the government of the United States, as the criminal," maliciously retorted Sir Reginald. "She has enjoyed immunity long enough. Let her suffer the penalty due to her sin, for so many years.

"Then will you be execrated by all men," exclaimed Arden, with passionate anguish. "I deign to compromise, to save her I love from your insane hatred. I permit you to retain the estate you have hazarded so much to gain, provided you will suffer this charge to fall into that oblivion from which it should never have been drawn."

"I refuse even that bribe, magnificent as you think it. Look at me—wasted to a shadow, bearing the seeds of death within me, with no son to claim the inheritance when I am gone; why should I forego my vengeance on yonder fair piece of deceit, to retain its possession a few brief months? No—Harry Arden, take your estate; consider yourself its possessor from this hour, for I relinquish all claim on it; the hangman's desecrating touch shall defile that swan-like throat—those bewitching features be convulsed by the——"

Arden, unable to control the fury that mastered him, rushed toward him, and would have struck him, but the intense tension of mind under which Sir Reginald had laboured for many hours, proved too much for his worn frame, and he fell heavily forward.

They lifted Sir Reginald, but he was quite insensible, and it was many moments before he showed signs of returning life. He was conveyed to his room, followed by his wife and servants, but Colonel and Mrs. Dunmore remained with Sybil. They had listened with horror and indignation to the charge brought against her, and the former now spoke:

"Consider me your fast friend, Sybil; for, like Arden, I feel how impossible it is that any truth can be in Reginald's words. His furious temper has at last unhinged his mind, and the result is this unnatural scene."

"And I, too, believe you innocent," said Mrs. Dunmore, clasping her hand in her own. "Poor Tom's darling shall never feel the want of a friend while I live."

"I thank you from my heart," replied Sybil. "It is much to me that those I love and respect repel the idea of guilt as connected with my name. But even the suspicion of it must be removed from my fair fame before I consent to be to you as I was before this debasing charge was proclaimed against me. I will retire to the protection of the convent in which I passed the first months of my widowhood. The sisters will be glad to receive me as a boarder, and perhaps—perhaps Reginald may retract—yet—no, no, I have no hope of that. It is too much to expect from him. He will never, never clear me from this imputation, for in my condemnation rests his own safety."

Her emotions overcame her, and she bowed her head and wept bitterly. Arden would have wiped her tears away, but she turned from him gently, as she said—

"No, leave me, Harry; forget the wretched tie that binds you to one so lost as I am. Go with your friend; he believes me guilty, for he has spoken no word of hope or consolation since Sir Reginald accused me of this fearful crime."

Thus appealed to, Mr. Mosby spoke—

"I have been weighing all that has passed, madam, and trying to find the true course for my friend to pursue. I am not a man of impulse, and I am accustomed to judge things as they really are. I do not condemn you, for my feelings incline toward your cause; but justice compels me to say that, aside from your own innocent bearing, your brother's story tells fearfully against you; that, coupled with your extreme anxiety to possess yourself of the miniature you obtained from me, makes me feel that it is my duty to restrain the fond confidence a loving heart leads Arden to repose in you, and insist that, until this wretched affair is settled, his union with you shall not be made known to the world."

Arden would have resisted, but Sybil entreated him to listen to the counsels of one who had proved himself a true friend, and leave her, at least until time for calm reflection enabled him to take a dispassionate view of what had occurred. Arden began himself to feel the necessity of an interval of repose; his head reeled and throbbed violently, and at moments he felt as if life was ebbing from his frame. He submitted to be taken away by his friend; and by the time Mosby succeeded in getting him to his lodgings, he was too ill to sustain himself. The intense excitement of the few last hours—the sudden wrenching away of the mysterious veil which had hidden the terrible past from him—produced a state of mental anguish that again threatened him with madness.

For many hours he lay impassive, as if already in the embrace of death; but beneath that outward calm a raging tumult was seething in his brain, and he was conscious that the mental powers were struggling with some subtle foe to maintain their mastery. During those hours of inexpressible suffering, the broken links of the past were slowly re-uniting, and that wretched sequence of events which had so long been blotted from his memory, came slowly sweeping by, and they seemed in mockery to ask if he could yet trust and love her who had left him to endure such unmerited suffering. Mosby became alarmed at his singular condition, and summoned an experienced physician to his assistance, who ordered iced water to his throbbing temples, and complete quiet.

(To be concluded in our next.)

