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"THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE IS THE LEGITIMATE SOURCE, AND THE HAPPINESS OF THE PEOPLE THE TRUE END OF GOVERNMENT."

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"Poet's Corner."

From the Baltimore American.

Messrs. Editors:—The enclosed slip, cut from the Albion, contains some lines by Mr. Tupper upon Niagara. As they suggest those which follow, the author of the latter hopes it will not be considered presumptuous in asking you to publish them together:

Niagara.

Forged for Andes all around, and Alps,
Hear kings and priests of nature, robed in snow,
Throned as for judgment in a solemn row,
With icy mitres on their granite scalps—
Dumb giants frowning at the strife below—
Hanged for the sublime!

——Thou art too fair,
Too fair, Niagara, to be sublime;
In calm slow strength thy mighty floods o'erflow,
And stand a cliff of cataracts in the air.
Yet, all too beauteous Water-bride of Time,
Veiled in soft mists, and sinetured by the bow,
The pastoral charms may fascinate the sight,
But have no force to set my soul aglow.
Raptured by fear, and wonder, and delight.

[MARTIN F. TUPPER.

Too fair for the sublime! Oh! say not so—
Bard of the "Heart's Twin's," and the "Crock of Gold!"
Stand once again by great Niagara's tide,
And view its majesty of waves once more!
No snow-capt hills, no giant mountains tow'r
Above the gently undulating plains
Where wave the ripening wheat and tassel'd corn;
Yet, here thou meetest with the true sublime!
Freed on by Huron, and its weight of Lakes,
Foaming and struggling,—far as stretches sight—
Onward and downward with tumultuous speed
Leaps the wild rapids;—as when Ocean's depths
The searching storm twists in its airy grasp,
And hurls the phashing surges to the shore.
High over head, naught but the arching sky
Spans the broad River; radiant with the light
Flashing like sunbeams from the tortur'd waves
That foam and madden round its rocky Isles,
Has lays his sceptre on the Ocean-waste,
His footprints stiffen in the Alpine snows—
Recently God moves visibly on Thee,
O, king of Floods! that with resistless fall
Down plungest in thy mighty width and depth,
As if the Spirit of the Universe
Had gathered Ocean from its thousand caves,
And pour'd these from the hollow of his hand.
Exapt and awed—amazement—terror—fill
Impress and overcome the gazers soul!
Man's schemes and dreams, and petty littleness,
Lie open and revealed—Himself, far less—
Kneeling before thy great confessional—
Thine are the bubbles of the passing tides.

Words may not picture thee, nor pencil paint
The might of waters—voluined, vast and deep—
Thy many-toned and all-pervading voice;
The wood-crowned isle—fast anchored on the brink
Of the dread precipice; thy double stream
Divided, yet, in strength all unimpaired;
The crest of sunlight, and thy depths of gloom,
Boiling and seething, like a Phlegathon.

Amid the wind-swept and convolving spray,
Steady as Faith, and beautiful as Hope,
O! fair creation of the beam and cloud—
Arches the rainbow its etherial hues
From flint and granite in compacture strong
With no thrice-hardened steel; naught but the wave
Soft and transparent, did the new-born Time
Chisel thy altars! Here hath ever poured
Earth's grand libation to eternity;
The misty incense rising unto God;
The God that was, and is, and is to be;
Who lays his hand upon the thunder cloud,
And presses from its dark and sulphurous folds
The herb-reviving rain. Thou praisest him,
Thou dread Niagara! He ordained thee here,
The Titan of the cataracts! Gave thee voice,
Loud as his own loud thunders! Gave thee strength
To shake the Alpine ridges from their base,
And trample Andes 'neath thy billowy feet.

Batavia, May, 1851.

Selected Miscellany.

From the London Lady's Companion.

MIRIAM.

A Tale of Circumstantial Evidence.

