

band in a very extraordinary manner, compressing the wrist between the thumb and finger. In a moment he dropped it, and said, 'My name is probably known to you and Mr Stanfield, altho' my person is not. I am Sir Walter Tudor and the world has imputed to me some skill in surgery. Three months ago I was staying in your neighborhood and received a letter from a lady requesting a private interview with me. I complied—the place of meeting was at an hotel in Westford—the lady was Mrs Stanfield. She informed me that she wished to consult me on the state of her health, and that she had an important reason for declining to acquaint any medical man in the vicinity with her illness, this reason Mr. Stanfield, was her consideration for the feelings of her husband, who was, she said, so nervous and apprehensive, that where he acquainted with half her symptoms, he would deem them to be indicative of some fatal disorder. Happy should I have been to inform her that she had no reason for uneasiness, but it was my painful task to tell her that the symptoms of which she spoke were likely to increase, and that in the course of two months it would be necessary that she should undergo a painful and dangerous operation.'

Here the penitent husband uttered a smothered exclamation of horror and grief, but the surgeon, who evidently regarded him with more disdain than sympathy, did not stop to reassure him, but proceeded regularly in his narrative.

Mrs Stanfield received this intelligence with unexampled fortitude; she promised to write to me from time to time to acquaint me with the state of her health, and desired me to send my answers under cover to her own maid, that the secrecy might be preserved, which she considered of so much importance. At length the period drew near for which I had prepared her, and to my great surprise she wrote word to me that it was her intention to come privately to London with no attendant but her own maid, and to undergo the operation without the knowledge of her husband and friends. I deemed it my duty to write to her, remonstrating with her on this extraordinary measure, and telling her how much at such a trying time, she would need the comforts of home, and the consolations of the society of her family. She was, however, resolved upon the project; no consolation, she wrote to me, could be so great to her mind as that of feeling that her husband was spared the pangs of knowing her present suffering, and anticipating her future danger. 'If,' she continued, 'you consider me in a precarious state after the operation is over, it will be time enough to write to my husband; I shall at least have saved him many weeks of sorrow; if, on the contrary, I recover, and return home in health, how delightful it will be to tell him the whole that has happened, and to receive his thanks for my consideration for his feelings.'

Sir Walter Tudor here paused a moment, and directing a searching glance to Mr Stanfield, which I am concerned to say that gentleman had not courage to meet.

'I then,' he continued, 'ceased my opposition, and Mrs Stanfield, attended only by her faithful and affectionate servant, removed to these apartments shortly after her arrival in London. Ten days ago the destined operation was performed, and never, Mr Stanfield, has it been my lot to witness, among those who have been sustained and encouraged by the presence and attentions of their nearest and dearest friends such fortitude and powers of endurance as were displayed by your wife in herself seclusion and desolation. She rapidly recovered greatly owing to her happy disposition and firm mind; and I had just been telling her that in a very short time I should consider her sufficiently restored to health to return home, and cheerfully congratulating her that her trials were over. How little, alas! did I conjecture that her worst trial was to come, that she was to undergo mental tortures far more painful than the bodily sufferings to which she had been subjected, and that her generous disregard of self, and kind anxiety to spare the feelings of her husband, would be made the ground work of an accusation against her truth and honor! Fearing that in her present weak state the task of vindicating her aspersed character might be too much for her, I have taken upon myself to relate this simple narrative of facts, and will leave it to herself to pronounce the pardon of those whose injurious suspicions have so deeply wronged her.'

Miss Sowerby had sat perfectly im-

movable during his narrative, looking just like an evil fairy, whose spell has been suddenly destroyed by the superior influence of a good one; she had never, in the memory of the oldest inhabitant of Westford, kept silence for so long a time before. Mr Stanfield usually reserved and taciturn, now became suddenly wordy, if not eloquent.

He implored his wife to forgive his unjust suspicions and concluded by malignantly playing the part of king's evidence, showing up Miss Sowerby as the original contriver and instigator of his journey to London, and earnestly attempting to convince his dear Sophia that he ought to be blamed very little, because the malicious spinster, who had deceived and misled him, deserved to be blamed much more. Mrs Stanfield, who was not quite perfect, although very near it, looked rather coldly at her husband when he was uttering his apology; soon, however she reflected that as he did not possess a strong mind and good qualities, he was not so accountable for his conduct as if he had been endowed with these gifts—that, in effect, it was his feeble and inert character, which had rendered her plea of secrecy necessary, and that his recent fear of the loss of her affections, was but another branch of the thousand and one misgivings and doubts respecting her health, spirits, and tranquility, which had been a source of passing annoyance to her ever since her marriage, accordingly she graciously accorded to him her pardon, and Miss Sowerby, encouraged by the sight of the olive-branch extended to a fellow-culprit, began piteously to request that 'dear Mrs Stanfield would be as good as not to punish her by withdrawing her friendship from her, but would continue to think the same of her as before.'

