

willing slave, to an emotion he should have mastered—that his life was a failure and a mistake, and himself a burthen and not a blessing to those around him, soon did their work.

Let the veil drop here over the last act of a tragedy of human life. Edward Angelo is a name now spoken only in hushed and solemn whispers. It is the name of a nature too finely strung, such as we have all met—of one whose soul was indeed that vase, too beautiful for use, into which no wine of life could be poured so fine that it would not corrode it. Into the coarser clay a stronger elixir may be poured without danger. Boadicea Fleurry was shocked at Edward's death, and did not dream of the cause.

"He was always too nervous," she sometimes says to her husband; who replies, without looking up from the newspaper:

"Ah!"

But the autumnal wind wailing over a stricken landscape, and the waning moon hanging in the hollow east, and the subtle sympathies of hearts that knew the costly beauty of that man—these, with melancholy pomps and dirges, and with thoughts sadder than funeral sermons, still celebrate the obsequies of Edward Angelo.

FOUR SIGHTS OF A YOUNG MAN.

FIRST SIGHT.

THE first time I saw him, he was, I think, one of the handsomest youths I ever beheld. I had gone down to see a boy who had been entrusted to my care by a friend in India, and whom I had put to a school at Wimbledon. On entering the play-ground with the master, I found my young charge eagerly engaged with a schoolfellow, somewhat older, in the highly intellectual occupation of knocking a ball with a crooked stick from one side of the ground to the other. Both were too earnest to observe any body or any thing but the ball; and, praying the master patience, I stood and watched them. Harry Wilson, my young friend, was a plain boy enough; but I never beheld a finer form or a finer face than that of his companion. The features were perfectly Greek, the complexion brown and warm, the hair curling in great masses round the broad open brow, the eyes full of light and life, and the mouth perfect in symmetry. With every muscle brought into action, and with the countenance full of excitement, I could not help thinking that such must have been the moments that ancient sculptors seized for the expression of their models; and this youth certainly might have furnished one to the greatest sculptor that ever lived.

I asked the master who he was; but Mr. C—— in answering sunk his voice a good deal, saying, in a confidential tone: "He is a very fine lad; but his history is rather a sad one. His father is Colonel Hardy, a very wealthy man, now holding an important command in India. He married a young lady, principally for her beauty, I believe; but they could not agree. This boy was their only child; for"—

and he dropped his voice still lower—"about a year after young William's birth, she left her husband—ran away with another man. A divorce and two deaths followed. Her paramour was shot by her husband in a duel; and she died—let us trust penitent—within eight months of her fatal error."

"And how does the Colonel treat his son?" I asked.

"I should say admirably," replied Mr. C——, "did he not indulge him too much in one respect. He placed him here before he went back to India, three years ago, with very careful injunctions as to his education, and that is the only time I ever saw him. He is a fine, soldier-like man, somewhat stiff and haughty, perhaps; but yet he showed all kindness toward the boy in leaving him, besought me on no account to 'break his spirit,' as he called it, saying that he was destined for the army, and would need it all, and leaving him somewhat too amply supplied with money. I have remonstrated by letter against the large allowance made him; but I received rather a tart reply, to the effect that the young man was the heir to a large fortune, and should learn betimes how to use it."

"Does he use it well?" I inquired, shaking my head at what I considered a very doubtful policy.

"In one respect he does," replied the master. "No selfishness, in the common acceptation of the word, mingles with his employment of it. He has treble or quadruple the allowance of any other lad in the school; but he spends less upon himself than many of the others. He is always ready to give or to lend. Indeed, he is lavish; and that is the only fault I can find in his use of his money."

"He is impetuous, I should think," I remarked, "from the way in which he strikes the ball."

"Too much so—far too much so," replied Mr. C——; "but, like most impetuous boys, frank and open-hearted. I should call him a creature of impulse, but that he has very strong and enduring affections; and it is only by them that he can be ruled. His mother's was much such a temper as his own, I am told; but she had weaknesses which he has not; and he has a touch of his father's pride, in which very doubtful quality she was deficient. One proof of his strength of attachment you may see in his regard for your little friend Harry. He has been his protector and guide ever since he came to the school; and not a boy in the house dare hurt or annoy Harry Wilson, if William Hardy is near at hand."

