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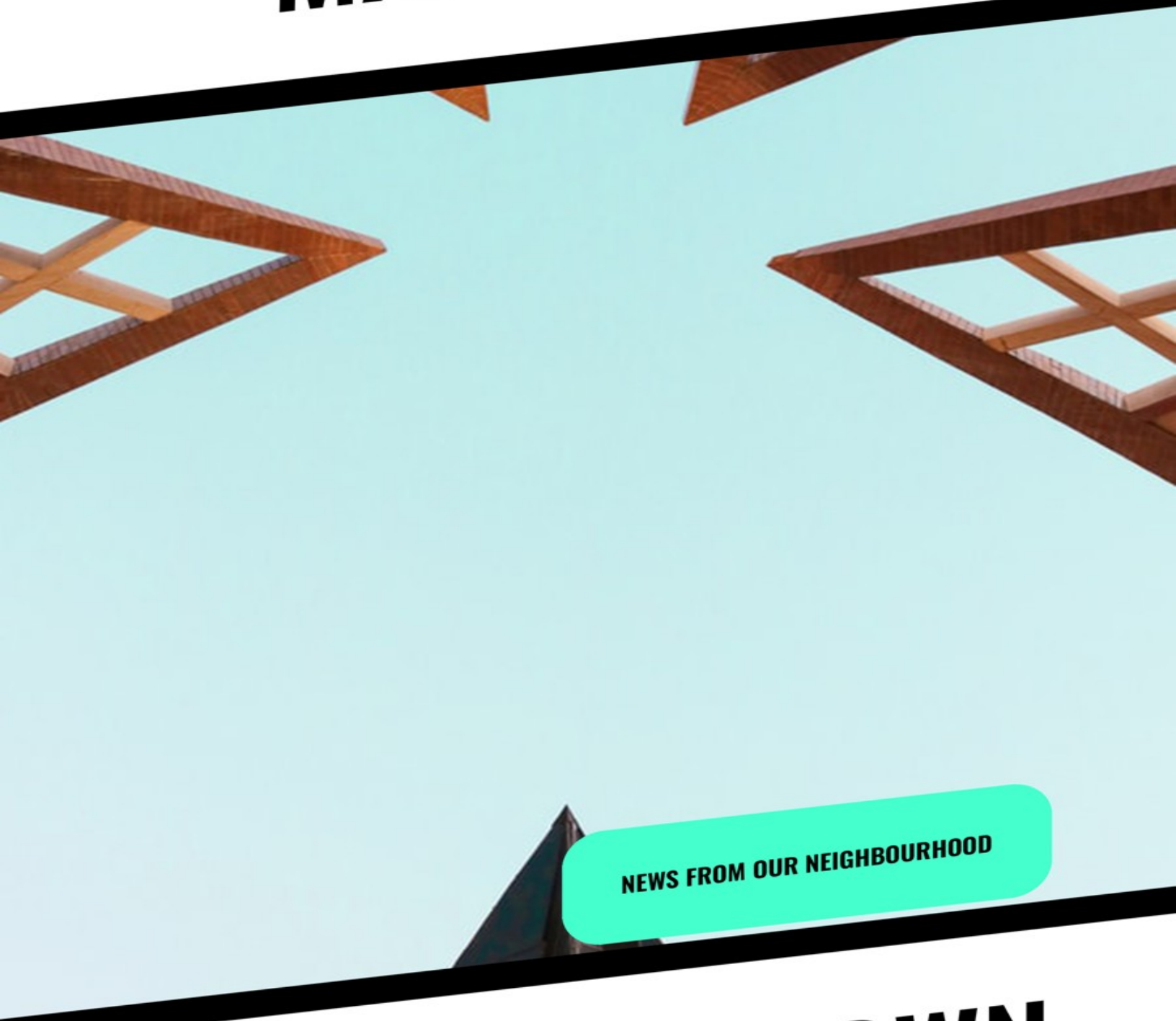

NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

CAMPERDOWN

Mary Griffith

Camperdown

News from our neighbourhood

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PREFACE.

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A few years ago a book was published, called “Our Neighbourhood;” and those who read it, will recollect that the author intended, in the second series, to give a short sketch of some of the most conspicuous characters therein mentioned. The second series is now presented to the public, and is called “Camperdown,” the name of our neighbourhood. The work will be continued, under different titles, until the author has accomplished the object stated in the preface to the first series; and which the tenor of the two volumes will more fully explain.

THREE HUNDRED YEARS HENCE.

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CHAPTER I.

