VANITY FAIR

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

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INTRODUCTION

It was just sixty years ago that the English-speaking world began to recognise a master of fiction and a man of genius in William Makepeace Thackeray.

The year before, this young man of letters (then thirty-five years old, known as a contributor to *Punch* and author of sundry stories and sketches, liked by his confrères but not yet very highly esteemed by the general public), removed from St. James Street to No. 16 (then No. 13) Young Street. Long afterwards, in a rollicking mood, he pointed out this house to his friend James T. Fields, the Boston publisher, saying, "Down on your knees, you rogue, for here *Vanity Fair* was penned; and I will go down with you, for I have a high opinion of that little production myself."

At first neither the publishers nor the public agreed with him about his "little production." Colburn, in fact, refused it outright, even for his magazine. Meantime the author was agonising over a title. He told the outcome himself, like the overgrown boy he remained on one side of his nature to the end: "I jumped out of bed, in the middle of the night, and ran three times round my room, uttering as I went, *Vanity Fair, Vanity Fair, Vanity Fair.*"

With this new title and on a cursory examination of the earlier pages, the story was at last accepted by the proprietors of *Punch*, and it began to appear in monthly parts in January 1847. The critics found the opening chapters dull; the public did not seem attracted, and the publishers even hesitated about continuing the serial publication. The fame of Dickens was already established; *Dombey and Son* was then appearing once a month in green paper covers; and the yellow-covered *Vanity Fair* did not seem to furnish a counter-attraction.

At last, after some eight numbers had been issued, Mrs. Carlyle, who had a faculty of seeing things in literature sooner than publishers or the public, read one of the parts "during the night" and wrote to her husband about it: "Very good indeed; beats Dickens out of the world." By the time ten out of the twenty monthly parts had appeared, *The Edinburgh Review* had discovered it to such purpose that the reviewer (Hayward, prompted, they say, by Barry Cornwall's wife, Mrs. Procter) declared that *Vanity Fair* is as sure of immortality as ninety-nine hundredths of modern novels are sure of annihilation. And then came the appreciation that might well count most of all, the tribute of Charlotte Brontë in December 1847:

"There is a man in our own days, whose words are not framed to tickle delicate ears: who, to my thinking, comes before the great ones of society much as the son of Imlah came before the throned Kings of Judah and Israel; and who speaks truth as deep, with a power as prophet-like and as vital, a mien as dauntless and as daring. . . . Why have I alluded to this man? . . . Because I think I see in him an intellect profounder and more unique than his contemporaries have yet recognised; because I regard him as the first social regenerator of the day—as the very master of that working corps who would restore to rectitude the warped system of things; because I think no commentator on his writings has yet found the comparison that suits him, the terms which rightly characterise his talent. They say he is like Fielding; they talk of his wit, humour, comic powers. He resembles Fielding as an eagle does a vulture: Fielding could stoop on carrion, but Thackeray never does. His wit is bright, his humour attractive, but both bear the same relation to his serious genius that the mere lambent sheet-lightning playing under the edge of the summer cloud does to the electric death-spark hid in its womb. Finally, I have alluded to Mr. Thackeray because to him—if he will accept the tribute of a total stranger—I have dedicated this second edition of *Jane Eyre*."

The recognition was complete; at the end of the year in which the publication was begun, and when little more than half the work had appeared, the literary world of Britain and America opened to and acclaimed a new master.

Just about sixty years, to a month, after the time when the author was still hunting publishers and springing from his bed in the middle of the night to race about his room in boyish delight over having found a title, a group of British wits and authors, under the name of the Titmarsh Club, were assembled in London, in memory of this great wit and author, their countryman. They chose to put the American Ambassador in the chair, and the publishers of "Everyman's Library" are good enough to suggest that the few words then uttered might properly enough be here reproduced. For this distinction, there and here, I must be indebted to the same cause—a kindly recollection of the fact that the great author found his audience in America almost if not quite as soon as at home; that he always held it, and holds it still. And perhaps, too, it may be remembered that Mr. Thackeray seemed to like us nearly as well as we liked him, and was never weary of showing his goodwill—even when he was somewhat more lonely in such manifestations than he would be now.