It was on this very circuit, and in this very town. I was young at the bar then, one of the least known juniors, and very poor; anxious to work hard, but without either interest or connexion to bring me forward. I had been the circuit four times, and, except twice, had never held a brief, and those two were given me by another man, who was summoned to his mother's death-bed. Still I did not despair; I had, indeed, two incentives to courage and perseverance. The first was a firm trust in God's mercy; and the second, my engagement to your mother.—But it was hard work sometimes, and needed all my resolution to endure; but I did endure, and the end came. Well, it was the Lent Assizes, and Lord Cranstoun, the Lord Chief Justice, was on the criminal side. The calander was unusually heavy, and we knew from his Lordship's charge that he came prepared "to make an example," as he called it.

The commission was opened late in the day, after which the court adjourned till the morrow. It happened that for some reason or other I remained in court a short time after every one else had quitted it. It seemed but an accident, although doubtless it was God's doing, and ordained by him. I remember that I was gazing idly on the empty benches, when I heard footsteps approaching through the deserted passage, and a moment after I was accosted by an attorney.

"I beg your pardon," he said, hurriedly, "can you tell me where to find Mr. Ashley?"

"Indeed, I cannot. Some mistake has occurred with his clerk, and when we came into town to-day we found that he had not procured lodgings as usual."

"So I learn. I have been to the rooms Mr. Ashley usually has, and I hear that they are taken for Sergeant Keats. I wish to see him as soon as possible, and I am in the utmost perplexity."

"I am very sorry I cannot help you, Mr. Paget—Mr. Ashley had some intention of going to Malvern this evening, in which case he offered to drive me over; therefore, if you will come to my rooms we may hear some tidings of him; although, perhaps, as I declined his proposal, he may not call; it is all chance."

"How did you know me?" asked the attorney as we walked together.

"You are an Oxford man, I think—were you not at Magdalen?"

"Yes; and you? I do not remember you."

"I was at Worcester. Do you not recollect that wine-party in Lloyd's rooms at Oriel, when the chimney took fire, and the punch spoiled? I met you there."

"To be sure; how could I forget?—And what have you been doing since?"

"Marvellously little."

"Is this your first circuit?"

"No, the fourth."

"I never saw you here before; did you read with Chanty?"

"No, with Monk—why?"

"Because he had an Oxford man of your name, with him a few terms since, and he married a cousin of mine. I wish I had seen you before; I should have asked you to hold this brief for me. But now—ah, here is Mr. Ashley."

Ashley had been to my rooms, and not finding me there, had sallied forth in search of me, and now turned back with us. As soon as his eye caught the name upon the brief which Mr. Paget handed to him, he said, "Sorry I can't take it sir; I am retained to prosecute."

A short conversation ensued, which resulted in the brief being handed to me.

"And now, Mr. Conway," said the attorney, "can you give me a conference? We must get an acquittal if possible; and I know that no efforts will be spared by the prosecution to convict my client, who is, I firmly believe, as innocent of the charge as you are—when can you see me?"

"Now; this moment." The guineas were nestling comfortably in my waistcoat pocket, and the novel excitement caused me to forget the dignity I ought to have preserved.

"Thank you; then if you will glance your eye over the case upon your brief, you will at once be in possession of the names of the parties and the offence charged. When you have done so, I will explain the prisoner's previous history, which it is material that you should know."

It was a prosecution for arson—the prisoner an apprentice girl, and her master's the premises which had been destroyed.

"Well," said Mr. Paget, when I had finished reading, "now you must listen to a long story. Eighteen years ago a large basket, containing an infant apparently six months old, was left at the door of a surgeon in this town. The child was handsomely dressed, and a letter enclosing a bank bill for twenty pounds, and stating that the infant's name was Miriam Lyndon, were found beside her.

