

## Chapter XVI

Men, like planets, have both a visible and an invisible history. The astronomer threads the darkness with strict deduction, accounting so for every visible arc in the wanderer's orbit; and the narrator of human actions, if he did his work with the same completeness, would have to thread the hidden pathways of feeling and thought which lead up to every moment of action, and to those moments of intense suffering which take the quality of action - like the cry of Prometheus, whose chained anguish seems a greater energy than the sea and sky he invokes and the deity he defies.

Deronda's circumstances, indeed, had been exceptional. One moment had been burned into his life as its chief epoch - a moment full of July sunshine and large pink roses shedding their last petals on a grassy court enclosed on three sides by a gothic cloister. Imagine him in such a scene: a boy of thirteen, stretched prone on the grass where it was in shadow, his curly head propped on his arms over a book, while his tutor, also reading, sat on a camp-stool under shelter. Deronda's book was Sismondi's 'History of the Italian Republics'; - the lad had a passion for history, eager to know how time had been filled up since the flood, and how things were carried on in the dull periods. Suddenly he let down his left arm and looked at his tutor, saying in purest boyish tones -

'Mr Fraser, how was it that the popes and cardinals always had so many nephews?'

The tutor, an able young Scotchman, who acted as Sir Hugo Mallinger's secretary, roused rather unwillingly from his political economy, answered with the clear-cut emphatic chant which makes a truth doubly telling in Scotch utterance -

'Their own children were called nephews.'

'Why?' said Deronda.

'It was just for the propriety of the thing; because, as you know very well, priests don't marry, and the children were illegitimate.'

Mr Fraser, thrusting out his lower lip and making his chant of the last word the more emphatic for a little impatience at being interrupted, had already turned his eyes on his book again, while Deronda, as if something had stung him, started up in a sitting attitude with his back to the tutor.

He had always called Sir Hugo Mallinger his uncle, and when it once occurred to him to ask about his father and mother, the baronet had

answered, 'You lost your father and mother when you were quite a little one; that is why I take care of you.' Daniel then straining to discern something in that early twilight, had a dim sense of having been kissed very much, and surrounded by thin, cloudy, scented drapery, till his fingers caught in something hard, which hurt him, and he began to cry. Every other memory he had was of the little world in which he still lived. And at that time he did not mind about learning more, for he was too fond of Sir Hugo to be sorry for the loss of unknown parents. Life was very delightful to the lad, with an uncle who was always indulgent and cheerful - a fine man in the bright noon of life, whom Daniel thought absolutely perfect, and whose place was one of the finest in England, at once historical; romantic, and home-like: a picturesque architectural outgrowth from an abbey, which had still remnants of the old monastic trunk. Diplow lay in another county, and was a comparatively landless place which had come into the family from a rich lawyer on the female side who wore the perruque of the restoration; whereas the Mallingers had the grant of Monk's Topping under Henry the Eighth, and ages before had held the neighboring lands of King's Topping, tracing indeed their origin to a certain Hugues le Malingre, who came in with the Conqueror - and also apparently with a sickly complexion which had been happily corrected in his descendants. Two rows of these descendants, direct and collateral, females of the male line, and males of the female, looked down in the gallery over the cloisters on the nephew Daniel as he walked there: men in armor with pointed beards and arched eyebrows, pinched ladies in hoops and ruffs with no face to speak of; grave-looking men in black velvet and stuffed hips, and fair, frightened women holding little boys by the hand; smiling politicians in magnificent perruques, and ladies of the prize- animal kind, with rosebud mouths and full eyelids, according to Lely; then a generation whose faces were revised and embellished in the taste of Kneller; and so on through refined editions of the family types in the time of Reynolds and Romney, till the line ended with Sir Hugo and his younger brother Henleigh. This last had married Miss Grandcourt, and taken her name along with her estates, thus making a junction between two equally old families, impaling the three Saracens' heads proper and three bezants of the one with the tower and falcons *argent* of the other, and, as it happened, uniting their highest advantages in the prospects of that Henleigh Mallinger Grandcourt who is at present more of an acquaintance to us than either Sir Hugo or his nephew Daniel Deronda.

In Sir Hugo's youthful portrait with rolled collar and high cravat, Sir Thomas Lawrence had done justice to the agreeable alacrity of expression and sanguine temperament still to be seen in the original, but had done something more than justice in slightly lengthening the nose, which was in reality shorter than might have been expected in a Mallinger. Happily the appropriate nose of the family reappeared in

his younger brother, and was to be seen in all its refined regularity in his nephew Mallinger Grandcourt. But in the nephew Daniel Deronda the family faces of various types, seen on the walls of the gallery; found no reflex. Still he was handsomer than any of them, and when he was thirteen might have served as model for any painter who wanted to image the most memorable of boys: you could hardly have seen his face thoroughly meeting yours without believing that human creatures had done nobly in times past, and might do more nobly in time to come. The finest childlike faces have this consecrating power, and make us shudder anew at all the grossness and basely-wrought griefs of the world, lest they should enter here and defile.

