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"This is true Liberty, when Freeborn Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free."---Euripides.

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LITERATURE.

THREE STAGES OF WOMAN'S LOVE.

There is a love in early life
Which shuns parade and worldly strife,
And seeks, contemned the princely dome,
In humble cot, a happy home,
More gorgeous than the pomp of kings,
The coral and the pearl it brings,
And all the glory of the skies,
In living diamonds—beaming eyes.
The rose's bloom it yields to view,
And lends its fragrance with its hue:
The gladdening smile, the balmy kiss,
With looks of fondness, thoughts of bliss,
Feelings that scarce know wordly leaven,
And dreams of ecstacy and heaven,
Life's dull anxieties above:
Such, such is woman's early love!

There is a love of elder growth,
Less dazzling than the love of youth,
Where gentle looks and anxious care
Aspire the husband's toil to share;
Which seeks its solace and employ,
Providing for her children joy;
Which owns no happiness complete
Till they are healthy, clean and neat;
Which strives to spare the humble store,
And make that little something more;
Love, which, the frugal table spread,
A blessing breathes on daily bread,
Which, scorning finery and pride,
Exults in comforts self-supplied;
And teaches man 'tis vain to roam
For pleasure to compare with home:—
This calms, as that the heart could move;
And this is woman's noon-day love.

There is a love in later stage,
When pain and sickness grow on age,
When he, so active once and gay,
Perceives approach his closing day;
When failing strength and tottering limb,
And sunken cheek, and eye grow dim,
And faltering voice and visage wan,
Have to a spectre changed the man;
Then love, by the fond wife possessed,
Too vast, too grand to be expressed,
Delights assiduously to ply,
And soothes with tender sympathy;
Consoles the mourner for the past,
And fondly soothes him to the last.
This love, in hours the most forlorn,
Surpasses that of youth's bright morn;
Different from that which marked life's prime,
Though not so brilliant, more sublime;
This love, from Heaven derived its birth,
Confesses no alloy of earth;
It lifts the sufferer from his woe,
Above the care of things below,
And points to brighter scenes above;
And this is woman's final love.

CHILDHOOD'S HOME.

O'er creation's wide expansion,
Fancy-wing'd the mind may roam:
But that tree encircled mansion,
Which in childhood was my home,
Rises still in memory's vision,
Tranquil, undecay'd, and fair,
As were Eden's scenes elysian,
When primeval peace was there.

It now possessed a palace,
Furnished in the richest style,
Far removed from strife and malice,
Ever blest with friendship's smile—
Still the mind would fondly cherish
Childhood's years of mirth and play,
And the joys foredoomed to perish
In maturer manhood's day.

Then my griefs were like the shadow
Of a humming-bird's gay wing,
Passing o'er a sunny meadow
In the laughing hours of spring;
Yes, the deepest cause of sorrow,
That disturbed my breast at night,
Was before the dawn of morrow
Vanished and forgotten quite.

In my breast had not arisen
Passions to embitter life,
Like vile felons in a prison
With each other all at strife.
Pride, and envy, and ambition,
Childhood does not, cannot know—
Tranquil is its blest condition
As a spirit free from woe.

I remember yet how gaily
Grew the woodbine near the door,
Where industrious bees were daily
Toiling for their winter's store.
In the rose-bush there still shedding
Fragrance on the summer air!
Are young childhood's feet still treading
O'er the turf's deep verdure there?

Is the sunshine resting brightly
On the dial near the door,
Indicating noon tide rightly,
As in happy days of yore?
Are the pear trees' branches shading
The foot path along the hill?
When the twilight's tints are fading,
Is the cow-bell tinkling still?

Oh! blest home, where childhood's hours,
Peaceful as a dream, flew by—
Yet were transient as the flowers
That are destined soon to die—
I would fain that peace recover
Which imparted rapture then,
And the fleeting years live over,
That can ne'er be mine again.

THE MARKED WINE.

My acquaintance with the world of rank and fashion was never very extensive, but some years ago I did happen to know a lady in Belgravia who wanted a maid, as also a young woman in Paddington whom I could recommend, with a safe conscience, as qualified to fill the vacancy. The lady was matron and mistress of a coroneted house, which I will designate by their initial, and call them the L—— family. The young woman was the daughter of an honest, industrious man, who in his day had served as butler in more than one titled family, but had given up the pantry and sideboard, and betaken himself to a small confectioner's shop. The goods in it were mostly of home manufacture, and of a better quality than is usually found in such establishments. I believe it was through them that myself and Johnson, as I will call the ex-butler, for my story does not admit of giving real names, first became acquainted; at any rate, acquainted we were sufficiently for me to recommend his daughter, the eldest of six children, who had been out at service, and lost her situation only through the death of her mistress, to Lady L—— as a proper and reliable maid. The girl had been wanting a situation for some time; fortune, and not character, had gone against her. With himself, his wife, and five juniors depending on the small confectioner's shop, it was important to Johnson that a place should be found for his eldest daughter, and I thought myself the bearer of glad tidings when I stepped into his shop with the intelligence that Lady L—— would take her for a month on trial.

