

BLEAK HOUSE

BY
 CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY H. K. BROWNE.

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CHUBB'S LOCKS, with all the recent improvements. **CASH BOXES** and **DEED BOXES** of all sizes; may be inspected.

IRON DOORS and FRAMES for Strong Rooms.

. Complete Lists, with Prices, will be sent on application.

CHUBB & SON, 57, St. Paul's Churchyard, London; 23, Lord-street, Liverpool; 16, Market-street, Manchester; and Hornsley Fields, Wolverhampton.

THE ROYAL  **TURKISH TOWELS.**

UNDER the Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen, and which received the Prize Medal at the Great Exhibition. The brown Linen combines the advantages of a fesh-brush with the qualities most desirable in a Towel. The white cotton is the softest Towel ever made, and absorbs moisture without the necessity of using friction. To be had of all respectable Linendrapers.

THE CAMP AT CHOBHAM.

"PORTABLE MEERSCHAUM PIPES in CASES,"

Adapted for Camp Use and

"FIRST-RATE LATAKIA,"

AT J. INDERWICK'S,

58, PRINCES STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE, LONDON.

CLERICAL, MEDICAL, AND GENERAL LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

ESTABLISHED 1824.

EMPOWERED BY SPECIAL ACT OF PARLIAMENT.

ADVANTAGES.

EXTENSION OF LIMITS OF RESIDENCE.—The Assured can reside in any part of Europe, the Holy Land, Egypt, Madeira, the Cape, Australia, New Zealand, and in most parts of North and South America, without extra charge.

MUTUAL SYSTEM WITHOUT THE RISK OF PARTNERSHIP.

The small share of Profit divisible in future among the Shareholders being now provided for, the Assured will hereafter derive all the benefits obtainable from a Mutual Office, with, at the same time, complete freedom from liability—thus combining in the same office all the advantages of both systems.

The Assurance Fund already invested amounts to £550,000, and the Income exceeds £136,000 per annum.

CREDIT SYSTEM.—On Policies for the whole of Life, one half of the Annual Premiums for the first five years may remain on credit, and may either continue as a debt on the Policy, or may be paid off at any time.

LOANS.—Loans are advanced on Policies which have been in existence five years and upwards to the extent of nine-tenths of their value.

BONUSES.—FIVE BONUSES have been declared: at the last, in January, 1852, the sum of **£131,125** was added to the Policies, producing a Bonus varying with the different ages from 24 to 55 per cent. on the Premiums paid during the five years, or from **£5 to £12 10s. per cent.** on the Sum Assured.

PARTICIPATION IN PROFITS.—Policies participate in the Profits in proportion to the number and amount of the Premiums paid between every division, so that if only one year's Premium be received prior to the books being closed for any division, the Policy on which it was paid will obtain its due share. The books close for the next division on 30th June, 1856, therefore those who effect Policies before the 30th June next, will be entitled to one year's additional share of Profits over later assurers.

APPLICATION OF BONUSES.—The next and future Bonuses may be either received in Cash, or

applied at the option of the assured in any other way.

NON-PARTICIPATION IN PROFITS.—Assurances may be effected for a Fixed Sum at considerably reduced rates, and the Premiums for term Policies are lower than at most other safe Offices.

PROMPT SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS.—Claims paid thirty days after proof of death, and all Policies are *Indisputable* except in cases of fraud.

INVALID LIVES may be assured at rates proportioned to the increased risk.

POLICIES are granted on the lives of persons in any station, and of every age, and for any sum on one life from £50 to £10,000.

PREMIUMS may be paid yearly, half-yearly, or quarterly, but if a payment be omitted from any cause, the Policy can be revived within *fourteen* Months.

The Accounts and Balance Sheets are at all times open to the inspection of the Assured, or of *Persons desirous to assure*.

Tables of Rates and Forms of Proposal can be obtained of any of the Society's Agents, or of
GEORGE H. PINCKARD, Resident Secretary.
99, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, BLOOMSBURY, LONDON.

THE VICTORIA REGIA SPONGING BATH.

Registered according to Act of Parliament, 6 & 7 Vic., c. 65.



THE peculiar advantage this Bath possesses over all other Sparging Baths is this,—the water cannot be splashed over its sides, the edge of the rim curls over inwards, after the manner of the magnificent leaf of the Victoria Regia, forming a hollow channel or groove all round, which effectually checks the water from dashing over. This bath will prove a desideratum long sought for, and by the moderation of price and great utility, must entirely supersede all others of the kind.

Sizes 27 — 30 — 33 — 36 inches diameter.
Prices 16s. 19s. 22s. 26s.

Securely packed, and forwarded carriage paid to any Railway Station in England, upon receipt of a Post Office Order, including 2s. extra, payable to WILLIAM S. ADAMS & SON, at Charing Cross.

BATHS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE PRICES.

WILLIAM S. ADAMS & SON,
FURNISHING IRONMONGERS, 57, HAYMARKET, LONDON.

SUMMER.

THE recurrence of the summer solstice invites the full display of Female Beauty, adorning the Fashionable Promenade, the ride, and drive; in all cases, *fervid heat*, and its concomitant, *dust*, materially injure the skin, producing *Sunburn, Tan, Freckles, and Discolorations*, of an almost indelible character. To obviate and eradicate these baneful results, recourse may with confidence be had to

ROWLAND'S KALYDOR

A preparation of vital importance to the sustainment of Female Beauty. It exerts the most *soothing, gentle, cooling, and purifying* action on the skin, and by its agency on the pores and minute secretory vessels, dispels all impurities from the surface, always every tendency to inflammation, and thus effectually dissipates all Redness, Tan, Pimples, Spots, Freckles, and other cutaneous visitations. Its constant use will transform the *bilious and clouded COMPLEXION* to one of *clear and spotless white*; while it invests the **NECK, HANDS, and ARMS**, with *delicacy and fairness*, and perpetuates the charms which it bestows to the most advanced period of life. Sold in bottles, at 4s. 6d. and 8s. 6d. each.

CAUTION!—The words "ROWLAND'S KALYDOR" are on the wrapper of each. Sold by A. ROWLAND & SONS, 20, Hatton Garden, London, and by all Chemists and Perfumers.

THE TEA DUTY IS NOW REDUCED 4d. PER POUND,

And we are enabled to sell

PRIME CONGOU TEA at.....	3s. 0d. per lb.
BEST CONGOU TEA at.....	3s. 4d. "
RICH RARE SOUCHONG at	3s. 8d. "
GOOD GREEN TEA at	3s. 4d. and 3s. 8d.
PRIME GREEN TEA	4s. 0d. "
DELICIOUS GREEN TEA at	5s. 0d. "

We strongly advise our Friends to purchase largely at our present prices, as Teas are getting dearer. Those who purchase now will save money.

The BEST PLANTATION COFFEE, 1s. per lb.

The BEST MOCHA COFFEE, 1s. 4d. per lb.

Tea or Coffee, to the value of 40s. sent carriage free to any part of England, by

PHILLIPS & CO.,

TEA MERCHANTS, OF 8, KING WILLIAM STREET, CITY, LONDON.

RIMMEL'S TOILET

VINEGAR (as exhibited in the Fountain at the Crystal Palace) is far superior to Eau-de-Cologne as a Tonic and Refreshing Lotion for the Toilet or Bath; a reviving Perfume, a pleasant Dentifrice, and a powerful Disinfectant for Apartments and Sick Rooms. Its numerous useful and sanitary properties render it an indispensable requisite in all families.

Price 2s. 6d. and 5s.



RIMMEL'S HAIR DYE im-

parts instantaneously to the Hair, Whiskers, &c., a natural and permanent Black or Brown Shade, without the trouble or danger attending other Dyes.—Price 5s. 6d.

RIMMEL'S Guards' Bouquet, Jockey Club Bouquet, and other fashionable perfumes. RIMMEL'S Odontine for the Teeth, Nutritive Cream for the Hair, &c., are also highly recommended.—Beware of counterfeits.

Sold by all Perfumers and Chemists, and by E. RIMMEL, 39, Gerard-street, Soho, London.

THE GENTLEMAN'S REAL HEAD OF HAIR, OR INVISIBLE

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

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

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



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

**PRIZE MEDAL,
WATHERSTON & BROGDEN'S
GOLD CHAINS.**

By Troy Weight, at realisable value; and the Workmanship at Wholesale Manufacturers' Prices.

THE Great Exhibition having established the Advantage of Purchasing from the Wholesale Manufacturer, wherever it can be accomplished, and thereby dispensing with an intermediate profit, WATHERSTON & BROGDEN beg to announce that, in obedience to the numerous calls made upon them, they have thrown open their Manufactory to the Public at the same prices they have been in the habit (for the last half century) of charging to the Trade in London, India, and the Colonies.

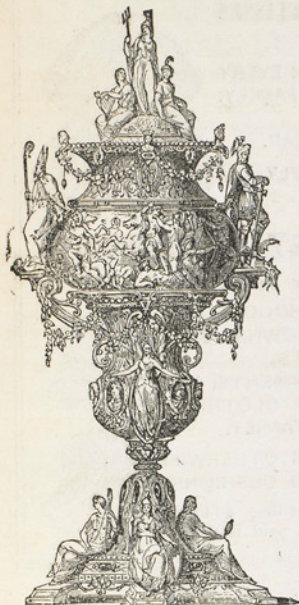
WATHERSTON & BROGDEN beg to caution the Public against the **Electro-Gold Chains**, and **Polished Zinc Gold**, so extensively put forth in the present day, under the titles of "**Pure Gold**" and "**Fine Gold**," and to call attention to the genuine Gold Chains made from their own ingots, and sold by Troy Weight at its bullion or realisable value.

The system of Weighing Chains against Sovereigns being one of the greatest frauds ever practised on the Public, WATHERSTON & BROGDEN guarantee the Gold in their Chains, and will re-purchase it at the price charged; the workmanship, according to the intricacy or simplicity of the pattern.

EXAMPLE.—Intrinsic value of a Chain of 15-Carat Gold, weighing 2 Ounces £5 6 2
Supposing the workmanship to be 2 0 0

Total £7 6 2

By this arrangement, the purchaser will see at a glance the proportion charged for labour compared with the Bullion in a Gold Chain, and being always able to realise the one, will have only to decide on the value of the other.



An extensive assortment of Jewellery, of the first quality, all made at their Manufactory, 16, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.

ESTABLISHED A.D. 1798.

N.B. Australian and Californian Gold made into articles of Jewellery at a moderate charge for the workmanship.

SOYER'S RELISH.

"To describe the Sauce would be to make our readers hungry,—rich, savoury, exotic, it infuses an ambrosial flavour into the substance on which it is poured."—*Bell's Life.*

THIS JUSTLY CELEBRATED SAUCE is now in universal use throughout the world. The great renown acquired by M. SOYER, having induced the introduction of several imitations of his Relish, purchasers are requested particularly to observe that every genuine bottle bears his portrait on the label, accompanied by the names of his wholesale Agents,

CROSSE AND BLACKWELL, 21, SOHO SQUARE, LONDON,

of whom also may be had his Original Sauces for Ladies and Gentlemen.

GORE HOUSE, KENSINGTON.

THE ELLIPTIC COLLAR,

TO FASTEN AT THE BACK,



WITH PATENT ELASTIC FASTENING

A most perfect and easy-fitting Shirt, and by a simple invention of the Patentee, adjusts itself to all movements of the body, both back and front, either walking, sitting, or riding. Price, including the REGISTERED ELLIPTIC WRISTBAND, 42s. the half-dozen. The Elliptic Collar, quite unique, in all shapes, with Patent Elastic Fastenings, 12s. the dozen. The Patent Elastic Collar Fastening can be attached to any Collar, opening back or front. Six sent by post on receipt of 13 Postage Stamps.

THE ELLIPTIC COLLAR,

TO FASTEN IN FRONT.



WITH PATENT ELASTIC FASTENING.

Directions for Self Measurement.

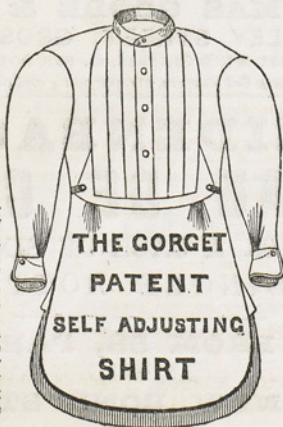
1. Round the Chest, tight over the Shirt.
2. Round the Waist, tight over the Shirt.
3. Round the Neck, taken about the middle of the Throat.
4. Round the Wrist.
5. The length of Coat Sleeve, from the centre of Back, down the seam of Sleeve to bottom of cuff.
6. The length of Shirt at Back. Say if the Shirts are to open back or front. If with Collars attached (3s. the half-dozen extra).

PATENTERS,

COOPER & FRYER,

Removed next door to the

HAYMARKET THEATRE.



CHILDREN'S FROCKS, COATS, & PELISSES

of every description,

LONG AND SHORT ROBES. WITH EVERY
OTHER REQUISITE FOR A YOUNG FAMILY.
IN FULL DRESS.

WALKING AND SCHOOL WEAR.

SEVERAL HUNDREDS CONSTANTLY ON
VIEW,**AT SHEARMAN'S, 5, FINSBURY PAVEMENT,**

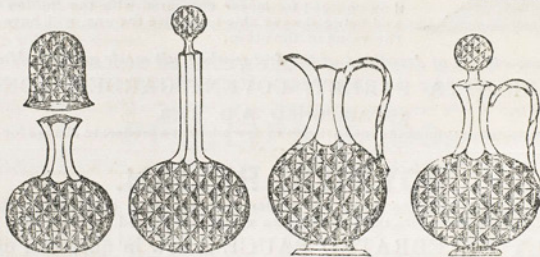
BETWEEN THE BANK AND FINSBURY SQUARE.

INFANTS' DRESSES, CLOAKS, HOODS,
HATS, BONNETS, ROBES, CAPS, GOWNS, OPEN
SHIRTS, ROBE BLANKETS,
BOYS' AND GIRLS' OVER GARMENTS,
WITH EVERY OTHER ARTICLE IN CLOTHING
REQUIRED FOR A YOUNG FAMILY.



BABY LINEN IN COMPLETE SETS OR OTHERWISE.
TRIMMED BASSINET BASKETS AND CUSHIONS.

A ILLUSTRATED PAMPHLET, affording additional
information, sent free on receipt of a paid letter.



EVERY ARTICLE FOR THE DINNER TABLE IN

DIAMOND PRESSED GLASS

Made of the purest Crystal, from moulds of a new description, by which means a brilliancy and sharpness is
produced, surpassing even the old Venetian glass from which it is copied.

Sold at lower Prices than before charged for the usual inferior description; by

THOMAS GOODE & CO.,

19, SOUTH AUDLEY STREET, GROSVENOR SQUARE.

BEST WINE GLASSES, 8s. PER DOZEN.

Quart Decanters with Lapidary Cut Stoppers, 21s. per pair; and all other articles in proportion.

**BREIDENBACH'S
REAL EAU DE COLOGNE,**

10s. A CASE OF SIX.

2s. SINGLE BOTTLES.

REMOVED FROM 88, PARK STREET,
TO
157 B, NEW BOND STREET,

NATIONAL PROVIDENT INSTITUTION.

FOR MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE, ANNUITIES, &c.
48, GRACECHURCH STREET, LONDON.

DIRECTORS.

CHAIRMAN.—SAMUEL HAYHURST LUCAS, Esq. DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN.—CHARLES LUSHINGTON, Esq.
JOHN BRADBURY, Esq. | JOHN FRITHAM, Esq. | ROBERT SHEPPARD, Esq.
THOMAS CASTLE, Esq. | CHARLES GILPIN, Esq. | WILLIAM TYLER, Esq.
WILLIAM MILLER CHRISTY, Esq. | ROBERT M. HOLBORN, Esq. | CHARLES WHETHAM, Esq.
Edward Crowley, Esq. | ROBERT INGHAM, Esq., M.P.

