

Doctor Thorne

Vol. II

Doctor Thorne

Vol. II

by

Anthony Trollope

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS
PUBLISHING

classic texts



Doctor Thorne Volume II, by Anthony Trollope

This book in its current typographical format first published 2008 by

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

The copyright in this publication is in the public domain

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-84718-693-9, ISBN (13): 9781847186935

Contents

CHAPTER XXIV. Louis Scatcherd	1
CHAPTER XXV. Sir Roger Dies	12
CHAPTER XXVI. War	26
CHAPTER XXVII. Miss Thorne Goes on a Visit	36
CHAPTER XXVIII. The Doctor Hears Something to his Advantage	48
CHAPTER XXIX. The Donkey Ride	58
CHAPTER XXX. Post Prandial	70
CHAPTER XXXI. The Small End of the Wedge	77
CHAPTER XXXII. Mr Oriel	86
CHAPTER XXXIII. A Morning Visit	94
CHAPTER XXXIV. A Barouche and Four Arrives at Greshamsbury	105
CHAPTER XXXV. Sir Louis Goes Out to Dinner	121
CHAPTER XXXVI. Will He Come Again?	130
CHAPTER XXXVII. Sir Louis Leaves Greshamsbury	137
CHAPTER XXXVIII. De Courcy Precepts and de Courcy Practice	146
CHAPTER XXXIX. What the World Says about Blood	158
CHAPTER XL. The Two Doctors Change Patients	167
CHAPTER XLI. Doctor Thorne won't Interfere	175
CHAPTER XLII. What can You Give in Return?	184

CHAPTER XLIII. The Race of Scatcherd Becomes Extinct	196
CHAPTER XLIV. Saturday Evening and Sunday Morning	205
CHAPTER XLV. Law Business in London	216
CHAPTER XLVI. Our Pet Fox Finds a Tail	225
CHAPTER XLVII. How the Bride was Received, and Who were Asked to the Wedding	236

CHAPTER XXIV. Louis Scatcherd

When Dr Thorne reached Boxall Hill he found Mr Rerechild from Barchester there before him. Poor Lady Scatcherd, when her husband was stricken by the fit, hardly knew in her dismay what adequate steps to take. She had, as a matter of course, sent for Dr Thorne; but she had thought that in so grave a peril the medical skill of no one man could suffice. It was, she knew, quite out of the question for her to invoke the aid of Dr Fillgrave, whom no earthly persuasion would have brought to Boxall Hill; and as Mr Rerechild was supposed in the Barchester world to be second—though at a long interval—to that great man, she had applied for his assistance.

Now Mr Rerechild was a follower and humble friend of Dr Fillgrave; and was wont to regard anything that came from the Barchester doctor as sure light from the lamp of Aesculapius. He could not therefore be other than an enemy of Dr Thorne. But he was a prudent, discreet man, with a long family, averse to professional hostilities, as knowing that he could make more by medical friends than medical foes, and not at all inclined to take up any man's cudgel to his own detriment. He had, of course, heard of that dreadful affront which had been put upon his friend, as had all the "medical world"—all the medical world at least of Barchester; and he had often expressed his sympathy with Dr Fillgrave and his abhorrence of Dr Thorne's anti-professional practices. But now that he found himself about to be brought in contact with Dr Thorne, he reflected that the Galen of Greshamsbury was at any rate equal in reputation to him of Barchester; that the one was probably on the rise, whereas the other was already considered by some as rather antiquated; and he therefore wisely resolved that the present would be an excellent opportunity for him to make a friend of Dr Thorne.

Poor Lady Scatcherd had an inkling that Dr Fillgrave and Mr Rerechild were accustomed to row in the same boat, and she was not altogether free from fear that there might be an outbreak. She therefore took an opportunity before Dr Thorne's arrival to deprecate any wrathful tendency.

"Oh, Lady Scatcherd! I have the greatest respect for Dr Thorne," said he; "the greatest possible respect; a most skilful practitioner—something brusque certainly, and perhaps a little obstinate. But what then? we all have our faults, Lady Scatcherd."

"Oh—yes; we all have, Mr Rerechild; that's certain."

"There's my friend Fillgrave—Lady Scatcherd. He cannot bear anything of that sort. Now I think he's wrong; and so I tell him." Mr Rerechild was in error here; for he had never yet ventured to tell Dr Fillgrave that he was wrong in anything. "We must bear and forbear, you know. Dr Thorne is an excellent man—in his way very excellent, Lady Scatcherd."

This little conversation took place after Mr Rerechild's first visit to his patient: what steps were immediately taken for the relief of the sufferer we need not describe. They were doubtless well intended, and were, perhaps, as well adapted to stave off the coming evil day as any that Dr Fillgrave, or even the great Sir Omicron Pie might have used.

And then Dr Thorne arrived.

"Oh, doctor! doctor!" exclaimed Lady Scatcherd, almost hanging round his neck in the hall. "What are we to do? What are we to do? He's very bad."

"Has he spoken?"

"No; nothing like a word: he has made one or two muttered sounds; but, poor soul, you could make nothing of it—oh, doctor! doctor! he has never been like this before."

It was easy to see where Lady Scatcherd placed any such faith as she might still have in the healing art. "Mr Rerechild is here and has seen him," she continued. "I thought it best to send for two, for fear of accidents. He has done something—I don't know what. But, doctor, do tell the truth now; I look to you to tell me the truth."

Dr Thorne then went up and saw his patient; and had he literally complied with Lady Scatcherd's request, he might have told her at once that there was no hope. As, however, he had not the heart to do this, he mystified the case as doctors so well know how to do, and told her that "there was cause to fear, great cause for fear; he was sorry to say, very great cause for much fear."

Dr Thorne promised to stay the night there, and, if possible, the following night also; and then Lady Scatcherd became troubled in her mind as to what she should do with Mr Rerechild. He also declared, with much medical humanity, that, let the inconvenience be what it might, he too would stay the night. "The loss," he said, "of such a man as Sir Roger Scatcherd was of such paramount importance as to make other matters trivial. He would certainly not allow the whole weight to fall on the shoulders of his friend Dr Thorne: he also would stay at any rate that night by the sick man's bedside. By the following morning some change might be expected."