I had already obtained the master's permission to take Harry out with me to row on the Thames and dine with me higher up the river; and I easily got permission to add William Hardy to the party. We made a pleasant expedition, without any incident or adventure worth detailing; but I was much charmed with Harry's young comrade. His manners were peculiarly high-toned and gentleman-like, and

there was about him all that frank, fearless openness which always characterizes the high-bred English boy. Faults he had, indeed, which were not hidden even during our short companionship. He was not only impetuous, but willful; and I could not but observe that he seemed to harden himself against counsel. Indeed, it was evident that he had been somewhat spoiled in his early youth, and I internally prayed that the similar points in his father's character and his own might never be brought into harsh opposition; for I had already gleaned enough insight into that of Colonel Hardy, from the few words which Mr. C—— had uttered concerning him, to feel sure that such antagonism might be very dangerous to the happiness of both. The man who spoils a son in youth is always prone to be harsh with him when he is grown up.

The approach of calamities either toward others or ourselves, however, is never worth calculating. As the simple iron edge of the railroad gives direction hither or thither to the enormous mass of the train, so things imperceptible or hardly noticed often divert the mighty events that seem coming directly upon us. Our little expedition concluded very pleasantly, and I parted from the two boys with kindly feelings, I am sure, on all parts. William Hardy came frequently during the holidays to see his young companion, and for a time became quite familiar in my house. But the tie between us was to be soon severed, for a time at least. Harry, in some boyish, exploit, got very wet, concealed the fact from the master, and was seized with that horrible disease, acute rheumatism of the heart. By enormous bleeding, the severer symptoms were checked; but the disease put on a chronic form, and it was necessary to remove the poor boy to my house. There he lingered sadly for some five months, and among all the painful pictures with which the gallery of my memory is filled, I know few more distressing than that of the poor gentle uncomplaining boy, sitting in an easy chair, with his feet at the fire, in the midst of summer, his breathing terribly laborious, his large dark eyes anxiously protruding, and his once ruddy lips become of a dark and sickly purple. With the extinction of all corporeal energies, kindly affections seemed to have gathered about him like fruit upon the branches of a tree stripped of all the freshness and green vigor of the summer. He evidently saw my anxiety regarding him, and my deep and painful sympathy, and when I came in he would turn round his head with a bright smile, which made his plain face look lovely, telling me in his gasping voice that he felt better, that he was easier. He kept up the same story to the day of his death; and I do believe he did then feel better and easier; for he went to sleep like a child. The mortal part seemed to give up the struggle to retain the immortal companion against the separating power of death, and during the last twelve hours one might have fancied that the freed spirit was

voluntarily lingering for awhile about the decayed house which it was abandoning forever.

William Hardy got up to see him more than once, and his cheerful tenderness always seemed to revive the poor boy during his long illness. There was no effort apparent upon William's part to talk happily and cheerfully; but yet there must have been an effort and a strong one; for when I met him one day as he was coming out of poor Harry's room, the tears were already in his eyes, and he passed me hurriedly without a word.

There were strong feelings in that boy's heart, and strong powers too in his mind. He could not bear to see poor Harry suffer, and yet how much happier was Harry Wilson's fate than his!

After the death of my little charge, a long interval succeeded during which I saw nothing of William Hardy. It was nearly five years, I think, and during that time I heard nothing of him personally, though I saw the return of his father from India noticed in some newspaper.

THE SECOND SIGHT.

The next time I saw William Hardy was in very different scenes. I was then a man of about forty-five; not old enough to forget the feelings of youth; too old to enter into its rivalries. If we would but try, it requires no very severe effort of the mind to fix, for our own government, our exact position in the race of life at each of its various periods; and the benefit of so doing is very great. If every man is in search of happiness, he will never attain his full share at any time of life, unless he settles what is the happiness that befits his age. At forty-five I had given up dancing, except when I was wanted to assist the amusements of others; but I was very fond of going to places where I could see others dance and enjoy themselves. To enjoy life innocently, I have always looked upon as obedience to the will of God—as a part of his worship when we do it in a right spirit; and I love to see young people happy.

On one occasion I was invited to a very gay ball, given by a merchant of some eminence. He had a little weakness for what is called "high life;" but, to his honor be it said, that the acquaintance he had contrived to form with people of elevated station never led him to look down upon or neglect persons in his own rank; nor had the wealth he had acquired ever taught him to sever the kindly ties between himself and the poorer companions of his youth—for he had not always been a rich man.

