in the east. Also a few stars might now be dimly seen, but still the sands were burning hot, and our feet were very much swollen.

At last the Genius ordered us to halt and lie down. We soon fell asleep. We had slept about an hour when the Genius awoke us and ordered us to proceed.

The moon had now risen and shone brightly in the midst of the sky—brighter far than it ever does in our country. The night-wind had somewhat cooled the sands of the desert, so that we walked with more ease than

before; but now a mist arose which covered the whole plain. Through it we thought we could discern a dim light. We now likewise heard sounds of music at a great distance.

As the mist cleared away the light grew more distinct till it burst upon us in almost insufferable splendour. Out of the barren desert arose a palace of diamonds, the pillars of which were ruby and emerald illuminated with lamps too bright to look upon. The Genius led us into a hall of sapphire in which were thrones of gold. On the thrones sat the Princes of the Genii. In the midst of the hall hung a lamp like the sun. Around it stood genii and fairies whose robes were of beaten gold sparkling with diamonds. As soon as their chiefs saw us they sprang up from their thrones, one of them seizing Arthur Wellesley and exclaiming: 'This is the Duke of Wellington!'

Arthur Wellesley asked her why she called him the Duke of Wellington.

The Genius answered: 'A prince will arise who shall be as a thorn in the side of England, and the desolator of Europe. Terrible shall be the struggle between that chieftain and you! It will last many years, and the conqueror shall gain eternal honour and glory. So likewise shall the vanquished; and though he shall die in exile his name shall never be remembered by his countrymen but with feelings of enthusiasm. The renown of the victory shall reach the ends of the earth; Kings and Emperors shall honour him; Europe shall rejoice in its deliverer; and though in his lifetime fools will envy him, he shall overcome. At his death renown shall cover him, and his name shall be everlasting!'

When the Genius finished speaking we heard the sound of music far off, which drew nearer and nearer till it seemed within the hall. Then all the fairies and genii joined in one grand chorus which rose rolling to the mighty dome and pillars of the genii palace, and reached among the vaults and dungeons beneath; then gradually dying away it at last ceased entirely.

As the music went off the palace slowly disappeared, and we found ourselves alone in the midst of the desert. The sun had just begun to enlighten the world, and the moon might be dimly seen; but all below there was sand as far as our eyes could reach. We knew not which way to go, and we were ready to faint with hunger; but on once more looking round we saw lying on the sands some dates and palm-wine. Of this we made our breakfast, and then began again to think of our journey, when suddenly there appeared a beaten track in the desert, which we followed.

About noon, when the sun was at its meridian, and we felt weary and faint with the heat, a grove of palm-trees appeared in sight towards which we ran; and after we had rested awhile under its shade, and refreshed ourselves with its fruit, we resumed our march; and that same night to our inexpressible joy we entered the gates of our beautiful city and slept beneath the shadow of its roofs.

CHAPTER IV NEWS FROM HOME

The next morning we were awakened by the sound of trumpets and great war-drums, and on looking towards the mountains we saw descending to the plain an immense army of Ashantees. We were all thrown into the utmost consternation except Arthur Wellesley, who advised us to look to the great guns and man the walls, never doubting that genii would come to our help if we ourselves could not beat them off by the help of the cannon and rockets.

This advice we immediately followed, while the Ashantees came on like a torrent, sweeping everything, burning the palm-trees, and laying waste the rice-fields.

When they came up to the walls of our city they set up a terrible yell, the meaning of which was that we should be consumed from the face of the earth, and that our city should vanish away; for as it came by magic it should go by the same. Our answer to this insolent speech was a peal of thunder from the mouth of our cannon. Two fell dead, and the rest set off towards the mountains with amazing swiftness, followed by a triumphant shout from their conquerors.

They came back in the afternoon and in the most submissive terms asked for their dead. We granted their request, and in return they allowed us to witness the funeral.

A few days after, on the 21st of September, Ronald, running into the Halls of Justice where we all were, shouted out that there was a ship from England. The Duke of York immediately sent Arthur Wellesley to ascertain the truth of this.

When he arrived at the seashore he found all the crew, consisting of fifty men, had landed. He then examined the state of the ship, and found it was

almost a complete wreck. He asked the men a few questions and they seemed greatly surprised to find him here, and asked him how he contrived to live in such a country. He told them to follow him.

When he brought them to the Halls of Justice, the Duke of York asked them to relate their story. They cried: 'We were driven on your shore by a storm, and we request shelter.'

The Duke of York answered: 'Fellow-Englishmen, we rejoice that you were driven on our part of the coast, and you shall have shelter if we can give it.'

Accordingly they remained with us about a fortnight, for at the end of that time the genii had fitted out their ship again, when they set sail for England accompanied by Arthur Wellesley.

For about ten years after this we remained at war with the blacks, and then made peace; after which, for about ten years more, nothing happened worth mentioning.

On the 16th of May 1816, a voice passed through the city saying: 'Set a watch on the tower which looks towards the south, for to-morrow a conqueror shall enter your gates!'

The Duke of York immediately despatched Henry Clinton to the highest tower in the city. About noon Clinton cried out:

'I see something at a great distance upon the Atlantic.'

We all of us ran to the watch-tower, and on looking towards the ocean we could discern a dark object upon the verge of the horizon which as it neared the shore we saw plainly was a fleet. At last it anchored and the men began to land.

First came seventy-two regiments of horsemen, next, three of infantry, then several high officers. The latter seemed to be the staff of some great general; and last of all came the general himself, who had the bearing of Arthur Wellesley.

After he had marshalled the regiments he ordered them to march, and we saw them enter the gates of the city. When they arrived at the tower they stopped, and we heard the general say:

'Hill, you may stop here with the army while I go to the Palace of Justice, as I suppose they are all there if they be yet in the land of the living. And, Beresford, you must come with me.'

'No, no, we are here, Arthur, almost terrified out of our wits for fear you shall burn the tower and sack the city!' exclaimed the Duke of York as we

descended from our hiding-place.

‘What! Are you all here, and not one of you slain in battle or dead in the hospital?’ said His Grace as he sprang from his war-horse and we shook hands with him two at a time. ‘But come, my brave fellows, let us go to the Grand Inn, and in Fernando Hall we will talk of what we have done and suffered since we last met.’

‘Please, your Grace, in what part of the town is the army to be quartered?’ said one of the staff.

‘Oh, never you fear for the army, Murry; we are not amongst Spaniards. Let them follow me.’

‘The army is to follow His Grace the Duke of Wellington,’ said Murry.

‘His Grace the Duke of Wellington!’ we all exclaimed at once in great surprise.

‘Yes,—His Grace the Duke of Wellington,’ said another of the staff. ‘I don’t know who you are, but he is one of the most noble generals, the conqueror of Bonaparte and the deliverer of Europe.’

‘Then the genii don’t always tell lies,’ said Marcus; ‘and I’m very glad of it, for I always thought, Duke, you would return to us with more glory than you had when you went away from us.’

By this time we had arrived at the Grand Inn, which was a most superior building and large enough to accommodate twenty thousand men. We were soon seated in the hall and listening to Beresford as he related to us how Europe had been set free from the iron chain of a despot, and how the mighty victory had been achieved with which all the civilised world had rung; of the splendid triumphs which had taken place on that glorious occasion; and how all the high sovereigns of Europe had honoured England with their presence on that grand occasion. Longer could we have listened and more could he have told had we not heard the sound of the midnight bell which reminded us that it was time to retire to rest.

Some days after this the Duke of York expressed a wish to return to his own country, and one of the ships with about twenty men was appointed to convey him there.

There were now in the city fifteen thousand men, and we determined to elect a King. Accordingly a council of the whole nation was summoned for the 14th of June 1816. On that day they all assembled in the Palace of Justice. Around the throne sat Marcus O’Donell, Ferdinand Cortez, Henry

Clinton, Gustavus Dumally, Harold FitzGeorge, and the Duke of Wellington and his staff.

An intense anxiety pervaded the council to know who would be proposed as King, for not a man of us knew, and no hints had been thrown out. At length the great entrance was closed, and Cortez proclaimed the whole nation to be present. Stewart then rose and said:

‘I propose the most noble Field-Marshal Arthur, Duke of Wellington, as a fit and proper person to sit on the throne of these realms.’

Immediately a loud shout burst forth from the multitude, and the hall rang: ‘Long live our most noble Duke of Wellington!’ and almost immediately afterwards a profound silence prevailed in the house. He said: ‘Fellow-soldiers, I will defend what you have committed to my care.’

Then, bowing to the council, he retired amidst thundering sounds of enthusiastic joy.

C. BRONTË,
April 2nd, 1829.
(Aged 12.)

AN ADVENTURE IN IRELAND

THIS is the second of the two stories in Charlotte Brontë's earliest manuscript. It was included by Mr. Clement Shorter in *Charlotte Brontë and Her Circle*, 1896, pp. 64-66, and in the enlarged edition of that work, entitled *The Brontës: Life and Letters*, 1908, vol. i. pp. 74-76. It is now reprinted for the first time.

C. W. H.

AN ADVENTURE IN IRELAND

DURING my travels in the south of Ireland the following adventure happened to me. One evening in the month of August, after a long walk, I was ascending the mountain which overlooks the village of Cahin, when I suddenly came in sight of a fine old castle. It was built upon a rock, and behind it was a large wood, and before it was a river. Over the river there was a bridge, which formed the approach to the castle.

When I arrived at the bridge I stood still awhile to enjoy the prospect around me: far below was the wide sheet of still water in which the reflection of the pale moon was not disturbed by the smallest wave; in the valley was the cluster of cabins which is known by the appellation of Cahin; and beyond these were the mountains of Killala. Over all, the grey robe of twilight was now stealing with silent and scarcely perceptible advances. No sound except the hum of the distant village and the sweet song of the nightingales in the wood behind me broke upon the stillness of the scene.

While I was contemplating this beautiful prospect a gentleman, whom I had not before observed, accosted me with ‘Good evening, sir; are you a stranger in these parts?’

I replied that I was. He then asked me where I was going to stop for the night; I answered that I intended to sleep somewhere in the village.

‘I am afraid you will find very bad accommodation there,’ said the gentleman; ‘but if you will take up your quarters with me at the castle, you are welcome.’

I thanked him for his kind offer, and accepted it.

When we arrived at the castle I was shown into a large parlour, in which was an old lady sitting in an armchair by the fireside, knitting. On the rug lay a very pretty tortoiseshell cat. As soon as mentioned, the old lady rose; and when Mr. O’Callaghan (for that, I learned, was his name) told her who I was, she said in the most cordial tone that I was welcome, and asked me to sit down.

In the course of conversation I learned that she was Mr. O’Callaghan’s mother, and that his father had been dead about a year.

We had sat about an hour, when supper was announced, and after supper Mr. O'Callaghan asked me if I should like to retire for the night. I answered in the affirmative, and a little boy was commissioned to show me to my apartment. It was a snug, clean, and comfortable little old-fashioned room at the top of the castle. As soon as we had entered, the boy, who appeared to be a shrewd, good-tempered little fellow, said with a shrug of the shoulder: 'If it was going to bed I was, it shouldn't be here that you'd catch me.'

'Why?' said I.

'Because,' replied the boy, 'they say that the ould masther's ghost has been seen sitting on that there chair.'

'And have you seen him?'

'No; but I've heard him washing his hands in that basin often and often.'

'What is your name, my little fellow?'

'Dennis Mulready, please, your honour.'

'Well, good night to you.'

'Good night, masther; and may the saints keep you from all fairies and brownies,' said Dennis as he left the room.

As soon as I had laid down I began to think of what the boy had been telling me, and I confess I felt a strange kind of fear, and once or twice I even thought I could discern something white through the darkness which surrounded me. At length, by the help of reason, I succeeded in mastering these, what some would call idle fancies, and fell asleep.

I had slept about an hour when a strange sound awoke me, and I saw looking through my curtains a skeleton wrapped in a white sheet. I was overcome with terror and tried to scream, but my tongue was paralysed and my whole frame shook with fear. In a deep hollow voice it said to me:

'Arise, that I may show thee this world's wonders,' and in an instant I found myself encompassed with clouds and darkness. But soon the roar of mighty waters fell upon my ear, and I saw some clouds of spray arising from high falls that rolled in awful majesty down tremendous precipices, and then foamed and thundered in the gulf beneath as if they had taken up their unquiet abode in some giant's cauldron.

But soon the scene changed, and I found myself in the mines of Cracone. There were high pillars and stately arches, whose glittering splendour was never excelled by the brightest fairy palaces. There were not many lamps; only those of a few poor miners, whose rough visages formed a striking contrast to the dazzling figures and grandeur which surrounded them. But in

the midst of all this magnificence I felt an indescribable sense of fear and terror; for the sea raged above us, and by the awful and tumultuous noises of roaring winds and dashing waves it seemed as if the storm was violent. And now the mossy pillars groaned beneath the pressure of the ocean, and the glittering arches seemed about to be overwhelmed. When I heard the rushing waters and saw a mighty flood rolling towards me I gave a loud shriek of terror.

The scene vanished and I found myself in a wide desert full of barren rocks and high mountains. As I was approaching one of the rocks, in which there was a large cave, my foot stumbled and I fell. Just then I heard a deep growl, and saw by the unearthly light of his own fiery eyes a royal lion rousing himself from his kingly slumbers. His terrible eye was fixed upon me, and the desert rang and the rocks echoed with the tremendous roar of fierce delight which he uttered as he sprang towards me.

‘Well, mather, it’s been a windy night, though it’s fine now,’ said Dennis, as he drew the window curtain and let the bright rays of the morning sun into the little old-fashioned room at the top of O’Callaghan Castle.

C. BRONTË,
April 28th, 1829.

THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS

THE original manuscript of this story is in the possession of Mr. T. J. Wise.

It appears to be the first manuscript which Charlotte Brontë attempted to complete in the form of a book, *i.e.* with a title-page and Preface. The title-page is written in capital letters resembling printing, and the Preface in the young authoress's ordinary writing.

The story contains the earliest known poem by Charlotte Brontë.

I am indebted to Mr. T. J. Wise for the loan of the original manuscript, thus enabling me to correct and complete a copy of the story in my keeping, and to present an accurate text.

The story was written by Charlotte Brontë at the age of thirteen years.

C. W. H.

THE SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS

**A TALE BY
CHARLOTTE
BRONTË**

**PRINTED BY HERSELF
AND
SOLD BY
NOBODY &c. &c.**

**AUGUST
THE
SEVENTEENTH
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED
AND
TWENTY-NINE**

PREFACE

THE persons meant by the Chief of the City and his sons are the Duke of Wellington, the Marquis of Douro, and Lord Wellesley.

The city is the Glass Town.

Henry O'Donell and Alexander Delancy are Captain Tarry-not-at-home and Monsieur Like-to-live-in-lonely-places.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË,

August the 17th, 1829.

CHAPTER I

CHARACTER OF O'DONELL—CAUSE OF HIS TRAVELS

NOT many years ago there lived in a certain city a person of the name of Henry O'Donell. In figure he was tall, of a dark complexion, and searching black eye. His mind was strong and unbending, his disposition unsociable, and though respected by many he was loved by few.

The city where he resided was very great and magnificent. It was governed by a warrior, a mighty man of valour, whose deeds had resounded to the ends of the earth.

This soldier had two sons, who were at that time of the separate ages of six and seven years.

Henry O'Donell was a nobleman of great consequence in the city, and a peculiar favourite with the governor, before whose glance his stern mind would bow; and at his command O'Donell's self-will would be overcome.

While playing with the young princes he would forget his usual sullenness of demeanour, the days of his childhood returned upon him, and he would be as merry as the youngest, who was gay indeed.

One day, at Court, a quarrel ensued between him and another noble. Words came to blows, and O'Donell struck his opponent a violent blow on the left cheek. At this the military King started up and commanded O'Donell to apologise. This he immediately did, but from that hour of dissent a spell seemed to have been cast over him, and he resolved to quit the city.

The evening before he put this resolution into practice he had an interview with the King, and returned quite an altered man. Before, he seemed stern and intractable; now, he was only meditative and sorrowful. As he was passing the inner court of the palace he perceived the two young princes at play. He called them, and they came running to him.

'I am going far from this city, and shall, most likely, never see you again,' said O'Donell.

'Where are you going?'

'I cannot tell.'

'Then why do you go away from us? Why do you go from your own house and lands, from this great and splendid city, to you know not where?'

‘Because I am not happy here.’

‘And if you are not happy here, where you have everything for which you can wish, do you expect to be happy when you are dying of hunger or thirst in a desert, or longing for the society of men when you are thousands of miles from any human being?’

‘How do you know that that will be my case?’

‘It is very likely that it will.’

‘And if it is I am determined to go.’

‘Take this then, that you may sometimes remember us when you dwell with only the wild beasts of the desert, or the great eagle of the mountain,’ said they, as they each gave him a curling lock of their hair.

‘Yes, I will take it, my princes, and I shall remember you, and the mighty warrior King, your father, even when the Angel of Death has stretched forth his bony arm against me, and I am within the confines of his dreary kingdom, the cold, damp grave,’ replied O’Donell, as the tears rushed to his eyes; and he once more embraced the little princes, and then quitted them, it might be, for ever.

CHAPTER II

ABOUT MEETING DELANCY—COMING TO THE OLD CASTLE—ENTERING THE NEW WORLD—DESCRIPTION

The dawn of the next morning found O’Donell on the summit of a high mountain which overlooked the city. He had stopped to take a farewell view of the place of his nativity. All along the eastern horizon there was a rich glowing light, which, as it rose, gradually melted into the pale blue of the sky, in which, just over the light, there was still visible the silver crescent of the moon. In a short time the sun began to rise in golden glory, casting his splendid radiance over all the face of nature, and illuminating the magnificent city; in the midst of which, towering in silent grandeur, there appeared the palace where dwelt the mighty Prince of that great and beautiful city, all around the brazen gates and massive walls of which there flowed the majestic stream of the Guadima, whose banks were bordered by splendid palaces and magnificent gardens. Behind these, stretching for many a league, were fruitful plains and forests, whose shade seemed almost impenetrable to a single ray of light; while in the distance blue mountains

were seen raising their heads to the sky and forming a misty girdle to the plains of Dahomey. On the whole of this grand and beautiful prospect O'Donell's gaze was long and fixed; but his last look was to the palace of the King, and a tear stood in his eye as he said earnestly:

'May he be preserved from all evil! May good attend him; and may the chief genii spread their broad shield of protection over him all the time of his sojourn in this wearisome world!'

Then, turning round, he began to descend the mountain. He pursued his way till the sun began to wax hot; when he stopped, and, sitting down, he took out some provisions which he had brought with him, and which consisted of a few biscuits and dates.

While he was eating, a tall man came up and accosted him. O'Donell requested him to sit beside him, and offered him a biscuit. This he refused, and, taking one out of a small bag which he carried, he sat down, and they began to talk. In the course of conversation, O'Donell: learned that this man's name was Alexander Delancy, that he was a native of France, and that he was engaged in the same pursuit with himself, *i.e.* the search of happiness. They talked for a long time, and, at last, agreed to travel together. Then, rising, they pursued their journey.

Towards nightfall they lay down in the open air, and slept soundly till morning, when they again set off; and thus they continued till the third day, when, about two hours after noon, they approached an old castle, which they entered; and, as they were examining it, they discovered a subterraneous passage which they could not see the end of.

'Let us follow where this passage leads us, and, perhaps, we may find happiness here,' said O'Donell.

Delancy agreed, and the two stepped into the opening. Immediately a great stone was rolled to the mouth of the passage, with a noise like thunder, which shut out all but a single ray of daylight.

'What is that?' exclaimed O'Donell.

'I cannot tell,' replied Delancy; 'but, never mind, I suppose it is only some Genius playing tricks.'

'Well, it may be so,' returned O'Donell; and they proceeded on their way.

After travelling for a long time—as near as they could reckon about two days—they perceived a silvery streak of light on the walls of the passage, something like the light of the moon. In a short time they came to the end of

the passage, and, leaping out of the opening which formed, they entered a new world.

They were, at first, so much bewildered by the different objects which struck their senses that they almost fainted; but, at length recovering, they had time to see everything around them. They were upon the top of a rock which was more than a thousand fathoms high. All beneath them were liquid mountains tossed to and fro with horrible confusion, roaring and raging with a tremendous noise, and crowned with waves of foam. All above them was a mighty firmament, in one part covered with black clouds from which darted: huge and terrible sheets of lightning. In another part an immense globe of light, like silver, was hanging in the sky; and several smaller globes, which sparkled exceedingly, surrounded it.

In a short time, the tempest, which was dreadful beyond description, ceased; the dark, black clouds cleared away; the silver globes vanished, and another globe, whose light was of a gold colour, appeared. It was far larger than the former, and, in a little time, it became so intensely bright, that they could no longer gaze on it; so, after looking around them for some time, they rose and pursued their journey.

They had travelled a long way when they came to an immense forest, the trees of which bore a large fruit of a deep purple colour, of which they tasted and found that it was fit for food. They journeyed in this forest for three days, and on the third day they entered a valley, or rather a deep glen, surrounded on each side by tremendous rocks whose tops were lost in the clouds. In this glen they continued for some time, and at last came in sight of a mountain which rose so high that they could not see the summit, though the sky was quite clear. At the foot of the mountain there flowed a river of pure water, bordered by trees which had flowers of a beautiful rose colour. Except these trees nothing was to be seen but black forests and huge rocks rising out of a wilderness which bore the terrible aspect of devastation, and which stretched as far as the eye could reach. In this desolate land no sound was to be heard, not even the cry of the eagle or the scream of the curlew; but a silence like the silence of the grave reigned over all the face of nature, unbroken except by the murmur of the river as it slowly wound its course through the desert.

CHAPTER III

COMING TO THE CAVE—MANNER OF LIFE—ARRIVAL OF THE OLD MAN

After they had contemplated this scene for some time, O'Donell exclaimed: 'Alexander, let us abide here. What need have we to travel farther? Let us make this our place of rest.'

'We will,' replied Delancy. 'And this shall be our abode,' added he, pointing to a cave at the foot of the mountains.

'It shall,' returned O'Donell, as they entered it.

In this country they remained for many long years, and passed their time in a manner which made them completely happy. Sometimes they would sit upon a high rock, and listen to the hoarse thunder rolling through the sky and making the mountains to echo and the desert to ring with its awful voice. Sometimes they would watch the lightning darting across black clouds and shivering huge fragments of rock in its terrible passage. Sometimes they would witness the great, glorious orb of gold sink behind the far distant mountains which girded the horizon, and then watch the advance of grey twilight, and the little stars coming forth in beauty, and the silver moon rising in her splendour, till the cold dews of night began to fall; and then they would retire to their beds in the cave with hearts full of joy and thankfulness.

One evening they were seated in this cave by a large blazing fire of turf which cast its lurid light to the high arched roof and illuminated the tall and stately pillars, cut by the hand of nature out of the stony rock, with a cheerful red glare that appeared strange in this desolate land, which no fires had ever before visited, except those fierce flames of death which flash from the heavens when robed in the dreadful majesty of thunder. They were seated in this cave then, listening to the howling night-wind as it swept in mournful cadences through the trees of the forest which encircled the foot of the mountain and bordered the stream which flowed round it. They were quite silent, and their thoughts were occupied by those that were afar off, and whom it was their fate most likely never more to behold.

O'Donell was thinking of his noble master and his young princes; of the thousands of miles which intervened between him and them; and the sad, silent tear gushed forth as he ruminated on the happiness of those times, when his master frowned not, when the gloom of care gave place to the

smile of friendship, when he would talk to him and laugh with him, and be to him, not as a brother,—no, no, but as a mighty warrior, who, relaxing from his haughtiness, would now and then converse with his high officers in a strain of vivacity and playful humour not to be equalled. Next he viewed him in his mind's eye at the head of his army. He heard, in the ears of his imagination, the buzz of expectation, of hope, and supposition which hummed round him as his penetrating eye, with a still keenness of expression, was fixed on the distant ranks of the enemy. Then he heard his authoritative voice exclaim: 'Onward, brave sons of freedom! Onward to the battle!' And, lastly, his parting words to him: 'In prosperity or in misery, in sorrow or in joy, in populous cities or in desolate wildernesses, my prayer shall go with you!' darted across his mind with such painful distinctness, that he at length gave way to his uncontrollable grief at the thought that he should never behold his beloved and mighty commander more; and burst into a flood of tears.

'What is the matter, Henry?' exclaimed Delancy.

'Oh, nothing, nothing,' was the reply; and they were resuming their tacit thinking, when a voice was heard outside the cavern, which broke strangely upon the desolate silence and that land which for thousands of years had heard no sound save the howling of the wind through the forest, the echoing of the thunder among mountains, or the solitary murmuring of the river; if we except the presence of O'Donell and Delancy.

'Listen!' cried Alexander; 'listen! What is that?'

'It is the sound of a man's voice,' replied Henry; and then snatching up a burning torch he rushed to the mouth of the cave, followed by Delancy. When they had got there they saw the figure of a very old man sitting on the damp, wet ground, moaning and complaining bitterly. They went up to him. At their approach he rose and said:

'Are you human or supernatural beings?'

They assured him that they were human. He went on:

'Then why have you taken up your abode in this land of the grave?'

O'Donell answered that he would relate to him all the particulars if he would take shelter for the night with them. The old man consented, and when they were all assembled round the cheerful fire, O'Donell fulfilled his promise; and then requested the old man to tell them how he came to be travelling there. He complied, and began as follows:—

CHAPTER IV

OLD MAN'S TALE

I was the son of a respectable merchant in Moussoul. My father intended to bring me up to his own trade, but I was idle and did not like it. One day, as I was playing in the street, a very old man came up to me and asked me if I would go with him. I asked him where he was going. He replied that if I would go with him he would show me very wonderful things. This raised my curiosity and I consented. He immediately took me by the hand and hurried me out of the city of Moussoul so quickly that my breath was almost stopped, and it seemed as if we glided along in the air, for I could hear no sound of any footsteps. We continued on our course for a long time, till we came to a glen surrounded by very high mountains. How we passed over these mountains I could never tell. In the middle of the glen there was a small fountain of very clear water. My conductor directed me to drink of it. This I did and immediately I found myself in a palace, the glory of which far exceeds any description which I can give. The tall, stately pillars, reaching from heaven to earth, were formed of the finest, purest diamonds; the pavement sparkling with gold and precious stones; and the mighty dome, made solemn and awful by its stupendous magnitude, was of a single emerald. In the midst of this grand and magnificent palace was a lamp like the sun, the radiance of which made all the palace to flash and glitter with an almost fearful grandeur. The ruby sent forth a streak of crimson light, the topaz gold, the sapphire intensest purple, and the dome poured a flood of deep, clear splendour which overcame all the other gaudy lights by its mild, triumphant glory. In this palace were thousands and tens of thousands of fairies and genii, some of whom flitted lightly among the blazing lamps to the sound of unearthly music, which died and swelled in a stream of wild grandeur, suited to the words they sang:—

In this fairy land of light
No mortals e'er have been;
And the dreadful grandeur of this sight
By them hath not been seen.
It would strike them shuddering to the earth
Like the flash from a thunder-cloud;
It would quench their light and joyous mirth
And fit them for the shroud.
The rising of our palaces
Like visions of the deep,

And the glory of their structure,
No mortal voice can speak.

