

the wildest terror and despair. As soon as she could speak coherently she implored the governor with frantic earnestness to send for me. As this was not only quite useless in the opinion of that official but against the rules, the prisoner's request was not complied with. The chaplain, however thinking it might be as well that I should know of her desire to see me, had of his own accord sent me this note. He thought that possibly the sheriffs would permit me to have a brief interview with the condemned prisoner in the morning, if I arrived sufficiently early; and although it could avail nothing as regarded her fate in this world, still it might perhaps calm the frightful tumult of emotion by which she was at present tossed and shaken, and enable her to meet the inevitable hour with fortitude and resignation.

It was useless to return to bed after receiving such a communication, and I forthwith dressed myself, determined to sit up and read, if I could, till the hour at which I might hope to be admitted to the jail should strike. Slowly and heavily the dark night limped away, and as the first rays of the cold wintry dawn reached the earth, I sallied forth. A dense brutal crowd were assembled in front of the prison, and hundreds of well dressed sight-seers occupied the opposite windows, morbidly eager for the rising of the curtain upon the mournful tragedy about to be enacted. I obtained admission without much difficulty, but till the arrival of the sheriffs, no conference with the condemned prisoners could be possibly permitted. Those important functionaries happened on this morning to arrive unusually late, and I paced up and down the paved corridor in a fever of impatience and anxiety. They were at last announced, but before I could, in the hurry and confusion, obtain speech of either of them, the dismal bell tolled out, and I felt with a shudder that it was no longer possible to effect my object.

'Perhaps it is better so,' observed the reverend Chaplain in a whisper. 'She has been more composed for the last two or three hours, and is now, I trust, in a better frame of mind for death.' I turned, sick at heart, to leave the place, and in missing the right way, came directly in view of the terrible procession. Jane Eccles saw me, and a terrific scream, followed by frantic heartrending appeals to me to save her, burst with convulsive efforts from her white quivering lips. Never will the horror of that moment pass from my remembrance. I staggered back as if every spasmodic word struck me like a blow; and then, directed by one of the turnkeys, sped in an opposite direction as fast as my trembling limbs could carry me—the shrieks of the wretched victim, the tolling of the dreadful bell, and the obscene jeers and mocks of the foul crowd through which I had to force my way, evoking a confused tumult of disgust and horror in my brain, which if long continued, would have driven me mad. On reaching home I was bled freely and got to bed. This treatment, I have no doubt, prevented a violent access of fever; for, as it was, several days passed before I could be safely permitted to re-engage in business.

On revisiting the office, the fragment of a letter, written by Jane Eccles a few hours previous to her death, and evidently addressed to Mrs Davies, was placed by Mr Flint, who had by this time returned, before me. The following is an exact copy of it, with the exception, that the intervals which I have marked with dots, . . . were filled with erasures and blots, and that every word seemed to have been traced by a hand smitten with palsy.

FROM MY DEATH-PLACE, Midnight.  
DEAR MADAM,  
No, beloved friend, mother let me call you, . . . Oh kind, gentle mother, I am to die . . . to be killed in a few hours, by cruel men—I, so young, so unprepared for death, and yet guiltless. Oh never doubt that I am guiltless of the offence for which they will have the heart to hang me. . . . Nobody they say can save me now; yet if I could see the lawyer. . . . I have been deceived, cruelly deceived, madam—buoyed up by lying hopes, till just now the thunder burst and I, Oh God! . . . As they spoke the fearful chapter in the testament came bodily before me—the rending of the veil in twain, the terrible darkness and the opened graves. . . . I did not write for this, but my brain aches and dazzles. . . . It is too late—too late they all tell me. . . . Ah, if these dreadful laws were not so swift, I might yet; but no—he clearly proved to me how useless. . . . I must not think. . . . It is of my nephew, of your Henry, child of my affections, that I would speak. . . . Oh, would that I. . . . But hark! they are coming. . . . The day has dawned—to me the day of judgment!

This incoherent scrawl only confirmed my previous suspicions, but it was useless to dwell further on the melancholy subject. The great axe had fallen, and whether justly or unjustly, would, I feared, as in many, very many other cases, never be clearly ascertained in this world. I was mistaken. Another case of uttering forged Bank-of-England notes, knowing them to be forged, came under our cognizance a few months afterwards, revived the fading memory of Jane Eccles's early doom, and cleared up every obscurity connected with it.