The house to which I was invited was a very splendid one near the end of Portland Place; and the decorations could not have been surpassed, either in point of taste or cost, by the palace of a prince. The hour of my arrival was not either very early or very late. Dancing had begun; but still the rooms were comparatively thin, and, as I stood in the first drawing-room, I could see the gay young couples swimming gracefully along in the ball-room beyond. There

were many pretty faces there; but the one which most attracted my attention was that of a young lady, of perhaps twenty years of age, with more color than is usually seen in the cheeks of London-worn beauties, and with white camellias in her rich dark hair. She was what is called splendidly dressed, but with great taste, and I think I have seldom seen any thing more graceful than her movements in the dance. She attracted a good deal of attention from all the male part of the company, but it was very evident that there was one she cared for more than all the rest. Nor was he at all indifferent to her. He was a fine, manly-looking fellow, a model of youthful strength, with the rich brown hair floating round the fine forehead, and rather large whiskers curling wildly which way they would. He was dressed almost in the extreme of the fashion, but withal there was a sort of careless ease about him which made his clothes become him much more than if they had been very precisely put on. He danced with that pretty girl twice before any one else could engage her, and then he suffered her to take a turn or two with some one else, but stood still gazing at her with eyes full of admiration—ay, and tenderness; and when she stopped he was by her side again in a moment.

I needed not to be told who he was, and yet I asked my host his name.

"That is young William Hardy," replied he, "the son of the rich Colonel Hardy. He is quite infatuated with our pretty little friend Jessie Reid; but I do not know how it is going to end. He has met her here several times at our little parties, but Colonel Hardy was here himself the last time, and I thought he did not seem to like it. I wish William would conceal his admiration a little more, for I fear the Colonel might not approve of his marriage with her."

"Not rich, I suppose?" I said.

"Neither rich nor high born," replied my good friend. "She is an excellent girl though, and her father is an excellent man. He is only, however, our principal managing clerk. I invite the family always, and nothing shall prevent me; for a better man does not live, nor one better educated. Besides, he was my school-fellow and old friend, and though fortune has dealt differently by us, that can make no change in my regard."

Just at that moment William Hardy's eyes turned for a single instant away from Jessie, and toward where I stood. He darted across at once, and took my hand with kindly warmth. A few words of no consequence passed between us, and then the looks of both were directed toward Jessie Reid.

"Is she not lovely!" he said, with a burst of lover's enthusiasm.

"Yes, she is very pretty indeed," I answered, drily enough. But he did not wait to hear or comment, darting away to her side again, to pour honey into her ear.

A few minutes after, an elderly gentleman,

tall, thin, and hard-looking, but with a very distinguished air, in spite of a toilet somewhat too elaborate, came near me, and continued gazing into the ball-room as if he had just arrived, and was reconnoitring the ground before he took up his position. William Hardy nodded to him gayly; but went on with his dancing and his love-making without the slightest change of demeanor. Again and again he danced with Jessie Reid, and his manner was not to be mistaken. His salutation of my neighbor made me turn my eyes to the countenance of the latter; but there was little to be remarked upon it. It was quiet, grave, and stern; and the only thing that attracted my notice was an occasional twitch of the upper lip, which might be habitual or might proceed from some nervous affection—though, be it said, he did not at all look like a nervous man.

At length when William, as if feeling that he was making his love too conspicuous, withdrew for a moment from fair Jessie's side—it was rather late in the evening—the tall, elderly man walked straight across the ball-room, putting a good number of people out of his way, as he went without the slightest ceremony and seated himself by William's fair partner. What he said to her, I do not know; but at first she smiled faintly, and answered, it seemed to me, with a timid effort to make herself agreeable to him. I had settled who he was, and I was right; but I was looking round for some one to give me confirmation, when suddenly I saw Jessie turn deadly pale, and Colonel Hardy rose dignifiedly, and left her, talking easily to some people near. William at once crossed over to her, and seemed to ask her to dance again, for I could see him offer his arm. She rose and took it with a bewildered sort of look; but the next moment she sunk down, rather than fell, with every particle of color gone from her cheeks and lips. She had fainted.

Some people talked of the extreme heat of the room, and some carried her into another chamber, and William Hardy disappeared; but the Colonel carried on his conversation, as if nothing had happened; and the music sounded gayly; and people proceeded with the dance. I fancied that I saw deeper than others into that fainting fit; and I have every reason to believe that I was not wrong. Soon after I took my departure and retired to my own quiet home. The feathers and the finery, the jewels and the gold, the gay laugh and the music, the whirling dance, and beaming eyes, and palpitating hearts, all faded away like the images of a vision, and a solemn sort of thoughtfulness fell upon me—an impression of the vanity of life and all things earthly, which would not let me sleep.

I fear the changes from fine weather to storm are more sudden than the reverse—that the brilliant and the gay scenes of life are more frequently the precursors of disaster and sorrow than the dark and the gloomy are of joy and prosperity. The mind requires time to recover

from the shock of the tempest: the effect of enjoyment is more evanescent. Even if it leaves a sweet trace upon memory, it is but to make the darker picture which follows look more black by the comparison.