'I am willing to grant you your requests Miss Sowerby,' said Mrs Stanfield, with somewhat of her former animation; 'I cannot withdraw my friendship from you, because you never possessed it; and I am willing to think the same of you as ever, because I always believed you capable of wantonly aspersing the character of your fellow creatures, although I never till now had an opportunity of knowing on how slight a foundation you could raise the edifice of calumny. I need not inflict any punishment on you, because you have one in store for yourself; not that of a reproving conscience—the conscience of the slanderer is generally tolerably seared and hardened—but you have failed in your endeavors to injure and disgrace me; this will be the first part of your punishment, and the second will be, that you will be universally ridiculed for your disappointment. I am not going to read you a homily, Miss Sowerby; none, I believe, systematically break the ninth commandment who would not upon temptation break any of the others, and it must be a higher power than mine that can reform a mind so evil in its ways. Let me, however give you some advice on the score of policy if not of principle. When next you endeavor to blight the fair fame of a neighbour, take care that you do not, like the hero of La Mancha, mistake windmills for giants; let your assurance, be doubly sure of his guilt proclaim it to the world; and do not content yourself with planning four acts of a tragedy, unless you can certainly foresee the melancholy catastrophe of the fifth, lest, as in the present case, it be suddenly converted into a comedy, setting forth the mistakes and mortifications of those scandalizing ladies who adopt the hazardous measures of 'Acting upon Suspicion.'

From the New York Mirror.

TIME'S SOLILOQUY.

Old! call you me? Ay, when the Almighty spoke creation into birth, I was there. Then was I born. 'Mid the bloom and verdure of Paradise I gazed upon the young world, radiant with celestial smiles. I rose upon the pinions of the first morn, and caught the first dew drops as they fell, and sparkled upon the bowers of the garden. Ere the foot of man was heard sounding in the wilderness, I gazed upon its thousand rivers, flashing in light, and reflecting the broad sun, like a thousand jewels, upon their bosoms. The cataracts sent up their antheims in those solitudes, and none was here to listen to their melody but I. The fawns bounded over the hills, and drank at the limpid streams, ages before an arm was raised to injure or make them afraid. For thousands of years the morning star rose in beauty upon these unpeopled shores and its twin sister of the eye flamed in the forehead of the sky, with no eyes to admire their rays but mine. Ay! call me, call me old! Babylon and Assyria—Palmyra and Thebes, rose, flourished and fell, and I beheld them in their glory and their decline. Scarce a melancholy rain marks the place of their existence; but when their first stones were laid in the earth, I was there! 'Mid all their splendour, glory and wickedness, I was in their busy streets, and crumbling their magnificent piles and their gorgeous palaces to the earth. My books will show a long and fearful account against them! I control the fate of empires: I give their period of glory and splendor: but at their birth I conceal in them

the seeds of death and decay. They must go down and be humbled in the dust; their proud heads bowed down before the rising glories of young nations, to whose prosperity there will also come a date and a day of decline. I poise my wing over the earth, and watch the course and doings of its inhabitants. I call up the violets upon the walls and crumble the grey ruins to the ground. I am the agent of a higher power, to give life and take it away. I spread alike tresses upon the brow of the young, and plant grey hairs upon the brow of the aged man. Dimples and smiles at my bidding lurk around the lips of the innocent child, and I frown the brow of the aged with wrinkles. Old! you call me? Ay! but when will my days be numbered? When will the earth and its waters, and the universe be rolled up, and a new world commence its revolution. Not till he who first bid me begin my fight so orders it. When his purposes, who called me into being, are accomplished; then, and not till then—and no one can proclaim the hour—I too shall go to the place of all living.

From the London Metropolitan, for December.

THE PLAGUE

But now a question arose, that absorbed all other feelings in the one interest that pervaded the garrison. An awful rumor was in mysterious circulation. Men clustered together in corners, and conversed in grave whispers, suddenly breaking off their discourse when joined by a new comer, or effecting obstreperous mirth, to hide the apprehensions that was daily growing more apparent.

Families were abruptly departing from the Rock, some to England, and—though it was by no means safe on account of the war—some into Spain—or failing vessels home, even to the Mediterranean.

The doctors were observed to be stealthily alert, and affectively idle. Looks were responded to by looks, and each seemed fearful of fashioning his thoughts into speech. Daily the parades grew less formal, and all duties, not absolutely necessary to the good order of the garrison, were fast falling into disuse. The officers were no longer seen promenading in merry groups. Parties were abolished—the soldiers were close to their barracks—mirth had fled—business was suspended—the shops were closed—the merchant's stores shut up—the streets become silent as the grave—and desolation was fast spreading itself over the place of doom.

Then came the appointment of lazarettos to receive the sick—the drafting of regiments for volunteers, to the most dangerous duties—those were selected from among the soldiers who had served in the West Indies, or on the Rock during a season of epidemic fever. Then houses were placed under the surveillance of sentries; next, whole streets were barricaded; and finally concealment was at an end; the port was closed, the yellow flag was hoisted, the dock became a place of quarantine, and the presence of the plague was speedily declared.

Who can speak the horror of that single sentence? Not even those who have partaken the sufferings of a place so visited—how little then can others comprehend all the fearful contingencies attendant upon that horrible announcement?