"The surgeon was a bachelor, an eccentric and strange man, although a very humane and charitable one, and in spite of all the scandal and jests of the world he kept the little stranger. But he had a housekeeper, Alice Sharpe. Yes," he continued, seeing me turn again to my brief, "that is the woman whose house has been burned, and she was so greatly enraged at the prospect of any one sharing the influence she had obtained over her master, that after vainly trying to alter his determination she revenged her disappointment upon the poor child by the most cruel usage. Ten years rolled on in this way: the surgeon gave up practice and society, secluding himself in his house and garden. There were no servants beside Alice Sharpe and poor little Miriam, who was still unreasonably hated by the former, with a boy who occasionally worked in the garden. By the exercise of constant watchfulness and cunning, Alice Sharpe managed to keep her master and his little *protege* almost entirely apart, and she continued so to fill the child's mind with apprehension and fears of her protector, that when by any chance they did meet, her terror was so great as to mortify and disappoint the kind old man. Still he loved the child dearly, and used to watch her pretty figure running about with great delight. Sometimes, too, when Alice was absent for a few hours at meeting or market, he would try to conciliate and attract the little creature, and thus, after a time, she learned to love, and forget to fear him. But all this was concealed from the housekeeper. Why has always been a mystery to me; however, it was so, and Alice Sharpe lived in ignorance of the mutual attachment, until her master was taken ill. Then, for the first time, the secret was betrayed by the intense grief of Miriam and the querulous anxiety of the invalid, who craved to have the child perpetually in his sight. To this, after a time, Alice was obliged to consent, and a little mattrass was brought into the sick room for her, while the manner and treatment of the wily, artful woman changed from its usual harshness to a caressing, oppressive kindness that was almost as offensive. But Miriam was too thankful to be allowed to remain with her protector to be fastidious, and she nursed him night and day until his death.

"He had no medical advice, Alice always ridiculing the idea of danger; but she prescribed for him herself, mixed up his medicines out of his own old stock of drugs, and administered them. Miriam observed that after taking them he was invariably worse, and that he often objected to do so; but the housekeeper always prevailed, and by dint of scolding and coaxing usually carried her point.—Ten days before his death, Alice introduced into his room a cousin of hers, a lawyer's clerk, whom she told Miriam that her master had sent for; and a will was then made and signed. After this the woman became careless, and left the dying man almost wholly to the charge of little Miriam, who was alone with him when he died.

"The last act of his life was to give the child a packet, which, after his death, he bade her take to the Clergyman it would explain who she was, he said; and Miriam positively asserts, that his last words were, 'bless you, my own child, my darling niece!'

"The packet, however, was lost; whether the child in her exceeding misery mislaid it, or it was taken from her as she slept, there is no means of discovering. Alice Sharpe always asserted that the whole tale was a pure invention, and that Miriam had never received any such article; she, however, remained positive, and so do I.

"Well, all was now changed. A will was produced, executed two days before the decease of the testator, bequeathing all his property to Alice Sharpe, and not one word was said about Miriam. People talked loudly, but the heiress heeded nothing: she took possession of the property, married her cousin, George Sharpe, (the man who made the will,) sent Miriam to the workhouse, and opened a milliner's establishment.

"Wheels roll within wheels: Mr. Sharpe was now a large rate payer, and once or twice overseer; and when his wife applied to the parish officers, offering to take Miriam Lyndon as an apprentice without premium, those functionaries found it convenient to forget her previous cruelty to the child, extolled her liberality to the skies, and, without consulting the poor girl, bound her instantly.

"The life she led in that house was horrible. No African slave ever workedharder or was more cruelly treated; but she never repined; she had learned endurance from infancy, and the practice was familiar. At last, however, she had another and greater trial to bear: her beauty attracted the evil eye of her wretched master, and her misery was complete.—The persecution she underwent from him, and the jealousy of his wife, made existence a burden to her, and many a night she has gone to sleep with a prayer for death upon her lips.

"One night (that named in the indictment) Miriam was occupied in dressing some straw bonnets, when her master entered the apartment, and after a great deal of impertinence attempted some familiarities. She resisted, and the noise of her struggle and her cries brought her mistress to the room; while the cowardly assailant, as soon as he saw his wife, slunk away, leaving the poor girl alone to bear the storm of her ungovernable rage. Blows, oaths, and every description of abuse were heaped upon Miriam by the infuriated woman, and she left her with a dreadful vow to be revenged.—Five hours after, in the dead of the night, the house was discovered to be on fire, the fire originating in Miriam's room, from which she was absent. She was, however, soon found in a small outhouse at the top of the garden, where she was at work; as she says by the order of her mistress, but which that woman denies. She was given into custody, and is prosecuted with a remorseless zeal that would do honor to a fiend. A subscription has been raised to defend her, and by God's help she shall be saved."