Was the grave thought which succeeded this bright scene a forewarning of the melancholy things to come? Within six months from that time, that splendid house and all its costly furniture were brought to the hammer; for a commercial crisis had come on. The owner became a bankrupt, a paralytic, a corpse. The Reid family shared in his ruin; and in old age Mr. Reid had to take an inferior clerkship on a small salary. It broke his heart too, and he died ere long—I know not how long after the disaster, but at all events within two years. All these facts reached my ears by degrees: but we are all very hard in this world: our feelings and affections are short-sighted; they only perceive keenly when things are brought very near them. A "Poor fellow!" a "Well, that is very sad!" is the most we give to the sorrow, the ruin, the death of mere acquaintances—and then, they are forgotten.

I next heard that William Hardy had married Jessie Reid against his father's consent, and that the Colonel had cast him off. That touched me more nearly. I had an interest in William Hardy, and I tried in vain to find out where he was living, to see if I could not mediate a reconciliation between him and his father. I could not find him, and I concluded that he was trying the rarely successful experiment of love in a cottage. I heard nothing more of his history for a long while, and then I heard it from his own mouth.

THE THIRD SIGHT.

Paris is Paris only. Give it what name you will—a great Fair—a large Theatre, where tragedy and farce are alternately enacted—a Race-course where every one is running against his neighbor to win the cup of pleasure—still it is the Fair, the Theatre, or the Race-course, Paris. London is the epitome of the whole world—in its resources, in its pursuits, in its enjoyments, in its privations, in its frantic joys and frantic miseries, its vices, its virtues, its brightness and its gloom. Human nature, human life, whatever be its aspect or its phase, finds there its exponent and its illustration. The very diversity of its streets; the proximity of the dark, the dingy, and the low, to the brilliant, the fresh, and the magnificent; the gradation from the thronged, noisy, and mercantile thoroughfares through the cool, aristocratic squares, the quiet abodes of mediocrity; the dull streets of poverty and labor to the low, narrow alleys of vice and destitution is but a symbol of man's condition here.

To the eastward of Regent-street, but close to it, and in a parallel line with its busy and crowded channel runs a small, well-smoked, very quiet street, enlivened only by the existence of a Roman Catholic chapel, a picture-frame maker's shop, a corn-chandler's, in a

small way, and a low public-house. Yes, I forgot—there is one other house worthy of note—a small eating-house, where one can get a plentiful meal of good beef, roast or boiled, for tenpence half-penny, and give the three-halfpence out of the shilling to the waiter. Most of the houses are used as furnished lodging-houses—and furnished lodgings of London are very curious places, well worthy, in general, of a history—where lodge persons of very various classes and pursuits, having but one characteristic common to them all—paucity of means. Women not quite abandoned, but in the high road to be so; gamblers who have lost much money, and no little reputation; men once well off, who have been ruined by a speculation, a friend, a merchant, or a lawyer; authors, who have had the singular misfortune of meeting with an honest bookseller; a few oboe-players and clarinet-men—and even a trumpet or a trombone here and there, affect that street, and the small quiet lodgings which it contains.

It is a place very full of heart-aches, I have a notion; more so than those who roll along Regent-street in smooth carriages with gaudy servants behind them, know or care about; for it is not the utter abysses of any thing that are the most terrible. When you reach the bottom, it is all over, or you are stunned; but it is while falling that come the terror and the agony.

There in that street men sit and think of all that might have been; and women, too. There they ponder over blighted hopes and wasted energies; there curse the perversity of Fortune, and murmur at the stern decree of Fate. There are no ghosts in that street—it does not look like it; but there are many living, hard realities;—no rats, I dare say, but gnawing cares and fearful expectations. Remorse, despondency, despair; the canker-worm, the mildew, and the blight lie beyond those dusty and obscure case-ments; and many, many a sad review of a dark army of errors is passing daily before the sight of the eyes within, to the dead march of the heart's hopes. There, too, perhaps, high aspirations, genius, bright and strong, kindly sympathies noble impulses, all the powers of mind, and heart, and spirit, lie crushed beneath the dust of petty cares, like the bright things of Græco-Roman art beneath the ashes of Vesuvius. Like the flowers of the forest, they perish unseen and unregretted, while brambles and tall weeds grow up and flourish; but unlike those flowers, they feel and repine. The world is a hard-heeled clown looking for precious stones, who treads upon a thousand gems, and picks up the bright pebbles which the glistening waters burnish.

