The Independent Republican.

"FREEDOM AND RIGHT AGAINST SLAVERY AND WRONG."

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Original Poetry.

For the Republican.

LINES BY KATE.

Though others may sing of the "beautiful west,"
So like the unbounded sea,
Of its "rising glory," by all confessed,
It is not the song for me.

I know that this land is most beautiful—
When Summer uplifts her wand,
An unrivalled coquette, she blushes and smiles,
By the silken winged zephyrs fanned.

Above and below, how expanded her vision,
While the heavens and earth are soft blending
And Hesperus gleams above shadows Elysian,
As the night like a queen is descending.

Yet these wide spreading shades, and ocean-like plains,
All so glorious, breathe not of health,
Let *me* rest in the life-giving goddess' domains,
'Twere a boon far more precious than wealth.

Aye give me to breath 'mong the cloud-kissing hills
On my own "Susquehanna's side,"
And ever to drink of her bright gushing rills,
Where the "witch" of the west can't abide.

Then a song to my home, my well beloved home,
The home of my future dreams,
The goal where my thoughts will e'er love to roam,
Though far in the distance it gleams.

Joliet, Feb. 1855

Select Tale.

From Putnam's Monthly.

MY THREE CONVERSATIONS WITH MISS CHESTER.

CHAPTER I.

I was at a party; where, is none of your business, and immaterial to the following relation. On second thoughts, however, as localization increases the interest of a narrative, I will say, at New York, in a Fifth-Avenue palace.

Perhaps it would be well to say something introductory about myself. I was twenty-five,—between you and me, fair reader, I am not so very much older now—tall, well-formed, strong and active, both mentally and physically, and an extensive omnivorous reader and student. The only trait of my character which has any special significance, *relative* to the matter in hand is, that I have considerable of that magnetic power used in throwing 'sensitives,' as they are technically termed, into the mesmeric state, although I very seldom exerted it, and my possession of it was known, I believe, only to myself. Did it never happen to you, respected reader, when looking intently into a person's eyes during conversation, that you *saw* the thought, and even the very words, which passed through his or her mind, in comment or reply? The whole group of phenomena, of which that is one—embracing some classes of dreams, much mental action, animal magnetism, biology, the whole circle, in fact, of physico-psychological science—is, at this present writing, the most profound, comprehensively, multitudinously and variously related, the most promising, important and intensely interesting, and the least understood, of all the departments of human knowledge. I wish I could stop to indicate a few of the complex and astonishingly intimate ramifications by which this philosophy—the philosophy of the combined and reciprocal inter-action of mind and body, the wondrous march or border-territory whereon mind and matter bear conflicting and contending sway—underlies and entwines itself with human interests and human actions. But that is not my *present* design; and for the narrator, especially, must *hoc age* be inscribed upon his pen. Mind *this*, not that, nor the other.

The relevancy of these remarks consists in this, namely: that the few circumstances which I propose to narrate are an actual exemplification of the working of the laws to whose existence and influence I have alluded. I have permission from the lady most interested to record and publish them; for, however insignificant in themselves, they will, at least, form some portion of the archives from which a future generation is certainly to draw facts co-operative in constructing a fabric of universal philosophy, more marvellous in architecture and more immeasurably magnificent in dimensions, than any of the wildest dreams hitherto figured by the loftiest human intellect. This splendor, however, is of course. Systems of actual truth, the work of the All-powerful—as their awful vastness unveils itself before human eyes—must as much transcend the beauty and the size of the one-sided little elaborations of human minds, as the unimaginable splendors of evening clouds excel the blue and yellow daubs of that landscape goat of a 'paintaster,' Skumble; as the great palaces of the heavens surpass the ecclesiological glories of the Woden Gothic.

I had selected, according to my custom, a corner, from which I was making my ordinary use of the company, viz: studying their lives from their faces, and working the detail of expressions and postures into connection with the pre-existent mass of mental philosophy, whose acquisition and arrangement had been my study for years.

All the usual varieties of young men and women passed in review before the uninteresting person in the corner. I was not dressed in fine raiment, wore no gloves, was not known as a 'lion,' known, indeed at all, to only two or three besides my cousin, the daughter of the house, and only very slightly known even to them and to her. So, nobody stopped to talk with me; and, as I arranged with cousin Ellen to let me alone, save when I should ask to be introduced, I had a fair opportunity for my sweet espials. It was a curious and entertaining spectacle, when rightly viewed. First, I generalized my eyesight—if the expression be allowable—and gazed upon the moving mass before me, without reference to any particular individual. This, especially during the dances, furnished a droll spectacle. Such another may be observed by gazing in the same general manner at a church, all waving with fans, like a flocks of great butterflies over a bed of gay cabbages, on a hot Sunday in summer: and another, more decided in character, by observing the simultaneous nutations of heads, fingers and arms in an orchestra.—These effects are different from that of a band of marching men; for the entire body of these last move forward by rhythmic progressions, while in the case just instanced, the company, considered together, is stationary; and the rhythmic movement of individual limbs and instruments throws only an atmosphere, as it were, of ordered motion over the whole.

