ELLICOTT CITY TIMES,

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June 24, '71-tf.

—A family in the country hired a new coachman; and his name was William. As both the gentleman of the house and his eldest son were named William, it was thought advisable, to avoid confusion, to call the coachman by his last name. William was accordingly asked to state his surname.

"Deary," said he, with a diabolical grin.

The family shuddered. Think of it. How would this sort of thing sound:

"Deary, come here a minute." "Cut me some flowers for a bouquet, Dear.' "How long I have been waiting for you, Deary!"

—An envious paragrapher remarks; "It has been observed that a lady with a diamond ring will scratch her nose, in a given period, four times as often as any other women.

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JOB PRINTING,

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Plain & Fancy Job Work

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THE OLD PIANO.

"Well, take it for what it is worth,
It cost me five hundred and more.
You'll hardly believe it, 'twas then
The handsomest one in the store."
There's nothing I own in the world,
That I am so certain to miss;
I've parted with two-legged friends
With far less regret than with this.

What joy it recalls of the past,
What moments of rapturous ease;
When delicate hands that I loved
Swept over the ivory keys;
When tremolos tender and sweet,
Rose, quivered, and died on the air
And life was a story in song,
Untouched by the shadow of care.

What visions of suppers it brings;
More jolly, I fancy, than wise.
When radiant bachelor swells
Swarmed in for a merry surprise.
Then chorus and song, till at last,
Wine clouded the talents of each,
And musical lunacy came
To finish it all in a screech.

What dreams of the dance now fled
When, brighter to us than the stars,
We waltzed with the daintiest girls,
"Who did not "object to cigars."
Rare plans for the future were laid,
We thought not of sorrow or loss,
But whirled in swift circles of bliss
To the magical measures of Strauss.

You've answered to many a touch,
And sounded full many a tune;
December hath brought you its wreaths,
And summer sent roses of June;
You've witnessed the rise and the fall
Of many old friendships and new,
But out of my feeling for all
Old friend, I've deepest for you!

MICHAEL ANGELO AND HIS PUPILS.

FROM THE FRENCH.

Among the scholars who crowded to Michael Angelo's painting room, was a poor man, a stranger, to whom his comrades had given the name of *il Triste*, from his melancholy temper. He never mingled in their noisy amusements, but loved to wander by the flowery banks of the Arno, listening to its murmurs, or gazing on the fading glories of sunset. All that was known of him was, that he was no Florentine, but a total stranger in the city, and his means were equal to his few expenses. The common thought him slightly deranged, because his look was sad and wild, and he would often talk to himself. The secret of his melancholy was, however, soon discovered.

Michael had taken into his house a distant relative, an orphan girl of some seventeen years, named Vesperia. She had studied music long and successfully, and had a voice of remarkable sweetness. One day, when the great artist was entertaining at dinner a party of friends, among whom were Benvenuto Celli, Francisco Francia, Carlo Dolce, and some of his pupils the subject, of conversation happened to be music. Michael Angelo boasted highly of his young relative's talent, and proposed to his guests to invite her to visit them and give a specimen of her skill. The proposition was received with acclamation, and he sent a servant to request the young girl to wait on him. When she entered the room, there was a profound, admiring silence. Vesperia, in her hurry to obey the orders of her relative and protector, had not time to arrange her yellow locks which fell in thick curls on her neck and shoulders, and her usually pale cheeks were covered with a brilliant flush of excitement. Her voice trembled at first, but she now gained confidence, and sang with so much sweetness and expression, that the guests sat with their eyes fixed upon her, in utter forgetfulness of the wines of Sicily and Cyprus that shed a perfume around the table. As soon as she ceased, he company broke out into that frenzy of applause which is unknown out of Italy. Michael Angelo, who cultivated poetry as well as the sister arts, called the attention of the guests to the beauty of the verses. Francis Francia asked for the author. The young men bent their heads forward to listen, while Vesperia, blushing still more deeply than before, whispered rather than uttered the name of Andrea. This was a thunderbolt to his pupils. They eyed each other with surprise, and one of them, a young patrician, named Marino, was so vexed, as to let fall the large drinking vase he held in his hand. The vessel broke to pieces, and injured in its fall one of Benvenuto Cellini's cups of rare workmanship. This drew a reproach and an oath from the fiery artist, which Marino dared not retaliate in the presence of his master, so that the reproach ended peaceably.