Chorus:

The music of our songs,
And our mighty trumpet's swell,
And the sounding of our silver harps,
No mortal tongue can tell.

Of us they know but little,
Save when the storm doth rise,
And the mighty waves are tossing
Against the archèd skies.
Then oft they see us striding
O'er the billow's snow-white foam,
Or hear us speak in thunder
When we stand, in grandeur lone,
On the darkest of the mighty clouds
Which veil the pearly moon,
Around us lightning flashing,
Night's blackness to illumine.

Chorus:

The music of our songs,
And our mighty trumpet's swell,
And the sounding of our silver harps,
No mortal tongue can tell.

When they had finished there was a dead silence for about half an hour; and then the palace began slowly and gradually to vanish, till it disappeared entirely, and I found myself in the glen surrounded by high mountains, and the fountain, illuminated by the cold light of the moon, springing up in the middle of the valley; and standing close by was the old man who had conducted me to this enchanted place. He turned round and I could see that his countenance had an expression of strange severity which I had not before observed.

‘Follow me,’ he said.

I obeyed, and we began to ascend the mountain. It is needless to trouble you with a repetition of my adventures. Suffice it to say that after two months' time we arrived at a large temple. We entered it. The interior as well as the outside had a very gloomy and ominous aspect, being entirely built of black marble. The old man suddenly seized me and dragged me to an altar at the upper end of the temple; then, forcing me down on my knees, he made me swear that I would be his servant for ever. This promise I faithfully kept, notwithstanding the dreadful scenes of magic of which

every day of my life I was forced to be a witness. One day he told me he would discharge me from the oath I had taken, and commanded me to leave his service. I obeyed, and, after wandering about the world for many years, I, one evening, laid myself down on a little bank by the roadside, intending to pass the night there. Suddenly, I found myself raised in the air by invisible hands. In a short time I lost sight of the earth, and continued on my course through the clouds till I became insensible; and, when I recovered from my swoon, I found myself lying outside this cave. What may be my future destiny I know not.

CHAPTER V

DEPARTURE OF THE OLD MAN—DISAPPEARANCE OF DELANCY—TRANSPORTATION OF O'DONELL—HIS ARRIVAL AT THE CITY—HIS ARRIVAL AT THE PALACE, AND HIS INTERVIEW WITH HIS CHIEF—HE FINDS DELANCY

When the old man had finished his tale, O'Donell and Delancy thanked him for the relation, adding at the same time that they had never heard anything half so wonderful. Then, as it was very late, they all retired to rest. Next morning, O'Donell awoke very early, and, looking round the cave, he perceived the bed of leaves on which the old man had lain to be empty. Then rising he went out of the cave.

The sky was covered with red, fiery clouds, except those in the east whose edges were tinged with the bright rays of the morning sun as they strove to hide its glory with their dark veil of vapours, now all beauty and radiance by the golden lines of light which streaked their gloomy surface beneath this storm-portending sky; and, far off, to the westward rose two tremendous rocks whose summits were enveloped with black clouds rolling one above another with an awful magnificence well-suited to the land of wilderness and mountain which they canopied.

Gliding along in the air between these two rocks was a chariot of light. In the chariot sat a figure the expression of whose countenance was that of the old man, armed with the majesty and might of a spirit.

O'Donell stood at the mouth of the cave watching it till it vanished, and then, calling Delancy, he related the circumstance to him.

Some years after this, Alexander went out one morning in search of the fruit on which they subsisted. Noon came, and he had not returned; evening, and still no tidings of him. O'Donell began to be alarmed and set out in search of him, but could nowhere find him. One whole day he spent in wandering about the rocks and mountains, and in the evening he came back to his cave weary and faint with hunger and thirst. Days, weeks, months, passed away, and no Delancy appeared. O'Donell might now be said to be truly miserable. He would sit on a rock for hours together and cry out: 'Alexander! Alexander!' but receive no answer but the distant echoing of his voice among the rocks. Sometimes he fancied it was another person answering him, and he would listen earnestly till it died away. Then, sinking into utter despair again, he would sit till the dews of night began to fall, when he would retire to his cave to pass the night in anguish, broken slumbers, or in thinking of his beloved comrade, whom he could never see more. In one of these dreadful intervals he took up a small parcel. Opening it, he saw lying before him two locks of soft, curly hair, shining like burnished gold. He gazed on them for a little time, and thought of the words of those who gave them to him:

'Take this then, that you may remember us when you dwell with only the wild beasts of the desert, or the great eagle of the mountain.'

He burst into a flood of tears. He wrung his hands in sorrow, and in the anguish of the moment he wished that he could once more see them and the mighty warrior King, their father, if it cost him his life.

Just at that instant a loud clap of thunder shook the roof of the cave. A sound like the rushing of wind was heard, and a mighty Genius stood before him.

'I know thy wish,' cried he with a loud and terrible voice, 'and I will grant it. In two months' time thou returnest to the castle, whence thou camest hither, and surrenderest thyself into my power!'

O'Donell promised that he would; and instantly he found himself at the door of the old castle, and in the land of his birth.

He pursued his journey for three days, and on the third day he arrived at the mountain which overlooked the city. It was a beautiful evening in the month of September, and the full moon was shedding her tranquil light on all the face of nature. The city was lying in its splendour and magnificence

surrounded by the broad stream of the Guadima. The palace was majestically towering in the midst of it, and all its pillars and battlements seemed in the calm light of the moon as if they were transformed into silver by the touch of a fairy's wand.

O'Donell stayed not long to contemplate this beautiful scene, but, descending the mountain, he soon crossed the fertile plain which led to the city, and, entering the gates, he quickly arrived at the palace. Without speaking to any one, he entered the inner court of the palace by a secret way with which he was acquainted, and then going up a flight of steps and crossing a long gallery he arrived at the King's private apartments. The door was half open. He looked in and beheld two very handsome young men sitting together and reading. He instantly recognised them, and was going to step forward, when the door opened and the Great Duke entered. O'Donell could contain himself no longer, and, rushing in, he threw himself at the feet of His Grace.

'O'Donell! is this you?' exclaimed the Duke.

'It is, my most noble master!' answered O'Donell, almost choking with joy. The young princes instantly embraced him, while he almost smothered them with caresses.

After awhile they became tranquil, and then O'Donell, at the request of the Duke, related all his adventures since he parted with them, not omitting the condition on which he was now in the palace.

When he had ended a loud voice was heard saying that he was free from his promise and might spend the rest of his days in his native city.

Some time after this, as O'Donell was walking in the streets, he met a gentleman whom he thought he had seen before, but could not recollect where or under what circumstances. After a little conversation he discovered that he was Alexander Delancy, that he was now a rich merchant in the city of Paris, and high in favour with the Emperor Napoleon. As may be supposed they both were equally delighted at the discovery. They ever after lived happily in their separate cities; and so ends my little tale.

C. BRONTË,
August 17th, 1829.

THE ADVENTURES OF ERNEST ALEMBERT

FIRST printed, from the original manuscript, in 1896, in an edition limited to thirty copies for private circulation only. Edited by Thomas J. Wise. This volume contains facsimiles of two pages of the manuscript. Reprinted in *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century*, edited by W. Robertson Nicoll, M.A., and Thomas J. Wise, vol. ii., 1896, pp. 47-79.

In the Preface to the privately printed volume we are informed by Mr. Wise, that—

The manuscript of 'The Adventures of Ernest Alembert' consists of sixteen octavo pages, measuring 7 1/4 by 4 1/2 inches, stitched in a wrapper of coarse brown paper, with the following title written in Charlotte's hand upon the front: 'The Adventures of Ernest Alembert. A Tale by C. Brontë. May 25, 1880.' The book is written in a free running hand, far more readily deciphered than the minute characters employed in the majority of these early books. Unlike most of these it has no title-page save that on the wrapper, but a large portion of the final page is occupied by an inscription, after the manner of a colophon.

C. W. H.

**THE ADVENTURES
OF
ERNEST ALEMBERT**

A TALE

BY

C. BRONTË

May 25, 1830.

CHAPTER I

MANY years ago there lived in a certain country a youth named Ernest Alembert. He came of an ancient and noble race: but one of his ancestors having been beheaded in consequence of a suspicion of high treason, the family since that time had gradually decayed, until at length the only remaining branch of it was this young man of whom I write.

His abode was a small cottage situated in the midst of a little garden, and overshadowed by the majestic ruins of his ancestral castle. The porch of his hut, adorned by the twisting clematis and jessamine, fronted the rising sun, and here in the cool summer mornings he would often sit and watch its broad orb slowly appearing above the blue distant mountains. The eminence on which his cottage was built formed one side of a wide valley, watered by a stream whose hoarse voice was softened into a gentle murmur ere it reached the summit of a hill. The opposing rocks which guarded the vale on the other side were covered by a wood of young ash and sycamore trees, whose branching foliage, clothing them in a robe of living green, hid their rugged aspect, save where some huge fragment, all grey and moss-grown, jutted far over the valley, affording a fine contrast to the leafy luxuriant branch which perhaps rested on the projection, and imparting an appearance of picturesque wildness and variety to the scene. The valley itself was sprinkled with tall shady elms and poplars, that shaded the soft verdant turf ornamented by cowslips, violets, daisies, golden cups, and a thousand other sweet flowers, which shed abroad their perfumes when the morning and evening summer dews, or the rains of spring, descend softly and silently to the earth. On the borders of the stream a few weeping willows stood dipping their long branches into the water, where their graceful forms were clearly reflected. Through an opening in the vale this noisy river was observed gradually expanding and smoothing until at last it became a wide lake, in calm weather a glassy unruffled mirror for all the clouds and stars of heaven to behold themselves in as they sailed through the spangled or dappled firmament. Beyond this lake arose high hills, at noonday almost indistinguishable from the blue sky, but at sunset glowing in the richest purple, like a sapphire barrier to the dim horizon.

One evening in autumn as Ernest sat by his blazing fire and listened to the wind which roared past his dwelling, shaking the little casement till the leaves of the wild vine which curled around it fell rustling to the earth, he heard suddenly the latchet of his door raised. A man clothed in a dark mantle, with long hair, and a beard of raven blackness, entered. At sight of this singular figure he started up, and the stranger immediately accosted him as follows:

‘My name is Rufus Warner. I come from a great distance, and having been overtaken by darkness in the valley I looked about for some roof where I might pass the night. At length I espied a light streaming through this window. I made the best of my way to it, and now I request shelter from you.’

Ernest, after gazing a moment at him, complied with his demand. He closed the door, and they both seated themselves by the fire. They sat thus for some time without interchanging a word, the stranger with his eyes intently fixed on the ascending flame, apparently quite inattentive to any other object; and Ernest as intently viewing him, and revolving in his mind who he might be—the cause of his strange attire—his long beard—his unbroken taciturnity—not unmixed with a feeling of awe allied to fear at the presence of a being of whose nature he was totally ignorant, and who, for aught he knew, might be the harbinger of no good to his humble dwelling. Dim, dreamlike reminiscences passed slowly across his mind concerning tales of spirits who, in various shapes; had appeared to men shortly before their deaths, as if to prepare them for the ghostly society with which they would soon have to mingle.

At length, to relieve himself of these almost insupportable thoughts, he ventured to accost his mysterious guest by inquiring whence he came.

‘From a rich and fruitful land,’ replied the stranger, ‘where the trees bear without ceasing, and earth casts up flowers which sparkle like jewels, the sun shines for ever, and the moon and stars are not quenched even at noonday; where the rocks lose themselves in the skies, and the tops of the mountains are invisible by reason of the firmament which rests upon them.’

The answer, uttered in a hollow and hoarse voice, convinced Ernest of the truth of his surmises; but a charm seemed to have been cast upon him which prevented him from being overcome by terror, and he replied as follows:

‘If what you say is true, I should like exceedingly to follow you into your country instead of remaining here, where I am often chilled by frost and icy winds, and saddened by the absence of the cheering warmth of the sun.’

‘If thou wilt go, thou mayst,’ replied the stranger; and Ernest, under the influence of a secret fascination, consented.

‘To-morrow, by daybreak, we will set out,’ said his guest; and then, as the night was far advanced, they both retired to their straw couches, after partaking of a simple supper which Ernest had hastily provided.

CHAPTER II

The rising dawn found Ernest and his unknown guide wending their way down the long valley. It was a still, gloomy October morning. The sky was obscured by grey clouds, and the cold wind which whistled among the yellow withered leaves of the wood that covered the rocks blew occasionally some mizzling drops of rain into the faces of the two travellers. The distant prospect of the lake and mountains was hidden by a veil of mist, and when the sun rose above them his presence was only revealed by a whitish light gleaming through the thin watery atmosphere. The only sounds which fell on the ear were the howling of the blast in the caverned sides of the valley, and the melancholy murmuring of the stream as its waves beat against the rugged stones which obstructed its passage.

They proceeded along in a straight course till they came to the borders of the lake, where the guide stopped, saying: ‘We must now cross this water.’ Ernest gazed at him a moment, and then said:

‘How can we? We have no boat, and I lack the power to swim for so long a time as it would require to cross this lake.’

No sooner had he uttered these words than a light gale arose which ruffled and agitated the quiet surface of the lake. Presently a tiny skiff appeared gliding over the waves, and in a few minutes reached the bank whereon they stood. The stranger quickly sprang into the bark, and Ernest, though filled with terror at the conviction that he was now in the hands of a supernatural being, felt himself compelled by a strong impulse to follow whither he was led. No sooner were they seated than a large white sail unfurled seemingly of its own accord, and in a few moments they found

themselves nearing the opposite shore, so lightly and swiftly this fairy vessel had borne them over the lake.

No sooner had they touched the bank with their feet than a huge billow like a mountain swept over the water. Immediately the swelling waves subsided, the rising foam vanished, and a great calm fell on the bosom of the lake. At the same moment Ernest felt his fear pass away, and it was succeeded by a feeling of courage against danger, mingled with a certain curiosity to see what was to come. After they had travelled a great distance they came to a wide moor that stretched to the verge of the horizon. This was perfectly level, save at one spot where tall black rocks were seen raising their heads towards the sky. About evening they reached these rocks, when they stopped and sat down to rest themselves. The scene was now grand and awful in the extreme. Around lay the dark desert heath, unenlivened by a single streak of verdure; its beautiful pink flowers were withered, and their fragrance had vanished. The mellow hum of the bee was no longer heard about them, for he had gathered his honey and was gone. Above rose the tremendous precipices whose vast shadows blackened all that portion of the moor, and deepened the frown upon the unpropitious face of nature. At intervals from the summit of the rocks shrill screams, uttered by some bird of prey which had built its nest upon them, swept through the arch of heaven in which wild clouds were careering to and fro as if torn by a horrible tempest. The sun had long since sunk to rest, and the full moon, like a broad shield dyed with blood, now ascended the stormy sky. A mournful halo surrounded her, and through that warning veil she looked from her place in the firmament, her glorious light dimmed and obscured, till the earth only knew by a faint ruddy tint that her white-robed handmaiden beheld her. All the attendant train of stars shone solemnly among the clouds, and by their abated splendour acknowledged the presence of their peerless queen.

After having viewed the scene some time the stranger rose, and beckoned Ernest to follow him. This he did, until he came to a particular part of the rocks where was seen a profound cavern. This the stranger entered, and Ernest felt himself impelled to enter too. The track seemed to incline downwards, and as they went deeper and deeper they soon lost sight of the upper world, and not a ray of light appeared to illumine the thick darkness around them. At length a faint grey dawn became visible, and at the same instant a warm and gentle breeze stole past them which softened the cold

raw air of the cave. Anon they began to behold branches of trees waving above them, and saw that they trod upon a smooth and velvety turf. In a short time, by the aid of the increasing light, they perceived that they were in a deep gloomy forest, which, as they advanced, gradually thinned into a pleasant shady wood, becoming more beautiful as they passed on, until at last it assumed the appearance of a delightful grove. From this they soon emerged into an open and graceful country. A wide plain was stretched before them, covered with the most enchanting verdure. Graceful trees sprang out of the earth bearing delicious fruits of a perfect transparency; others rose to a great height, casting down their branches laden with white blossoms, and dark flourishing leaves. Crystal fountains, that fell with a murmuring noise, were seen glittering through bowers of roses and tall lilies. The melody of a thousand birds was heard from groves of myrtle and laurel which bordered a river whose waters glided through the plain. Arching rocks of diamond and amethyst, up which plants of immortal verdure crept, sparkled in the light and lent variety to the lovely prospect. The plain was bounded by hills, some of which rose majestically to the heavens, covered with vines and pomegranates, while others only gently swelled upon the sight, and then sank into calm and peaceful valleys. Over all this scene hung an atmosphere of crystal clearness. Not one fleecy cloud sullied the radiant sky; not one wreath of mist floated over the brows of the distant mountains. The whole land lay in stainless purity, arrayed in a robe of spiritual and unearthly light.

When Ernest emerged from the wood, this view, bursting at once upon his eyes, completely overpowered him. For a long time he stood speechless, gazing intently upon it. His mind seemed to be elevated and enlarged by the resplendency of the vision. All his senses were delighted: his hearing by the combination of sweet sounds which poured upon it, his sight by the harmonious blending of every colour and scene, and his smell by the fragrant perfume of each flower which bloomed in these everlasting fields. At length, in ecstatic admiration, he hastened to thank his conductor for bringing him thither, but when he turned the stranger had gone. The forest through which he came had vanished also, and in its stead was a vast ocean whose extent seemed altogether boundless. Ernest, now more than ever filled with astonishment, remained for a while alternating between fear and wonder; then, rousing himself, he uttered the name of his guide aloud. But his voice was only answered by a faint echo. After this he walked a

considerable distance into the country without meeting with one visible being either human or supernatural. In a few hours he had traversed the plain and reached the acclivities which bordered it, and then entered a wide and mountainous land totally different from that which he had left. He wandered among the rocks heedless whither he went until twilight fell, when he longed to return, but was entirely unable to detect the way. No signs appeared of the plain he had quitted, save that on the southern horizon a beautiful light lingered long after sunset, and occasionally, as the wind rose, faint melodious sounds were heard floating fitfully by.

After a while, when the night had closed in, Ernest came to the brow of a lofty precipice. Overcome with fatigue he cast himself upon the ground and began to gaze into the profound depth beneath him. As he lay a deathlike stillness fell upon the earth. No voice was heard in the gloomy region, the air was untracked by any wing. No footstep crushed the desolate sands. Echo whispered not in the caverned rocks, and even the winds seemed to have held their breath. At length he perceived in the tremendous gulf a thick vapour slowly rising. It gradually expanded, until the chasm was filled with a dense cloud swaying to and fro as if moved by an invisible power. Then he heard a dull hollow noise like water roaring in subterraneous caves. By degrees the cloud rose and enlarged, sweeping round him till all things vanished from his sight, and he found himself encircled by its curling mist. Then he heard music; subdued and harmonious, resembling the soft breathings of flutes and dulcimers. This was suddenly broken by a flood of warlike melody rolling from golden trumpets and great harps of silver, which now suddenly gleamed upon him as the curtain of clouds rent and the whole scene was revealed. A pavement of sapphire sparkled, from which flashes of radiant purple light proceeded, mingling with the glory of an emerald dome that proudly arched a palace whose pillars were the purest diamond. Vases of agate and porphyry sent up wreaths of refined incense formed of the united fragrance of a thousand flowers. Beings of immortal beauty and splendour stood in shining ranks around a throne of ruby guarded by golden lions, and sounds so sweet and enchanting swelled on his ear that Ernest, overwhelmed with the too powerful magnificence, sank senseless on the bright pavement. When he recovered from his swoon he found himself no longer surrounded by the gorgeous splendour of the fairy palace, but reposing in a wood whose branches were just moved by a fresh moaning wind. The first sunbeams penetrating the green umbrage lighted

up the dewdrops which glistened on tender blades of grass, or trembled in the cups of the wild flowers which bordered a little woodland well. When Ernest opened his eyes he beheld standing close to him a man whom he presently recognised to be his guide. He started up, and the stranger addressed him as follows:

‘I am a fairy. You have been, and still are, in the land of fairies. Some wonders you have seen; many more you shall see if you choose to follow me still.’

Ernest consented. The fairy immediately stepped into the well, and he felt compelled to do the same. They sank gradually downwards. By degrees the water changed into mists and vapours; the forms of clouds were dimly seen floating around. These increased until at length they were wholly enveloped in their folds. In a short time they seemed to land, and Ernest felt his feet resting on a solid substance. Suddenly the clouds were dissipated, and he found himself in a lovely and enchanting island encircled by a boundless expanse of water. The trees in the island were beautiful: rose laurels and flowering myrtles, creeping pomegranates, clematis and vines, intermixed with majestic cypresses and groves of young elms and poplars. The fairy led him to a natural bower of lofty trees whose thick branches mingling above formed a shady retreat from the sun, which now glowed in meridian splendour. This bower was on a green bank of the isle, embroidered with every kind of sweet and refreshing flower. The sky was perfectly free from clouds, but a milky haze softened the intense brilliancy of the blue and gave a more unbroken calmness to the air. The lake lay in glassy smoothness. From its depths arose a sound of subdued music, a breath of harmony which just waved the blue water-lilies lying among their dark green leaves upon its surface. While Ernest reposed on the green turf and viewed this delightful prospect, he saw a vision of beauty pass before him. First he heard the melody of a horn, which seemed to come from dim mountains that appeared to the east. It rose again nearer, and a majestic stag of radiant whiteness, with branching and beaming golden horns, bounded suddenly into sight, pursued by a train of fairies mounted upon winged steeds, caparisoned so magnificently that rays of light shot from them, and the whole air was illumined with their glory. They flew across the lake swifter than wind. The water rose sparkling and foaming about them, agitated and roaring as if by a storm. When they had disappeared Ernest turned towards the fairy, who still continued with him, and expressed his admiration of the beautiful scene

which had just vanished. The fairy replied that it was but a shadow compared with the things infinitely more grand and magnificent which were still reserved for him to behold. Ernest at these words replied that he felt extremely impatient for the time to come when he might see them. His conductor arose, and commanded Alembert to follow. This he did, and they proceeded to enter a dark and thick wood which grew on the banks of the island. They journeyed here for several miles, and at length emerged into an open glade of the forest, where was a rock formed like a small temple, on the summit of which, covered with grass and various kinds of flowers, grew several young poplars and other trees. This curious edifice the fairy entered alone. After remaining some time he reappeared, and approaching Ernest bade him look up. Alembert instantly complied, and, as he did so, beheld a chariot, which shone as the clouds that the sun glorifies at his setting, descending from the skies. It was drawn by two swans, larger than the fabulous roc, whose magnificent necks, arched like a rainbow, were surrounded by a bright halo reflected from the intense radiancy and whiteness of their plumage. Their expanded wings lightened the earth under them, and, as they drew nearer, their insufferable splendour so dazzled the senses of Ernest that he sank in a state of utter exhaustion to the ground.

His conductor then touched him with a small silver wand, and immediately a strange stupor came over him, which in a few minutes rendered him perfectly insensible. When he awoke from this swoon he found himself in an exceedingly wide and lofty apartment, whose vast walls were formed of black marble. Its huge gloomy dome was illumined by pale lamps that glimmered like stars through a curtain of clouds. Only one window was visible, and that, of an immense size, and arched like those of an ancient Gothic cathedral, was veiled by ample black drapery. In the midst arose a colossal statue, whose lifted hands were clasped in strong supplication, and whose upraised eyes and fixed features betokened excessive anguish. It was rendered distinctly visible by the light of the tapers which burned around. As Ernest gazed on this mysterious room he felt a sensation of extreme awe, such as he had never before experienced. He knew that he was in a world of spirits. The scene before him appeared like a dim dream. Nothing was clear, for a visionary mist hovered over all things, that imparted a sense of impenetrable obscurity to his mental as well as his bodily eyesight.

After continuing awhile in this state, amidst the most profound silence, he heard the sweet soft tones of an æolian harp stealing through the tall pillared arches. The subdued melody rose and filled the air with mournful music as the wind began to moan around the dome. By degrees these sounds sank to rest, and the deathly stillness returned with a more chilling and oppressive power. It continued for a long period until its unbroken solemnity became supernatural and insupportable. Ernest struck the ground with his foot, but the blow produced no sound. He strove to speak, but his voice gave forth no utterance. At that instant a crashing peal of thunder burst. The wild air roared round the mighty building, which shook and trembled to its centre. Then, as the wind arose, the music swelled again, mingling its majestic floods of sound with the thunder that now pealed unceasingly. The unearthly tones that rolled along the blast exceeded everything that any mortal had heard before, and Ernest was nigh overwhelmed by the awe which their weird majesty inspired.

Suddenly the fairy who had been his guide appeared, and approaching the window beckoned him to come near. Ernest obeyed, and on looking out his eyes were bewildered by the scene which presented itself to his view. Nothing was visible beneath but billowy clouds, black as midnight, rolling around a tower a thousand feet in height, on whose terrible summit he stood. Long he gazed intently on the wild vapours tossed to and fro like waves in a storm. At times they lay in dense gloom and darkness, then globes or flashes of fire illumined them with sudden light.

At length the thunder and the wind ceased, the clouds slowly dispersed, and a growing brightness shone upon them. Beyond the horizon, through the dismal piles of mist fast fading away, a fair vision gleamed which filled Alembert: with wonder and delight. A beautiful city appeared, whose lovely hues charmed the eye with their mild attractive splendour. Its palaces, arches, pillars, and temples all smiled in their own gentle radiance, and a clear wide stream (transformed by the distance into a silver thread) which circled its crystal walls was spanned by a bright rainbow, through whose arch it flowed into a broad, expanse of green hills, woods, and valleys, enamelled by a thousand flowers that sent up their united fragrance so high that even the atmosphere around the summit of the lofty tower was faintly perfumed by it.

‘That city,’ said the guide, ‘is the abode of our fairy king, whose palace you may see rising above those long groves near the southern gates.’

Ernest looked in the direction indicated, but beheld only a star of light, for the palace was formed of certain materials too brilliant for any but the eyes of fairies to behold. He continued some time at the window, until the prospect beneath, as twilight shed her dim influence over it, began to fade. Slowly the stars looked forth one by one from the sky's deepening azure, and the full moon as she ascended the east gradually paled the bright orange-dye which glowed in the western heavens. The murmur of the aerial city died away. Only at intervals was heard the voice of the giant harp breaking the stillness of eventide, and its wild mournful melody as it floated on the balmy breeze served but to enhance the calm, sacred, and mysterious feeling of that peaceful hour.

'We must now depart,' said the fairy, turning suddenly to Alembert, and at the same instant the latter found himself upon the very summit of the tower. His conductor then, without warning, pushed him from the dizzy eminence into the void beneath.

Ernest gave a loud shriek of terror, but his fear was instantly dispelled by a delightful sensation which followed. He seemed to sink gently and slowly downwards, borne on a soft gale which now fanned his cheek, and guided by invisible beings who appeared to check the velocity of his fall, and to moderate his descent into a quiet and easy transition to the regions of the earth.

