

# THE ERIE OBSERVER.

"THE WORLD IS GOVERNED TOO MUCH."

VOLUME XVIII.

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By Hiram L. Brown, corner of State Street and  
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Dealer in Theological, Miscellaneous, Sunday  
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No. 111, French Street, Erie, Pa.

## "THOU ART NOT HERE."

BY A WANDERER.

The Spring comes forth in loveliness,  
The earth in gay attire is clad,  
The fields put on their richest dress,  
And every thing looks bright and glad.  
But what are all these things to me,  
Since they are pleasures can impart?  
No beauties in them can I see  
To soothe or cheer this lonely heart.  
The folds in vain their beauties rear,  
I heed them not—thou art not here.

The Summer comes to cheer the sight,  
The birds are singing in the grove,  
The sun is shining clear and bright,  
And nature seems attuned to love,  
But on my ear unheeded falls,  
The merry song and plaintive lay:  
For gay or sad, each note recalls  
The bitter thought—thou art away.  
Their joyous songs fall on mine ear,  
And make me sigh—thou art not here.

The Autumn comes, and brings along  
Of golden fruits a plentiful store,  
Glad voices sweetly blend in song,  
And hearts with mirth seem rousing o'er.  
The young and old are blest and glad,  
The crowded halls in splendor shine,  
And yet it makes me lone and sad  
To think upon my fate and thine.  
I weep to think that thou my dear,  
My life my all—thou art not here.

## COINCIDENCES.

A TALE OF FACTS.

CHAPTER I.  
My mind and my heart are full, yet I fear  
to tip the pen. I would fain write a short  
story of some things which happened to my-  
self—a simple, yet strange tale, wherefrom  
men may draw a moral if they choose. But it  
is true; and it hinges on facts which are  
the staple of our daily knowledge, though we  
lack the faith that would show us how they  
are linked together, and made to act upon  
each other by an unseen yet ever-working  
power; and therefore, I doubt if it will be  
believed. Within this hour in a pit of Lon-  
don, whither my duties seldom call me—in  
durians of Covent Garden—I have seen one,  
skulking under the shadow of night, who has  
brought back to my thoughts what happened  
many long years ago—scenes in which I was  
forced against my will to act, and yet in which  
I felt as if the sorrow had been my own. And  
here let me also say, that my story is not one  
of strong passions or glaring crimes. I am  
no skilled writer of cunningly schemed fictions,  
nor—did I even know how—should I care  
to harrow tender hearts with plots of  
wicked men or scenes of poignant grief. My  
tale will only be a plain string of facts; it  
will have but one claim upon the reader's  
heart, which is, that it is true.

CHAPTER II.  
About twenty years ago, in the little woolly  
village of ———, in Middlesex, there was a  
boy's school. It was not a seminary for  
young gentlemen; it was not a childish-trap  
—a mockery, a delusion, and a snare;—for  
anxious mothers, or a commission agency for  
parents and guardians, or a huckster's-shop  
for butchers had butchers to exchange meat and  
bread for Latin and stripes; nor was it a house  
of torture for gentle hearts and emulous spi-  
rits, where a cold, low despotism chilled and  
stifled the warm impulses of the childish na-  
ture, or a vile grinding tyranny stirs and  
stimulates the nascent passions in forms of  
monstrous precocity. It was not a place  
where the eternal welfare of living souls  
could be jockeyed away against petty profits on  
bad beef and stick-jaw pudding; nor where  
one stunted, coarse, unshapen mortal uniform  
was forced by contract on all minds alike,  
whether by nature they were great or little,  
strong or weak. It was called Boy's School,  
but it was something more; it was a family,  
where the time was spent in living and learn-  
ing, where authority and coercion were un-  
known, because love and duty pre-occupied  
their places.

