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MISCELLANEOUS.

From the New Yorker.

ESHIBAN,—THE LAST KING OF THE HOUSE OF ESAU.

[BY MRS. P. W. L.]

Explanatory Note by an American Traveller.—Some time in the year 1837, being impelled by that restless desire for novelty which urges so many to forego the comforts of home for the perils of distant countries, I commenced my sojourn in the East, without any definite object but curiosity and a desire to behold what I had so often seen described.

I made the usual tour of observation through the south of Europe, Asia Minor, and Egypt, with probably much the same adventures and discoveries that have befallen thousands before me; and I should not, in all probability, have ever informed the public of my existence and peregrinations, were it not for the circumstance I am about to relate, and of which I leave the same sage public to judge for themselves.

In the course of one of my rambles about the environs of Athens, I fell in with a young Englishman of prepossessing but singular manners, and bearing about him the indelible marks, not only of aristocracy of caste, but of nature's nobility—I had not been long with him, however, before I came to the conclusion that I beheld before me one of the saddest as well as most magnificent ruins I had ever seen. He seemed to dwell only in the long-forgotten past, and appeared, by constant and fruitless effort, to be striving to connect it with the present.—In his imagination, every thing seemed in its primeval freshness; and he felt as one who follows the track of an earthquake, and finds only chaos and desolation where but yesterday was seen splendor and universal prosperity. I lost sight of him in Asia Minor, and saw him but once again, which was in Egypt, among the mighty ruins of Thebes. But I found his malady was increased, inasmuch that he seemed to take little cognizance of living objects. He was literally "searching for the living among the long, long forgotten dead." When I approached him, he turned to me with a bewildered surprise and exclaimed, "Child of Yesterday!—oh that I could wake from this long and terrible dream! Where you behold the dim memorials of a race that has passed away, I am a conspicuous actor in a glorious pageant in the days of the proudest Pharaoh. Where you behold only crumbling stones and deserted streets, I see gorgeous palaces, and a countless host like the sands of the desert. Where is the king, and the throng of attendants!—Oh, where is the peerless bride, and her woman, the fairest and proudest of Egypt's daughters! And the bridegroom—who was he? Oh, Death! Death! Death! how do mortals fear thee!—and yet how powerful thou art!" Here the poor maniac rushed from me, and I saw him no more, though I made diligent search and inquiry for many days. I joined an expedition to the excavated city of Edom; but I found that, by some means, the denoted had arrived before me, and had found a resting place—the most fitting, perhaps, that the earth could have afforded. On an altar of the principal temple I found a manuscript, which I here present, without alteration, to the public; but no farther traces of the writer could be discovered. Probably in some one of the many sepulchres his weary frame reposes; but I would not, if I could find it, disturb its hallowed repose.

THE MANUSCRIPT.

Eshiban, of the house of Esau, king of a desolate city—monarch of a perished race, to the sons of to-day: Learn from me the punishment of arrogance, and be humble. Israel's God is the God; there is none great but Him. Jesus is the Saviour; in him there is mercy. Thousands of years have rolled by, and I stand again in the halls of my fathers—for the punishment of my transgression doomed to witness the utter extinction of my people, and the 'invincible' city without an inhabitant. Aias for poor Idumea! Ireal, it is true, has been scattered, and the glory of Judah, thy ancient enemy is departed; but Edom—vain-glorious Edom, has none left to tell of his fallen greatness. Yet it seems but now that the East, and the South, and the West, and the North sent of their goodliest treasures to enrich the City of the Rock, that said, in her strength, "I shall never be moved!" and these silent halls were busy with the activity of hundreds of thousands. How often have I seen this very temple crowded with priests and princes, who came to offer their prayers to the great Bel-Dagon of Edom! And here it was, on the threshold of this very temple, that the fearful malediction was sounded in my ears. "That Esau should pass away, and that Eshiban, the proudest and the last of the kings of Edom, should walk in the city after the very dust of his people had been given to the winds!"