SCHOOL FOR THE INDIGENT BLIND, SOUTHWARK.

Blindness is one of the heaviest afflictions which can fall upon man. The loss of sight deprives the sufferer of a sense of higher value than of all the other senses put together. When the power of distinguishing colours is removed, the safest guide as to distance, form, and motion is also taken away, and all ordinary kinds of literature become useless. A feeling of dependence settles on the mind; equality of competition with others is rendered impossible, and the common pursuits of life are denied.

It is estimated that, in London alone, there are nearly five thousand blind persons. A small minority of these are in good circumstances, and have within their reach all the comforts and conveniences which wealth can procure. A large number—perhaps about four hundred—are supported by their friends; a still larger number obtain a precarious living by working at basket-making, knitting, netting, or similar employment; but the largest number of all—estimated at between three and four thousand—are utterly destitute: the "poor blind" of the London streets, beggars and paupers, or the inmates of our charitable institutions.

In alluding to blindness as one of the heaviest afflictions, and in sympathising with those

"In darkness and with dangers compassed round,"

we must bear in mind that it is a fact clearly established, that the deprivation of one sense sharpens and quickens the remaining senses. Faculties which, under ordinary circumstances, are comparatively inert, are brought into active service. The hearing of the blind is generally remarkable for its acute perception of sound; the taste and smell acquire fresh powers of discernment; and the sense of touch, properly disciplined, becomes exquisitely keen. We must also bear in mind how many great things have been accomplished by sightless men, by the exercise of their remaining faculties. Amongst mathematicians, the names of Diodotus, Didymus, Eusebius, Nicasius de Voerda, and especially our own Saunderson, are conspicuous. As poets, we can point to Homer and Milton; as musicians, Salinas, John Stanley, and many others, have made themselves eminent. Even in sculpture, there are instances of the success of the blind; and many brilliant names in prose literature are those of persons similarly afflicted.

But, at the same time that we observe how the increased power of the remaining faculties, in some degree, compensate the loss of sight, and how, by extraordinary diligence and application, the blind have occasionally distinguished themselves in the world, it is evident that these faculties require careful discipline; that to earn bread, even without the thought of winning reputation, is practically beyond the reach of the large majority of the blind in London.

Thus, the blind have peculiar claims on our benevolence and sympathy. They are suffering a heavy affliction—an affliction which renders them more dependent upon friends than any other. Judiciously trained, they may be taught both to work and study. There is the certainty that they might acquire the means of earning a living, and the possibility that some of them may rise to eminence.

There is no cause for complaint of the lack of British benevolence. We support a very large number of charitable institutions. We cannot fail to be struck with the enormous sum annually raised for charitable purposes in London alone. Among the institutions thus supported, there are several exclusively devoted to the blind. There is a Society for Printing and Distributing Books for the Blind; there is, in the New-road, an Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind; there is the Indigent Blind Visiting Society, in Red Lion-square; and there is the Blind Man's Friend, or Day's Charity, in Saville-row. But, admirable as all these are, the first place belongs to the institution known as the Blind School, in St. George's Fields, Southwark.

This school was instituted in 1799. Its object is to impart a sound mental, moral, and manual education to the indigent blind. The education of the pupils includes religious instruction, the Holy Scriptures, reading, arithmetic, writing from dictation, history, geography, and music. The industrial work includes the manufacture of mats of various kinds, plain and fancy worsted rugs, rope and cocoa-nut-fibre matting, basket-work of all descriptions, patent sash-lines, twine, shoes, knitting, netting, fancy hair-work, brushes, &c. The school contains an average number of about one hundred and fifty-four pupils, who are clothed, boarded, lodged, and instructed in a trade by which they may be able to provide wholly or in part for their future subsistence. A large sum, averaging about £8,000, derived from voluntary contributions, dividends, and sale of goods, is annually expended; but the want of funds limits, to a very serious extent, the benefits of the institution. The available resources of the school are taxed to the utmost, and every exertion is made both to accommodate an increased number of scholars, and to assist those who have already received instruction in the institution.

The building, of which we give a representation, is in the style of the domestic Tudor. It occupies a large area and presents an excellent frontage. The arrangements of the school and home are admirable, and the workshops are remarkable for neatness and order. Taking into consideration the advantages offered by the institution, it is easy to understand how numerous are the applications for admission, and how, under these circumstances, the committee are obliged to refuse many whom they would, if it were possible, gladly receive.