It was a November evening, heavy and dull, with not exactly a fog, but a gray leaden sky, from which daylight was sliding away into a still heavier night: the gas was glimmering along the little street where Johnson lived, in the oldest part of Paddington; but everybody kept within doors. I found his shop utterly deserted, and the old man sitting behind his counter in a desponding attitude, with his gray head leaning on his hand. "There is very little friendly inquiries regarding the state of trade, made by buying; very little indeed," he said in answer to my way of prologue to the good news. "You see people are saving themselves now for Christmas, and the children have all gone back to school; it's the dullest time in the whole year, and like to last for some weeks." I cut short the sigh with which Johnson closed his account of business by saying: "Well, I have got a place for Lizzie. Lady L—— in Belgrave Square wants a maid, and will take her for a month on trial." I had expected to see Johnson in a flush of delight, if not of gratitude, but the old man looked as blank as if I had announced Lizzie's immediate transportation to Botany Bay, and he said in a low, terrified tone: "Thank you, ma'am, thank you: it's too good you are to take such trouble for us; but not that house—I could not let Lizzie go there."

"Why, Johnson," said I, laying down the bun with which I had been refreshing myself, in perfect amazement, "it is one of the first houses in the West End. Besides being titled themselves, the L—— family are connected with half the court: they are known to be liberal and kind to their servants; and if I am not mistaken, you once served in that house yourself."

"I did, ma'am," said Johnson: "I was butler there thirty years ago, in the old family's time—the elder branch, I think, they ought to be called. They died quite out with the last heir, my master's only son. That was how the estate and title came to the present family."

"And why do you not wish Lizzie to go into their service?"

"Well, ma'am"—and Johnson stepped round, and shut his own shop-door—"it's a story I wouldn't tell to everybody: it don't do for people in our station to make such things public; and I don't care for telling it at all; only the like lies heavy on one's mind, and you have taken so much trouble about Lizzie, I'll just tell you my reason for not liking to see her in that house; and you'll be kind enough, ma'am, I am sure you will, to put Lady L—— off quietly with any discreet excuse you may think best, about the girl falling sick, or the like. Her ladyship will get another maid soon enough, and may be Providence will send my girl another situation. I know you'll never repeat what passes here between you and me, to the injury of a poor family, and the annoyance of a great one; that is all that talking about it could serve for; but I know you won't, ma'am, and I'll tell you the story. I always think of it when I happen to be alone here, and no customers coming, as there are this evening."

I made the requisite protestations of silence and secrecy, for my woman's curiosity was roused, and however extraordinary it may seem, I have kept the said promises till now, when Johnson's family are gone to Australia, and himself to the other world. At the time, he was satisfied that I would keep them—there was a mutual alliance between the honest man and me; and after another look round the shop, and a declaration that they were all as ten inside, he spread his hands on the counter—which was Johnson's notion of solemnity—and proceeded with his tale, which I believe to be substantially true.

I was butler in the L—— family for nearly three years; I served them in town and country, and was more than once left in charge of the house. I had come with good recommendations from my last service in Lord Bristol's. I left them with the best of characters; but that was the last situation I ever had, or wanted. As you say of the present family, the L——s were liberal and considerate to their servants. They kept a large establishment, and everything on a grand, handsome scale, befitting a nobleman's house; but we down-stairs people made it out, it would be a long business to tell you how, that Lord L—— had as little to spare as any man in Belgravia. His father had raced and gamed with the wicked Lord Lyttelton; he had done likewise with Charles James Fox, and the rest of that set, in his youth, before he turned Tory: so there were mortgages on the estate; heavily encumbered they said it was, but would get clear perhaps in Master Vincent's time. He was the only son or child Lord and Lady L—— ever had; the Honourable Mr. L—— was his proper title now, for he was turned twenty-two, and going on his father's early courses, which, however, had been all over before he was born. At Newmarket, Epsom, and Ascot, he was the man for betting on horses and getting fleeced by blacklegs and jockeys. In gaming-houses and worse places, he was the boy for not going home till the morning; yet everybody liked Mr. Vincent, and wished him well. He was handsome, gay, and good-natured, as civil to the dustman as to my lord, ready to help every man, woman, or child who had got into trouble or distress, and never willing to let a servant sit up for him without paying him well. His father and mother saw no faults in him; he was their only son and heir, and they were too much occupied with business of their own to take notice of his ongoings. Lord L—— was entirely given up to politics of the Tory kind. I am not sure whether he thought he was saving the country, or that the ministry could not do without him, but morning, noon, and night, he was buzzing about the Conservative Club, getting letters and answering them, going to dinners and making speeches, receiving deputations in the library, talking with whippers-in, getting petitions signed, and when parliament was sitting, very nearly living in the House of Lords. Of course, his lady went on a different tack. She was what they call a leader of fashion, having no daughters to bring out and get married, Lady L—— brought out herself; and whether it was admirers she wanted, or a richer husband, after his lordship's death, none of her maids could be certain, but the West End milliners, jewellers, and hairdressers were for ever sending in parcels and bills, and nobody saw her ladyship in the same dress for two evenings together. She minded nothing else, to my knowledge, and the butler gets a pretty good understanding of all that goes on in the four corners of a house. The morning was spent in trying on, the afternoon in getting dressed, and in the evening Lady L—— received or went out in company. She was twenty years younger than her husband; but he was some way above sixty; and leading fashion must be hard work, for there wasn't a bit on her ladyship's bones, nor a dark hair in her head, if she had not shaved it all off, and worn a wig. But for constant enamelling, rouge, and pearl-powder, she would have been no beauty. In spite of the paint, the padding, and the everlasting parcels, she was not much of one; but these gentry never get things cleared up to them like common folks. Lord L—— went on from one year to another far busier than a bee with what he called his public life, and the wits at the club called him Lord Preamble and Old Red Tape. Lady L—— kept the milliners and herself up to it night and day; she said the world expected everything from a reigning belle; and her fashionable friends used to remark what efforts she made to forget her age and keep up her appearance.