PHYSICIANS.

J. T. CONQUEST, M.D., F.L.S. | THOMAS HODGKIN, M.D.
BANKERS.—Messrs. BROWN, JANSON, & Co., and the Bank of England. SOLICITOR.—SEPTIMUS DAVIDSON, Esq.
CONSULTING ACTUARY.—CHARLES ANSELL, Esq., F.R.S.

THE THIRD DIVISION OF PROFITS MADE UP TO THE 20TH NOVEMBER LAST.

Those members who have not yet been informed the result of the Profits assigned to their respective Policies will receive circulars to that effect as soon as possible.

The following are a few of the instances of Bonuses added, and of Reductions in the Premiums, which show, in the former case, additions varying from 50 to 75 per cent. on the premiums paid during the last five years; and as respects the reductions it will be seen they vary from 6 per cent. to 89 per cent. on the original premiums paid, according to the age of the member, and the time the policy has been in force.

BONUSES.

Years in existence in Nov. 1852.	Age at commencement.	Sum Assured.	Amount of Premiums paid in the 5 Years ending 20 Nov. 1852.	Amount of Bonus for the 5 Years ending 20 Nov. 1852.	Total Amount of Premiums paid.	Total Amount of Bonuses declared.
		£.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
17	25	2,000	220 0 0	165 0 0	748 0 0	469 6 0
	52	500	121 17 6	81 18 0	414 7 6	212 6 0
12	24	500	53 19 2	38 9 0	129 10 0	82 19 0
	63	3,000	1,123 15 0	643 8 0	2,697 0 0	1,275 9 0
7	21	1,000	100 12 6	71 0 0	140 17 6	98 10 0
	59	100		15 5 0	41 6 1	20 16 0
4	23	1,000			84 6 8	57 15 0
	56	100			22 11 0	10 5 0
1	18	1,000			18 15 10	14 0 0
	57	500			29 5 5	14 2 0

REDUCTIONS.

Years in existence in Nov. 1852.	Age at commencement.	Sum Assured.	Original Annual Premium.	REDUCTION IN ANNUAL PREMIUM.			Annual Premium now payable.	The Reduction in the Annual Premium for the 5 Years ending 20th Nov., 1857, being
				From 1842 to 1847.	From 1847 to 1852.	From 1852 to 1857.		
		£.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	per cent.
17	63	2,000	149 16 8	64 15 0	83 13 4	134 3 0	15 16 8	89 "
	59	500	23 13 4	9 9 3	9 19 0	13 13 9	8 19 7	60 "
	32	500	7 17 9	2 19 1	2 19 2	3 16 7	4 1 2	49 "
13	58	500	30 8 9	5 7 3	11 19 10	17 3 11	13 4 10	56 "
	32	2,000	52 18 4	7 15 0	17 8 4	22 1 8	30 16 8	42 "
9	59	500	31 12 11		8 5 10	14 8 9	17 4 2	45 "
	28	500	11 18 4		2 14 10	4 6 6	7 11 10	36 "
5	67	500	45 3 9			18 6 5	26 17 4	40 "
	30	1,500	37 12 6			12 5 8	25 6 10	32 "
1	60	500	32 19 2			2 12 4	30 6 10	8 "
	26	500	11 6 8			0 13 7	10 13 1	6 "

The new Prospectuses, together with the last Report of the Directors, are now ready and may be had on application at the Office.
June 1, 1853.

JOSEPH MARSH, Secretary.

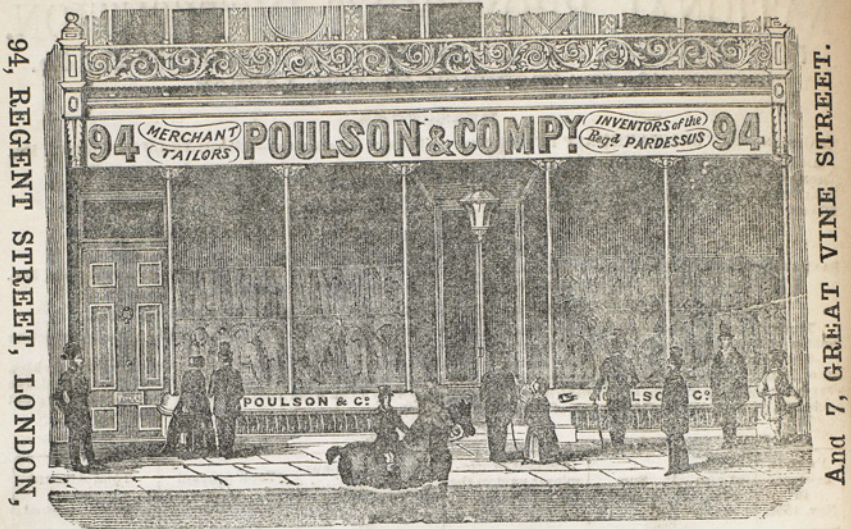
BONUS FORTY PER CENT. DEFENDER FIRE & LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY.

34, NEW BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON, AND
4, BOULEVARD DES ITALIENS, PARIS.

A BONUS was declared on the 3rd of January last on all Life Policies effected prior to 1852, equal on the average to FORTY PER CENT. upon the premiums paid thereon.

In the FIRE DEPARTMENT the rates are adapted to the actual risk.

Prospectuses and full information may be obtained at the Chief Offices, or of any of the Agents. Respectable active Agents Wanted.
JOHN KELDAY, Managing Director.



Messrs. POULSON & Co.'s REGISTERED PARDESSUS,
OF FINE AUSTRALIAN and LLAMA WOOLS, (6TH & 7TH VICTORIA, CAP. 65),
FOR WALKING OR RIDING.

THIS is an improved style of Coat for Spring use, of a light convenient form, which admits of its being worn either over or without the ordinary coat. It is neatly and handsomely made, care being bestowed in its construction to impart to it that graceful and appropriate character which, since its first introduction, has so greatly recommended it to public favour; it is produced in all colours with silk sleeve linings, at the very moderate price of TWO GUINEAS. THE PARDESSUS D'ETE, for hot weather, ONE GUINEA. This comfort-promoting garment has been truthfully pronounced by a leading Journal as *Cheap, Elegant, and Durable*. THE IMPROVED ELASTIC SUMMER GUINEA TROUSERS are also ready for selection from a choice variety of patterns.

In London only at the Sole Patentees and Manufacturers, B. POULSON & CO.'s, Court, Clerical, Naval and Military Tailors, 94, REGENT STREET, and in the country and colonies of their recognised Agents.

PARASOLS.

W. & J. SANGSTER respectfully solicit an inspection of their Stock of PARASOLS for this Season, comprising the richest Brocaded Silks from Lyons and Spitalfields.

W. & J. S. also beg to offer for notice their China Crape Parasols, so universally admired last Season; China Crape being a material both for its beauty of texture and durability peculiarly fitted for a Parasol.

Parasols in Moiré Antique, from 10s.; and of every other description, whether for the Fête, Promenade, or Sea-side.

Ladies' Umbrellas made on Fox's Patent Paragon Frames stronger and lighter than any others offered to the Public.



W. AND J. SANGSTER,

140, Regent Street.

94, Fleet Street.

10, Royal Exchange.

75, Cheapside.



ARDESSUS

Car. 85,

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JACQUES WESS

Maria T. Wess

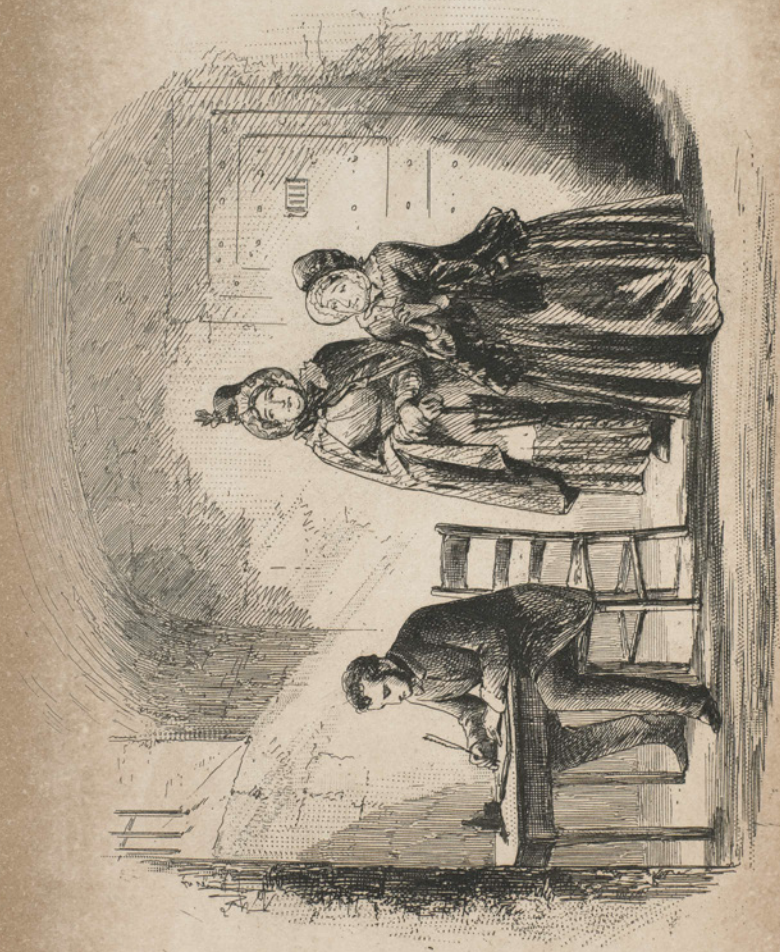
The undersigned
has the honor to
acknowledge the
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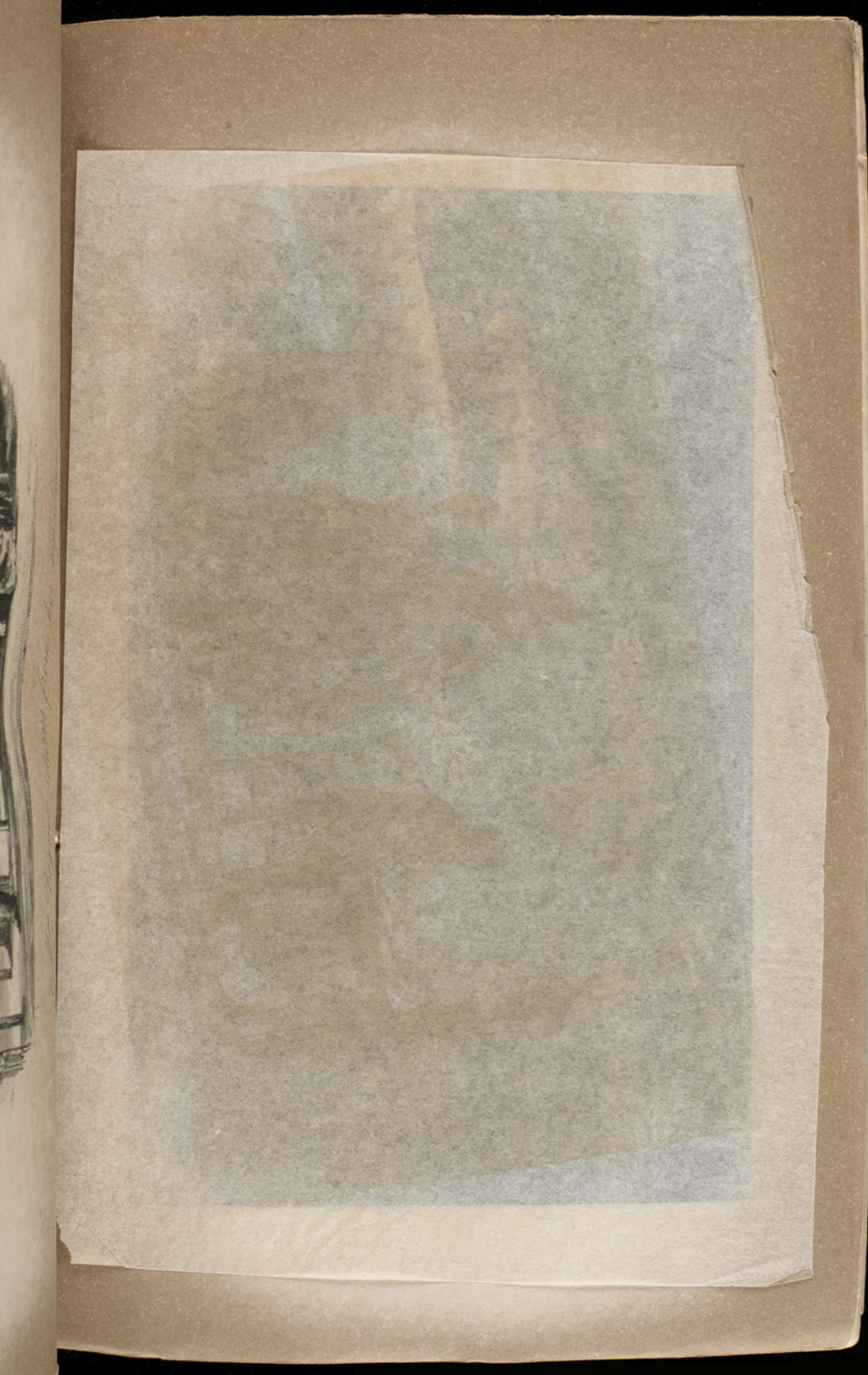
of the County
of ... State
of ...

W. AND J. CARPENTER
140 N. ...
St. ...





Mr. Baguet returns from her expectation.





The lonely figure

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

A Weekly Journal, conducted by CHARLES DICKENS.

Published on the second day of every week, at the office of the Editor, No. 11, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

THE HOUSEHOLD NARRATIVE OF CURRENT EVENTS.

Published by the Editor, No. 11, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

Printed and Published by W. BENTLEY, 11, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

ESTABLISHED
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Weekly Number, price

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CHAPTER LIV.

SPRINGING A MINE.

REFRESHED by sleep, Mr. Bucket rises betimes in the morning, and prepares for a field-day. Smartened up by the aid of a clean shirt and a wet hair-brush, with which instrument on occasions of ceremony he

In Weekly Numbers, price 2d., or stamped for post, 3d.; in Monthly Parts, and in Half-yearly Volumes,

HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

A Weekly Journal, conducted by CHARLES DICKENS.

DESIGNED FOR THE INSTRUCTION AND AMUSEMENT OF ALL CLASSES OF READERS, AND TO ASSIST
IN THE DISCUSSION OF THE SOCIAL QUESTIONS OF THE TIME.

SIX VOLUMES are published, price 5s. 6d. each, in cloth boards, and are always on sale.

Also, published at the end of every Month, at the same Office, price 2d., or stamped for post, 3d.,

THE HOUSEHOLD NARRATIVE OF CURRENT EVENTS;

Which being declared, by the Judgment of the Court of Exchequer, a Legal Publication, not coming within the provisions of the Stamp Act, will be regularly continued and much improved.

* * * The First, Second, and Third Volumes, being a Record of the Public Events of 1850, 1851, and 1852, may always be had, price 3s. each, neatly bound in cloth. Each Volume contains a copious Index.

OFFICE, No. 16, WELLINGTON STREET NORTH. Sold by all Booksellers and Newsmen.

head persuasively on one side, and his forefinger pendant at one ear like an ear-ring, "we can't be too private, just at present. You will presently see that we can't be too private. A lady, under any circumstances, and especially in Miss Dedlock's elevated station of society, can't but be agreeable to me; but speaking without a view to myself, I will take the liberty of assuring you that I know we can't be too private."