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It is seldom that men begin to muse and sit alone in the twilight until they arrive at the age of fifty, for until that period the cares of the world and the education of their young children engross all their thoughts. Edgar Hastings, our hero, at thirty years of age was still unmarried, but he had gone through a vast deal of excitement, and the age of musing had been anticipated by twenty years. He was left an orphan at fourteen, with a large income, and the gentleman who had the management of his estates proved faithful, so that when a person of talents and character was wanted to travel with the young man, a liberal recompense was at hand to secure his services. From the age of fourteen to twenty-one he was therefore travelling over Europe; but his education, instead of receiving a check, went on much more advantageously than if he had remained at home, and he became master of all the modern languages in the very countries where they were spoken. The last twelve months of his seven years' tour was spent in England, being stationary in London only during the sitting of Parliament.

His talents thus cultivated, and his mind enlarged by liberal travel, he returned to America well worthy the friendship and attention of those who admire and appreciate a character of his stamp. He had not therefore been back more than a year, before his society was courted by some of

the best men in the country; but previous to his settling himself into *a home*, he thought it but proper to travel through his own country also. His old friend, still at his elbow, accompanied him; but at the close of the excursion, which lasted nearly two years, he was taken ill of a fever caught from an exposure near the Lakes, and died after a few days' illness.

Edgar Hastings was now entirely alone in the world, and he would have fallen into a deep melancholy, had he not engaged in politics. This occupied him incessantly; and, as his purse was ample and his heart liberally disposed, he found the demands on his time gradually increasing. He had occupations heaped upon him—for rich, disengaged, and willing, every body demanded his aid; and such were the enthusiasm and generosity of his nature, that no one applied in vain.

His first intention, on returning from his tour through his own country, was to improve an estate he had purchased in Pennsylvania, promising himself an amiable and beautiful wife to share his happiness; but politics interfered, and left him no time even for the luxury of musing in the evening. But a man can get weary of politics as well as of any other hard up-hill work; so, at the end of seven years, seeing that the young trees which he had planted were giving shade, and that the house that they were to overshadow was not yet begun, he fell to musing. He wanted something, likewise, to love and protect—so he fell to musing about that. He wished to convert a brisk stream, that fell down the side of a hill opposite to the south end of his grounds, into a waterfall—so he fell to musing about that. He wanted to

make an opening through a noble piece of woods that bounded the north side, that he might catch a view of the village steeple—so he fell to musing about that. A beautiful winding river lay in front of his estate, the bank of which sloped down to the water’s edge; this tranquillizing scene likewise operated on his feelings, so that politics faded away, and his mind became calm and serene. Thus it was, that at thirty years of age he had these fits of abstraction, and he became a muser.

Men of his age—sensible men—are not so easily pleased as those who are younger. He admired graceful, easy manners, and a polished mind, far before beauty or wealth; and thus fastidious, he doubted whether he should marry at all. Every now and then, too, an old bachelor feeling came over him, and he feared that when his beloved twilight found him sitting under the noble porticos which he intended to build, his wife would drag him away to some far distant route in the city; or that she would, untimely, fill the house with visiters. So, with all the dispositions in the world, he lived alone, though every fit of musing ended by finding a wife at his side, gazing on the dim and fading landscape with him.

While his house was building, he occupied a small stone farm house, at the extremity of the estate. Here he brought his valuable books and prints, well secured from damp and insects by aromatic oils; here did he draw his plans during the day, and here, under a small piazza, did he meditate in the evening, transferring his musings to the little parlour as soon as the damp evenings of autumn compelled him to sit within doors.

Adjoining his estate lived a quaker, by the name of Harley, a steady, upright man, loving his ease, as all quakers do, but having no objection to see his neighbours finer or wiser than himself. He took a fancy to our hero, and the beloved evening hour often found him sitting on the settee with Hastings, when, after enjoying together an animated conversation, he also would fall into the deep feeling which fading scenery, and the energy of such a character as his young friend’s, would naturally excite in a mind so tranquil as his own.

At length, the quiet quaker spoke of his daughter, but it was not with a view to draw Edgar’s attention; he mentioned her incidentally, and the young man was delighted. In a moment, his imagination depicted her as a beautiful, graceful, accomplished creature; and there could be no doubt that she was amiable and gentle; so he strolled over to his friend’s house, and was regularly introduced to her. She *was* beautiful, and amiable, and gentle—all this he saw at a glance; but, alas! she had no accomplishment farther than that she wrote an exquisitely clear, neat hand, and was an excellent botanist and florist. But “propinquity” softened down all objections. Every time he strayed away to Pine Grove the eligibilities of the match became more apparent, and his love of grace and polish of mind seemed to be of comparatively little importance, when he listened to the breathings of the innocent quaker, who thought all of beauty was in a flower, and who infinitely preferred the perfume of a rose or a lilac, to the smell of a dozen lamps in a crowded room. Her name was Ophelia, too.