I never had the good fortune to meet Mr. Thackeray in America, though I did meet soon afterwards the other great British novelist of that period. But for years I was constantly hearing gossip about Thackeray from those who had met him during his visits to us, like the genial publisher who was his guide, philosopher and friend among the Brahmins of Boston, or like the old Centurions of New York. Their accounts ran all one way. They admired his talk, and they loved him. They pictured him as big, hearty, and very human. They didn't find him playing the lion the least little bit, and we may hope he didn't find us playing the spread eagle too much. They pointed out the corner in the Century Club where he used to sit exchanging literary chat, or, in Yankee parlance, "swapping stories," with a group of club men about him. They could tell you years afterwards what had been Thackeray's favourite chair, and some had even been so observant of the least trifles about the great man as to know what particular concoction in a club tumbler had been his favourite "night-cap."

There was never any lack of admiration for the other great novelist to whom I have referred, even when we were still thin-skinned, and *The American Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit* were still fresh from the press. But there was no such social and club tradition of Dickens. Perhaps the reason is not obscure. Dickens painted us, for the very eyes in all the world wherein we were then most anxious to look well, in the books I have just named. Thackeray represented America to the Mother Country in the persons of Henry Esmond and George Washington. No doubt we had our Jefferson Bricks and Elijah Pograms too. I do not deny it, and do not deny that they were painted to the life. But we were human enough to like it better when the others were presented as our national types.

No such consideration, however, affected the publisher's touchstone—and I am afraid the touchstone of most men of letters too—the sales. These went on in America very much as they did in Great Britain—perhaps more so. The great popular circulation came to Dickens; the audience, fit though fewer, to Thackeray. I have not seen the late figures, but I fancy that the disparity in sales is less nowadays. Few reasonably comprehensive private libraries are without the works of one if not both; but I believe that in the severer collections of pure literature the name under which the Titmarsh Club assembles has begun to lead.

We must not think of anything more nearly approaching comparison between these two men of genius. It would be utterly idle, if not impossible. If there were comparisons once and if a shade of coolness ever crept between them, let us recall at any rate with pleasure the warm public references Thackeray so frequently volunteered about Dickens. Long after his own fame was firmly established, he could find no better way to point his dislike of a certain coarseness in Sterne and other old humorists than by saying, "I think of these past writers and of one who lives amongst us now, and am grateful for the innocent laughter and the sweet and unsullied page which the author of *David Copperfield* gives to my children." And again, in the course of a more elaborate eulogy, he told how his daughters read *Nicholas Nickleby* for amusement when they were wakeful, and for rest when they were tired, and for medicine when they were ill, and how they demanded of him, "Papa, why don't you write novels like *Nicholas Nickleby*?" He closed the story with the outburst, "Alas! who can?" and with the most generous of tributes.

Perhaps I may now say, without comparisons and without disparagement or offence, that American men of letters are apt to speak with particularly warm admiration of Thackeray. Simply as a story-teller they may not rate him so high as other British authors—not, in fact, so high as some British authors of to-day. They may even hint at prolixity, and at the frequency with which the innocent reader is held by the buttonhole for over-much moralising. But criticism is silenced, all are carried away by his creations of character, by the keen but kindly analysis of human nature, the scorn of meanness, the

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trenchant satire that still hates to wound, the sentiment at once healthy, manly and tender, the splendid humanity. As for his style, it is thought well-nigh perfect. Leslie Stephen has somewhere told us that at the beginning, if not to the end, this style was the work of constant revision and interlineation. For myself I do not believe any style of the first order was ever attained in any other way. I have no faith—here, perhaps, speaks the old Editor, hardened in his prejudices—but I have no sort of faith in the things that are written at a dash, and handed you without a change of a word. It was no less a genius than Sheridan, was it not, who formulated the immutable literary law that "Your easy writing's curst hard reading"?[1]