After a while he alighted in the fairy city, still attended by his conductor. They proceeded along a magnificent street, paved with the rarest gems, gorgeously sparkling in the moonlight, until they arrived at a majestic palace of lapis lazuli whose golden gates rolled back at their approach, and admitted them to a wide hall floored with the purest alabaster, richly carved and figured, and lighted by silver lamps perfumed with the most costly odours.

Ernest was now grown weary, and the fairy led him into another apartment more beautiful than the first. Here was a splendid couch overhung by a canopy adorned with emeralds, diamonds, sapphires, and rubies, whose excessive brilliancy illuminated all the room. On this couch Alembert flung himself joyfully down to rest. In a few moments a profound slumber closed his eyelids, and his sleep continued undisturbed until break of day, when he was awakened by the sweet singing of birds. He arose, and on looking forth from his casement beheld an immense garden filled with the sweetest flowers, and with rare plants unknown among mortals. Long

rows of lofty trees, bearing fruit that sparkled like precious stones, shaded green walks strewn with fallen blossoms. On their fresh verdant branches sat innumerable birds, clothed in rich and resplendent plumage, who filled the air with delightful and harmonious warbling.

Ernest was astonished at beholding no appearance of the city, but continued for some time listening to the enchanting music of the birds, enjoying the fragrant perfume of the blossoms, and the dark grandeur of the majestic trees that surrounded him. This contemplation was at length interrupted by his conductor, who now appeared in the apartment. Without speaking, his guide led him from the chamber, and when they reached the open air bade him by a sign to look around. Ernest obeyed, and in place of the palace he saw a high bower formed of trees whose flowers were more lovely than the finest roses, and sweeter than lilies or camellias. The prospect then suddenly changed, and a deep glen, embosomed in hills whose sides were wooded and rock-strewn, took the place of the garden. A deep, clear-watered river flowed past them. Into this the fairy plunged, and Ernest, forced by an overmastering spell, followed him. For a long time they sank slowly down and nought was visible save the waters that swallowed them.

At length, leagues beneath, a new realm dawned upon Ernest's astonished sight. Their speed now accelerated, and soon they arrived at the abode of a fairy king. The palace was brilliant as a liquid diamond. A great fountain rushing upwards from the earth parted into a thousand arches and pillars, through whose transparent surfaces appeared a quantity of emeralds, rubies, and other gems which the fountain continually cast up. The palace roof was formed of the frozen spray that proceeded like a vapour from the living arches ever in motion. This, congealed into round lucid drops, assumed the appearance of a lofty dome, from which descended other pillars of a larger size that seemed to support it. Over the summit of the dome was suspended in the air a sun of insufferable brightness, and from within gleamed a hundred stars sparkling with supernatural splendour.

By reason of the translucent nature of the edifice the interior was perfectly visible, and Ernest saw the fairy king seated on a glittering and revolving throne. He was surrounded by attendants, one of whom held a diamond cup filled with the honeydew of wild flowers. Others played sweetly upon silver harps and lutes, or sang in more melodious tones than the nightingale or skylark.

It would be impossible to relate all the marvellous adventures that befel Alembert whilst he abode in the land of Faery. He saw their midnight revels in many a wild glen, and witnessed how they feasted in the greenwood beneath the solemn moon. He viewed their pleasures and their pageants, and learned the spells by which they drew the lonely traveller into their enchanted circlet. Often he watched their sports by the 'beached margin of the sea,' and saw the rolling billows rest calmly under the magic influence of their incantations. He heard and felt the sweet witchery of their songs chanted at unearthly banquets, and when the sound swelled until it reached the starlit sky the revolving worlds arrested their mighty courses and stood still in the charmed heavens to attend. But this life in time grew wearying and insupportable. He longed once more to dwell among humankind, to hear again the language of mortals, and to tread upon the old green grass-covered turf, under the shade of the earthly trees he loved so well. At length the fairies perceived that the yearning to return was filling the bosom of Alembert, and that his heart was straining with the desire for home. This desire they appreciated, for they knew well that no mortal born of mortals could for long endure the light and fleeting glories of the land of Fays. Thus it was that they determined to relinquish him, and to bestow upon him the crown of his hopes. The following tells the manner in which they gave fulfilment to his wish.

CHAPTER III

It was a fair and mild evening in the decline of summer, when all the elfin courts assembled within a dell, one of those privileged spots which the pinching frosts and snows of winter are unable to deprive of their everlasting green array. The soft velvet turf served them for seats, and the profusion of sweet flowers with which it was embroidered shed around a refreshing perfume. The lily canopy was raised, and the glittering table was covered with crystal goblets brimming with nectarous dew. The song of a lark now hymning his vespers in the cloud-wrapped dome was all their music, and as its tones fell on the silent earth they diffused a holy calm on all. Before the festival began a fairy rose and advanced towards Alembert, who reposed on the ground a little apart. Approaching him, he presented him with a goblet, and bade him drink the contents. Ernest obeyed, and

scarcely had he done so when a strange stupor seized him, which slowly overpowered all his senses. In a short time he sank into a profound slumber.

When he recovered from his stupor he found himself at the entrance to a wide green vale, bounded by high hills, whose sides were clothed with pleasant woods, which descended to their feet, and here and there advanced a considerable way into the valley. At intervals enormous rocks were scattered, whose rugged and moss-grown forms added a touch of romance to the delightful scene. Nor were there wanting pleasant groves, whose cool green shades offered welcome shelter to the toiling and travel-wearied pilgrim. It was sunset, and not one purple cloud was visible in all the radiant sky. The west swam in an ocean of golden light that bathed the heavens in glory, and poured its reflected splendour over half the world. Eastward a long line of sober red appeared, gradually growing softer and paler towards the point of sunrise. Above, all was a clear bright silvery blue, deepening at the zenith, and faintly tinged with grey as it receded from the gorgeous west. Beneath this sky the earth glowed with tints whose warm and mellow richness could not have been surpassed by the loveliest scenes in Italy. Hills, rocks, and trees shone invested in a lustrous halo of beauty. The vale flowed with light, and a hundred flowers stirred among their leaves as the sun shed its last beams over them. Long Ernest lingered, gazing entranced upon the sight. He knew that this was no delusive vision, and that no mystery hung upon its spell. As he stood a sound stole past him like the music of a harp. He trembled, fearing he was still held in the power of supernatural beings. The sound swelled, and, gathering in volume, swept solemnly down the wild glen, awakening low sweet echoes among the frowning rocks which specked the lovely woods in which it was embosomed.

Soon, however, Ernest's fear was dissipated, for he heard the music accompanied by a human voice. He moved forward a step or two, and then bent eagerly towards the spot whence the tones issued, striving to catch the burthen of the uttered tones. This at length he did, and this is the song that fell upon his ears:—

Proudly the sun has sunk to rest
Behind yon dim and distant hill;
The busy noise of day has ceased,
A holy calm the air doth fill.

That softening haze which veils the light
Of sunset in the gorgeous sky,

Is dusk, grey harbinger of night,
Now gliding onward silently.

No sound rings through the solemn vale
Save murmurs of those tall dark trees,
Which raise eternally their wail,
Bending beneath the twilight breeze.

And my harp peals the woods among
When vesper lifts its quiet eye,
Commingle with each night-bird's song
That chants its vigils pensively.

And here I sit, until night's noon
Hath gemmed the heavens with many a star,
And sing beneath the wandering moon
Who comes, high journeying, from afar.

Oh! sweet to me is that still hour
When frown the shades of night around,
Deepening the gloom of forest bower;
Filling the air with awe profound.

I hush my harp, and hush my song,
Low kneeling 'neath the lofty sky,
I hark the nightingale prolong
Her strain of wondrous melody,

Forth gushing like a mountain rill,
So rich, so deep, so clear and free;
She pours it forth o'er dale and hill,
O'er rock and river, lake and tree,

Till morn comes, and, with rosy hand,
Unbars the golden gates of day;
Then, as at touch of magic wand,
The earth is clad in fair array.

Then from its couch the skylark springs;
The trembling drops of glittering dew
Are scattered, as with vigorous wings
It mounts the glorious arch of blue.

Before the strain ceased the hues of sunset had begun to fade away, yet sufficient light remained for Ernest to perceive a man of ancient and venerable aspect seated at the mouth of a deep cavern, under the shade of an immense oak, whose massive limbs and dense foliage stood in dark relief against the sky. Every leaf and twig was dimly pencilled on the silvery blue, the outline of the trunk and larger branches alone being clearly visible. The

stranger was clad in a long white robe and dark mantle which partly enveloped his person, and then, falling downwards, swept the ground in picturesque and magnificent folds. His robe was confined by a black girdle, down to which his snowy beard flowed in profusion, and formed a fine contrast to his mantle and belt. His right hand rested upon a harp, whose chords he now and then swept with his left, causing a few sweet transitory notes to issue therefrom, which rose and swelled in an uncertain cadence and then died away in the distance. As Ernest approached, the harper raised his head, and demanded his name. When Alembert had answered this question to the old man's satisfaction, he requested permission to seat himself beside him for a few moments that he might rest. The harper instantly complied, and after a short pause asked him whence he came, and whither he went, and the reason of his being in so unfrequented and lonely a spot at such an unaccustomed hour. Ernest in reply related the whole of his adventures, and by the time he had completed their recital night had closed in, and the moon had risen. His host now arose and invited him to lodge for that night within his cave. Alembert gladly consented, and together they proceeded to enter. When they were seated at their frugal supper of fruits and herbs, Ernest in his turn begged the old man to recount the circumstances of his own life. To this request he gave a ready assent, and proceeded to unfold the following story:—

‘You have told me that your latter years have been spent among fairies. I likewise abode for a time with supernatural beings, but theirs was a less gentle nature than those whom you have described. When yet: very young I became imbued with the spirit of adventure, and determined to go out and seek my fortune in the world. The quarter of the globe which I fixed upon as the first scene of my wanderings was Asia, and accordingly I embarked myself on board a ship bound for Odessa. In a few days we set sail, and after a prosperous voyage arrived at that part of the Russian dominions. From thence I proceeded to Tcherkask, where I halted a few days, and then went on to Good-Gard, a mountain in the Caucasus. Here I decided to venture upon crossing that stupendous range alone. Upon communicating my intentions to some of the natives, they solemnly warned me against such an enterprise, assuring me that many powerful genii held their courts among the snows of Elbruz and Kasbec. These words I disregarded, and as soon as extreme fatigue would permit me I began to ascend the Good-Gard road. With great difficulty I proceeded along this road for several days, until I

reached the towering Elbruz. During the whole of my journey this mountain had been partly hidden from me by the minor hills that surrounded it, but upon emerging from a gorge in the last of these a full view of its tremendous magnitude burst upon my sight. It was a fair and sunny afternoon in autumn when I first beheld the sublime vision. The mountain was separated from me only by a lovely green valley, through which a branch of the Aragua* wound its silent course. Never shall I forget that inspiring scene. The mountain towered before me, the grandeur of its radiant summit majestically cleaving the skies; its yawning abysses and clefts sufficiently wide to engulf a city; and its immovable aspect firm as if its base were fixed beyond the seas. As I gazed, suddenly the mountain trembled, the top rent asunder, and a huge grim spirit rose from the horrible chasm thus produced. He raised his head to heaven, and uttered a cry which shook all Georgia. At this mystic appearance I sank to the ground insensible. When I recovered from my swoon I found myself in a vast cave, illuminated only by an opening at the top, through which one ray of light streamed in. On looking round I perceived an iron door fitted in the side of the cave. This, with much difficulty, I opened, and found beyond a narrow passage tending downwards. I entered, and continued for several hours to follow whither it led. At length I heard in the distance a dull noise like the roaring of the sea, and after a while found myself borne upon the bosom of a rushing wave. I was hurried through the waters without fear or injury, whilst strange and ghastly scenes saluted my wondering eyes. Anon I was walking at the bottom of the ocean. A thousand huge monsters lay there, glaring with fixed and solemn eyes through the tenebrous gloom. I saw the kraken with its hundred arms, the great whale, the sea bear, and others unknown to dwellers upon the earth. Voiceless they glided through the regions of eternal silence, and the black billows broke far above them in the midst of loneliness and solitude. Unutterable were the feelings with which I viewed the foundation of the everlasting hills, and beheld the trackless pathways of the unfathomed sea. Lustrous gems glittered on every side; groves of coral begirt each rock; myriads of pearls gleamed constantly around; and the loveliest shells shone below me, to be crushed at each movement of my feet. Slowly I advanced until I espied a cavern, which opened before me. This I entered. Instantly a wave rose behind me and swept me swiftly down an abyss which led beneath the arches of a magnificent palace, larger and grander than any that can be boasted of in the

lands which rise above the ocean's surface. There I saw, coiled in his own vast halls, that mystic snake known among ancient Scalds by the name of Jormandugar. He it is who holds the earth girdled in his toils. For many days I sojourned here, and beheld sights of which no mortal tongue can tell. After a season: I returned to the cave in Elbruz, whence I was taken by the spirit who had brought me thither. Since then I have wandered in many regions of the earth, mingled with the peoples of many lands, and seen the myriad wonders of the world. At length, compelled by age, I have retired to this valley, where I have now dwelt in happiness and peace for twenty years.'

Here the old man ended his recital. Ernest thanked him for his narrative, adding that he likewise longed to spend the remainder of his days in that same lovely glen. The old man approved of his design, and for many years they two dwelt together in perfect harmony, tranquillity, and peace.

C. BRONTË,
May 25th, 1830.

ALBION AND MARINA

THIS is Charlotte Brontë's first love story. It was printed by permission of Mr. Clement Shorter, the owner of the copyright of all the unpublished Brontë manuscripts, in the Brontë Society Publications, Part xxx., 1920, and is now reprinted for the first time.

C. W. H.

ALBION AND MARINA

**A
TALE BY
LORD
WELLESLEY**

**PRINCIPAL PART
POSSESSING FACT
FOR ITS FOUNDATION.**

**PUBLISHED
AND SOLD BY SERGEANT
TREE
AND ALL OTHER BOOKSELLERS IN THE CHIEF GLASS TOWN,
PARIS, &C.**

PREFACE

I HAVE written this tale out of malignity for the injuries that have lately been offered to me. Many parts, especially the former, were composed under a mysterious influence that I cannot account for.

My reader will easily recognise the characters through the thin veil which I have thrown over them. I have considerably flattered Lady Zelvia Ellrington. She is not nearly so handsome as I have represented her, and she strove far more vigorously to oust some one from another person's good graces than I say. But her endeavours failed. Albion has hitherto stood firm. What he will do I cannot even pretend to guess; but I think that Marina's incomparable superiority will prevail over her Frenchified rival, who, as all the world knows, is a miller, jockey, talker, blue-stockings, charioteer, and beldam united in one...

The conclusion is wholly destitute of any foundation in truth, and I did it out of revenge. Albion and Marina are both alive and well for aught I know.

One thing, however, will certainly break my heart, and that is the admission of any scandal against Tree (the publisher); but I hope my readers will pardon me for it, as I promise to make amends with usury the next time I write a book.

C. WELLESLEY,
October 12th, 1880.

I wrote this in four hours.—C. B.

CHAPTER I ALBION

THERE is a certain sweet little pastoral village in the south of England with which I am better acquainted than most men. The scenery around it possesses no distinguishing characteristic of romantic grandeur or wildness that might figure to advantage in a novel, to which high title this brief narrative sets up no pretensions.

Neither rugged lofty rocks, nor mountains dimly huge, mark with frowns the undisturbed face of nature; but little peaceful valleys, low hills crowned with wood, murmuring cascades and streamlets, richly cultivated fields, farmhouses, cottages, and a wide river, form all the scenic features. And every hamlet has one or more great men.

This had one and he was 'na sheep-shanks.'

Every ear in the world had heard of his fame, and every tongue could bear testimony to it. I shall name him the Duke of Strathelleraye, and by that name the village was likewise denominated.

For more than thirty miles around every inch of ground belonged to him and every man was his retainer.

The magnificent villa, or rather palace, of this noble, stood on an eminence, surrounded by a vast park and the embowering shade of an ancient wood, proudly seeming to claim the allegiance of all the countryside.

The mind, achievements, and character of its great possessor, must not, *can* not, be depicted by a pen so feeble as mine; for though I could call filial love and devoted admiration to my aid, yet both would be utterly ineffective.

Though the duke seldom himself came among his attached vassals, being detained elsewhere by important avocations, yet his lady the duchess resided in the castle constantly. Of her I can only say that she was like an earthly angel. Her mind was composed of charity, beneficence, gentleness, and sweetness. All, both old and young, loved her; and the blessings of those that were ready to perish came upon her evermore.

His Grace had also two sons, who often visited Strathelleraye.

Of the youngest, Lord Cornelius, everything is said when I inform the reader that he was seventeen years of age, grave, sententious, stoical, rather haughty and sarcastic, of a fine countenance though somewhat swarthy; that he had long thick hair black as the hood's wing; and liked nothing so well as to sit in moody silence musing over the vanity of human affairs, or improving and expanding his mind by the abstruse study of the higher branches of mathematics, and that sublime science astronomy.

The eldest son, Albion, Marquis of Tagus, is the hero of my present tale. He had entered his nineteenth year; his stature was lofty; his form equal in the magnificence of its proportions to that of Apollo Belvedere. The bright wealth and curls of his rich brown hair waved over a forehead of the purest

marble in the placidity of its unveined whiteness. His nose and mouth were cast in the most perfect mould. But saw I never anything to equal his eye! Oh! I could have stood riveted with the chains of admiration gazing for hours upon it! What clearness, depth, and lucid transparency in those large orbs of radiant brown! And the fascination of his smile was irresistible, though seldom did that sunshine of the mind break through the thoughtful and almost melancholy expression of his noble features. He was a soldier, captain in the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards, and all his attitudes and actions were full of martial grace. His mental faculties were in exact keeping with such an exterior, being of the highest order; and though not like his younger brother, wholly given up to study, yet he was well versed in the ancient languages, and deeply read in the Greek and Roman classics, in addition to the best works in the British, German, and Italian tongues.

Such was my hero. The only blot I was ever able to discover in his character was that of a slight fierceness or impetuosity of temper which sometimes carried him beyond bounds, though at the slightest look or word of command from his father he instantly bridled his passion and became perfectly calm.

No wonder the duke should be, as he was, proud of such a son.

CHAPTER II

MARINA

About two miles from the castle there stood a pretty house, entirely hid from view by a thick forest, in a glade of which it was situated.

Behind it was a smooth lawn fringed with odoriferous shrubs, and before it a tasteful flower garden.

This was the abode of Sir Alured Angus, a Scotchman, who was physician to His Grace, and though of gentlemanly manners and demeanour, yet harsh, stern, and somewhat querulous in countenance and disposition.

He was a widower, and had but one child, a daughter, whom I shall call Marina, which nearly resembles her true name.

No wild rose blooming in solitude, or bluebell peering from an old wall, ever equalled in loveliness this flower of the forest. The hue of her cheek would excel the most delicate tint of the former, even when its bud is just

opening to the breath of summer, and the clear azure of her eyes would cause the latter to appear dull as a dusky hyacinth. Also, the silken tresses of her hazel hair straying in light ringlets down a neck and forehead of snow seemed more elegant than the young tendrils of a vine. Her dress was almost Quaker-like in its simplicity. Pure white or vernal green were the colours she constantly wore, without any jewels save one row of pearls round her neck. She never stirred beyond the precincts of the wooded and pleasant green lane which skirted a long cornfield near the house. There on warm summer evenings she would ramble and linger listening to the woodlark's song, and occasionally join her own more harmonious voice to its delightful warblings.

When the gloomy days and nights of autumn and winter did not permit these walks she amused herself with drawing (for which she had an exact taste), playing on the harp, reading the best English, French, and Italian works (all which languages she understood) in her father's extensive library, and sometimes a little light needlework.

Thus in a state of almost perfect seclusion (for seldom had she even Sir Alured's company, as he generally resided in London) she was quite happy, and reflected with innocent wonder on those who could find pleasure in the noisy delights of what is called 'fashionable society.'

One day, as Lady Strathelleraye was walking in the wood she met Marina, and on learning who she was, being charmed with her beauty and sweet manners, invited her to go on the morrow to the castle. She did so, and there met the Marquis of Tagus. *He* was even more surprised and pleased with her than the duchess, and when she was gone he asked his mother many questions about her, all of which she answered to his satisfaction.

For some time afterwards he appeared listless and abstracted. The reader will readily perceive that he had, to use a cant phrase, 'fallen in love.'

Lord Cornelius, his brother, warned him of the folly of doing so; but instead of listening to his sage admonitions he first strove to laugh, and then frowning at him commanded silence.

In a few days he paid a visit to Oakwood House (Sir Alured's mansion), and after that became more gloomy than before.

His father observed this, and one day as they were sitting alone remarked it to Albion, adding that he was fully acquainted with the reason.

Albion reddened but made no answer.

‘I am not, my son,’ continued the duke, ‘opposed to your wishes, though certainly there is a considerable difference of rank between yourself and Marina Angus, but that difference is compensated by the many admirable qualities she possesses.’

On hearing these words, Arthur,—Albion, I mean, —started up, and throwing himself at his father’s feet, poured forth his thanks in terms of glowing gratitude, while his fine features, flushed with excitement, spoke even more eloquently than his eloquent words.

‘Rise, Albion!’ said the duke; ‘you are worthy of her and she of you; but both are yet too young. Some years must elapse before your union takes place; therefore exert your patience, my son.’

Albion’s joy was slightly damped by this news, but his thankfulness and filial obedience as well as love forced him to acquiesce, and immediately after he quitted the room and took his way to Oakwood House.

There he related the circumstance to Marina, who, though she blushed incredulously, yet in truth felt as much gladness and as great a relief from doubt almost amounting to despair as himself.

CHAPTER III GLASS TOWN

A few months afterwards the Duke of Strathelleraye determined to visit that wonder of the world, the great city of Africa: the Glass Town, of whose splendour, magnificence, and extent, strength and riches, occasional tidings came from afar, wafted by breezes of the ocean to Merry England.

But to most of the inhabitants of that little isle it bore the character of a dream or gorgeous fiction. They were unable to comprehend how mere human beings could construct fabrics of such a marvellous size and grandeur as many of the public buildings were represented to be; and as to the ‘Tower of all the Nations,’ few believed in its existence. It seemed as the cities of old: Nineveh or Babylon with the temples of their gods, Ninus or Jupiter Belus, and their halls of Astarté and Semalt. These most people believe to be magnified by the dim haze of intervening ages, and the exaggerating page of history through which medium we behold them.

The duke, as he had received many invitations from the Glass Townians, who were impatient to behold one whose renown had spread so far, and

who likewise possessed vast dominions near the African coast, informed his lady, the Marquis of Tagus, and Lord Cornelius, that in a month's time he should take his departure with them, and that he should expect them all to be prepared at that period, adding that when they returned Marina Angus should be created Marchioness of Tagus.

Though it was a bitter trial to Albion to part with one to whom he was now so entirely devoted, yet, comforted by the last part of his father's speech, he obeyed without murmuring.

On the last evening of his stay in Strathelleraye he took a sad farewell of Marina, who wept as if hopeless; but suddenly restraining her griefs she looked up, with her beautiful eyes irradiated by a smile that like a ray of light illumined the crystal tears, and whispered:

'I shall be happy when you return.'

Then they parted; and Albion during his voyage over the wide ocean often thought for comfort on her last words.

It is a common superstition that the words uttered by a friend on separating are prophetic, and these certainly portended nothing but peace.

CHAPTER IV LITERARY AMBITIONS

In due course of time they arrived at the Glass Town, and were welcomed with enthusiastic cordiality.

After the duke had visited his kingdom he returned to the chief metropolis and established his residence there at Salamanca Palace.

The Marquis of Tagus from the noble beauty of his person attracted considerable attention wherever he went, and in a short period he had won and attached many faithful friends of the highest rank and abilities.

From his love of elegant literature and the fine arts in general, painters and poets were soon among his warmest admirers. He himself possessed a most sublime genius, but as yet its full extent was unknown to him.

One day as he was meditating alone on the world of waters that rolled between him and the fair Marina, he determined to put his feelings on paper in a tangible shape that he might hereafter show them to her when anticipation had given place to fruition. He took his pen, and in about a quarter of an hour had completed a brief poem of exquisite beauty. The

attempt pleased him and soothed the anguish that lingered in his heart. It likewise gave him an insight into the astonishing faculties of his own mind; and a longing for immortality, an ambition of glory, seized him.

He was a devoted worshipper of the divine works that the Grecian tragedians have left for all succeeding ages to marvel at, particularly those of Sophocles the Majestic; and his mind was deeply imbued with the spirit of their eagle-like flights into higher regions than that of earth or even Parnassus.

Being now sensible in a degree of his lofty powers, he determined, like Milton, to write somewhat that the traditionary muses would not willingly let die, and accordingly commenced a tragedy entitled: 'Necropolis, or the City of the Dead.' Here was set forth in a strain of the grandest mind the mysteries of ancient Egyptian worship; and he has acknowledged to me that he felt his being absorbed while he wrote it, even by the words himself had made.

Sublime is this surprising production! It is indeed, in the words of an eminent writer (Captain Tree), 'a noble instance of the almost perfectibility of human intellect'; but there hovers over it a feeling of tender melancholy, for the image of Marina haunted his thoughts, and Amalthea, his heroine, is but an impersonation of her.

This tragedy wreathed the laurels of fame round his brow, and his after-productions, each of which seemed to excel the other, added new wreaths to those which already beautified his temples.

I cannot follow him in the splendour of his literary career, nor even mention so much as the titles of his various works. Suffice it to say he became one of the greatest poets of the age; and one of the chief motives that influenced him in his exertions for renown was to render himself worthy to possess such a treasure as Marina. She in whatever he was employed was never out of his thoughts, and none had he as yet beheld among all the ladies of the Glass Town,—though rich, titled, and handsome strove by innumerable arts to gain his favour, —whom he could even compare with her.

CHAPTER V

LADY ZELVIA ELLINGTON

One evening Albion was invited to the house of Earl Cruachan, where was a large party assembled. Among the guests was one lady apparently about twenty-five or twenty-six years of age. In figure she was very tall, and both it and her face were of a perfectly Roman cast. Her features were regularly and finely formed, her full and brilliant eyes jetty black, as were the luxuriant tresses of her richly-curled hair. Her dark glowing complexion was set off by a robe of crimson velvet trimmed with ermine, and a nodding plume of black ostrich feathers added to the imposing dignity of her appearance.

Albion, notwithstanding her unusual comeliness, hardly noticed her till Earl Cruachan rose and introduced her to him as the Lady Zelviah Ellrington.

She was the most learned and noted woman in Glass Town, and he was pleased with this opportunity of seeing her.

For some time she entertained him with a discourse of the most lively eloquence, and indeed Madame de Staël herself could not have gone beyond Lady Zelviah in the conversational talent; and on this occasion she exerted herself to the utmost, as she was in the presence of so distinguished a man, and one whom she seemed ambitious to please.