I threw out of consideration the bodies of the dancers, and only observed their heads. A strong volition of a few minutes' duration enabled me entirely to lose the remembrance of bodies, and to free myself from the sensations coming from the sound of the music; and so, from the silent motions of the dancers, and the accompanying expressions of the faces, in quadrille dances especially,—there arose before me a spectacle of such intense absurdity that I was forced to break off my occupation to avoid an obtrusive laugh. I was beholding only faces, it will be remembered, as solely as if I had been looking at heads cut off. The expressions upon nearly all of them were of intense solemnity.—Nearly upon a level, they bobbed up and down in couples and fours; swam about, cocking themselves oddly to one side or to the other in the alternations of rest, and gibbered slightly; anon, launched forth again upon the inane vagaries of their solemn mummery. I nearly laughed aloud, but ceased gazing; and, forthwith, grew angry. Apish phantasms of silly sport, the winking, wiggling heads were a fair representation of the earnestness with which the 'first circles' bury themselves in the mindless frivolities of polite society. I was angry that the observances of fashion should be so much regarded, even by the brainless noodles who gabbled and fluttered before me; and with a most expansive and ardent aspiration after the Apotheosis of Labor, I left the dancers to their aimless evolutions.

Then I made a similar experiment upon the heterogeneous volume of sounds that arose from the social hubbub of the rooms. Not listening to any single voice, I regarded only the clacking, clattering rattle that flowed turbulently up from so many voices, mingled with the monotonous dance-music of the two German fiddlers, the harpist and pianist, who officiated as orchestra. The din was stunning. It was as if the English language had been torn into ragged angular scraps and fragments, and vociferated at utmost possible speed, and entirely at random, by the whole company. Now and then a shrill laugh, or one or two connected words loudly articulated, jumped up from the rough average of the confused noise. The harsh fiddle-notes darted and streamed up and down among the tumult, like so many vocal squibs; and the harp and piano were scarcely audible. A minute or two of such listening satisfied me, and I returned to my invidious business of watching my neighbors.

A flaxen-haired and flaxen-moustached dandy, whose unnaturally slender limbs, cased, *secundum artem*, in skin-tight pants, would almost equally him for the workhouse under the vagrant laws, as 'having no visible means of support,' stood 'diddling' (i. e., imitating the movements of a wretch in an ague-fit,) after the approved fashion, and expending washy conversation and washier smiles upon a female counterpart. Two or three city damsels, very much alike, all having the fair complexions, slender forms and large fringed eyes, so common among metropolitan beauties,—were giggling and chattering, in the enjoyment of fluent ladies' talk so incomprehensible and unattainable to us stupid and slow-tongued men. Two or three wizzled antiques of the same sex mumbled sourly together upon a sofa. Several fat mothers conversed in awful conclave, on the other side of the room; and in the middle, the varying dances wove their interminable tangle

With her back towards me, so near that I could almost hear the words, stood a tall young woman dressed in black, with magnificent shoulders and arms, with raven-black hair of great fineness, length and volume, and a dark but peculiarly transparent complexion. She was surrounded by several gentlemen, whom she seemed at no loss to entertain, at least so far as to bear her full share in the conversation, and in the commerce of wits, whatever they might be; for there seemed to be in the circle much laughter, though not of the pleasantest sort. As I watched the group, I saw one and another of the gentlemen's faces redden, when the others laughed; one or two grew preternaturally sober, and quietly left that part of the room. The lady's noble head, haughtily set upon her neck, moved now and then with an almost imperceptible gesture of disdain or anger. I quiely drew a little nearer; not to listen to the conversation, but to observe the heads. The faces of the men were all foolish and conceited; and they were, as it happened, all fair-haired. Although I could not see the lady's face, yet the dark masses of her hair and dress, and the height and volume of her head, her self-possessed attitude, the minute gesture of which I spoke, and the short and keen replies which she shot about, rendered the contrast of characters, as she stood among the young men, extreme and striking.

