

THE THREAD OF LIFE

OR
SUNSHINE AND SHADE.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—PROVING HIS CASE.

At the pension Hugh had engaged in haste a dull private sitting-room on the second floor, with bedroom and dressing-room adjoining at the side; and here he laid Winifred down on the horsehair sofa, wearied out with her long journey and her fit of delirium. Then the waiter brought her up refreshments on a tray, soup and sweet-breads and country wine—the plain sound of Ligurian claret—and she ate and drank with an apparent avidity which fairly took her husband's breath away. The food supplied her with a sudden access of hectic energy. "Wheel me over to the window," she cried in a stronger voice to Hugh. And Hugh wheeled the sofa over as he was bid to a point where she could see across the town and the hills and the villas and the lemon-gardens.

It was beautiful, beautiful, very beautiful. For the moment, the sight soothed Winifred. She was content now to lie where she lay. Her wounded heart asked nothing further from unkind fortune. She looked up at her husband with a stony gaze. "Hugh," she said, in firm but grimly resolute tones, with no trace of tenderness or softening in her voice, "bury me here. I like the place. Don't try to take me home in a box to Whitestrand."

Her very callousness, if callousness it were, cut him to the heart. That so young and frail and delicate a girl should talk of her own death with such insensibility was indeed terrible. The proud hard man was broken at last. Shame and remorse had touched his soul. He burst into tears, and kneeling by her side, tried to take her hand with some passing show of affection in his. Winifred withdrew it, coldly and silently, as his own approached it. "Winnie," he cried, bending over her face, "I don't ask you to forgive me. You can't forgive me. You can never forgive me for the wrong I've done you. But I do ask you, from my soul I do ask you, in this last extremity, to believe me and to listen to me. I did not lie to you last night. It was all true, what I told you in the *coupe*. I've never intrigued against you in the way you believe. I've never deceived you for the purpose you suppose. I've treated you cruelly, heartlessly, wickedly—I acknowledge that; but oh, Winnie, I can't bear you to die as you will, believing what you do believe about me.—This is the hardest part of all my punishment. Don't leave me so! My wife, my wife, don't kill me with this coldness!"

Winifred looked over at him more stonily than ever. "Hugh," she said with a very slow and distinct utterance, "every word you say to me in this hateful strain only increases and deepens my loathing and contempt for you.—You see I'm dying—you know I'm dying. You've tried to hound me and to drive me to my grave, that you might marry Elsie.—You've tried to murder me by slow degrees, that you might marry Elsie.—Well, you've carried your point: you've succeeded at last.—You've killed me now, or as good as killed me; and when I'm dead and gone, you can marry Elsie.—I don't mind that.—Marry her and be done with it.—But if ever you dare to tell me again that lying story concocted last night so glibly in the *coupe*—Hugh Massinger, I'll tell you in earnest what I'll do: I'll jump out of that window before your very face, and dash myself to pieces on the ground in front of you."

She spoke with feverish and lurid energy. Hugh Massinger bent his head to his knees in abject wretchedness.

"Winifred, Winifred, my poor wronged and injured Winifred," he cried at last, in another wild outburst, "I can do or say nothing, I know, to convince you. But one thing perhaps will make you hesitate to disbelieve me. Look here, Winifred: watch me closely!"

A happy inspiration had come to his aid. He brought over the little round table from the corner of the room and planted it full in front of the sofa where Winifred was lying. Then he set a chair close by the side, and selecting a pen from his writing case, began to produce on a sheet of note-paper, under Winifred's very eyes, some lines of manuscript—in Elsie's handwriting. Slowly and carefully he framed each letter in poor dead Elsie's bold and large-lined angular characters. He didn't need now any copy to go by; long practice had taught him to absolute perfection each twist and curl and flourish of her pen—the very tails of her *g's*, the black downstrokes of her *f's*, the peculiar unsteadiness of her *s's* and her *w's*. Winifred, sitting by in haughty disdain, pretended not even to notice his strange proceeding. But as the tall letter grew on apace beneath his practised pen—Elsie all over, past human conceiving—she descended at last, by an occasional hasty glimpse or side-glance, to manifest her interest in this singular paragon. Hugh persevered to the end in solemn silence, and when he had finished the whole short letter, he handed it to her in a sort of subdued triumph. She took it with a gesture of supreme unconcern. "Did any man ever take such pains before," she cried ironically, as she glanced at it with an assumption of profound indifference, "to make himself out to his wife a liar, a forger, and perhaps a murderer!"