They were both, as I have said, too much occupied with their own affairs to take notice of the rigs Mr. Vincent was running; but at last we all thought his mother had got a notion of them. Of the two, she was the fonder of her son. Whatever Lord L—— might have been in his youth, when they said he was so wild and gay, I suppose living in the House of Lords, and receiving deputations, had in a manner stupified him; for one might have carried off the dining-room and his lordship in it, if that had been possible, without his knowing anything about it, while he sat with his eyes half closed, droning away concerning the difficulties of the cabinet, and the coalitions that ought to be formed. I have learned those grand words with hearing them so often at the sideboard. But Lady L—— was of a quicker turn, and besides her business was a far more expensive one than his lordship's. In saving the country and keeping in the ministry, he spent nothing but his time, for which he had no other use, but her eternal parcels brought bills after them. The family had just enough to do in keeping up their style; the bills had not been paid for years, dunning-letters and messages were coming every day; and her ladyship generally went into hysterics once a quarter when they were particularly pressing. In short, Lady L—— 's debts were something past the common, and so were her son's. There was no use in letting his lordship know; beside his mortgaged estate and his great occupation, he had an uncommonly stiff temper of the cold hard kind and humdrum as he was, his livelier lady and son both stood in dread of him.

Such was the state of things when I came into their service. The valets and the lady's maid lived in the daily expectation of setting out with them to the continent, seeing the town-house closed, and the establishment broken up; but Lady L—— was a woman of wonderful management. There was at that time—you see it is thirty years ago—a man—I ought to say a gentleman, perhaps—living in C—— Square, whom they called Mr. Vanderholt. Some said he was a Jew, some said he was a Dutchman, but everybody agreed that there was not a richer man in the West End.

Mr. Vanderholt was publicly a banker and head of a solicitoring firm, who carried on business and sharp practice, it was said, in Craven Street, Strand; believed to be the moneyed and money-making man of several speculating companies; and supposed to be a money-lender in the quietest way, with exorbitant interest and sound security. On which of these accounts, or if it were for them all together, I cannot tell, but from fellow-butlers and footmen in the best houses, I learned that Mr. Vanderholt was to be seen at their finest balls and tip-top dinners He was a stout bald-headed man, somewhere about fifty-five, with a dark complexion, a hard steady face, and a harder manner of speaking. At the best table and among the finest company, he would have said anything in the way of taking people down, or telling his mind with a kind of a dry sneer. He wore no fashionable things, scarcely dressed well, was not particular in the use of soap and water; but a greater judge of good dinners and good wine there was not in all London. The most confident cooks stood in mortal fear of him; and ladies who at all affected housekeeping had no rest in their minds for a week before he came to dinner. It was my belief, the gentry, every one, hated him, yet he dined and drank wine, and made his dry remarks among them. The ladies disliked him particularly. He had never married, and never would, it was thought. His house in C—— Square was kept by a foreign housekeeper with a few servants, for he saw a little company at home. Lady L—— disliked him most of all: they said it was for some observations about paint and finery never concealing age; but I know that her ladyship never called Mr. Vanderholt anything in my first season of service but "that shocking old bore." You may judge, then, that there was a good deal of talk and speculation among us downstairs the week before the Derby-day, when a select dinner party was given at L—— House, and Mr. Vanderholt was one of the company. I had the honour of hearing him making his remarks on the dinner, the wine, and the ladies; in fact, on everything that came under his eye or taste, just as my acquaintances of other pantries and side-boards had told me. It is in my recollection how he informed Lord L—— that a thousand like him could not keep the ministry in their places, if there were any chance of them going out; and warned her ladyship that French white satin did not suit people getting into years. I saw her eyes flash fire. Lady L—— had a considerable temper and pride enough for Lucifer's eldest daughter, but she made believe to smile the next minute, though it was only a grin, and paid the stout, bald-headed, disagreeable man as much attention as if he had been the Duke of Wellington.

