

monosyllable by which things, persons, luck, even eyes, are devoted to the infernal gods, we may be sure is not wanting in that Babel. Where does one not hear it? "D—the luck," says Lord Kew, as the croupier sweeps off his lordship's rouleaux. "D—the luck," says Brown, the bagman, who has been backing his lordship with five-franc pieces. "Ah, body of Bacchus!" says Count Felice, whom we all remember a courier. "Ah, sacré coup," cries M. le Vicomte de Florac, as his last louis parts company from him—each cursing in his native tongue. Oh, sweet chorus!

That Lord Kew should be at Baden is no wonder. If you heard of him at the "Finish," or at Buckingham Palace ball, or in a watch-house, or at the Third Cataract, or at a New-market meeting, you would not be surprised. He goes everywhere; does everything with all his might; knows everybody. Last week he won who knows how many thousand louis from the bank (it appears Brown has chosen one of the unlucky days to back his lordship). He will eat his supper as gayly after a great victory as after a signal defeat; and we know that to win with magnanimity requires much more constancy than to lose. His sleep will not be disturbed by one event or the other. He will play skittles all the morning with perfect contentment, romp with children in the forenoon (he is the friend of half the children in the place), or he will cheerfully leave the green table and all the risk and excitement there, to take a hand at sixpenny whist with General Fogeey, or to give the six Miss Fogeys a turn each in the ballroom. From H. R. H. the Prince Royal of —, who is the greatest guest at Baden, down to Brown, the bagman, who does not consider himself the smallest, Lord Kew is hail-fellow with everybody, and has a kind word from and for all.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN WHICH CLIVE BEGINS TO SEE THE WORLD.

In the company assembled at Baden, Clive found one or two old acquaintances; among them his friend of Paris, M. de Florac, not in quite so brilliant a condition as when Newcome had last met him on the Boulevard. Florac owned that Fortune had been very unkind to him at Baden; and, indeed, she

had not only emptied his purse, but his portmanteaus, jewel-box, and linen-closet—the contents of all of which had ranged themselves on the red and black against M. Bénazet's crown pieces; whatever side they took was, however, the unlucky one. "This campaign has been my Moscow, *mon cher*," Florac owned to Clive. "I am conquered by Bénazet; I have lost in almost every combat. I have lost my treasure, my baggage, my ammunition of war, everything but my honor, which, *au reste*, M. Bénazet will not accept as a stake; if he would, there are plenty here, believe me, who would set it on the Trente et Quarante. Sometimes I have had a mind to go home; my mother, who is an angel all forgiveness, would receive her prodigal, and kill the fatted veal for me. But what will you? He annoys me—the domestic veal. Besides, my brother, the Abbé, though the best of Christians, is a Jew upon certain matters; a Bénazet who will not *troquer* absolution except against repentance; and I have not a sou of repentance in my pocket! I have been sorry, yes—but it was because odd came up in place of even, or the reverse. The accursed *après* has chased me like a remorse, and when black has come up I have wished myself converted to red. Otherwise I have no repentance; I am *joueur*—nature has made me so, as she made my brother *dévo*t. The Archbishop of Strasbourg is of our parents; I saw his grandeur when I went lately to Strasbourg, on my last pilgrimage to the Mont de Piété. I owned to him that I would pawn his cross and ring to go play; the good prelate laughed, and said his chaplain should keep an eye on them. Will you dine with me? The landlord of my hotel was the intendant of our cousin, the Duc d'Ivry, and will give me credit to the day of judgment. I do not abuse his noble confidence. My dear! there are covers of silver put on my table every day with which I could retrieve my fortune, did I listen to the suggestions of Satan; but I say to him, *Vade retro*. Come and dine with me—Duluc's kitchen is very good."

These easy confessions were uttered by a gentleman who was nearly forty years of age, and who had indeed played the part of a young man in Paris and the great European world so long that he knew or chose to perform no other. He did not want for abilities; had the best temper in the world; was well bred and gentlemanlike always; and was gay even after Moscow. His courage was known, and his character for bravery, and another kind of gallantry probably exaggerated by his bad reputation. Had his mother not been alive, perhaps he would

have believed in the virtue of no woman. But this one he worshiped, and spoke with tenderness and enthusiasm of her constant love, and patience, and goodness. "See her miniature!" he said, "I never separate myself from it—oh, never! It saved my life in an affair about—about a woman who was not worth the powder which poor Jules and I burned for her. His ball struck me here, upon the waistcoat, bruising my rib and sending me to my bed, which I never should have left alive but for this picture. Oh, she is an angel, my mother! I am sure that Heaven has nothing to deny that saint, and that her tears wash out my sins."