It is a sad and sorrowful-looking street by night or by day; and yet, I know not why, I always prefer walking through it, on my way home, to threading the living labyrinth of the crowded street near at hand. It is, perhaps, the contrast which makes the gay scene more sad to me than the gloomy one.

One evening in November, about six o'clock, I was walking home from Lincoln's Inn, and passed up that way. It was by no means one of the gloomiest November nights I have seen in London; but yet the rigorous and ungenial precursor of the cold tyrant, Winter, made itself felt. There was a thin, yellowish mist in the air, a damp, unwholesome smell; the lamps looked large, and threw out long, straggling pencils of light; and the ground was in that unpleasant, half-frozen state when the very friction of passing feet dissolves the abortive ice into cold, clammy mud. I went along slowly by the many windows—some of them dull and blank, like the eyes of death; others emitting a feeble, obscure light. I had nearly reached the shop of the corn-chandler, where a gas-burner was flaring in the still open window, when I saw a man—the only one I had met for the last two hundred yards—coming with a quick and irregular pace toward me. I thought from his walk that he was tipsy, and gave him ample room; but just before the shop we came close—and, looking at him, I saw a face that I knew.

He did not recognize me, and I might have passed on; but there was something in his appearance which, even by that dull light, struck me as strange and sad. How shall I describe it! I can not; it is not to be clearly defined. The color, the materials of his dress, I could not see—no particular was distinct; but yet there was about him altogether what I must call an air of neglect, which was very grievous when compared with his appearance a year or two before; and, stopping suddenly, I called to him before he had passed out of hearing. There was something friendly in my tone, I suppose—I hope there was; and he turned instantly and approached me.

"Mr. Hardy," I said, holding out my hand, "I am exceedingly happy to see you."

He paused a minute, at least, before he answered; and then asked, "Are you? You are the only one, I believe, who would say the same."

There was something bitter, and yet deeply melancholy, in his tone, and icy cold—almost to superciliousness—in his manner. His face, too, which I could now see more distinctly by the light in the shop-window, was deadly pale, and grave as that of a corpse. There was no fierceness in it; and, as to the superciliousness, I knew right well what a contempt of every thing earthly, and of human nature especially, is exhaled from the crushed flowers of hope when the heel of despair treads upon the heart.

I saw that I had made a mistake. He had not been drinking; and I was almost inclined to address him in the words of the prophet speaking to Jerusalem: "Hearken unto me, thou drunken, but not with wine."

That, however, which is sublime on great and rare occasions becomes ludicrous in ordinary circumstances; and I answered: "Something,

I fear, has distressed you, Mr. Hardy. I trust there are many who would greet you kindly."

He shook his head, sorrowfully; and I added: "As for my part, I never use words I do not wish to express feelings. I said I was exceedingly glad to see you, because I had heard that some unpleasant circumstances have befallen you. As long as you are affluent and happy, I—being somewhat morose—do not care much whether I see you or not; but when reverses befall you, or sorrow assails you, I claim my right as an old friend, as the friend of the poor boy, now in his grave, to a portion of your society and a share in your confidence."

He put his hand up to his forehead, pushing his hat a little back; and as he did not speak, I continued, saying: "Come now, my young friend, I am going home. There is nobody at my house to-night to interrupt us. Take a bachelor's dinner with me, and let me hear all that has befallen you."

"Time was," he answered, "when I could have accepted your invitation to dine with a free heart. Now, I feel as if I were receiving a charity."

"Good heavens!" I murmured, grasping his terrible meaning at once; but then I checked myself suddenly, and replied, with the wish to revive hope: "You give way too soon, my dear sir. We lawyers are accustomed to see strange vicissitudes; and we do not give up the fates of men till long after they have given them up themselves. But come, our dinner is being overcooked, and it is too simple to bear spoiling."

"Go on—go on," he said, in a choking voice, "I will dine once more."

I put my arm through his, unceremoniously, and walked along with him, supporting his unsteady steps. When we got into the lights of Regent-street, I saw—without appearing at all to look at him—that his dress was worn and dirty; but, nevertheless, I kept tight hold of his arm; for I thought I perceived a sort of shrinking from the glare that might soon make him run away from me. Yet, with all, there was that indefinable gentlemanly look, which made the common eye pass over him without notice of his shabby dress.

When we arrived at my house I told my servant to put another cover on the table, and led the way to the drawing-room, which was lighted—but dimly, however, for I abominate a harsh glare. I do not know how I should have got over five minutes; for it was my object not to appear observant of any thing amiss, or to enter upon any of the painful themes which I feared were in his heart, till he had taken some refreshment. The punctuality of my habits, however, spared me any trial. The servants knew I loved every thing to be ready, and never delayed dinner after my arrival longer than just allowed me to wash my hands.