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[1] I am indebted to Mr. Ernest Rhys for recalling a passage in Mr. W. Holman-Hunt's *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, which admirably illustrates the opposite view. Mr. Wingrove Cook is reported as telling how Thackeray wrote and how Mr. Cook would have written:

"We talked about the author of *Vanity Fair*. Cook said, 'Thackeray is no genius! He was my schoolfellow and I've known him all along for a rather able and plodding gentleman of letters, nothing more; amusing enough some of his lucubrations are, but he is overrated, he hammers out all with the greatest toil. Look here! When I came home last year after a long absence abroad, I invited a party of old chums to come and dine with me at Hampton Court. And I went to Thackeray, saying, "Now, my dear fellow, you must come and dine with me and a lot of ancient cronies next Wednesday."'

"'Ah me!' returned William Makepeace, 'I wish 'twere not so, but the end of the month is coming, and so far I have not written a line of my new number, and I have put aside next Wednesday evening to go down to some quiet lodgings I have taken at Surbiton to make a big innings, so you see I am obliged to give up your attractive party. I'm truly chagrined.'

"'Do you mean to tell me that you consider the writing a few pages of your story a sufficient reason for breaking through our good fellowship?' I argued. 'Why, I could write twice the quantity of your whole number in four hours.'

"'Ah!' Thackeray replied, 'I know too well that I could not, and if I gave up Wednesday night, I should find that I was behind, and all my sense of deliberate judgment would go. It would not do indeed.'

"It was no use arguing with him, and I had to give him up. Well, our party met. Every one asked why Thackeray was not there, and I told them. Nevertheless we had a jolly evening, and when we were breaking up, in reply to an inquiry where Surbiton was, I decided that we would drive home that way, and knock up W. M. Thackeray. We arrived at the dark village. There was one house with a light on the first floor; it was easy to conclude that we were at the right one, and we all shouted out 'Thackeray.' The window was forthwith opened and our friend appeared; recognising us, he said quietly, 'Oh! wait a minute and I will come down and let you in.' He descended and opened the door. He was feverish, yet very calm, and terribly sober.

"We flocked in and I preceded the party upstairs. There was the writing-pad with some sheets of notepaper on the table, and the upper sheet had about twelve lines of his neatest small writing, with a blank

But this rambling talk must not wander on. As I have been thinking of this man, whose place is secure among the immortals, whom every one counts in the first rank of the great Victorians, I could not help recalling that exquisite little essay of his among the *Roundabout Papers*, "Nil Nisi Bonum," as noble a paper as ever adorned even *The Spectator*. Readers will remember the warm tribute it pays to two men of letters then lately taken away, one from England, both perhaps I may presume to say from America, Thomas Babington Macaulay and Washington Irving. He called them the Gibbon and Goldsmith of their time, and finally applied to them some words which I venture to think men of letters the world over will now feel that we may apply with equal justice, and even greater fervour, to William Makepeace Thackeray himself. Let me close by quoting them:

"It has been his fortunate lot to give incalculable happiness and delight to the world, which thanks him in return with an immense kindliness, respect, affection. It may not be our chance, brother scribe, to be endowed with such merit, or rewarded with such fame. But the rewards of these men are rewards paid to *our service*. We may not win the baton or epaulettes; but God give us strength to guard the honour of the flag!"

WHITELAW REID.

February 1908.

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space at the bottom. I held it up before Thackeray. 'Tell me,' I said, 'Is this all you have written this blessed evening?'

"'Alas!' he replied, quite sadly, 'that is all.'

"And I rejoined, 'Then that is what you left all of us for? You ought to be ashamed of yourself.' And in return, he admitted that I was quite right.

"While my mind was still in the lodging at Surbiton, and following the inspired author of *Vanity Fair* after his boisterous companions had gone and he sat down to gather up the disturbed threads of his wonderful embroidery, Wingrove unsuspectingly said to us, 'Now do you call that a genius?'"

