

or a tract, or that sort of thing, and stop that infernal Independent's mouth."

"If we had gone sooner," said Miss Ethel simply, "there would not have been all this abuse of us in the paper." To which statement her worldly father and brother perforce agreeing, we may congratulate old Mrs. Mason on the new and polite acquaintance she is about to make.

CHAPTER XV.

THE OLD LADIES.

The above letter and conversation will show what our active Colonel's movements and history had been since the last chapter in which they were recorded. He and Clive took the Liverpool Mail, and traveled from Liverpool to Newcome with a post chaise and a pair of horses, which landed them at the King's Arms. The Colonel delighted in post chaising—the rapid transit through the country amused him, and cheered his spirits. Besides, had he not Dr. Johnson's word for it, that a swift journey in a post chaise is one of the greatest enjoyments in life, and a sojourn in a comfortable inn one of its chief pleasures? In traveling he was as happy and noisy as a boy. He talked to the waiters, and made friends with the landlord; got all the information which he could gather, regarding the towns into which he came; and drove about from one sight or curiosity to another with indefatigable good-humor and interest. It was good for Clive to see men and cities; to visit mills, manufactories, country seats, cathedrals. He asked a hundred questions regarding all things round about him; and anyone caring to know who Thomas Newcome was, and what was his rank and business, found no difficulty in having his questions answered by the simple and kindly traveler.

Mine host of the King's Arms, Mr. Taplow aforesaid, knew in five minutes who his guest was and the errand on which he came. Was not Colonel Newcome's name painted on all his trunks and boxes? Was not his servant ready to answer all questions regarding the Colonel and his son? Newcome pretty generally introduced Clive to my landlord, when the latter brought his guest his bottle of wine. With old-fashioned

cordiality, the Colonel would bid the landlord drink a glass of his own liquor, and seldom failed to say to him, "This is my son, sir. We are traveling together to see the country. Every English gentleman should see his own country first, before he goes abroad, as we intend to do afterward—to make the Grand Tour. And I will thank you to tell me what there is remarkable in your town, and what we ought to see—antiquities, manufactures, and seats in the neighborhood. We wish to see everything, sir—everything." Elaborate diaries of these home tours are still extant, in Clive's boyish manuscript and the Colonel's dashing handwriting—quaint records of places visited, and alarming accounts of inn bills paid.

So Mr. Taplow knew in five minutes that his guest was a brother of Sir Brian, their member; and saw the note dispatched by an 'ostler to "Mrs. Sarah Mason, Jubilee Row," announcing that the Colonel had arrived, and would be with her after his dinner. Mr. Taplow did not see fit to tell his guest that the house Sir Brian used—the Blue House—was the Roebuck, not the King's Arms. Might not the gentleman be of different politics? Mr. Taplow's wine knew none.

Some of the jolliest fellows in all Newcome use the Boscawen Room at the King's Arms as their club, and pass numberless merry evenings and crack countless jokes there.

Duff, the baker; old Mr. Vidler, when he can get away from his medical labors (and his hand shakes, it must be owned, very much now, and his nose is very red); Parrot, the auctioneer; and that amusing dog, Tom Potts, the talented reporter of the Independent—were pretty constant attendants at the King's Arms; and Colonel Newcome's dinner was not over before some of these gentlemen knew what dishes he had had; how he had called for a bottle of sherry and a bottle of claret, like a gentleman; how he had paid the postboys, and traveled with a servant, like a top-sawyer; that he was come to shake hands with an old nurse and relative of his family. Everyone of those jolly Britons thought well of the Colonel for his affectionateness and liberality, and contrasted it with the behavior of the Tory Baronet—their representative.

His arrival made a sensation in the place. The Blue Club at the Roebuck discussed it, as well as the uncompromising Liberals at the King's Arms. Mr. Speers, Sir Brian's agent, did not know how to act, and advised Sir Brian by the next night's mail. The Rev. Dr. Bulkers, the rector, left his card.