This little circumstance made Andrea's fellow-students regard him with more attention. It was plain that the loved Vesperia, and that she was not indifferent to his passion, since she sang his verses. Moreover, Marino recollected, that once when he spoke to Vesperia of Andrea's strange character, she answered that there were some spirits so harmoniously sad, some voices so musically plaintive, that it was sweet to lament along with them. Be this as it may, jealousy soon made its appearance among Vesperia's suitors—more than once a duel on her account terminated their nightly revels, and once, in a fray on the banks of the Arno, one of the students was dangerously wounded. When this came to the ears of Michael Angelo, he answered, to put an end to all disputes, that he would give his relative's hand to him among his pupils whose picture should surpass the others. He gave them as a subject to paint, Cecilia composing a hymn, and fixed on the next Michaelmas as the day when he would decide on the merits of their performances.

The subject was exactly suited to Andrea's genius. He resembled Raphael more than he did his teacher. His outlines wanted boldness, he did not bring out every nerve, vein and muscle; but his figures were smooth, soft and rounded. Consequently, his female figures were the best things he did, and the reason that his talent had never been discovered was, that he had always been employed on bold and severe subjects, such as the prophets in the Sistine chapel. He commenced his work with a beating heart, full of hope; he had within himself a female figure, and a wondrously soft and beautiful one. It would have been useless for him to draw any other; the same one always came back upon him.

As for Marino, he felt that his triumph was certain. He had no doubts of his superiority. He handled flesh with almost as much ease as his master. His men always looked like prize-fighters. For this reason, Michael Angelo had employed him in preference to his other pupils, to paint the figures of the damned in his great work of The Judgment, and his comrades tacity yielded him the palm among them. But when he began to paint for the prize, he was greatly disappointed. His imagination was silent. His design was harsh, his coloring gray and cold, and ill-suited to the harmonious forms of the patroness of music. He tore his canvass in pieces, and began again and again, with no better success. His temper, always proud and quick, became so irritable that he lost the affection of his former friends. Cristoforo, commonly called Pescarenico, the best of the students, was sick, and could be of no assistance to him. As to the others, they were so far inferior, that if they made an effort for the prize, it was only because there is in the mind of every artist, even in the humblest, a secret vanity which tells him that his merits are not appreciated, and that they will one day come to light.

This was a period of extreme rivalry and hatred among the masters of the art. They attacked each other and their productions with equal fury, employed corrosive preparations to destroy their rival pictures, and the dagger and poison against themselves. Raphael introduced himself by stealth into the Sistine Chapel, and stole from Michael Angelo the head of the patriarch Isaac. Michael Angelo himself had forced an entrance into the Chigi palace, and painted a huge satyr's head just below Raphael's Psyche. Marino was only too ready to follow the example thus set him. Surprised at seeing joy re-appear on Andrea's visage, and knowing that he spent many hours in working privately, he felt the keenest jealousy. One night, when *il Triste* was absent, he broke into his little room, and hurried to the picture; what was his astonishment, at recognizing in the face of St. Cecilia the very features and smiles of Vesperia! Unable to contain himself, he threw down the canvass and trampled it under foot, so as to make it impossible to finish it.

