



THE WILKIE COLLINS SOCIETY

All The Year Round
Newly identified journalism
by Wilkie Collins
(II)

Appalling Disclosure for the Lord Chamberlain
A Florentine Procession
The Last Leaves of a Sorrowful Book

Introduction © Paul Lewis 2017

The Wilkie Collins Society
August 2017

Newly identified journalism by Wilkie Collins in *All The Year Round* (II)

Introduction

This pamphlet reproduces three more pieces which are annotated ‘Wilkie Collins’ in the volumes of *All The Year Round* discovered by Dr Jeremy Parrott in 2015.¹ The annotations identify the names of the contributors to Dickens’s periodical.² Prior to their discovery barely a third of the pieces in the periodical were firmly attributed. No-one had ever attributed these three articles to Wilkie.³

It is accepted that the annotations are contemporary and probably done for a luxury ‘Office Set’ of the periodical used by Dickens himself.⁴ A few errors in the annotations have been identified and one of the eight new pieces annotated with Wilkie’s name has been ruled out as his, partly due to his other commitments at the time.⁵ The annotations should be treated as very strong evidence of authorship but not absolute proof.

I have no doubt that the three pieces reproduced here are by Wilkie.

Two of them were written during the time Wilkie was on contract to work for *All The Year Round* and was paid six guineas (£6-6s or £6.30) a week. When he

¹ Private communication from Jeremy Parrott; I was kindly granted access to the 20 volumes in 2017.

² For three other pieces see Paul Lewis *All The Year Round Newly identified journalism by Wilkie Collins*, Wilkie Collin Society, May 2017.

³ See Ella Ann Oppenlander, *Dickens’ All The Year Round: Descriptive Index and Contributor List*, New York, 1984 and *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* various dates.

⁴ Jeremy Parrott, ‘The Annotated Set of *All The Year Round: Questions, Answers and Conjectures*’, *The Dickensian*, No.498, Spring 2016, pp. 10-21; and ‘George Holsworth and Henry Walker: the Backroom Boys at *All The Year Round*’ *The Dickensian*, No.500 Winter 2016 pp. 247-259 – see.p.256.

⁵ Paul Lewis *All The Year Round: Newly identified contributions by Wilkie Collins*, Wilkie Collins Society, January 2017.

accepted his renewed contract in August 1860 – with a pay rise – he wrote to Dickens

I am also, when not engaged on the serial story, to write articles (the copyright of which is conceded to me) for “All The Year Round”, as I can,⁶

Both the earlier pieces reprinted here were written before he began writing *The Woman in White* in August 1859.

The later piece – published second here – was written five years after that contract expired. After a long absence Wilkie had renewed his connection with *All The Year Round*. He wrote the 1867 Christmas number *No Thoroughfare* jointly with Dickens and his final serial for the periodical, *The Moonstone*, ran from January to August 1868. When Dickens went on his American tour from 9 November 1867 to 2 May 1868. He asked Collins to stand in as Conductor.⁷ Wilkie’s Coutts account records six monthly payments of £42 from December 1867 to May 1868, probably for that work. In November Collins wrote to his mother

I am finishing the 3rd act of the play – conducting All The Year Round – and correcting *The Moonstone* for its first appearance in London and New York.⁸

A short 1200 word piece, perhaps to fill a gap, would have been within his editorial duties.

Appalling Disclosure for the Lord Chamberlain is one of 12 pieces Wilkie is now known to have written for Volume I of *All The Year Round* (three of them were minor co-authored pieces).⁹

Wilkie writes in the person of a country gentleman who tells the Lord Chamberlain that he should close all theatres. Collins uses that to satirise a guide to acting which he says shows how actors are tortured by the exaggerated way

⁶ [0364] WC to Charles Dickens, 7 August 1860.

⁷ Pilgrim, Biographical Tables, XI p.xx and XII p.xxiv.

⁸ [0789] to Harriet Collins, 26 November 1867 (BGLL, II, pp. 92-93)

⁹ *All The Year Round*, 9 July 1859, vol. I, pp. 261-264.

they have to express emotions.¹⁰ Wilkie also takes a swipe at the office itself, calling it “a species of vexatious sinecure”. It is reminiscent of Collins’s earlier ‘Deep Design on Society’ (*Household Words* 2 January 1858) which was also a social satire in the guise of a review of a book.¹¹ Clearly Wilkie Collins.

A Florentine Procession¹² is the last published of the newly identified pieces from the Parrott annotations. This short article criticises, though rather warmly, a work by the female artist Jane Benham Hay (1829-1904). *The Florentine Procession* also called *The Burning of the Vanities* was exhibited in November 1867 at the French Gallery, Pall Mall in London. The large work occupied “almost one whole side of the gallery” and its catalogue description ran to three pages. It was her best-known painting and is now at Homerton College, Cambridge University.

The tone and the style of the piece is reminiscent of many earlier Collins art criticisms. See for example ‘The Royal Academy in Bed’ (*All The Year Round*, 28 May 1859, pp. 105-109) and ‘The Exhibition of the Royal Academy’ (*Bentley’s Miscellany*, XXIX, June 1851). Also ‘To Think or be Thought for?’ an attack on works of art by Michelangelo and Raphael which were loved by the art establishment (*Household Words*, 13 September 1856, XIV, pp. 337-348). To me, clearly a Collins piece.

The Last Leaves of a Sorrowful Book¹³

Of all the newly attributed pieces, this one reads the least like Wilkie Collins. Two heavy and maudlin opening paragraphs introduce the newly published diary of Captain James FitzJames who captained one of the ships on the lost Franklin expedition to the North Pole in 1845.

When the grave has claimed its own; when the darkened rooms are open again to the light of heaven; when grief rests more gently on the weary heart, and the tears, restrained through the day, fall quietly in the lonely night hours, there comes a time at which we track the farewell journey of the dead over the familiar ways of home by the simple household relics that the lost and loved companion has left to guide us.

¹⁰ Probably *The Amateur, or Guide to the Stage...by a retired performer*, New York, Fisher & Brothers [1851].

¹¹ John Timbs *Things Not Generally Known Familiarly Explained*, Bogue, London 1856.

¹² *All The Year Round*, 14 December 1867, vol. XIX, pp. 5-6.

¹³ *All The Year Round*, 30 July 1859, vol. I, pp. 318-323.

The expedition and the debate in the press about whether the lost men had resorted to cannibalism was an abiding interest of Dickens and it is quite possible these opening paragraphs were heavily influenced by him. The diary itself had recently been privately published by William Coningham (1815-1884), the Liberal MP for Brighton, who was in effect the adopted father of the illegitimate FitzJames. It was probably because he knew of Dickens's interest in the expedition he "voluntarily accorded to us the permission to make what literary use we may think fit". Much of the piece consists of quotes from the diary linked by short paragraphs. The longer links read more like Collins.

Every page of it assures us that Captain Fitzjames added to his high professional qualifications the two rare gifts of a quick and true observation of character and a happy facility in conveying the results of that observation plainly, unaffectedly, and graphically to others. Narrow as its limits are, this interesting journal effects its avowed object of placing us on board ship by the writer's side.

Certainly it is not one of Collins's best works. But as a staff writer very much one that Dickens could have asked him to write and amended.

Work done for Dickens Journals Online, a year before Parrott announced his discovery, used computer analysis to assess the authorship of this piece among three others that DJO thought were certainly written by someone in the inner circle of *All The Year Round*. The analysis said this article was more likely to be written by Wilkie Collins than five other authors including Charles Collins and Dickens himself. So to the surprise of some this piece is also added to the Collins *oeuvre*.

Conclusion

The annotations are strong evidence of authorship. Collins's availability and the content both support the annotation fully in the case of these three pieces. They add nearly 10,000 words to Wilkie Collins's known journalistic work.

Note on the text

These three pieces are taken from the original text exactly as published in *All The Year Round*. Victorian spelling and grammar are not altered and any errors are not corrected.