The master, to be sure, seemed somewhat  
young to be the patriarch of such a little lov-  
ing tribe. He was an M. A., and the clergy-  
man of the village. His attainments were  
such as would have entitled him to aim at  
distinction in the church, but, though active-  
minded, he loved peace and retirement, and  
he had a passion for training and developing  
the minds of children, towards whom he felt  
a really Christian love. His boys were his  
friends. He possessed the rare faculty of be-  
ing able to descend to the level of their intel-  
ligence; and they opened their little hearts  
and minds to him as if he had been their  
brother, or they play-fellows, as indeed, out  
of school hours, he often was. Yet he had  
brought with him into the scene of his tran-  
quil existence much insight into mankind—  
a store of that pure and better wisdom, which  
is founded on a knowledge of the existence of  
evil, tempered by an ever-watchful hope of  
good.

One boy—he was the eldest of the school  
—was to Mr. Faber almost a companion.—  
On his promising nature he had bestowed  
much care, stimulating his habit of rever-  
ence, strengthening his honesty of spirit and pas-  
sion for truth; and, while encouraging a nat-  
urally active benevolence and disposition to  
self-sacrifice for the sake of serving others,  
at the same time striving to develop and en-  
courage discrimination and prudence. The  
youth's mind had thus attained a healthy and  
early maturity.

The master who in easy circumstances,  
kept a sort of little pony barouche—a neat af-  
fair, in which he and his wife could now and  
then pay a visit at a distance. Sometimes,  
when a commission was to be executed in a  
town not far distant, he would trust the boy  
I speak of to drive over for the purpose, with  
perhaps a quiet junior.

One day the unpretending carriage and its  
youthful charioteer were on the way back to  
— when at the end of a plantation, a  
gentleman hailed the latter from a cottage-  
door. He was tall, remarkably handsome,  
and had a soft mode of address which instan-  
taneously charmed the boy. He had a young lady  
on his arm.

"My little man, I wish you would do me  
a favor?"

"Certainly, sir, with pleasure."  
"Then, will you let this young lady ride as  
far as ———, and set her down at the Merton  
Arms, to wait for me? She is not well enough  
to walk so far, and there is no hope of any  
other conveyance. I am obliged to wait here  
for an hour or so. I am sure I can trust her  
with you, my little gentleman, and I see you  
are a steady driver."

The young lady did not speak, but, as she  
stepped into the carriage, she bowed kindly  
to the boy, and slowly to the gentleman, and  
in a minute they were on the road. The youth  
made some friendly remark to his fair charge,  
but she only bowed, though still kindly. She  
spoke not a word, and her companion, who al-  
ready had that instinctive respect for her sex  
which is the true key to human happiness,  
forbore to intrude on her reserve. In less  
than an hour the chaise stopped at the inn; he  
jumped down, handed out his fair charge,  
who he confided to the smiling landlady,  
and followed them into the inn-parlor. Alone  
for a moment with the young lady, he saw  
that she was in tears. He felt sympathy,  
but he dared not speak. She thanked him  
courteously, as a young woman would thank  
a growing lad; and, on giving him her hand,  
she said, abruptly—

"Will you let me know the name of the  
young gentleman who has saved me this  
fatigue?"

Boy-like he gave his name and address; and  
he immediately proceeded back to school, tell-  
ing his master of the adventure. Mr. Faber,  
who never missed an opportunity of cultivat-  
ing a new idea, listened attentively, and half  
seriously, half jocularly, complimented him on  
the "conquest" he had made, at the same  
time praising his delicacy and good manage-  
ment. And the affair was soon forgotten.

It might have been a month or six weeks  
afterwards. One evening, in the twilight af-  
ter tea, as the master was seated with his  
wife and one or two of the principal boys, it  
was announced that the landlady of the Merton  
Arms wished to speak to Master ———.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Faber, archly. Master  
——— felt conscious that his face was red  
yet he did not know why. The landlady was  
called in at his request, when she presented  
him with a note, superscribed in a delicate fe-  
male hand.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Faber, again, but rather  
gravely.

The boy handed the note to his master,  
who opened and read it with evident interest.