Meantime, the appointed time drew nigh. Marino's picture was finished. Andrea had told nothing of his misfortune, for he had no friends to sympathize with him; only his fleeting joy had disappeared, and he was gloomier than ever. On Micaaelmas eve the students had a carouse, and they drank the health of their master and Vesperia so deep and so often, that they were half intoxicated the next morning when they went to the painting room. There were standing there two pictures which the great artist had just finished, and on which the colors were still fresh. The subjects were two of the virtues, Hope and Charity. To pass the time away, while waiting for their master, and perhaps to show his wit, Marino thought proper to rally Andrea, who sat pensively in a corner. He bore his sarcasm patiently at first, but Marino, who was heated with wine, having alluded to his love for Vesperia, and how much his St. Cecilia resembled her, Andrea's blood began to boil. He drew a poniard, and leaped upon his rival like a tiger. The others threw themselves between and soon separated them, but in the scuffle the two pictures were thrown down with violence. The noise of their fall put an end to the strife. All stood, as it were, stupid, and did not even notice that Andrea was slightly wounded. After a long silence—"We must lift up the pictures, at any rate," said Marino, affecting more indifference than he really felt. They were lifted up, and the colors were found to have been completely rubbed off.

"Oh, brothers, what have we done!" cried Bartolomeo. "Look, Charity is blind, and the mouth of Hope grins like one of the damned! "Oh, my friends, you have destroyed, in one instant, two years of labor, and twenty ages of glory!"

It was necessary to do something, however, for the teacher was expected every hour.

"Some one of us must retouch the pictures," was timidly suggested by Albertazzi.

"Who will dare to pass his pencil over the work of Michael Angelo?" answered Bartolomeo. "Not I, certainly."

"Nor I, nor I!" echoed around the room.

"*Corpo di Cai Mario!*" said Apostolo. "it belongs to the authors of the mischief to mend it. Let each of them take one of the pictures, and retouch it."

"Or, better yet," Albertazzi, "let them each draw for the picture they are to take."

It was agreed that the two names should be placed in a cup, and the first one drawn should take the *Hope*, and the other the *Charity*. The name of Andrea was the first proclaimed, and he rejoiced at his good fortune. While they were hard at work, which by the way, was difficult for Andrea, whose arm was wounded and whose blood sometimes ran down and mixed with his colors, the other students kept aloof; and Bartolomeo, who was kind-hearted, though careless, whispered Albertazzi—

"Andrea, the weakest of all us scholars, to tell you the truth, I have great fears——"

"Let him alone," was the answer, "he will do well enough; the subject seems to inspire him. But to give the Charity to Marino! Certainly, fortune is often blind!"

In a few minutes Marino cried out, "I am ready!"

"So am I," rejoined Andrea. "Judge between us!"

"Our master is coming!" said Apostolo. And Michael Angelo entered the painting room.

He happened to be agitated and out of humor that morning. Perhaps he had been meditating on the shortness of life, the vastness of his art, and the empty nature of all earthly glory. Whatever the cause, he was thoughtful and moody, and spoke much to himself and incoherently, not regarding the confusion of his scholars. Gradually, he grew calmer and more collected. He began to give some lessons on his divine art, and he turned to the pictures, as an illustration of the rules he had been laying down. No sooner had he fixed his eyes on the picture of Charity, than he exclaimed, his eyes flashing with anger:

"Furies! what woman is this? Can I be so far deceived? Curses on it! heaven has forsaken me." Then turning to the *Hope*, "Ah—ah—no, no—here there is some of the true inspiration. But as for this Charity, that looks like a hangman—coundfound it!"

And he drew his dagger, and cut the canvass to pieces. The whole company were silent with fear, except a few who talked in whispers in a corner. The great master noticed them, and as he saw at once that something had happened, he approached the picture a second time, viewed it closely a few minutes, and said all at once:

"What is the matter here, gentlemen; what is all this? This is not my style, these are not my tints. On your lives, tell me what has happened here!"

The silence continued.

"Am I listened to, when I speak? Can I have an answer when I ask a question?"

"Master," said Bartolomeo, timidly, "in the agitation inseparable from such a festival, an accident happened, and——"

Michael Angelo reflected for some moments.

"Who retouched the picture of Hope?" he asked calmly.

"Andrea!" answered Bartolomeo.

"Andrea, come hither," said the artist. He advanced slowly and timidly; his master clasped him in his arms.

"You are a pupil worthy of Michael Angelo," cried he; "you are the only one that understood my *Hope*."