Mr. Harley, or friend Harley as he was called, was nowise rigid in his creed; for the recent lawsuits between the Orthodox and Hicksite quakers had very much weakened his attachments to the forms of quakerism. He found that the irritable portion of his society had great difficulty in keeping *hands off*, and in preserving the decorum of their order. Peaceful feelings, equable temperaments, being the foundation—the cement, which, for so many years, had bound the fraternity together, were now displaced for the anger and turbulence so often displayed by other sects of Christians.

Litigations amongst themselves—the law—had done that which neither fine nor imprisonment, the derision nor impositions of other sects, could accomplish. The strong cement had cracked along the edge of the bulwarks, where strength was the most necessary, and the waters of discord and disunion were insinuating themselves into every opening. The superstructure was fast crumbling away, and friend Harley looked to the no very distant period when his posterity should cast off the quaker dress, and naturally follow the customs and obey the general laws which govern the whole body of Americans.

This was sensible Valentine Harley’s opinion and feeling; in rules of faith he had never been inducted—are there any quakers, apart from a few of their leaders, who can define what their religious faith is? So, although he loved the forms in which he had been educated—although he wore the quaker dress, and made his son and daughter do the same—yet when Edgar Hastings left off musing in the twilight, and was seen at that hour walking slowly down the glen,

with Ophelia hanging on his arm, he only heaved a sigh, and wished that the young man said *thee* and *thou*. But this sigh was far from being a painful one; he felt that when the obscure grave, which shuts out all trace of the quaker's place of rest, should close over him, his memory would live fresh and green in the heart of his daughter. Far more should he be reverenced, if he gave her gentle spirit to the strong arm, the highly gifted mind of such a man as Edgar Hastings, than if he compelled her to marry a man of their own order—to the one who was now preferring his suit, friend Hezekiah Connerthwaite, a rich, respectable, yet narrow minded and uneducated man.

That he consented to his daughter's marriage willingly, and without an inward struggle, was a thing not to be expected; but he was too manly, too virtuous, to use a mean subterfuge with his sect that he might escape the odium which falls on the parent who allows his daughter to marry out of the pale. He would not suffer his child to wed clandestinely, when in reality his heart and reason approved of her choice; when her lover's merits and claims, and her own happiness, strongly overbalanced his scruples. She might have married privately, and her father, thus rid of the blame of consenting to her apostacy, could, as usual, take his seat in their place of worship, without the fear of excommunication. But Valentine Harley scorned such duplicity and foolishness; Ophelia was therefore married under her father's roof, and received her father's blessing; and here, in this well regulated house, Edgar Hastings spent the first year of his wedded life. Here, too, his son was born; and now no longer a being without kindred or a home, he

found how much happier were the feelings of a husband and father than those of a selfish, isolated being.

As he was building a spacious, elegant, and durable mansion, one that should last for many years, he went slowly to work. It was begun a year before his marriage, and it was not until his young son was three months old that he could remove his family, of which Mr. Harley now made a part, to their permanent home. The younger Harley, who had married and settled at a distance, being induced to come among them, again to take the property at Pine Grove, thus adding another link to the bond of friendship which this happy marriage had created. In the month of May the younger Harley was expected to take possession of his father’s house.

It was now February. The new house was completely furnished, and every thing ready for their removal as soon as Mr. Hastings returned from New York, where he had some business of importance to transact. As it called for immediate attention, he deferred unpacking his books, or indeed taking them from the farm house, until his return. It was with great reluctance that he left his wife, who grieved as if the separation was to last for years instead of a fortnight; but he was compelled to go, so after a thousand charges to take care of her health, and imploring her father to watch over her and his little boy, he once more embraced them and tore himself away. His wife followed him with her eyes until she saw him pass their new habitation, cross over the stile and turn the angle; here he stopped to take one more look at the spot where all he loved dwelt, and seeing the group still looking towards him, he waved his

handkerchief, and a few steps farther hid him from their sight.

The farm house was at the extremity of the estate, and as it lay on the road leading to the ferry, he thought he would look at the fire which had been burning in the grate all the morning. Mr. Harley said he would extinguish it in the afternoon, and lock up the house, but still he felt a curiosity to see whether all was safe. His servant, with the baggage, had preceded him, and was now waiting for him at the boat; so he hurried in, and passed from the hall to the middle room, where the books were. Here he found an old man sitting, apparently warming himself by the still glowing coals, who made an apology for the intrusion, by saying that he was very cold, and seeing a fire burning, for he had looked in at the window, he made bold to enter.

