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HEART AND SCIENCE BY WILKIE COLLINS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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# HEART AND SCIENCE.

A STORY OF THE PRESENT TIME.

BY

WILKIE COLLINS,

AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," ETC. ETC.

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# HEART AND SCIENCE.

## CHAPTER I.

‘Now,’ said Benjulia, “what is it to be. The favourite public bugbear? Vivisection?”

“Yes.”

“Very well. What can I do for you?”

“Tell me first,” said Lemuel, “what is Law?”

“Nobody knows.”

“Well, then, what *ought* it to be?”

“Justice, I suppose.”

“Let me wait a bit, Nathan, and get that into my mind.”

Benjulia waited with exemplary patience.

“Now about yourself,” Lemuel continued. “You won’t be offended—will you? Should I be right, if I called you a dissector of living creatures?”

Benjulia was reminded of the day when he had discovered his brother in the laboratory. His dark complexion deepened in hue. His cold grey eyes seemed to promise a coming outbreak. Lemuel went on.

"Does the Law forbid you to make your experiments on a man," he asked.

"Of course it does!"

"Why doesn't the Law forbid you to make your experiments on a dog?"

Benjulia's face cleared again. The one penetrable point in his ironclad nature had not been reached yet. That apparently childish question about the dog appeared, not only to have interested him, but to have taken him by surprise. His attention wandered away from his brother. His clear intellect put Lemuel's objection in closer logical form, and asked if there was any answer to it, thus:!

The Law which forbids you to dissect a living man, allows you to dissect a living dog. Why?

There was positively no answer to this.

Suppose he said, Because a dog is an animal? Could he, as a physiologist, deny that a man is an animal too?

Suppose he said, Because a dog is the inferior creature in intellect? The obvious answer to this would be, But the lower order of savage, or the lower order of lunatic, compared with the dog, is the inferior creature in intellect; and, in these cases, the dog has, on your own showing, the better right to protection of the two.

Suppose he said, Because a man is a creature with a soul, and a dog is a creature without a soul?

This would be simply inviting another unanswerable question: How do you know?

Honestly accepting the dilemma which thus presented itself, the conclusion that followed seemed to be beyond dispute.

If the Law, in the matter of Vivisection, asserts the principle of interference, the Law has barred its right to place arbitrary limits on its own action. If it protects any living creatures, it is bound, in reason and in justice, to protect all.

"Well," said Lemuel, "am I to have an answer?"

"I'm not a lawyer."

With this convenient reply, Benjulia opened Mr. Morphew's letter, and read the forbidden part of it which began on the second page. There he found the very questions with which his brother had puzzled him—followed by the conclusion at which he had himself arrived!

"You interpreted the language of your dog just now," he said quietly to Lemuel; "and I naturally supposed your brain might be softening. Such as it is, I perceive that your memory is in working order. Accept my excuses for feeling your pulse. You have ceased to be an object of interest to me."

He returned to his reading. Lemuel watched him—still confidently waiting for results.

The letter proceeded in these terms:

"Your employer may perhaps be inclined to