But at this moment on the grass among the rose-petals, Daniel Deronda was making a first acquaintance with those griefs. A new idea had entered his mind, and was beginning to change the aspect of his habitual feelings as happy careless voyagers are changed with the sky suddenly threatened and the thought of danger arises. He sat perfectly still with his back to the tutor, while his face expressed rapid inward transition. The deep blush, which had come when he first started up, gradually subsided; but his features kept that indescribable look of subdued activity which often accompanies a new mental survey of familiar facts. He had not lived with other boys, and his mind showed the same blending of child's ignorance with surprising knowledge which is oftener seen in bright girls. Having read Shakespeare as well as a great deal of history, he could have talked with the wisdom of a bookish child about men who were born out of wedlock and were held unfortunate in consequence, being under disadvantages which required them to be a sort of heroes if they were to work themselves up to an equal standing with their legally born brothers. But he had never brought such knowledge into any association with his own lot, which had been too easy for him ever to think about it - until this moment when there had darted into his mind with the magic of quick comparison, the possibility that here was the secret of his own birth, and that the man whom he called uncle was really his father. Some children, even younger than Daniel, have known the first arrival of care, like an ominous irremovable guest in their tender lives, on the discovery that their parents, whom they had imagined able to buy everything, were poor and in hard money troubles. Daniel felt the presence of a new guest who seemed to come with an enigmatic veiled face, and to carry dimly-conjectured, dreaded revelations. The ardor which he had given to the imaginary world in his books suddenly rushed toward his own history and spent its pictorial energy there, explaining what he knew, representing the unknown. The uncle whom he loved very dearly took the aspect of a father who held secrets about him - who had done him a wrong - yes, a wrong: and what had become of his mother, for whom he must have been taken away? - Secrets about which he, Daniel, could never inquire; for to speak or to be spoken to about these new thoughts

seemed like falling flakes of fire to his imagination. Those who have known an impassioned childhood will understand this dread of utterance about any shame connected with their parents. The impetuous advent of new images took possession of him with the force of fact for the first time told, and left him no immediate power for the reflection that he might be trembling at a fiction of his own. The terrible sense of collision between a strong rush of feeling and the dread of its betrayal, found relief at length in big slow tears, which fell without restraint until the voice of Mr Fraser was heard saying:

‘Daniel, do you see that you are sitting on the bent pages of your book?’

Daniel immediately moved the book without turning round, and after holding it before him for an instant, rose with it and walked away into the open grounds, where he could dry his tears unobserved. The first shock of suggestion past, he could remember that he had no certainty how things really had been, and that he had been making conjectures about his own history, as he had often made stories about Pericles or Columbus, just to fill up the blanks before they became famous. Only there came back certain facts which had an obstinate reality, - almost like the fragments of a bridge, telling you unmistakably how the arches lay. And again there came a mood in which his conjectures seemed like a doubt of religion, to be banished as an offense, and a mean prying after what he was not meant to know; for there was hardly a delicacy of feeling this lad was not capable of. But the summing-up of all his fluctuating experience at this epoch was, that a secret impression had come to him which had given him something like a new sense in relation to all the elements of his life. And the idea that others probably knew things concerning which they did not choose to mention, set up in him a premature reserve which helped to intensify his inward experience. His ears open now to words which before that July day would have passed by him unnoted; and round every trivial incident which imagination could connect with his suspicions, a newly- roused set of feelings were ready to cluster themselves.

One such incident a month later wrought itself deeply into his life. Daniel had not only one of those thrilling boy voices which seem to bring an idyllic heaven and earth before our eyes, but a fine musical instinct, and had early made out accompaniments for himself on the piano, while he sang from memory. Since then he had had some teaching, and Sir Hugo, who delighted in the boy, used to ask for his music in the presence of guests. One morning after he had been singing ‘Sweet Echo’ before a small party of gentlemen whom the rain had kept in the house, the baronet, passing from a smiling remark to his next neighbor said:

'Come here, Dan!'

The boy came forward with unusual reluctance. He wore an embroidered holland blouse which set off the rich coloring of his head and throat, and the resistant gravity about his mouth and eyes as he was being smiled upon, made their beauty the more impressive. Every one was admiring him.

'What do you say to being a great singer? Should you like to be adored by the world and take the house by storm; like Mario and Tamberlik?'

Daniel reddened instantaneously, but there was a just perceptible interval before he answered with angry decision -

'No; I should hate it!'

