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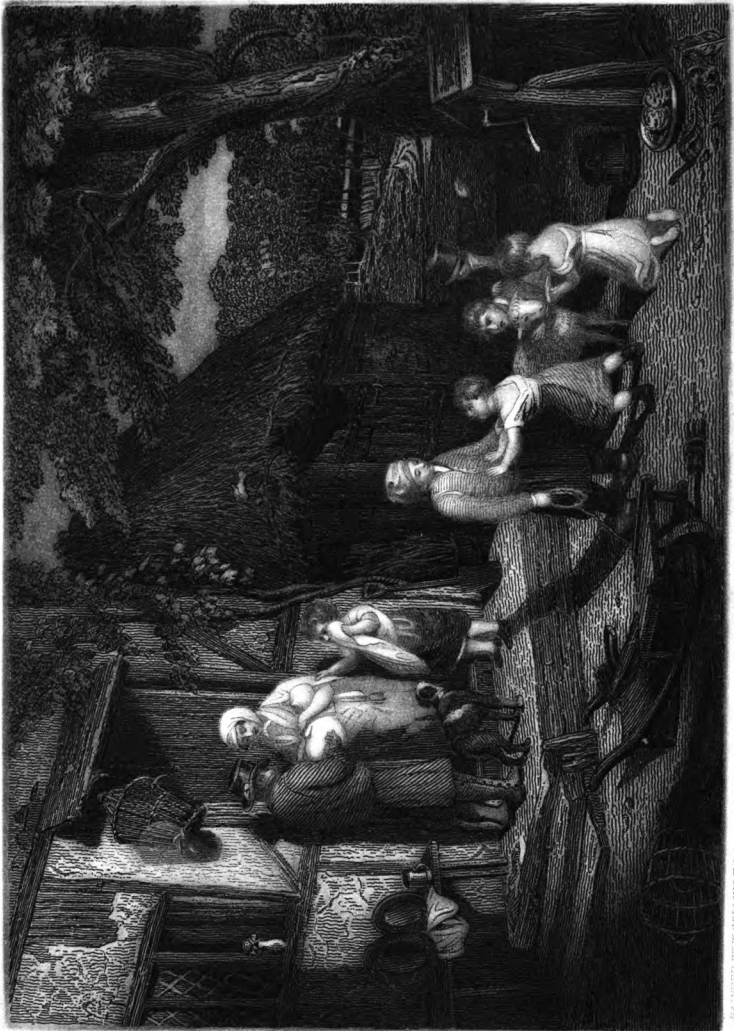
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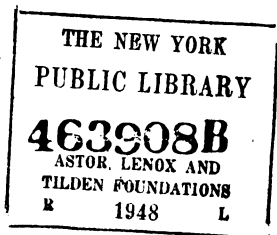
DESIGNED BY W. COLLINS, R.A.

MARY ELLIS,
OR,
THE RUNAWAY MATCH,
AND OTHER TALES.

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BY T. S. ARTHUR.
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PHILADELPHIA:
JOHN E. POTTER & COMPANY,
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MARY ELLIS;

OR, THE RUNAWAY MATCH.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

It is rarely that our sympathies are awakened for the poor who reside near us, and daily pass our dwellings. How indifferent are we to their condition—how regardless of their wants! Unless their sufferings and privations are forced upon our notice, we dream not of their existence. We read of misery in towns and villages far remote, and wonder that it could be allowed to exist; we even venture so far as to pass strong censure upon those who failed to relieve it, and think, “surely they must have known of its presence!” and yet, perhaps, in the low comfortless habitation beside our own dwelling, is one suffering almost to the extent of human

endurance, and we know it not. While sympathizing with the far off distress, we forget that want and suffering are all around us.

Thus I mused, after passing from the poor, half furnished dwelling of the widow Morrison. She had lived a few doors away from my own home for years; and although I had often noticed her, sometimes with an armful of wood, sometimes with her pail of water, yet no feeling of interest in her, as one of the great human family, had ever been awakened in my bosom.

It was a cold morning in January, with a deep snow upon the ground, when I noticed, as I passed in the morning to my business, that the widow Morrison's windows were not open as usual. Why I observed this, I knew not, for I had never thought much about her. But, somehow or other, the fact of the windows being closed, haunted me all the while, and when I started to go home for dinner, I felt a nervous anxiety to know whether the windows were still closed. A chilling sensation ran through my nerves as I came in sight of the poor looking tenement, and saw that there was still no sign of life about the house. I did not, however, yet, feel interest enough in the poor widow to call in to see why she was not stirring as usual.

There might be many reasons why she had not unclosed her windows. She might be away on a visit. And no doubt she is, I said to myself—thus endeavoring to quiet the strange concern I felt.

I said nothing about it during dinner; and left as usual for my place of business; not, however, in passing, without casting an eye of concern upon the closed windows of the dwelling of the poor widow. Her image was present to my mind during all the afternoon; and as the day began to draw to a close, I grew so restless, that I could no longer restrain a desire to go at once and satisfy myself of her real condition. Once having made up my mind to do this, I lost no time in repairing to her humble home.

It was just before night-fall when I knocked at her door, but there was no answer from within. The noise was returned with a hollow deserted echo. I shook the latch rapidly, and then listened for a sound, but none came to my ear. Yes! there *was* a sound; a low, feeble, child-like murmur. But again all was still. I knocked now louder than before, and shook the rattling door violently, for my mind had become strangely agitated. The weak fastening gave way, and in the next moment I stood, for the

first time, within the humble dwelling of the poor widow.

Upon a low bed, with scanty clothing, lay the widow Morrison, cold and stiff in death. With his young cheek upon her pale, cold face, nestled on her arm, and almost within her bosom, was a sweet child, scarce three years old. He lifted his little head as I entered thus abruptly, looked at me for a moment, and then laying his white hand upon her face, shook her head gently, and said—

“Gran'ma, get up—Oh, gran'ma, get up! I'm so cold!”

For a moment my feelings overcame me, and my eyes filled with the first drops that had moistened them for months. Lifting, in the next moment, the dear child from his cold resting place, I carried him at once to my own house; and then, with some of my family, returned to perform the last offices for the dead. Our kindness had come too late for the released sufferer. How shocked were our feelings, to find, on examination, that there was in the house neither fuel nor food! Thus, almost at our next door, had one perished of cold and hunger.

From a friend of the widow, who was present at the burial, I gained many interesting

particulars of her life. I have thrown them into form, and now present another leaf from the book of human life, though blotted and soiled with many tears.

CHAPTER II.

PARENTAL ANXIETIES.

IN the years of light-hearted maidenhood, Mary Ellis was one of the happiest of the happy. The present was to her all brightness and bloom—the future filled with glad anticipations. But like too many others, she reposed little confidence in the experience of the aged. Innocent as a child, she had never suspected anything but rectitude in the heart of another. Sadly, through many years of sorrow and disappointment, did she repent her early thoughtlessness.

Her parents, poor, but sensible people, looked with much concern upon their only child, just entering a world in which are thickly planted the germs of sorrow, and where temptation is ready to meet the unwary at every step. Especially did they feel a lively anxiety for Mary, when she would attend any of the “parties” which were then so frequent among the young

people ; for she was handsome, and full of spirits, and they dreaded lest some one, unworthy of her in every way, should win her young and happy heart. The evenings when she would be thus absent, were evenings of little enjoyment to them ; for always on such occasions would their minds revert to the many instances of unhappy marriages which had fallen under their notice. Let me introduce the old couple for a few minutes to the reader. Mary has gone to a party, and what was very unusual, instead of going before night, had waited until after dark, when she was called for by a gay looking young man, whom she introduced as Mr Morrison

The old couple sat for some time in silence after they were gone ; at last the father remarked, in a slow, serious tone :

“ I can't say that I feel altogether right about our Mary, to-night. To tell the truth, I never was, and am less now than ever, a friend of these parties.”

“ Those are just my own thoughts,” replied Mrs. Ellis. “ I do wish our Mary would stay at home. But, you know, Thomas, that we can't expect young folks to feel as we do.”

“ True—true. But then, we old folks can

see danger when they only know delight I know Mary is a good girl; but she is thoughtless, and knows nothing of the world. But who is this Mr. Morrison? I cannot say that I like his looks. There is too much of the fop about him, and too little of the man."

"In truth, Thomas, I cannot say. But when I think of poor Sarah Jones, and of her marriage with the gay but graceless Wilkins, who broke her heart in a year, I tremble for our own dear child. I want to know all about the man who steps beyond our door-stone with Mary, and I not by their side. No stranger can ever gain my willing consent to her hand, unless innocence be written upon his face in characters that none can mistake.

"I agree with you there, wife. But the young heart is wayward in its loves. We must not expect to find Mary with a judgment as matured as our own, or even willing to profit by our experience."

"That is the thing that troubles me," replied Mrs. Ellis. "The time may not be far off, when we may, perhaps, see her standing on the very edge, as it were, of a dreadful precipice, and yet be unable to open her eyes to her perilous situation; and have the agony to see her take

the fatal leap, even while we are conjuring her, by all the love that is in our hearts, to start back from her danger."

Tear after tear stole down from the eyes of Mrs. Ellis, as her feelings overcame her in view of so sorrowful a reality.

"I wonder," continued Mrs. Ellis, recovering herself, "that Mr. and Mrs. Jameson are willing to have promiscuous assemblages of young persons at their house, when they have three daughters, each of whom is in danger of forming an unhappy intimacy with some one unsuited to her in every way."

"The three daughters, you may be sure, is the only reason for these parties. They are to be married off; and Mrs. Jameson is the very woman to plan schemes for getting them mated!"

"Strange, and unnatural!"

"Truly, it is so. But there are too many who have families, and yet do not understand how to take the right care of them. And the worst of it is, their own children are not alone the sufferers."

"It seems to me, Thomas, that we are not discharging our duty to our child, when we suffer her to mingle in such company, as we

have too much reason to believe is to be found at Mrs. Jameson's."

"I have thought so myself, often," replied Mr. Ellis. "But have not yet found it in my heart to deny her a participation in the parties of young persons, in which she seems to take so much pleasure."

From the anxious father and mother at home, waiting, lonely and troubled in spirits, for the return of the light of their countenances, even until the hour of midnight, let us turn to the gay assemblage of thoughtless young persons, amid whom Mary Ellis is the centre of attraction. Let us mingle with them, and see and hear what it is that makes the time pass so pleasantly and so swiftly away.

CHAPTER III.

PARTY-GOING.

It is a mild evening in June. We enter a room, brightly illuminated, the furniture of which is more showy than costly. This room is filled to overflowing with young persons of both sexes. They seem to be in high spirits, if we may judge from the merry peals of

laughter that fall from their lips. Let us trace out the cause of this hearty mirth. Ah! we have found it. A black waiter has handed a lady a glass of brandy in place of wine, and she has taken nearly the whole of it before making the discovery.

But where is Mary Ellis? Oh! here she is, leaning, with too confiding an air, upon the arm of a gaily dressed young man, who is whispering something in her ear that seems to please her greatly. How sweetly she smiles! From the liquid depths of those soft eyes look out the very soul of affection; and yet they are bright with a wealth of innocent joyfulness. In every movement there is grace, simple and natural; and her voice is "music's own."

From a contemplation of her loveliness we are startled by a vulgar laugh at one end of the room.

"Ha! ha! ha! Tom!—Ha! ha! ha! Tom! She's more than a match for you!"

All eyes were turned to the scene of mirth.

"Why, what's the matter here?" asks a dozen voices; and one answers—

"Why, Tom, here, has attempted to clash wits with Miss Jameson, but she's more than a match for him. I tell you, though, she is hard to beat."

Let us listen to the elegant and witty **spar-
ring.**

“You say, Mr. Welsh, that I am too wide awake for a lady. You are mistaken there, for I always feign dullness when with you, to make myself agreeable.”

“It is well for me, Miss Jameson,” retorts Mr. Welsh, “that you were so considerate, for if you had thown all your soul into your eyes, I should have been consumed in their brightness.”

“Not so bad, Mr. Welsh! I am almost disposed to cry quits.”

“Do, pray—for I shall hate to retire from the field worsted.”

“O, that would be no disgrace to you.”

“Indeed, and why?” asks Mr. Welsh.

“Because,” replies the lady, “no one expects anything else. When we disappoint the reasonable expectations of our friends, then failure is truly mortifying.”

Similar to this was the lady-like sally that had called forth such peals of rude and boisterous mirth. But see! all is again quiet, and interest and expectation sits on every face. Ah! the explanation is at hand. Here comes sundry waiters with wines, fruit, and confectionary;

the third round within an hour. See how earnestly they have all commenced eating, as though it were one of the chief pleasures of life. And their tongues are no less idle than their teeth.

This course of refreshments through, and all parties more or less stimulated by the wine, their merriment becomes more loud and less rational. The piano, which earlier in the evening was made to give out sweet and gentle music, now accompanies the "Lithping Lover," the "Schoolmaster," or "Lord Lovel," succeeded by the half insane "bravos," and calls for a repetition of the piece.

As most of the assembly have conscientious scruples about dancing, and would be struck with pious horror at the sound of a violin, a promenade is substituted by way of variety.

"Will you take my arm, Miss Mary?" said young Morrison, as soon as he saw the movement; and in a few minutes they were in deep conversation, unnoticed, because in the promenade each individual was too much interested with his or her partner to observe others.

Pressing her arm closely within his, Morrison, who was as really charmed with Mary as a thoroughly selfish man can be with a lovely woman, began to insinuate in more direct terms

than he had ever yet done, that he felt for her a strong preference. Their acquaintance had been of but recent date ; and with no knowledge of his character, a prudent girl would have at once thrown him from the subject, and left his company as early as possible. But Mary was excited by the circumstances surrounding her, and her rational perceptions had been rendered indistinct by the frivolous nonsense which had flowed all around, and in which she had been a willing participant. She had already been turning over in her mind the question whether Morrison did really love her, and whether he would say so at once or keep her in suspense, when she perceived with a woman's quickness, the real meaning of his distant allusions. Her young heart trembled, and beat quickly and heavily against her bosom,—she felt agitated, but it was with a joyful feeling, mingled, it is true, with doubt and fear, and an indistinct perception of wrong. More and more direct did he become in his allusions, until, at last, he ventured to tell her, in terms that could not be mistaken, that until he had seen her, he had never felt a preference for any particular woman.

Poor girl !—she hardly knew where she was, or what to say. Scarcely seventeen, she was

yet no guide to herself, and one with no fixed principles had now her heart. At a promiscuous party of the young and thoughtless, she had met him a stranger; and at another assemblage of the kind he had renewed the attentions offered on the evening of their first acquaintance; and thus again and again renewed them, until, finally, he had declared himself her lover, and was, without hesitation, reflection, or consultation, accepted!

In this brief relation, how many a thoughtless though innocent girl's history can be traced. Does it not seem strange that parents—parents who love their children with the most devoted affection, will allow their daughters, young girls from sixteen to twenty, unacquainted with the world and unsuspecting, to mingle, unattended by any one to whisper a friendly caution, in scenes of which the imperfect sketch just given, is but a faint picture! It is strange, but alas! how true. Who does not remember the vision of some sweet young face that has dawned upon him amid the crowd of the thoughtless and the gay? How the wonder arose in the mind why she was there, who seemed less a woman than an angel? How the lovely face grew familiar, and how a sweet young voice thrilled on the ear

with a strange but pleasant music? Months would pass away, and at last she would be missed from the gay circles, and to the inquiry, would be answered, she has married the dashing young W—, or the idle spendthrift Y—. At once, she is consigned to forgetfulness. But after the lapse of a few brief years, you meet her, perchance on the street, perchance at some friend's, a sad, pale, sorrow-stricken creature, the miserable wreck of her who once glanced before your eyes like a being from another world.

All large parties, especially those into which a particular station in life, and not character, becomes the passport, are dangerous places for young girls. It makes little difference whether the social grade, so called, be the lower, the middle, or the highest, unless character and intellect form the standard of admission. Why will parents shut their eyes to this fact?

How shall we introduce our daughters into company? asks an intelligent person, who, in the main, has correct views. I will tell you. No longer indulge a selfish and recluse spirit. Because you are married and have a family, it is no reason why you should shut yourself out from the world. Do not, however, pass from

the extreme of seclusion, to the other extreme of fashionable party-going. But endeavor to form a small social circle of those who have moral worth and intelligence. Cultivate a feeling of goodwill towards each member of this circle, and endeavor to introduce a oneness of social aim, that you may all be as one. Into this circle, introduce your sons and your daughters. Let a want of moral principle always exclude from admission, even if it cut off some of the members of families who formed a part of the circle. You will not only by this course, cease to live a life of selfish seclusion, but you will diffuse around you a pure moral atmosphere; and one which your own children may breathe with healthy enjoyment.

CHAPTER IV.

ONE OF ITS CONSEQUENCES.

THE hours passed heavily away; and long after the clock had struck twelve, did the mother and father wait in anxious suspense for the return of their child. The next hour had nearly closed, when Mary came home, in company with Morrison. The quick ears of the parents,

soon detected the low murmur of their voices, as they lingered for some time at the door, to say their last words over and over again. Mrs. Ellis' anxieties had been so keenly felt, that she could not sit quietly and hear the sound of Mary's voice in conversation with one who was to her a stranger, and that, too, at the hour of midnight. She went at once to the door, and as she turned the key, Morrison bade Mary a hasty good-bye, and was out of sight by the time the door was fairly opened.

The parents asked Mary no questions then, nor remarked upon the lateness of the hour, but they noticed, with a new and keen sensation of pain that in her eye was an expression heretofore a stranger in that mirror of the thoughts and feelings. Mary slept as little that night as did her parents. But how different were their thoughts. Towards day she fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamed that one with the countenance of Morrison, though brilliant and superhuman in its expression, had called for her at her mother's to ride into the country; and that she had accompanied him, in simple confidence. But that after he had taken her far away from the sight of any habitations, his face suddenly changed to that of a demon, and

while he was in the act of dashing her shrinking form over an immense precipice, she awoke in terror.

On the next morning, Mary's appearance added another weight to the burden that was resting upon the feelings of her mother. But neither of her parents through the day, for reasons weighing with themselves alone, made any allusion to the peculiar emotions, which had agitated their bosoms.

On the second evening after the party, Morrison called, and after a formal introduction to Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, spent a few hours in alternate conversation with them and Mary. How different were the impressions made on the minds of the parents and child. The former felt a strong dislike to him, from his own exhibition of himself; while the latter, looking at him through a different medium, found some new cause for admiration in every word and in every movement. Which does the reader imagine were capable of forming the most rational judgment—the parents or the child? But let the sequel show.

For some weeks, Mary hid in her own bosom the secret that Morrison had formally declared himself her lover, and that she had not dis-

couraged his preference. But the time soon came to reveal all.

One evening, when Mary was dressing to go to a party, the attendance on which had been partially and mildly opposed by her parents, her mother asked her if she were going before night. She replied that she was not, that Mr. Morrison was going to call for her.

“Do you know anything about this Mr. Morrison, Mary?” inquired her mother, in a serious tone of voice.

“O yes, ma’am, I know a good deal about him.”

“Well, Mary, I should like to hear what you do know about him; for I think one so young as you should be sure of the real character of the man you allow to keep your company.”

“Why, mother, I know he is a very fine young man. His manners, his appearance,—all, show him to be a gentleman.”

“Older heads than yours have erred, my child, and older eyes been deceived. Have you no further evidence than your own observation?”

“Why, every body likes him. Mary Jones is jealous enough of his attentions to me; and Jane Williams said no longer ago than Thure-

day, that I was a forward chit, and all because Mr. Morrison took but little notice of her, while he kept with me nearly the whole of the evening."

"My dear child, that is all of no account. The preference of Mary Jones or Jane Williams to any one, is no argument to prove his worth. I am not at all prepossessed in favor of Mr. Morrison; and neither is your father. We can see deeper into his real character than you can. He is selfish, and wants stability and firmness. Unless I am much mistaken, the woman who marries him will eat her bread in bitterness of spirit."

"Oh mother! mother! how can you talk so?" said Mary, bursting into tears. "You have entirely misapprehended his character. I am sure he is the reverse of all you have thought him."

Mrs. Ellis was truly alarmed at this exhibition of feeling. She had spoken to guard her daughter against allowing her affections to be influenced by a stranger, whose worth, and fixedness of character she suspected, and lo! the fact that those affections were already deeply interested, was too plainly manifest. The embarrassed silence that ensued, told that the

mother's perception of a right course of action was, for a time, perfectly clouded. She at length said—

“Mary, I see too plainly that you have unwisely suffered yourself to indulge an undue preference for a stranger, without letting your mother, your only safe adviser, know of such a preference. Your own better judgment tells you that in this you were wrong. Your pain of mind this evening—your tears, show that you have an internal conviction of wrong; for pain never succeeds a right action. Now, my child, what course is left for you? Why, this plain and simple one. Pause and reflect. Do not go out to-night. The matter under consideration is one that will affect for good or evil, for happiness or misery, your whole life; and, surely, one evening's privation were a small sacrifice to make where such great interests are involved.”

Mary did not reply for some time. But there was an evident struggle between inclination and duty. There was something so reasonable in her mother's appeal to her, that it seemed almost like madness, even in her own view of the case, to go in opposition to it. But when the image of Morrison came up before her mind,

and she saw him disappointed at not finding her ready to accompany him, she hesitated, wavered, and at last said—

“Mother, indeed you are too serious in this matter. I am sure you have mistaken the character of Mr. Morrison altogether. I have seen more of him than you have, and I know you are mistaken. I am sure there is no cause for concern on your part, and none, why I should not go to the party to-night. I should like to go very much, and will be expected. Do, mother, lay aside your objections. I don’t want to go against your consent.”

“I cannot lay aside objections founded on such serious considerations. But I will not command you to stay at home. You can go to-night. But you must expect, hereafter, that both your father and myself will think it our duty to require you to mingle less frequently in these parties of idleness and dissipation.”

With a heavy heart Mary made her arrangements for going to the party that evening. And with a heart much heavier, did her mother observe the preparations. Knowing that Morrison’s reception on that evening could not, in the nature of things, be very cordial, she got all ready to go before the hour when he should call,

and knowing his knock, she met him at the door dressed to go out.

Morrison soon discovered that all was not right, and to his repeated question as to what troubled her, she at length mentioned to him the objections of her mother.

“That is generally the way,” he said, with some warmth,—“with all parents. They are jealous over their daughters; and yet, one can’t blame them so much for it. But their jealousy is always capricious and unreasonable. I believe no one can allege anything against my character. I am sure I am willing to challenge the world to produce a dishonorable action against me.”

“I never doubted you, Mr. Morrison, and never will,” replied Mary, earnestly.

“Thank you for your confidence,” said he, in a tender tone, pressing her hand within his. “You shall never have cause to repent.”

“But I fear,” said Mary, “that my parents will positively object to our keeping company. Would it not be best for you to go at once to my father, and seek his approbation?”

“I do not know why I should beg him to think well of me. If he have unfounded prejudices against me, I am the one to complain

of injustice, and not the one to seek meanly for favor."

"But, is he not my father?" asked his companion, roused for a moment to a proper sense of her lover's ungenerous remark.

"True!—true! But I never could seek the favor of any one—much less where an ill-founded prejudice was entertained against me."

"I am still unconvinced," said Mary. "A parent has a right to be consulted in regard to the disposal of his daughter's hand. And, even if he have a prejudice against the person, and the prejudice be without foundation, it can easily be removed; and steps should at once be taken to have it removed. A child cannot be happy if her parents object to her marriage."

"There may be some truth in what you say," was the modified reply of Morrison, who, as he really loved, or thought that he loved, Mary, had no idea of offending her. "And if you really think that I had better see your father, why I suppose I must do so."

"Certainly, I see no other right course," was Mary's answer.

Their conversation gradually changed from this unpleasant subject, and by the time they had reached the house where they were to

spend the evening, Mary was listening with a pleasant thrill of delight to the honeyed words of affection, stealing into her ear like refreshing dews into the cup of the half closed violet.

In a few evenings after, Morrison called at the house of Mr. Ellis, for the purpose of formally asking for his daughter. His reception was not very cordial. Mary, who knew the real design of the visit, soon made an excuse to withdraw, and left Morrison alone with her parents. After some time, spent in an embarrassed silence, or a more embarrassed effort to carry on a conversation, Morrison came boldly to the point, and made his distinct avowal of a preference for Mary

“Mary is much too young to think of marrying,” was the prompt reply of Mrs. Ellis, made before her husband could even form a thought upon the subject.

“Many are married much younger, madam,” said Morrison.

“The example of wrong-doing in others, instead of being an argument in favor of such wrong being imitated, is a strong reason for others to shun a like evil.”

“We are not thoughtless in regard to our daughter, Mr. Morrison,” said Mr. Ellis, having

now sufficiently gathered his thoughts into form as to allow him to take a part—"and we have long since made up our minds, neither to consent to a very early marriage, nor to approve of a union with a stranger."

"Your rule, Mr. Ellis, may be, as a general thing, a good one," replied Morrison, "but no rule can apply to all cases. Yet even if I am, to a certain degree, a stranger to you, still I am known in this city, and I can readily be inquired after."

Mr. Ellis, who had already made sufficient inquiries to convince him that Morrison was no suitable companion for Mary, now fixed his positive objection on the age of his child, from which no argument could move him. Morrison was deeply chagrined on leaving the house, and being forced to leave, too, without a private interview with Mary; for the parents, with a oneness of purpose, determined not to leave them alone.

CHAPTER V.

A WRONG BEGINNING IN LIFE.

It is painful to record any instance of filial disobedience, but such disobedience did Mary

Ellis practice towards her parents. Stolen interviews were frequently had, and the two finally resolved upon a clandestine marriage, which was entered into but two months after the rejection of Morrison's suit by Mr. and Mrs. Ellis.

Mary had gone out, professedly, to spend an afternoon with a friend. She was to have been home before evening. But at night-fall she had not made her appearance. When her father came in concern was expressed by the mother in consequence of Mary's not having returned from her visit. Night closed darkly in, but she was still absent. An hour passed and yet she came not. Still, they could only suppose that she was detained from some good cause. But, when hour after hour passed away, and the time stole on even to the hour of midnight, a chilling fear, unwhispered by either, gathered about their hearts; a fear that took no form, but was even the more painful from its uncertainty.

The weary hours passed on, and at last the dim morning twilight came coldly in upon them, while they were yet anxious watchers. She will now soon come, they thought; for they fed their hopes with the idea, that she had been overpersuaded to stay all night with a friend. Two

hours had passed since the sun had risen, and as Mary was still absent, her father, with a heavy heart, prepared to go out in search of her. He was met at the door by a stranger, who placed a letter in his hand, and instantly retired. Trembling he broke the seal, and read a confirmation of his worst fears. Mary had risked all on a union with Morrison.

In silent anguish of spirit Mr. Ellis handed the letter to his wife, and bitter were the tears they wept together over this token of Mary's sad infatuation. She was their only child. In her were centered their fondest hopes. In one fearful moment, all these garnered hopes were scattered to the winds. Filial disobedience was no cause of the profound sorrow that settled like a dark shadow over their spirits. It lay in their yearning affection for the child who was, in their minds, wilfully sowing the seeds that would produce, in after years, a fruitful harvest of inexpressible anguish. Unlike too many in their situation, who feel more of offended pride, and mortified ambition, than real concern, they lost no time in repairing to the residence of a Mrs. L——, where Mary said she was with her husband. It was but an hour from the time that Mary despatched her letter, until she was weep-

ing on the breast of her mother. And did that mother chide her for an act that could not be recalled? It never entered her heart to utter a word of reproach. But the shade of unusual seriousness that rested on her face, and the fixed glance of her eye, that seemed with her inward perceptions scanning the future, troubled the heart of Mary.

“You have taken my child without my consent, Mr. Morrison,” were the father’s first words. “But let that pass! Cherish her as a tender plant, and a father’s heart shall bless you!” Then folding his daughter in his arms, in a long embrace, he could only say, “God bless you!” while a tear stole down his pale, time-furrowed cheek.

I will not mock the unutterable grief, that throbbled with a strong pulsation from heart to heart of the parents, by any attempt to picture it to the mind. It was such as cannot be imagined, and is never described when felt. The disobedient child had no conception of its real character. Relieved beyond measure at finding kindness and apparent oblivion, where she had expected reproach, and perhaps abandonment, she fondly hoped that there was less of real objection in her parents’ minds, and less of sor-

row in their hearts than she had anticipated. Fond delusion! Not long to last. For, even she soon noted a change in her parents, which a closer observer would have known to be the failing spirit where the cherished hope was blighted. One hope, the future welfare of their child, had been the life-spring of their existence for years; that had failed, and now they drooped in spirit, and there were none with the power to comfort them.

Mary and her husband were at once invited to come home, and live there. But Morrison preferred going to house-keeping immediately, and Mary readily acquiesced, not considering for a moment how lonely her parents would be, and how much it would have gratified them if they had spent a few months under the paternal roof before starting fairly out into the world.

Morrison, I will merely say, in passing, was at this time a junior partner in a retail dry goods store. His interest was but small, however, and his income limited. He had been for some years a clerk in this store, and had recently been offered an interest, which he accepted. He was an expert salesman, and a ready man of business, though fond of pleasure. His partners were of the same stamp of character,

so that there were in the firm no checks or balances. They could make money in good times ; and well they knew how to spend it.

A house was taken at a high rent, and filled with showy and expensive furniture. Little taste or neatness was displayed in its selection or arrangement ; but as there was the fashionable quantity of pier and card tables, sofas and looking glasses, astral lamps and mantle ornaments, brussels carpets, etc., etc., it was all right. Into this Mary was introduced, and installed mistress. How fondly did she look around upon all these things, and congratulate herself upon having made so good a choice, notwithstanding the mistaken notions of her parents ! But they saw all with different eyes. Too many like beginnings they had witnessed, and too many sad endings. They feared that her husband's means could not sustain an outlay of several thousand dollars for furniture, and the cost of maintaining a style of living such as his commencement indicated. But they said nothing. Admonition they knew would be vain.

Mrs. Morrison was soon lost in the giddy whirlpool of fashionable visiting, and fashionable ambition. There were many to count her

society, and to flatter her vanity; and too soon the simple-minded, pure-hearted maiden, had become the flippant, pleasure-seeking woman of fashion—a follower in the wake, and an apert of the frivolities of the thoughtless and giddy, in the next rank or elevation of society in the plain above her.

Nor had she gained this position without paying its penalty—domestic infelicity. Not that her husband disapproved of any display or pleasure, but because, in the very nature of things, the minds that can take an ardent delight in these, cannot understand nor practice the gentle and reciprocal virtues which make the marriage life a happy one. Often did she weep in the silence of her own chamber, at the indifference of her husband, or at his unfeeling remarks, indulged in at times, without reflecting, that in the life they led the domestic virtues had no time to spring up and grow.

The unhappy parents saw all this, and it added but another weight to those already too heavy for them to bear. The stamina of their minds was completely gone, and with it was fast going their physical health. They tried hard, for the sake of their child, to keep up, but in vain. Scarcely two years had passed since

her marriage, when, yielding to the touch of the pale messenger, they closed their eyes upon a world of disappointment and sorrow.

Roused from her dream of gay delusion, at so unexpected an event, Mrs. Morrison had time to pause and call back her scattered senses. The fashionable period of seclusion and mourning gave leisure for reflection, and she began to have a faint perception of the ultimate tendency of her present course of action. The more she thought about it, the more did she see her error; and the clearer she saw her error, the more distinctly was her heart made sensible that she could not fall back upon the real affection of her husband. This was a startling discovery, and one that when made to a woman's heart, awakens it to dream no more.

The very necessity for excitement, after the mourning season had passed, threw her again into fashionable life. She was gayer than ever, and as insincere and heartless in her fashionable professions as the gayest and most heartless. The neglect and indifference of her husband had nearly extinguished in her bosom all affection for him,—they merely tolerated each other. Each pursued the course of action, and followed the pleasure that each thought best. But,

though Mr. Morrison could thus pursue a course of pleasure, thoughtless of his wife, it was in vain for her to attempt to be happy in the mere excitements of fashionable visitings and gay assemblies. She was still a woman, and a woman's sphere is one of affection. She must love, or be miserable.

About this time Mrs. Morrison became a mother. A new feeling took possession of her heart as she looked upon the dear emblem of innocence that rested in sweet unconsciousness upon her bosom; but she wanted one who could share with her the love she bore her child. Her husband would come to the bedside and look upon it, but he was too selfish even to care much for his own child!

When Mrs. Morrison was again able to mingle in society, she felt the same desire to court admiration, and share excitements, with the gayest of her fashionable acquaintances. Her little Emeline was too often left for hours in the care of a hired nurse, who felt but little real affection for the tender infant entrusted to her charge.

CHAPTER VI.

AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

GRADUALLY the firm, of which Mr. Morrison was a partner, enlarged its business, which showed greatly increased profits. This induced Morrison to indulge in a still more expensive style of living. Only in a desire for extravagance and show did he assimilate at all to his wife in disposition. Here they met on neutral ground—here they were agreed. A large house, at a very high rent, was taken on Charles street, and newly furnished, at great expense, and little taste. Cards of invitation were sent out to the *elite*, and crowded rooms of the gay, the thoughtless, and the fashionable, answered the summons.

“My dear Mrs. Morrison, what a paradise you have here!” said Mrs. Stanley, one of her dear friends, a lady whose husband was more prudent than to make a show beyond his means.

“Yes, we have every thing our hearts can desire. Mr. Morrison never thinks anything expensive that will add to my comfort.”

Mrs. Stanley sighed. “My husband thinks

too much of his business, and is always talking about prudence and caution," she remarked "But I will bring him on by degrees. He has got rich so lately, that he has not yet lost his old fashioned habits of economy."

Now, be it known, that Mr. Stanley was keeping a retail dry goods' store, and might, probably, be worth ten thousand dollars. As an offset to this, the single item of Mrs. Stanley's dress on this evening, including jewelry, etc. cost over one thousand dollars.

"Welcome to your new home!" said another lady acquaintance, coming up. "Why you have a palace to live in! Really, Mrs. Morrison, I must have a set of blue damask curtains just like yours. Ain't they beautiful, Mrs. Stanley?"

"The handsomest I have ever seen," replied that lady. "I have made up my mind to have a set, too."

"Were you at Mrs. Hone's party last week?" continued the first speaker.

"No," was the answer of Mrs. Morrison.

"Well, I am told that it was the grandest come-off this season. Quite an eclipse of anything we have seen! I wonder why we were not invited? However, I suppose Mrs. Hone

begins to feel herself a grade higher than usual, since her husband has turned shipping merchant."

"Pride always has a fall," remarked Mrs Morrison, "and her time will come one of these days."

"Of course," said the other two ladies.

"I don't care much how soon it does come," added Mrs. Stanley.

Just at that moment Mrs. Morrison was called to the other end of the room, and the two ladies continued their conversation.

"And *your* turn will come, too, or I'm much mistaken!" remarked one of them, glancing towards her retreating form.

"She is getting up rather fast, Mrs. Webster," said Mrs. Stanley; "that's my opinion."

"Why, the fact is, Mrs. Stanley," replied Mrs. Webster, "her husband is only junior partner in the house of Collins & Co., and I've often heard my husband say, that they all carried more sail than ballast. The first storm will drive them under."

"Well, be that as it may," said the other—
"I've had my own thoughts about her for some time. She affects an air of superiority that I can't tolerate Her time will come one of these

days. Ah! my dear Mrs. Morrison, we have not yet done admiring your beautiful establishment," said the veracious lady, as the object of her animadversions came up at the moment.

"Thank you, Mrs. Stanley! you are always pleased to admire my taste, and the style of my arrangements. Be sure it is to me highly gratifying. But there is Mrs. N.— just come in,—excuse me, ladies, again, I must welcome her to my new paradise, as you are pleased to call it."

"Now I am sure, Mrs. Webster," said Mrs. Stanley, "that these curtains are not half so beautiful as Mrs. Charitan's? I'll have a set before long though, that will throw them both into the shade, and make Mrs. Morrison almost die with envy."

But little difference as to substance and value was the conversation passing through the richly furnished parlors of Mrs. Morrison. She had invited her dear friends to admire her new house and her new furniture, and they took their own way of doing it. Some, it is true, made it a point to make no allusion to them, but it was for the reason that they thought such allusion would be gratifying. Music, dancing and eating, made up the general enjoyment of

the evening, and at a late hour the company separated, as is usual in all similar cases.

One month after this party, the house of Collins & Co. failed for a large amount, and every thing was given up into the hands of a trustee for the benefit of the creditors. All the personal property of the debtors shared the same fate, Mr. Morrison's costly furniture, and all.

And now began the downward course with Mrs. Morrison. She had passed the zenith of her fortune. In one hour her husband was reduced to poverty. With *his* habits, and *her* artificial wants, the salary of one thousand dollars a year which he obtained as salesman in a jobbing house, went but a small way towards making them comfortable. All their splendor was gone, and neither of them was in any humor to make the best of the bare conveniences and necessaries which the eager creditors of the firm had left them.

How lonely did she feel in her small house poorly furnished, and in a retired street. Day after day she waited and looked for a visit from her "dear Mrs. Stanley," her bosom friend; but that lady had quite forgotten her, as was shortly afterwards evident from her failing to recognize her on the street.

This was a severe blow for Mary Morrison. On this she had not calculated. Although she had been insincere to all, she had been deceived by the professions of all, and particularly by the most heartless one of her fashionable friends.

Suddenly, about a year after this reverse, her anxieties were aroused by an alarming illness of her husband. He was taken with a prevailing fever and life hung upon a feeble thread that a breath might sever. All the passionate love she had borne him when first she suffered her young heart to invest him with perfections that, alas! existed only in imagination, returned upon her as she stood by his bedside, and felt the awful truth that he must die. But it was of no avail now. The invisible arrow winged its unerring flight, and Morrison closed his eyes forever upon the world.

And now came thick and fast upon her the trials which were to prove her as in a furnace of fire. Trials, that would either reveal the pure gold of her real character, hidden long under the exterior dross of fashionable habits, or consume the whole as poor and worthless.

After her husband had been buried out of her sight, the pressing necessity to consider well

her situation and resources, diverted her mind from a vain and heart-sickening contrast of the past with the present ; and kindled up a lively concern for the future. Her little girl was between two and three years old, and she had been sadly neglected. But for all that, she was a sweet-tempered child, and had been gradually winning an interest in her mother's heart, ever since her banishment from the fashionable circle in which she was at one time "a bright particular star." Now, when her eye rested upon the sweet, innocent, confiding face of her little one, her feelings were agitated with an affection more tender, more ardent, than she had ever felt. Her heart literally yearned over her child.

CHAPTER VII.

TRIED IN THE FIRE.