Hugh bit his lip with mortification, and watched her closely. The tables were turned. How strange that he should now be all eager anxiety for her to learn the truth he had tried so long and so successfully with all his might to outdo! from her keenest and most prying scrutiny!

Winifred scanned the forged letter for a minute with apparent carelessness. He had written over again from memory the single note of Elsie's—or rather of his own in Elsie's hand—that Winifred had never happened at all to show him—the second note of the series, the one he despatched on the day of her father's death. It had reached her at Inverfarnham Castle, redirected from Whitestrand, two mornings later. Winifred had read the few lines as soon as they arrived, and then burnt the page in haste, in the heat and flurry of that fearful time. But now, as the letter lay before her in fac-simile once more, the very words and phrases came back to her memory as they had come back to Hugh's, with all the abnormal vividness and distinctness of such morbid moments. Ill as she was—nay, rather dying—he had fairly aroused her feminine curiosity. "How did you ever come to know what Elsie wrote to me that day?" she asked coldly.

"Because I wrote it myself," Hugh answered with an eager forward movement.

Winifred looked hard at him, half doubtful still. Could any man be quite so false and heartless? Admirably as he acted, could he act like this? What tragedian had ever such command of his countenance? Might not that strange story of his, so pat and straight, so consonant with the facts, so neatly adapted in every detail to the known circumstances, perhaps after all be actually true? Could Elsie be really and truly dead? Could ring and letters and circumstantial evidence have fallen out, not as she conceived, but as Hugh pretended?

"I can't make my mind up," she muttered slowly. "It's hard to believe that Elsie's dead. But for Elsie's sake, I hope so!—That you have deceived me, I know and am sure. That Elsie's deceived me, I should be sorry to think, though I've often thought it. Your story, incredible as it may be, brings home all the baseness and cruelty to yourself. It exculpates Elsie. And I wish I could believe that Elsie was innocent. I could endure your wickedness if only I knew Elsie didn't share it!"

Hugh leaped from his chair with his hands clasped. "Believe what you will about me," he cried. "I deserve it all. I deserve everything. But not of her—not of her, I beg of you. Believe no ill of poor dear Elsie!"

Winifred smiled a coldly satirical smile. "So much devotion does you honor indeed," she said in a scathing voice. "Your consideration for dead Elsie's reputation is truly touching. I only see one flaw in the case. If Elsie's dead, how did Mr. Relf come to tell me, I should like to know, she was living at San Remo?"

"Relf!" Hugh cried, taken aback once more. "Relf! Always! That serpent! That wriggling, insinuating, back stairs intriguer! I hate the wretch. If I had him here now, I'd wring his neck for him with the greatest pleasure. He's at the bottom of everything that turns up against me. He told you a lie, that's the plain explanation, and he told it to baffles me. He hates me, the car, and he wanted to make my game harder. He knew it would sow distrust between you and me if he told you that lie; and he had no pity, like an unmanly sneak that he is, even on a poor weak helpless woman."

"I see," Winifred murmured with exasperating calmness. "He told me the truth. It's his habit to tell it. And the truth happens to be very disconcerting to you, by making what you're frank enough to describe as your game a little harder. The word's sufficient. You can never do anything but play a game. That's very clear. I understand now. I prefer Mr. Relf's assurance to yours, thank you!"

"Winifred," Hugh cried, in an agony of despair, "let me tell you the whole story again, bit by bit, act by act, scene by scene"—Winifred smiled derisively at the theatrical phrase—"and you may question me out on every part of it. Cross-examine me, please, like a hostile lawyer, to the minutest detail.—O, Winnie, I want you to know the truth now. I wish you'd believe me. I can't endure to think that you should die mistaking me."

His imploring look and his evident earnestness shook Winifred's wavering mind again. Even the words of men has his truthful moments. Her resolution faltered. She began as he suggested, cross-questioning him at full. He gave his replies plainly and straightforwardly. The fever of confession had seized hold of him once more. The pent-up secret has burst its bounds. He revealed his inmost soul to Winifred—he even admitted, with shame and agony, his abiding love and remorse for Elsie.