"I say, Dr Thorne," said her ladyship, calling the doctor into the housekeeping-room, in which she and Hannah spent any time that they were not required upstairs; "just come in, doctor: you couldn't tell him we don't want him any more, could you?"

"Tell whom?" said the doctor.

"Why—Mr Rerechild: mightn't he go away, do you think?"

Dr Thorne explained that Mr Rerechild certainly might go away if he pleased; but that it would by no means be proper for one doctor to tell another to leave the house. And so Mr Rerechild was allowed to share the glories of the night.

In the meantime the patient remained speechless; but it soon became evident that Nature was using all her efforts to make one final rally. From time to time he moaned and muttered as though he was conscious, and it seemed as though he strove to speak. He gradually became awake, at any rate to suffering, and Dr Thorne began to think that the last scene would be postponed for yet a while longer.

"Wonderful strong constitution—eh, Dr Thorne? wonderful!" said Mr Rerechild.

"Yes; he has been a strong man."

"Strong as a horse, Dr Thorne. Lord, what that man would have been if he had given himself a chance! You know his constitution of course."

"Yes; pretty well. I've attended him for many years."

"Always drinking, I suppose; always at it—eh?"

"He has not been a temperate man, certainly."

"The brain, you see, clean gone—and not a particle of coating left to the stomach; and yet what a struggle he makes—an interesting case, isn't it?"

"It's very sad to see such an intellect so destroyed."

"Very sad, very sad indeed. How Fillgrave would have liked to have seen this case. He is a clever man, is Fillgrave—in his way, you know."

"I'm sure he is," said Dr Thorne.

"Not that he'd make anything of a case like this now—he's not, you know, quite—quite—perhaps not quite up to the new time of day, if one may say so."

"He has had a very extensive provincial practice," said Dr Thorne.

"Oh, very—very; and made a tidy lot of money too, has Fillgrave. He's worth six thousand pounds, I suppose; now that's a good deal of money to put by in a little town like Barchester."

"Yes, indeed."

"What I say to Fillgrave is this—keep your eyes open; one should never be too old to learn—there's always something new worth picking up. But, no—he won't believe that. He can't believe that any new ideas can be worth anything. You know a man must go to the wall in that way—eh, doctor?"

And then again they were called to their patient. "He's doing finely, finely," said Mr Rerechild to Lady Scatcherd. "There's fair ground to hope he'll rally; fair ground, is there not, doctor?"

"Yes; he'll rally; but how long that may last, that we can hardly say."

"Oh, no, certainly not, certainly not—that is not with any certainty; but still he's doing finely, Lady Scatcherd, considering everything."

"How long will you give him, doctor?" said Mr Rerechild to his new friend, when they were again alone. "Ten days? I dare say ten days, or from that to a fortnight, not more; but I think he'll struggle on ten days."

"Perhaps so," said the doctor. "I should not like to say exactly to a day."

"No, certainly not. We cannot say exactly to a day; but I say ten days; as for anything like a recovery, that you know—"

"Is out of the question," said Dr Thorne, gravely.

"Quite so; quite so; coating of the stomach clean gone, you know; brain destroyed: did you observe the periporollida? I never saw them so swelled before: now when the periporollida are swollen like that—"

"Yes, very much; it's always the case when paralysis has been brought about by intemperance."

"Always, always; I have remarked that always; the periporollida in such cases are always extended; most interesting case, isn't it? I do wish Fillgrave could have seen it. But, I believe you and Fillgrave don't quite—eh?"

"No, not quite," said Dr Thorne; who, as he thought of his last interview with Dr Fillgrave, and of that gentleman's exceeding anger as he stood in the hall below, could not keep himself from smiling, sad as the occasion was.

Nothing would induce Lady Scatcherd to go to bed; but the two doctors agreed to lie down, each in a room on one side of the patient. How was it possible that

anything but good should come to him, being so guarded? "He is going on finely, Lady Scatcherd, quite finely," were the last words Mr Rerechild said as he left the room.

And then Dr Thorne, taking Lady Scatcherd's hand and leading her out into another chamber, told her the truth.

"Lady Scatcherd," said he, in his tenderest voice—and his voice could be very tender when occasion required it—"Lady Scatcherd, do not hope; you must not hope; it would be cruel to bid you do so."

"Oh, doctor! oh, doctor!"

"My dear friend, there is no hope."

"Oh, Dr Thorne!" said the wife, looking wildly up into her companion's face, though she hardly yet realised the meaning of what he said, although her senses were half stunned by the blow.

"Dear Lady Scatcherd, is it not better that I should tell you the truth?"

"Oh, I suppose so; oh yes, oh yes; ah me! ah me! ah me!" And then she began rocking herself backwards and forwards on her chair, with her apron up to her eyes. "What shall I do? what shall I do?"

"Look to Him, Lady Scatcherd, who only can make such grief endurable."

"Yes, yes, yes; I suppose so. Ah me! ah me! But, Dr Thorne, there must be some chance—isn't there any chance? That man says he's going on so well."

"I fear there is no chance—as far as my knowledge goes there is no chance."

"Then why does that chattering magpie tell such lies to a woman? Ah me! ah me! ah me! oh, doctor! doctor! what shall I do? what shall I do?" and poor Lady Scatcherd, fairly overcome by her sorrow, burst out crying like a great school-girl.

And yet what had her husband done for her that she should thus weep for him? Would not her life be much more blessed when this cause of all her troubles should be removed from her? Would she not then be a free woman instead of a slave? Might she not then expect to begin to taste the comforts of life? What had that harsh tyrant of hers done that was good or serviceable for her? Why should she thus weep for him in paroxysms of truest grief?

We hear a good deal of jolly widows; and the slanderous raillery of the world tells much of conjugal disturbances as a cure for which women will look forward to a state of widowhood with not unwilling eyes. The raillery of the world is very slanderous. In our daily jests we attribute to each other vices of which neither we,

nor our neighbours, nor our friends, nor even our enemies are ever guilty. It is our favourite parlance to talk of the family troubles of Mrs Green on our right, and to tell how Mrs Young on our left is strongly suspected of having raised her hand to her lord and master. What right have we to make these charges? What have we seen in our own personal walks through life to make us believe that women are devils? There may possibly have been a Xantippe here and there, but Imogenes are to be found under every bush. Lady Scatcherd, in spite of the life she had led, was one of them.

