

The hours passed.

The dawn appeared and brought the day. A bright ray penetrated the chamber, and at the same instant broke on the soul of Gwynplaine.

And Dea! said the light.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

URSUS UNDER DIFFERENT ASPECTS.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT THE MISANTHROPE SAID.

After Ursus had seen Gwynplaine thrust within the gates of Southwark Jail, he remained, haggard, in the corner from which he was watching. For a long time his ears were haunted by the grinding of the bolts and bars, which was like a howl of joy that one wretch more should be enclosed within them.

He waited. What for? He watched. What for? Such inexorable doors, once shut, do not re-open so soon. They are tongue-tied by their stagnation in darkness, and move with difficulty, especially when they have to give up a prisoner. Entrance is permitted. Exit is quite a different matter. Ursus knew this. But waiting is a thing which we have not the power to give up at our own will. We wait in our own despite. What we do disengages an acquired force, which maintains its action when its object has ceased, which keeps possession of us and holds us, and obliges us for some time longer to continue that which has already lost its motive. Hence the useless watch, the inert position that we have all held at times, the loss of time which every thoughtful man gives mechanically to that which has disappeared. None escapes this law. We become stubborn in a sort of vague fury. We know not why we are in the place, but we remain there. That which we have begun actively we continue passively, with an exhausting tenacity from which we emerge overwhelmed. Ursus, though differing from other men, was, as any other might have been, nailed to his post by that species of conscious reverie into which we are plunged by events all important to us, and in which we are impotent. He scrutinized by turns those two black walls, now the high one, then the low; sometimes the door near which the ladder to the gibbet stood, then that surmounted by a death's head. It was as if he were caught in a vice, composed of a prison and a cemetery. This shunned and unpopular street was so deserted that he was unobserved.

At length he left the arch under which he had taken shelter, a kind of chance sentry-box, in which he had acted the watchman, and departed with

slow steps. The day was declining, for his guard had been long. From time to time he turned his head and looked at the fearful wicket through which Gwynplaine had disappeared. His eyes were glassy and dull. He reached the end of the alley, entered another, then another, retracing almost unconsciously the road which he had taken some hours before. At intervals he turned, as if he could still see the door of the prison, though he was no longer in the street in which the jail was situated. Step by step he was approaching Tarrinzeau Field. The lanes in the neighbourhood of the fair-ground were deserted pathways between enclosed gardens. He walked along, his head bent down, by the hedges and ditches. All at once he halted, and drawing himself up, exclaimed, "So much the better!"

At the same time he struck his fist twice on his head and twice on his thigh, thus proving himself to be a sensible fellow, who saw things in their right light; and then he began to growl inwardly, yet now and then raising his voice.

"It is all right! Oh, the scoundrel! the thief! the vagabond! the worthless fellow! the seditious scamp! It is his speeches about the government that have sent him there. He is a rebel. I was harbouring a rebel. I am free of him, and lucky for me; he was compromising us. Thrust into prison! Oh, so much the better! What excellent laws! Ungrateful boy! I who brought him up! To give oneself so much trouble for this! Why should he want to speak and to reason? He mixed himself up in politics. The ass! As he handled pennies he babbled about the taxes, about the poor, about the people, about what was no business of his. He

permitted himself to make reflections on pennies. He commented wickedly and maliciously on the copper money of the kingdom. He insulted the farthings of her Majesty. A farthing! Why, 'tis the same as the queen. A sacred effigy! Devil take it! a sacred effigy! Have we a queen--yes or no? Then respect her verdigris! Everything depends on the government; one ought to know that. I have experience, I have. I know something. They may say to me, 'But you give up politics, then?' Politics, my friends! I care as much for them as for the rough hide of an ass. I received, one day, a blow from a baronet's cane. I said to myself, That is enough: I understand politics. The people have but a farthing, they give it; the queen takes it, the people thank her. Nothing can be more natural. It is for the peers to arrange the rest; their lordships, the lords spiritual and temporal. Oh! so Gwynplaine is locked up! So he is in prison. That is just as it should be. It is equitable, excellent, well-merited, and legitimate. It is his own fault. To criticize is forbidden. Are you a lord, you idiot? The constable has seized him, the justice of the quorum has carried him off, the sheriff has him in custody. At this moment he is probably being examined by a serjeant of the coif. They pluck out your crimes, those clever fellows! Imprisoned, my wag! So much the worse for him, so much the better for me! Faith, I am satisfied. I own frankly that fortune favours me. Of what folly was I guilty when I picked up that little boy and girl! We were so quiet before, Homo and I! What had they to do in my caravan, the little blackguards? Didn't I brood over them when they were young! Didn't I draw them along with my harness! Pretty foundlings, indeed; he as ugly as sin, and she blind of both eyes! Where was the use of depriving myself of everything for their sakes? The beggars grow up, forsooth, and

make love to each other. The flirtations of the deformed! It was to that we had come. The toad and the mole; quite an idyl! That was what went on in my household. All which was sure to end by going before the justice. The toad talked politics! But now I am free of him. When the wapentake came I was at first a fool; one always doubts one's own good luck. I believed that I did not see what I did see; that it was impossible, that it was a nightmare, that a day-dream was playing me a trick. But no! Nothing could be truer. It is all clear. Gwynplaine is really in prison. It is a stroke of Providence. Praise be to it! He was the monster who, with the row he made, drew attention to my establishment and denounced my poor wolf. Be off, Gwynplaine; and, see, I am rid of both! Two birds killed with one stone. Because Dea will die, now that she can no longer see Gwynplaine. For she sees him, the idiot! She will have no object in life. She will say, 'What am I to do in the world?' Good-bye! To the devil with both of them. I always hated the creatures! Die, Dea! Oh, I am quite comfortable!"

CHAPTER II.

WHAT HE DID.

He returned to the Tadcaster Inn,

It struck half-past six. It was a little before twilight.

Master Nicless stood on his doorstep.

He had not succeeded, since the morning, in extinguishing the terror which still showed on his scared face.

He perceived Ursus from afar.

"Well!" he cried.

"Well! what?"

"Is Gwynplaine coming back? It is full time. The public will soon be coming. Shall we have the performance of 'The Laughing Man' this evening?"

"I am the laughing man," said Ursus.

And he looked at the tavern-keeper with a loud chuckle.

Then he went up to the first floor, opened the window next to the sign of the inn, leant over towards the placard about Gwynplaine, the laughing man, and the bill of "Chaos Vanquished;" unnailed the one, tore down the other, put both under his arm, and descended.

Master Nicless followed him with his eyes.

"Why do you unhook that?"

Ursus burst into a second fit of laughter.

"Why do you laugh?" said the tavern-keeper.

"I am re-entering private life."