Mr. Hastings bade him sit still, but the man said he was about to cross the ferry and must hurry on, observing that he thought there would be a great thaw before morning, “and in that case,” said he, pointing up to the hill, at the foot of which the house stood, “that great bank of snow will come down and crush the roof of this house.” Hastings looked up and saw the dangerous position of the snow bank, and likewise apprehending a thaw, he begged the man to hurry on and tell his servant to go over with his baggage, and get all things in readiness for him on the other side, and that he would wait for the next boat, which crossed in fifteen minutes after the other. He gave the poor man a small piece of money, and after he left the house Hastings wrote a note about the snow bank to Mr. Harley, which he knew that gentleman would see, as he was to be there in

the afternoon. Knowing that he should hear the steam boat bell, and feeling cold, he drew an old fashioned chair, something in the form of an easy chair, and fell into one of his old fits of musing. He thought it would not be prudent to return to his family merely to say farewell again, even if there were time, but a melancholy *would* creep over him, as if a final separation were about to take place. In vain he tried to rouse himself and shake it off; he closed his eyes, as if by doing so he could shut out thought, and it did, for in less than five minutes he was fast asleep.

CHAPTER II.

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Hearing a noise, he suddenly started up. It was dusk, and having lain long in one position, he felt so stiff as to move with difficulty; on turning his head, he saw two strangers looking at him with wonder and pity. “Is the steamboat ready?” exclaimed he, still confused with his long sleep. “Has the bell rung, gentlemen? Bless me, I have overslept myself—what o’clock is it? Why, it is almost dark—I am ashamed of myself.”

Finding, after one or two attempts, that he could not get up easily, the two strangers hastened forward and assisted him to rise. They led him to the door, but here the confusion of his mind seemed rather to increase than diminish, for he found himself in a strange place. To be sure, there lay the river, and the hills on the opposite shore still rose in grandeur; but that which was a wide river, now appeared to be a narrow stream; and where his beautiful estate lay, stretching far to the south, was covered by a populous city,

the steeples and towers of which were still illuminated by the last rays of the sun.

“Gentlemen,” said the bewildered man, “I am in a strange perplexity. I fell asleep at noon in this house, which belongs to me, and after remaining in this deep repose for six hours I awoke, and find myself utterly at a loss to comprehend where I am. Surely I am in a dream, or my senses are leaving me.”

“You are not dreaming, neither is your mind wandering; a strange fate is yours,” said the elder of the two young men. “When you are a little more composed we will tell you how all this has happened; meantime, you must come with me; I shall take you where you will find a home and a welcome.”

“What is your name,” said the astonished Hastings, “and how have I been transported hither.”

“My name is Edgar Hastings,” said the young man; “and I feel assured that yours is the same. If I thought you had sufficient fortitude to hear the strange events which have occurred, I would tell you at once; but you had better come with me, and during the evening you shall know all.”

Hastings suffered himself to be led by the two strangers, as he felt cramped and chilly; but every step he took revived some singular train of thought. As he proceeded, he saw what appeared to be his own house, for the shape, dimensions and situation were like the one he built, and the distance and direction from his farm house was the same. What astonished him most was the trees; when he saw them last they were silver pines, chestnuts, catalpas, locusts and sycamores—now the few that remained were

only oak and willow; they were of enormous size, and appeared aged.

“I must wait, I see,” said poor Hastings, “for an explanation of all this; my hope is, that I am dreaming. Here lie trees newly felled, immense trees they are, and they grew on a spot where I formerly had a range of offices. I shall awake to-morrow, no doubt,” said he, faintly smiling, “and find myself recompensed for this miserable dream. Pray what is your name?”—turning to the younger of the two men.

“My name is Valentine Harley, and I am related to this gentleman; our family have, at intervals, intermarried, for upwards of three hundred years.”

“Valentine Harley!” exclaimed Hastings, “that is the name of my wife’s father. There never was any of the name of Valentine, to my knowledge, but his; and I did not know that there was another Edgar Hastings in existence, excepting myself and my young son.”

They were now in front of the house—the massive north portico had been replaced by another of different shape; the windows were altered; the vestibule, the main hall, the staircase, no longer the same—yet the general plan was familiar, and when they opened the door of a small room in the north wing, he found it exactly to correspond with what he had intended for his laboratory.

After persuading him to take some refreshments, they conducted him to his chamber, and the two young men related to the astonished Hastings what follows. We shall not stop to speak of his surprise, his sufferings, his mortal agony—nor of the interruptions which naturally took place;

but the group sat up till midnight. It is needless to say that not one of the three closed his eyes the remainder of the night.

“Early this morning,” began the younger Edgar Hastings —“and be not dismayed when I tell you, that instead of the 15th of February, 1835, it is now the 15th of April, 2135— several of us stood looking at some labourers who were at work cutting a street through the adjoining hill. Our engines had succeeded in removing the trees, rocks and stones, which lay embedded in the large mounds of earth, and about ten o’clock the street, with the exception of the great mass which covered your farm house, was entirely cut through to the river. This portion of it would have been also removed, but both from papers in my possession and tradition, a stone building, containing many valuable articles, was supposed to be buried there, by the fall of the hill near which it stood.