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THE HOUSEHOLD WORDS

THE HOUSEHOLD NARRATIVE OF
CURRENT EVENTS

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CHAPTER LIV.

SPRINGING A MINE.

REFRESHED by sleep, Mr. Bucket rises betimes in the morning, and prepares for a field-day. Smartened up by the aid of a clean shirt and a wet hair-brush, with which instrument, on occasions of ceremony, he lubricates such thin locks as remain to him after his life of severe study, Mr. Bucket lays in a breakfast of two mutton chops as a foundation to work upon, together with tea, eggs, toast, and marmalade, on a corresponding scale. Having much enjoyed these strengthening matters, and having held subtle conference with his familiar demon, he confidentially instructs Mercury "just to mention quietly to Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, that whenever he's ready for me, I'm ready for him." A gracious message being returned, that Sir Leicester will expedite his dressing and join Mr. Bucket in the library within ten minutes, Mr. Bucket repairs to that apartment; and stands before the fire, with his finger on his chin, looking at the blazing coals.

Thoughtful Mr. Bucket is; as a man may be, with weighty work to do; but composed, sure, confident. From the expression of his face, he might be a famous whist-player for a large stake—say a hundred guineas certain—with the game in his hand, but with a high reputation involved in his playing his hand out to the last card, in a masterly way. Not in the least anxious or disturbed is Mr. Bucket, when Sir Leicester appears; but he eyes the baronet aside as he comes slowly to his easy chair, with that observant gravity of yesterday, in which there might have been yesterday, but for the audacity of the idea, a touch of compassion.

"I am sorry to have kept you waiting, officer, but I am rather later than my usual hour this morning. I am not well. The agitation, and the indignation from which I have recently suffered, have been too much for me. I am subject to—gout;" Sir Leicester was going to say indisposition, and would have said it to anybody else, but Mr. Bucket palpably knows all about it; "and recent circumstances have brought it on."

As he takes his seat with some difficulty, and with an air of pain, Mr. Bucket draws a little nearer, standing with one of his large hands on the library table.

"I am not aware, officer," Sir Leicester observes, raising his eyes to his face, "whether you wish us to be alone; but that is entirely as you please. If you do, well and good. If not, Miss Dedlock would be interested——"

"Why, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet," returns Mr. Bucket, with his head persuasively on one side, and his forefinger pendant at one ear like an ear-ring, "we can't be too private, just at present. You will presently see that we can't be too private. A lady, under any circumstances, and especially in Miss Dedlock's elevated station of society, can't but be agreeable to me; but speaking without a view to myself, I will take the liberty of assuring you that I know we can't be too private."

"That is enough."

"So much so, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet," Mr. Bucket resumes, "that I was on the point of asking your permission to turn the key in the door."

"By all means." Mr. Bucket skilfully and softly takes that precaution; stooping on his knee for a moment, from mere force of habit, so to adjust the key in the lock as that no one shall peep in from the outside.

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I mentioned yesterday evening, that I wanted but a very little to complete this case. I have now completed it, and collected proof against the person who did this crime."

"Against the soldier?"

"No, Sir Leicester Dedlock; not the soldier."

Sir Leicester looks astounded, and inquires, "Is the man in custody?"

Mr. Bucket tells him, after a pause, "It was a woman."

Sir Leicester leans back in his chair, and breathlessly ejaculates, "Good Heaven!"

"Now, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet," Mr. Bucket begins, standing over him with one hand spread out on the library table, and the forefinger of the other in impressive use, "it's my duty to prepare you for a train of circumstances that may, and I go so far as to say that will, give you a shock. But Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, you are a gentleman; and I know what a gentleman is, and what a gentleman is capable of. A gentleman can bear a shock, when it must come, boldly and steadily. A gentleman can make up his mind to stand up against almost any blow. Why, take yourself, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet. If there's a blow to be inflicted on you, you naturally think of your family. You ask yourself, how would all them ancestors of yours, away to Julius Cæsar—not to go beyond him at present—have borne that blow; you remember scores of them that would have borne it well; and you bear it well on their accounts, and to maintain the family credit. That's the way you argue, and that's the way you act, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet."

Sir Leicester, leaning back in his chair, and grasping the elbows, sits looking at him with a stony face.

"Now, Sir Leicester Dedlock," proceeds Mr. Bucket, "thus preparing you, let me beg of you not to trouble your mind, for a moment, as to anything having come to *my* knowledge. I know so much about so many characters, high and low, that a piece of information more or less, don't signify a straw. I don't suppose there's a move on the board that would surprise *me*; and as to this or that move having taken place, why my knowing it is no odds at all; any possible move whatever (provided it's in a wrong direction) being a probable move according to my experience. Therefore what I say to you, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, is, don't you go and let yourself be put out of the way, because of my knowing anything of your family affairs."

"I thank you for your preparation," returns Sir Leicester, after a silence, without moving hand, foot, or feature; "which I hope is not necessary, though I give it credit for being well intended. Be so good as to go on. Also;" Sir Leicester seems to shrink in the shadow of his figure; "also, to take a seat, if you have no objection."

None at all. Mr. Bucket brings a chair, and diminishes his shadow.

"Now, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, with this short preface, I come to the point. Lady Dedlock——"

Sir Leicester raises himself in his seat, and stares at him fiercely. Mr. Bucket brings the finger into play as an emollient.

"Lady Dedlock, you see, she's universally admired. That's what her Ladyship is; she's universally admired," says Mr. Bucket.

"I would greatly prefer, officer," Sir Leicester returns, stiffly, "my Lady's name being entirely omitted from this discussion."

"So would I, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, but—it's impossible."

"Impossible?"

Mr. Bucket shakes his relentless head.

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, it's altogether impossible. What I have got to say, is about her Ladyship. She is the pivot it all turns on."

"Officer," retorts Sir Leicester, with a fiery eye, and a quivering lip, "you know your duty. Do your duty; but be careful not to overstep it. I would not suffer it. I would not endure it. You bring my Lady's name into this communication, upon your responsibility—upon your responsibility. My Lady's name is not a name for common persons to trifle with!"

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I say what I must say; and no more."

"I hope it may prove so. Very well. Go on. Go on, sir!"

Glancing at the angry eyes which now avoid him, and at the angry figure trembling from head to foot, yet striving to be still, Mr. Bucket feels his way with his forefinger, and in a low voice proceeds.

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, it becomes my duty to tell you that the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn long entertained mistrusts and suspicions of Lady Dedlock."

"If he had dared to breathe them to me, sir—which he never did—I would have killed him myself!" exclaims Sir Leicester, striking his hand upon the table. But, in the very heat and fury of the act, he stops, fixed by the knowing eyes of Mr. Bucket, whose forefinger is slowly going, and who, with mingled confidence and patience, shakes his head.

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn was deep and close; and what he fully had in his mind in the very beginning, I can't quite take upon myself to say. But I know from his lips, that he long ago suspected Lady Dedlock of having discovered, through the sight of some handwriting—in this very house, and when you yourself, Sir Leicester Dedlock, were present—the existence, in great poverty, of a certain person, who had been her lover before you courted her, and who ought to have been her husband;" Mr. Bucket stops, and deliberately repeats, "ought to have been her husband; not a doubt about it. I know from his lips, that when that person soon afterwards died, he suspected Lady Dedlock of visiting his wretched lodging, and his wretched grave, alone and in secret. I know from my own inquiries, and through my eyes and ears, that Lady Dedlock did make such visit, in the dress of her own maid; for the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn employed me to reckon up her Ladyship—if you'll excuse my making use of the term we commonly employ—and I reckoned her up, so far, completely. I confronted the maid, in the chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields, with a witness who had been Lady Dedlock's guide; and there couldn't be the shadow of a doubt

that she had worn the young woman's dress, unknown to her. Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I did endeavour to pave the way a little towards these unpleasant disclosures, yesterday, by saying that very strange things happened even in high families sometimes. All this, and more, has happened in your own family, and to and through your own Lady. It's my belief that the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn followed up these inquiries to the hour of his death; and that he and Lady Dedlock even had bad blood between them upon the matter, that very night. Now, only you put that to Lady Dedlock, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet; and ask her Ladyship whether, even after he had left here, she didn't go down to his chambers with the intention of saying something further to him, dressed in a loose black mantle with a deep fringe to it."

Sir Leicester sits like a statue, gazing at the cruel finger that is probing the life-blood of his heart.

"You put that to her Ladyship, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, from me, Inspector Bucket of the Detective. And if her Ladyship makes any difficulty about admitting of it, you tell her that it's no use; that Inspector Bucket knows it, and knows that she passed the soldier as you called him (though he's not in the army now), and knows that she knows she passed him, on the staircase. Now, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, why do I relate all this?"

Sir Leicester, who has covered his face with his hands, uttering a single groan, requests him to pause for a moment. By and by, he takes his hands away; and so preserves his dignity and outward calmness, though there is no more color in his face than in his white hair, that Mr. Bucket is a little awed by him. Something frozen and fixed is upon his manner, over and above its usual shell of haughtiness; and Mr. Bucket soon detects an unusual slowness in his speech, with now and then a curious trouble in beginning, which occasions him to utter inarticulate sounds. With such sounds, he now breaks silence; soon, however, controlling himself to say, that he does not comprehend why a gentleman so faithful and zealous as the late Mr. Tulkinghorn should have communicated to him nothing of this painful, this distressing, this unlooked-for, this overwhelming, this incredible intelligence.

"Again, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet," returns Mr. Bucket, "put it to her Ladyship to clear that up. Put it to her Ladyship, if you think right, from Inspector Bucket of the Detective. You'll find, or I'm much mistaken, that the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn had the intention of communicating the whole to you, as soon as he considered it ripe; and further, that he had given her Ladyship so to understand. Why, he might have been going to reveal it on the very morning when I examined the body! You don't know what I'm going to say and do, five minutes from this present time, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet; and supposing I was to be picked off now, you might wonder why I hadn't done it, don't you see?"

True. Sir Leicester, avoiding, with some trouble, those obtrusive sounds, says, "True." At this juncture, a considerable noise of voices is heard in the hall. Mr. Bucket, after listening, goes to the library-door, softly unlocks and opens it, and listens again. Then he draws in his head, and whispers, hurriedly, but composedly, "Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, this unfortunate family affair has taken air, as I expected it

might; the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn being cut down so sudden. The chance to hush it, is to let in these people now in a wrangle with your footmen. Would you mind sitting quiet—on the family account—while I reckon 'em up? And would you just throw in a nod, when I seem to ask you for it?"

Sir Leicester indistinctly answers, "Officer. The best you can, the best you can!" and Mr. Bucket, with a nod and a sagacious crook of the forefinger, slips down into the hall, where the voices quickly die away. He is not long in returning, a few paces ahead of Mercury, and a brother deity also powdered and in peach-blossom smalls, who bear between them a chair in which is an incapable old man. Another man and two women come behind. Directing the pitching of the chair, in an affable and easy manner, Mr. Bucket dismisses the Mercuries, and locks the door again. Sir Leicester looks on at this invasion of the sacred precincts with an icy stare.

"Now, perhaps you may know me, ladies and gentlemen," says Mr. Bucket, in a confidential voice. "I am Inspector Bucket of the Detective, I am; and this," producing the tip of his convenient little staff from his breast-pocket, "is my authority. Now, you wanted to see Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet. Well! You do see him; and, mind you, it ain't every one as is admitted to that honor. Your name, old gentleman, is Smallweed; that's what your name is; I know it well."

"Well, and you never heard any harm of it!" cries Mr. Smallweed in a shrill loud voice.

"You don't happen to know why they killed the pig, do you?" retorts Mr. Bucket, with a stedfast look, but without loss of temper.

"No!"

"Why, they killed him," says Mr. Bucket, "on account of his having so much check. Don't *you* get into the same position, because it isn't worthy of you. You ain't in the habit of conversing with a deaf person, are you?"

"Yes," snarls Mr. Smallweed, "my wife's deaf."

"That accounts for your pitching your voice so high. But as she ain't here, just pitch it an octave or two lower, will you, and I'll not only be obliged to you, but it'll do you more credit," says Mr. Bucket. "This other gentleman is in the preaching line, I think?"

"Name of Chadband," Mr. Smallweed puts in, speaking henceforth in a much lower key.

"Once had a friend and brother serjeant of the same name," says Mr. Bucket, offering his hand, "and consequently feel a liking for it. Mrs. Chadband, no doubt?"

"And Mrs. Snagsby," Mr. Smallweed introduces.

"Husband a law stationer, and a friend of my own," says Mr. Bucket. "Love him like a brother!—Now, what's up?"

"Do you mean what business have we come upon?" Mr. Smallweed asks, a little dashed by the suddenness of this turn.

"Ah! You know what I mean. Let us hear what it's all about in presence of Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet. Come."

Mr. Smallweed, beckoning Mr. Chadband, takes a moment's counsel with him in a whisper. Mr. Chadband, expressing a considerable

amount of oil from the pores of his forehead and the palms of his hands, says aloud, "Yes. You first!" and retires to his former place.

"I was the client and friend of Mr. Tulkinghorn," pipes Grandfather Smallweed, then; "I did business with him. I was useful to him, and he was useful to me. Krook, dead and gone, was my brother-in-law. He was own brother to a brimstone magpie—leastways Mrs. Smallweed. I come in to Krook's property. I examined all his papers and all his effects. They was all dug out under my eyes. There was a bundle of letters belonging to a dead and gone lodger, as was hid away at the back of a shelf in the side of Lady Jane's bed—his cat's bed. He hid all manner of things away, everywhere. Mr. Tulkinghorn wanted 'em and got 'em, but I looked 'em over first. I'm a man of business, and I took a squint at 'em. They was letters from the lodger's sweetheart, and she signed Honoria. Dear me, that's not a common name, Honoria, is it? There's no lady in this house that signs Honoria, is there? O no, I don't think so! O no, I don't think so! And not in the same hand, perhaps? O no, I don't think so!"

Here Mr. Smallweed, seized with a fit of coughing in the midst of his triumph, breaks off to ejaculate "O dear me! O Lord! I'm shaken all to pieces!"

"Now, when you're ready," says Mr. Bucket, after awaiting his recovery, "to come to anything that concerns Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, here the gentleman sits, you know."

"Haven't I come to it, Mr. Bucket?" cries Grandfather Smallweed. "Isn't the gentleman concerned yet? Not with Captain Hawdon and his ever affectionate Honoria, and their child into the bargain? Come, then, I want to know where those letters are. That concerns me, if it don't concern Sir Leicester Dedlock. I will know where they are. I won't have 'em disappear so quietly. I handed 'em over to my friend and solicitor, Mr. Tulkinghorn; not to anybody else."

"Why he paid you for them, you know, and handsome too," says Mr. Bucket.

"I don't care for that. I want to know who's got 'em. And I tell you what we want—what we all here want, Mr. Bucket. We want more pains-taking and search-making into this murder. We know where the interest and the motive was, and you have not done enough. If George the vagabond dragoon had any hand in it, he was only an accomplice, and was set on. You know what I mean as well as any man."

"Now I tell you what," says Mr. Bucket, instantaneously altering his manner, coming close to him, and communicating an extraordinary fascination to the forefinger, "I am damned if I am a going to have my case spoilt, or interfered with, or anticipated by so much as half a second of time, by any human being in creation. *You* want more pains-taking and search-making? *You* do? Do you see this hand, and do you think that *I* don't know the right time to stretch it out, and put it on the arm that fired that shot?"