Master Nicless understood, and gave an order to his lieutenant, the boy Govicum, to announce to every one who should come that there would be no performance that evening. He took from the door the box made out of a cask, where they received the entrance money, and rolled it into a corner of the lower sitting-room.

A moment after, Ursus entered the Green Box.

He put the two signs away in a corner, and entered what he called the woman's wing.

Dea was asleep.

She was on her bed, dressed as usual, excepting that the body of her gown was loosened, as when she was taking her siesta.

Near her Vinos and Fibi were sitting--one on a stool, the other on the ground--musing. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, they had not dressed themselves in their goddesses' gauze, which was a sign of deep discouragement. They had remained in their drugget petticoats and their dress of coarse cloth.

Ursus looked at Dea.

"She is rehearsing for a longer sleep," murmured he.

Then, addressing Fibi and Vinos,--

"You both know all. The music is over. You may put your trumpets into the drawer. You did well not to equip yourselves as deities. You look ugly enough as you are, but you were quite right. Keep on your petticoats. No performance to-night, nor to-morrow, nor the day after to-morrow. No Gwynplaine. Gwynplaine is clean gone."

Then he looked at Dea again.

"What a blow to her this will be! It will be like blowing out a candle."

He inflated his cheeks.

"Puff! nothing more."

Then, with a little dry laugh,--

"Losing Gwynplaine, she loses all. It would be just as if I were to lose Homo. It will be worse. She will feel more lonely than any one else could. The blind wade through more sorrow than we do."

He looked out of the window at the end of the room.

"How the days lengthen! It is not dark at seven o'clock. Nevertheless we will light up."

He struck the steel and lighted the lamp which hung from the ceiling of the Green Box.

Then he leaned over Dea.

"She will catch cold; you have unlaced her bodice too low. There is a proverb,--

"Though April skies be bright,
Keep all your wrappers tight."

Seeing a pin shining on the floor, he picked it up and pinned up her sleeve. Then he paced the Green Box, gesticulating.

"I am in full possession of my faculties. I am lucid, quite lucid. I consider this occurrence quite proper, and I approve of what has happened. When she awakes I will explain everything to her clearly. The catastrophe will not be long in coming. No more Gwynplaine. Good-night, Dea. How well all has been arranged! Gwynplaine in prison, Dea in the cemetery, they will be vis-à-vis! A dance of death! Two destinies going off the stage at once. Pack up the dresses. Fasten the valise. For valise, read coffin. It was just what was best for them both. Dea without eyes, Gwynplaine without a face. On high the Almighty will restore sight to Dea and beauty to Gwynplaine. Death puts things to rights. All will be well. Fibi, Vinos, hang up your tambourines on the nail. Your talents for noise will go to rust, my beauties; no more playing, no more trumpeting 'Chaos Vanquished' is vanquished. 'The Laughing Man' is done for. 'Taratantara' is dead. Dea sleeps on. She does well. If I were she I would never awake. Oh! she will soon fall asleep again. A skylark like her takes very little killing. This comes of meddling with politics. What a lesson! Governments are right. Gwynplaine to the sheriff. Dea to the grave-digger. Parallel cases! Instructive symmetry! I hope the tavern-keeper has barred the door. We are going to die to-night quietly at home, between ourselves--not I, nor Homo, but Dea. As for me, I shall continue to roll on in the caravan. I belong to the meanderings of vagabond life. I shall dismiss these two women. I shall not keep even one of them. I have a tendency to become an old scoundrel. A maidservant in the house of a libertine is like a loaf

of bread on the shelf. I decline the temptation. It is not becoming at my age. *Turpe senilis amor*. I will follow my way alone with Homo. How astonished Homo will be! Where is Gwynplaine? Where is Dea? Old comrade, here we are once more alone together. Plague take it! I'm delighted. Their bucolics were an encumbrance. Oh! that scamp Gwynplaine, who is never coming back. He has left us stuck here. I say 'All right.' And now 'tis Dea's turn. That won't be long. I like things to be done with. I would not snap my fingers to stop her dying--her dying, I tell you! See, she awakes!"

Dea opened her eyelids; many blind persons shut them when they sleep. Her sweet unwitting face wore all its usual radiance.

"She smiles," whispered Ursus, "and I laugh. That is as it should be."

Dea called,--

"Fibi! Vinos! It must be the time for the performance. I think I have been asleep a long time. Come and dress me."

Neither Fibi nor Vinos moved.

Meanwhile the ineffable blind look of Dea's eyes met those of Ursus. He started.

"Well!" he cried; "what are you about? Vinos! Fibi! Do you not hear your mistress? Are you deaf? Quick! the play is going to begin."

The two women looked at Ursus in stupefaction.

Ursus shouted,--

"Do you not hear the audience coming in?--Fibi, dress Dea.--Vinos, take your tambourine."

Fibi was obedient; Vinos, passive. Together, they personified submission. Their master, Ursus, had always been to them an enigma. Never to be understood is a reason for being always obeyed. They simply thought he had gone mad, and did as they were told. Fibi took down the costume, and Vinos the tambourine.

Fibi began to dress Dea. Ursus let down the door-curtain of the women's room, and from behind the curtain continued,--

"Look there, Gwynplaine! the court is already more than half full of people. They are in heaps in the passages. What a crowd! And you say that Fibi and Vinos look as if they did not see them. How stupid the gipsies are! What fools they are in Egypt! Don't lift the curtain from the door. Be decent. Dea is dressing."

He paused, and suddenly they heard an exclamation,--

"How beautiful Dea is!"

It was the voice of Gwynplaine.

Fibi and Vinos started, and turned round. It was the voice of Gwynplaine, but in the mouth of Ursus.

Ursus, by a sign which he made through the door ajar, forbade the expression of any astonishment.

Then, again taking the voice of Gwynplaine,--

"Angel!"

Then he replied in his own voice,--

"Dea an angel! You are a fool, Gwynplaine. No mammifer can fly except the bats."

And he added,--

"Look here, Gwynplaine! Let Homo loose; that will be more to the purpose."

And he descended the ladder of the Green Box very quickly, with the agile spring of Gwynplaine, imitating his step so that Dea could hear it.

In the court he addressed the boy, whom the occurrences of the day had

made idle and inquisitive.

"Spread out both your hands," said he, in a loud voice.

And he poured a handful of pence into them.

Govicum was grateful for his munificence.

Ursus whispered in his ear,--

"Boy, go into the yard; jump, dance, knock, bawl, whistle, coo, neigh, applaud, stamp your feet, burst out laughing, break something."