After that, they never had dejeuner, dinner, or ball that Mr. Vanderholt was not invited. He never made himself a whit more agreeable; yet her ladyship continued to show him uncommon civility, and always looked disappointed and out of sorts when he did not happen to come. It was the wonder among us servants what she could see in him; and Mr. Vincent appeared to be taken with the Jew or Dutchman quite as much as was his mother. We noticed that they drew together more since the duns began to come about them; but Lord L—— did not share in their fancy for Mr. Vanderholt. I heard him once say to her ladyship when she was issuing cards of invitation out of the back drawing-room: "Why on earth do you invite that vulgar creature?" and she gave him a long lecture about doing as the world did, and paying proper attention to people who had become fashionable, and were seen in the first society. I know they had other arguments on the subject, for Robinson the footman heard them. Mr. Vincent would not dispute with his father, but he helped Lady L—— in the entertaining of her favourite, and agreed with his lordship that the old man was a terrible bore. We couldn't make it out; but at last Lady L——'s maid—she was a Frenchwoman, keen and clever as they generally are, but a very respectable young person; you see I have no prejudices, ma'am, though they did say mademoiselle refused me, which wasn't true, for I never popped the question; my own Martha, that's now Mrs. Johnson, and I were keeping company; indeed, at the time, the French maid and I were good friends, and she told me one day that Mr. Vincent's debts, and her ladyship's, too, were all paid, but she couldn't tell what had become of the family diamonds which Lady L—— used to wear so constantly, and keep with such care. Her story proved to be true. The parcels began to come without bills or messages, the ill-looking men who came inquiring for Mr. Vincent were seen no more; neither were Lady L——'s diamonds; they were nearly all the jewels she had, and very valuable ones. I remember hearing Lord L—— ask her at breakfast one morning why she hadn't worn them at the Duchess of Manchester's ball the evening before. Her ladyship's colour could not change, thanks to the enamelling; but there was a quivering of great fear about her face, and she muttered something about diamonds not suiting her pink orafiane; and Mr. Vincent took his father off the subject by telling him about somebody in parliament who was believed to be ratting.

Every one of the L—— family went on his own way, as folks do in those great houses where there is room for the like. The seasons went on, too, with the goings out of town and the comings back, his lordship's politics, her ladyship's parcels, Mr. Vincent's bets, and other doings known to nobody but himself and his valet. But as the seasons went and came, Mr. Vanderholt went and came with them. They had him out at their seat in Devonshire for shooting; they had him back with a select company for private theatricals at Christmas; they had him at every party they gave in Belgrave Square; and we did not wonder, for it was plain how the debts had been paid, and where the money had been borrowed. One thing rather puzzled me and Robinson the footman, who, I must say, was clever at making matters out, and that was how Lady L—— happened to get her diamonds to wear once a month or so, till the French maid made me clear on it, for, said she, with a knowing look: "It's only vat you English call a loan."

It was about the beginning of my last season in the L—— service, and while things were in the state I have been telling you, that we began to notice a queer, bad-looking woman, who came inquiring for Lady L——, and was taken up the back-stairs by her maid. I knew mademoiselle did not like the look of her, and she couldn't—queer, and bad is the nearest account of it I can give you, ma'am. The woman was old and maybe she had been handsome in her young days, for it was a gipsy face, with very dark complexion, very black eyes, and very black hair, with a good deal of grey among it. She was tall and thin, had a hooked nose, a deep voice, and went mostly muffled up in a darkred or rather ash-coloured cloak. Robinson told me he had first seen her speaking to Lady L—— one day in Kensington Gardens, when she got out of the carriage, he believed in pure bad temper, because nobody in Rotten Row would pay proper attention to the new Indian shawl she had on. He said it was his belief the woman was a fortune-teller, and whatever she said to Lady L—— it put her at once in good-humour. They talked for some time under the trees, and all the words he could catch were getting out of trouble and being at the top of the tree. The queer woman had come five or six times, and had long talks with Lady L—— in her dressing-room. We thought her ladyship might have had something else to think of than getting her fortune told by an old gipsy, for Mr. Vanderholt had come two or three times lately, as it seemed by appointment, when Lord L—— was known to be at the club, and had been closeted with her and Mr. Vincent in the library. Robinson, too, going in on a quiet message one day after he was gone, heard the young man wish he had not taken those post obits, for the old knave would let it out some day, and his mother answered: "No, Vincent; I'll take care he shan't; it was for me ye did it as well as for yourself; it would be worse if Lord L—— knew about the diamonds, and he says this is the last loan of them I am to have." Robinson said he heard her groan at the end of that speech like a troubled ghost, if ever there was one; and he was sent the same evening, just before she went to dinner at Apsley House, with a note addressed to Mrs. Brewer, I forget where in the Seven Dials.