"Have you seen her?" I asked, after listening thoughtfully to this history.

"Yes, several times: she has been in prison several months."

"And she persists in her innocence?"

"Yes, but there is little necessity to asseverate what to every one who sees her must be plain."

"Your suspicion then lies—"

"Upon the prosecutor's wife. And more than this, I am inclined to suspect her of using unfair means with her late master, and of holding his property unjustly."

"How?"

"I cannot exactly tell, but I firmly believe Miriam's assertion that the old man gave her a packet previous to his death, and that he called her his niece; and I also believe that in some way or other Alice Sharpe has become possessed of the secret, and a deeper motive than even jealousy urges her to destroy her victim."

"But the will—if *that* was fairly executed, she need be under no apprehension."

"So it seems. Still my suspicions of foul play are very strong. Now let us go through the evidence. You see the principal witnesses are Alice Sharpe, Ann Jackson, the servant girl who discovered the fire, Edward Harris, the constable who apprehended the accused, and Louisa Jones, an apprentice, who swears that she heard Miriam vow to be revenged upon her mistress."

We perused carefully the evidence given before the committing magistrate—that of the servant and constable was straight-forward enough; there was no collusion or deception there; both spoke to facts within their knowledge, without prejudice or exaggeration. But it struck me upon a second examination that the testimony of Mrs. Sharpe and Louisa Jones was not genuine; there were several points that I did not like; and the language of both betrayed great acrimony and ill-feeling.

"You can make something of that?" suggested Mr. Paget, as he saw me musing upon the matter.

"I don't know. It's very strange they don't call the husband."

"Yes, and therefore I have served him with a Crown-office subpœna, which has frightened them, and put them on a wrong scent, I think."

"Is the letter found with the prisoner when she was left at the surgeons door in existence?"

"I don't know; why?"

"Nothing—a vague idea as to the indictment, that's all. But I think if it is possible it will be as well to have it. By the by, what brothers and sisters had this old doctor? How could this girl have been his niece?"

"Nobody knows. He came here about thirty years since, but he never visited, and so far as I know never said where he came from. Alice Sharpe followed him immediately."

"I should like to read my brief over alone, and see you upon it afterwards—to-night, if you are not engaged."

"What time will suit you?"

"Eight o'clock."

After the attorney was gone, I poured over those sheets again and again, and the more I did so the more satisfied was I that Miriam was innocent, and that Mrs. Sharpe had some desire for wishing to get rid of her. But, unfortunately, this was only my own conviction; I could see no way of working it out, or of bringing a jury to so desirable a conclusion, and the more satisfied I became the more uncomfortable I was also, because I knew that nothing theft was not very plain and unmistakable would, except by a very great chance, be accepted by Lord Cranstoun.

Such help I had, and next to commonplace witnesses it is the greatest that a counsel can have—a shrewd, clever, practical attorney.

It was afternoon before the trial came on. I shall never forget my sensations, as I saw the prisoner come up to the bar. She was not simply pretty, she was beautiful; fair, slight and delicate as a high-born lady, and graceful exceedingly.—There was a general murmur in the court as she appeared, and even the old judge was softened. Oh, what I felt! knowing that under god her life was in my hands. I was very nervous; the pen I held, feigning to make notes, trembled in my hand, and I shivered from head to foot as if ague-stricken. The constable was the first witnessed called. His evidence was short and clear. He stated that he was sent for at twelve o'clock at night to apprehend Miriam Lyndon, the prisoner, who was accused of having set fire to her master's house; that when he reached the place he found it burning inside, in a room which he was told was the prisoner's bed-room, and in another immediately under the chamber of her employers. That upon searching the house the prisoner was not to be found; but that after a little delay she was discovered in an out-building, at some distance from the house, pressing bonnets.

The man was turning to leave the box when it struck me that I might put a question or two with effect, and I therefore desired him to stay.

"When you reached Sharpe's house," I commenced, "what had been done to extinguish the fire? Was there any engine or people there?"

"No, sir, none; nothing had been done as I see'd: the fire was dying out of itself—a few pails of water would have put it out altogether: the straw blazed a bit fierce at first, but there was nothing for it to catch hold on; there hadn't been nobody of fire."