Master Nicless, saddened and humiliated at seeing the folks who had come to see "The Laughing Man" turned back and crowding towards other caravans, had shut the door of the inn. He had even given up the idea of selling any beer or spirits that evening, that he might have to answer no awkward questions; and, quite overcome by the sudden close of the performance, was looking, with his candle in his hand, into the court from the balcony above.

Ursus, taking the precaution of putting his voice between parentheses fashioned by adjusting the palms of his hands to his mouth, cried out to him,--

"Sir! do as your boy is doing--yelp, bark, howl."

He re-ascended the steps of the Green Box, and said to the wolf,--

"Talk as much as you can."

Then, raising his voice,--

"What a crowd there is! We shall have a crammed performance."

In the meantime Vinos played the tambourine. Ursus went on,--

"Dea is dressed. Now we can begin. I am sorry they have admitted so many spectators. How thickly packed they are!--Look, Gwynplaine, what a mad mob it is! I will bet that to-day we shall take more money than we have ever done yet.--Come, gipsies, play up, both of you. Come here.--Fibi, take your clarion. Good.--Vinos, drum on your tambourine. Fling it up and catch it again.--Fibi, put yourself into the attitude of Fame.--Young ladies, you have too much on. Take off those jackets. Replace stuff by gauze. The public like to see the female form exposed. Let the moralists thunder. A little indecency. Devil take it! what of that? Look voluptuous, and rush into wild melodies. Snort, blow, whistle, flourish, play the tambourine.--What a number of people, my poor Gwynplaine!"

He interrupted himself.

"Gwynplaine, help me. Let down the platform." He spread out his pocket-handkerchief. "But first let me roar in my rag," and he blew his

nose violently as a ventriloquist ought. Having returned his handkerchief to his pocket, he drew the pegs out of the pulleys, which creaked as usual as the platform was let down.

"Gwynplaine, do not draw the curtain until the performance begins. We are not alone.--You two come on in front. Music, ladies! turn, turn, turn.--A pretty audience we have! the dregs of the people. Good heavens!"

The two gipsies, stupidly obedient, placed themselves in their usual corners of the platform. Then Ursus became wonderful. It was no longer a man, but a crowd. Obligated to make abundance out of emptiness, he called to aid his prodigious powers of ventriloquism. The whole orchestra of human and animal voices which was within him he called into tumult at once.

He was legion. Any one with his eyes closed would have imagined that he was in a public place on some day of rejoicing, or in some sudden popular riot. A whirlwind of clamour proceeded from Ursus: he sang, he shouted, he talked, he coughed, he spat, he sneezed, took snuff, talked and responded, put questions and gave answers, all at once. The half-uttered syllables ran one into another. In the court, untenanted by a single spectator, were heard men, women, and children. It was a clear confusion of tumult. Strange laughter wound, vapour-like, through the noise, the chirping of birds, the swearing of cats, the wailings of children at the breast. The indistinct tones of drunken men were to be heard, and the growls of dogs under the feet of people who stamped on

them. The cries came from far and near, from top to bottom, from the upper boxes to the pit. The whole was an uproar, the detail was a cry. Ursus clapped his hands, stamped his feet, threw his voice to the end of the court, and then made it come from underground. It was both stormy and familiar. It passed from a murmur to a noise, from a noise to a tumult, from a tumult to a tempest. He was himself, any, every one else. Alone, and polyglot. As there are optical illusions, there are also auricular illusions. That which Proteus did to sight Ursus did to hearing. Nothing could be more marvellous than his facsimile of multitude. From time to time he opened the door of the women's apartment and looked at Dea. Dea was listening. On his part the boy exerted himself to the utmost. Vinos and Fibi trumpeted conscientiously, and took turns with the tambourine. Master Nicless, the only spectator, quietly made himself the same explanation as they did--that Ursus was gone mad; which was, for that matter, but another sad item added to his misery. The good tavern-keeper growled out, "What insanity!" And he was serious as a man might well be who has the fear of the law before him.

Govicum, delighted at being able to help in making a noise, exerted himself almost as much as Ursus. It amused him, and, moreover, it earned him pence.

Homo was pensive.

In the midst of the tumult Ursus now and then uttered such words as these:--"Just as usual, Gwynplaine. There is a cabal against us. Our rivals are undermining our success. Tumult is the seasoning of triumph.

Besides, there are too many people. They are uncomfortable. The angles of their neighbours' elbows do not dispose them to good-nature. I hope the benches will not give way. We shall be the victims of an incensed population. Oh, if our friend Tom-Jim-Jack were only here! but he never comes now. Look at those heads rising one above the other. Those who are forced to stand don't look very well pleased, though the great Galen pronounced it to be strengthening. We will shorten the entertainment; as only 'Chaos Vanquished' was announced in the playbill, we will not play 'Ursus Rursus.' There will be something gained in that. What an uproar! O blind turbulence of the masses. They will do us some damage. However, they can't go on like this. We should not be able to play. No one can catch a word of the piece. I am going to address them. Gwynplaine, draw the curtain a little aside.--Gentlemen." Here Ursus addressed himself with a shrill and feeble voice,--

"Down with that old fool!"

Then he answered in his own voice,--

"It seems that the mob insult me. Cicero is right: plebs fex urbis. Never mind; we will admonish the mob, though I shall have a great deal of trouble to make myself heard. I will speak, notwithstanding. Man, do your duty. Gwynplaine, look at that scold grinding her teeth down there."

Ursus made a pause, in which he placed a gnashing of his teeth. Homo, provoked, added a second, and Govicum a third.

Ursus went on,--

"The women are worse than the men. The moment is unpropitious, but it doesn't matter! Let us try the power of a speech; an eloquent speech is never out of place. Listen, Gwynplaine, to my attractive exordium.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am a bear. I take off my head to address you. I humbly appeal to you for silence." Ursus, lending a cry to the crowd, said, "Grumphll!"

Then he continued,--

"I respect my audience. Grumphll is an epiphonema as good as any other welcome. You growlers. That you are all of the dregs of the people, I do not doubt. That in no way diminishes my esteem for you. A well-considered esteem. I have a profound respect for the bullies who honour me with their custom. There are deformed folks amongst you. They give me no offence. The lame and the humpbacked are works of nature. The camel is gibbous. The bison's back is humped. The badger's left legs are shorter than the right, That fact is decided by Aristotle, in his treatise on the walking of animals. There are those amongst you who have but two shirts--one on his back, and the other at the pawnbroker's. I know that to be true. Albuquerque pawned his moustache, and St. Denis his glory. The Jews advanced money on the glory. Great examples. To have debts is to have something. I revere your beggardom."

Ursus cut short his speech, interrupting it in a deep bass voice by the

shout,--

"Triple ass!"