Henceforth the vessels arriving from other ports, warned by fatal signal, steered wide of the harbor, communicating only distantly with the depot ships of war lying off the New Mole, under the command of Rear Admiral Fleming, and then passed away in terror of every breeze that swept across their decks.

Letters to England were forbidden, the Rock paper was circulated jealously, and its details could no longer be relied on—the progress of the war had lost its engrossing interest, and upon the single point where all minds concentrated the reports were every way delusive—hopes were held forth that had no foundation—not half the number of cases recorded, and no death that could by possibility be kept concealed. Such was the danger to be apprehended from spreading the alarm, which in spite of all precautions acted only too powerfully as a most insidious assistant to the incursions of the disease.

And soon, instead of being a journal of incidental occurrences, the Rock paper became only a vehicle for the transmission of garrison regulations. Female attendants were no longer to be had in any capacity; washerwoman and nurses abandoned their duties, and could neither be bribed nor threatened into their performance. Delicate hands were dedicated to the most servile and laborious occupations and each family became a separate community, holding no intercourse with the rest, except such as were passed through the momentary interchange of a few words conveyed by the conductors of the provision carts, by whom stores were daily deposited in baskets placed at spots appointed for the purpose.

The only circumstances that interrupted the solemn stillness of the place where the transits of such carts, or of others devoted to more mournful duties. The course of that appointed for the conveyance of the

sick to the public lazarettos was often marked by the wailings of the dying, or the shrieks of the newly smitten, who were forcibly torn from their distracted relatives, in all probability to die among hospital fire-lings, and to be hurled without distinction of rank or sex, into those dreadful capacious pits on the neutral ground—to serve as the common receptacle of all persons suspected to have died of the pestilence, in each of which at the least fifty uncoffined bodies were huddled and heaped together.

The separation of infected members from their families was a measure considered essential to stop the course of infection, but it could only be practised when one person in a household suffered; in these cases, however, it was so abhorrent to the feelings of the people generally, that the doctors were continually assailed by the most heart piercing entreaties to secrete the fact of such cases—and failing in their prayers, many persons have been known wilfully to incur the infection, so that by a family quarantine, they might be suffered to remain shut up together in their homes, to the chances of recovery or death.

When the spread of the infection rendered the calamity more general, the removal to lazarettos, except in very peculiar circumstances, became of necessity abandoned. And during this period there was scarcely a family on the Rock, from whose history could not be selected, among the women especially, instances of courage, of beautiful attachment, of enduring constancy, of self-abnegation and intrepidity, that would have adorned the annals of past ages.

Perhaps, of all the circumstances attendant on that awful visitation, none was more terrible than the frightful rapidity with which burial followed death.

The necessity of the measure could not be disputed—but the occasional results were truly horrible to reflect upon.

The passages of the death carts were unintermitting day and night: the solemn rumble might continually be distinguished; and though the conductors did not, as in some places in times of plague, summon the survivors to bring out their dead, the celerity with which they appeared in the chambers of the scarcely breathless,—unceremoniously hustling the beloved departed into a coffin that was destined to bear numbers only to the brink of the grave, from which, except by special favor, it was there to be cast into its nauseous resting place, were details sufficiently revolting to the feelings of the survivors.

Nor was this unhalloved burial, where no prayers consecrated the repose of the departed the only circumstance that harrowed the sorrows of the mourners. There was yet a fearful question, which had, in several cases, been but too awfully answered, that paralyzed them with terror then, and formed the subject of painful doubt to many for the remainder of their lives—

Was the buried dead?

The terror of a living burial appears to be indigentous to the human mind—how many record their fears on the face of their last testament!—To how many injunctions does that single apprehension give rise! Even death itself loses its hideousness in comparison with the horrible suggestion of recovering sensation and memory in the grave! and what a grave was their? who could venture to portray such an awakening? The human mind would break down, and reason itself be frightened from her throne, were we steadily to contemplate the position of a victim restored to consciousness in the midst of such a charnel pit of villainess and corruption.

WAS THE BURIED DEAD?

Thou wert wise! thou wert good! thou wert loved!

With my name all my hopes were entwined, And each day but more tenderly proved, How my life in thy life was enshrined, But the light has gone out from thine eye, And thine odorous breathings are shed, Now while to awake thee I try, They rudely exclaim, thou art dead!

Thou wert prized as the one precious gem, And my heart was the casket for thee! Yet new I am plundered by them, And they bear my rich treasure from me: They wait not for coffin or shroud, They heed not the tears that I shed, But they hustle thee off with the crowd, And can it be true thou art dead?

Thou wert good! yet no requiem nor bell, Denotes the sad passage of worth, And no shuddering mourner may tell, How they flung thee like filth in the earth: Death with horrors hath heaped thee around, Corruption now pillows thy head, They have piled up that dread cavern's bound, And now must I pray thou art dead.

Couldst thou wake in that pestilent grave To know where thou art left to decay, To struggle, to battle, to rave, 'Midst the dead as thou gapest thy way, Thou wouldst tear out thine heart in affright; Thy wisdom, thine intellect fled, Couldst thou creep through that death slime to light, Affection would wish thou wert dead.