Such is the dread power of the man, and so terribly evident it is that he makes no idle boast, that Mr. Smallweed begins to apologise. Mr. Bucket, dismissing his sudden anger, checks him.

"The advice I give you, is, don't you trouble your head about the murder. That's my affair. You keep half an eye on the newspapers;

and I shouldn't wonder if you was to read something about it before long, if you look sharp. I know my business, and that's all I've got to say to you on that subject. Now about those letters. You want to know who's got 'em. I don't mind telling you. I have got 'em. Is that the packet?"

Mr. Smallweed looks, with greedy eyes, at the little bundle Mr. Bucket produces from a mysterious part of his coat, and identifies it as the same.

"What have you got to say next?" asks Mr. Bucket. "Now, don't open your mouth too wide, because you don't look handsome when you do it."

"I want five hundred pound."

"No, you don't; you mean fifty," says Mr. Bucket, humorously.

It appears, however, that Mr. Smallweed means five hundred.

"That is, I am deputed by Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, to consider (without admitting or promising anything) this bit of business," says Mr. Bucket; Sir Leicester mechanically bows his head; "and you ask me to consider a proposal of five hundred pound. Why, it's an unreasonable proposal! Two fifty would be bad enough, but better than that. Hadn't you better say two fifty?"

Mr. Smallweed is quite clear that he had better not.

"Then," says Mr. Bucket, "let's hear Mr. Chadband. Lord! Many a time I've heard my old fellow-serjeant of that name; and a moderate man he was in all respects, as ever I come across!"

Thus invited, Mr. Chadband steps forth, and, after a little sleek smiling and a little oil-grinding with the palms of his hands, delivers himself as follows:

"My friends, we are now—Rachael my wife, and I—in the mansions of the rich and great. Why are we now in the mansions of the rich and great, my friends? Is it because we are invited? Because we are bidden to feast with them, because we are bidden to rejoice with them, because we are bidden to play the lute with them, because we are bidden to dance with them? No. Then why are we here, my friends? Air we in possession of a sinful secret, and doe we require corn, and wine, and oil—or, what is much the same thing, money—for the keeping thereof? Probably so, my friends."

"You're a man of business, you are," returns Mr. Bucket, very attentive; "and consequently you're going on to mention what the nature of your secret is. You are right. You couldn't do better."

"Let us then, my brother, in a spirit of love," says Mr. Chadband, with a cunning eye, "proceed untoe it. Rachael my wife, advance!"

Mrs. Chadband, more than ready, so advances as to jostle her husband into the back-ground, and confronts Mr. Bucket with a hard frowning smile.

"Since you want to know what we know," says she, "I'll tell you. I helped to bring up Miss Hawdon, her Ladyship's daughter. I was in the service of her Ladyship's sister, who was very sensitive to the disgrace her Ladyship brought upon her, and gave out, even to her Ladyship, that the child was dead—she *was* very nearly so—when she was born. But she's alive, and I know her." With these words, and a laugh, and laying a bitter stress on the word "Ladyship," Mrs. Chadband folds her arms, and looks implacably at Mr. Bucket.

"I suppose now," returns that officer, "*you* will be expecting a twenty-pound note, or a present of about that figure?"

Mrs. Chadband merely laughs, and contemptuously tells him he can "offer" twenty pence.

"My friend the law-stationer's good lady, over there," says Mr. Bucket, luring Mrs. Snagsby forward with the finger. "What may *your* game be, ma'am?"

Mrs. Snagsby is at first prevented, by tears and lamentations, from stating the nature of her game: but by degrees it confusedly comes to light, that she is a woman overwhelmed with injuries and wrongs, whom Mr. Snagsby has habitually deceived, abandoned, and sought to keep in darkness, and whose chief comfort, under her afflictions, has been the sympathy of the late Mr. Tulkinghorn; who showed so much commiseration for her, on one occasion of his calling in Cook's Court in the absence of her perjured husband, that she has of late habitually carried to him all her woes. Everybody, it appears, the present company excepted, has plotted against Mrs. Snagsby's peace. There is Mr. Guppy, clerk to Kenge and Carboy, who was at first as open as the sun at noon, but who suddenly shut up as close as midnight, under the influence—no doubt—of Mr. Snagsby's suborning and tampering. There is Mr. Weevle, friend of Mr. Guppy, who lived mysteriously up a court, owing to the like coherent causes. There was Krook, deceased; there was Nimrod, deceased; and there was Jo, deceased; and they were "all in it." In what, Mrs. Snagsby does not with particularity express; but she knows that Jo was Mr. Snagsby's son, "as well as if a trumpet had spoken it," and she followed Mr. Snagsby when he went on his last visit to the boy, and if he was not his son why did he go? The one occupation of her life has been, for some time back, to follow Mr. Snagsby to and fro, and up and down, and to piece suspicious circumstances together—and every circumstance that has happened has been most suspicious; and in this way she has pursued her object of detecting and confounding her false husband, night and day. Thus did it come to pass that she brought the Chadbands and Mr. Tulkinghorn together, and conferred with Mr. Tulkinghorn on the change in Mr. Guppy, and helped to turn up the circumstances in which the present company are interested, casually, by the wayside; being still, and ever, on the great high road that is to terminate in Mr. Snagsby's full exposure, and a matrimonial separation. All this Mrs. Snagsby, as an injured woman, and the friend of Mrs. Chadband, and the follower of Mr. Chadband, and the mourner of the late Mr. Tulkinghorn, is here to certify under the seal of confidence, with every possible confusion, and involvement possible and impossible; having no pecuniary motive whatever, no scheme or project but the one mentioned; and bringing here, and taking everywhere, her own dense atmosphere of dust, arising from the ceaseless working of her mill of jealousy.

While this exordium is in hand—and it takes some time—Mr. Bucket, who has seen through the transparency of Mrs. Snagsby's vinegar at a glance, confers with his familiar demon, and bestows his shrewd attention on the Chadbands and Mr. Smallweed. Sir Leicester Dedlock remains immovable, with the same icy surface upon him; except that he once or twice looks towards Mr. Bucket, as relying on that officer alone of all mankind.

"Very good," says Mr. Bucket. "Now I understand you, you know; and, being deputed by Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, to look into this little matter," again Sir Leicester mechanically bows in confirmation of the statement, "can give it my fair and full attention. Now I won't allude to conspiring to extort money, or anything of that sort, because we are men and women of the world here, and our object is to make things pleasant. But I tell you what I *do* wonder at; I am surprised that you should think of making a noise below in the hall. It was so opposed to your interests. That's what I look at."

"We wanted to get in," pleads Mr. Smallweed.

"Why, of course, you wanted to get in," Mr. Bucket assents with cheerfulness; "but for a old gentleman at your time of life—what I call truly venerable, mind you!—with his wits sharpened, as I have no doubt they are, by the loss of the use of his limbs, which occasions all his animation to mount up into his head—not to consider, that if he don't keep such a business as the present as close as possible it can't be worth a rag to him, is so curious! You see your temper got the better of you; that's where you lost ground," says Mr. Bucket, in an argumentative and friendly way.

"I only said I wouldn't go, without one of the servants came up to Sir Leicester Dedlock," returns Mr. Smallweed.

"That's it! That's where your temper got the better of you. Now, you keep it under another time, and you'll make money by it. Shall I ring for them to carry you down?"

"When are we to hear more of this?" Mrs. Chadband sternly demands.

"Bless your heart for a true woman! Always curious, your delightful sex is!" replies Mr. Bucket, with gallantry. "I shall have the pleasure of giving you a call to-morrow or next day—not forgetting Mr. Smallweed and his proposal of two fifty."

"Five hundred!" exclaims Mr. Smallweed.

"All right! Nominally five hundred;" Mr. Bucket has his hand on the bell-rope; "*shall* I wish you good day for the present, on the part of myself and the gentleman of the house?" he asks in an insinuating tone.

Nobody having the hardihood to object to his doing so, he does it, and the party retire as they came up. Mr. Bucket follows them to the door; and returning, says with an air of serious business:

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, it's for you to consider whether or not to buy this up. I should recommend, on the whole, it's being bought up myself; and I think it may be bought pretty cheap. You see, that little pickled cucumber of a Mrs. Snagsby has been used by all sides of the speculation, and has done a deal more harm in bringing odds and ends together than if she had meant it. Mr. Tulkinghorn, deceased, he held all these horses in his hand, and could have drove 'em his own way, I haven't a doubt; but he was fetched off the box head-foremost, and now they have got their legs over the traces, and are all dragging and pulling their own ways. So it is, and such is life. The cat's away, and the mice they play; the frost breaks up, and the water runs. Now, with regard to the party to be apprehended."

Sir Leicester seems to wake, though his eyes have been wide open;

and he looks intently at Mr. Bucket, as Mr. Bucket refers to his watch.

"The party to be apprehended is now in this house," proceeds Mr. Bucket, putting up his watch with a steady hand, and with rising spirits, "and I'm about to take her into custody in your presence. Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, don't you say a word, nor yet stir. There'll be no noise, and no disturbance at all. I'll come back in the course of the evening, if agreeable to you, and endeavour to meet your wishes respecting this unfortunate family matter, and the nobbiest way of keeping it quiet. Now, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, don't you be nervous on account of the apprehension at present coming off. You shall see the whole case clear, from first to last."

Mr. Bucket rings, goes to the door, briefly whispers Mercury, shuts the door, and stands behind it with his arms folded. After a suspense of a minute or two, the door slowly opens, and a French woman enters. Mademoiselle Hortense.

The moment she is in the room, Mr. Bucket claps the door to, and puts his back against it. The suddenness of the noise occasions her to turn; and then, for the first time, she sees Sir Leicester Dedlock in his chair.

"I ask you pardon," she mutters hurriedly. "They tell me there was no one here."

Her step towards the door brings her front to front with Mr. Bucket. Suddenly a spasm shoots across her face, and she turns deadly pale.

"This is my lodger, Sir Leicester Dedlock," says Mr. Bucket, nodding at her. "This foreign young woman has been my lodger for some weeks back."

"What do Sir Leicester care for that, you think, my angel?" returns Mademoiselle, in a jocular strain.

"Why, my angel," returns Mr. Bucket, "we shall see."

Mademoiselle Hortense eyes him with a scowl upon her tight face, which gradually changes into a smile of scorn. "You are very mysterieuse. Are you drunk?"

"Tolerable sober, my angel," returns Mr. Bucket.

"I come from arriving at this so detestable house with your wife. Your wife have left me, since some minutes. They tell me down stairs that your wife is here. I come here, and your wife is not here. What is the intention of this fool's play, say then?" Mademoiselle demands, with her arms composedly crossed, but with something in her dark cheek beating like a clock.

Mr. Bucket merely shakes the finger at her.

"Ah my God, you are an unhappy idiot!" cries Mademoiselle, with a toss of her head and a laugh.—"Leave me to pass down stairs, great pig." With a stamp of her foot, and a menace.

"Now, Mademoiselle," says Mr. Bucket, in a cool determined way, "you go and sit down upon that sofa."

"I will not sit down upon nothing," she replies, with a shower of nods.

"Now, Mademoiselle," repeats Mr. Bucket, making no demonstration, except with the finger; "you sit down upon that sofa."

"Why?"

"Because I take you into custody on a charge of murder, and you don't need to be told it. Now, I want to be polite to one of your sex and a foreigner, if I can. If I can't, I must be rough; and there's rougher ones outside. What I am to be, depends on you. So I recommend you, as a friend, afore another half a blessed moment has passed over your head, to go and sit down upon that sofa."

Mademoiselle complies, saying in a concentrated voice, while that something in her cheek beats fast and hard, "You are a Devil."

"Now, you see," Mr. Bucket proceeds approvingly, "you're comfortable, and conducting yourself as I should expect a foreign young woman of your sense to do. So I'll give you a piece of advice, and it's this, Don't you talk too much. You're not expected to say anything here, and you can't keep too quiet a tongue in your head. In short, the less you Parlay, the better, you know." Mr. Bucket is very complacent over this french explanation.

Mademoiselle, with that tigerish expansion of the mouth, and her black eyes darting fire upon him, sits upright on the sofa in a rigid state, with her hands clenched—and her feet too, one might suppose—muttering, "O, you Bucket, you are a Devil!"

"Now, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet," says Mr. Bucket, and from this time forth the finger never rests, "this young woman, my lodger, was her Ladyship's maid at the time I have mentioned to you; and this young woman, besides being extraordinary vehement and passionate against her Ladyship after being discharged——"

"Lie!" cries Mademoiselle. "I discharge myself."

"Now, why don't you take my advice?" returns Mr. Bucket, in an impressive, almost in an imploring tone. "I'm surprised at the indiscreetness you commit. You'll say something that'll be used against you, you know. You're sure to come to it. Never you mind what I say, till it's given in evidence. It's not addressed to you."

"Discharge, too!" cries Mademoiselle, furiously, "by her Ladyship! Eh, my faith, a pretty Ladyship! Why, I r-r-r-ruin my character by remaining with a Ladyship so infame!"

"Upon my soul I wonder at you!" Mr. Bucket remonstrates. "I thought the French were a polite nation, I did, really. Yet to hear a female going on like that, before Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet!"

"He is a poor abused!" cries Mademoiselle. "I spit upon his house, upon his name, upon his imbecility," all of which she makes the carpet represent. "Oh, that he is a great man! O yes, superb! O heaven! Bah!"

"Well, Sir Leicester Dedlock," proceeds Mr. Bucket, "this intemperate foreigner also angrily took it into her head that she had established a claim upon Mr. Tulkinghorn, deceased, by attending on the occasion I told you of, at his chambers; though she was liberally paid for her time and trouble."

"Lie!" cries Mademoiselle. "I ref-use his money alltogether."

("If you *will* Parlay, you know," says Mr. Bucket, parenthetically, "you must take the consequences.) Now, whether she became my lodger, Sir Leicester Dedlock, with any deliberate intention then of doing this deed and blinding me, I give no opinion on; but she lived in my house, in that capacity, at the time that she was hovering about the chambers of

the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn with a view to a wrangle, and likewise persecuting and half frightening the life out of an unfortunate stationer."

"Lie!" cries Mademoiselle. "All lie!"

"The murder was committed, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, and you know under what circumstances. Now, I beg of you to follow me close with your attention for a minute or two. I was sent for, and the case was entrusted to me. I examined the place, and the body, and the papers, and everything. From information I received (from a clerk in the same house) I took George into custody, as having been seen hanging about there, on the night, and at very nigh the time, of the murder; also, as having been overheard in high words with the deceased on former occasions—even threatening him, as the witness made out. If you ask me, Sir Leicester Dedlock, whether from the first I believed George to be the murderer, I tell you candidly No; but he might be, notwithstanding; and there was enough against him to make it my duty to take him, and get him kept under remand. Now, observe!"

As Mr. Bucket bends forward in some excitement—for him—and inaugurates what he is going to say with one ghostly beat of his forefinger in the air, Mademoiselle Hortense fixes her black eyes upon him with a dark frown, and sets her dry lips closely and firmly together.

"I went home, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, at night, and found this young woman having supper with my wife, Mrs. Bucket. She had made a mighty show of being fond of Mrs. Bucket from her first offering herself as our lodger, but that night she made more than ever—in fact, overdid it. Likewise she overdid her respect, and all that, for the lamented memory of the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn. By the living Lord it flashed upon me, as I sat opposite to her at the table and saw her with a knife in her hand, that she had done it!"

Mademoiselle is hardly audible, in straining through her teeth and lips the words "You are a Devil."