And he answered in his politest accent,--

"I admit it. I am a learned man. I do my best to apologize for it. I scientifically despise science. Ignorance is a reality on which we feed; science is a reality on which we starve. In general one is obliged to choose between two things--to be learned and grow thin, or to browse and be an ass. O gentlemen, browse! Science is not worth a mouthful of anything nice. I had rather eat a sirloin of beef than know what they call the psoas muscle. I have but one merit--a dry eye. Such as you see me, I have never wept. It must be owned that I have never been satisfied--never satisfied--not even with myself. I despise myself; but I submit this to the members of the opposition here present--if Ursus is only a learned man, Gwynplaine is an artist."

He groaned again,--

"Grumphll!"

And resumed,--

"Grumphll again! it is an objection. All the same, I pass it over. Near Gwynplaine, gentlemen and ladies, is another artist, a valued and distinguished personage who accompanies us--his lordship Homo, formerly

a wild dog, now a civilized wolf, and a faithful subject of her Majesty's. Homo is a mine of deep and superior talent. Be attentive and watch. You are going to set Homo play as well as Gwynplaine, and you must do honour to art. That is an attribute of great nations. Are you men of the woods? I admit the fact. In that case, *sylvæ sunt consule digna*. Two artists are well worth one consul. All right! Some one has flung a cabbage stalk at me, but did not hit me. That will not stop my speaking; on the contrary, a danger evaded makes folks garrulous. *Garrula pericula*, says Juvenal. My hearers! there are amongst you drunken men and drunken women. Very well. The men are unwholesome. The women are hideous. You have all sorts of excellent reasons for stowing yourselves away here on the benches of the pothouse--want of work, idleness, the spare time between two robberies, porter, ale, stout, malt, brandy, gin, and the attraction of one sex for the other. What could be better? A wit prone to irony would find this a fair field. But I abstain. 'Tis luxury; so be it, but even an orgy should be kept within bounds. You are gay, but noisy. You imitate successfully the cries of beasts; but what would you say if, when you were making love to a lady, I passed my time in barking at you? It would disturb you, and so it disturbs us. I order you to hold your tongues. Art is as respectable as debauch. I speak to you civilly."

He apostrophized himself,--

"May the fever strangle you, with your eyebrows like the beard of rye."

And he replied,--

"Honourable gentlemen, let the rye alone. It is impious to insult the vegetables, by likening them either to human creatures or animals. Besides, the fever does not strangle. 'Tis a false metaphor. For pity's sake, keep silence. Allow me to tell you that you are slightly wanting in the repose which characterizes the true English gentleman. I see that some amongst you, who have shoes out of which their toes are peeping, take advantage of the circumstance to rest their feet on the shoulders of those who are in front of them, causing the ladies to remark that the soles of shoes divide always at the part at which is the head of the metatarsal bones. Show more of your hands and less of your feet. I perceive scamps who plunge their ingenious fists into the pockets of their foolish neighbours. Dear pickpockets, have a little modesty. Fight those next to you if you like; do not plunder them. You will vex them less by blackening an eye, than by lightening their purses of a penny. Break their noses if you like. The shopkeeper thinks more of his money than of his beauty. Barring this, accept my sympathies, for I am not pedantic enough to blame thieves. Evil exists. Every one endures it, every one inflicts it. No one is exempt from the vermin of his sins. That's what I keep saying. Have we not all our itch? I myself have made mistakes. Plaudite, cives."

Ursus uttered a long groan, which he overpowered by these concluding words,--

"My lords and gentlemen, I see that my address has unluckily displeased you. I take leave of your hisses for a moment. I shall put on my head,

and the performance is going to begin."

He dropt his oratorical tone, and resumed his usual voice.

"Close the curtains. Let me breathe. I have spoken like honey. I have spoken well. My words were like velvet; but they were useless. I called them my lords and gentlemen. What do you think of all this scum, Gwynplaine? How well may we estimate the ills which England has suffered for the last forty years through the ill-temper of these irritable and malicious spirits! The ancient Britons were warlike; these are melancholy and learned. They glory in despising the laws and contemning royal authority. I have done all that human eloquence can do. I have been prodigal of metonymics, as gracious as the blooming cheek of youth. Were they softened by them? I doubt it. What can affect a people who eat so extraordinarily, who stupefy themselves by tobacco so completely that their literary men often write their works with a pipe in their mouths? Never mind. Let us begin the play."

The rings of the curtain were heard being drawn over the rod. The tambourines of the gipsies were still. Ursus took down his instrument, executed his prelude, and said in a low tone: "Alas, Gwynplaine, how mysterious it is!" then he flung himself down with the wolf.

When he had taken down his instrument, he had also taken from the nail a rough wig which he had, and which he had thrown on the stage in a corner within his reach. The performance of "Chaos Vanquished" took place as usual, minus only the effect of the blue light and the brilliancy of the

fairies. The wolf played his best. At the proper moment Dea made her appearance, and, in her voice so tremulous and heavenly, invoked Gwynplaine. She extended her arms, feeling for that head.

Ursus rushed at the wig, ruffled it, put it on, advanced softly, and holding his breath, his head bristled thus under the hand of Dea.

Then calling all his art to his aid, and copying Gwynplaine's voice, he sang with ineffable love the response of the monster to the call of the spirit. The imitation was so perfect that again the gipsies looked for Gwynplaine, frightened at hearing without seeing him.

Govicum, filled with astonishment, stamped, applauded, clapped his hands, producing an Olympian tumult, and himself laughed as if he had been a chorus of gods. This boy, it must be confessed, developed a rare talent for acting an audience.

Fibi and Vinos, being automatons of which Ursus pulled the strings, rattled their instruments, composed of copper and ass's skin--the usual sign of the performance being over and of the departure of the people.

Ursus arose, covered with perspiration. He said, in a low voice, to Homo, "You see it was necessary to gain time. I think we have succeeded. I have not acquitted myself badly--I, who have as much reason as any one to go distracted. Gwynplaine may perhaps return to-morrow. It is useless to kill Dea directly. I can explain matters to you."

He took off his wig and wiped his forehead.

"I am a ventriloquist of genius," murmured he. "What talent I displayed! I have equalled Brabant, the engastrimist of Francis I. of France. Dea is convinced that Gwynplaine is here."

"Ursus," said Dea, "where is Gwynplaine?"

Ursus started and turned round. Dea was still standing at the back of the stage, alone under the lamp which hung from the ceiling. She was pale, with the pallor of a ghost.

She added, with an ineffable expression of despair,--

"I know. He has left us. He is gone. I always knew that he had wings."

And raising her sightless eyes on high, she added,--

"When shall I follow?"

CHAPTER III.

COMPLICATIONS.

Ursus was stunned.

He had not sustained the illusion.