"You should send a message up to London for Louis," said the doctor.

"We did that, doctor; we did that to-day—we sent up a telegraph. Oh me! oh me! poor boy, what will he do? I shall never know what to do with him, never! never!" And with such sorrowful wailings she sat rocking herself through the long night, every now and then comforting herself by the performance of some menial service in the sick man's room.

Sir Roger passed the night much as he had passed the day, except that he appeared gradually to be growing nearer to a state of consciousness. On the following morning they succeeded at last in making Mr Rerechild understand that they were not desirous of keeping him longer from his Barchester practice; and at about twelve o'clock Dr Thorne also went, promising that he would return in the evening, and again pass the night at Boxall Hill.

In the course of the afternoon Sir Roger once more awoke to his senses, and when he did so his son was standing at his bedside. Louis Philippe Scatcherd—or as it may be more convenient to call him, Louis—was a young man just of the age of Frank Gresham. But there could hardly be two youths more different in their appearance. Louis, though his father and mother were both robust persons, was short and slight, and now of a sickly frame. Frank was a picture of health and strength; but, though manly in disposition, was by no means precocious either in appearance or manners. Louis Scatcherd looked as though he was four years the other's senior. He had been sent to Eton when he was fifteen, his father being under the impression that this was the most ready and best-recognised method of making him a gentleman. Here he did not altogether fail as regarded the coveted object of his becoming the companion of gentlemen. He had more pocket-money than any other lad in the school, and was possessed also of a certain effrontery which carried him ahead among boys of his own age. He gained, therefore, a degree of *éclat*, even among those who knew, and very frequently said to each other, that young Scatcherd was not fit to be their companion except on such open occasions as those of cricket-matches and boat-races. Boys, in this respect, are at least as exclusive as men, and understand as well the difference between an inner and an outer circle. Scatcherd had many companions at school who were glad enough to go up to

Maidenhead with him in his boat; but there was not one among them who would have talked to him of his sister.

Sir Roger was vastly proud of his son's success, and did his best to stimulate it by lavish expenditure at the Christopher, whenever he could manage to run down to Eton. But this practice, though sufficiently unexceptionable to the boys, was not held in equal delight by the masters. To tell the truth, neither Sir Roger nor his son were favourites with these stern custodians. At last it was felt necessary to get rid of them both; and Louis was not long in giving them an opportunity, by getting tipsy twice in one week. On the second occasion he was sent away, and he and Sir Roger, though long talked of, were seen no more at Eton.

But the universities were still open to Louis Philippe, and before he was eighteen he was entered as a gentleman-commoner at Trinity. As he was, moreover, the eldest son of a baronet, and had almost unlimited command of money, here also he was enabled for a while to shine.

To shine! but very fitfully; and one may say almost with a ghastly glare. The very lads who had eaten his father's dinners at Eton, and shared his four-oar at Eton, knew much better than to associate with him at Cambridge now that they had put on the *toga virilis*. They were still as prone as ever to fun, frolic, and devilry—perhaps more so than ever, seeing that more was in their power; but they acquired an idea that it behoved them to be somewhat circumspect as to the men with whom their pranks were perpetrated. So, in those days, Louis Scatcherd was coldly looked on by his whilom Eton friends.

But young Scatcherd did not fail to find companions at Cambridge also. There are few places indeed in which a rich man cannot buy companionship. But the set with whom he lived at Cambridge were the worst of the place. They were fast, slang men, who were fast and slang, and nothing else—men who imitated grooms in more than their dress, and who looked on the customary heroes of race-courses as the highest lords of the ascendant upon earth. Among those at college young Scatcherd did shine as long as such lustre was permitted him. Here, indeed, his father, who had striven only to encourage him at Eton, did strive somewhat to control him. But that was not now easy. If he limited his son's allowance, he only drove him to do his debauchery on credit. There were plenty to lend money to the son of the great millionaire; and so, after eighteen months' trial of a university education, Sir Roger had no alternative but to withdraw his son from his *alma mater*.

What was he then to do with him? Unluckily it was considered quite unnecessary to take any steps towards enabling him to earn his bread. Now nothing on earth can be more difficult than bringing up well a young man who has not to earn his own bread, and who has no recognised station among other men similarly

circumstanced. Juvenile dukes, and sprouting earls, find their duties and their places as easily as embryo clergymen and sucking barristers. Provision is made for their peculiar positions: and, though they may possibly go astray, they have a fair chance given to them of running within the posts. The same may be said of such youths as Frank Gresham. There are enough of them in the community to have made it necessary that their well-being should be a matter of care and forethought. But there are but few men turned out in the world in the position of Louis Scatcherd; and, of those few, but very few enter the real battle of life under good auspices.

Poor Sir Roger, though he had hardly time with all his multitudinous railways to look into this thoroughly, had a glimmering of it. When he saw his son's pale face, and paid his wine bills, and heard of his doings in horse-flesh, he did know that things were not going well; he did understand that the heir to a baronetcy and a fortune of some ten thousand a year might be doing better. But what was he to do? He could not watch over his boy himself; so he took a tutor for him and sent him abroad.

Louis and the tutor got as far as Berlin, with what mutual satisfaction to each other need not be specially described. But from Berlin Sir Roger received a letter in which the tutor declined to go any further in the task which he had undertaken. He found that he had no influence over his pupil, and he could not reconcile it to his conscience to be the spectator of such a life as that which Mr Scatcherd led. He had no power in inducing Mr Scatcherd to leave Berlin; but he would remain there himself till he should hear from Sir Roger. So Sir Roger had to leave the huge Government works which he was then erecting on the southern coast, and hurry off to Berlin to see what could be done with young Hopeful.

The young Hopeful was by no means a fool; and in some matters was more than a match for his father. Sir Roger, in his anger, threatened to cast him off without a shilling. Louis, with mixed penitence and effrontery, reminded him that he could not change the descent of the title; promised amendment; declared that he had done only as do other young men of fortune; and hinted that the tutor was a strait-laced ass. The father and the son returned together to Boxall Hill, and three months afterwards Mr Scatcherd set up for himself in London.