'Well, well, well!' said Sir Hugo, with surprised kindness intended to be soothing. But Daniel turned away quickly, left the room, and going to his own chamber threw himself on the broad window-sill, which was a favorite retreat of his when he had nothing particular to do. Here he could see the rain gradually subsiding with gleams through the parting clouds which lit up a great reach of the park, where the old oaks stood apart from each other, and the bordering wood was pierced with a green glade which met the eastern sky. This was a scene which had always been part of his home - part of the dignified ease which had been a matter of course in his life. And his ardent clinging nature had appropriated it all with affection. He knew a great deal of what it was to be a gentleman by inheritance, and without thinking much about himself - for he was a boy of active perceptions and easily forgot his own existence in that of Robert Bruce - he had never supposed that he could be shut out from such a lot, or have a very different part in the world from that of the uncle who petted him. It is possible (though not greatly believed in at present) to be fond of poverty and take it for a bride, to prefer scoured deal, red quarries and whitewash for one's private surroundings, to delight in no splendor but what has open doors for the whole nation, and to glory in having no privileges except such as nature insists on; and noblemen have been known to run away from elaborate ease and the option of idleness, that they might bind themselves for small pay to hard-handed labor. But Daniel's tastes were altogether in keeping with his nurture: his disposition was one in which everyday scenes and habits beget not *ennui* or rebellion, but delight, affection, aptitudes; and now the lad had been stung to the quick by the idea that his uncle - perhaps his father - thought of a career for him which was totally unlike his own, and which he knew very well was not thought of among possible destinations for the sons of English gentlemen. He had often stayed in London with Sir Hugo, who to indulge the boy's ear had carried him to the opera to hear the great tenors, so that the

image of a singer taking the house by storm was very vivid to him; but now, spite of his musical gift, he set himself bitterly against the notion of being dressed up to sing before all those fine people, who would not care about him except as a wonderful toy. That Sir Hugo should have thought of him in that position for a moment, seemed to Daniel an unmistakable proof that there was something about his birth which threw him out from the class of gentlemen to which the baronet belonged. Would it ever be mentioned to him? Would the time come when his uncle would tell him everything? He shrank from the prospect: in his imagination he preferred ignorance. If his father had been wicked - Daniel inwardly used strong words, for he was feeling the injury done him as a maimed boy feels the crushed limb which for others is merely reckoned in an average of accidents - if his father had done any wrong, he wished it might never be spoken of to him: it was already a cutting thought that such knowledge might be in other minds. Was it in Mr Fraser's? probably not, else he would not have spoken in that way about the pope's nephews. Daniel fancied, as older people do, that every one else's consciousness was as active as his own on a matter which was vital to him. Did Turvey the valet know? - and old Mrs. French the housekeeper? - and Banks the bailiff, with whom he had ridden about the farms on his pony? - And now there came back the recollection of a day some years before when he was drinking Mrs. Banks's whey, and Banks said to his wife with a wink and a cunning laugh, 'He features the mother, eh?' At that time little Daniel had merely thought that Banks made a silly face, as the common farming men often did, laughing at what was not laughable; and he rather resented being winked at and talked of as if he did not understand everything. But now that small incident became information: it was to be reasoned on. How could he be like his mother and not like his father? His mother must have been a Mallinger, if Sir Hugo were his uncle. But no! His father might have been Sir Hugo's brother and have changed his name, as Mr Henleigh Mallinger did when he married Miss Grandcourt. But then, why had he never heard Sir Hugo speak of his brother Deronda, as he spoke of his brother Grandcourt? Daniel had never before cared about the family tree - only about that ancestor who had killed three Saracens in one encounter. But now his mind turned to a cabinet of estate-maps in the library, where he had once seen an illuminated parchment hanging out, that Sir Hugo said was the family tree. The phrase was new and odd to him - he was a little fellow then - hardly more than half his present age - and he gave it no precise meaning. He knew more now and wished that he could examine that parchment. He imagined that the cabinet was always locked, and longed to try it. But here he checked himself. He might be seen: and he would never bring himself near even a silent admission of the sore that had opened in him.

It is in such experiences of a boy or girlhood, while elders are debating whether most education lies in science or literature, that the main lines of character are often laid down. If Daniel had been of a less ardently affectionate nature, the reserve about himself and the supposition that others had something to his disadvantage in their minds, might have turned into a hard, proud antagonism. But inborn lovingness was strong enough to keep itself level with resentment. There was hardly any creature in his habitual world that he was not fond of; teasing them occasionally, of course - all except his uncle, or 'Nunc,' as Sir Hugo had taught him to say; for the baronet was the reverse of a strait-laced man, and left his dignity to take care of itself. Him Daniel loved in that deep-rooted filial way which makes children always the happier for being in the same room with father or mother, though their occupations may be quite apart. Sir Hugo's watch-chain and seals, his handwriting, his mode of smoking and of talking to his dogs and horses, had all a rightness and charm about them to the boy which went along with the happiness of morning and breakfast time. That Sir Hugo had always been a Whig, made Tories and Radicals equally opponents of the truest and best; and the books he had written were all seen under the same consecration of loving belief which differenced what was his from what was not his, in spite of general resemblance. Those writings were various, from volumes of travel in the brilliant style, to articles on things in general, and pamphlets on political crises; but to Daniel they were alike in having an unquestionable rightness by which other people's information could be tested.