'You say you found the fire burning in two rooms, the prisoner's and the one under her employers; was there much light, much glare, I mean, through the windows; any thing to attract attention?'

'No, sir.'

'It was a light, moonlight night, was it not?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Was the firelight then less visible from the moon shining on the windows, than it would otherwise have been.'

'Yes, sir.'

'How far was the outhouse where the prisoner was working at the end of the orchard, from the dwelling-house?'

'About three hundred yards, more or less.'

'In going in and out of the outhouse, as you have just told the Court the prisoner would often have occasion to do in the course of her work, was there any thing in the appearance of the house to draw her attention?'

'No, sir; I shouldn't have known there was a fire, outside of the house.'

'Did the prisoner express any surprise at seeing you?'

'No sir; it seems there was a bonnet of my misses altering at the shop, and she thought I'd come for it, for she said, I am sorry your wife's tuscan isn't done, Mr. Harris, but we have been so busy.'

'Did she seem to be regularly at work, as if she had been at it some time?'

'Yes, sir; there was lots of bonnets about as she had been scouring and pressing.'

'When you took her into custody, what did she say?'

'I told her nothing at first, only as she was suspected of setting fire to the house, and then she looked all amazed, dumbfounded as it were; but after a bit she said very steadily like, 'I know nothing of it, I never had such a thought.'

The next witness was the servant-girl. Her testimony was clear and short. She had seen Miriam go to her bedroom at the usual time, had retired herself immediately after, and slept until aroused by her mistress, who told her that Miriam had set the house on fire, and had run away. She was very much frightened, and by her mistress's order went to the constable. She did not see the rooms until her return with the man for whom she had been sent; she wished to do so, but her mistress refused to let her. She knew of the quarrel that had taken place in the evening between Mrs. Sharpe and Miriam, and heard the former say that her apprentice should 'rue the day she had set her cap at her master.' It was unusual to work at the bonnet-pressing and scouring at night, but once or twice before Miriam had worked all night by her mistress's orders. Mrs. Sharpe was a regular Turk to her; and her master worried the life of her; she led the life of a black slave between them. Never heard her swear to be revenged, or any such thing, and would not believe it. There was not much burned, only a cupboard door and shelves in one room, and an old bedstead in another; there was a lot of straw and matches under the bed; Miriam had no call for either.

The apprentice was called next. She was a bold, impudent-looking girl, dressed in a very showy style, and stared round the court in the most insolent manner.—She took oath with great flippancy, and when she turned round cast a look at Miriam which betrayed all the hatred of her heart, and its cause—she was jealous.

She swore to many conversations with the prisoner on the day previous to the fire, in each of which she had declared her resolution to be revenged upon Mrs. Sharpe, although she did not say why.—Never saw Mr. Sharpe pay her any attention, although she did all in her power to attract him. Considered her a great flirt and a very artful girl. Purchased a tinder box and sixpennyworth of matches for her a few days before the fire. She said she wanted them for a particular purpose. Don't know where she got the money, unless it was from the young lawyer up the street, who was always after her. Would swear that on that very night, before she left work, Miriam said, 'you'll hear something before morning as'll make you stare.' Asked what she meant, but got no answer, except a vow to be revenged on her mistress. This conversation took place at the garden gate. There is an old-fashioned lodge at the gate, open to the road. People can sit and rest in it; any body there would see all the people who came down the garden-walk. They could not help seeing.

Cross-examination did very little with this witness, except to show the bitter feeling with which she regarded Miriam, to elicit the fact that the young lawyer had formerly been a lover of her own, but had deserted her for Miriam, and that her own character was far from stainless.

Then came Alice Sharpe, the only witness from whom I had any hope; and what that hope was, was even to myself so vague and undefined an idea, that I could not shape it into any practical and tangible form. With a hesitating step and furtive glance Alice Sharpe now entered the box, and certainly I never saw a more cunning, ruthless and determined countenance than hers.