The day after, Lady L—— had been invited to a quadrille-party; a lace dress had been sent home for it, but she changed her mind, and would not go, lest her strength should be too far exhausted to entertain a company of select friends who were coming to dinner next day, and Mr. Vanderholt among them. People were to understand she had gone, however; her ladyship wished to spend that evening quietly in her own rooms. Lord L—— and Mr. Vincent were both out at different dinners; the French maid got leave to go and see a friend she had in one of the houses in Eaton Square; the rest of us were all downstairs doing very little; the house was dark and quiet—her ladyship did not like noise—and the London season was wearing to its end, the whole square was quiet too. I remember it was twilight. Lady L——'s dinner was to be served in her dressing-room, and I was taking it up, when I heard a knock at the back-door, and the voice of the old woman—I would have known it among a thousand—inquiring for her ladyship. She must have been on the watch, for downstairs she came like lightning, and stopped me with: "Don't bring up the dinner just yet, and bring that poor woman up to me in the dressing-room; she is an unfortunate creature, who comes to tell her family trials, and I have always an interest in the afflicted." It was the first time that every anybody learned that of Lady L——; but I did as I was ordered—laid aside my tray, and showed the old woman up to her dressing-room. I scarcely noticed it at the time, but it occured to my mind afterwards, that she was carrying something very like a bottle carefully hidden under her cloak. If she were telling of family trials, they were soon disclosed, for we never knew the old woman to stay so short a time. Robinson heard her say: "Good-night and good-fortune, your ladyship," and she came down stairs clinking money.

Next day, the select party were expected: they were not a large company, and no young people among them, but every one great judges of cookery and wine; so there was extra work in the kitchen, and I had to be particular in my bringings up from the cellar and pantry. Everything was nearly ready; the family had gone to dress for dinner; Robinson was at his post in the hall; I was in the dining-room settling the sideboard, and putting some choice wine Lord L—— had bought in the cooler. It was of a kind in high fashion then among Tory gentlemen, for Whigs and Tories were still going at the time. It came from Prince Metternich's vineyard, and they called it Johannisberg. Well, I was putting it in, when a foot came behind me; and to my astonishment, there was Lady L——, looking very flurried, and still in her morning-dress. "Johnson," said she, "do you see among those bottles one with a mark on the cork?"

"Yes, my lady," said I, after looking over them, and noticing one more than the number I had brought up, with a queer mark on the cork, which I could compare to nothing but the track of a sharp claw or nail dug into it.

"Very well, Johnson"—and she spoke almost in my ear—"when the cloth is removed, and the gentlemen are going to have their wine, you will draw that bottle, and set it by Mr. Vanderholt. Remember, it is for him, and no one else. He pretends to be such a judge of wine; and I wish to try—in fact, I have a wager on the subject—and you will take care that no one else gets that bottle. I will not forget it, if you help me to win my wager."

"I'll see that no one gets it, my lady," said I, thinking it very natural that she should wish to take the old fellow down a trifle from his conceit about wine; and saying "I will depend on you, Johnson," she ran upstairs to dress. I looked once more at the bottle, to make my eyes sure of it. The mark was a queer one; but there was nothing else, of either colour or appearance, to distinguish it from the rest of the wine; and somebody must have brought and placed it among the other bottles while I was out of the room. Her ladyship deserved credit for such a clever trick upon Vanderholt. Nobody but myself knew the secret; and I kept it, in hopes there would be a good laugh at him upstairs and down. The family got dressed; the company arrived; the cook and myself got creditably through the dinner; there was a great many new dishes; and even Vanderholt found no fault. I never saw the banker better satisfied, nor heard him say less disagreeable things. Neither did I ever see Lady L—— pay him more attention, or look in such high spirits herself. At last, the dinner was finished, the cloth was removed, and I set on the wine, taking special care to draw the marked bottle, and place it by Mr. Vanderholt. Fashions change, ma'am; and gentlemen don't drink quite so much now as they did thirty years ago. Being so long out of high life, I am not sure if every man's bottle is set by him as it was then at Lord L——'s. He said he was a Conservative, and liked to keep up old customs, and none of the company he had that evening appeared to dissent as concerned the Johannisberg. The ladies rose and retired to the drawing-room; the gentlemen tasted their wine, and pronounced it excellent, all but Mr. Vanderholt, who was talking so deeply with Mr. Vincent about a beautiful race-horse—the first time I ever heard him talk of the like—that he appeared to forget his bottle. Suddenly there was a noise in the square—a newsman proclaiming the state state of the poll at Lancaster; it was election time throughout the country—the parliament had been dissolved on account of the Reform Bill, I think. Lord L—— was up into the window in a great state of excitement; all the gentlemen, even Mr. Vincent, followed his example, and I also took the liberty of looking out; but Mr. Vanderholt sat still at the table, and as I turned in that direction, my eye caught the movement of his hands among the nearest bottles. I did not comprehend it till they were all sat down again, filling their glasses and talking over the Lancashire poll, which was not at all to their minds. Perhaps that made the wine go down quicker; and Mr. Vincent was drinking as fast as any of them, but it was out of the bottle with the marked cork. The old fellow had exchanged it for his while the rest were looking out, though he never appeared to have noticed cork or bottle. I, of course, could not interfere, could find no excuse for telling my lady, and stood in great fear of being blamed for foiling her scheme. I had resolved on taking the first opportunity to let her know, when I saw Mr. Vincent lay down his glass and rise from the table, with a hurried whisper to Vanderholt, who still sat next to him. The look of his face struck me as that of a man quite intoxicated, but he said as he passed me:—"Johnson, go and find my valet, if you can; send him to me in my own room, for I am not well;" and walked steadily out.