She stood talking with her retinue for a considerable time; and afterwards with others who approached. I observed her steadily and intently, watching her head, her temperament, her form, and her demeanor. All were faultless; at least, even with a sufficiently critical disposition, and much experience in estimating phrenological, physiological, and psychological characteristics, I could not see anything to change. I did not, however, as I said, see the front of her head. I gazed and gazed, until I became absorbed in my contemplations, and in considering their consequent and collateral reflections, my meditations eventuated in a profound reverie, of a dim and undefinable character. All my thoughts, at first, seemed centered upon the individual lady at whom I had been looking. But I lost track of them; and it seemed, afterward, as if I had entered into a state resembling that which Asiatic ascetics believe they can attain by unending reiterations of their sacred names.

I was aroused from entire forgetfulness of time and place, by some sudden and uncomfortable sensation, which made me for an instant suspect that I had been struck, although I could not say where. Upon this unceremonious recall of my fugitive wits, whatever its nature might be, I looked again at the fair object of my speculations; and with such a feeling as if I had not seen her for a long time. For the sudden change from abstracted reverie of intense contemplation, to mere ordinary intuition, was quite great enough to cause the requisite break in the current of my consciousness. The strange beauty, for some reason or other, was blushing deeply—at least it is improbable that so brilliant a color would incarnadine her neck, and not her cheeks and brow. Deeply she blushed for some unknown reason, and almost immediately she moved away, without turning her head, saying something which I could not hear, to a distant part of the room.

I recurred to my cogitations upon the flitting figures before me, but still my thoughts recurred to the 'dark ladye.' I felt certain that she must be well worth acquaintance. It could hardly be possible that one evidently of so remarkable natural endowments, should not present a rare study for the philosopher—especially for the philosopher in living minds. I desired to complete my new discovery. My snug corner became dull. I left it; and edged and twisted about the lofty rooms, pretending great need to arrive at some point in advance, which, like the beetle with buttered horns, I carried forward as I went. Up and down I wormed about; sometimes looking earnestly at the other side of the room in general; sometimes peering with emphasis at a feigned something among the closely crowded male and female shoulders around me; until, after making a good deal of trouble, and many skilful evolutions, I unsuspectedly established myself to my satisfaction, *en echelon* and to the front of my unknown. Thus, I was in better luck than before, in my philosophical pursuit. For while I was as well hidden from her as before, by the densely aggregated and moving mass of the crowd, a skilful adjustment of my operations would preserve me from annoying her, while I could study her face and gesture-language to much better advantage.

Of her face, the lower half was perfect but not peculiar, unless for the firm closure of the full lips. The eyes were large, black, and deepset. The eyebrows fell with an unusual slope at the outer end of the eye. The forehead rose high above, full and steep, like an intellectual man's forehead; and in those portions which would be its four angles, were in a parallelogram laid athwart the face, fuller than any I had ever observed. And in looking, again I glided into deep and concentrated musings; and again, from a state of profound reverie, I was aroused by such another shock as I had felt before. Again I gathered together my scattered thoughts; and as soon as I had retraced their lost clue up to the passing moment, again I looked toward the dark beauty who had so much attracted me. She had changed her position, and was looking another way; but again, whether from some casualty of conversation, or from having noticed my persistent gaze, she was blushing.

Beginning, now to be actuated by a desire to obtain by conversation the complement of my scanty knowledge with which mere exterior observation had supplied me, and thus to secure some satisfactory acquaintance with one, who, I did not doubt, possessed unusual gifts, I forthwith resorted to Cousin Ellen. From her I requested an introduction to my fair unknown; at the same time inquiring in general as to her name and condition. She was, Ellen said, a Miss Irene Chester; the daughter of a farmer in one of the small sea port towns of Fairfield County, Connecticut; an assistant teacher in one of the city schools; an old schoolmate of hers, cousin Ellen's; here in society for almost the first time, but already making quite a sensation; nicknamed 'The Two-edged Sword,' from the keenness of her repartees; always a strange girl; invited on the ground of the school-fellowship, having, I think, been Ellen's room-mate; perhaps not known at all in city society, beyond Ellen's immediate circle; of great conversational talent, a student, a reader, and otherwise accomplished.

These last, namely, the study, reading and accomplishments, a trifle unsettled me; for ladies with those recommendations usually gabble and dabble, but little else. Yet I took comfort from the omen of power in the nick-name, and persisted.

Miss Chester heard my name and the recital of my cousinship to the pretty hostess, with considerable frigidity; looked me clearly in the eye as I accosted her, and waited, apparently under the influence of some dislike or disinclination to speak, for me to begin.