Meanwhile, it was not gain or business, but only love and

gratitude which brought Thomas Newcome to his father's native town. Their dinner over, away went the Colonel and Clive guided by the ostler, their previous messenger, to the humble little tenement which Thomas Newcome's earliest friend inhabited. The good old woman put her spectacles into her Bible, and flung herself into her boy's arms, her boy who was more than fifty years old. She embraced Clive still more eagerly and frequently than she kissed his father. She did not know her Colonel with them whiskers. Clive was the very picture of the dear boy as he had left her almost two-score years ago. And as fondly as she hung on the boy, her memory had ever clung round that early time when they were together. The good soul told endless tales of her darling's childhood, his frolics and beauty. To-day was uncertain to her, but the past was still bright and clear. As they sat prattling together over the bright tea table, attended by the trim little maid, whose services the Colonel's bounty had secured for his old nurse, the kind old creature insisted on having Clive by her side. Again and again she would think he was actually her own boy, forgetting in that sweet and pious hallucination, that the bronzed face, and thinned hair, and melancholy eyes of the veteran before her were those of her nursling of old days. So for near half the space of man's allotted life he had been absent from her, and day and night, wherever he was, in sickness or health, in sorrow or danger, her innocent love and prayers had attended the absent darling. Not in vain, not in vain, does he live whose course is so befriended. Let us be thankful for our race, as we think of the love that blesses some of us. Surely it has something of Heaven in it, and angels celestial may rejoice in it, and admire it.

Having nothing whatever to do, our Colonel's movements are of course exceedingly rapid, and he has the very shortest time to spend in any single place. That evening, Saturday, and the next day, Sunday, he will faithfully accompany his dear old nurse to church. And what a festival is that day for her, when she has her Colonel and that beautiful, brilliant boy of his by her side, and Mr. Hicks, the curate, looking at him, and the venerable Dr. Bulkers himself eyeing him from the pulpit, and all the neighbors fluttering and whispering to be sure, who can be that fine, military gentleman and that splendid young man sitting by old Mrs. Mason, and leading her so affectionately out of church? That Saturday and Sunday the Colonel will pass with good old Mason, but on Monday

he must be off; on Tuesday he must be in London, he has important business in London—in fact, Tom Hamilton, of his regiment, comes up for election at the Oriental on that day, and on such an occasion could Thomas Newcome be absent? He drives away from the King's Arms through a row of smirking chambermaids, smiling waiters, and thankful ostlers, accompanied to the post chaise, of which the obsequious Taplow shuts the door, and the Boscawen Room pronounces him that night to be a trump; and the whole of the busy town, ere the next day is over, has heard of his coming and departure, praised his kindness and generosity, and no doubt contrasted it with the different behavior of the baronet, his brother, who has gone for some time by the ignominious sobriquet of Screwcome in the neighborhood of his ancestral hall.

Dear old nurse Mason will have a score of visits to make and to receive, at all of which you may be sure that triumphal advent of the Colonel's will be discussed and admired. Mrs. Mason will show her beautiful new India shawl, and her splendid Bible with the large print, and the affectionate inscription, from Thomas Newcome to his dearest old friend; her little maid will exhibit her new gown; the curate will see the Bible, and Mrs. Blunders will admire the shawl; and the old friends and humble companions of the good old lady, as they take their Sunday walks by the pompous lodge-gates of Newcome Park, which stands with the baronet's new-fangled arms over them, gilded, and filagreed, and barred, will tell their stories too about the kind Colonel and his hard brother. When did Sir Brian ever visit a poor old woman's cottage, or his bailiff exempt from the rent? What good action, except a few thin blankets and beggarly coal and soup tickets, did Newcome Park ever do for the poor? And as for the Colonel's wealth, Lord bless you, he's been in India these five-and-thirty years; the baronet's money is a drop in the sea to his. The Colonel is the kindest, the best, the richest of men. These facts and opinions, doubtless, inspired the eloquent pen of "Peeping Tom," when he indited the sarcastic epistle to the Newcome Independent, which we perused over Sir Brian Newcome's shoulder in the last chapter.