"It is from the young lady you set down  
at the Merton Arms. She begs that she may  
see you."

"Ah, poor young lady!" interposed the  
landlady; "she has been with us ever since  
I'm sure she's a good young lady."  
Mr. Faber reflected for a few moments;  
then his face resumed its usual cheerful ex-  
pression, and he said, laughing—

"Well, Harry, I shall have instructed you  
to little purpose if I cannot trust you with this  
little adventure. I suppose she is at least a  
princess in disguise! Go back with Mrs.  
Critchett. I suppose the end of it will be  
that you will bring your fair innamorata to the  
Parsonage House."

The youth did as he was desired.

Perhaps the reader thinks that this was very  
imprudent in the clergyman. In an ordinary  
case it would have been so, but Mr. Faber  
knew the lad's disposition well; and, more-  
over, it was his system to enforce, wherever  
it was possible, his precepts by example, thus  
preparing inexperienced minds for the real-  
ities of life.

In less than an hour a ring was heard at the  
bell.

"It is Harry come back from the princess,"  
cried Mr. Faber, laughing.

Harry it certainly was, but he had on his  
arm a young and singularly beautiful girl—  
Mr. Faber turned pale, and looked very grave.  
He had not expected that his peculiar remark  
would be taken literally by his pupil. Mrs.  
Faber turned very red, and looked rather an-  
grily at the new-comer.

The youth, in whom the adventure had in-  
spired the natural course of our sex when  
befriending the other, said—  
"Sir, you have always told me never to do  
a part from my word, even if spoken in jest."  
"You are right—you are right, my boy—  
well?"  
"I am very anxious that this young lady  
should speak in private with you and Mrs.  
Faber. She will then return to the inn,  
where Mrs. Critchett is expecting her."  
The master assented, and the three were  
left alone. At the end of this time, a mes-  
sage was sent to the inn that the young lady  
would sleep at the Parsonage. Mr. Faber  
said nothing to his pupil, beyond praising him  
for the kindness and decision he had shown;  
nor was it till two or three years after, when  
he had grown older, and was leaving the  
school for college, that he told him what had  
passed at the interview. In about a week  
from her arrival, the young lady again left,  
and her young champion heard no more about  
her. But the adventure left a strong impres-  
sion on his memory.

CHAPTER III.  
I was not always so steady as I am now.

At first the temptations of a London life are  
too much for a young man thrown suddenly  
in their way; on the other hand, if they do  
not lead to actual vice, they are almost a ne-  
cessary school. At the time I refer to—per-  
haps twelve or fourteen years ago—I was a  
law student. One night, I was, at a late  
hour, in one of those taverns frequented by  
young men who lead what they call a "fast"  
life, though anything more dull, stupid, sense-  
less, and "slow," cannot be conceived. Al-  
though the tavern I speak of was, and I be-  
lieve still is, one of the best and most popu-  
lar of its kind, the room was but a large dun-  
geon, boxed off on either side into separate  
places of confinement, where to sit and eat

at ease was a feat for little men alone; and  
the atmosphere, heated to a poisonous degree  
with gas, reeked with the conflicting odors of  
innumerable and indescribable suppers.—  
Here were to be nightly met a motley com-  
pany, composed of sucking professionals, like  
myself, intermingled with a few steady, top-  
sytizens to whom their conversation was a  
relaxation after their daily toil, and occasion-  
ally varied by the presence of a flashy, slan-  
gony-looking race of beings peculiar to some  
London taverns,—wretched imitations of the  
cast-off habits of a few notorious aristocratic  
rascals. Here men nightly sacrificed their  
rest, forcing untimely food on cloyed appetites,  
and drinking fiery stimulants without  
relief, save in the mad excitement they pro-  
duced.

I sat in a box apart. This night there  
were not many persons present. I was quiet-  
ly eating my chop, thinking how foolishly I  
had spent my evening. Insensibly my at-  
tention was attracted towards the opposite  
box, where a tall, florid, handsome man was  
entertaining a small knot of listeners with  
what seemed to be a good story, so frequent  
was the laughter. Without actually listen-  
ing, yet I could not help hearing.