Here was a man who was quite sure that no pangs of labour need precede a literary birth. But, if the kind reader will pardon my transatlantic ignorance, we know now who the struggling author was that spent a whole evening in writing a dozen lines in *Vanity Fair*—but exactly who was Mr. Wingrove Cook?

BEFORE THE CURTAIN

As the Manager of the Performance sits before the curtain on the boards, and looks into the Fair, a feeling of profound melancholy comes over him in his survey of the bustling place. There is a great quantity of eating and drinking, making love and jilting, laughing and the contrary, smoking, cheating, fighting, dancing, and fiddling: there are bullies pushing about, bucks ogling the women, knaves picking pockets, policemen on the look-out, quacks (*other* quacks, plague take them!) bawling in front of their booths, and yokels looking up at the tinselled dancers and poor old rouged tumblers, while the light-fingered folk are operating upon their pockets behind. Yes, this is VANITY FAIR: not a moral place certainly; nor a merry one, though very noisy. Look at the faces of the actors and buffoons when they come off from their business; and Tom Fool washing the paint off his cheeks before he sits down to dinner with his wife and the little Jack Puddings behind the canvas. The curtain will be up presently, and he will be turning over head and heels, and crying, " How are you? "

A man with a reflective turn of mind, walking through an exhibition of this sort, will not be oppressed, I take it, by his own or other people's hilarity. An episode of humour or kindness touches and amuses him here and there;—a pretty child looking at a gingerbread stall; a pretty girl blushing whilst her lover talks to her and chooses her fairing; poor Tom Fool, yonder behind the waggon, mumbling his bone with the honest family which lives by his tumbling; but the general impression is one more melancholy than mirthful. When you come home you sit down, in a sober, contemplative, not uncharitable frame of mind, and apply yourself to your books or your business.

I have no other moral than this to tag to the present story of " Vanity Fair." Some people consider fairs immoral altogether, and eschew such, with their servants and families: very likely they are right. But persons who think otherwise, and are of a lazy, or a benevolent, or a sarcastic mood, may perhaps like to step in for half-an-hour, and look at the performances. There are scenes of all sorts: some dreadful combats, some grand and lofty horse-riding, some scenes of high life, and some of very middling indeed; some love-making for the sentimental, and some light comic business; the whole accompanied by appropriate scenery and brilliantly illuminated with the Author's own candles.

What more has the Manager of the Performance to say?—To acknowledge the kindness with which it has been received in all the principal towns of England through which the Show has passed, and where it has been most favourably noticed by the respected conductors of the public Press, and by the Nobility and Gentry. He is proud to think that his Puppets have given satisfaction to the very best company in this empire. The famous little Becky Puppet has been pronounced to be uncommonly flexible in the joints, and lively on the wire: the Amelia Doll, though it has had a smaller circle of admirers, has yet been carved and dressed with the greatest care by the artist: the Dobbin Figure, though apparently clumsy, yet dances in a very amusing and natural manner: the Little Boys' Dance has been liked by some; and please to remark the richly dressed figure of the Wicked Nobleman, on which no expense has been spared, and which Old Nick will fetch away at the end of this singular performance.

And with this, and a profound bow to his patrons, the Manager retires, and the curtain rises.

LONDON, *June* 28, 1848.

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VANITY FAIR

A NOVEL WITHOUT A HERO

CHAPTER I

CHISWICK MALL

WHILE the present century was in its teens, and on one sunshiny morning in June, there drove up to the great iron gate of Miss Pinkerton's academy for young ladies, on Chiswick Mall, a large family coach, with two fat horses in blazing harness, driven by a fat coachman in a three-cornered hat and wig, at the rate of four miles an hour. A black servant, who reposed on the box beside the fat coachman, uncurled his bandy-legs as soon as the equipage drew up opposite Miss Pinkerton's shining brass plate, and as he pulled the bell, at least a score of young heads were seen peering out of the narrow windows of the stately old brick house. Nay, the acute observer might have recognised the little red nose of good-natured Miss Jemima Pinkerton herself, rising over some geranium-pots in the window of that lady's own drawing-room.