Who cannot imagine the bitterness of a first suspicion that something in this object of complete love was *not* quite right? Children demand that their heroes should be fleckless, and easily believe them so: perhaps a first discovery to the contrary is hardly a less revolutionary shock to a passionate child than the threatened downfall of habitual beliefs which makes the world seem to totter for us in maturer life.

But some time after this renewal of Daniel's agitation it appeared that Sir Hugo must have been making a merely playful experiment in his question about the singing. He sent for Daniel into the library, and looking up from his writing as the boy entered threw himself sideways in his armchair. 'Ah, Dan!' he said kindly, drawing one of the old embroidered stools close to him. 'Come and sit down here.'

Daniel obeyed, and Sir Hugo put a gentle hand on his shoulder, looking at him affectionately.

'What is it, my boy? Have you heard anything that has put you out of spirits lately?'

Daniel was determined not to let the tears come, but he could not speak.

‘All changes are painful when people have been happy, you know,’ said Sir Hugo, lifting his hand from the boy's shoulder to his dark curls and rubbing them gently. ‘You can't be educated exactly as I wish you to be without our parting. And I think you will find a great deal to like at school.’

This was not what Daniel expected, and was so far a relief, which gave him spirit to answer -

‘Am I to go to school?’

‘Yes, I mean you to go to Eton. I wish you to have the education of an English gentleman; and for that it is necessary that you should go to a public school in preparation for the university: Cambridge I mean you to go to; it was my own university.’

Daniel's color came went.

‘What do you say, sirrah?’ said Sir Hugo, smiling.

‘I should like to be a gentleman,’ said Daniel, with firm distinctness, ‘and go to school, if that is what a gentleman's son must do.’

Sir Hugo watched him silently for a few moments, thinking he understood now why the lad had seemed angry at the notion of becoming a singer. Then he said tenderly -

‘And so you won't mind about leaving your old Nunc?’

‘Yes, I shall,’ said Daniel, clasping Sir Hugo's caressing arm with both his hands. ‘But shan't I come home and be with you in the holidays?’

‘Oh yes, generally,’ said Sir Hugo. ‘But now I mean you to go at once to a new tutor, to break the change for you before you go to Eton.’

After this interview Daniel's spirit rose again. He was meant to be a gentleman, and in some unaccountable way it might be that his conjectures were all wrong. The very keenness of the lad taught him to find comfort in his ignorance. While he was busying his mind in the construction of possibilities, it became plain to him that there must be possibilities of which he knew nothing. He left off brooding, young joy and the spirit of adventure not being easily quenched within him, and in the interval before his going away he sang about the house, danced among the old servants, making them parting gifts, and insisted many times to the groom on the care that was to be taken of the black pony.



'Do you think I shall know much less than the other boys, Mr Fraser?' said Daniel. It was his bent to think that every stranger would be surprised at his ignorance.

'There are dunces to be found everywhere,' said the judicious Fraser. 'You'll not be the biggest; but you've not, the makings of a Porson in you, or a Leibnitz either.'

'I don't want to be a Porson or a Leibnitz,' said Daniel. 'I would rather be a greater leader, like Pericles or Washington.'

'Ay, ay; you've a notion they did with little parsing, and less algebra,' said Fraser. But in reality he thought his pupil a remarkable lad, to whom one thing was as easy as another, if he had only a mind to it.

Things went on very well with Daniel in his new world, except that a boy with whom he was at once inclined to strike up a close friendship talked to him a great deal about his home and parents, and seemed to expect a like expansiveness in return. Daniel immediately shrank into reserve, and this experience remained a check on his naturally strong bent toward the formation of intimate friendship. Every one, his tutor included, set him down as a reserved boy, though he was so good-humored and unassuming, as well as quick, both at study and sport, that nobody called his reserve disagreeable. Certainly his face had a great deal to do with that favorable interpretation; but in this instance the beauty of the closed lips told no falsehood.

A surprise that came to him before his first vacation strengthened the silent consciousness of a grief within, which might be compared in some ways with Byron's susceptibility about his deformed foot. Sir Hugo wrote word that he was married to Miss Raymond, a sweet lady, whom Daniel must remember having seen. The event would make no difference about his spending the vacation at the Abbey; he would find Lady Mallinger a new friend whom he would be sure to love - and much more to the usual effect when a man, having done something agreeable to himself, is disposed to congratulate others on his own good fortune, and the deducible satisfactoriness of events in general.