"Now where," pursues Mr. Bucket, "had she been on the night of the murder? She had been to the theayter. (She really was there, I have since found, both before the deed and after it.) I knew I had an artful customer to deal with, and that proof would be very difficult; and I laid a trap for her—such a trap as I never laid yet, and such a ventur as I never made yet. I worked it out in my mind while I was talking to her at supper. When I went up-stairs to bed, our house being small and this young woman's ears sharp, I stuffed the sheet into Mrs. Bucket's mouth that she shouldn't say a word of surprise, and told her all about it.—My dear, don't you give your mind to that again, or I shall link your feet together at the ankles." Mr. Bucket, breaking off, has made a noiseless descent upon Mademoiselle, and laid his heavy hand upon her shoulder.

"What is the matter with you now?" she asks him.

"Don't you think any more," returns Mr. Bucket, with admonitory finger, "of throwing yourself out of window. That's what's the matter with me. Come! Just take my arm. You needn't get up; I'll sit down by you. Now take my arm, will you. I'm a married man, you know; you're acquainted with my wife. Just take my arm."

Vainly endeavouring to moisten those dry lips, with a painful sound, she struggles with herself, and complies.

"Now we're all right again. Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, this case could never have been the case it is, but for Mrs. Bucket, who is a woman in fifty thousand—in a hundred and fifty thousand! To throw this young woman off her guard, I have never set foot in our house since; though I've communicated with Mrs. Bucket, in the baker's loaves and in the milk, as often as required. My whispered words to Mrs. Bucket, when she had the sheet in her mouth, were, 'My dear, can you throw her off continually with natural accounts of my suspicions against George, and this, and that, and t'other? Can you do without rest, and keep watch upon her, night and day? Can you undertake to say, She shall do nothing without my knowledge, she shall be my prisoner without suspecting it, she shall no more escape from me than from death, and her life shall be my life, and her soul my soul, till I have got her, if she did this murder?' Mrs. Bucket says to me, as well as she could speak, on account of the sheet, 'Bucket, I can!' And she has acted up to it glorious!"

"Lies!" Mademoiselle interposes. "All lies, my friend!"

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, how did my calculations come out under these circumstances? When I calculated that this impetuous young woman would overdo it in new directions, was I wrong or right? I was right. What does she try to do? Don't let it give you a turn? To throw the murder on her Ladyship."

Sir Leicester rises from his chair, and staggers down again.

"And she got encouragement in it from hearing that I was always here, which was done a' purpose. Now, open that pocket-book of mine, Sir Leicester Dedlock, if I may take the liberty of throwing it towards you, and look at the letters sent to me, each with the two words, **LADY DEDLOCK**, in it. Open the one directed to yourself, which I stopped this very morning, and read the three words, **LADY DEDLOCK MURDERESS**, in it. These letters have been falling about like a shower of lady-birds. What do you say now to Mrs. Bucket, from her spy-place, having seen them all written by this young woman? What do you say to Mrs. Bucket having, within this half-hour, secured the corresponding ink and paper, fellow half-sheets and what not? What do you say to Mrs. Bucket having watched the posting of 'em every one by this young woman, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet?" Mr. Bucket asks, triumphant in his admiration of his lady's genius.

Two things are especially observable, as Mr. Bucket proceeds to a conclusion. First, that he seems imperceptibly to establish a dreadful right of property in Mademoiselle. Secondly, that the very atmosphere she breathes seems to narrow and contract about her, as if a close net, or a pall, were being drawn nearer and yet nearer around her breathless figure.

"There is no doubt that her Ladyship was on the spot at the eventful period," says Mr. Bucket; "and my foreign friend here saw her, I believe, from the upper part of the staircase. Her Ladyship and George and my foreign friend were all pretty close on one another's heels. But that don't signify any more, so I'll not go into it. I found the wadding of the pistol with which the deceased Mr. Tulkinghorn was shot. It was a bit of the printed description of your house at Chesney Wold. Not much in that, you'll say, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet. No. But when my foreign friend here is so thoroughly off her guard as to think it a safe time to tear up the rest of that leaf, and when Mrs. Bucket

puts the pieces together and finds the wadding wanting, it begins to look like Queer street."

"These are very long lies," Mademoiselle interposes. "You prose great deal. Is it that you have almost all finished, or are you speaking always?"

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet," proceeds Mr. Bucket, who delights in a full title, and does violence to himself when he dispenses with any fragment of it, "the last point in the case which I am now going to mention, shews the necessity of patience in our business, and never doing a thing in a hurry. I watched this young woman yesterday, without her knowledge, when she was looking at the funeral, in company with my wife, who planned to take her there; and I had so much to convict her, and I saw such an expression in her face, and my mind so rose against her malice towards her Ladyship, and the time was altogether such a time for bringing down what you may call retribution upon her, that if I had been a younger hand with less experience, I should have taken her, certain. Equally, last night, when her Ladyship, as is so universally admired I am sure, come home, looking—why, Lord! a man might almost say like Venus rising from the ocean, it was so unpleasant and inconsistent to think of her being charged with a murder of which she was innocent, that I felt quite to want to put an end to the job. What should I have lost? Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I should have lost the weapon. My prisoner here proposed to Mrs. Bucket, after the departure of the funeral, that they should go, per buss, a little ways into the country, and take tea at a very decent house of entertainment. Now, near that house of entertainment there's a piece of water. At tea, my prisoner got up to fetch her pocket-handkercher from the bed-room where the bonnets was; she was rather a long time gone, and came back a little out of wind. As soon as they came home this was reported to me by Mrs. Bucket, along with her observations and suspicions. I had the piece of water dragged by moonlight, in presence of a couple of our men, and the pocket-pistol was brought up before it had been there half-a-dozen hours. Now, my dear, put your arm a little further through mine, and hold it steady, and I sha'n't hurt you!"

In a trice Mr. Bucket snaps a handcuff on her wrist. "That's one," says Mr. Bucket. "Now the other, darling. Two, and all told!"

He rises; she rises too. "Where," she asks him, darkening her large eyes until their drooping lids almost conceal them—and yet they stare, "where is your false, your treacherous and cursed wife?"

"She's gone forrard to the Police Office," returns Mr. Bucket. "You'll see her there, my dear."

"I would like to kiss her!" exclaims Mademoiselle Hortense, panting tigress-like.

"You'd bite her, I suspect," says Mr. Bucket.

"I would!" making her eyes very large. "I would love to tear her, limb from limb."

"Bless you, darling," says Mr. Bucket, with the greatest composure; "I'm fully prepared to hear that. Your sex have such a surprising animosity against one another, when you do differ. You don't mind me half so much, do you?"

"No. Though you are a Devil still."

"Angel and devil by turns, eh?" cries Mr. Bucket. "But I am in my regular employment, you must consider. Let me put your shawl tidy. I've been lady's maid to a good many before now. Anything wanting to the bonnet? There's a cab at the door."

Mademoiselle Hortense, casting an indignant eye at the glass, shakes herself perfectly neat in one shake, and looks, to do her justice, uncommonly genteel.

"Listen then, my angel," says she, after several sarcastic nods. "You are very spiritual. But can you restore him back to life?"

Mr. Bucket answers "Not exactly."

"That is droll. Listen yet one time. You are very spiritual. Can you make a honorable lady of Her?"

"Don't be so malicious," says Mr. Bucket.

"Or a haughty gentleman of *Him*?" cries Mademoiselle, referring to Sir Leicester with ineffable disdain. "Eh! O then regard him! The poor infant! Ha! ha! ha!"

"Come, come, why this is worse Parlaying than the other," says Mr. Bucket. "Come along!"

"You cannot do these things? Then you can do as you please with me. It is but the death, it is all the same. Let us go, my angel. Adieu you old man, grey. I pity you, and I des-pise you!"

With these last words, she snaps her teeth together, as if her mouth closed with a spring. It is impossible to describe how Mr. Bucket gets her out, but he accomplishes that feat in a manner peculiar to himself; enfolding and pervading her like a cloud, and hovering away with her as if he were a homely Jupiter, and she the object of his affections.

Sir Leicester, left alone, remains in the same attitude as though he were still listening, and his attention were still occupied. At length he gazes round the empty room, and finding it deserted, rises unsteadily to his feet, pushes back his chair, and walks a few steps, supporting himself by the table. Then he stops; and, with more of those inarticulate sounds, lifts up his eyes and seems to stare at something.

Heaven knows what he sees. The green, green woods of Chesney Wold, the noble house, the pictures of his forefathers, strangers defacing them, officers of police coarsely handling his most precious heir-looms, thousands of fingers pointing at him, thousands of faces sneering at him. But if such shadows flit before him to his bewilderment, there is one other shadow which he can namewith something like distinctness even yet, and to which alone he addresses his tearing of his white hair, and his extended arms.

It is she, in association with whom, saving that she has been for years a main fibre of the root of his dignity and pride, he has never had a selfish thought. It is she whom he has loved, admired, honored, and set up for the world to respect. It is she, who, at the core of all the constrained formalities and conventionalities of his life, has been a stock of living tenderness and love, susceptible as nothing else is of being struck with the agony he feels. He sees her, almost to the exclusion of himself; and cannot bear to look upon her cast down from the high place she has graced so well.

And, even to the point of his sinking on the ground, oblivious of his suffering, he can yet pronounce her name with something like distinctness in the midst of those intrusive sounds, and in a tone of mourning and compassion rather than reproach.

CHAPTER LV.

FLIGHT.

INSPECTOR BUCKET of the Detective has not yet struck his great glare, as just now chronicled, but is yet refreshing himself with sleep preparatory to his field-day, when, through the night and along the freezing wintry roads, a chaise and pair comes out of Lincolnshire, making its way towards London.

Railroads shall soon traverse all this country, and with a rattle and a glare the engine and train shall shoot like a meteor over the wide night-landscape, turning the moon paler; but, as yet, such things are non-existent in these parts, though not wholly unexpected. Preparations are afoot, measurements are made, ground is staked out. Bridges are begun, and their not yet united piers desolately look at one another over roads and streams, like brick and mortar couples with an obstacle to their union; fragments of embankments are thrown up, and left as precipices with torrents of rusty carts and barrows tumbling over them; tripods of tall poles appear on hill-tops, where there are rumours of tunnels; everything looks chaotic, and abandoned in fell hopelessness. Along the freezing roads, and through the night, the post-chaise makes its way without a railroad on its mind.

Mrs. Rouncewell, so many years housekeeper at Chesney Wold, sits within the chaise; and by her side sits Mrs. Bagnet with her grey cloak and umbrella. The old girl would prefer the bar in front, as being exposed to the weather, and a primitive sort of perch more in accordance with her usual course of travelling; but Mrs. Rouncewell is too thoughtful of her comfort to admit of her proposing it. The old lady cannot make enough of the old girl. She sits, in her stately manner, holding her hand, and, regardless of its roughness, puts it often to her lips. "You are a mother, my dear soul," says she many times, "and you found out my George's mother!"

"Why, George," returns Mrs. Bagnet, "was always free with me, ma'am, and when he said at our house to my Woolwich, that of all the things my Woolwich could have to think of when he grew to be a man, the comfortablest would be that he had never brought a sorrowful line into his mother's face, or turned a hair of her head gray, then I felt sure, from his way, that something fresh had brought his own mother into his mind. I had often known him say to me, in past times, that he had behaved bad to her."

"Never, my dear!" returns Mrs. Rouncewell, bursting into tears. "My blessing on him, never! He was always fond of me, and loving to me, was my George! But he had a bold spirit, and he ran a little wild, and went for a soldier. And I know he waited at first, in letting us know about himself, till he should rise to be an officer; and when he didn't rise, I know he considered himself beneath us, and wouldn't be a

disgrace to us. For he had a lion heart, had my George, always from a baby!"

The old lady's hands stray about her as of yore, while she recalls, all in a tremble, what a likely lad, what a fine lad, what a gay good-humored clever lad he was; how they all took to him, down at Chesney Wold; how Sir Leicester took to him when he was a young gentleman; how the dogs took to him; how even the people, who had been angry with him, forgave him the moment he was gone, poor boy. And now to see him after all, and in a prison too! And the broad stomacher heaves, and the quaint upright old-fashioned figure bends under its load of affectionate distress.

Mrs. Bagnet, with the instinctive skill of a good warm heart, leaves the old housekeeper to her emotions for a little while—not without passing the back of her hand across her own motherly eyes—and presently chirps up in her cheery manner:

"So I says to George when I goes to call him in to tea (he pretended to be smoking his pipe outside), 'What ails you this afternoon, George, for gracious sake? I have seen all sorts, and I have seen you pretty often in season and out of season, abroad and at home, and I never see you so melancholly penitent.' 'Why, Mrs. Bagnet,' says George, 'it's because I am melancholly and penitent both, this afternoon, that you see me so.' 'What have you done, old fellow?' I says. 'Why, Mrs. Bagnet,' says George, shaking his head, 'what I have done has been done this many a long year, and is best not tried to be undone now. If I ever get to Heaven, it won't be for being a good son to a widowed mother; I say no more.' Now, ma'am, when George says to me that it's best not tried to be undone now, I have my thoughts as I have often had before, and I draw it out of George how he comes to have such things on him that afternoon. Then George tells me that he has seen by chance, at the lawyer's office, a fine old lady that has brought his mother plain before him; and he runs on about that old lady till he quite forgets himself, and paints her picter to me as she used to be, years upon years back. So I says to George when he has done, who is this old lady he has seen? And George tells me it's Mrs. Rouncewell, housekeeper for more than half a century to the Dedlock family down at Chesney Wold in Lincolnshire. George has frequently told me before that he's a Lincolnshire man, and I says to my old Lignum that night, 'Lignum, that's his mother for five-and-for-ty pound!'"

All this Mrs. Bagnet now relates for the twentieth time at least within the last four hours. Trilling it out, like a kind of bird; with a pretty high note, that it may be audible to the old lady above the hum of the wheels.

"Bless you, and thank you," says Mrs. Rouncewell. "Bless you, and thank you, my worthy soul!"

"Dear heart!" cries Mrs. Bagnet, in the most natural manner. "No thanks to me, I am sure. Thanks to yourself, ma'am, for being so ready to pay 'em! And mind once more, ma'am, what you had best do on finding George to be your own son, is, to make him—for your sake—have every sort of help to put himself in the right, and clear himself of a charge of which he is as innocent as you or me. It won't do to have truth and justice on his side; he must have law and lawyers,"

exclaims the old girl, apparently persuaded that the latter form a separate establishment, and have dissolved partnership with truth and justice for ever and a day.

"He shall have," says Mrs. Rouncewell, "all the help that can be got for him in the world, my dear. I will spend all I have, and thankfully, to procure it. Sir Leicester will do his best, the whole family will do their best. I—I know something, my dear; and will make my own appeal, as his mother parted from him all these years, and finding him in a jail at last."

The extreme disquietude of the old housekeeper's manner in saying this, her broken words, and her wringing of her hands, make a powerful impression on Mrs. Bagnet, and would astonish her but that she refers them all to her sorrow for her son's condition. And yet Mrs. Bagnet wonders, too, why Mrs. Rouncewell should murmur so distractedly, "My Lady, my Lady, my Lady!" over and over again.

The frosty night wears away, and the dawn breaks, and the post-chaise comes rolling on through the early mist, like the ghost of a chaise departed. It has plenty of spectral company, in ghosts of trees and hedges, slowly vanishing and giving place to the realities of day. London reached, the travellers alight; the old housekeeper in great tribulation and confusion; Mrs. Bagnet, quite fresh and collected—as she would be, if her next point, with no new equipage and outfit, were the Cape of Good Hope, the Island of Ascension, Hong Kong, or any other military station.

But when they set out for the prison where the trooper is confined, the old lady has managed to draw about her, with her lavender-colored dress, much of the staid calmness which is its usual accompaniment. A wonderfully grave, precise, and handsome piece of old china she looks; though her heart beats fast, and her stomacher is ruffled, more than even the remembrance of this wayward son has ruffled it these many years.