And now his life, if not more virtuous, was more crafty than it had been. He had no tutor to watch his doings and complain of them, and he had sufficient sense to keep himself from absolute pecuniary ruin. He lived, it is true, where sharpers and blacklegs had too often opportunities of plucking him; but, young as he was, he had been sufficiently long about the world to take care he was not openly robbed; and as he was not openly robbed, his father, in a certain sense, was proud of him.

Tidings, however, came—came at least in those last days—which cut Sir Roger to the quick; tidings of vice in the son which the father could not but attribute to his own example. Twice the mother was called up to the sick-bed of her only child, while he lay raving in that horrid madness by which the outraged mind avenges itself on the body! Twice he was found raging in *delirium tremens*, and twice the father was told that a continuance of such life must end in an early death.

It may easily be conceived that Sir Roger was not a happy man. Lying there with that brandy bottle beneath his pillow, reflecting in his moments of rest that that son of his had his brandy bottle beneath his pillow, he could hardly have been happy. But he was not a man to say much about his misery. Though he could restrain neither himself nor his heir, he could endure in silence; and in silence he did endure, till, opening his eyes to the consciousness of death, he at last spoke a few words to the only friend he knew.

Louis Scatcherd was not a fool, nor was he naturally, perhaps, of a depraved disposition; but he had to reap the fruits of the worst education which England was able to give him. There were moments in his life when he felt that a better, a higher, nay, a much happier career was open to him than that which he had prepared himself to lead. Now and then he would reflect what money and rank might have done for him; he would look with wishful eyes to the proud doings of others of his age; would dream of quiet joys, of a sweet wife, of a house to which might be asked friends who were neither jockeys nor drunkards; he would dream of such things in his short intervals of constrained sobriety; but the dream would only serve to make him moody.

This was the best side of his character; the worst, probably, was that which was brought into play by the fact that he was not a fool. He would have a better chance of redemption in this world—perhaps also in another—had he been a fool. As it was, he was no fool: he was not to be done, not he; he knew, no one better, the value of a shilling; he knew, also, how to keep his shillings, and how to spend them. He consorted much with blacklegs and such-like, because blacklegs were to his taste. But he boasted daily, nay, hourly to himself, and frequently to those around him, that the leeches who were stuck round him could draw but little blood from him. He could spend his money freely; but he would so spend it that he himself might reap the gratification of the expenditure. He was acute, crafty, knowing, and up to every damnable dodge practised by men of the class with whom he lived. At one-and-twenty he was that most odious of all odious characters—a close-fisted reprobate.

He was a small man, not ill-made by Nature, but reduced to unnatural tenuity by dissipation—a corporeal attribute of which he was apt to boast, as it enabled him, as he said, to put himself up at 7 st. 7 lb. without any "d— nonsense of not eating

and drinking." The power, however, was one of which he did not often avail himself, as his nerves were seldom in a fit state for riding. His hair was dark red, and he wore red moustaches, and a great deal of red beard beneath his chin, cut in a manner to make him look like an American. His voice also had a Yankee twang, being a cross between that of an American trader and an English groom; and his eyes were keen and fixed, and cold and knowing.

Such was the son whom Sir Roger saw standing at his bedside when first he awoke to consciousness. It must not be supposed that Sir Roger looked at him with our eyes. To him he was an only child, the heir of his wealth, the future bearer of his title; the most heart-stirring remembrancer of those other days, when he had been so much a poorer, and so much a happier man. Let that boy be bad or good, he was all Sir Roger had; and the father was still able to hope, when others thought that all ground for hope was gone.

The mother also loved her son with a mother's natural love; but Louis had ever been ashamed of his mother, and had, as far as possible, estranged himself from her. Her heart, perhaps, fixed itself almost with almost a warmer love on Frank Gresham, her foster-son. Frank she saw but seldom, but when she did see him he never refused her embrace. There was, too, a joyous, genial lustre about Frank's face which always endeared him to women, and made his former nurse regard him as the pet creation of the age. Though she but seldom interfered with any monetary arrangement of her husband's, yet once or twice she had ventured to hint that a legacy left to the young squire would make her a happy woman. Sir Roger, however, on these occasions had not appeared very desirous of making his wife happy.

"Ah, Louis! is that you?" ejaculated Sir Roger, in tones hardly more than half-formed: afterwards, in a day or two that is, he fully recovered his voice; but just then he could hardly open his jaws, and spoke almost through his teeth. He managed, however, to put out his hand and lay it on the counterpane, so that his son could take it.

"Why, that's well, governor," said the son; "you'll be as right as a trivet in a day or two—eh, governor?"

The "governor" smiled with a ghastly smile. He already pretty well knew that he would never again be "right," as his son called it, on that side of the grave. It did not, moreover, suit him to say much just at that moment, so he contented himself with holding his son's hand. He lay still in this position for a moment, and then, turning round painfully on his side, endeavoured to put his hand to the place where his dire enemy usually was concealed. Sir Roger, however, was too weak now to be his own master; he was at length, though too late, a captive in the hands of nurses and doctors, and the bottle had now been removed.

Then Lady Scatcherd came in, and seeing that her husband was no longer unconscious, she could not but believe that Dr Thorne had been wrong; she could not but think that there must be some ground for hope. She threw herself on her knees at the bedside, bursting into tears as she did so, and taking Sir Roger's hand in hers covered it with kisses.

"Bother!" said Sir Roger.

She did not, however, long occupy herself with the indulgence of her feelings; but going speedily to work, produced such sustenance as the doctors had ordered to be given when the patient might awake. A breakfast-cup was brought to him, and a few drops were put into his mouth; but he soon made it manifest that he would take nothing more of a description so perfectly innocent.

"A drop of brandy—just a little drop," said he, half-ordering, and half-entreating.

"Ah, Roger!" said Lady Scatcherd.

"Just a little drop, Louis," said the sick man, appealing to his son.

"A little will be good for him; bring the bottle, mother," said the son.

After some altercation the brandy bottle was brought, and Louis, with what he thought a very sparing hand, proceeded to pour about half a wine-glassful into the cup. As he did so, Sir Roger, weak as he was, contrived to shake his son's arm, so as greatly to increase the dose.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the sick man, and then greedily swallowed the dose.