She was evidently ill at ease, for she cast an anxious, apprehensive gaze round the court, and trembled visibly. My hopes rose as I saw this. There was something she wished to conceal, something she feared would come out, and I knew better than she did that there was no place like a court of justice to facilitate discoveries, or to unmask a lie.

At first while she was giving her evidence, I looked steadily at her, and she became confused and nervous, and hurried on, and I saw that if I hoped to succeed in eliciting any thing from her, it must be by setting her at ease; so I buried my face in my hands, and feigned to read; but through the division between two fingers I managed unseen to keep a keen watch over her. The effect of this release from surveillance was immediately apparent. She thought that she had baffled me, and that I felt myself beaten; and this idea brightened her countenance, strengthened her voice, and unloosed her tongue. Thenceforth she spoke freely, and her evidence against the prisoner was, if it could be believed, perfectly conclusive of guilt. She positively denied having sent the girl to work in the out-house, and swore to having found a tinder-box and matches concealed in Miriam's bed after the discovery of the fire, as also some of the same matches (which she recognized from being made of a different wood to that generally employed for the purpose) by the heap of straw which had been used to set the closet and bedstead on fire.

She said all this in a flippant, malicious manner, every now and then casting her eyes furtively upon me, but receiving reassurance by seeing how completely I appeared to be absorbed. While she was speaking a note was passed over to me by one of the senior counsel, who had been watching her attentively. It ran thus:—'I am not sure—but I believe this woman was tried five-and-thirty years since at Liverpool, for aiding in the forgery of a check. Her accomplice was a cousin, a sort of clerk in some office; but they were acquitted in consequence of some error in the indictment. I recognize her by that mark upon her right cheek and temple, which she was suspected of receiving upon the occasion of some disreputable quarrel, and by that singular pronunciation; but her name then was Martha Steele.'

I turned round and handed this to the attorney, and in a few seconds the man who had written it came round and spoke to me. When I next turned towards the witness box, I saw her displaying an old pocket book of her husband's, which she said had been found among the articles in Miriam's box, and which she said had been missed for some days. It was an old book, with a green shagreen cover, and as I glanced at it I saw in silver studded nails the initials C. S. upon it. I resumed my seat carelessly, looking at her with the utmost indifference I could assume. I hopod to throw her off her guard, and all unconsciously Mr. Ashley played into my hands most admirably.

At last the examination-in-chief was concluded, and I rose as Mrs. Sharpe was hastily quitting the box. "Stop," I said, "I must have a little conversation with you now."

I cast one look at the prisoner. The misery of her face gave me new courage, and I mentally prayed for help to bring the truth to light. At first I put a few unimportant questions, and then said, "You lived with your late brother—master, I mean—twelve years or thereabouts, did you not?"

Her face became livid white, and she muttered some indistinct reply. Whether wisely done or not, I felt that I had now thrown off the mask, and must be prepared to make the most of every word, or even change of feature. "Why do you not answer me?" I said sternly.

Another muttered sentence.

"Speak louder," said the judge.

"Yes," replied the woman.

"What did you do from the time of your trial for forgery at Liverpool in 18— till your appearance at Worcester as the late Mr. Steele's house-keeper?"

She gazed hopelessly at me.

"Answer me, woman!"

"I was living in different places; I can't exactly say where now."

"Were you not married in the name of Sharpe?"

"Yes."

"How long previously had you ceased to bear your own name of Steele?"

A frightened glance was all her answer.

"Well never mind; it was somewhere about the time that unpleasant busines of embezzlement in Mr. Pearson's office occurred. You were housekeeper then, I think. After that it would be disagreeable to bear the same name; and you did wisely to get rid of it as soon as you could, and I suppose your cousin was of the same opinion."

Her face worked convulsively as I went on thus coolly, but she said nothing.—This rather perplexed me; I had depended upon discovering something from her own incautious replies, and her wary cunning baffled me. At last I was obliged to let her go down without having produced any stronger effect than that of destroying her credit with the jury.