Approaching the cell, they find the door opening and a warder in the act of coming out. The old girl promptly makes a sign of entreaty to him to say nothing; assenting, with a nod, he suffers them to enter as he shuts the door.

So George, who is writing at his table, supposing himself to be alone does not raise his eyes, but remains absorbed. The old housekeeper looks at him, and those wandering hands of hers are quite enough for Mrs. Bagnet's confirmation; even if she could see the mother and the son together, knowing what she knows, and doubt their relationship.

Not a rustle of the housekeeper's dress, not a gesture, not a word, betrays her. She stands looking at him as he writes on, all unconscious, and only her fluttering hands give utterance to her emotions. But they are very eloquent; very, very eloquent. Mrs. Bagnet understands them. They speak of gratitude, of joy, of grief, of hope; of inextinguishable affection, cherished with no return since this stalwart man was a strippling; of a better son loved less, and this son loved so fondly and so proudly; and they speak in such touching language, that Mrs. Bagnet's eyes brim up with tears, and they run glistening down her sun-browned face.

"George Rouncewell! O my dear child, turn and look at me!"

The trooper starts up, clasps his mother round the neck, and falls down on his knees before her. Whether in a late repentance, whether

in the first association that comes back upon him, he puts his hands together as a child does when it says its prayers, and raising them towards her breast, bows down his head, and cries.

"My George, my dearest son! Always my favorite, and my favorite still, where have you been these cruel years and years? Grown such a man too, grown such a fine strong man. Grown so like what I knew he must be, if it pleased God he was alive!"

She can ask, and he can answer, nothing connected for a time. All that time the old girl, turned away, leans one arm against the whitened wall, leans her honest forehead upon it, wipes her eyes with her serviceable grey cloak, and quite enjoys herself like the best of old girls as she is.

"Mother," says the trooper, when they are more composed; "forgive me first of all, for I know my need of it."

Forgive him! She does it with all her heart and soul. She always has done it. She tells him how she has had it written in her will, these many years, that he was her beloved son George. She has never believed any ill of him, never. If she had died without this happiness—and she is an old woman now, and can't look to live very long—she would have blessed him with her last breath, if she had had her senses, as her beloved son George.

"Mother, I have been an undutiful trouble to you, and I have my reward; but of late years I have had a kind of a glimmering of a purpose in me, too. When I left home I didn't care much, mother—I am afraid not a great deal—for leaving; and went away and 'listed, harum-scarum, making believe to think that I cared for nobody, no not I, and that nobody cared for me."

The trooper has dried his eyes, and put away his handkerchief; but there is an extraordinary contrast between his habitual manner of expressing himself and carrying himself, and the softened tone in which he speaks, interrupted occasionally by a half-stifled sob.

"So I wrote a line home, mother, as you too well know, to say I had 'listed under another name, and I went abroad. Abroad, at one time I thought I would write home next year when I might be better off; and when that year was out, I thought I would write home next year when I might be better off; and when that year was out again, perhaps I didn't think much about it. So on, from year to year, through a service of ten years, till I began to get older, and to ask myself why should I ever write?"

"I don't find any fault, child—but not to ease my mind, George? Not a word to your loving mother, who was growing older, too?"

This almost overturns the trooper afresh; but he sets himself up with a great, rough, sounding clearance of his throat.

"Heaven forgive me, mother, but I thought there would be small consolation then in hearing anything about me. There were you, respected and esteemed. There was my brother, as I read in chance north-country papers now and then, rising to be prosperous and famous. There was I, a dragoon, roving, unsettled, not self-made like him, but self-unmade—all my earlier advantages thrown away, all my little learning unlearned, nothing picked up but what unfitted me for most things that I could think of. What business had I to make myself known? After letting all that time go by me, what good could come of

it? The worst was past with you, mother. I knew by that time (being a man) how you had mourned for me, and wept for me, and prayed for me; and the pain was over, or was softened down, and I was better in your mind as it was."

The old lady sorrowfully shakes her head; and taking one of his powerful hands, lays it lovingly upon her shoulder.

"No, I don't say that it was so, mother, but that I made it out to be so. I said just now what good could come of it? Well, my dear mother, some good might have come of it to myself—and there was the meanness of it. You would have sought me out; you would have purchased my discharge; you would have taken me down to Chesney Wold; you would have brought me and my brother and my brother's family together; you would all have considered anxiously how to do something for me, and set me up as a respectable civilian. But how could any of you feel sure of me, when I couldn't so much as feel sure of myself? How could you help regarding as an incumbrance and a discredit to you, an idle dragooning chap, who was an incumbrance and a discredit to himself, excepting under discipline? How could I look my brother's children in the face, and pretend to set them an example—I, the vagabond boy, who had run away from home, and been the grief and unhappiness of my mother's life? 'No, George.' Such were my words, mother, when I passed this in review before me: 'You have made your bed. Now, lie upon it.'"

Mrs. Rouncewell, drawing up her stately form, shakes her head at the old girl with a swelling pride upon her, as much as to say, "I told you so!" The old girl relieves her feelings, and testifies her interest in the conversation, by giving the trooper a great poke between the shoulders with her umbrella; this action she afterwards repeats, at intervals, in a species of affectionate lunacy: never failing, after the administration of each of these remonstrances, to resort to the whitened wall and the grey cloak again.

"This was the way I brought myself to think, mother, that my best amends was to lie upon that bed I had made, and die upon it. And I should have done it (though I have been to see you more than once, down at Chesney Wold, when you little thought of me), but for my old comrade's wife here, who I find has been too many for me. But I thank her for it. I thank you for it, Mrs. Bagnet, with all my heart and might."

To which Mrs. Bagnet responds with two pokes.

And now the old lady impresses upon her son George, her own dear recovered boy, her joy and pride, the light of her eyes, the happy close of her life, and every fond name she can think of, that he must be governed by the best advice obtainable by money and influence; that he must yield up his case to the greatest lawyers that can be got; that he must act, in this serious plight, as he shall be advised to act; and must not be self-willed, however right, but must promise to think only of his poor old mother's anxiety and suffering until he is released, or he will break her heart.

"Mother, 'tis little enough to consent to," returns the trooper, stopping her with a kiss; "tell me what I shall do, and I'll make a late beginning, and do it. Mrs. Bagnet, you'll take care of my mother, I know?"

A very hard poke
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de will find them
advise and assist
"And, George
your brother.
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myself—and w
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A very hard poke from the old girl's umbrella.

"If you'll bring her acquainted with Mr. Jarndyce and Miss Summerson, she will find them of her way of thinking, and they will give her the best advice and assistance."

"And, George," says the old lady, "we must send with all haste for your brother. He is a sensible sound man as they tell me—out in the world beyond Chesney Wold, my dear, though I don't know much of it myself—and will be of great service."

"Mother," returns the trooper, "is it too soon to ask a favor?"

"Surely not, my dear."

"Then grant me this one great favor. Don't let my brother know."

"Not know what, my dear?"

"Not know of me. In fact, mother, I can't bear it; I can't make up my mind to it. He has proved himself so different from me, and has done so much to raise himself while I've been soldiering, that I haven't brass enough in my composition, to see him in this place and under this charge. How could a man like him be expected to have any pleasure in such a discovery? It's impossible. No, keep my secret from him, mother; do me a greater kindness than I deserve, and keep my secret from my brother, of all men."

"But not always, dear George?"

"Why, mother, perhaps not for good and all—though I may come to ask that too—but keep it now, I do entreat you. If it's ever broke to him that his Rip of a brother has turned up, I could wish," says the trooper, shaking his head very doubtfully, "to break it myself; and be governed, as to advancing or retreating, by the way in which he seems to take it."

As he evidently has a rooted feeling on this point, and as the depth of it is recognised in Mrs. Bagnet's face, his mother yields her implicit assent to what he asks. For this he thanks her kindly.

"In all other respects, my dear mother, I'll be as tractable and obedient as you can wish; on this one alone, I stand out. So now I am ready even for the lawyers. I have been drawing up," he glances at his writing on the table, "an exact account of what I knew of the deceased, and how I came to be involved in this unfortunate affair. It's entered, plain and regular, like an orderly-book; not a word in it but what's wanted for the facts. I did intend to read it, straight on end, whensoever I was called upon to say anything in my defence. I hope I may be let to do it still; but I have no longer a will of my own in this case, and whatever is said or done, I give my promise not to have any."

Matters being brought to this so far satisfactory pass, and time being on the wane, Mrs. Bagnet proposes a departure. Again and again the old lady hangs upon her son's neck, and again and again the trooper holds her to his broad chest.

"Where are you going to take my mother, Mrs. Bagnet?"

"I am going to the town house, my dear, the family house. I have some business there, that must be looked to directly," Mrs. Rouncewell answers.

"Will you see my mother safe there, in a coach, Mrs. Bagnet? But of course I know you will. Why should I ask it!"

Why indeed, Mrs. Bagnet expresses with the umbrella.

"Take her, my old friend, and take my gratitude along with you. Kisses to Quebec and Malta, love to my godson, a hearty shake of the hand to Lignum, and this for yourself, and I wish it was ten thousand pound in gold, my dear!" So saying, the trooper puts his lips to the old girl's tanned forehead, and the door shuts upon him in his cell.

No entreaties on the part of the good old housekeeper will induce Mrs. Bagnet to retain the coach for her own conveyance home. Jumping out cheerfully at the door of the Dedlock mansion, and handing Mrs. Rouncewell up the steps, the old girl shakes hands and trudges off; arriving soon afterwards in the bosom of the Bagnet family, and falling to washing the greens, as if nothing had happened.

My Lady is in that room in which she held her last conference with the murdered man, and is sitting where she sat that night, and is looking at the spot where he stood upon the hearth, studying her so leisurely, when a tap comes at the door. Who is it? Mrs. Rouncewell. What has brought Mrs. Rouncewell to town so unexpectedly?

"Trouble, my Lady. Sad trouble. O my Lady, may I beg a word with you."

What new occurrence is it that makes this tranquil old woman tremble so? Far happier than her Lady, as her Lady has often thought, why does she falter in this manner, and look at her with such strange mistrust?

"What is the matter? Sit down and take your breath."

"O, my Lady, my Lady. I have found my son—my youngest, who went away for a soldier so long ago. And he is in prison."

"For debt?"

"O no, my Lady; I would have paid any debt, and joyful."

"For what is he in prison, then?"

"Charged with a murder, my Lady, of which he is as innocent as—I am. Accused of the murder of Mr. Tulkinghorn."

What does she mean by this look and this imploring gesture? Why does she come so close? What is the letter that she holds?

"Lady Dedlock, my dear Lady, my good Lady, my kind Lady! You must have a heart to feel for me, you must have a heart to forgive me. I was in this family before you were born. I am devoted to it. But think of my dear son wrongfully accused."

"I do not accuse him."

"No, my Lady, no. But others do, and he is in prison and in danger. O Lady Dedlock, if you can say but a word to help to clear him, say it!"

What delusion can this be? What power does she suppose is in the person she petitions, to avert this unjust suspicion, if it be unjust? Her Lady's handsome eyes regard her with astonishment, almost with fear.

"My Lady, I came away last night from Chesney Wold to find my son in my old age, and the step upon the Ghost's Walk was so constant and so solemn that I never heard the like in all these years. Night after night, as it has fallen dark, the sound has echoed through your rooms, but last night it was awfulest. And as it fell dark last night, my Lady, I got this letter."

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"What letter is it?"

"Hush! Hush!" The housekeeper looks round, and answers in a frightened whisper: "My Lady, I have not breathed a word of it, I don't believe what's written in it, I know it can't be true, I am sure and certain that it is not true. But my son is in danger, and you must have a heart to pity me. If you know of anything that is not known to others, if you have any suspicion, if you have any clue at all, and any reason for keeping it in your own breast, O my dear Lady, think of me, and conquer that reason, and let it be known! This is the most I consider possible. I know you are not a hard lady, but you go your own way always without help, and you are not familiar with your friends; and all who admire you—and all do—as a beautiful and elegant lady, know you to be one far away from themselves, who can't be approached close. My Lady, you may have some proud or angry reasons for disdain to utter something that you know; if so, pray, O pray, think of a faithful servant whose whole life has been passed in this family which she dearly loves, and relent, and help to clear my son! My Lady, my good Lady," the old housekeeper pleads with genuine simplicity, "I am so humble in my place, and you are by nature so high and distant, that you may not think what I feel for my child; but I feel so much, that I have come here to make so bold as to beg and pray you not to be scornful of us, if you can do us any right or justice at this fearful time!"

Lady Dedlock raises her without one word, until she takes the letter from her hand.

"Am I to read this?"

"When I am gone, my Lady, if you please; and then remembering the most that I consider possible."

"I know of nothing I can do. I know of nothing I reserve, that can affect your son. I have never accused him."

"My Lady, you may pity him the more, under a false accusation, after reading the letter."

The old housekeeper leaves her with the letter in her hand. In truth she is not a hard lady naturally; and the time has been when the sight of the venerable figure suing to her with such strong earnestness would have moved her to great compassion. But, so long accustomed to suppress emotion, and keep down reality; so long schooled for her own purposes, in that destructive school which shuts up the natural feelings of the heart, like flies in amber, and spreads one uniform and dreary gloss over the good and bad, the feeling and the unfeeling, the sensible and the senseless; she has subdued even her wonder until now.

She opens the letter. Spread out upon the paper is a printed account of the discovery of the body, as it lay face downward on the floor, shot through the heart; and underneath is written her own name, with the word Murderess attached.

It falls out of her hand. How long it may have lain upon the ground, she knows not; but it lies where it fell, when a servant stands before her announcing the young man of the name of Guppy. The words have probably been repeated several times, for they are ringing in her head before she begins to understand them.

"Let him come in!"

He comes in. Holding the letter in her hand, which she has taken

from the floor, she tries to collect her thoughts. In the eyes of Mr. Guppy she is the same Lady Dedlock, holding the same prepared, proud, chilling state.

"Your Ladyship may not be at first disposed to excuse this visit from one who has never been very welcome to your Ladyship—which he don't complain of, for he is bound to confess that there never has been any particular reason on the face of things, why he should be; but I hope when I mention my motives to your Ladyship, you will not find fault with me," says Mr. Guppy.

"Do so."

"Thank your Ladyship. I ought first to explain to your Ladyship," Mr. Guppy sits on the edge of a chair, and puts his hat on the carpet at his feet, "that Miss Summerson, whose image as I formerly mentioned to your Ladyship was at one period of my life imprinted on my art until erased by circumstances over which I had no controul, communicated to me, after I had the pleasure of waiting on your Ladyship last, that she particularly wished me to take no steps whatever in any matter at all relating to her. And Miss Summerson's wishes being to me a law (except as connected with circumstances over which I have no controul), I consequently never expected to have the distinguished honor of waiting on your Ladyship again."

And yet he is here now, Lady Dedlock moodily reminds him.

"And yet I am here now," Mr. Guppy admits. "My object being to communicate to your Ladyship, under the seal of confidence, why I am here."

He cannot do so, she tells him, too plainly or too briefly.

"Nor can I," Mr. Guppy returns, with a sense of injury upon him, "too particularly request your Ladyship to take particular notice that it's no personal affair of mine that brings me here. I have no interested views of my own to serve in coming here. If it was not for my promise to Miss Summerson, and my keeping of it sacred,—I, in point of fact shouldn't have darkened these doors again, but should have seen 'em further first."

Mr. Guppy considers this a favorable moment for sticking up his hair with both hands.