"It was a proud day for Petra when Eshiban brought home from Egypt his beautiful bride, the daughter of Pharaoh. Five thousand camels and ten thousand horsemen came forth from the glorious city of Egypt, led by Eshiban and his bride; and Pharaoh and his hosts came forth to honor the departure of Anah for the city of her husband, for Eshiban's father had sought to strengthen his alliance with Egypt, and had sent messengers and costly presents to Pharaoh, and Pharaoh had given his daughter to the son of Edom. The desert was behind them. They had begun to climb the mountain of Seir, when the cry went forth in Petra—'Eshiban of Esau, and Anah of Pharaoh!' Then went forth all Petra to welcome the bride and bridegroom: horse and horsemen—a countless host; camels and their riders, priests and princes, soldiers and merchants. The very mountains shook with the

shouts of the people: 'Eshiban of Edom!—Anah of Egypt!' And, in truth, Anah was a princess worthy of Pharaoh, and first in the heart of Eshiban.

"The night was lovely, even for Idumea, when, Anah and her train having been established in the costly chambers provided for them, Eshiban went forth to meet his rejoicing people. The whole city was illuminated; theatre and temple, tomb and terrace, garden and dwelling, all sent forth a flood of light, while women, wrapped in their long, white veils—the costly product of Egypt—went forth before the prince of Edom, singing his praises, and strewing flowers in his path to the temple. Then followed his officers, clothed in the purple of Tyre, and the rich gems and gold of the East; then the king's musicians—the dark sons of Ethiopia—not as we see the poor, fallen children of Africa now, but the proud sons of a gallant race; then followed embassadors from the East and from the West—from Babylon and from Greece, from Persia and from Tyre—a goodly train; and as they approached the temple, a captive band of our ancient and hated enemies, the Jews, were brought to do honor to the king and to the great idol, Bel-Dagon of Petra.—Slowly and sad they came forth, the captives of proud Jerusalem; and one there was of a loftier mien than the rest, though his garments were coarse and his head was bald; yet all—even I, proud, inflated as I was with power and prosperity—covered beneath his steady and scornful look. But he halted not till he came to the threshold of the temple, where all must do reverence to Bel-Dagon, or remain in bondage forever. Never did it pass from me—that look of defiance and scorn with which he paused and, lifting his voice, proclaimed—

"The Lord is God!—there is none great but Him."

"Instantly that dense and heaving mass of human life was hushed, as by a spell; all was as still as if at that moment the city had been desolate and dead as now. My wrath was kindled. I looked around in indignation that none should the bold rebel to the earth; but none moved; and I rushed forward, and with my own hand would have smote him, but he turned to me with a look that froze the blood in my veins, and raising his hands and voice at the same time, exclaimed:

"Thus saith the Lord God: My sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse unto judgment. From generation to generation, it shall be waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also, and the raven, shall dwell in it, and he shall stretch out the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the mounds thereof to the kingdom; but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces—settles and brambles in the fortress thereof; and it shall be a habitation for dragons and a court for owls."

"There was an awful pause. The whole city was suddenly clothed in palpable darkness; and the voice of that fearful man was again heard, like the voice of thunder, pouring out its terrible denunciations on this devoted city:

"Lo! thy terriblest hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart, oh thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks—that holdest the height of the hill! Though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle's, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. And thou proud son of Esau—the proudest and the last!—thou shalt yet walk this spot when these things are accomplished, and the very dust of thy people is scattered to the winds; because thou wouldst compel the servants of the living God to blaspheme, and bow down to molten images; and because thou sayest in thine heart—'Who is the Lord, that he can do this great thing!'"

"The prophet ceased his terrible denunciation; but the mountains shook to their centre, and all felt that the fearful doom was about to be fulfilled.—The lightning played about the mountains till the whole mass seemed wrapped in a continuous sheet of flame. And the captives, with solemn pace, turned from the appalled and fear-struck multitude, and walked through the magnificent portals of the city; yet none dared stay their steps, for they felt that a terrible power sheltered them from harm.—Fears that night—that tremendous night, took hold of every heart in Idumea; but most on mine, for I felt the awful certainty that every word should be accomplished. But morning came, and men began to forget the terrors of the night; and business and pleasure succeeded; tranquility and prosperity were again the inhabitants of Petra.