At length one of the guests asked her to favour the company with a song and tune on the grand piano. At first she refused, but on Albion seconding the request rose, and taking from the drawing-room table a small volume of poems opened it at one by the Marquis of Tagus. She then set it to a fine air and sang as follows, while she skilfully accompanied her voice upon the instrument:—

I think of thee when the moonbeams play
On the placid water's face;
For thus thy blue eyes' lustrous ray
Shone with resembling grace.

I think of thee when the snowy swan
Glides calmly down the stream;
Its plumes the breezes scarcely fan,
Awed by their radiant gleam.

For thus I've seen the loud winds hush
To pass thy beauty by,
With soft caress and playful rush
'Mid thy bright tresses fly.

And I have seen the wild birds sail
In rings thy head above,

While thou hast stood like lily pale
Unknowing of their love.

Oh! for the day when once again
Mine eyes shall gaze on thee;
But an ocean vast, a sounding main,
An ever howling sea,
Roll on between
With their billows green,
High tost tempestuously.

This song had been composed by Albion soon after his arrival at the Glass Town. The person addressed was Marina. The full rich tones of Lady Zelvia's voice did ample justice to the subject, and he expressed his sense of the honour she had done him in appropriate terms.

When she had finished the company departed, for it was then rather late.

CHAPTER VI THE SPIRIT OF MARINA

As Albion pursued his way homewards alone he began insensibly to meditate on the majestic charms of Lady Zelvia Ellrington, and to compare them with the gentler ones of Marina Angus. At first he could hardly tell which to give the preference to, for though he still almost idolised Marina, yet an absence of four years had considerably deadened his remembrance of her person.

While he was thus employed he heard a soft but mournful voice whisper 'Albion!'

He turned hastily round, and saw the form of the identical Marina at a little distance distinctly visible by the moonlight.

'Marina! My dearest Marina!' he exclaimed, springing towards her, while joy unutterable filled his heart; 'how did you come here? Have the angels in Heaven brought you?'

So saying he stretched out his hand, but she eluded his grasp, and slowly gliding away, said: 'Do not forget me; I shall be happy when you return.'

Then the apparition vanished. It seemed to have appeared merely to assert her superiority over her rival, and indeed the moment Albion beheld her beauty he felt that it was peerless.

But now wonder and perplexity took possession of his mind. He could not account for this vision except by the common solution of supernatural agency, and that ancient creed' his enlightened understanding had hitherto rejected until it was forced upon him by this extraordinary incident.

One thing there was, however, the interpretation of which he thought he could not mistake, and that was the repetition of her last words: 'I shall be happy when you return.' It showed that she was still alive, and that which he had seen could not be her wraith. However, he made a memorandum of the day and hour, namely, the 18th of June 1815, twelve o'clock at night.

From this time the natural melancholy turn of his disposition increased, for the dread of her death before he should return was constantly before him, and the ardency of his adoration and desire to see her again redoubled.

At length, not being able any longer to bear his misery he revealed it to his father; and the duke, touched with his grief and the fidelity of his attachment, gave him full permission to visit England and bring back Marina with him to Africa.

CHAPTER VII ALBION'S RETURN

I need not trouble the reader with a minute detail of the circumstances of Albion's voyage, but shall pass on to what happened after he arrived in England.

It was a fair evening in September 1815 when he reached Strathelleraye.

Without waiting to enter the halls of his fathers he proceeded immediately to Oakwood House. As he approached it he almost sickened when for an instant the thought that she might be no more passed across his mind, but summoning hope to his aid and resting on her golden anchor he passed up the lawn and gained the glass doors of the drawing-room.

As he drew near a sweet symphony of harp music swelled on his ear. His heart bounded within him at the sound. He knew that no fingers but hers could create those melodious tones with which now blended the harmony of a sweet and sad but well-known voice. He lifted the vine branch that shaded the door and beheld Marina, more beautiful he thought than ever, seated at her harp sweeping with her slender fingers the quivering chords.

Without being observed by her, as she had her face turned from him, he entered, and sitting down leaned his head on his hand and, closing his eyes, listened with feelings of overwhelming transport to the following words:—

Long my anxious ear hath listened
For the step that ne'er returned;
And my tearful eye hath glistened,
And my heart hath daily burned,
But now I rest.

Nature's self seemed clothed in mourning;
Even the star-like woodland flower,
With its leaflets fair, adorning
The pathway to the forest-bower,
Drooped its head.

From the cavern of the mountain,
From the groves that crown the hill,
From the stream, and from the fountain,
Sounds prophetic murmured still,
Betokening grief.

Boding winds came fitful, sighing,
Through the tall and leafy trees;
Birds of omen, wildly crying,
Sent their calls upon the breeze
Wailing round me.

At each sound I paled and trembled,
At each step I raised my head,
Harkening if it his resembled,
Or if news that he was dead
Were come from far.

All my days were days of weeping;
Thoughts of grim despair were stirred;
Time on leaden feet seemed creeping;
Long heart-sickness, hope deferred
Cankered my heart.

Here the music and singing suddenly ceased.

Albion raised his head. All was darkness except where the silver moonbeams showed a desolate and ruined apartment instead of the elegant parlour that a few minutes before had gladdened his sight.

No trace of Marina was visible, no harp or other instrument of harmony, and the cold lunar light streamed through a void space instead of the glass door. He sprang up and called aloud: 'Marina! Marina!' But only an echo as of empty rooms answered. Almost distracted he rushed into the open air. A

child was standing alone at the garden gate, who advanced towards him and said: 'I will lead you to Marina Angus; she has removed from that house to another.'

Albion followed the child till they came to a long row of tall dark trees leading to a churchyard, which they entered, and the child vanished, leaving Albion beside a white marble tombstone on which was chiselled:—

MARINA ANGUS

She died

18th of June 1815

at

12 o'clock

midnight.

When Albion had read this he felt a pang of horrible anguish wring his heart and convulse his whole frame. With a loud groan he fell across the tomb and lay there senseless a long time, till at length he was waked from the death-like trance to behold the spirit of Marina, which stood beside him for a moment, and then murmuring, 'Albion, I am happy, for I am at peace,' disappeared!

For a few days he lingered round her tomb, and then quitted Strathelleraye, where he was never again heard of.

The reason of Marina's death I shall briefly relate. Four years after Albion's departure tidings came to the village that he was dead. The news broke Marina's faithful heart. The day after, she was no more.

C. B.,

October 12th, 1830.

THE RIVALS

THE RIVALS

A SHORT DRAMA WRITTEN BY

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

AT THE AGE OF FOURTEEN YEARS.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LORD ARTHUR.

***The Rivals:* MARIAN. LADY ZENOBIA ELLRINGTON.**

These characters will be easily recognised under their assumed names in the story entitled ‘Albion and Marina,’ pp. 75-94.

THE RIVALS

SCENE—*A thick forest, under the trees of which* LADY ZENOBIA ELLRINGTON *is reposing, dressed in her usual attire of a crimson-velvet robe and black plumes. She speaks:*

'Tis eve: how that rich sunlight streameth through
The unwoven arches of this sylvan roof!
How their long, lustrous lines of light illumine,
With trembling radiance, all the agèd boles
Of elms majestic as the lofty columns
That proudly rear their tall forms to the dome
Of old cathedral or imperial palace!
Yea, they are grander than the mightiest shafts
That e'er by hand of man were fashioned forth
Their holy, solemn temples to uphold;
And sweeter far than the harmonious peals
Of choral thunder, that in music roll
Through vaulted isles, are the low forest sounds
Murmuring around: of wind and stirrèd leaf,
And warbled song of nightingale or lark
Whose swelling cadences and dying falls
And whelming gushes of rich melody
Attune to meditation, all serene,
The weary spirit; and draw forth still thoughts
Of happy scenes half veiled by the mists
Of bygone times. Yea, that calm influence
Hath soothed the billowy troubles of my heart
Till scarce one sad thought rises, though I sit
Beneath these trees, utterly desolate.
But no, not utterly, for still one friend
I fain would hope remains to brighten yet
My mournful journey through this vale of tears;
And, while he shines, all other, lesser lights

May wane and fade unnoticed from the sky.
But more than friend, e'en he can never be:

[Heaves a deep sigh.

That thought is sorrowful, but yet I'll hope.
What is my rival? Nought but a weak girl,
Ungifted with the state and majesty
That mark superior minds. Her eyes gleam not
Like windows to a soul of loftiness;
She hath not raven locks that lightly wave
Over a brow whose calm placidity
Might emulate the white and polished marble.

[A white dove flutters by.

Ha! what art thou, fair creature? It hath vanished
Down that long vista of low-drooping trees.
How gracefully its pinions waved! Methinks
It was the spirit of this solitude.
List! I hear footsteps; and the rustling leaves
Proclaim the approach of some corporeal being.

*[A young girl advances up the vista, dressed in green, with a garland
of flowers wreathed in the curls of her hazel hair. She comes
towards LADY ZENOBIA, and says:*

GIRL.

Lady, methinks I erst have seen thy face.
Art thou not that Zenobia, she whose name
Renown hath come e'en to this fair retreat?

LADY ELLRINGTON.

Aye, maiden, thou hast rightly guessed. But how
Didst recognise me?

GIRL.

In Verreopolis

I saw thee walking in those gardens fair
That like a rich, embroidered belt surround
That mighty city; and one bade me look
At her whose genius had illumined bright
Her age, and country, with undying splendour.

The majesty of thy imperial form,
The fire and sweetness of thy radiant eye,
Alike conspired to impress thine image
Upon my memory; and thus it is
That now I know thee as thou sittest there
Queen-like, beneath the over-shadowing boughs
Of that huge oak-tree, monarch of this wood.

LADY ELLRINGTON [*smiling graciously*].
Who art thou, maiden?

GIRL.

Marian is my name.

LADY ELLRINGTON [*starting up: aside*].
Ha! my rival! [*Sternly*] What dost thou here alone?

MARIAN [*aside*].
How her tone changed! [*Aloud*] My favourite cushat-dove,
Whose plumes are whiter than new-fallen snow,
Hath wandered, heedless, from my vigilant care.
I saw it gleaming through these dusky trees,
Fair as a star, while soft it glided by:
So have I come to find and lure it back.

LADY ELLRINGTON.
Are all thy affections centred in a bird?
For thus thou speakest, as though nought were worthy
Of thought or care saving a silly dove!

MARIAN.
Nay, lady, I've a father, and mayhap
Others whom gratitude or tenderest ties,
If such there be, bind my heart closer to.

LADY ELLRINGTON.

But birds and flowers and such trifles vain
Seem most to attract thy love, if I may form
A judgment from thy locks elaborate curled
And wreathed around with woven garlandry,
And from thy whining speech, all redolent
With tone of most affected sentiment.

[She seizes MARIAN, and exclaims with a violent gesture:

Wretch, I could kill thee!

MARIAN.

Why, what have I done?

How have I wronged thee? Surely thou 'rt distraught!

LADY ELLRINGTON.

How hast thou wronged me? Where didst weave the net
Whose cunning meshes have entangled round
The mightiest heart that e'er in mortal breast
Did beat responsive unto human feeling?

MARIAN.

The net? What net? I wove no net; she's frantic!

LADY ELLRINGTON.

Dull, simple creature! Canst not understand?

MARIAN.

Truly, I cannot. 'Tis to me a problem,
An unsolved riddle, an enigma dark.

LADY ELLRINGTON.

I'll tell thee, then. But, hark! What voice is that?

VOICE [*from the forest*].

Marian, where art thou? I have found a rose
Fair as thyself. Come hither, and I'll place it
With the blue violets on thine ivory brow.

MARIAN.

He calls me; I must go; restrain me not.

LADY ELLINGTON.

Nay! I will hold thee firmly as grim death.
Thou need'st not struggle, for my grasp is strong.
Thou shalt not go: Lord Arthur shall come here,
And I will gain the rose despite of thee!
Now for my hour of triumph: here he comes.

[LORD ARTHUR *advances from among the trees, exclaiming on
seeing* LADY ELLINGTON.

LORD ARTHUR.

Zenobia! How com'st thou here? What ails thee?
Thy cheek is flushed as with a fever glow;
Thine eyes flash strangest radiance; and thy frame
Trembles like to the wind-stirred aspen-tree!

LADY ELLINGTON.

Give me the rose, Lord Arthur, for methinks
I merit it more than my girlish rival;
I pray thee now grant my request, and place
That rose upon my forehead, not on hers;
Then will I serve thee all my after-days
As thy poor handmaid, as thy humblest slave,
Happy to kiss the dust beneath thy tread,
To kneel submissive in thy lordly presence.
Oh! turn thine eyes from her and look on me
As I kneel here imploring at thy feet,

Supremely blest if but a single glance
Could tell me that thou art not wholly deaf
To my petition, earnestly preferred.

LORD ARTHUR.

Lady, thou'rt surely mad! Depart, and hush
These importunate cries. They are not worthy
Of the great name which thou hast fairly earned.

LADY ELLRINGTON.

Give me that rose, and I to thee will cleave
Till death. Hear me, and give it me, Lord Arthur!

LORD ARTHUR [*after a few minutes' deliberation*].

Here, take the flower, and keep it for my sake.

[*MARIAN utters a suppressed scream, and sinks to the ground.*]

LADY ELLRINGTON [*assisting her to rise*].

Now I have triumphed! But I'll not exult;
Yet know, henceforth, I'm thy superior.
Farewell, my lord; I thank thee for thy preference!
[*She plunges into the wood and disappears.*]

LORD ARTHUR.

Fear nothing, Marian, for a fading flower
Is not symbolical of constancy.
But take this sign; [*Gives her his diamond ring*] enduring adamant
Betokens well affection that will live
Long as life animates my faithful heart.
Now let us go; for, see, the deepening shades
Of twilight darken our lone forest-path;
And, lo! thy dove comes gliding through the murk,
Fair wanderer, back to its loved mistress' care!
Luna will light us on our journey home:

For, see, her lamp shines radiant in the sky,
And her bright beams will pierce the thickest boughs.

[Exeunt, and curtain falls.]

From an unpublished manuscript by Charlotte Brontë, entitled 'Visits in Verreopolis,' vol. i., completed December 11th, 1880.

THE FAIRY GIFT

UNDER the title of 'The Four Wishes' this story was first printed by Mr. Clement Shorter in April 1918, in an edition limited to twenty copies for private circulation only.

It was published, with three illustrations, in the *Strand Magazine*, December 1918, pp. 461-466.

The title of 'The Fairy Gift' was given to the story by Charlotte Brontë.

C. W. H.

THE FAIRY GIFT

ONE cold evening in December 17—, while I was yet but a day labourer, though not even at that time wholly without some aspirations after fame and some intimations of future greatness, I was sitting alone by my cottage fire engaged in ambitious reveries of *l'avenir*, and amusing myself with wild and extravagant imaginations. A thousand evanescent wishes flitted through my mind, one of which was scarcely formed when another succeeded it; then a third, equally transitory, and so on.

While I was thus employed with building castles in the air my frail edifices were suddenly dissipated by an emphatic 'Hem!' I started, and raised my head. Nothing was visible, and, after a few minutes, supposing it to be only fancy, I resumed my occupation of weaving the web of waking visions. Again the 'Hem!' was heard; again I looked up, when lo! sitting in the opposite chair I beheld the diminutive figure of a man dressed all in green. With a pretty considerable fluster I demanded his business, and how he had contrived to enter the house without my knowledge.

'I am a fairy,' he replied, in a shrill voice; 'but fear nothing; my intentions are not mischievous. On the contrary, I intend to gift you with the power of obtaining four wishes, provided that you wish them at different times; and if you should happen to find the fruition of my theme not equal to your anticipations, still you are at liberty to cast it aside, which you must do before another wish is granted.'

When he had concluded this information he gave me a ring, telling me that by the potency of the spell with which it was invested my desires would prove immediately successful.

I expressed my gratitude for this gift in the warmest terms, and then inquired how I should dispose of the ring when I had four times arrived at the possession of that which I might wish.

'Come with it at midnight to the little valley in the uplands, a mile hence,' said he, 'and there you will be rid of it when it becomes useless.'

With these words he vanished from my sight. I stood for some minutes incredulous of the reality of that which I had witnessed, until at last I was convinced by the green-coloured ring set in gold that sparkled in my hand.

By some strange influence I had been preserved from any feeling of fear during my conversation with the fairy, but now I began to feel certain doubts and misgivings as to the propriety of having any dealings with supernatural beings. These, however, I soon quelled, and began forthwith to consider what should be the nature of my first wish. After some deliberation I found the desire for beauty was uppermost in my mind, and therefore formed a wish that next morning when I arose I should find myself possessed of surpassing loveliness.

That night my dreams were filled with anticipations of future grandeur, but the gay visions which my sleeping fancy called into being were dispelled by the first sounds of morning.

I awoke lightsome and refreshed, and springing out of bed glanced half-doubtingly into the small looking-glass which decorated the wall of my apartment, to ascertain if any change for the better had been wrought in me since the preceding night.

Never shall I forget the thrill of delighted surprise which passed through me when I beheld my altered appearance. There I stood, tall, slender, and graceful as a young poplar tree, all my limbs moulded in the most perfect and elegant symmetry, my complexion of the purest red and white, my eyes blue and brilliant, swimming in liquid radiance under the narrow dark arches of two exquisitely-formed eyebrows, my mouth of winning sweetness, and, lastly, my hair clustering in rich black curls over a forehead smooth as ivory.

In short, I have never yet heard or read of any beauty that could at all equal the splendour of comeliness with which I was at that moment invested.

I stood for a long time gazing at myself in a trance of admiration while happiness such as I had never known before overflowed my heart. That day happened to be Sunday, and accordingly I put on my best clothes and proceeded forthwith towards the church. The service had just commenced when I arrived, and as I walked up the aisle to my pew I felt that the eyes of the whole assembly were upon me, and that proud consciousness gave an elasticity to my gait which added stateliness and majesty to my other innumerable graces. Among those who viewed me most attentively was Lady Beatrice Ducie. This personage was the widow of Lord Ducie, owner of the chief part of the village where I resided and nearly all the surrounding land for many miles, who, when he died, left her the whole of

his immense estates. She was without children and perfectly at liberty to marry whomsoever she might chance to fix her heart on, and therefore, though her ladyship had passed the meridian of life, was besides fat and ugly, and into the bargain had the reputation of being a witch, I cherished hopes that she might take a liking for me, seeing I was so very handsome; and by making me her spouse raise me at once from indigence to the highest pitch of luxury and affluence.

These were my ambitious meditations as I slowly retraced my steps homeward.

In the afternoon I again attended church, and again Lady Ducie favoured me with many smiles and glances expressive of her admiration. At length my approaching good fortune was placed beyond a doubt, for while I was standing in the porch after service was over she happened to pass, and inclining her head towards me, said: 'Come to my house to-morrow at four o'clock.'? I only answered by a low bow and then hastened back to my cottage.

On Monday afternoon I dressed myself in my best, and putting a Christmas rose in the buttonhole of my coat, hastened to the appointed rendezvous.

When I entered the avenue of Ducie Castle a footman in rich livery stopped me and requested me to follow him. I complied, and we proceeded down a long walk to a bower of evergreens, where sat her ladyship in a pensive posture. Her stout, lusty figure was arrayed in a robe of purest white muslin, elegantly embroidered. On her head she wore an elaborately curled wig, among which borrowed tresses was twined a wreath of artificial flowers, and her brawny shoulders were enveloped in a costly Indian shawl. At my approach she arose and saluted me. I returned the compliment, and when we were seated, and the footman had withdrawn, business summarily commenced by her tendering me the possession of her hand and heart, both which offers, of course, I willingly accepted.

Three weeks after, we were married in the parish church by special licence, amidst the rejoicings of her numerous tenantry, to whom a sumptuous entertainment was that day given.

I now entered upon a new scene of life. Every object which met my eyes spoke of opulence and grandeur. Every meal of which I partook seemed to me a luxurious feast. As I wandered through the vast halls and magnificent

apartments of my new residence I felt my heart dilating with gratified pride at the thought that they were my own.

Towards the obsequious domestics that thronged around me I behaved with the utmost respect and deference, being impelled thereto by a feeling of awe inspired by their superior breeding and splendid appearance.

I was now constantly encompassed by visitors from among those who moved in the highest circles of society. My time was passed in the enjoyment of all sorts of pleasures; balls, concerts, and dinners were given almost every day at the castle in honour of our wedding. My evenings were spent in hearing music, or seeing dancing and gormandising; my days in excursions over the country, either on horseback or in a carriage.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, I was not happy. The rooms were so numerous that I was often lost in my own house, and sometimes got into awkward predicaments in attempting to find some particular apartment. Our high-bred guests despised me for my clownish manners and deportment. I was forced to bear patiently the most humiliating jokes and sneers from noble lips. My own servants insulted me with impunity; and, finally, my wife's temper showed itself every day more and more in the most hideous light. She became terribly jealous, and would hardly suffer me to go out of her sight a moment. In short, before the end of three months I sincerely wished myself separated from her and reduced again to the situation of a plain and coarse but honest and contented ploughboy.

This separation was occasioned by the following incident sooner than I expected. At a party which we gave one evening there chanced to be present a young lady named Cecilia Standon. She possessed no mean share of beauty, and had besides the most graceful demeanour I ever saw. Her manner was kind, gentle, and obliging, without any of that haughty superciliousness which so annoyed me in others of my fashionable acquaintances. If I made a foolish observation or transgressed against the rules of politeness she did not give vent to her contempt in a laugh or suppressed titter, but informed me in a whisper what I ought to have done, and instructed me how to do it.

When she was gone I remarked to my wife what a kind and excellent lady Miss Cecilia Standon was. 'Yes,' exclaimed she, reddening, 'every one can please you but me. Don't think to elude my vigilance, I saw you talking and laughing with her, you low-born creature whom I raised from obscurity to splendour. And yet not one spark of gratitude do you feel towards me.'

But I will have my revenge.' So saying she left me to meditate alone on what that revenge might be.

The same night, as I lay in bed restless, I heard suddenly a noise of footsteps outside the chamber door. Compelled by irresistible curiosity, I rose and opened it without making any sound. My surprise was great on beholding the figure of my wife stealing along on tiptoe with her back towards me, and a lighted candle in her hand. Anxious to know what could be her motive for walking about the house at this time of night I followed softly, taking care to time my steps so as to coincide with hers.

After proceeding along many passages and galleries which I had never before seen, we descended a very long staircase that led us underneath the coal and wine cellars to a damp, subterraneous vault. Here she stopped and deposited the candle on the ground. I shrank instinctively, for the purpose of concealment, behind a massive stone pillar which upheld the arched roof on one side.

The rumours which I had often heard of her being a witch passed with painful distinctness across my mind, and I trembled violently. Presently she knelt with folded hands and began to mutter some indistinguishable words in a strange tone. Flames now darted out of the earth, and huge smouldering clouds of smoke rolled over the slimy walls, concealing their hideousness from the eye.

At length the dead silence that had hitherto reigned unbroken was dissipated by a tremendous cry which shook the house to its centre, and I saw six black, indefinable figures gliding through the darkness bearing a funeral bier on which lay arranged, as I had seen her the previous evening, the form of Cecilia Standon. Her dark eyes were closed, and their long lashes lay motionless on a cheek pale as marble. She was quite stiff and dead.

At this appalling sight I could restrain myself no longer, and uttering a loud shriek I sprang from behind the pillar. My wife saw me. She started from her kneeling position, and rushed furiously towards where I stood, exclaiming in tones rendered tremulous by excessive fury: 'Wretch, wretch, what demon has lured thee hither to thy fate?' With these words she seized me by the throat and attempted to strangle me.

I screamed and struggled in vain. Life was ebbing apace when suddenly she loosened her grasp, tottered, and fell dead.

When I was sufficiently recovered from the effects of her infernal grip to look around I saw by the light of the candle a little man in a green coat striding over her and flourishing a bloody dagger in the air. In his sharp, wild physiognomy I immediately recognised the fairy who six months ago had given me the ring.

That was the occasion of my present situation. He had stabbed my wife through the heart, and thus afforded me opportune relief at the moment when I so much needed it.

After tendering him my most ardent thanks for his kindness I ventured to ask what we should do with the dead body.

‘Leave that to me,’ he replied. ‘But now as the day is dawning, and I must soon be gone, do you wish to return to your former rank of a happy, honest labourer, being deprived of the beauty which has been the source of so much trouble to you, or will you remain as you are? Decide quickly, for my time is limited.’

I replied unhesitatingly, ‘Let me return to my former rank,’ and no sooner were the words out of my mouth than I found myself standing alone at the porch of my humble cottage, plain and coarse as ever, without any remains of the extreme comeliness with which I had been so lately invested.

I cast a glance at the tall towers of Ducie Castle which appeared in the distance faintly illuminated by the light reflected from rosy clouds hovering over the eastern horizon, and then, stooping as I passed beneath the lowly lintel, once more crossed the threshold of my parental hut.

A day or two after, while I was sitting at breakfast; a neighbour entered and, after inquiring how I did, etc., asked me where I had been for the last half year. Seeing it necessary to dissemble, I answered that I had been on a visit to a relation who lived at a great distance. This satisfied him, and I then inquired if anything had happened in the village since my departure.

‘Yes,’ said he, ‘a little while after you were gone Lady Ducie married the handsomest young man that was ever seen, but nobody knew where he came from, and most people thought he was a fairy; and now about four days ago Lady Ducie, her husband, and Lord Standon’s eldest daughter all vanished in the same night and have never been heard of since, though the strictest search has been made after them. Yesterday her ladyship’s brother came and took possession of the estate, and he is trying to hush up the matter as much as he can.’

This intelligence gave me no small degree of satisfaction, as I was now certain that none of the villagers had any suspicion of my dealings with the fairy.

But to proceed. I had yet liberty to make three more wishes; and, after much consideration, being convinced of the vanity of desiring such a transitory thing as my first, I fixed upon 'superior talent' as the aim of my second wish; and no sooner had I done so than I felt an expansion, as it were, of soul within me.

Everything appeared to my mental vision in a new light. High thoughts elevated my mind, and abstruse meditations racked my brain continually. But you shall presently hear the upshot of this sudden *éclaircissement*.

One day I was sent to a neighbouring market town, by one Mr. Tenderden, a gentleman of some consequence in our village, for the purpose of buying several articles in glass and china.

When I had made my purchases I directed them to be packed up in straw, and then with the basket on my back trudged off homeward. But ere I was half-way night overtook me. There was no moon, and the darkness was also much increased by a small mizzling rain. Cold and drenched to the skin, I arrived at The Rising Sun, a little wayside inn, which lay in my route.

On opening the door my eyes were agreeably saluted by the light of a bright warm fire, round which sat about half a dozen of my acquaintance.

After calling for a drop of something to warm me, and carefully depositing the basket of glass on the ground, I seated myself amongst them. They were engaged in a discussion as to whether a monarchical or republican form of government was the best. The chief champion of the republican side was Bob Sylvester, a blacksmith by trade, and of the largest loquacity of any man I ever saw. He was proud of his argumentative talents, but by dint of my fairy gift I soon silenced him, amid cheers from both sides of the house.