APPALLING DISCLOSURE FOR THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

ENGLAND has the happiness of knowing that the new Ministry has been set in working order at last. If the representation of almost all the contradictory forms of political opinion, and the official union of statesmen who have been hitherto remarkable for their capacity of disagreeing with one another, be the secret for forming a permanent Government, the new administration may look forward to a long life, and the free and independent electors may shut up the vote-markets all over the country for some time to come. To the Ministry, generally, a patriotic private individual has nothing particular to say. They have their lessons to practise in fitting themselves for their new places. The Premier has to learn the necessity of treating the House of Commons (as purporting to represent the small nation who take the liberty of occupying Great Britain) with some little respect and civility. The Foreign Secretary has to steer the British nation carefully through the shoals, quicksands, and whirlpools of existing continental complications—no more spirited or honest man than he, could try to do it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has to collect all his powers of persuasion, with the object of reconciling his countrymen to some few additional figures on the tax-collectors' bills. Other minor members of the Ministry, in and out of the Cabinet, have other responsibilities to confront.

The one exceptional person of quality, so far as I can see, whose official occupations are not likely to be at all affected by these stirring times, is the noble lord who presides over the administration of our places of theatrical amusement. At a period when all his fellow-potentates of the governing classes are called on to exert themselves with special activity, it must be a humiliating reflection to the Lord Chamberlain to think that his peculiar office, in connexion with the drama, is now more than ever likely to be little better than a species of vexatious sinecure. If I have rightly interpreted his lordship's sensations—and my deep respect for his office and himself, although I have no idea who he is, assures me that I have done so—I feel great pleasure in coming forward with a proposal for specially employing this minister's dormant energies, and for presenting his office in a prominent position before the eyes of the whole country. In plain terms, I have hereby to request that the Lord Chamberlain, on the ground of common humanity, will be pleased to shut up all our theatres forthwith, and to erase the Stage henceforth and for ever from the list of English professions.

I rest this proposal solely on the ground of common humanity. I have no objection whatever, either of the fanatically sectarian or of the severely critical sort, to set up against my theatrical fellow-citizens. I oppose the continuance of their professional

existence purely for their own unfortunate sakes; precisely as my philanthropic predecessors opposed the employment of climbing-boys in foul chimneys; precisely as civilised Europe still opposes the buying and selling of African negroes. The case of the climbing-boy was, that he underwent tortures; the case of the negro is, that he undergoes tortures; the case of the equally miserable and equally uncomplaining actor and actress is (as I shall presently show), that they undergo tortures.

I live in the country, in a position of happy retirement. Everything that happens inside our snug little town, interests me deeply. Nothing that happens outside of it, is of the slightest importance to me. If there had been a theatre in our snug little town, I should have been long since familiarly acquainted with the British Stage. As there is no theatre in our snug little town, I know nothing whatever about the British Stage. Until yesterday I never gave the subject a thought because it was not a subject connected with our town. Actors and actresses will please not be offended at this; we treat all other eminent people and national subjects, when they are unfortunate enough to be out of our town, with precisely similar neglect. Popular characters in London would find themselves total strangers among us. We never know anything about a new book, a new picture, or a new play, until it has obtruded itself by main force on our attention; even then, I would not give much for its chance of absorbing us, for five minutes together; if our two rival doctors happened to have a new quarrel at the time; or if our High Church clergyman omitted bowing to our dissenting solicitor when they passed each other in the street; or if the town-council met on that day with only the average amount of wrangling in the course of their parliamentary debates. It is hardly in the power of words to do justice to our immense capacity for ignoring everything that does not happen to be locally connected with us, in our snug little town.

Well, as I have said: until yesterday I never gave the British Stage and the unfortunate persons who practise on it so much as a thought. On that memorable day, however, a certain small pamphlet, descriptive of the training that actors and actresses must go through to practise their profession, fell into my hands by pure accident. I took it up with perfect indifference; but the moment I opened it, the moment my eyes fell upon one of the pages, I felt my flesh creep. By the time I had read the thing through, I was cold all over—my hands were elevated in sorrow and amazement—generous tears of sympathy and indignation started to my eyes—stern resolution to expose unheard-of barbarities, and to vindicate a hapless race, fired my mind. I seized pen, ink, and paper in the cause of suffering humanity—and here I am.

The pamphlet to which I refer is dated 1858, and is entitled, “The Amateur’s Guide to the Stage; or, How to become a Theatrical: Pointing out the certain way to Eminence and Distinction in this lucrative, honourable, and pleasant Profession: describing the points in Love, Grief, Despair, Madness, Jealousy, Remorse, Rage, Hatred, Revenge, Tyranny, Humility, and Joy; with all the varied phases of Villany, Hypocrisy, &c. &c.”

My present business is not with the moral aspect of this extremely painful subject. Let me proceed at once to the physical side of it; let me show, from the pages of the audacious publication now under notice, the precise species of suffering which is habitually and officially inflicted on patient human nature by the profession of the Stage.

At the ninth page of this pamphlet the disclosures open partially to view, in one of the sections of the subject, which is entitled, with shocking flippancy, “Making up the Face.” I find it here laid down as law, that “every one on entering the theatre at night should wash his face.” Thus far, there is no objection to be made. If people who have business in a theatre go to that business with dirty faces, it is of course highly desirable that they should be washed at the first opportunity. Well, the dirt having been, most properly, removed, is the face of the washed man or woman thereupon mercifully let alone? No. A powder-puff is passed over it; over that again, a mixture of carmine and Chinese vermilion, boiled in milk and then suffered to dry, is smeared with a hare’s-foot. If the character to be represented is required to appear with moustache and whiskers, hair made of Crape is next glued—glued—to the cheeks and upper lip. If the personage is to be a Moor or a negro, his persecuted physiognomy is treated with still greater indignity. Lard—horrible to relate—lard, with which our nice roasted capons have made us all pleasantly familiar at the social board, is daubed over the much-enduring face which the victim has just washed; and Spanish brown (in the case of the Moor), or burnt cork powdered (in the case of the negro), is daubed over the lard; carmine, in both instances, is daubed over the Spanish brown and burnt cork, to “throw up the impression.” Let us not stop to inquire what this mysterious phrase can possibly mean, for the subject is too greasy and too painful to be dwelt on. Let us rather follow the unfortunate person whose face has been powdered, painted, and larded, to the point at which the exercise of his or her profession begins on the stage—to the point, also, from which the disclosures of bodily suffering burst on us in their full terror.

At page twelve of the pamphlet, the instructions for expressing the furious passions, enumerated on the title-page, begin. On reckoning up these passions, together with

some of the milder affections of the mind which are added to them on the list, I find that they amount to forty-four in number, and that they are by no means exhausted even when they have reached that figure, on the confession of the writer himself, who declares that he has merely selected them from many others. We will, in our turn, select a few examples of what the actor or actress is expected to undergo in order to earn the means of subsistence. Persons who may not have prepared themselves for what is now to come, by reading past disclosures in connexion with slaves and climbing-boys, are strongly recommended not to proceed any farther with the perusal of this article.

Here, literally and exactly copied, are the directions for performing a passionate character on the stage:

“Rage, or Anger, expresses itself with rapidity, interruption, rant, harshness, and trepidation. The neck is stretched out, the head forward, often nodding, and shaken in a menacing manner against the object of the passion; the eyes alternately staring and rolling, the eyebrows drawn down over them, and the forehead wrinkled into clouds; the nostrils stretched wide, and every muscle strained; the breast heaving, and the breath fetched hard; the mouth open, and drawn on each side towards the ears, showing the teeth in a gnashing posture; the feet often stamping; the right arm frequently thrown out and menacing, with the clenched fist shaken, and a general and violent agitation of the whole body.”

If these frightful directions have not altogether prostrated the proverbially gentle reader, two additional specimens may perhaps be endured. They relate to Grief and Despair.

“Grief, sudden and violent, expresses itself by beating the head and forehead, tearing the hair, and catching the breath, as if choking; also by screaming, weeping, stamping, lifting the eyes from time to time to heaven, and hurrying backwards and forwards.”

“Despair bends the eyebrows downwards, clouds the forehead, rolls the eyes, and sometimes bites the lips and gnashes with the teeth; the heart is supposed to be too much hardened to suffer the tears to flow, yet the eyeballs will be red and inflamed; the head is hung down upon the breast; the arms are bent at the elbows, the fist clenched hard, and the whole body strained and violently agitated.”