I took him into my little dressing-room, on one side of the drawing-room, and he washed his face, and neck, and hands—I may say eagerly—murmuring, with a sort of sigh, "How fragrant this soap is!"

The words were hardly spoken when dinner was announced, and we went down. I then perceived that his dress was very shabby—very shabby, indeed—and that his linen was by no means fresh and clean. I took no notice, however, and took care to treat him exactly as I would have treated him in other circumstances, without any extraordinary civilities, but with easy cordiality. He ate ravenously, and drank a sufficient, but not too abundant proportion of wine, his fine countenance seeming to expand and revive under the influence of nourishment which he had too evidently needed. As long as the man was in the room I avoided all allusion to his circumstances, talked upon indifferent matters, party politics, and other subjects, in reference to which no sensible man has any real feelings, though intense excitement is often assumed to countenance electioneering or other manœuvres. He listened with the air of one to whom such subjects were altogether new and strange: sometimes answered with a very vague sentence or two; but never grappled with any general question affecting his fellow-men and fellow-countrymen. He was evidently “not read up,” upon the subjects which I thought would interest him—subjects which every one who saw a newspaper, or took an active part in the world's doings, was conversant with.

As soon as dinner was done, and the man out of the room, I dashed at the main question at once. “Mr. Hardy,” I said, “I gather from your words when first I met you, that you have met with misfortunes. What are they? You are speaking with a friend—with one who knew you as a boy—with one who is bound to you by ties not to be broken—with one who can counsel—perhaps assist you. Speak freely, I entreat you, and let me know what has happened.”

He remained silent for some minutes. He leaned down his forehead and covered over his eyes with his hands. It was a terrible struggle for him to tell the whole. It was like the throes of a woman in labor for him to bring forth the tale. But at length it was spoken. He had married the beautiful, poor, rankless girl with whom I had seen him dancing, without and against his father's approval. He had been cast off in consequence, and had striven with the world for her sake till she died and left him with a child. Then, he had appealed to his father and had received a cold letter and a hundred pounds. That saved him and the babe from starvation, and as long as the little girl lived he had a consolation and an object; but it died a month or two after its mother; and then the spirit of resistance seized upon him. He resolved never to appeal to his hard father again, to struggle with the world, to carve his own fortune, to do aught, to do every thing, rather than to be a dependent upon the mere pity of a parent. He flattered himself with fond hopes; he thought of his education—of his powers of mind. But alas! those powers of mind had never had a practical direction; his education had not been

of the world. Hope delayed, constant disappointment, rejection where he had the best right to expect employment, crushed his spirit. He tried every where and in every manner, he said, to earn his bare bread; but some refused to employ him because he was too high bred; others because he was too smartly dressed; some because he had not already labored as a clerk; others because he did not write a round hand. Long weeks of frustrated efforts wore away his means to a few pounds. Then came the desperation and the last fatal resource. He took to the low gambling tables; he drank hard to keep up the feverish excitement that bore him on. Sometimes he won—sometimes he lost—one day he was in the fashionable dens of St. James's—one day in the dark holes near Leicester Square and Newport Market. Once he and a number of others were taken by the police, their names exhibited in the papers—their examination in a police court paraded to the eyes of the public. There was no end of miseries and degradations; and, oh, with what keen and cutting energy he depicted his mental sufferings—how he despised, how he abhorred his pursuits—his associates—himself. The strong spirit, the stout heart, the high pride had been at length broken and ground down, he said. He had written to his father, implored forgiveness—asked for a crust of bread. He had said “I have sinned before Heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” But the father had refused to hear, and the letter was returned without an answer.

And yet, he told me, he saw that father whirled by him in the splendid chariot or riding along upon a magnificent horse, with his gayly dressed groom behind him; he heard of him spending thousands upon luxuries, or upon amusements, or sometimes upon vices. As he dwelt upon all this there was a bitterness in his tone—a fierce indignation mingling with his grief and his despair that had something very painful in it.

At length the tale came to its close in what might be expected. Step by step—or rather by waves and pulsations, sometimes tossed up and sometimes cast down, but left lower and lower at every fall, he had sunk into utter destitution. When I met him, he had not tasted food for four-and-twenty hours; the next day was his rent day, and then he would be homeless as well as penniless. There was nothing left for him but a lodging on the steps of a house or of a church, a beggar's pittance, or the Thames. Bitter and terrible was the telling of the tale, and it ended with a groan which spoke anguish of spirit more strongly than any thing I ever heard at a gallows foot or in prison cell.