CHAPTER XXV. Sir Roger Dies

That night the doctor stayed at Boxall Hill, and the next night; so that it became a customary thing for him to sleep there during the latter part of Sir Roger's illness. He returned home daily to Greshamsbury; for he had his patients there, to whom he was as necessary as to Sir Roger, the foremost of whom was Lady Arabella. He had, therefore, no slight work on his hands, seeing that his nights were by no means wholly devoted to rest.

Mr Rerechild had not been much wrong as to the remaining space of life which he had allotted to the dying man. Once or twice Dr Thorne had thought that the great original strength of his patient would have enabled him to fight against death for a somewhat longer period; but Sir Roger would give himself no chance. Whenever he was strong enough to have a will of his own, he insisted on having his very medicine mixed with brandy; and in the hours of the doctor's absence, he was too often successful in his attempts.

"It does not much matter," Dr Thorne had said to Lady Scatcherd. "Do what you can to keep down the quantity, but do not irritate him by refusing to obey. It does not much signify now." So Lady Scatcherd still administered the alcohol, and he from day to day invented little schemes for increasing the amount, over which he chuckled with ghastly laughter.

Two or three times during these days Sir Roger essayed to speak seriously to his son; but Louis always frustrated him. He either got out of the room on some excuse, or made his mother interfere on the score that so much talking would be bad for his father. He already knew with tolerable accuracy what was the purport of his father's will, and by no means approved of it; but as he could not now hope to induce his father to alter it so as to make it more favourable to himself, he conceived that no conversation on matters of business could be of use to him.

"Louis," said Sir Roger, one afternoon to his son; "Louis, I have not done by you as I ought to have done—I know that now."

"Nonsense, governor; never mind about that now; I shall do well enough, I dare say. Besides, it isn't too late; you can make it twenty-three years instead of twenty-five, if you like it."

"I do not mean as to money, Louis. There are things besides money which a father ought to look to."

"Now, father, don't fret yourself—I'm all right; you may be sure of that."

"Louis, it's that accursed brandy—it's that that I'm afraid of: you see me here, my boy, how I'm lying here now."

"Don't you be annoying yourself, governor; I'm all right—quite right; and as for you, why, you'll be up and about yourself in another month or so."

"I shall never be off this bed, my boy, till I'm carried into my coffin, on those chairs there. But I'm not thinking of myself, Louis, but you; think what you may have before you if you can't avoid that accursed bottle."

"I'm all right, governor; right as a trivet. It's very little I take, except at an odd time or so."

"Oh, Louis! Louis!"

"Come, father, cheer up; this sort of thing isn't the thing for you at all. I wonder where mother is: she ought to be here with the broth; just let me go, and I'll see for her."

The father understood it all. He saw that it was now much beyond his faded powers to touch the heart or conscience of such a youth as his son had become. What now could he do for his boy except die? What else, what other benefit, did his son require of him but to die; to die so that his means of dissipation might be unbounded? He let go the unresisting hand which he held, and, as the young man crept out of the room, he turned his face to the wall. He turned his face to the wall and held bitter commune with his own heart. To what had he brought himself? To what had he brought his son? Oh, how happy would it have been for him could he have remained all his days a working stone-mason in Barchester! How happy could he have died as such, years ago! Such tears as those which wet that pillow are the bitterest which human eyes can shed.

But while they were dropping, the memoir of his life was in quick course of preparation. It was, indeed, nearly completed, with considerable detail. He had lingered on four days longer than might have been expected, and the author had thus had more than usual time for the work. In these days a man is nobody unless his biography is kept so far posted up that it may be ready for the national breakfast-table on the morning after his demise. When it chanced that the dead hero is one who was taken in his prime of life, of whose departure from among us the most far-seeing biographical scribe can have no prophetic inkling, this must be difficult. Of great men, full of years, who are ripe for the sickle, who in the course of Nature must soon fall, it is of course comparatively easy for an active compiler

to have his complete memoir ready in his desk. But in order that the idea of omnipresent and omniscient information may be kept up, the young must be chronicled as quickly as the old. In some cases this task must, one would say, be difficult. Nevertheless, it is done.

The memoir of Sir Roger Scatcherd was progressing favourably. In this it was told how fortunate had been his life; how, in his case, industry and genius combined had triumphed over the difficulties which humble birth and deficient education had thrown in his way; how he had made a name among England's great men; how the Queen had delighted to honour him, and nobles had been proud to have him for a guest at their mansions. Then followed a list of all the great works which he had achieved, of the railroads, canals, docks, harbours, jails, and hospitals which he had constructed. His name was held up as an example to the labouring classes of his countrymen, and he was pointed at as one who had lived and died happy—ever happy, said the biographer, because ever industrious. And so a great moral question was inculcated. A short paragraph was devoted to his appearance in Parliament; and unfortunate Mr Romer was again held up for disgrace, for the thirtieth time, as having been the means of depriving our legislative councils of the great assistance of Sir Roger's experience.

"Sir Roger," said the biographer in his concluding passage, "was possessed of an iron frame; but even iron will yield to the repeated blows of the hammer. In the latter years of his life he was known to overtask himself; and at length the body gave way, though the mind remained firm to the last. The subject of this memoir was only fifty-nine when he was taken from us."

And thus Sir Roger's life was written, while the tears were yet falling on his pillow at Boxall Hill. It was a pity that a proof-sheet could not have been sent to him. No man was vainer of his reputation, and it would have greatly gratified him to know that posterity was about to speak of him in such terms—to speak of him with a voice that would be audible for twenty-four hours.

Sir Roger made no further attempt to give counsel to his son. It was too evidently useless. The old dying lion felt that the lion's power had already passed from him, and that he was helpless in the hands of the young cub who was so soon to inherit the wealth of the forest. But Dr Thorne was more kind to him. He had something yet to say as to his worldly hopes and worldly cares; and his old friend did not turn a deaf ear to him.

It was during the night that Sir Roger was most anxious to talk, and most capable of talking. He would lie through the day in a state half-comatose; but towards evening he would rouse himself, and by midnight he would be full of fitful energy. One night, as he lay wakeful and full of thought, he thus poured forth his whole heart to Dr Thorne.

