## CHAPTER XXIX. - PETTIGREW'S DREAM.

My dream (said Pettigrew) contrasts sadly with those of my young friends. They dream of revenge, but my dream is tragic. I see my editor writing my obituary notice. This is how it reads:

Mr. Pettigrew, M.A., whose sad death is recorded in another column, was in his forty-second year (not his forty-fourth, as stated in the evening papers), and had done a good deal of Jubilee work before he accepted the commission that led to his death. It is an open secret that he wrote seventy of the Jubilee sketches which have appeared in this paper. The pamphlet now selling in the streets for a penny, entitled "Jubilees of the Past," was his. He wrote the introductory chapter to "Fifty Years of Progress," and his "Jubilee Statesmen" is now in a second edition. The idea of a collection of Jubilee odes was not his, but the publisher's. At the same time, his friends and relatives attach no blame to them. Mr. Pettigrew shivered when the order was given to him, but he accepted it, and the general impression among those who knew him was that a man who had survived "Jubilee Statesmen" could do anything. As it turns out, we had overestimated Mr. Pettigrew's powers of endurance.

As "The Jubilee Odes" will doubtless yet be collected by another hand, little need be said here of the work. Mr. Pettigrew was to make his collection as complete as the limited space at his disposal (two volumes) would allow; the only original writing in the book being a sketch of the various schemes suggested for the celebration of the Jubilee. It was this sketch that killed him. On the morning of the 27th, when he intended beginning it, he rose at an unusually early hour, and was seen from the windows of the house pacing the garden in an apparently agitated state of mind. He ate no breakfast. One of his daughters states that she noticed a wild look in his eyes during the morning meal; but, as she did not remark on it at the time, much stress need not be laid on this. The others say that he was unusually quiet and silent. All, however, noticed one thing. Generally, when he had literary work to do, he was anxious to begin upon his labors, and spent little time at the breakfast-table. On this occasion he sat on. Even after the breakfast things were removed he seemed reluctant to adjourn to the study. His wife asked him several times if he meant to begin "The Jubilee Odes" that day, and he always replied in the affirmative. But he talked nervously of other things; and, to

her surprise--though she thought comparatively little of it at the time--drew her on to a discussion on summer bonnets. As a rule, this was a subject which he shunned. At last he rose, and, going slowly to the window, looked out for a quarter of an hour. His wife asked him again about "The Jubilee Odes," and he replied that he meant to begin directly. Then he went round the morning-room, looking at the pictures on the walls as if for the first time. After that he leaned for a little while against the mantelpiece, and then, as if an idea had struck him, began to wind up the clock. He went through the house winding up the clocks, though this duty was usually left to a servant; and when that was over he came back to the breakfast-room and talked about Waterbury watches. His wife had to go to the kitchen, and he followed her. On their way back they passed the nursery, and he said he thought he would go in and talk to the nurse. This was very unlike him. At last his wife said that it would soon be luncheon-time, and then he went to the study. Some ten minutes afterward he wandered into the dining-room, where she was arranging some flowers. He seemed taken aback at seeing her, but said, after a moment's thought, that the study door was locked and he could not find the key. This astonished her, as she had dusted the room herself that morning. She went to see, and found the study door standing open. When she returned to the dining-room he had disappeared. They searched for him everywhere, and eventually discovered him in the drawing-room, turning over a photograph album. He then went back to the study. His wife accompanied him, and, as was her custom, filled his pipe for him. He smoked a mixture to which he was passionately attached. He lighted his pipe several times, but it always went out. His wife put a new nib into his pen, placed some writing material on the table, and then retired, shutting the door behind her.

About half an hour afterward Mrs. Pettigrew sent one of the children to the study on a trifling errand. As he did not return she followed him. She found him sitting on his father's knee, where she did not remember ever having seen him before. Mr. Pettigrew was holding his watch to the boy's ears. The study table was littered with several hundreds of Jubilee odes. Other odes had slipped to the floor. Mrs. Pettigrew asked how he was getting on, and her unhappy husband replied that he was just going to begin. His hands were trembling, and he had given up trying to smoke. He sought to detain her by talking about the boy's curls; but she went away, taking the child with her. As she closed the door he groaned heavily, and she reopened it to ask if he felt unwell. He answered in the

negative, and she left him. The last person to see Mr. Pettigrew alive was Eliza Day, the housemaid. She took a letter to him between twelve and one o'clock. Usually he disliked being disturbed at his writing; but this time, in answer to her knock, he cried eagerly, "Come in!" When she entered he insisted on her taking a chair, and asked her how all her people were, and if there was anything he could do for them. Several times she rose to leave, but he would not allow her to do so. Eliza mentioned this in the kitchen when she returned to it. Her master was naturally a reserved man who seldom spoke to his servants, which rendered his behavior on this occasion the more remarkable.

As announced in the evening papers yesterday, the servant sent to the study at half-past one to see why Mr. Pettigrew was not coming to lunch, found him lifeless on the floor. The knife clutched in his hand showed that he had done the fatal deed himself; and Dr. Southwick, of Hyde Park, who was on the spot within ten minutes of the painful discovery, is of opinion that life had been extinct for about half an hour. The body was lying among Jubilee odes. On the table were a dozen or more sheets of "copy," which, though only spoiled pages, showed that the deceased had not succumbed without a struggle. On one he had begun, "Fifty years have come and gone since a fair English maiden ascended the throne of England." Another stopped short at, "To every loyal Englishman the Jubil----" A third sheet commenced with, "Though there have been a number of royal Jubilees in the history of the world, probably none has awakened the same interest as----" and a fourth began, "1887 will be known to all future ages as the year of Jub----" One sheet bore the sentence, "Heaven help me!" and it is believed that these were the last words the deceased ever penned.

Mr. Pettigrew was a most estimable man in private life, and will be greatly missed in the circles to which he had endeared himself. He leaves a widow and a small family. It may be worth adding that when discovered dead, there was a smile upon his face, as if he had at last found peace. He must have suffered great agony that forenoon, and his death is best looked upon as a happy release.

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Marriot, Scrymgeour and I awarded the tin of Arcadia to Pettigrew, because he alone of the competitors seemed to believe that his dream might be realized.