Then, as he knew that he was ready to weep, and remembering how much he had suffered, "Child," said he, with a tenderness unusual and strange in him, "you were a ray of light hidden behind clouds, but the clouds have passed away, and the sun of thy genius shines out brightly in the sight of heaven and earth. Ask for what you will—it is granted already."

The young man was too much agitated to answer—two big tears rolled down his cheeks. A young girl crossed the garden; he pointed to her in silence.

"Vesperia!" cried Michael Angelo, "by St. Luke! I remember now——"

He sent for his young relation, and put her hand in Andrea's; then turning to the other pupils, said, "Gentlemen, this is but justice!" The next day Marino's lifeless body was found in the garden; his poniard was thrust into his heart up to the very hilt. He had rolled around the blade a paper which had also entered his breast, on which was written, "There was something here!" When the body was wrought to Michael Angelo, he shrugged up his shoulders, and only said—"His hatred must have come out with the blood, for the wound is a wide one.—*N. Y. Mirror.*

Charming Women.

There are certain women who are invariably spoken of as charming. We never hear any other epithet applied to them. They are not said to be pretty, nor amiable, nor clever, though they may be all three, but simply charming; which we may take as a kind of verbal amalgam, the concentration and concretion of all praise. The main feature about these charming women is their intense femininity. There is no blurring of the outlines here; no confusion of qualities admirable enough in themselves but slightly out of place considering the sex; no Amazonian virtues which leave one in doubt as to whether we have not before us a youth in petticoats rather than a soft and tender woman. A charming woman is woman all over, one who places her glory in being a woman, and has no desire to be anything else. She is a woman rather than a human being, and a lady rather than a woman. One of her characteristics is the softness and exquisite grace of her manner, which so sweetly represents the tender nature within. She has not an angle anywhere. If she were to be expressed geometrically, Hogarth's Line of Beauty is the sole figure that could be used for her. She is flowing, graceful, bending in mind as in body; she is neither self-asserting nor aggressive, neither rigid nor narrow; she is a creature who glides gracefully through life, and adjusts herself to her company and her circumstances in a manner little less than marvellous; working her own way without tumult or sharpness, creeping round insuperable obstacles, and quietly wearing down more friable opposition with that gentle persistency which does so much more than turmoil and disturbance. Even if enthusiastic,—which she is for art, either as music, as painting, or as poetry,—she is enthusiastic in such a sweet and graceful way that no one can be offended by a fire which shines and does not burn. There is no touch of scorn about her, and no assumption of superior knowledge.

She speaks to you, poor ignorant Philistine, with the most flattering conviction that you follow her in all her flights; and when she comes out, quite naturally, with her pretty little bits of recondite lore or professional technicalities, you cannot be so boorish as to ask for an explanation of those every-day matters, which she makes so sure you must understand. Are you not an educated person with a soul to be saved, and can you then be ignorant of things with which every one of culture is familiar? She discourses confidentially of musicians and painters unknown to fame, and speaks as if she knew the secret doings of the Conservatoire and the R. A. council-chamber alike. The models and the methods, the loves and the hates, of the whole artistic world are to her things of every day life, and you cannot tell her that she is shooting her delicate shafts wide of the mark, and that you know no more of what she means than if she were talking in the choicest Arabic. If she has been abroad,—and she generally has been more or less,—she will pour out her tender little rhapsodies about palazzi and ville of which you have never heard, but every room of which she assumes you know by heart; and she will speak of out-of-the-way churches, and grim old castles perched upon vine-clad mounts, as if you were as well acquainted with them as with your native hamlet; and she will bring into her discourse all manner of Italian technicalities, as if you understood the subject as well as she herself understands it; though your learning is limited to a knowledge of how much was done in jute and tallow, or how many pockets of hops went off in the market last week. If she has a liking for high life and titles,—and what charming woman has not?—she will mention the names of all manner of counts and dukes and monsignori unknown to English society, as though they were her brothers; but, if you were to interrupt the gentle ripple of her speech with such rude breakwaters as "who?" and "what?" the charming woman would think you a horrid bore, and no man would willingly face that.