"Years passed away, but of all my wives, my beautiful Anah was the woman of my love. I have mingled with the great ones of the world; I have gazed on the fairest of earth's daughters, but never have I seen a fairer or a gentler than Anah, or her more gentle daughter. But Anah was smitten by the hand of death before her beauty yielded to time, and my heart was made heavy. But skillful men from her father's land embalmed her with costly spices, and I built her a tomb, the most sumptuous in Edom, and a hundred priests were employed to keep the place, and burn incense daily before the shrine where Anah reposed. I have found the tomb; but it was empty, only that a jackal had made his lair in the very spot where my beloved had been laid. And I have been in the theatre; I found the very seat where, in my pride, I sat above my people, who came thronging here in pursuit of pleasure. Where are they! I cannot find even their very ashes. I went to the apartments of my favorite daughter, the child of Anah. Beautiful and rare were the treasures of this place, but I found only the dusty stone; and, as if in bitter mockery a she fox had brought forth her whelps, and growled fiercely at my intrusion. I went to the house of Hildad my privy councillor. The brother of my heart was Hildad. I hoped to find some trace of his household—something to tell that Hildad had lived. Alas! one of the most ferocious of the sons of Ishmael had made his den in the very chamber of my friend, and roughly threatened to notice the different articles which have been taken by eminent men as stimulants to the mental faculties. It is interesting, how diametrically opposite means may produce the same effect in various systems; and it is interesting, as showing how much the mind sympathizes with the body.—Haller drank plenty of cold water when he wished for great activity of the brain; Fox, for the same purpose, used brandy. The stimulants of Newton and Hobbes were the fumes of tobacco; those of Pope and Fontenelle strong coffee. Dr. Johnson at one period of his life was a great wine

drinker; but in the latter part of it, found tea a good substitute. Don Juan is said to have been written under the influence of gin and water, and it is reported that a certain lord, of learning and talent, plied himself with port when he wishes to shine. Pitt was a great drinker of wine; Sheridan, also, was fond of his bottle. Dr. Paris tells us that when Dr. Dunning wished to make an extraordinary display of eloquence he always put a blister on his chest a few hours before he was to speak in order that it might irritate the brain by sympathy during his speech.

Of my early childhood in my second existence I have small remembrance. My first recollection is a feeling of bewildered rapture at an ancient air song by an old wandering Gypsy. Withered, and old, and sun burnt as she was, I could have hugged to my heart that poor creature, as an old and familiar friend. I remember, too, of a strange sensation when taken to visit a green-house where some young palms were growing. Time passed, I was regarded as a strange and wayward boy, for even then my soul thirsted for something—I knew not what—distant and unattainable. I walked amongst those that men taught me to regard as my fellows—With them but not of them, for I felt as a stranger. I entered the University. I soon became distinguished for my proficiency in the languages of the East to me there, was in them a mysterious charm, a strange fascination, that I could not resist—that touched a hidden chord in my heart, even to rapture. The Professor called me a prodigy. They prated of genius and intellect; but I was not flattered; my thirst was too intense, my feeling too deeply alive, to pause or bestow a thought on flattery. The adulations of my fellows was but a breath, scarcely stirring the surface of deep waters.

"I was not then religious. I had no abiding system of faith; but I delighted in some of the books of the Old Testament. Some of the descriptions there given were so vivid to my imagination, that I could scarcely believe I had not myself been an eye witness to them. One thing I should have observed: which was the hatred I bore to the descendants of Abraham. There were names among them that afflicted me strangely; changed as they may seem by language and pronunciation, yet they often threw me into a dreamy reverie. I would have given kingdoms to solve the mystery; but the time was not yet fully come. Yet I went of ten among them; I witnessed their ceremonies; I listened in breathless eagerness to the voice of the Hebrew priest; and yet, the more I listened—the more intensely I became interested, the more deeply I hated the whole race. I gloried in their degradation; I rejoiced in the maledictions which an unjust world heaped upon them. But when I questioned my father, he rebuked them, there was no answer.