I ran to find the valet, sent him upstairs, and came back to my post, still looking for an excuse to the drawing-room; but while the company drank on, and I stood wondering what could be the matter with Mr. Vincent, a cry from his valet startled the whole house. Robinson and I were the first to rush into our young master's room, and there we found him lying on the bed, in strong but very quiet convulsions. The family doctor was sent for in all haste; but before he came, the convulsions had ceased, the face had turned perfectly blue, and Mr. Vincent had gone to his account.

I need not tell you of the horror and confusion in the house; everybody agreed that Lady L—— showed wonderful presence of mind, and made less noise than any of her guests, except Mr. Vanderholt. He and they went home as quickly as they could. I understand that the fright turned some of them very pious, but I never heard that it had any effect upon him. The family doctor made a great fuss at first, wanted to keep every person in the house, and analyse the wine they had been drinking; but when Lady L—— had talked to him a few minutes in the library, he gave up both intentions, and told us that Mr. Vincent's death had been caused by a sudden derangement of the vital functions. I never knew what that meant, till the newspapers, in their notice of his death, said that it was a spasm of the heart. But I knew too late what had been intended, and what part I had been made to take in it; and when the funeral was fairly over, I took the opportunity of my lady being alone in the drawing-room to go to her quietly, and ask my discharge. "You'll get it, Johnson, and an excellent character," said she, pulling out her purse. "Stop, my lady," said I, "what I did, was by your orders: had I known what it was, I would have put my hand in the fire rather than do it. The evil has fallen on you and yours, and for my own sake, I'll never publish it; but I'll take no money, my lady; it would burn my conscience."

She never uttered a word, but made me a sign to leave the room; and within the same hour the housekeeper gave me my proper wages and a first-rate certificate. Neither she nor any of my fellow-servants could ever make out why I left, or was sent away: I kept the story to myself, and did not frequent their company, lest they should poke into it. But before that season ended, the establishment was broken up, and the house in Belgrave Square let to a foreign nobleman. Lord L—— had got a knowledge of his lady's debts, and his poor son's too. Of course, the man who changed the bottles lost the post-obits; goodness knows if he counted on that when making the exchange. At any rate, he lived long after, was always rich, and in a manner courted by the West-end people: and they tell me there is a tablet in St. George's Church quite covered with his virtues. Lord and Lady L—— retired to their country-seat in Devonshire, a great old hall, and they lived in separate wings of it; but in the year after her son's death, Lady L—— had to be removed to a private asylum. I have heard that her fancy was a fear of being poisoned, and it made her half starve herself in spite of the doctors and keepers. She did not live long, and neither did Lord L——; so the title and estate passed to the present family about the time my Lizzie was born; and now you understand why I don't want her to go to service in that house. They are no relations, except by marriage, it's true; but, ma'am, I have seen Lady L—— riding in Rotten Row; she looks exactly like the last one; and Lizzie might get some such work to do as I got with the marked wine.

HUNTING THE WALRUS.

Some years ago I accepted the invitation of a friend to accompany him on a voyage to the frozen regions of Spitzbergen, for the purpose of hunting seal and walrus, he declaring that the sport *per se* had not its equal in the world, and he had hunted in the forests of Africa, in the jungles of Asia, among the mountains of Europe, and on the prairies of America.

I pass over the voyage, always an unpleasant thing to me, and more so in sailing to the dreary regions of eternal ice, and simply state that we reached our hunting locality about the first of June, and immediately set about the work we had in hand.

The walrus—or sea-elephant, as it is more properly termed—is an amphibious, carnivorous animal, as large and even larger than an ox about the body, from fifteen to twenty feet in length, is covered with short, yellowish hair, has a small head, somewhat human in appearance, with fierce looking eyes, savage bristle about the nose, and white ivory tusks growing downward to an average length of two feet. It swims in water from ten to twenty fathoms in depth,—breathes air, which it sucks in and blows out something like a whale—feeds on sand-worms, star-fish, shrimps, clams, cockles and sea weeds—often ploughs the bed of the ocean with its tusks in search of food, and suns itself and sleeps on flat cakes of floating ice.