“To extend the city, which is called Hamilton, my property, or rather, I should say, your property, was from time to time sold, till at length nothing remains in our possession but this house and a few acres of ground; the last we sold was that strip on which your farm house stands. It was with great reluctance that I parted with this portion, as I could not but consider it as your sepulchre, which in fact it has proved to be.

“When they commenced cutting through the hill the top was covered with large oaks, some of which, when sawed through, showed that they were upwards of a century old; and one in particular, which stood on the boundary line, had

been designated as a landmark in all the old title deeds of two hundred years' standing.

"About three hours before you were liberated the workmen came to a solid stratum of ice, a phenomenon so extraordinary, that all the people in the vicinity gathered to the spot to talk and ponder over it. An aged man, upwards of ninety, but with his faculties unimpaired, was among the number present. He said, that in his youth his great grandfather had often spoken of a tradition respecting this hill. It was reported to have been much higher, and that a ravine, or rather a precipitous slope, a little below the road, was quite filled up by the overthrow of the hill. That the fall had been occasioned by an earthquake, and the peak of the hill, after dislodging a huge rock, had entirely covered up a stone building which contained a large treasure. He very well remembered hearing his aged relative say, that the hill was covered with immense pines and chestnuts.

"The truth of part of this story was corroborated by ancient documents in my possession, and I hastened to my library to search for some old family papers, which had been transmitted to me with great care. I soon found what I wanted, and with a map of the estate, in which, from father to son, all the alterations of time had been carefully marked down, I was able to point out the exact spot on which the old stone farm house stood. In a letter from a gentleman named Valentine Harley, which, with several from the same hand, accompanied the different maps, an account was given of the avalanche which buried the house and filled up the ravine and gap below. As the originals were likely to be destroyed by time, they had been copied in a large book,

containing all the records of the family, which, from period to period, receive the attestation of the proper recording officer, so that you may look upon these documents as a faithful transcript of every thing of moment that has occurred within the last three hundred years. It was only last November that I entered an account of the sale of this very strip of land in which the stone house lay.

“Here is the first thing on record—a letter, as I observed, from the father-in-law of Edgar Hastings, my great ancestor—but I forget that it is of you he speaks. Believe me, dear sir, that most deeply do we sympathize with you; but your case is so singular, and the period in which all this suffering occurred is so very remote, that your strong sense will teach you to bear your extraordinary fate like a man. Allow me to read the letter; it is directed to James Harley, son to the above mentioned Valentine Harley.

“‘Second month, 17th, 1834. My dear son—Stay where thou art, for thy presence will but aggravate our grief. I will give thee all the particulars of the dreadful calamity which has befallen us. I have not yet recovered from the shock, and thy sister is in the deepest wo; but it is proper that thou shouldst know the truth, and there is no one to tell thee but myself. On Monday the 15th, my dear son Edgar Hastings took a tender farewell of thy sister and his babe, shaking hands with me in so earnest and solemn a manner, that one prone to superstition would have said it was prophetic of evil. We saw him walk briskly along the road until the angle, which thou knowest is made by the great hill, shut him from our sight; but just before he turned the angle he cast a look towards the house wherein all his treasure lay, and seeing

that we were watching his steps, he waved his handkerchief and disappeared. His intention, thou knowest, was to proceed to New York; Samuel, his faithful servant, was to accompany him, and had gone forward in the carriage with the baggage, as Edgar preferred to walk to the boat. Thy poor sister and myself stood on the old piazza waiting until the little steamboat—it was the Black Hawk—should turn the great bend and appear in sight, for it was natural, thou knowest, to linger and look at the vessel which held one so dear to us both. It was the first time that thy sister had been separated from Edgar, and she stood weeping silently, leaning on my arm, as the little steamboat shot briskly round the bend and appeared full in sight. Thou must recollect that the channel brings the boat nearly opposite the stone farm house, and even at that distance, although we could not distinguish features or person, yet we fancied we saw the waving of a handkerchief. At that instant the Black Hawk blew up, every thing went asunder, and to my affrighted soul the boat appeared to rise many feet out of the water. I cannot paint to thee our agony, or speak of the profound grief, the unextinguishable grief, of thy dear sister; she lies still in silent wo, and who is there, save her Maker, who dares to comfort her.