"Thorne," said he, "I told you about my will, you know."

"Yes," said the other; "and I have blamed myself greatly that I have not again urged you to alter it. Your illness came too suddenly, Scatcherd; and then I was averse to speak of it."

"Why should I alter it? It is a good will; as good as I can make. Not but that I have altered it since I spoke to you. I did it that day after you left me."

"Have you definitely named your heir in default of Louis?"

"No—that is—yes—I had done that before; I have said Mary's eldest child: I have not altered that."

"But, Scatcherd, you must alter it."

"Must! well then I won't; but I'll tell you what I have done. I have added a postscript—a codicil they call it—saying that you, and you only, know who is her eldest child. Winterbones and Jack Martin have witnessed that."

Dr Thorne was going to explain how very injudicious such an arrangement appeared to be; but Sir Roger would not listen to him. It was not about that that he wished to speak to him. To him it was matter of but minor interest who might inherit his money if his son should die early; his care was solely for his son's welfare. At twenty-five the heir might make his own will—might bequeath all this wealth according to his own fancy. Sir Roger would not bring himself to believe that his son could follow him to the grave in so short a time.

"Never mind that, doctor, now; but about Louis; you will be his guardian, you know."

"Not his guardian. He is more than of age."

"Ah! but doctor, you will be his guardian. The property will not be his till he be twenty-five. You will not desert him?"

"I will not desert him; but I doubt whether I can do much for him—what can I do, Scatcherd?"

"Use the power that a strong man has over a weak one. Use the power that my will will give you. Do for him as you would for a son of your own if you saw him going in bad courses. Do as a friend should do for a friend that is dead and gone. I would do so for you, doctor, if our places were changed."

"What I can do, that I will do," said Thorne, solemnly, taking as he spoke the contractor's own in his own with a tight grasp.

"I know you will; I know you will. Oh! doctor, may you never feel as I do now! May you on your death-bed have no dread as I have, as to the fate of those you will leave behind you!"

Doctor Thorne felt that he could not say much in answer to this. The future fate of Louis Scatcherd was, he could not but own to himself, greatly to be dreaded. What good, what happiness, could be presaged for such a one as he was? What comfort could he offer to the father? And then he was called on to compare, as it were, the prospects of this unfortunate with those of his own darling; to contrast all that was murky, foul, and disheartening, with all that was perfect—for to him she was all but perfect; to liken Louis Scatcherd to the angel who brightened his own hearthstone. How could he answer to such an appeal?

He said nothing; but merely tightened his grasp of the other's hand, to signify that he would do, as best he could, all that was asked of him. Sir Roger looked up sadly into the doctor's face, as though expecting some word of consolation. There was no comfort, no consolation to come to him!

"For three or four years he must greatly depend upon you," continued Sir Roger.

"I will do what I can," said the doctor. "What I can do I will do. But he is not a child, Scatcherd: at his age he must stand or fall mainly by his own conduct. The best thing for him will be to marry."

"Exactly; that's just it, Thorne: I was coming to that. If he would marry, I think he would do well yet, for all that has come and gone. If he married, of course you would let him have the command of his own income."

"I will be governed entirely by your wishes: under any circumstances his income will, as I understand, be quite sufficient for him, married or single."

"Ah!—but, Thorne, I should like to think he should shine with the best of them. For what I have made the money if not for that? Now if he marries—decently, that is—some woman you know that can assist him in the world, let him have what he wants. It is not to save the money that I put it into your hands."

"No, Scatcherd; not to save the money, but to save him. I think that while you are yet with him you should advise him to marry."

"He does not care a straw for what I advise, not one straw. Why should he? How can I tell him to be sober when I have been a beast all my life myself? How can I advise him? That's where it is! It is that that now kills me. Advise! Why, when I speak to him he treats me like a child."

"He fears that you are too weak, you know: he thinks that you should not be allowed to talk."

"Nonsense! he knows better; you know better. Too weak! what signifies? Would I not give all that I have of strength at one blow if I could open his eyes to see as I see but for one minute?" And the sick man raised himself up in his bed as though he were actually going to expend all that remained to him of vigour in the energy of a moment.

"Gently, Scatcherd; gently. He will listen to you yet; but do not be so unruly."

"Thorne, you see that bottle there? Give me half a glass of brandy."

The doctor turned round in his chair; but he hesitated in doing as he was desired.

"Do as I ask you, doctor. It can do no harm now; you know that well enough. Why torture me now?"

"No, I will not torture you; but you will have water with it?"

"Water! No; the brandy by itself. I tell you I cannot speak without it. What's the use of canting now? You know it can make no difference."

Sir Roger was right. It could make no difference; and Dr Thorne gave him the half glass of brandy.

"Ah, well; you've a stingy hand, doctor; confounded stingy. You don't measure your medicines out in such light doses."

"You will be wanting more before morning, you know."

"Before morning! indeed I shall; a pint or so before that. I remember the time, doctor, when I have drunk to my own cheek above two quarts between dinner and breakfast! aye, and worked all the day after it!"

"You have been a wonderful man, Scatcherd, very wonderful."

"Aye, wonderful! well, never mind. It's over now. But what was I saying?—about Louis, doctor; you'll not desert him?"

"Certainly not."

"He's not strong; I know that. How should he be strong, living as he has done? Not that it seemed to hurt me when I was his age."

"You had the advantage of hard work."

"That's it. Sometimes I wish that Louis had not a shilling in the world; that he had to trudge about with an apron round his waist as I did. But it's too late now to think of that. If he would only marry, doctor."

Dr Thorne again expressed an opinion that no step would be so likely to reform the habits of the young heir as marriage; and repeated his advice to the father to implore his son to take a wife.

"I'll tell you what, Thorne," said he. And then, after a pause, he went on. "I have not half told you as yet what is on my mind; and I'm nearly afraid to tell it; though, indeed, I don't know why I should be."

"I never knew you afraid of anything yet," said the doctor, smiling gently.

"Well, then, I'll not end by turning coward. Now, doctor, tell the truth to me; what do you expect me to do for that girl of yours that we were talking of—Mary's child?"

There was a pause for a moment, for Thorne was slow to answer him.