"The time came when I resolved to visit the New World; I plunged into the dark recesses of the forests of America; I visited ruins of cities and temples over which the stately forest waved the growth of ages; I explored the deepest caverns of the earth; I climbed the loftiest mountains; I mingled with the wildest and fiercest of the tribes of the wilderness and the mountains. I encountered danger, and hardships, and suffering, from heat and from cold, from hunger and thirst; I was pursued by wild beasts; I was threatened by still more ferocious men. Three times have I been shipwrecked, when all but myself perished; yet still an unseen power held me up. A longing for something I could not find goaded me on and on, forever unsatisfied. I stood amid the ruins of Greece. The hills and valleys were the same; but I had nothing to do with mouldering ruins, and I turned away and embarked for Egypt. The destroying angel had been before me, and I was sad; but I heard a voice behind me which said that my toils were nearly at an end, and my destiny fulfilled.—I heard of Petra. My heart responded to the name; I knew that there my wanderings should cease; and I hurried thither. I did not wait for guide nor passport; what were they to me, impelled as I was by invincible necessity! I procured two camels, and set out on my journey alone; for I was at home in the desert. At every step new light dawned upon me; till here, on the portal of this very temple, which ages long past I built and dedicated to the god of Babel, the whole truth burst upon me, and I saw how the tremendous wrath of the Almighty had been poured out, and every prediction of His prophets faithfully fulfilled. I have humbled myself before him; and the last King of Esau dies, full of faith in the last and greatest King of the House Israel."

Knowledge is Power.—Curious Illustration.—At a meeting which took place the other evening for the purpose of forming a North London Mechanics' Institution, Mr. Basil Montagu, as an illustration of the maxim that knowledge is power, related the following anecdote: He was walking a few months ago in Portland Place, when he observed a large crowd of people assembled, and found that it was in consequence of a large mastiff dog having a loser one in his grips. Several persons tried by pulling the mastiff's ears, and by biting and pinching its tail, to make it let go its hold, but in vain. At last a delicate and dandified young gentleman came up, and making his way through the crowd, into the circle requested to be allowed to separate the dogs; assent was given amid cheers and laughter, when the dandy slowly drew from his pocket a large snuff-box, and having taken a pinch himself, inserted his fingers again in the dog's, and withdrawing a larger pinch deliberately applied it to the mastiff's nose. The snuff operated so powerfully on the animal's olfactory nerves, that it not only immediately let go its hold, but made its escape as fast as it could. The dandy was loudly cheered, upon which he stopped for a moment, and said, "Gentlemen I have merely given you a proof that Knowledge is power."

Stimulants of Great Men.—It is interesting to notice the different articles which have been taken by eminent men as stimulants to the mental faculties. It is interesting, how diametrically opposite means may produce the same effect in various systems; and it is interesting, as showing how much the mind sympathizes with the body.—Haller drank plenty of cold water when he wished for great activity of the brain; Fox, for the same purpose, used brandy. The stimulants of Newton and Hobbes were the fumes of tobacco; those of Pope and Fontenelle strong coffee. Dr. Johnson at one period of his life was a great wine

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AFAR IN THE DESERT.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side;
When the sorrows of life the soul o'ercast,
And, sick of the Present, I cling to the Past;
When the eye is suffused with regretful tears,
From the fond recollections of former years;
And shadows of things that have long since fled,
Flit over the brain, like ghosts of the dead;
Bright visions of glory—that vanished too soon;
Day-dreams—that departed ere manhood's noon;
Attachments—by fate or by falsehood reft;
Companions of early days—lost of left;
And my native land—whose magical name
Thrills to the heart like electric flame.
The home of my childhood; the haunts of my prime;
All the passions and scenes of that rapturous time
When the feelings were young and the world was new.

Like the fresh bowers of Eden unfolding to view;
All—all now forsaken—forgotten—forgone!
And I—a lone exile remembered by none—
My high aims abandoned—my good acts undone—
Aweary of all that is under the sun—
With that sadness of heart which no stranger may scan,
I fly to the Desert afar from home!