"'I told thee in a previous letter, written I believe on the 12th, that I apprehended a sudden thaw. I mentioned my fears to our dear Edgar, and with his usual prudence he gave orders to strengthen some of the embankments below the ravine. Among other things I thought of his valuable books and instruments, which still remained in the stone farm house, and that very afternoon I intended to have

them removed to Elmwood. At the instant the dreadful explosion took place, the great snow bank, which thou recollectest lay above the house in the hollow of the hill, slid down and entirely covered the building; and, in another second, the high peak of the hill, heavily covered with large pines, fell down and buried itself in the ravine and gap below. The building and all its valuable contents lie buried deep below the immense mass of earth, but we stop not in our grief to care for it, as he who delighted in them is gone from us for ever.

"'Thy sister, thy poor sister, when the first horrible shock was over, would cling to the hope that Edgar might be spared, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could prevent her from flying to the spot where the crowd had collected. Alas! no one lived to tell how death had overtaken them. Of the five persons engaged on board, three of their bodies have since been found; this was in dragging the water. It seems there were but few passengers, perhaps only our beloved Edgar, his poor servant Samuel, and one or two others. An old man was seen to enter the boat just as she was moving off; *his* body was found on the bank, and on searching his pockets a small piece of silver, a quarter of a dollar, was taken out, which I knew in a moment; it was mine only an hour before, and had three little crosses deeply indented on the rim, with a hole in the centre of the coin; I made these marks on it the day before, for a particular purpose; I could therefore identify the money at once. About an hour before Edgar left us, thinking he might want small silver, I gave him a handful, and this piece was among the number. He must have given it to the man as

soon as he got on board, perhaps for charity, as the man was poor, and probably had begged of him. This at once convinced me that our dear Edgar was in the fatal boat. We have made every exertion to recover the body, but are still unsuccessful; nor can we find that of our poor faithful Samuel. The body of the horse was seen floating down the river yesterday; and the large trunk, valueless thing now, was found but this morning near the stone fence on the opposite shore.

“‘There were some valuable parchments, title deeds, in a small leather valise, which our dear Edgar carried himself—but what do we care for such things now, or for the gold pieces which he also had in the same case. Alas! we think of nothing but of the loss of him, thy much valued brother. Edgar Hastings has been taken from us, and although thy poor sister is the greatest sufferer, yet *all* mourn.

“‘Offer up thy prayers, my son, that God will please to spare thy sister’s reason; if that can be preserved, time will soften this bitter grief, and some little comfort will remain, for she has Edgar’s boy to nourish and protect. As to me, tranquil as I am compelled to be before her, I find that my chief pleasure, my happiness, is for ever gone. Edgar was superior to most men, ay, to any man living, and so excellent was he in heart, and so virtuous and upright in all his ways, that I trust his pure spirit has ascended to the Great Being who gave it.

“‘Do not come to us just now, unless it be necessary to thy peace of mind; but if thou shouldst come, ask not to see thy sister, for the sight of any one, save me and her child, is most painful to her.

“‘Kiss thy babe, and bid him not forget his afflicted grandfather. God bless thee and thy kind wife.—Adieu, my son.
Valentine Harley.’”

It need not be said that Edgar Hastings was plunged in profound grief at hearing this epistle read; his excellent father, his beloved wife, his darling child, were brought before him, fresh as when he last saw them; and now the withering thought came over him that he was to see them no more! After a few moments spent in bitter anguish, he raised his head, and motioned the young man to proceed.

“Meantime the workmen proceeded in their labours, and so great was the anxiety of all, that upwards of fifty more hands were employed to assist in removing the thick layer of ice which apparently covered the whole building. When the ice was removed, we came immediately to the crushed roof of the house, into which several of the labourers would have worked their way had we not withheld them. After placing the engines in front they soon cleared a road to the entrance, and by sundown Valentine Harley and myself stood before the doorway of the low stone farm house.

“It was not without great emotion that we came thus suddenly in view of a building which had lain under such a mass of earth for three centuries. We are both, I trust, men of strong and tender feelings, and we could not but sigh over the disastrous fate of our great ancestor, distant as was the period of his existence. We had often thought of it, for it was the story of our childhood, and every document had been religiously preserved. We stood for a few moments looking at the entrance in silence, for among other letters

there were two or three, written late in life by your faithful and excellent wife—was not her name Ophelia?”

“It was, it was,” said the afflicted man; “go on, and ask me no questions, for my reason is unsteady.”

“In one of these letters she suggested the possibility that her beloved husband might have been buried under the ruins; that the thought had sometimes struck her; but her father believed otherwise. That within a few years an old sailor had returned to his native place, and as it was near Elmwood, he called on her to state that it was his firm belief that Mr. Hastings did not perish in the Black Hawk. His reason for this belief was, that on the way to the ship he encountered an old friend, just at that moment leaving the low stone building. ‘I wanted him,’ said the old sailor, ‘to jump in the wagon and go with me to the wharf, but he refused, as he had business on the other side of the river. Besides, said my friend, the gentleman within, pointing to the door, has given me a quarter of a dollar to go forward and tell the captain of the Black Hawk that he cannot cross this trip. This gentleman, he said, was Mr. Hastings.’