Was it the fault of ventriloquism? Certainly not. He had succeeded in deceiving Fibi and Vinos, who had eyes, although he had not deceived Dea, who was blind. It was because Fibi and Vinos saw with their eyes, while Dea saw with her heart. He could not utter a word. He thought to himself, *Bos in lingua*. The troubled man has an ox on his tongue.

In his complex emotions, humiliation was the first which dawned on him. Ursus, driven out of his last resource, pondered.

"I lavish my onomatopies in vain." Then, like every dreamer, he reviled himself. "What a frightful failure! I wore myself out in a pure loss of imitative harmony. But what is to be done next?"

He looked at Dea. She was silent, and grew paler every moment, as she stood perfectly motionless. Her sightless eyes remained fixed in depths of thought.

Fortunately, something happened. Ursus saw Master Nicless in the yard, with a candle in his hand, beckoning to him.

Master Nicless had not assisted at the end of the phantom comedy played by Ursus. Some one had happened to knock at the door of the inn. Master

Nicless had gone to open it. There had been two knocks, and twice Master Nicless had disappeared. Ursus, absorbed by his hundred-voiced monologue, had not observed his absence.

On the mute call of Master Nicless, Ursus descended.

He approached the tavern-keeper. Ursus put his finger on his lips. Master Nicless put his finger on his lips.

The two looked at each other thus.

Each seemed to say to the other, "We will talk, but we will hold our tongues."

The tavern-keeper silently opened the door of the lower room of the tavern. Master Nicless entered. Ursus entered. There was no one there except these two. On the side looking on the street both doors and window-shutters were closed.

The tavern-keeper pushed the door behind him, and shut it in the face of the inquisitive Govicum.

Master Nicless placed the candle on the table.

A low whispering dialogue began.

"Master Ursus?"

"Master Nicless?"

"I understand at last."

"Nonsense!"

"You wished the poor blind girl to think that all going on as usual."

"There is no law against my being a ventriloquist."

"You are a clever fellow."

"No."

"It is wonderful how you manage all that you wish to do."

"I tell you it is not."

"Now, I have something to tell you."

"Is it about politics?"

"I don't know."

"Because in that case I could not listen to you."

"Look here: whilst you were playing actors and audience by yourself, some one knocked at the door of the tavern."

"Some one knocked at the door?"

"Yes."

"I don't like that."

"Nor I, either."

"And then?"

"And then I opened it."

"Who was it that knocked?"

"Some one who spoke to me."

"What did he say?"

"I listened to him."

"What did you answer?"

"Nothing. I came back to see you play."

"And--?"

"Some one knocked a second time."

"Who? the same person?"

"No, another."

"Some one else to speak to you?"

"Some one who said nothing."

"I like that better."

"I do not."

"Explain yourself, Master Nicless."

"Guess who called the first time."

"I have no leisure to be an Oedipus."

"It was the proprietor of the circus."

"Over the way?"

"Over the way."

"Whence comes all that fearful noise. Well?"

"Well, Master Ursus, he makes you a proposal."

"A proposal?"

"A proposal."

"Why?"

"Because--"

"You have an advantage over me, Master Nicless. Just now you solved my enigma, and now I cannot understand yours."

"The proprietor of the circus commissioned me to tell you that he had seen the cortège of police pass this morning, and that he, the proprietor of the circus, wishing to prove that he is your friend, offers to buy of you, for fifty pounds, ready money, your caravan, the Green Box, your two horses, your trumpets, with the women that blow them, your play, with the blind girl who sings in it, your wolf, and yourself."

Ursus smiled a haughty smile.

"Innkeeper, tell the proprietor of the circus that Gwynplaine is coming

back."

The innkeeper took something from a chair in the darkness, and turning towards Ursus with both arms raised, dangled from one hand a cloak, and from the other a leather esclavine, a felt hat, and a jacket.

And Master Nicless said, "The man who knocked the second time was connected with the police; he came in and left without saying a word, and brought these things."

Ursus recognized the esclavine, the jacket, the hat, and the cloak of Gwynplaine.

CHAPTER IV.

MOENIBUS SURDIS CAMPANA MUTA.

Ursus smoothed the felt of the hat, touched the cloth of the cloak, the serge of the coat, the leather of the esclavine, and no longer able to doubt whose garments they were, with a gesture at once brief and imperative, and without saying a word, pointed to the door of the inn.

Master Nicless opened it.

Ursus rushed out of the tavern.

Master Nicless looked after him, and saw Ursus run, as fast as his old legs would allow, in the direction taken that morning by the wapentake who carried off Gwynplaine.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, Ursus, out of breath, reached the little street in which stood the back wicket of the Southwark jail, which he had already watched so many hours. This alley was lonely enough at all hours; but if dreary during the day, it was portentous in the night. No one ventured through it after a certain hour. It seemed as though people feared that the walls should close in, and that if the prison or the cemetery took a fancy to embrace, they should be crushed in their clasp. Such are the effects of darkness. The pollard willows of

the Ruelle Vauvert in Paris were thus ill-famed. It was said that during the night the stumps of those trees changed into great hands, and caught hold of the passers-by.

By instinct the Southwark folks shunned, as we have already mentioned, this alley between a prison and a churchyard. Formerly it had been barricaded during the night by an iron chain. Very uselessly; because the strongest chain which guarded the street was the terror it inspired.

Ursus entered it resolutely.

What intention possessed him? None.

He came into the alley to seek intelligence.

Was he going to knock at the gate of the jail? Certainly not. Such an expedient, at once fearful and vain, had no place in his brain. To attempt to introduce himself to demand an explanation. What folly! Prisons do not open to those who wish to enter, any more than to those who desire to get out. Their hinges never turn except by law. Ursus knew this. Why, then, had he come there? To see. To see what? Nothing. Who can tell? Even to be opposite the gate through which Gwynplaine had disappeared was something.

Sometimes the blackest and most rugged of walls whispers, and some light escapes through a cranny. A vague glimmering is now and then to be perceived through solid and sombre piles of building. Even to examine

the envelope of a fact may be to some purpose. The instinct of us all is to leave between the fact which interests us and ourselves but the thinnest possible cover. Therefore it was that Ursus returned to the alley in which the lower entrance to the prison was situated.

Just as he entered it he heard one stroke of the clock, then a second.

"Hold," thought he; "can it be midnight already?"

Mechanically he set himself to count.

"Three, four, five."

He mused.

"At what long intervals this clock strikes! how slowly! Six; seven!"

Then he remarked,--

"What a melancholy sound! Eight, nine! Ah! nothing can be more natural; it's dull work for a clock to live in a prison. Ten! Besides, there is the cemetery. This clock sounds the hour to the living, and eternity to the dead. Eleven! Alas! to strike the hour to him who is not free is also to chronicle an eternity. Twelve!"