"It is Mrs. Sedley's coach, sister," said Miss Jemima. "Sambo, the black servant, has just rung the bell; and the coachman has a new red waistcoat."

"Have you completed all the necessary preparations incident to Miss Sedley's departure, Miss Jemima?" asked Miss Pinkerton herself, that majestic lady; the Semiramis of Hammersmith, the friend of Doctor Johnson, the correspondent of Mrs. Chapone herself.

"The girls were up at four this morning, packing her trunks, sister," replied Miss Jemima; "we have made her a bow-pot."

"Say a bouquet, sister Jemima, 'tis more genteel."

"Well, a booky as big almost as a hay-stack; I have put up two bottles of the gillyflower-water for Mrs. Sedley, and the receipt for making it, in Amelia's box."

"And I trust, Miss Jemima, you have made a copy of Miss Sedley's account. This is it, is it? Very good—ninety-three pounds, four shillings. Be kind enough to address it to John Sedley, Esquire, and to seal this billet which I have written to his lady."

In Miss Jemima's eyes an autograph letter of her sister, Miss Pinkerton, was an object of as deep veneration as would have been a letter from a sovereign. Only when her pupils quitted the establishment, or when they were about to be married, and once, when poor Miss Birch died of the scarlet fever, was Miss Pinkerton known to write personally to the parents of her pupils; and it was Jemima's opinion that if anything *could* console Mrs. Birch for her daughter's loss, it would be that pious and eloquent composition in which Miss Pinkerton announced the event.

In the present instance Miss Pinkerton's "billet" was to the following effect:—

"*The Mall, Chiswick, June* 15, 18—.

"MADAM,—After her six years' residence at the Mall, I have the honour and happiness of presenting Miss Amelia Sedley to her parents, as a young lady not unworthy to occupy a fitting position in their polished and refined circle. Those virtues which characterise the young English gentlewoman, those accomplishments which become her birth and station, will not be found wanting in the amiable Miss Sedley, whose *industry* and *obedience* have endeared her to her instructors, and whose delightful sweetness of temper has charmed her *aged* and her *youthful* companions.

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"In music, in dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needlework, she will be found to have realised her friends' *fondest wishes*. In geography there is still much to be desired; and a careful and undeviating use of the backboard, for four hours daily during the next three years, is recommended as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified *deportment and carriage*, so requisite for every young lady of *fashion*.

"In the principles of religion and morality, Miss Sedley will be found worthy of an establishment which has been honoured by the presence of *The Great Lexicographer*, and the patronage of the admirable Mrs. Chapone. In leaving the Mall, Miss Amelia carries with her the hearts of her companions, and the affectionate regards of her mistress, who has the honour to subscribe herself,

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"Madam, your most obliged humble servant,

"BARBARA PINKERTON.

"*P.S.*—Miss Sharp accompanies Miss Sedley. It is particularly requested that Miss Sharp's stay in Russell Square may not exceed ten days. The family of distinction with whom she is engaged, desire to avail themselves of her services as soon as possible."

This letter completed, Miss Pinkerton proceeded to write her own name, and Miss Sedley's, in the fly-leaf of a Johnson's Dictionary—the interesting work which she invariably presented to her scholars on their departure from the Mall. On the cover was inserted a copy of "Lines addressed to a young lady on quitting Miss Pinkerton's school, at the Mall; by the late revered Doctor Samuel Johnson." In fact, the Lexicographer's name was always on the lips of this majestic woman, and a visit he had paid to her was the cause of her reputation and her fortune.

Being commanded by her elder sister to get "the Dictionary" from the cupboard, Miss Jemima had extracted two copies of the book from the receptacle in question. When Miss Pinkerton had finished the inscription in the first, Jemima, with rather a dubious and timid air, handed her the second.

"For whom is this, Miss Jemima?" said Miss Pinkerton, with awful coldness.

"For Becky Sharp," answered Jemima, trembling very much, and blushing over her withered face and neck, as she turned her back on her sister. "For Becky Sharp: she's going too."