These cold receptions are very much more adapted to vivify one's anger than one's intellect. I burned in inward wrath and outward speechlessness, for a minute or so; then suddenly adopting a resolution, I drove away the rage, assumed as pretty a simper as I could muster, and ventured to remark, with an air of great interest and (I flatter myself) a well executed 'diddle,'

'It is very fine weather, Miss Chester.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Unusually crowded rooms this evening. How tiresome it is to be squeezed up among so many disagreeable vulgar people!'

'Do you think so?' said she, with a sort of glimmer in her eye. 'If it is so disagreeable, what made you come?'

'Self-denial,' answered I, 'is healthful for the soul. And aside from that excellent reason,'—here I rather exaggerated my simper and my diddle, to the young lady's evident disgust—'I must have had a presentiment of pleasure reserved for me, in the acquisition of so valuable an acquaintance as Miss Chester.' I accompanied the last words with a culminating grin, and as silly a bow as I could contrive.

'*Are* you acquainted with me?' she asked, with a curious observing expression of eye and lip, as much as to say, 'behold here a new and strange variety of baboon.'

I sniggered after the most approved style, and answered after the most fashionable euphuistic dialect, at which I could easily see that Miss Chester's disdain and anger were flaming almost unendurably.

'He, he, he! Ah flattah meself that I am competent to elucidate and analyze characters at short notice. But you must be weary with standing so long. Pahmit me to wait upon you to the *tete-a-tete* opposite; and if you will allow me, ah shall be exceedingly delighted to fahnish you a specimen of my powahs in that line.'

'By all means, sir,' said Miss Chester.—'I thank you.'

So we sat down.

'I must make one preface,' said I. 'I presume that a young lady of Miss Chester's talents and information' (another disdain-provoking bow from me), 'is aware that such observation as I have been able to make, cannot reveal what modifications circumstances and occupation may have engrafted upon your original character. Permit me, therefore, to ask that you will just tell me what and where your life has been.'

'Not one single syllable,' returned she, with evident pleasure in a short refusal.—'You pretended to an acquaintance with me, and offered to prove it. And now when it comes to the trial, you already begin to feel about for such scraps and hints as you may hope to coax out of me, after the usual fashion of fortune-tellers. I thought it would be so. I don't believe you know yourself, and to pretend to know me, whom you never saw before, and probably never will again! How should you? And why should you?'

'I know this, at least,' said I, quietly, and dropping my baboonery, 'that you are quite angry, and that you have acquired a sudden and immeasurable contempt for me. Is it not so?'

'Yes,' said she promptly, and with inconsiderate but full sincerity; for she spoke in answer to all my conversation and manners, up to the last question. Then she started, and looking at me in hasty alarm, and reflecting what her answer had been, added, 'No;' for she comprehended for the first time the indications afforded by the new tone of the query.

'Hot and cold,' I replied. 'However, both answers are right. No matter for the apparent inconsistency. Deeper thinkers than either of us have decided that truth may often times best be presented by the assertion of incompatible extremes.'

'I think you are correct,' said Miss Chester, 'but I don't know how you could tell. However, as to that notion about presenting truth, it behooves to be careful lest the poor creature perish between its two incompatible bundles of hay. Well, sir; now, if you will please commence the proof positive of acquaintance?'

'Yes.' I scanned her face a moment, and added, 'You do not like to attend church.'

'I do, too,' she replied, hastily. 'You are wrong there.'

'You are glad to think so,' I said. 'But think a moment. I do not mean that you dislike religious services. But does not very much of the church choir music displease you?'

'Yes.'

'And the prayers—were you never perplexed with a troublesome feeling that somehow they were not *your* prayers?'

'And the sermon—I am sure you have often shocked your friends by staying at home and reading one, when they were sure you ought to have been at church.'

'Pshaw!' said Miss Chester, 'you found that out from cousin Ellen.'

'Not at all. I stated the particular fact merely on one phase of a characteristic which ramifies into many manifestations. You are what is sometime called 'original,'—I mean slow of belief, and independent in reasoning. You examine doctrine and precept for yourself. The rapid statements of a sermon—of any oral discussion of a subject, do not satisfy you.—You want to examine, to compare, to weigh. That accounts for you preferring to read sermons rather than to hear them. In general, you dislike lectures and public addresses, on whatever subjects; and in general, you prefer to read on them rather than to hear. As to the prayers, you are wrong to allow yourself in the feeling, though I am right in stating it to you. The dissatisfaction is owing to your defect of sympathy, either with congregation or preacher. If you would abandon yourself to a generous participation in petitions which are only such as universal petitions must of necessity be, you would reap good from the prayer. The music, not to speak of its usual wretched execution, is unpleasant to you, as a dishonest pretence of praise, offered usually by the irreligious lips of persons who chant hymns to God, not because hymns overflow from hearts full of love, but because in their individual cases, the laryngeal membranes and tissues possess unusual motive and vibratory power. You see that my observations are merely individual corollaries from the premises of honesty, good observing and reflecting faculties, and musical temperment.'