Bob was a man of hot temper, and not calculated for lying down quietly under a defeat. He therefore rose and challenged me to single combat. I accepted, and a regular battle ensued. After some hard hits he closed in furiously, and dealt me a tremendous left-handed blow. I staggered, reeled, and fell insensible. The last thing I remember was a horrible crash as if the house was tumbling in about my ears.

When I recovered my senses I was laid in bed in my own house, all cut, bruised, and bloody. I was soon given to understand that the basket of glass

was broken, and Mr. Tenderden, being a miserly, hard-hearted man, made me stand to the loss, which was upwards of five pounds.

When I was able to walk about again I determined to get rid of my ring forthwith in the manner the fairy had pointed out, seeing that it brought me nothing but ill-luck.

It was a fine clear night in October when I reached the little valley in the uplands before mentioned. There was a gentle frost, and the stars were twinkling with the lustre of diamonds in a sky of deep and cloudless azure. A chill breeze whistled dreamily in the gusty passes of the hills that surrounded the vale, but I wrapped my cloak around me and standing in a sheltered nook boldly awaited the event.

After about half an hour of dead silence I heard a sound as of many voices weeping and lamenting at a distance. This continued for some time until it was interrupted by another voice, seemingly close at hand. I started at the contiguity of the sound, and looked on every side, but nothing was visible. Still the strain kept rising and drawing nearer. At length the following words, sung in a melancholy though harmonious tone, became distinctly audible:—

Hearken, O Mortal! to the wail
Which round the wandering night-winds fling,
Soft-sighing 'neath the moonbeams pale,
How low! how old! its murmuring!

No other voice, no other tone,
Disturbs the silence deep;
All, saving that prophetic moan,
Are hushed in quiet sleep.

The moon and each small lustrous star,
That journey through the boundless sky,
Seem, as their radiance from afar
Falls on the still earth silently,

To weep the fresh descending dew
That decks with gems the world:
Sweet teardrops of the glorious blue
Above us wide unfurled.

But, hark! again the sighing wail
Upon the rising breeze doth swell.
Oh! hasten from this haunted vale,
Mournful as a funeral knell!

For here, when gloomy midnight reigns,

The fairies form their ring,
And, unto wild unearthly strains,
In measured cadence sing.

No human eye their sports may see,
No human tongue their deeds reveal;
The sweetness of their melody
The ear of man may never feel.

But now the elfin horn resounds,
No longer mayst thou stay;
Near and more near the music sounds,
Then, Mortal, haste away!

Here I certainly heard the music of a very sweet and mellow horn. At that instant the ring which I held in my hand melted and became like a drop of dew, which trickled down my fingers and falling on the dead leaves spread around, vanished.

Having now no further business I immediately quitted the valley and returned home...

Being very tired and sleepy I retired to bed. As I have no doubt my reader is by this time in much the same state, I bid him good-bye.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË,
December 18th, 1830.

From *Visits in Verreopolis*, vol. II. chap. ii., by the Honourable Charles Albert Florian, Lord Wellesley, aged ten years. Published by Sergeant Bud. The tale is related by, and is a passage from the early life of, Captain Bud, the father of the fictitious publisher.—C. W. H.

LOVE AND JEALOUSY

No title was given by Charlotte Brontë to this story, which was probably intended as a sequel to the short drama printed on pp. 95-104.

The original manuscript has been divided into two parts, one sheet of four pages having been removed and certain words erased (see footnotes on pages 126 and 129), apparently in an attempt to make it appear as two separate and complete manuscripts. The missing words have been obtained from a transcript made before the manuscript was mutilated.

C. W. H.

LOVE AND JEALOUSY

IN the autumn of the year 1831, being weary of study, and the melancholy solitude of the vast streets and mighty commercial marts of our great Babel, and being fatigued with the ever-resounding thunder of the sea, with the din of a thousand self-moving engines, with the dissonant cries of all nations, kindreds, and tongues, congregated together in the gigantic emporium of commerce, of arts, of God-like wisdom, of boundless learning, and of superhuman knowledge; being dazzled with continually beholding the glory, the power, the riches, dominion, and radiant beauty of the city which sitteth like a queen upon the waters; in one word, being tired of Verdopolis and all its magnificence, I determined on a trip into the country.

Accordingly, the day after this resolution was formed, I rose with the sun, collected a few essential articles of dress, etc., packed them neatly in a light knapsack, arranged my apartment, partook of a wholesome repast, and then, after locking the door and delivering the key to my landlady, I set out with a light heart and joyous step.

After three days of continued travel I arrived on the banks of a wide and profound river winding through a vast valley embosomed in hills whose robe of rich and flowery verdure was broken only by the long shadow of groves, and here and there by clustering herds and flocks lying, white as snow, in the green hollows between the mountains. It was the evening of a calm summer day when I reached this enchanting spot. The only sounds now audible were the songs of shepherds, swelling and dying at intervals, and the murmur of gliding waves. I neither knew nor cared where I was. My bodily faculties of eye and ear were absorbed in the contemplation of this delightful scene, and, wandering unheedingly along, I left the guidance of the river and entered a wood, invited by the warbling of a hundred forest minstrels. Soon I perceived the narrow, tangled woodpath to widen, and gradually it assumed the appearance of a green shady alley. Occasionally bowers of roses and myrtles appeared by the pathside, with soft banks of moss for the weary to repose on. Notwithstanding these indications of individual property, curiosity and the allurements of music and cool shade

led me forwards. At length I entered a glade in the wood, in the midst of which was a small but exquisitely beautiful marble edifice of pure and dazzling whiteness. On the broad steps of the portico two figures were reclining, at sight of whom I instantly stepped behind a low, wide-spreading fig-tree, where I could hear and see all that passed without fear of detection. One was a youth of lofty stature and remarkably graceful demeanour, attired in a rich purple vest and mantle, with closely fitting white pantaloons of white woven silk, displaying to advantage the magnificent proportions of his form. A richly adorned belt was girt tightly round his waist from which depended a scimitar whose golden hilt, and scabbard of the finest Damascus steel, glittered with gems of inestimable value. His steel-barred cap, crested with tall, snowy plumes, lay beside him, its absence revealing more clearly the rich curls of dark, glossy hair clustering round a countenance distinguished by the noble beauty of its features, but still more by the radiant fire of genius and intellect visible in the intense brightness of his large, dark, and lustrous eyes.

The other form was that of a very young and slender girl, whose complexion was delicately, almost transparently, fair. Her cheeks were tinted with a rich, soft crimson, her features moulded in the utmost perfection of loveliness; while the clear light of her brilliant hazel eyes, and the soft waving of her auburn ringlets, gave additional charms to what seemed already infinitely too beautiful for this earth. Her dress was a white robe of the finest texture the Indian loom can produce. The only ornaments she wore were a long chain which encircled her neck twice and hung lower than her waist, composed of alternate beads of the finest emeralds and gold; and a slight gold ring on the third finger of her left hand, which, together with a small crescent of pearls glistening on her forehead (which is always worn by the noble matrons of Verdopolis), betokened that she had entered the path of wedded life. With a sweet vivacity in her look and manner the young bride was addressing her lord thus when I first came in sight of the peerless pair:

‘No, no, my lord; if I sing the song you shall choose it. Now, once more, what shall I sing? The moon is risen, and, if your decision is not prompt, I will not sing at all!’

To this he answered: ‘Well, if I am threatened with the entire loss of the pleasure if I defer my choice, I will have that sweet song which I overheard you singing the evening before I left Scotland.’*

With a smiling blush she took a little ivory lyre, and, in a voice of the most touching melody, sang the following stanzas:—

He is gone, and all grandeur has fled from the mountain;
All beauty departed from stream and from fountain;
 A dark veil is hung
 O'er the bright sky of gladness,
 And, where birds sweetly sung,
 There's a murmur of sadness;
The wind sings with a warning tone
 Through many a shadowy tree;
I hear, in every passing moan,
 The voice of destiny.

Then, O Lord of the Waters! the Great and All-seeing!
Preserve in Thy mercy his safety and being;
 May he trust in Thy might
 When the dark storm is howling,
 And the blackness of night
 Over Heaven is scowling;
But may the sea flow glidingly
 With gentle summer waves;
And silent may all tempests lie
 Chained in Æolian caves!

Yet, though ere he returnest long years will have vanished,
Sweet hope from my bosom shall never be banished:
 I will think of the time
 When his step, lightly bounding,
 Shall be heard on the rock
 Where the cataract is sounding;
When the banner of his father's host
 Shall be unfurled on high,
To welcome back the pride and boast
 Of England's chivalry!

Yet tears will flow forth while of hope I am singing;
Still despair her dark shadow is over me flinging;
 But, when he's far away,
 I will pluck the wild flower
 On bank and on brae
 At the still, moonlight hour;
And I will twine for him a wreath
 Low in the fairy's dell;
Methought I heard the night-wind breathe
 That solemn word: 'Farewell!'^{*}—

When the lady had concluded her song I stepped from my place of concealment, and was instantly perceived by the noble youth (whom, of

course, every reader will have recognised as the Marquis of Douro).

He gave me a courteous welcome, and invited me to proceed with him to his country palace, as it was now wearing late. I willingly accepted the invitation, and, in a short time, we arrived there.

It is a truly noble structure, built in the purest style of Grecian architecture, situated in the midst of a vast park, embosomed in richly wooded hills, perfumed with orange and citron groves, and watered by a branch of the Gambia, almost equal in sight to the parent stream.

The magnificence of the interior is equal to that of the outside. There is an air of regal state and splendour throughout all the lofty domed apartments which strikes the spectator with awe for the lord of so imposing a residence. The marquis has a particular pride in the knowledge that he is the owner of one of the most splendid, select, and extensive libraries now in the possession of any individual. His picture and statue galleries likewise contain many of the finest works, both of the ancient and modern masters, particularly the latter, of whom the marquis is a most generous and munificent patron. In his cabinet of curiosities I observed a beautiful casket of wrought gold. At my request he opened it and produced the contents, viz. a manuscript copy of that rare work, 'The Autobiography of Captain Leaf.' It was written on a roll of vellum, but much discoloured and rendered nearly illegible by time. To my eager inquiries respecting the manner in which he had obtained so inestimable a treasure, he replied, with a smile:

'That question I must decline to answer. It is a secret with which I alone am acquainted.'

I likewise noticed a brace of pistols, most exquisitely wrought and highly finished. He told me they were the *chef-d'œuvre* of Darrow, the best manufacturer of firearms in the universe. I counted one hundred gold and silver medals, which had been presented to this youthful but all-accomplished nobleman by different literary and scientific establishments. They were all contained in a truly splendid gold vase awarded to him last year by the Academy of Modern Athenians (as that learned body somewhat presumptuously chooses to style itself) as being the composer of the best epigram in Greek. Above this was suspended a silver bow and quiver, the first prize given by the Royal Society of Archers, together with a bit, bridle, spurs, and stirrups, all of fine gold, obtained from the Honourable Community of Equestrians. Near these lay several withered wreaths of myrtle, laurel, etc., etc., won by him as conqueror in the great African

Biennial Games. On a rich stand of polished ebony were ranged twenty-three beautiful vases of marble, alabaster, etc., all richly carved in basso-relievo, remarkable for classic elegance of form, design, and execution. Some of these were filled with cameos, others with ancient coins, and others again bore branches of scarlet and white coral, pearls, gems of various sorts, fossils, etc. But what interested me more than all these trophies of victory and specimens of art and nature, costly, beautiful, and almost invaluable as they were, was a little figure of Apollo, about six inches in height, curiously carved in white agate, holding a lyre in his hand, and placed on a pedestal of the same valuable material, on which was the following inscription:—

In our day we beheld the god of Archery, Eloquence, and Verse, shrined in an infinitely fairer form than that worn by the ancient Apollo, and giving far more glorious proofs of his divinity than the day-god ever vouchsafed to the inhabitants of the old Pagan world. Zenobia Ellrington implores Arthur Augustus Wellesley to accept this small memorial, and consider it as a token that, though forsaken and despised by him whose good opinion and friendship she valued more than life, she yet bears no malice.

There was a secret contained in this inscription which I could not fathom. I had never before heard of any misunderstanding between his lordship and Lady Zenobia, nor did public appearances warrant a suspicion of its existence. Long after, however, the following circumstances came to my knowledge. The channel through which they reached me cannot be doubted, but I am not at liberty to mention names.

*— One evening about dusk, as the Marquis of Douro was returning from a shooting excursion into the country, he heard suddenly a rustling noise in a deep ditch on the roadside. He was preparing his fowling-piece for a shot when the form of Lady Ellrington started up before him. Her head was bare, her tall person was enveloped in the tattered remnants of a dark velvet mantle. Her dishevelled hair hung in wild elf-locks over her face, neck, and shoulders, almost concealing her features, which were emaciated and pale as death. He stepped back a few paces, startled at the sudden and ghastly apparition. She threw herself on her knees before him, exclaiming in wild, maniacal accents:

‘My lord, tell me truly, sincerely, ingenuously, where you have been. I heard that you had left Verdopolis, and I followed you on foot five hundred miles. Then my strength failed me, and I lay down in this place, as I thought, to die. But it was doomed I should see you once more before I became an inhabitant of the grave. Answer me, my lord: Have you seen that

wretch Marian Hume? Have you spoken to her? Viper! Viper! Oh, that I could sheathe this weapon in her heart!’

Here she stopped for want of breath, and, drawing a long, sharp, glittering knife from under her cloak, brandished it wildly in the air. The marquis looked at her steadily, and, without attempting to disarm her, answered with great composure:

‘You have asked me a strange question, Lady Zenobia; but, before I attempt to answer, you had better come with me to our encampment. I will order a tent to be prepared for you where you may pass the night in safety, and, to-morrow, when you are a little recruited by rest and refreshment, we will discuss this matter soberly.’*

Her rage was now exhausted by its own vehemence, and she replied with more calmness than she had hitherto evinced:

‘My lord, believe me, I am deputed by Heaven to warn you of a great danger into which you are about to fall. If you persist in your intention of uniting yourself to Marian Hume you will become a murderer and a suicide. I cannot explain myself more clearly; but ponder carefully on my words until I see you again.’

Then, bowing her forehead to the ground in an attitude of adoration, she kissed his feet, muttering at the same time some unintelligible words. At that moment a loud rushing, like the sound of a whirlpool, became audible, and Lady Zenobia was swept away by some invisible power before the marquis could extend his arms to arrest her progress, or frame an answer to her mysterious address. He paced slowly forward, lost in deep reflection on what he had heard and seen. The moon had risen over the black, barren mountains ere he reached the camp. He gazed for awhile on her pure, undimmed lustre, comparing it to the loveliness of one far away, and then, entering his tent, wrapped himself in his hunter’s cloak, and lay down to unquiet sleep.

Months rolled away, and the mystery remained unravelled. Lady Zenobia Ellrington appeared as usual in that dazzling circle of which she was ever a distinguished ornament. There was no trace of wandering fire in her eyes which might lead a careful observer to imagine that her mind was unsteady. Her voice was more subdued and her looks pale, and it was remarked by some that she avoided all (even the most commonplace) conversation with the marquis.

In the meantime the Duke of Wellington had consented to his son's union with the beautiful, virtuous, and accomplished, but untitled, Marian Hume.

Vast and splendid preparations were making for the approaching bridal, when just at this critical juncture news arrived of the Great Rebellion headed by Alexander Rogue. The intelligence fell with the suddenness and violence of a thunderbolt. Unequivocal symptoms of dissatisfaction began to appear at the same time among the lower orders in Verdopolis. The workmen at the principal mills and furnaces struck for an advance of wages, and, the masters refusing to comply with their exorbitant demands, they all turned out simultaneously. Shortly after, Colonel Grenville, one of the great millowners, was shot. His assassins being quickly discovered and delivered up to justice were interrogated by torture, but they remained inflexible, not a single satisfactory answer being elicited from them. The police were now doubled. Bands of soldiers were stationed in the more suspicious parts of the city, and orders were issued that no citizen should walk abroad unarmed. In this state of affairs Parliament was summoned to consult on the best measures to be taken. On the first night of its sitting the house was crowded to excess. All the members attended, and above a thousand ladies of the first rank appeared in the gallery. A settled expression of gloom and anxiety was visible in every countenance. They sat for some time gazing at each other in the silence of seeming despair. At length the Marquis of Douro rose and ascended the tribune. It was on this memorable night he pronounced that celebrated oration which will be delivered to posterity as a finished specimen of the sublimest eloquence. The souls of all who heard him were thrilled with conflicting emotions. Some of the ladies in the gallery fainted and were carried out. My limits will not permit me to transcribe the whole of this speech, and to attempt an abridgment would be profanation. I will, however, present the reader with the conclusion. It was as follows:—

I will call upon you, my countrymen, to rouse yourselves to action. There is a latent flame of rebellion smouldering in our city, which blood alone can quench: the hot blood of ourselves and our enemies freely poured forth! We daily see in our streets men whose brows were once open as the day, but which are now wrinkled with dark dissatisfaction, and the light of whose eyes, formerly free as sunshine, is now dimmed by restless suspicion. Our upright merchants are ever threatened with fears of assassination from those dependants who, in time past, loved, honoured, and revered them as fathers. Our peaceful citizens cannot pass their thresholds in safety unless laden with weapons of war, the continual dread of death haunting their footsteps wherever they turn. And who has produced this awful change? What agency of hell has affected, what master-spirit of crime, what prince of sin, what Beelzebub of black iniquity, has been at work in this Kingdom? I will answer that fearful question: ALEXANDER ROGUE! Arm for the battle, then,

fellow-countrymen; be not faint-hearted, but trust in the justice of your cause as your banner of protection, and let your war-shout in the onslaught ever be: 'God defend the right!'

When the marquis had concluded this harangue, he left the house amidst long and loud thunders of applause, and proceeded to one of the shady groves planted on the banks of the Guadima. Here he walked for some time inhaling the fresh night-wind, which acquired additional coolness as it swept over the broad rapid river, and was just beginning to recover from the strong excitement into which his enthusiasm had thrown him when he felt his arm suddenly grasped from behind, and turning round beheld Lady Zenobia Ellrington standing beside him, with the same wild, unnatural expression of countenance which had before convulsed her features among the dark hills of Gibbel Kumri.

'My lord,' she muttered, in a low, energetic tone, 'your eloquence, your noble genius has again driven me to desperation. I am no longer mistress of myself, and if you do not consent to be mine, and mine alone, I will kill myself where I stand.'

'Lady Ellrington,' said the marquis coldly, withdrawing his hand from her grasp, 'this conduct is unworthy of your character. I must beg that you will cease to use the language of a madwoman, for I do assure you, my lady, these deep stratagems will have no effect upon me.'

She now threw herself at his feet, exclaiming in a voice almost stifled with ungovernable emotion:

'Oh! do not kill me with such cold, cruel disdain. Only consent to follow me, and you will be convinced that you ought not to be united to one so utterly unworthy of you as Marian Hume.'

The marquis, moved by her tears and entreaties, at length consented to accompany her. She led him a considerable distance from the city to a subterranean grotto, where was a fire burning on a brazen altar. She threw a certain powder into the flame, and immediately they were transported through the air to an apartment at the summit of a lofty tower. At one end of this room was a vast mirror, and at the other a drawn curtain, behind which a most brilliant light was visible.

'You are now,' said Lady Ellrington, 'in the sacred presence of one whose counsel, I am sure, you, my lord, will never slight.'

At this moment the curtain was removed, and the astonished marquis beheld Crashie, the divine and infallible, seated on his golden throne, and surrounded by those mysterious rays of light which ever emanate from him.

‘My son,’ said he, with an august smile, and in a voice of awful harmony, ‘fate and inexorable destiny have decreed that in the hour you are united to the maiden of your choice, the angel Azazel shall smite you both, and convey your disembodied souls over the swift-flowing and impassable river of death. Harken to the counsels of wisdom, and do not, in the madness of self-will, destroy yourself and Marian Hume by refusing the offered hand of one who, from the moment of your birth, was doomed by the prophetic stars of heaven to be your partner and support through the dark, unexplored wilderness of future life.’

He ceased. The combat betwixt true love and duty raged for a few seconds in the marquis’s heart, and sent his life-blood in a tumult of agony and despair burning to his cheek and brow. At length duty prevailed, and, with a strong effort, he said in a firm, unfaltering voice:

‘Son of Wisdom! I will war no longer against the high decree of heaven, and here I swear by the eternal—’

The rash oath was checked in the moment of its utterance by some friendly spirit who whispered in his ear:

‘There is magic. Beware!’

At the same time Crashie’s venerable form faded away, and in its stead appeared the evil genius, Danhasch,^{*} in all the naked hideousness of his real deformity. The demon soon vanished with a wild howl of rage, and the marquis found himself again in the grove with Lady Ellrington.

She implored him on her knees to forgive an attempt which love alone had dictated, but he turned from her with a smile of bitter contempt and disdain, and hastened to his father’s palace.

About a week after this event the nuptials of Arthur Augustus, Marquis of Douro, and Marian Hume were solemnized with unprecedented pomp and splendour. Lady Ellrington, when she thus saw that all her hopes were lost in despair, fell into deep melancholy, and while in this state she amused herself with carving the little image before mentioned. After a long time she slowly recovered, and the marquis, convinced that her extravagances had arisen from a disordered brain, consented to honour her with his friendship once more.

I continued upwards of two months at the Marquis of Douro’s palace, and then returned to Verdopolis, equally delighted with my noble host and his fair, amiable bride.

August 20th, 1882.

NAPOLEON AND THE SPECTRE

THIS story was printed by Mr. Clement Shorter in February 1919, in an edition limited to twenty-five copies for private circulation only. Extracts from it were printed in *Poet-Lore*, vol. ix., Autumn Number, 1897. The complete story is now published for the first time.

In the Introduction by Mr. Shorter in the privately printed pamphlet we are informed that the story is supposed to be ‘told at an inn by a traveller whose name is not given, but who is described as a dapper little man, dressed in brown coat and waistcoat and cream-coloured continuations.’

I venture to copy the following further extract from Mr. Shorter’s Introduction to the story:—

The identity of the ghost is revealed by Napoleon’s exclamation when he is recovering from his somnambulistic trance, ‘Where in the world is Piche?’ Piche is General Pichegru, who, when Napoleon was first consul, joined in a plot to assassinate him. The plot was discovered and Pichegru was arrested and imprisoned; but before the day fixed for his trial ‘he was found dead in his cell with his black silk cravat twisted tightly round his neck by means of a stick.’

Whether he was strangled at the instigation of Napoleon, as has been asserted by some historians, is not clear; but Charlotte Brontë apparently believed in Napoleon’s guilt, and in the story causes the ghost of his victim to haunt him.

C. W. H.

NAPOLEON AND THE SPECTRE

WELL, as I was saying, the Emperor got into bed.

‘Chevalier,’ says he to his valet, ‘let down those window-curtains, and shut the casement before you leave the room.’

Chevalier did as he was told, and then, taking up his candlestick, departed.

In a few minutes the Emperor felt his pillow becoming rather hard, and he got up to shake it. As he did so a slight rustling noise was heard near the bed-head. His Majesty listened, but all was silent as he lay down again.

Scarcely had he settled into a peaceful attitude of repose, when he was disturbed by a sensation of thirst. Lifting himself on his elbow, he took a glass of lemonade from the small stand which was placed beside him. He refreshed himself by a deep draught. As he returned the goblet to its station a deep groan burst from a kind of closet in one corner of the apartment.

‘Who’s there?’ cried the Emperor, seizing his pistols. ‘Speak, or I’ll blow your brains out.’

This threat produced no other effect than a short, sharp laugh, and a dead silence followed.

The Emperor started from his couch, and, hastily throwing on a *robe-de-chambre* which hung over the back of a chair, stepped courageously to the haunted closet. As he opened the door something rustled. He sprang forward sword in hand. No soul or even substance appeared, and the rustling, it was evident, proceeded from the falling of a cloak, which had been suspended by a peg from the door.

Half ashamed of himself he returned to bed.

Just as he was about once more to close his eyes, the light of the three wax tapers, which burned in a silver branch over the mantelpiece, was suddenly darkened. He looked up. A black, opaque shadow obscured it. Sweating with terror, the Emperor put out his hand to seize the bell-rope, but some invisible being snatched it rudely from his grasp, and at the same instant the ominous shade vanished.

‘Pooh!’ exclaimed Napoleon, ‘it was but an ocular delusion.’

‘Was it?’ whispered a hollow voice, in deep mysterious tones, close to his ear. ‘Was it a delusion, Emperor of France? No! all thou hast heard and seen is sad forewarning reality. Rise, lifter of the Eagle Standard! Awake, swayer of the Lily Sceptre! Follow me, Napoleon, and thou shalt see more.’

As the voice ceased, a form dawned on his astonished sight. It was that of a tall, thin man, dressed in a blue surtout edged with gold lace. It wore a black cravat very tightly round its neck, and confined by two little sticks placed behind each ear. The countenance was livid; the tongue protruded from between the teeth, and the eyes all glazed and bloodshot started with frightful prominence from their sockets.

‘Mon Dieu!’ exclaimed the Emperor, ‘what do I see? Spectre, whence cometh thou?’

The apparition spoke not, but gliding forward beckoned Napoleon with uplifted finger to follow.

Controlled by a mysterious influence, which deprived him of the capability of either thinking or acting for himself, he obeyed in silence.

The solid wall of the apartment fell open as they approached, and, when both had passed through, it closed behind them with a noise like thunder.

They would now have been in total darkness had it not been for a dim light which shone round the ghost and revealed the damp walls of a long, vaulted passage. Down this they proceeded with mute rapidity. Ere long a cool, refreshing breeze, which rushed wailing up the vault and caused the Emperor to wrap his loose nightdress closer round, announced their approach to the open air.

This they soon reached, and Nap found himself in one of the principal streets of Paris.

‘Worthy Spirit,’ said he, shivering in the chill night air, ‘permit me to return and put on some additional clothing. I will be with you again presently.’

‘Forward,’ replied his companion sternly.

He felt compelled, in spite of the rising indignation which almost choked him, to obey.

On they went through the deserted streets till they arrived at a lofty house built on the banks of the Seine. Here the Spectre stopped, the gates rolled back to receive them, and they entered a large marble hall which was partly concealed by a curtain drawn across, through the half transparent folds of which a bright light might be seen burning with dazzling lustre. A row of

fine female figures, richly attired, stood before this screen. They wore on their heads garlands of the most beautiful flowers, but their faces were concealed by ghastly masks representing death's-heads.

‘What is all this mummary?’ cried the Emperor, making an effort to shake off the mental shackles by which he was so unwillingly restrained, ‘Where am I, and why have I been brought here?’

‘Silence,’ said the guide, lolling out still further his black and bloody tongue. ‘Silence, if thou wouldst escape instant death.’

The Emperor would have replied, his natural courage overcoming the temporary awe to which he had at first been subjected, but just then a strain of wild, supernatural music swelled behind the huge curtain, which waved to and fro, and bellied slowly out as if agitated by some internal commotion or battle of waving winds. At the same moment an overpowering mixture of the scents of mortal corruption, blent with the richest Eastern odours, stole through the haunted hall.