And you may be sure Thomas Newcome had not been many weeks in England before good little Miss Honeyman, at Brighton, was favored with a visit from her dear Colonel. The envious Gawler scowling out of his bow-window, where the flyblown card still proclaimed that his lodgings were un-

occupied, had the mortification to behold a yellow post chaise drive up to Miss Honeyman's door, and having discharged two gentlemen from within, trot away with servant and baggage to some house of entertainment other than Gawler's. While this wretch was cursing his own ill fate, and execrating yet more deeply Miss Honeyman's better fortune, the worthy little lady was treating her Colonel to a sisterly embrace, and a solemn reception. Hannah, the faithful house-keeper, was presented, and had a shake of the hand. The Colonel knew all about Hannah; ere he had been in England a week, a basket containing pots of jam of her confection, and a tongue of Hannah's curing, had arrived for the Colonel. That very night, when his servants had lodged Colonel Newcome's effects at the neighboring hotel, Hannah was in possession of one of the Colonel's shirts; she and her mistress having previously conspired to make a dozen of those garments for the family benefactor.

All the presents which Newcome had ever transmitted to his sister-in-law from India, had been taken out of the cotton and lavender in which the faithful creature kept them. It was a fine hot day in June, but I promise you Miss Honeyman wore her blazing scarlet Cashmere shawl; her great brooch representing the Taj of Agra, was in her collar; and her bracelets (she used to say, "I am given to understand they are called Bangles, my dear, by the natives") decorated the sleeves round her lean old hands, which trembled with pleasure as they received the kind grasp of the Colonel of colonels. How busy those hands had been that morning! What custards they had whipped!—what a triumph of pie-crusts they had achieved! Before Colonel Newcome had been ten minutes in the house, the celebrated veal cutlets made their appearance. Was not the whole house adorned in expectation of his coming? Had not Mr. Kuhn, the affable foreign gentleman of the first floor lodgers, prepared a French dish? Was not Betty on the lookout, and instructed to put the cutlets on the fire at the very moment when the Colonel's carriage drove up to her mistress' door? The good woman's eyes twinkled, the kind old hand and voice shook, as holding up a bright glass of Madeira, Miss Honeyman drank the Colonel's health. "I promise you, my dear Colonel," says she, nodding her head adorned with a bristling superstructure of lace and ribbons, "I promise you that I can drink your health in good wine!" The wine was of his own sending; and so were the China fire-

screens, and the sandal-wood work-box, and the ivory card-case, and those magnificent pink and white chessmen, carved like little Sepoys and mandarins, with the castles on elephants' backs, George III. and his Queen in pink ivory, against the Emperor of China and lady in white—the delight of Clive's childhood, the chief ornament of the old spinster's sitting room.

Miss Honeyman's little feast was pronounced to be the perfection of cookery; and when the meal was over, came a noise of little feet at the parlor door, which being opened, there appeared, first, a tall nurse with a dancing baby; second and third, two little girls with little frocks, little trousers, long ringlets, blue eyes, and blue ribbons to match; fourth, Master Alfred, now quite recovered from his illness, and holding by the hand, fifth, Miss Ethel Newcome, blushing like a rose.

Hannah, grinning, acted as mistress of the ceremonies, calling out the names of "Miss Newcomes, Master Newcomes to see the Colonel, if you please, Ma'am," bobbing a courtesy, and giving a knowing nod to Master Clive, as she smoothed her new silk apron. Hannah, too, was in new attire, all crisp and rustling, in the Colonel's honor. Miss Ethel did not cease blushing as she advanced toward her uncle; and the honest campaigner started up, blushing too. Mr. Clive rose also, as little Alfred, of whom he was a great friend, ran toward him. Clive rose, laughed, nodded at Ethel, and ate gingerbread-nuts all at the same time. As for Colonel Thomas Newcome and his niece, they fell in love with each other instantaneously, like Prince Camaralzaman and the Princess of China.

I have turned away one artist; the poor creature was utterly incompetent to depict the sublime, graceful, and pathetic personages and events with which this history will most assuredly abound, and I doubt whether even the designer engaged in his place can make such a portrait of Miss Ethel Newcome as shall satisfy her friends and her own sense of justice. That blush which we have indicated, he cannot render. How are you to copy it with a steel point and a ball of printer's ink? That kindness which lights up the Colonel's eyes; gives an expression to the very wrinkles round about them; shines as a halo round his face—what artist can paint it? The painters of old, when they portrayed sainted personages, were fain to have recourse to compasses and gold-leaf—as if celestial splendor could be represented by Dutch metal!