'It appears, then,' said Miss Chester, 'that your acquaintance is one of not very long standing, and hypothetical and extemporaneous to an extreme.'

'But have I not spoken truly?'

'Yes, I believe so,' said she, 'although the things you say are such, as for some reason or other had not been articulately presented to me in exactly that way. I hardly knew them, if at all. And what is more,' she added with a troubled look, 'I do not like to be so easily read. I had thought myself safe in unintelligibility.'

'While,' I rejoined, 'you fancied that nobody else had got beyond 'baker' and 'shady.''

'Excuse the long word. I will plead the privilege of my pedagogy for that, though.—But as to your discoveries; I see that things which I never told to anybody, are known outside of my own mind. The more I think of it, the less I like it.'

'But you should not dislike truth,' I said.

'The truth is not to be spoken at all times. Nor is it always best or necessary to have it known even.'

'Perhaps not,' I answered. 'But I will proceed with my analysis.'

'No,' said Miss Chester, hastily. 'You have said enough already.' I—— You——

'One single remark let me make, however,' I answered, and I now looked steadily into eyes that did not endure my gaze. 'Just one thing. You do not despise me any longer. And you are half afraid of me, and the rest, I fear, is dislike.'

'I won't tell you anything about it,' she replied, with an alarmed sharpness.

'Very well; quite as well;' I rejoined.—A good observer is like a good arithmetician. He proves his work as he goes along; he does not need to look for 'the answer in the book.' But let me ask you if you play chess?'

'I do. Not much; but I am very fond of it.'

'Will you give me leave to come and paly a game with you?' I asked.

I had permission; and thus our conversation ended for the evening.

It is no part of the design of this plain statement of facts, to produce any dramatic surprises. So I will plainly say, that by this time I was exceedingly delighted with my new acquaintance, and, indeed, to all intents and purposes, thoroughly and suddenly 'in love at first sight.'

But as to the nature of her opinions, in regard to me, except for the brief synopsis which I had mentioned to herself, and which also I was confident of, in respect to my estimate of their kind but not of their degree, I could form no guess. But respect is much.

CHAPTER SECOND.

MISS CHESTER, in truth, was almost my ideal, in point of personal attractions; namely, the embodiment of health and strength, under the lovely feminine limitations imposed by the laws and graceful lines of womanly beauty; and I felt a certainty which long observation and study in psychology and physiology might justify, that her mind was worthy even of a nobler casket, if such an one were imaginable. The fine hair, so inscrutably dark; the deep liquid eyes, whose unfathomable irises seemed, as I gazed into them, overflowing as redundant fountains into the clear white eye-balls; the dark and clear transparency of skin demonstrated (a rare conjunction) quickness and endurance, not bodily only, but intellectual. The great volume of the head, the noble lofty forehead, the height of the upper cerebral region, proved as surely her intellectual excellence; which, in such a character as hers, must have been sustained and developed by the severe discipline of her work as a teacher. For, although the fact is seldom recognized, and indeed little known, no occupation on earth furnishes so comprehensive, invigorating, and symmetrical an exercise for the maturing, or matured mind, as the quiet and neglected business of 'teaching school.' And although disagreeable conclusions might seem suggested by the sharp words which I was certain she had distributed plentifully to the amiable youths, my predecessors in conversation, of which she had given me a specimen or two, and of which, the surname she had acquired might be reckoned a boding omen, yet they pleased me. For the wretched dandies richly deserved them. And how natural was it, for a strong and clear mind like hers, full of noble thoughts and the power to live them out, to be kindled into sparkling and blazing anger at the witless drivel of the butterflies she crushed!—Moreover; I remembered with keen delight, how the wrathful contempt which my simulated folly had provoked, faded out forthwith, as soon as I spoke true and clear thoughts to her; how her maiden pride, so pardonably and beautifully lofty and outspoken, when she felt that her interlocutors dwelt in a sphere far below her—when she flashed lightnings of scorn down upon their puny heads from the ethereal air of her own inaccessible and uninvaded realm of thought—had fled, abashed; how with truthful and maidenly honesty infinitely more lovely than her beautiful anger, and which was the basis, to me, reflecting upon it, of deep, delicious musings, she had recognized in me an intelligence honest and like her own, in kind at least, even if (which I never doubted) her womanhood had clothed her with the great womanly prerogatives of deeper intuitions and more unfathomable enthusiasms. And that, she was a true woman still, and not a mannish unsexed truant from her right life-limits, I knew; first, because I had seen so plainly—and I revelled in the remembrance, not from selfish pride of power, but because the fact vindicated to myself a claim of near relationship to such a noble soul—because I had seen so plainly how she consented to respect my masculine prerogative of self-confident and aggressive intellection; and, second, because it was only with such instinctive frankness, and with such sweet and close-following recoil into reluctance, that she recognized my bold appeals to her own interior consciousness—my sudden invasion of her own realms of silent thought—where she had before sat, sole empress,

'In maiden meditation, fancy free.'