I ask any reasonable being to reflect, first of all, on the exquisitely intricate, tender, and delicate construction of the nerves and muscles in the human face; and then to consider what must be the effect on those nerves and muscles, of the terrible epileptic contortions here insisted on, when habitually practised for hire, by men and women, night after night. Here are strainings of the neck, starings and rollings of the eyes, wrinklings of the forehead into clouds, stretchings of the nostrils, distensions of the mouth, gnashings of the teeth, beatings of the head, tearings of the hair, catchings of the breath, bitings of the lip, and inflammations of the eyeballs, all coolly enumerated as a species of physical stock-in-trade with out which the miserable stage performer cannot so much as start in business with a prospect of success. I protest my own forehead begins to wrinkle into clouds as I trace these terrifying lines; my own eyes begin to stare and roll; my own placid features feel in some slight degree the torture that is nightly self-inflicted by the devoted wretches condemned to this direful profession,

There are people in this world who will endeavour to excuse everything and to make light of everything. Such people will tell me that the heart-rending directions here quoted, only apply to the performance of Tragedy, and that when Comedy has its turn the distorted faces of the actors snatch a brief repose. I meet that assertion with a flat denial, on the authority of the pamphlet. The directions for impersonating the milder and lighter affections of the mind simply involve a new set of contortions. For instance, "Joy is expressed by clapping of hands and exulting looks; the eyes are opened wide, and on some occasions raised to heaven; the countenance is smiling, not composedly, but with features aggravated. Modesty, or Submission, levels the eyes to the breast, if not to the feet of the superior character. In Boasting, or Affected Courage, the eyes stare, the eyebrows are drawn down, the face is red and bloated, the mouth pouts out, the voice is hollow and thundering." Where is the repose, here, for the tortured theatrical face? Joy cannot smile without aggravated features. Modesty cannot express itself without levelling its eyes at other people's feet. Even Boasting—jovial, thoughtless, comically mendacious Boasting—must draw down its eyebrows, swell its face, pout its mouth, and thunder with its voice. The system I denounce is at least consistent. There are always physical convulsions of one kind or another at the bottom of it, survey it where you will.

But, why dwell on the sufferings of the actors' faces only, when their limbs and lungs are assailed as mercilessly as their features by this barbarous profession? The passion of pride, for example, when it gets on the stage, stretches the legs "to a distance from one another, and takes large and solemn strides." Remorse "bends the knees;" Hatred "throws out the hands;" Threatening "brandishes the hands;"

Acquitting (a passion I never heard of before, out of the jury-box) “waves the hands;” Fear “draws back the elbows parallel with the sides;” Hope “spreads the arms;” Denying (a passion to which we are all subject, especially when we are asked for money) “pushes your open right hand from you, and turns your face the contrary way.” As for the lungs, the vocal contortions prescribed for them equal the contortions imposed on the face and limbs. The victims of the stage are expected to speak on a system of impossible modulation, comprised under the following heads: “High, loud, and quick; Low, loud, and quick; High, loud, and slow; High, soft, and slow.” And when they have accomplished these preliminary vocal gymnastics, they are condemned to get on next to “Pauses of Reflection, and to Pauses of Confusion, filled up with Hesitative Pantings.” I pledge my word of honour to the correctness of these phrases, as being exactly copied from the pamphlet.

On the stage. I have considered these atrocities, hitherto, purely with reference to the public life, or business existence, of the sufferers. But suppose we now follow them, men and women, into private life? Here, the prospect is hideous. When people have accustomed themselves to the practice of contortions, night after night (it may be for years together, assuming that the bodily energies of theatrical individuals are of peculiarly robust fabric), those contortions must become habitual, and must cling to them as a kind of second nature in their brief moments of retirement by their own firesides. What is the necessary consequence? This unhappy race must be unspeakably portentous and terrible to the humanity that surrounds them. Conceive the effect of stretched nostrils, distended mouths, clouded foreheads, inflamed eyeballs, and hesitative pantings, within the sacred circle of home, and before the scared tribunal of the neighbouring trades-people! Let me take two instances only in support of the lamentable considerations here suggested. When I relieve a meritorious and miserable crossing-sweeper, my emotions of pity are simply expressed by my putting my hand in my pocket and giving the man a penny. What actor, in a similar position, could be expected to conduct himself in a similar manner? He has been learning to express the emotion of Pity on the stage; he has practised his art so often, that the actions connected with it have become a habit and a second nature to him; and, as a necessary consequence, when he relieves his necessitous fellow-citizen, his emotions of Pity (as I find from the directions in the pamphlet, under that head) mechanically lead him into looking down on the crossing-sweeper “with lifted hands, eyebrows drawn down, mouth open, and features drawn together.” His voice (when he says, Here’s a penny for you) is “frequently interrupted with sighs;” and his hand (when he has presented the penny) is “employed in wiping his eyes.”

Again, when my own beloved wife enters the butcher's shop, a little anxious and perplexed about what she shall order for dinner, she taps her pearly teeth with the handle of her parasol, and looks with smiling uncertainty at the rosy murderer of sheep and oxen who awaits her orders knife in hand. In a similar position, how does the actor's own beloved wife, who is on the stage, and who has performed Anxious and Perplexed characters so many hundreds of times that she has become part and parcel of those characters herself, necessarily and inevitably behave before the butcher? Guided once more by the pamphlet, (see "Anxiety or Perplexity," in the list of passions), I find that the unhappy woman enters the shop with "all the parts of her body drawn together; with her arms either crossed upon her bosom, or covering her eyes, or rubbing her forehead; with her head hanging on her breast; with her eyelids close shut and pinched, and with her whole body vehemently agitated."

With this impressive picture I close the case I have undertaken to prove. More disclosures might be added, but they would only prolong to no purpose this painful and serious subject. The nervous systems of our governing classes are precious to their country; and I decline to proceed any farther, after the shocks which I must have inflicted, by this time, on the impressionable nature of the Lord Chamberlain. I have shown, on printed and published authority, what the effect of the stage profession is on the lungs, limbs, and faces, on the public and private lives, of actors and actresses; and I have surely established my claim, in the eyes of all friends of humanity, to call for the peremptory and merciful suppression of playhouses and players. The decision now rests with his lordship. I will allow him a brief interval for Pauses of Reflection and Pauses of Confusion; and I await his answer—either High, loud, and quick, or Low, loud, and quick, which he pleases—with Hesitative Pantings, on my own part.

First published in *All The Year Round*, 9 July 1859 vol. I, pp. 261-264

"My friend the surgeon was instantly sent for, and from him I gained the particulars which follow :

"Turning the poor fellow over on his face, and cutting open his garments to examine the wound, the surgeon said to those who were standing around : 'The ball has entered his back; if by chance it should have glanced off and passed round by the ribs, as will sometimes happen, this wound would not be fatal.'

"'It is fatal,' said the wounded man, with a sudden effort. 'Have I been waiting for this stroke so long, and shall it fail to do its work when it comes? It is fatal,' he gasped again, 'and I shall die—but not here.'

"I have to relate a horrible and incredible thing, which, impossible as it seems, is yet true. 'The German locksmith started up from where he lay, pushing aside all those who stood around him with an unnatural and inconceivable strength. His body swayed for an instant from side to side, and then he darted forwards. The crowd gave way before him, and he rushed from the house. He tore along the streets—the few people whom he met giving way before him, and looking after him in horror as he flew along—his clothes cut open at the back, blood-stained and dripping, and with death in his regard. Not one pause, not an abatement in his speed till he reached the infirmary, passed the man who kept the door, and up the stairs he flew, nor stopped till he came to a bed which stands beneath the window, and across which the shadow of a cypress falls when the sun begins to sink.

"It was the bed on which his friend had breathed his last.

"'I must die here,' said the German locksmith, as he fell upon it. 'It is here that I must die.'

"And there he died. The haunting thought which had made his existence a living death was justified. The presentiment had come true at last; and when the thunder-cloud, which had hung so long over this man's life, had discharged its bolt upon his head, it seemed to us as if the earth were then lighter, for the shade had passed away.

"Is death the name for a release like this? Who could look upon his happy face, as he lay upon that bed, and say so?

"It was not the end of a life—but the beginning."

CHAPTER THE LAST.

THE discovery of my friends Clipper and Mathews, which would have made my stay in Paris all the pleasanter, was made, as is often the case, just too late. It was time for me to be off. I was getting weary of my holiday, and, having spent my money, was anxious to get back and make some more. Two days after hearing the story of the German locksmith, I got up one morning at half-past six, and taking a hasty breakfast at Paris, was in London and at home in time for supper.