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side;
When the wild turmoil of the yearning life,
With its scenes of oppression, corruption and strife—
The proud man's frown, and the base man's fear,
And malice, and meanness, and falsehood, and folly,
Dispose me to musing and dark melancholy;
When my bosom is full, and my thoughts are high—
And my soul is sick with the bodeman's sigh—
Oh! then there is freedom, and joy, and pride,
Afar in the Desert alone to ride!

There is rapture to vault on the champing steed,
And to bound away with the eagle's speed,
With the death fraught firelock in my hand—
The only law of the Desert Land!

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side;
Away—away from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's gleam;
By salient rocks where the oribi plays,
Where the gazelle, and the harebeest graze,
And the kudu and eland unhunted recline
By the skirts of grey forests of orchard with wild-vine;
Where the elephant browses at peace in his wood,
And the river-gnaw gambols unscarred in the flood,
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side;
O'er the brown Karroo, where the fleeting cry
Of the spring-bird's faint sounds plaintively;
And the timorous quagga's shrill whistling neigh,
Is heard by the fountain at twilight grey;
Where the vulture stoops to kiss his mate,
With wild hoof scouring the desolate plain;
And the feet footed ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste,
Hieing away to the home of rest,
Where she and her mate have scooped their nest,
Far hid from the pitiless plunderer's view,
In the pathless depths of the parched Karroo.

Afar in the Desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side;
Away—away—in the wilderness vast,
Where the white man's foot hath never passed,
And the quivered cornea of Bechuan
Hath rarely crossed with his roving clan:
A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with oiled sides;
Where sedgey pool, nor bubbling fountain,
Nor tree, nor cloud, nor misty mound,
Appears, to refresh the aching eye;
But the barren earth, and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon, round and round,
Spread—void of living sight or sound.

And here, while the night-wind round me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the mid-night sky,
As I sit apart by the desert stone,
Like Elijah at Iseba's cave alone,
"A still small voice" comes through the wild
(Like a father consoling his fretful child,
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear,
Saying,—MAN IS DISTANT, BUT GOD IS NEAR!

THE CONVENT CELL.

On a bleak and gloomy morning in the month of March 1827, two travellers walked up the aisle of the Church of St. —, in one of the chief towns of the Netherlands. They were evidently strangers not only to the place, which they gazed at with curiosity, but to the manner and feeling of the congregation, for they were observed to walk carelessly past the *Bencher*, without dipping their fingers in the blessed water, nor did they bend their knees as they crossed before the altar.

Still there was nothing of indifference in their manner; nothing in short, which any liberal-minded devotee might not have excused in the bearing of two heretics, unaccustomed to Roman Catholic rites, and from the impulses of inexperience and youth. For they were both young, under five and twenty; and they had that reckless and independent air which marks the citizens of a free country. They were in fact Americans, who with a full fund of health, money, and ardour of variety, had just arrived in Europe, and were starting on their journey in quest of knowledge and adventures.

They had landed a day or two before at Ostend, from London, and this was their first visit to a Roman Catholic Church in a Roman Catholic country. One of the strangers, who was a quaker, viewed the religious ceremonies without any other emotion than that of a painter or a novelist, as if scanning the groups for the effect which they would produce portrayed on the canvass, or in description; while the other of a more sanguine temperament, felt a deeper moral interest in the scene.

He was however, after a short time, roused to a more minute and personal train of thought by ob-

servant that one of the nuns who had most pretensions to beauty, fixed her looks upon him, with an uncommon, intension, and in a manner so remarkable as to cause him, at length, considerable embarrassment. There was something remarkable in the expression of her countenance, and in the determined scrutiny of her gaze, that made him almost shudder. She was handsome certainly. Her features were regular and marked; but she was pale to sallowness, and her dark eyes had a restlessness of motion, that seemed caused by an unquiet mind.

He then felt his cheeks glow, and he gave to his looks the tenderest expression of which they were capable. He saw an answering flush rise on the pallid brow of the nun, and a smile, that thrilled through him, but not with unmixed delight, played for an instant on her colourless lips. Her eyes then sank down and her face resumed her calm and sculptured look.