UPON a careful examination into the state of her affairs after the death of her husband, Mrs. Morrison found that she had not twenty dollars in money, besides her scanty household furniture. This was a startling discovery, and for a time she gave way to a feeling of despair that was indeed terrible. Not a single ray glim-

mered through the darkness and hopelessness of her thoughts, obscured as they were by a sense of weakness and ignorance of the world, and by a shrinking dread of the shame and disgrace of actual labor for money. But no suffering child of humanity is ever left to the dominion of idle and despairing thoughts in the day of strong trial. The way of relief is not only always at hand, but there are invisible messengers of good ever ready, not only to stir the thoughts to inquiry, but to guide them aright, if there exists also, even a latent willingness to do the right. Nor did Mrs. Morrison long remain bowed down and hopeless. Gradually, something like a faint light seemed to dart its feeble rays from afar off—true, it was again obscured, and all seemed darkness and doubt and despair. But steadily did she continue to fix her eye in the direction whence the kind ray had seemed to come; and soon a light, so dim, so faint that nothing could be seen, was diffused around her. Eagerly looking still, she could now distinctly see whence the light of hope had come. For the first time she felt confidence in a power within her.

Bringing out at once her newly formed hopes and resolutions into action, she prudently set

about disposing of every thing that was really useless to her, or that would be useless in a single room. At auction she obtained one hundred and fifty dollars for these. All of her jewelry had been retained at the time of her husband's failure, though the greater part of it had been subsequently disposed of—still, she had enough, with a watch, to sell readily for one hundred and fifty dollars more. Two hundred and fifty of this sum were deposited in the Savings' Bank, and with the balance in possession for immediate wants, she dismissed her servant, and removed into a comfortable room at a rent of three dollars a month. This was done before she had yet resolved upon any certain means of earning a support for herself and child. But she had acted wisely in beginning to do just what she saw to be right, without sitting down in despair to think about what she could not do.

It must not be supposed that after she had removed to her humble abode, that she did not feel keenly the heartless desertion of the friends of her better days. Sometimes in looking back, it seemed as if her feelings would drive her mad; nor could she gain any relief by trying to penetrate the future. Only in the present

was there a temporary repose of mind. But the bias of wrong habits of feeling and action had so warped her original character, that it was not now possible for any sudden change to correct at once her evils. She would have to suffer much and suffer long before a healthy reaction could possibly take place.

One day, some weeks after she had entered upon her new mode of living, in conversation with the woman from whom she rented her room, and who had proved a more sincere friend than she had found since she left her mother's house, she expressed a desire to do something by which she could earn enough to buy food for herself and child, and thus enable her to leave her money in the Savings' Bank untouched.

"What do you think you could do, child?" said she, in answer.

"Indeed, Mrs. Winter, I do not know. I have thought and thought, but I really know of nothing that I could do."

The old woman mused for some time. "Can you sew well?" she at length inquired.

"Yes ma'am. At least I can do fine work."

"Fine work you will not be able to get all at

once. But as you seem so willing, I think something can be got for you to do."

Little did Mrs. Morrison think, a few months before, that such words of encouragement, from such a source, would have been so soothing to her feelings. But now they were as oil to the troubled waters of her spirit.

"You cannot," continued Mrs. Winter, "make pantaloons for the tailors; neither can you make and fit dresses; nor do millinery work—nor bind shoes, nor hats. But still you might learn some one of these, and after awhile be able to do very well for yourself."

"But how long would it take me to learn to do some of these?" she inquired eagerly.

"Why, child, when any one is very anxious, they can easily learn to do almost anything."

"Well, what would you advise me to do, Mrs. Winter?"

"That I can hardly tell just now. I must think a little first, and look about me to see what can be done."

"How good you are!" said Mrs. Morrison almost involuntarily, her eyes filling with tears.

"I try to do, my child, as I would be done by. It does me no injury to think a little for

you; and assist you with my advice. You help me by renting my room, and thus lightening my burdens, and if I can help you a little with my advice, why we will be even, on the score of obligations. But this is not the proper light in which to look at these things. There is no situation in life in which we may be placed where we cannot be useful to others; and the delight arising from the love of being useful to others, is the highest state of happiness to which the human mind is capable of advancing."

Mrs. Morrison listened to her kind adviser with a new feeling of interest. The sentiments uttered by her were so evidently true, that her mind almost appreciated them at once,—yet they were so new that she wondered almost if they were not spoken by inspiration.

"You have seen better days, Mrs. Winter?" she said, after musing for some moments over the last uttered sentiments.

"I cannot say that I have, Mrs. Morrison," she replied, "I have seen days of more worldly prosperity, it is true, but I cannot call them better days. I was once as familiar as you have been with gaiety and dissipation: but it pleased the Divine Providence which is ever doing what is best for us, to cut off the springs of

worldly splendor, and lo! the streams became suddenly dry. It was a sad trial to be forced out from among the old familiar friends and to miss the old familiar faces—to meet those with whom I had been on terms of the closest intimacy, and find myself unrecognized. But in the school of adversity I learned wisdom, and found comfort where peace and contentment can alone be found:—I mean, in a perfect, or, as far as possible, a perfect acknowledgment of the goodness and wisdom of the Divine Providence, and a calm trust in its operations towards me. I soon discovered, that, for years, I had been drinking at an impure fountain, and that my whole moral nature had become poisoned. Could I, in such a state, be happy? Your own experience will answer the question.”

Although Mrs. Morrison could not possibly perceive the perfect beauty of Mrs. Winter's system of ethics, yet enough was apparent to make her in love with it. But she had not yet put away from her the strong love of self that had ruled her for years, and consequently could not act from a pure love of the neighbor at once. Still the desire to do so, was the beginning, and if brought out into action whenever occasion

offered, would eventually tend to change the ruling affection from a love of self to a love of the neighbor.

True to her promise, Mrs. Winter thought carefully over many plans by which she might assist her new friend, in whom she felt a lively interest. She mentioned her situation to others whenever it seemed to promise any good result, and in various ways, endeavored to obtain for her some suitable employment.

"Mrs. Wellman was asking me yesterday, if I knew of any one who could do some hemming and ruffling for her, very neatly," said a person to whom Mrs. Winter mentioned Mrs. Morrison's desire to obtain work.

"Did you name any one to her," said Mrs. Winter.

"No, I did not, for I knew of no person who could do it neatly. I do a good deal of common sewing for the family."

"I wish then you would speak for Mrs. Morrison," said Mrs. Winter.

"Certainly. I am going again this afternoon, and will get the work for her."

True to her promise, she brought a large roll of fine laces and muslins, to hem, ruffle, insert, etc. Mrs. Wellman said that "they must be

done very nice, and that if they pleased her she would give her a good deal of work."

How joyfully, how thankfully, and with how patient a spirit did Mrs. Morrison sit down to her work! In a few days it was all done, and beautifully done, too; at least so said Mrs. Winter.

A new and painful task was now to be performed, that of carrying home her work, and getting the hire of her labor. With keen emotions of pain she shrank from the bare thought, as it flashed through her mind, for the first time, while surveying her finished task. She knew nothing of the person for whom the work was intended, not having even inquired her name.

On learning the name of the person for whom it was intended, she turned pale, and almost staggered to a chair. A Mrs. Wellman had been one of the most intimate of her former acquaintances. But she experienced a relief of mind from the fact, that the Mrs. Wellman, whose work she had been doing lived in another part of the town from that where her former acquaintance resided. Much agitated in mind at the similarity of the name, and still fearing that there was but one Mrs. Wellman, she dressed herself in neat but plain attire, corresponding

with her new condition, and taking the small bundle in her hand, went with a throbbing heart to carry it home. She pulled the bell of a house in Hanover street, with a timid hand, which was answered by a servant-man who had many a time handed her to and from her carriage on her visits to Mrs. Wellman. But he did not recognize her, and to her low-toned inquiry for Mrs. Wellman, was shown into the parlor.

That lady soon made her appearance—sweeping into the room with an air of vulgar consequence.

“Here is some work you sent me by Mrs. Mayfield,” she said, in a faint, trembling tone, endeavoring to keep her face as much out of the light as possible.

Mrs. Wellman took the bundle from her hand, looking her steadily in the face for a few moments with a rude stare, and then, as if satisfied with the scrutiny, proceeded to examine the work.

Hem after hem, frill after frill, and even stitch after stitch, were looked into with a long and close examination; during all which time Mrs. Morrison felt as if she would gladly have sunk into the floor.

“This will do very well. I am pleased with

your work, and will give you more. What is your name?" she added, looking her intently in the face.

"Morrison," was the reply, in a voice scarcely audible.

"Morrison—Morrison. That's a familiar name. But what's your Christian name?"

"Mary."

"Well, Mary, how much do you charge for this?"

"Two dollars, ma'am."

"That is reasonable enough. Here is the amount. Come to-morrow, and I will have some more work prepared for you. Are you a single woman?"

"I am a widow, ma'am!"

"Ah! you look young. Have you any children?"

"I have one. A little girl about three years old."

"How long has your husband been dead?"

"Only a few months, ma'am."

"Why, I did not know ——. Did your husband ever do business in this city?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"I remember there was a Morrison in the firm of Collins & Co. Was he your husband?"

“He was,” quickly replied Mrs Morrison, looking up with an eager countenance, expecting an instant and sympathizing recognition by one who had been of her most intimate acquaintances. But Mrs. Wellman looked at her with a countenance expressive of the most perfect composure. No sign of recognition was visible in a single feature.

“I remember,” she at length said, in a careless manner, “having heard you spoken of. You must find your change of fortune rather a distressing event.”

Mrs. Morrison did not, for she could not reply. But rose at once to go, saying, as calmly as she could, that she would call on the next day for the promised work.

Mrs. Morrison hardly knew how she arrived at home. But there she was met by one real friend, to whom she could tell all her painful feelings.

“You have much yet to learn of the selfishness and heartlessness of the world,” said Mrs Winter, after she had told her the manner in which Mrs. Wellman had treated her. “But you should think that a kind Providence which delivered you from false friends, and gave you to perceive that you were foolishly building

your happiness upon the smiles and approval of the vicious or the vain, instead of upon a surer and more abiding foundation."

Thus did this kind friend ever correct, by gentle means, the evils which rendered Mrs. Morrison unfit to be contented in the sphere she now had to move in. And she was successful far above what she had hoped.

CHAPTER VIII.

DAYS OF DARKNESS. •

NOTHING of more than ordinary interest occurred, until Emeline sprung up and verged on to womanhood. Now all of Mrs. Morrison's anxieties became aroused. She remembered her own false step, and trembled for her glad-hearted but inexperienced child. She was, however, spared much trouble on this account, for one who was all in character she could have wished him, a young and industrious mechanic, first won upon the affections of Emeline, and continued to hold them until it was agreed on all sides that they should be married.

And they were married. Emeline Morrison became Mrs. Williams. For three or four years every thing went on pleasantly enough, and

Mrs. Morrison's heart was happy in the affection of her children and their two sweet babes. Though living in a very humble condition, by carefulness and prudence, the income of Mr. Williams was sufficient to make them comfortable. But alas! a sad change began to show itself. In those times, every one was in the habit of drinking strong liquors, and still there were but few cases of abandoned drunkenness. Occasionally, it is true, some one would fall a victim to the bowl, and one of these it seemed was to be Mr. Williams. Several times he had come home from his work in a condition which showed that he had been indulging himself too freely; and gradually there was a diminishing of the weekly amount of earnings. Mrs. Morrison ventured a mild remonstrance, and for the first time received an unkind answer.

Emeline was not so keenly alive to the danger as her mother, though she soon felt that all was not right; and many a tear wet her eyes in the silence of the night, though she hardly knew why she wept.

Ten years from the day that Mrs. Morrison gave the hand of her daughter to Mr. Williams, she saw her, with five small children, and an idle, drunken husband, turned out of her home,

and all of her furniture sold for rent. A second time in her life was she called upon to bring into action all the resources of a tried spirit. She still had preserved, untouched, her little treasure, now nearly thirty years since its deposit in a Savings' Bank. It had continued to accumulate, until there stood to her credit over seven hundred dollars. The time had come to draw upon it, and she did so for the purpose of buying some necessary articles of furniture for a small house, which she took for her daughter and grandchildren.

Since his family had been turned out of doors and only kept from immediate suffering by the kindness of a neighbor, Williams was not to be seen, but as soon as they were again tolerably comfortable, he walked into their little asylum, provided by Mrs. Morrison, with an air of perfect freedom. It was a sore trial for her to see an idle, drunken man, eating up the bread she had bought for his children, and thus hastening the time when she would be no longer able to meet their wants. But there was no redress. He had become unfeeling—even brutalized.

But a new and keener sorrow came upon the mother and daughter. All of the children were taken down with scarlet fever. and after great

suffering, four of them died—one each day for four successive days. Two at a time were these little ones, escaped from the evil to come, borne out to the lonely graveyard. But for the living one, the last of the dear little flock, were now all their feelings interested. Hour after hour could be seen the mother and daughter seated, one on each side of the bed, where lay the little sufferer, eagerly watching every motion, every symptom, their hearts now trembling in hope, and now almost ceasing to beat in silent oppressing despair. The last of the jewels was a little girl, three years old, whose glad young face, and bird-like voice, had often chased from both her mother and grandmother, the burden of care that oppressed the one, and of sorrow that weighed down the heart of the other.

It was midnight, and still they leaned over her, watching her dear face, and listening to her painful breathing. There was no sound, other than that which came faintly from the sufferer, to disturb the deep silence of the hour. In another room, the father slept in leaden insensibility. Suddenly the bright blue eyes of the little sufferer unclosed, and, looking first at the one, and then at the other of the anxious faces that bent over her, she closed

them again, with a murmur of disappointment.

“What does little Emily want?” said her mother, in a tender tone.

“Where’s father?” asked the child, again opening her eyes, and looking around.

“He’s asleep, my dear,” replied her mother, soothingly.

She closed her eyes again with a faint sigh, and lay for half an hour, motionless as before. Again she lifted the dark lashes from those innocent orbs—again looked about—and again asked—

“Where’s father?”

“He’s asleep, my child,” said the mother.

“Do you want him?”

“I want to see my father. Where is my father?”—she asked eagerly.

Mrs. Williams left the bed-side of her sick child, and entered the room where her husband was asleep. She endeavored to rouse him from his deep slumber, but he answered her gentle effort to awaken him by a drunken growl, and turned himself over. She now shook him more violently. He opened his eyes, and with an angry exclamation, pushed her half across the room.

Sick at heart, she returned to the bed-side of her suffering child, whose eager eyes, now widely and fixedly unclosed, sought her own.

“Mother, I want to see father;” she said, as her mother bent again over her. “Why don’t father come?” Mrs. Williams burst into tears, and covering her face with her hands, sobbed as if her very heart would break.

“Don’t cry, mother—father won’t be cross any more. Father!—where’s my father?” She now called out in a loud, clear voice—“Father, come!”

That thrilling voice was heard, even by the drunkard in his slumber. The door suddenly opened, and the father stood by the bed-side of his sick child. The violence of the fever which had been consuming her, seemed now to have given way—her little hands were moist and cool, and her eyes shone with an unearthly brightness. She raised herself with an unexpected strength, and taking the hand of her father, she looked up to him with an expression that an angel’s face might wear, and her voice that was strangely musical and sweet, stole out, and the words—

“Father, be good!” thrilled every heart-string with a wild emotion.

For a moment more that sweet, earnest, appealing look was fixed in the face of her father, and then her eyes gradually closed, her muscles relaxed, and she sunk back upon her pillow. The heart of the strong man was shaken, and the fountain of tears long sealed up were touched. He bowed his head and wept bitter tears of repentance.

No look, no word, no sigh beamed from the eye or passed from the lips of the dear little sufferer through the hours that intervened until the dawning of the morning. Still as if death had parted the spirit from its earthly covering, did she lay. Mr. Williams, now wide awake both in mind and body, scarcely left the bedside a moment; but either sat or stood near the last one of his little flock, watching with intense interest for some living change to pass over the features of his child. But hour after hour he looked in vain.

Forgetful of his accustomed potation in the morning, forgetful of every thing but the insensible babe whose innocent thoughts, even in the extremity of life had been filled with his wrong doings, he continued to watch over her through all the day, scarcely induced to allow food to pass his lips.

Night, gloomy night, with lightning and storm, came on again. Hushed in a deep slumber had Emily lain all the day, her breathing so low as scarcely to be distinguished. The physician had come in and looked at her, but had gone away, without remark on her condition, or prescription, simply saying that he would come again in the morning. Silently did they all gather round the bed, none thinking of rest, as the storm without deepened into a tempest. The quick, intense flashes of lightning, came in through the uncurtained windows, paling the dim light, and seeming to play round the face of the innocent sufferer, giving it the livid, ghastly appearance of death. The deafening crash that would follow was scarcely heard, as the three would bend nearer, startled at the deathlike expression that the fierce light had thrown upon the face of the child, to ascertain if she were still alive.

She was the last of five dear children—how could they give her up? Even to pray in the agony of tried affection that she might be spared, did the mother presume—forgetful that infinite Love and Wisdom, that sees all for the best, cannot be moved to grant a prayer that would change his merciful and wise providence.

The hearts of the parents were now oppressed with their own pulsations ; for they had almost ceased to hope. They could not hide from themselves the truth that Emily, in the last twenty four hours, had failed rapidly. Now she lay before them, with a face only exceeded in whiteness by the snowy pillow on which it lay—and with a form shrunk to half its ordinary size. The motion of her chest was so slight, that it scarcely seemed to agitate the covering that enclosed it, and, save this, there was about the child no sign of life. The pale light of the morning came in, and as it gained strength, revealed to the anxious watchers, more of death in the face of the hushed sleeper, than the dim lamps had shown. Each bent forward with a yearning fear about their hearts—an intense oppression. But the tale was soon told. Once did the eye-lids slowly unclose—once did the orbs which had been hidden for hours, look up with their brightness undiminished—once did a feeble but sweet smile play round her lips, and then all was fixed in the rigidity of death.

In silence and in tears did they bear out the body of their last babe, and lay it with the rest. As the heavy clods rattled upon the coffin lid, Williams inwardly swore by the life that ani-

mated him, to be again the industrious citizen, the tender husband, and the kind son that he had been in years, now passed forever. But no sudden resolution can change the will. The shock of powerful affliction; the roused sense of evil doing, may for a time keep down the passions, strong by indulgence; but unless something beyond and above mere human resolves is called to the aid, the victim to a love of evil will again sink back—again return to wallow in the mire of sensuality.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DRUNKARD'S MADNESS.

TEN years had rolled away since the never-to-be-forgotten night in which the last dear child passed into the world of spirits. In a small, meanly furnished room, was laid in her last moments, a pale-faced mother, who had but a few days before given birth to an infant. Suffering and privation had worn away her flesh, and she was little more than a breathing skeleton. Seated by the bedside was an old woman, also emaciated and care-worn, who bent her eyes, filled with glances of affection, upon the child of her many thoughts, now evidently

drawing near the moment of death. The reader will recognize in these two lonely women, the widow Morrison, and her long suffering child. But where, he asks, is Williams? Alas! his spasmodic repentance was soon succeeded by a moral collapse, and he speedily returned to the habits of a miserable drunkard. He had continued to eat his bread in idleness—bread earned by the patient and hard labor of his wife and her mother. Not long did the treasure she had laid up for sickness, extremity, or old age, last the widow Morrison. She could not see her own child want. It had been exhausted years before this time of painful extremity.

Night had just closed in on a still evening in autumn. The breathing of the dying woman had grown less and less labored, and, as if passing into a gentle slumber, she had laid herself back upon the pillow with closed eyes, and a peaceful expression of countenance. With intense interest did Mrs. Morrison regard the face of her daughter, watching the feeble play of every muscle that showed the mind to be active, although the body was calm and almost motionless.

Suddenly the door was swung rudely open

and with a heavy step, came reeling in the drunken husband. The noise startled Mrs Williams from her sweet dream, and she lifted herself with a wild expression and gesture from her pillow.

Mrs. Morrison's raised finger, and low "h-u-s-h," was answered by

"Shut up your trap, old woman! I want none of your gammon. I guess I can be allowed to hear my own feet in my own house."

"O James!—James!" said his wife, in a faint voice, "you will kill me!"

"Women are hard to kill. You've been saying that for the last ten years, but you are here yet. Come, get up! I want some supper,"—and the drunken wretch actually caught her by the arm, and, but for the timely interference of her mother, would have dragged her out upon the floor.

This resistance was answered by a blow upon the face of Mrs. Morrison, so powerful as to knock her insensible upon the floor. This was more than the feeble body of Mrs. Williams could endure. With one loud, piercing shriek, that seemed to embody the agony of a broken heart, she fell back upon her pillow and was dead in an instant.

For an hour did Mrs. Morrison lay, void of sense or motion, upon the floor. The wretched father, when he saw the awful result of his drunken anger, was sobered instantly. But even in his sober moments, he had no thought, no affection for others. He thought only of himself, and precipitately left the house. When Mrs. Morrison recovered from the stunning effects of the blow and fall, she found the body of her daughter lying cold in death across the bed, and the infant under her, only protected from injury by a pillow, close beside which it lay in a gentle sleep.

Her cup of sorrow now seemed full, and for the first time for many years, all energy of mind forsook her. She seated herself by the bed-side, and gave way to thoughts of despair. From this she was roused by the entrance of a neighbor, who came in to see if she could be of any service for an hour or two, in relieving Mrs. Morrison from the care of her daughter. She found need for all her kind intentions.

It were needless to dwell on the oft told scene of burial. Mrs. Williams' body was removed in due time. Her husband did not make his appearance, and none knew where to find him, or cared to have him present

One week after the death of her daughter, while the widow Morrison was sitting in her lonely dwelling, holding in her arms all that now made life desirable, the door slowly opened, and a pale, haggard-looking man entered, and silently seated himself in a chair. There was a strange fear expressed in his face, and his eye glancing wildly and nervously about, occasionally looking with something like terror towards the door, as if he had just escaped from some one who sought his life. Presently he got up, and coming close to the alarmed widow, said, in a husky whisper—

“You won’t let them hurt me, will you? Hark! See! They are coming! Quick! hide me!—hide me! There now! Don’t move, nor tell them I am here!” And he crouched down behind her chair, in a paroxysm of terror, the large drops of perspiration streaming over his face and falling to the floor.

In speechless alarm Mrs. Morrison looked at the terrified being, and all at once discovered that the pale, emaciated, horror-stricken wretch by her side, was none other than the husband of Emeline.

“Keep off!—*keep off!*” he suddenly screamed out, “Go away—*oh!*—OH!—OH!” in a

loud, prolonged yell of agony. Then cowering down upon the floor he hid his face in his hands and trembled in every limb.

“What is the matter, James?” said Mrs. Morrison, laying the child upon the bed, and regarding the terrified man, evidently bereft of his senses, with a look of pity mingled with fear.

“Oh mother! evil spirits in every form are after me. See! see! It comes!—it comes!”

“What comes, James?”

“The great red dragon, with eyes of flame! See, he is coming down from the ceiling, and now—Save me! save me! oh!—o-h!” the last interjection prolonged into a wild scream of terror.

“It is gone!” he said, breathing more freely, and an expression of returning reason lighting up his face. “Oh mother! I shall die, if they are not kept off. Why did you let them in? *There now!* one of them is pushing his head under the door. Be off! be off! You can’t hurt me now! No, you know you can’t.”

The wretched man sprung from his recumbent position as if a knife had pierced his heart; flung himself upon the bed, and buried himself beneath the clothes. The infant narrowly escaped being crushed to death.

Mrs. Morrison, whose bewildered senses began to come back to her, picked up the child and ran with it into a neighbor's. Several men went into the house, and after trying in vain to quiet the alarmed and wretched being, laboring under an attack of *mania-à-potu*, had him conveyed to the Alms-House, where he rapidly grew worse, and died in less than a week.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

MRS. MORRISON was now all alone with the child that had fallen to her charge. She was nearly sixty years old, and much enfeebled by constant toil and great mental suffering. She had no means with which to pay for nursing the child, and even if she had been able, she would still have been unwilling to have parted with it. No certain means were within her reach for even a subsistence; but she did not give way to despondency. A kind neighbor who kept a cow supplied her with new milk twice a day for the infant, and between knitting, spinning, and doing coarse sewing for the shops, she managed to get enough food to supply her

own wants, and to gather together the rent for the landlord whenever he should call for it.

For a year after her daughter died, the widow Morrison managed to get along without actual suffering. But her strength began now rapidly to fail, and of course, her slender income was diminished. Little Henry could now just totter about, and required even more of her attention than when, seated upon the floor, he used to amuse himself for hours. For another year she toiled on, but it was amid many sufferings and severe privations. Henry was often sick from his first to his second year, and required, in consequence, the most careful attention. He was now entering his third year, and Mrs. Morrison began to fear, from too apparent indications, that she should be unable long to bear up.

Winter soon came on, and she had nothing laid by for the inclement season. And though she toiled on in pain and weakness, she could earn but little. Tea and coffee, which become so necessary from long use, to old persons, she could now rarely procure. Unwilling to make her wants known, where relief would have been obtained, she struggled on, often stinting herself that her dear little boy might have a hearty meal. Through it all she managed to

have her money ready on the day her landlord called. Something she continued to earn all along, but she called none of it her own, until she had laid by just what the rent would amount to in the day or the week for which she drew her little earnings. As the weather grew more severe, she found it very difficult to procure wood enough to keep them warm. Almost every night, as soon as it grew dark, would she retire to her bed with little Henry, to keep warm, and thus save wood and candles. Often when they thus retired, their supper had consumed every particle of food in the house. But she generally managed to husband so well her little resources as to have still a few cents left to buy bread for breakfast; and through the succeeding day she never failed to obtain something for work already finished. So constantly was her mind occupied with the duties devolving upon her that she had no time to be unhappy. And the sore trials she had passed through, and the afflictions she had experienced, had elevated her affections above mere selfish and sensual things, and caused her to fix them upon a higher and more certain source of contentment.

There was one abiding principle of her mind that had, in all her long suffering, buoyed her

up. It was a fixed confidence in the Divine Providence. She perceived, clearly, that, in the Divine Providence, eternal ends were always in view, and that all temporal affliction was of use to enable its subject to see clearly where affection was wrongly placed.

Thus had she gradually attained a state of preparation for another life, by the putting away of evils, through the Divine assistance. The keen suffering she had endured showed how deeply seated had been the disease. Patiently, but fulfilling all her duties, she now waited for her change.

For the first time, one cold night in January, she retired to bed, after having consumed the last morsel, without anything left with which to buy food on the next morning. She had paid her rent on that day, and in doing so parted with her last cent. She found herself through the day more feeble than usual, and to a neighbor who dropped in just about night-fall, she expressed herself as being conscious that she had nearly filled up the days of her pilgrimage.

“I can hardly tell you,” she said, “how pleasantly my mind has been affected through the day, in looking back on a long and chequered life, and perceiving the hand of Good-

ness in every event. It is all summed up for me now, and I can see the result. I know that I am near a peaceful end to all my wandering; and standing now as I do upon the utmost verge of time, I bless the kind Providence that has watched over me, and am thankful for all the affliction I have endured."

In a calm and holy frame of mind did the Widow Morrison take her dear child in her arms, and resign herself to slumber. Sweetly, no doubt, did she sink away, like an infant on its mother's breast. But the sleep that locked up her senses, proved to be a gentle lapsing away of life. When next she awoke it was in the world of spirits.

The rest has already been told.

BELL MARTIN.

CHAPTER I

SPRIGS OF AMERICAN ARISTOCRACY.

"ARE you going to Mr. Martin's grand 'come-off,' to-morrow evening, Harry?" asked one young man of another, as they lounged in the bar-room of the Mansion House.

"Of course I am. Will you be there?"

"O, yes. I never miss being present on such occasions. But say, Harry, are you serious in that matter about pretty Bell?"

"Am I? What a question for you to ask! Certainly I am."

"Do you think you can get around the old man, her father?"

"I can try. My family is as good as his. So you see we are even there. But I do n't think much about him, now. I must first get the right side of Bell."

"How do you expect to manage that?"

"By talking sentiment, paying her the most flattering attentions possible, and being her most humble servant on all occasions."

"She will have a splendid fortune."

"There is no mistake about that"

"How large do you think?"

"I have ascertained, pretty certainly, that old Martin is worth about nine hundred thousand dollars. He has two children. They will divide at his death over three hundred thousand dollars a piece, after the widow's one-third has been taken out. And she, of course, is not going to live forever."

"Of course not. And you would come in, if you had the daughter, for half of that sum also."

"Exactly. Now is n't there a glorious prospect before me?"

"There is, really. A golden opportunity, like this, must not pass, unimproved."

"Nor will it."

"How do you stand with Bell?"

"Pretty fair, I think. Last week I was at a party with her, and broke the ice. She is young, you know, and as frank and innocent as a child. I really felt my heart warm toward her."

"Indeed! That was a phenomenon!" said the friend laughing.

"Was n't it! But do n't be alarmed. I'm not going to fall in love with her until I find the coast clear."

"Do n't, if you please, or I shall be compelled to cut your acquaintance."

"Never fear. A young man of my habits can't afford to fall in love, unless he is sure of success."

"And certain of gaining a fortune."

"Of course. That was pre-supposed."

"Are you going to buy that splendid pair of horses, belonging to Porter, which you drove out yesterday?"

"I wish to do so."

"He asks twelve hundred dollars for them, I believe."

"Yes. But I think would not refuse a thousand if laid down before him."

"Why do n't you take them, Harry! They are worth all of that."

"I've sounded my old man about it. But he looks black so soon as I begin to approach the subject."

"What a bore! I wonder if either of us will ever get our fingers upon some of our dads' cash, to spend it as we please?"

"I hope so, one of these days. Won't I put it in circulation, then!" snapping his fingers, and winking with a knowing look. "It will be one of the strangest things in nature, if I do n't."

"What an annoyance it is," said the companion of the one called Harry, "to have rich old fathers like ours, to tantalize us with the idea of wealth in prospective, while they give us but the mere trifle of two or three thousand a year to spend."

"It is indeed! But what do you think? My old man told me, yesterday, that he thought it high time that I was beginning to do something."

"Do something!"

"Yes."

"What did he mean by that?"

"Open an office for the practice of law, I suppose. You know that, to please him, I studied law for a year or two—got squeezed through an examination, and entered as a member of the Philadelphia bar."

"Yes, I remember now; ha! ha! And he wanted you to put up your shingle, '*Eternally at Law*,' and come into association with the filth and off-scouring of this righteous city,—Pickpockets, thieves, blackguards, etc."

"Yes, that was it."

"But you had no notion of such a thing?"

"Not I. Why do I want to practice law, or do any thing else? Has n't the old man plenty of

money? Ain't I born a gentleman? Let the common herd work, say, L."

"Ditto. Only about every tenth man that is born, as some one has said, can afford to do nothing. Thank fortune! I am one of the decimal numbers."

"So is this child. It's no use for the old man to talk to me. I'm not going to open an office and stick up my name, to be reduced in public estimation to a mere pettifogging lawyer."

"But would n't it be policy for you to do so?"

"How?"

"To make fair weather with old Martin."

"How would my opening an office make fair weather with him?"

"He is a merchant?"

"Yes."

"And by industry and enterprise has quadrupled the fortune left him by his father."

"So I have heard it said."

"From persevering in industrious habits himself, he has, doubtless, come to have a high estimation of industry in others."

"There may be something in that."

"Naturally, then, he would be inclined to think favorably of a young man, pursuing, with apparent industry, some business or profession, while he would look unfavorably upon one whom he would call a mere idler."

"I see the force of what you say; and wonder that the idea never presented itself to my mind. But do n't you think the fact of my being known as only a young lawyer, would lessen my estimation in the eyes of Bell?"

"I do n't know. Perhaps it might."

"I fear so. She's a young romantic thing, and the idea of a common workie—for all these lawyers and merchants, and the like, are as much

workies as mere mechanics—might give her a prejudice against me.”

“There is force in that view.”

“And suppose some foreign earl, or count were to come along and take a notion to her—what chance would a mere lawyer have? None at all. O, no! I must still keep up the gentleman, until I’ve got her hooked, and then for scheming it over the old codger, her father!”

“I believe you are right, Harry. But come, let’s have a drink, and then for a ride out to Howell’s.”

The two young sprigs of American aristocracy then turned to the bar, and each took a strong glass of brandy punch, preparatory to their ride into the country. Fifteen minutes afterward they were dashing up Chesnut street behind a pair of beautiful horses, owned by the friend of Harry, or Henry Ware, with feelings of contempt for the spiritless pedestrians who plodded along the sidewalks.

The reader needs no further description of their characters, than what they have themselves given, to be able to appreciate them fully. Both were sons of wealthy merchants, wrongly educated. The systematic labor by which their parents had risen into wealth and station in society, they despised as something degrading. Idle pleasure seemed to them the only worthy object of pursuit. Every thing else was beneath the station and dignity of true gentlemen. Spendthrifts—the liberal supplies of money furnished them with a false liberality by their fathers, were altogether insufficient to meet their growing and extravagant wants. Hence, the means of obtaining more inexhaustible and independent supplies, soon formed part of their thoughts. They had become men, and, as men, were annoyed by

what they esteemed the niggardly parental offerings. To such, marriage presents the only way to obtain the large amount of money called for by extravagant habits and unsatisfied desires. And to thoughts of marriage their minds, especially that of Henry Ware, turned; and he was about entering, as has been seen, with no small degree of tact and earnestness, upon the business he had laid out as necessary to be done;—it is said, necessary to be done, for only in a business light did young Ware view the matter. If he had been in possession of as much money as he wanted, he would have thought of a wife about the last thing. With such an encumbrance, he would have been very far from burdening himself.

CHAPTER II.

LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM.

“How does that look, Fanny?” asked Bell Martin, turning her happy face toward her sister, and directing attention to a beautiful head dress that a modest-looking, plainly attired girl, about her own age, had been arranging for her.

“Very pretty indeed, sister; Mary is always tasty in her devices and arrangements.”

“Is n't she? We must try and find you a nice husband, Mary.”

Mary smiled quietly, but made no reply. Her station did not permit her to return jests, and knowing this, she never attempted to do so. But still, she had her own thoughts, as well as they.”

“I think that white rose is a little too much con-

cealed, Mary, do n't you?" remarked Bell, after having surveyed herself for some time in the glass.

"Perhaps it is," replied Mary, lifting her hand to re-adjust the flower.

"But stop, Mary," interposed the light-hearted girl, taking hold of her hand before she had touched the rose. "That '*perhaps*' was rather coldly said. You do n't really think the flower too much hid—now do you?"

"No, I do not, or else I would have brought it out more."

"Then I won't have it touched, for I never opposed my taste to yours yet, that you were not in the right," Bell replied, laughing.

"You are very particular this evening, sister," remarked Fanny.

"Am I? Well I have my reason for it."

"Ah! What is it?"

"I'm going to captivate young Harry Ware."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. I intend carrying the citadel of his heart by storm."

"Take care that you do not lose your own in the contest."

"Oh, never fear but that I'll keep fast hold of mine, at least till I see something to gain by a surrender."

"Harry is certainly a very captivating young man. Do n't you think so, Mary?"

Indirectly appealed to, although in a laughing mood, Mary replied with the frankness of a sincere heart,

"I have not had an opportunity of observing him very closely; but the little I have seen of him has not prepossessed me a great deal in his favor."

"Has n't it, indeed! Miss Demure?"

"It has not, Bell; but no doubt I can judge a flower for a young lady of your position in society, much better than I can a lover."

"Perhaps so. But why do n't you like Harry Ware, Mary?"

"Did I say that I did not like him?"

"No. But you said you were not prepossessed in his favor?"

"That is true."

"Then why are you not prepossessed in his favor?"

"I am sure I do n't know. But I feel as if I should n't like to see you the wife of Mr. Ware."

The voice of the maiden trembled slightly as she said this, and her tones had in them something of tenderness; for she loved Bell Martin and her sister—although standing to them only in the relation of one that served—almost as purely as if they were of her own kindred.

"His wife, Mary! How strangely you talk! No one said any thing about becoming his wife. O, dear! That's another matter, altogether."

"It's the next thing that follows the winning and losing of hearts, though, I believe," replied Mary, the color on her cheek deepening.

"Is it, Mary?" Bless me! how the girl talks And see how she is blushing, Fanny! As I live now I come to think of it, I do believe she has lost her heart already. I thought Mr. Lane, Pa's head clerk, came here pretty often of late."

This speech had the effect to make poor Mary's face as red as scarlet.

"There! See that! See that, Fanny! Just look at her face! Now, who would have suspected our modest, quiet Mary?"

"The next thing that follows the losing and winning of hearts, is marriage, I believe, ain't it, Mary?" said Fanny, with mock seriousness.

"O, of course it is. How soon is the wedding to take place? It shall be in this very house, for you are a good girl, Mary, and we all love you," Bell added, half laughing, half serious.

The momentary confusion that this unexpected sally wrought in the mind of Mary, soon subsided, and she said, in her quiet way—

"You have anticipated what I should have told you to-morrow."

"So it's all true, Mary!" ejaculated Bell, almost springing upon the floor with delight. Then turning quickly, and grasping the hand of the young girl, she said, in a serious voice—

"None will rejoice more than Fanny and myself at your good fortune, Mary. Mr. Lane I have always heard spoken of by Pa in the highest terms, and I am sure he will make you a good husband. But we shall be very sorry to lose you. Indeed, I do not know what we will do when you are gone."

"You can still feel kindly toward me. I ask but that return for the deep interest my heart does, and always must take in you," Mary said, looking up into the face of the sisters, her eyes ready to gush with tears. "We have been together as little children, sharing each other's pleasures. The same tender care that was over you has been over me. And notwithstanding, as we sprung up toward womanhood, our relations to each other became necessarily changed, I have not loved you less. Forgive me for saying, that I have loved you as sisters—I could not help it."

The tears that had trembled beneath her dark lashes now rolled over the maiden's cheek.

"We will love you as a sister," was the instant response of the affectionate Bell, drawing her arm around the waist of Mary. Our stations in life are different. We cannot mingle in society

together. But that need not—that cannot disturb the sisterly regard we must feel for you. You are worthy of it all, Mary.”

A deep silence followed—a silence in which tender emotions were welling up from each gentle and affectionate bosom. As they had never felt it before, did Bell and Fanny feel the delight of being loved fervently by a pure and honest heart—even though it beat in the bosom of one all unknown to, and all unappreciated by, the world.

“But come, Bell,” said Fanny, breaking in upon that deep pause, “time passes.”

“So it does. But I will soon be ready. Here, Mary, arrange this scarf for me, if you please. There, that will do. And now do n’t you think I look charming?”

“Very; only a little—pardon me—overdressed.”

“That’s according to your taste, Mary.”

“Of course. My taste inclines to the simple.”

“It’s a very pure taste, I know, but hardly gives attractions enough for one in my station. Young ladies who move in our circle, you know, dress with a rich display, sometimes.”

“I know they do. But they hide, it seems to me, instead of bringing out their loveliness.”

“Perhaps they do. Still, to quote a homely adage—‘Fine feathers make fine birds.’”

Mary shook her head, and smiled a reproof, as she said—

“It’s no use for me to argue with you, Bell, for while you give up your point, virtually, in argument, you stick to it in practice.”

“No, Mary, I do n’t think it is. I can admire the beauty of simplicity in others—you for instance—but like a little finery for myself. But bark! there’s the bell. Our company are begin-

ning to come, and we must be down to receive them."