And now—back among the mean and ugly streets, the dull monotonous miles of shabby brick and mortar, of our huge and melancholy

capital—what are my sensations? what do I find now? This: that the friendly faces which those screens of brick and mortar hide, the hands stretched out to bid me welcome, the daily interchange of thought and observation, the social meal, the fireside group, the thought that there are among those who greet me daily some who, in the midst of those cares of their own, which naturally must have such a hold on every human soul, have yet a corner in their hearts where an interest in what affects me finds a place—these things, do they not compensate for all the gaiety and charm of the beautiful and brilliant town in which I have lived a month alone?

Indeed they do. It was a selfish thought that wish to be alone, lest the plans of a companion should clash with mine, and I should fail to have my way in everything. Besides, did I get my way after all? Not always. Nor was it always a pleasant one when I did.

Who is free? Who is independent? Who does as he likes? If friends and associates do not interfere to change our plans, are there not fifty other ways besides in which they may be overthrown and dashed aside? Better a thousand times to be bored by others than to bore oneself. Better anything than to have to be alone.

APPALLING DISCLOSURE FOR THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN.

ENGLAND has the happiness of knowing that the new Ministry has been set in working order at last. If the representation of almost all the contradictory forms of political opinion, and the official union of statesmen who have been hitherto remarkable for their capacity of disagreeing with one another, be the secret for forming a permanent Government, the new administration may look forward to a long life, and the free and independent electors may shut up the vote-markets all over the country for some time to come. To the Ministry, generally, a patriotic private individual has nothing particular to say. They have their lessons to practise in fitting themselves for their new places. The Premier has to learn the necessity of treating the House of Commons (as purporting to represent the small nation who take the liberty of occupying Great Britain) with some little respect and civility. The Foreign Secretary has to steer the British nation carefully through the shoals, quicksands, and whirlpools of existing continental complications—no more spirited or honest man than he, could try to do it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has to collect all his powers of persuasion, with the object of reconciling his countrymen to some few additional figures on the tax-collectors' bills. Other minor members of the Ministry, in and out of the Cabinet, have other responsibilities to confront.

The one exceptional person of quality, so far as I can see, whose official occupations are not likely to be at all affected by these stirring times, is the noble lord who presides

W. H. Collins

A FLORENTINE PROCESSION.

UNDER this title, a picture by an Englishwoman—Mrs. Benham Hay—is now to be seen at the French Gallery in London, which deserves special notice from all persons interested in the progress of Art, and which, therefore, receives special notice here.

The scene is the Square of the Cathedral at Florence, and the period is the Carnival of the year 1497. It is the time when the pulpit eloquence of the famous Puritan of Italy (Savonarola), always fervent in denouncing the pomps and vanities of Florence, has singled out for special reprobation every object of luxury and beauty which can decorate a citizen's house or adorn a citizen's person. Incapable of appreciating the genial influences of jewellery in the formation of female character, or the loyal homage rendered to the general sense of beauty by the general use of rouge, the narrow old Reformer has insisted on the burning of all the "Vanities," with the ardour of a man who is only himself accessible to the most ineradicable vanity of all—the vanity of spiritual rule. A pious few have succumbed to the great preacher's arguments, out of church, as well as in. They have assembled in procession, with their "Vanities" in their hands. Under a striped awning, they pass through the old Cathedral Square of Florence, on their way to the fire which is to devour their doomed luxuries, in the presence of the profane many who are celebrating the joyous Carnival of mediæval times.

This is the moment chosen for illustration in the picture. It is a work of very considerable size, containing a large number of figures, exhibiting several striking dramatic contrasts, and exacting from the artist unusually severe intellectual preparation, and unusually elaborate technical execution. The aim of this picture is a high one, and (upon the whole) that aim has been intelligently and conscientiously achieved.

The defects of the work—to speak of these first, and to pay Mrs. Benham Hay the compliment of confronting her with impartial criticism—appear to lie in a certain meagreness of execution, and a certain want of easy force in drawing. It is also to be remarked that the work this picture has cost the artist—the struggle there has been here with the terrible technical difficulties of the most technically-exacting of all the Arts—is a little too visible in certain places. Take, for example, the timidly-stiff action and expression of the Carnival-reveller who holds the dice in his hand, at one end of the composition, and the curiously overwrought attitude of the citizen with the extended hands, at the other end. To these objections, which the artist may

remove in future works, one more remains to be added, which the artist may remove immediately—for it lies, not in the picture itself, but in what is, most injudiciously, claimed for the picture in the catalogue.

Not content with the high imaginative effort of reviving the people and events of a past time; not content with representing character and action, feeling and beauty, Mrs. Benham Hay invites us to discover abstruse symbolical meanings in the principal figures of her picture. In plainer words, she aspires to express abstract qualities, by the purely concrete means of brushes and paint. To take an instance. We are charmed by one of her figures—a girl dressed in blue, playing on a musical instrument. What Art *can* do (within Art's limits) is shown in this figure. It is full of the charm of innocence and youth and beauty; there is true feeling in the face, and true grace in the attitude. These all-attractive qualities having produced their full effect upon us in the picture, we happen to look into the catalogue next, and find—what no human being, without the catalogue, could possibly discover—that our charming girl in blue represents “a servant of the Ideal” (whatever that may be), “absorbed in the meaning of the music she is playing.” In other words, here is something which the picture, confessedly, cannot express for itself, and which the catalogue is obliged to express for it. The general spectator looks up again at the figure, sees no more in it than he saw before: arrives inevitably (prompted by the catalogue) at the false conclusion that there must be some defect in expression which he ought to have noticed before; and underrates the work which he would have appreciated at its proper value if the picture had been left to exercise its legitimate influence over him. The cultivated spectator takes a shorter way. He simply closes the catalogue; knowing perfectly well that it is claiming for the art of painting something which that art is, by the nature of it, absolutely incapable of accomplishing. In both cases, the picture suffers from being perversely weighted with a meaning which words alone can convey, and which no picture whatever can carry. Mrs. Benham Hay may rest assured that the worst obstacle her work will have to encounter on its way to success, is the cloudy symbolism which puffs out upon it from the catalogue.

Turning next to the merits of this remarkable picture, the first quality in it which strikes us, is the masterly vigour and variety of the composition. The difficulties here must have been enormous. The persons of the procession and the spectators of the procession are all arranged as nearly as possible on one plane. No common fancy, and no common knowledge of the resources of Art, were needed to make the action of the scene, thus treated, graceful and various, without the sacrifice of truth to Nature. Excepting the two figures already noticed of the reveller and the citizen,

the difficulty here has been met, and vanquished, in a manner which deserves the heartiest recognition that we can bestow. Looking closer at the work, the eye is at once riveted by the admirable individuality of some of the heads—by the subtle knowledge of character, and the singularly clear and intelligent rendering of that knowledge to the eye. The heads of the two citizens (at the right-hand side of the picture) who stand nearest to the spectator; the head of the monk who is assisting to carry the picture; and the heads of some of the children (in which last, beauty and expression are admirably combined)—all prove this lady to be a genuine artist, in the best sense of the word. The colour again, so far as we could judge—looking at it under no very favourable atmospheric conditions—possesses the excellent qualities of vigour and harmony, and tells well at a distance, with no counterbalancing defect of harshness or glare on a nearer view.

Upon the whole, the claim of this picture on the public attention appears to us to be an unusually strong one. It is in many important respects a really rare work. One of the most exacting and elaborate efforts in Art that has been made by a woman in our time, it is also an effort in the imaginative direction; appearing at a period when painting in England is fast sinking into lower and lower materialism, and fast becoming more and more of a mere trade- commodity manufactured for a mere market- purpose. One of the objects of this journal, as our readers know, is to help the cause of fancy and imagination. The artist who has painted the Florentine Procession receives no special indulgence here—she has fairly earned the welcome which we offer to her in these pages.

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ling's next friend, I have to look to these things. See here. I find by our friend Gallinan, snugg in my pocket" (this was his familiar style and title for the Englishman's friend, the excellent Galligani's Messenger), "the mail-ship sails on the twenty-fourth. That gives us, you see, little more than four weeks."

Vivian, downcast and distressed, answered: "You are quite right. That is the very day. Too near, indeed."