Another witness, for whom we were not prepared, now came forward, and deposed that on the very day of the fire Miriam went to her house, and purchased a "bolting" of straw, and a large bundle of matches, all of which she declared were for her mistress, but portions of which, as it turned out, had been found in the burning room. All my tact failed in shaking her testimony; it was evidently true; and she proved having delivered the straw, which she took up stairs by Miriam's directions, and put under the bed in her room. She asked for what purpose it was wanted, and was told that Mrs. Sharpe was about to make some new mattresses 'unbeknown to her husband," and therefore desired that it should be hidden out of his way. The girl, she said, was crying, and upon being asked why she did so, said that her mistress had been very cruel to her, and that she wished herself dead, drowned, burnt, or poisoned, or anything.

This closed the case for the prosecution and I could see that, although the jury had been dissatisfied with some of the evidence, yet this last testimony had decided them against us. Their faces wore the hard, resolute expression of men who had made upt heir minds to punishment. Oh, the agony of that poor girl as she saw it too!

"I would not run the risk of calling George Sharpe," whispered Mr. Paget; "the jury are dead against us, and the judges, too, I think; and if he does you no good, as I fear he will not, he'll ruin the case wholly—you had better trust to yourself." But I dared not; one more look at that beseeching face, and the impulse to call Sharpe came so strongly upon me that I gave way to it. Very few, but as prompt as I could imagine, or utter, were the words I addressed to the jury, and then, urged I know not how, I called George Sharpe." He was a long time coming, and when at last he made his apearance, it was only by the help of the crier, and in a most pitiable state, that he could enter the box;—he looked like some one who had been suddenly stricken with death; he shook frightfully, his eyes glared, his teeth chattered, and his mind seemed wandering.

"Your name is Steele, I think—Geo. Steele?" I said, quietly.

He started vacantly; then said, "yes, George Steele; you're right, sir, George Steele."

"You are a cousin, I think, of your wife, of the late Mr. William Steele, the surgeon?"

"Yes."

"Do you remember how long it was after your trial at Liverpool that you changed your name?"

"No," he answered helplessly.

"Had not Mr. Steele another sister besides your wife—one who displeased him by marrying?"

"Yes Miram's mother."

An exclamation from his wife, who stood in a box behind, startled him a little, but he shook his head dismally, and, as if to himself, "It's no good!"

"What was her name—Mrs.—Mrs.—?" and I turned over my brief as if to look for it.

"Mrs. Blackwood, she married young Will Blackwood, the squire's son, as had been courting Martha afore Fanny left school." The whole thing was now plain legible to my mind as if it had been upon my brief—but, as fact after fact rapidly followed, corroborated and explained each other, I began to fear that I should lose the connection, and not shape my questions so as to bring out the truth for the jury.

"When was it that you first knew the child left at Mr. Steele's door to be his sister Mrs. Blackwood's child?"

"Not for a good while, but Martha knew it soon after."

"That relationship is the reason, I suppose, why she dislikes the girl so much; her sister had captivated her sweetheart, eh?—and of course she did not like the child?"

"Yes, that reason, and another?" he answered glomily.

"George!" exclaimed a voice, which all recognized as that of his wife. He heard it, as he had before, but he took no heed.

"Ay, that was the will, I suppose!"

"The will?"

"Yes that document which was contained in the letter which Mr. Steele gave to Miriam, you know."

"A document—how came you to know anything about that? he asked, as if suddenly awaking from his dreamy state to a consciousness of all that was going on around him.

"Oh, I knew all about it!—You drew up the first will, you remember, ten days before Mr. Steele's death, but this deed, which altered that disposal of his property, and left it to his sister Fanny's child, was executed the very day of his death, and was stolen from Miriam while she slept."

I thought this probable, and acted as if it were a certainty; but the man looked surprised, and said, "He did not leave it all to her."

"No!—I've been misinformed then!—How much did he leave?"

"George!" said the warning voice.

"How should I know?" answered the frightened man.

"Take the woman into custody," exclaimed the judge, "if she disturbs the court again!"

The man was now thoroughly alarmed and perplexed.

"How much besides the house did he leave to her?" I asked, quietly, fixing my eyes steadily upon his quivering face.

"I don't know."

"Thats a falsehood. Remember your'e upon your oath, man, and answer me truly; how much did Mr. Steele leave to his niece?"

"What's the good of bullying me? I tell you I don't know."