It is a regulation of the committee, that no applicant under ten or above twenty years of age, or having a greater degree of sight than to distinguish light from darkness, can be placed on the list; that no candidate whose age exceeds twenty-five years can remain on the list; and that all candidates must, before admission, bring to the school a certificate of moral character, signed by the minister where last resident. The election takes place twice a year, and is determined by the majority of votes. Annual subscribers have the privilege of one vote, applicable to each vacancy, for each guinea they subscribe; and each member for life, one vote for every ten guineas he subscribes.

The difficulties which attend the education and training of the blind, the pains and patience which are essential in the teachers, are plain to every one. Most of the scholars having lived without discipline of any kind, have acquired habits which ignorance and poverty too often produce, and are, consequently, less fitted to receive instruction. To teach them the mere elements of education is no common task. They must be taught to *see* with their fingers; to detect by touch the delicate differences of form which appear on the embossed text-book. They must be taught to trace characters without seeing a letter; to calculate accounts with the rapidity and accuracy of those who have the figures before their eyes. There is much that is singularly interesting in speculating on how the blind must think of those things which the school-books teach them. Rivers and oceans, mountains and valleys, the wonders of nature, the triumphs of art—what are these but names of things on which their poor sightless orbs can never look? What is light to them? what its component parts—its blended rainbow-tints, sevenfold in their variety? Doubtless they associate all colours with something familiar to their own minds, as we have all heard of the blind man's saying, that scarlet was like the sound of a trumpet. The seven notes in music may correspond to seven prismatic rays, and the sensitive ear may *see*, as it were, rich, glowing pictures in the harmonious strains of Handel and Mozart. The blind are especially susceptible to the influences of music, and acquire a knowledge of the art with remarkable facility. Taking this into their consideration, the Blind School committee have introduced the practice of secular as well as of sacred music. Formerly, all that was attempted in the way of musical instruction was the formation of an efficient choir, and training for the office of organist. There is now an exceedingly well-trained orchestra of about thirty performers, and on the third Wednesday of each month a concert is given, and this has become a large source of gratification to the scholars, as well as interest to all

SCHOOL FOR THE INDIGENT BLIND, ST. GEORGE'S FIELDS, SOUTHWARK.

who have attended the meetings.

In the ordinary branches of education, the majority of the pupils make astonishing progress. They read with ease and fluency. The fault of dropping the voice at every comma, often noticed in blind readers, has especially engaged the attention of the teachers, and is being rapidly removed. Of course, there is much difficulty in obtaining any vast store of literature printed in the embossed character, and many of the indigent blind, after leaving the institution, are deprived of the privilege of reading to any extent. The difficulty is increased by different systems or alphabets of the embossed character being in use. "This," as Mr. Taylor justly remarks, "is much to be deplored, as it divides the efforts in behalf of the blind, and lessens the advantages which a union of endeavours might produce." In comparing the various systems invented for the use of the blind, the common Roman alphabet offers to the impartial observer the most striking advantages. There can be no reasonable doubt that it is far preferable in all respects to the adoption of any arbitrary characters; at the same time, the character would be of less importance if all who were interested in the welfare of the blind agreed to adopt the same. The difficulty in extending information amongst the blind arises not so much from the inferior character of one system to another, as from the great variety of systems which have been adopted. The Roman alphabet is used by the teachers at the Blind School, St. George's Fields; and kindred institutions at York, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, &c., have decided in its favour. We propose to enter more fully on this subject in a future article on the "Education of the Blind." The very greatest importance naturally attaches to the simplicity of the system adopted. It is by this medium that the blind receive an education which connects them with the other members of society. By this they acquire not only ordinary school information, but learn lessons of virtue and piety from the sacred Scriptures. There is something exceedingly interesting in hearing the blind read a gospel story—in watching their facile fingers feeling out the story of old Bartimeus.

The Scriptural knowledge evinced by the pupils in the Blind School is highly creditable to themselves and to their teachers. The same thing may

ISABEL DEFIES HER TYRANT.

be said of other branches of education. In geography, arithmetic, and English history, they are well instructed, and seem to be interested in the information they acquire.

Many times the difficulties of the teachers are increased by the blind scholar being otherwise afflicted. Defective hearing, an inability to use the fingers with facility, or to feel a single letter, apparently renders the instruction of a pupil almost hopeless; but the energy, enterprise, and perseverance of the teachers have overcome obstacles the most formidable.