Let Sir Hugo be partly excused until the grounds of his action can be more fully known. The mistakes in his behavior to Deronda were due to that dullness toward what may be going on in other minds, especially the minds of children, which is among the commonest deficiencies, even in good-natured men like him, when life has been generally easy to themselves, and their energies have been quietly spent in feeling gratified. No one was better aware than he that Daniel was generally suspected to be his own son. But he was pleased with that suspicion; and his imagination had never once been troubled with the way in which the boy himself might be affected, either then or

in the future, by the enigmatic aspect of his circumstances. He was as fond of him as could be, and meant the best by him. And, considering the lightness with which the preparation of young lives seem to lie on respectable consciences, Sir Hugo Mallinger can hardly be held open to exceptional reproach. He had been a bachelor till he was five-and-forty, had always been regarded as a fascinating man of elegant tastes; what could be more natural, even according to the index of language, than that he should have a beautiful boy like the little Deronda to take care of? The mother might even, perhaps, be in the great world - met with in Sir Hugo's residence abroad. The only person to feel any objection was the boy himself, who could not have been consulted. And the boy's objections had never been dreamed of by anybody but himself.

By the time Deronda was ready to go to Cambridge, Lady Mallinger had already three daughters - charming babies, all three, but whose sex was announced as a melancholy alternative, the offspring desired being a son; if Sir Hugo had no son the succession must go to his nephew, Mallinger Grandcourt. Daniel no longer held a wavering opinion about his own birth. His fuller knowledge had tended to convince him that Sir Hugo was his father, and he conceived that the baronet, since he never approached a communication on the subject, wished him to have a tacit understanding of the fact, and to accept in silence what would be generally considered more than the due love and nurture. Sir Hugo's marriage might certainly have been felt as a new ground of resentment by some youths in Deronda's position, and the timid Lady Mallinger with her fast-coming little ones might have been images to scowl at, as likely to divert much that was disposable in the feelings and possessions of the baronet from one who felt his own claim to be prior. But hatred of innocent human obstacles was a form of moral stupidity not in Deronda's grain; even the indignation which had long mingled itself with his affection for Sir Hugo took the quality of pain rather than of temper; and as his mind ripened to the idea of tolerance toward error, he habitually liked the idea with his own silent grievances.

The sense of an entailed disadvantage - the deformed foot doubtfully hidden by the shoe, makes a restlessly active spiritual yeast, and easily turns a self-centered, unloving nature into an Ishmaelite. But in the rarer sort, who presently see their own frustrated claim as one among a myriad, the inexorable sorrow takes the form of fellowship and makes the imagination tender. Deronda's early-weakened susceptibility, charged at first with ready indignation and resistant pride, had raised in him a premature reflection on certain questions of life; it had given a bias to his conscience, a sympathy with certain ills, and a tension of resolve in certain directions, who marked him off from other youths much more than any talents he possessed.

One day near the end of the long vacation, when he had been making a tour in the Rhineland with his Eton tutor, and was come for a farewell stay at the Abbey before going to Cambridge, he said to Sir Hugo -

‘What do you intend me to be, sir?’ They were in the library, and it was the fresh morning. Sir Hugo had called him in to read a letter from a Cambridge Don who was to be interested in him; and since the baronet wore an air at once business-like and leisurely, the moment seemed propitious for entering on a grave subject which had never yet been thoroughly discussed.

‘Whatever your inclination leads you to, my boy. I thought it right to give you the option of the army, but you shut the door on that, and I was glad. I don't expect you to choose just yet - by-and-by, when you have looked about you a little more and tried your mettle among older men. The university has a good wide opening into the forum. There are prizes to be won, and a bit of good fortune often gives the turn to a man's taste. From what I see and hear, I should think you can take up anything you like. You are in the deeper water with your classics than I ever got into, and if you are rather sick of that swimming, Cambridge is the place where you can go into mathematics with a will, and disport yourself on the dry sand as much as you like. I floundered along like a carp.’

‘I suppose money will make some difference, sir,’ said Daniel blushing. ‘I shall have to keep myself by-and-by.’

‘Not exactly. I recommend you not to be extravagant - yes, yes, I know - you are not inclined to that; - but you need not take up anything against the grain. You will have a bachelor's income - enough for you to look about with. Perhaps I had better tell you that you may consider yourself secure of seven hundred a year. You might make yourself a barrister - be a writer - take up politics. I confess that is what would please me best. I should like to have you at my elbow and pulling with me.’

