and write correct English, and that interests do not result in oppression more than States attain works and functions.] The statement of the principle is fruitless, because nobody has ever contradicted it, and the bearings of it lie in the application, which Lord Bramwell proceeds to examine.

As to the Merchant Shipping Acts, Mr. Lefevre himself appears to admit that no substantial benefit has as yet been conferred on the community by devices of the "harassing" sort, which have cost the country £70,000 a year in inspectors alone; and when Lord Bramwell attributes the present melancholy condition of the shipping trade, involving almost the extinction of ship-building, in some measure to the difficulties strewn by these Acts in the path of the ship-owners, it is easy to believe that he has much reason on his side. The Hares and Rabbits Act, the Agricultural Holdings Act, the Employers' Liability Act, and the Act forbidding the payment of wages in public-houses, are all shown by Lord Bramwell to contain provisions which abridge the legal capacity of the citizen, and so far make him less apt for activity, usefulness, or enjoyment without conferring a compensating benefit on any one else. A good example of the way this happens is furnished by Lord Bramwell's criticism upon Mr. Lefevre's proposal, "if it should prove to be the fact that large numbers of employers are forcing contracts on their men to elude the liability contemplated by" the Employers' Liability Act, to make it impossible for masters to contract themselves out of the Act. The result, of course, would be that, whereas the masters and workmen together can now choose between lower wages with liability and higher wages without liability, the masters would then be compelled to pay, and the men to take, the lower wages with liability. Nor can Mr. Lefevre shelter himself under the saving clause, that making contracts out of the Act should not be allowed, "unless they contain a fair and reasonable substitute." For, as Lord Bramwell emphatically declares, "that substitute always exists, must and does in the nature of things; that is, if there is no liability the wages are more."

The fact is that when you forbid two men to make a contract, not unlawful *per se*, which they both wish to make, you recede in the path that has led up from barbarism to civilization. Each capacity for bargaining that you take away is a small thing in itself; but you are making both would-be parties a little less like cultivated men and a little more like anarchical savages. Possibly Mr. Lefevre thinks that in paring away the power of making and enforcing contracts he is preparing us for the happy time which the eager hearts of Messrs. George and Chamberlain expect, when every Briton will once more cultivate his appointed proportion of boc-land, and we shall all wear—well, not orchids.

TO CRAIGENPUTTOCK IN A SNOW-STORM.

AT the King's Arms, Dumfries, where Carlyle used to put up his "beast," within a few yards of the rival inn that housed Prince Charlie, we jumped one frosty morning into a yellow dog-cart and turned our pony's head in the direction of Craigenputtock. There was just time, as we clattered through the worst-paved town in Scotland, to catch a glimpse of the squat and grimy taverns whence Burns used to grope his way home after many an ambrosial night; and then we were across the Nith, bowling along an open road—ears tingling despite our Scotch cravats, hair damp and rimy, tobacco, as ever, a treasure. A few years earlier and a rugged-faced Titan, in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, might have whirled past us, with his sharp-tongued wife, in the Craigenputtock "machine;" as it was, but few farmers on the road, the shivering trees in a thin transparent veil of snow, time-worn Lincluden Abbey to the right, looking sadly across the frost-nipped Cluden.

It is the country of Jeanie Deans. Not, as the novel would teach us, on the shore of St. Margaret's Loch—nor in St. Anthony's Chapel, among the ragged boulders piled high to the east of Arthur's Seat—did the real Effie Deans steal out in the gloaming to meet her lover. A hundred and fifty years ago, when the moon sailed behind the clouds that overhung sleepy Irongray, Effie put in the kye and fearfully picked her way up those grassy slopes to the trysting place our fancy fixed on. Why not in the old kirkyard itself, where we saw the stone erected by Sir Walter Scott to Jeanie's memory, *vice* "a stane frae the kirkyard dyke," deposed? Helen and Isabella (abbreviated into Tibbie) Taylor were the real names of the sisters; and the cottage whence Helen set out on her perilous journey to London still stands. In Dumfries we were gratified with a sight of the spot where Waugh, the cause of all her woe, visited the imprisoned Effie and whispered pretty things to her through an iron grating. Of such stuff as Helen Taylor—shrewd, severe, and pious—were the female Carlyles made; but in Irongray they love best to talk of Tibbie.

The first time Carlyle travelled between Craigenputtock and Dumfries his eyes must have rested with some solemnity on the spot where Grierson one fine morning led out a brave old Covenanter to be shot. A solitary tombstone in a tiny group of trees now calls attention to the scene of the tragedy. Further from Dumfries is the only romantic bit of scenery in the district: the Rooten Bridge—spanning a turbulent stream that sprawls and blusters over gnarled rocks, vomiting a white steam before it twists and twirls and loses itself, black and dangerous, in narrow winding channels of Nature's chiselling. The bridge is almost the gate of drear Glenesslin, which now stretches straight before us, heathery hills enclosing it on both sides; and, far away to the north, lordly Queensberry in his white nightcap, straining his neck and looking all up the valley for a glimpse of Craigenputtock. A poor cold glen, sparsely populated, in some parts completely swept of its thin woods by last year's tearing blasts; the trees still locked in each other's arms as they fell, or hanging in line over old dykes and fences, like the side of a square preparing to receive cavalry at the bayonet's point.