As our artist cannot come up to this task, the reader will be pleased to let his fancy paint for itself the look of courtesy for a woman, admiration for a young beauty, protection for an innocent child, all of which are expressed upon the Colonel's kind face, as his eyes are set upon Ethel Newcome.

"Mamma has sent us to bid you welcome to England, Uncle," says Miss Ethel, advancing, and never thinking for a moment of laying aside that fine blush which she brought into the room, and which is her pretty symbol of youth, and modesty, and beauty.

He took a little slim white hand and laid it down on his brown palm, where it looked all the whiter; he cleared the grizzled mustache from his mouth, and stooping down he kissed the little white hand with a great deal of grace and dignity. There was no point of resemblance, and yet a something in the girl's look, voice, and movements which caused his heart to thrill, and an image out of the past to rise up and salute him. The eyes which had brightened his youth (and which he saw in his dreams and thoughts for faithful years afterward, as though they looked at him out of Heaven), seemed to shine upon him after five-and-thirty years. He remembered such a fair bending neck and clustering hair, such a light foot and airy figure, such a slim hand lying in his own—and now parted from it with a gap of ten thousand long days between. It is an old saying, that we forget nothing; as people in fever begin suddenly to talk the language of their infancy; we are stricken by memory sometimes, and old affections rush back on us as vivid as in the time when they were our daily talk, when their presence gladdened our eyes, when their accents thrilled in our ears, when with passionate tears and grief we flung ourselves upon their hopeless corpses. Parting is death, at least as far as life is concerned. A passion comes to an end; it is carried off in a coffin, or, weeping in a post chaise, it drops out of life one way or other, and the earth-clods close over it, and we see it no more. But it has been part of our souls, and it is eternal. Does a mother not love her dead infant? a man his lost mistress? with the fond wife nestling at his side—yes, with twenty children smiling round her knee. No doubt, as the old soldier held the girl's hand in his, the little talisman led him back to Hades, and he saw Leonora.

"How do you do, Uncle," say girls Nos. 2 and 3, in a pretty little infantile chorus. He drops the talisman, he is back in

common life again—the dancing baby in the arms of the bobbing nurse babbles a welcome. Alfred looks up for awhile at his uncle in the white trousers, and then instantly proposes that Clive should make him some drawings; and is on his knees at the next moment. He is always climbing on somebody or something, or winding over chairs, curling through banisters, standing on somebody's head, or his own head—as his convalescence advances, his breakages are fearful. Miss Honeyman and Hannah will talk about his dilapidations for years after the little chap has left them. When he is a jolly young officer in the Guards, and comes to see them at Brighton, they will show him the blue dragon Chayny jar on which he would sit, and which he cried so fearfully upon breaking.

When this little party has gone out smiling to take its walk on the seashore, the Colonel sits down and resumes the interrupted dessert. Miss Honeyman talks of the children and their mother, and the merits of Mr. Kuhn, and the beauty of Miss Ethel, glancing significantly toward Clive, who has had enough of gingerbread-nuts and dessert and wine, and whose youthful nose is by this time at the window. What kind-hearted woman, young or old, does not love match-making?

The Colonel, without lifting his eyes from the table, says "she reminds him of—of somebody he knew once."

"Indeed!" cries Miss Honeyman, and thinks Emma must have altered very much after going to India, for she had fair hair, and white eyelashes, and not a pretty foot certainly—but my dear good lady, the Colonel is not thinking of the late Mrs. Casey.

