

the intelligence which governs Europe, and which can only be done by personal acquaintance, he returned to this country.

The somewhat hard and literal character of English life suited one who shrank from sensibility, and often took refuge in sarcasm. Its masculine vigour and active intelligence occupied and interested his mind. Sidonia, indeed, was exactly the character who would be welcomed in our circles. His immense wealth, his unrivalled social knowledge, his clear vigorous intellect, the severe simplicity of his manners, frank, but neither claiming nor brooking familiarity, and his devotion to field-sports, which was the safety-valve of his energy, were all circumstances and qualities which the English appreciate and admire; and it may be fairly said of Sidonia that few men were more popular, and none less understood.

CHAPTER XI.

AT dinner, Coningsby was seated on the same side as Sidonia, and distant from him. There had been, therefore, no mutual recognition. Another guest had also arrived, Mr. Ormsby. He came straight from London, full of rumours, had seen Tadpole, who, hearing he was on the wing for Coningsby Castle, had taken him into a dark corner of a club, and shown him his book, a safe piece of confidence, as Mr. Ormsby was very near-sighted. It was, however, to be received as an undoubted fact, that all was right, and somehow or other, before very long, there would be national demonstration of the same. This arrival of Mr. Ormsby, and the news that he bore, gave a political turn to the conversation after the ladies had left the room.

'Tadpole wants me to stand for Birmingham,' said Mr. Ormsby, gravely.

'You!' exclaimed Lord Monmouth, and, throwing himself back in his chair, he broke into a real, hearty laugh.

'Yes; the Conservatives mean to start two candidates; a manufacturer they have got, and they have written up to Tadpole for a "West-end man."'

'A what?'

'A West-end man, who will make the ladies patronise their fancy articles.'

'The result of the Reform Bill, then,' said Lucian Gay, 'will be to give Manchester a bishop, and Birmingham a dandy.'

'I begin to believe the result will be very different from what we expected,' said Lord Monmouth.

Mr. Rigby shook his head and was going to prophesy, when Lord Eskdale, who liked talk to be short, and was of opinion that Rigby should keep his amplifications for his slashing articles, put in a brief careless observation, which balked his inspiration.

'Certainly,' said Mr. Ormsby, 'when the guns were firing over Vyvyan's last speech and confession, I never expected to be asked to stand for Birmingham.'

'Perhaps you may be called up to the other house by the title,' said Lucian Gay. 'Who knows?'

'I agree with Tadpole,' said Mr. Ormsby, 'that if we only stick to the Registration the country is saved.'

'Fortunate country!' said Sidonia, 'that can be saved by a good registration!'

'I believe, after all, that with property and pluck,' said Lord Monmouth, 'Parliamentary Reform is not such a very bad thing.'

Here several gentlemen began talking at the same time, all agreeing with their host, and proving in their different ways, the irresistible influence of property and pluck; property in Lord Monmouth's mind meaning vassals, and pluck a total disregard for public opinion. Mr. Guy Flouncey, who wanted to get into parliament, but why nobody knew, who had neither political abilities nor political opinions, but had some floating idea that it would get himself and his wife to some more balls and dinners, and who was duly ticketed for 'a good thing' in the candidate list

of the Tadpoles and the Tapers, was of opinion that an immense deal might be done by properly patronising borough races. That was his specific how to prevent revolution.

Taking advantage of a pause, Lord Monmouth said, 'I should like to know what you think of this question, Sidonia?'

'I am scarcely a competent judge,' he said, as if wishing to disclaim any interference in the conversation, and then added, 'but I have been ever of opinion that revolutions are not to be evaded.'

'Exactly my views,' said Mr. Rigby, eagerly; 'I say it now, I have said it a thousand times, you may doctor the registration as you like, but you can never get rid of Schedule A.'

'Is there a person in this room who can now tell us the names of the boroughs in Schedule A?' said Sidonia.

'I am sure I cannot,' said Lord Monmouth, 'though six of them belonged to myself.'

'But the principle,' said Mr. Rigby; 'they represented a principle.'

'Nothing else, certainly,' said Lucian Gay.

'And what principle?' inquired Sidonia.

'The principle of nomination.'

'That is a practice, not a principle,' said Sidonia. 'Is it a practice that no longer exists?'

'You think then,' said Lord Eskdale, cutting in before Rigby, 'that the Reform Bill has done us no harm?'

'It is not the Reform Bill that has shaken the aristocracy of this country, but the means by which that Bill was carried,' replied Sidonia.

'Physical force?' said Lord Eskdale.

'Or social power?' said Sidonia.

Upon this, Mr. Rigby, impatient at any one giving the tone in a political discussion but himself, and chafing under the vigilance of Lord Eskdale, which to him ever appeared only fortuitous, violently assaulted the argument, and astonished several country gentlemen present by its volu-

bility. They at length listened to real eloquence. At the end of a long appeal to Sidonia, that gentleman only bowed his head and said, 'Perhaps;' and then, turning to his neighbour, inquired whether birds were plentiful in Lancashire this season; so that Mr. Rigby was reduced to the necessity of forming the political opinions of Mr. Guy Flouncey.

As the gentlemen left the dining-room, Coningsby, though at some distance, was observed by Sidonia, who stopped instantly, then advanced to Coningsby, and extending his hand said, 'I said we should meet again, though I hardly expected so quickly.'

'And I hope we shall not separate so soon,' said Coningsby; 'I was much struck with what you said just now about the Reform Bill. Do you know that the more I think the more I am perplexed by what is meant by Representation?'

'It is a principle of which a limited definition is only current in this country,' said Sidonia, quitting the room with him. 'People may be represented without periodical elections of neighbours who are incapable to maintain their interests, and strangers who are unwilling.'

The entrance of the gentlemen produced the same effect on the saloon as sunrise on the world; universal animation, a general though gentle stir. The Grand-duke, bowing to every one, devoted himself to the daughter of Lady St. Julians, who herself pinned Lord Beaumanoir before he could reach Mrs. Guy Flouncey. Coningsby instead talked nonsense to that lady. Brilliant cavaliers, including Mr. Melton, addressed a band of beautiful damsels grouped on a large ottoman. Everywhere sounded a delicious murmur, broken occasionally by a silver-sounding laugh not too loud. Sidonia and Lord Eskdale did not join the ladies. They stood for a few moments in conversation, and then threw themselves on a sofa.

'Who is that?' asked Sidonia of his companion rather earnestly, as Coningsby quitted them.

''Tis the grandson of Monmouth; young Coningsby.'

'Ah! The new generation then promises. I met him once before, by chance; he interests me.'

'They tell me he is a lively lad. He is a prodigious favourite here, and I should not be surprised if Monmouth made him his heir.'

'I hope he does not dream of inheritance,' said Sidonia. 'Tis the most enervating of visions.'

'Do you admire Lady Augustina St. Julians?' said Mrs. Guy Flouncey to Coningsby.

'I admire no one except yourself.'