The service was at length concluded; the priest had retired from the deserted altar, and one by one the congregation left the church. Aroused by his less excitable friend the enamored young gentleman also retired.

They were on the point of quitting their places and retiring from the almost deserted church; the friend of the young lover, for so we must call him, had turned round and made a few steps in the direction of the door, and the lover himself was about to follow, when his parting look at the nun was answered by an imploring glance, from her quick raised eyes, and a momentary, but an intelligible motion with her finger, that he should remain.

Determined, of course, to comply with this invitation, he found means to rid himself of his friend, and followed the fair sun down a back stair, entered with her a narrow recess, lighted by a single lamp, before a shrine contained in which, she again resumed her kneeling posture. The lover took a position at a few yards distant from the object of his gaze, and leaning against a pillar, awaited her communication.

With her head low bent, and inclined towards him, while she turned over her beads with much apparent devotion, she asked him, in a deep whisper, "do you understand French?"

"Yes," murmured he.

"Do you speak it?"

"Not sufficiently to express your influence on me."

This was answered by her wondrous smile.

"God heavens is it satisfaction or triumph?" thought to America.

"If you can see in me, anything to interest you," continued she, "are you inclined to do me a favor?"

"Am I," replied he with energy—"try to put me to the proof!"

"It is no trifle," said she solemnly.

"Any thing is trifling that can enable me to serve you; for any thing short of death command me!"

"And if death did cross your path in the adventure?" exclaimed she, with a full expressive voice and piercing solemnity of look.

"By heavens! I'd even spurn that," cried he; "you have exalted me to a pitch of excitement, I know not how or wherefore."

"I am satisfied with you," resumed she—"I believe you to be a man of honor; and that your fine person and striking face cannot be allied to an ignoble soul; I feel myself safe in your hands. You perceive that the rules of my order are the strictest—but the discovery of their infringement is ruin; and I am now infringing them. I can speak to you no more at present—I have run a fearful risk.—But meet me outside that little portal to-night at nine. I will admit you punctually as the clock strikes. You must not speak; but trust to me, follow me and count on my gratitude."

At the hour of nine the young American, followed by his anxious friend, rushed to the convent. The lover gained admittance, and soon after was seen returning, bearing a figure wrapped in his cloak, which from its form and dimensions was judged to be a human being.—The alarm and anxiety of his friend, heightened by this occurrence was aroused, and he followed at a distance and in silence.

After a little time, in which they traversed several by-roads, they reached one of those canals with which the town abounded, and the lover unhesitatingly descended one of the flights of steps, which facilitate the landing of goods from the barges, and the embarkation of persons employed.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the watchful friend to himself, "can he be wild enough to bear her off at night in some open boat—God only knows where or how this adventure will end!"

He placed himself close to the quay wall and looked over the parapet. He saw his friend on the steps; there was no boat of any kind stationed near or in sight, yet the lover continued to descend.

"What can this mean? What frantic feat can be destined to conclude this affair?" muttered the careful guardian as he watched with intense interest; and as he watched, he observed the object of his care to disencumber himself of his burden—a figure in black emerged from beneath the cloak, and a heavy plunge in the stagnant water was the signal of its disappearance.

The perpetrator of this appalling deed immediately ascended the steps. The shocked witness felt the blood curdling through his veins. His eyes seemed doubly fixed on his retreating friend, and on the rippled surface of the water where the body sank. The safety of his friend kept him mute; for to call assistance was to reveal the murderer!

Leaving the place, he quickly gained upon his companion, who to his astonishment, took the direct road to the hotel. They arrived there at the same moment and recognized each other without exchanging a word. A simultaneous pressure of the hand was the salutation; the friend shuddered to feel that the one he clasped was cold and clammy. The door opened to their summons, and they mounted together to their chamber. The explanation given by the young American to his friend, is full of that source of interest which the lovers of the Ratieliff school delight in—namely, the horrible. The nun by whose appearance he had been captivated, had received some untold injury or slight from a young priest; and assassinated him in her cell. It was for the purpose of conveying away the murdered body that she invited the traveller to this fearful interview. Maddened by her