“Another letter stated—I think it was written by the wife of James Harley, your brother-in-law—that, in addition to the above, the old sailor stated, that the ship in which he sailed had not raised anchor yet, when they heard the explosion of the Black Hawk, of which fact they became acquainted by means of a little fishing boat that came along side, and which saw her blow up. He observed to some one near, that if that was the case, an old shipmate of his had lost his life. The sailor added likewise, that he had been beating about the world for many years, but at length growing tired, and

finding old age creeping on him, he determined to end his days in his native village. Among the recitals of early days was the bursting of the Black Hawk and the death of Mr. Hastings, which latter fact he contradicted, stating his reasons for believing that you were not in the boat. The idea of your being buried under the ruins, and the dread that you might have perished with hunger, so afflicted the poor Lady Ophelia that she fell into a nervous fever, of which she died."

"Say no more—tell me nothing farther," said the poor sufferer; "I can listen no longer—good night—good night—leave me alone."

The young men renewed the fire, and were about to depart, when he called them back.

"Excuse this emotion—but my son—tell me of him; did he perish?"

"No—he lived to see his great grandchildren all married: I think he was upwards of ninety when he died."

"And what relation are you to him?"

"I am the great grandson of your great grandson," said Edgar Hastings the younger; "and this young man is the eighth in descent from your brother, James Harley. We both feel respect and tenderness for you, and it shall be the business of our lives to make you forget your griefs. Be comforted, therefore, for we are your children. In the morning you shall see my wife and children. Meantime, as we have not much more to say, let us finish our account of meeting you, and then we trust you will be able to get a few hours' rest."

“Rest!” said the man who had slept three hundred years, “I think I have had enough of sleep; but proceed.”

“When the thought struck us that your bones might lie under the ruins, we did not wish any common eye to see them; we therefore dismissed the workmen, and entered the door by ourselves. We came immediately into a square hall, at the end of which was the opening to what is called in all the papers the middle room; the door had crumbled away. The only light in the room proceeded from a hole which had been recently made by the removal of the ice on the roof, but it was sufficient to show the contents of the room. We saw the boxes, so often mentioned in all the letters, nine in number, and four large cases, which we supposed to be instruments. The table and four chairs were in good preservation, and on the table lay the very note which you must have written but a few minutes before the ice covered you. On walking to the other side of the room, the light fell on the large chair in which you were reclining.

“‘This is the body of our great ancestor,’ said Valentine Harley, ‘and now that the air has been admitted it will crumble to dust. Let us have the entrance nailed up, and make arrangements for giving the bones an honourable grave.’

“‘Unfortunate man,’ said I; ‘he must have perished with hunger—and yet his flesh does not appear to have wasted. It is no doubt the first owner of our estate, and he was buried in the fall of the ice and hill. The old sailor was right. His cap of sealskin lies at the back of his head, his gloves are on his lap, and there is the cameo on his little finger, the very one described in the paper which offered that large

reward for the recovery of his body. The little valise lies at his feet—how natural—how like a living being he looks; one could almost fancy he breathes.’

“‘My fancy is playing the fool with me,’ said Valentine; ‘he not only appears to breathe, but he moves his hand. If we stay much longer our senses will become affected, and we shall imagine that he can rise and walk.’

“We stepped back, therefore, a few paces; but you may imagine our surprise, when you opened your eyes and made an attempt to get up. At length you spoke, and we hastened to you; our humanity and pity, for one so singularly circumstanced, being stronger than our fears. You know the rest. I picked up the valise, and there it lies.”

We shall draw a veil over the next two months of our hero’s existence. His mind was in distress and confusion, and he refused to be comforted; but the young men devoted themselves to him, and they had their reward in seeing him at length assume a tranquil manner—yet the sad expression of his countenance never left him. His greatest pleasure—a melancholy one it was, which often made him shed tears—was to caress the youngest child; it was about the age of his own, and he fancied he saw a resemblance. In fact, he saw a strong likeness to his wife in the lady who now occupied Elmwood, and her name being Ophelia rendered the likeness more pleasing. She had been told of the strange relationship which existed between her guest and themselves; but, at our hero’s request, no other human being was to know who he was, save Edgar Hastings the younger and his wife, and Valentine Harley. It was thought most prudent to keep it a secret from the wife of the latter,

as her health was exceedingly delicate, and her husband feared that the strangeness of the affair might disturb her mind.