'Oh! how very gallant, Mr. Coningsby!'

'When should men be gallant, if not to the brilliant and the beautiful!' said Coningsby.

'Ah! you are laughing at me.'

'No, I am not. I am quite grave.'

'Your eyes laugh. Now tell me, Mr. Coningsby, Lord Henry Sydney is a very great friend of yours?'

'Very.'

'He is very amiable.'

'Very.'

'He does a great deal for the poor at Beaumanoir. A very fine place, is it not?'

'Very.'

'As fine as Coningsby?'

'At present, with Mrs. Guy Flouncey at Coningsby, Beaumanoir would have no chance.'

'Ah! you laugh at me again! Now tell me, Mr. Coningsby, what do you think we shall do to-night? I look upon you, you know, as the real arbiter of our destinies.'

'You shall decide,' said Coningsby.

'Mon cher Harry,' said Madame Colonna, coming up, 'they wish Lucretia to sing and she will not. You must ask her, she cannot refuse you.'

'I assure you she can,' said Coningsby.

'Mon cher Harry, your grandpapa did desire me to beg you to ask her to sing.'

So Coningsby unwillingly approached Lucretia, who was talking with the Russian Ambassador

'I am sent upon a fruitless mission,' said Coningsby, looking at her, and catching her glance.

'What, and why?' she replied.

'The mission is to entreat you to do us all a great favour; and the cause of its failure will be that I am the envoy.'

'If the favour be one to yourself, it is granted; and if you be the envoy, you need never fear failure with me.'

'I must presume then to lead you away,' said Coningsby, bending to the Ambassador.

'Remember,' said Lucretia, as they approached the instrument, 'that I am singing to you.'

'It is impossible ever to forget it,' said Coningsby, leading her to the piano with great politeness, but only with great politeness.

'Where is Mademoiselle Flora?' she inquired.

Coningsby found La Petite crouching as it were behind some furniture, and apparently looking over some music. She looked up as he approached, and a smile stole over her countenance. 'I am come to ask a favour,' he said, and he named his request.

'I will sing,' she replied; 'but only tell me what you like.'

Coningsby felt the difference between the courtesy of the head and of the heart, as he contrasted the manner of Lucretia and Flora. Nothing could be more exquisitely gracious than the daughter of Colonna was to-night; Flora, on the contrary, was rather agitated and embarrassed; and did not express her readiness with half the facility and the grace of Lucretia; but Flora's arm trembled as Coningsby led her to the piano.

Meantime Lord Eskdale and Sidonia are in deep converse.

'Hah! that is a fine note!' said Sidonia, and he looked round. 'Who is that singing?' Some new *protégée* of Lord Monmouth?

'Tis the daughter of the Colonnas,' said Lord Eskdale, 'the Princess Lucretia.'

'Why, she was not at dinner to-day.'

'No, she was not there.'

'My favourite voice; and of all, the rarest to be found. When I was a boy, it made me almost in love even with Pisaroni.'

'Well, the Princess is scarcely more lovely. 'Tis a pity the plumage is not as beautiful as the note. She is plain.'

'No; not plain with that brow.'

'Well, I rather admire her myself,' said Lord Eskdale. She has fine points.'

'Let us approach,' said Sidonia.

The song ceased, Lord Eskdale advanced, made his compliments, and then said, 'You were not at dinner to-day.'

'Why should I be?' said the Princess.

'For our sakes, for mine, if not for your own,' said Lord Eskdale, smiling. 'Your absence has been remarked, and felt, I assure you, by others as well as myself. There is my friend Sidonia so enraptured with your thrilling tones, that he has abruptly closed a conversation which I have been long counting on. Do you know him? May I present him to you?'

And having obtained a consent, not often conceded, Lord Eskdale looked round, and calling Sidonia, he presented his friend to the Princess.

'You are fond of music, Lord Eskdale tells me?' said Lucretia.

'When it is excellent,' said Sidonia.

'But that is so rare,' said the Princess.

'And precious as Paradise,' said Sidonia. 'As for indifferent music, 'tis Purgatory; but when it is bad, for my part I feel myself ——'

'Where?' said Lord Eskdale.

'In the last circle of the Inferno,' said Sidonia.

Lord Eskdale turned to Flora.

'And in what circle do you place us who are here?' the Princess inquired of Sidonia.

'One too polished for his verse,' replied her companion.

'You mean too insipid,' said the Princess. 'I wish that life were a little more Dantesque.'

'There is not less treasure in the world,' said Sidonia, 'because we use paper currency; and there is not less passion than of old, though it is *bon ton* to be tranquil.'

'Do you think so?' said the Princess, inquiringly, and then looking round the apartment. 'Have these automata, indeed, souls?'

'Some of them,' said Sidonia. 'As many as would have had souls in the fourteenth century.'

'I thought they were wound up every day,' said the Princess.

'Some are self-impelling,' said Sidonia.

'And you can tell at a glance?' inquired the Princess. 'You are one of those who can read human nature?'

'Tis a book open to all.'

'But if they cannot read?'

'Those must be your automata.'

'Lord Monmouth tells me you are a great traveller?'

'I have not discovered a new world.'

'But you have visited it?'

'It is getting old.'

'I would sooner recall the old than discover the new,' said the Princess.

'We have both of us cause,' said Sidonia. 'Our names are the names of the Past.'

'I do not love a world of Utility,' said the Princess.

'You prefer to be celebrated to being comfortable,' said Sidonia.

'It seems to me that the world is withering under routine.'

'Tis the inevitable lot of humanity,' said Sidonia. 'Man must ever be the slave of routine: but in old days it was a routine of great thoughts, and now it is a routine of little ones.'

The evening glided on; the dance succeeded the song; the ladies were fast vanishing; Coningsby himself was meditating a movement, when Lord Beaumanoir, as he passed him, said, 'Come to Lucian Gay's room; we are going to smoke a cigar.'

This was a favourite haunt, towards midnight, of several of the younger members of the party at the Castle, who loved to find relaxation from the decorous gravities of polished life in the fumes of tobacco, the inspiration of whiskey toddy, and the infinite amusement of Lucian Gay's conversation and company. This was the genial hour when the good story gladdened, the pun flashed, and the song sparkled with jolly mirth or saucy mimicry. To-night, being Coningsby's initiation, there was a special general meeting of the Grumpy Club, in which everybody was to say the gayest things with the gravest face, and every laugh carried a forfeit. Lucian was the inimitable president. He told a tale for which he was famous, of 'the very respectable county family who had been established in the shire for several generations, but who, it was a fact, had been ever distinguished by the strange and humiliating peculiarity of being born with sheep's tails.' The remarkable circumstances under which Lucian Gay had become acquainted with this fact; the traditionary mysteries by which the family in question had succeeded for generations in keeping it secret; the decided measures to which the chief of the family had recourse to stop for ever the rumour when it first became prevalent; and finally the origin and result of the legend; were details which Lucian Gay, with the most rueful countenance, loved to expend upon the attentive and expanding intelligence of a new member of the Grumpy Club. Familiar as all present were with the story whose stimulus of agonising risibility they had all in turn experienced, it was with extreme difficulty that any of them could resist the fatal explosion which was to be attended with the dreaded penalty. Lord Beaumanoir looked on the table with desperate seriousness, an ominous pucker quivering round his lip; Mr. Melton crammed his handkerchief into his mouth with one hand, while he lighted the wrong end of a cigar with the other; one youth hung over the back of his chair pinching himself like a faquir, while another hid his countenance on the table.