"Very well. Now we come to what is to be done. What is the arrangement? Within that limit, my dear friend, I leave everything to you, and pray suit your own convenience."

There was a pause.

"Mr. Dacres," said the other, desperately, "you know how I feel towards your child. She knows it too; but, if I appear to hesitate in this matter, I implore you to give me credit for the most passionate eagerness to do what is right. You know not what my situation is, and I cannot tell you."

"I don't want to know," said Mr. Dacres, good humouredly. "All of us, here at least, are in queer situations enough. But, as I said, you'll have time enough to look about you between this and the sailing of the packet."

"I tell you, I am helpless," said Vivian, more desperately, "and have no choice. Things may become smooth, and I pray they may. But if they should not, I know *she* will understand."

"Oh now, see here," said Mr. Dacres, gravely, "I won't understand, though. You know, yourself, we can't have any of that. You're a gentleman, and I know all about you and your belongings; so I feel quite secure. To any of the raps here, of course, I'd take quite a different tone, but with *you* it's another matter. You see, yourself, there can't be anything of that sort. You and she have settled it long ago between you. That man, West, a fine, intelligent, honourable fellow, has got his congé—between ourselves, was rather cavalierly sent about his business—all for you. But girls are kittle cattle. I consider it as next to the rising of the glorious sun to-morrow, that we see you and she standing together, with Penny in his gown between ye. My dear friend, that must be, and no mistake, before you go. To this complexion we must come before the—what's this Gallinan says is her name? yes—the Duchess of Kent weighs anchor."

"I shall behave as a man of honour," said Vivian, "you may depend on that."

"Indeed, and I wish I was as sure of a hundred-pound note this moment."

At another time this artful allusion might have had some effect. But Vivian, looking gloomily, walked quickly away.

"By —," said Mr. Dacres, savagely, as he looked after him, "if he's hatching any trick,

I'll shoot him on the sands there. And all that they'll have for his Majesty's service, or to send home, will be his body."

A FLORENTINE PROCESSION.

UNDER this title, a picture by an Englishwoman—Mrs. Benham Hay—is now to be seen at the French Gallery in London, which deserves special notice from all persons interested in the progress of Art, and which, therefore, receives special notice here.

The scene is the Square of the Cathedral at Florence, and the period is the Carnival of the year 1497. It is the time when the pulpit eloquence of the famous Puritan of Italy (Savonarola), always fervent in denouncing the pomps and vanities of Florence, has singled out for special reprobation every object of luxury and beauty which can decorate a citizen's house or adorn a citizen's person. Incapable of appreciating the genial influences of jewellery in the formation of female character, or the loyal homage rendered to the general sense of beauty by the general use of rouge, the narrow old Reformer has insisted on the burning of all the "Vanities," with the ardour of a man who is only himself accessible to the most ineradicable vanity of all—the vanity of spiritual rule. A pious few have succumbed to the great preacher's arguments, out of church, as well as in. They have assembled in procession, with their "Vanities" in their hands. Under a striped awning, they pass through the old Cathedral Square of Florence, on their way to the fire which is to devour their doomed luxuries, in the presence of the profane many who are celebrating the joyous Carnival of mediæval times.

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The defects of the work—to speak of these first, and to pay Mrs. Benham Hay the compliment of confronting her with impartial criticism—appear to lie in a certain meagreness of execution, and a certain want of easy force in drawing. It is also to be remarked that the work this picture has cost the artist—the struggle there has been here with the terrible technical difficulties of the most technically-exacting of all the Arts—is a little too visible in certain places. Take, for example, the timidly-stiff action and expression of the Carnival-reveller who holds the dice in his hand, at one end of the composition, and the curiously overwrought attitude of the citizen with the extended hands, at the other end. To these objections, which the artist may remove in future works, one more remains to be added, which the artist may remove immediately—for it lies, not in the picture itself, but

Wilkie Collins

THE LAST LEAVES OF A SORROWFUL BOOK.

IN the history of our lives there is one touching domestic experience, associated with the solemn mystery of Death, which is familiar to us all. When the grave has claimed its own; when the darkened rooms are open again to the light of heaven; when grief rests more gently on the weary heart, and the tears, restrained through the day, fall quietly in the lonely night hours, there comes a time at which we track the farewell journey of the dead over the familiar ways of home by the simple household relics that the lost and loved companion has left to guide us. At every point of the dread pilgrimage from this world to the next, some domestic trace remains that appeals tenderly to the memory, and that leads us on, from the day when the last illness began, to the day that left us parted on a sudden from our brother or sister-spirit by the immeasurable gulf between Life and Eternity. The sofa on which we laid the loved figure so tenderly when the first warning weakness declared itself; the bed, never slept in since, which was the next inevitable stage in the sad journey; all the little sick-room contrivances for comfort that passed from our living hands to the one beloved hand which shall press ours in gratitude no more; the last book read to beguile the wakeful night, with the last place marked where the weary eyes closed for ever over the page; the little favourite trinkets laid aside never to be taken up again; the glass, still standing by the bedside, from which we moistened the parched lips for the last time; the handkerchief which dried the deathly moisture from the dear face and touched the wasted cheeks almost at the same moment when our lips pressed them at parting—these mute relics find a language of their own, when the first interval of grief allows us to see them again; a language that fills the mind and softens the heart, and makes the sacred memory of the dead doubly precious; a language that speaks to every nation and every rank, and tells, while the world lasts, the one solemn story that exalts, purifies, and touches us all alike.

Reflections such as these are naturally suggested by a relic of public interest, associated with a public bereavement, which now lies before us while we write. England has not forgotten the brave and devoted men who went out from her, never to return, on Franklin's expedition to the Polar Seas. Few subjects of national interest have sunk deeper into the public mind than the fate of the lost heroes whose last earthly resting-place is still hidden from us in the mysterious solitudes of the frozen deep. Every step of their progress so long as any trace of it was left, was once eagerly watched; every chance of their preservation, so long as those chances remained, was once anxiously discussed; every relic of their past existence that has drifted back to us, since we mourned them as lost, has been welcomed with

melancholy gratitude, and treasured with loving care. Any fresh trace of their progress on the fatal voyage which we can still recover, is a memorial of the dead and gone, only less precious than those nearer and dearer memorials associated with the private and personal losses which have tried us all within the circle of our own homes.

The new relic of the lost Arctic voyagers to which we now refer, is as simple in form as any of those little household remembrances which hard experience has taught us to regard with such tender care. It consists only of a few pages of a journal on board ship, kept by Captain Fitzjames, of the *Erebus*, and addressed by him, from the coast of Greenland, to Mrs. Coningham. The manuscript thus produced has been privately printed by Mr. Coningham, well known to many of our readers as the Member of Parliament for Brighton, and as the advocate of some important reforms in connexion with the purchase of pictures for the National Gallery. Although Captain Fitzjames was not related either to Mr. or Mrs. Coningham, he had always lived on terms of the closest intimacy with them; having being brought up at an early age under the roof of Mr. Coningham's father. Captain Fitzjames's career began in the year 1825, when he entered the navy as a master's assistant. At a later period, he became a first class volunteer. After serving in various ships, he joined Colonel Chesney in the Euphrates expedition; and, before sailing, rescued a Liverpool tide-waiter from drowning, at the risk of his own life, by jumping overboard in his clothes in the middle of the Mersey—an heroic action which the authorities of Liverpool rewarded by presenting him with a medal, and with the freedom of their city. Subsequently this brave officer joined the Chinese expedition, and was severely wounded. His next, and last, exertions in the service of his country were devoted—against Mr. Coningham's urgent entreaties—to the fatal Arctic Expedition under Sir John Franklin; and his narrative of that part of the voyage which brought the *Erebus* and *Terror* to the coast of Greenland is now privately printed, as the simplest and truest memorial of a man whose happy privilege it was to be loved, honoured, and trusted by all who knew him.