"Ah, but the way I got the girl was better  
than all! I made regular love to her—hon-  
orable proposals, you know, and all that sort  
of thing; and the old mother was as proud as  
possible that her daughter had a 'gentleman'  
for a sweetheart. But she always wanted to  
put off the marriage; her daughter was too  
young, she said. The little one did not think  
so. As she was very romantic (and by the way,  
she had a nice romantic little name to-  
ward), I persuaded her to elope, bought the li-  
cense, and did everything 'quite proper,' you  
know."

I am really ashamed to pen the rest of his  
infamous story; yet if these things are not  
known where is the value of the warning?  
This man went on in the coolest way, to re-  
late, that his victim had eloped with him; that  
he had, in vain, manoeuvred; till, at last, he  
was obliged to try what he called a "capital  
duress," which he had once before used with  
success. Were not the truth of the tale es-  
tablished beyond a doubt, it would be difficult  
to believe that any human being could be such  
a fiend. The poor girl had, at last, begun to  
doubt; but, in the morning, he came to, her  
with the license open in his hand, and said he  
was prepared to take her to church. Then he  
told, with passionate protestations, his "his-  
tory;" that he had in early youth, been in-  
veigled into marriage; that his wife had left  
him many years before, on finding herself de-  
ceived as to his property; that she knew not where  
she was; whether alive or dead; and that, if he  
married again, he incurred the risk of the law,  
and full his promise. And then he conjured her  
to go to church. The end may be guessed.  
By her virtue she conquered her virtue. By  
her very magnanimity and spirit of loving  
self-sacrifice he effected her ruin. He gave  
her a written promise of marriage "on the  
death of his wife." Of course he had no  
wife. Let no one too severely judge the un-  
happy girl. To be utterly ignorant of vice  
is almost as dangerous as to be vicious.

Not a word of this was lost on me. I was  
not sorry to see that even the half-intoxicated  
listeners had an instinct that it was a "little  
too bad." One of them asked—  
"And what became of the young lady?"  
The man, who was too much inflamed by  
wine to see the change in their manner, went  
on—

"Why, the way I got rid of her was better  
still. One day I took her a walk. She got  
tired and we rested a moment in a cottage.—  
A first rate idea struck me. I had promised  
her that she should die at the pretty village of  
———. I saw an empty carriage going in  
that direction. I asked the youngster who  
drove it to let her ride to the inn. The green-  
horn was quite proud of his office. I need  
not say that I was off for London directly. I  
knew she'd be too proud to come back when  
she found it out."

"And you never heard of her again?"

"No, nor never shall. But I believe she  
was obliged to hook the youngster, who was  
just getting out of his hobble-de-boyhood. I  
dare say she was his first love."

Unconsciously seeing that I looked inter-  
ested, he had addressed his latter sentences  
across to me. I stepped over and said—  
"But you have not told us the name, the ro-  
mantic little name, of the girl?"  
"Oh, she was called Rose!—pretty name,  
isn't it?"

"And her other name?"

"Ammerford."

I was now quite certain. I could bear it no  
longer.

"Monster! fiend! scoundrel!" I cried, to the  
utter astonishment of the spectators. "Know  
that your victim was saved! I can tell you  
the sequel of the story. Providence has pro-  
tected her. She was restored to a life of  
virtue. I am the boy whom you would  
have duped, and whom you now seek to de-  
fame—'Reptile!'"

In an instant a rumour was flung at my  
head. I rushed at the ruffian. Alas! I was  
no match for his science; I had only courage  
and passion on my side. I was in a fair way  
of suffering for my interference, when a new  
comer changed the face of affairs.