Among the first who came, were Henry Ware and his two sisters, with whom Bell and Fanny were on terms of intimacy. The young man, as has been seen, had resolved on making a conquest; he, therefore, had dressed himself with studied care, so as to bring out into good effect his really attractive person.

There was something in the tone of his voice and the expression of his face, when he saluted Bell, already prepossessed in his favor, that made her heart quicken its pulsations, and send the blood in warmer currents to her cheek. Henry Ware did not fail to observe the slight glow that mantled her young and innocent face, nor the pleasure that sparkled in her eye. They strengthened his hope of success.

"She is mine, in spite of the d—l!" was the elegant and manly expression of his thoughts, whispered to himself, as he turned from her to address her sister.

Whenever, without attracting particular observation, he could get by her side during the evening, he was sure to be there; and all his conversation was skilfully managed, so as to excite in her mind tender emotions.

Attached to Mr. Martin's elegant residence was a large garden, richly adorned with plants of the rarest kinds. It was laid off in beautifully arranged walks, with arbors and alcoves, statuary and every tasteful device that could please the eye. Always, during an evening entertainment in pleasant weather, it was brilliantly illuminated with variegated lamps, ingeniously arranged into elegant and striking figures.

Into this a portion of the company might always be found, strolling about, thus dividing the allure-

ments of the social circle with the calmer and more elevating delights of nature.

"Come, Bell, suppose we take a little walk in the garden;—the air of these rooms is becoming oppressive," said Ware to the gentle girl who leaned upon his arm. "We have danced and sung, and mingled pleasantly in the gay circle here for some two hours. A change to the quiet scene without will be very pleasant."

"It certainly will," replied Bell, making an involuntary movement toward the door.

The two then retired from the brilliantly lighted saloon and gay company, and entered the garden. The air was mild, and balmy from the perfume rising from a thousand odoriferous flowers. The moon and stars looked down from a sky of unusual brilliancy, and shed their soft light, like a veil of silver over all things.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" ejaculated Bell, as she perceived and felt the loveliness of the scene.

"It is, indeed, very beautiful!" replied her companion, uttering a sentiment he scarcely felt. His mind was too selfishly interested in securing the affections of the maiden, to care any thing about a lovely moonlight scene, except so far as it might tend to aid in the accomplishment of his purpose. He could, therefore, perceive the beauty of external nature, but not feel it.

Slowly, they took their way down one of the most retired alleys of the garden. Bell, whose feelings the scene around had almost instantly softened into tenderness, leaned with an air of affectionate confidence upon the arm of Ware, and listened to his artful and insinuating words, that, while they spoke not of his own thoughts and feelings, were fraught with just the sentiments calculated to awaken the heart of one so

young and by nature so affectionate as the innocent maiden by his side.

"Let us rest here for awhile, and enjoy the calm delight of this lovely season," the young man said, after having strayed through the garden for some ten or fifteen minutes, pausing as he did so, before an arbor thickly shaded by a vine, upon which the yet unripe clusters hung in luxuriant profusion.

"How much I enjoy a scene like this," he remarked, after they were seated, thus alone. "It has in it something so purifying and elevating to the spirit. Something that lifts us above the base ideas and grovelling affections of this sordid world. It is under the influence of an hour like this that we feel ourselves to be immortal."

"Do you remember L. E. L.'s lines 'On a Star?'" asked Bell, after a brief silence.

"I do not."

"That brilliant star, yonder, has recalled the touching effusion to my mind."

"Can you repeat the lines to which you allude?"

"O yes. For I have thought of them hundreds of times."

"Then recite them, Bell."

The maiden complied, and recited, in a low voice, full of pathos, the following lines:

Beautiful star, that art wandering through
The midnight ocean's waves of blue!
I have watched since thy first pale ray
Rose on the farewell of summer's day.
From thy first sweet shine in the twilight hour,
To thy present blaze of beauty and power!
Would I could read my destiny,
Lovely and glorious star, in thee!
Yet why should I wish?—I know too well
What thy tablet of light would tell!
What, O, what, could I read there
But the depths of love's despair.—

Blighted feelings, like leaves that fall
 The first from April's coronal,—
 Hopes, like meteors, that shine and depart—
 An early grave and a broken heart!"

"A beautiful beginning but a sad ending, Bell. Why should such poetry be a favorite with you? But that brilliant star, overhead, if the star of thy destiny, would reveal a brighter page."

"I hope so. Still, I have always loved those lines, and have repeated them over, almost involuntarily, a hundred times, until my feelings have become imbued with their sadness. Heaven grant that they be not prophetic of wrecked hopes and a broken heart for me."

Bell spoke with emotion—for, suddenly, there came over her heart a chilling fear, that seemed like a prophetic warning.

"How strange that you should speak thus!" said her companion, in surprise. "You, than whom no one has a brighter prospect;—you, every footstep of whose way has, thus far, been upon flowers."

"It is strange that I should feel thus. But it is only when I repeat those verses, that there falls upon my heart a shadow."

"Then I would never repeat them again; for they mock you with idle fears."

"I believe they do," replied Bell, rallying herself with an effort.

"How exquisitely falls that music upon the ear softened by distance," remarked Ware, after another pause. "It comes like the swelling and subsiding tones of the wind-touched Æolian."

"Music never came to me with such sweetness before," said the maiden, in innocence and simplicity. "It seems as if I could listen to it forever."

"I feel the same subdued and tender impressions," replied the young man, in a low, soft tone.

"But come," he added, after a brief silence, "we will be missed."

"True—true! I had forgotten, under the sweet influence of the hour, that others are to be thought of and regarded."

The two then returned, slowly, arm in arm entered the house, and rejoined the gay groups within.

It was past two o'clock when the last visiter departed. Mary, who had superintended the arrangements of the party, after all were gone and a few directions had been given to the servants, went up to the room of Bell and Fanny to assist in undressing them. She found the former seated by a window in a musing attitude, looking out upon the brilliant sky.

"Come, Mary, you must attend to me first, for Bell is away up among the stars, and won't be down again for half an hour."

Mary smiled at this pleasant sally, but she did not seem to hear it.

"There, Mary, you can go to star-gazing with Bell if you choose,—I'm going to court a few pleasant dreams!" she added, in a little while, springing lightly into bed. In a few minutes she was fast asleep.

Mary turned, and stood looking for some moments at Bell, who was still lost in deep abstraction. Then going up to her, she laid her hand gently on her arm, and said—

"Shall I assist you to undress?"

"If you please, Mary," replied Bell, looking up with a deep sigh, and then submitting to Mary's hands in silence. Her rich attire was soon changed for garments of snowy whiteness, and in these she again took her place by the window,

and lifted her young face once more to the sky that was sparkling in beauty and brightness.

As Mary turned to leave the chamber, she felt a strong reluctance to do so. For a few moments she hesitated, and then going back, she said in a respectful tone—

“You do not seem like yourself to-night, Bell.”

The maiden roused herself again at this, and after looking into Mary’s face for an instant or two, said—

“Come, and sit down here, Mary.”

Mary complied in silence.

“I am not myself to-night. In that you say truly. But what ails me I cannot tell. I have never felt the influence of a scene like this as I do now. It seems as if I could sit and gaze forever upon the sky and its myriads of beautiful stars. Let me repeat to you some verses of that exquisite poetess, L. E. L. They describe this hour and this scene most beautifully.

— Look up

Toward the beautiful heaven! the fair moon
Is shining timidly, like a young queen,
Who fears to claim her full authority:
The stars shine in her presence; o’er the sky
A few light clouds are wandering, like the feat
That even happy love must know; the air
Is full of perfume and most musical,
Although no other sounds are on the gale
Than the soft falling of the mountain rill
Or the waving of the leaves.’

Is that not appropriate and beautiful?”

“Very. But it is too late now to be gazing at the moon and stars, and repeating poetry, Bell. Come, get into bed and go to sleep. A good night’s repose will calm down your over excited feelings. Come! or I shall really think that in the

effort to captivate the heart of Henry Ware, you have lost your own!"

Thus rallied, Bell came more to herself, and after having been urged again by Mary, retired to her bed. It was long, however, before she sunk into slumber, and that was full of the dreams of a maiden's first, pure, ardent love for one she fondly invests with a thousand perfections.

CHAPTER III.

PARENTAL ANXIETIES.

"Ah! Good morning, Harry! Good morning!"

"Good morning, Tom. I'm glad to see you! How are you, my boy? How are you?" grasping the hand that was extended, and shaking it long and heartily.

"Really, Harry, you seem to be on the mountain top this morning."

"And so I am. Confound it, old fellow! I'm sure of success!"

"So I should suspect, after seeing the peculiar manner in which Bell leaned on your arm, last night."

"You observed it, then, did you?"

"O, of course."

"And I felt it, Tom: which was a thousand times better! She's mine as sure as fate! I knew that I would prove irresistible if I only laid myself out for it. I'm not the commonest looking fellow that walks Chestnut street--am I?"

"No, not by a dozen. But, say, Harry, did you break the ice?"

"How?"

"Did you talk love to her?"

"O, no! only poetry and sentiment. Last night I spent most of the time in reading her character, which I found I could do as readily as I can read a book."

"Well, how were you pleased with it?"

"Admirably, of course!"

"She'll make just the wife you want?"

"The what?"

"The wife."

"Fal-lal! I'm not looking out for a wife."

"For what, then?"

"You're simple, Tom! For a fortune, of course. Have you so soon forgotten our conversation of yesterday? As to the wife part, no doubt that will be well enough. Still, I'm a little afraid."

"Of what?"

"Afraid that she will love me too well."

"Love you too well?"

"Aye! There rests my only fear. But that's her look out—not mine."

"I do n't see any particular objection to her loving you as hard as she pleases."

"You're dull this morning, Tom. I would like a wife, if I must have one,—an inevitable necessity, I believe, since my old man is so close with his purse-strings—who would mind her own concerns and let me mind mine. She might have her own establishment if she chose, and dash it in any kind of style that pleased her. Of course, I should want the same privilege. Now, from what I can see of Bell, she's not exactly that kind of a body. She would want her husband tied to her apron strings all the while. Would want to

be kissed twenty times a day, and all that silly nonsense. Or else there would be a constant succession of April showers. Do you understand now?"

"Clearly! But that's a risk you will have to run. A consequence that must be endured, if it can't be helped. Money will cover a multitude of sins and imperfections."

"You're right, Tom! and if she chooses to indulge in all that sentimental kind of nonsense, she must take the consequence. For certain it is, I can't stomach it, and will not. I'll leave her in freedom to come in when she pleases, go out when she pleases, and do what she pleases; and, as I want nothing but what is fair, shall take the same privilege myself."

"Precisely! You seem to be pretty sure of her, however?"

"So I am. I made an impression last night, that is not going to be effaced."

"But suppose the old man will not consent?"

"Did you never hear of a runaway match, Tom?"

"O, yes," laughingly.

"Then you'll hear of another, in that case. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly! You're a rare fellow, Harry."

"Ain't I! Still, I must avoid that last necessity, if possible. It might stand in the way of my fingering the old fellow's cash as soon as I wish."

"You'd better be looking out for an office then, had n't you?"

"Yes, I suppose I had. Confound the necessity! What fools some of these old codgers are! A man is nothing in their eyes, unless he is a workie. Pah!"

"What a figure you will cut, sitting with

solemn importance in your office, surrounded with books, and a tin sign on your window—
'Henry Ware, Attorney at Law.' Ha! ha! ha!"

"Do hush, Tom! or I shall get sick!"

"It'll have to be done, though. I wonder who will be your first client?"

"Some loafer, up for assault and battery, I suppose."

"As likely as not. But come, I have an engagement at twelve, and it is that now."

"Let us drink first," replied Harry, and turning to the bar-keeper—for they had met, as usual, in a tavern—ordered some brandy. The two worthies then drank success to Harry's enterprise, and parted.

It was, probably, an hour after that young Ware entered his father's counting-room, and after glancing over the newspapers, sought an opportunity to converse with the old gentleman.

"I've been thinking a good deal about what you suggested a few days ago, father," he said, with a serious air.

"Well, to what conclusion have you come?" was the reply, in a grave tone.

"That you are right. A young man of my age ought not to be spending his time so idly as I am now doing."

"You have concluded to open an office, then?"

"I have. And if you will furnish me with the necessary books, I will put myself down to business at once."

"That is right, Henry," said Mr. Ware, in a cheerful tone, his face suddenly brightening. "Your repugnance to any kind of business, has been to me a source of great anxiety. Idle pleasure-taking, let me assure you, Henry, is the poorest possible way in which to seek for real

happiness. In that path it never has, and never will be found."

"I believe you are right," replied the son, with hypocritical gravity. "I am sure, that in mere pleasure-taking, as you term it, I have never realized any thing to give true satisfaction to the mind."

"And you never will, rest assured, if you pursue that course. Most truly do I rejoice to find a better perception of things dawning upon your mind. If you will only enter upon your profession with application, energy, and industry, you must rise into eminence, for you have, naturally, a mind that is active, and comprehensive in its grasp. Or, if you should prefer entering into business with me, the way is open and a quicker road to independence, before you. Here is capital and every facility that may be needed."

"I think I should prefer law," replied the son, after musing for an instant or two. "It offers a better field for the exercise of talents."

"So it does. Let it be law, then. I am satisfied. So soon as you meet with an office to suit you, let me know, and I will have it fitted up handsomely. In the mean time, furnish me with a list of such books as you want, and they shall be ready."

"I will hand you a list to-morrow," replied Henry.

After half an hour's further conference, which ended in the transference of a check to the young man for two hundred dollars, he left the counting-room. A few hours after, he met his crony, Tom, or Thomas Handy.

"Well, Tom, I've talked to the old man about that law office,' was his salutation.

"You are quick on the trigger! How was he pleased?"

"Tickled to death, of course! He thinks that I'll be second to none at the bar, if I only devote myself to the profession with untiring zeal and industry."

"Indeed! That's flattering!"

"Ain't it! Untiring zeal and industry! Oh, dear! That would be a catastrophe, as old What-do-ye-call-him says."

"He thought you in solemn earnest, then?"

"Of course. And gave me some capital good advice, though, for the soul of me, I can't recollect a word of it now."

"No consequence."

"But I'll tell you what I do recollect."

"Well!"

"How I came over him too nicely for a couple of hundred."

"Indeed!"

"It's a fact. I talked, and talked, until I got him in a capital good humor, and then came down upon him for a check. He was completely cornered, and could not say no. So here's the hundred I borrowed of you last week, and much obliged to you. The other hundred will pay off a small debt or two, and leave me a little spending money. My stock was getting rather low."

While Henry Ware was thus, in cold, unprincipled heartlessness, laying his plans for securing the hand of a pure-minded, intelligent, affectionate girl, Bell's heart was trembling with love's first and tenderest emotions. The expression of his face, as he looked into hers, the tones of his voice, if not the words he had uttered, all told her that she had awakened an interest in his feelings; and even in many a remembered word, could she

trace a meaning that plainly spoke of love. She was, of course, in a dreamy, abstracted mood.

Mr. Martin, whose ardent affection for his children made him observant of them, had noticed on the preceding evening that young Ware was over attentive to Bell. He was not pleased to see this, for he understood the young man's character pretty thoroughly. He did not suppose these attentions had any thing serious in them. Still, a fear that such might be the case, was naturally awakened. Once during the evening he had missed them for some time, and was just on the eve of strolling out into the garden to see if they were lingering there, when they came in, and separating from each other, mingled generally with the company. He could not but notice, however, that Bell's eye wandered too frequently toward the young man, with a look of interest. This troubled him for the moment—but he soon dismissed it as an idle fear.

Several times during the next day, as opportunity for observation presented itself, he could not but observe that Bell had a look of quiet abstraction that was unusual to her. This recalled to his mind the preceding evening, and the feeling of uneasiness that was then experienced returned.

"Have you noticed Bell particularly to-day?" he inquired of her mother, as they sat alone that evening.

"I have not. Why do you ask?"

"It seems to me that she is not altogether in as good spirits as usual."

"Now you mention it, I do remember that she has appeared rather dull. Perhaps it is from fatigue. You know she danced a good deal last night, and that it was late before any of us got to bed."

"Very true. But still, I have thought that there might possibly be another reason."

"What other reason could there be?"

"Did n't you observe that young Ware was over attentive to her last night?"

"Young Henry Ware?"

"Yes."

"No, I did not."

"Well, he was a good deal more so than pleased me."

"Henry Ware! Why, he's not out of his teens yet, is he?"

"Yes, he is, and thinks himself of no little degree of consequence. I never was much pre-possessed in his favor, however, though I esteem his father very highly, as a man of sterling principles. Pity that his son did not more resemble him."

"I should not like Henry Ware to become attached to Bell. He is not the man that pleases my fancy."

"Nor mine either. Indeed, I should esteem it a calamity to our family for one of my daughters to have her affections called out by a young man who possesses no more claims to estimation than he."

"And yet what are we to do?" said the mother, in a serious tone. "We cannot deny him our house, nor can we refuse to let Bell attend parties where we know he will be present."

"All too true," replied Mr. Martin. "Our families are on terms of intimacy, and his father is one of my oldest and firmest friends. Still, regard for old Mr. Ware ought not to be a sufficient reason why I should sacrifice my daughter to his worthless son."

"That is very true. And yet no real danger may exist. The young man may never have had

a serious thought of marriage—or a single regard beyond that of mere friendship for Bell.”

“That may be—but I fear it is otherwise. They were together a great deal last evening, and to-day Bell is evidently changed, and far more pensive and thoughtful than usual.”

“You really alarm me!” replied Mrs. Martin, in a voice of concern.

“There is cause of serious alarm; and that is why I have spoken on the subject,” rejoined her husband. “Now is the point of time in our daughters’ histories, when a false step may wreck their hopes forever. How many, alas! how many sweet girls have we seen in the last twenty years, with hearts as pure and innocent, and hopes as brilliant as those of our own dear children, thrown down from the pinnacle of happiness to hopeless misery by marriage. You remember Anne Milford—one of the gentlest and loveliest of her sex; how her affections were won by a man who has not only dragged her down, down, down, into abject poverty, but who never could and never did return a tithe of the deep love she lavished upon him. I met her in the street to-day. Her pale, sad face, with its dreamy expression, made my heart ache.”

“But even if young Ware should have made an impression on Bell’s mind—and even if it were to end in marriage, which Heaven forbid! she can never be reduced to want, as poor Anne has been.”

“There is no guaranty for that, in such a man as the son of Mr. Ware.”

“Why not?”

“He will never earn a dollar, unless driven to it by necessity; and even then, the little that he would make would be of no account.”

“But both his father and you are rich.”

"Riches, says the good Book, take to themselves wings and fly away, Fanny."

"True, but——"

"Your observation and my own," said Mr. Martin, interrupting his wife, "prove that the wealth which is accumulated by a man in this country, rarely reaches his grand-children. In four cases out of five, it is all gone in a few years after his death—scattered by improvident children, who, never having earned a dollar, have no idea of the value of money. Henry Ware is just the man to squander, with a rapidity four-fold greater than his father ever accumulated. I will pass away in a brief period, and so will that excellent old man his father; and then, if Bell should be his wife, it will take only a few years to bring them down to want and obscurity. It makes my heart sick, Fanny, to think of it. I would a hundred times rather see her the wife of Mr. Lane, than of that young spendthrift. He, though poor now, is a man of principle, and has habits of attention to business. He must rise in the world, while the other will as certainly sink. In this country, all men, sooner or later, find their level. True merit, united with persevering industry, must rise into positions of influence and wealth, while idleness and extravagance must as inevitably sink into obscurity and dependence.

"Of course, Bell could not fancy him."

"No, nor he Bell, I suppose. They do not now stand upon the same level; and where there is not true equality, there cannot be a true reciprocal affection. But do you know that he has taken a fancy to our Mary?"

"Yes, I learned it for the first time this morning."

"And it delighted you, of course?"

"It did. Mary is one of the best of girls, and

I have always felt strongly attached to her. To know, that she is going to do so well, gives me a sincere pleasure—though I shall be sorry indeed to lose her.”

“Mr. Lane mentioned it to me to-day, and I said, ‘take her with all my heart! I believe you are worthy of each other.’ How glad I shall feel if I can only say the same when the hands of my daughters are asked. But young ladies, occupying their position in society, are surrounded with dangers on every hand, and it is little less than a miracle if they escape. Idle fortune-hunters are ever on the alert with insidious arts to ensnare their guileless affections, and are, alas! too often successful.”

“May such a one never be successful in winning the love of either of my children!”

“Amen!” was the heartfelt response of Mr. Martin.



CHAPTER IV.

OPENING AN OFFICE.

It was about a week after the conversations, recorded in the last chapter, occurred, that a party was given by Mr. and Mrs. Ware. The Martins were present. The father of Bell had his eye upon her with a careful interest. His fears were soon awakened anew, for Henry got by her side early in the evening, and held his place there with a steadiness that Mr. Martin felt augured no good. As for Bell, she was in the finest spirits imaginable.

"How does Henry come on now?" asked Mr Martin of Mr. Ware, as the two sat conversing familiarly.

"I am glad to say that there has been, what I esteem, a great change in him of late," replied the father, with a pleased manner.

"Ah, indeed! I am really gratified to hear it."

"You are aware, that he has, all along, evinced no inclination to settle himself down to any business?"

"Yes, I have observed as much."

"I believe he has seen his folly, for he has taken an office with a determination to do something."

"He studied law, I believe?"

"Yes—and passed an excellent examination, more than a year ago."

"Truly, what you say is gratifying. Like too many of the sons of our wealthy men, Henry, I suppose, has not been able to see the necessity of applying himself to any business."

"That has been his error."

"And a very fatal one it is, Mr. Ware. Until our young men feel that there is just the same necessity for them to enter into and attend to business with persevering industry, as there was for their fathers, there will be no guaranty for their retaining the positions to which they have been elevated. Young men of humble origin and no pecuniary resources, will gradually rise up and take the places which they have proved unworthy to fill."

"So I have told Henry many and many a time. But, until now, he has never felt the force of what I said."

"You must feel, greatly encouraged for him?"

"No one can tell how much. He is my only son—to see him running a round of idleness, and,

I might say, dissipation, has pained me more than I can tell. But he has suddenly paused, and reflected. I know not why—I do not ask why. The fact is all that concerns me.”

“You have confidence in the permanency of his good resolutions?”

“I do not permit myself to doubt, Mr. Martin. I look only to the happy results that must follow the change, and look with feelings of pride as well as pleasure. He is a young man of fine mind, and must soon begin to take a place in his profession that will flatter his pride, and spur him onward to higher attainments. This is my calculation—and I believe I am right.”

“Most earnestly do I hope that this may be the result.”

How far the anticipations of the father were in the way of being realized, the reader will be able to judge by the following conversation, which took place at Harry's new office, with his particular friend and associate, Tom Handy. One of the appendages to this office was an upper room, neatly furnished. In this the two young men were seated, their feet upon a table, on which were glasses and wine in coolers, filling the room with clouds of smoke from two real Havanas.

“This opening an office is not such a bad idea, after all, is it, Tom?” said young Ware, with a knowing leer, as he slowly drew his segar from his mouth, and then watched the wreaths of smoke, that he leisurely puffed out, curling up toward the ceiling and gradually dissolving in air.

“No, indeed—it's a capital one,” replied his crony, lazily taking his segar from his teeth, and suffering the smoke, in turn, to float in thick clouds about his head. “No doubt your old man

thinks you now deeply immersed in the mysteries of legal reports or some such interesting employment. Or, perhaps he is at this very time imagining that you are engaged with a client, who, conscious of your superior legal knowledge, has chosen you to represent him in some cause of vast importance—”

“ And delighting himself, in imagination, with the sensation my maiden speech will produce ! ”

“ Suppose a case were really offered you ? ”

“ I should decline it, of course. I ’m not going to make a fool of myself in that court-room, I know. What do I know of law ? ”

“ Not much, I should imagine. ”

“ About as much as a dog does of Latin. ”

“ And that is as much as you ever intend to know ? ”

“ Precisely. I have but one case on hand, and that ’s the only one I ever intend to have. As far as that is concerned, I believe I am fully ready to maintain my position against any opponent who may present himself. ”

“ What case is that, pray ? ”

“ My case in the court of love. ”

“ True. I had forgotten. ”

“ It required an office, you know, to give me importance, and thus ensure success. When that suit is gained, good-bye to law, office and library. They may float in the Schuylkill for aught I care. ”

“ Every thing went off to a charm last night, I believe ? ”

“ O yes, so far as Bell was concerned. But I can ’t say that I liked the way old Martin and his wife eyed me, every now and then. They ’re a little suspicious, I believe, of my design. ”

“ You ’ll have to fight shy for awhile. ”

“ Yes, I will ; at least until I can get into the old folks good graces. ”

"How will you manage that?"

"I've been scheming over a plan all the morning."

"Well, have you hit upon anything?"

"Yes—and I think it will do."

"What is it?"

"You know my way to this office, from home, is right by old Martin's counting-room?"

"Yes."

"I'm going to get a green bag made, of pretty liberal capacity, and carry it backward and forward in my hand, once or twice a day, with an air of great business importance."

"You must manage, occasionally, to let the end of a document, plentifully supplied with red tape and big seals, protrude from it, as if you had thrust in your papers hurriedly."

"That's a capital suggestion, Tom, and I shall be sure to adopt it. Do n't you think it will have a good effect?"

"It can do no harm, at least."

"So I think—and may do good. As for Bell, she's safe. I could see that she was dull, except when with me, last night, and then she was as lively as a cricket."

"I noticed that, too—and I noticed more."

"What was that?"

"That she was a sweet, interesting girl—and decidedly the handsomest one in the room."

"Do you think so?"

"I do really. It would be no sin for you to love her in downright earnest, Harry."

"So I thought last night. But I can't go that. I should soon get sick of it, and it would only spoil her, into the bargain."

"Fanny looked a very picture of loveliness, also"

"I did n't take much notice of her."

"I did then."

"Suppose you spruce up to her, Tom? She will have the rino, of course, equal to Bell."

"So I thought. But I can't marry yet, unless compelled to do so, which I'm afraid will be the case, as my old man seems inclined to cut off, instead of increasing, supplies."

"Indeed! That's bad. How has it happened?"

"He says that he does not feel willing to support me in what he calls, idleness any longer—and that if I will not go into his store and go to work, he will turn me loose upon the world, to shift for myself."

"The old rascal! But pardon me, Tom! I could not but feel indignant at such downright unnatural conduct."

"No offence, Harry. Though I must say, you indulged in great plainness of speech."

"What are you going to do?"

"Heaven alone knows, for I do n't."

"You do not intend going into the store, of course?"

"Hardly."

"You'd better speak quick for Fanny, before somebody else steps in. I should like to have you for a brother-in-law, above all things."

"Thank you, Harry! But I must take a little time to consider the matter. The truth is, I don't want a wife if I can keep free. But, if I must take one, I see no particular objection to Fan."

Henry Ware was in earnest in reference to the green bag, which he procured and regularly carried to and fro, between his office and home, at least once every day. Two or three books were of course thrown into it—and, acting upon his friend Tom's suggestion, he now and then managed to let the end of a thick roll of paper, tied with red tape, peep carelessly out. The effect of this upon the mind of Mr. Martin he had truly calculated

The old gentleman, who now had good reason for observing him, did not fail to notice the regularity with which Henry went by on his way to his office, and particularly was his eye caught by the green, well-filled bag. All this caused him to regard the young man less unfavorably.

"Who came in just now?" he asked of his wife one evening about two weeks after Harry had begun to carry his green bag. "Some one rung the bell."

"It 's Henry Ware and his sisters, I believe."

"Henry Ware?"

"Yes."

"He was here with his sisters one evening last week, was he not?"

"Yes."

"Next week, I suppose, he will come alone."

"Do you really think he is seriously inclined toward Bell?" the mother asked.

"I 'm afraid so, Fanny; and what is more, I 'm afraid that Bell is becoming seriously inclined toward him. Several times I have mentioned his name on purpose to see its effect upon her, and the color has instantly risen to her cheek."

"I have noticed the same thing myself," replied the mother with much concern in her voice. "What is to be done if she should really love him, and he should make an offer for her hand?"

"We shall, in that case, have to let them marry, I suppose, and take their chance," remarked the father in rather a gloomy tone.

"Surely not! It would be cruel in us to let such a sacrifice take place."

"But we could not help it, Fanny. When a young thing like Bell once gets fairly in love no reason can reach her. All opposition is vain, and must be finally overcome. My observation convinces me, that the best way is to let matters take

their course, and then try and make the best of every thing."

"I cannot, indeed I cannot think of consenting to such a marriage, which must inevitably end in heart breaking misery to our child," said the mother, the tears starting to her eyes.

"It will not be so bad as that, I begin to hope," replied Mr. Martin, encouragingly.—"You know what Mr. Ware told me about the change that had taken place in his son?"

"But I have no confidence in it."

"Nor had I, at first. But I really now think that the young man may be in earnest. He passes my store regularly every day to his office, and is no doubt already getting into business, for, of late, he has his bag of books and papers with him every morning and afternoon, and begins to have quite a thoughtful air. He has mind enough, and if he only turn himself industriously to the profession he has chosen, he must rise, inevitably, to distinction. Perhaps the chord of ambition may have already been touched. If so, he is safe."

The mother did not fall so readily into this idea. Still, it relieved her mind a good deal; and both, from that time, began to look upon the young man with more favorable eyes.

CHAPTER V.

A GAMING ADVENTURE.

ONE day, about three months subsequent to the time in which occurred the incidents just related, Henry Ware called upon Mr. Martin at his count-

ing-room. After passing a few common-place remarks, the young man said, with a serious air—

“I should like to have a little private conversation with you, Mr. Martin.”

“Certainly, Henry,” replied Mr. Martin, though not in a very encouraging tone. “We shall be uninterrupted here, as all my clerks are engaged at present in the store and will be so for some time.”

“You know, sir,” began the young man after a few moments’ hesitation, “that I have visited your daughter, Bell, pretty often of late.”

“I have observed as much,” was the cold response.

“In doing so,” resumed Ware, “I have been influenced by an admiration and a regard for her that have fast ripened into affection. In a word, sir, my errand here to-day is to ask of you her hand in marriage.”

“You ask of me, Henry, that which I cannot lightly give,” replied Mr. Martin, with a still graver look and tone. “A father who loves his children as I love mine, must be fully satisfied that they will be happy, ere he can consent to their marriage.”

“I should have much mistaken the character of Mr. Martin, if he were to act otherwise,” the young man said, with a perfectly unembarrassed manner. “No father ought to give his consent to the marriage of his child, without being fully satisfied as to the character of the man who proposes for her hand. I do not, therefore, expect you to accept of my proposal at once. But your manner leads me to infer, that in your mind, there are objections to me. Am I right?”

Ware was perfectly cool and self-possessed.

“You are right in your inference,” was Mr. Martin’s answer. “You know, Henry, that, like

your father, I am a man of buisness views and habits. One who has been, mainly, the architect of his own fortune; and one who values in others the same qualities and habits that have made him, successful in life. These, he has not perceived in you—or, at least only, in very feeble activity. The man who, with my consent, marries either Fanny or Bell, must be a man of energy, industry, and sound views and principles. These will bear him up under all circumstances. These will preserve him amid temptations. These will be a guaranty for my daughters' happiness."

"I fully appreciate what you say, Mr. Martin," returned Ware. "Your own success in life, and that of my father, are strong illustrations of the truth of those practical principles which you have adopted. Principles which, of late, have been presented to my mind as altogether worthy of adoption. I know that I have been a thoughtless young man, fond of company and pleasure. I know that there was a time when I laughed at sober industry, and those manly exertions which elevate individuals into positions of honor and usefulness, as something for the vulgar. But I have seen the folly and weakness of such views, and have entered, seriously, upon the business of life, with a steady, and I hope, vigorous determination to succeed. You are aware, sir, I presume, that I opened an office for the practice of law some months ago. Since that time, I have devoted myself with diligence to the profession I have chosen."

"It gives me great pleasure, Henry, to hear you express views that are so sound, and far more pleasure to hear you declare that you have adopted them as rules of life," replied Mr. Martin in a more encouraging tone. "Still, the change in your course of life is of such recent occurrence, that you cannot blame me for fearing that difficul

ties, unforseen by yourself in the new path, you have so properly chosen, may prevent you persevering in it."

"Is there any other objection to me?" Henry Ware asked, in a serious tone.

"None other, Henry," was Mr. Martin's prompt reply. "You are the son of one of my oldest and most esteemed friends. Your father and myself grew up together as boys, and entered upon business at the same time. Thus far, we have been fast friends, and, I trust, will remain so through life. No objection can, therefore, possibly exist in reference to this matter but what pertains to yourself, personally. If I can be satisfied that you will make Bell happy—that you will cherish her and care for her as I have cherished and cared for her, I will say, take her with my whole heart."

"How am I to satisfy you of this, Mr. Martin?"

"I can only be satisfied by such an assurance of the permanency of your present course of life, as will leave my mind free from all doubt upon the subject. In the mean time, I will not restrict you in your visits to Bell. A few weeks' observation and deliberation I shall take before I make up my mind. When that is done, my decision will be final. And I can only say, that it will be to me a source of real pleasure if I can make it in your favor."

"I will cheerfully await your decision, Mr. Martin," young Ware said. "And I thank you for the frankness with which you have dealt with me. If you do not find me worthy to claim the hand of your daughter, reject my suit. But do not judge of me by the past. Let me be estimated by what I am, not by what I was."

"My mind will no doubt incline in your favor," replied Mr. Martin. "And I more than suspect

that, at home, I shall find many reasons for encouraging your suit. Be that as it may, however, I shall endeavour to decide the matter soon, and in doing so, be governed by a regard for the happiness of my child."

The young man, after a few further words, arose, and went away. For nearly an hour after, old Mr. Martin remained seated, in deep thought.

In a few minutes from the time Ware left the store of Mr. Martin, he entered his own office, and ascended to the upper room, before mentioned. There he found, as he had expected, his very particular friend, Thomas Handy, who was lounging in an easy chair, and filling the room with tobacco smoke.

"Halloo! Back a'ready!" was that individual's salutation as Ware entered, rising up with a quick movement, and a look of interest as he spoke.

"Yes, I'm a prompt man, you know."

"Did you get round the old fellow?"

"O, yes."

"Indeed! Has he consented?"

"No—of course not. I didn't expect that. But I've got him safely enough, or I'm very much mistaken."

"How did he take your proposition?"

"Coldly enough at first. But I saw his weak side, and so dropped in a little ingenious flattery. Then I made him believe that I was going to be one of the most industrious, exemplary young men in the whole city—a very pattern of plodding, dollar and cent dullness. That green bag, with the documents peeping out of it occasionally, has touched the old codger's heart, I can see plainly enough."

"Did you ask for Bell, outright?"

"O, yes. I thought it best to come to the point at once."

"What did he say?"

"He put me off for a month or so, to give him time to consider."

"A month or so!"

"Yes, confound it! I shall have to walk a chalk line until my knees grow stiff. If in that time any thing should go wrong, or I should, unfortunately, be betrayed into any little indiscretion while under the influence of a bottle of wine too much, the whole jig will be up."

"You will have to be prudent, Harry," replied his friend, gravely.

"Indeed, I will. I've taken almost as much trouble now as the jade is worth, and could hardly be tempted to act such a farce over again were the present enterprise to prove a failure. To be compelled to stick up my name as a miserable lawyer, and go, regularly, day after day, to my office; and what is worse, lug a green bag about the street, with a mock business air, is going it a little too strong for a gentleman."

"It is rather hard, I confess, but two months will soon slip round."

"Yes. And during the time I must endeavor to enjoy myself as much as possible, and thus rob it of a portion of irksomeness."

"We hav'n't been to P——'s together for some time," remarked Handy, after a pause in the conversation.

"No. It's too expensive sometimes—especially as the money do n't come quite as easy as formerly," was the reply of Ware.

"It seems to me, Harry, that you and I ought to have wit and skill enough to prevent that."

"I've often thought as much myself. But they're keen hands at turning a card there."

"So are all these professional men. The only thing is for us to be just as keen as they are, and"

believe we can be. The fact is, I find that I am gaining skill and nerve every day. Last night I came away from T——'s worth a hundred dollars more than I was when I went to the rooms."

"You did?"

"Yes, I did. But I had to work for it, and no mistake."

"Your hand is improving."

"Very much. And so is yours."

"Yes, I believe it is." Then, after a pause--

"You propose going to P——'s to-night?"

"Yes."

"How much can you raise, Tom?"

"About two hundred dollars."

"That's more than I can, by one hundred and ninety."

"So low as that?" in a tone of surprise.

"It's a fact. My old man, you know, is n't too liberal in his supplies."

"Nor mine either. But I thought this office, the green bag, and all that, had mollified him considerably."

"So it has. Still, he makes me ask him, every time I want a dollar, and that is not so very pleasant, you know."

"Of course not, but no matter—my purse is yours. We can take a hundred dollars apiece, and go to P——'s to night."

"And come away without a hundred cents in our pockets, I suppose."

"That don't follow, by any means, Harry. Rather say we will come away with a cool thousand a-piece."

"Very pleasant to contemplate, but difficult to realize," was Ware's reply.

"Though difficult, it is yet possible to realize all that, and more. For my part, my mind is fully made up to do something for myself in this way

If I don't, I shall, like you, be driven to marry some silly girl, or else be forced into some kind of business, than stoop to which, I would almost as lief drown myself."

"And you seriously think that something may be done in this line?"

"Certainly I do. Did n't I win a hundred dollars last night?"

"So you have said. But might not that have been the result of accident?"

"It might have been—but it was not. I had as keen a fellow to deal with as is to be found in a hundred. He did his best, but I was wide awake all the time. Practice makes perfect, you know, and I have been practising for the last three or four months, pretty steadily."

"I do n't know but that it would be well for me to improve myself in this way, too. There's no telling what may turn up, after I secure Bell."

"That is true enough, Harry."

"Of course, I do n't intend keeping this shop open a day. For three or four months I shall manage to have forty good excuses for not attending to business. At first, you know, we will have to travel for a few weeks; then I shall want to spend some time in New York, and so on to the end of the chapter. But the mark will have to be toed at last. I shall have to take a deliberate stand, and make a plain avowal of my determination not to have a stone laid upon my back, and be crushed down and kept down, to the level of a mere workie. When that comes—and come it must, Tom—there is no telling what two hard-headed old fellows, like Bell's father and mine, may attempt. But they'll find their match, or I'm mistaken. They'll discover that I'm a boy that is hard to beat. The first movement will, no doubt, be to cut off supplies. Of course, I must

prepare for such an event—I must; if possible hit upon some expedient for keeping up supplies.”

“Of course you must. And that which I propose, is the only honorable expedient. And, besides, you can manage it with the utmost secrecy. You can go night after night to T——’s, or M——’s, or P——’s. and old Martin will be none the wiser. No secrets leak out of those places.”

“We will go to-night, as you propose, Tom,” was Ware’s prompt reply.