Clive smiled. "I think Mme. de Florac must weep a good deal," he said.

"*Enormément*, my friend! My faith! I do not deny it! I give her cause, night and evening. I am possessed by demons! This little Affenthaler wine of this country has a little smack which is most agreeable. The passions tear me, my young friend! Play is fatal, but play is not so fatal as woman. Pass me the *écrevisses*, they are most succulent. Take warning by me, and avoid both. I saw you *roder* round the green tables, and marked your eyes as they glistened over the heaps of gold, and looked at some of our beauties of Baden. Beware of such sirens, young man! and take me for your Mentor; avoiding what I have done—that understands itself. You have not played as yet? Do not do so; above all avoid a martingale, if you do. Play ought not to be an affair of calculation, but of inspiration. I have calculated infallibly, and what has been the effect? Gousset empty, tiroirs empty, nécessaire parted for Strasbourg! Where is my fur pelisse, Frédéric?"

"Parbleu! vous le savez bien, M. le Vicomte," says Frédéric, the domestic, who was waiting on Clive and his friend.

"A pelisse lined with true sable, and worth three thousand francs, that I won of a little Russian at billiards. That pelisse is at Strasbourg (where the infamous worms of the Mount of Piety are actually gnawing her). Two hundred francs and this reconnaissance, which Frédéric receive, are all that now represents the pelisse. How many chemises have I, Frédéric?"

"Eh, parbleu, M. le Vicomte sait bien que nous avons toujours vingt-quatre chemises," says Frédéric, grumbling.

M. le Vicomte springs up shrieking from the dinner-table. "Twenty-four shirts," says he, "and I have been a week without a louis in my pocket! *Béâtre! Nigaud!*" He flings open one drawer after another, but there are no signs of that super-

fluity of linen of which the domestic spoke, whose countenance now changes from a grim frown to a grim smile.

"Ah, my faithful Frédéric, I pardon thee! Mr. Newcome will understand thy harmless *supercherie*. Frédéric was in my company of the Guard, and remains with me since. He is Caleb Balderstone and I am Ravenswood. Yes, I am Edgar. Let us have coffee and a cigar, Balderstone."

"Plait-il M. le Vicomte?" says the French Caleb.

"Thou comprehendest not English. Thou readest not Val-tare Scott, thou?" cries the master. "I was recounting to M. Newcome thy history and my misfortunes. Go seek coffee for us, *Nigaud*." And as the two gentlemen partake of that exhilarating liquor, the elder confides gayly to his guest the reason why he prefers taking coffee at the Hotel to the coffee at the great Café of the Redoute, with a *duris urgéns in rébus égestass!* pronounced in the true French manner.

Clive was greatly amused by the gayety of the Viscount after his misfortunes and his Moscow; and thought that one of Mr. Baines' circular notes might not be ill laid out in securing this hero. It may have been to this end that Florac's confessions tended; though, to do him justice, the incorrigible young fellow would confide his adventures to anyone who would listen; and the exact state of his wardrobe, and the story of his pawned pelisse, dressing case, rings, and watches were known to all Baden.

"You tell me to marry and range myself," said Clive (to whom the Viscount was expatiating upon the charms of the *superbe* young Anglaise with whom he had seen Clive walking on the promenade). "Why do you not marry and range yourself too?"