'It was at the Hunt dinner,' continued Lucian Gay, in

an almost solemn tone, 'that an idea for a moment was prevalent, that Sir Mowbray Cholmondeley Fetherstonehaugh, as the head of the family, had resolved to terminate for ever these mysterious aspersions on his race, that had circulated in the county for more than two centuries; I mean that the highly respectable family of the Cholmondeley Fetherstonehaughs had the misfortune to be graced with that appendage to which I have referred. His health being drunk, Sir Mowbray Cholmondeley Fetherstonehaugh rose. He was a little unpopular at the moment, from an ugly story about killing foxes, and the guests were not as quiet as orators generally desire, so the Honourable Baronet prayed particular attention to a matter personal to himself. Instantly there was a dead silence——' but here Coningsby, who had moved for some time very restlessly on his chair, suddenly started up, and struggling for a moment against the inward convulsion, but in vain, stamped against the floor, and gave a shout.

'A song from Mr. Coningsby,' said the president of the Grumpy Club, amid an universal, and now permissible roar of laughter.

Coningsby could not sing; so he was to favour them as a substitute with a speech or a sentiment. But Lucian Gay always let one off these penalties easily, and, indeed, was ever ready to fulfil them for all. Song, speech, or sentiment, he poured them all forth; nor were pastimes more active wanting. He could dance a Tarantalla like a Lazarone, and execute a Cracovienne with all the mincing graces of a ballet heroine.

His powers of mimicry, indeed, were great and versatile. But in nothing was he so happy as in a Parliamentary debate. And it was remarkable that, though himself a man who on ordinary occasions was quite incapable without infinite perplexity of publicly expressing his sense of the merest courtesy of society, he was not only a master of the style of every speaker of distinction in either house, but he seemed in his imitative play to appropriate their intellectual as well as their physical peculiarities, and presented

you with their mind as well as their manner. There were several attempts to-night to induce Lucian to indulge his guests with a debate, but he seemed to avoid the exertion, which was great. As the night grew old, however, and every hour he grew more lively, he suddenly broke without further pressure into the promised diversion; and Coningsby listened really with admiration to a discussion, of which the only fault was that it was more parliamentary than the original, 'plus Arabe que l'Arabie.'

The Duke was never more curt, nor Sir Robert more specious; he was as fiery as Stanley, and as bitter as Graham. Nor did he do their opponents less justice. Lord Palmerston himself never treated a profound subject with a more pleasant volatility; and when Lucian rose at an early hour of morn, in a full house alike exhausted and excited, and after having endured for hours, in sarcastic silence, the menacing finger of Sir Robert, shaking over the green table and appealing to his misdeeds in the irrevocable records of Hansard, Lord John himself could not have afforded a more perfect representative of pluck.

But loud as was the laughter, and vehement the cheering, with which Lucian's performances were received, all these ebullitions sank into insignificance compared with the reception which greeted what he himself announced was to be the speech of the night. Having quaffed full many a quail of toddy, he insisted on delivering it on the table, a proposition with which his auditors immediately closed.

The orator appeared, the great man of the night, who was to answer everybody on both sides. Ah! that harsh voice, that arrogant style, that saucy superficiality which decided on everything, that insolent ignorance that contradicted everybody; it was impossible to mistake them! And Coningsby had the pleasure of seeing reproduced before him the guardian of his youth and the patron of the mimic, the Right Honourable Nicholas Rigby!

CHAPTER XII.

MADAME COLONNA, with that vivacious energy which characterises the south, had no sooner seen Coningsby, and heard his praises celebrated by his grandfather, than she resolved that an alliance should sooner or later take place between him and her step-daughter. She imparted her projects without delay to Lucretia, who received them in a different spirit from that in which they were communicated. Lucretia bore as little resemblance to her step-mother in character, as in person. If she did not possess her beauty, she was born with an intellect of far greater capacity and reach. She had a deep judgment. A hasty alliance with a youth, arranged by their mutual relatives, might suit very well the clime and manners of Italy, but Lucretia was well aware that it was altogether opposed to the habits and feelings of this country. She had no conviction that either Coningsby would wish to marry her, or, if willing, that his grandfather would sanction such a step in one as yet only on the threshold of the world. Lucretia therefore received the suggestions and proposals of Madame Colonna with coldness and indifference; one might even say contempt, for she neither felt respect for this lady, nor was she sedulous to evince it. Although really younger than Coningsby, Lucretia felt that a woman of eighteen is, in all worldly considerations, ten years older than a youth of the same age. She anticipated that a considerable time might elapse before Coningsby would feel it necessary to seal his destiny by marriage, while, on the other hand, she was not only anxious, but resolved, not to delay on her part her emancipation from the galling position in which she very frequently found herself.

Lucretia felt rather than expressed these ideas and impressions. She was not naturally communicative, and conversed with no one with less frankness and facility than with her step-mother. Madame Colonna therefore found

no reasons in her conversation with Lucretia to change her determination. As her mind was not ingenious she did not see questions in those various lights which make us at the same time infirm of purpose and tolerant. What she fancied ought to be done, she fancied must be done ; for she perceived no middle course or alternative. For the rest, Lucretia's carriage towards her gave her little discomfort. Besides, she herself, though good-natured, was obstinate. Her feelings were not very acute ; nothing much vexed her. As long as she had fine dresses, good dinners, and opera-boxes, she could bear her plans to be crossed like a philosopher ; and her consolation under her unaccomplished devices was her admirable consistency, which always assured her that her projects were wise, though unfulfilled.

She broke her purpose to Mr. Rigby, that she might gain not only his adhesion to her views, but his assistance in achieving them. As Madame Colonna, in Mr. Rigby's estimation, exercised more influence over Lord Monmouth than any other individual, faithful to his policy or practice, he agreed with all Madame Colonna's plans and wishes, and volunteered instantly to further them. As for the Prince, his wife never consulted him on any subject, nor did he wish to be consulted. On the contrary, he had no opinion about anything. All that he required was that he should be surrounded by what contributed to his personal enjoyment, that he should never be troubled, and that he should have billiards. He was not inexpert in field-sports, rode indeed very well for an Italian, but he never cared to be out-of-doors ; and there was only one room in the interior which passionately interested him. It was where the echoing balls denoted the sweeping hazard or the effective cannonade. That was the chamber where the Prince Colonna literally existed. Half-an-hour after breakfast he was in the billiard-room ; he never quitted it until he dressed for dinner ; and he generally contrived, while the world were amused or amusing themselves at the comedy or in the dance, to steal down with some congenial sprites to the magical and illumined chamber, and use his cue until bedtime.