That night, at about nine o’ clock, the young men met according to arrangement, and proceeded together to a house in the upper part of Chestnut street, which, in external appearance, bore all the indications of a private dwelling. They rung the bell, and were regularly admitted by a servant. First, they entered, with an air of freedom and self-possession, the parlors below, which were brilliantly lighted, exhibiting a rich display of furniture, costly mirrors and pictures, with frames of the richest manufacture. Here were to be found all the newspapers, and the choicest periodicals of the day. A few individuals were to be seen, reading, or lounging upon the sofas.

The two young men lingered here but a few moments, and then ascended to a room ranging along the back-buildings of the house, which was fitted up as a bar with great elegance. Here was exhibited in tempting array every thing that could please the taste of the epicure, or delight the thirsty seekers for wines or mixed liquors; while smiling attendants stood ready to answer with promptness any demand. All this was free—provided by the generous munificence (!) of the rich proprietors of the establishment.

“We must take a strong punch to make our nerves steady,” remarked Handy to Ware, as the two entered the bar-room door.

"Of course," was the brief answer.

A stiff glass of the compound named by Handy was taken in silence by the young men, and then they turned away, and ascending two or three steps, entered the large room that fronted the street, which was brilliantly illuminated. From without, the windows, although presenting the appearance of being lightly draped, gave no sign of the busy life within. The passer-by, if he lifted, perchance, his gaze to the building, concluded, if he thought of the matter at all, that few, if any, were its inmates—for all was dark and silent as desolation.

In this room were arranged many small tables, at several of which persons were engaged at play. Two or three were walking backward and forward, evidently absorbed in thought; and one was seated alone, his head drooping upon his breast, and but a portion of his features visible. For a moment or two Ware let his eye rest upon the last mentioned individual, and observed that his lips were separated, and that his teeth were closely shut, and in a slight oblique position, as if he were just about grinding them together. His hand, too, was clenched, and had a perceptible nervous twitching.

"That poor devil has been fleeced, I suppose," whispered Handy, with a contemptuous smile, and toss of the head.

"Yes, I suppose so—and now sits here making a fool of himself," was Ware's heartless reply. "But come," he added, "let's go to the upper room in the rear building. This is too nigh the street. I can't bear the noise of the carriages—nor to hear the sound of voices on the pavement. It does 'nt seem private enough."

"My own feelings," rejoined Handy.

The two young men accordingly withdrew, and

ascended to the room which Ware had indicated. It was much longer than the one they had just left, running the whole length of an extensive back building. The floor was covered with rich Brussels carpeting, the windows were hung with costly curtains, and the walls glittered with mirrors that reflected light from three splendid chandeliers. Here, as below, were ranges of tables, some occupied by individuals with cards, and others vacant. As Ware and Handy came in, they were approached by a man of the blindest manners, and the most polished address. He supposed the young gentlemen desired to amuse themselves—there were tables with cards, and other means of passing an agreeable hour. The young gentlemen thanked him with a manner as polite and courteous as his own; and acting upon his hint took possession of a table.

“Rather dull work for two,” this very considerate and gentlemanly personage remarked, with his pleasant smile, passing near them a few minutes afterwards.

“Rather,” was Handy’s response. “Won’t you sit down with us?”

“No objection, if agreeable,” was the prompt reply, as he drew up a chair.

“Still rather dull work,” he said, after a short time, leaning back and throwing an eye around the room. “I wonder if we can’t find somebody else that would like to take a hand? We are not now evenly balanced. There comes a man who looks as if he wanted to be either winning or losing something, not much odds which. Look here, friend!” addressing the individual to whom he had alluded, “do n’t you want to take a hand?”

“No objection,” was the reply.

“Come along, then. I want a partner; and one with a clear, cool head, too; for one of my young

friends here, at least, I know to be a sharp hand, and I more than guess that the other is not much behind him."

The stranger sat down with the rest, and the four were soon deeply buried in the game at once commenced. Ten dollars round was the stake, and for a time the games all ran in favor of Handy and Ware. A proposition to double the stakes had just been made by Handy, when the individual whom they had noticed below, as sitting apart, absorbed in some intensely painful struggle of mind, entered the room, and came and stood beside the table at which they were seated. As he did so, Ware looked up, and observed that his face wore a fierce, malignant, determined expression. He had hardly time to notice this when the intruder said—addressing the individual who had spoken to them so blandly, on their entering the room—in low, emphatic tones while his eye flashed, and his face grew dark with suppressed anger—

"You are a cheating scoundrel, sir! Here, to your teeth, in the presence of these young gentlemen, I brand you as a miserable, cheating scoundrel!"

The change that instantly passed upon the face of the individual addressed, was fearful to look upon. The bland, open countenance became in a moment rigid, and almost black—while his eyes, before so mild in expression, were now dilated, and seemed to throw out corruscations of fiendish hate. For an instant only he paused, and then springing to his feet, he dashed both fists into the face of the person who had insulted him, before the latter had time to defend himself. Quick as thought, however, the other regained his feet, a large knife already gleaming in his hand, and made a headlong plunge toward the assailant.

That individual dexterously avoided the blow aimed at his heart, which was made with such a desperate energy, that its failure caused the stranger to fall forward upon one of the tables. Ere he could recover himself, the other was upon him, bearing him down, while his hand made two or three quick plunges, striking his sides as he did so with some sharp instrument, that glistened each time it was raised in the light.

Desperate were the struggles now made by the stranger to throw off his antagonist, but the gambler held him down by bearing his whole weight upon him, every now and then stabbing him in the side, with a fierce energy, accompanying each blow with some hellish imprecation. All this passed before any one had time to interfere. But a crowd gathered round, one catching the hand that held the deadly weapon, and another dragging him off of the wounded man, from whose side the blood already gushed in copious streams. Instantly upon being thus released, the latter turned and dashed his knife into the abdomen of the gambler. As he did so, his arm fell nerveless by his side and he sank upon the floor a ghastly corpse.



CHAPTER VI.

A DILEMMA.

“THAT was a horrible affair, last night,” Handy said to Ware, on their meeting next morning.

“Horrible, indeed! I was never so shocked in my life.”

"So it was Mr B——, then, with whom we were playing, the head man of that splendid establishment."

"How do you know?"

"Hav 'nt you seen the newspapers this morning?"

"I have seen one or two, but none of them contained any allusion to that affair."

"Here is one, then, which has the full particulars. And rather too full to please me."

"How so?"

"Just listen to this," drawing a newspaper from his pocket, and reading :

"DESPERATE RENCONTRE AT P——'S SPLENDID ESTABLISHMENT IN CHESTNUT STREET, NEAR ——, and DEATH OF ONE OF THE PARTIES.—Last night at about ten o'clock, as P——, the principal proprietor of the gambling rooms in Chestnut street to which we have alluded in the caption of this article, was engaged at play with a couple of young bloods of this city, whose names are in our possession, an individual came up and insulted him, when a fight ensued, which terminated in the death of the latter, who received several severe stabs in the side, one or two of these penetrating his heart. In return, he dealt P—— a fearful wound in the abdomen, which, it is thought, will terminate fatally. We have not yet learned the name of the deceased. We understand that many young men of respectable standing in society were found in this establishment by those who rushed in from the street as soon as the fatal affray became known. One, in particular, was noticed there, the son of a wealthy merchant, who is engaged to one of the sweetest maidens in the city—a rich heiress. Poor girl! Though now the envy of thousands, if she should become his wife, we fear that the time will come when she, in turn, will envy the lot of even the most lowly and obscure, in whose habitation rests the sunshine of peace."

"Too bad! too bad!" ejaculated Henry Ware, pacing the room backward and forward with hurried steps. "Confound these officious newspaper editors! What has our being there, to do with the murder that was committed? Just no."

thing at all! But, to make a strong paragraph we must be lugged in, and others into the bargain And he says, moreover, that he has our names—and, I suppose, will publish them to-morrow."

"If he does, I will cut off his ears."

"Better cut his head off *before* he does it. Why, I would n't have it known, publicly, that I was there for the world."

"You might at once bid good-bye to Bell Martin, and her father's money, if that were to happen."

"And that it will happen, I fear there is little doubt."

"Why so?"

"Does not this officious scoundrel say that he has our names?"

"Well?"

"Of course, now that he has published that fact, he will be called upon by the Attorney General to give the names, that we may be summoned as witnesses for the prosecution, in the trial that will ensue, should P——survive his wound, which heaven forbid!"

"True! true!" Handy said, with a troubled look.

"If it comes to that, it will be a death-blow to my prospects. The fact of my having been in a gambling-house, and engaged in playing with P——, which will appear from my own testimony on oath, will at once set my hopes at rest."

Handy did not reply to this for some time, but sat deeply absorbed in thought. At length he said—

"Every thing looks dark enough in your case, Harry, I must confess. But I think there is one hope."

"What is that?"

"That you may be able to secure Bell's hand

before the trial comes on. In the mean time, you must make fair weather, if possible, with the Attorney General, and get him to keep your name from transpiring as one of the-witnesses, until the last moment."

"Thank you, Tom, for that hope. I see there is still light ahead. But this vagabond editor—what shall we do with him?" Suppose he were to publish our names?"

"He must not do that. I will see him to-day, and endeavor to secure his silence."

"Do so, if possible. But what if old Martin's eye has caught this unfortunate paragraph? His suspicions will be almost certainly aroused."

"You must allay them."

"How?"

"Do not ask me. Surely you are possessed of enough cool impudence for that. Visit there as formerly—and with as frank and easy an air. If the affray last evening be introduced before you have time to allude to it, converse about it freely. Do you take the idea?"

'Perfectly—and shall act it out fully.

CHAPTER VII.

SUSPICIONS AWAKENED.

"BELL, did you see this?" asked Mary, coming into Bell's chamber, and handing her the morning paper, with her finger on the paragraph which had disturbed young Ware's peace of mind so seriously.

"No—what is it?" replied the maiden, taking the paper and glancing over the article pointed to her.

"That is a dreadful affair, truly, Mary," said Bell, as she finished reading the paragraph, in a voice of more than scarcely ordinary concern. "I wonder who the young man is, alluded to as about to marry some beautiful heiress? I hope, at least for her sake, that this notice may meet her eye, and that she may have resolution to cast him off forever."

"Most earnestly do I hope so," was Mary's answer, made in a fervent tone.

"You seem unusually serious about the matter, Mary," Bell now said, looking up with an expression of surprise. "Have you any idea to whom allusion is made?"

Mary hesitated a few minutes and then replied—

"I have my suspicions."

"Then where do they rest?"

"Pardon me, Bell. Perhaps it is the earnest love I feel for you that makes me suspicious. But I cannot help thinking that you are the maid-alluded to."

"Me, Mary!" ejaculated Bell, in instant and profound astonishment. "In the name of wonder! what has put that into your head?"

"I know not where the suggestion came from, Bell," said Mary, calmly and seriously. "But the instant I read that notice the thought flashed upon my mind with startling vividness."

"It is not a true thought, Mary."

"I sincerely hope not. Time, however, I trust, will tell whether it be true or false."

"You are not prepossessed in Henry Ware's favor, Mary. That accounts for this suspicion."

"I certainly am not prepossessed in his favor,"

replied Mary, "and never have been. You know that I have said this from the first."

"But upon what ground rests your prejudice against him?"

"I am afraid that he can never love you, Bell, as you should be loved," replied Mary, in a voice that was low, and trembled with feeling.

"Certain am I, Mary that, he loves me deeply, and tenderly. Why do you doubt it?"

"To me he does not seem capable of loving any thing half so well as himself. Pardon my freedom of speech on a subject of such a delicate nature. As I have said before, it is nothing but my love for you, that causes me to speak so plainly."

"You do not see him as I see him, Mary, nor hear the peculiar tones of his voice as I hear them."

"I know that. But my observation of him causes me to doubt his sincerity. I do not see him often, but when I do, I observe him with the closest scrutiny; and that tells me that he is insincere—that he is acting a part."

"Something has blinded your mind in regard to him, Mary, so that you cannot judge him fairly."

"I think not, Bell. Until within a few months, his life has been one constant round of selfish pleasure-taking. He has kept gay, wild company, and been the gayest and wildest of all."

"How do you know that, Mary?"

"I have heard your father say so."

"But has he not changed? Did not my father say that likewise?"

"He did."

"Does not that, then, satisfy you?"

"Far from it. Men change not thus, so suddenly, without a sufficient motive."

"And what, think you, his motive?"

“To gain the hand of Bell Martin.”

“And if to *gain* her hand,” said the maiden, while her cheek deepened its color, and her eyes sparkled, “he would forego all these, think you not that to *keep* that hand, and the heart that goes with it, he would not still forego them?”

To this triumphant appeal on the part of Bell, Mary made no reply; though it did not satisfy her mind, far more acute in its perceptions of character than the maiden's with whom she was conversing. The reader's knowledge of the facts in the case, will, of course, approve her judgment. Men do not thus suddenly change a course of life in which they have taken delight, without some strong influencing motive. And it would be well for the happiness of many a fond, confiding girl, if she would lay this axiom up in her heart.

Let every young woman beware of the suitor, especially if she have in possession or prospect a fortune, who suddenly reforms or changes his course of life upon making advances toward her. Previous habits, when the stronger motive of securing her hand is withdrawn, will, in nine cases out of ten, return and become as strong and active as ever. Then will come the bitterness which nothing can allay. Then will come neglect, perhaps unkindness, and, it may be, cruelty. Who would not pause and reflect? Who would not hesitate, and ponder well the chances, before running such a risk? A neglected wife!—Oh! who would be that heart-broken thing? And, worse than all, how often do early habits of dissipation become confirmed? Then comes severer anguish than even springs from neglect alone. Poverty—wretchedness—and the untold pangs of a drunkard's wife are the attendants of these! Again we say, let the maiden know well the character of the man she marries: and the more elevated her sta-

tion in life, the more guarded let her be. The greater the villain, the higher his aim.

"Did you see the account of that affray last night, Henry?" asked Mr. Martin, suddenly, on the evening succeeding the event alluded to, eyeing the young man closely as he did so.

Henry Ware was sitting upon the sofa beside Bell, at the time the question was asked.

"I did," was his prompt reply, turning round toward Mr. Martin, and looking him steadily in the face. "It seems to have been rather a desperate affair,"

"It certainly does. I wonder who the young man can be to whom allusion is made in the paper of this morning?"

"I really do not know; although I have my suspicions," was the cool reply of Ware, still looking at Mr. Martin, with an expression of unconcern upon his face.

"Upon whom do they rest, Henry?"

"I do not know that it is exactly fair to mention such suspicions; but of course they will be sacred here. It has occurred to me that the individual there alluded to is James L—. You know that he is engaged to Miss Eberly."

"Can it be possible!" said Mr. Martin, in surprise.

"Both possible and probable," resumed Ware. "I know that he has been in the habit of visiting that establishment for some time past. It is only a week since I remonstrated with him about it, and tried to show him that it was a certain road to ruin."

"You surprise and pain me very much, Henry. I had a very different opinion of James L—."

"Few suspect him of being wedded to the vice of gaming. But it is, alas! too true. Of the handsome fortune left him by his father, I doubt

if there is any thing, over a meagre remnant, left."

"It is really dreadful to think about," said Mrs. Martin, "What a sad prospect for Caroline Eberly!"

"This affair," remarked Ware, coolly, "may lead to such an exposure of him, as will open her eyes; and for her sake, I earnestly hope that it may be so."

Thus did this young but accomplished villain, to draw suspicion from himself, assail the character of an innocent young man. Mr. Martin, on whose mind the most painful doubts had rested ever since the morning, was now fully satisfied that his suddenly awakened fears had done injustice to Henry Ware. His manner and the expression of his face were to him full of innocence. He even regretted having made an effort to obtain the names of the individuals mentioned in the notice of the affray, by going to the newspaper office, where the editor declined answering his question. He was not, of course, aware that Thomas Handy had been there half an hour before him, and informed said editor that if he divulged the names of the persons to whom he had alluded, he would have his ears cut off, and, perhaps, his life taken!



CHAPTER VIII.

A TROUBLESOME AFFAIR.

"Good morning, Mr. Blackstone," said Henry Ware, entering the office of the Attorney General, about three weeks after the fatal affray. "So

you've got me down for that unpleasant affair?"

"To what do you allude, Mr. Ware?" the Attorney-General asked, gravely.

"To the affair which came off up Chesnut street, some two or three weeks ago."

"Do you refer to the murder of — by P—?"

"Yes. To that murder, or manslaughter, or homicide, which ever you feel disposed to call it. But, as I was saying, you have got me down for one of the witnesses?"

"Oh yes. Now I remember; and a very important one you are. You were present at the beginning, through the progress, and at the termination, of the affray; and, of course, your testimony will decide the matter. You were playing with P— at the time — came up to the table at which he was sitting, I understand, Was that so?"

"I am sorry to say that I was," Ware replied, his tone changing a good deal, in spite of a determined effort not to let the deep concern he felt become too visible.

"That is important," returned Mr. Blackstone, with a thoughtful air. "I hope," he added, in a few moments after, "that you will keep the whole scene fresh in your memory, so as to describe it accurately."

"But can you not, possibly, dispense with my testimony?" Ware asked. "There were many others present, who can fully attest all the facts in the case."

"We have failed to learn any of their names, except that of Thomas Handy, who has been summoned to appear as well as yourself."

"Why will not his evidence be conclusive in the matter?"

"Because, as you well know, corroborating testimony is always desirable."

How soon will the case come on?"

"At the next term, which commences in about two months."

The young man's countenance fell, and he seemed troubled at this information. A brief silence followed, and then he said, while his voice slightly trembled—

"I have reasons, Mr. Blackstone, of a very important nature, for not wishing to appear in this case."

"I am sorry for it Mr. Ware; and regret the absolute necessity for calling you."

"Do not say absolute necessity, Mr. Blackstone," Ware rejoined, while his manner became agitated. "I cannot, I must not appear!"

"What detriment can it be to you simply to relate what you saw? You were no actor in the case."

"But I could not have seen what passed in that establishment, if I had not, unfortunately, been there. It is the fact of my presence there that I do not wish known."

"I am sorry for the existing necessity," replied the Attorney General; "but cannot accede to your desire. The evidence which you can give is of too much importance to the State to be waived."

The manner of Ware became still more agitated at this.

"You know not, Mr. Blackstone," he said, in an earnest and almost supplicating tone, "how much depends upon the concealment of the fact that I was present at that unfortunate affray. If it should become known, it will mar all my expectations in life."

"I regret exceedingly to hear you say so," the Attorney General simply remarked at this; and then the young man went on—

"The fact is, Mr. Blackstone, to make you

fully sensible of my situation, in the hope that an appreciation of it may induce you to consider me more than you are now inclined to do, I will mention, that I have recently made proposals to old Mr. Martin, for the hand of his youngest daughter, and that I am now awaiting a decision. I have no doubt of its being in my favor. But should this fact get out before the consummation of the marriage, the engagement will inevitably be broken off. I was a fool to go to that miserable place any how ; and should n't have done so had it not been for the persuasion of a friend, for I have no taste for such amusements."

"I certainly feel for your situation very much," said Mr. Blackstone. And he only spoke what he felt ; for he really believed the concluding portion of the young man's statement, not having had much knowledge of his previous character and habits of life.

"It is a very peculiar and very critical one, indeed," was Ware's reply. And I do hope you will, as it is in your power, duly consider the delicate position in which I am placed."

"But it is not in my power to do so, Mr. Ware."

"How can that be? Is it not upon your summons that all witnesses appear?"

"Very true. But in this act I cannot be governed by any considerations except those which regard justice."

"Still, justice may be attained as fully by my non-appearance, as by my appearance."

"I do not think so."

"But surely the testimony of Mr. Handy will be conclusive."

"It may not be in the minds of all the jurors. But if in your testimony and Handy's there be a corroborating agreement on some important points, then doubt will be set aside. You see,

therefore, that it is impossible for me, much as I feel for you in so unpleasant a position, to accede to your wishes. Were it in my power, I would do so cheerfully ; but, as I have before said, it is not in my power. I cannot let any personal consideration interfere to endanger the cause of justice."

"Do not say, that in this resolution you are fixed, Mr. Blackstone," returned Ware, appealingly.

"I certainly do say so, and emphatically," was the firm reply. "My office is a responsible one ; and in the discharge of its duties, I suffer myself to know no man."

There was now a long silence, deeply troubled on the part of the young man.

"And you think the trial will come on at the next term?" he at length asked in an anxious tone.

"Oh yes. It is already entered for the next Court."

Perceiving by the manner of the Attorney General, that it was useless to urge him farther, Henry Ware retired, with a feeling of deeper and more painful anxiety than he had ever experienced. He had fondly believed that, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, where there was another witness who could testify as fully and as clearly as himself to all the facts which had occurred, there would be no great difficulty in his getting relieved from the duty of a witness, but this hope the Attorney General had dashed to the ground. And he now saw himself standing, as it were, on the brink of utter ruin, as he esteemed it. For if he failed under these circumstances, to secure the hand of Bell Martin, the fact would become so notorious, that all hope of securing any other prize of equal value, would be cut off. It would, likewise, involve such an exposure, as to

utterly destroy his father's newly awakened confidence, and cause him further to curtail supplies of money. This would necessarily separate them so far as to make it very doubtful whether the old gentleman, at his death, would trust much of his property in the hands of one in whose habits and principles there was so little to approve.

"What is to be done now?" he asked, thoughtfully, as he seated himself in his office. "If this comes out before Bell is mine, the whole jig is up. And what then? Why, the old man will be so incensed, that, in all probability, he will tell me to go and shift for myself. And a pretty figure I would make at that kind of work. What could I do? Gamble, I suppose, and nothing else: and not much headway would I make at that, it strikes me. But if I could only get fairly spliced to Bell, I would have two strings to my bow. My old dad, and hers too, would then think twice before cutting loose from me. And, besides, I would have two deep pockets to thrust my hand in, and both together, it strikes me, ought to keep me in spending money. Let me see:—this trial will come on in two months. Can't I push the business through in that time? I must try: for every thing depends upon it. Certainly, old Martin has had full time to consider, and decide upon my offer! And I think he has decided favorably, for his manner grows more and more encouraging and familiar every time I meet him. I'll see him this very day and press for an answer; and if that should be favorable, will next urge an immediate marriage. It is my only course."

Acting upon this decision, Ware sought and obtained a private interview with Mr. Martin on that afternoon.

"You must excuse me, Mr. Martin," he said, after alluding to the object of his visit, "for my so

early asking a decision. Young folks, you know, are restless under uncertainties—and, especially, under an uncertainty of this nature, you cannot wonder that I should feel anxious. I trust, therefore, that you have taken pains to satisfy yourself as to my ability to render your daughter happy, and are now prepared to give me a final answer.”

The old man sat thoughtful for some moments, after Ware had ceased speaking. All that he had seen or heard, since his proposal for the hand of Bell, had caused him to think more and more favorably of the young man's suit. And yet he did not feel satisfied. Whenever he thought of resigning his daughter to Ware, it was with feelings of unconquerable reluctance. The man he would choose for his child, if the full choice were his, would be one in whom correct principles had been early implanted, and had grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength. Such was not the case with Ware. With him, correct principles were of but a hot-bed growth; and, therefore, he could feel no well-grounded confidence in them. Still, he would condemn this kind of judgment, on the argument that the young man had evidently seen his error, and was now thoroughly reforming himself. That, with maturer years, a youthful love of exciting pleasures and loose company had subsided, never again to exercise any controlling influence over him.

“In one week I will give you a decisive answer, Henry,” Mr. Martin at length replied.

“Even a week seems a great while to prolong this kind of suspense, Mr. Martin. I have already waited with as much as I could exercise, for many weeks.”

“But there need be no hurry about the matter, Henry. You are both young, and won't expect to be married for a twelvemonth to come.”

This remark made the young man's spirits sink at once. If not married within a twelvemonth, very certain was he, that he should never be married at all to Bell Martin. But he would not trust himself to reply. The first thing was to gain the father's consent to marry her at all.

"I must wait a week, you say?" he remarked after a brief silence.

"In a week I will be prepared to decide upon your proposition."

"It will be a month to me," said Ware, as he arose to depart.



CHAPTER IX.

LIGHT AHEAD.

"Is it all settled, Harry?"

"The child is christened——"

"And named Anthony?"

'You've said it. The old man could n't but give his consent, though it came reluctantly; and then the way he piled on the admonition was a 'sin to curious.'"

"Good advice, no doubt. What was it like?"

"That's more than I can tell."

"Went into one ear and out of the other, eh?"

"Not even that. It did n't find its way into either ear. I wanted his daughter and not his advice."

"So far so good. But the next question is, how soon will he consent to let you marry her?"

"Next year!" in a tone of bitter irony.

"Never, you had better say."

"It will be never, if not within a year, that is certain."

"That confounded trial will be here in less than two months."

"And in less than two months all my hopes will be scattered before the wind if I cannot manage to secure Bell's hand within that period."

"Is there any possible hope of doing so?"

"I'm afraid not. But I must try. While there is life there is hope, Tom, as the doctors say. So far I have managed to throw dust in the old people's eyes, and get their consent to marry Bell. I must now do my best to accomplish another end, fully as important as the first."

"How will you go about it?"

"I have been racking my brains over that for the past week, in anticipation of the acceptance of my suit, and can thus far, think of but one way."

"What is that?"

"To get my old man in favour of an immediate marriage, and then set him to work on Martin."

"Do you think you can bring him over to your side?"

"I can only try."

"But are you sanguine?"

"I am. He knows I've been a pretty wild boy in my time, and is now tickled to death at the idea of my reformation. If I can only manage to get the notion into his head that there is still some danger of my getting back into the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity, until the protecting arms of a wife are thrown around me—he is safe on my side of the question."

"But how will you manage that? It would hardly do for you to insinuate such a thing."

"Of course not. But I have a friend of my own kidney who has often served me before, and I am

going to make a requisition on him for this especial business."

"Indeed! And who might that friend be?"

"He might be one Thomas Handy, alias, Tom Handy—a chap of notable parts—and, moreover *is* the said Tom Handy."

"Exactly."

"And of course Tom Handy is still as ready to serve his friend as ever?"

"My hand for that. But how am I to manage this for you?"

"You must fall in with the old man."

"He don't love me very tenderly, you must remember."

"I am fully aware of that fact. But I have been wearing down his prejudice for the past week with might and main."

"You have?"

"O, yes. Whenever I could manage to get something to say about Thomas Handy, I lugged your honourable self in, head and shoulders."

"He did n't like my company, I presume?"

"It did disturb him at first. But I surprised him with the pleasing information that there had occurred in you a most salutary change of late."

"O, dear! ha! ha! ha! Hush, Harry, or you will kill me!"

"Mainly brought about, I informed him, by my influence and example. That you had been a wild boy in your time, there was no denying. But having sowed your wild oats, you were now setting seriously and earnestly about the business of life."

"He did n't believe you?"

"He did—every word! It would have done your heart good to see how pleased he was. 'You see, Harry,' he said, 'how much depends on every individual. We do not stand alone. Every act whether good or evil, carries its salutary or inju-

rious effect into society, and there reproduces itself, often in innumerable forms. Let this truth, my dear son, sink deep into your heart. And for the sake of others, if not for your own, let every act bear with it a healthful influence.' Now what do you think of that?"

"He'd make a first-rate preacher, would n't he?"

"So I thought."

"And he is prepossessed in my favour!"

"O, decidedly. Now I want you to fall in with him as soon as possible, for no time is to be lost, and do the right thing by me. I need not tell you in what way. That, of course, you understand."

"Perfectly."

"When do you think you can see him?"

"I do n't know. I must fall in with him *by accident*, of course. Let me consider. At what time does he go to the store after dinner?"

"About four o'clock."

"Takes wine pretty freely at the table?"

"Yes."

"And is always in a good humor afterwards?"

"Generally so."

"I'll meet him, then, *by accident*, on some corner between your house and the store, and walk down the street with him. As we go along, I will do my prettiest to interest him; so that when we pause at the store door, he'll say, 'Come! won't you walk in, Thomas?' Of course I will go in. How do you like that style of doing the thing?"

"Admirably!"

"But is he alone much in his counting-room?"

"Yes, especially in the afternoon. There is a cosy little office just back of the main counting-room, in which is a large arm-chair, that has generally some attractions for him after a hearty dinner. He will, in all probability, invite you in

there. If he does, you will have a fair chance at him."

"And I'll do my prettiest."

"I will trust you for that, Tom. You are true blue, when you undertake to perform a friendly act."

About four o'clock on the next day, Thomas Handy met old Mr. Ware, "by accident," a short distance from his store. During the dinner hour, Henry Ware had artfully introduced his friend in conversation, and by the relation of some imagined circumstances, and the repetition of some imagined sentiments attributed to him, very much interested his father in the young man. He was, in consequence, prepared to give him a pleasant word and a bland smile, which Handy appropriated very coolly and very naturally. Then, as he was going the same way, a pleasant conversation sprung up, which was just at a point of interest when they arrived at Mr. Ware's store, that made him feel inclined to invite the young man to walk in. Of course, Thomas Handy made no excuse. In a few moments after, he was snugly seated in the cosy little office of which his friend had told him, with Mr. Ware as snugly fixed in his great arm-chair.

"Well, Thomas," remarked the old gentleman, after he had got fairly settled, looking at Handy with quite a complacent, benevolent expression on his countenance, "it must be as great a pleasure to your father as it is to me, to know that you young men are beginning to see with different eyes, and to act from different views."

"Indeed, sir, it is," was the prompt, cool, heartless reply. "My father seems like another man. But you can, no doubt, enter into his feelings more fully than I can."

"Very truly said. None but a father can pos-

sibly realize, fully, a father's feelings under such circumstances. For my part, I can say, that the change which has become apparent in Harry, has taken a mountain from my heart."

"No doubt of it, sir! No doubt of it!" was Handy's fervent response. "For the change in Harry has been great indeed."

"Indeed it has."

"And I most earnestly trust that he will abide by it."

"Abide by it! He must abide by it, Thomas! I cannot think of his going back again. It would almost kill me. O, if he only knew the world of misery I have suffered in consequence of his past life, he would die rather than think of returning to his previous habits!"

There was a tremulousness and a pathos in the old man's voice, that even reached, in some degree, the ice-bound feelings of the young man with whom he was conversing. But the effect was neither deep nor permanent. The selfish end he had in view, quickly dispersed even these small touches of nature.

"The influence of habits, confirmed by long indulgence, are not thrown off in a day, Mr. Ware," he replied, in a serious tone. "Both Henry and myself will have to struggle manfully before we have fully conquered. And struggle we will. In this effort we need all the kind consideration and aid that we can receive from those upon whom we have any claims."

"And surely you have both, Thomas."

"We have, so far as our condition can be appreciated. But you, who have never felt the force of such habits as we have contracted, can no more fully sympathize with us, than we can fully sympathize with you. Do you understand me?"

"I do. But why do you speak thus?"

"I have been led, almost involuntarily, to say what I have, Mr. Ware, from—from—"

"From what, Thomas? Speak out plainly."

The young man hesitated for a few moments, as if deliberating some question in his mind, and then said, in a serious tone—

"I had no thought of saying what I am now almost compelled to say, seeing that I have excited, unintentionally, a concern in your mind. You must not, of course, intimate to Harry, even remotely, that I have said what I am now about saying."

"O, no, of course not, Thomas."

"You know, then, I presume, that he has been addressing Bell Martin?"

"Yes."

"I learned from him yesterday that her father had consented to the marriage."

"So I heard last evening."

"But he thinks it time enough for them to get married in a year from now."

"Well?"

"Do you know that the first effort Henry made to reform his course of life, was after his affections had become fixed upon Bell?"

"I do not know it certainly."

"It is true. We are intimate friends, and I know it to be true. He loves her fondly and passionately—and is, of course, very much disappointed at the stand which her father has taken. A year is a long time to wait."

"It is a good while—but it will soon pass round."

To him it will not. The hours, and days, and weeks, will drag wearily and heavily. To speak frankly and seriously, Mr. Ware, I fear for its effect upon him. You know his ardent temper-

ament, and how little used he has been to self-denial."

"You speak seriously, Thomas."

"It is because I feel serious in this matter. I am much attached to Harry, and whatever deeply concerns him concerns me."

"In what way do you fear that it will affect him injuriously?"

"Indeed, sir, I can hardly tell myself. But I have a vague fear that I cannot shake off—a dim, troubled idea that has haunted me ever since I saw his strong manifestation of disappointment. For relief of mind, he may fall back in some weak moment, upon old and exciting pleasures, and then his danger would be great, very great. I tremble to think of it."

"You certainly alarm me, Thomas."

"I do not wish, Mr. Ware, to disturb your mind, and would not do so, did I not feel so deep an interest in your son. An ounce of prevention, you know, is worth a pound of cure. It is in the hope that through your influence all danger may be put far away, that I now speak to you as I do."

"Thank you kindly, Thomas. I feel the force of your generous interest. But if that is all, we need not disturb our minds. They might just as well be married now as a year hence."

"So I think. There can be no reason for waiting."

"None at all. I will see Mr. Martin, and have that matter settled at once."

"You have indeed, sir, taken a load from my mind," said Handy, earnestly and sincerely. Then, after a brief pause for reflection, he added:

"Urge Mr. Martin to permit the marriage to take place at a very early period. I shall never feel that Henry is perfectly safe, until this new

relation is formed. Then, all danger will be passed."

"It shall take place soon, I pledge myself for that," replied Mr. Ware. "I understand Bell's father as well as he understands himself, and I know how to take him. Trust me, sir; they shall be married as early as they wish."

Thus much gained, Handy soon after arose, and bade Mr. Ware good day.

CHAPTER X.

IN DIFFICULTY AGAIN.

ONE morning, a week after the interview mentioned in the concluding portion of the last chapter, our two young men met, as usual, at the office of Henry Ware, which was still retained, and all the appearances of studious attention to business kept up.

"You look grave, Harry," remarked his friend, as he came in.

"I look no graver than I feel," was the gloomy response.

"What has turned up now? Are we never to be done with these cross purposes?"

"I'm afraid not. It seems as if the old Harry himself had turned against us. If it had not been for that cursed affair in Chestnut street, all would have gone on swimmingly. But that, I see very plainly is going to mar the whole plot."

"Old Martin has given his consent to an early marriage."

"So he has. But--"

"But what?"

"Bell, confound her! can't get ready for two months to come!"

"The devil!"

"Ain't it too bad?" And Ware paced the floor of his office with hurried steps, his countenance expressive of anger and disappointment. "Can't get ready for two months! Confound it! Why, I could get ready in two days, and so could she, if it were not for some romantic notion she has probably got into her head. They're all a set of silly fools any how!"

"You'll soon take the romance out of her, if you ever get a chance!"

"Won't I? She'll not have much left, six months after we're married, if that event ever takes place."

"Not for two months, you say?"

"No."

"Too bad! Too bad! But can't you change her resolution?"

"No. I tried last evening, as far as I could. But it was no use. She says that she cannot possibly be ready before the middle of May."

"That trial will come up on the first."

"So Blackstone says."

"What then is to be done?"

"That is a question easy to ask, but difficult to answer. I see no chance of escape from the dilemma."

"I can tell you of one way that occurs to me at this moment."

"Name it, then, for Heaven's sake!"

"Absent yourself from the city on the day the case is called. It will then have to go on without you, or be postponed, so that you will have time to get married before it again comes up."

"The very thing!" ejaculated Ware, striking

his fist with his open hand, his whole countenance brightening up. "It's the very thing, Tom! And I'll do it."

"There will then only remain one danger."

"What is that?"

"Your name will be called as a witness. Should any one there, who knows Bell's father, inform him of the fact, the jig will be up for you as effectually as if you had made your appearance."

"True—true," and the countenance of Ware again fell.

"And the danger would be greatly increased, were the names of the witnesses published, which will in all probability be the case."

"Still it is the only course that promises any thing."

"It is; and therefore the only course you can take."

"Do you intend remaining, Tom?"

"I havn't made up my mind yet."

"You had better go also."

"Why do you think so?"

"As we are the two principal witnesses on the part of the prosecution, our absence will make it absolutely necessary to postpone the trial to another term. If that can be done, I am safe."

"That is true again. I will go."

"Now I begin to see a little daylight ahead," remarked Ware in a more cheerful tone. "We'll outwit Mr. Attorney General in spite of his teeth."

"Mr. Ware, I believe," said an individual, entering at the moment.

"My name," was the half haughty reply, for the individual who addressed him, had not, to his eye, the appearance of a gentleman.

"You are required to appear and give bail to the amount of four thousand dollars as a witness in the case of the *State vs. P—*," was the mo-

notonous response of the visiter, who added in a moment afterwards, "The bail is required by twelve o'clock this morning,"—and then withdrew.

Neither of the young men spoke for nearly five minutes after the officer retired. At length Ware said, in a low but firm tone :

"It's all over, Tom! The fates are against me. I might as well give up at once. But it is hard, devilish hard! after all the trouble I have taken, thus to have the cup dashed to the earth, at the moment it is about to touch my lips!"

"It is hard, Harry. But you must bear it like a man. Something yet may turn up in your favor."

"I have ceased to look for it. The effort to get bail will, no doubt, lead to a full exposure of the whole matter."

"Things look cloudy enough," remarked Harry, after musing for some time. "I do not see any way of escape."

"There is none, I presume," Ware gloomily replied. "Any how, I shall prepare myself for the worst."

CHAPTER XI.

A FURTHER PROSPECT.

It was just eleven o'clock when Henry Ware received the notice requiring him to give bail, as mentioned in the last chapter, and at twelve that day bail had to be produced. The unexpected

aspect which this difficulty, already well nigh insurmountable, had assumed, made the young man feel like giving up all further efforts at compassing a concealment of his visit to P——'s establishment. After a long silence, in which his own mind, and that of his friend, were searching, but in vain, for some new expedient, Handy asked, in rather a desponding tone,

"Can you think of nothing, Harry?"

"Nothing," was the brief, gloomy response.

"Who will go your bail?"

"Can't you?"

"Of course I would not be received, in consequence of being a witness myself. Nor am I at all sure that a similar notice to yours will not be served on me before the next hour."

"I see the difficulty."

"But you must have bail."

"I know that too well. And yet, I can think of no one except the old man. But it will never do to make application in that quarter."

"Can't you humbug him into it in some way?"

"How?"

"I don't know exactly how. But still, may it not be done? Can't you invent a plausible story that will mislead him in regard to the real facts in the case, and so get him to stand by you?"

"That might be done, though I do not exactly see how."

"Has he given any attention to the case?"

"Not much, I believe. When the affair occurred, it was a kind of three days' wonder with him, as with others. Since then, I presume, he has scarcely thought of it."

"Suppose, then, you trump up some story about your knowledge of an old quarrel between P—— and ——, and that you have been summoned to testify in regard to that? Don't you think that

you might come it over him in some such style as that?"

"That's it again!" ejaculated Ware, starting to his feet, and beginning to walk about his office with a quick step, while the dark shadow that had rested upon his face, was quickly dispersed by an exulting smile. "You are certainly rare at inventions. But for you, I never could have got along even half so far as I now am, in this most perplexing affair."

"You think it can be done without difficulty?"