One may be a rhinoceros in one's own haunts, but, as the fable tells us, even rhinoceroses are ashamed of their parentage when among gazelles. Never self-asserting, never contradictory, only sweetly and tenderly putting you right when you blunder, the charming woman nevertheless always makes you feel her superiority. True, she lays herself, as it were, at your feet, and gives you a thousand delicate flatteries,—indeed, among her specialities is that of being able to set you on good terms with yourself, and her art of subtle flattery; but despite her own self-abasement and your exaltation, you cannot but feel that she is your superior, and that although she is too charming to acknowledge what would wound your pride, yet she feels it too, and tries to hide it. All which has the effect of making you admire her still more for the grace and tact she has displayed.

The charming woman is generally notoriously in love with her husband, who is almost always inferior to her in birth, acquirements, manner, or appearance. This affection of hers only shows her feminine qualities of sacrifice and wifely devotion to greater advantage, and makes other men envy more ferociously the lucky fellow who has drawn such a prize. The husband of a charming woman is indeed lucky in the world's esteem; no man more so. Though he may be one of the most ordinary, perhaps unpleasant fellows you know, with a sour face, an underbred air, and by no means famous in his special sphere, his wife speaks of him enthusiastically as so good, so clever, so delightful; no one knows how good he is, she says, though, of course, he has his little peculiarities of temper, and the rest of it, and perhaps every one would not bear with them as she does. But then she knows him, and knows his wonderful worth and value! If they are not seen much together, that comes from causes over which they have no control, not from anything like disinclination to each other's society.

Certainly, for so happy a marriage, it is a little surprising how very seldom they are together; and how all her friends are hers only and not his, and how much she goes into society without him. On the whole, counting hours, they live very much more apart than united; but that is the misfortune of his career, of his health, or of hers,—a misfortune due to any cause but that of diversity of tastes and inharmoniousness of pursuits. Full of home affection and the tenderest sentiment as she is, the charming woman does sometimes the ugliest-looking things, which a rough little domestic creature without graceful pretensions would not dream of doing. Her child is lying dangerously ill, perhaps dying, and she appears at the grand ball of the season, subdued certainly,—how well that sweet melancholy becomes her!—but always graceful, always thoughtful for others, and attentive; and though indeed, she will tell you, she does not know how she got dressed at all, she is in such a state of cruel anxiety, yet she is undeniably the best dressed woman in the room, and the most carefully appointed. It is against her own will that she is there, you may be sure, but she has been forced to sacrifice herself and tear herself away for an hour. The exigencies of society are so merciless, the world is such a terrible Juggernaut, she says, raising her eyes with plaintive earnestness to yours in the breathing times of the waltz. She has another trial if her husband is ordered out to Canada or the West Indies. Dearly as she loves him, and though she is heart-broken at the idea of the separation, yet her health cannot stand the climate, and she must obey her doctor's orders. She is so delicate, you know,—all charming women are delicate,—and the doctor tells her she could not live six months either in Toronto or Port Royal. If he had to go on diplomatic service to St. Petersburg or Madrid, she might be able to stand the climate then; but that is different. A dull station, without any of her favorite pleasures, would be more than she could bear; so she remains behind, goes out greatly into society, and writes her husband tender and amusing letters once a month.

The charming woman is the gentlest of her sex. She would not do a cruel thing, nor say an unkind word, for the world. When she tells you the unpleasant things which ill-natured people have said of your friends or hers, she tells them in the sweetest and dearest way imaginable. She is so sure there is not a syllable of truth in it all; and what a shame it is that people should be so ill-natured! In the gentle tone of sympathy and deprecation peculiar to her, she gives you all the ugly and uncomfortable reports that have come to her, of which you have never heard a breath until this moment; yet it is you who are stupid, for she tells them to you as if they were of patent notoriety to the whole world; only she does not believe them, remember! She takes the most scrupulous care to deny and defend as she retails, and you cannot class her with the tribe of the ill natured whom she censures, settling, as she does, the whole strength of her gentle words and generous disbelief to oppose these ugly rumors. Yet you wish she had not told you. Her disclaimers spring so evidently from the affectionate amiability of her own mind, which cannot bear to think evil, that they have not much effect upon you. The excuse dies away from your memory, but the ill-savored report roots, and you feel that you have lost your respect for your former friends forever; or, if they were only hers, that nothing should tempt you to know them. There is no smoke without some fire, you think; and the charming woman cannot possibly have kindled the flame herself out of sticks, and leaves, and rubbish of her own collecting. But how sweet and charitable she was when she told you! how much you love her for her tenderness of nature! what a guileless and delightful creature she is!