It is necessary to state that the journal produced under Mr. Coningham's supervision is intended for private circulation among his own friends. That gentleman has, however, voluntarily accorded to us the permission to make what literary use we may think fit of Captain Fitzjames's Diary. We have gladly accepted Mr. Coningham's offer, not only in consideration of the deep public interest which attaches to this unpretending document, viewed simply as an addition to our few memorials of the lost Polar Expedition, but also on account of the remarkable merit of the journal itself. Every page of it assures us that Captain Fitzjames added to his

high professional qualifications the two rare gifts of a quick and true observation of character and a happy facility in conveying the results of that observation plainly, unaffectedly, and graphically to others. Narrow as its limits are, this interesting journal effects its avowed object of placing us on board ship by the writer's side, of showing us his floating home in its most familiar and most domestic aspect, and of introducing us, in a delightfully considerate and kindly spirit, to the more prominent characters among the officers and the men. We propose to make our readers sharers in the attractive view thus presented—the last view attainable, so far as we know at present—of past life and past events on board one of the two doomed Discovery Ships; in the full belief that every one who looks over them will close the pages here presented, as we have closed the journal from which they are quoted, with a heightened admiration and a closer sympathy for Sir John Franklin, for Captain Fitzjames, and for their brave companions on that memorable Voyage which Englishmen who prize the honour of their country can never forget.

The sad story takes us back to the June of eighteen hundred and forty-five. The two discovery ships, the Erebus and Terror, are at sea, with the transport containing their supplies in attendance on them. The time is noon; the place on the ocean is near the island of Rona, seventy or eighty miles from Stromness; and the two steamers, Rattler and Blazer, are taking leave—a last, long leave—of the Arctic voyagers.

“Their captains” (says the journal, referring to the two steamers) “came on board and took our letters; one from me will have told you of our doings up to that time. There was a heavy swell and wind from north-west; but it began veering to west and south-west, which is fair. The steamers then ranged alongside of us, one on each side, as close as possible without touching, and, with the whole force of lungs of officers and men, gave us, not three, but a prolongation of cheers, to which, of course, we responded. Having done the same to the Terror, away they went, and in an hour or two were out of sight, leaving us with an old gull or two and the rocky Rona to look at; and then was the time to see if any one flinched from the undertaking. Every one's cry was, ‘Now we are off at last!’ No lingering look was cast behind. We drank Lady Franklin's health at the old gentleman's table, and, it being his daughter's birthday, hers too. But the wind, which had become fair as the steamers left (as if to give the latest best news of us), in the evening became foul from the north-west, and we were going northward instead of westward. The sky was clear, the air bracing and exhilarating. I had a slight attack of aguish headache the evening before, but am now clear-headed, and I went to bed thinking of you and dear William, whose portrait is now looking at me.”

Such was the farewell to England, and the sailing away in right earnest to the Arctic seas—such the steady and hopeful spirit in which officers and men confronted the unknown and the dreadful future that was awaiting them. The next passages in the journal, which can be profitably extracted for quotation, describe the companions of Captain Fitzjames's mess.

“In our mess we have the following, whom I shall probably from time to time give you descriptions of: First Lieutenant, Gore; second, Le Vescomte; third, Fairholme; purser, Osmar; surgeon, Stanley; assistant-surgeon, Goodsir; ice-master (so called) Reid; mates—Sargent, Des Vœux, Crouch; second master, Collins; commander, you know better than he does himself. “The most original character of all—rough, intelligent, unpolished, with a broad north country accent, but not vulgar, good-humoured, and honest-hearted—is Reid, a Greenland whaler, native of Aberdeen, who has commanded whaling vessels, and amuses us with his quaint remarks and descriptions of the ice, catching whales, &c. For instance, he just said to me, on my saying we should soon be off *Cape Farewell* at this rate, and asking if one might not generally expect a gale off it (Cape Farewell being the south point of Greenland), ‘Ah! now, Mister Jems, we’ll be having the weather fine, sir! fine. No ice at arl about it, sir, unless it be the bergs—arl the ice’ll be gone, sir, only the bergs, which I like to see. Let it come on to blow, look out for a big ‘un. Get under his lee, and hold onto him fast, sir, fast. If he drifts near the land, why, he grounds afore you do.’ The idea of all the ice being gone, except the icebergs, is racy beyond description. I have just had a game of chess with the purser, Osmar, who is delightful ... I was at first inclined to think he was a stupid old man, because he had a chin and took snuff; but he is as merry-hearted as any young man, full of quaint dry sayings, always good-humoured, always laughing, never a bore, takes his pinch after dinner, plays a rubber, and beats me at chess—and, he is a gentleman.”

We shall hear more of the quaint ice-master, and his shrewd north country sayings. For the present, he must give way to a character of paramount interest—to the high-spirited old man who nobly led the expedition, at a time of his life when he might well have rested among us, content with his high professional position and his well-won fame. Every word in the journal relating to Sir John Franklin is now of such interest and value, that we can hardly do better than mass together the detached passages in which his name occurs, with the object of presenting all that is characteristically related of him to the reader's mind at one view.

“6th June.—To-day Sir John Franklin showed me such part of his instructions as related to the main purpose of our voyage, and the necessity of observing everything

from a flea to a whale in the unknown regions we are to visit. He also told me I was especially charged with the magnetic observations. He then told all the officers that he was desired to claim all their remarks, journals, sketches, &c., on our return to England, and read us some part of his instructions to the officers of the Trent, the first vessel he commanded, in 1818, with Captain Buchan, on an attempt to reach the North Pole, pointing out how desirable it is to note everything, and give one's individual opinion on it. He spoke delightfully of the zealous co-operation he expected from all, and his desire to do full justice to the exertions of each At dinner, to-day, Sir John gave us a pleasant account of his expectations of being able to get through the ice on the coast of America, and his disbelief in the idea that there is open sea to the northward. He also said he believed it to be possible to reach the Pole over the ice by wintering at Spitzbergen, and going in the spring before the ice broke up and drifted to the south, as it did with Parry on it 8th.—I like a man who is in earnest. Sir John Franklin read the Church-service to-day and a sermon so very beautifully, that I defy any man not to feel the force of what he would convey. The first Sunday he read was a day or two before we sailed, when Lady Franklin, his daughter, and niece attended. Every one was struck with his extreme earnestness of manner, evidently proceeding from real conviction. We are very fond of Sir John Franklin, who improves very much as we come to know more of him. He is anything but nervous or fidgety; in fact, I should say remarkable for energetic decision in sudden emergencies; but I should think he might be easily persuaded where he has not already formed a strong opinion.”

These are slight touches; but the stamp of truth is on every one of them. They add to the deep regret which the sacrifice of such a man inspires; but they also strengthen our conviction of the Christian courage and resignation with which he met his dreadful end.

Let us look back again to the journal, and take our places at the mess-table with some of Captain Fitzjames's companions. Assistant-surgeon Goodsir is as well worth knowing in his way as ice-master Reid.

“6th, towards midnight.—I can't make out why Scotchmen just caught always speak in a low, hesitating, monotonous tone of voice, which is not at all times to be understood; this is, I believe, called 'cannyness.' Mr. Goodsir is 'canny.' He is long and straight, and walks upright on his toes, with his hands tucked up in each jacket pocket. He is perfectly good-humoured, very well informed on general points, in natural history learned, was Curator of the Edinburgh Museum, appears to be about twenty-eight years of age, laughs delightfully, cannot be in a passion, is enthusiastic

about all 'ologies, draws the insides of microscopic animals with an imaginary pointed pencil, catches phenomena in a bucket, looks at the thermometer and every other meter, is a pleasant companion, and an acquisition to the mess 10th.—A clear fine sunset at a quarter to ten, and Goodsir examining 'mollusca' in a *mæcroscope*. He is in extasies about a bag full of blubber-like stuff, which he has just hauled up in a net, and which turns out to be whales' food and other animals."

Goodsir and Reid are the two Characters of the expedition. But there are more members of the mess, pleasantly distinguishable one from the other, by the light of Captain Fitzjames's clear and genial observation. Crouch, the mate, "is a little black-haired, smooth-faced fellow, good-humoured in his own way; writes, reads, works, draws, all quietly; is never in the way of anybody, and always ready when wanted; but I can find no remarkable point in his character, except, perhaps, that he is, I should think, obstinate. Stanley, the surgeon, I knew in China. He was in the Cornwallis a short time, where he worked very hard in his vocation. Is rather inclined to be good-looking, but fat, with jet-black hair, very white hands, which are always abominably clean, and the shirt-sleeves tucked up; giving one unpleasant ideas that he would not mind cutting one's leg off immediately—"if not sooner." He is thoroughly good-natured and obliging, and very attentive to our mess. Le Vescomte you know. He improves, if possible, on closer acquaintance. Fairholme, you know or have seen, is a smart, agreeable companion, and a well-informed man. Sargent, a nice, pleasant-looking lad, very good-natured. Des Vœux, I knew in the Cornwallis. He went out in her to join the *Endymion*, and was then a mere boy. He is now a most unexceptionable, clever, agreeable, light-hearted, obliging young fellow, and a great favourite of Hodgson's, which is much in his favour besides. Graham Gore, the first lieutenant, a man of great stability of character, a very good officer, and the sweetest of tempers, is not so much a man of the world as Fairholme or Des Vœux, is more of Le Vescomte's style, without his shyness. He plays the flute dreadfully well, draws sometimes very well, sometimes very badly, but is altogether a capital fellow.