"Eh, my dear! I am married already. You do not know it? I am married since the Revolution of July. Yes. We were poor in those days, as poor we remain. My cousins the Duc d'Ivry's sons and his grandson were still alive. Seeing no other resource and pursued by the Arabs, I espoused the Vicomtesse de Florac. I gave her my name, you comprehend, in exchange for her own odious one. She was Miss Higg. Do you know the family Higg of Manchester in the comté of Lancastre? She was then a person of a ripe age. The Vicomtesse is now—ah! it is fifteen years since, and she dies not. Our union was not happy, my friend—Mme. Paul de Florac is of the reformed religion—not of the Anglican Church, you understand—but a dissident, I know not of what sort. We

inhabited the Hôtel de Florac for a while after our union, which was all of convenience, you understand. She filled her salon with ministers to make you die. She assaulted my poor father in his garden chair, whence he could not escape her. She told my sainted mother that she was an idolatress—she who only idolatrizes her children! She called us other poor Catholics who follow the rites of our fathers, *des Romishes*; and Rome, Babylon; and the Holy Father—a scarlet—eh! a scarlet abomination. She outraged my mother, that angel; essayed to convert the antechamber and the office; put little books in the Abbé's bedroom. Eh, my friend! what a good king was Charles IX., and his mother what a wise sovereign! I lament that Mme. de Florac should have escaped the St. Barthélemi, when no doubt she was spared on account of her tender age. We have been separated for many years; her income was greatly exaggerated. Beyond the payment of my debts I owe her nothing. I wish I could say as much of all the rest of the world. Shall we take a turn of promenade? *Mauvais sujet!* I see you are longing to be at the green table."

Clive was not longing to be at the green table; but his companion was never easy at it or away from it. Next to winning, losing, M. de Florac said, was the best sport—next to losing, looking on. So he and Clive went down to the Redoute, where Lord Kew was playing, with a crowd of awe-struck amateurs and breathless punters admiring his valor and fortune; and Clive, saying that he knew nothing about the game, took out five napoleons from his purse, and besought Florac to invest them in the most profitable manner at roulette. The other made some faint attempts at a scruple; but the money was speedily laid on the table, where it increased and multiplied amazingly, too; so that in a quarter of an hour Florac brought quite a handful of gold pieces to his principal. Then Clive, I dare say blushing as he made the proposal, offered half the handful of napoleons to M. de Florac, to be repaid when he thought fit. And fortune must have been favorable to the husband of Miss Higg that night; for in the course of an hour he insisted on paying back Clive's loan; and two days afterward appeared with his shirt-studs (of course with his shirts also), released from captivity, his watch, rings and chains on the parade; and was observed to wear his celebrated fur pelisse as he drove back in a britzka from Strasbourg. "As for myself," wrote Clive, "I put back into my purse the five napoleons with which I had begun; and laid down the whole

mass of winnings on the table, where it was doubled and then quadrupled, and then swept up by the croupiers, greatly to my ease of mind. And then Lord Kew asked me to supper, and we had a merry night."

This was Mr. Clive's first and last appearance as a gambler. J. J. looked very grave when he heard of these transactions. Clive's French friend did not please his English companion at all, nor the friends of Clive's French friend, the Russians, the Spaniards, the Italians of sounding titles and glittering decorations, and the ladies who belonged to their society. He saw by chance Ethel, escorted by her cousin Lord Kew, passing through a crowd of this company one day. There was not one woman there who was not the heroine of some discreditable story. It was the Comtesse Calypso who had been jilted by the Duc Ulysse. It was the Marquise Ariane to whom the Prince Thésée had behaved so shamefully, and who had taken to Bacchus as a consolation. It was Mme. Médée, who had absolutely killed her old father by her conduct regarding Jason; she had done everything for Jason; she had got him the *toison d'or* from the Queen Mother, and now had to meet him every day with his little blonde bride on his arm! J. J. compared Ethel, moving in the midst of these folks, to the Lady amid the rout of Comus. There they were, the Fauns and Satyrs; there they were, the merry Pagans; drinking and dancing, dicing and sporting; laughing over jests that never should be spoken; whispering rendezvous to be written in midnight calendars; jeering at honest people who passed under their palace windows—jolly rebels and repealers of the law. Ah, if Mrs. Brown, whose children are gone to bed at the Hotel, knew but the history of that calm, dignified looking gentleman who sits under her, and over whose patient back she frantically advances and withdraws her two-franc piece, while his own columns of louis d'or are offering battle to fortune—how she would shrink away from the shoulder which she pushes! That man so calm and well-bred, with a string of orders on his breast, so well dressed, with such white hands, has stabbed trusting hearts; severed family ties; written lying vows; signed false oaths; torn up pitilessly tender appeals for redress, and tossed away into the fire supplications blistered with tears; packed cards and clogged dice; or used pistol or sword as calmly and dexterously as he now ranges his battalions of gold pieces.