Behold our hero, then, in full health and vigour, at the ripe age of thirty-two, returning to the earth after an absence of three hundred years! Had it not been for the loss of his wife and son, and his excellent father, he surely was quite as happily circumstanced, as when, at twenty-one, he returned from Europe, unknowing and unknown. He soon made friends *then*, and but for the canker at his heart he could make friends again. He thought of nothing less than to appear before the public, or of engaging in any pursuit. His fortune, and that part of his father-in-law's which naturally would have fallen to him, was now in the possession of this remote descendant. He was willing to let it so remain, retaining only sufficient for his wants; and his amiable relation took care that his means were ample.

To divert his mind, and keep him from brooding over his sorrows, his young relative proposed that they should travel through the different states. "Surely," said he, "you must feel a desire to see what changes three hundred years have made. Are not the people altered? Do those around you talk, and dress, and live as you were accustomed to do?"

"I see a difference certainly," said Hastings, "but less than I should have imagined. But my mind has been in such confusion, and my grief has pressed so heavily on my heart, that I can observe nothing. I will travel with you, perhaps it may be of service; let us set out on the first of May. Shall we go northward first, or where?"

“I think we had better go to New York,” said Edgar, “and then to Boston; we can spend the months of May, June and July very pleasantly in travelling from one watering place to another. We now go in locomotive cars, without either gas or steam.”

“Is that the way you travel now?” exclaimed Hastings.

“Yes, certainly; how should we travel? Oh, I recollect, you had balloons and air cars in your time.”

“We had balloons, but they were not used as carriages; now and then some adventurous man went up in one, but it was merely to amuse the people. Have you discovered the mode of navigating balloons?”

“Oh yes; we guide them as easily through the air, as you used to do horses on land.”

“Do you never use horses to travel with now?”

“No, never. It is upwards of a hundred years since horses were used either for the saddle or carriage; and full two hundred years since they were used for ploughing, or other farming or domestic purposes.”

“You astonish me; but in field sports, or horse racing, there you must have horses.”

The young man smiled. “My dear sir,” said he, “there is no such thing as field sports or horse racing now. Those brutal pastimes, thank heaven, have been entirely abandoned. In fact, you will be surprised to learn, that the races of horses, asses and mules are almost extinct. I can assure you, that they are so great a curiosity now to the rising generation, that they are carried about with wild beasts as part of the show.”

“Then there is no travelling on horseback? I think that is a great loss, as the exercise was very healthy and pleasant.”

“Oh, we have a much more agreeable mode of getting exercise now. Will you take a ride on the land or a sail on the water?”

“I think I should feel a reluctance in getting into one of your new fashioned cars. Do the steamboats cross at what was called the Little Ferry, where the Black Hawk went from when her boiler exploded?”

“Steamboats indeed! they have been out of use since the year 1950. But suspend your curiosity until we commence our journey; you will find many things altered for the better.”

“One thing surprises me,” said Hastings. “You wear the quaker dress; indeed, it is of that fashion which the gravest of the sect of my time wore; but you do not use the mode of speech—is that abolished among you?”

The young man, whom we shall in future call Edgar, laughed out. “Quaker!” said he; “why, my dear sir, the quakers have been extinct for upwards of two centuries. My dress is the fashion of the present moment; all the young men of my age and standing dress in this style now. Does it appear odd to you?”

“No,” said Hastings, “because this precise dress was worn by the people called Friends or Quakers, in my day—strange that I should have to use this curious mode of speech—my day! yes, like the wandering Jew, I seem to exist to the end of time. I see one alteration or difference, however; you wear heavy gold buckles in your shoes, the quakers wore strings; you have long ruffles on your hands,

they had none; you wear a cocked hat, and they wore one with a large round rim."

"But the women—did they dress as my wife does?"

"No.—Your wife wears what the old ladies before my time called a *frisk* and petticoat; it is the fashion of the year 1780. Her hair is cropped and curled closely to her head, with small clusters of curls in the hollow of each temple. In 1835 the hair was dressed in the Grecian style—but you can see the fashion. You have preserved the picture of my dear Ophelia; she sat to two of the best painters of the day, Sully and Ingham; the one *you* have was painted by Ingham, and is in the gay dress of the time. The other, which her brother had in his possession, was in a quaker dress, and was painted by Sully."

"We have it still, and it is invaluable for the sweetness of expression and the grace of attitude. The one in your room is admirable likewise; it abounds in beauties. No one since has ever been able to paint in that style; it bears examination closely. Was he admired as an artist in your day?"

"Yes; he was a distinguished painter, but he deserved his reputation, for he bestowed immense labour on his portraits, and sent nothing unfinished from his hands."

"But portrait painting is quite out of date now; it began to decline about the year 1870. It was a strange taste, that of covering the walls with paintings, which your grandchildren had to burn up as useless lumber. Where character, beauty and grace were combined, and a good artist to embody them, it was well enough; a number of these beautiful fancy pieces are still preserved. Landscape and historical painting