In truth, it is while occupying these cakes of ice, that the walrus is generally discovered by the look-out from the mast-head of the cruising vessel, who immediately communicates the fact to the crew in waiting, when one or more boats, as the case may be, at once put off for the scene of slaughter.

These boats are peculiarly constructed, being some twenty-one feet in length, with five feet beam, bow-shaped at both ends, and with keel depressed in the centre, so that they may be quickly turned as if on a pivot.

On approaching a herd of walruses or seals, the harpooner stands in the bow, his weapon pointed and attached to a coil of rope fifteen fathoms long, this leuth being considered sufficient security against the danger of the animal diving suddenly after being struck. Sometimes another of the party stands ready with a rifle, and if it is found that the boat cannot approach near enough for the harpooner to strike, he selects a victim and fires. The greatest objection to this mode of killing either a seal or a walrus is, that the animal often eludes the grasp of the hunter even after being mortally wounded; for if the creature is in the water and shot dead, its specific gravity will carry it to the bottom before a boat can reach the spot; and if on a cake of ice, and not absolutely shot dead, it will flounder into the sea and escape. The only spot in the huge walrus where a rifle ball will instantly terminate life, is the brain; and as this occupies a space at the back of the head not larger than your fist, and as the boat is rocking and the ice rising and falling, the difficulty of hitting so small a mark at an uncertain distance will readily be perceived.

The most exciting sport is what is termed jaging, and the manner of it is this. Walruses generally move in herds, and it is a common thing to find a large flat cake of floating ice so perfectly packed and jammed with them that one overlaps another like hogs in a sty. In this manner they sun themselves and sleep, but with some of their number on the watch for danger. When aroused by an alarm, as is frequently the case on the approach of a boat, they will hurriedly tumble off into the water; and then with such a roaring, bellowing, snorting and splashing as would make a novice tremble, they will all dive together and make off for some safer locality. Now jaging is to follow with the boat in the direction they take, each man rowing with all his strength and skill, so as to be near enough when they rise for air to send the harpoon into the back of some old bull, who will not only tow the boat with great velocity, but will utter such sounds of fear and distress, as will bring all his comrades around to his defence. Then look out for your life! for these monsters when they do attack, are both formidable and ferocious; and should the line become entangled in paying out, or some daring fellow gets his tusks over the gunwale, the boat will probably be upset, an you will have reason to thank God if you ever see the inside of it again.

I had not been many days engaged in this sport, when an accident of this kind happened to us. Our harpooner had secured a junger, as the calf of the walrus is termed, and the moaning, plaintive cries of the little fellow rendered not only the mother perfectly frantic with fury, but the whole herd also; and as they gathered about us, leaping half out of the water, lashing the sea into a perfect foam, roaring, bellowing and gnashing their teeth, their scowling, grinning faces, with their piercing bloodshot eyes, resembling what the mind conceives of demons of the infernal regions, I shuddered at the horrible sight, and secretly wished myself a hundred leagues away. Suddenly, while we were all busy with our harpoons, spears and boat-hooks, slaying both for gain and self defence, I heard a terrible crash, a wild shriek, and found myself struggling in the icy water, in the very midst of the maddened herd. Our boat had been leaped upon by an old bull, stove in, and sunk, and here we were in the water, wholly unarmed and defenceless, at the mercy of these infuriated beasts, not another boat in sight, and our vessel distant at least three English miles. Can you conceive a more horrible situation?

Though taken so completely by surprise and terribly frightened, as I am free to admit, I fortunately retained sufficient presence of mind to make the best effort possible for my life. There was an ice-floe within two hundred yards, and my only hope was to reach that. I struck out vigorously, and though a remarkably fast swimmer, was passed within ten yards by one of the seamen.

'Ah! God help us!" he ejaculated, looking over his shoulder.

The next moment, to my utter horror, I saw him seized by a huge walrus and dragged under the water. He threw up his hands as he went down, and uttered a cry of such mental and physical agony as I can never forget. I was obliged to pass over the spot where he disappeared, and as I did so I saw the water discolored with his blood. The whole scene, with this for a climax, sickened and made me faint; but remembering a similar fate might be mine at any moment, I felt my strength renewed by my fears, and pulled forward with great vigor.

Chilled to the very bone and nearly exhausted, I had almost reached the floating ice—upon which I hoped for temporary rest, and escape from the horrid monsters, even should I subsequently perish—when suddenly a huge beast appeared beside me, and the next moment I was seized and dragged under myself. I remember going down, with a wild roaring in my ears, a sense of suffocation, and a sort of consciousness that all was over. A short period of oblivion must have followed, for my next recollection is of floundering in the water alongside a boat, of seeing human figures above me like shadows, and hearing human voices in quick, excited tones. Then a period of strange confusion followed, during which I seemed to be roughly handled, but whether by man or beasts I could not tell, and then came another period of oblivion.