"You would not let me see her, you know, though she is my niece as truly as she is yours."

"Nothing," at last said the doctor, slowly. "I expect nothing. I would not let you see her, and therefore, I expect nothing."

"She will have it all if poor Louis should die," said Sir Roger.

"If you intend it so you should put her name into the will," said the other. "Not that I ask you or wish you to do so. Mary, thank God, can do without wealth."

"Thorne, on one condition I will put her name into it. I will alter it all on one condition. Let the two cousins be man and wife—let Louis marry poor Mary's child."

The proposition for a moment took away the doctor's breath, and he was unable to answer. Not for all the wealth of India would he have given up his lamb to that young wolf, even though he had had the power to do so. But that lamb—lamb though she was—had, as he well knew, a will of her own on such a matter. What alliance could be more impossible, thought he to himself, than one between Mary Thorne and Louis Scatcherd?

"I will alter it all if you will give me your hand upon it that you will do your best to bring about this marriage. Everything shall be his on the day he marries her; and should he die unmarried, it shall all then be hers by name. Say the word, Thorne, and she shall come here at once. I shall yet have time to see her."

But Dr Thorne did not say the word; just at the moment he said nothing, but he slowly shook his head.

"Why not, Thorne?"

"My friend, it is impossible."

"Why impossible?"

"Her hand is not mine to dispose of, nor is her heart."

"Then let her come over herself."

"What! Scatcherd, that the son might make love to her while the father is so dangerously ill! Bid her come to look for a rich husband! That would not be seemly, would it?"

"No; not for that: let her come merely that I may see her; that we may all know her. I will leave the matter then in your hands if you will promise me to do your best."

"But, my friend, in this matter I cannot do my best. I can do nothing. And, indeed, I may say at once, that it is altogether out of the question. I know—"

"What do you know?" said the baronet, turning on him almost angrily. "What can you know to make you say that it is impossible? Is she a pearl of such price that a man may not win her?"

"She is a pearl of great price."

"Believe me, doctor, money goes far in winning such pearls."

"Perhaps so; I know little about it. But this I do know, that money will not win her. Let us talk of something else; believe me it is useless for us to think of this."

"Yes; if you set your face against it obstinately. You must think very poorly of Louis if you suppose that no girl can fancy him."

"I have not said so, Scatcherd."

"To have the spending of ten thousand a year, and be a baronet's lady! Why, doctor, what is it you expect for this girl?"

"Not much, indeed; not much. A quiet heart and a quiet home; not much more."

"Thorne, if you will be ruled by me in this, she shall be the most topping woman in this county."

"My friend, my friend, why thus grieve me? Why should you thus harass yourself? I tell you it is impossible. They have never seen each other; they have nothing, and can have nothing in common; their tastes, and wishes, and pursuits are different. Besides, Scatcherd, marriages never answer that are so made; believe me, it is impossible."

The contractor threw himself back on his bed, and lay for some ten minutes perfectly quiet; so much so that the doctor began to think that he was sleeping. So thinking, and wearied by the watching, Dr Thorne was beginning to creep quietly from the room, when his companion again roused himself, almost with vehemence.

"You won't do this thing for me, then?" said he.

"Do it! It is not for you or me to do such things as that. Such things must be left to those concerned themselves."

"You will not even help me?"

"Not in this thing, Sir Roger."

"Then, by —, she shall not under any circumstances ever have a shilling of mine. Give me some of that stuff there," and he again pointed to the brandy bottle which stood ever within his sight.

The doctor poured out and handed to him another small modicum of spirit.

"Nonsense, man; fill the glass. I'll stand no nonsense now. I'll be master in my own house to the last. Give it here, I tell you. Ten thousand devils are tearing me within. You—you could have comforted me; but you would not. Fill the glass I tell you."

"I should be killing you were I to do it."

"Killing me! killing me! you are always talking of killing me. Do you suppose that I am afraid to die? Do not I know how soon it is coming? Give me the brandy, I say, or I will be out across the room to fetch it."

"No, Scatcherd. I cannot give it to you; not while I am here. Do you remember how you were engaged this morning?"—he had that morning taken the sacrament from the parish clergyman—"you would not wish to make me guilty of murder, would you?"

"Nonsense! You are talking nonsense; habit is second nature. I tell you I shall sink without it. Why, you know I always get it directly your back is turned. Come, I will not be bullied in my own house; give me that bottle, I say!"—and Sir Roger essayed, vainly enough, to raise himself from the bed.

"Stop, Scatcherd; I will give it you—I will help you. It may be that habit is second nature." Sir Roger in his determined energy had swallowed, without thinking of it, the small quantity which the doctor had before poured out for him, and still held the empty glass within his hand. This the doctor now took and filled nearly to the brim.

"Come, Thorne, a bumper; a bumper for this once. 'Whatever the drink, it a bumper must be.' You stingy fellow! I would not treat you so. Well—well."

"It's as full as you can hold it, Scatcherd."

"Try me; try me! my hand is a rock; at least at holding liquor." And then he drained the contents of the glass, which were sufficient in quantity to have taken away the breath from any ordinary man.

"Ah, I'm better now. But, Thorne, I do love a full glass, ha! ha! ha!"

There was something frightful, almost sickening, in the peculiar hoarse guttural tone of his voice. The sounds came from him as though steeped in brandy, and told, all too plainly, the havoc which the alcohol had made. There was a fire too about his eyes which contrasted with his sunken cheeks: his hanging jaw, unshorn beard, and haggard face were terrible to look at. His hands and arms were hot and clammy, but so thin and wasted! Of his lower limbs the lost use had not returned to him, so that in all his efforts at vehemence he was controlled by his own want of vitality. When he supported himself, half-sitting against the pillows, he was in a continual tremor; and yet, as he boasted, he could still lift his glass steadily to his mouth. Such now was the hero of whom that ready compiler of memoirs had just finished his correct and succinct account.

After he had had his brandy, he sat glaring a while at vacancy, as though he was dead to all around him, and was thinking—thinking— thinking of things in the infinite distance of the past.

"Shall I go now," said the doctor, "and send Lady Scatcherd to you?"

"Wait a while, doctor; just one minute longer. So you will do nothing for Louis, then?"

"I will do everything for him that I can do."