Overcome by her feelings, Winifred leaned back on the sofa and cried. Thank heaven, thank heaven, she could cry now. He was glad of that. She could cry, after all. That poor little cramped and cabined nature, turned in upon itself so long for lack of an outlet, found vent at last. Hugh cried himself, and held her hand. In her momentary impulse of womanly softening, she allowed him to hold it. Her small face pleaded piteously with his heart. "Dare I, Winnie?" he asked with a faint tremor, and leaning forward, he kissed her forehead. She did not withdraw it. He thrilled at the concession. Then he thought with a pang how cruelly he had worn her young life out. She never reproached him; her feelings went far too deep for reproach. But she cried—silently.

At length she spoke. "When I'm gone," she said in a fainter voice now, "you must put up a stone by Elsie's grave. I'm glad Elsie at least was true to me!"

Hugh's heart gave a bound. Then she wavered at last! She accepted his account! She knew that Elsie was dead and buried! He had carried his point. She believed him!—she believed him!

Winifred rose and staggered feebly to her feet. "I shall go to bed now," she said in husky accents. "You may send for a doctor. I shan't last long. But on the whole, I feel better so. I wanted Elsie to be alive indeed, because I hunger and thirst for sympathy, and Elsie would give it me. But I'm glad at least Elsie didn't deceive me!" She paused for a moment and wiped her eyes; then she steadied herself by the bar of the window—the air blew in so warm and fresh. She looked out at the palms and the blue, blue sea. It seemed to calm her, the beautiful south. She gazed long and wearily at the glassy water. But her dream didn't last undisturbed for many minutes. Of a sudden, a shade came over her face. Something below seemed to sting and appal her. She started back, tottering, from the open window. "Hugh, Hugh!" she cried, ghastly pale and quivering, "you said she was dead!—you said she was dead! You lie to me still. O heaven, how terrible!"

"So she is," Hugh groaned out, half catching her in his arms for fear she should fall. "Dead and buried, on my honour, at Orfordness, Winifred!"

"Hugh, Hugh! can you never tell me the truth?" And she stretched out one thin white bony forefinger towards the street beyond. One second she gasped a terrible gasp then she flung out the words with a last wild effort: "That's she!—that's Elsie!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—GHOST OR WOMAN?
Winifred spoke with such concentrated

force of inner conviction that, absurd and incredible as he knew it to be—for had he not seen Elsie's own grave that day at Orfordness?—Hugh rushed over to the window and gazed across the street to the exact spot where Winifred's ghost-like finger pointed eagerly to some person or thing on the pavement opposite. He was almost too late, however, to prove her wrong. As he neared the window he caught but a glimpse of a graceful figure in light half-mourning—like Elsie's, to be sure, in general outline, though distinctly a trifle older and fuller—disappearing in haste round the corner by the pharmacy.

The figure gave him none the less a shock of surprise. It was certainly a very strange and awkward coincidence. He glanced at Winifred. She stood triumphant there—triumphant but heart-broken—exulting over his defeat with one dying "I told you so," and chuckling out inarticulately in her thin small voice, with womanish persistence; "That's she!—that's Elsie!"

"It's very like her!" he moaned in his agony.

"Very like her!" Winifred cried with a fresh burst of unnatural strength. "Very like her!—O Hugh, I despise you! I tell you I saw her face to face! It's Elsie—it's Elsie!"

His brain reeled and whirled with the unexpected shock; the universe turned round on him as on a pivot. "Winifred," he cried, "you're right! your right! There can't be anybody else on earth so like her! I don't know how she's come back to life! She's dead and buried at Orfordness! It's a miracle! a miracle! But that's she that we saw! I can't deny it. That's she!—that's Elsie!"

His hat lay thrown down on the table by his side. He snatched it up in his eager haste to follow and track down this mysterious resemblance. He couldn't let Elsie's double, her bodily simulacrum, walk down the street unnoticed and unquestioned. A profound horror possessed his soul. A doubter by nature, he seemed to feel the solid earth falling beneath his feet. He had never before in all his life drawn so perilously close to the very verge and margin of the unseen universe. It was Elsie herself, or else—the grave had yielded up its shadowy occupant.

He rushed to the door, on fire with his sense of mystery and astonishment. A loud laugh by his side held him back as he went. He turned round. It was Winifred, laughing, choking, exultant, hysterical. She had flung herself down on the sofa now, and was catching her breath in spasmodic bursts with unnatural merit. That was the awful kind of laughter that bodes no good to those who laugh it—hollow, horrible, mocking, delusive. Hugh saw at a glance she was dangerously ill. Her mirth was the mirth of mania, and worse. With a burning soul and a chafing heart, he turned back, as in duty bound, to her side. He must leave Elsie's wraith to walk by itself, unexplained and uninvestigated, its ghostly way down the streets of San Remo.