"O yes. He'll believe any well told tale just now. Still, I dread to approach him on the subject, for fear that something in my countenance or tone of voice may betray me. There is so much at stake, and I feel so deeply on the subject, that I am beginning to lose the calm assurance that has thus far stood me such good service."

"How would it do for me to go to him?"

"I am sure I do not know. He would very naturally wish to know why I did not see him myself."

"Of course he would. But I can manage him well enough in regard to that. The last interview I had with the old codger gave me a clue to his character. I read him like a book, then, and know him now from A. to Z."

"If you are perfectly willing to go, Tom, I shall be glad enough to have you do so, and am satisfied to trust the matter to your sound judgment. But time presses. I must be at the Court House in less than an hour, or there will be the devil to pay."

Ten minutes after, young Handy entered the store of Mr. Ware, with a manner perfectly calm and assured, while there sat upon his countenance an expression of concern, not deep, but clearly defined, and not to be mistaken.

"Ah, good morning, Thomas—I am pleased to see you," said Mr. Ware, encouragingly. "Walk back into the counting-room."

Handy followed the old gentleman into his counting-room, the door of which Mr. Ware closed after him, purposely, in order that their conversation might be private. The coming in of Handy made him think of his son, and he felt desirous of conversing more in regard to him, with one who was on such intimate terms with, and seemed to take so deep an interest in him.

"Well, Thomas," he said, in a cheerful tone, after they were seated, "what news is stirring in your way?"

"Nothing of consequence, except"—and then he hesitated and looked a little grave.

"Except what, Thomas?" asked Mr. Ware, exhibiting some little concern of manner.

"To be plain, honest and frank with you at once, Mr. Ware, a course that I always like to pursue, I have come in this morning to see you about an annoying circumstance that has occurred to Henry."

"To Henry?" said the old man, with anxiety. "What of him, Thomas?"

"Oh! it's nothing at which to be alarmed. In fact, it is nothing but a little matter of annoyance to him."

"Speak out plainly and to the point, my young friend," Mr. Ware now said, in a firm, decided tone.

"It is, in fact," resumed Handy, "only one of the results of former imprudent associations. Our sins often visit us with penalties, after our earnest repentance, and repudiation of them."

"Speak plainly, Mr. Handy."

"I will, sir. It is now nearly a year since Henry and myself were induced, among other indi-

cretions, to visit P——'s gambling rooms, and engage in play. Three months' experience, however, completely cured us of our folly. During that time both Henry and myself became acquainted with P——, and also with several regular visitors at his establishment. Among these, was an ill-conditioned, quarrelsome individual. One night a dispute arose between him and P——, when a brief rencontre ensued, in which he was severely beaten. Henry and myself were both present, and saw the whole affair. Ever since that time, it appears, that this individual held a grudge against P——, and has, I am told, frequently insulted him with the intention of drawing him into another fight. A few weeks ago, as you will remember, he quarrelled with P——, and was killed. Now, some one has informed Blackstone, the Attorney General, that we were present at the former affray, and he has summoned us both to appear as witnesses in the case. But what he wants us to prove, is more than I can figure out."

"Is that all?" said Mr. Ware, breathing more freely.

"That is the whole merit of the case—but it is not all that troubles Henry's mind."

"What does trouble his mind?"

"The fact that he has been required to give bail for his attendance as a witness."

"Why has that course been pursued?" asked Mr. Ware, gravely.

"I must explain a little to make that matter clear to you. When Henry first learned that the Court required his attendance, he went to the State's Attorney, in the hope that he could induce him to leave his name off, stating to him, frankly, that his presence in such a place was at a time when he had suffered himself to be led away into

Irregular habits, by injudicious association, and that he had very particular reasons for wishing this fact not to see the light, as he feared that it would now lead to a false judgment in regard to him in quarters where it was of the utmost moment that he should be thought of favorably. But Mr. Blackstone could not be induced to waive his evidence. At a subsequent interview, when he had fixed in his own mind about the first of May as the day of his marriage, he mentioned to Mr. Blackstone that he expected to be unavoidably absent from the city, at the time the case would be called. To prevent this, he has been required to furnish bail."

"Why did he not himself mention this to me, Thomas?" asked Mr. Ware.

"I urged him very much to do so," was the cool reply. "But he said that he was so much troubled and mortified in regard to it, that he felt sure, that, in making it known to you, he would be liable to misapprehension, and be judged more severely than he deserved. I do really feel sorry for him—he takes the whole thing so hard. And it does seem hard when a young man is trying his best to do right, that the consequences of old indiscretions should visit him, and threaten disgrace and injury."

"What amount of bail is required?" asked the old gentleman, in a thoughtful tone, after Hardy had ceased speaking.

"Four thousand dollars."

"Four thousand dollars!"

"Yes—a most exorbitant bail. And it is the fact of such a large security having been required, that troubles Henry so much, though I tell him that it does not reflect upon him, but upon the party who stands the prosecution."

"Certainly it does not reflect upon him. It only

shows that his evidence is considered of great importance, and that a strong barrier is to be put in the way of his absenting himself at the time of the trial. Of course I must go his bail; and it might as well be done at once. Will you go with me to the Court-room?"

"O, certainly, sir! Certainly!" was Handy's ready and pleased response, as he rose from his chair. In a few moments after, he left the store, and, in company with old Mr. Ware, took his way to the State House.

CHAPTER XII.

OFFICIAL INTEGRITY.

"I HAVE passed safely another dangerous strait, with rocks and reefs on every side," said Ware to his friend, the next day, as they sat conferring in regard to some future course of action. "With such a pilot as your very excellent self at the helm, I begin to feel as if I shall yet gain the desired haven."

"The devil is good to his own, you know, Harry. We must put our trust in him, and I doubt not but that he will be true to the end."

"So I begin to feel. Still, doubt and uncertainty hang darkly over the future."

"So did it yesterday, in regard to bail. Yet, when the effort was once made, how the difficulty vanished, like smoke!"

"But the Attorney General is not to be humbugged quite so easily as my old man. I'm sadly afraid that nothing can be made out of him—that

he will go on his own course, steadily, in spite of all we may do or say."

"That is to be feared. Still, past success is to me an earnest that we shall overcome every difficulty."

With this feeling, our young men saw day after day go by, and week after week, until the thirtieth day of April came, and yet no change had occurred in the aspect of a single dark feature of Ware's prospects. On the first of May opened a term of the Criminal Court, when, in all probability, the case of the State *vs.* P—— would be called. It was about nine o'clock in the evening, that Ware, with an anxious and troubled countenance, called at the residence of Mr. Blackstone, and asked an interview, which was accorded to him.

"I have come, Mr. Blackstone," he said, with a good deal of embarrassment in his manner, yet in a tone of earnestness, arising almost to entreaty, "to see if I cannot, in some way, prevail on you to pass me over in your call for witnesses in the case of which I have before spoken to you."

"It is impossible, Mr. Ware. You cannot be set aside," was the firm reply of the Attorney General. "Your evidence is of the first importance."

"But Mr. Handy will prove every thing that I can. He saw the whole affair."

"I have before explained to you, Mr. Ware," said the Attorney General, "precisely my view of the importance of your evidence, and also my view in regard to my own position as prosecuting Attorney for the State. Since then, I have seen no reason for changing my opinion, and must, therefore, adhere to my original design of calling you upon the stand."

To this, Ware did not reply for some moments, when he said with bitterness—

"From the moment I appear upon that stand, Mr. Blackstone, I may date the utter ruin of my hopes: for it will throw over my character a shade of suspicion, which no explanations, if, indeed, I shall be allowed the privilege of making any, can remove. The twentieth of this month is the day fixed for my marriage with Bell Martin, and if this thing transpires before that day, her father will, I am fully persuaded, come forward with a positive interdiction."

"On the twentieth did you say?" asked the Attorney.

"Yes, on the twentieth."

Then there was a long pause, which was at length broken by Mr. Blackstone, who said—

"Come and see me to-morrow evening, Mr. Ware. In the mean time, I will give this matter all the thought I possibly can."

With this assurance, the young man withdrew.

"Here is a matter in which I feel somewhat at a loss how to act," mused the attorney, after he was alone. "If the marriage of this young man is to take place as early as the twentieth, I can easily keep the case back until that affair is all settled to his satisfaction. But will it be right for me to do so? That is the question. May not justice to all parties, and more especially to Miss Martin and her family, require that this trial should be permitted to come on in the natural order of things? If it make any developments in regard to young Ware that are discreditable to him, it is far better that they should know it before his marriage than afterwards. And, more than that, it is, to my mind, very questionable, indeed, whether I have any right, from private or individual considerations, to interfere, even in the slightest degree, with the regular and orderly progress and succession of public business. Certainly such an act would be

of very doubtful character, and I cannot think that I would be right in deviating from my official duties from a regard to any individual's feelings, prospects or interests."

Such were the views which a good deal of reflection had measurably confirmed in the mind of Mr. Blackstone, when Henry Ware called in to see him on the next evening.

"Has any way occurred to you, in which it will be in your power to screen me in the coming trial?" asked the young man, with a look and a tone of concern, as soon as he was seated.

"But one way has occurred. Yet I do not feel at liberty to adopt it," replied Mr. Blackstone.

"Why not?"

"Because it would be a private interference with the orderly course of public business. And that, it seems to me, no Judicial functionary has a right to make."

"To what do you allude?"

"As your marriage is to take place on the twentieth, it would be a very easy matter to let other cases (which come after this one on the docket) precede it, so that you need not make your appearance here until after that date."

"The very thing that I intended suggesting to you this evening. Surely, that can be done without compromising, in any sense, either justice or principle."

"Not as I view the subject."

"How so?"

"I do not know, Mr. Ware, that you will appreciate my views, especially at this time. However, I will give them. As a public officer, I ought not to regard any man's private relations in society, so much as to make them supersede or stay the regular operations of justice. Yours is a case in point. You wish me to put off a certain trial, in

which you are to appear as witness beyond a specified date, in order that the disgrace, or whatever you may call it, which will result from your so appearing, may not have the effect of preventing your marriage with an heiress. Now, it is clear to my mind, that with your private affairs I have nothing to do. My business is to prosecute offences against the State, according to the legal forms."

"But my dear sir," broke in Ware, "what possible detriment can the State suffer, by the postponement of a prosecution for a few days? Are not postponements affairs of constant occurrence?"

"True. But they are all governed by legal considerations. As for instance, the alleged absence of an important witness, or other inabilities on the part of either the prosecution or defence, to meet the questions at issue. But your case is one that has relation to private matters, and those alone, and cannot be admitted as a reason for postponement."

"I cannot, Mr. Blackstone, appreciate the distinction you make."

"I did not suppose that you could, Mr. Ware, for the simple reason that it has reference to a matter which deeply concerns you, personally. As regards myself, I stand on different ground, and can look at the subject in a very different aspect. I view it abstracted from all personal interest, as a matter of simple right."

"Surely you cannot call it right, to blast, without provocation, without any adequate reason for doing so, the prospects of a man who never injured you."

"Mr. Ware," said the attorney, in a firm and decided tone, while he looked him steadily and somewhat sternly in the face, "when I accepted

my present office, it was with the solemn determination to know no man, personally, while engaged in the discharge of its duties. Were you my brother, sir, I would act as I am now doing. And, let me say to you, that the more I reflect upon this matter, the more deep is my conviction that I ought not to deviate from the course I have declared, in this case above all that have ever come under my notice. If you were in improper company, that was, I presume, the result of loose habits and a love for improper associates. In the course of events, this fact has come out, or is about to come out, just as you are preparing to marry a young and innocent maiden. Its exposure, you fear, will cause a dissolution of your engagement. If I understand you right, you are deceiving both the maiden and her parents in regard to your real character, which, if known, would cause them to reject you at once. And shall I, as a lover of justice, as a good citizen, as a father, screen you in my official capacity? No, sir! I would resign my office before I would betray the sacred trust placed in my hands!"

"You do me injustice," urged the young man "I am not in association with gamblers, as you infer. In a thoughtless moment, I was induced, by a friend, to go into P——'s rooms, and while there, consent to play a game or two with my friend and a stranger, which stranger proved to be P—— himself. Fifteen minutes only had elapsed before the quarrel took place. Thus, you see, that an undeserved odium will attach to my name from this one indiscreet act."

"You must take the consequences of your own conduct, Mr. Ware. If your statement can be substantiated to Miss Martin's friends, no difficulty, I presume, will occur."

"You will not, then, stay proceedings in the case?"

"No, sir; not a day."

"When do you think it will be reached?"

"In two or three days, at the farthest."

With this decisive information, Ware arose, and bowing to Mr. Blackstone, in silence, withdrew.

The next morning brought the two young men together, whose sayings and doings have occupied, thus far, so much of the reader's attention.

"Did you see Blackstone, last evening?" asked Handy, as they met.

"Yes, and had my labor for my pains."

"Would n't he put off the trial?"

"No—not a day."

"Was he positive?"

"Yes. He said that he would n't put it off if his own brother stood in my place."

"Of course not! But who believes him? Not I."

"It seems as if the very fates were against me," said Ware, in a gloomy tone.

"Do n't despair. I think I've hit the right thing at last."

"How? What is it? Speak out, and let me hear at once." This was said in a quick, excited tone.

"Hear, and judge for yourself. I went last night to see P—, against whom, you know, this prosecution is got up. After sounding him pretty thoroughly, I found that, for a consideration—you know he goes in for that, and, what is more, is as keen for the rhino now as he was before the axe of justice hung suspended over his head—that, for a consideration, he would cause his lawyer to have the trial put off, on the plea of not being ready until after the twentieth."

"Are you sure of that?" asked Ware eagerly, his whole expression and manner changing.

"O yes. He can be bought over to do anything. And this is a matter that will cost him neither risk nor labor."

"Will he take a 'promise to pay?'"

"O yes. He will consider it a debt of honor, you know."

"Precisely. Go then, Tom, see him at once, and make sure of him at any price. When the arrangement is completed, just let me know the amount, and I will fork over my due bill in a little less than no time at all. It's all safe now, I can see. Hurrah!"

"H-u-s-h, Harry! do n't go into spasmodics," was the reply of Tom Handy, as he turned to the door, on his prompt errand to the gambler.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TWO BRIDES.

ON the evening of the twentieth of May, 18— an interview of touching interest occurred in one of the chambers of Mr. Martin's elegant mansion—an interview never forgotten by the two who alone were its participants. Those two were Bell Martin and the gentle, pure-minded, affectionate Mary, before introduced to the reader. Both were to become brides on that evening; but under what different external circumstances. A large and brilliant company had already begun to assemble in honor of the one, while the other was waiting the arrival of her humble lover, to convey her,

a. one with himself, in Mr. Martin's family carriage, to the minister's, from whence she was to be taken to a small house, which Mr. Lane had furnished neatly and modestly, and there to be introduced as its mistress. One was arrayed in rich and attractive garments, and adorned with a profusion of jewels—while the other had on a simple dress of pure white, and, as an ornament, a single rose, half concealed beneath the folds of her glossy hair. The one instantly attracted the eye, and awoke a sentiment of admiration; while the unobtrusive innocence and native gracefulness of the other, touched the heart with a feeling of tenderness and interest. The fancy of Bell was full of undefined but pleasing images, and her eyes bright and sparkling. Mary had, on the contrary, a thoughtful, sad and subdued look, while her eyes swam in moisture, and the tears seemed ready at every moment to spring forth upon her cheek. The tender interest which was felt for Bell by the latter, would not permit any one else to array her for the bridal occasion, even though her own marriage was to take place on the same evening. She felt it to be her last sad privilege to render this service, at the period when their paths, which had long run side by side through pleasant and flowery scenes, were about diverging; and thus feeling, she claimed the privilege.

The scene of busy preparation at last over, with the degree of interest which had prevented a free interchange of affectionate parting words between the two maidens, they now stood looking at each other with feelings of warmer affection than had ever yet swelled their bosoms—but the love of the humble maiden was deeper and tenderer than that of her companion.

“Dear Bell!” she said, laying her light hand gently upon her, and looking with a tearful smile

in her face—"you must forgive the freedom with which I address you, for at this moment you seem so dear to me, as if you were my own sister—that I must speak as I feel. Will you sometimes think of me, Bell? I leave the only home and the only friends I have ever known; and even though I shall go to one who loves me tenderly, and who has my heart's first, best, purest affections, yet I shall often think of you, and sigh for the home and friends of my early and happy years."

"Think of you, Mary? Dear Mary! Sister Mary, I should rather say," Bell replied, in a voice of earnest affection, as she drew her arm around the gentle maiden. "How can I ever forget the self-sacrificing companion of my childhood and maturer years? You have borne to me, to all of us, Mary, a true and faithful heart. This we have ever felt, and for it we have ever loved you. But now, as we are about separating, I feel for you a purer and deeper love. You are as my sister."

"For you," replied Mary, "I have long felt a like tender regard, and now, that a new, important and momentous change is about taking place in our histories, that feeling toward you assumes a hue of sadness that I cannot remove."

"Why should it be sad, Mary? I am happy—and before me is a brilliant prospect. Rather should the feeling be mine for you, thus rending all the pleasant ties of early years—thus leaving the bosom of that family in which you have been loved and cherished, to stand up alone in the world beside one, who, no matter how tenderly he may love you, cannot fill every place in a woman's heart."

"All that I feel, Bell," was Mary's reply, made in a tone which had recovered its calmness. "But I shall be happy, perfectly happy, according to the

measure of my anticipations. You, I fear, will not."

"What reason have you for so fearing, Mary?"

"I have no brilliant expectations—you have. Rarely, I believe, so says the world's eventful history, are such expectations realized. If not in your case, then will come unhappiness. I have thought of this often and often, when I have heard your expressions of delight in anticipation of coming joy, and often have I felt like checking them by a word. To-night I cannot help doing so. O, then, remember, dear Bell! that the surest way to happiness, is to expect little from mere external things. These are ever changing and passing away. And, above all, let me urge you not to look for unalloyed pleasures in your married life. There will be—there must be in the very nature of things—uncongenialities between your husband and yourself, and if I have formed of man's character a true idea, the wife will have much to learn in the way of submission. This lesson will be harder for you than for me."

"Why harder, Mary?"

"For this reason. Both Mr. Lane and myself have, thus far in life, moved in subordinate positions, and have been in the daily habit of submitting our wills to others—of preferring others to ourselves. Less, then, will be required of me in the way of submission to his will, and what is required will cheerfully be given. But your case is different. Neither Mr. Ware nor yourself know much about this yielding to others. He will, as a man, from the confirmed habit of having his own way in almost every thing, expect you to yield nearly every point of difference to him. This you will find a hard lesson, indeed, to learn; and it will, unless you guard and deny yourself very much, be the fruitful source of unhappiness."

"Why do you talk so strangely to me, at this time, Mary?" asked Bell, in a half-offended tone.

"Because I love you," was the quick reply of Mary, as she leaned her head upon the shoulder of Bell, and gave way to tears. The tone and words of the latter had wounded her feelings.

"Forgive me, Mary," said Bell, after a few moments, "for the unkind manner in which I spoke. Your words seemed like a reflection upon Henry, and that, with my present feelings toward him, I cannot bear."

"Mary, you are waited for," said a servant, opening the chamber door.

"Say that I will be ready in a few moments," replied Mary, and then the servant withdrew.

"And so the time has come, at last, for our parting," was the remark of Bell, in a tender and subdued voice, after they were again alone. "I shall miss you every day, and every hour, Mary—and so will every one in this house. What you have just said, comes back upon me now, and it may be too true. If so, your way, humble and unseen though it be, will be a happier one than mine."

"With a sincere heart, fervently do I pray, Bell, that no shadow may ever fall upon you—that your path may be amid sunshine and flowers. But, should this not be the case—should it so happen, in the mysterious permission of Divine Providence, that, in some future time, your pillow become a thorny one—that even a single sorrow press upon your heart, let it be my privilege to speak to you, if I can do no more, words of comfort—to pillow your head upon my bosom. If no other heart remain true to its first love for you, mine will still pour out its treasures of affection, and be blest in giving."

Silently, and with full hearts, did the two

maidens then fold each other in their arms. When, at last, this earnest embrace was over tears were on the cheeks of both. Then came a long, fond gaze into each other's eyes, and an earnest grasping of the hands.

"Farewell, Bell"—

"Farewell, Mary"—

were uttered with choking voices. In the next minute Bell stood alone in her chamber, and Mary's hand was in that of her lover.

CHAPTER XIV.

BLIGHTED HOPES.

WE must now pass over the events of five years, and introduce our characters at the end of that period. It is unnecessary to tell the reader, that the marriage of Bell Martin has been an unhappy one. Scarcely a week elapsed, before some act or word from her husband had chilled the warm current of joyous affection that was gushing out toward him. How could it be otherwise? She, young, innocent and confiding, with her woman's heart full of tenderness and truth—and he, all uninfluenced by a feeling or a principle that was not purely selfish. The coldness with which he received, from the very first, her acts of exuberant fondness, that were but the natural expressions of the love she felt for him, soon taught her one of the hardest lessons a young wife has to learn; and many months had not passed away before this lesson, if forgotten in a moment of warmer feelings, was enforced by words.

It is not often that the young wife, even when regarded with the deepest and purest affection, finds that affection manifested toward her in what her heart recognizes as its true expression. Nor does she ever, or, at least, but rarely indeed, meet that warm reciprocation in word and act, for which her heart yearns. This is the natural consequence of differences in mental conformation. But where the affection that exists is a genuine one, the husband gradually learns to manifest more in word and act the love he feels, and the wife to perceive far more in a look or word, or tone, or action, than she did in the first months, or years of wedded life. But, alas! Where, as in the case of Bell, not the first pure emotion of love has even stirred the icy surface of a husband's feelings, how sad must be the condition of a wife!

The coldness that soon manifested itself in her case, was followed by neglect, and a seeming, as it was a real, indifference toward her. This came earlier, from the fact, that the revelations on the trial of P——, the gambler, destroyed Mr. Martin's confidence in Ware—though it did not weaken Bell's affection for her husband. Indeed, she took Henry's own version of the matter as the true one; which version made him an innocent victim of circumstances.

Following these revelations, came the open and avowed determination of the young man not to bind himself down to the plodding duties of a pettifogging lawyer, as he expressed it; accompanied by requests for liberal sums of money, which were refused. Finding that Henry had, in a most heartless and cruel manner, deceived them, and that he was now disposed to act out his real, but, for a few months, concealed character, both his own father and the father of Bell felt called upon

to restrict him in the use of money, to the end that he might feel compelled to apply himself to his profession.

But this result did not follow. He was too deeply and thoroughly corrupted, and had, in his friend Thomas Handy, too ready a prompter to evil. Money he wanted, and money he must have. Through the influence of Bell with her mother, and by taking from her hands, freely given it is true, nearly every dollar which she received for her own use, he obtained small supplies. These furnished the means of resort to the only way of filling his purse that he could think of—the gaming table. Of course, he was, for some time, a constant loser in the main,—temporary and permitted success, being followed, surely, by the entire loss of his little capital, and, very frequently, by his becoming involved in debts of honor, to pay which gave him no little trouble.

For five years had he persevered in his evil courses, growing all the while more and more indifferent, or openly unkind toward his wife. Having no further cause for the concealment of his real character and feelings, he took little pains to appear what he was not, or to regulate his conduct by the rule of appearances. As neither his father nor the father of Bell would support the young couple in an establishment of their own, and for the very best of reasons, Ware continued to reside with his wife at the house of Mr. Martin. But even this constant mingling with her family, failed to influence his conduct toward her. Rarely did he accompany her abroad, and never did he pretend to deny himself any thing for her sake, or seem to feel drawn toward home, even though two pleasant children had come to light it up with their sweet smiles, and to fill it with the music

of their happy voices. Rarely did he come in before one, two, and sometimes three, in the morning, and then, frequently, in a state of partial intoxication. Added to this, he had grown, of late, abstracted and sullen in his manner, rarely joining in any conversation with the family, and, sometimes, not coming home for two or three days at a time, and then much under the influence of liquor.

One day, about the period indicated in the opening of this chapter, Lane, the chief clerk of Mr. Martin, who had been engaged in settling the Bank account for the previous three months, came up to him, holding five checks in his hand, each for a thousand dollars, and said—

“Mr. Martin, I find a difference in our accounts with the Bank, of just five thousand dollars—and here are five cancelled checks, of one thousand dollars each, for which I find no corresponding dates or numbers in our check-book. What can this mean?”

Mr. Martin took the checks from the hand of his clerk, and, after examining them attentively for a moment or two, said with a look of alarm—

“These are forgeries, Mr. Lane!”

“So I feared,” was the clerk’s reply, in a voice of concern.

A silence of some moments ensued, when Mr. Martin asked—

“Do your suspicions fall upon any one?”

“They do not. The discovery of this discrepancy between the two accounts, and the fact of your pronouncing the checks to be forgeries, are so recent, that I have not had time to think beyond the mere circumstance that a forgery has been committed.”

“Do not, then, allude, in any way to the fact; I will inform the Bank, and leave its officers to take

their own measures, as the loss will fall upon the institution."

It was about eleven o'clock on the next day, that Mr. Martin was sent for, in great haste, by the runner of the Bank in which his account was kept. He repaired at once to the banking house, and was shown into the private room of the Cashier.

"For what purpose am I summoned?" he asked, a feeling of alarm coming over him as he looked steadily into the officer's face, and saw that it wore a painful expression.

"We have already detected the forger of your check!" the Cashier said.

"And secured him?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?"

"Sorry, indeed, am I to say, Mr. Martin, that it is your own son-in-law."

"Henry Ware!" ejaculated the merchant, his face blanched to an ashy paleness.

"It is, alas! too true, Mr. Martin. The unhappy young man is now in the custody of an officer of the police."

At this intelligence, Mr. Martin sunk into a chair, and shading his face with his hand, sat for some time before his agitated feelings were sufficiently calmed to allow his thoughts to come into distinct forms. At length he said—

"And so the matter is already in the hands of the police?"

"Yes, sir. A check was presented for five thousand dollars, which the teller at once detected as a forgery. The young man was detained, and an officer sent for."

"I am sorry for this," replied Mr. Martin, with a troubled countenance. "Why did you not first send for me."

"That course would have been pursued, had I known the young man at the moment of his detection. The fact that it was the son of old Mr. Ware, and the husband of your daughter, came to my knowledge too late."

"Where is he now?"

"He was taken to the Mayor's office a few minutes before you came in."

"Has Mr. Ware been informed of the facts?"

"Not through me."

Mr. Martin waited to hear no more, but hurried away to the Mayor's office, where he found the young man undergoing an examination. The testimony of the teller was clear as to the fact of his having presented the check pronounced a forgery, and the Mayor was only waiting the arrival of Mr. Martin, for whom an officer had been despatched, to have the check pronounced genuine or spurious. Reluctantly he was compelled to say that the check had been forged. An order for Ware's commitment to prison, to await his trial at the Quarter Sessions, followed next in order. To prevent this, Mr. Martin entered into a recognizance in the sum of ten thousand dollars, for his appearance at Court.

This done, the old man turned away sternly, without letting his eyes rest upon the unhappy young man. From the Mayor's office he went to his store. After informing Mr. Lane of the painful discovery that had been made, he bent his steps homeward, with a troubled and heavy heart. On entering the family sitting-room, he found no one in but Bell, and one of his little grandchildren, a beautiful boy, who was playing about in happy unconsciousness of the guilt of one parent, and the wretchedness of the other.

"Where is your mother, Bell?" he asked with

an expression of countenance that made the blood feel cold about the heart of his child.

"She has gone out," was the reply, while his daughter looked earnestly and inquiringly into his face. Then followed a long silence, during which Mr. Martin was debating the question whether he should at once, and plainly, unfold to his child the conduct of her husband, or leave her to discover it in some other way.

The manner of her father convinced Bell that something was wrong, and her thoughts turned instinctively to her husband. His long continued silence at length became so distressing, filling her mind as it did with vague and terrible fears, that she could bear it no longer.

"Father," she said, in a tone of forced calmness, "something is the matter, I know. If it concerns me, nearly, do not keep me in suspense. I can bear painful news from your lips better than from another's."

"To you, my dear, suffering child," replied the old man, in a voice that trembled, coming to her side as he spoke, "the news I have to tell will be painful indeed."

"Does it concern Henry?" asked Bell, eagerly and quickly, looking up into her father's face with pale and quivering lips.

"It does concern that wretched young man, Bell."

"O, father! Speak out plainly! How does it concern him?"

"He has been detected in the crime of forgery."

"Father! it cannot be—it is not true!" exclaimed Bell, starting suddenly to her feet, an indignant expression glancing across her face.

"Would to Heaven it were not so, my child!—But it is, indeed, too true."

"Where—where is he, father . . ."

"I do not know, and but for your sake I would say, that I did not care. He was arrested this morning, and carried before the Mayor, when the crime was fully proved. I was present, and went his bail to prevent his being taken to prison."

"Upon whom was the forgery committed?" asked Bell, in a firm tone, while her face was deadly pale.

"Upon—but that is of no consequence, Bell."

"But I wish to know, father."

"You know enough, already, my child; more, I fear, than your poor afflicted heart can bear."

"Was it on you?" persevered the daughter.

"Bell—"

"Say, father! Was it upon you?"

"It was, my child," replied the old man, after a moment's hesitation. "But that does not change, in any way, the features of the case."

The half-expected, but dreaded reply of her father, smote heavily upon Bell's heart.

"Oh, how could he have done that! How could he have done that!" she murmured, in a low, indistinct tone, dropping her head upon her bosom. In a few moments the tears came gushing forth, while her whole body was convulsed with violent sobs. Her little boy, seeing the distress of his mother, ran to her side in alarm, and climbing up into her lap, threw his arms around her neck, and while his tears mingled with hers, begged her, in lisping accents, not to cry.

"Try and bear it as well as you can, my dear child," said Mr. Martin, after the violence of Bell's emotion had subsided in a degree.

"But, father, this is hard to bear."

"I know it Bell. But what we are compelled to bear should be made as light as possible. Your husband has, from the first, shown himself not only to be an unprincipled man, but has treated you

with a coldness and cruelty that it seems to me ought long since to have utterly estranged your affections from him. It ought, then, not to be hard to bear a permanent separation from him. To be to him as if he were not."

"Father! Do not talk so about my husband, and the father of my dear little ones! I cannot bear it. If I am willing to endure all this coldness and estrangement, you ought not to complain. But why do you talk of a permanent, separation?" And the face of the young wife grew paler still.

"Are you not aware, Bell, that the crime of forgery is punishable by long years of solitary confinement in the penitentiary? This must be your husband's inevitable fate, if his case should come to trial, which I presume will never take place."

"How can that be prevented?"

"By his going away, and leaving me to forfeit the ten thousand dollars bail."

To this Bell made no reply, but sat in a musing, dreamy attitude, forgetful of all around her. The cup of her misery seemed full.

As for old Mr. Martin, his mind was agitated by many conflicting thoughts and painful emotions. Family pride was, with him, a strong feeling. The unfortunate marriage of his daughter, besides its other painful concomitants, deeply wounded this feeling, and had caused him to cherish much bitterness toward Henry Ware. Now this pride was destined to receive a more powerful blow in the publicity of the fact that the husband of his daughter had proved a forger.

Hurriedly, yet involuntarily, did both father and daughter, each almost entirely forgetful of the other's presence, review the past five or six years. Alas! how had they mocked all the

bright promise of earlier days. Could there have been a more utter shipwreck of a young heart's best affections? Could a father's tender hopes for his child have been more deeply and incurably blighted?

As for the latter, the more he thought about the conduct of his daughter's husband, the more his anger was aroused against him. The final conclusion of his mind was, that Henry Ware should never again cross the threshold of his house, nor Bell, if he could prevent it, ever see him again.

"No good can come out of it," he argued to himself, "and much harm in the necessary disturbance of my poor child's mind. Besides, he has not only violated every honorable principle in his intercourse and connection with my family, but stands, now, in the position of a criminal, who has deliberately broken the laws of his country. No, no. He shall never enter this house again!"

CHAPTER XV.

A WIFE'S LOVE.

NEARLY a mile away from the fashionable neighborhood, in which the elegant mansion of Mr. Martin attracted every eye, stood a neat little dwelling, unpretending without, and modestly arranged within. Here lived Mr. Lane and Mary, his pure-minded, loving wife. Two dear little ones made up the number of their household treasures—sweet, innocent children, who bore in

their young countenances the miniature image of their mother's face. Blessed indeed were they in the marriage union! Every passing day but endeared them more and more to each other—for almost every day developed in the character of each some new moral beauty perceptible to the other. In regard to external circumstances, they had no cause for complaint. The liberal salary which Mr. Martin paid to one in whom he had such good cause for reposing almost unlimited confidence, was full five hundred dollars in each year more than was required to meet all expenses incident to household economy. Already had he been able to purchase the pleasant little dwelling into which his dear ones were gathered, and now he was depositing the surplus of his salary in a savings bank, in view of accumulating a small capital with which, at some future time, to enter into business.

The discovery of Ware as the forger of Mr. Martin's checks pained him very deeply—not so much on the young man's account, for he had never regarded him in any other light than that of a cold-hearted, unprincipled villain, capable of this or any other act that would serve his selfish purposes; but for the sake of Mr. Martin, and especially for poor Bell, did he feel pained exceedingly.

"Mary," he said, on coming home at dinner time, "I have bad news to tell you. Henry Ware has been arrested for forgery, and the fact fully proved."

"Poor Bell!" exclaimed Mary, striking her hands suddenly together. "Poor Bell! It will kill her!"

"It may go hard now, Mary; but it will be better for her in the end."

"How so?"

"They will be permanently separated. He will have to go away from here before his trial comes on, and leave Mr. Martin to pay ten thousand dollars bail, which he was foolish enough to involve himself in, or be sentenced for four or five years imprisonment in the Penitentiary."

"If he goes away, as you say, cannot he return after the trial is over?"

"O no. The crime is one against the State, and nothing will do but the legal penalty. He can never return, if he goes away, without being subject to a revival of the prosecution. As I said before, I have no doubt but that it will be far better for her never to see him again."

"But you must remember that he is her husband, and the father of her children. That he called out the first ardent feelings of a young and affectionate heart; feelings that even cruel neglect and wrong have not been able to subdue. You must remember that she still looks up to and rests upon him as her husband."

"How can she thus rest, Mary, when there is not in his character a single healthy moral principle? I confess that I do not understand it. She I know to be innocent and pure-minded. How, then, can she cling to one so utterly unprincipled as Henry Ware?"

"He is her husband!" was Mary's emphatic reply.

"Still I do not understand it."

"The reason is plain."

"What is it?"

"You have not a woman's heart."

"True, Mary,—and that *may* explain it. But I will not say that it does."

"How long will it be before the trial comes on?" asked Mary, after a thoughtful pause.

About a month, I think."

"A month? Until that time, he can, of course, remain in Philadelphia?"

"Yes, if he chooses to do so."

"I wish, for the sake of Bell, that the trial would come on in a week."

"Why so?"

"Because in that case she would the sooner be separated from him."

"My own impression is that she will never see him again."

"Why?"

"I cannot believe that Mr. Martin will permit Ware to enter his house. He was terribly incensed against him."

"That will not prevent Bell from seeing him. She loves him too well, even though he has almost broken her heart. If he is not allowed to come into her father's house, she will go to his father's, or any where else, for the purpose of meeting him. I wish she could give him up; but I fear that she cannot."

"She will have to give him up soon, Mary."

"I know it. But she will not do it until the last moment. Of that I am sure."

"Cannot you influence her in the matter?"

"Not so far as to prevent her meeting him. And, indeed, I could not urge her upon this subject. He is her husband—and she loves him deeply. Why should she not be permitted the sad pleasure of a few stolen interviews with him, ere they are parted, perhaps forever?"

"Would it not be well for you to go over and see her this afternoon?"

"O, yes. I made up my mind to go as soon as I learned the painful intelligence. Since Fanny's marriage and removal to New York, there has been no one but myself to whom she has felt free

to tell all her feelings, and thus find relief in their expression."

It was about four o'clock, on the same afternoon, that a gentle tap at Bell's chamber door, aroused her from a state of gloomy abstraction. Her low, half-reluctant "come in," was answered by the entrance of Mary. They were in each other's arms in a moment, the tears gushing from the eyes of both. For many minutes they were together in silence. At last, the feelings of each became subdued.

"O, Mary! is not this dreadful?" said Bell at length, the tears flowing afresh.

"It is indeed dreadful, Bell," replied Mary, as soon as she could command her voice. "And, much as my heart yearns for the ability, I know not how to offer you words of comfort."

"That is in the power of no one, Mary! For me there is nothing left but stern endurance. Oh, Mary! To think that Henry should have been so mad, so wicked, as to commit such a crime! I could have borne all his neglect of me, and still lived on, cherishing, as I have done, the hope that a day would come when all the excitements that won him away from me, would lose their power over him, and then he would be to me all that I could desire. That then he would discover how deeply and fondly I had loved him, through neglect and unkindness, and be constrained to give me back his heart in return. But alas! alas! All these long and ardently cherished hopes have been scattered, in a moment, to the winds. He has been guilty of crime, and must flee, like a hunted criminal, or, remaining, receive the stern sentence of the law for his misdeeds."

"Have you seen him since morning?" asked Mary, after a pause.

"No, Mary. And what is more, father says he

shall never enter this house again. I cannot blame him, but I feel it to be very hard. He is my husband still, and I cannot give him up."

"But is it not better that you should not see him again, Bell? The interview would only have the effect to wound still deeper your already crushed feelings."

"I must see him, Mary, and I will see him," replied Bell with a sudden energy. "Can you suppose, for a moment, that I would let him go away, never again to return—to be an out-cast in the world—a pursued and hunted man—and not give him a wife's parting blessing? No—no—Mary! I must and will see him—and that many times—before we part, perhaps, for ever."

"Do not act too broadly against your father's desire, Bell," urged Mary.

"He is my husband," was the firm reply; "and now, when all turn from him, shall his wife give him up? No, Mary! That would be a sin against nature. I cannot and I will not give him up."

The manner of Bell showed that she was resolute in her determination, and therefore Mary did not urge her further upon a subject so painful to both.

CHAPTER XVI.

CRIME AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

WHEN old Mr. Ware received the painful and mortifying intelligence of his son's crime, he became deeply incensed, and when he met him, upbraided him with his conduct in bitter terms.

"You are no longer my son! I disown you from this moment!" he said in angry tones. "My son could not be guilty of baseness and crime."

"Blame yourself alone, as I do," was the young man's brief, but stern reply.

"What do you mean?" asked the father, still in a voice of anger.

"I mean, simply, that in consequence of your refusal to supply me with the money required to make such an appearance as a young man in my station in society had a right to make, I was driven to the gaming-table, where debts of honor accumulated against me to such an extent, that I could wipe them out no other way than by forgery. Mr. Martin, like yourself, has played toward me a niggardly part, and upon his purse I first commenced operations. In doing so, I merely took what he should long since have given. I do not consider my offence a criminal one."