A murmur of many voices was now heard at a distance, and something grasped his arm eagerly from behind.

He turned hastily round. His eyes met the well-known countenance of Marie Louise.

‘What! are you in this infernal place, too?’ said he. ‘What has brought you here?’

‘Will your Majesty permit me to ask the same question of yourself?’ said the Empress, smiling.

He made no reply; astonishment prevented him. No curtain now intervened between him and the light. It had been removed as if by magic, and a splendid chandelier appeared suspended over his head. Throngs of ladies, richly dressed, but without death's-head masks, stood round, and a due proportion of gay cavaliers was mingled with them. Music was still sounding, but it was seen to proceed from a band of mortal musicians stationed in an orchestra near at hand. The air was yet redolent of incense, but it was incense unblended with stench.

‘Mon Dieu!’ cried the Emperor, ‘how is all this come about? Where in the world is Piche?’

‘Piche?’ replied the Empress. ‘What does your Majesty mean? Had you not better leave the apartment and retire to rest?’

‘Leave the apartment? Why, where am I?’

‘In my private drawing-room, surrounded by a few particular persons of the Court whom I had invited this evening to a ball. You entered a few minutes since in your nightdress with your eyes fixed and wide open. I suppose from the astonishment you now testify that you were walking in your sleep.’

The Emperor immediately fell into a fit of catalepsy, in which he continued during the whole of that night and the greater part of next day.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

From the manuscript of the ‘Green Dwarf,’ an unpublished story which was commenced on July 10th, 1833, and completed on September 2nd, 1833.—C. W. H.

THE TRAGEDY AND THE ESSAY

THE TRAGEDY AND THE ESSAY

FROM THE MANUSCRIPT ENTITLED

ARTHURIANA, OR

ODDS AND ENDS

BEING

A MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTION

OF PIECES

IN

PROSE AND VERSE,

BY

LORD CHARLES A. F.

WELLESLEY.

Commenced September 27th, 1833.

Finished November 20th, 1833.

THE TRAGEDY AND THE ESSAY

ONE wet and rainy afternoon Arthur was sitting alone in his room. The unfavourable weather, united to a severe headache the consequence of certain vigils of the previous night, indisposed him for serious study, and he sat toasting his feet at a bright fire and languidly turning over Vernet's splendid views of the scenery round Verdopolis.

While thus employed, or rather indis-employed, in the vain endeavour to kill time, a servant entered and announced: 'Mr. Hamilton.'

'Show him in,' said Arthur with alacrity, glad of anything which might be likely to divert the tedious ennui which oppressed him.

As the young architect, who it is well known is one of my brother's numerous toadies, appeared at the door, he rose and, offering him his hand, said with that winning air of condescension which has gained for him the hearts of the rising geniuses in Verdopolis:

'Well, Edwin, how are you this suicidal day?'

'Quite well, my lord, I thank you. I trust I find your lordship the same?'

As they seated themselves on a sofa the marquis replied:

'I cannot say that I am very brisk this afternoon, I have a slight headache...'

A brief silence followed of which Arthur seemed impatient, and he broke it by saying:

'Now tell me, Edwin, what was your motive for coming to see me this dull day. I'm mistaken if you had not some particular reason.'

'Why, my lord,' replied the architect, blushing and looking down with an embarrassed air, 'I can't deny that I have.'

'What is it, then?' replied my brother eagerly. 'Have you been striking out some plan for a new public building? If so, let me see it directly.'

'No, my lord; my employment lately has been of another kind to that to which you allude. I have been wooing—'

'Wooing!' interrupted the marquis. 'What! you are going to be married, are you? Humph! I see it all now. On my conscience, it's a perfect miracle how such a bashful fellow as you ever summoned courage to pop the question! But pray, what is the fair lady's name?'

‘Melpomene, the muse of tears!’ replied the modest Hamilton, blushing to the temples as he spoke. ‘In short, I’ve ventured hither to show your lordship a tragedy which I have written, called “Petus and Aria.”’

At these words the spirit of criticism began to sparkle in Arthur’s eye and the smile of sarcasm to curl his lip. Poor Hamilton shrunk together as he saw his patron gazing on him with that-cool, keen, composed aspect of contempt which he sometimes assumed in order to torture the wretches dependent on his favour.

‘A tragedy!’ he began. ‘Produce it by all means. But first tell me, Edwin, is it constructed in the Grecian or Gothic style of architecture? Or perhaps you may have invented a kind of composite order out of your own head?’

‘Eh, my lord?’ murmured his hapless victim.

‘Petus and Aria,’ continued the unrelenting monster; ‘the former was, I believe, a somewhat timid and henpecked gentleman, whom for his arrant poltroonery I have always looked upon with supreme contempt; and the latter a strapping virago that showed herself particularly anxious to get her husband out of the world which he dishonoured. Queer materials these for a tragedy!’

To his observations Hamilton’s only answer was a look of imploring agony. Its silent eloquence, however, touched Arthur more nearly than words would have done. He smiled and said in a more encouraging tone than he had hitherto used:

‘Come, Edwin, dismiss that miserable expression from your face and let us see this notable play.’

With a trembling hand the architect drew the manuscript from his pocket and presented it to my brother. Half an hour of profound silence ensued, during which he continued to endure all the torments of suspense. At length the marquis laid it down, and the single word ‘Admirable!’ which escaped from his lips at once relieved Hamilton from a host of fears.

‘Are you in earnest, my lord?’ asked he.

‘Perfectly so; and as a proof of it I advise you to offer this play without loss of time to Mr. Price of the Theatre Royal. I will write a few lines in favour of it to him, and I do not doubt but that my recommendation will be sufficient to secure you handsome treatment in that quarter.’

A fortnight passed. Rumours began to be rife through Verdopolis that Mr. Hamilton the architect, whose skill had long advanced him to the rank of rival to the celebrated Turner, had laid down the compasses and taken up

the pen. Ere long these reports were confirmed by the appearance one Wednesday morning of Price's bill of fare, containing the following announcement:—

This evening will be performed at the Theatre Royal
PETUS AND ARIA,
an entirely new tragedy by Edwin Hamilton, Esq.,
under the patronage of the Marquis of Douro.
The character of Aria to be performed by Mrs. Siddons;
that of Petus by Garry David.

That night Price had reason to lick his lips with satisfaction. Never before was there such a crowded house: pit, box, and gallery overflowed; and the manager after all expenses were paid netted a clear profit of five hundred pounds.

It was on this occasion that I took my station among the branches of the mighty golden chandelier which hangs from the centre of the dome; and from thence obtained a bird's-eye view of the whole magnificent scene.

Certainly there are few sights more animated and inspiring than a crowded theatre. The brilliant lights, the ceaseless hum of voices, the busy and visionary stage, all conspire to raise indescribable feelings in the soul. More than a thousand of the loveliest women on earth sparkled in the dress circle, where the waving of plumes, the rustling of robes, and the light-bright eyes were perfectly dazzling. Among these my eyes singled out Lady Zenobia Ellrington. I noticed her particularly, because she seldom visits the theatre. There she sat robed in gorgeous purple, a star-light band of jewels gleaming among her rich raven locks. Lord Ellrington stood beside her in his usual plain black attire, and wearing a white cravat in the centre of which shone a single diamond. From my elevated station I beheld the entrance of Mr. Hamilton. The Marquis of Douro preceded him, accompanied by a beautiful girl in a white dress and green sash without any ornament on her head except a profusion of chestnut curls which, clustering in the most luxuriant ringlets, obliged her every now and then to raise her small hand in order to put them back from her snowy forehead and laughing blue eyes, which they almost concealed. I need not say that this was the marchioness.

Who shall describe the tumultuous rush of feelings which rose in Edwin's bosom as he glanced hurriedly round at the vast assembly on which his fate this night depended. His eyes wildly wandered from the rough tenants of the gallery to the glittering population of the boxes, and finally fixed

themselves on the mighty green curtain which still hung before the stage. The few moments that elapsed before its removal seemed to him an hour, but at last the tinkle of the prompter's bell sounded and at once it was gathered to the ceiling.

The prologue (which had been furnished by Arthur) was received with thunders of applause, amidst which arose one solitary note of disapprobation. All eyes turned on the utterer of this presumptuous squeal, which was a small deformed thing of the ape kind dressed in a green coat, and bearing the name of Captain Andrew.

'Knock him down!' was the general cry of the gods in the gallery; which mandate was presently executed by my friend, John Bud, who stood near. The first scene now came on, in the course of which Mrs. Siddons displayed all her finest powers and even excelled herself. Peals of applause again shook the theatre to its foundations. Hamilton was scarcely able to contain the joy and gratitude which this intoxicating success excited. His cheeks glowed, his eye sparkled, and his frame trembled all over. His transports, however, were soon about to receive a fearful check. At the commencement of the second act Petus rushed into the tent of Camilus, exclaiming: 'General, we breathe the air of death. Our plot is smoked!'

'Well,' cried Lord Lofty, who with a bevy of puppies like himself occupied a box at no great distance; 'Well, sir, and if your Pipe is smoked, can't you light another?'

The laughter of some of the audience was raised by this sally of miserable wit, which from what followed seemed to have been a preconcerted signal for an indiscriminate attack on the tragedy. The thread of approval being once broken it appeared impossible to reunite it. Hisses, groans, and peals of laughter now rose at the finest passages. The gods, who are ever ready to join in a tumult, without nicely inquiring into the cause, yelled aloud for the instant condemnation of the whole concern. Lofty and his gang joined them clamourosly in this demand, and at length the uproar rose to such a pitch that Mr. Price was compelled to come forward to the footlights and declare that since the audience disapproved of the play he consented to withdraw it.

'All hope of fame is gone and I desire to live no longer,' said Hamilton, turning on the marquis his corpse-like countenance.

'Courage, Edwin,' replied the latter. 'It is part of my creed that there is no wound too deep to receive relief from the divine balsam of revenge. I know

who is your principal foe, and if I live you shall enjoy the remedy in perfection.'

It was a bright and lovely afternoon in the midst of autumn. The saloons of Waterloo Palace were thrown open for the admission of all the rank and fashion of Verdopolis. The doors of the great library were likewise unfolded, and there a knot of *bel-esprits*, the very flower of Africa's geniuses, had gathered round a large open bow-window through which might be seen the extensive pleasure-grounds where groups of the brighter children of fashion roamed idly about or reposed under the shade of sequestered bowers. Of course my brother and Lady Zenobia Ellrington formed the nucleus round which this literary party had assembled. While they were conversing Lord Lofty entered and took his station near them. He could not actually join their party, because, though a man of considerable talent, he had never written a book, painted a picture, or moulded a statue; and it is an understood regulation of this chosen band that none but genuine authors and artists shall have the privilege of entering into their high and exclusive society. While he listened to the noble sentiment, the brilliant wit, the exhaustless knowledge, and the varied information which, clothed in the purest language and uttered in the soft subdued tones which perfect refinement dictates, formed a *conversazione* of such fascinating brilliancy as he had never heard before, undefined longings arose in his heart to become a more immediate partaker of the feast of reason and the flow of soul he witnessed. At this moment the Marchioness of Douro, who, seated on a low footstool at the feet of her husband and Lady Ellrington, had been gazing up at them with her large blue eyes full of wonder and delight, suddenly exclaimed in her usual artless manner: 'I wish I had written a book!'

'And so do I,' was the response that immediately burst from Lofty's lips. The marquis smiled at the characteristic simplicity of Marian's aspiration; but he turned with a more serious air to Lofty, and said:

'Well, and what is there to hinder you from writing as many books as you like?'

'Nothing, my lord, except that I have not the genius.'

'Pshaw! nonsense! you can do anything you choose!'

'Are you in earnest, Douro?'

'In earnest? Yes, that I am: I never was more so in my life.'

‘Well, then, I really do think I’ll turn author.’

‘That’s right, Fred. I’ll breakfast with you to-morrow morning, and we’ll talk the matter over at our leisure.’

Next day Arthur was punctual to his appointment. On entering the breakfast-room he found Lord Frederic seated in a morning gown of green and silver brocade with slippers to correspond, and on the table beside him lay a quire of paper and an inkstand of elaborate workmanship with golden pens, etc. The smile with which he viewed these preparations would have undeceived any other than Lofty, whose faculties were rendered, however, so obtuse by conceit that he conceived it to be merely a token of approbation.

After the first cup or two of chocolate had been discussed the marquis entered upon business by saying: ‘Well, Fred, do you continue in the same mind I left you in last night?’

‘Certainly, my lord; I am even confirmed in my determination to become an author. The only thing that puzzles me is on what subject to exercise that genius which you flatter me I possess.’

After a moment’s silence and apparent consideration, Arthur said:

‘Of course you would desire something original. Talent like yours would not be content to follow in any beaten path.’

‘Surely. In fact, I have determined that no hackneyed theme shall receive immortality from my pen. Now, Douro, could you not help me to one that has never been touched on before?’

‘I think I could; but before I mention it let me briefly define to you the meaning of originality. It consists in raising from obscurity some theme, topic, employment, or existence which has never been thought of by the great mass of men, or thought of only to be despised; in pouring around it the light of genius, proving its claim to admiration by subtlety of logic, clothing it with all the bright tones of a lively imagination, and presenting it thus adorned to the astonished world. I counsel you, Fred, to take for your subject the unjustly condemned art of the laundress. Write an essay on it divided into three parts, viz.: washing, starching, and ironing. In the first, summon up all your learning. Go back to the old times of Homer when princesses bleached linen in the gardens of Adcinous. Trace the art through the ramifications of ages and nations down to the present day. Expatriate upon the purity of the employment; give it an allegorical meaning, and conclude by saying that it excels all others in dignity and honour. Let the

second be a dissertation on the process of making starch. Point out the grain which is most proper for it, and launch a thundering anathema against all adulterators of the genuine article. In the third, discourse most excellent music on the different kinds of irons, as box-irons, flat-irons, and Italian irons, and mind you give them the preference over such machines as mangles and calenders. Do all this and I think I can promise you as the reward of your labours renown of such a nature and extent as would satisfy the ambition of most men.'

'My lord,' replied Lofty, 'by this disinterested and noble counsel you have conferred on me an eternal obligation. I will follow up the hint you have given, and by so doing I hope to produce somewhat that the gracious public will not willingly let die.'

From that day Lord Lofty became an altered man. He was no longer the free, dashing, gallant young nobleman whose handsome exterior and high-bred manners endeared him to the fair sex, and whose superiority both mental and personal had entitled him to the rank of viceroy in the world of fashion, subject only to those two mighty monarchs, Douro and Ellrington. Seldom now was either ballroom, race ground, parliament house, rotunda, or ring honoured with his presence. Day and night he immersed himself in the solitude of his study and gave access to none but my brother, who urged him unrelentingly to the completion of the task which he had assigned him. Sometimes, indeed, the unhappy gull ventured forth to his old haunts, but so changed was he become in dress, language, and behaviour as scarcely to be recognised by his most intimate friends. A shabby black coat was generally wrapped round him; shoes trodden down at the heels garnished his feet; and the fair hair which formerly was his greatest pride, and which he usually wore arranged in clustering curls, now hung neglected in elf-locks round a countenance that for consumptive paleness and attenuation might have been envied by the veriest tea-taster in existence. His conversation was in unison with his appearance, whining, sickly, pedantic, and filled with that disgusting species of affectation peculiar to literary coxcombs. The consequence of this was that those who had been accustomed to consider his acquaintance as an honour and a matter of boasting now grew ashamed to be seen in company with him. When he entered a drawing-room the ladies turned aside their heads, and the gentlemen regarded him with a glance of undisguised contempt. Not a hand was stretched out to welcome him; not a voice repeated his name except in atone of derision. These

things, however, he neither saw nor regarded. Fenced by a triple shield of self-conceit, the scorn of women and the disgust of men moved him no more than hailstones would a rock.

After some months of incessant labour he at length one evening announced to the marquis that his work was completed.

‘Wait till to-morrow, Fred,’ replied that faithful friend. ‘I will then accompany you to Sergeant Tree’s, and you shall taste the first sweets of authorship.’

That night and the first hours of morning seemed to Lofty an age. As soon as breakfast was over he stationed himself at the window and continued impatiently looking out for Arthur’s appearance. At length about eleven o’clock a.m. he perceived him advancing with his usual stately tread up the street. Flinging open the sash he jumped out and ran to meet him. As they walked towards the great bookseller’s the marquis mentioned that he had invited a few friends to meet him there that morning, as he wished them to be spectators of Lofty’s triumph. The latter bowed and expressed his gratitude for what he considered to be another instance of my brother’s attachment to him. They now entered the shop. Above a hundred men of the highest rank were assembled there, including Castlereagh, Molyneux, Aberford, Beauclerk, Sidney, Russell, Howard, Morpeth, etc., and by himself, leaning against a pillar, was Hamilton the architect, his pale face and his usually downcast eyes glowing with uncommon ardour behind the marble slab which, supported on Ionic columns, forms the counter. Sergeant Tree was seated in an elevated armchair. To him Lofty immediately advanced and, presenting his manuscript, said in a loud and pompous tone of voice:

‘Look at that, sir, and tell me what you will give me for it.’

Tree took out his spectacles, placed them with all imaginable tranquillity, and after reading the title-page and glancing over the body of the work returned it coolly to the washerwoman, saying in his quiet business-like manner: ‘This, my lord, is not in my way. You have probably mistaken me for Mrs. Bleachum, the washerwoman.’

A peal of laughter from the noble bystanders accompanied these words. Lofty stood motionless a moment as if transfixed, then turned to the marquis with a look of speechless agony. Instead of the cloud of sympathetic sorrow he had expected to see brooding on his friend’s brow his eyes fell on a countenance illumined by a smile of arch, cold,

triumphant, deep and devilish meaning. It pierced at once the thick veil of infatuation that obscured his-mental vision, and suddenly the light of truth burst on him with almost annihilating splendour. While he stood more like a statue than a living man Arthur advanced and said in a low and soft voice, but so distinct as to be heard by all present:

‘Well, Frederic, don’t you think a rejected essay is almost as agreeable as a condemned tragedy?’

C. BRONTË,
October 6th, 1833.

A PEEP INTO A PICTURE BOOK

CHARLOTTE BRONTË was eighteen years of age when she wrote these descriptions of the principal characters in her stories. 'The land of the Genii' had become 'The Kingdom of Angria'; the Duke of Wellington was almost forgotten; and her early hero, the Marquis of Douro, had received various other titles, including that of Duke of Zamorna, and had been elected King of Angria. He had developed a character totally different from that of the studious and ingenuous youth of Charlotte Brontë's earlier stories.

At this time his first wife, Marian Hume, is supposed to have been dead several years, and he is married to Mary Henrietta, the daughter of his Prime Minister—Alexander Percy, Viscount Ellrington and Earl of Northangerland.

Alexander Percy (sometimes called Alexander Rogue) was originally a pirate, and was one of the creations of Charlotte's brother, Patrick Branwell Brontë, when very young. On pp. 175-179 of *A Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of the Members of the Brontë Family*, 1917, by Thomas J. Wise, is printed a poem of one hundred and twenty-eight lines entitled 'The Rover.' This is a poem by Patrick Branwell Brontë descriptive of one of Alexander Percy's adventures when he was a pirate. It was from this character that Branwell Brontë took the pseudonyms of 'Northangerland' and 'Alexander Percy,' which he continued to use until the end of his life.

The first wife of Northangerland also is dead at this time, and he is married to Lady Zenobia Ellrington, who in earlier stories ('Albion and Marina,' 'The Rivals,' and 'Love and Jealousy') was the rival of Marian Hume for the affections of the Marquis of Douro.

General Thornton is the guardian of the young Lord Wellesley, the supposed author of the manuscript in which 'A Peep into a Picture Book' was found.

C. W. H.

A PEEP INTO A PICTURE BOOK

FROM THE MANUSCRIPT ENTITLED

CORNER DISHES

BEING

**A SMALL COLLECTION OF
MIXED AND UNSUBSTANTIAL**

TRIFLES

IN PROSE AND

VERSE

BY

**LORD CHARLES ALBERT
FLORIAN WELLESLEY.**

Begun May 28th, 1834.

Finished June 16th, 1834.

A PEEP INTO A PICTURE BOOK

It is a fine, warm, sultry day, just after dinner. I am at Thornton Hotel. The General is enjoying his customary nap; and while the serene evening sunshine reposes on his bland features and unruffled brow, an atmosphere of calm seems to pervade the apartment.

What shall I do to amuse myself? I dare not stir lest he should awake; and any disturbance of his slumbers at this moment might be productive of serious consequences to me: no circumstance would more effectually sour my landlord's ordinarily bland temperament. Hark! There is a slight, light snore, most musical, most melancholy: he is firmly locked in the chains of the drowsy god.

At the opposite end of the room three large volumes that look like picture books lie on a sideboard; their green watered-silk quarto covers and gilt backs are tempting, and I will make an effort to gain possession of them. Softly, softly: there, I have thrown down a silver fruit knife and a piece of orange peel! He stirs! I must pause awhile or he will certainly awake. Hem! the worthy gentleman settles down to his former tranquillity; the incipient frown which contracted his forehead is past away; and the rest of a good conscience, the calm of a mental and corporeal healthiness, sleeps there again.

With zephyr-step and bosomed breath I glide onward to the sideboard, I seize my prize, and being once more safely established in my chair I open the volumes to see if the profit be equivalent to the pains.

Eureka! Eureka! 'Tree's Portrait Gallery of the Aristocracy of Africa'! Why, here is cent. per cent. indeed! The very thing; the beau-ideal of provision for an after-dinner's amusement! However languid and unfitted for exertion, the veriest gourmand could not turn with disgust from such placid entertainment as is here prepared for him; the sleepest eye might wander unwearied over the silent visions that here follow each other in a succession so dreamy and voiceless.

I am no gourmand after dinner; I am as active as before; but just now the pleasure of hanging over forms that speak without sound, of gazing into

motionless eyes that search your very heart, is more attractive to me than sprightlier employments.

The second volume is nearest to my hand, and I will raise first from the shadow of gossamer paper, waving as I turn it like a web of woven air, the spirit whosoever it be, male or female, crowned or coroneted, that animates its frontispiece.

A mighty phantom has answered my spell: an awful shape clouds the magic mirror! Reader, before me I behold the earthly tabernacle of Northangerland's unsounded soul! There he stands: what a vessel to be moulded from the coarse clay of mortality! What a plant to spring from the rank soil of human existence! And the vessel is without flaw: polished, fresh, and bright from the last process of the maker. The flower has sprung up to mature beauty, but not a leaf is curled, not a blossom faded. This portrait was taken ere the lights and shadows of twenty-five summers had fallen across the wondrous labyrinth of Percy's path through life. At this moment a gleam of sunlight, real deep gold in hue, comes through the kindled window-panes, and falls richly and serenely on the picture. It is a softened glory, for the sun is far west and its amber rays shed inexpressible tranquillity wherever they descend. How sweetly they sleep on that brow! and on those Ionic features! Percy! Percy! never was humanity fashioned in a fairer mould. The eye follows delighted all those classic lines of face and form: not one unseemly curvature or angle to disturb the general effect of so much refined regularity; all appears carved in ivory. The grossness of flesh and blood will not suit its statuesque exactness and speckless polish. A feeling of fascination comes over me while I gaze on that Phidian nose defined with such beautiful precision; that chin and mouth chiselled to such elaborate perfection; that high, pale forehead, not bald as now, but yet not shadowed with curls, for the clustering hair is parted back, gathered in abundant wreaths on the temples and leaving the brow free for all the gloom and glory of a mind that has no parallel to play over the expanse of living marble which its absence reveals. The expression in this picture is somewhat pensive, composed, free from sarcasm except the fixed sneer of the-lip and the strange deadly glitter of the eye whose glance—a mixture of the keenest scorn and deepest thought—curdles the spectator's blood to ice. In my opinion this head embodies the most vivid ideas we can conceive of Lucifer, the rebellious archangel: there is such a total absence of human feeling and sympathy; such a cold frozen pride; such a fathomless power of

intellect; such passionless yet perfect beauty—not breathing and burning, full of tightening blood and fiery thought and feeling like that of some others whom our readers will recollect,—but severely studied, faultlessly refined, as cold and hard and polished and perfect as the most priceless brilliant. And in his eye there is a shade of something, words cannot express what. The sight may catch, but not fix it. A gleam, scarcely human, dark and fiend-like, it steals away under the lash, quivers sometimes with the mysterious tremor of a northern light, fixes stedfastly on some luckless bystander, who shrinks from the supernatural aspect, and then is all at once quenched. Once that marvellous light fell on me; and long after I beheld it vanish its memory haunted me like a spirit. The sensation which it excited was very singular. I felt as if he could read my soul; and strange to tell there was no fear lest he should find sinful thoughts and recollections there, but a harassing dread lest anything good might arise which would awake the tremendous power of sarcasm that I saw lurking in every feature of his face. Northangerland has a black drop in his veins that flows through every vessel, taints every limb, stagnates round his heart, and there in the very citadel of life the albinous blood of the patrician is the bitterest, rankest gall. Let us leave him in that shape, ‘bright with beauty, dark with crime.’ He has sailed over many seas, wandered in many lands; just so with that look buried in profound meditation I can imagine him pacing the silent quarter-deck of his own *Red Rover*, his eyes fixed on the sullen sea that moans round him on every side, watching the mighty plunges of the waves rushing on as if they had an aim in their journey, as if they would bound on before his gallant ship, and were seeking the land she sought with emulous intent to outstrip the wanderer of their green wilderness, and to teach her that ocean would not brook her haughty defiance. Farewell, Percy!

I turn the leaves and behold—his countess!

Hum! hum! I am not on very good terms with this celebrated lady, as all the world knows; yet plain truth compels me to confess that she is a very fine woman, a superb daughter of Verdopolis; and Frederick de Lisle has done her justice; so has Edward Findan. A mere blue ought not to be so handsome. What eyes! What raven hair! What an imposing contour of form and countenance!

She is perfectly grand in her velvet robes, dark plume, and crown-like turban. The lady of Ellrington House, the wife of Northangerland, the prima donna of the Angrian Court, the most learned woman of her age, the

modern Cleopatra, the Verdopolitan de Staël: in a word, Zenobia Percy! Who would think that that grand form of feminine majesty could launch out into the unbridled excesses of passion in which her ladyship not unfrequently indulges? There is fire in her eyes, and command on her brow; and some touch of a pride that would spurn restraint in the curl of her rich lip. But all is so tempered with womanly dignity that it would seem as if neither fire nor pride nor imperiousness could awaken the towering fits of ungoverned and frantic rage that often deform her beauty. Her hands, look at them, they are well formed and small, white and sparkling with rings; is it natural that such hands should inflict the blows that sometimes tingle from them? I think not; but my scarlet ears and aching bones have more than once borne incontestable witness how the case stands! The truth is her fingers though slender are long and like those of Zamorna, and like his they possess more vigour than their fragile structure would seem to indicate. She can spar, I verily believe, with her own husband, one of the best boxers on record, though now a little disabled by a tormenting complaint from long-continued exertion. Her employment, however, as here represented is of a higher order than pugilistic achievement. She leans on a large clasped volume, another of equal size lies open before her, and: one taper forefinger directs the spectator's attention to the page while her eye looks into his with an earnest and solemn air as if she were warning him of the mighty treasures contained in the maxims of ancient lore to which she points. As I turn from this pictured representation of the countess I must say she is a noble creature both in mind and body, though full of the blackest defects: a flawed diamond; a magnificent landscape trenched with drains; virgin gold basely adulterated with brass; a beautiful intellectual woman, but an infidel.