He had more than enough to do at home. Winifred was dying—dying of laughter.

And yet her laugh seemed almost hilarious. In spite of all, it had a ghastly ring of victory and boisterous joy in it. "O Hugh," she cried, with little choking chuckles, in the brief intervals of her spasmodic peals, "you're too absurd! You'll kill me—I can't help laughing; it's so ridiculous.—You tell me one minute, with solemn oaths and ingenious lies, you've seen her grave—you know she's dead and buried: you pull long faces till you almost force me to believe you— you positively cry and moan and groan over her—and then the next second, when she passes the window before my very eyes, alive and well, and in her right mind, you seize your hat, you want to rush out and find her and embrace her—here, this moment, right under my face—and leave me alone to die by myself, without one soul on earth to wait upon me or help me! Oh, you make me laugh! You have broken my heart; but you'll be the death of me.—Puck and Don Juan rolled into one!"

"Elsie's dead!—Why, there's dear Elsie!"

"—It's too incongruous; it's too ridiculous." And she exploded once more in a hideous semblance of laughter.

Hugh gazed at her blankly, sobered with alarm. Was she going mad? or was he mad himself?—that he should see visions, and meet dead Elsie! Could it really be Elsie? He had heard strange stories of appearances and second-sight, such as mystics among us love to dwell upon; and in all of them the appearances were closely connected with death-bed scenes. Could any truth lurk, after all, in those discredited tales of wraiths and visions? Could Elsie's ghost have come from the grave to prepare him betimes for Winifred's funeral? Or did Winifred's dying mind, by some strange alchemy, project, as it were, an image of Elsie, who filled her soul, on to his own eye and brain, as he sat there beside her?

He brushed away these metaphysical cobwebs with a dash of his hand. Fool that he was to be led away thus by a mere accidental coincidence or resemblance! He was tired with sleeplessness; emotion had unmanned him.

Winifred's laugh dissolved itself into tears. She broke down, hysterically, utterly. She sobbed and moaned in agony on the sofa. Deep sighs and loud laughter alternated horribly in her storms of emotion. The worst had come. She was dangerously ill. Hugh feared in his heart she was on the point of dying.

"Go!" she burst out, in one spasmodic effort, thrusting him away from her side with the palm of her open hand. "I don't want you here. Go—go—to Elsie! I can die now. I've found you all out. You're both of you alike; you've both of you deceived me."

Hugh rang the bell wildly for the Swiss waiter. "Send the chambermaid! he cried in his broken Italian. "The patroness! A lady! The signora is ill. No time to be lost. I must run at once and find the English doctor."

When Winifred looked around her again, she found two or three strange faces crowded beside the bed on which they had laid her, and a fresh young Italian girl, the landlady's daughter, holding her head and bathing her brows with that universal specific, orange-flower water. The faint perfume revived her a little. The landlady's daughter was a comely girl, with sympathetic eyes, and she smiled the winsome Italian smile as the poor pale child opened her lids and looked vaguely up at her. "Don't cry, signorina," she said soothingly. Then her glance fell, womanlike, upon the plain gold ring on Winifred's thin and wasted fourth finger, and she corrected herself half unconsciously: "Don't cry, signora. Your

husband will soon be by your side; he's gone to fetch the English doctor."

"I don't want him," Winifred cried, with intense yearning, in her boarding-school French, for she knew barely enough Italian to understand her new little friend. "I don't want my husband: I want Elsie. Keep him away from me—keep him away, I pray.—Hold my hand yourself, and send away my husband! Je ne l'aime pas, cet hommel!" And she burst once more into a discordant peal of hysterical laughter.

"The poor signora!" the girl murmured, with wide open eyes, to the others around. "Her husband is cruel. Ah, wicked wretch! Hear what she says! She says she doesn't want any more to see him. She wants her sister!"

As she spoke, a white face appeared suddenly at the door—a bearded man's face, silent and sympathetic. Warren Relf had heard the commotion down-stairs, from his room above, and had seen Massinger rush in hot haste for the Doctor. He had come down now with eager inquiry for poor wasted Winifred, whose face and figure had impressed him much as he saw her borne out by the porters at the railway station.

"Is the signora very ill?" he asked in a low voice of the nearest woman. "She speaks no Italian, I fear. Can I be of any use to her?"