"Here ends my catalogue. I don't know whether I have managed to convey an impression of our mess, and you know me sufficiently to be sure that I mention their little faults, ailings, and peculiarities in all charity. I wish I could, however, convey to you a just idea of the immense stock of good feeling, good-humour, and real kindness of heart in our small mess. We are very happy."

They are very happy. What a pathos in those four simple words, read by the light of our after experience! They are very happy. How delightfully the little strokes of

character in the journal open the view to us of the cheerful, simple-hearted social intercourse of the sailor-brotherhood! How vividly, between tears and smiles, we see the honest faces round the mess-table, as day by day draws the good ship nearer and nearer to the cruel north! Purser Osmar, taking his after-dinner pinch, and playing his rubber; long, straight, pleasantly-laughing Goodsir, matching his learning and his science against ice-master Reid, and his natural north-country sharpness; plump, white-handed Surgeon Stanley, with an attentive eye to the appointments of the mess-table; little, quiet, steady, black-haired Crouch, listening to the conversation, while sweet-tempered Des Vœux keeps it going pleasantly, and Graham Gore sits near at hand, ready to while away the time, when the talk flags, with a tune on his flute;—one by one, these members of the doomed ship's company appear before us again: fold by fold, the snowy veil wreathed over them is melted from view, and the dead and gone come back to us for a little while from the icy keeping of Death.

The journal, so careful and so considerate in describing the officers, does not forget the men. They, too, come in for their share of kindly and clear-sighted notice.

“Our men are all fine, hearty fellows, mostly north-countrymen, with a few men-of-war's men. We feared at Stromness that some of them would repent, and it is usual to allow no leave—the Terror did not. But two men wanted to see—one his wife, whom he had not seen for four years, and the other his mother, whom he had not seen for seventeen—so I let them go to Kirkwall, fourteen miles off. I also allowed a man of each mess to go on shore for provisions. They all came on board to their leave; but finding we were not going to sea till the following morning, four men (who probably had taken a *leetle* too much whisky, among them was the little old man who had not seen his wife for four years) took a small boat that lay alongside, and went on shore without leave. Their absence was soon discovered, and Fairholme, assisted by Baillie, and somebody or other, brought all on board by three o'clock in the morning. I firmly believe each intended coming on board (if he had been sober enough), especially the poor man with the wife; but, according to the rules of the service, these men should have been severely punished—one method being to stop their pay and give it to the constables, or others, who apprehended them. It struck me, however, that the punishment is intended to prevent misconduct in others, and not to revenge their individual misconduct: men know very well when they are in the wrong, and there is clearly no chance of any repetition of the offence until we get to Valparaiso, or the Sandwich Islands; so I got up at four o'clock, had everybody on deck, sent Gore and the sergeant of marines below, and searched the whole deck for spirits, which were thrown

overboard. This took two good hours; soon after which we up anchor, and made sail out. I said nothing to any of them. They evidently expected a rowing, and the old man with the wife looked very sheepish, and would not look me in the face; but nothing more was said, and the men have behaved not a bit the worse ever since.”

Was this wise forbearance, this merciful interpretation of the true end of punishment, tenderly remembered, on both sides, when officers and men lay helpless together, waiting for their long release, in the voiceless and lifeless solitudes of the North? Even such a trifle as the memory of what had happened at Stromness might have helped to soothe the last moments of some among the lost men when the end was near at hand. We may at least hope and believe that it might have been so.

The journal which has, thus far, mainly occupied itself with life and character on board the Erebus, goes on to narrate the various events and changes of weather which accompanied the progress of the ships on the fatal northward voyage. On the 11th and 12th of June, the wind is high—the colour of the sea is “a beautiful, delicate, cold-looking green”—“long rollers, as if carved out of the essence of glass bottles,” swell onwards in grand procession, meeting the vessels. The rate of sailing is so rapid, with the high wind in their favour, that they get within six miles of Iceland. On the 14th the rain pours down and the fogs close round them. The Erebus sails on through the dense obscurity, with the Terror on one side, and the transport on the other, all three keeping close together for fear of losing each other. On this day the officers amuse themselves by arranging their books, and find to their satisfaction that they can produce a very sufficient library. Ice-master Reid comes out in his quaint experienced way with a morsel of useful information on the subject of cookery. He sees the steward towing some fish overboard to try and get a little of the salt out of it; roars out sarcastically, “What are you making faces at there? That’s not the way to get the *sarlt oout*,” and instructs the steward to boil the fish first, and then to take it off the fire and keep it just not boiling. It is Saturday night when Reid sets matters right with the salt fish; and he and Purser Osmar socially hob-and-nob together, drinking the favourite sea-toast of Sweethearts and Wives, and asking Captain Fitzjames to join them. He, poor fellow, meets them with his light-hearted joke, in return—says he has not got a sweetheart and does not want a wife—and ends the entry in his journal, for that day, by writing “good night” to his dear friends in England.

On the 16th it is calm enough to allow of a boat visit to the Terror. On the 17th the night is cloudy, with a bright light on the horizon to the north-east, which Gore

thinks is the Aurora Borealis. Practical Reid, with his old whaling experience, calls it ice-blink. Captain Fitzjames says it is the reflexion of sunset, and likens the effect of it to a large town on fire twenty miles off. On the 18th, they make a catalogue of their little library; and, remembering that it is “Waterloo Day,” drink the Duke of Wellington’s health at Sir John Franklin’s table. On this day, also, the “crow’s nest” is completed. It is usually “a cask, lined with canvas, at the fore-topmast head, for a man to stand in to look out for channels in the ice;” on board the Erebus, however, it is “a sort of canvas cylinder, hooped.” Ice-master Reid is to be perched up in this observatory, and criticises it, with his north-country eye on the main chance, as “a very expensive one.” At ten at night—the time which, allowing for difference of longitude, answers to half-past seven in London—Captain Fitzjames takes a glass of brandy-and-water, in honour of his own anticipated promotion at the brevet of the 18th, which has been talked of in England. He pleases himself with the idea that he is taking an imaginary glass of wine with Mr. and Mrs. Coningham, at that moment; and, while he is telling them this in the journal, Reid comes in, and sees him writing as usual. “Why, Mister Jems,” says the surprised ice-master, perplexedly scratching his head, “you never seem to me to sleep at arl; you’re always writin!” On the 21st the ships are in Davis’s Straits; bottle-nose whales are plunging and tumbling all round them; and tree-trunks, with the bark rubbed off by the ice, are floating by. The next day is Sunday: it is blowing hard, and the ships are rolling prodigiously; but they contrive to struggle through the Church service on the lower deck. The 23rd brings a downright gale; the dinner-party in Sir John’s cabin is obliged to be given up, the host finding that his guests cannot combine the two actions of holding on and eating and drinking at the same time. The next day is calmer; and the Arctic cold begins to make itself so sensibly felt, that the ship’s monkey is obliged to be clothed in a blanket, frock, and trousers, which the sailors have made for her. On the 25th, they sight the coast of Greenland, “rugged, and sparkling with snow.” The sea is now of a delicate blue in the shadows, and so calm that “the Terror’s mast-heads are reflected close alongside, though she is half a mile off. The air is delightfully cool and bracing, and everybody is in good-humour either with himself or his neighbours. Captain Fitzjames has been on deck all day, taking observations. Goodsir is catching the most extraordinary animals in a net, and is in ecstasies. Gore and Des Vœux are over the side, poking with nets and long poles, with cigars in their mouths, and Osmar laughing.” Captain Fitzjames is weary and sleepy with his day’s work; but he will not go to bed until he has written these few lines in his journal, because this is the memorable day on which the voyagers have first seen the Arctic land.