Such thoughts burdened me in daily dreams; and the current of my studious life, before flowing steadily on in reading and thought, now spreading itself out in wide, quiet expanses of reverie; reflecting infinities of sweet thoughts, but flowing onward no more. I was deeper than ever plummet sounded,' in (I flattered myself,) a reasonable, noble, and beautiful love.

After two or three fruitless calls, made, to my great disgust, when Miss Chester happened to be out of town, or otherwise employed away from home, I succeeded in finding her at leisure for the chess game which she had promised me.

I was shown, that evening, into a well furnished parlor; and in a few minutes Miss Chester entered, dressed as usual, in black. She greeted me as if I had been an old acquaintance.

'Yes,' said I, 'that is right. We *are* acquainted, are we not? In fact, old friends?'

'In some sense', she replied, 'it certainly does seem as if I had known you a long time; or rather, as if you had known me a long time, for I don't feel as well acquainted with you as you do with me. You read thoughts with an ease which frightens me.'

'Where the fountain is so clear,' said, 'it is no wonder that its depths are searched.—Turbid and muddy thoughts would have shamed your mind into a cloudy secretive fear. But *that* would have revealed its own story, too.'

'I believe,' said Miss Chester, 'that I won't talk any more mental philosophy with you. But here is our battlefield. I suppose I might as well surrender without a summons, if it were not for the shame. So I challenge you to the course with sharpened spears, as Ivanhoe did his wicked enemy, Brian de Bois Guilbert.'

'I accept the challenge, but not in the spirit of de Bois Guilbert. And in token that I bear you no ill-will, I offer you the right hand of a foeman's friendship.'

She hesitated almost imperceptibly, but took the offered hand with a smile. I had offered her mine, indeed, that I might touch hers again, and I think some conscious or unconscious perception of it withheld hers.

'Now, then,' said I, as I held her hand a moment, let it go, sat down by the table, emptied the chessmen upon the board, and quoted with assumed ferocity, 'Death to the Huguenot! Fagot and Flame!'

Miss Chester replied promptly.

'But the braggart retreated more sad than he came. There's a Roland for your Oliver, sir. Still, your random shot told, for my mother was of a Huguenot family from the south of France, which came over to this country about 1690, and settled near New York, when John Jay's ancestors and so many more good men and women fled out of France to escape the *dragonnades*.'

'Indeed? But now please tell me where you found the quotation with which you answered mine?'

'If I can remember, certainly. And where did you get yours?'

I reflected a moment. 'It is mere flotsam,' I suspect—a splinter from some half-read poem, floating among miscellaneous *debris* of hurried reading. I declare I can't locate it. Stay, I'll tell you. No.' And I had to give it up.

'I'm not so honest as you,' said Miss Chester. 'I have tinkered my line—it is a transfer from Walter Scott's 'Search after happiness.' The last two lines, you know are,

'And the king, disappointed, in sorrow and shame,
Went back to Serendib as sad as he came.'

'I think I caught it by the jingle at the end, as one might a rattlesnake by the tell-*tale*.—Excuse the pun, please. The requisite alteration I extemporized.'

By this time the battle was ranged. Miss Chester, by lady's privilege, having the white pieces, and I the bloody red.

I invited her to the attack with as much politeness as did the Colonel of the English household troops his French adversaries at Fontenoy, and with more literature; for I challenged again in verse—

'Charge, Chester, charge!'

'For shame!' exclaimed my fair foe, laughing however, 'to pervert and parody right and left in that way! I fear you don't reverence anything, sacred or profane. I won't begin, now, unless the lot shall decide it so.'

By lot the first move fell to me.

'I don't know,' said I, scanning Miss Chester's face, 'whether to attack you in an ordinary or an extraordinary manner. Let me consider. You like ghost stories. I shouldn't wonder if you specially enjoyed Poe's marvellous imagination 'The Fall of the House of Usher.'

She laughed. 'You are right, I declare. Do you?'

'I do, indeed. So, seeing that you take such delight in things 'strange and vague,' I will treat you to a chess opening of that precise description.'