Deronda looked embarrassed. He felt that he ought to make some sign of gratitude, but other feelings clogged his tongue. A moment was passing by in which a question about his birth was throbbing within him, and yet it seemed more impossible than ever that the question should find vent - more impossible than ever that he could hear certain things from Sir Hugo's lips. The liberal way in which he was dealt with was the more striking because the baronet had of late cared particularly for money, and for making the utmost of his life-interest in the estate by way of providing for his daughters; and as all this flashed through Daniel's mind it was momentarily within his imagination that the provision for him might come in some way from

his mother. But such vaporous conjecture passed away as quickly as it came.

Sir Hugo appeared not to notice anything peculiar in Daniel's manner, and presently went on with his usual chatty liveliness.

'I am glad you have done some good reading outside your classics, and have got a grip of French and German. The truth is, unless a man can get the prestige and income of a Don and write donnish books, it's hardly worth while for him to make a Greek and Latin machine of himself and be able to spin you out pages of the Greek dramatists at any verse you'll give him as a cue. That's all very fine, but in practical life nobody does give you the cue for pages of Greek. In fact, it's a nicety of conversation which I would have you attend to - much quotation of any sort, even in English is bad. It tends to choke ordinary remark. One couldn't carry on life comfortably without a little blindness to the fact that everything had been said better than we can put it ourselves. But talking of Dons, I have seen Dons make a capital figure in society; and occasionally he can shoot you down a cart-load of learning in the right place, which will tell in politics. Such men are wanted; and if you have any turn for being a Don, I say nothing against it.'

'I think there's not much chance of that. Quicksett and Puller are both stronger than I am. I hope you will not be much disappointed if I don't come out with high honors.'

'No, no. I should like you to do yourself credit, but for God's sake don't come out as a superior expensive kind of idiot, like young Brecon, who got a Double First, and has been learning to knit braces ever since. What I wish you to get is a passport in life. I don't go against our university system: we want a little disinterested culture to make head against cotton and capital, especially in the House. My Greek has all evaporated; if I had to construe a verse on a sudden, I should get an apoplectic fit. But it formed my taste. I dare say my English is the better for it.'

On this point Daniel kept a respectful silence. The enthusiastic belief in Sir Hugo's writings as a standard, and in the Whigs as the chosen race among politicians, had gradually vanished along with the seraphic boy's face. He had not been the hardest of workers at Eton. Though some kinds of study and reading came as easily as boating to him, he was not of the material that usually makes the first-rate Eton scholar. There had sprung up in him a meditative yearning after wide knowledge which is likely always to abate ardor in the fight for prize acquirement in narrow tracks. Happily he was modest, and took any second-rate-ness in himself simply as a fact, not as a marvel necessarily to be accounted for by a superiority. Still Mr Eraser's high

opinion of the lad had not been altogether belied by the youth: Daniel had the stamp of rarity in a subdued fervor of sympathy, an activity of imagination on behalf of others which did not show itself effusively, but was continually seen in acts of considerateness that struck his companions as moral eccentricity. 'Deronda would have been first-rate if he had had more ambition,' was a frequent remark about him. But how could a fellow push his way properly when he objected to swop for his own advantage, knocked under by choice when he was within an inch of victory, and, unlike the great Clive, would rather be the calf than the butcher? It was a mistake, however, to suppose that Deronda had not his share of ambition. We know he had suffered keenly from the belief that there was a tinge of dishonor in his lot; but there are some cases, and his was one of them, in which the sense of injury breeds - not the will to inflict injuries and climb over them as a ladder, but a hatred of all injury. He had his flashes of fierceness and could hit out upon occasion, but the occasions were not always what might have been expected. For in what related to himself his resentful impulses had been early checked by a mastering affectionateness. Love has a habit of saying 'Never mind' to angry self, who, sitting down for the nonce in the lower place, by-and-by gets used to it. So it was that as Deronda approached manhood his feeling for Sir Hugo, while it was getting more and more mixed with criticism, was gaining in that sort of allowance which reconciles criticism with tenderness. The dear old beautiful home and everything within it, Lady Mallinger and her little ones included, were consecrated for the youth as they had been for the boy - only with a certain difference of light on the objects. The altarpiece was no longer miraculously perfect, painted under infallible guidance, but the human hand discerned in the work was appealing to a reverent tenderness safer from the gusts of discovery. Certainly Deronda's ambition, even in his spring-time, lay exceptionally aloof from conspicuous, vulgar triumph, and from other ugly forms of boyish energy; perhaps because he was early impassioned by ideas, and burned his fire on those heights. One may spend a good deal of energy in disliking and resisting what others pursue, and a boy who is fond of somebody else's pencil-case may not be more energetic than another who is fond of giving his own pencil-case away. Still it was not Deronda's disposition to escape from ugly scenes; he was more inclined to sit through them and take care of the fellow least able to take care of himself. It had helped to make him popular that he was sometimes a little compromised by this apparent comradeship. For a meditative interest in learning how human miseries are wrought - as precocious in him as another sort of genius in the poet who writes a Queen Mab at nineteen - was so infused with kindness that it easily passed for comradeship. Enough. In many of our neighbors' lives there is much not only of error and lapse, but of a certain exquisite goodness which can never be written or even spoken - only divined by each of us, according to the inward instruction of our own privacy.