On the 27th, they are all enlivened by an unexpected visit at sea. The skipper of a Shetland brig comes on board. He is up in these high latitudes on a fishing speculation, and he has presented himself to shake hands with the little old man who went to visit his wife at Stromness, and who had once been mate on board the brig. On the 29th they pass some grand icebergs, which do not look, as we all suppose, like rocks of ice, but like “huge masses of pure snow, furrowed with caverns and dark ravines.” The 1st of July brings the ships within a day’s sail of Whalefish Islands, at which place the transport is to be unloaded of her provisions and coals, and left to return to England. On the evening of that day, there are sixty-five icebergs in sight; and the vessels sail in “among a shoal of some hundred walruses, tumbling over one another, diving and splashing with their fins and tails, and looking at the ships with their grim, solemn-looking countenances and small heads, bewhiskered and betusked.” On the 2nd, they find themselves in a fog, “right under a dense, black-looking coast topped with snow.” This is Disco, a Danish settlement. The scenery is grand, but desolate beyond expression. At midnight, Captain Fitzjames finds Purser Osmar on deck, cheerfully dancing with an imaginary skipping-rope. “What a happy fellow you are,” says Captain Fitzjames; “always in good humour.” “Well, sir,” answers cheerful Osmar, “if I am not happy here, I don’t know where else I could be.” The 4th finds them safe in their temporary haven at the Whalefish Islands. The next day, every man is on shore, “running about for a sort of holiday, getting eider ducks’ eggs, curious mosses and plants, and shells.” It is warm enough again, now, for the mosquitoes to be biting. During this fine weather, the transport will probably be unloaded, either on Monday the 7th, or Tuesday the 8th; and on the 9th or 10th, the two Discovery Ships will perhaps be on their way to Lancaster Sound. It is reported that this is the mildest and earliest summer known in those regions, and that the ice is clear all the way through the coming voyage. Guided by Sir John Franklin’s experience, the officers expect to reach Lancaster Sound as soon as the 1st of August; but this information is not to be generally communicated in England from the fear of making the public too sanguine about the season. Captain Fitzjames’s own idea is that they have “a good chance of getting through this year, if it is to be done at all;” but he is himself privately inclined to hope that no such extraordinary luck may happen to them, as he wants “to have a winter for magnetic observations.”

With this little outbreak of professional enthusiasm, and with this description of the future prospects of the expedition, the deeply-interesting narrative draws to a close. Its few concluding lines are thus expressed:

“Your journal is at an end, at least for the present. I do hope it has amused you, but I fear not; for what can there be in an old tub like this, with a parcel of sea-bears, to amuse a ‘lady fair?’ This, however, is *façon de parler*, for I think, in reality, that you will have been amused in some parts and interested in others, but I shall not read back, for fear of not liking it, and tearing it up.”

Those are the last words. They are dated Sunday, the 6th of July, 1845. Five days later, on the 11th, Captain Fitzjames sends a letter to his friend, with the journals, still dating from the Whalefish Islands. The ships are expected to sail on the night of the 12th for Lancaster Sound. If no tidings are received in England before the June of the next year, letters are to be despatched, on the chance of reaching those to whom they are addressed, to Petro Paulowski, in Kamschatka. The closing sentence in the letter is, “God bless you and everything belonging to you.” Those simple, warm-hearted words are the last that reach us, before the endless and the awful silence that follows. With “God bless you and all belonging to you,” the two ships’ companies drift away from us into the frozen seas. The little flicker of light that we have viewed them by for a moment, dies out, and the long night falls darkly between us and them—the night whose eternal morning dawns in the glory of another world.

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aforesaid, against the law and custom of the realm of England, long detained, namely, for the space of four hours of the day (years might have been expected from the previous adverb), against the dignity and tranquillity of the King's peace, and to the manifest lesion of his crown, whereby the life of the said John Mortimer was despaired of; until the constables of the adjacent villages, meeting together for the rescue of the said John Mortimer and the salvation of the King's peace, marched and ran (at the double, let us hope) towards Eston aforesaid, and the aforesaid William Trussell and the other malefactors, awed by the said body of people so coming as aforesaid to the help and defence of the said John Mortimer and the maintenance of the King's peace; then permitted the said John Mortimer to depart out of his prison.

It is satisfactory to see that even in these rude days "the police" were respected.

Should not my late Lord Chancellor have lived five hundred years back, when the press was unborn, the parliament a toy, and the voice of the public a feeble cry, save when it roared, like a despot of the nursery, for its food or its liberty? Then he might have made what appointments he would, without contradiction, outcry, condemnation, or, worse than all, reversal. From amongst the Miscellaneous Letters in the Chancery department of the public Records take this, all you good people who have railed at Lord Chelmsford's nepotism, precious epistle without name, date, or address, from some unhappy devil of a clerk in Chancery, with an official grief in his bosom, to Sir John de Langton, most probably, the Chancellor to King Edward the First, A.D. 1292, or thereabouts, and learn a lesson. It is to be borne in mind that the Chancellor then was not half, nor a third, nor a sixth, in degree as potent as he is now. Keeping and affixing the King's seal was, according to the learned Sir Henry Spelman, the greater part of their trust and employment.

Here is my translation from the Latin original, of a clear, sustained, yet condensed groan from a Clerk in Chancery: "My Lord,— Whatever pleases you pleases me, yet among those things which, as I have been given to understand, have been ordered by you in the Chancery, there is one which fills me with displeasure; and this is that Sir N. de Bassingbourn now fills my place among our other companions the Clerks of Course. (The Cursitor Clerks, or officers belonging to the Chancery that made out original writs.) Now I pray you, perpend, that I have laboured more in this very Chancery of our Lord the new King than he has done, and I promise you to hold as high a place as he, even though he be the older man, and also to despatch as many, and more, suitors in the Court as he can do, though he swear it.

"Besides, I marvel that you should have given him my clerk without asking either my leave or his; which clerk cares no longer to hold with

such a master, nor indeed can he do so, since such a master is more likely to be taught by such a disciple, than such a disciple by such a master, which seems to me to be inconvenient.

"And again, seeing from what a position God has called you to such honour in the world, you ought sometimes to think of your companions and contemporaries who love you well, and who were brought up with you in the household of your first master, at your first coming to Court, and as such you are bound to promote them, if you would the oftener recal your inborn honesty and good feeling to your mind, and before the eyes of your heart.

"May these words therefore that I write out of the full fervour of my love, move you to the advancement of my state, and the augmentation of my condition."

Here, as his conclusion, the petitioner adds a crafty caution against the Chancellor's ventilating the correspondence, and the likelihood of his dismissing it, as it were, by discussion:

"It is neither fitting nor necessary to consult my fellows upon this subject, but say the word forthwith and let it be done, I pray you, out of the plenitude of your power. I swear to you by the Tetragrammaton of God, that there lives not in the whole world a poor clerk who loves you more than I do; as I firmly believe to the utmost of my power. And this I call God to witness. Farewell, and may God cause your seed to increase and multiply."

THE LAST LEAVES OF A SORROWFUL BOOK.

Ex the history of our lives there is one touching domestic experience, associated with the solemn mystery of Death, which is familiar to us all. When the grave has claimed its own; when the darkened rooms are open again to the light of heaven; when grief rests more gently on the weary heart, and the tears, restrained through the day, fall quietly in the lonely night hours, there comes a time at which we track the farewell journey of the dead over the familiar ways of home by the simple household relics that the lost and loved companion has left to guide us. At every point of the dread pilgrimage from this world to the next, some domestic trace remains that appeals tenderly to the memory, and that leads us on, from the day when the last illness began, to the day that left us parted on a sudden from our brother or sister-spirit by the immeasurable gulf between Life and Eternity. The sofa on which we laid the loved figure so tenderly when the first warning weakness declared itself; the bed never slept in since, which was the next inevitable stage in the sad journey; all the little sick-room contrivances for comfort that passed from our living hands to the one beloved hand which shall press ours in gratitude no more; the last book read to beguile the wakeful night, with the last place marked where the weary eyes closed for ever over the page; the little favourite trinkets laid aside never to be taken up again; the glass, still standing by the

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