When I again returned to consciousness, I found myself lying on the ground before a roaring fire, the warmth of which felt very grateful. Two of the rescued boat's crew were standing close beside me. I looked up wonderingly in their faces, and feebly inquired where I was. In reply they briefly informed me of all that had occurred since our first immersion. At the moment our boat was stove, another of our boats was just rounding the angle of an ice-berg, about a quarter of a mile distant; and perceiving our misfortune, the crew of this at once rowed to our assistance. Two of my four companions had been killed, and these two saved, and I had been picked up in an exhausted state, after having once been dragged to the bottom by a cow-walrus, whose tusks had given me some flesh wounds, but had not otherwise injured me. Fearing that I might perish, they made for a small Island, and built the fire before which I lay. They then put back to the scene of the disaster, to recover what they might of the floating wreck, and perhaps the bodies of the dead.

In about half an hour the boat returned with some of our lost tackle, spears, harpoons, boat-hooks, and other articles, but without the remains of the two unfortunate seamen who had disappeared for ever. By this time I was able to sit up, and all congratulated me on my narrow escape, though much in the manner I should have rejoiced with one of them at his finding a lost purse. I saw the terrible affair had not made the same impression on them as as on me—that with them it was rather an unfortunate occurrence in the way of business, which might be looked for any time, and frequently did happen, and that the loss of the boat and the walruses entered about as much into their grief as that of their comrades. And yet these were not men devoid of feeling, but only persons whose keener sensibilities had been blunted by a life of constant hardship, vicissitude and peril.

'Yo-ho! a bear on the ice!" was the exciting cry which drew every thought from the painful calamity to fix it on sport and profit; and away bounded the crew for their boat, which in less than a minute was plowing the glassy waters, and heading towards a distant ice-floe, upon which the naked eye could barely see perceive a peculiar speck, but which the telescope of the lookout had proved to be a large polar bear.

These white bears of the Northern Ocean prey upon the seal and walrus, and in turn become the prey of the seal and walrus hunters, being valuable for their hides, oil, and meat. Though having probably no particular choice between the food of the seal and walrus, yet either instinct or experience, or perhaps both, teaches Bruin that the former, though wary and shy, is the safest to attack—for among a herd of the latter he may be torn to pieces, as some of his friends, relations, or companions have been before his eyes. Therefore, on the look out for the seal, he no sooner sees Monsieur Phoca crawling upon the edge of an ice-floe for a short nap, then he plunges into the water and swims off to him, taking care to move without noise, to keep to the leeward, to show a small portion of his head, and to dive this under if he fancies his prey looking towards him. In this manner, if he can get close up under the edge of the ice without being perceived, a sudden spring and a powerful blow of his mighty paw will generally place the seal in his power, though sometimes the latter escapes even after that, and the hungry bear has all his labor for nothing.

Sometimes, planting himself on a floating cake of ice, as in the case just mentioned, Mr. Bruin will set off on a voyage of discovery; but a light walrus-boat, propelled by five skillful oarsmen, will frequently overhaul him, and a good rifleman put him hors de combat at the first fire.

In about three hours our boat came back with the captured bear, and the whole crew were in high spirits. As we were all ready by this time to return to the vessel, we hastened to jump into the little craft; but before it could be again pushed from the island, we found ourselves enveloped in one of those sudden mists for which that icy region is so remarkable. It is not an uncommon thing for a boat's crew, and even a vessel, to be lost in one of these fogs.

Luckily our boat had returned to us, and we were on an island, with plenty of provisions and fuel, when this fog enveloped us—for against our anxiety and impatience, it lasted three days and nights.

At last we got back to our vessel, to report our misfortune, and resume our occupation as if nothing had happened—for such is the wild, exciting life of the walrus-hunter.

A LION AT PLAY.—The *African*, of Constantina, states that as a woodcutter was lately proceeding from St. Charles to Gastonville he suddenly saw crouched in the road before him an enormous lion. Seized with terror he turned round and ran off, when the lion pursued and went past him, and on reaching a certain distance in advance again lay down, as if to await the man's approach. The man again turned round and went back; the lion once more rushing beyond him, and lying down. This manœuvre was repeated by the animal several times, when the man at length fell to the ground, exhausted by fright and fatigue. The lion then approached him, and after examining him from head to foot walked off with a friendly roar, as if expressive of its pleasure at the trick it had played him. The man was confined to his bed for some days after.

SIX RAINBOWS AT ONCE.—The editor of the Marquette News says that just as the force of a recent shower at that place was spent, the sun looked out from behind the clouds, when a brilliant rainbow spanned the heavens, then a second, then a third, a fourth, a fifth, and finally a sixth one; all of them in regular gradation from the inner, which was a mere line, to the outer, which was of great breadth and magnitude.

This notice was lately posted on the estate of an English nobleman in Kent:

"Notice is hereby given that the Marquis of —— (on account of the backwardness of the season), will not shoot himself nor any of his tenants till after the 16th of September!"