"Ah, yes! everything but the one thing that will save him. Well, I will not ask you again. But remember, Thorne, I shall alter my will to-morrow."

"Do so by all means; you may well alter it for the better. If I may advise you, you will have down your own business attorney from London. If you will let me send he will be here before to-morrow night."

"Thank you for nothing, Thorne: I can manage that matter myself. Now leave me; but remember, you have ruined that girl's fortune."

The doctor did leave him, and went not altogether happy to his room. He could not but confess to himself that he had, despite himself as it were, fed himself with hope that Mary's future might be made more secure, aye, and brighter too, by some

small unheeded fraction broken off from the huge mass of her uncle's wealth. Such hope, if it had amounted to hope, was now all gone. But this was not all, nor was this the worst of it. That he had done right in utterly repudiating all idea of a marriage between Mary and her cousin—of that he was certain enough; that no earthly consideration would have induced Mary to plight her troth to such a man—that, with him, was as certain as doom. But how far had he done right in keeping her from the sight of her uncle? How could he justify it to himself if he had thus robbed her of her inheritance, seeing that he had done so from a selfish fear lest she, who was now all his own, should be known to the world as belonging to others rather than to him? He had taken upon him on her behalf to reject wealth as valueless; and yet he had no sooner done so than he began to consume his hours with reflecting how great to her would be the value of wealth. And thus, when Sir Roger told him, as he left the room, that he had ruined Mary's fortune, he was hardly able to bear the taunt with equanimity.

On the next morning, after paying his professional visit to his patient, and satisfying himself that the end was now drawing near with steps terribly quickened, he went down to Greshamsbury.

"How long is this to last, uncle?" said his niece, with sad voice, as he again prepared to return to Boxall Hill.

"Not long, Mary; do not begrudge him a few more hours of life."

"No, I do not, uncle. I will say nothing more about it. Is his son with him?" And then, perversely enough, she persisted in asking numerous questions about Louis Scatcherd.

"Is he likely to marry, uncle?"

"I hope so, my dear."

"Will he be so very rich?"

"Yes; ultimately he will be very rich."

"He will be a baronet, will he not?"

"Yes, my dear."

"What is he like, uncle?"

"Like—I never know what a young man is like. He is like a man with red hair."

"Uncle, you are the worst hand in describing I ever knew. If I'd seen him for five minutes, I'd be bound to make a portrait of him; and you, if you were describing a dog, you'd only say what colour his hair was."

"Well, he's a little man."

"Exactly, just as I should say that Mrs Umbleby had a red-haired little dog. I wish I had known these Scatcherds, uncle. I do so admire people that can push themselves in the world. I wish I had known Sir Roger."

"You will never know him now, Mary."

"I suppose not. I am so sorry for him. Is Lady Scatcherd nice?"

"She is an excellent woman."

"I hope I may know her some day. You are so much there now, uncle; I wonder whether you ever mention me to them. If you do, tell her from me how much I grieve for her."

That same night Dr Thorne again found himself alone with Sir Roger. The sick man was much more tranquil, and apparently more at ease than he had been on the preceding night. He said nothing about his will, and not a word about Mary Thorne; but the doctor knew that Winterbones and a notary's clerk from Barchester had been in the bedroom a great part of the day; and, as he knew also that the great man of business was accustomed to do his most important work by the hands of such tools as these, he did not doubt but that the will had been altered and remodelled. Indeed, he thought it more than probable, that when it was opened it would be found to be wholly different in its provisions from that which Sir Roger had already described.

"Louis is clever enough," he said, "sharp enough, I mean. He won't squander the property."

"He has good natural abilities," said the doctor.

"Excellent, excellent," said the father. "He may do well, very well, if he can only be kept from this;" and Sir Roger held up the empty wine-glass which stood by his bedside. "What a life he may have before him!—and to throw it away for this!" and as he spoke he took the glass and tossed it across the room. "Oh, doctor! would that it were all to begin again!"

"We all wish that, I dare say, Scatcherd."

"No, you don't wish it. You ain't worth a shilling, and yet you regret nothing. I am worth half a million in one way or the other, and I regret everything—everything—everything!"

"You should not think in that way, Scatcherd; you need not think so. Yesterday you told Mr Clarke that you were comfortable in your mind." Mr Clarke was the clergyman who had visited him.

"Of course I did. What else could I say when he asked me? It wouldn't have been civil to have told him that his time and words were all thrown away. But, Thorne, believe me, when a man's heart is sad—sad—sad to the core, a few words from a parson at the last moment will never make it all right."

"May He have mercy on you, my friend!—if you will think of Him, and look to Him, He will have mercy on you."

"Well—I will try, doctor; but would that it were all to do again. You'll see to the old woman for my sake, won't you?"

"What, Lady Scatcherd?"

"Lady Devil! If anything angers me now it is that 'ladyship'—her to be my lady! Why, when I came out of jail that time, the poor creature had hardly a shoe to her foot. But it wasn't her fault, Thorne; it was none of her doing. She never asked for such nonsense."

"She has been an excellent wife, Scatcherd; and what is more, she is an excellent woman. She is, and ever will be, one of my dearest friends."

"Thank'ee, doctor, thank'ee. Yes; she has been a good wife—better for a poor man than a rich one; but then, that was what she was born to. You won't let her be knocked about by them, will you, Thorne?"

Dr Thorne again assured him, that as long as he lived Lady Scatcherd should never want one true friend; in making this promise, however, he managed to drop all allusion to the obnoxious title.

"You'll be with him as much as possible, won't you?" again asked the baronet, after lying quite silent for a quarter of an hour.

"With whom?" said the doctor, who was then all but asleep.

"With my poor boy; with Louis."

"If he will let me, I will," said the doctor.

"And, doctor, when you see a glass at his mouth, dash it down; thrust it down, though you thrust out the teeth with it. When you see that, Thorne, tell him of his father—tell him what his father might have been but for that; tell him how his father died like a beast, because he could not keep himself from drink."

These, reader, were the last words spoken by Sir Roger Scatcherd. As he uttered them he rose up in bed with the same vehemence which he had shown on the former evening. But in the very act of doing so he was again struck by paralysis, and before nine on the following morning all was over.