"MISS JEMIMA!" exclaimed Miss Pinkerton, in the largest capitals. "Are you in your senses? Replace the Dixonary in the closet, and never venture to take such a liberty in future."

"Well, sister, it's only two-and-ninepence, and poor Becky will be miserable if she don't get one."

"Send Miss Sedley instantly to me," said Miss Pinkerton. And so, venturing not to say another word, poor Jemima trotted off, exceedingly flurried and nervous.

Miss Sedley's papa was a merchant in London, and a man of some wealth; whereas Miss Sharp was an articled pupil, for whom Miss Pinkerton had done, as she thought, quite enough, without conferring upon her at parting the high honour of the Dixonary.

Although schoolmistresses' letters are to be trusted no more nor less than churchyard epitaphs; yet, as it sometimes happens that a person departs this life who is really deserving of all the praises the stonecutter carves over his bones; who *is* a good Christian, a good parent, child, wife, or husband; who actually *does* leave a disconsolate family to mourn his loss; so in academies of the male and female sex it occurs every now and then, that the pupil is fully worthy of the praises bestowed by the disinterested instructor. Now Miss Amelia Sedley was a young lady of this singular species; and deserved not only all that

Miss Pinkerton said in her praise, but had many charming qualities which that pompous old Minerva of a woman could not see, from the differences of rank and age between her pupil and herself.

For she could not only sing like a lark, or a Mrs. Billington, and dance like Hillisberg or Parisot; and embroider beautifully; and spell as well as a Dixonary itself; but she had such a kindly, smiling, tender, gentle, generous heart of her own, as won the love of everybody who came near her, from Minerva herself down to the poor girl in the scullery and the one-eyed tart-woman's daughter, who was permitted to vend her wares once a week to the young ladies in the Mall. She had twelve intimate and bosom friends out of the twenty-four young ladies. Even envious Miss Briggs never spoke ill of her: high and mighty Miss Saltire (Lord Dexter's grand-daughter) allowed that her figure was genteel; and as for Miss Swartz, the rich woolly-haired mulatto from St. Kitt's, on the day Amelia went away, she was in such a passion of tears, that they were obliged to send for Dr. Floss, and half tipsify her with sal volatile. Miss Pinkerton's attachment was, as may be supposed, from the high position and eminent virtues of that lady, calm and dignified; but Miss Jemima had already whimpered several times at the idea of Amelia's departure; and, but for fear of her sister, would have gone off in downright hysterics like the heiress (who paid double) of St. Kitt's. Such luxury of grief, however, is only allowed to parlour-boarders. Honest Jemima had all the bills, and the washing, and the mending, and the puddings, and the plate and crockery, and the servants to superintend. But why speak about her? It is probable that we shall not hear of her again from this moment to the end of time, and that when the great filagree iron gates are once closed on her, she and her awful sister will never issue therefrom into this little world of history.

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But as we are to see a great deal of Amelia, there is no harm in saying, at the outset of our acquaintance, that she was a dear little creature; and a great mercy it is, both in life and in novels, which (and the latter especially) abound in villains of the most sombre sort, that we are to have for a constant companion so guileless and good-natured a person. As she is not a heroine, there is no need to describe her person; indeed I am afraid that her nose was rather short than otherwise, and her cheeks a great deal too round and red for a heroine; but her face blushed with rosy health, and her lips with the freshest of smiles, and she had a pair of eyes which sparkled with the brightest and honestest

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good-humour, except indeed when they filled with tears, and that was a great deal too often; for the silly thing would cry over a dead canary-bird; or over a mouse, that the cat had haply seized upon; or over the end of a novel, were it ever so stupid; and as for saying an unkind word to her, were any persons hard-hearted enough to do so—why, so much the worse for them. Even Miss Pinkerton, that austere and godlike woman, ceased scolding her after the first time, and though she no more comprehended sensibility than she did Algebra, gave all masters and teachers particular orders to treat Miss Sedley with the utmost gentleness, as harsh treatment was injurious to her.