The charming woman is kind and graceful, but she does not command the stronger virtues. She flatters sweetly, but, it must be confessed, she fibs as sweetly. She sometimes owns to this, but only to fibs that do more good than harm,—fibs into which she is forced for the sake of peace, and to avoid mischief. It is a feminine privilege, she says; and men agree with her. Truth at all times, bold, uncompromising, stern-faced truth, is coarse and indelicate, she says; a masculine quality as little fitted for women as courage or great bodily strength.

Her husband knows that she fibs; her friends at times find her out too; but though the women throw it at her as an accusation, the men accept it as a quality without which she would be less the charming woman that she is; and not only forgive it, but like her the better for the grace and tact and suppleness she displays in the process of manufacture. Hers are not the severer virtues, but the gentler, the more insinuating; and absolute truth—truth at any price and on all occasions—does not come into the list. Charming women, with their plastic manners and non-aggressive force, always have their own way in the end. They are the women who influence by unseen methods, and who shrink from any open display of power. They know that their *metier* is to soothe men, to put them on good terms with themselves, and so to get the benefit of the good-humor they induce; and they dread nothing so much as a contest of wills. They coax and flatter for their rights, and consequently they are given privileges in excess of their rights; whereas the women who take their rights, as things to which they are entitled without favor, lose them and their privileges together. This art of self-abasement for future exaltation is one which it is given only to few to carry to perfection, but no woman is really charming without it. In fact it is part of her power; and she knows it.

Though charming women are decidedly the favorites with men, they are careful to keep on good terms with their own sex; and in society you may often see them almost ostentatiously surrounded by women only, whom they take pains to please, or exert themselves to amuse, but whom they throw into the shade in the most astonishing way. Whatever these really charming women are, or do, or wear, is exactly the right thing; and every other woman falls in proportion to the distance she is removed from this model. If a charming woman is dressed richly, the simpler costumes of her friends look poor and mean; if she is *a la bergere*, the court dresses about her are vulgar; if she is gay, quietness is dulness; if she is quiet, laughter is coarse. And there is no use in imitating her. She is the very will-o'-the-wisp of her circle, and no sooner shows her light here than she flits away there; she has no sooner set one fashion, which her admiring friends have adopted with infinite pains and trouble, than she has stuck out a new one, which renders all the previous labor in vain. This is part of her very essence; and the originality which is simply perfection that cannot be repeated, and not eccentricity that no one will imitate, comes in as one of the finest and most potent of her charms. When she lends her patterns to her friends, or tells them this or that little secret, she laughs in her heart, knowing that she has shown them a path they cannot possibly follow, and raised up a standard to which they cannot attain. And even should they do either, then she knows that by the time they have begun to get up to her, she will be miles away, and that no art whatever can approximate them to her as she is. What she was she tosses among them as a worn-out garment; and remains still the unapproachable, the inimitable, the charming woman *par excellence* of her set, whom none can rival.

Forty Shillings and Costs.