He paused.

"Yes, it is midnight."

The clock struck a thirteenth stroke.

Ursus shuddered.

"Thirteen!"

Then followed a fourteenth; then a fifteenth.

"What can this mean?"

The strokes continued at long intervals. Ursus listened.

"It is not the striking of a clock; it is the bell Muta. No wonder I said, 'How long it takes to strike midnight!' This clock does not strike; it tolls. What fearful thing is about to take place?"

Formerly all prisons and all monasteries had a bell called Muta, reserved for melancholy occasions. La Muta (the mute) was a bell which struck very low, as if doing its best not to be heard.

Ursus had reached the corner which he had found so convenient for his watch, and whence he had been able, during a great part of the day, to keep his eye on the prison.

The strokes followed each other at lugubrious intervals.

A knell makes an ugly punctuation in space. It breaks the preoccupation of the mind into funereal paragraphs. A knell, like a man's death-rattle, notifies an agony. If in the houses about the neighbourhood where a knell is tolled there are reveries straying in doubt, its sound cuts them into rigid fragments. A vague reverie is a sort of refuge. Some indefinable diffuseness in anguish allows now and then a ray of hope to pierce through it. A knell is precise and desolating. It concentrates this diffusion of thought, and precipitates the vapours in which anxiety seeks to remain in suspense. A knell speaks to each one in the sense of his own grief or of his own fear. Tragic bell! it concerns you. It is a warning to you.

There is nothing so dreary as a monologue on which its cadence falls. The even returns of sound seem to show a purpose.

What is it that this hammer, the bell, forges on the anvil of thought?

Ursus counted, vaguely and without motive, the tolling of the knell. Feeling that his thoughts were sliding from him, he made an effort not to let them slip into conjecture. Conjecture is an inclined plane, on which we slip too far to be to our own advantage. Still, what was the meaning of the bell?

He looked through the darkness in the direction in which he knew the gate of the prison to be.

Suddenly, in that very spot which looked like a dark hole, a redness showed. The redness grew larger, and became a light.

There was no uncertainty about it. It soon took a form and angles. The gate of the jail had just turned on its hinges. The glow painted the arch and the jambs of the door. It was a yawning rather than an opening. A prison does not open; it yawns--perhaps from ennui. Through the gate passed a man with a torch in his hand.

The bell rang on. Ursus felt his attention fascinated by two objects. He watched--his ear the knell, his eye the torch. Behind the first man the gate, which had been ajar, enlarged the opening suddenly, and allowed egress to two other men; then to a fourth. This fourth was the wapentake, clearly visible in the light of the torch. In his grasp was his iron staff.

Following the wapentake, there filed and opened out below the gateway in order, two by two, with the rigidity of a series of walking posts, ranks of silent men.

This nocturnal procession stepped through the wicket in file, like a procession of penitents, without any solution of continuity, with a funereal care to make no noise--gravely, almost gently. A serpent issues from its hole with similar precautions.

The torch threw out their profiles and attitudes into relief. Fierce looks, sullen attitudes.

Ursus recognized the faces of the police who had that morning carried off Gwynplaine.

There was no doubt about it. They were the same. They were reappearing.

Of course, Gwynplaine would also reappear. They had led him to that place; they would bring him back.

It was all quite clear.

Ursus strained his eyes to the utmost. Would they set Gwynplaine at liberty?

The files of police flowed from the low arch very slowly, and, as it were, drop by drop. The toll of the bell was uninterrupted, and seemed to mark their steps. On leaving the prison, the procession turned their backs on Ursus, went to the right, into the bend of the street opposite to that in which he was posted.

A second torch shone under the gateway, announcing the end of the procession.

Ursus was now about to see what they were bringing with them. The prisoner--the man.

Ursus was soon, he thought, to see Gwynplaine.

That which they carried appeared.

It was a bier.

Four men carried a bier, covered with black cloth.

Behind them came a man, with a shovel on his shoulder.

A third lighted torch, held by a man reading a book, probably the chaplain, closed the procession.

The bier followed the ranks of the police, who had turned to the right.

Just at that moment the head of the procession stopped.

Ursus heard the grating of a key.

Opposite the prison, in the low wall which ran along the other side of the street, another opening was illuminated by a torch passing beneath it.

This gate, over which a death's-head was placed, was that of the cemetery.

The wapentake passed through it, then the men, then the second torch. The procession decreased therein, like a reptile entering his retreat.

The files of police penetrated into that other darkness which was beyond the gate; then the bier; then the man with the spade; then the chaplain with his torch and his book, and the gate closed.

There was nothing left but a haze of light above the wall.

A muttering was heard; then some dull sounds. Doubtless the chaplain and the gravedigger--the one throwing on the coffin some verses of Scripture, the other some clods of earth.

The muttering ceased; the heavy sounds ceased. A movement was made. The torches shone. The wapentake reappeared, holding high his weapon, under the reopened gate of the cemetery; then the chaplain with his book, and the gravedigger with his spade. The cortège reappeared without the coffin.

The files of men crossed over in the same order, with the same taciturnity, and in the opposite direction. The gate of the cemetery closed. That of the prison opened. Its sepulchral architecture stood out against the light. The obscurity of the passage became vaguely visible. The solid and deep night of the jail was revealed to sight; then the whole vision disappeared in the depths of shadow.

The knell ceased. All was locked in silence. A sinister incarceration of shadows.

A vanished vision; nothing more.

A passage of spectres, which had disappeared.

The logical arrangement of surmises builds up something which at least resembles evidence. To the arrest of Gwynplaine, to the secret mode of his capture, to the return of his garments by the police officer, to the death bell of the prison to which he had been conducted, was now added, or rather adjusted--portentous circumstance--a coffin carried to the grave.

"He is dead!" cried Ursus.

He sank down upon a stone.

"Dead! They have killed him! Gwynplaine! My child! My son!"

And he burst into passionate sobs.

CHAPTER V.

STATE POLICY DEALS WITH LITTLE MATTERS AS WELL AS WITH GREAT.

Ursus, alas! had boasted that he had never wept. His reservoir of tears was full. Such plentitude as is accumulated drop on drop, sorrow on sorrow, through a long existence, is not to be poured out in a moment. Ursus wept alone.

The first tear is a letting out of waters. He wept for Gwynplaine, for Dea, for himself, Ursus, for Homo. He wept like a child. He wept like an old man. He wept for everything at which he had ever laughed. He paid off arrears. Man is never nonsuited when he pleads his right to tears.

The corpse they had just buried was Hardquanonne's; but Ursus could not know that.

The hours crept on.

