

'Do you call that music?' asked Agnes, laughing. 'And yet,' continued she, 'it is most truly so, with his rich Pasta-like voice, and his fine sense of sound; and to you, who do not greatly love poetry for its own sake, it is doubtless a pleasure much resembling in kind that of hearing the most thrilling of melodies on the noblest of instruments. I myself have felt such a gratification in hearing that voice recite the voices of Homer or of Sophocles in the original Greek. Charles Woodford's reading is music.'

'It is a music which you are neither of you likely to hear here again,' interrupted Mr. Molesworth, advancing suddenly towards them: 'for he has been ungrateful, and I have discarded him.'

Agnes stood as if petrified: 'Ungrateful! oh father!'

'You can't have discarded him, to be sure, papa,' said Jessy, always good natured; 'poor Charles! what can he have done?'

'Refuse your hand, child,' said the angry parent; 'refused to be my partner and son-in-law, and fallen in love with another lady! What have you to say for him now?'

'Why, really, papa,' replied Jessy, 'I'm much more obliged to him for refusing my hand than to you for offering it. I like Charles very well for a cousin, but I should not like such a husband at all; so that if this refusal be the worst that has happened, there's no great harm done.' And off the gipsy ran, declaring that 'she must put on her habit, for she had promised to ride with Sir Edmund and his sister, and expected them every minute.'

The father and his favourite daughter remained in the conversatory.

'That heart is untouched, however,' said Mr. Molesworth, looking after her with a smile.

'Untouched by Charles Woodford, undoubtedly,' replied Agnes, 'but has he really refused my sister?'

'Absolutely.'

'And does he love another?'

'He says so, and I believe him.'

'Is he loved again?'

'That he did not say.'

'Did he tell you the name of the lady?'

'Yes.'

'Is she worthy of him?'

'Most worthy.'

'Has he any hopes of gaining her affections?'

'Oh! he must! he must! What woman could refuse him?'

'He is determined not to try. The lady whom he loves is above him in every way; and much as he has counteracted my wishes, it is an honourable part of Charles Woodford's conduct, that he intends to leave his affection unsuspected by its object.'

Here ensued a short pause in the dialogue, during which Agnes appeared trying to occupy herself with collecting the blossoms of a Cape jessamine and watering a favourite geranium; but it would not do; the subject was at her heart, and she could not force her mind to indifferent occupations. She returned to her father, who had been anxiously watching her notions and the varying expression of her countenance and resumed the conversation.

'Father! perhaps it is hardly maidenly to avow so much, but although you have never in set words told me your intentions, I have yet seen and known. I can hardly tell how, all that your too-kind partiality towards me has designed for your children. You have mistaken me, dearest father, doubly mistaken me; first, in thinking me fit to fill a splendid place in society; next, in imagining that I desired such splendour. You meant to give Jessy and the lucrative partnership to Charles Woodford, and designed me and your large possessions to my wealthy and titled neighbour. And with some little change of persons these arrangements may still for the most part hold good. Sir Edmund may still be son-in-law and your heir, for he loves Jessy and Jessy loves him. Charles Woodford may still be your partner and your adopted son, for nothing has changed that need diminish your affection or his merit. Marry him to the woman he loves. She must be ambitious indeed if she be not content with such a destiny. And let me live on with you, dear father, single and unwedded, with no thought but to contribute

to your comfort, to cheer and brighten your declining years. Do not let your too great fondness for me stand in the way of their happiness! Make me not so odious to them and to myself; dear father! Let me live always with you, and for you—always your own poor Agnes! And, blushing at the earnestness with which she had spoken, she bent her head over the marble basin, whose waters reflected the fair image, as if she really had been the Grecian statue to which, whilst he listened, her fond father's fancy had compared her: 'Let me live single with you, and marry Charles to the woman whom he loves.'

'Have you heard the name of the lady in question? Have you formed any guess who she may be?'

'Not the slightest. I imagined from what you said that she was a stranger to me. Have I ever seen her?'

'You may see her—at least you may see her reflection in the water, at this very moment; for he has had the infinite presumption, the admirable good taste, to fall in love with his Cousin Agnes!'

'Father!'

'And now, my own sweetest! do you still wish to live single with me?'

'Oh, Father! father!'

'Or do you desire that I should marry Charles to the woman of his heart?'

'Father! dear father!'

'Choose, my Agnes! It shall be as you command. Speak freely. Do not cling so round me, but speak!'

'Oh, my dear father! Cannot we all live together? I cannot leave you. But poor Charles—surely, father, we may all live together!'

And so it was settled; and a very few months proved that love had contrived better for Mr. Molesworth than he had done for himself. Jessy, with her prettiness and her title, and her sopperies, was the very thing to be vain of—the very thing to visit for a day;—but Agnes, and the cousin whose noble character and splendid talents so well deserved her, made the pride and the happiness of his home.

FROM BERNARD'S RETROSPECTIONS OF THE STAGE.