This mode of reasoning excited Mr. Ware still more, especially as there was an air of insolence and hardihood about his son, that ill became one in his peculiar circumstances. A keen retort trembled on his tongue, but he suppressed it, and turning away quickly, left the young man to his own reflections. These were not of a very pleasant nature, for he was yet undetermined, fully, in re-

gard to future action. To leave the city would be, of course, his first movement, unless prevented from so doing. But where to hide himself away from the law's searching glances he knew not, nor how he should—cut off entirely from every resource but his own exertions, as he expected to be, now that both Mr. Martin and his father were so incensed against him—maintain himself even in an humble position.

On the next morning the newspapers teemed with various accounts of the forgery, and with many allusions to the families of both Mr. Ware and Mr. Martin. Some few hesitated not to assert that the young man would, of course, escape the legal penalty of his crime, seeing that his father and father-in-law were rich men. Others suddenly remembered, or thought they remembered, a somewhat similar case, in which an uncle of young Ware had been implicated many years previous. These things were deeply galling to both families, and to all who stood in any way connected with them.

Painfully mortified at the position in which the discovery of his conduct had placed him, Henry Ware shrunk away in his father's house from an exposure of himself to the public eye. The only one there who seemed to feel for him was his mother. She could not frown upon her child, now that every tongue spake against him. Much as she abhorred his conduct, she could not resist the pleadings of maternal love for her child.

She had been with him alone for nearly an hour, on the morning following the discovery of his mad act, and her conversation and manifestation of deep affection, wounded and bruised as it was, had softened his feelings a good deal, when a letter, addressed to him, was handed in. He

roke the seal hurriedly, and read, not unmoved, the following touching epistle from his wife :—

“MY DEAR HUSBAND—Since the dreadful news of yesterday morning, I have been waiting with a fluttering heart to see you or to hear from you. Now, I am told that you are no more to enter these walls, and that I am never again to hold communication with you. But this, no human being has power to say, but yourself. Are you not my husband?—my husband whom I have loved with a depth and devotedness that tongue cannot tell!—And shall I not cling to you until the last? Cling to you with a closer and more self-renouncing love, as all others turn from you? Yes! If I offend all the world, I will love my husband! Love him through evil report and good report. Thus far, Henry, I have loved you under coldness and neglect—pardon my allusion to the past—loved you, when the allurements of the world won you away from your wife, and made the smile on her lip seem all unattractive. Now, the world turns from you, but your wife still remains true in her affection as the needle to the pole. Will you not now love her for her unwavering devotion? O, Henry! If you knew how my poor heart yearns for pleasant words, and tender looks, you would no longer withhold them. Where are you? I send this to your father's, in the hope that it may reach your hand. Should it do so, send me word where you are, and, oh! how eagerly will I fly to you.

Yours, in life and death, BELL.”

After reading this letter, Ware sat for a moment in thoughtful silence, and then handed it to his mother. After glancing hurriedly through it, she returned it with the remark—

"Henry, among all your faults, not the least has been your conduct toward your wife. Bell has not deserved the coldness and neglect with which you have treated her."

"Perhaps not," was the half impatient reply. "But that cannot now be helped. As it is, I do not see that any good can grow out of our meeting. I must soon leave this, never again to return; and so the quicker she can forget me, the better."

"Do not talk in that way, Henry," said Mrs. Ware, interrupting her son. "You cannot, and you must not, deny poor Bell the melancholy pleasure of seeing you. Reply to this note at once, and say that you are here. Address her kindly and even tenderly—for tender words will be sweet to her heart just now; and surely, you can give those, if nothing else."

About an hour after, as Bell sat alone with her two children, a note came from her husband. It ran thus:—

"MY DEAR BELL—Your affectionate note has touched my feelings a good deal, and made me conscious of how deeply I have wounded a heart whose every pulsation has been true to me. I am now at my father's house, where I shall remain for a short time, previous to my final departure from this city. Here I can no longer remain in safety. Come and see me.

"Yours, &c. HENRY WARE."

Without an intimation to any one of her design, Bell instantly repaired to the house of Mr. Ware. Here she held a long interview with her husband, in which more expressions of tenderness fell from his lips than had greeted her ears since the first few months of their married life hurried

pleasantly and rapidly away. It mattered not how sincere they were on his part. To her spirit, they were like cool, refreshing dews to the dry and thirsty ground. Dearer than ever did he seem to her, and more painful than at first was the idea of a separation.

It was between two and three o'clock in the afternoon when Bell returned. While standing at the door, waiting for the servant to open it, her father came up.

"Where have you been, Bell?" he asked, looking her gravely in the face, as soon as they had entered the hall.

"I have been to Mr. Ware's," she replied, in a hesitating voice, while her cheek colored, and her eyes fell upon the floor.

"To Mr. Ware's? and at this time! Why did you go there, Bell?"

"It is scarcely necessary for me to tell the reason, father. I went, of course, to see Henry."

"And after what I said to you this morning?" rejoined Mr. Martin, in an excited tone.

"Father, he is my husband, and my heart will cling to him until it is broken," was the daughter's reply. Then bursting into tears, she glided away, and sought the sanctuary of her own chamber.

"Infatuated girl!" ejaculated Mr. Martin. But his words did not reach her ear.

In despite of argument, remonstrance, persuasion, and every other means resorted to for the purpose of influencing her, Bell repaired regularly to the house of Mr. Ware, and spent hours of each day with her husband. From him, she learned his plans in regard to the future. Under the assumed name of Johnson, he would repair to New Orleans, and upon a capital of two or three thousand dollars, which his father had promised to give him

at parting, he stated to her that he intended to enter into some business, and try, if possible, to reform himself. As soon as he got a little ahead there, he purposed going to Cuba, as a place of permanent residence. There he would be free from the threatening penalties of the law he had so madly violated. The ten thousand dollars for which Mr. Martin would be held liable, were to be paid over by his father when the day of trial came and it was found that the recognizance had been forfeited.

In all these plans, eagerly as her ear listened for it, there was nothing said about her being sent for to join him.

"How soon do you think that you will get fairly into business in New Orleans?" she asked, about a week before the day fixed for his departure.

"In a few months after my arrival there, I nope."

"Shan't I come out to you then?"

The voice of Bell trembled as she asked this question, and the tears filled her eyes.

"Leave your comfortable home, surrounded with luxury and elegance, and join me, an out-cast, in a strange city? That idea never crossed my mind, Bell."

"But it has mine, a hundred and a hundred times," replied his wife. "Whenever you go, I am ready to follow, and fully prepared to share your lot, be it what it may."

To this, Ware did not reply for some minutes. Then he said—

"For a time, Bell, I think you had better remain here. I know not what may befall me. It may happen that all my efforts will prove unsuccessful, and that I may find myself far away from home and friends, in sickness and destitu-

tior. If such should be the case, I can write freely to you, and through you at least obtain some small relief. If success should, however, crown my efforts, then you can readily join me. In fact, I could come on as far as Baltimore, and meet you there."

To this arrangement Bell consented. Two weeks previous to the day of trial, Ware took leave of the few friends who were in the secret of his movements, and left Philadelphia. To his mothers and sisters the parting was painful in the extreme. It was to them as if death were about to separate him from them — aye, worse than death, for it was dishonor and crime, and the separation was to be permanent. Old Mr. Ware assumed a stern aspect, but as he took the hand of his son in the final pressure, and looked upon his face for the last time perhaps, his feelings gave way.

"God bless you, Harry!" he said in a choking voice, and then turned away hastily to hide his feelings. He might never see the face of his son again—his only son, upon whom he had so often looked in hope and pride, now parting from him, perhaps, forever, and with a stain upon his character which nothing could wipe out.

As for Bell, that parting hour was the bitterest of her life. And yet she, of all whom he had left behind him, was the only one that had the feeblest hope of ever again seeing his face. But, fond creature, she dreamed not of the cold-hearted selfishness with which he laid his real plans for the future in regard to her. As to going into business in New Orleans, there was some truth in that; but it was the business of gambling and cheating. Fortune he expected to go often against him, and of course he would need fresh supplies of money. With Bell and his mother he determined to keep

up a regular correspondence, deceiving them throughout in regard to what he was doing, and as to the real motives of action that governed him. He knew that he could readily deceive them, and through this deception he had little doubt but that he could often obtain money. If in this way he could not still manage to drain the purses of his father and Mr. Martin, it was his determination to induce Bell to join him, under the belief that her father, who was deeply attached to his daughter, as he well knew, would transmit liberal sums to her in order to keep her, as she had been all her life, above the want of any thing that money could procure. Thus, with a degree of cruel selfishness, hardly paralleled, did this wretched young man lay his plans of future action.



CHAPTER XVII.

COMPANIONS IN EVIL.

It was about three years from the time that Henry Ware, exiled by crime from his home and friends, left Philadelphia, that two men sat conversing in a private room of an obscure tavern in what was called "Natchez-under-the-Hill." Both were evidently young, or, at least, in the earliest prime and freshness of manhood—yet strong lines had already deepened on their foreheads, and every lineament of their countenances bore vividly the marks of evil and selfish passions long indulged. A skin deeply bronzed, and large black whiskers, meeting under their chins, gave effect to

the singularly bold and ferocious aspect of their faces. They sat opposite to each other, at a small square table, upon which were glasses and a decanter, containing nearly a quart of brandy. Each was resting his elbows on the table, and his chin upon his hands, and each was looking the other, while they conversed, intently in the face.

"What then, in the devil's name, is to be done?" one of them asked, in a quick, excited tone, after listening to something which the other had said.

"We must leave here, of course."

"Of course. But can we get away safely? That's the question."

"I think so."

"How?"

"We must assume a disguise."

"Of what kind?"

To this the companion replied by taking from his pocket a small package, which he carefully opened, and exhibited two pairs of green spectacles.

"We must shave off our whiskers, and mount a pair of spectacles a-piece," said he with a grin that fell sadly short of a smile, for which it was intended.

"And, in that disguise, return to New Orleans?"

"Yes."

"But, will we be safe there, if this fellow should take it into his head to die? His connections are rich, and will make great efforts to have us arrested."

"Let me get once into New Orleans, and I'll defy them," replied the companion.

Just at this moment the door was opened by a coarse, ill-dressed fellow, who entered familiarly,

and walking up to the table where the two men sat, each regarding him with a frown, said :

"There are a couple of chaps down stairs asking for Mr. Johnson and Mr. Smith."

"They are not in, Mike," one of the men replied.

"O, aye. But I'm pretty sure, from their looks, that they will not take my word for it."

"Indeed!" And the face of the individual thus ejaculating turned somewhat pale.

"My name is Hartly. Will you remember that, Mike?" said Johnson, or Henry Ware, which was truly his name.

"O aye, sir."

"And mine Haines. Don't forget that, Mike," added Smith, or Tom Handy, Ware's inseparable companion in evil, who had been, really, as much implicated as himself in the forgeries for which both were now self-banished from home and friends.

"I won't forget," replied Mike. "But names are nothing, you know, to these men, who are not going to leave the house until they know who are in it, or I'm mistaken."

"Keep 'em on the wrong scent for some ten or fifteen minutes, will you, Mike?"

"O, aye. Trust me for that." And the bar-keeper, and doer-of-all-things-in-general about the establishment, made his bow, and departed.

As soon as he had withdrawn, the door was locked after him, and the two young men proceeded, hurriedly, first to shave off their whiskers, and then to change their external garments for others that had not been worn by them during their brief professional visit to Natchez. Green spectacles and caps gave the finishing touch to their metamorphoses.

"Well, Hartly, do you think you would know

me, if we were to meet in the street?" asked Handy, or Haines, as he had newly styled himself, turning toward his friend.

"I should certainly never suspect that it was you. But how do I look?"

"Like Mr. Hartly, and no one else. Can I say more?"

"And you, like Mr. Haines. Well, I think we may venture to pass the gentlemen who are so kindly waiting for us below."

"I think so. There, do you hear that bell again?"

"Yes. It is the Gulnare's. She has been ringing for the last five hours, and I suppose will get off now in the course of an hour more. Shall we get on board of her?"

"Most certainly! The quicker we can get away from here the better."

Every thing being carefully packed away in their trunks, the two companions descended, with a careless, indifferent air, to the bar-room, where Mike was busily attending to his customers. As they entered, they were eyed searchingly from head to foot, by two men, whose appearance told plainly enough their business. This scrutiny continued until Mike said—

"Good morning, Mr. Hartly! What will you have? Good morning, Mr. Haines!"

"A little brandy and water," was the reply.

Neither the appearance nor names of the two men corresponding, in any degree, with the descriptions of the individuals, which the officers—for such they were—had been directed to arrest for an assault with intent to kill the son of a wealthy citizen of Natchez, who had come into collision with them at a gambling table, these personages withdrew, in a few moments, their attention from the real objects of their search.

As Handy bent over the counter to pay for the brandy they had taken, he pronounced, in a low tone, to Mike, the word

“Gulnare.”

“O, aye?” responded Mike, perfectly comprehending his meaning. And the two walked deliberately away, and repaired to the boat upon which they designed taking passage for New Orleans. In the course of half an hour, Mike appeared with their baggage, and for the very important assistance he had rendered Ware and Handy, received a ten dollar bill, which he pocketed with a grateful smile, and bowing hurriedly departed.

With fear and trembling did the young men wait for nearly three hours for the boat to move off, the bell ringing about every quarter of an hour, giving all the town, and the officers of police in particular, notice—so it seemed to them—that they were on board. Six times, during that period, did they have to endure the excruciating anxiety consequent upon as many visits from the officers who had put them in such bodily fear at the tavern. And for the last half hour, they were compelled tremblingly to endure their constant presence.

Finally, as every thing must have an end, their suspense ended. The last prolonged vibrations from the bell echoed along the hills, and died away into silence, as the boat was loosed from her moorings, and fell gently down the stream. Not, however, until the engine commenced its vigorous revolutions, and the boat, yielding to its power, shot away from the landing, and the city began to look dim in the distance, did our young men feel at ease. Then they began to breathe more freely.

Truly did they find that “The way of trans-

gressors is hard." Both were of wealthy families, and had their habits been correct and their pursuits honorable, they might have occupied good positions in society, with the possession of the most ample means for supplying all their wants. And still more, have had quiet consciences, and lived in the enjoyment of the most enlarged social pleasures. But they chose to transgress both moral and civil laws—and the penalty was visited upon them in perpetual pain of mind. Their evil pursuits, though accompanied with a kind of insane delight, were ever succeeded by a fear of consequences, or reluctant, and, at times, involuntary self-upbraidings.

The excitement of escape, for so they both esteemed it, being over, neither Ware nor Handy felt much inclined to enter into conversation, but sat silent and thoughtful, musing over past disappointments, or busy with plans for future operations. The reader need scarcely be told that they were gamblers by profession.

Toward evening, Ware took up a newspaper and read until dark. Then he went out upon the guards, and commenced pacing backward and forward with a quick step, that evinced more than ordinary excitement of mind. Handy joined him. But few words had passed between them, when the latter said—

"Is it not very strange that your mother does not write to you now, Harry?"

"I have thought so. But the mystery is solved.

"In what way?"

"I see, by a Philadelphia newspaper, which I was looking over in the cabin, that the old man has gone by the board."

"How? Not dead, I hope?"

"No, not quite that. But he might as well be, for he has become a bankrupt."

"That's bad, really."

"Yes, bad for us, for while there was any thing to be had, I could drain a little out of his purse; but that is over now. There is no getting blood out of a turnip, you know."

"It is some time since you heard from Bell."

"Yes. And when I did get a letter from her, there was not much account in it. Only a paltry hundred dollar-bill."

"Her father suspects the use she makes of the money she gets from him."

"So she hints. But I suppose she hasn't managed it carefully enough. These women never know how to do any thing rightly," was her husband's unfeeling remark.

"We are beginning to be pretty hard run, Luck seems all going against us," rejoined Handy, after a pause. "Something must be done to raise the wind, or we shall be driven to the wall at last."

"I'm afraid it will come to the last resort I have before mentioned," Ware replied.

"What is that?"

"Sending for Bell."

"Will that do any good? Won't she, in fact prove a useless encumbrance?"

"She will be encumbrance enough, no doubt. But we must take the evil with the good. That old rascal, her father, loves her too well to let her be any where without a liberal supply of all the means necessary to her external comfort. If we get her out here, money must, and will follow her."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Morally certain. I know old Martin too well to doubt it."

"Will she leave her children, and come to you?"

"Yes, with half an invitation. Almost every letter I receive from her is filled with hints or open requests for me to say 'come.'"

"We can but try the experiment. But suppose it fails. What will you do with Bell?"

"What would you do with her?"

"She is your wife."

"I know. But suppose she were *your* wife?"

"I would put her in the way of getting back again to her children in double quick time."

"But suppose she would n't go?"

"Then I would leave her to stay or go, as she liked, while I journeyed elsewhere."

"My own views, precisely," was the heartless response of Ware.

That evening, and a portion of the next day, were passed by the two young men in the business of studying the characters, and ascertaining, as far as possible, the length of the purses of the different passengers on board the *Gulnare*. These settled to their satisfaction, as far as it was possible for them to settle such matters, the next thing was to introduce cards in a way that would create no suspicion as to their real design. This was done on the second evening, and several hours spent in play, during which the loss and gain were but trifling.

On the next morning, after breakfast, cards were again resumed, and rather more skill displayed than on the evening previous. Still, our young men found themselves well matched, and the tide of success, if at all in their favor, scarcely perceptible.

Among the passengers was a young man entrusted with a large sum of money, which was to be paid over to a mercantile house at New Orleans on his arrival there. Being a good player, he prided himself on his skill at cards, and was

much flattered at his success while engaged with Ware, who, finding himself losing steadily at almost every game, was roused to more energetic efforts. Nearly the whole of the third day had been spent in playing, and as night drew on, both Ware and Handy found themselves, instead of winners, almost entirely stripped of their slender stock of money.

After supper, they held a long conference together out upon the guards, and then went to the bar and drank pretty freely. As they entered the cabin again, the young man who had been so successful during that and the preceding day, met them at the door, and said to Ware—

“Well, stranger, what say you to another heat?”

“Ready,” was the brief reply, and then the two sat down, while Handy threw himself into a careless position near the young man, so that he could, if he chose, read his hand at a glance, without much danger of detection.

The first stake was ten dollars. As the cards fell one after the other upon the table, the game showed evidently in favour of the gambler, and terminated on his side.

“Double the stake,” was the brief remark of the young man, as he threw down a twenty dollar bill.

The gambler matched it in silence. This game like the first, resulted in favor of Ware.

“Double again,” said the loser, laying down forty dollars.

“Double it is,” responded Ware, mechanically, suiting the action to the words.

The stranger played now with care and deliberation. But his skill was in vain. The stakes were soon appropriated by his opponent.

"Double," fell from his lips in a firm tone, as this result followed his more earnest effort to win.

"Double, of course," was answered with an air of confidence.

Many of the passengers, who had looked on at first carelessly, now began to note the contest with a livelier interest, gathering around the table and watching each card that was played, and calculating the result of every game, which regularly terminated as the first had done. Each time the stakes were doubled, until, finally, they rose to twenty thousand dollars on each side. A breathless interest pervaded the little group of spectators eagerly watching the result of the game that was to assign to one party or the other the large sum so madly risked by the infatuated young man. As before, the cards came up in favor of Ware.

"Double," was the hoarse response to this, and again the contest was renewed. Forty thousand dollars on each side now gave to both a strong incentive to note well each card before it left the hand. Among the spectators of this exciting scene, none seemed so little concerned as the companion of Ware, who stood obliquely opposite, and occasionally cast toward him a look of indifference.

A few minutes of breathless interest passed, and the game terminated as before. The face of the loser grew pale, but he rallied himself instantly, drew forth a package of money, and throwing it upon the table, said in a firm voice—

"Double."

Half whispered expressions of surprise passed through the little group at this, and one of them moved off quietly and left the cabin. In about a minute he returned with the Captain, who took his place among the spectators, and silently

awaited the result of the game. It was played on both sides with great care and deliberation, but there were odds against the young man with which it was folly to contend. When the last card was thrown upon the table, it showed the game to have terminated as the rest.

Following this was an instantaneous gesture of despair, and a motion to spring from the table by the loser, when his eye caught a most unexpected movement in the Captain of the steamboat, who had sprung forward, and grasped in both hands the heavy stakes, amounting to about one hundred and sixty thousand dollars. As he did this, Handy jumped across the table, and, uttering a most bitter imprecation, seized the Captain by the throat. A general scene of confusion followed, which ended in the passengers all taking sides with the Captain against Ware and Handy, who made attempts to use both knives and pistols, but were prevented. Several of the deck hands were then called in, and the two men secured. Following this came a jury of passengers, called by the Captain, to inquire into the whole proceeding that had ended so disastrously to the foolish young man, who had been induced to risk money that was not his own. Two individuals testified, positively, that they had observed Handy, or Haines, as he had booked himself, make signs of various kinds to his companion, during the progress of every game—and that his position was not only such as to give him a sight of the young man's hand, but that he had, after every deal, been seen stealthily glancing towards his cards.

Fully satisfied as to their guilt, the Captain restored to the young man the heavy sum he had lost, with a word of advice as to future operations. He then went out, and remained about five mi-

minutes. When he came in, he was followed by four stout men—deck hands.

"There they are," he said, pointing to Ware and Handy, who were seated in the cabin with their arms pinioned behind them. "Let them be put on shore at once."

"Not at night, Captain?" one of the passengers said.

"Yes, sir, at night. I never allow a gambling swindler to remain on board the *Gulnare* more than ten minutes, after I have found him out, day or night. The boat is now running as near to the shore as possible. Come, move quick, my gentlemen!"

Two stout fellows, at each side, left little room for resistance. In a few minutes, the companions in evil were hurried over the side of the boat, and rowed quickly to the shore. There they were left, with their baggage. It was near the hour of midnight—the sky heavily overcast with clouds, and they perfectly unacquainted with the country around them, or its relation to known places. As the boat, which had conveyed them to the shore, shot back to the steamer, and she moved off and became soon lost to view, they shrunk closer together—while a sudden fear passed over them with an icy shudder.

They had stood irresolute for nearly five minutes, when a low growl, and a slight movement in the under brush, caused the hair of each to rise. Two bright eye-balls were next seen glistening within a few feet of them. Handy's presence of mind prompted him to draw a pistol and fire. A loud howl of pain followed the report, answered by a dozen responses in various directions near and more remote, which told the fearful tale that they were surrounded by wolves.

"We must kindle a fire as quickly as possible,"

whispered Handy, in a hoarse voice, and following the word by the action, poured a little powder into his pistol and pressed in loosely some paper. Then he drew a whole newspaper from his pocket and fired the pistol into it. In a moment or two it was in a blaze. Leaves, small twigs, and pieces of dry wood were added to this, and soon a bright fire was lighting up the dark and gloomy forest, but rendering darker and denser the black obscurity beyond the small circle of their vision. By feeding this fire all night, they kept themselves safe from prowling wild beasts. Morning at last broke, and soon after they were taken off by another steamboat, and conveyed to the place for which they had at first set out. During the remainder of the voyage, they felt little inclined to look at a card, much less to handle one.

On arriving at New Orleans, they found an account in the newspapers, of the affray hinted at as having occurred at Natchez, with themselves described as the principal actors in it, and a reward for their apprehension. The young man, who had been stabbed by Handy, had since died. Their assumed disguise it was now rendered necessary to retain, and they also felt it prudent to forsake old haunts and seek new ones. The unexpected termination of affairs on board the Gull-nare had chagrined and disappointed them severely—more especially, as it left them almost penniless.

On the second day of their return, Ware received a letter from his wife. It ran thus:

“MY DEAR HUSBAND,—Do not think that I am to blame because this letter contains no money. Father not only suspects the fact of my having been in the habit of sending you supplies of cash, but has made himself so certain of it, in some way,

that he no longer entrusts me with any—telling me, when I ask for money, to go and purchase what I want, and have the bills sent to him. I have delayed writing for some time, in the hope that I might be able to get something for you, but I have delayed in vain. But you say that your business begins to prosper, and that you are much encouraged in looking ahead. How glad I am of this—and for two reasons. One is, because you will not need, and therefore not feel, in a very short time, the withdrawal of the little assistance I have been able to render you; and the other is, because I see reason to promise myself a speedy restoration to your arms. O, Henry, you do not know how earnestly I desire to see your face. You fill all my waking thoughts, and my dreams at night. Why do you not say ‘come!’ How quickly, were that word uttered, would I leave all, and fly to you! Leave all!—Alas! how can I leave my dear little ones! My heart grows faint when I think of it. But why should I hesitate! I shall leave them surrounded by every circumstance that can minister to their happiness; and they will soon forget their mother. The greater pain will be mine, not theirs. My desire to linger with them is a selfish one. Duty calls me to my husband’s side. Deeply do I feel this. Let me come, then, Henry! Do write to me, and say ‘come!’

Ever yours,

BELL.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

A RASH STEP.

ABOUT one month from the day Bell wrote to her husband, she received the following answer :

“DEAR BELL,—Your last has been received, and I at once respond to your desire and say ‘come.’ Since I wrote to you, my business has improved a little, and I feel encouraged to hope for success. I cannot, however, leave New Orleans for the purpose of meeting you at Baltimore, or any intermediate place. You will have to come alone. Can you venture to do so? I think you may. Go to Baltimore, and there take passage for Wheeling. At that place you can go on board of some boat bound for Louisville, from whence you will come directly here by the same mode of conveyance. Write me from Louisville, a day or two before you leave there, and mention the boat in which you intend taking passage, so that I can meet you on your arrival. I feel very anxious to see you. Many happy days, I trust, are in store for us. In the hope of soon looking upon your dear face, I now say farewell. Come quickly.

Truly and affectionately yours,
HENRY.”

Bell read this letter over and over again, lingering upon each passage in which she could find a tender allusion to herself, and treasuring up the words as precious. While still holding it in her hand, two little children came bounding playfully

into the room, and ran up to her side. One, the eldest, was a bright boy, over whom six summers had passed pleasantly; the other was a girl, with mild, pleasant eyes, and a sweet young face, on which smiles played as often as ripples over the yielding surface of a quiet lake. As they stood by her, looking up into her countenance, their eyes sparkling with filial confidence and affection, the thought of leaving them made her waver in her purpose.

"Why not take them with me?" she asked herself, almost involuntarily.

"No—no—no!" was the instant reply to this. "I have no right to remove them from a happy home, for one, by myself, all untried, and which may prove, even to me, a place of privation and wretchedness. No—no—no! Here they must and shall remain. And I must go. Duty and affection call me, and I cannot disregard the summons, nor linger in dread of the violent pangs that must attend my separation from these dearly beloved and treasured ones."

Stooping down, and kissing each of her children with fervent tenderness, and dropping, in spite of herself, a tear upon each fair young cheek, she bade them return to their plays, when they bounded off, as light and gay as birds in the pleasant sunshine.

"Happy creatures!" she murmured, as they vanished from her presence. "Once I was like you. Heaven grant that you may never be like me!"

For nearly an hour after the children had gone out, did Bell sit, in deep and anxious thought. At the end of that period she arose, with a hurried movement, as if the decision on a long debated course of action had been made, and putting on her bonnet and shawl, left the house, without

mentioning to any one her intention of going out. In half an hour she entered the house of Mary Lane.

"I am very glad to see you, Bell," was Mary's affectionate greeting, kissing, as she spoke, the cheek of her afflicted friend. For years, their intercourse had been as equals and friends—or, rather, as sisters, who loved each other tenderly.

"I have an especial favor to ask of you, Mary," said Bell, after she was seated. "A favor such as I have never asked of you before, and shall never ask again. If in your power, you must not refuse it, Mary."

"I can refuse you nothing, Bell. Speak your request freely," was Mary's reply.

An embarrassing pause of a moment or two followed, and then Bell said—

"Of late my father has refused to let me have any money to use myself. If I ask for it, he tells me to go and buy whatever I want, and have the bills sent to him."

"You know the reason of this, Bell, and cannot blame him."

"I do not blame him, Mary; nor can I expect him under all the circumstances, to act differently. But what I wish to say is this. I want, and must have, one hundred dollars. If I ask him for it, he will, I know, refuse me, under the belief that I wish to send it to my husband. Now, Mary, can I get this sum from you?"

For the first time in her life, Mary felt embarrassed by a request from Bell. She had the money, and she knew that Bell was aware that she had then in the house, in gold double the sum asked, which had been given to her at various times by her husband. Not that she valued the money more than she regarded Bell's necessity. But she did not feel that it would be right for her to give it for

the use of a man like Henry Ware, to whom she very naturally concluded Bell wished to send the money she asked. While the struggle between a sense of duty and her desire to meet Bell's wishes was going on in her mind, Bell sat looking her steadily in the face.

"And so you are not willing to grant my earnest request?" she said, breaking in upon Mary's silent indecision of mind.

"I will grant you any thing in my power, which it is right that I should grant," replied Mary. "But this I cannot do, unless you assure me that you will not send the money to Mr. Ware."

"That such a disposition will not be made of it, I can most solemnly assure you. I want the money for my own use."

"Then you shall have it in welcome," was the cheerful, smiling reply of Mary.

In a little while she left the room, and returned in a few minutes with ten gold eagles, which she placed in the hands of Bell, saying, as she did so,

"Take them in welcome. But how much more gladly would I give them, if they had the power to restore to you the happy heart that once beat in your bosom."

"That they can never do—nor can any other earthly means. Still the sum you have so generously placed in my hands, Mary, will, I trust, do a great deal toward accomplishing that which you and I so much desire," said Bell, in a tone somewhat cheerful.

"What do you mean, Bell?" asked Mary, in surprise.

"Can I trust you with a secret?"

"You have never had cause to think otherwise."

"True. But mine is a secret which I do not know that even you would feel bound to keep."

There was something in the words, manner, and expression of Bell, that inspired Mary with a feeling of sudden alarm. For a moment or two the thought that her mind was wandering, startled her feelings with a sudden shock. But the steady eye and calm countenance of Bell soon dispelled the impression.

"Do not," she said, as her thoughts rallied, and she became assured that Bell contemplated some act of which all would disapprove, "let me entreat you, act in any important matter, without full consultation with your friends."

"Why should I consult friends, Mary, when I have resolved to do a thing which no one, not even you, will approve?"

"O, Bell! Surely you do not intend taking any important step with such injudicious rashness."

"I have fully made up my mind to do the thing to which I have alluded," was the firm response.

"What is it, Bell?" asked Mary, imploringly.

"I will tell you, but upon one condition."

"What is that?"

"Secrecy."

"Not knowing what you intend, I should not like to bind myself to secrecy."

"Then I cannot tell you."

"Do not act with such deliberate rashness, Bell," urged Mary, drawing her arm tenderly about her neck, and looking her earnestly in the face, her own eyes suffused with tears.

"I have calmly counted the cost, Mary."

"Will you not confide in me?"

"Not unless you pledge yourself to secrecy."

"Then, as there is no other course, I thus pledge myself."

"I am glad you have done so, Mary," said Bell, in a steady voice, "for I desire most earnestly to open my heart to you, as the only one who can now truly feel for me. I have made up my mind to join Mr. Ware in New Orleans. He has—"

"Join Mr. Ware in New Orleans!" ejaculated Mary, starting back in surprise and alarm, her face growing pale. "Bell, your mind is wandering."

"I am perfectly sane, Mary," replied Bell with a feeble smile, "and have calmly and rationally weighed the whole matter. My husband is in business in New Orleans, and has written me many kind and affectionate letters, and now asks me to join him there."

"And your children?"

"I shall leave them where they are, at least for the present. I should not think it right to take them away from the comfortable home they now have."

"You do not contemplate going at once?"

"Yes—I shall start in a day or two. There are but few preparations necessary for me to make."

"Who will accompany you?"

"I shall go alone."

"Alone! Surely, Bell, you cannot be in your right mind!"

"Perhaps not!" was the low, mournful response, made after a pause. "Would it be any wonder, if I were to lose my senses?"

"Then why act so rashly, Bell? Why deliberately do a thing that you know all your friends will disapprove? Trouble has obscured your mind, so that you are hardly capable of rightly deciding such a question as is now presented to you. Hesitate, then—and let those in whom you

can confide, determine the matter for you. Do not your father and mother love you? Have they not ever sought your happiness with wise and careful solicitude? Still repose confidence in them. Go to them, and tell them your earnest desire to join your husband, and, if such really be your resolution, tell them, that if they will not give their consent for you to do so, you will have to go without their consent. Then you will secure protection from your father, and put it in his power, if you should go, to shield you from suffering and privation while among strangers."

"I do not expect suffering and privation. My husband has greatly changed, and is now in a good business."

"So he writes you."

"Mary," replied Bell, in a changed and somewhat offended tone. "I am not prepared to hear any question of my absent husband's sincerity and truth. I am the party most concerned, and I am perfectly willing to confide in him."

"But, granting that, Bell, you cannot be safe from all contingencies. How much better that your father's care should still be over you."

"As I said before, Mary, I have fully counted the cost, and am prepared for the worst. I cannot be more wretched with my husband, than I am away from him. My father will never give his consent for me to leave Philadelphia, and therefore I wish, above all things, to shun the pain of an interview with him and my mother. Do not, then, let me beg of you, urge me further on this subject. I have fully settled the matter in my own mind, and, therefore, nothing that you can possibly say, will have any influence with me."

"I must allude to your children, Bell," urged

the anxious Mary. "How can you leave dear Henry and Fanny?"

"Do not speak of them, Mary! Do not speak of them!" replied Bell, quickly, and in a low, husky whisper. "I have counted *that* cost, too. You urge me in vain."

As she said this, Bell arose and moved toward the door, but paused, with an irresolute air, as she placed her hand upon it, looking, as she did so, toward Mary with an expression of deep tenderness, while her eyes grew dim. She remained thus for a moment or two, and then returning to where Mary still stood, she threw her arms suddenly around her neck, and let her head droop upon her bosom. A gush of tears, and a fit of wild, uncontrollable sobbing, followed. It was many minutes before this subsided. When she at last grew calm, Bell drew her arms around the friend and companion of her childhood and the earnest sympathizer in the sorrows of her maturer years, and held her in a long, strained embrace. At last she looked up, with a feeble smile, murmured "God bless you, Mary!" kissed her lips, cheeks and forehead, earnestly, and then turning away, hurriedly left the house.

As for Mary, her heart was burdened with a double weight. Grief for the rash step which Bell was about to take, and regret that she had, unwittingly, furnished her with the means of taking that step. And to make it worse, was the pledge of secrecy which had been extorted from her, and which she was unable to decide whether she should violate or keep.

"It was late in the evening before her husband returned, to whom she at once related the substance of her interview with Bell.

"It will never do to let her put her determi-

nation into practice," was Mr. Lane's prompt remark.

"But I am pledged to secrecy."

"Under all the circumstances, Mary, you should not consider your promise binding."

"I wish I could think so. Most gladly would I avail myself of any just plea for breaking it."

"It will fall upon me, I suppose, to relieve you from all doubt and responsibility in this matter," said Mr. Lane, after some moments of reflection.

"How so?"

"I shall feel it to be my duty to inform Mr. Martin of Bell's intention so soon as he comes to the store, to-morrow morning. Have you any objection to my doing so?"

"None in the world," was Mary's reply.

But Mr. Lane's good resolution was put into practice too late. Before Mr. Martin came down to the store the next morning, Bell had been missed, and, on looking into her room, a letter was found upon her table, announcing to her father and mother the distressing intelligence that she had left them to follow her husband. Before they had time to recover from this shock, and to determine what course to pursue, a letter from Fanny's husband, in New York, brought the melancholy tidings of her dangerous illness, and a request that her father, mother and sister would come on immediately if they hoped to see her alive. Whether to go in pursuit of Bell, or to repair to New York, was a question which agitated Mr. Martin's mind only for a short time, when he determined on the latter course, resolving, however, that as soon as he could return, to proceed at once to New Orleans, and bring his daughter home.

On his arrival, with Mrs. Martin, in New York, he found that Fanny was lingering on the brink of the grave. Five days did they hover around her bed, but all their anxious hopes were in vain. She passed away at the end of that period, to be no more seen on earth.

On returning to Philadelphia, other matters of serious import demanded the attention of Mr Martin, who was, in consequence, prevented from proceeding at once to the South for Bell, as he had determined.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HARDEST TRIAL.

WHEN Bell parted from Mary, it was with the resolution fixed in her mind, to put her determination to leave Philadelphia, into execution on the following morning. It had occurred to her, that Mary would inform her husband of her intended journey, and that he would feel himself bound to communicate the fact to her father. And it was to prevent this availing any thing toward detaining her, that she resolved not to put off her departure for a single day. This was the reason why, in parting from Mary, whose face she might never see again, she exhibited so much emotion.

After leaving the house of Mary, she hurried home, and set about making preparations for her journey. The departure of the steamboat at the early hour of six, afforded a good opportunity for her to get away unseen by any of the family, provided she was unencumbered with baggage. But it would be necessary for her to take as many of her clothes as possible; and to do so, at least one large trunk would be required. But how this was to be removed from the house, presented itself as a serious difficulty. Sometimes she thought it best to tie up a few articles of wearing apparel into a compact bundle, such as she could easily take in her hand. But a little reflection convinced her that this would not answer. It was very desirable, she felt, to be able to pass along without attracting particular attention—and as she would have, necessarily, to put up frequently at public

houses, the fact of her having no trunk, would be looked upon with more or less suspicion, and might subject her to unpleasant incidents. And besides this, it would be impossible for her to carry, in this way, a sufficient quantity of clothing. The trunk must be taken—that she fully determined. But how it was to be conveyed away from the house, in the morning, without being seen by some one, was more than she could tell.

Necessity, under all circumstances, is the mother of inventions. So it proved in the case of Bell. While pondering over the difficulty that had presented itself, she at last thought of the gate attached to the large yard and garden belonging to the house, and of the many places for the temporary concealment of a trunk which the alcoves in the garden afforded. Soon after this occurred to her, she had her plan of proceeding matured—which was this. After the servants and all had retired for the night, she would get a large empty trunk, and carry it out into the garden near the gate, which opened, on to a small back street. Then she would take her clothes down in bundles, moving with a noiseless tread, and pack into the trunk as many of them as it would hold. All this was accomplished in the most perfect silence and secrecy, and the well-filled trunk left concealed near the gate. Her plan was to steal out into the garden as soon as it was daylight, and passing from the gate, procure a porter, and have her trunk removed before any one should be stirring in the house.

When all these preliminary arrangements were completed, Bell retired to her bed, after having penned a hurried note to her father and mother, but not to sleep. By her side lay her two children, about to be forsaken by their mother. Into their innocent faces, beautified by calm and holy

sleep, she would look often, and for many minutes at a time, bending over them, and almost holding her breath, lest they should be awakened, and only removing from her position to prevent the warm tears that were dimming her eyes from falling upon their glowing cheeks. At times, the mother's love ruled so strongly in her mind, that it seemed as if it would be impossible for her to part with them. Then she would picture to her imagination their disappointment at not seeing her as usual when they awoke in the morning; their grief at being told that she had gone away from them, no more to return—and the drooping of their young hearts, as day after day went by, and the voice they had loved so from infancy, and the smile that had been the sunlight of their spirits no more greeted them. This was her sorest trial and it had the effect more than once to cause her to hesitate. But other thoughts and other affections soon came back with a power that could not be controlled.