The sky had been threatening all the morning, dropping an occasional flake on to our horse's back as if in warning of the coming storm; and we crossed the Rooten Bridge in a whirl of falling snow. There was little wind, and the big white heavy flakes fell straight to the earth, burying it in half an hour's time in a cold sheet of snow and enveloping the Glenesslin Hills, until lofty Queensberry seemed erased from the perspective. His white head had towered prominently to the leaden sky over the dark and less considerable mountains in the neighbourhood; but snow has a levelling effect, and Queensberry's nightcap soon ceased to be a landmark. The farms dotted over the valley are, almost without exception, "whitewashed;" thus making the panorama spread out before us a dreary monotonous study in white, without so much as a stone wall standing out in relief. The patient sheep ceased to search in the dismal fields for their frosted turnips, now hidden under a wilderness of snow, and huddled together in the corners of the naked fields, themselves hardly distinguishable in their fleecy coats. There are famous "Galloways" in the valley, but their heros can read nature's weather-chart and had anticipated the storm. The snow fell relentlessly; and but for the occasional snort of our steed as a flake alighted in his eye, or the grating of the dog-cart's wheels on a stone, there was absolute stillness in Glenesslin.

There is no inn in the glen; and right glad were we to "unyoke" at a small farmhouse some two miles from Craigenputtock. Seated before a roaring kitchen fire, we were oblivious to the fact that the wind had risen and was now piling the drifting snow in great knolls along the road we had just traversed. Purple is the heather of the Glenesslin Hills, and the honey of the guid wives of the valley good accordingly. As we defied the gathering storm at a homely table groaning with good things, I wondered how even Carlylean dyspepsia could have held out against the Glenesslin scones. And when afternoon wore to evening we had not budged from the ingle-nook; where we comfortably shivered as we listened to the snow driving against the sides of the house, and used our pipes and glasses as shoeing-horns to help over the farmer's surprising stories. Every soul in the glen he knew, from the well-to-do farmer to the humble herd-boy, and "Craigenputtock" was his friend. A much more considerable man, he plainly thought, than old Tom Carlyle, who had never been sociable and was believed to have written books. Here the farmer shook his head. But he might have overlooked the author of "Sartor Resartus's" unfortunate predilection for literature had he been a curler. In a glen whose inhabitants, as represented by our host, could on a frosty morning distinctly hear the roar of the stones on the ice several miles away at Dunscore, a man who despised bonspiels was an anomaly.

It was eight o'clock in the evening when I left the farm-house to make my way to Craigenputtock. The storm had subsided, and, but for a late flake or two that had lost themselves on the way down, the snow had ceased to fall. We had given up all thought of returning to Dumfries that night; but the morrow's start was to be an early one, and I refused to be storm-staid within two miles of Craigenputtock. Well wrapped up, I pulled to the farm-door after me and ventured into the moonlight night along the road Carlyle had trod a hundred times—the only living creature out, I believe, with the exception of an old crow I met on the way, in all Glenesslin. I could not, I was told, go wrong if I kept the road; but the farmer and his wife had forgotten that the road was obliterated by the snow. The low dilapidated dykes were my only guides; but at some points they lost themselves in the snow-drifts, and the vast expanse of whiteness glazed my eyes. I stumbled into a ditch, I wandered altogether from the road, and am not even yet certain that I ever regained it; my staff slipped from my numbed hands and stood fast in the freezing snow. At last I reached a farm, standing white and gaunt at a turn in the road far up the glen. It was Craigenputtock. I leant on the low dyke that encloses the garden in front of the house, and looked long and silently before me. The loneliness of Carlyle's home in Glenesslin has perhaps been overdrawn by his biographer, the surrounding cluster of farms being nearer than one is led to expect; but that night it looked inexpressibly drear and desolate. Before me lay the hill on which Emerson had his famous talk with Carlyle. No sound broke the stillness, not a single candle burned in Craigenputtock. In noisy London people were sitting down to dinner; here every living thing, from the barn-door fowl to the farmer, was overcome with sleep. I was dreaming, when a dim light showed for a moment at one of the upper windows. Carlyle in his old room writing for his life in a glen of the dead, his arm shadowed on the window-blind! A noise as of the creaking of a door on its hinges, and a grim sad-eyed old man coming out into the night. The light suddenly went out, and I turned shivering away.

TWO NEW NOVELS.*

"GREAT PORTER SQUARE."

PEOPLE who like a book with a good murder in it will be fascinated by Mr. Farjeon's new novel. It may be said to be all murder. It contains no interest or incident unconnected with the mysterious crime in Great Porter Square. The story is interesting almost in spite of itself. There is no art or grace about it. It might be called a "machine-made" novel. The lodgings, the lodging-house keeper, the villains, male and female, the detectives—everybody and everything connected with the plot—have been, and no doubt will be, turned out in scores from the same old moulds. Here, however, they are skilfully handled and worked into comparatively fresh combinations, so that the author holds the reader's attention, and keeps him in excited expectation of something dreadful turning up. An air of reality is given to the story by the matter-of-fact way in which it is

* "Great Porter Square." By B. L. Farjeon. (London: Ward and Downey).

"Fair Diana." By "Wanderer." One vol. Illustrated by G. Bowers. (London: Bradbury, Agnew, and Co.)