Ridley shrank away from such lawless people with the delicacy belonging to his timid and retiring nature, but it must

be owned that Mr. Clive was by no means so squeamish. He did not know, in the first place, the mystery of their iniquities; and his sunny, kindly spirit, undimmed by any of the cares which clouded it subsequently, was disposed to shine upon all people alike. The world was welcome to him; the day a pleasure; all nature a gay feast; scarce any dispositions discordant with his own—for pretension only made him laugh, and hypocrisy he will never be able to understand if he lives to be a hundred years old; the night brought him a long sleep, and the morning a glad waking. To these privileges of youth what enjoyments of age are comparable? what achievements of ambition? what rewards of money and fame? Clive's happy, friendly nature shone out of his face; and almost all who beheld it felt kindly toward him. As those guileless virgins of romance and ballad, who walk smiling through dark forests charming off dragons and confronting lions, the young man as yet went through the world harmless; no giant waylaid him as yet; no robbing ogre fed on him; and—greatest danger of all for one of his ardent nature—no winning enchantress or artful siren coaxed him to her cave, or lured him into her waters—haunts into which we know so many young simpletons are drawn, where their silly bones are picked and their tender flesh devoured.

The time was short which Clive spent at Baden, for, as it has been said, the winter was approaching, and the destination of our young artists was Rome; but he may have passed some score of days here to which he and another person in that pretty watering-place possibly looked back afterward, as not the unhappiest period of their lives. Among Colonel Newcome's papers to which the family biographer has had subsequent access, there are a couple of letters from Clive, dated Baden, at this time, and full of happiness, gayety, and affection. Letter No. 1 says, "Ethel is the prettiest girl here. At the assemblies all the Princes, Counts, Dukes, Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, are dying to dance with her. She sends her dearest love to her uncle." By the side of the words "prettiest girl," was written in a frank female hand the monosyllable "Stuff;" and as a note to the expression "dearest love," with a star to mark the text and the note, are squeezed, in the same feminine characters at the bottom of Clive's page, the words, "That I do. E. N."

In letter No. 2, the first two pages are closely written in Clive's handwriting, describing his pursuits and studies, and

giving amusing details of the life at Baden, and the company whom he met there—narrating his *rencontre* with their Paris friend, M. de Florac, and the arrival of the Duchesse d'Ivry, Florac's cousin, whose titles the Vicomte will probably inherit. Not a word about Florac's gambling propensities are mentioned in the letter; but Clive honestly confesses that he has staked five napoleons, doubled them, quadrupled them, won ever so much, lost all again, and come away from the table with his original five pounds in his pockets—proposing never to play any more. "Ethel," he concludes, "is looking over my shoulder. She thinks me such a delightful creature that she is never easy without me. She bids me to say that I am the best of sons and cousins, and am, in a word, a darling du * * * " The rest of this important word is not given, but goose is added in the female hand. In the faded ink, on the yellow paper that may have crossed and recrossed oceans, that has lain locked in chests for years, and buried under piles of family archives, while your friends have been dying and your head has grown white—who has not disinterred mementos like these—from which the past smiles at you so sadly, shimmering out of Hades an instant but to sink back again into the cold shades, perhaps with a faint, faint sound as of a remembered tone—a ghostly echo of a once familiar laughter? I was looking, of late, at a wall in the Naples Museum, whereon a boy of Herculaneum eighteen hundred years ago had scratched with a nail the figure of a soldier. I could fancy the child turning round and smiling on me after having done his etching. Which of us that is thirty years old has not had his Pompeii? Deep under ashes lies the Life of Youth—the careless Sport, the Pleasure and Passion, the darling Joy. You open an old letter-box and look at your childish scrawls, or your mother's letters to you when you were at school; and excavate your heart. Oh me, for the day when the whole city shall be bare and the chamber unroofed—and every cranny visible to the Light above, from the Forum to the Lupanar!

Ethel takes up the pen. "My dear uncle," she says, "while Clive is sketching out of window, let me write to you a line or two on his paper, though I know you like to hear no one speak but him. I wish I could draw him for you as he stands yonder, looking the picture of good health, good spirits, and good-humor. Everybody likes him. He is quite unaffected; always gay; always pleased. He draws more and more beau-

tifully every day; and his affection for young Mr. Ridley, who is really a most excellent and astonishing young man, and actually a better artist than Clive himself, is most romantic, and does your son the greatest credit. You will order Clive not to sell his pictures, won't you? I know it is not wrong, but your son might look higher than to be an artist. It is a rise for Mr. Ridley, but a fall for him. An artist, an organist, a pianist, all these are very good people, but you know not *de notre monde*, and Clive ought to belong to it.