Faithful to her first impressions, Lucretia had made no difference in her demeanour to Coningsby to that which she offered to the other guests. Polite, but uncommunicative; ready to answer, but never originating conversation; she charmed him as little by her manner as by her person; and after some attempts, not very painstaking, to interest her, Coningsby had ceased to address her. The day passed by with only a faint recognition between them; even that sometimes omitted.

When, however, Lucretia observed that Coningsby had become one of the most notable persons in the Castle; when she heard everywhere of his talents and accomplishments, his beauty and grace and great acquirements, and perceived that he was courted by all; that Lord Monmouth omitted no occasion publicly to evince towards him his regard and consideration; that he seemed generally looked upon in the light of his grandfather's heir; and that Lady St. Julians, more learned in that respect than any lady in the kingdom, was heard more than once to regret that she had not brought another daughter with her, Clara Isabella, as well as Augustina; the Princess Lucretia began to imagine that Madame Colonna, after all, might not be so extravagant in her purpose as she had first supposed. She, therefore, surprised Coningsby with the almost affectionate moroseness with which, while she hated to sing, she yet found pleasure in singing for him alone. And it is impossible to say what might not have been the next move in her tactics in this respect, had not the very night on which she had resolved to commence the enchantment of Coningsby introduced to her Sidonia.

The Princess Lucretia encountered the dark still glance of the friend of Lord Eskdale. He, too, beheld a woman unlike other women, and with his fine experience, both as a man and as a physiologist, felt that he was in the presence of no ordinary organisation. From the evening of his introduction Sidonia sought the society of the Princess Lucretia. He could not complain of her reserve. She threw out her mind in various and highly-cultivated intel-

ligence. He recognised in her a deep and subtle spirit, considerable reading for a woman, habits of thought, and a soul passionate and daring. She resolved to subdue one whose appreciation she had gained, and who had subdued her. The profound meaning and the calm manner of Sidonia combined to quell her spirit. She struggled against the spell. She tried to rival his power; to cope with him, and with the same weapons. But prompt as was her thought and bright as was its expression, her heart beat in tumult; and, with all her apparent serenity, her agitated soul was a prey of absorbing passion. She could not contend with that intelligent, yet inscrutable, eye; with that manner so full of interest and respect, and yet so tranquil. Besides, they were not on equal terms. Here was a girl contending with a man learned in the world's way.

Between Sidonia and Coningsby there at once occurred companionship. The morning after his arrival they went out shooting together. After a long ramble they would stretch themselves on the turf under a shady tree, often by the side of some brook where the cresses grow, that added a luxury to their sporting meal; and then Coningsby would lead their conversation to some subject on which Sidonia would pour out his mind with all that depth of reflection, variety of knowledge, and richness of illustrative memory, which distinguished him; and which offered so striking a contrast to the sharp talent, the shallow information, and the worldly cunning, that make a Rigby.

This fellowship between Sidonia and Coningsby elevated the latter still more in the estimation of Lucretia, and rendered her still more desirous of gaining his good will and opinion. A great friendship seemed to have arisen between them, and the world began to believe that there must be some foundation for Madame Colonna's innuendos. That lady herself was not in the least alarmed by the attention which Sidonia paid her step-daughter. It was, of course, well known that Sidonia was not a marrying man. He was, however, a great friend of Mr. Coningsby, his presence

and society brought Coningsby and Lucretia more together; and however flattered her daughter might be for the moment by Sidonia's homage, still, as she would ultimately find out, if indeed she ever cared so to do, that Sidonia could only be her admirer, Madame Colonna had no kind of doubt that ultimately Coningsby would be Lucretia's husband, as she had arranged from the first.

The Princess Lucretia was a fine horse-woman, though she rarely joined the various riding-parties that were daily formed at the Castle. Often, indeed, attended only by her groom, she met the equestrians. Now she would ride with Sidonia and Coningsby, and as a female companion was indispensable, she insisted upon La Petite accompanying her. This was a fearful trial for Flora, but she encountered it, encouraged by the kind solicitude of Coningsby, who always seemed her friend.

Very shortly after the arrival of Sidonia, the Grand-duke and his suite quitted the Castle, which had been his Highness' head-quarters during his visit to the manufacturing districts; but no other great change in the assembled company occurred for some little time.

CHAPTER XIII.

'You will observe one curious trait,' said Sidonia to Coningsby, 'in the history of this country: the depository of power is always unpopular; all combine against it; it always falls. Power was deposited in the great Barons; the Church, using the King for its instrument, crushed the great Barons. Power was deposited in the Church; the King, bribing the Parliament, plundered the Church. Power was deposited in the King; the Parliament, using the People, beheaded the King; expelled the King, changed the King, and, finally, for a King substituted an administrative officer. For one hundred and fifty years Power has been deposited in the Parliament, and for the last sixty or

seventy years it has been becoming more and more unpopular. In 1830 it was endeavoured by a reconstruction to regain the popular affection; but, in truth, as the Parliament then only made itself more powerful, it has only become more odious. As we see that the Barons, the Church, the King, have in turn devoured each other, and that the Parliament, the last devourer, remains, it is impossible to resist the impression that this body also is doomed to be destroyed; and he is a sagacious statesman who may detect in what form and in what quarter the great consumer will arise.'

'You take, then, a dark view of our position?'

'Troubled, not dark. I do not ascribe to political institutions that paramount influence which it is the feeling of this age to attribute to them. The Senate that confronted Brennus in the Forum was the same body that registered in an after-age the ribald decrees of a Nero. Trial by jury, for example, is looked upon by all as the Palladium of our liberties; yet a jury, at a very recent period of our own history, the reign of Charles II., was a tribunal as iniquitous as the Inquisition.' And a graver expression stole over the countenance of Sidonia as he remembered what that Inquisition had operated on his own race and his own destiny. 'There are families in this country,' he continued, 'of both the great historical parties, that in the persecution of their houses, the murder and proscription of some of their most illustrious members, found judges as unjust and relentless in an open jury of their countrymen as we did in the conclaves of Madrid and Seville.'

'Where, then, would you look for hope?'

'In what is more powerful than laws and institutions, and without which the best laws and the most skilful institutions may be a dead letter, or the very means of tyranny in the national character. It is not in the increased febleness of its institutions that I see the peril of England; it is in the decline of its character as a community.'

'And yet you could scarcely describe this as an age of corruption?'

‘Not of political corruption. But it is an age of social disorganisation, far more dangerous in its consequences, because far more extensive. You may have a corrupt government and a pure community; you may have a corrupt community and a pure administration. Which would you elect?’

‘Neither,’ said Coningsby; ‘I wish to see a people full of faith, and a government full of duty.’

‘Rely upon it,’ said Sidonia, ‘that England should think more of the community and less of the government.’

‘But tell me, what do you understand by the term national character?’