So that when the day of departure came, between her two customs of laughing and crying, Miss Sedley was greatly puzzled how to act. She was glad to go home, and yet most wofully sad at leaving school. For three days before, little Laura Martin, the orphan, followed her about, like a little dog. She had to make and receive at least fourteen presents,—to make fourteen solemn promises of writing every week: "Send my letters under cover to my grandpapa, the Earl of Dexter," said Miss Saltire (who, by the way, was rather shabby): "Never mind the postage, but write every day, you dear darling," said the impetuous and woolly-headed, but generous and affectionate, Miss Swartz; and the orphan little Laura Martin (who was just in round-hand), took her friend's hand and said, looking up in her face wistfully, "Amelia, when I write to you I shall call you Mamma." All which details, I have no doubt, JONES, who reads this book at his Club, will pronounce to be excessively foolish, trivial, twaddling, and ultra-sentimental. Yes; I can see Jones at this minute (rather flushed with his joint of mutton and half-pint of wine) taking out his pencil and scoring under the words "foolish, twaddling," etc., and adding to them his own remark of "*quite true.*" Well, he is a lofty man of genius, and admires the great and heroic in life and novels; and so had better take warning and go elsewhere.

Well, then. The flowers, and the presents, and the trunks, and bonnet-boxes of Miss Sedley having been arranged by Mr. Sambo in the carriage, together with a very small and weather-beaten old cow's-skin trunk with Miss Sharp's card neatly nailed upon it, which was delivered by Sambo with a grin, and packed by the coachman with a corresponding sneer—the hour for parting came; and the grief of that moment was considerably lessened by the admirable discourse which Miss Pinkerton addressed to her pupil. Not that the parting speech caused Amelia

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to philosophise, or that it armed her in any way with a calmness, the result of argument; but it was intolerably dull, pompous, and tedious; and having the fear of her schoolmistress greatly before her eyes, Miss Sedley did not venture, in her presence, to give way to any ebullitions of private grief. A seed-cake and a bottle of wine were produced in the drawing-room, as on the solemn occasions of the visits of parents, and these refreshments being partaken of, Miss Sedley was at liberty to depart.

"You'll go in and say good-bye to Miss Pinkerton, Becky!" said Miss Jemima to a young lady of whom nobody took any notice, and who was coming downstairs with her own bandbox.

"I suppose I must," said Miss Sharp calmly, and much to the wonder of Miss Jemima; and the latter having knocked at the door, and receiving permission to come in, Miss Sharp advanced in a very unconcerned manner, and said in French, and with a perfect accent, "Mademoiselle, je viens vous faire mes adieux."

Miss Pinkerton did not understand French; she only directed those who did; but biting her lips and throwing up her venerable and Roman-nosed head (on the top of which figured a large solemn turban), she said, "Miss Sharp, I wish you a good-morning." As the Hammersmith Semiramis spoke she waved one hand, both by way of adieu, and to give Miss Sharp an opportunity of shaking one of the fingers of the hand which was left out for that purpose.

Miss Sharp only folded her own hands with a very frigid smile and bow, and quite declined to accept the proffered honour; on which Semiramis tossed up her turban more indignantly than ever. In fact, it was a little battle between the young lady and the old one, and the latter was worsted. "Heaven bless you, my child," said she, embracing Amelia, and scowling the while over the girl's shoulder at Miss Sharp. "Come away, Becky," said Miss Jemima, pulling the young woman away in great alarm, and the drawing-room door closed upon them for ever.

Then came the struggle and parting below. Words refuse to tell it. All the servants were there in the hall—all the dear friends—all the young ladies—the dancing-master who had just arrived; and there was such a scuffling, and hugging, and kissing, and crying, with the hysterical *yoops* of Miss Swartz, the parlour-boarder, from her room, as no pen can depict, and as the tender heart would fain pass over. The embracing was over; they parted—that is, Miss Sedley parted from her friends. Miss Sharp had demurely entered the carriage some minutes before. Nobody cried for leaving *her*.

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