Toward daylight, she sunk into a state of half unconsciousness, that was neither wakefulness nor sleep. From this a horrible phantasy of the imagination startled her, and she awoke, uttering a stifled scream. As her scattered thoughts returned, and she was enabled to realize the truth of her condition, she perceived that the day was beginning to dawn. Now had come the hour of severe trial—the most painful, she felt in her life—for it involved deliberate action on her part, that would be condemned by all; and more than that—the severing and lacerating of the most tender and sacred bonds.

Hastily rising, and endeavoring to force back the thoughts and affections that pleaded eagerly with her to pause, she proceeded in the completion of her few last sad arrangements for parting

perhaps for ever, from her children and parents and all the associations that a whole life-time had endeared to her. These completed, she threw a cloak over her shoulders, drew a bonnet on her head, and taking a small bundle in her hand, made a movement to leave the room, without a last look at her children. This she was endeavoring, purposely, to avoid, for she felt herself unequal to the trial. But the mother's heart was strong within her bosom. She could not thus leave them. A powerful arm seemed restraining her. There was a pause—a hesitating moment—and then she slowly turned and went to the bed on which her children lay, still hushed in gentle sleep. Pushing back her bonnet, she bent down over them, resting her arm upon the pillow that supported both their heads, and her own head upon her hand, where she remained for many minutes, gazing sadly and tenderly into their faces, unable to tear herself away.

The sound of footsteps along the passage aroused her from this state of irresolution, or rather paralization of mind, to a consciousness of the danger that threatened to defeat her cautiously laid plans. This enabled her to break the spell that bound her to the spot where lay the dear treasures of an almost broken heart. Closing her eyes, in order to shut out for a moment, their images from her mind, she arose from her position on the bed, and stepped quickly to the door, where she stood listening to the sound that had awakened her fears, until it died away in a distant part of the house. Fearful of trusting herself to look again at her children, though her heart pleaded earnestly for one more glance, she opened her chamber door, stepped out softly, and then hurried along the passages and down the stairs with a noiseless tread, until she reached the door leading

into the yard. This she found locked, indicating that no one had yet gone from the house in that direction. Opening this door in silence, and softly closing it after her, she glided quickly away from the house, entering an alley thickly shaded with vines, so as to be concealed from the observation of any one who might have chanced to be looking from a window.

Her trunk was found where she had left it the night before. Passing from the gate, and entering the street upon which it opened, she was not long in finding a man who agreed to carry her baggage to the steamboat. With him she returned, and succeeded in getting her trunk off, unseen by any member of her father's family. A hurried walk brought her to the landing. It was about half an hour before the time for starting, and the passengers were beginning to arrive. The sight of so many persons, old and young, male and female, rapidly assembling, awoke in her mind a new source of uneasiness. She dreaded to lift her eyes to each newly arriving face, lest it should reveal one perfectly familiar. Nor were her fears, on this score, in vain. Before the boat started, two or three ladies with whom she was on terms of social intimacy, came on board, and took their places in the cabin near where she was sitting. This caused her to shrink away in order to avoid observation, while she drew the folds of a thick veil closer to her face. She was not fully successful in her efforts to avoid observation, as she perceived by the frequent glances of inquiry and interest that were cast toward her. Once, during the passage down the Delaware, she noticed a lady who was a very intimate and beloved friend, after gazing upon her for some time, rise from her seat and come toward her. For a moment or two, her heart paused in its labored pulsations.

But the lady either changed her mind, or had not intended addressing her, for she passed by, seemingly on an errand to another part of the cabin. This warned her to shun observation still more, which she did by taking a volume from one of the berths, and bending down low over it, as if deeply absorbed in its contents. But how far away from the unseen pages of that book, whose very title was all unread by her, were her thoughts and affections! These were not going eagerly before, but returning back toward the dear little ones she had forsaken. How vividly was each gentle face pictured before her! Not calmly reposing in sleep, as when last she looked upon them, but bathed in grief for her loss.

Each passing minute, as the body was borne farther and farther away from her children, her spirit was drawn nearer, while her heart yearned over them with an interest that was intensely painful. It was with difficulty that she could refrain from uttering aloud—

“My children! my children! Treasures of my heart! How can I give you up?”

Words of lamentation, that were repeated over and over again, in silence and in bitterness of spirit.

But onward, steadily and rapidly, progressed the boat that bore her away, increasing, each moment, the distance between herself and her forsaken home—and making sadder, and oppressing with intense pain, the heart already too heavily burdened.

There was nothing in the excitement of the journey—nothing in the hurried changes from boat to land carriage and from land carriage to boat again, that could win her mind, even for a moment, away from its sad visions of home.

In Baltimore, under the assumed name of John-

son, she took lodgings at the City Hotel, where she spent the night—a night, the first ever passed away from her children—a night never after forgotten. Need a mother be told why it was to her one of bitter agony? Only a mother's heart can realize a mother's sufferings, thus separated from her children! On the following morning she left Baltimore for Wheeling, in the fast line, and travelled night and day until she reached the banks of the Ohio. At Wheeling she took passage on board of a steamboat for Louisville, as directed by her husband. Four days spent in reaching the last named place, seemed to her like four weeks—so eager was she to get to the end of her entire journey, and once more look upon the face that had been hid from her for three long weary years.

From Louisville, she wrote a hasty letter to her husband, and two days after she had despatched it, she started for New Orleans. Seven days more passed lingeringly away before her long and fatiguing journey was completed. It was midnight when the heavy rumbling and jarring of the machinery ceased, and the shrill, nerve-thrilling shriek of the escaping steam told that the boat had arrived at the Crescent City. Hurriedly rising from her berth, Mrs. Ware dressed herself with all possible speed, expecting each moment to hear her name called. But the servant passed in and out, conveying a message to this lady and to that; but no inquiry came for her. "Surely he must be here!" she said to herself. But it seemed that it was not so. For time passed steadily away, and passenger after passenger left the boat, but no voice asked for her. At last the cold, sad, grey light of the morning began to break, and Mrs. Ware went out upon the guards, and strained her eyes through the yet undispersed mists of the

night, to see if she could not recognize her husband among the few forms dimly seen upon the shore. But she looked in vain. Slowly and almost imperceptibly was the morning twilight dispersed, revealing at each moment more and more distinctly the strange appearances, forms and faces of a strange city. The few slowly moving figures that first met her eye, passing to and fro in the misty air like wandering spirits, had given place to a crowd of human beings, some surveying with idle curiosity the newly arrived steamer—others hurrying on board with expectant faces, eager to meet some looked-for friend, wife, sister or brother—while others went steadily by, scarcely casting a glance at the stately vessel.

Among all these did Bell search, with anxious eyes, for her husband. Sometimes her heart would bound and flutter, as afar off some new form became revealed, the bearing of which seemed so like her husband, that she could hardly help striking her hands together, and exclaiming aloud, "It is he!" But as that form drew nearer and nearer, its resemblance to her husband gradually faded, until her eyes turned disappointed away from a face all unfamiliar. Thus did the anxious wife stand leaning over the guards, eager and expectant for nearly three hours, when she was obliged from faintness to retire to the cabin, and seek a berth, where she lay for nearly two hours longer, in momentary expectation of hearing the sound of her husband's voice.

At last, through the kind suggestions and directions of the female servant attached to the boat, Bell concluded to go to a respectable hotel, marking on the books of the steamboat, opposite to the entry of her name, the house to which she had gone, so that her husband could find her when he learned the arrival of the boat.

As soon as she had made this change, she asked the servant in attendance at her room at the hotel, to bring her a late newspaper. Over this she looked eagerly, hoping, yet fearing to hope, that her eye might fall upon something that would give her a clue by which to find her husband. Almost the first thing that attracted her notice was the list of advertised letters. In this she unexpectedly found one for herself. Ringing hurriedly for a servant, she despatched, as soon as her summons was answered, a messenger for the letter. It was full half an hour before it was brought, during which time she paced the floor of her chamber in a state of painful excitement. Hastily breaking the seal, so soon as the servant who had brought the letter had left the room, she read with difficulty, for her hand shook so that she could scarcely distinguish a letter, the following note:—

NEW ORLEANS, ——— —, 18—.

My dear Bell—Unexpectedly, an entire change has taken place in my circumstances, and I have been obliged to leave New Orleans for Galveston, in Texas, before your arrival. Considerations of personal safety have prompted me to take this hasty step. I need not allude to the painful and mortifying cause. Take the steam-packet, and come here without delay. I shall expect you by every new arrival, until I see your long-absent but dear face. Do not delay a moment. Here I shall remain, free from molestation, and here be able to prosecute without fear an honest calling.

Ever yours, HENRY.

The hand of Mrs. Ware trembled so violently, that the letter fell to the floor the moment she had finished reading the last word. O, what a heart

sickening disappointment did its contents prove to her! From the momentary expectation of seeing him, to come into the sudden consciousness that her husband was still hundreds of miles away, and that many days must elapse before her eyes would rest upon him, was a painful shock to her feelings. For a time she felt weak, sick and irresolute. Then her thoughts began to rally, and she turned once more to the newspaper from which she had gained intelligence of the letter, to see if a boat was up for Galveston. One was advertised to go on the next day. Her resolution was at once taken to avail herself of the opportunity. The rest of the day passed wearily, and the night was spent in restless, feverish, anxious looking for the morning, with occasional brief periods of unrefreshing sleep. — Morning at last came. At an early hour she was on board of the steamboat, where she had to remain until nearly night before starting, tortured with eager impatience to be on her way.

CHAPTER XX.

A RE-UNION, AND CRUEL DESERTION.

AFTER a passage of many weary days, Mrs. Ware arrived at Galveston, her last dollar expended, and her heart trembling with fear lest some new disappointment awaited her. Happily, her fears in this respect were vain. Her husband met her at the boat. The moment her eyes rested on him, changed in appearance as he was, and even to her sadly changed for the worse, she forgot the circumstances by which she was surrounded, the persons present, and all things relating to the time and place, and flung herself, with a wild expression of delight, into his arms.

To him, such a public exhibition of affection was any thing but agreeable, and he restrained and checked her instantly with something so icy cold in his manner, that poor Bell's heart felt sick as it had often, alas! too often felt before when repelled in like manner. Still, there were expressions of pleasure, strong expressions, at seeing her, and instant kind inquiries as to how she had been, and how she had fared on her long journey. Then came a hurried removal to one of the hotels, where she was received into a very comfortable room, which, by special favor, her husband had obtained, in expectation of her arrival.

"Dear—dear Henry!" she said, as soon as they were alone, leaning her head upon his shoulders, and bursting into tears—"I cannot tell you how constantly, for three long years, my heart has longed to see your face—to hear your voice—to

move once more by your side. Thank heaven: we are again united."

"Never, I trust, to part again," was the reply, in an assumed tone of tenderness.

"Never—never!" murmured Bell. "For myself, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

"How did you leave our dear little ones, Bell?" her husband asked, after a few moments.

"Well. But oh! what a trial. I wonder that my heart did not break in the struggle of separation! Truly, mine is a hard lot!" And the tears gushed forth afresh. "But may we not hope one day to have them with us, dear husband?"

"That time may come, Bell. But it cannot come speedily," was the reply. "Your father could never be induced to give them up. And it will, perhaps, never be in our power to demand them. But let us not burden this hour with thoughts so painful and oppressive."

Then, after a few moments, he asked—

"Tell me, Bell, all about your getting away from Philadelphia, and the particulars of your long journey?"

In accordance with this request, Mrs. Ware gave her husband an account of her preparations for coming away, her departure, and a history of what occurred to her during the period that elapsed from the time she left Philadelphia, until her arrival at Galveston. Beginning with the borrowing of one hundred dollars from Mary, and ending with an account of the expenditure of her last farthing. In the beginning and ending of this story, her husband felt the strongest—indeed, it might be said, the only interest. Deeply was he disappointed to find that Bell was upon his hands, penniless, and not at all encouraged from her accounts of her father's state of mind, in regard to

receiving any thing liberal from him, if, indeed, a single dollar were to be obtained from that quarter.

"And so you have got her out at last," said his friend Handy to him, a few hours after, as they met in the bar-room.

"Yes, and a bad bargain, I am afraid, it will turn out in the end," was the half angry reply.

"Why so?"

"She came off with only a hundred dollars, and had to borrow that. It took every cent to pay her expenses here."

"The d—l you say! I expected that she would bring with her at least five hundred or a thousand dollars."

"So did I. But, instead of that, she has brought only herself, which I could have very well dispensed with."

"Her father will send her money as a matter of course, so soon as he learns that she is here."

"I am not by any means certain of that. From what I can gather, he was very angry when he discovered that Bell sent me money, and threatened her with his permanent displeasure if she continued to write to me."

"You must try and wheedle him out of some funds through her."

"That I am afraid, it will be hard to do."

"I am not so certain. Make her believe that you are in business here, and that by the aid of a little more capital you could do very well. Represent yourself as thoroughly reformed, and deeply penitent for past sins and iniquities, and as being exceedingly anxious to maintain in society an honest and honorable position. All this, with amplifications, she can detail to her father, winding off with a request for a remittance to aid you

in this praiseworthy effort at reformation. That will do the business for us, I'm thinking."

"I cannot say that I feel very sanguine in regard to the result," replied Ware; "still something must be done, for business is dull, and luck is against an empty pocket."

Acting upon this suggestion of Handy, which was but a repetition of the substance of former suggestions, prospective of his wife's arrival, Ware made plausible representations to Bell in regard to his position, to business, his changed views, and his anxious desire to take a fair and respectable station in the community, and of his great need of money to enable him to prosecute his business with success. Entering into all he said, with a deep and lively interest, Bell at once volunteered to write to her father, asking him for money, which, under the new aspect of affairs, she was sanguine would be promptly sent.

Accordingly, she wrote at once, appealing to him with all the pathos and eloquence that her heart, warm in what she was doing, could express. Then came the days of suspense. The looking, and anxious waiting for a reply. Weeks, and even months passed on, and yet this suspense was unbroken. No answer came. During the first part of this period, her husband treated her with every kindness and attention. But his manner grew cold as time elapsed and no word was received from home. Again and again she wrote, but with no better success.

One afternoon, five months from the day she arrived in Galveston, her husband and his inseparable companion were seated in the bar-room of one of the principal hotels of the place, glancing over files of newspapers. Among these files were many old papers from the United States, princi-

pally from New York, Philadelphia, and other cities on the sea board.

"Did you see this?" suddenly asked Handy in a tone of surprise, pushing the file he had in his hand across the table to Ware, and putting his fingers upon a paragraph. "Old Martin has failed!"

"O no, it cannot be!" was the quick reply.

"It is too true. Read that."

Ware read the paragraph pointed out. It was, as Handy had said, too true. Mr. Martin had indeed failed. The truth was, the bankruptcy of his old friend, Mr. Ware, had very seriously affected him. Other losses, following in quick succession, so crippled his energies, and cut off his resources, that he had at last to yield to the pressure of uncontrollable circumstances, and sink down from his position of a merchant-prince, into a state little above mere dependence.

It was about the same time that her husband made this discovery, that Bell was running her eye over a file of papers, likewise from the United States. Many of them were old, bearing date some five or six months anterior. Suddenly she started, as a familiar name met her eye, and then bent eagerly down to read the unexpected paragraph. It was the announcement of her sister Fanny's death, which took place in New York a few days after her departure from home. It was with difficulty that she could control an almost irresistible impulse to utter a cry of anguish, as the paper dropped upon the floor, so sudden and terrible was the shock to her feelings. For a long time she sat in a kind of stupor, unable fully to realize the dreadful truth. Then came a distinct and acute consciousness of the sad affliction, accompanied with thoughts of her parents, and children, and home. and touches of regret for having

forsaken all for one who had already proved himself to have little true affection for the wife he had so often deceived, and had now lured away thousands of miles from her friends, with selfish and mercenary ends, already too apparent even to her.

After the feelings of Mrs. Ware had calmed down, in a degree, she began to desire her husband's return, that she might communicate the sad intelligence to him, and find in his sympathy, some relief to her distressed feelings. Yet even in this desire was mingled a consciousness that from him little comfort would flow; for he had, of late, grown too apparently indifferent toward her, and too careless of her comfort—often remaining away until after midnight, and frequently not coming in until morning.

The afternoon passed heavily away—evening came, and hour after hour rolled by, until midnight, and still poor Mrs. Ware was waiting and watching for her husband, but waiting and watching in vain. After midnight she threw herself upon the bed, and fell into a troubled sleep, full of distressing dreams, from which she awoke at day dawn, and found herself still alone. And alone she remained all through the day, her husband neither returning nor sending to inform her of the reason. On the following morning, Mr. Ware not having yet made his appearance, she had a visit from the landlord of the hotel where she had been since her arrival at Galveston.

"Do you know where your husband is, madam?" he asked, abruptly, and yet not in a rude or unkind manner.

"Indeed, sir, I do not," replied Mrs. Ware, the tears starting to her eyes, and seeming ready at each moment to leap forth.

"When did you last see him?"

"I have not seen him since the morning of the day before yesterday."

"And never will again, in these parts, I'm thinking," was the rough, straight-forward remark of the landlord, not rude, nor meant to be unkind.

"O, sir! what do you mean?" ejaculated poor Bell, endeavoring to rise, but utterly unable to do so.

"I mean just what I say, madam. I only know how to speak the truth, and that in a plain, straight-forward manner. Your husband, I am told, left here, yesterday morning, with a companion, for Mexico. He has not acted, since he has been here, in a way just to please the people, and finding that it would not be safe to stay much longer, he has quietly taken himself off. Now, my advice to you is, to get home to your friends as quickly as possible, for it will be folly to hope for his return. He is not only heavily indebted to me for his own and your boarding, but owes a great many others, and will not be suffered to come back to this place. And now, while I am on this subject, I might as well say what you ought to know, and that is, that he only induced you to come out here, in the hope that large sums of money would be sent to you by your father."

"It is false, sir!" exclaimed Bell, rising to her feet with sudden energy, her eyes dilating and flashing, as she looked the landlord steadily and angrily in the face.

"I wish from my heart, for your sake, that all I have said were false," replied the landlord, in a softened tone. "But it is, believe me, madam, too true, as I know to my cost, and you will know to your sorrow."

"O, can it be true?" said poor Bell, after a pause, clasping her hands tightly across her forehead. Then, as the conviction came stealing over

her mind, that it was indeed the truth which the straight-forward landlord had uttered, she looked up in his face and said in a broken voice :

“ Then, sir, what can I, what shall I do ? ”

“ Go home to your friends as quickly as possible.”

“ But I have no means of getting home.”

“ Then write to them at once to send you the means. You are welcome to remain here until you get a remittance from them, much as I have been deceived and wronged by your husband.”

As Mrs. Ware uttered her almost inarticulate thanks, the landlord bowed and left her alone in her chamber, a prey to most harrowing reflections. So soon, however, as she could compose her thoughts, she sat down and wrote to her mother, imploring her to send her instantly the means of returning home.

Month after month passed away, but there came no word from her husband, nor any letter from home. Again and again she wrote, but all her letters remained unanswered. Grateful for the kindness and consideration of the landlord and the different members of his family, Mrs. Ware, after the time had passed by in which she had hoped to hear from her father, began to feel that it was her duty to try and render them, if possible, some service. This thought was the form of acknowledgement to herself, of the heart-sickening fear that her father and mother had cast her off. Any more distinct acknowledgement of this fear would have been more than she could have borne. Accordingly, she proposed to instruct the landlord's two daughters in music, as some compensation for the burden of her support.

This proposition was accepted, and in the occupation of mind which it afforded, proved to her a great relief from afflicting thoughts. There be-

ing no music teacher then in the town, and many young ladies being extremely desirous to learn, Mrs. Ware received several applications to give lessons, so soon as it was known that she was engaged in so doing at the hotel. For a time, she declined acceding to these propositions, all her feelings shrinking away from such an exposure of herself. But as month after month continued to pass, and no tidings came from home, her intense longings to get back to her children, made her determine to make the teaching of music a means of procuring sufficient money to pay her passage to Philadelphia. As soon as this was determined upon, she let it be known, and was at once engaged to give lessons in several families.

This brought her, for the first time in nearly twelve months, once more within the precincts of the private domestic circle—once more among mothers and their children. How vividly did it bring back the memories of home and the dear little ones she had left behind her—moving her often to tears that no effort on her part could restrain. In more than one family where she gave lessons, a strong interest was felt in her; but delicacy prevented the kind inquiries that were often ready to be made. All felt drawn toward her, for all saw and felt that she had indeed seen better days—but none ventured to inquire the particulars of her history.

Six months more had passed wearily away, and Mrs. Ware's gradually accumulating fund had nearly reached the sum required to pay her way to Philadelphia, when nature, too long and too painfully tried, suddenly, and from an unlooked for shock, gave way, and she sunk down under the influence of a raging fever. For weeks she hung lingering on the brink of the grave, but finally her system began to rally and she slowly

recovered, but did not regain her former strength. Her nervous system was much shattered and her spirits almost entirely gone. Few were aware of the cause of her severe illness. It was this. A Houston paper had fallen in her way, and there she read the summary execution of two men, under Lynch law, by hanging. Full particulars were given. They had been detected in cheating at cards, when a quarrel ensued, and a young man who had been engaged with them was killed. The incensed populace at once wrecked their vengeance on the gamblers.—Their names were given as Johnson, *alias* Ware, and Haines, *alias* Handy. A long history of their previous lives was appended, relating minutely the particulars of the forgery in Philadelphia, the scene on the Mississippi, with many other things new and startling to the already too deeply afflicted wife. In closing the narrative, it was added that he had induced his wife to leave her home and join him a few months before in Galveston, where he had heartlessly forsaken her in a strange place, among strangers, and penniless. "Although," finally added the account, "we cannot sanction the summary proceedings in this case, yet we do sincerely rejoice that we have been freed, even in this way, of two of the most unprincipled scoundrels that ever disgraced this part of the country."

When Mrs. Ware arose from the severe illness occasioned by this dreadful news her spirits were gone, as has been stated, and her nervous system sadly shattered. The kindness of the hotel keeper and his family had enabled her to retain unbroken her little treasure, amounting to between sixty and seventy dollars, and with this, as soon as she was able to start, she took passage for New Orleans. She arrived safely there, after a quick voyage, and on the day following went on board of a boat that

was up for Louisville. Two tedious weeks were consumed in reaching the falls of the Ohio. Hence she proceeded, without waiting a single day, to Wheeling. But alas! when she arrived at Wheeling, she found herself with but four dollars, and the fare to Baltimore alone was fourteen, exclusive of the expense of meals.

CHAPTER XXI.

CONCLUSION.

ONE evening, about two months from the day on which Mrs. Ware arrived at Wheeling, there sat, conversing, in the handsomely furnished parlors of a house in Baltimore, a man and his wife, still youthful in appearance, but with a sober expression resting on their countenances. They had, evidently, known care and anxiety, but from the fact that no harsh lines marred the quiet tone of their faces, it was evident that their cares had been for others, more than for themselves. The man held an open letter in his hand, the contents of which formed the subject of conversation.

“There can be little doubt,” remarked the wife, “that Bell’s husband is the person to whom allusion is made. If she be still living, which I fear is not the case, she was, doubtless, in company with him in Texas, when he met his awful fate.”

“What more can be done?” said Mrs. Lane (The reader has, of course, already recognised Mary and her husband.) “We must not give her up.”

“No, not until she be found, living or dead. If moved by no other consideration, I cannot break the solemn promise I made to old Mr. Martin, but an hour before his overburdened spirit took from earth its everlasting departure. Nor the repeated assurance to Bell’s mother, ere she, too, followed quickly her husband’s footsteps.”

“It is now nearly two years since Bell went away,” said Mrs. Lane, after a thoughtful silence. “Two years! How like a painful dream do the events of that brief period come back upon the memory!”

“Painful, indeed to me. But, I can well believe, far more painful to you, Mary,” her husband replied. “How utterly has the family of Mr. Martin been broken up, and well nigh extinguished.”

“Strange and mysterious are the ways of Providence,” Mary remarked, in a mournful tone.

“To me, there is nothing like mystery connected with the sad vicissitudes which have taken place in Mr. Martin’s family. Most of them, I can readily trace to a clearly apparent cause—and that cause, the marriage of Bell.

“That it would cause Mr. Martin to lose his property, I began to fear soon after the marriage. The wicked manner in which Ware had deceived both his own and Mr. Martin’s family, and the consequent unhappiness of Bell, so unsettled his mind, that he no longer gave that calm, earnest

attention to business which had heretofore characterized him. Frequent losses were the consequence, which now always irritated, and made him less fitted for new transactions. The intimacy between him and old Mr. Ware likewise partook of a different character. Their business was more mingled—while neither of them was so well fitted for making good operations as before. At the time of Mr. Ware's failure, Mr. Martin was responsible for him to a heavy amount. The payment of this crippled him very much. Then occurred the double shock of Bell's secret departure from home, and Fanny's sudden death. And following, in quick succession, came a crisis in his business, which ended in utter bankruptcy. He survived this last shock, you know, only four weeks. Can you not now see how the marriage of Bell led to all the sad results that followed?"

"Hark? Was not that a groan?" said Mrs. Lane. "There! Did you hear it again? It seemed to come from under our window."

Mr. Lane paused to listen, when the sound came again, distinct and mournful. He then arose, and proceeded to the door to ascertain the cause.

The reader has discovered enough in the conversation which passed between Mary Lane and her husband to enable him to connect pretty distinctly the whole chain of events in the history now drawing to a close. Lane is partner in a large commission house, in Baltimore. As the rich merchant went rapidly down, the obscure, but honest, intelligent clerk, was slowly rising. The two children left by Bell, have been taken into Mary's fold

and affections, and are loved equally with her own.

On the same evening, in the passage of which the scene and conversation, above recorded, took place, poor Bell arrived in the city. She had walked nearly half the distance from Wheeling to Baltimore, riding the other half of the way through the kind indulgence of a humane wagoner. Two months had been consumed in the journey—six weeks of which time she lay at the house of a farmer, who had picked her up, fainting, on the road.

Arrived at Baltimore, her clothes soiled and worn, without one cent to buy a mouthful of food, and ill from fatigue and loss of rest, she descended from the wagon, and turned away, with weak and trembling limbs, to go she knew not where. Thoughts of home, and parents, and children, roused her up for a few moments, but her spirit quickly sunk, while her limbs trembled more and more as she walked slowly along. At last she grew so faint that she had to pause and lean against something for support. Then she gradually sunk down upon the pavement, overcome with a feeling of deathly sickness, and soon became insensible.

How long she remained in that condition she knew not. When consciousness again returned, a great change had taken place. She was lying upon a bed, in a handsomely furnished chamber, and as she turned her eyes slowly around, some few objects looked to her strangely familiar. In attempting to move, she felt very weak, but had no sensation of pain or sickness. No one appear

ed to her to be in the room, and she lay for many minutes endeavoring in vain to settle the question whether she were really awake or dreaming.

"Where am I?" she at length murmured, half audibly.

The sound of her voice startled a female, before hid by the curtains of the bed, who sprung forward, and stood for a moment looking into her face.

"Mary! dear Mary! is it indeed you? or is this but a mocking dream?" ejaculated Bell, rising up quickly, and falling forward into Mary's arms.

"You are Bell!—my long lost, long mourned, dear sister Bell! And I *am* Mary!" whispered Mrs. Lane, as she drew Bell to her heart, in a long embrace.

"And my children! O, Mary, where are they?"

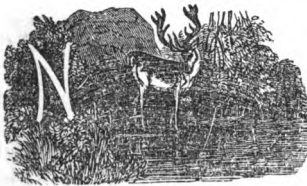
Mary did not reply to this, but left the bed and stepped quickly out of the room. When she returned with Bell's two children, so little changed to the mother's eye, that she almost sprung from the bed the moment their bright young faces came in sight. How tenderly—how wildly did Mrs. Ware clasp to her bosom these dear treasures, once more restored to her!

We care not to pain the reader with an account of her grief on learning the death of her parents. Let that sleep with her subsequent history, which only contains this much of interest to the reader, that she found with Mary and her husband a permanent and peaceful home.

THE END.

PRIDE OR PRINCIPLE; WHICH MAKES THE LADY?

CHAPTER I.



O, no, my dear! Never go to the hall-door. That's the waiter's business," said Mrs. Pimlico, laying her hand, as she spoke, upon the arm of her daughter Helen. "But it's only Jane and Lizzy Malcolm, and John is away up in the fourth story. I can let them in before he gets half way down."

"No, my dear!" the mother replied, with dignity. "It's the waiter's place to answer the bell. No lady or gentleman ever goes to the door to admit a visiter!"

"Mrs. Henry does, sometimes, for she opened the door for me the last time I called at her house to see Mary."

“Then Mrs. Henry was not raised a lady, that’s all I have to say.”

“I don’t know how that is, Ma; everybody seems to like Mrs. Henry; and I have heard some speak of her as a perfect lady. But why in the world doesn’t John answer the bell? He certainly hasn’t heard it. I will go and call him.” And Helen made a movement to leave the room, but her mother again checked her, saying—

“Why don’t you keep quiet, child? A lady never runs after the waiter to tell him that visiters are at the door. It’s his place to hear the bell.”

“But, suppose, Ma, as in the present case, he does not hear it, and you do?”

“Let the visiters ring again, as ours are doing at this moment.”

Nearly a minute passed after the bell had been rung a second time, and yet, John did not go to the door. He was engaged up in the fourth story, and did not hear the sound.

“Strange that John does not come!” Helen said—“Don’t you think I’d better let the girls in, Ma. I’m afraid they’ll go away, and I want to see them very much. And, besides, you know it is a long walk up here for them, and especially fatiguing for Lizzy, who has only been out once or twice since her severe illness. I would not have them go away for anything.”

“No, Helen, you cannot! Haven’t I al-

ready told you that no lady ever answers the door-bell. That reason one would think sufficient."

"But surely, Ma, there are circumstances under which the violation of such a rule would be no treason against social etiquette."

"No lady, I tell you, Helen, ever breaks that rule, and you must not. But ring the bell, dear, for a servant."

The bell was rung, and to the servant who appeared a few moments after, Mrs. Pimlico said—

"Go and see where the waiter is, and tell him to attend the street door."

But, before John could be found, the young ladies had departed. They lived in a part of the city distant from that in which Mrs. Pimlico resided, and had come out expressly to call upon Helen. Lizzy Malcolm, as was intimated by Miss Pimlico, had but recently recovered from a very severe illness. She was still weak, and able to bear but little fatigue.

"There is no one at the door," John said, entering the parlour, nearly five minutes after the direction to call him had been given by Mrs. Pimlico.

"Very well, John. But another time be more attentive. Through your negligence of duty, our visitors have been forced to go away. This must not occur again."

"Just as I feared," Helen said, with dis

appointment and concern as soon as John had left the room. "I wished to see Lizzy Malcolm, particularly. But that is a matter of little importance, compared with the consequences to herself that may be occasioned by excessive fatigue. To walk this far, and her health so feeble as it is, must have been a great effort. How will she possibly be able to get home, without either rest or refreshment? Indeed, Ma, etiquette or no etiquette, I think we were wrong! It seems to me, that one leading characteristic of a lady is, to be considerate of others—to seek the happiness and the good of others—not to be all deference to mere external rules and forms, to the death of genuine lady-like principles."

"How foolish you talk, Helen! If you expect to move in well-bred society, you must show yourself to be a well-bred woman. And no well-bred woman ever violates the prescribed rules of etiquette. I am as sorry as you can be that necessity compelled us to let the Misses Malcolm go away from our door without admission. But I would not admit the President's daughter myself, nor suffer you to do it, even if the waiter could not be found. No lady, as I have often tried to impress upon your mind, ever opens her own door to admit any one. Let visitors go away, if necessary, but stand by the good usages of your station."

"But what harm could have arisen from

my just opening the door, and letting in Lizzy and her sister. No one from the street would have seen me."

"Would the Misses Malcolm have seen you?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Don't you suppose they would have blazoned it about? Certainly they would, to your loss of caste!"

"I am, no doubt, exceedingly dull, and exceedingly vulgar, Ma. But, for my life, I cannot understand how the mere opening of a door, or the calling of a servant, can in any way affect a lady or a gentleman's social standing among sensible people, who are supposed to have the faculty of discriminating moral worth, and the virtue to estimate every one according to his real interior quality. Certainly, as far as I am concerned, I should not have the slightest objection to its being known everywhere that I visit, that I have opened the front door a dozen times every week during the last four years."

Thus far the conversation had been conducted, on the part of the mother, in a perfectly calm and dignified manner. The avoidance of all appearance of excitement was as much a rule of external observance, as the cutting of a lemon or cocoa-nut pudding with a spoon, or the saturating of her bread in the gravy and sauce of her dinner plate, and thus conveying them to the masticatory cavity,

instead of using so ungenteeled an instrument as a knife in eating. But the bold declaration of such unheard-of opinions in genteel society, and that from her own daughter, broke down the spell of composure that had been so well assumed.

“Fool! Fool that I was!” ejaculated Mrs. Pimlico, rising quick’y to her feet, and walking backwards and forwards in an agitated manner, “ever to have permitted you to become the inmate of your Aunt Mary’s family! I always knew that she was a woman of no breeding, but I forgot that her want of gentility might, unhappily, be transferred to my own daughter.”

“Mother!” said Helen, in a firm voice, “if there ever was a lady, Aunt Mary is one!”

Mrs. Pimlico stopped suddenly in her nervous perambulation, and stared at her daughter with a look of blank amazement.

“To think that I should ever hear a child of mine make such a declaration!” she at length said, half mournfully. “Your Aunt Mary a lady! She is one neither by birth nor education, let me tell you, Helen. She never is, and never will be a lady, although a very good woman in her way. But if she were a saint, that would not constitute her a lady. I wish you would learn to make a just discrimination between a woman of kind feelings, excellent moral character, and intelli-

gence, all of which my brother's wife possesses, and a lady. The former we meet with in all classes—but the thorough-bred lady is not of every-day occurrence."

"I should really like to know what constitutes a lady, Ma" Helen replied. "Since I have come home, I find that, on this subject, all my previous ideas go for nothing. I thought I had been fully instructed on this subject; but it seems I have been mistaken."

"Instructed? By whom?"

"By my aunt, and by my own common sense."

"By your aunt!" (with an expression of contempt). "Would you go to a blacksmith to learn music?"

"A residence of four years with my aunt has made me so well acquainted with her character, as to cause me to love her tenderly. I cannot, therefore, hear her lightly spoken of without pain," Helen said, with much feeling.

A cutting retort trembled upon Mrs. Pimlico's tongue; but she all at once remembered that to exhibit feeling of any kind was unbecoming in a well-bred woman. She therefore contented herself with merely saying, in a cold voice,

"I never admired your aunt; you must not, therefore, be offended, if I give my reasons for not liking her."

Mrs. Pimlico was a thorough-bred woman

of the world. She was a lady, in the conventional sense of that term, and belonged to that portion of society which passes not over one jot or tittle of the law of etiquette. All were judged by one unvarying standard. No matter how virtuous, how high-minded, how self-sacrificing for the good of others, any might be, they were looked upon by her as unfit to mingle in "good society," if they were detected in any deviation, through manifest ignorance, from the social statute. An instance or two of her rigid adherence to conventional rules, will illustrate her character.

"I want to introduce you to Mr. Lionel, my dear," said Mr. Pimlico to her one evening, while they were in a large company.

"You must excuse me, Mr. Pimlico," she replied, drawing herself up with dignity. "He is not a gentleman."

"Mr. Lionel not a gentleman!" said her husband, in surprise.

"No. Didn't you notice him at Mr. Elmwood's dinner party eating fish with a knife. Who ever heard of such a thing? And worse than that: when asked by Mr. Elmwood to carve a turkey, he actually pushed back his chair, and stood up to it!"

Mr. Pimlico said no more. He knew his wife well enough to understand that she was in earnest.

On another occasion she refused to be introduced to a gentleman, because, at a dinner

arty, in handing his plate to a waiter, he had laid his knife and fork straight, instead of crossed, upon it; and, after concluding the meal, instead of placing his knife and fork in parallel lines *beside* his plate, he had been so vulgar as to leave both knife and fork crossed *upon* his plate. The lady who presided at the table on the occasion, was likewise voted by her as not a well-bred woman, because she used a knife instead of a spoon to serve a cocoa-nut pudding, which all know resembles a pie, and is so treated for convenience by nearly every one. The suspicion of want of clear pretensions to gentility in both herself and husband was corroborated in various ways. As, for instance, the carving-knives placed by the dishes containing fowls were not short-bladed, and of the peculiar construction required—the dessert-knives were of fine polished steel, instead of silver; and, worse than all, steel forks were actually placed *beside* each plate, as well as silver ones, thus providing for that most vulgar practice, the use of a steel fork as a fork, instead of a silver one as a spoon, or a scoop-shovel.

Her only daughter, Helen, had resided for four years in the family of Mrs. Pimlico's brother, who lived in the city where she had been sent to a celebrated seminary for young ladies. How far, in thus permitting Helen to reside from home for so many years, Mrs. Pimlico had been governed by a simple re

gard for the good of her child, we cannot pretend to guess. She was a proud, cold-hearted woman of fashion—one who esteemed herself better than others, just in the degree that she possessed a more minute knowledge of the too frequently arbitrary rules of etiquette, and observed them with undeviating precision. Her sister-in-law, Mrs. Godwin, as the reader has already learned, was no favourite with her, although she had been willing to let Helen remain an inmate of her family for four years. The reason of her want of a very affectionate regard for Mrs. Godwin, grew out of the fact of their characters and ends of action being diametrically opposite. *Pride* ruled the one—*Principle* the other. One was ambitious of being considered a thorough-bred woman in high life—the other of doing good. The one thought of herself, and sought to be courted and admired—the other was humble-minded, seeking not her own glory, or the praise of men, but striving to bless all around her by kind acts, kind words, and cheerful smiles. Like oil and water, therefore, they could not mingle.

Helen had completed her period of instruction and returned home about six months previous to the time of the opening of our story. It was not long before Mrs. Pimlico discovered that she was alarmingly deficient in those nice points of observance by which

a thorough-bred woman is at once distinguished. This was, to her, a source of great concern and mortification. Of the nature and strength of the principles that governed her, she thought but little. These were secondary to her external accomplishments. From the time of her return to her father's house, Helen's intercourse with her mother had not been pleasant to her. She had lived long enough with her aunt to become familiar with and to love higher and nobler ends than those which govern a mere woman of fashion, such as she discovered her mother to be. And as she was ever violating some unmeaning rule of so-called propriety, and meeting the penalty of censure, without being sufficiently conscious of wrong to repent and amend, her days passed far less happily than those which had been spent with her aunt, where some precept of true wisdom, or some living expression of true affection, marked each peaceful hour. Still, she loved her mother, and, for her sake, strove to act by line and rule. But the impulses of a warm and generous heart—the habit of thinking little of herself, and of being governed by the rule of right under all circumstances,—were constantly leading her into some little act or other that provoked a maternal rebuke.

CHAPTER II.