"We met him at Bonn on our way to a great family gathering here; where, I must tell you, we are assembled for what I call the Congress of Baden! The chief of the house of Kew is here, and what time he does not devote to skittles, to smoking cigars, to the *jeu* in the evenings, to Mme. d'Ivry, to Mme. de Cruchecassée, and the foreign people (of whom there are a host here of the worst kind, as usual) he graciously bestows on me. Lord and Lady Dorking are here, with their meek little daughter, Clara Pulleyn; and Barnes is coming. Uncle Hobson has returned to Lombard Street to relieve guard. I think you will hear before very long of Lady Clara Newcome. Grandmamma, who was to have presided at the Congress of Baden, and still, you know, reigns over the house of Kew, has been stopped at Kissingen with an attack of rheumatism; I pity poor aunt Julia, who can never leave her. Here are all our news. I declare I have filled the whole page; men write closer than we do. I wear the dear brooch you gave me, often and often. I think of you always, dear, kind uncle, as your affectionate

ETHEL."

Besides roulette and trente-et-quarante, a number of amusing games are played at Baden, which are not performed, so to speak, *sur table*. These little diversions and *jeux de société* can go on anywhere; in an alley in the park; in a picnic to this old schloss, or that pretty hunting lodge; at a tea table in a lodging house or hotel; in a ball at the Redoute; in the play rooms, behind the backs of the gamblers, whose eyes are only cast upon rakes and rouleaux, and red-and-black; or on the broad walk in front of the Conversation Rooms, where thousands of people are drinking and chattering, lounging and smoking, while the Austrian brass band, in the little music pavilion, plays the most delightful mazurkas and waltzes. Here the widow plays her black suit, and sets her bright eyes against the rich bachelor, elderly or young as may be. Here the artful

practitioner, who has dealt in a thousand such games, engages the young simpleton with more money than wit; and knowing his weakness and her skill, we may safely take the odds, and back rouge et couleur to win. Here mamma not having money perhaps, but metal more attractive, stakes her virgin daughter against Count Fettacker's forests and meadows; or Lord Lackland plays his coronet, of which the jewels have long since been in pawn, against Miss Bags' three per cents. And so two or three funny little games were going on at Baden among our immediate acquaintance; besides that vulgar sport round the green table, at which the mob, with whom we have little to do, were elbowing each other. A hint of these domestic proflusions has been given to the reader in the foregoing extract from Miss Ethel Newcome's letter; likewise some passions have been in play, of which a modest young English maiden could not be aware. Do not, however, let us be too prematurely proud of our virtue. That tariff of British virtue is wonderfully organized. Heaven help the society which made its laws. Gnats are shut out of its ports, or not admitted without scrutiny and repugnance, while herds of camels are let in. The law professes to exclude some goods (or bads shall we call them?)—well, some articles of baggage, which are yet smuggled openly under the eyes of winking officers, and worn every day without shame. Shame? What is shame? Virtue is very often shameful according to the English social constitution, and shame honorable. Truth, if yours happens to differ from your neighbor's, provokes your friend's coldness, your mother's tears, the world's persecution. Love is not to be dealt in, save under restrictions which kill its sweet healthy free commerce. Sin in man is so light that scarce the fine of a penny is imposed; while for woman it is so heavy that no repentance can wash it out. Ah, yes! all stories are old. You proud matrons in your May Fair markets, have you never seen a virgin sold, or sold one? Have you never heard of a poor wayfarer fallen among robbers, and not a Pharisee to help him? of a poor woman fallen more sadly yet, abject in repentance and tears, and a crowd to stone her? I pace this broad Baden walk as the sunset is gilding the hills round about, as the orchestra blows its merry tunes, as the happy children laugh and sport in the alleys, as the lamps of the gambling palace are lighted up, as the throngs of pleasure-hunters stroll, and smoke, and flirt, and hum; and wonder sometimes, is it the sinners who are the most sinful? Is it poor