Then came a moment's pause, and then I said suddenly:—

"Who mixed up the medicines?"

The man's face was horrible to look at, as I asked this. White it had been all along; but now it was ghastly; the eyes started and glared, and white froth came out, fringing the blue livid lips. I shuddered as I looked. There was evidently some terrible mystery, and I dreaded almost to speak, lest it should overwhelm me.

"Who mixed up the medicines?" I asked again.

A vacant stare of terror was all my answer.

"I must have an answer," I said sternly, "or I shall ask his lordship to commit you."

"Oh Lord, Martha, it's come at last!" exclaimed the wretched man; "I knew it would!" and uttered a hideous scream, he fell upon the floor of the witness-box in strong convulsions.

After this witness had been carried out, and as soon as the confusion had subsided, Mr. Ashley rose to reply upon his evidence; but as it was impossible to recall the man, and endeavor to set him right with the jury, or to remove from their minds the fearful impression he had made, the counsel confined his remarks to a few commonplace observations, which he hurried over as quickly as possible.

Lord Cranstoun then summed up; but the jury heeded him very little; they in common with all the court, were gazing on the prisoner who had fainted in the box, whose beautiful and sorrow stricken face lay white and moveless before them. Her head was supported by one of the turnkeys, and a surgeon, who happened to be near, had entered the box to chafe her hands and bathe her face; but to those rough men in whose hands her fate reposed, this swoon appeared like death; and I knew as I looked upon their pitying faces, that not the most obdurate among them would venture to pronounce the word which must, in the event of her recovery, doom her to die.

And I was right. Almost without turning in their box, and quickly, as if glad to release her, and do their part towards comforting her, they returned their verdict, and she was immediately acquitted, and borne out of the dock, senseless.

Alice Sharp absconded during the confusion in court, and her husband, in the intervals of delirium, and just before his death, made a fearful confession, of which I can only give the outline:

Martha, Fanny, and William Steele were the three children of a tradesman living in a Yorkshire village. The son of the Squire, attracted by the bold beauty of Martha, paid her so much attention, that she fully expected he intended to marry her, and, therefore, boasted of her conquest to all her companions; but just when she had decided in her own mind that the proposal ought to be made, Fanny returned from school.

From that time Martha lost empire over her lover's heart; and, in her treatment of the unfortunate cause of her disappointment, showed the first symptoms of that mate cruelty of heart which afterwards worked so much evil to herself and others. In a few months worn out with her sisters unkindness and taunting words, and urged by her lover, poor Fanny Steele eloped, only leaving behind her a vague note for her brother William, whom she dearly loved.

Soon after this their father died, and Martha accepted a situation as housekeeper to a solicitor in Liverpool. There she became acquainted with her Cousin George, and in a very short period attained so great a mastery over him as to persuade him to commit the forgery for which they were both subsequently tried and acquitted. After this she was, of course homeless and characterless, her guilt had been too evident to admit of any doubt, and it was very well known that her life had only been saved by some flaw in the indictment; no wonder, then, she found it impossible to obtain any situation.

In this position she thought of her brother. She knew that he was most merciful and forgiving, and thought that if she could only persuade him of her innocence of the crime for which she had been tried, he might receive her again. This after a time he consented to do, on condition that she changed her name, as that she might not be recognized as the heroine of the celebrated forgery case.—This proviso, however, reasonable as it was, angered her greatly, but she affected to be grateful, and after her brother broke up his comfortable house in Yorkshire and went to Worcester, she followed him in the capacity of house keeper. Two years afterwards an anonymous letter, informing him of his sister Fanny's dangerous illness, reached the kind hearted surgeon. Without saying anything to Martha, he went to the place to which he was directed, just in time to see his dear sister before she died, and to undertake the charge of her infant. He learned then for the first time, that her husband was dead, and that his family had refused to receive her. After the funeral Mr. Steele entrusted the child to the care of the women who had nursed her mother, and some weeks after he received the infant from her in his own surgery, while to baffle the suspicions of Martha, (now called Alice Sharpe,) to whom he had said nothing of Fanny's illness and death, and to whom he dared not trust the secret, he deposited the baby,