‘A character is an assemblage of qualities; the character of England should be an assemblage of great qualities.’

‘But we cannot deny that the English have great virtues.’

‘The civilisation of a thousand years must produce great virtues; but we are speaking of the decline of public virtue, not its existence.’

‘In what, then, do you trace that decline?’

‘In the fact that the various classes of this country are arrayed against each other.’

‘But to what do you attribute those reciprocal hostilities?’

‘Not entirely, not even principally, to those economical causes of which we hear so much. I look upon all such as secondary causes, which, in a certain degree, must always exist, which obtrude themselves in troubled times, and which at all times it is the business of wise statesmen to watch, to regulate, to ameliorate, to modify.’

‘I am speaking to elicit truth, not to maintain opinions,’ said Coningsby; ‘for I have none,’ he added, mournfully.

‘I think,’ said Sidonia, ‘that there is no error so vulgar as to believe that revolutions are occasioned by economical causes. They come in, doubtless, very often to precipitate a catastrophe; very rarely do they occasion one. I know no period, for example, when physical comfort was more diffused in England than in 1640. England had a moderate

population, a very improved agriculture, a rich commerce; yet she was on the eve of the greatest and most violent changes that she has as yet experienced.'

'That was a religious movement.'

'Admit it; the cause, then, was not physical. The imagination of England rose against the government. It proves, then, that when that faculty is astir in a nation, it will sacrifice even physical comfort to follow its impulses.'

'Do you think, then, there is a wild desire for extensive political change in the country?'

'Hardly that: England is perplexed at the present moment, not inventive. That will be the next phasis in her moral state, and to that I wish to draw your thoughts. For myself, while I ascribe little influence to physical causes for the production of this perplexity, I am still less of opinion that it can be removed by any new disposition of political power. It would only aggravate the evil. That would be recurring to the old error of supposing you can necessarily find national content in political institutions. A political institution is a machine; the motive power is the national character. With that it rests whether the machine will benefit society, or destroy it. Society in this country is perplexed, almost paralysed; in time it will move, and it will devise. How are the elements of the nation to be again blended together? In what spirit is that reorganisation to take place?'

'To know that would be to know everything.'

'At least let us free ourselves from the double ignorance of the Platonists. Let us not be ignorant that we are ignorant.'

'I have emancipated myself from that darkness for a long time,' said Coningsby. 'Long has my mind been musing over these thoughts, but to me all is still obscurity.'

'In this country,' said Sidonia, 'since the peace, there has been an attempt to advocate a reconstruction of society on a purely rational basis. The principle of Utility has been powerfully developed. I speak not with lightness of the labours of the disciples of that school. I bow to inte!-

lect in every form: and we should be grateful to any school of philosophers, even if we disagree with them; doubly grateful in this country, where for so long a period our statesmen were in so pitiable an arrear of public intelligence. There has been an attempt to reconstruct society on a basis of material motives and calculations. It has failed. It must ultimately have failed under any circumstances; its failure in an ancient and densely-peopled kingdom was inevitable. How limited is human reason, the profoundest inquirers are most conscious. We are not indebted to the Reason of man for any of the great achievements which are the landmarks of human action and human progress. It was not Reason that besieged Troy; it was not Reason that sent forth the Saracen from the Desert to conquer the world; that inspired the Crusades; that instituted the Monastic orders; it was not Reason that produced the Jesuits; above all, it was not Reason that created the French Revolution. Man is only truly great when he acts from the passions; never irresistible but when he appeals to the imagination. Even Mormon counts more votaries than Bentham.'

'And you think, then, that as Imagination once subdued the State, Imagination may now save it?'

'Man is made to adore and to obey: but if you will not command him, if you give him nothing to worship, he will fashion his own divinities, and find a chieftain in his own passions.'

'But where can we find faith in a nation of sectaries? Who can feel loyalty to a sovereign of Downing Street?'

'I speak of the eternal principles of human nature, you answer me with the passing accidents of the hour. Sects rise and sects disappear. Where are the Fifth-Monarchy men? England is governed by Downing Street; once it was governed by Alfred and Elizabeth.'

CHAPTER XIV.

ABOUT this time a steeple-chase in the West of England had attracted considerable attention. This sport was then of recent introduction in England, and is, in fact, an importation of Irish growth, although it has flourished in our soil. A young guardsman, who was then a guest at the Castle, and who had been in garrison in Ireland, had some experience of this pastime in the Kildare country, and he proposed that they should have a steeple-chase at Coningsby. This was a suggestion very agreeable to the Marquess of Beaumanoir, celebrated for his feats of horsemanship, and, indeed, to most of the guests. It was agreed that the race should come off at once, before any of the present company, many of whom gave symptoms of being on the wing, had quitted the Castle. The young guardsman and Mr. Guy Flouncey had surveyed the country, and had selected a line which they esteemed very appropriate for the scene of action. From a hill of common land you looked down upon the valley of Coningsby, richly cultivated, deeply ditched, and stilly fenced; the valley was bounded by another rising ground, and the scene was admirably calculated to give an extensive view to a multitude.

The distance along the valley was to be two miles out, and home again; the starting-post being also the winning-post, and the flags, which were placed on every fence which the horses were to pass, were to be passed on the left hand of the rider both going and coming; so that although the horses had to leap the same fences forward and backward, they could not come over the same place twice. In the last field before they turned, was a brook seventeen feet clear from side to side, with good taking off on both banks. Here real business commenced.

Lord Monmouth highly approved the scheme, but mentioned that the stakes must be moderate, and open to the whole county. The neighbourhood had a week of prepara-

tion, and the entries for the Coningsby steeple-chase were numerous. Lord Monmouth, after a reserve for his own account, placed his stable at the service of his guests. For himself, he offered to back his horse, Sir Robert, which was to be ridden by his grandson.

Now, nothing was spoken or thought of at Coningsby Castle except the coming sport. The ladies shared the general excitement. They embroidered handkerchiefs, and scarfs, and gloves, with the respective colours of the rivals, and tried to make jockey-caps. Lady St. Julians postponed her intended departure in consequence. Madame Colonna wished that some means could be contrived by which they might all win.

Sidonia, with the other competitors, had ridden over the ground and glanced at the brook with the eye of a workman. On his return to the Castle he sent a despatch for some of his stud.

Coningsby was all anxiety to win. He was proud of the confidence of his grandfather in backing him. He had a powerful horse and a first-rate fencer, and he was resolved himself not to flinch. On the night before the race, retiring somewhat earlier than usual to his chamber, he observed on his dressing-table a small packet addressed to his name, and in an unknown handwriting. Opening it, he found a pretty racing-jacket embroidered with his colours of pink and white. This was a perplexing circumstance, but he fancied it on the whole a happy omen. And who was the donor? Certainly not the Princess Lueretia, for he had observed her fashioning some maroon ribbons, which were the colours of Sidonia. It could scarcely be from Mrs. Guy Flouncey. Perhaps Madame Colonna to please the Marquess? Thinking over this incident he fell asleep.