Day began to break. The pale clothing of the morning was spread out, dimly creased with shadow, over the bowling-green. The dawn lighted up the front of the Tadcaster Inn. Master Nicless had not gone to bed, because sometimes the same occurrence produces sleeplessness in many.

Troubles radiate in every direction. Throw a stone in the water, and count the splashes.

Master Nicless felt himself impeached. It is very disagreeable that such things should happen in one's house. Master Nicless, uneasy, and foreseeing misfortunes, meditated. He regretted having received such people into his house. Had he but known that they would end by getting

him into mischief! But the question was how to get rid of them? He had given Ursus a lease. What a blessing if he could free himself from it! How should he set to work to drive them out?

Suddenly the door of the inn resounded with one of those tumultuous knocks which in England announces "Somebody." The gamut of knocking corresponds with the ladder of hierarchy.

It was not quite the knock of a lord; but it was the knock of a justice.

The trembling innkeeper half opened his window. There was, indeed, the magistrate. Master Nicless perceived at the door a body of police, from the head of which two men detached themselves, one of whom was the justice of the quorum.

Master Nicless had seen the justice of the quorum that morning, and recognized him.

He did not know the other, who was a fat gentleman, with a waxen-coloured face, a fashionable wig, and a travelling cloak. Nicless was much afraid of the first of these persons, the justice of the quorum. Had he been of the court, he would have feared the other most, because it was Barkilphedro.

One of the subordinates knocked at the door again violently.

The innkeeper, with great drops of perspiration on his brow, from

anxiety, opened it.

The justice of the quorum, in the tone of a man who is employed in matters of police, and who is well acquainted with various shades of vagrancy, raised his voice, and asked, severely, for

"Master Ursus!"

The host, cap in hand, replied,--

"Your honour; he lives here."

"I know it," said the justice.

"No doubt, your honour."

"Tell him to come down."

"Your honour, he is not here."

"Where is he?"

"I do not know."

"How is that?"

"He has not come in."

"Then he must have gone out very early?"

"No; but he went out very late."

"What vagabonds!" replied the justice.

"Your honour," said Master Nicless, softly, "here he comes."

Ursus, indeed, had just come in sight, round a turn of the wall. He was returning to the inn. He had passed nearly the whole night between the jail, where at midday he had seen Gwynplaine, and the cemetery, where at midnight he had heard the grave filled up. He was pallid with two pallors--that of sorrow and of twilight.

Dawn, which is light in a chrysalis state, leaves even those forms which are in movement in the uncertainty of night. Ursus, wan and indistinct, walked slowly, like a man in a dream. In the wild distraction produced by agony of mind, he had left the inn with his head bare. He had not even found out that he had no hat on. His spare, gray locks fluttered in the wind. His open eyes appeared sightless. Often when awake we are asleep, and as often when asleep we are awake.

Ursus looked like a lunatic.

"Master Ursus," cried the innkeeper, "come; their honours desire to speak to you."

Master Nicless, in his endeavour to soften matters down, let slip, although he would gladly have omitted, this plural, "their honours"--respectful to the group, but mortifying, perhaps, to the chief, confounded therein, to some degree, with his subordinates.

Ursus started like a man falling off a bed, on which he was sound asleep.

"What is the matter?" said he.

He saw the police, and at the head of the police the justice. A fresh and rude shock.

But a short time ago, the wapentake, now the justice of the quorum. He seemed to have been cast from one to the other, as ships by some reefs of which we have read in old stories.

The justice of the quorum made him a sign to enter the tavern. Ursus obeyed.

Govicum, who had just got up, and who was sweeping the room, stopped his work, got into a corner behind the tables, put down his broom, and held his breath. He plunged his fingers into his hair, and scratched his head, a symptom which indicated attention to what was about to occur.

The justice of the quorum sat down on a form, before a table.

Barkilphedro took a chair. Ursus and Master Nicless remained standing. The police officers, left outside, grouped themselves in front of the closed door.

The justice of the quorum fixed his eye, full of the law, upon Ursus. He said,--

"You have a wolf."

Ursus answered,--

"Not exactly."

"You have a wolf," continued the justice, emphasizing "wolf" with a decided accent.

Ursus answered,--

"You see--"

And he was silent.

"A misdemeanour!" replied the justice.

Ursus hazarded an excuse,--

"He is my servant."

The justice placed his hand flat on the table, with his fingers spread out, which is a very fine gesture of authority.

"Merry-andrew! to-morrow, by this hour, you and your wolf must have left England. If not, the wolf will be seized, carried to the register office, and killed."

Ursus thought, "More murder!" but he breathed not a syllable, and was satisfied with trembling in every limb.

"You hear?" said the justice.

Ursus nodded.

The justice persisted,--

"Killed."

There was silence.

"Strangled, or drowned."

The justice of the quorum watched Ursus.

"And yourself in prison."

Ursus murmured,--

"Your worship!"

"Be off before to-morrow morning; if not, such is the order."

"Your worship!"

"What?"

"Must we leave England, he and I?"

"Yes."

"To-day?"

"To-day."

"What is to be done?"

Master Nicless was happy. The magistrate, whom he had feared, had come to his aid. The police had acted as auxiliary to him, Nicless. They had delivered him from "such people." The means he had sought were brought to him. Ursus, whom he wanted to get rid of, was being driven away by the police, a superior authority. Nothing to object to. He was delighted. He interrupted,--

"Your honour, that man--"

He pointed to Ursus with his finger.

"That man wants to know how he is to leave England to-day. Nothing can be easier. There are night and day at anchor on the Thames, both on this and on the other side of London Bridge, vessels that sail to the Continent. They go from England to Denmark, to Holland, to Spain; not to France, on account of the war, but everywhere else. To-night several ships will sail, about one o'clock in the morning, which is the hour of high tide, and, amongst others, the Vograat of Rotterdam."

The justice of the quorum made a movement of his shoulder towards Ursus.

"Be it so. Leave by the first ship--by the Vograat."

"Your worship," said Ursus.

"Well?"

"Your worship, if I had, as formerly, only my little box on wheels, it might be done. A boat would contain that; but--"

"But what?"

"But now I have got the Green Box, which is a great caravan drawn by two horses, and however wide the ship might be, we could not get it into

her."

"What is that to me?" said the justice. "The wolf will be killed."

Ursus shuddered, as if he were grasped by a hand of ice.

"Monsters!" he thought. "Murdering people is their way of settling matters."

The innkeeper smiled, and addressed Ursus.

"Master Ursus, you can sell the Green Box."

Ursus looked at Nicless.

"Master Ursus, you have the offer."

"From whom?"

"An offer for the caravan, an offer for the two horses, an offer for the two gipsy women, an offer--"

"From whom?" repeated Ursus.

"From the proprietor of the neighbouring circus."