The offender in this new case was a tall, dark-complexioned handsome man, of about thirty years of age, of the name of Justin Arnold. His mother, whose real name I shall conceal under that of Barton, retained us for her son's defence, and from her and other sources we learned the following particulars respecting him:

Justin Arnold was the lady's son by a former marriage. Mrs Barton, a still splendid woman, had, in second nuptials, espoused a very wealthy person, and from time to time had covertly supplied Justin Arnold's extravagance. This, however, from the wild course the young man pursued, could not be for ever continued, and after many warnings the supplies were stopped. Incapable of reformation, Justin Arnold, in order to obtain the means of dissipation, connected himself with a cleverly organised band of swindlers and forgers, who so adroitly managed their nefarious business, that, till his capture, they had contrived to keep themselves clear of the law—the inferior tools and dupes having been alone caught in its fatal meshes. The defence, under these circumstances necessarily a difficult, almost impossible one, was undertaken by Mr Flint, and conducted by him with his accustomed skill and energy.

I took a very slight interest in the matter and heard very little concerning it till its judicial conclusion by the conviction of the offender, and his condemnation to death. The decision on the recorder's report was this time communicated to the authorities of Newgate on a Saturday, so that the batch ordered for execution, amongst whom was Justin Arnold, would not be hanged till the Monday morning. Rather late in the evening a note once more reached me from the chaplain of the prison. Justin Arnold wished to see me—me, not Mr Flint. He had something of importance to communicate, he said, relative to a person in whom I had once felt great interest. It flashed across me that this Justin might be the 'brother' of Jane Eccles, and I determined to see him. I immediately sought out one of the sheriffs and obtained an order empowering me to see the prisoner on the afternoon of the morrow (Sunday.)

I found that the convict had expressed great anxiety lest I should decline to see him. My hoped-for visit was the only matter which appeared to occupy the mind or excite the care of the mocking, desperate young man; even the early and shameful termination of his own life on the morrow he seemed to be utterly reckless of. Thus prepared, I was the less surprised at the scene which awaited me in the prisoner's cell, where I found him in angry altercation with the pale affrighted chaplain.

I had never seen Justin Arnold before; this I was convinced of the instant I saw him; but he knew, and greeted me instantly by name. His swarthy, excited features were flushed and angry, and after briefly thanking me for complying with his wishes, he added in a violent, rapid tone, 'this good man has been teasing me. He says, and truly, that I have defied God by my life; and now he wishes me to mock that inscrutable Being, on the eve of death, by words without sense, meaning or truth!'

'No, no, no,' ejaculated the reverend gentleman. 'I exhorted you to true repentance, to peace, charity, to—'

'True repentance, peace, charity!' broke in the prisoner with a scornful burst: 'when my heart is full of rage, and bitterness and despair! Give me time for this repentance which you say is so needful—time to lure back long since banished hope, and peace, and faith! Poh!—you but flout me with words without meaning. I am unfit you say, for the presence of men, but quite fit for that of God, before whom you are about to arrogantly cast me! Be it so; my deeds upon head! It is at least not my fault that I am hurled to judgment before the Eternal Judge himself commanded my presence there!'

'He may be unworthy to live,' murmured the sacred chaplain, 'but oh, how utterly unfit to die.'

'That is true,' rejoined Justin Arnold, with undiminished vehemence. 'Those, if you will, are the words of truth and sense: go you and preach them to the makers and executioners of England's laws. In the meantime I would speak privately with this gentleman.'

The reverend pastor, with a mute gesture of compassion, sorrow and regret, was about to leave the cell, when he was stayed by the prisoner, who exclaimed:

'Now I think of it, you had better remain, sir. The statement I am about to make cannot, for the sake of the victim's reputation, and for her friends' sake, have too many witnesses. You both, I suppose remember Jane Eccles?'

A broken exclamation from both of us answered him, and he quickly continued:

'Ay, you already guess the truth, I see. Well, I do not wonder you should start and turn pale. I was a cruel, shameless deed—a dastardly murder if there was ever one. In as few words as possible, so you interrupt me not, I will relate my share in the atrocious business.'

He spoke rapidly, and once or twice during the brief recital the moistened eye and husky voice betrayed emotions which his pride would have concealed.

Jane and I were born in Hertfordshire, within a short distance of each other. I knew her from a child. She was better off then, I worse than we subsequently became—she by her father's bankruptcy, I by my mother's, by Mrs Barton's wealthy marriage. She was about nineteen, I twenty-four when I left the country for London. That she loved me with all the fervour of a trusting woman I well knew; and I had, too, for some time, known that she must be either honorably wooed or not at all. That with me was out of the question, and, as I told you, I came about that time to London. You can, I dare say, imagine the rest. We were—I and my friends I mean—at a loss for agents to dispose of our wares, and at the same time pressed for money. I met Jane Eccles by accident.