He has taken a fitting quantity of the Madeira, the artless greeting of the people here, young and old, has warmed his heart, and he goes upstairs to pay a visit to his sister-in-law, to whom he makes his most courteous bow as becomes a lady of her rank. Ethel takes her place quite naturally beside him during his visit. Where did he learn those fine manners, which all of us who knew him admired in him? He had a natural simplicity, an habitual practice of kind and generous thoughts; a pure mind, and therefore above hypocrisy and affectation—perhaps those French people with whom he had been intimate in early life had imparted to him some of the traditional graces of their *vieille our*—certainly his half-brothers had inherited none such. "What is this that Barnes has written about his uncle, that the Colonel is ridiculous?" Lady Ann said to her daughter that night. "Your uncle is

adorable. I have never seen a more perfect grand seigneur. He puts me in mind of my grandfather, though grandpapa's grand manner was more artificial, and his voice spoiled by snuff. See the Colonel. He smokes round the garden, but with what perfect grace! This is the man Uncle Hobson, and your poor dear papa, have represented to us as a species of bear. Mr. Newcome, who has himself the ton of a waiter. The Colonel is perfect. What can Barnes mean by ridiculing him? I wish Barnes had such a distinguished air; but he is like his poor dear papa. *Que voulez-vous, my love?* The Newcomes are honorable; the Newcomes are wealthy; but distinguished; no. I never deluded myself with that notion when I married your poor dear papa. At once I pronounce Colonel Newcome a person to be in every way distinguished by us. On our return to London I shall present him to all our family; poor good man! let him see that his family have some presentable relations besides those whom he will meet at Mrs. Newcome's, in Bryanstone Square. You must go to Bryanstone Square, immediately we return to London. You must ask your cousins and their governess, and we will give them a little party. Mrs. Newcome is insupportable, but we must never forsake our relatives, Ethel. When you come out you will have to dine there, and to go to her ball. Every young lady in your position in the world has sacrifices to make, and duties to her family to perform. Look at me. Why did I marry your poor dear papa? From duty. Has your Aunt Fanny, who ran away with Captain Canonbury, been happy? They have eleven children, and are starving at Boulogne. Think of three of Fanny's boys in yellow stockings at the Bluecoat School. Your papa got them appointed. I am sure my papa would have gone mad, if he had seen that day! She came with one of the poor wretches to Park Lane; but I could not see them. My feelings would not allow me. When my maid, I had a French maid then—Louise, you remember; her conduct was abominable; so was Prévillé's—when she came and said that my Lady Fanny was below with a young gentleman, *qui portait des bas jaunes*, I could not see the child. I begged her to come up in my room; and, absolutely that I might not offend her, I went to bed. That wretch Louise met her at Boulogne, and told her afterward. Good-night, we must not stand chattering here any more. Heaven bless you, my darling. Those are the Colonel's windows. Look, he is sitting on his balcony—that must be Clive's room.

Clive is a good, kind boy. It was very kind of him to draw so many pictures for Alfred. Put the drawings away, Ethel, Mr. Smee saw some in Park Lane, and said they showed remarkable genius. What a genius your Aunt Emily had for drawing; but it was flowers. I had no genius in particular, so mamma used to say—and Dr. Belper said, 'My dear Lady Walham' (it was before my grandpapa's death), 'has Miss Ann a genius for sewing buttons and making puddens?'—puddens he pronounced it. Good-night, my own love. Blessings, blessings on my Ethel!"

The Colonel from his balcony saw the slim figure of the retreating girl, and looked fondly after her; and as the smoke of his cigar floated in the air, he formed a fine castle in it, whereof Clive was lord, and that pretty Ethel, lady. "What a frank, generous, bright young creature is yonder!" thought he. "How cheery and gay she is; how good to Miss Honeyman, to whom she behaved with just the respect that was the old lady's due—how affectionate with her brothers and sisters. What a sweet voice she has! What a pretty little white hand it is! When she gave it to me, it looked like a little white bird lying in mine. I must wear gloves, by Jove I must, and my coat is old-fashioned, as Binnie says; what a fine match might be made between that child and Clive! She reminds me of a pair of eyes I haven't seen these forty years. I would like to have Clive married to her; to see him out of the scrapes and dangers that young fellows encounter, and safe with such a sweet girl as that. If God had so willed it, I might have been happy myself, and could have made a woman happy. But the Fates were against me. I should like to see Clive happy, and then say *Nunc dimittis*. I shan't want anything more to-night, Kean, and you can go to bed."

"Thank you, Colonel," says Kean, who enters, having prepared his master's bedchamber, and is retiring when the Colonel calls after him.

"I say, Kean, is that blue coat of mine very old?"