'Sheridan sometimes brought Fox with him: they were then another Damon and Pythias. Of the comparisons that were instituted between these gentlemen in public, I pretend to no opinion; but in society no two men could present a greater contrast. The 'Champion of the people' appeared to be the stupidest person at the table, till he had imbibed his bottle, and then he woke up, to put the whole room to silence with his laughter; whilst Sheridan kept firing and blazing away for the evening, like an inexhaustible battery.

'Fox had all the taste for this society, but not the talents, no man could be more affable, or more completely satisfied with his company. If he did not throw fuel on the flame, he enjoyed all its light and heat; if he spoke not till he was spoken to, he evidently felt and understood every good thing that was said, by the nature of his applause, which was a lengthened roar, in no bad imitation of thunder. From this latter peculiarity, combined with the truly John Bull Characteristics of his face and figure, I should certainly have taken him for an alderman of the old school, had we not been introduced.

'Sheridan, I observed, never exerted himself so palpably as when Fox was present: there was a perceptible effort on these occasions, which implied he had a higher object in view than that which the society usually afforded. It struck me, however, that his spontaneous sallies were equally successful.

'Sheridan was not, in the truest sense of the word a convivialist; he had no *bonhomie*, or what an Englishman understands by the word—good-humour; he was a satirist, and fonder of detecting the follies of his companions than admiring their talents or virtues. In lieu of good humour, he had great rancour. He went into society, not to sympathize with even clever men, out to find an audience. He required to be the centre of the circle; he seldom laughed, but in the manner of Sir Archy M'Garcasm; and he could only talk under the excitement of the general attention: so that he secured this attention, I don't think he was particular as to the grade of his companions (provided they were not fools); but his comparative coldness and indifference to the general sources of merriment, his evident absorption in himself, led me to think that he did not come among us in the way of other men, but

rather to play a part, in which he concerted his startling brilliancies, and derived his gratification solely from the effect they produced.

'His wit, with all the effervescence and pop of champagne, had undoubtedly too often the sour sharpness of cider. I have heard it rather happily compared to a steel, which is polished and pointed—and to an icicle, which is pointed also, but cold and glittering. I think that, personally, he bore the most resemblance to a torpedo, which can electrify without being electrified.

'After Sheridan, Fox used to be most pleased with Charles Bannister, whose quiet and sustained humour contrasted strongly with the sudden flashings of the manager's wit. It was the difference of daylight and lightning. One evening, I remember, Fox was seated between Sheridan and Bannister, and did nothing but fill their glasses and listen to their conversation, whilst they, making his head a kind of shuttlecock, hit it on each side with such admirable repartees, that he roared aloud like a bull.'

ANECDOTE OF BRUCE.—One day, while he was at the house of a relation in East Lothian, a gentleman present bluntly observed, that it was impossible that the natives of Abyssinian could eat raw meat! Bruce said not a word; but, leaving the room, he shortly returned with a piece of raw beefsteak, peppered and salted in the Abyssinian fashion. 'You will eat that sir, or fight me,' he said. When the gentleman had eaten up the raw flesh, (most willingly would he have eaten his own words instead,) Bruce calmly observed, 'Now sir, you will never again say it is impossible.' Single-speech Hamilton was Bruce's first cousin and intimate friend. One evening, at Kianaird, he said, 'Bruce, to convince the world of your power of drawing you need only draw us now something in as good a style as those drawings of yours which they say have been done for for by Balgani, your Italian artist.' 'Gerard,' replied Bruce, very gravely, 'you made one fine speech, and the world doubted its being your own composition; but, if you will stand up now here, and make another speech as good, we shall believe it to have been your own.'—*Family Library, No. 17: Life of Bruce.*

PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICA.—It may serve our purpose to allege, in general, that the progenitors of the Indian tribes emigrated from the northeast parts of Asia to the northwest parts of America, and thence gradually spread themselves over that great continent. At what time this emigration began it is needless to inquire, and impossible to ascertain. It is not unreasonable to believe, that families or tribes performed the passage at different periods and at different places. Savages are often carried to great distances in their frail barks. The islands of the South Sea, although widely separated from each other, are mostly inhabited; and the person who thoroughly understands the language of any one island is seldom at a loss to hold communication with the natives of any other, which proves that these people are all of one common stock, and that the period of their settlement in the Islands is not very remote. In this inquiry the Indians can give us no assistance; for, of their own history, beyond the traditionary records of two or three generations, they know nothing, and the strange notion which some of them entertain of their origin need not surprise us. According to the unambitious belief of the Osages, a people living on the banks of one of the lower tributaries of the Missouri, they are sprung from a snail and a beaver. The Mandans believe their ancestors once lived in a large village under ground, near a subterranean lake; that, by means of a vine tree, which extended its roots to their cheerless habitation they got a glimpse of the light; that, informed by some adventurers, who had visited the upper world, of the numerous buffaloes pasturing on the plains, and of the trees loaded with fruits, the whole nation, with unanimous consent began to ascend the roots of the vine; but that, when about half of them had reached the surface, a corpulent woman climbing up broke the roots by her weight; that the earth closed, and concealed forever from those below the cheering beams of the sun. From a people who entertain such fanciful notions of their origin, no valuable information concerning their early history can be expected.—*Cabinet Cyclopaedia. History of the Western world.*