The next portrait is that of His Grace the Duke of Fidenia. I feel as if awaking from a feverish dream, a distempered vision of troubled grandeur and stormy glory, as I raise my eyes from the lord and lady of Pandemonium, from Sin and Satan, and let them fall on Prince John, the Royal Philosopher. How grave! what severe virtue! what deep and far-sought and well-treasured wisdom! what inflexible uprightness! Integrity that Death could not turn from the path of right; Firmness that would stoop to the block rather than yield one jot of its just, mature, righteous resolution; Truth from which the agonies of the wheel would be powerless to wring a word of equivocation; and to speak verity, Pride that could no more be thawed than the icebergs of Greenland or the snows of his own Highland

hills. There is a look too of prejudice in his rather stern forehead, a something which tells us that Fidená could be an unforgiving, almost a vindictive, enemy, if stubbornly opposed or wantonly insulted. An air of reserve, of stiffness, which warns us that the son of Alexander,—all good, wise, and just, as he is,—lays emphasis on the forms of Courts, the usages of high circles. He will brook no breach of them, however trivial, in those under his authority. That cold eye and aristocratic mien say that jealousy would be quickly aroused by any mingling of ranks, any inroads of plebeians on the rights of patricians, any removing of landmarks or undermining of old institutions. He looks chill, almost forbidding. Something like a cold feeling of restraint creeps over us whilst we gaze: the virtues pictured in his stately features seem of that high and holy order which almost exempt their possessor from sympathy with mankind. Thoughts of martyrs or patriots, a zealous but stern prophet chosen in evil times to denounce judgment, not to proclaim mercy, recur to our minds. Yet John is not altogether what he appears; or rather he is that and more too. I have seen him in private life in moments of relaxation when surrounded by his family and one or two bosom friends. Nothing in such circumstances can be more fascinating than his winning, easy manner, his calm cheerfulness, his pleasing, philosophical gravity of aspect and demeanour. For hours I have watched him while he sat on a sofa with his lovely wife beside him, and the beautiful Marchioness of Douro sitting at his feet; and heard the benignant simplicity with which he poured out the stores of his varied and extensive erudition, answering so kindly and familiarly each question of the fair listeners, mingling an air of conjugal tenderness in his manner to his wife, and earnest melancholy gentleness in that to Marian such as always characterized his treatment of her. Poor thing! she looked on him as her only friend,—her brother, her adviser, her unerring oracle; with the warm devotedness that marked her disposition she followed his advice as if it had been the precept of inspired revelation. Fidená could not err; he could neither think nor act wrongly: he was perfect. Those who thought him too proud were very much mistaken. *She* never found him so. Nobody had milder and softer manners; nobody spoke more pleasantly. Thus she would talk; then blush with anger if any one contradicted her too exclusively favourable opinion. Prince John, I believe, regarded Marian as a delicate flower planted in a stormy situation; as a lovely, fragile being that needed his careful protection; and that protection he would have extended to her at

the hazard of life itself. To the last he tried to support her. Many lone days he spent in watching and cheering her during her final lingering sickness; but all the kindness, all the tenderness in the world were insufficient to raise that blighted lily so long as the sunshine of those eyes which had been her idolatry was withered; and so long as the music of that voice she had loved so fondly and truly sounded too far off to be heard. Fidenia was in the house when she died. He had left the chamber but a few minutes before Zamorna entered it. On quitting the bedside, as he hung over his adopted sister for the last time, a single large tear, the only one anguish, bodily or mental, ever wrung from the exalted soul of the Christian philosopher, dropped on the little worn hand he held in his; and he muttered half aloud: 'Would to God I had possessed this treasure; it should not thus have been thrown away.'

Marian's portrait comes next to Fidenia. Every one know what it is like: the small delicate features, dark blue eyes full of wild and tender enthusiasm, beautiful curls, and frail-looking form, are familiar to all; so I need not pause on a more elaborate detail.

After her the frank face of General Thornton looks out on the gazer with a hearty, welcoming aspect. You almost hear his doric accents exclaiming: 'Well, how do you do, this evening? Fine, summer weather! I'm taking a bit of a stroll to Girnington Hall. Will ye come with me and see how the cattle thrive?' Honest, honest Thornton! there are few men so worthy as thyself in the world. Thou hast been wronged, vilely and shamefully wronged; yet not a shadow of discontent in that smooth, broad brow, with its dashing swirl of hair, intimates that thou art an ill-used man. Never did a word of complaint fall from those fresh-coloured, well-formed lips. Hearty execrations have often poured from them, but not a single whine. Thornton bears a resemblance to Prince John; faint indeed and rather uncertain as to its locality, but still sufficient to point out their relationship. The complexions of both are fair and northern; the eyes are of similar colour: a clear and lively grey; and the nose not unlike in contour. Their forms, however, are very different, the general's being middle-sized and somewhat stout, the duke's tall, thin, and stately. But their minds! There the great distinction lies; no wonder they hate each other! Fire and flint could no more amalgamate than them.

Lady Maria Sneachy, a real, dazzling, brilliant, smiling beauty! What large, imperial eyes; what a magnificent neck and brow; and how haughtily she lifts her fair head with its weight of glancing black ringlets! She seems

to scorn the earth which her small foot presses, and to look round in supreme contempt of beggarly man and all his trifling concerns. He may gaze at her, worship her, but let him aspire no higher. The laugh of satire that can burst from those lips is cutting to the last degree. I have seen many a wretch writhing under it, and pitied the despair with which he turned away from the royal coquette to seek happiness in a less splendid and less disdainful form. People say that Maria has found her tamer now. I know not how that is, but I think the King of Angria is too well satisfied with his present Queen, who fits herself to him and all his proud strange ways more perfectly every day, to choose even so grand a successor as Maria Sneachy would be.

Augustus, Marquis of Rosendale—young Highland Red-Deer! Fidena may be proud of his son. I never saw a child who better merited the epithet, ‘handsome,’ than does this juvenile prince. All his limbs and features are so round and regular. Look at those fleshy, plump arms naked to the shoulder; on that fair and florid face with its fearless blue eye, and the curly grace of his plentiful light hair; on that bold white forehead which will be bared yet to the mountain winds of his fatherland when he fronts them in the storm of the chase, and to the keener gales of war when he follows the sound of the trumpet and charges either to the rescue or ruin of that banner whose orb is rising, but which ere then will be in its glowing noontide. Prince John should watch Augustus; let him not follow his young god-father in infancy or he will do it hereafter in manhood.

Here the second volume closes. I now take up the first.

Fire! Light! What have we here? Zamorna’s self, blazing in the frontispiece like the sun on his own standard. De Lisle has given him to us in full regimentals—plumed, epauletted, and sabred (I wish the last were literally true, by-the-bye!). All his usual insufferableness or irresistibleness, or whatever the ladies choose to call it, surrounding him like an atmosphere, he stands as if a thunderbolt could neither blast the light of his eyes nor dash the effrontery of his brow. Keen, glorious being! tempered and bright and sharp and rapid as the scimitar at his side when whirled by the delicate yet vigorous hand that now grasps the bridle of a horse to all appearance as viciously beautiful as himself. O Zamorna! what eyes those are glancing under the deep shadow of that raven crest! They bode no good. Man nor woman could ever gather more than a troubled, fitful happiness from their kindest light, Satan gave them their glory to deepen the midnight

gloom that always follows where their lustre has fallen most lovingly. This, indeed, is something different from Percy. All here is passion and fire unquenchable. Impetuous sin, stormy pride, diving and soaring enthusiasm, war and poetry, are kindling their fires in all his veins, and his wild blood boils from his heart and back again like a torrent of new-sprung lava. Young duke? Young demon! I have looked at you till words seemed to issue from your lips in those fine electric tones, as clear and profound as the silver chords of a harp, which steal affections like a charm. I think I see him bending his head to speak to the Countess Zenobia or the Princess Maria or Lady Julia or perhaps Queen Henrietta, while he whispers words that touch the heart like a 'melody that's sweetly played in tune.' A low wind rises and sighs slowly onward. Suddenly his plumes rustle; their haughty shadow sweeps over his forehead; the eye, —the full, dark, refulgent eye,—lightens most gloriously; his curls are all stirred; smiles dawn on his lip. Suddenly he lifts his head, flings back the feathers, and clusters of bright hair, and, while he stands erect and god-like, his regards (as the French say) bent on the lady, whoever it be, who by this time is of course seriously debating whether he be man or angel, a momentary play of indescribable expression round the mouth, and elevation of the eyebrows, tell how the stream of thought runs at that moment; the mind which so noble a form enshrines! Detestable wretch!—I hate him!

But just opposite, separated only by a transparent sheet of silver paper, there is something different: his wife, his own matchless Henrietta! She looks at him with serene eyes as if the dew of placid thought could be shed on him by the influence of those large, clear stars. It reminds me of moonlight descending on troubled waters. I wish the parallel held good all the way, and that she was as far beyond the reach of sorrows arising from her husband's insatiable ambition and fiery impetuosity as Dian is above the lash of the restless deep. But it is not so: her destiny is linked with his; and however strange the great river of Zamorna's fate may flow; however awful the rapids over which it may rush; however cold and barren the banks of its channel; however wild, however darkly beached and stormily billowed the ocean into which it may finally plunge, Mary's must follow. Fair creature! I could weep to think of it. For her sake, I hope a bright futurity for her lord; pity that the shadow of grief should ever fall where the light of such beauty shines. Every one knows how like the duchess is to her father: his very image cast in a softer—it could not be a more refined—mould. They are

precisely similar, even to the very delicacy of their hands. As Byron says, her features have all the statuesque repose, the calm classic grace, that dwells on the Earl's. She, however, has one advantage over him: the stealing, pensive brilliancy of her hazel eyes, and the peaceful sweetness of her mouth, impart a harmony to the whole which the satanic sneer fixed on the corresponding features of Northangerland's face totally destroys. The original paintings of these two engraved portraits, namely, Zamorna's and his lady's, hang in the grand refectory at Wellesley House. Five hundred guineas was the sum paid for each. They are de Lisle's, and rank amongst his most splendid *chefs-d'œuvre*. I know of no parallels to them, except those of Percy and Zenobia in the central saloon at Ellrington Hall. Search all the world from Iceland to Australia, and you will not find four human beings, male and female, to compare with them.

Hector Mirabeau Montmorency, Esq.! These features are somewhat stern to gaze on after such a continuation of the beautiful. They are far, however, from being harsh and disagreeable. A great deal of stuff was written some years ago about the exaggerated and grotesque character of this gentleman's physiognomy. I remember several libellous assertions to that effect in the long since exploded catch-penny of Captain Tree's denominated: 'The Foundling.'^{*} But, indeed, where all the rest was a compound of the grossest falsehood, where Lord and Lady Ellrington, Mr. Sydney, the Duke of Wellington, the whole concern of the Philosopher's Island,—tutors, masters of colleges, students and all,—were hashed up into one wild farrago of bombast, fustian and lies, why should the Lord of Derrinane escape more than others? It is not to be wondered at that this same work, which gave a detailed account of Zenobia Percy's declaring in solemn soliloquy that she hated her husband—abhorred, loathed, detested her own Alexander—which afterwards showed her daring him in the most insolent language to his fate, glorifying the young Marquis of Douro, and anathematizing *him*; and which, to crown all, made Percy offer to commit an act that certainly was more than excusable—almost justifiable after such provocation,—namely, the final settling of so shrewish and shameless a wife, introduced a third person to prevent the deed, and made his interference successful. The volume which contained all this, I say, should excite but small accession of wonder by the few lines that describe Montmorency as a broad, low man, bandy-legged, squinting, his head covered with a shock of shaggy black hair, and his eyes of the consistency of boiled gooseberries: green, glassy,

and ghost-like. The fact is Hector is a tall, well-proportioned, robust figure, with red hair, a florid complexion, an expression of eye which indicates good humour, powerful talent, and no small degree of ferocity. His countenance is certainly not so femininely elegant as that of Northangerland, nor so fierily magnificent as that of Zamorna, but it is the countenance of a gentleman and a Glass-towner, not of a brownie and a bear.

Hist! Thornton is awakening!

‘Heigho, Charles, what are ye about there?’

‘Looking at pictures.’

‘Looking at pictures? Aye, that ye are with a vengeance! Do ye see what you’ve done? Daubed your hands with ink, and then rubbed them over every other portrait in the book. Well, child, thou dost try my patience! Take away your fingers this minute. There! he’s drawn a scrawl across Lady Julia Sydney’s bonny face and spoiled the handsomest lass in the book! Leave the room and get me *The Cook’s Guide*: you shall learn a page of recipes for this business before ever you have a morsel of supper. Poor Julia! she’s fairly changed into a blackamoor; and there’s John with an ink mark across his forehead that makes him frown like death. Faith, that was a lucky hit! I’ve a’most a good mind to forgive you for it; but I willn’t either: there’s a hundred pounds thrown away, and I won’t have such work.’

All this was very true. While examining the portraits I had been jotting down the few remarks here contained. The ink had been communicated by the pen to my fingers, and by them to each leaf as I turned it over. If crime can be expiated by punishment, however, my sin was soon washed away. Till ten o’clock that night I was engaged in lifting up my voice over the pathetic pages of *The Cook’s Guide, or, Every Man his own Housekeeper*—(I think that is the title of the abomination); and, let me assure the reader, such a penalty as this might be the guerdon of graver guilt.

C. BRONTË,
May 30th, 1834.

MINA LAURY

I

FROM the first part of the manuscript entitled 'Passing Events,' completed by Charlotte Brontë on her twentieth birthday, April 21st, 1836.

C. W. H.

MINA LAURY

I

THE Cross of Rivaulx!—* Is that a name familiar to my readers? I rather think not. Listen, then. It is a green, delightful, and quiet place, half way between Angria and the foot of the Sydenham Hills, under the frown of Hawkscliffe, and on the edge of its royal forest. You see a fair house whose sash-windows are set in ivy grown thick and kept in trim order. Over the front door there is a little porch of trellis-work, all the summer covered with a succession of verdant leaves and pink roses: globes, buds, and full-blown blossoms. Within this in fine weather the door is constantly open and reveals a passage terminating in a staircase of low white steps traced up the middle by a brilliant carpet. There are no decided grounds laid out about the Cross of Rivaulx; but a lawn-like greenness surrounds it, and the last remnants of Hawkscliffe shade it in the form of many wild-rose trees and a few lofty elms. You look in vain for anything like a wall or gate to shut it in. The only landmark consists in an old obelisk with moss and wild-flowers at its base and a half-obliterated crucifix sculptured on its side. Well, this is no very presuming place, but on a June evening not seldom have I seen a figure whom every eye in Angria might recognise stride out of the domestic gloom of that little hall and stand in pleasant leisure under the porch whose flowers and leaves were disturbed by the contact of his curls. It is but a lodge to the mighty towers of Hawkscliffe, which being five miles distant buried in the chase are of less convenient access. The day is breezeless, quite still and warm. The sun far declined, for afternoon is just melting into evening, sheds a deep amber light. A cheerful air surrounds the mansion, whose windows are up, its door as usual hospitably apart; and the broad passage reverberates with a lively conversational hum from the rooms which open upon it. The day is of that perfectly mild, sunny kind that by an irresistible influence draws people out into the balmy air; and see, there are two gentlemen lounging easily in the porch sipping coffee from the cups they have brought from the drawing-room, and a third has stretched himself

on the soft moss in the shadow of the obelisk. But for these figures the landscape would be one of exquisite repose. They break the enchantment of sun, sky, pleasant home, and waveless trees. Their dress is military: they are officers from Angria, from the headquarters of Zamorna's grand army. Two at least are of this description. The other, reclining on the grass, a slight figure in black, wears a civil dress. That is Mr. Warner, the Home Secretary. Another person was standing by him, whom I should not have omitted to describe. It was a fine girl dressed in rich black satin with ornaments like those of a bandit's wife, in which a whole fortune seemed to have been expended; but no wonder, for they had doubtless been the gifts of a king! In her ears (she was not too refined for the barbaric magnificence of earrings) hung two long clear drops red as fire and suffused with a purple tint that showed them to be the true oriental ruby. Bright, delicate links of gold circled her neck again and again; and a cross of gems lay on her breast, the centre stone of which was a locket enclosing a ringlet of dark brown hair. With that little soft curl she would not have parted for a kingdom.

Warner's eyes were fixed with interest on Miss Laury as she stood over him, a model of beautiful vigour and glowing health, a kind of military erectness in her form so elegantly built, and in the manner in which her neck sprung from her bust and was placed with graceful uprightness on her falling shoulders. Her waist too falling in behind, and her fine slender foot supporting her in a regulated position, plainly indicated familiarity from her childhood with the sergeants' drill.

All the afternoon she had been entertaining: her exalted guests,—the two in the porch were no other than Lord Hartford and Enara,^{*} and conversing with them frankly and cheerfully, but with a total absence of levity, a dash of seriousness, an habitual intentness of purpose that had more than once attracted to her the admiring glance of the Home Secretary. These and Lord Arundel were the only friends she had in the world. Female acquaintance she never sought, nor if she had sought would she have found them. And so sagacious, clever, and earnest was she in all she said and did that the haughty aristocrats did not hesitate to communicate with her often on matters of first-rate importance. Mr. Warner was now talking to her about himself.

'My dear madam,' he was saying in his imperious but still dulcet tone, 'it is unreasonable that you should remain thus exposed to danger. I am your friend; yes, madam, your true friend. Why do you not hear me and attend to

my representations of the case? Angria is an unsafe place for you; you ought to leave it.'

The lady shook her head: 'Never till my master compels me; his land is my land.'

'But—but, Miss Laury, you know that our army has no warrant from the Almighty of conquest. This invasion may be successful, at least for a time, and then what becomes of you? When the duke's nation is wrestling with destruction, his glory sunk in deep waters, and himself diving desperately to recover it, can he waste a thought or a moment on a woman? You will be at the tender mercies of Quashia,* and of Sheik Medina,—I mean of the detestable renegade Gordon,—before you are aware.'

Mina smiled. 'I am resolved,' said she. 'My master himself shall not force me to leave him. You know I am hardened, Warner; shame and reproach have no effect on me. I do not care for being called a camp-follower. In peace and pleasure all the ladies in Africa would be at the duke's beck; in war and suffering he shall not lack one poor peasant girl. Why, sir, I've nothing else to exist for; I've no other interest in life. Just to stand by His Grace and watch him and anticipate his wishes, or when I cannot do that to execute them like lightning when they are signified; to wait on him when he is sick or wounded, to hear his groans and bear his heartrending animal-patience in enduring pain; to breathe if I can my own inexhaustible health and energy into him; and oh! if it were practicable, to take his fever and agony, to guard his interests, to take on my shoulders power from him that galls me with its weight; to fill gaps in his mighty train of service that nobody else would dare to step into; to do all that, sir, is to fulfil the destiny I was born to. I know I am of no repute among society at large, because I have devoted myself so wholly to one man. And I know that he very seldom troubles himself to think of what I do; and has never and can never appreciate the unusual feelings of subservience, the total self-sacrifice I offer at his shrine. But then he gives me my reward, and that an abundant one. Mr. Warner, when I was at Fort Adrian and had all the yoke of governing the garrison and military household I used to rejoice in my responsibility and to feel firmer the heavier the weight was assigned me to support. And when my master came over, as he often did, to take one of his general surveys, or on a hunting expedition with some of you, his officers, I had such delights in ordering the banquets and entertainments and in seeing the fires kindled up and chandeliers lighted in those dark halls, knowing for

whom the feast was made ready; and it gave me a feeling of ecstasy to hear my young master's voice as he spoke to you or Arundel or to that stately Hartford, and to see him moving about secure and powerful in his own stronghold, to know what true hearts he had about him, assured as I was that his generals and ministers were men of steel, and that his vassals under my rule were trusty as the very ramparts they garrisoned. The last summer evening that he came here the sun and flowers and quietness brightened his noble features with such happiness I could tell his heart was at rest, for as he lay in the shade where you are now I heard him hum the airs he long ago played on his guitar at Mornington. I was rewarded then to feel that the house I kept was pleasant enough to make him forget Angria, and recur to home. The west, the sweet west, is both his home and mine.'

Mina paused and looked solemnly at the sun now softened in its shine and hanging exceedingly low. In a moment her eyes fell again on Warner. They seemed to have absorbed radiance from what they had gazed on. Light like an arrow-point glanced in them as she said:

'This is my time to follow. Ill not be robbed of those hours of blissful danger when I may be continually with him. My kind, noble master never likes to see my tears, and I will weep before him night and day till he grants what I wish. I am not afraid of danger. I have strong nerves. I don't wish to fight like an Amazon; and fatigue I never felt. I will die or be with him.'

'What has fired your eyes so suddenly, Miss Laury?' asked Lord Hartford, now advancing with Enara from their canopy of roses.

'The duke, the duke,' muttered Henri Fernando; 'she won't leave him, I'll be sworn.'

'I can't, general,' said Mina.

'No,' answered the Italian; 'and nobody shall force you. You shall have your own way, madam, whether it be right or wrong.'

Before Miss Laury could answer a voice from within the mansion spoke her name.

'It is my lord!' she exclaimed, and ran over the sward, through the porch, along the passage, to a summer parlour whose walls were painted a fine pale red, its mouldings burnished gilding, and its window-curtains artistical draperies of dark blue silk covered with gold waves and flowers. Here Zamorna sat alone. He had been writing. One or two letters, folded, sealed, and inscribed with western directions, lay on the table beside him. His gloves and cambric handkerchief with a crown wrought upon it in black

hair appeared on his desk. He had not uncovered since entering the house three hours since; and either the weight of his dragoon helmet or the gloom of its impending plumes or else some inward feeling had clouded his face with a strange darkness. Mina closed the door and softly drew near. Without speaking or asking leave she began to busy herself in unclasping the heavy helmet. The duke smiled faintly as her little fingers played about his chin and luxuriant whiskers, and then, the load of brass and sable plumage being removed, as they arranged the pressed masses of glossy brown ringlets and touched with soft cool contact his feverish brow. Absorbed in the grateful task she hardly felt that His Majesty's arm had encircled her waist, and yet she did feel it too and would have thought herself presumptuous to shrink from the endearment. She took it as a slave ought to take the caress of a Sultan, and obeying the gentle effort of his hand slowly sank on to the sofa by her master's side.

'My little physician,' said he, meeting her adoring but anxious upward gaze with the full light of his countenance, 'you look at me as if you thought I was not well. Feel my pulse.'

She folded that offered hand, white, supple, and soft with youth and delicate nature, in both her own, and whether Zamorna's pulse beat rapidly or not his handmaid's did as she felt the slender grasping fingers of the monarch laid quietly in hers. He did not wait for the report, but took his hand away again, and laying it on her raven curls said:

'So, Mina, you won't leave me though I never did you any good in the world? Warner says you are resolved to continue in the scene of war.'

'To continue by your side, my lord.'

'But what shall I do with you, Mina? Where shall I put you? My little girl, what will the army say when they hear of your presence? You have read history? Recollect that it was Darius who carried his concubines to the field, not Alexander! The world will say: "Zamorna attends to his own pleasures and cares not how his men suffer."'

Mina writhed at these words as if the iron had entered into her soul. A vivid burning flush crimsoned her cheek, and tears of shame and bitter self-reproach gushed at once into her bright black eyes. Zamorna was touched acutely.

'Nay, my little girl,' said he, redoubling his caresses and speaking in his most soothing tone, 'never weep about it. It grieves me to hurt your

feelings, but you desire an impossibility, and I must use strong language to convince you that I cannot grant it.'

'Oh, don't refuse me again,' sobbed Miss Laury. 'I'll bear all infamy and contempt to be allowed to follow you, my lord. My lord, I've served you for many years most faithfully, and I seldom ask a favour of you. Don't reject the first request of the kind I have ever made.'

The duke shook his head, and the meeting of his lips, too placid for the firm compression, told that he was not to be moved.

'If you should receive a wound, if you should fall sick,' continued Mina, 'what can surgeons and physicians do for you? They cannot watch you and wait on you and worship you like me, and you do not seem well now. The bloom is so faded on your complexion, and the flesh is wasted round your eyes. Do not look so calmly resolved: let me go!'

Zamorna withdrew his arm from her waist. 'I must be displeased before you cease to importune me,' said he. 'Mina, look at that letter. Read the direction,' pointing to one he had been writing. She obeyed. It was addressed to, 'Her Royal Highness, Mary Henrietta, Duchess of Zamorna.'

'Must I pay no attention to the feelings of that lady?' pursued the duke, whom the duties of war and the conflict of some internal emotions seemed to render peculiarly stern. 'Her public claims must be respected whether I love her or not.'

Miss Laury shrunk into herself. Not another word did she venture to breathe. An unconscious wish of wild intensity filled her that she were dead and buried, and insensible to the shame that overwhelmed her. She saw Zamorna's finger with the ring on it still pointing to that awful name, a name that raised no impulse of hatred: far too high and blessed did the exalted lady seem for that; but only bitter humiliation and self-abasement. She stole from her master's side feeling that she had no more right to sit there than a fawn has to share the den of a royal lion; and murmuring that she was very sorry for her folly, was about to glide in dismay and despair from the room. But the duke rising up arrested her, and bending his lofty stature over her as she crouched before him folded her again in his arms. His countenance relaxed not a moment from its sternness, nor did the gloom leave his magnificent but worn features as he said:

'I will make no apologies for what I have said, because I know, Mina, that as I hold you now you feel fully recompensed for my severity. Before I depart I will speak to you one word of comfort which you may remember

when I am far away and perhaps dead. My dear girl! I know and appreciate all you have done, all you have resigned, and all you have endured, for my sake. I repay you for it with one coin: with what alone to you will be of greater worth than worlds without it. I give you such true and fond love as a master can give to the fairest and loveliest vassal that ever was bound to him in feudal allegiance. You may never feel the touch of Zamorna's lips again. There, Mina!' And fervently and almost fiercely he pressed his lips to her forehead. 'Go to your chamber; to-morrow you must leave for the west.'

'Obedient till death,' was Miss Laury's answer as she closed the door and disappeared.

• • • • •

C. BRONTË,
April 21st, 1836.

MINA LAURY

II

FROM the final portion of an untitled manuscript which was completed on January 17th, 1838.