"Your Ladyship will remember when I mention it, that the last time I was here, I run against a party very eminent in our profession, and whose loss we all deplore. That party certainly did from that time apply himself to cutting in against me in a way that I will call sharp practice, and did make it, at every turn and point, extremely difficult for me to be sure that I hadn't inadvertently led up to something contrary to Miss Summerson's wishes. Self-praise is no recommendation; but I may say for myself that I am not so bad a man of business neither."

Lady Dedlock looks at him in stern inquiry. Mr. Guppy immediately withdraws his eyes from her face, and looks anywhere else.

"Indeed, it has been made so hard," he goes on, "to have any idea what that party was up to in combination with others, that until the loss which we all deplore, I was gravelled—an expression which your Ladyship, moving in the higher circles, will be so good as to consider tantamount to knocked over. Small likewise—a name by which I refer to another party, a friend of mine that your Ladyship is not acquainted with—got to

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be so close and double-faced that at times it wasn't easy to keep one's hands off his ed. However, what with the exertion of my humble abilities, and what with the help of a mutual friend by the name of Mr. Tony Weevil (who is of a high aristocratic turn, and has your Ladyship's portrait always hanging up in his room), I have now reasons for an apprehension, as to which I come to put your Ladyship upon your guard. First, will your Ladyship allow me to ask you whether you have had any strange visitors this morning? I don't mean fashionable visitors, but such visitors, for instance, as Miss Barbary's old servant, or as a person without the use of his lower extremities, carried up-stairs similarly to a Guy?"

"No!"

"Then I assure your Ladyship that such visitors have been here, and have been received here. Because I saw them at the door, and waited at the corner of the square till they came out, and took half-an-hour's turn afterwards to avoid them."

"What have I to do with that, or what have you? I do not understand you. What do you mean?"

"Your Ladyship, I come to put you on your guard. There may be no occasion for it. Very well. Then I have only done my best to keep my promise to Miss Summerson. I strongly suspect (from what Small has dropped, and from what we have corkscrewed out of him) that those letters I was to have brought to your Ladyship were not destroyed when I supposed they were. That if there was anything to be blown upon, it *is* blown upon. That the visitors I have alluded to have been here this morning to make money of it. And that the money is made, or making."

Mr. Guppy picks up his hat and rises.

"Your Ladyship, you know best, whether there's anything in what I say, or whether there's nothing. Something or nothing, I have acted up to Miss Summerson's wishes in letting things alone, and in undoing what I had begun to do, as far as possible; that's sufficient for me. In case I should be taking a liberty in putting your Ladyship on your guard when there's no necessity for it, you will endeavour, I should hope, to outlive my presumption, and I shall endeavour to outlive your disapprobation. I now take my farewell of your Ladyship, and assure you that there's no danger of your ever being waited on by me again."

She scarcely acknowledges these parting words by any look; but when he has been gone a little while, she rings her bell.

"Where is Sir Leicester?"

Mercury reports that he is at present shut up in the library, alone.

"Has Sir Leicester had any visitors this morning?"

Several, on business. Mercury proceeds to a description of them, which has been anticipated by Mr. Guppy. Enough; he may go.

So! All is broken down. Her name is in these many mouths, her husband knows his wrongs, her shame will be published—may be spreading while she thinks about it—and in addition to the thunderbolt so long foreseen by her, so unforeseen by him, she is denounced by an invisible accuser as the murderess of her enemy.

Her enemy he was, and she has often, often, often, wished him dead. Her enemy he is, even in his grave. This dreadful accusation comes upon

her, like a new torment at his lifeless hand. And when she recalls how she was secretly at his door that night, and how she may be represented to have sent her favorite girl away, so soon before, merely to release herself from observation, she shudders as if the hangman's hands were at her neck.

She has thrown herself upon the floor, and lies with her hair all wildly scattered, and her face buried in the cushions of a couch. She rises up, hurries to and fro, flings herself down again, and rocks and moans. The horror that is upon her, is unutterable. If she really were the murderer, it could hardly be, for the moment, more intense.

For, as her murderous perspective, before the doing of the deed, however subtle the precautions for its commission, would have been closed up by a gigantic dilation of the hateful figure, preventing her from seeing any consequences beyond it; and as those consequences would have rushed in, in an unimagined flood, the moment the figure was laid low—which always happens when a murder is done; so, now she sees that when he used to be on the watch before her, and she used to think, "if some mortal stroke would but fall on this old man and take him from my way!" it was but wishing that all he held against her in his hand might be flung to the winds, and chance-sown in many places. So, too, with the wicked relief she has felt in his death. What was his death but the key-stone of a gloomy arch removed, and now the arch begins to fall in a thousand fragments, each crushing and mangling piecemeal!

Thus, a terrible impression steals upon and overshadows her, that from this pursuer, living or dead—obdurate and imperturbable before her in his well-remembered shape, or not more obdurate and imperturbable in his coffin-bed,—there is no escape but in death. Hunted, she flies. The complication of her shame, her dread, remorse, and misery, overwhelms her at its height; and even her strength of self-reliance is overturned and whirled away, like a leaf before a mighty wind.

She hurriedly addresses these lines to her husband, seals, and leaves them on her table.

"If I am sought for, or accused of, his murder, believe that I am wholly innocent. Believe no other good of me; for I am innocent of nothing else that you have heard, or will hear, laid to my charge. He prepared me, on that fatal night, for his disclosure of my guilt to you. After he had left me, I went out, on pretence of walking in the garden where I sometimes walk, but really to follow him, and make one last petition that he would not protract the dreadful suspense on which I had been racked by him, you do not know how long, but would mercifully strike next morning.

"I found his house dark and silent. I rang twice at his door, but there was no reply, and I came home.

"I have no home left. I will encumber you no more. May you, in your just resentment, be able to forget the unworthy woman on whom you have wasted a most generous devotion—who avoids you, only with a deeper shame than that with which she hurries from herself—and who writes this last adieu!"

She veils and dresses quickly, leaves all her jewels and her money, listens, goes down-stairs at a moment when the hall is empty, opens and shuts the great door; flutters away, in the shrill frosty wind.

CHAPTER LVI.

PURSUIT.

IMPASSIVE, as behoves its high breeding, the Dedlock town-house stares at the other houses in the street of dismal grandeur, and gives no outward sign of anything going wrong within. Carriages rattle, doors are battered at, the world exchanges calls; ancient charmers with skeleton throats, and peachy cheeks that have a rather ghastly bloom upon them seen by daylight, when indeed these fascinating creatures look like Death and the Lady fused together, dazzle the eyes of men. Forth from the frigid Mews come easily-swinging carriages guided by short-legged coachmen in flaxen wigs, deep sunk into downy hammercloths; and up behind mount luscious Mercuries, bearing sticks of state, and wearing cocked hats broadwise: a spectacle for the Angels.

The Dedlock town-house changes not externally, and hours pass before its exalted dulness is disturbed within. But Volumnia the fair, being subject to the prevalent complaint of boredom, and finding that disorder attacking her spirits with some virulence, ventures at length to repair to the library for change of scene. Her gentle tapping at the door producing no response, she opens it and peeps in; seeing no one there, takes possession.

The sprightly Dedlock is reputed, in that grass-grown city of the ancients, Bath, to be stimulated by an urgent curiosity, which impels her on all convenient and inconvenient occasions to sidle about with a golden glass at her eye, peering into objects of every description. Certain it is that she avails herself of the present opportunity of hovering over her kinsman's letters and papers, like a bird; taking a short peck at this document, and a blink with her head on one side at that document, and hopping about from table to table with her glass at her eye in an inquisitive and restless manner. In the course of these researches she stumbles over something; and turning her glass in that direction, sees her kinsman lying on the ground like a felled tree.

Volumnia's pet little scream acquires a considerable augmentation of reality from this surprise, and the house is quickly in commotion. Servants tear up and down stairs, bells are violently rung, doctors are sent for, and Lady Dedlock is sought in all directions but not found. Nobody has seen or heard her since she last rang her bell. Her letter to Sir Leicester is discovered on her table;—but it is doubtful yet whether he has not received another missive from another world, requiring to be personally answered; and all the living languages, and all the dead, are as one to him.

They lay him down upon his bed, and chafe, and rub, and fan, and put ice to his head, and try every means of restoration. Howbeit, the day has ebbed away, and it is night in his room, before his stertorous breathing

lulls, or his fixed eyes shew any consciousness of the candle that is occasionally passed before them. But when this change begins, it goes on; and by and by he nods, or moves his eyes, or even his hand, in token that he hears and comprehends.

He fell down, this morning, a handsome stately gentleman; somewhat infirm, but of a fine presence, and with a well-filled face. He lies upon his bed, an aged man with sunken cheeks, the decrepit shadow of himself. His voice was rich and mellow; and he had so long been thoroughly persuaded of the weight and import to mankind of any word he said, that his words really had come to sound as if there were something in them. But now he can only whisper; and what he whispers sounds like what it is—mere jumble and jargon.

His favorite and faithful housekeeper stands at his bedside. It is the first fact he notices, and he clearly derives pleasure from it. After vainly trying to make himself understood in speech, he makes signs for a pencil. So inexpressively, that they cannot at first understand him; it is his old housekeeper who makes out what he wants, and brings him a slate.

After pausing for some time, he slowly scrawls upon it, in a hand that is not his, "Chesney Wold?"

No, she tells him; he is in London. He was taken ill in the library, this morning. Right thankful she is that she happened to come to London, and is able to attend upon him.

"It is not an illness of any serious consequence, Sir Leicester. You will be much better to-morrow, Sir Leicester. All the gentlemen say so." This, with the tears coursing down her fair old face.

After making a survey of the room, and looking with particular attention all round the bed where the doctors stand, he writes "My Lady."

"My Lady went out, Sir Leicester, before you were taken ill, and don't know of your illness yet."

He points again, in great agitation, at the two words. They all try to quiet him, but he points again with increased agitation. On their looking at one another, not knowing what to say, he takes the slate once more, and writes "My Lady. For God's sake, where?" And makes an imploring moan.

It is thought better that his old housekeeper should give him Lady Dedlock's letter, the contents of which no one knows or can surmise. She opens it for him, and puts it out for his perusal. Having read it twice by a great effort, he turns it down so that it shall not be seen, and lies moaning. He passes into a kind of relapse, or into a swoon; and it is an hour before he opens his eyes, reclining on his faithful and attached old servant's arm. The doctors know that he is best with her; and, when not actively engaged about him, stand aloof.

The slate comes into requisition again; but the word he wants to write, he cannot remember. His anxiety, his eagerness, and affliction, at this pass, are pitiable to behold. It seems as if he must go mad, in the necessity he feels for haste, and the inability under which he labors of expressing to do what, or to fetch whom. He has written the letter B, and there stopped. Of a sudden, in the height of his misery, he puts

Mr. before it. The old housekeeper suggests Bucket. Thank Heaven! That's his meaning.

Mr. Bucket is found to be down-stairs, by appointment. Shall he come up?

There is no possibility of misconstruing Sir Leicester's burning wish to see him, or the desire he signifies to have the room cleared of every one but the housekeeper. It is speedily done; and Mr. Bucket appears. Of all men upon earth, Sir Leicester seems fallen from his high estate to place his sole trust and reliance upon this man.

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I'm sorry to see you like this. I hope you'll cheer up. I'm sure you will, on account of the family credit."

Sir Leicester puts her letter in his hand, and looks intently in his face while he reads it. A new intelligence comes into Mr. Bucket's eye, as he reads on; with one hook of his finger, while that eye is still glancing over the words, he indicates, "Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I understand you."

Sir Leicester writes upon the slate. "Full forgiveness. Find——" Mr. Bucket stops his hand.

"Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I'll find her. But my search after her must be begun out of hand. Not a minute must be lost."

With the quickness of thought, he follows Sir Leicester Dedlock's look towards a little box upon a table.

"Bring it here, Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet? Certainly. Open it with one of these here keys? Certainly. The littlest key? *To be sure.* Take the notes out? So I will. Count 'em? That's soon done. Twenty and thirty's fifty, and twenty's seventy, and fifty's one twenty, and forty's one sixty. Take 'em for expenses? That I'll do, and render an account of course. Don't spare money? No, I won't."

The velocity and certainty of Mr. Bucket's interpretation on all these heads is little short of miraculous. Mrs. Rouncewell, who holds the light, is giddy with the swiftness of his eyes and hands, as he starts up, furnished for his journey.

"You're George's mother, old lady; that's about what you are, I believe?" says Mr. Bucket, aside, with his hat already on, and buttoning his coat.

"Yes, sir, I am his distressed mother."

"So I thought, according to what he mentioned to me just now. Well, then, I'll tell you something. You needn't be distressed no more. Your son's all right. Now don't you begin a-crying; because what you've got to do is to take care of Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, and you won't do that by crying. As to your son, he's all right, I tell you; and he sends his loving duty, and hoping you're the same. He's discharged honorable; that's about what *he* is; with no more imputation on his character than there is on yours, and yours is a tidy one, I'll bet a pound. You may trust me, for I took your son. He conducted himself in a game way, too, on that occasion; and he's a fine-made man, and you're a fine-made old lady, and you're a mother and son, the pair of you, as might be showed for models in a caravan. Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, what you've trusted to me, I'll go

through with. Don't you be afraid of my turning out of my way, right or left; or taking a sleep, or a wash, or a shave, 'till I have found what I go in search of. Say everything as is kind and forgiving on your part? Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, I will. And I wish you better, and these family affairs smoothed over—as, Lord! many other family affairs equally has been, and equally will be, to the end of time.”

With this peroration, Mr. Bucket, buttoned up, goes quietly out, looking steadily before him as if he were already piercing the night, in quest of the fugitive.

His first step is to take himself to Lady Dedlock's rooms, and look all over them for any trifling indication that may help him. The rooms are in darkness now; and to see Mr. Bucket with a wax-light in his hand, holding it above his head, and taking a sharp mental inventory of the many delicate objects so curiously at variance with himself, would be to see a sight—which nobody *does* see, as he is particular to lock himself in.

“A spicy boudoir this,” says Mr. Bucket, who feels in a manner furbished up in his french by the blow of the morning. “Must have cost a sight of money. Rum articles to cut away from, these; she must have been hard put to it!”

Opening and shutting table-drawers, and looking into caskets and jewel-cases, he sees the reflection of himself in various mirrors, and moralises thereon.

“One might suppose I was a moving in the fashionable circles, and getting myself up for Almack's,” says Mr. Bucket. “I begin to think I must be a swell in the Guards, without knowing it.”

Ever looking about, he has opened a dainty little chest in an inner drawer. His great hand, turning over some gloves which it can scarcely feel, they are so light and soft within it, comes upon a white handkerchief.

“Hum! Let's have a look at *you*,” says Mr. Bucket, putting down the light. “What should *you* be kept by yourself for? What's *your* motive? Are you her Ladyship's property, or somebody else's? You've got a mark upon you, somewheres or another, I suppose?”

He finds it as he speaks, “Esther Summerson.”

“Oh!” says Mr. Bucket, pausing, with his finger at his ear. “Come, I'll take *you*.”

He completes his observations as quietly and carefully as he has carried them on, leaves everything else precisely as he found it, glides away after some five minutes in all, and passes into the street. With a glance upward at the dimly lighted windows of Sir Leicester's room, he sets off, full swing, to the nearest coach-stand, picks out the horse for his money, and directs to be driven to the Shooting Gallery. Mr. Bucket does not claim to be a scientific judge of horses; but he lays out a little money on the principal events in that line, and generally sums up his knowledge of the subject in the remark, that when he sees a horse as can go, he knows him.

His knowledge is not at fault in the present instance. Clattering over the stones at a dangerous pace, yet thoughtfully bringing his keen eyes to bear on every slinking creature whom he passes in the midnight streets, and even on the lights in upper windows where people are going

or gone to bed, and on all the turnings that he rattles by, and alike on the heavy sky, and on the earth where the snow lies thin—for something may present itself to assist him, anywhere—he dashes to his destination at such a speed, that when he stops, the horse half smothers him in a cloud of steam.