The morning before the race Sidonia's horses arrived. All went to examine them at the stables. Among them was an Arab mare. Coningsby recognised the Daughter of the Star. She was greatly admired for her points; but Guy Flouncey whispered to Mr. Melton that she never could do the work.

'But Lord Beauvernoir says he is all for speed against strength in these affairs,' said Mr. Melton.

Guy Flouncey smiled incredulously.

The night before the race it rained rather heavily.

'I take it the country will not be very like the Deserts of Arabia,' said Mr. Guy Flouncey, with a knowing look to Mr. Melton, who was noting a bet in his memorandum-book.

The morning was fine, clear, and sunny, with a soft western breeze. The starting-post was about three miles from the Castle; but, long before the hour, the surrounding hills were covered with people; squire and farmer; with no lack of their wives and daughters; many a hind in his smock-frock, and many an 'operative' from the neighbouring factories. The 'gentlemen riders' gradually arrived. The entries were very numerous, though it was understood that not more than a dozen would come to the post, and half of these were the guests of Lord Monmouth. At half-past one the *cortège* from the Castle arrived, and took up the post which had been prepared for them on the summit of the hill. Lord Monmouth was much cheered on his arrival. In the carriage with him were Madame Colonna and Lady St. Julians. The Princess Lucretia, Lady Gaythorpe, Mrs. Guy Flouncey, accompanied by Lord Eskdale and other cavaliers, formed a brilliant company. There was scarcely a domestic in the Castle who was not there. The comedians, indeed, did not care to come, but Villebecque prevailed upon Flora to drive with him to the race in a buggy he borrowed of the steward.

The start was to be at two o'clock. The 'gentlemen jockeys' are mustered. Never were riders mounted and appointed in better style. The stewards and the clerk of the course attend them to the starting-post. There they are now assembled. Guy Flouncey takes up his stirrup-leathers a hole; Mr. Melton looks at his girths. In a few moments, the irrevocable monosyllable will be uttered.

The bugle sounds for them to face about; the clerk of the course sings out, 'Gentlemen, are you all ready?' No

objection made, the word given to go, and fifteen riders start in excellent style.

Prince Colonna, who rode like Prince Rupert, took the lead, followed close by a stout yeoman on an old white horse of great provincial celebrity, who made steady running, and, from his appearance and action, an awkward customer. The rest, with two exceptions, followed in a cluster at no great distance, and in this order they continued, with very slight variation, for the first two miles, though there were several ox-fences, and one or two of them remarkably stiff. Indeed, they appeared more like horses running over a course than over a country. The two exceptions were Lord Beaumanoir on his horse Sunbeam, and Sidonia on the Arab. These kept somewhat slightly in the rear.

Almost in this wise they approached the dreaded brook. Indeed, with the exception of the last two riders, who were about thirty yards behind, it seemed that you might have covered the rest of the field with a sheet. They arrived at the brook at the same moment: seventeen feet of water between strong sound banks is no holiday work; but they charged with unflinching intrepidity. But what a revolution in their spirited order did that instant produce! A masked battery of canister and grape could not have achieved more terrible execution. Coningsby alone clearly lighted on the opposing bank; but, for the rest of them, it seemed for a moment that they were all in the middle of the brook, one over another, splashing, kicking, swearing; every one trying to get out and keep others in. Mr. Melton and the stout yeoman regained their saddles and were soon again in chase. The Prince lost his horse, and was not alone in his misfortune. Mr. Guy Flouney lay on his back with a horse across his diaphragm; only his head above the water, and his mouth full of chickweed and dockleaves. And if help had not been at hand, he and several others might have remained struggling in their watery bed for a considerable period. In the midst of this turmoil, the Marquess and Sidonia at the same moment cleared the brook.

Affairs now became interesting. Here Coningsby took

up the running, Sidonia and the Marquess lying close at his quarters. Mr. Melton had gone the wrong side of a flag, and the stout yeoman, though close at hand, was already trusting much to his spurs. In the extreme distance might be detected three or four stragglers. Thus they continued until within three fields of home. A ploughed field finished the old white horse; the yeoman struck his spurs to the rowels, but the only effect of the experiment was, that the horse stood stock-still. Coningsby, Sidonia, and the Marquess were now altogether. The winning-post is in sight, and a high and strong gate leads to the last field. Coningsby, looking like a winner, gallantly dashed forward and sent Sir Robert at the gate, but he had over-estimated his horse's powers at this point of the game, and a rattling fall was the consequence: however, horse and rider were both on the right side, and Coningsby was in his saddle and at work again in a moment. It seemed that the Marquess was winning. There was only one more fence; and that the foot people had made a breach in by the side of a gate-post, and wide enough, as was said, for a broad-wheel waggon to travel by. Instead of passing straight over this gap, Sunbeam swerved against the gate and threw his rider. This was decisive. The Daughter of the Star, who was still going beautifully, pulling double, and her jockey sitting still, sprang over the gap and went in first; Coningsby, on Sir Robert, being placed second. The distance measured was about four miles; there were thirty-nine leaps; and it was done under fifteen minutes.

Lord Monmouth was well content with the prowess of his grandson, and his extreme cordiality consoled Coningsby under a defeat which was very vexatious. It was some alleviation that he was beaten by Sidonia. Madame Colonna even shed tears at her young friend's disappointment, and mourned it especially for Lucretia, who had said nothing, though a flush might be observed on her usually pale countenance. Villebecque, who had betted, was so extremely excited by the whole affair, especially during the last three minutes, that he quite forgot his quiet

companion, and when he looked round he found Flora fainting.

'You rode well,' said Sidonia to Coningsby; 'but your horse was more strong than swift. After all, this thing is a race; and, notwithstanding Solomon, in a race speed must win'

CHAPTER XV.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fatigues of the morning, the evening was passed with great gaiety at the Castle. The gentlemen all vowed that, far from being inconvenienced by their mishaps, they felt, on the whole, rather better for them. Mr. Guy Flouncey, indeed, did not seem quite so limber and flexible as usual; and the young guardsman, who had previously discoursed in an almost alarming style of the perils and feats of the Kildare country, had subsided into a remarkable reserve. The Provincials were delighted with Sidonia's riding, and even the Leicestershire gentlemen admitted that he was a 'customer.'

Lord Monmouth beckoned to Coningsby to sit by him on the sofa, and spoke of his approaching University life. He gave his grandson a great deal of good advice: told him to avoid drinking, especially if he ever chanced to play cards, which he hoped he never would; urged the expediency of never borrowing money, and of confining his loans to small sums, and then only to friends of whom he wished to get rid; most particularly impressed on him never to permit his feelings to be engaged by any woman; nobody, he assured Coningsby, despised that weakness more than women themselves. Indeed, feeling of any kind did not suit the present age: it was not *bon ton*; and in some degree always made a man ridiculous. Coningsby was always to have before him the possible catastrophe of becoming ridiculous. It was the test of conduct, Lord Monmouth said; a fear of becoming ridiculous is the best guide in life,

and will save a man from all sorts of scrapes. For the rest, Coningsby was to appear at Cambridge as became Lord Monmouth's favourite grandson. His grandfather had opened an account for him with Drummonds', on whom he was to draw for his considerable allowance; and if by any chance he found himself in a scrape, no matter of what kind, he was, to be sure to write to his grandfather, who would certainly get him out of it.