The impression he made at Cambridge corresponded to his position at Eton. Every one interested in him agreed that he might have taken a high place if his motives had been of a more pushing sort, and if he had not, instead of regarding studies as instruments of success, hampered himself with the notion that they were to feed motive and opinion - a notion which set him criticising methods and arguing against his freight and harness when he should have been using all his might to pull. In the beginning his work at the university had a new zest for him: indifferent to the continuation of Eton classical drill, he applied himself vigorously to mathematics, for which he had shown an early aptitude under Mr Fraser, and he had the delight of feeling his strength in a comparatively fresh exercise of thought. That delight, and the favorable opinion of his tutor, determined him to try for a mathematical scholarship in the Easter of his second year: he wished to gratify Sir Hugo by some achievement, and the study of the higher mathematics, having the growing fascination inherent in all thinking which demands intensity, was making him a more exclusive worker than he had been before.

But here came the old check which had been growing with his growth. He found the inward bent toward comprehension and thoroughness diverging more and more from the track marked out by the standards of examination: he felt a heightening discontent with the wearing futility and enfeebling strain of a demand for excessive retention and dexterity without any insight into the principles which form the vital connections of knowledge. (Deronda's undergraduateship occurred fifteen years ago, when the perfection of our university methods was not yet indisputable.) In hours when his dissatisfaction was strong upon him he reproached himself for having been attracted by the conventional advantage of belonging to an English university, and was tempted toward the project of asking Sir Hugo to let him quit Cambridge and pursue a more independent line of study abroad. The germs of this inclination had been already stirring in his boyish love of universal history, which made him want to be at home in foreign countries, and follow in imagination the traveling students of the middle ages. He longed now to have the sort of apprenticeship to life which would not shape him too definitely, and rob him of the choice that might come from a free growth. One sees that Deronda's demerits were likely to be on the side of reflective hesitation, and this tendency was encouraged by his position; there was no need for him to get an immediate income, or to fit himself in haste for a profession; and his sensibility to the half-known facts of his parentage made him an excuse for lingering longer than others in a state of social neutrality. Other men, he inwardly said, had a more definite place and duties. But the project which flattered his inclination might not have gone beyond the stage of ineffective brooding, if certain circumstances had not quickened it into action.

The circumstances arose out of an enthusiastic friendship which extended into his after-life. Of the same year with himself, and occupying small rooms close to his, was a youth who had come as an exhibitioner from Christ's Hospital, and had eccentricities enough for a Charles Lamb. Only to look at his pinched features and blonde hair hanging over his collar reminded one of pale quaint heads by early German painters; and when this faint coloring was lit up by a joke, there came sudden creases about the mouth and eyes which might have been moulded by the soul of an aged humorist. His father, an engraver of some distinction, had been dead eleven years, and his mother had three girls to educate and maintain on a meagre annuity. Hans Meyrick - he had been daringly christened after Holbein - felt himself the pillar, or rather the knotted and twisted trunk, round which these feeble climbing plants must cling. There was no want of ability or of honest well-meaning affection to make the prop trustworthy: the ease and quickness with which he studied might serve him to win prizes at Cambridge, as he had done among the Blue Coats, in spite of irregularities. The only danger was, that the incalculable tendencies in him might be fatally timed, and that his good intentions might be frustrated by some act which was not due to habit but to capricious, scattered impulses. He could not be said to have any one bad habit; yet at longer or shorter intervals he had fits of impish recklessness, and did things that would have made the worst habits.

Hans in his right mind, however, was a lovable creature, and in Deronda he had happened to find a friend who was likely to stand by him with the more constancy, from compassion for these brief aberrations that might bring a long repentance. Hans, indeed, shared Deronda's rooms nearly as much as he used his own: to Deronda he poured himself out on his studies, his affairs, his hopes; the poverty of his home, and his love for the creatures there; the itching of his fingers to draw, and his determination to fight it away for the sake of getting some sort of a plum that he might divide with his mother and the girls. He wanted no confidence in return, but seemed to take Deronda as an Olympian who needed nothing - an egotism in friendship which is common enough with mercurial, expansive natures. Deronda was content, and gave Meyrick all the interest he claimed, getting at last a brotherly anxiety about him, looking after him in his erratic moments, and contriving by adroitly delicate devices not only to make up for his friend's lack of pence, but to save him from threatening chances. Such friendship easily becomes tender: the one spreads strong sheltering wings that delight in spreading, the other gets the warm protection which is also a delight. Meyrick was going in for a classical scholarship, and his success, in various ways momentous, was the more probable from the steadying influence of Deronda's friendship.