“Unbear him half a moment to freshen him up, and I’ll be back.”

He runs up the long wooden entry, and finds the trooper smoking his pipe.

“I thought I should, George, after what you have gone through, my lad. I haven’t a word to spare. Now, honor! All to save a woman. Miss Summerson that was here when Gridley died—that was the name, I know—all right!—where does she live?”

The trooper has just come from there, and gives him the address near Oxford-street.

“You won’t repent it, George. Good night!”

He is off again, with an impression of having seen Phil sitting by the frosty fire, staring at him open-mouthed; and gallops away again, and gets out in a cloud of steam again.

Mr. Jarndyce, the only person up in the house, is just going to bed; rises from his book, on hearing the rapid ringing at the bell; and comes down to the door in his dressing-gown.

“Don’t be alarmed, sir.” In a moment, his visitor is confidential with him in the hall, has shut the door, and stands with his hand upon the lock. “I’ve had the pleasure of seeing you before. Inspector Bucket. Look at that handkerchief, sir. Miss Esther Summerson’s. Found it myself, put away in a drawer of Lady Dedlock’s, quarter of an hour ago. Not a moment to lose. Matter of life or death. You know Lady Dedlock?”

“Yes.”

“There has been a discovery there, to-day. Family affairs have come out. Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, has had a fit—apoplexy or paralysis—and couldn’t be brought to, and precious time has been lost. Lady Dedlock disappeared this afternoon, and left a letter for him that looks bad. Run your eye over it. Here it is!”

Mr. Jarndyce, having read it, asks him what he thinks?

“I don’t know. It looks like suicide. Anyways there’s more and more danger, every minute, of its drawing to that. I’d give a hundred pound an hour to have got the start of the present time. Now, Mr. Jarndyce, I am employed by Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, to follow her and find her—to save her, and take her his forgiveness. I have money and full power, but I want something else. I want Miss Summerson.”

Mr. Jarndyce, in a troubled voice, repeats “Miss Summerson?”

“Now, Mr. Jarndyce;” Mr. Bucket has read his face with the greatest attention all along; “I speak to you as a gentleman of a humane heart, and under such pressing circumstances as don’t often happen. If ever delay was dangerous, it’s dangerous now; and if ever you couldn’t afterwards forgive yourself for causing it, this is the time. Eight or ten hours, worth, as I tell you, a hundred pound a-piece at least, have been lost since Lady Dedlock disappeared. I am charged to find her. I am

Inspector Bucket. Besides all the rest that's heavy on her, she has upon her, as she believes, suspicion of murder. If I follow her alone, she, being in ignorance of what Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, has communicated to me, may be driven to desperation. But if I follow her in company with a young lady, answering to the description of a young lady that she has a tenderness for—I ask no question, and I say no more than that—she will give me credit for being friendly. Let me come up with her, and be able to have the hold upon her of putting that young lady for'ard, and I'll save her and prevail with her if she is alive. Let me come up with her alone—a harder matter—and I'll do my best; but I don't answer for what the best may be. Time flies; it's getting on for one o'clock. When one strikes, there's another hour gone; and it's worth a thousand pound now, instead of a hundred."

This is all true, and the pressing nature of the case cannot be questioned. Mr. Jarndyce begs him to remain there, while he speaks to Miss Summerson. Mr. Bucket says he will; but, acting on his usual principle, does no such thing—following up-stairs instead, and keeping his man in sight. So he remains, dodging and lurking about in the gloom of the staircase, while they confer. In a very little time, Mr. Jarndyce comes down, and tells him that Miss Summerson will join him directly, and place herself under his protection, to accompany him where he pleases. Mr. Bucket, satisfied, expresses high approval; and awaits her coming, at the door.

There, he mounts a high tower in his mind, and looks out, far and wide. Many solitary figures he perceives, creeping through the streets; many solitary figures out on heaths, and roads, and lying under haystacks. But the figure that he seeks, is not among them. Other solitaries he perceives, in nooks of bridges, looking over; and in shadowed places down by the river's level; and a dark, dark, shapeless object drifting with the tide, more solitary than all, clings with a drowning hold on his attention.

Where is she? Living or dead, where is she? If, as he folds the handkerchief and carefully puts it up, it were able, with an enchanted power, to bring before him the place where she found it, and the night landscape near the cottage where it covered the little child, would he descry her there? On the waste, where the brick-kilns are burning with a pale blue flare; where the straw-roofs of the wretched huts in which the bricks are made, are being scattered by the wind; where the clay and water are hard frozen, and the mill in which the gaunt blind horse goes round all day, looks like an instrument of human torture;—traversing this deserted blighted spot, there is a lonely figure with the sad world to itself, pelted by the snow and driven by the wind, and cast out, it would seem, from all companionship. It is the figure of a woman, too; but it is miserably dressed, and no such clothes ever came through the hall, and out at the great door, of the Dedlock mansion.

IMPORTANT FAMILY MEDICINE.

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS,

THE

MOST CERTAIN PRESERVER OF HEALTH;

A MILD, YET SPEEDY, SAFE, AND

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

AND, AS A NATURAL CONSEQUENCE,

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

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

difficulty; pleasing events, society, will for a time dissipate all appearance of disease: but the excitement produced by an agreeable change vanishes soon after the cause has gone by. Other symptoms are, violent palpitations, restlessness, the sleep disturbed by frightful dreams and startings, and affording little or no refreshment: occasionally there is much moaning, with a sense of weight and oppression upon the chest, nightmare, &c.

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

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

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

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

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

use; they will only injure by abuse. Consequently, whatever the palate approves, eat and drink always in moderation, but never in excess; keeping in mind that the first process of digestion is performed in the mouth, the second in the stomach; and that, in order that the stomach may be able to do its work properly, it is requisite the first process should be well performed; this consists in masticating or chewing the solid food, so as to break down and separate the fibres and small substances of meat and vegetables, mixing them well, and blending the whole together before they are swallowed; and it is particularly urged upon all to take plenty of time to their meals and never eat in haste. If you conform to this short and simple, but comprehensive advice, and find that there are various things which others eat and drink with pleasure and without inconvenience, and which would be pleasant to yourself only that they disagree, you may at once conclude that the fault is in the stomach, that it does not possess the power which it ought to do, that it wants assistance, and the sooner that assistance is afforded the better. A very short trial of this medicine will best prove how soon it will put the stomach in a condition to perform with ease all the work which nature intended for it. By its use you will soon be able to enjoy, in moderation, whatever is agreeable to the taste, and unable to name one individual article of food which disagrees with or sits unpleasantly on the stomach. Never forget that a small meal well digested affords more nourishment to the system than a large one, even of the same food, when digested imperfectly. Let the dish be ever so delicious, ever so enticing a variety offered, the bottle ever so enchanting, never forget that temperance tends to preserve health, and that health is the soul of enjoyment. But should an impropriety be at any time, or ever so often, committed, by which the stomach becomes overloaded or disordered, render it immediate aid by taking a dose of *Norton's Camomile Pills*, which will so promptly

assist in carrying off the burden thus imposed upon it that all will soon be right again.

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

On account of their volatile properties, they must be kept in bottles; and if closely corked their qualities are neither impaired by time nor injured by any change of climate whatever. Price 13½d. and 2s.9d. each, with full directions. The large bottle contains the quantity of three small ones, or **PILLS** equal to fourteen ounces of **CAMOMILE FLOWERS**

Sold by nearly all respectable Medicine Vendors.

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

A CLEAR COMPLEXION.

GODFREY'S EXTRACT OF ELDER FLOWERS

is strongly recommended for Softening, Improving, Beautifying, and Preserving the SKIN, and giving it a blooming and charming appearance; being at once a most fragrant perfume and delightful cosmetic. It will completely remove Tan, Sunburn, Redness, &c.; and, by its Balsamic and Healing qualities, render the skin soft, pliable, and free from dryness, scurf, &c.; clear it from every humour, pimple, or eruption; and, by continuing its use only a short time, the skin will become and continue soft and smooth, and the complexion perfectly clear and beautiful. In the process of shaving it is invaluable, as it allays the irritation and smarting pain, annihilates every pimple and all roughness, and renders the skin smooth and firm. It protects the skin from the effects of the cold winds and damp atmosphere which prevail during the winter months, and will be found beyond all praise to use as a Family Lotion on all occasions.

Sold in Bottles, price 2s. 9d., with Directions for using it, by all
Medicine Vendors and Perfumers.

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"The Eighth Plague," said the learned Dr. Johnson, *"is the Gout, and that man who discovers a Medicine to alleviate its torments deserves well of his country; but he who can effect a cure should have a Monument raised to his memory as high as St. Paul's, as wide as the Thames, and as lasting as time."*

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are sold by nearly all Medicine Vendors at 1s. 1½d., and 2s. 9d. per Box; the former containing doses for five and the latter for fifteen days; and so many individuals, who considered themselves martyrs to Gout or Rheumatism, are now ready and willing to bear testimony of the wonderful effects of Simco's Pills, that the Proprietor fearlessly challenges the whole world to produce a Medicine which at all deserves to be compared to them. There are many instances in which persons have been completely restored to health and activity by taking Simco's GOUT PILLS, who have suffered from Rheumatic Gout for several years, and had drawn on a miserable existence, having lost the use of their limbs, believing that death alone could terminate their sufferings.

Whilst taking the Pills, no particular rules or restrictions are necessary, as they are warranted not to contain any preparation of Mercury whatever; they seldom produce perspiration, purging, or sickness, but invariably improve the general health, sharpen the appetite, and facilitate digestion. Those periodically subject to Gout, Rheumatic Gout, Rheumatic Fever, &c., should keep these Pills by them, as by their timely use an approaching attack may always be averted, and the tendency of these complaints to attack a vital part be effectually counteracted.

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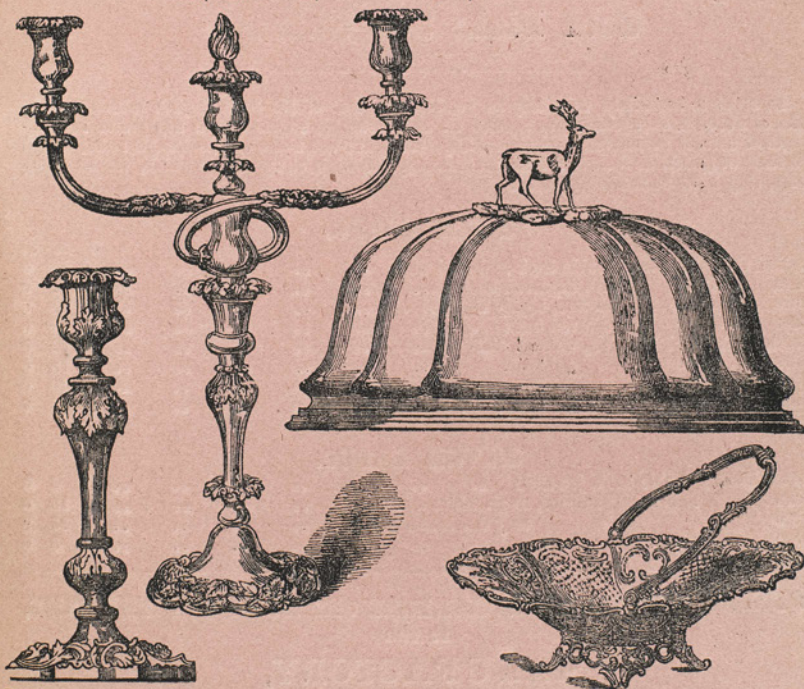
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Tea Spoons	"	1 5 0	1 12 0	1 15 0
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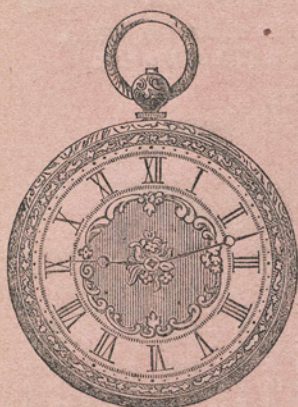
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Where Advertisements and Communications to the Editor can be addressed.

IMPORTANT.—Should any article not give satisfaction, it will be exchanged, if desired, or, if preferred, the money will be returned without hesitation. All Goods are marked, in plain figures, the lowest prices, from which no abatement can be made.

The Establishments close from sunset on Fridays till sunset on Saturdays, when business is resumed till 12 o'clock.

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TABLE-MOVING is a very interesting experiment, and very engaging too, some say it requires both sexes to manage it effectually and when their fingers are properly united. No wonder the Table moves enthusiastically with so much magnetism united. Virgil tells us that the music of Orpheus caused the trees and stones to *move* after him. *Table-moving* is therefore not quite so astonishing as we might be inclined at first to think. But there is no delusion in "TABLES BEING TURNED" at the Establishment of **E. MOSES & SON**: all tables of **STYLES** for **DRESS**, all **TABLES of PRICES** for **ATTIRE** have been turned "upside down," and entire novelty introduced in the **CUT** and **MAKE** of **GARMENTS**, and **PRICES** are charged far lower than at other Houses.

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Tunic Suit	from 15s. 6d.	to 1 12 0
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LADIES' HABITS, WITH $\frac{3}{4}$ TRAIN from 2l.	to 4 10 0
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CAUTION.—E. MOSES & SON regret having to guard the Public against imposition, having learned that the *untrade-maniike falsehood* of "being connected with their Establishment," or "It's the same concern," has been resorted to in many instances, and for obvious reasons. They beg to state they have **NO CONNECTION WITH ANY OTHER HOUSE IN OR OUT OF LONDON, EXCEPT THEIR OWN ESTABLISHMENTS**, as follows:—

London City Establishments—154, 155, 156, and 157, Minorities; 83, 84, 85, and 86, Aldgate, (opposite the Church) all communicating.

London West End Branch—506, 507, and 508, New Oxford-street; 1, 2, and 3, Hart-street, all communicating.

Bradford, "Yorkshire" Branch, 19 and 20, Bridge-street.

Sheffield Branch, 36, Fargate.

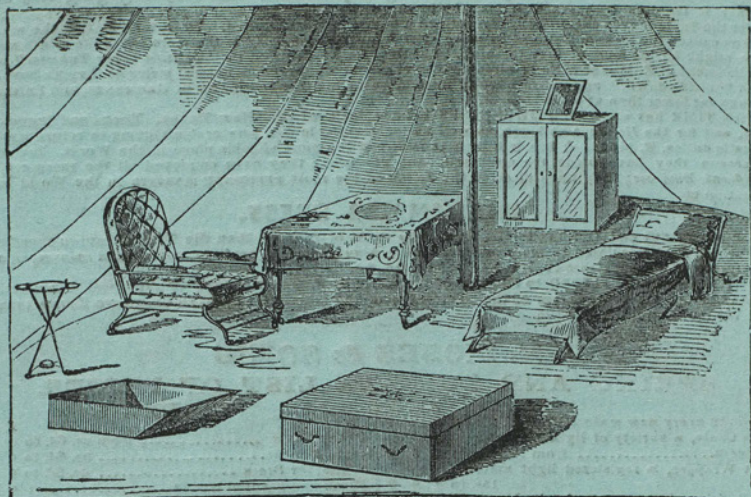
IMPORTANT.—Should any article not give satisfaction, it will be exchanged, if desired, or, if preferred, the money will be returned without hesitation. All Goods are marked, in plain figures, the lowest prices, from which no abatement can be made.

The Establishments close from sunset on Fridays till sunset on Saturdays, when business is resumed till 12 o'clock.

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