Genteel, of graceful address and winning manners, she was just fitted for our purpose. I feigned reawakened love, proffered marriage, and a home across the Atlantic, as soon as certain trifling but troublesome affairs which momentarily harassed me were arranged. She believed me. I got her to change a number of notes under various pretexts, but that they were forged she had not nor could have had the slightest suspicion. You know the catastrophe. After her apprehension I visited this prison as her brother, and buoyed her up to the last with illusions of certain pardon and release, whatever the verdict, through the influence of my wealthy father-in-law, of our immediate union afterwards, and tranquil American home. It is needless to say more, she trusted me and I sacrificed her—less flagrant instances of a like nature occur every day. And now, gentlemen, I would fain be alone.'

'Remorseless villain!' I could not help exclaiming under my breath as he moved away.

He turned quickly back, and looking me in the face, without the slightest anger, said, 'An execrable villain if you like—not a remorseless one! Her death alone sits near, and troubles me to all else hardened conscience. And let me tell you, reverend sir,' he continued, resuming his former bitterness as he addressed the chaplain—'let me tell you that it was not the solemn words of the judge the other day, but her pale, reproachful image, standing suddenly beside me in the dock, just as she looked when I passed my last deception on her, that caused the tremor and affright, complacently attributed by that grave functionary to his own sepulchral eloquence. After all, her death cannot be exclusively laid to my charge. Those who tried her would not believe her story, and yet it was true as death. Had they not been so confident in their own unerring wisdom, they might have doomed her to some punishment short of the scaffold, and could now have retrieved their error. But I am weary, and would, I repeat, be alone. Farewell!' He threw himself on the rude pallet and we silently withdrew.

A paper embodying Justin Arnold's declaration, was forwarded to the secretary of state and duly acknowledged, accompanied by an official expression of mild regret that it had not been made in time to save the life of Jane Eccles. No further notice was taken of the matter, and the record of the young woman's judicial sacrifice still doubtless encumbers the archives of the Home Office, forming with numerous others of like character, the dark, sanguine background upon which the achievements of the great and good men who have so successfully purged the old Draco code that now a faint vestige only of the old barbarism remains, stand out in bright relief and changeless lustre.

#### A HEART IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

I am wedded, Coleridge, to the fortunes of my sister and my poor old father. Oh! my friend, I think, sometimes, could I recall the days that are past, which among them could I choose? Not those 'merrier days,' not these 'days of hope,' not those 'wandering with a fair haired maid,' which I have so often and so feelingly regretted, but the days, Coleridge, of a mother's fondness for her school boy. What would I give to call her back to earth for one day, that I might, on my knees, ask her pardon for all those little asperities of temper, which from time to time have given her gentle spirit pain; and the day, my friend, I trust will come, when there will be 'time enough for kind offices of love,' if 'heaven's eternal year' be ours. Hereafter her meek spirit shall not reproach me. Oh! my friend, cultivate the filial feelings! And let no man think himself released from the kind 'charities' of relationship. These shall give him peace at last. These are the best foundation for every species of benevolence.—Charles Lamb.

#### THE BLACK ANT OF AFRICA.

THE black ant, however is the insect most to be dreaded, not merely on account of its severe bite, but because it is so destructive to live stock as well as dead, and so difficult to get rid of, when once they have found their way into your house, or any other part of your premises. They are much larger than our full sized emmet; have strong, large front forceps, which inflict a severe pinch; and are very powerful in their bodily actions, as well as swift in their movements. They are serviceable in one way—and that is in clearing your premises of every species of filth and vermin, of which they will not leave a vestige. Only when you receive a visit from them, you must look well to your poultry, goats, or anything you may have of a consumable description, and remove them to some place of security. Nor ought you to attempt to interrupt them in their march, or in anyway interfere with them, but allow them free ingress and egress, suffering them to depart when they please. For they come in such armies, that to annihilate them is out of the question, and prudence advises not to provoke them to reprisals.—Pool's Life in Sierra Leone.

#### WOMEN.

If the power which women possess, and the influence which they exercise over men be great, how deeply are they answerable to the world for the imperfect use which they make of the means in their hands for the improvement of man! How little have they yet done to accomplish the great end—the perfection of the species; and how often do we see the power thus placed in their hands squandered in folly.

From the Bristol Times.

#### THE CRYSTAL CAGE.

Prince Albert pushed his cutlet and tomato sauce from before him, and rose up from the breakfast table, apparently too troubled in spirit to eat.