When the wretch pronounced the name of  
the girl, I had fancied I heard something like  
a groan at the other end of the room, but I  
was too much excited to take much notice of  
it. To my surprise, a fine, strong-looking  
fellow stepped between us, saying to my an-  
tagonist—

"Mr. ———, I have heard your disgusting  
story. You know me, and what it is to me  
to hear it. This is my business," turning to  
me; and then he covered the other with most  
obnoxious epithets.

"You impudent rascal, how dare you speak  
to me in that manner!" roared the other; yet  
he quailed under the attack, but his pride  
made him fight. This time he had his  
match.

I never saw a man receive such a punish-  
ment. The doors of the tavern having been  
closed for the night against in-comers, the af-  
fair went off without the interference of the  
police. ——— was only too glad to sink off  
to his chamber; and as for my unexpected  
champion, he walked away, apparently over-  
come by deep feeling, and I know not who or  
what he was.

To me the coincidence seemed singular,  
and the instantaneous retribution, adminis-  
tered by one who was evidently interested, was  
something out of the common course of things.  
But there were more strange coincidences to  
come.

CHAPTER IV.  
My professional duties and the turmoil of a  
tolerably active life soon obliterated from my  
mind all memory of the affair mentioned in the  
last chapter; indeed, except in connection  
with its antecedents and consequences, it was  
not of a character much to arrest the atten-  
tion. I need scarcely say, too, that I soon  
gave up those habits of dissipation in which  
most young men indulge, for at least a short  
time, when they are first thrown upon the  
world. I applied myself steadily to my pro-  
fession, and do not suppose that, except when  
engaged in consultations, I ever was out of  
my bed later than eleven o'clock. A tavern  
I never entered; a theatre, only when some-  
thing great or remarkable was to be per-  
formed; and I need not remind the reader how lit-  
tle opportunity has of late been given for an  
indulgence of that sort. In short I was one  
of the most regular and plodding men in a  
profession where steadiness and application  
conduce more certainly to success than in any  
other.

As a necessary consequence of these habits,  
I wanted to get married. When a man  
has experienced the advantage of practising  
the smaller virtues, he begins to long for that  
which is the greatest of all. I once seri-  
ously bent on the delightful venture, fortune is  
generally kind enough to throw a lottery ticket  
in the way; for I never listen to those men  
who say "Oh, I would marry directly, but I  
can't get a wife!"

My ticket turned out a prize. I do honest-  
ly and sincerely feel that I was utterly un-  
worthy of the preference shown in my favor,  
and my whole subsequent life has been devo-  
ted to striving to render myself worthy of it.  
I was on a visit to Mr. Faber, when I was first  
introduced to the family with which I now  
have the honor to be allied. It is enough for  
the purposes of my tale to say, that there were  
two sisters, Mary (mine) and Eliza. I think  
Mary had the strongest mind, but perhaps, it  
was my vanity that suggested the idea. Eliza  
was extremely beautiful, but a little head-  
strong. After some difficulty, I became the  
accepted suitor of Mary, and of course a  
constant visitor at the house.

I now speak of what happened about six  
years ago.

I became conscious, after a short time had  
elapsed, that there was something going on  
of which I was not aware. At last I discov-  
ered that there was some secret between the  
sisters. I frequently asked Mary, but was  
often put off with an arch laugh. Once I  
asked Eliza, but she blushed so scarlet, and  
looked so frightened, that I forbore to repeat  
my question. At length the secret came to  
light. Eliza had a lover. Mary told me the  
important fact one evening in the twilight,  
during a positively intoxicating state of ten-  
derness. Well, as soon as the ice was broken,  
Eliza could talk of nothing else. She evi-  
dently admired the unknown excessively. He  
was so handsome, so courteous and so well  
read; he could sing so well and ride so well;  
in short he had every manly attraction under  
the sun. True, he was a little older than Eliza,  
—it seemed to me more than a little; but  
she had always resolved never to marry a man  
who was not considerably in advance of her  
in point of years. It seemed to me that Eliza  
was proud of her lover; more than that, she  
loved him as a woman ought to love. When  
she loves, he had evidently struck her im-  
agination, and had obtained an ascendancy  
over her mind. I ought to add, that Eliza  
was to inherit a very large fortune,—and not  
only the same amount of money that Mary  
was to have, but in addition, a considerable  
sum from a grand-uncle, who had formally  
made her her heir.