"Uncommon white about the seams, Colonel," says the man.

"Is it older than other people's coats?" Kean is obliged gravely to confess that the Colonel's coat is very queer.

"Get me another coat, then—see that I don't do anything or wear anything unusual. I have been so long out of Europe that I don't know the customs here and am not above learning."

Kean retires, vowing that his master is an old trump, which

opinion he had already expressed to Mr. Kuhn, Lady Hann's man, over a long potation which those two gentlemen had taken together. And, as all of us, in one way or another, are subject to this domestic criticism, from which not the most exalted can escape, I say, lucky is the man whose servants speak well of him.

CHAPTER XVI.

IN WHICH MR. SHERRICK LETS HIS HOUSE IN FITZROY SQUARE.

In spite of the sneers of the Newcome Independent, and the Colonel's unlucky visit to his nurse's native place, he still remained in high favor in Park Lane, where the worthy gentleman paid almost daily visits, and was received with welcome and almost affection, at least by the ladies and the children of the house. Who was it that took the children to Astley's but Uncle Newcome? I saw him there in the midst of a cluster of these little people, all children together. He laughed, delighted, at Mr. Merryman's jokes in the ring. He beheld the Battle of Waterloo with breathless interest, and was amazed—amazed, by Jove, sir—at the prodigious likeness of the principal actor to the Emperor Napoleon, whose tomb he had visited on his return from India, as it pleased him to tell his little audience who sat clustering round him; the little girls, Sir Brian's daughters, holding each by a finger of his honest hands; young Masters Alfred and Edward clapping and hurrahing by his side; while Mr. Clive and Miss Ethel sat in the back of the box enjoying the scene, but with that decorum which belonged to their superior age and gravity. As for Clive, he was in these matters much older than the grizzled old warrior, his father. It did one good to hear the Colonel's honest laughs at clown's jokes, and to see the tenderness and simplicity with which he watched over this happy brood of young ones. How lavishly did he supply them with sweetmeats between the acts! There he sat in the midst of them, and ate an orange himself with perfect satisfaction. I wonder what sum of money Mr. Barnes Newcome would have taken to sit for five hours with his young brothers and sisters in a public box at the theater and eat an orange in the face of

the audience? When little Alfred went to Harrow, you may be sure Colonel Newcome and Clive galloped over to see the little man and tipped him royally. What money is better bestowed than that of a schoolboy's tip? How the kindness is recalled by the recipient in after days! It blesses him that gives and him that takes. Remember how happy such benefactions made you in your own early time, and go off on the very first fine day and tip your nephew at school!

The Colonel's organ of benevolence was so large that he would have liked to administer bounties to the young folks, his nephews and nieces, in Bryanstone Square, as well as to their cousins in Park Lane; but Mrs. Newcome was a good deal too virtuous to admit of such spoiling of children. She took the poor gentleman to task for an attempt upon her boys when those lads came home for their holidays, and caused them ruefully to give back the shining gold sovereign with which their uncle had thought to give them a treat.

"I do not quarrel with other families," says she; "I do not allude to other families;" meaning, of course, that she did not allude to Park Lane. "There may be children who are allowed to receive money from their father's grown-up friends. There may be children who hold out their hands for presents, and thus become mercenary in early life. I make no reflections with regard to other households. I only look, and think, and pray for the welfare of my own beloved ones. They want for nothing. Heaven has bounteously furnished us with every comfort, with every elegance, with every luxury. Why need we be bounden to others, who have been ourselves so amply provided? I should consider it ingratitude, Colonel Newcome, want of proper spirit, to allow my boys to accept money. Mind, I make no allusions. When they go to school they receive a sovereign apiece from their father, and a shilling a week, which is ample pocket money. When they are home I desire that they may have rational amusements; I send them to the Polytechnic with Professor Hickson, who kindly explains to them some of the marvels of science and the wonders of machinery. I send them to the picture galleries and the British Museum. I go with them myself to the delightful lectures at the institution in Albemarle Street. I do not desire that they should attend theatrical exhibitions. I do not quarrel with those who go to plays; far from it. Who am I that I should venture to judge the conduct of others? When you wrote from India, expressing a wish that