Ursus remembered it.

"It is true."

Master Nicless turned to the justice of the quorum.

"Your honour, the bargain can be completed to-day. The proprietor of the circus close by wishes to buy the caravan and the horses."

"The proprietor of the circus is right," said the justice, "because he will soon require them. A caravan and horses will be useful to him. He, too, will depart to-day. The reverend gentlemen of the parish of Southwark have complained of the indecent riot in Tarrinzeau field. The sheriff has taken his measures. To-night there will not be a single juggler's booth in the place. There must be an end of all these scandals. The honourable gentleman who deigns to be here present--"

The justice of the quorum interrupted his speech to salute Barkilphedro, who returned the bow.

"The honourable gentleman who deigns to be present has just arrived from Windsor. He brings orders. Her Majesty has said, 'It must be swept away.'"

Ursus, during his long meditation all night, had not failed to put himself some questions. After all, he had only seen a bier. Could he be sure that it contained Gwynplaine? Other people might have died besides Gwynplaine. A coffin does not announce the name of the corpse, as it

passes by. A funeral had followed the arrest of Gwynplaine. That proved nothing. Post hoc, non propter hoc, etc. Ursus had begun to doubt.

Hope burns and glimmers over misery like naphtha over water. Its hovering flame ever floats over human sorrow. Ursus had come to this conclusion, "It is probable that it was Gwynplaine whom they buried, but it is not certain. Who knows? Perhaps Gwynplaine is still alive."

Ursus bowed to the justice.

"Honourable judge, I will go away, we will go away, all will go away, by the Vograat of Rotterdam, to-day. I will sell the Green Box, the horses, the trumpets, the gipsies. But I have a comrade, whom I cannot leave behind--Gwynplaine."

"Gwynplaine is dead," said a voice.

Ursus felt a cold sensation, such as is produced by a reptile crawling over the skin. It was Barkilphedro who had just spoken.

The last gleam was extinguished. No more doubt now. Gwynplaine was dead. A person in authority must know. This one looked ill-favoured enough to do so.

Ursus bowed to him.

Master Nicless was a good-hearted man enough, but a dreadful coward.

Once terrified, he became a brute. The greatest cruelty is that inspired by fear.

He growled out,--

"This simplifies matters."

And he indulged, standing behind Ursus, in rubbing his hands, a peculiarity of the selfish, signifying, "I am well out of it," and suggestive of Pontius Pilate washing his hands.

Ursus, overwhelmed, bent down his head.

The sentence on Gwynplaine had been executed--death. His sentence was pronounced--exile. Nothing remained but to obey. He felt as in a dream.

Some one touched his arm. It was the other person, who was with the justice of the quorum. Ursus shuddered.

The voice which had said, "Gwynplaine is dead," whispered in his ear,--

"Here are ten guineas, sent you by one who wishes you well."

And Barkilphedro placed a little purse on a table before Ursus. We must not forget the casket that Barkilphedro had taken with him.

Ten guineas out of two thousand! It was all that Barkilphedro could make

up his mind to part with. In all conscience it was enough. If he had given more, he would have lost. He had taken the trouble of finding out a lord; and having sunk the shaft, it was but fair that the first proceeds of the mine should belong to him. Those who see meanness in the act are right, but they would be wrong to feel astonished. Barkilphedro loved money, especially money which was stolen. An envious man is an avaricious one. Barkilphedro was not without his faults. The commission of crimes does not preclude the possession of vices. Tigers have their lice.

Besides, he belonged to the school of Bacon.

Barkilphedro turned towards the justice of the quorum, and said to him,--

"Sir, be so good as to conclude this matter. I am in haste. A carriage and horses belonging to her Majesty await me. I must go full gallop to Windsor, for I must be there within two hours' time. I have intelligence to give, and orders to take."

The justice of the quorum arose.

He went to the door, which was only latched, opened it, and, looking silently towards the police, beckoned to them authoritatively. They entered with that silence which heralds severity of action.

Master Nicless, satisfied with the rapid dénouement which cut short

his difficulties, charmed to be out of the entangled skein, was afraid, when he saw the muster of officers, that they were going to apprehend Ursus in his house. Two arrests, one after the other, made in his house--first that of Gwynplaine, then that of Ursus--might be injurious to the inn. Customers dislike police raids.

Here then was a time for a respectful appeal, suppliant and generous. Master Nicless turned toward the justice of the quorum a smiling face, in which confidence was tempered by respect.

"Your honour, I venture to observe to your honour that these honourable gentlemen, the police officers, might be dispensed with, now that the wolf is about to be carried away from England, and that this man, Ursus, makes no resistance; and since your honour's orders are being punctually carried out, your honour will consider that the respectable business of the police, so necessary to the good of the kingdom, does great harm to an establishment, and that my house is innocent. The merry-andrews of the Green Box having been swept away, as her Majesty says, there is no longer any criminal here, as I do not suppose that the blind girl and the two women are criminals; therefore, I implore your honour to deign to shorten your august visit, and to dismiss these worthy gentlemen who have just entered, because there is nothing for them to do in my house; and, if your honour will permit me to prove the justice of my speech under the form of a humble question, I will prove the inutility of these revered gentlemen's presence by asking your honour, if the man, Ursus, obeys orders and departs, who there can be to arrest here?"

"Yourself," said the justice.

A man does not argue with a sword which runs him through and through. Master Nicless subsided--he cared not on what, on a table, on a form, on anything that happened to be there--prostrate.

The justice raised his voice, so that if there were people outside, they might hear.

"Master Nicless Plumptree, keeper of this tavern, this is the last point to be settled. This mountebank and the wolf are vagabonds. They are driven away. But the person most in fault is yourself. It is in your house, and with your consent, that the law has been violated; and you, a man licensed, invested with a public responsibility, have established the scandal here. Master Nicless, your licence is taken away; you must pay the penalty, and go to prison."

The policemen surrounded the innkeeper.

The justice continued, pointing out Govicum,--

"Arrest that boy as an accomplice." The hand of an officer fell upon the collar of Govicum, who looked at him inquisitively. The boy was not much alarmed, scarcely understanding the occurrence; having already observed many things out of the way, he wondered if this were the end of the comedy.

The justice of the quorum forced his hat down on his head, crossed his hands on his stomach, which is the height of majesty, and added,--

"It is decided, Master Nicless; you are to be taken to prison, and put into jail, you and the boy; and this house, the Tadcaster Inn, is to remain shut up, condemned and closed. For the sake of example. Upon which, you will follow us."

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

THE TITANESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE AWAKENING.

And Dea!

It seemed to Gwynplaine, as he watched the break of day at Corleone Lodge, while the things we have related were occurring at the Tadcaster