Her Majesty noticed the act, and enquired the cause.

'Those confounded Sparrows!' cried the Prince with great distress—'we can't get them out.'

'Oh sit down and get your breakfast,' interposed Her Majesty soothingly, 'and I'll write an order to the Horse Guards, to send up a whole regiment of the line to shoot them.'

The Prince groaned out, 'oh, no; the cure would be worse than the disease—they'd break all the glass.'

The Queen saw and felt for his distress, 'I never liked the Exhibition,' she thought, 'but it is his hobby, and I must not let these stupid sparrows make him unhappy.' So she sat down at the escritoire, and taking up a gold pen, wrote a notice at once to the Premier requiring his attendance at Buckingham Palace. As the royal messenger was seen dashing at top speed into Chesham-place, people said 'twas another crisis, but 'twasn't.'

'What's the matter, your Majesty?' cried the Premier, making his appearance, pale and out of breath.

'The sparrows,' said her Majesty, 'in the Crystal Palace.' And as she spoke she nodded her head to Prince Albert, who was walking about at the upper part of the room, and striking his forehead, and minding no one, his mind being occupied with the one sad tho't.

'You know we can't shoot them, Lord John,' observed her Majesty, 'or I'd soon silence them with a park of artillery.'

'No, your Majesty,' mused the First Lord of the Treasury, biting his nails; and after a pause he added, 'We might net them.'

The Queen clapped her hands in glee. 'Albert, Albert,' she exclaimed, 'don't fret—Lord John has found a remedy—we'll net them.'

'Nonsense,' retorted the Prince Consort, rather gruffly and ungratefully, 'you can't—the place is too large.'

Her Majesty's face fell at once, as she mournfully repeated her Consort's words, 'tis too large, John—think again.' Lord John bit his nails, and thought again. 'I have it,' said he, after a longer meditation than before.

The Queen's eyes sparkled. 'Have you!' cried she in ecstasy. 'What, Lord John—do please say what at once.'

'Fumigate the place—smother them with sulphur.'

'Capital!' cried the Queen. 'Albert, Albert,' she shouted out once more, 'we have it this time—we'll smother them.'

'Can't,' retorted Saxe Gotha and Coburg, 'I thought of that myself—but 'twon't do. Stink all the goods and spoil them.'

The Queen looked miserable once more, and begged of her Prime Minister to think again, but he could not, and left the Palace.

The Bishop of London now called by chance and her Majesty at once consulted him. He was always a courtier; he looked wise, vowed his service over and over again, and said he'd go home, and look at the Canons of the Church.

'Don't mind it,' interposed her Majesty; 'your canons always make a dreadful noise, but take no effect.'

Still Prince Albert kept pacing up and down, and groaning out ejaculations from time to time about these confounded sparrows; and every groan sent a pang to her Majesty's heart. 'I have determined,' she exclaimed, 'I'll send for the Duke.'

Another letter and another courier to bear it to Apsley House. The royal missive ran thus:

'My dear Duke—Do come at once; my kind and true friend in every emergency. Albert is in sad talking about these horrid sparrows that have got into the Exhibition building. You can do everything; you can help us to get them out. Ever yours, V. R.'

The Duke was standing at the window when the Royal messenger alighted at the door. He knew the man by his livery. 'Humph I hope Russel is not again in one of his resignation fits,' he muttered. He took the letter off the silver dish and opened it. He seemed annoyed, and immediately sat down in a pet to write.

'F. M. the Duke of Wellington presents his loyal duty to his Sovereign. F. M. the Duke of Wellington is Commander-in-chief of her Majesty's land forces, and as such thinks the service upon which he is summoned out of his province. F. M. the Duke of Wellington, is not a bird-catcher. F. M. the Duke of Wellington understands there are several following this line of life in the neighborhood of the Seven Dials, to whom, if it be her Majesty's pleasure, he will make known the royal request. F. M. the Duke of Wellington has had considerable experience in capturing French eagles, but none in taking English sparrows.'

His Grace read the note—gave a grim smile then repented, tore it, and ordering his horse, said he would be at Buckingham Palace in twenty minutes.

The Prince was still walking about restless when the Duke arrived.

The Queen and the Prince all but jumped into his arms, and reminded him of *Quarrel Bras*.

'Oh, last and best resort of difficulty and danger! what do you suggest?' ejaculated the Sovereign.

'A SPARROW HAWK,' said the Duke, bowing.

'Oh, ever fertile in resources,' exclaimed the Prince; 'to place a difficulty before you