My task was to come; but it seemed neither a very painful nor a very hopeless one. I had to console and to offer relief. I did the first as best I might. Where mistakes and misfortunes have gone together it is the worst plan in the world to preach, and I therefore made it my first business to see if I could not stir up the embers

of the undying fire—hope, in the bosom of the afflicted man, and warm him into exertion and activity. I found this not so easy as I had expected. He seemed quite crushed, saying gloomily that there was no return for him, and quoting the line of Dante on the fate of those who pass the gates of Hell, as if he really believed that he had entered the place of the condemned.

I did not give up the task, but I thought it better to hold out something more substantial than mere philosophical arguments upon the folly of despair. I assured him that I would do the best I could to serve him; that if he liked I would see his father and attempt to mediate; but I strongly advised him to go to his father and personally entreat forgiveness.

"Put away all pride, my young friend," I said, "submit yourself to his will, and even hear his reproaches without reply. The sight of a son's face must have an effect upon a father's heart if it be not of stone."

He shook his head, gloomily murmuring, "it might be dangerous—it might be dangerous!"

I did not clearly understand what he meant; but I still pressed him to what I believed to be the right course, and starting up as if to go, he said, "I will write to him first and ask permission to wait upon him—oh, he is a very punctilious gentleman, and may not find it convenient to receive his own begotten beggar. No one was ever admitted to his presence without an appointment. His dearest friends never ventured to take him unaware."

There was an angry sarcasm in his tone that I did not like, and though I would not give up my good offices, yet there might be something reproving in my manner when I replied, "You know your father best; but depend upon it the least sign of unsubdued pride on your part, will harden his heart against you."

He grasped my hand tight in his, and answered in a low, earnest tone, "Don't mistake me. There shall be no pride. I have drunk the cup of degradation to the dregs. I have acknowledged to him my faults, my follies, and my vices. My next letter shall be merely a humble request that he will see me once again. I will disguise my hand that he may open the letter, and I will try to move him by the most abject entreaty."

"Stay, stay," I cried, as he turned toward the door; "you forget you must have some temporary assistance till we see how this plan answers."

"I know how it will answer," he said, in a harsh, grating voice, "but it is the last act, and it must be done."

"No, no;" I replied, "there may be many other resources. But in the mean time, let me supply you with what money you may want at present."

He started, gazed full in my face for a moment or two, and then casting down his eyes remained silent for some time, while his face worked with many emotions. Oh that I could

have read upon his countenance what was going on in his heart. At length he looked up saying in a mild, sweet tone, but with a very strange expression upon his handsome countenance, "You are very kind—very kind indeed. I cannot, however, be a dependent upon any man's bounty. If you will let me have two guineas, I will take them. If I can ever repay you I will. If not, you have done an act of charity. Two guineas will be enough."

"Take more—take more," I said, "you will be able to repay it some day. That I will answer for."

"Well, make it another guinea," he answered with a ghastly smile. "That is one-and-twenty days' life at a shilling a day."

I urged him, but in vain. He would only take three guineas, and promising that I should hear the result of his letter to his father, he left me to think over what could be done for him if that plan failed, in regard to which I had some misgivings.

THE FOURTH SIGHT.

For a whole week I heard nothing of William Hardy; but whenever an interval of business gave me time for thought in regard to his case, I went on meditating and planning. The more I revolved the circumstances and the peculiar character of his father, which I had easily divined, the less probability I saw of his application succeeding. I almost regretted that I had advised it. Colonel Hardy's vice was intractable pride. That was clear enough. Was there any chance then that one who had brought disgrace upon his name, who had set his authority at naught, should obtain any compassion in misery and distress. Could William have gone to him in splendor and success he might have obtained pardon for sins much more heinous than any he had committed. I doubt not in the least if he had cut a friend's throat, or insulted a benefactor, or seduced a lady of high rank, Colonel Hardy would have forgiven it all. But to have his name on the police-sheet as a common gambler for mere bread was unpardonable.

Such was the conclusion in which all my meditations ended. My plans were rather more satisfactory to myself at least. I determined to offer the young man a seat in my office; to give him his articles; and to pay him a salary. I entertained no doubts of him—no suspicions. His were not faults which would render such confidence dangerous, and I only waited to see him to make the offer.