"Ecco! 'tis Signor Relf, the English artist!" the woman cried in surprise; for all San Remo knew Warren well as an old inhabitant. "Come in, signor," she continued, with Italian frankness—for bedrooms in Italy are less sacred than in England. "You know the signora? She is ill—very ill: she is faint—she is dying."

At the name, Winifred turned her eyes languidly to the door, and raised herself, still dressed in her travelling dress, on her elbows on the bed. She yearned for sympathy. If only she could fling herself on Elsie's shoulder! Elsie, who had wronged her, would at least pity her. "Mr. Relf," she cried, too weak to be surprised, but glad to welcome a fellow-countryman and acquaintance among so many strangers—"I'm going to die. But I want to speak to you. You know the truth. Tell me about Elsie. Why did Elsie Chalonner deceive me?"

"Deceive you?" Warren answered, drawing nearer in his horror. "She didn't deceive you. She couldn't deceive you. She only wished to spare your heart from suffering all her own heart had suffered. Elsie could never deceive anyone!"

"But why did she write to say she was in Australia, when she was really living here in San Remo?" Winifred asked piteously.

And why did she keep up a correspondence with my husband?"

"Write she was in Australia! She never wrote," Warren cried in haste, seizing the poor dying girl's thin hand in his. "Mrs. Massinger, this is no time to conceal anything. I dare not speak to you against your husband, but still—"

"I hate him!" Winifred gasped out, with concentrated loathing. "He has done nothing since I knew him but lie to me and deceive me. Don't mind speaking ill of him; I don't object to that. What kills me is that Elsie has helped him! Elsie has helped him!"

"Elsie has not," Warren answered, lifting up her white little hand to his lips and kissing it respectfully. "Elsie and I are very close friends. Elsie has always loved you dearly. If she's hidden anything from you, she's hid it for your own sake alone.—It was Hugh Massinger who forged those letters.—I can't let you die thinking ill of Elsie. Elsie has never, never written to him.—I know it all.—I'll tell you the truth. Your husband thought she was drowned at Whitestrand!"

"Then Hugh doesn't know she's living here?" Winifred cried eagerly.

Warren Relf hardly knew how to answer her in this unexpected crisis. It was a terrible moment. He couldn't expose Elsie to the chance of meeting Hugh face to face. The shock and strain, he knew, would be hard for her to bear. But, on the other hand, he couldn't let that poor broken-hearted little woman die with this fearful load of misery unlightened on her bosom. The truth was best. The truth is always safest. "Hugh doesn't know she's living here," he answered slowly. "But if I could only be sure that Hugh and she would not meet, I'd bring her round, before she leaves San Remo, this very day, and let you hear from her own lips, beyond dispute, her true story."

Winifred clenched her thin hands hard and tight. "He shall never enter this room again," she whispered hoarsely, "till he enters it to see me laid out for burial."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Discernment of Character.

Men are deceived in their judgments of others by a thousand causes—by their hopes, their ambition, their vanity, their antipathies, their likes and dislikes, their party feelings, their nationality, but, above all by their presumptuous reliance on the ratiocinative understanding, their disregard to presentiments and unaccountable impressions, and their vain attempt to reduce everything to rule and measure. Women, on the other hand, if they be very women, are seldom deceived, except by love, compassion, or religious sympathy—by the latter too often deplorably; but then it is not because their better angel neglects to give warning, but because they are persuaded to make a merit of disregarding his admonitions. The craftiest Iago cannot win the good opinion of a true woman, unless he approach her as a lover, an unfortunate, or a religious confidant. Be it however remembered that this superior discernment in character is merely a female instinct, arising from a more delicate sensibility, a finer tact, a clearer intuition and a natural abhorrence of every appearance of evil. It is a sense which belongs only to the innocent, and is quite distinct from the tact of experience. If, therefore, ladies without experience attempt to judge, to draw conclusions from premises, and give a reason for their sentiment, their is nothing in their sex to prevent them from error.—[Hartley Coleridge.]

The Emperor of Germany was a bumptious and overbearing child, and never endured being beaten in any game. If he could not get his own way, he would first sulk, and then try and take advantage of his position as a "royal child." But this was never allowed. The rule in the nursery was strict equality, and the nurse had stringent orders to enforce it. He had a cold, proud, manner, which made him anything but popular with his other playmates. It was quite the reverse with Prince Henry and the little Princess Sophie, who were beloved by all.

PEARLS OF TRUTH.

Everywhere endeavor to be useful, and everywhere you will be at home.

The marksman who aims at the whole target will seldom hit the centre.