And I moved, king's knight's pawn one.

In giving a cursory account of the progress of the game, I cannot of course expect to make myself understood in detail by untechnical readers. But the game of chess is one whose combinations and varying fortunes can perhaps be more readily represented by illustrative phrases drawn from the language pertaining to departments of life and action not merely luxury, than any other transaction so insignificant as a sedentary amusement. I shall therefore pause a little for an explanatory *excursus*.

The main series of evolutions of a game of chess may very aptly be narrated in phrases applicable to a military campaign. There is the same set of material conditions; namely, an area for combat, invasive and defensive; a given force to command; main points of attack and defence; centres of operations; and necessity for intricately adjusted combinations of effort, for in both cases, each separate corps or soldier must subserve some leading purposes, immediate, or remote, or both, and must also strengthen his neighbors without impeding them. The strife is decided by the same conditions in the opponents, viz., equality or inequality of force, or of both. And the same qualities of mind are required; clearness of perception, longanimity, boldness, decision and perseverance.

Having premised thus much, I may more intelligibly proceed to state that the move with which I commenced my game was the first step of a plan of campaign like that of Fabius the Delayer; a movement designedly insignificant, upon my own flank, designed to induce the enemy to deploy rapidly and unwisely and so to lay her positions open to some deadly attack when the game should be in mid career. I intended to hold my centre troops close around my king, and to carry on my attack and defence from the sides of the game, allowing my opponent what is usually supposed the decisive advantage of occupying all the central open field, as the old sly Roman I mentioned, who "lurked and wandered in the bailiwicks" of Apulia, and of Latium, lying close among the hills, watching Hannibal, and waiting for chances to annoy him.

The game progressed as I expected; and in truth much more so too. For Miss Chester's forces had been manœuvered more skillfully than I had presumed upon; indeed she was the only lady player I ever saw who marshalled the mimic ranks, with a man-like and purposeful decision and force of combinations. My plan, like an illogical argument, seemed likely to develop itself only to its own confusion. My deceitful Fabian policy, allowing my opponent time and space to construct an impregnable array, had cramped up my own hosts within a space so limited as to prevent me from developing their power any whither. It seemed likely that (in a "chess point of view") I should be slain helpless and motionless, like a rat in a hole.

But it was not merely the difficulty of my chosen course of play, either, that prevented the operation of my combinations. I had been struggling hard to confine my attention wholly to my game; for, a good player and a genuine lover of chess, I abhorred to be beaten. My sexual pride, moreover, revolted, in spite of philosophy, against being beaten by a woman, and I experienced much repugnance, also, at the prospect of sharing the undesirable sensations of that disingenuous machinator commemorated by Shakespeare as affording special delight to beholders—

'The knavish engineer
Hoist by his own petard.'

Therefore I strove to centre my mental powers upon the analytical and mnemonic operations mainly valuable in chess. But, for the first time, I could not do it. At one move after another, I caught myself gazing at Miss Chester,—instead of at the pieces, and my thoughts intensly occupied in retracing the occurrences of the evening when I first met her. The violent efforts I made to discontinue this irrelevant occupation, must themselves of course have used much of the power which I could otherwise have bestowed on my game; and their ill-success, again, left more and more of their power to expend itself upon unreasonable and absurd reverie. But so it was, and I could not prevent it. The time which I should have occupied—which Miss Chester *did* occupy—in planning and combining, I used in gazing at her, as she leaned in steady study over the table; in gazing, not merely with the close attention to curves and forms which, nevertheless, artistic knowledge and experience did cause me to use; but with that mere rapture of contemplation with which we look at what is grand and perfectly magnificent, even to the satisfaction of our ideal of perfection. She nearly surprised me at it, once or twice. I escaped by quickly dropping my eyes, not altogether ingenuously, I fear, upon the board. Nor, had she been disposed to critical observation, could the fact have escaped her that something pre-possessed me. For not only did such evasions cause my cheeks to tingle, but they were followed by particularly asinine proceedings in my conduct of the game. For, having wasted the minutes which should have found me a strong move, in dreams, I then, ashamed of further delay, moved not only unpreparedly, but with the additional blindness of embarrassment and anger.

We had played without remarks, Miss Chester studiously and I morosely or abstractedly, for nearly an hour. It was only the slow developement consequent upon the line of play which I had adopted, which kept me from being checkmated before. But at last I thought that I discovered the inevitable impendency of check-mate in five moves. I waited to study the position fairly, and instead of that, fell off into unseasonable and profound meditation. I can hardly assert that I was precisely in the voluntary exercise of my ordinary mental faculties, such was the extreme of my abstraction. At least I quite forgot, for the time being, my place and my occupation, in dreams of delightful memory, and delightful, though groundless, vaticination. But these were suddenly shattered into destruction by a spasm or blow which vibrated in some mysterious way through all the chambers of my being. I looked up, and was astounded. Miss Chester stood erect before me, her large eyes dilated, and her breast heaving with anger and fear; and the red blood crimsoning her fair face, her fair neck, into a deep blush.