I had been all day trying to get from Aveminster to Chelchester by a country line, a London line, and a branch line of railway. In the first place, as the country line only ran three trains a day, passenger and goods together, necessitating weary shuntings at every station, we could hardly be said to have made a good start. In the next place, the strategic arrangement whereby the London line managed invariably to start its trains five minutes before the arrival of the "up"-country train, making us wait for two hours at Marlboury Junction, to spite the country company, scarcely tended to rapid progress. In the third place, as it always happens to be the aim of a traffic-manager to endeavor to drive passengers on to the main line, and to visit with all possible retributive details the hostile British public when it *will* travel on a branch, we could not be considered to have made up for lost time on the branch. In the fourth place, it did n't help us forward to be compelled to travel one hundred and twenty-seven miles round about in a parabola, in order to reach Chelchester, which, at starting, was only fifty-eight miles from Aveminster. In the fifth and last place, we were not got to Chelchester yet; and it would have been money in my pocket if I never had.

"Swinbro'—Swinbro'. Change here for Marchmont and Nutchley. Change here."

Almost time for a change, I reflected, considering I had been nine hours out on a journey of fifty-eight miles, and was still far off from my destination. Looking out from my window of a first-class compartment, I saw it was a cheerless, drizzling night, and the railway porters were steaming in the misty air as they hurried to and fro past the gleam of the lamps. Remonstrating with the guard respecting our train being nearly an hour late, and the time past eleven at night, he soothed my irritation by telling me gruffly I had no business on a branch line if I wanted to go anywhere; and if I would go to out-of-the-way place like Chelchester, I must be very thankful if the company put themselves to the expense of taking me there at all, considering branches did n't pay to work as a rule.

A solitary passenger then entered my carriage, or rather was banged into it by the guard. Another minute, and the guard had banged himself into his van, emitting the growl; "Change here!" Our fiery and restive iron steed, no doubt weary with its headlong career of full twelve miles an hour, gave a heroic neigh of triumph, resembling a feeble crow, in emulation of past exploits, in days long before it was condemned to transportation on a branch, and dragged us off into the bleak night.

My companion was a tall, thin, middle-aged man, with a face lean and withered like a shrivelled apple, concluded below the chin by a stiff satin cravat. In a dress, tight-fitting, and of ancient and faded black, he looked altogether like a man who had run very much to seed, which perhaps accounted for the luxuriant growth of his arms and legs. Observing his clothes steaming with the damp air, I began to realize it was very chilly. It certainly was.

"Quite a change in the weather," I remarked. "Very cold to-night; is it not?"

"Don't feel the cold myself. Perhaps you would like to *change places with me*. There is no draught here."

I replied I should be very pleased to do so, if not to his inconvenience; and accordingly we changed seats.

It *was* cold, and no mistake. I must have taken a chill, for I felt the cold creeping over me in a most unaccountable manner.

Looking at my companion on the opposite seat, on whom the lamp-light now shone full, I saw that his face was not so thin, nor his features so withered, as I had at first supposed; and I must have made a mistake as to his age, for he was by no means so old as I had previously judged. How cold it was to be sure! As I continued to look at him, I noticed his aspect changed momently,—that he was growing younger; that the wrinkles in his face were filling out, and smoothing down; and that he was gradually becoming like some one I had seen before. As his cheeks grew round and ruddy, and his hair changed from gray to brown, before my very eyes, I became in such a state of nervous agitation, I endeavored to cry out, but could not. I was paralyzed with the cold,—cold that seemed to make my limbs rigid, and numb my vitals; for I saw the man sitting before me was no longer a stranger,—no mere friend or acquaintance; he had become ME!

I held up my hands, to try and shut out the sight, and as I did so, saw they were withered, and thin, and old. I pressed them on my brow, to see if I were dreaming; but I found it shrivelled, and seamed, and puckered. And I knew that this man, this fiend, had stolen my body, and given me his. Maddened with the discovery, I rose to my feet,—*his* feet,—which swayed beneath me, and I struck wildly at the vision of myself on the other seat. But I found my arms light as vapor, for they passed over his body, which went through them, giving me the impression of pain. It was a body of shade that had been given me for my own body of flesh and blood, which this wretch had stolen. By some sorcery or other, we had indeed changed places.

"Sorcerer-demon!" I cried out, only to hear myself speaking with his sharp, cracked voice. When I saw *myself* sitting opposite to me, coolly addressing me in my own voice, I could no longer credit my senses, if indeed I had any of them at all left of my own.