Absence lessens small passions, and increases great ones; as the wind extinguishes the taper, and kindles the burning dwelling.

An unjust acquisition is like a barbed arrow, which must be drawn backward with horrible anguish or else will be your destruction.

What is remote and difficult of success we are apt to overrate; what is really best for us lies always within our reach, though often overlooked.

The capacity for happiness, like every other, needs continual exercise for its growth and development. If it is continually checked and postponed, it will wither away.

It is better to have strength of principle than of mere muscle, but better still to have both. A man who is strong in intellect and in body is on the best terms with nature and the world.

Education is not first or chiefly the mere learning of certain facts or principles; it is such a development and training of faculty as makes a man master of himself and his conditions.

As they who, for every slight infirmity take physic to repair their health, do rather impair it, so they who, for every trifle, are eager to vindicate their character do rather weaken it.

Success rides on every hour; grapple it and you may win, but without a grapple it will never go with you. Work is the weapon of honor, and he who lacks the weapon will never triumph.

Manners form at least a rich varnish with which the routine of life is washed and its details adorned. If they are superficial, so are the dewdrops which give such a depth to the morning meadows.

Influence of the East Wind.

With few exceptions the east or north-east winds act unfavorably upon human beings. Dr. Richardson says: "That all nervous conditions in which, for want of a more correct term, we say the nervous tone is lowered, are much intensified by the east wind, and, indeed, the special action of this particular wind is to produce want of tone or debility. Under its influence almost all sick persons say they are depressed; they do not complain of reduced appetite, nor of pain intensified, nor of derangement of the secretions, but they declare that they are rendered prostrate both mind and body. They are also more irritable in mind, which perhaps leads them to feel acutely the sense of prostration. In brief, if a single word were wanted to express the morbid effect of an east wind on the sick man, and on all the members of the sick community, that word would be prostration."

The same authority continues: "That the presence of the east wind increases the mortality of those who are suffering from diseases of debility of every kind is a fact that seems undoubted. The physician, through the whole of the spell of an east wind, will find his patients complaining of not making satisfactory progress, and will see extreme cases rendered more speedily hopeless—facts indicating the existence of a general and all pervading influence in the atmospheric sea itself as the cause of the whole of the evil. What that influence is, how the air is modified, whether it is modified by some change in the constitution of the oxygen, or whether, it carries with it some foreign deleterious product, it is impossible to say, for up to this time no special chemical examination of the east wind has been made with the object of determining its special physical properties. We know the effects of it and we know no more."

The Man Who Has Money.

The keeping of money is a harder job than the earning of it. The old adage may not always be true, that any fool can make money, but only a wise man can save it. Those who save money frequently cannot keep it, for their very thrift frequently becomes blind. There is perhaps no fact so quickly known as an individual's possession of more money than he requires for his living. Men who save are frequently vain of their success at thrift, and let out the fact that they are further ahead of the world than somebody else says or supposes. In a little while, especially in our metropolitan society, so called, the man who has this money is mysteriously waited upon. A bright minded man is pursued. He is entreated to come out a little more into the world and enjoy himself, and not let his exceptional wit and ability be hid under a bushel. Perhaps in the course of a few months his own wife will acquaint him with the fact that there is a great deal of money in some stock, mine, mortgage or scheme; the piper and steerer have got around on the blindest side of the man and made his wife believe that her husband can suddenly become three times as well off as he is if he would only take a sure chance, as if any chance can be sure. Individuals of his family will brighten up and say: "Well, Jones, if I had your money I would not; it lay out at five per cent. I know a thing or two myself."

Opinions Changed with Age.

On the notions and expectations of one stage of life I suppose all reflecting men look back with a kind of contempt, though it may be often with the mingling wish that some of its enthusiasms or feelings could be recovered—I mean the period between proper childhood and maturity. They will allow that their reason was then feeble, and they are prompted to exclaim "What fools we have been!" while they recollected how sincerely they entertained and advanced the most ridiculous speculations on the interests of life, and the questions of truth; how regretfully astonished they were to find the mature sense of some of those around them so completely wrong, yet in other instances, what veneration they felt for authorities for which they have since lost all their respect; what a fantastic importance they attached to some most trivial things; what complaints against their fate were uttered on account of disappointments which they have since recollected with gaiety or self-congratulation; what happiness of Elysium they expected from sources which would soon have failed to impart even common satisfaction, and how certain they were that the feelings and opinions then predominant would continue through life.—[Rev. John Foster.]