One of the most important branches of the school is the workshop. The object is to enable the blind to earn their own living, or, at all events, contribute towards their own support. Those who have been instructed in music are assisted, so far as practicable, to obtain situations as organists, or teachers of music. The rest of the scholars are employed in the different trades already enumerated. Some of them are engaged in teaching others, or in household work. The average earnings of the male pupils, when work can be had, are about six or seven shillings per week; in some cases sinking as low as two or three shillings, and in others rising as high as fifteen. The females earn far less. "But," in the words of the chaplain, "though often in extreme poverty, the pupils who have left during the past ten years are, with few exceptions, content to labour diligently in the station to which God has called them, and to make the preservation of a good character the object of their constant endeavour; one clear proof that the school is, by God's blessing, steadily fulfilling the work for which it was founded." The school is excellently well arranged and admirably conducted, and the good work which it has already accomplished, and is still carrying forward, is deserving of a large share of public patronage.

The public are admitted to the school on Thursdays, between the hours of three and five P.M.; and admission may be obtained on other days by an order, signed by a member of the committee, or on application to the resident chaplain. Cards of admission to the monthly concert may also be obtained on application to the chaplain or secretary.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN HEIRESS;

OR,

The Old Feud.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FRENCH HAY," ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII. (*continued.*)

Leaving her, therefore, to answer a multitude of frivolous questions, I hastened to my own room to think and to fear; to recall every ominous word and threat; to wonder in terror what would be the next step my enemies would take; and what I should, or could do.

How terribly upon my memory now returned the conversation I had overheard in the ante-room, on the night of the ball; with what a sinking heart I recalled my stepfather's broken phrase, "*if she cannot be otherwise disposed of;*" and the heartless suggestion which had been made to him, and approved of.

Enough had been said, then, to lead to the conclusion that it was not to Mr. Cunningham's interest that I should marry his friend, however he might pretend to him that he wished it. Mr. Meredith's late assertion had proved, however, that it would be unsafe for his host to trifle with or deceive him. How, then, were the two opposite wills and intentions to be reconciled? What would Mr. Cunningham do? What would be done with me? My mother, too, had she taken part against me? Was there no one to whom I could appeal, no one to whom I could go confidently for protection? Oh! the desolation which answered the inquiry, the wrung heart gazing through the world in vain.

At length, in the midst of this dreary reverie, I was summoned to my mother's room.

I went, of course, but with a throbbing pulse and aching head, and found her sitting upon her low chair before the fire, baby asleep beside her in his cot, and Mr. Cunningham looking out of the window.

For a few moments, just sufficient to calm my beating heart and recall its fleeting courage, I stood unnoticed; but upon asking my mother if she had not sent for me, Mr. Cunningham turned savagely, exclaiming—

"Oh, you are come, are you? Prettily you have been behaving, madam! How have you dared——"

"Nay, Malcolm," said my mother, gently, "I thought you wished me to speak to Isabel, to explain what your wishes are."

"Wishes! Commands! and let her disobey them at her peril."

"She will not, indeed she will not; only do not excite yourself, and frighten her."

"She frightened!" and he broke out into a low, sneering laugh. "Does she look frightened? By my life, young lady, if you indulge in such fiery glances towards me, you had better take leave of your friends and day-light for a while! I will have that rebellious spirit tamed, I promise you!"

"If you can! and if you dare!" I answered, dauntlessly; for like a war-horse my spirit had answered to the note of battle. "But I am no baby to be locked up now, and beaten like a hound. Ellerslie is not like Shirley!"

"Why, you—you——" he gasped, almost breathless with rage, "do you threaten me?"

"No; I only protect myself!"

"Isabel!" exclaimed my mother, nervously, trying to restrain the words she saw rising to my lips.

"Nay, mother, I must speak: not to you, for you are my mother, but to him. I can endure this treatment no longer; I will not. Why should I? I owe no respect, no allegiance to him; why, then, should I submit to be outraged thus?"

"Why? Because you are my dependent; a refractory, insolent child, and under my control for punishment!"

"I am not! Once I might be, for I was a helpless, though not frightened, baby, on whom it was safe to wreak unmanly vengeance and lavish brutal blows; but I am not so now. Neither am I your dependent, however I may be my mother's; and I warn you that the days of my silent endurance are past!"

"Indeed! That is terrible news. And pray to what tremendous expedient will you resort to prove it?"