C. W. H.

MINA LAURY

II

MISS LAURY was sitting after breakfast in a small library. Her desk lay before her and two large ruled quartos filled with items and figures which she seemed to be comparing. Behind her chair stood a tall, well-made, soldierly young man with light hair. His dress was plain and gentlemanly; the epaulette, on one shoulder, alone indicated that he occupied an official capacity. He watched with a fixed look of attention the movements of the small finger which ascended in rapid calculation the long columns of accounts. It was strange to see the absorption of mind expressed in Miss Laury's face, the gravity of her smooth white brow shaded with drooping curls, the scarcely perceptible and unsmiling movement of her lips, though those lips in their rosy sweetness seemed formed only for smiles. An hour or more lapsed in this employment, the room meantime continuing in profound silence broken only by an occasional observation addressed by Miss Laury to the gentleman behind her concerning the legitimacy of some item or the absence of some stray farthing wanted to complete the accuracy of the sum total. In this balancing of the books she displayed a most business-like sharpness and strictness. The slightest fault was detected and remarked on in few words, but with quick searching glance. However, the accountant had evidently been accustomed to her surveillance, for on the whole his books were a specimen of arithmetical correctness.

‘Very well,’ said Miss Laury, as she closed the volumes, ‘your accounts do you credit, Mr. O’Neill. You may tell His Grace that all is quite right. Your memoranda tally with my own exactly.’

Mr. O’Neill bowed.

‘Thank you, madam. This will bear me out against Lord Hartford. His lordship lectured me severely last time he came to inspect Fort Adrian.’

‘What about?’ asked Miss Laury, turning aside her face to hide the deepening of colour which overspread it at the mention of Lord Hartford’s name.

‘I can hardly tell you, madam; but his lordship was in a savage temper. Nothing could please him. He found fault with everything and everybody. I thought he scarcely appeared himself, and that has been the opinion of many lately.’

Miss Laury gently shook her head.

‘You shall not say so, Ryan,’ she replied in a soft tone of reproof. ‘Lord Hartford has a great many things to think about, and he is naturally rather stern. You ought to bear with his tempers.’

‘Necessity has no law, madam,’ replied O’Neill with a smile, ‘and I *must* bear with them. But his lordship is not a popular man in the army. He orders the lash so unsparingly. We like the Earl of Arundel ten times better.’

‘Ah,’ said Miss Laury, smiling, ‘you and I are Westerns, Mr. O’Neill: Irish,—and we favour our countrymen. But Hartford is a gallant commander. His men can always trust him. Do not let us be partial.’

Mr. O’Neill bowed in deference to her opinion, but smiled at the same time, as if he doubted its justice. Taking up his books he seemed about to leave the room. Before he did so, however, he turned and said:

‘The duke wished me to inform you, madam, that he would probably be here about four or five o’clock in the afternoon.’

‘To-day?’ asked Miss Laury in an accent of surprise.

‘Yes, madam.’

She mused a moment, then said quickly: ‘Very well, sir.’

Mr. O’Neill now took his leave.

For a long time after the door had closed Miss Laury sat, with her head on her hand, lost in a tumultuous flush of ideas and anticipations awakened by that simple sentence: ‘The duke will be here to-day.’

The striking of a timepiece aroused her. She remembered that twenty tasks awaited her direction. Always active, always employed, it was not her custom to waste many hours in dreaming. She rose, closed her desk, and left the quiet library for busier scenes.

Four o’clock came, and Miss Laury’s foot was heard on the staircase descending from her chamber. She crossed the large light passage—an apparition of feminine elegance and beauty. The robe of black satin became at once the slender form, which it enveloped in full and shining folds, and her bright blooming complexion, which it set off by the contrast of colour. Glittering through her curls there was a band of fine diamonds, and drops of the same pure gems trembled from her small ears. These ornaments, so

regal in their nature, had been the gift of royalty, and were worn now chiefly for the associations of soft and happy moments which their gleam might be supposed to convey. She entered the drawing-room and stood by the window. From thence appeared one glimpse of the highroad visible through the thickening shades of Rivaulx. Even that was now almost concealed by the frozen mist in which the approach of twilight was wrapped. All was very quiet both in the house and in the wood. A carriage drew near; she heard the sound. She saw it shoot through the fog; but it was not Zamorna. No; the driving was neither the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, nor that of Jehu's postillions. She had not gazed a minute before her experienced eye discerned that there was something wrong with the horses.' The harness had got entangled or they were frightened. The coachman had lost control over them: they were plunging violently. She rang the bell. A servant entered. She ordered immediate assistance to be despatched to the carriage on the road. Two grooms presently hurried down the drive to execute her commands, but before they could reach the spot one of the horses, in its gambols, had slipped on the icy road and fallen. The others grew more unmanageable, and presently the carriage lay overturned on the roadside. One of Miss Laury's messengers came back. She threw up the window that she might communicate with him more readily.

'Any accident?' she asked; 'anybody hurt?'

'I hope not much, madam.'

'Who is in the carriage?'

'Only one lady, and she seems to have fainted. She looked very white when I opened the door. What is to be done, madam?'

Miss Laury answered directly: 'Bring her into the house. Let the horses be taken to the stables. And the servants: how many are there?'

'Three, madam: two postillions and a footman.'

'Do you know the liveries?'

'Can't say, madam. Postillions in grey and white, footman in plain clothes. Horses frightened at a drove of Sydenham oxen, they say: very spirited nags.'

'Well, you have my orders: bring the lady in directly, and make the others comfortable.'

'Yes, madam.'

The groom touched his hat and departed. Miss Laury shut her window. It was very cold. Not many minutes elapsed before the lady in the arms of her

own servants was slowly brought up the lawn and ushered into the drawing-room.

‘Lay her on the sofa,’ said Miss Laury.

She was obeyed. The lady’s travelling-cloak was carefully removed and a thin figure became apparent in a dark silk dress. The cushions of down scarcely sank under the pressure, it was so slight.

Her swoon was now passing off. The genial warmth of the fire which shone full on her revived her. Opening her eyes she looked up at Miss Laury, who was now bending close over her and wetting her lips with some cordial. Recognizing a stranger she shyly turned her glance aside and asked for her servants.

‘They are in the house, madam, and perfectly safe. But you cannot pursue your journey at present: the carriage is much broken.’

The lady lay silent. She looked keenly round the room, and seeing the perfect elegance of its arrangement, the cheerful and tranquil glow of its hearth-light, she appeared to grow more composed. Turning a little on the cushions which supported her, and by no means looking at Miss Laury, but straight the other way, she said:

‘To whom am I indebted for this kindness? Where am I?’

‘In a hospitable country, madam; the Angrians never turn their backs on strangers.’

‘I know I am in Angria,’ she said quickly, ‘but where? What is the name of the house? Who are you?’

Miss Laury coloured slightly; it seemed as if there was some undefined reluctance to give her real name.

‘I am only the housekeeper,’ she said. ‘This is a shooting-lodge belonging to a great Angrian proprietor.’

‘Who?’ asked the lady, who was not to be put off by indirect answers.

Again Miss Laury hesitated. She replied hastily:

‘A gentleman of Western extraction: a distant branch of the great Pakenhams. So at least the family records say; but they have been long naturalized in the Kast.’

‘I never heard of them,’ replied the lady. ‘Pakenham! That is not an Angrian name?’

‘Perhaps, madam, you are not particularly acquainted with this part of the country?’

‘I know Hawkscliffe,’ said the lady, ‘and your house is on the very borders, within the Royal Liberties; is it not?’

‘Yes, madam. It stood there before the great duke bought up the forest manor, and His Majesty allowed my master to retain this lodge and the privilege of sporting in the chase.’

‘Well, and you are Mr. Pakenham’s housekeeper?’

‘Yes, madam.’

The lady surveyed Miss Laury with another furtive side-glance of her large majestic eyes. Those eyes lingered upon the diamond earrings, the bandeau of brilliants that flashed from between the clusters of raven curls; then passed over the sweet face, the exquisite figure of the young housekeeper, and finally were reverted to the wall with an expression that spoke volumes. Miss Laury could have torn the dazzling pendants from her ears. She was bitterly stung.

In her turn she gazed on her guest. The lady was but a young creature, though so high and commanding in her demeanour. She had very small and feminine features, handsome eyes, a neck of delicate curve, and fair, long, and graceful little snowy aristocratic hands, and sandalled feet to match. It would have been difficult to tell her rank by her dress. None of those dazzling witnesses appeared which had betrayed Miss Laury. Any gentleman’s wife might have worn the gown of dark-blue silk, the tinted gloves of Parisian kid, and the fairy sandals of black satin in which she was attired.

‘May I have a room to myself?’ she asked, again turning her eyes with something of a smile toward Miss Laury.

‘Certainly, madam; I wish to make you comfortable. Can you walk upstairs?’

‘Oh, yes!’

She rose from her couch, and leaning on Miss Laury’s arm in a way that showed she had been used to that sort of support, they both glided from the room. Having seen her fair but haughty guest carefully laid on a stately crimson bed in a quiet and spacious chamber; having seen her head sink with all its curls into the pillow of down, her large shy eyes close under their smooth eyelids, and her little slender hands fold on her breast in an attitude of perfect repose, Miss Laury prepared to leave her. She stirred.

‘Come back a moment,’ she said. She was obeyed; there was something in her tone of voice which exacted obedience. ‘I don’t know who you are;’

she said, 'but I am very much obliged to you for your kindness. If my manners are displeasing, forgive me; I mean no incivility. I suppose you will wish to know my name: it is Mrs. Irving; my husband is a minister in the northern kirk; I come from Sneachiesland. Now you may go!'

Miss Laury did go. Mrs. Irving had testified incredulity respecting her story, and now she reciprocated that incredulity. Both ladies were lost in their own mystification.

Five o'clock now struck. It was nearly dark. A servant with a taper was lighting up the chandeliers in the large dining-room where a table spread for dinner received the kindling lamplight upon a starry service of silver. It was likewise magnificently flashed back from a splendid sideboard all arranged in readiness to receive the great, the expected guest. Tolerably punctual in keeping an appointment when he meant to keep it at all, Zamorna entered the house as the fairy-like voice of a musical clock in the passage struck out its symphony to the pendulum. The opening of the front door, a bitter rush of the night-wind and then the sudden close, and the step advancing forwards, were the signals of his arrival.

Miss Laury was in the dining-room looking round and giving the last touch to all things. She just met her master as he entered. His cold lip pressed to her forehead and his colder hand clasping hers brought the sensation which it was her custom of weeks and months to wait for; and to consider when attained the ample recompense for all delay, all toil, all suffering.

'I am frozen, Mina,' said he; 'I came on horseback for the last four miles; and the night is like Canada.'

Chafing his icy hand to animation between her own warm supple palms, she answered by the speechless but expressive look of joy, satisfaction, idolatry, which filled and overflowed her eyes.

'What can I do for you, my lord?' were her first words as he stood by the fire rubbing his hands cheerily over the blaze. He laughed.

'Put your arms round my neck, Mina, and kiss my cheeks as warm and blooming as your own.'

It gave her a pang to resist the impulse that urged her to take him at his word; but she put it by, and only diffidently drew near the armchair into which he had now thrown himself, and began to smooth and separate the curls which were matted on his temples. She noticed as the first smile of salutation subsided a gloom succeeded on her master's brow, which,

however he spoke or laughed, afterwards remained a settled characteristic of his countenance.

‘What visitors are in the house?’ he asked; ‘I saw the groom rubbing down four black horses before the stables as I came in. They are not of the Hawkscliffe stud, I think?’

‘No, my lord. A carriage was overturned at the lawn gates about an hour since, and as the lady who was in it was taken out insensible I ordered her to be brought up here, and her servants accommodated for the night.’

‘And do you know who the lady is?’ continued His Grace; ‘the horses are good: first-rate.’

‘She says her name is Mrs. Irving, and that she is the wife of a Presbyterian minister in the north, but—’

‘You hardly believe her?’ interrupted the duke.

‘No,’ returned Miss Laury; ‘I must say I took her for a lady of rank. She has something highly aristocratic about her manners and aspect, and she appeared to know a good deal about Angria.’

‘What is she like?’ asked Zamorna; ‘young or old, handsome or ugly?’

‘She is young, slender, not so tall as I am, and I should say rather elegant than handsome; very pale, cold in her demeanour; she has a small mouth and chin, and a long fair neck.’

‘Humph! A trifle like Lady Stuartville,’ replied His Majesty. ‘I should not wonder if it is the countess; but I’ll know. Perhaps you did not say to whom the house belonged, Mina?’

‘I said,’ replied Mina, smiling, ‘that the owner of the house was a great Angrian proprietor, a lineal descendant of the Western Pakenhams, and that I was his housekeeper.’

‘She would not believe you! Give me your hand, Mina. You are not so old as I am.’

‘Yes, my lord; I was born on the same day, an hour after Your Grace.’

‘So I have heard, but it must be a mistake; you don’t look twenty, and I am twenty-five. Look at me, Mina, straight, and don’t blush!’

Mina tried to look, but she could not do it without blushing. She coloured to the temples.

‘Pshaw!’ said His Grace, pushing her away, ‘my acquaintance of ten years cannot meet my eye unshrinkingly! Have you lost that ring I once gave you, Mina?’

‘Which ring, my lord? You have given me many.’

‘That which I said had the essence of your whole heart and mind engraven in the stone as a motto.’

‘FIDELITY?’ asked Miss Laury; and she held out her hand with a graven emerald on the forefinger.

‘Right!’ was the reply; ‘is it your motto still?’ And with one of his jealous glances, he seemed trying to read her conscience. Miss Laury at once saw that late transactions were not a secret confined between herself and Lord Hartford. She saw His Grace was unhinged and strongly inclined to be savage. She stood and watched him with a sad, fearful gaze.

‘Well,’ she said, turning away after a long pause, ‘if Your Grace is angry with me I’ve very little to care about in this world.’

The entrance of servants with the dinner prevented Zamorna’s answer. As he took his place at the head of the table, he said to the man who stood behind him:

‘Give Mr. Pakenham’s compliments to Mrs. Irving, and say that he will be happy to see her at his table if she will honour him so far as to be present there.’

The footman vanished. He returned in five minutes.

‘Mrs. Irving is too much tired to avail herself of Mr. Pakenham’s kind invitation at present, but she will be happy to join him at tea.’

‘Very well,’ said Zamorna. Then looking round: ‘Where is Miss Laury?’

Mina was in the act of gliding from the room, but she stopped mechanically at his call.

‘Am I to dine alone?’ he asked.

‘Does Your Grace wish me to attend you?’

He answered by rising and leading her to her seat. He then resumed his own, and dinner commenced. It was not until after the cloth was withdrawn and the servants had retired that the duke, whilst he sipped his single glass of champagne, recommenced the conversation he had before unpleasantly entered upon.

‘Come here,’ he said, drawing a chair close to his side.

Mina never hesitated, never delayed through bashfulness or any other feeling to comply with his orders.

‘Now,’ he continued, leaning his head towards hers and placing his hand on her shoulder, ‘are you happy, Mina? Do you want anything?’

‘Nothing, my lord.’ She spoke truly; all that was capable of yielding her happiness on this side of eternity was at that moment within her reach. The

room was full of calm. The lamps burnt as if they were listening. The fire sent up no flickering flame, but diffused a broad, still, glowing light over all the room. Zamorna touched her; his form and features filled her eye; his voice her ear; his presence her whole heart; she was soothed to perfect happiness.

‘My Fidelity!’ pursued that musical voice, ‘if thou hast any favour to ask, now is the time. I’m all concession: as yielding as a lady’s glove. Come, Mina, what is thy petition? and thy request even to the half of my kingdom shall be granted!’

‘Nothing,’ again murmured Miss Laury. ‘Oh, my lord, nothing! What can I want?’

‘Nothing?’ he repeated. ‘What! No reward for ten years of faith and love and devotion; no reward for the companionship in six-months’ exile; no recompense to the little hand that has so often smoothed my pillow in sickness, to the sweet lips that have many a time in cool and dewy health been pressed to a brow of fever; none to the dark Milesian eyes that ‘once grew dim with watching through endless nights by my bed of delirium? Need I speak of the sweetness and fortitude that cheered sufferings known only to thee and me? of the devotion that gave me bread when thou wert dying of hunger? and that scarcely more than a year since! For all this and much more, must there be no reward?’

‘I have had it,’ said Miss Laury. ‘I have it now.’

‘But,’ continued the duke, ‘what if I have devised something worthy of your acceptance? Look up now and listen to me.’

She did look up, but she speedily looked down again. Her master’s eye was insupportable; it burned absolutely with infernal fire! ‘What is he going to say?’ murmured Miss Laury to herself. She trembled.

‘I say, love,’ pursued the individual, drawing her a little closer to him, ‘I will give you as a reward a husband. Don’t start, now! And that husband shall be a nobleman; and that nobleman is called Lord Hartford! Now, stand up and let me look at you.’

He opened his arms and Miss Laury sprang erect like a loosened bow.

‘Your Grace is anticipated,’ she said. ‘That offer has been made me before. Lord Hartford did it himself three days ago.’

‘And what did you say? Speak the truth now: subterfuge won’t avail you.’

‘What did I say? I don’t know; it little signifies; you have rewarded me, my lord, but I cannot bear this: I feel sick.’

With a deep, short sob, she turned white, and fell close by the duke, her head against his foot.

This was the first time in her life that Mina Laury had fainted, but strong health availed nothing against the deadly struggle which convulsed every feeling in her nature when she heard her master’s announcement. She believed him to be perfectly sincere. She thought he was tired of her and she could not endure it.

I suppose Zamorna’s first feeling when she fell was horror; and his next I am tolerably certain was intense gratification. People say I am not in earnest when I abuse him, or else I would here insert half a page of deserved vituperation—deserved and heartfelt as it is, I will merely relate his conduct without note or comment.

He took a wax taper from the table and held it over Miss Laury. Here could be no dissimulation. She was white as marble and still as stone. In truth then she did intensely love him, with a devotion that left no room in her thoughts for one shadow of an alien image. Do not think, reader, that Zamorna meant to be so generous as to bestow Miss Laury on Lord Hartford. No; he was but testing the attachment which a thousand proofs daily given ought long ago to have convinced him was undying.

While he yet gazed she began to recover. Her eyelids stirred and then slowly dawned from beneath the large black orbs that scarcely met his before they filled to overflowing with sorrow. Not a gleam of anger, not a whisper of reproach. Her lips and eyes spoke together no other language than the simple words: ‘I cannot leave you!’:

She rose feebly and with effort. The duke stretched out his hand to assist her. He held to her lips the scarcely tasted wine.

‘Mina,’ he said, ‘are you collected enough to hear me?’

‘Yes, my lord.’

‘Then listen. I would much sooner give half, aye, the whole of my estates to Lord Hartford, than yourself! What I said just now was only to try you.’

Miss Laury raised her eyes and sighed like one awakening from some hideous dream, but she could not speak.

‘Would I,’ continued the duke, ‘would I resign the possession of my first love to any hands but my own? I would far rather see her in her coffin; and I would lay you there as still, as white, and much more lifeless than you

were stretched just now at my feet before I would for threat, for entreaty, for purchase, give to another a glance of your eyes or a smile from your lips. I know you adore me now, Mina; for you could not feign that agitation, and therefore I will tell you what proof I gave yesterday of my regard for you. Hartford mentioned your name in my presence, and I avenged the profanation by a shot which sent him to his bed little better than a corpse.'

Miss Laury shuddered, but so dark and profound are the mysteries of human nature, ever allying vice with virtue, that I fear this bloody proof of her master's love brought to her heart more rapture than horror. She said not a word, for now Zamorna's arms were again folded round her, and again he was soothing her to tranquillity by endearments and caresses that far away removed all thought of the world, all past pangs of shame, all cold doubts, all weariness, all heart-sickness resulting from hope long deferred. He had told her that she was his first love, and now she seemed tempted to believe that she was his only love. Strong-minded beyond her sex; active, energetic, and accomplished in all other points of view, here she was as weak as a child. She lost her identity; her very life was swallowed up in that of another.

There came a knock to the door. Zamorna rose and opened it. His valet stood without.

'Might I speak with Your Grace in the anteroom?' asked Monsieur Rosier in somewhat of a hurried tone. The duke followed him out.

'What do you want with me, sir? Anything the matter?'

'I was walking through the passage two minutes since when I heard a step on the stairs: a light step as if of a very small foot. I turned, and there was a lady coming down.'

'Well, did you know her?'

'I did. I stood in the shade, screened by a pillar, and she passed very near without observing me. I saw her distinctly, and it was—'

'Who, sir?'

'The duchess!'

There was a pause which was closed by a clear and remarkably prolonged whistle from the duke. He took a leisurely turn through the room.

'Mrs. Irving, the wife of a minister in the north! A satirical hit at myself! What can have brought her? Anxiety about her invaluable husband! Could not bear any longer without him: obliged to set off to see what he was

doing. It's as well Rosier told me, however. What shall I do? I must not be angry; she can't do with that sort of thing just now.'

Ceasing his soliloquy, the duke turned again to his valet:

'Which room did Her Grace go into?'

'The drawing-room, my lord. She's there now.'

Zamorna left the room.

Softly unclosing the drawing-room door he perceived the lady by the hearth. Her back was towards him, but there could be no mistake. The whole turn of form, the style of dress, the curled auburn head: all were attributes but of one person. He closed the door as noiselessly as he had opened it and stole forwards. Her attention was absorbed in a book she had picked up. As he stood unobserved behind her he could see that her eyes rested on the flyleaf, where was written in his own hand:

Holy St. Cyprian! thy waters stray
With still and solemn tone;
And fast my bright hours pass away
And somewhat throws a shadow grey,
Even as twilight closes day,
Upon thy waters lone.

Farewell! If I might come again,
Young as I was and free,
And feel once more in every vein
The fire of that first passion reign
Which sorrow could not quench nor pain,
I'd soon return to thee;
But while thy billows seek the main.
That never more may be!

This was dated 'Mornington, 1829.'

The duchess felt a hand press her shoulder and she looked up. The force of attraction had its natural results and she clung to what she saw.

'Adrian! Adrian!' was all her lips would utter.

'Mary! Mary!' replied the duke, allowing her to hang about him; 'what brought you here? Are you running away: eloping in my absence?'

'Adrian, why did you leave me? You said you would come back in a week, and it is eight days since you left me; do come home!'

'So you actually have set off in search of a husband,' said Zamorna, laughing heartily; 'and been overturned and obliged to take shelter in Pakenham's shooting-box!'

‘Why are you here, Adrian?’ enquired the duchess, who was far too much in earnest to join in his laugh. ‘Who is Pakenham? and who is that person who calls herself his housekeeper? And why do you let any one live so near Hawkscliffe without ever telling me?’

‘I forgot to tell you,’ said His Grace; ‘I’ve other things to think about when those bright eyes are looking up to me! As to Pakenham, to tell you the truth he is a sort of left-hand cousin of your own, being son to the old admiral, my uncle, in the south. And his housekeeper is his sister. *Voilà tout*. Kiss me now.’

The duchess did kiss him, but it was with a heavy sigh. The cloud of jealous anxiety hung on her brow undissipated.

‘Adrian, my heart aches still. Why have you been staying so long in Angria? Oh, you don’t care for me! You have never thought how miserably I have been longing for your return, Adrian!’ She stopped and cried.

‘Mary, recollect yourself,’ said His Grace. ‘I cannot be always at your feet. You were not so weak when we were first married. You let me leave you often then without any jealous remonstrance.’

‘I did not know you so well at that time,’ said Mary; ‘and if my mind is weakened, all its strength has gone away in tears and terrors for you. I am neither so handsome nor so cheerful as I once was. But you ought to forgive my decay, because you have caused it.’

‘Low spirits,’ returned Zamorna; ‘looking on the dark side of matters. God bless me! the wicked is caught in his own net! Mary, never again reproach yourself with loss of beauty till I give the hint first. Believe me now, in that and every other respect you are just what I wish you to be. You cannot fade any more than marble can, at least not in my eyes. And as for your devotion and tenderness, though I chide its excess sometimes, because it wastes and bleaches you almost to a shadow, yet it forms the very firmest chain that binds me to you. Now, cheer up! To-night you shall go to Hawkscliffe: it is only five miles off. To-morrow I will be at the castle before dawn; the carriage shall be ready; I will put you in, myself beside you; off we go straight to Verdopolis; and there for the next three months I will tire you of my company, morning, noon, and night! Now what can I promise more?’

By dint of subterfuge and laughter the individual at last succeeded in getting all things settled to his mind.

The duchess went to Hawkscliffe that night, and keeping his promise for once Zamorna accompanied her to Verdopolis next morning.

• • • • •

For a long space of time, 'Good-bye, reader!' I have done my best to please you; and though I know that through feebleness, dulness, and iteration my work terminates rather in failure than in triumph, yet you are sure to forgive, for I have done my best!

C. BRONTË,
Haworth,
January 17th, 1838.

THE END

NOTES.

* Maimoune, a fairy, daughter of Damriel, King or head of a legion of genies.—*Arabian Nights Entertainments*.—C. W. H.

* ‘Lines to the River Aragua’ is the title of a poem by Charlotte Brontë which is mentioned by Mrs. Gaskell in *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, 1857, vol. i. p. 94.—C. W. H.

* The last four words in this sentence have been erased from the MS.—
C. W. H.

* The above poem appears to have been composed more than twelve months before the story in which it appears. In *The Red Cross Knight and Other Poems*, 1917 (a little book printed for private circulation only, in an edition limited to thirty copies), the poem was printed for Mr. T. J. Wise from a manuscript dated July 1831.—C. W. H.

—* The first twelve words in this sentence have been erased from the MS.
—C. W. H.

* It is the custom in Verdopolis, where perhaps forty or so noblemen, with their attendants, go to shoot or hunt wild beasts or birds in the desolate and uninhabited Mountains of the Moon, to form a sort of camp for their mutual protection and defence. These camps sometimes contain upwards of a hundred individuals.—*Note by Author.*

* Danhasch, son of Schemhourasch, a genie rebellious to God (*Arabian Nights Entertainments*).—C. W. H.

* ‘The Foundling: A Tale of Our Own Times,’ by Captain Tree, is an unpublished story containing about thirty-five thousand words, which was commenced by Charlotte Brontë on May 31st, 1833, and completed on June 27th, 1823. The manuscript is described, and facsimiles of two pages of the manuscript are given, by Mr. T. J. Wise in his book, *A Bibliography of the Writings in Prose and Verse of the Members of the Brontë Family*, published in 1917.—C. W. H.

* The name of Rivaulx was probably obtained from Rivaulx Abbey (now in ruins), founded in 1131 for the Cistercians. It is in the N. Riding of Yorkshire, in Rye Dale, at the foot of the Hambleton Hills.—C. W. H.

* General Henri Fernando de Euara, known in the army as ‘The Tiger.’—
C. W. H.

* Quashia Quamina Kashna, an African chief.—C. W. H.

ERRATA.

The following obvious typographical errors have been corrected:

On [page 126](#): Added missing closing quote after *Scotland*.'

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE TWELVE
ADVENTURERS, AND OTHER STORIES ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG™ LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are

located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the

work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg electronic works provided that:

- • You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- • You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- • You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- • You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription

errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable

to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg's goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax

deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 41 Watchung Plaza #516, Montclair NJ 07042, USA, +1 (862) 621-9288. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate.

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg electronic works
Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with

anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.