I had settled the matter in my own mind and dismissed the subject from my thoughts, when just one week after he had dined with me, to the very day, I was walking quietly to my chambers, thinking of other affairs, and had taken my way through a short but wide street, principally consisting of fashionable lodging houses, leading from a great square. There was but one shop in the street; that of a wax-chandler with whom I dealt, and who knew me well: a man of the name of Shepherd. I walked along on the same side of the way as that on

which his shop stood, and had met nobody till I reached it; but just as I was coming near, I saw a servant in a striped morning jacket run across from a house opposite, and call Shepherd to the door. They were talking eagerly, and apparently anxiously; but I was passing on when Shepherd called me by name, saying, "I beg pardon, sir; but I am afraid something serious has happened over there. This man, William, sir, tells me he has heard two pistol shots in his master's drawing-room, where he was at breakfast, and he and the people of the house are afraid to go in, for the gentleman is very stern and severe, and never suffers any one to come unless he rings the bell."

"Nonsense," I said, "people do not fire pistols in their drawing-rooms without cause which should be inquired into, and if they do they should be taken care of. Who is your master, my man?"

"My master is Colonel Hardy, sir," he answered with a very anxious look; and his words seemed to send all the blood in my body to my heart in a moment.

"Was any one with him?" I asked in a shaking voice; "was your young master with him?"

"Yes, sir," replied the servant, "the housemaid says he walked past her when she was cleaning the steps, and up-stairs straight, about half an hour ago."

I walked across the street at once, followed by the servant and the wax-chandler, and ran up the stairs without ceremony. "Which is the room?" I cried: but before the man could speak, the question was answered by my sight. There were two doors on the first floor; one apparently leading to a bedroom at the back, and one to a front room facing the street. From underneath the latter, as I put my foot upon the top step, I saw oozing a small dark red stream of blood. I instantly tried the door, but it was locked, and I called loudly for admission.

There was no answer.

"Colonel Hardy! William!" I exclaimed, "let me in!"

All was silent.

Shepherd, who was a stout man and a famous pugilist, stepped forward, turned the handle of the door and put his shoulder against it. It gave way suddenly; but then caught against something. The violence of the first push, however, had forced it open sufficiently for a man to pass. Shepherd went in first with an exclamation of horror, and I followed him closely.

Never shall I forget the sight. There before me stretched upon the hearth-rug, lay the stern father with his right arm bent underneath him, and the left stretched out as if it had been grasping at something—the bell perhaps. He was dressed in a brocade silk dressing-gown, with slippers on his feet, and his coffee-cup stood half full upon the table near. His face was somewhat distorted but not disfigured; but it was the face of a dead man, and the blood

that stained the rug and spattered his dressing-gown told the manner of his death, though the wound being in the side of his head, and rather toward the back, was not at first apparent. He was deadly pale, of course: the flush of passion, if it had been there, was gone; but the brow was still knitted in one of the fiercest frowns I ever saw.

Not far from him lay on the carpet a discharged pistol; but I stopped not to look at it, for after having given one glance at the first object which struck me, I turned to another still more horrible.

That which had prevented the full opening of the door was the body of William Hardy, and it was his blood which had trickled underneath. He had fallen partly against the door, and lay on his side with his head toward the windows. Oh, what a frightful sight that head presented! The temple was blacked; the beautiful curling hair was singed, and dabbled with the spouting blood, and the ball passing right through from side to side had spattered the brains against the wall; and yet his face was perfectly calm. Agony, anguish, despair—there was no trace of either. It looked far more like his countenance as a boy than I had ever seen it between my first and last sight of him. A pistol was grasped firmly in his right hand—so firmly indeed, that we had difficulty in removing it; and hanging to the guard of the trigger was still the shop ticket bearing the words, "Second-hand. Egg's best make. Only £2 10s."

Good Heaven, how he had applied the money that I gave him!

There he lay, that bright, warm-hearted, energetic, willful boy—a parricide—a suicide! Was it altogether by his own fault he had become that thing? No, no! sin breeds sin, and crime begets crime; and every guilty human being has to answer not only for his own offenses, but for a share of all those to which his offenses lead, or tempt, or drive another. No one ever accurately knew what had passed in that dreadful chamber before we entered it. The housemaid had heard high words; and after they had gone on some time two pistol shots, with the interval of but a few seconds between them. And that was all. I trust that the poor lad was mad; but that was my last sight of William Hardy.

MR. COTTLE AND HIS FRIENDS.

A YOUNG man in drab coat and broad-brimmed hat is leaning over the counter in the shop of Mr. Joseph Cottle, the young Bristol bookseller, in earnest discourse with the proprietor. The subject of conversation is the problem—ever old, yet always new—of the reorganization and reconstruction of society. This great problem, says Mr. Lovell, the young gentleman in the drab coat, is now upon the point of solution. A perfect social state is about to be constituted, which shall be free from all the evils and turmoils which have always agitated the world—never so much so as at the present