"Dare say you think you are speaking loud now," he said.

I answered by calling the guard as loudly as I could halloo.

"Ah, you might call a good deal louder than that, if the carriage were full of passengers, and they could no more hear you than they could *see* you," he continued, chuckling and screwing up my features into a hideously knowing grin, such as I could never have made them assume. "You see, my friend, yours is a body of air, shadow, insensible, impalpable to all but myself, just as it was to all but you when I entered the carriage. You wish, perhaps, to know who I am? Well, two years ago to-night I was a passenger by this very up mail. There was a collision with a stupid down goods, you see, and the result was that several passengers were injured. One of them was—well, it's no use mincing matters—killed on the spot. Quite so: it was I. Yes, I am what you call a ghost, though we consider the word rather *infra dig.* amongst ourselves, and have a better term for it. Now I have told you what I am, you will like to know what I want? Very good. You shall see."

The ghost in my body then began to feel in my pockets, from which he drew out my meerschaum, loaded it from my pouch, and legated it with one of my Vesuvians.

"Ah," he proceeded, whiffing the weed rapidly, "you smoke very good stuff,—Golden Leaf and Returns; not a bad mixture, though I prefer a little Latakia with it myself. Not at all a bad body yours, either," he went on, eyeing the form in which he was sitting,—"not at all a bad body; and it fits me to a T, only a little short in the arms. By the way, I find one of your front teeth a little loose, so don't say I did that, when you come to yourself again; and your nose is a little long for me, but I dare say it blows none the worse for that." I shuddered as I saw him take out my handkerchief, and use it on that cherished organ of mine.

"Yes, I dare say now you feel the cold a little; I did at first; but it's nothing when you are used to it. I find your body very hot,—being heavier than I am accustomed to wear; but it won't be for long. I require it 'positively for this night only,' as you say in your playbills, and will return it uninjured by the time we get to Chelchester. By the by, let me beg you to be a little careful how you throw your arms about so much as you did just now, for my body is of a more delicate construction than yours; and, being so thin in substance, I am afraid you will scag it under the armpits. You will observe, ladies and gentlemen," he went on in lecturer's style, "that if I take a lighted Vesuvian and insert it in the corner of the patient's eye, he will feel no pain." Saying this, my dreadful companion proceeded to illustrate his remark by making a dive at my shadowy eye with a burning match. I felt no pain as the match burned in my head, certainly.

"You will allow, after all you see, that my shape has its advantages," the ghost proceeded; "but it also has its disadvantages. Try the pipe now." I tried to take the pipe; it dropped through my vapory fingers. He placed it in my mouth; I could not hold it, nor get a whiff from it. Precisely so," said the ghost. "Now, this is just what has brought me here to-night. A great smoker all my life, doing my six pipes a day regularly, I have been defunct these two years,—and during all that time I have n't had a smoke!—not a blessed draw! I miss my 'bacco dreadful. There is provision made for smokers, down with us, you will understand; but we are governed by a Board of Directors, whose incapacity quite equals that of most of your City Boards. There is a stock of bodies kept on purpose for smokers, so that, if you want a pipe, you must go into one of the bodies to enjoy it. But, if you will believe me, the supply is so notoriously insufficient to meet the demand, that there is no chance whatever for a new ghost to get a smoke. When I entered the Society, all the bodies were out in use, and booked for three years in advance. My name has been down on the books for two years, and there is no likelihood of my getting a body allotted me under another twelve-month. Fancy two years without a smoke! Why, sir, the incompetence of our Board is positively wooden. I can only explain the reason why we put up with such gross mismanagement in the other world, because we have become so used to it in this. Our constitutions, however, are being undermined to that extent that the Board has at last been coerced by popular feeling into passing a measure empowering ghosts to render themselves visible to single individual at a time in order that they may effect an exchange of bodies for short periods, always with the consent of the person in question, for the purpose of indulging in a habit which

(*Continued on fourth page*).