But an imprudence of Meyrick's, committed at the beginning of the autumn term, threatened to disappoint his hopes. With his usual alternation between unnecessary expense and self-privation, he had given too much money for an old engraving which fascinated him, and to make up for it, had come from London in a third-class carriage with his eyes exposed to a bitter wind and any irritating particles the wind might drive before it. The consequence was a severe inflammation of the eyes, which for some time hung over him the threat of a lasting injury. This crushing trouble called out all Deronda's readiness to devote himself, and he made every other occupation secondary to that of being companion and eyes to Hans, working with him and for him at his classics, that if possible his chance of the classical scholarship might be saved. Hans, to keep the knowledge of his suffering from his mother and sisters, alleged his work as a reason for passing the Christmas at Cambridge, and his friend stayed up with him.

Meanwhile Deronda relaxed his hold on his mathematics, and Hans, reflecting on this, at length said: 'Old fellow, while you are hoisting me you are risking yourself. With your mathematical cram one may be like Moses or Mahomet or somebody of that sort who had to cram, and forgot in one day what it had taken him forty to learn.'

Deronda would not admit that he cared about the risk, and he had really been beguiled into a little indifference by double sympathy: he was very anxious that Hans should not miss the much-needed scholarship, and he felt a revival of interest in the old studies. Still, when Hans, rather late in the day, got able to use his own eyes, Deronda had tenacity enough to try hard and recover his lost ground. He failed, however; but he had the satisfaction of seeing Meyrick win.

Success, as a sort of beginning that urged completion, might have reconciled Deronda to his university course; but the emptiness of all things, from politics to pastimes, is never so striking to us as when we fail in them. The loss of the personal triumph had no severity for him, but the sense of having spent his time ineffectively in a mode of working which had been against the grain, gave him a distaste for any renewal of the process, which turned his imagined project of quitting Cambridge into a serious intention. In speaking of his intention to Meyrick he made it appear that he was glad of the turn events had taken - glad to have the balance dip decidedly, and feel freed from his hesitations; but he observed that he must of course submit to any strong objection on the part of Sir Hugo.

Meyrick's joy and gratitude were disturbed by much uneasiness. He believed in Deronda's alleged preference, but he felt keenly that in serving him Daniel had placed himself at a disadvantage in Sir Hugo's opinion, and he said mournfully, 'If you had got the scholarship, Sir Hugo would have thought that you asked to leave us with a better



grace. You have spoiled your luck for my sake, and I can do nothing to amend it.'

'Yes, you can; you are to be a first-rate fellow. I call that a first-rate investment of my luck.'

'Oh, confound it! You save an ugly mongrel from drowning, and expect him to cut a fine figure. The poets have made tragedies enough about signing one's self over to wickedness for the sake of getting something plummy; I shall write a tragedy of a fellow who signed himself over to be good, and was uncomfortable ever after.'

But Hans lost no time in secretly writing the history of the affair to Sir Hugo, making it plain that but for Deronda's generous devotion he could hardly have failed to win the prize he had been working for.

The two friends went up to town together: Meyrick to rejoice with his mother and the girls in their little home at Chelsea; Deronda to carry out the less easy task of opening his mind to Sir Hugo. He relied a little on the baronet's general tolerance of eccentricities, but he expected more opposition than he met with. He was received with even warmer kindness than usual, the failure was passed over lightly, and when he detailed his reasons for wishing to quit the university and go to study abroad. Sir Hugo sat for some time in a silence which was rather meditative than surprised. At last he said, looking at Daniel with examination, 'So you don't want to be an Englishman to the backbone after all?'

'I want to be an Englishman, but I want to understand other points of view. And I want to get rid of a merely English attitude in studies.'

'I see; you don't want to be turned out in the same mould as every other youngster. And I have nothing to say against your doffing some of our national prejudices. I feel the better myself for having spent a good deal of my time abroad. But, for God's sake, keep an English cut, and don't become indifferent to bad tobacco! And, my dear boy, it is good to be unselfish and generous; but don't carry that too far. It will not do to give yourself to be melted down for the benefit of the tallow-trade; you must know where to find yourself. However, I shall put no vote on your going. Wait until I can get off Committee, and I'll run over with you.'

So Deronda went according to his will. But not before he had spent some hours with Hans Meyrick, and been introduced to the mother and sisters in the Chelsea home. The shy girls watched and registered every look of their brother's friend, declared by Hans to have been the salvation of him, a fellow like nobody else, and, in fine, a brick. They so thoroughly accepted Deronda as an ideal, that when he was gone

the youngest set to work, under the criticism of the two elder girls, to paint him as Prince Camaralzaman.