'Your departure is sudden,' said the Princess Lucretia, in a low deep tone to Sidonia, who was sitting by her side and screened from general observation by the waltzers who whirled by.

'Departures should be sudden.'

'I do not like departures,' said the Princess.

'Nor did the Queen of Sheba when she quitted Solomon. You know what she did?'

'Tell me.'

'She wept very much, and let one of the King's birds fly into the garden. "You are freed from your cage," she said; "but I am going back to mine."'

'But you never weep?' said the Princess.

'Never.'

'And are always free?'

'So are men in the Desert.'

'But your life is not a Desert?'

'It at least resembles the Desert in one respect: it is useless.'

'The only useless life is woman's.'

'Yet there have been heroines,' said Sidonia.

'The Queen of Sheba,' said the Princess, smiling.

'A favourite of mine,' said Sidonia.

'And why was she a favourite of yours?' rather eagerly inquired Lucretia.

'Because she thought deeply, talked finely, and moved gracefully.'

'And yet might be a very unfeeling dame at the same time,' said the Princess.

'I never thought of that,' said Sidonia.

'The heart, apparently, does not reckon in your philosophy.'

'What we call the heart,' said Sidonia, 'is a nervous sensation, like shyness, which gradually disappears in society. It is fervent in the nursery, strong in the domestic circle, tumultuous at school. The affections are the children of ignorance; when the horizon of our experience expands, and models multiply, love and admiration imperceptibly vanish.'

'I fear the horizon of your experience has very greatly expanded. With your opinions, what charm can there be in life?'

'The sense of existence.'

'So Sidonia is off to-morrow, Monmouth,' said Lord Eskdale.

'Hah!' said the Marquess. 'I must get him to breakfast with me before he goes.'

The party broke up. Coningsby, who had heard Lord Eskdale announce Sidonia's departure, lingered to express his regret, and say farewell.

'I cannot sleep,' said Sidonia, 'and I never smoke in Europe. If you are not stiff with your wounds, come to my rooms.'

This invitation was willingly accepted.

'I am going to Cambridge in a week,' said Coningsby. 'I was almost in hopes you might have remained as long.'

'I, also; but my letters of this morning demand me. If it had not been for our chase, I should have quitted immediately. The minister cannot pay the interest on the national debt; not an unprecedented circumstance, and has applied to us. I never permit any business of State to be transacted without my personal interposition; and so I must go up to town immediately.'

'Suppose you don't pay it,' said Coningsby, smiling.

'If I followed my own impulse, I would remain here,' said Sidonia. 'Can anything be more absurd than that a nation should apply to an individual to maintain its credit, and, with its credit, its existence as an empire, and its

comfort as a people; and that individual one to whom its laws deny the proudest rights of citizenship, the privilege of sitting in its senate and of holding land? for though I have been rash enough to buy several estates, my own opinion is, that, by the existing law of England, an Englishman of Hebrew faith cannot possess the soil.'

'But surely it would be easy to repeal a law so illiberal ——'

'Oh! as for illiberality, I have no objection to it if it be an element of power. Eschew political sentimentalism. What I contend is, that if you permit men to accumulate property, and they use that permission to a great extent, power is inseparable from that property, and it is in the last degree impolitic to make it the interest of any powerful class to oppose the institutions under which they live. The Jews, for example, independently of the capital qualities for citizenship which they possess in their industry, temperance, and energy and vivacity of mind, are a race essentially monarchical, deeply religious, and shrinking themselves from converts as from a calamity, are ever anxious to see the religious systems of the countries in which they live flourish; yet, since your society has become agitated in England, and powerful combinations menace your institutions, you find the once loyal Hebrew invariably arrayed in the same ranks as the leveller and the latitudinarian, and prepared to support the policy which may even endanger his life and property, rather than tamely continue under a system which seeks to degrade him. The Tories lose an important election at a critical moment; 'tis the Jews come forward to vote against them. The Church is alarmed at the scheme of a latitudinarian university, and learns with relief that funds are not forthcoming for its establishment; a Jew immediately advances and endows it. Yet the Jews, Coningsby, are essentially Tories. Toryism, indeed, is but copied from the mighty prototype which has fashioned Europe. And every generation they must become more powerful and more dangerous to the society which is hostile to them.

Do you think that the quiet humdrum persecution of a decorous representative of an English university can crush those who have successively baffled the Pharaohs, Nebuchadnezzar, Rome, and the Feudal ages? The fact is, you cannot destroy a pure race of the Caucasian organisation. It is a physiological fact; a simple law of nature, which has baffled Egyptian and Assyrian Kings, Roman Emperors, and Christian Inquisitors. No penal laws, no physical tortures, can effect that a superior race should be absorbed in an inferior, or be destroyed by it. The mixed persecuting races disappear; the pure persecuted race remains. And at this moment, in spite of centuries, of tens of centuries, of degradation, the Jewish mind exercises a vast influence on the affairs of Europe. I speak not of their laws, which you still obey; of their literature, with which your minds are saturated; but of the living Hebrew intellect.

‘You never observe a great intellectual movement in Europe in which the Jews do not greatly participate. The first Jesuits were Jews; that mysterious Russian Diplomacy which so alarms Western Europe is organised and principally carried on by Jews; that mighty revolution which is at this moment preparing in Germany, and which will be, in fact, a second and greater Reformation, and of which so little is as yet known in England, is entirely developing under the auspices of Jews, who almost monopolise the professorial chairs of Germany. Neander, the founder of Spiritual Christianity, and who is Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Berlin, is a Jew. Benary, equally famous, and in the same University, is a Jew. Wehl, the Arabic Professor of Heidelberg, is a Jew. Years ago, when I was in Palestine, I met a German student who was accumulating materials for the History of Christianity, and studying the genius of the place; a modest and learned man. It was Wehl; then unknown, since become the first Arabic scholar of the day, and the author of the life of Mahomet. But for the German professors of this race, their name is Legion. I think there are more than ten at Berlin alone.

'I told you just now that I was going up to town to-morrow, because I always made it a rule to interpose when affairs of State were on the carpet. Otherwise, I never interfere. I hear of peace and war in newspapers, but I am never alarmed, except when I am informed that the Sovereigns want treasure; then I know that monarchs are serious.