'How dare you,' said she, rapidly and angrily 'use such a power over me? This is the third time that——. But you may understand that even if you have it, you can never subject me to it. Did you not understand that the will of your subject must be subdued, or surrendered? If I were not able and willing to defy all you can do, I promise you I would have left you without a word. So often—in my own home, too!'

In utter extremity of surprise, I too arose. She had spoken as if profoundly convinced of same pernicious attempt designedly made by me; but what her precise belief could be, I wondered, and had to answer nearly at random.

'Would you believe me,' I asked, 'under *any* sanction?'

She replied hesitatingly, 'I don't know'——

'I swear to you,' I said, 'before God, that I never entertained the most distant wish or purpose in respect to you, which could displease, or should displease the proudest or noblest woman.'

She stood yet hesitant in angry beauty.—Even when truth is intellectually believed, it is often not felt until some corroboratory circumstance be furnished.

'You *know* it is so,' I added, earnestly, 'I know you saw how unexpected your words were to me.'

'I did,' she answered. 'I saw it. I believe you. But it was natural, you know, to be indignant.'

'But I *don't* know, either,' I replied.—'There is something here which I don't half understand. And you must let me talk with you about it. Let me lead you to the sofa.'

She sat down, and I sat, unrebuked, near her. 'What do you mean, I continued, 'by speaking of 'the third time?''

'You know,' she answered, half suspiciously, as if thinking that I pretended ignorance.

'I think I partly do; but I want to be certain.'

'Don't you recollect,' said Miss Chester, 'that you treated me in the same way, twice, the other evening? And before you had spoken to me, too?'

'I remember well,' said I, 'being twice surprised myself, by some one striking me a severe blow, as I supposed And, I acknowledge that I looked much and often at you.—But to-night, it must have been your anger, I think, that struck me. At least, I saw that you were angry. I say struck. But it was not a blow. It was something like a spasm or, indeed, not that either; a sudden and powerful repellent force exerted upon me, and operating, it seems to me, now that I consider it, neither on my body nor my mind. But I don't understand it at all; although I confess to you——. But tell me, please what was the sensation that you experienced For it seems to me that you have been agitated much more than I.'

'You magnetized me,' said she; 'or tried to. Don't you know what that is?'

'Yes. I know what that is, perfectly well. I know that I have some power of that kind. But I have never met with any phenomenon like these which seem to have occurred to you and certainly *have* appeared in respect to myself. Please tell me all about it. For there are, I think, many things which I can learn from you; and I shall be right glad to learn.'

I spoke with two meanings; if, indeed, I needed any instruction in the love-lesson which I was intuitively learning from my beautiful companion. Whether she saw both of them I do not know. But she blushed as she answered.

'I will tell you just what happened to me. You know what the sensation is which indicates the coming of psychomagnetic power from some person other than one's self?'

'No indeed,' I replied; 'that is, unless these three curious, sudden rebuffs, if I might call them so, which I have felt so lately, were such. In truth, I have perhaps an unreasonably keen horror of coming under any such influence. I have often thought, that if I should find any person magnetizing me, I would kill him, as surely as if it were necessary to prevent him from cutting my throat.'

'Yes. Then you can understand,' said she 'how justifiably I was displeased when I found you trying to magnetize me.'

'Don't you believe me yet?, I asked—'I do most solemnly assure you that I had not the remotest intention of the kind. If I did it, it was entirely and most innocently, involuntary.'

'Do you mean to say,' returned Miss Chester, now apparently much surprised, but incredulously, 'that you did not undertake to put my volition into a state of subjection to your own, either this evening or the other?'

'Most assuredly I do,' I answered. 'Did I not tell you so before? I never used any such power at all, except to relieve one feeble person from the headache.'

So speaking, I grew angry. For now, for the first time, I understood what was the suspicion that Miss Chester entertained of me, viz.: that I had endeavored to make myself master of her will, by taking advantage of her susceptible nervous temperament. So I myself now spoke further; and disdainfully and wrathfully.

'And since you think that I proposed so vile and devilishly wicked a snare to rob a woman of the control of her own spirit, I do well to be angry. I will not even deny the base accusation. Believe it, if you can. And good by to you. For I denied it, and truly,