



tantaneous message across the Atlantic, he would speedily make his fortune at the expense of all the rest of the trade. If forty men divided that monopoly, those forty would divide the profits of the trade. Early intelligence is not enough. The earliest opportunity of sending messages and orders is not less necessary. Through the aid of our own columns every merchant in London might know the state of prices all over the United States, and, indeed, all over the whole American continent, every day, or every hour of the day; but that knowledge would be unavailing if the merchant had not also the means of sending to his correspondents orders founded upon it. Hundreds at both ends would be pressing not only to receive messages, but to send them; and no doubt the great bulk, perhaps 99-hundredths, of the messages transmitted would be of this private and uninteresting character. One cable would not do it. The Leviathan might be constantly employed at the work, till cables enough had been laid down for the demands of commerce. We make this suggestion in all simplicity, and shall not be suspected of doing it in the interest of private speculation, however meritorious, however unfortunate.

The case of "ROBINSON V. ROBINSON and "LANE," still in suspense before the Divorce Court, might furnish yet another chapter to Mrs. CROWE'S *Night Side of Nature*. For the lady who has figured as the heroine of this surprising tale the solid barriers which separate realities from shadows—truth from fiction—the waking from the dreaming world—had no existence. Every wild desire which thrilled through her frame, every vagrant thought which flitted across her disordered brain, was invested with the attributes of personality. She lived in an inner world of her own. The men and women with whom she mixed in the everyday intercourse of life were, without consciousness on their own part, but puppets in an unpleasant melodrama which she had arranged in her own fashion. In the solitude of her own chamber, in her lonely walks, she gave meetings, she listened to declarations of affection, and returned them in kind; she betrayed her husband; she exhausted the phases of the dirtiest of French novels; and yet it was all a delusion. All this is strange enough, but somewhat stranger still remains to be told. Many of us in our waking moments let imagination run riot, and take excursion tickets for little journeys into dreamland, but we know all the while that we are but dreaming. We are ashamed of these gossamer webs even while weaving them, and would not for the world give to others an inkling of our idle fancies. Mrs. ROBINSON thought otherwise. She invented, in the first place, a fictitious existence for herself and others, and day by day recorded in her diary—and such a diary!—the progress of their fortunes. To certain minds the act of autobiography appears to afford relief. With some the process takes the form of a confession of faith; with others it is a confession of filth. Mrs. ROBINSON'S confessions belonged to the latter category. Most French students are acquainted with the successful efforts of JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU in this line. There is, however, this difference between his notes of his own life and those of Mrs. ROBINSON, that we have no reason to doubt that he actually did the dirty things which he said he did. Mrs. ROBINSON, on the other hand, revelled in an imaginary story. Day by day she continued her chronicle of events which never should have happened, and which never did happen, carefully recording all the vicissitudes of an unholy, but fictitious passion. As we read we are reminded of the glowing lines which POPE puts in the mouth of his ELOISA:—

"I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,
"And ponder thy phantom glow my clasping arms;
"I wake,—no more I hear, no more I view—
"And phantom thee mine, as unkind as you."
"I call aloud; it hears not what I say."
"I stretch my empty arms; it glides away."

Mrs. ROBINSON'S diary is a far more remarkable composition in its way than even this fervent flight of a poet's imagination. It is, however, somewhat hard upon a respectable, hard-working professional man to be travestied into an ABELEARD without any fault of his own.

The subject is not one which we would willingly have chosen for comment. The time, however, has arrived when it is a simple act of justice to the gentleman whose name has been implicated in the fair to call attention to the turn which the inquiry has taken. Dr. LANE'S position is a most sinful and a most trying one. He has been dragged before the public in a way which is calculated to ruin his professional prospects, unless he be purged of the scandal so ridiculously brought upon him by a lady whom it is charity to suppose mad, or at all that has appeared, the case might happen to any of us. We really know of no reason why Mrs. ROBINSON should have not selected the bishop of CANTERBURY for the time being as the hero of her romance. She might have made trials in her diary of fictitious meetings in the rooms of Lambeth Palace just as well as anywhere else. She might have placed what ridiculous domineering she pleased in the mouth of her bishopical admirer, and who was to gainsay that? It may be said that this is an extreme case, inasmuch as the two parties were not dwelling together under the same roof. Take, then, the case of any respectable man who has the misfortune to inhabit the same house as a middle-aged lady of ill-regulated mind who chooses to make him the hero of a secret romance, and who will naturally be aware of his movements— that he was away from home on a given day; that on a particular day he did not come home until late; that on Tuesday he went out for a drive, and so forth. All these trifling incidents, true in themselves, can be easily enough incorporated into a romance which will be nothing but a tissue of lies, for the very scraps of truth will be as disclosed as they are converted into falsehood. Now, this is the case to have been pretty much the position of Dr. LANE with regard to Mrs. ROBINSON. There is, of course, as far as this gentleman was concerned, the unfortunate addition that he was the eminent physician of an establishment frequented by ladies for medical purposes. It was, of course, an easy matter for any one of his patients to contribute to him words and acts during a series of interviews at which necessarily she and he only were present. It is a mere question of credibility on either side. Now, in the present instance, every circumstance of Dr. LANE'S position, both socially and professionally, is calculated to negative the hypothesis of improper conduct on his part. On the other hand, every act of Mrs. ROBINSON'S leaves nothing but the choice between two conclusions, either she is as foul and abandoned a creature as the worst woman's shape, or she is mad. In either case her testimony is worthless. With-making profession of any special familiarity with this class of literature, we cannot but to mind an instance in which a woman

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10