At length an important day came. The  
unknown was to come down and pay his  
brother a visit. I discovered that I was the  
chief cause of so much of the anxiety I wil-  
nessed in the sisters; but Eliza had somehow  
conceived an opinion of my judgment, and was  
very nervous as to the impression her lover  
would produce. Mary, on the other hand,  
who was all affection, trembled lest I and my  
future brother-in-law should not like each  
other.

On the eventful day I strolled over from the  
Parsonage. There were the two sisters, with  
their good old mamma in the corner, smiling  
benignant satisfaction. Mary was grave; as  
for Eliza, I expected every moment to see her  
handkerchief fly off, her heart thumped at  
such a rate.

At length there was a loud ring at the out-  
er gate, then the sound of horse's hoofs, then  
a domestic bustle in the passage, and then  
the lover was ushered in.

It was ———!

The master turned pale as death when he  
saw me. With all his assurance and address,  
he was taken off his guard. But he saluted  
me distantly, in the manner of one who has  
been only introduced. The sisters ex-  
changed glances.

"You know Mr. ———," said Eliza,  
"Yes," I said, gravely; "Mr. ——— and I  
have met before."  
Poor Mary! All her worst fears were more  
than realized.

We talked on indifferent subjects for some  
time. At length a walk in the grounds was  
proposed. While we were out, ——— con-  
trived to take me aside. He had made up for  
the part of a repentant sinner,—perhaps he  
calculated on the softness of the greenbush  
again! He protested, he abjured, he conjured.  
He was utterly reformed. He had spent  
years in striving to find Rose, that he might  
make her the only reparation. Even now,  
could he find her, he would make the sacri-  
fice; and so on. I listened quietly. His  
manner was too abject. It was not the real  
expression of manly contrition. I saw that  
the wretch was acting.

"Mr. ———," I said, "I shall do my duty,  
which is, to tell this family the simple facts;  
they can then act as they choose. Of this I  
am certain, the man who could do as you have  
done towards poor Rose must have the nature  
of a fiend. At all events, the risk is too  
great for an innocent creature like Eliza. Be-  
sides I have heard of you since. I know that  
you have neglected your profession from hav-  
ing an independence. I have heard also that  
you have gambled away your fortune. You  
seek Eliza's fortune, not herself. No, sir, I  
shall do my duty and you can take what steps  
you like."

He was livid with rage.

"Do you wish that I should give you another  
lesson?" said he, maliciously insolent.

"Pooh, pooh, sir! I am wiser now than I  
was then. Good day!"

I blame myself much that, from an instinc-  
tive dislike to come into contact with this  
man, I did not at once speak, I let a day  
pass. That day had nearly proved fatal to  
poor Eliza; it would have done so for an-  
other "coincidence." When I again sought  
Mary, she was grave, and spoke in a manner  
she had never yet used. Still, her hand  
trembled when I pressed it, and a tear stole  
down her cheek.

"Mary," I said, "where is your mother? I  
have a communication to make her of the ut-  
most importance to your sister's happiness."

"Oh! you need not do so; Mr. ——— has  
already confessed all. It was with shame  
that he did it; but he said your 'hypocri-  
sies' (that was the word he said, Harry),  
compelled him," and the tears rolled down  
her beautiful cheeks.

True it was the scoundrel had made the  
most of his time, and had told his story in his  
own way; but in order to put me forever out  
of the witness-box, he had coined a lie to the  
effect that he had intended to fulfil his prom-  
ise, but that he had withdrawn the affections of  
the girl, and that I had forever concealed  
where she was to be found.

With Mary, a solemn assurance that it was  
a falsehood was enough, but Eliza looked on