'A few years back we were applied to by Russia. Now, there has been no friendship between the Court of St. Petersburg and my family. It has Dutch connections, which have generally supplied it; and our representations in favour of the Polish Hebrews, a numerous race, but the most suffering and degraded of all the tribes, have not been very agreeable to the Czar. However, circumstances drew to an approximation between the Romanoffs and the Sidonias. I resolved to go myself to St. Petersburg. I had, on my arrival, an interview with the Russian Minister of Finance, Count Cancrin; I beheld the son of a Lithuanian Jew. The loan was connected with the affairs of Spain; I resolved on repairing to Spain from Russia. I travelled without intermission. I had an audience immediately on my arrival with the Spanish Minister, Senor Mendizabel; I beheld one like myself, the son of a Nuevo Christiano, a Jew of Arragon. In consequence of what transpired at Madrid, I went straight to Paris to consult the President of the French Council; I beheld the son of a French Jew, a hero, an imperial marshal, and very properly so, for who should be military heroes if not those who worship the Lord of Hosts?'

'And is Soult a Hebrew?'

'Yes, and others of the French marshals, and the most famous; Massena, for example; his real name was Manasseh: but to my anecdote. The consequence of our consultations was, that some Northern power should be applied to in a friendly and mediative capacity. We fixed on Prussia; and the President of the Council made an application to the Prussian Minister, who attended a few days after our conference. Count Arnim entered the cabinet, and I beheld

a Prussian Jew. So you see, my dear Coningsby, that the world is governed by very different personages from what is imagined by those who are not behind the scenes.'

'You startle, and deeply interest me.'

'You must study physiology, my dear child. Pure races of Caucasus may be persecuted, but they cannot be despised, except by the brutal ignorance of some mongrel breed, that brandishes fagots and howls extermination, but is itself exterminated without persecution, by that irresistible law of Nature which is fatal to curs.'

'But I come also from Caucasus,' said Coningsby.

'Verily; and thank your Creator for such a destiny: and your race is sufficiently pure. You come from the shores of the Northern Sea, land of the blue eye, and the golden hair, and the frank brow: 'tis a famous breed, with whom we Arabs have contended long; from whom we have suffered much: but these Goths, and Saxons, and Normans were doubtless great men.

'But so favoured by Nature, why has not your race produced great poets, great orators, great writers?'

'Favoured by Nature and by Nature's God, we produced the lyre of David; we gave you Isaiah and Ezekiel; they are our Olynthians, our Philippics. Favoured by Nature we still remain: but in exact proportion as we have been favoured by Nature we have been persecuted by Man. After a thousand struggles; after acts of heroic courage that Rome has never equalled; deeds of divine patriotism that Athens, and Sparta, and Carthage have never excelled; we have endured fifteen hundred years of supernatural slavery, during which, every device that can degrade or destroy man has been the destiny that we have sustained and baffled. The Hebrew child has entered adolescence only to learn that he was the Pariah of that ungrateful Europe that owes to him the best part of its laws, a fine portion of its literature, all its religion. Great poets require a public; we have been content with the immortal melodies that we sung more than two thousand years ago by the waters of Babylon and wept. They record our triumphs;

they solace our affliction. Great orators are the creatures of popular assemblies; we were permitted only by stealth to meet even in our temples. And as for great writers, the catalogue is not blank. What are all the schoolmen, Aquinas himself, to Maimonides? And as for modern philosophy, all springs from Spinoza.

'But the passionate and creative genius, that is the nearest link to Divinity, and which no human tyranny can destroy, though it can divert it; that should have stirred the hearts of nations by its inspired sympathy, or governed senates by its burning eloquence; has found a medium for its expression, to which, in spite of your prejudices and your evil passions, you have been obliged to bow. The ear, the voice, the fancy teeming with combinations, the imagination fervent with picture and emotion, that came from Caucasus, and which we have preserved unpolluted, have endowed us with almost the exclusive privilege of Music; that science of harmonious sounds, which the ancients recognised as most divine, and deified in the person of their most beautiful creation. I speak not of the past; though, were I to enter into the history of the lords of melody, you would find it the annals of Hebrew genius. But at this moment even, musical Europe is ours. There is not a company of singers, not an orchestra in a single capital, that is not crowded with our children under the feigned names which they adopt to conciliate the dark aversion which your posterity will some day disclaim with shame and disgust. Almost every great composer, skilled musician, almost every voice that ravishes you with its transporting strains, springs from our tribes. The catalogue is too vast to enumerate; too illustrious to dwell for a moment on secondary names, however eminent. Enough for us that the three great creative minds to whose exquisite inventions all nations at this moment yield, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, are of Hebrew race; and little do your men of fashion, your muscadins of Paris, and your dandies of London, as they thrill into raptures at the notes of a Pasta or a Grisi, little do they suspect that they are offering their homage to "the sweet singers of Israel!"'

CHAPTER XVI.

It was the noon of the day on which Sidonia was to leave the Castle. The wind was high; the vast white clouds scudded over the blue heaven; the leaves yet green, and tender branches snapped like glass, were whirled in eddies from the trees; the grassy sward undulated like the ocean with a thousand tints and shadows. From the window of the music-room Lucretia Colonna gazed on the turbulent sky.

The heaven of her heart, too, was disturbed.

She turned from the agitated external world to ponder over her inward emotion. She uttered a deep sigh.

Slowly she moved towards her harp; wildly, almost unconsciously, she touched with one hand its strings, while her eyes were fixed on the ground. An imperfect melody resounded; yet plaintive and passionate. It seemed to attract her soul. She raised her head, and then, touching the strings with both her hands, she poured forth tones of deep, yet thrilling power.

I am a stranger in the halls of a stranger! Ah! whither shall I flee?

To the castle of my fathers in the green mountains; to the palace of my fathers in the ancient city?

There is no flag on the castle of my fathers in the green mountains: silent is the palace of my fathers in the ancient city.

Is there no home for the homeless? Can the unloved never find love?

Ah! thou fliest away fleet cloud: he will leave us swifter than thee! Alas! cutting wind, thy breath is not so cold as his heart! I am a stranger in the halls of a stranger! Ah! whither shall I flee?

The door of the music-room slowly opened. It was Sidonia. His hat was in his hand; he was evidently on the point of departure.

'Those sounds assured me,' he said calmly but kindly,

as he advanced, 'that I might find you here, on which I scarcely counted at so early an hour.'

'You are going then?' said the Princess.

'My carriage is at the door; the Marquess has delayed me; I must be in London to-night. I conclude more abruptly than I could have wished one of the most agreeable visits I ever made; and I hope you will permit me to express to you how much I am indebted to you for a society which those should deem themselves fortunate who can more frequently enjoy.'

He held forth his hand; she extended hers, cold as marble, which he bent over, but did not press to his lips.

'Lord Monmouth talks of remaining here some time,' he observed; 'but I suppose next year, if not this, we shall all meet in some city of the earth?'

Lucretia bowed; and Sidonia, with a graceful reverence, withdrew.

The Princess Lucretia stood for some moments motionless; a sound attracted her to the window; she perceived the equipage of Sidonia whirling along the winding roads of the park. She watched it till it disappeared; then quitting the window, she threw herself into a chair, and buried her face in her shawl.