"I'm really afraid this walk will be too much for you," the mother of Lizzy Malcolm said, looking into her daughter's pale face, as the latter came down from her chamber, dressed to go out, and accompanied by her sister Jane.

"Oh no, Ma. I feel quite strong this morning—and the day is so fine. We will walk slowly, and then sit a good while at Mrs. Pimlico's. I promised Helen Pimlico that I would see her to-day."

"Well, go along, child—but take care of yourself. Over-fatigue may throw you back again, and keep you confined to the house all this fall and winter."

"Don't be uneasy, Ma. I'll take good care of myself," Lizzy said, smiling, as she turned away.

The day, though bright, was cool for the season. Lizzy Malcolm had not walked many squares before she felt a good deal fatigued, as well as chilled by the cold, penetrating atmosphere. She had miscalculated her strength. By the time they reached Mrs. Pimlico's, she was so faint that she had to lean against the door for support, while her sister rang the bell.

"I cannot stand a minute longer, sister," she said, after they had rung twice and waited for a good while; "I shall faint if they don't open the door soon."

Jane listened intently for a moment or two for the sound of some one approaching from within—then drawing her arm around Lizzy, and supporting her, she said, in a half-voiced tone—

"Come! The footman is probably asleep: And no one else dare open the door!"

As Lizzy descended the steps, and commenced walking, the change from a perfectly quiet, standing position, produced, temporarily, a healthier action of the vital functions, and threw the sluggish blood more quickly to the surface and extremities of the body, so that she had merely to lean heavily upon the arm of Jane, through which she had drawn her own on gaining the pavement, to be able to walk quite steadily. Still, she felt exceedingly fatigued and heavy in every limb, and, yet worse, had not gone far before a severe and blinding headach commenced, accompanied with nausea, to her too sure a precursor of a sick day.

"How do you feel now?" Jane asked, for the tenth time, in a concerned voice, after they had walked along for several squares.

"I feel very sick," was the reply. "Every little while a faintness comes over me, and I seem just as if I were going to fall to the

ground. I'm afraid I won't be able to keep up much longer. What shall I do? I wouldn't like to faint here in the street."

"We are not far now from Mrs. Henry's," Jane said. "Try and keep up—we will soon be there."

"Bless me! If there aint Lizzy Malcolm and her sister!" exclaimed the lady of whom Jane had just spoken, rising from her seat at the window of a richly furnished parlour. "I didn't know she had been out since her severe illness. How pale she looks! She is no doubt fatigued with so long a walk, and mustn't be kept waiting at the door an instant."

As she said this, Mrs. Henry stepped quickly from the parlour, where she had been conversing with a visiter of some distinction in society, and went to the street-door, which she opened and held in her hand until the two young ladies had ascended the steps and entered the hall. Lizzy was too much exhausted to speak, which Mrs. Henry instantly perceiving, she drew her arm around her and assisted Jane to support her into the parlour, which she had only time to gain before she sunk, fainting, upon a sofa. It was more than an hour before she recovered from this state of unconsciousness, and then she was too ill to sit up. Mrs. Henry had her removed to her chamber and bed, and Jane went home for her mother, who soon came

and, after consultation with Mrs. Henry, deemed it best to send for their family physician. The doctor found his patient with considerable fever, a strong tendency of blood to the head, and partial delirium. After prescribing as he deemed requisite, he advised the immediate removal of Lizzy to her own home, which was done. The cause of her illness, he said, arose altogether from over-fatigue, which had brought on what threatened to be a relapse into the disease from which she had so recently and but partially recovered. In this last fear, he was right. A long and painful illness was the consequence, from which she at last slowly recovered, but with, it was feared by both medical attendant and family, a shattered constitution.

During this sickness, Helen Pimlico visited the patient frequently. Her heart always smote her when she looked upon her pale face and emaciated form, and remembered that all this was in consequence of her having been permitted to go away from the door of her father's house, merely because it would have been, according to her mother's code, a violation of etiquette for any one to admit her but the waiter.

"If I must obey such rules to be called a lady," she sighed to herself as she left the house of the sick girl one day, "then I do not wish to be honoured by the empty title. I

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do not wish to be a lady—let me rather be a **WOMAN**—a true woman, like my Aunt Mary.”

On going home that day, she found that her mother had received a letter from her sister-in-law, informing her that she intended visiting Philadelphia in about two weeks, to spend a month or so in the city.

“Oh, I am so glad!” exclaimed Helen, clapping her hands with delight, and actually taking one or two bounds from the floor. But she stopped suddenly on seeing her mother’s look of surprise, rebuke, and mortification.

“Really, Helen, I’m discouraged!” said Mrs. Pimlico—“utterly discouraged! I did hope that my daughter would become a well-bred woman—a lady in the true sense of that term. But I am in despair. Your Aunt Godwin has utterly ruined you!”

“What have I done?” asked Helen, with a look of blank amazement. “I am sure I meant nothing wrong.”

“Who ever saw any one in good society enact a scene like that?—Jumping up and clapping your hands like a vulgar country hoyden! Will you never learn to practise that dignified repose, which is undisturbed by any intelligence?”

“Undisturbed by any intelligence! Would you have me become as immovable as a statue?”

“Yes, as immovable as a statue, rather than as agitated and turbulent as a monkey.”

Nature forcibly asserted her right, and caused Mrs. Pimlico to show a little—a very little—though still a well-defined, excitement, as she uttered the last sentence, thus exhibiting a gleam of the woman, shining through a crack in the conventional crust of good-breeding. She was conscious of this, and regained, by a well-timed effort, her calm and dignified exterior.

“A true gentlewoman,” she added, “never enacts a *scene* under any circumstances. News of the greatest misfortune that could befall her, is received with the same calmness and apparent indifference as the intelligence of some distinguished favour, or happy event. Her business is to be composed under all circumstances. This being one of the invariable standards by which she is known, there is no difficulty in distinguishing a lady from a mere ordinary woman. You, my dear, are not sufficiently composed. Suppose any one had seen you start up and clap your hands as you did just now at the bare intelligence that a woman like your Aunt Mary was going to pay us a visit, what would they have thought of you? It would have destroyed your prospects in life effectually.”

Helen could not understand how her expression of joy, at the news of her aunt's visit, even if it had been seen by others, was going to affect her prospects in life. But she did not say so, for opposition to, or questions

as to the correctness of, any of her mother's opinions, always grieved her. She, therefore, remained silent, while her mother gave her another of her long and tedious lectures on etiquette.

CHAPTER III.

MR. GODWIN, the brother of Mrs. Pimlico, was a lawyer of eminence, residing in a city some three or four hundred miles from that which had the honour of numbering his sister among the members of its most distinguished and fashionable coteries. He was a real gentleman, that is, one from the heart. And his wife was a real American woman, inside and out. Both were respected and loved in the circle of true refinement and intelligence where they moved. Not for their calm, cold exterior—not because of their strict observance of every nice law in the code of etiquette—but for their genuine good-feeling towards all, that never permitted them to say or do anything to offend good sense, real good-breeding, or virtuous principles. Mrs. Godwin, like Mrs. Pimlico, went much into company, and sought, like her, positions of influence. But, with what different ends! While the artificial gentlewoman sought

praise and glory, she sought to inspire all around her with elevated sentiments and correct principles of action. While the former looked for deference to herself, the latter forgot herself in her efforts to make others pleased and happy. Thus it was, that a principle of good will to all made Mrs. Godwin a lady; while pride and self-love gave to Mrs. Pimlico merely the external semblance of one.

The residence of Helen with her aunt and uncle, had been a blessing both to them and to herself. They had no children of their own. Their love for her was, in consequence, of a tenderer character than it otherwise would have been. In the few years that she spent with them, her mind expanded rapidly in its advance to maturity; and they had the unspeakable pleasure of guiding and protecting this expansion—of seeing Helen's character taking that true form which distinguishes the real woman from the conventional lady. In parting with her, they found that they had loved her even more tenderly than they had imagined;—that she seemed so much like their own child, as to make the separation, which was to be a permanent one, deeply painful. During the few months that had elapsed since her return home, a regular correspondence had been kept up between Helen and her aunt, in which the former had hinted only vaguely at her mother's exces-

sive deference to the nicest social forms, too many of which were, to her, perfectly unmeaning. But, enough was apparent to one so well acquainted with Mrs. Pimlico's peculiarities as Mrs. Godwin, to make her fully aware of the trying, if not dangerous, position in which Helen was placed.

"I really think we shall have to make your sister a visit," Mrs. Godwin said, one day, about six months after Helen had returned home. "I cannot tell you how much I desire to see our dear Helen."

"That will hardly be possible," Mr. Godwin replied. "Three or four hundred miles is a long journey. And just at this time my business requires close attention."

Mrs. Godwin sat, thoughtful, for some time, and then said in a quiet, but serious voice,

"Apart from the pleasure it would give me to see the dear girl again, I think duty really calls upon me to make some sacrifices for her sake. She has been with her mother for about six months of the most critical portion of her life. We both know, too well, the false standard she sets up, and the pertinacity with which she will seek to make Helen square her conduct by that standard; instead of guiding her into the living principles of right conduct in life, from which flow, as a pure stream from a pure fountain, the highest forms of social intercourse — those which have governed the best, the wisest

and the most refined men and women of this or any other age. Helen is young, and, we know, loves her mother tenderly; and we cannot tell how the latter may insinuate into her mind her own false notions, and cause her to act from them. If she had not entrusted Helen to our care for so many years, thus throwing upon us the duty of guiding her opening mind, and sowing there the seeds that are to spring up and produce fruit in after age; and if Helen were not now of a rational and therefore individually responsible age, I should deem any act that looked to the destruction of her mother's peculiar influence over her, as decidedly wrong. But we have a certain responsibility in regard to her. It fell to our duty to implant good seed in her mind, and now, it seems to me that we would be blameable if we did not do our best to prevent evil seed from being sown, and springing up in luxuriant vegetation, to the weakening or extermination of the good. Does it not so present itself to your mind?"

"Perhaps you are right," Mr. Godwin said, thoughtfully. "But what can you do by a mere visit of a few days or a few weeks, to counteract the daily and hourly influence of her mother?"

"Not much, if Helen have already yielded herself up blindly to her influence. But this I don't believe to be the case. I think she is still struggling against mere prescription, and

seeking to discover the good and the true in every thing. I do not propose to myself to take any distinct counter-positions to her mother—to array myself in open opposition to her, in her own sphere of action; but to strengthen and sustain Helen by my example—to let her come within the attractive impulses of another and a different sphere. If still firm in her love of principles in action, my presence for a little while may be of great use to her. If she is wavering, I may be able to exhibit to her a truer standard than the one about to be adopted.”

To this Mr. Godwin did not reply for some time. At length he said—

“You are right, Mary. If, in the order of Providence, it become our duty to sow good seed, we ought, as far as it is in our power, to seek to water that seed, and protect it, as it springs up, from poisonous plants. In the present case, we cannot do much; nor would it be right to attempt to do much. But I think you had better make my sister a visit, and spend a few weeks with her. It will not be in my power to accompany you. But you can go alone.”

“I would rather not go alone,” Mrs. Godwin said, looking up into her husband’s face with a glance of affection. “I am not a favourite with your sister, and shall not feel comfortable unless you are along.”

"I wish it were in my power to go, Mary, but it is not at this time. I have two or three cases on hand that require my attention. But the end which you propose to yourself is one involving a serious duty. If we set out to act from right principles, we will sometimes be required to do violence to our feelings. But this you have already learned."

"True. Then you think I ought to visit Philadelphia, even if I have to go alone?"

"I do. If I can possibly leave home at the termination of your visit, I will come on for you."

This matter decided, a letter was written to Mrs. Pimlico, announcing that her sister-in-law would be in Philadelphia in a few weeks. The receipt of this letter, as has been seen, occasioned some little excitement in the minds of both the mother and daughter. The former was really not much gratified by the intelligence; while the latter was in ecstasies that it required all her self-possession to control.

CHAPTER IV.

“YOUR aunt will be here to-day, Helen,” Mrs. Pimlico said to her daughter, a few hours before the time at which Mrs. Godwin was expected to arrive. “And I shall expect to see you conduct yourself, when she makes her appearance, with a due sense of propriety. Do not offend me by any vulgar excitement, with exclamations and embraces like a stage-actress. Receive your aunt as every *lady* receives even her dearest friend—with calmness and dignity. A smile, a gentle salutation, and a quiet pressure of the hand, constitute the true mode. To deviate from these materially, is vulgar in the extreme.”

Helen was silent. She felt that it would be utterly impossible for her to follow the prescription of her mother. She loved her aunt with a fervent love; and when she thought of meeting her so soon, she could with difficulty keep back the tears of joy. She knew that, when she did appear, she could no more refrain from throwing herself into her arms and weeping with intense delight, than she could still the pulsations of her heart by an effort of the will.

“Remember,” resumed Mrs. Pimlico, seeing that her daughter made no reply, and

guessing pretty correctly the reason, "that if you do not govern yourself by my directions, I shall be deeply offended. You have now arrived at a woman's age, and should act like a woman—not like a young and foolish school-girl."

"But suppose, Ma, I shall not be able to govern myself? I love my aunt, for the affection she so uniformly showed me through all the time I was a member of her family; and when I meet her, I do not see how I can refrain from expressing all I feel. Is it wrong to feel for my aunt both gratitude and affection?"

"No, I suppose not."

"Then, if it be not wrong to *feel* this, how can it be wrong to *show* it? My aunt has always told me that the natural expression of a good affection cannot be wrong—that, in fact, unless good affections are allowed to come out into ultimate action, they will perish."

"Your aunt, I have before told you, is not governed by the rules which belong to good society. She knows nothing of them. If you persist in making her antiquated notions a standard of action, you will soon be driven to the circumference of the circle into which I am striving to introduce you. So far from this rule of feeling coming out into action, being true, at least for well-bred women, the very reverse is the fact. A true lady never

exhibits the slightest feeling on any occasion. She has, at least to all appearance, no feelings whatever."

"Then, it seems to me," Helen said, "that a woman and a lady are two different things."

"Undoubtedly!" was the reply of Mrs. P'mlico. "Women are to be met with in every circle, but a lady is of rare occurrence."

Poor Helen was deeply disturbed by this conversation. Her mother's doctrine she could neither comprehend nor approve. The truth of all Mrs. Godwin's precepts had been fully apparent. They accorded with her own rational perceptions; but her mother's code of ethics and rules for conduct in society, were, to her straight-forward, ingenuous mind, wide deviations from true grounds of action. The last, positively uttered axiom, decided her to keep silence, and endeavour, for her mother's sake, to be as composed as it was possible for her to be when her aunt should appear. A few hours brought the trial of this composure. Her aunt came at the time she was expected to arrive. A carriage, with baggage lashed on behind, stopped before the house, and, in a moment after, the bell was rung loudly.

"Oh! There's Aunt Mary!" exclaimed Helen, springing up, and moving quickly towards the door.

Her name, uttered in a firm, reproving

tone, and a steady glance from Mrs. Pimlico made her pause, and then slowly retrace her steps and seat herself in the spot from which she had arisen, her heart throbbing heavily. The street-door soon opened—there was the sound of quick footsteps in the passage—and, in a moment after, Mrs. Godwin entered. Mrs. Pimlico rose with quiet dignity, and advanced to meet her.

“Sister Mary, I bid you welcome,” she murmured, in a calm, yet sweetly-modulated voice, taking the hand extended by Mrs. Godwin, and bending to salute her.

“Aunt Mary!” said Helen, coming towards her, not with a quick, eager movement, but with forced composure. She could do no more than utter the beloved name. Her heart was too full of joy repressed by her mother’s presence. The effort to give utterance to that joy would have destroyed her self-control.

“My dear Helen! How glad I am to see you!” Mrs. Godwin exclaimed, starting forward a few paces to meet her niece, and extending her arms to embrace her.

For a single instant, Helen struggled with her feelings, and then, with the tears of joy gushing from her eyes, she flung herself upon the bosom of her beloved relative, and wept and sobbed like a child.

Of course, such an exhibition of feeling was an outrage upon Mrs. Pimlico.

"Helen!" she said, somewhat sternly, so soon as the maiden's emotion had subsided; "your conduct is altogether unbecoming a daughter of mine. I have told you over and over again, that to enact a *scene* is highly improper. No well-bred woman ever suffers herself to be betrayed into any such vulgarities. Why will you oblige me to allude so frequently to these matters? And why mar the pleasure of your aunt's visit by compelling me to reprove you during the first few minutes that have passed since her entrance into my house?"

"Helen, it seems to me, has done nothing worthy of reproof," Mrs. Godwin said, after her niece, whose heart was too full to utter a word, had hastily retired from the room, and she had gone up with Mrs. Pimlico to the chamber assigned to her. "I saw only the natural expression of innocent and amiable feelings—such as I should encourage, rather than check, in a child of mine."

"Such things may do well enough for ordinary people, sister Mary," Mrs. Pimlico replied, with much dignity of tone and manner. "But I wish to make Helen a well-bred woman, and well-bred women never exhibit any feeling."

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Godwin.

"Because," was the reply, "well-bred people understand so thoroughly the true philosophy of life, that they never permit anything

that occurs to disturb them. The news of the loss of a pointer, or the loss of an estate, is received with like composure by a man of true breeding. And a gentlewoman exhibits, on all occasions, the same absence of excitement. True dignity resides in calmness. To be disturbed by every event, marks the weak and vulgar mind."

"Suppose, however, you are really disturbed by an event?"

"Conceal that inward turbulence, by all means. Assume a virtue, if you have it not," Mrs. Pimlico said, dogmatically.

"Then, to indulge a wrong feeling is nothing. The evil lies in permitting it to be seen. The form is rendered of more consequence than the substance. The cause is of secondary consideration. It may be suffered to exist, if the effect can be concealed. I cannot believe such a philosophy to be the true one. It seems to me to strike at the foundation of all real virtue. It would make a community of hypocrites."

"That is because you have not a just idea of what is meant by a well-bred woman. She need not be a hypocrite. Let her, as she really should, be internally unexcited, no matter what may transpire. Excitement does no good—then why indulge it? It ever, as I have said, marks a vulgar mind. Events take place independent of our control—why fret about them, if adverse? or suffer them to

betray us into a school-girl's excitement, if prosperous or happy?"

Mrs. Godwin did not reply to this for some moments; then she said—

"I can see little in all this, but the pride of being thought what we are not. As you have justly said, it is the assumption of a virtue that does not exist. You and I, and every one around us, even the most well-bred stoic, in appearance, that there is, know too well, that the interior calmness you would assume, does not, and cannot exist in this life. We are, in reality, creatures of excitement. We have joy to-day, and grief to-morrow. Now swell in our bosoms emotions of pleasure, and now we are oppressed by pain. All these have their natural language, and, unless suffered to speak out in some degree, will act injuriously on mind and body. A striking fact in illustration of the injurious effects of suppressed emotions upon the body is given in some medical reports to which my husband called my attention recently. Army surgeons who have seen much service on the field of battle, state, that a much larger proportion of French than English soldiers who are wounded in battle, recover. The first are not ashamed to cry out and groan, and writhe their bodies from pain; while the latter think it unbecoming and unmanly to exhibit any strong indications of suffering. The free expression of the pain of body and an

guish of mind they feel, which is but the natural language of suffering, being orderly, tends to health; while the suppression of all external signs of what is felt, being a disorderly and constrained state, tends to internal congestion of the vital organs, and consequently, renders the condition of the sufferer worse by many degrees."

"But I cannot see how this applies to, or condemns exterior calmness in ordinary life."

"It is a strong example, illustrative of a true principle; and applies, I think, with much force to the moral condition of society. If, from the mere pride of exterior composure, all natural emotions be subdued, it cannot but happen that violence will be done to the mind, as in the case of the soldier it was done to the body. Men and women, who thus suppress, from no higher ends than to appear what they are not, the natural language of the feelings, may, perhaps, stifle all really good and generous emotions—may become cold and heartless—but they will find, in the end, when these external motives cease to influence them, that the surface of their lives can be ruffled—not by the gentle summer breezes, but by the chilling blasts of a dreary autumn. Depend upon it, the life you would have your daughter live is a false life—and its consequences will be lamentable. Violence is never done to nature, that she does not react upon that violence, sooner or later

with pain. It is true of the body, and just as true of the mind, from which the body exists, and which employs the body as its medium of communication with the visible things of creation in the material universe. Do not, therefore, rebuke in her what is innocent and orderly. If she feels a generous affection for any one, let it appear in the tone of her voice, the brightening of her eye, and even in warmly-spoken words, for these are innocent. If she be in pain, let her weep—it will do her good. Let the internal excitement that is innocent, come into external manifestation and pass off—then it can do her no harm. Imprison this excitement, and it will be in her bosom like a hidden serpent.”

But Mrs. Pimlico neither understood nor approved Mrs. Godwin's mode of reasoning. Her replies were only repeated declarations of the social doctrine, that excitement was vulgar, and never indulged by a well-bred woman. Pride was her rule, and this never listens to the claims of mere Principle.

CHAPTER V.

THE rebuke which Mrs. Pimlico gave Helen for her want of lady-like composure, instead of producing the desired effect, only caused a more violent, though different kind of excitement. On leaving the presence of her mother and aunt, she retired to her room, and there gave way to a fit of weeping, which agitated her whole frame. It was fully an hour afterwards before she could so command her feelings as to venture to make her appearance. And even then marks of tears were upon her cheeks, and her face wore a sober, subdued expression. She found her aunt alone in the parlour.

“I promised myself so much happiness, dear aunt!” she said, with a trembling voice, and suffused eyes, “in seeing you again. But the last hour has been one of the most wretched in my whole life. My mother’s doctrine may be true, but if it is, I, for one, cannot live up to it. Such violence to my feelings would kill me. Tenderly do I love my mother, and often do I feel like throwing myself into her arms, and shedding tears of affection upon her bosom—but I dare not do this. Nothing would offend her more

than such a want of decorum, as she would call it."

To this, Mrs. Godwin hardly knew what to reply. She did not think it right openly to condemn the mother's unhealthy notions of external conduct to her child; and yet, she felt it to be her duty to impart some strength to one who saw the truer way, and wished to walk in it, and who looked up to her eagerly for words of encouragement. Before she had time to reply, Mrs. Pimlico entered. In a few minutes after, visitors came in. They were a Mr. and Mrs. Glandville, who stood among the first in the most accomplished and intelligent circles in the city. They had a son and daughter, both of age, and both favourites in society. The son was a very handsome young man, and a thorough gentleman both exteriorly and interiorly. Mrs. Pimlico had often thought of him as the man of all others whom she would rather see the husband of Helen. And she had not scrupled to use all the little arts in her power to draw Albert Glandville's attention towards her daughter. Helen's want of true refinement annoyed her particularly on this account. Albert was a thorough-bred gentleman, and could not, of course, tolerate, for a moment, vulgarity in a wife. And yet, it could not be concealed. Helen was extremely vulgar and remained so in spite of

all Mrs. Pimlico's efforts to give her the true polish.

When Mr. and Mrs. Glandville were announced, Mrs. Pimlico was, at least internally, much disturbed. They were people of social rank, and thorough good-breeding, while Mrs. Godwin was only a common woman; and yet she must, of necessity, introduce her to them, and as her sister-in-law. This she did, with the manner that became a lady, and soon an interesting conversation was entered into with Mrs. Godwin, whose intelligence, sweet temper, and sound sentiments, charmed both of the visitors. How they were affected by the presence of Helen's Aunt Mary, their conversation on leaving the house will indicate.

"Really," said Mr. Glandville, with warmth, "that Mrs. Godwin is a charming woman. It is a rare treat to meet such a one, so different from your cold, artificial ladies, of whom Mrs. Pimlico is the representative."

"You express my own thoughts," Mrs. Glandville replied. "How simple, and yet how charming are her manners! There is a summer warmth about them. And her face—did you ever see a countenance that expressed so much? It was ever varying to the play of her thoughts and feelings, and gave a peculiar force and charm to her animated conversation. I could not help

marking the contrast between her and Mrs. Pimlico—the peculiar calm, lifeless manner of the latter never appeared to me in such an unfavourable light. She is a well-bred lady. But Mrs. Godwin is one by nature.”

“Mrs. Godwin is the aunt with whom Helen has lived for the last few years, I believe?”

“Yes. And what is more, her character is evidently formed upon her model, rather than her mother’s. Did you not observe with what a pleased interest she listened to her aunt’s conversation, and how coldly and strangely she looked at her mother when she spoke?”

“I did observe something of the kind. And no wonder. There was substance in form in what was uttered by the one—and form without substance in what was uttered by the other.”

“A just distinction, indeed,” remarked Mrs. Glandville. “Glad am I that we have not a preponderance in our best circles of such artificial women as Mrs. Pimlico; who are, at best, the mere apes of good-breeding, of which they talk so much. Women who estimate the standing and worth of another by the way she uses her knife and fork; the peculiar manner in which she enters a room; or by her use of the words *street door* instead of *front door*—or, *going* to a party, instead of *attending* a party. Deviations in these

unimportant matters are rank outrages against social etiquette, and considered offences heinous enough to exclude any one from the, by them considered, charmed circle."

"No doubt, then, Mrs. Pimlico esteems you a very vulgar woman," Mr. Glandville said, smiling, "for you asked her if she would attend the concert next week."

"Did I, indeed! How unfortunate! I am really afraid I shall lose caste!"

"And worse than that, you were so much of an American as to say *cotillion*, instead of *quadrille*!"

"True! So I did! Well, I trust to be forgiven this time, if I mend my manners in future. I must be more on my guard. I find no difficulty in being kind and considerate towards all I meet, for then I act as I feel. But I cannot always remember the nicer shades of arbitrary observances; though to sin against these is esteemed, by far too many, much worse than to pick a pocket."

Mr. Glandville smiled at this remark, and then changed the subject.

CHAPTER V.

ON the day but one following that on which Mr. and Mrs. Glandville had called, notes of invitation came from them to Mr. and Mrs. Pimlico, Helen, and Mrs. Godwin, asking the honour of their company for an evening in the coming week. The appearance of these gave Mrs. Pimlico both pleasure and pain,—pleasure, because Helen would again be brought into the company of Albert Glandville; and pain, lest Mrs. Godwin's want of true polish should so disgust the Glandvilles, as to cause them to avoid an alliance with her daughter.

Under the influence of these conflicting emotions, the time passed until the appointed evening. During that period, the mother was instant in season and out of season in endeavouring to instruct Helen in the most refined shades in the law of social etiquette appertaining to evening parties—nor did she omit to give Mrs. Godwin certain hints as to proper conduct on such occasions. But these were altogether lost, for Mrs. Godwin had mingled in good society as well as she, and understood well enough how to conduct herself, though her code was based upon a principle of good-will towards all, and a desire to please in order to benefit; while Mrs. Pim-

lico was influenced merely by the pride of being thought well-bred.

When the time finally arrived, the little family party was kept an hour later than Mr. Pimlico, who was a man of good sense and good feelings, deemed it right to go, because Mrs. Pimlico could not be persuaded to appear before ten o'clock. Well-bred people, she said, never went before ten. At ten, punctually, their carriage set them down before the beautiful dwelling of Mr. Glandville. A few minutes afterwards, they entered the already crowded rooms, crowded with the "best-bred" people of the city, where, according to a certain writer, "purity of blood" is the passport into the first circles. Unfortunately for Mrs. Pimlico, the crowd was too great for her to exhibit the perfect grace and propriety with which a lady should enter a drawing-room—and fortunately, she thought, too great for her vulgar sister-in-law to attract attention. As for Helen, she felt constrained. She had been lectured so much during the week, and had heard so much of the absolute importance of a certain well-bred ease, and a strict adherence to certain forms and observances, that her freedom was entirely gone. She felt awkward, and, what was worse, acted awkwardly. This, the watchful eye of her mother did not fail to perceive, and its real, though not apparent, effect was to disturb her deeply, notwithstanding her doctrine

that a real gentlewoman, as she esteemed herself, should have no feeling.

Their entrance was soon perceived by Mrs. Glandville, who took especial pains to introduce Mrs. Godwin to the "first people," who had honoured her with their company. The fact that she was the sister-in-law of Mrs. Pimlico, gave her instant attention; and it was not long before she formed the centre of a select group of ladies, each of whom Mrs. Pimlico considered among the first in social rank. This put the latter, well-bred and perfectly composed under all circumstances, as she was, on, as it is very vulgarly said, nettles. She trembled for the disgrace that must inevitably fall upon her family.

"Mrs. Godwin seems to be already a favourite," said Mr. Glandville, coming up to Mrs. Pimlico, whose sensitive nerves would not permit her to make one with the group surrounding her sister-in-law. It was enough for her to know that she was disgraced, without being compelled to witness every shade and variety of that disgrace.

To the remark of Mr. Glandville she hardly knew what to reply. It was evidently meant to relieve her mind, though uttered with the full consciousness that Mrs. Godwin was not a fit woman to mingle in the polished circle he had invited to his house.

"My sister-in-law is a very excellent person in her way," she said, after a momentary

embarrassment, "though no one is more fully aware than myself of her ignorance in regard to those social accomplishments that mark the well-bred woman. I trust, however, that—"

"But, my dear madam," interrupted Mr Glandville, with some surprise in his manner, "you do Mrs. Godwin injustice. If I am any judge, I would pronounce her as perfect a lady as is here to-night. I have met no one for a long time who has interested me so much as she has done. Combined with a high degree of intelligence, she unites manners charmingly natural, and in genuine good taste. She is a woman who thinks and feels, and, what is best of all, thinks right and feels right. She is, at this moment, delighting every one around her."

This relieved, and at the same time chagrined, Mrs. Pimlico. She was relieved to think she was not disgraced, and chagrined that Mrs. Godwin was really eclipsing her. At the instance of Mr. Glandville, she joined the pleasant circle of which Mrs. Godwin was a prominent member. The conversation had just taken a personal turn, which was resumed, as soon as the formalities attending Mrs. Pimlico's presence had been observed. The personality of the conversation merely consisted in an allusion, by a lady, to Lizzy Malcolm, who was present, and still bore traces of her recent illness.

"How pale and feeble Miss Malcolm

looks," was the remark that turned the current of thought into a new channel.

"Yes," was the reply, "very pale and very feeble. She has suffered much in her recent illness, which had nearly proved fatal."

"She had a relapse, I believe?" said one.

"Yes," replied the first speaker, "and it was that which had well-nigh cost her her life."

"By the way," said another, "I have heard a curious story in connection with this matter, which I can hardly believe; and yet there are some people who are weak enough, and ignorant enough, to do anything. It is said that she had recovered from her first attack, and ventured out one fine day to make a call at some distance from home. When she arrived at the house where she had proposed to make her visit, it appears that the waiter was asleep, or out of the way, and she rang the bell in vain. Both the lady and her daughter, upon whom the call was made, saw her at the door, and knew that she had been ill, and was very feeble. But neither of them would open the street-door for her, nor suffer a female servant to do so, because that would have exposed them, so they imagined, to the suspicion of being mere vulgar people. Before the waiter could be found, the almost fainting girl had to leave the door, and with trembling steps, a fluttering pulse, and a sudden blinding pain in the head, attempt the

almost impossible task of wending her way homeward. A few squares of the distance had been accomplished, when she fortunately thought of a friend who lived near where she was. As she drew near to the lady's house, who stood really higher in the social circle than the other, she saw her from her window. Knowing that Miss Malcolm had been recently ill, and perceiving instantly that she walked with feeble steps, she ran to the door, opened it herself, and, meeting her half way down the steps, assisted her to ascend them, and supported her into her parlour, upon gaining which she sank, fainting, upon a sofa. It was the relapse brought on by that over-fatigue, that so nearly terminated fatally."

"Is that really true?" asked Mr. Glandville. "I heard something of it before, but thought it an idle story. I did not believe that any, claiming to be ladies, could have acted so little like the character to which they aspired."

Mrs. Pimlico, as may well be supposed, found it a very hard task to maintain perfect external composure while such remarks were made, and she the real subject of them. In spite of all she could do, the blood mounted rapidly to her face.

"There is no question of its truth," said one, "for I had it from Lizzy Malcolm herself. She would not tell who the ladies were only one of whom, however, was to blame.

The daughter, she said, was anxious to go to the door and admit her, as she had since learned; but her mother positively interdicted so ill-bred an act as answering the bell in place of the waiter."

"It is really inconceivable," Mrs. Godwin remarked at this stage of the conversation, "how any one can make so gross a mistake as that, while striving after true external conduct. To be a lady, is not to be tied hand and foot by a set of rules as immutable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. A true gentlewoman is one who never thinks of rules, much less talks about them, or regulates by them her conduct. She regards the happiness of every one, and, in her social intercourse, perceives instantly what she ought to do or say in order to avoid offending or injuring others; while, at the same time, she seeks to make them pleased with themselves, and all around them. Her movement is not in one unvarying orbit. Her conduct, always upright and governed by principle, is never alike to every one. She accommodates herself to innocent prejudices, and makes liberal allowances for defects of education in all with whom she comes in contact; ever looking, primarily, to uprightness of character, rather than to external accomplishment. In a word, a true lady is governed in all her actions by this high consideration—this purest law of etiquette—*Is it right?* What others

may think of her, or how others may estimate her, never enters her thoughts. *Is it right?* decides all doubtful questions."

"Happy indeed would it be, if all around us were governed by such a law!" said Mr. Glandville, with warmth. "Then we should not have had our ears pained by the recital of so gross an outrage upon good-feeling, good-breeding, and every generous impulse of the human heart, as that just alluded to!"

As Mr. Glandville uttered this sentence, he fixed his eyes upon Mrs. Pimlico, not with design, but more by accident than anything else. He was surprised and startled to see her look of pain and confusion, and the sudden crimson mantling her face. The truth instantly flashed upon his mind, and he paused in deep embarrassment. All eyes were instantly turned upon Mrs. Pimlico, and all understood, in a moment, that she was the one who had acted with such singular folly. The first impulse of Mr. Glandville was to apologize; but what could he say? Before he could recover himself, however, Mrs. Pimlico arose in an agitated manner, and swept hurriedly from the room. Here was a *scene!* and the perfect gentlewoman, Mrs. Pimlico, the chief actor! The members of the little circle in which a place was made vacant by her sudden withdrawal, looked at each other for a moment or two in mute surprise. Mrs. Godwin was deeply pained by this sudden

and unlooked for exposure of her sister-in-law. Her position was embarrassing in a high degree. She was, however, the first to break the oppressive silence, by saying, in a calm, quiet voice, as she arose to her feet—

“I must, of course, follow my sister, and leave with her, if such, as I presume it is, be her intention. We cannot blame her for being deeply hurt at what has been said, although all are, I am assured, alike innocent of any intention of singling her out, and wounding her feelings by harsh and censorious remarks. The circumstance may be a lesson to us all, teaching us the danger of alluding to acts of unknown persons, in promiscuous assemblies.”

As Mrs. Godwin gracefully bowed to the group of ladies, and turned to leave them, Mr. Glandville came to her side, and, offering his arm, conducted her from the drawing-room, expressing, as he did so, his deep and painful regret at the circumstance which had just occurred, and assuring her of his entire ignorance of the fact that Mrs. Pimlico was the individual to whom allusion had been made.

“When we deliberately purpose to wound another’s feelings,” Mrs. Godwin said, “then we are to be censured. But where an act is done with no such intent, and the injury could not have been guarded against by ordinary foresight, we are to suppose that the circum-

stance has been permitted to occur for some good end. I have no doubt that such is the case in the present instance. The violent shock my sister's feelings have sustained, will, I trust, give her clearer views in regard to her social duties. If this be the result, none of us need blame ourselves very deeply."

"I think not," Mr. Glandville replied, a good deal relieved by the calm, philosophical way in which Mrs. Godwin alluded to the unpleasant subject. By this time, they had gained the apartment to which Mrs. Pimlico had retired. She was already more than half-attired for departure.

"May I trouble you to ask my husband to step here," she said to Mr. Glandville, with remarkable self-composure, considering the little time that had passed since the unpleasant scene in the drawing-room.

Mr. Glandville bowed, and withdrew in silence to fulfil her request. To Mr. Pimlico he briefly explained, as well as he could, the unpleasant circumstance, and then went in search of his wife, to whom he communicated, more comprehensively, the incident that had occurred so inopportunistically. Mrs. Glandville was much disturbed. She attended, however, the offended lady, and endeavoured to prevail upon her not to leave so abruptly, but without effect.

"You are not going without Helen?" Mrs.

Godwin said, as Mrs. Pimlico moved towards the door.

“The carriage can return for her,” was the reply. “If you will remain, and accompany her home, you will oblige me.”

Mrs. Godwin readily assented to this arrangement, greatly to the satisfaction of Mrs. Glandville, who was charmed with her manners, as much as her husband had been with her conversation.

“Helen must not be informed of this,” she said, as she drew her arm within that of Mrs. Godwin, and descended to join the company. “Her mother will hardly allude to the subject herself, and, as Helen is innocent in the matter, though in some sense an actor, I do not think her feelings should be wounded by a knowledge of what has occurred to-night.”

“From my heart I thank you for that kind thought and kind intention,” Mrs. Godwin said. “Of course that dear girl is innocent. She has been like a daughter to me for the last four years, and I know her to be as different from what that act would represent her, as day is from night. If ever there was a lovely disposition, hers is one. And with her sweetness and innocence, there is a force of character, and a love of the truth for its own sake, rarely to be found. There are few, Mrs. Glandville, so worthy of esteem and love as Helen Pimlico.”

"I believe you," was the simple, but earnest reply, as the two entered the crowded rooms below.

"I shall have to scold Albert a little, I'm afraid," Mrs. Glandville remarked, in a laughing way, to Mrs. Godwin, as the two moved amid the gay throng. "See! He is still monopolizing Helen. And that I don't think quite fair, particularly as he is in his own house, and therefore bound to be more general in his attentions."

Mrs. Godwin smiled, but made no reply. She had heard her sister-in-law, more than once, allude to Albert Glandville in terms of as warm approval as she allowed herself to bestow on any one. This had rather tended to prejudice her mind against him, than impress her favourably. The discovery that his father and mother were well-bred in the genuine senses, tended, however, to modify her almost involuntary opinion, and caused her to feel a glow of pleasure at the remark of Mrs. Glandville, which plainly indicated that her son was more than ordinarily pleased with Helen.

"Martin," said Mrs. Glandville, a moment after, to a young man whose side she had gained, "you see Albert and Miss Pimlico, there?"

"I do," was the smiling reply, accompanied by an arch look.

"Very well. I want you to ask Helen to

dance with you in the next cotillion. Do you understand?"

"O yes! Perfectly."

"And you will do it?"

"Of course I will. The fact is, Albert has not acted fairly in monopolizing, as he has done, the sweetest girl in the room."

"Come, come, Martin, that won't do. Such distinctions, openly expressed, and especially to a partial mother, are out of place. Remember, that I have a daughter in the room."

The colour rose to the young man's face, as he replied quickly—

"Pardon me, Mrs. Glandville. I spoke but half in earnest. Still," and his voice was serious, "there is no disguising the fact, that Helen Pimlico is a lovely girl. Lovely in person, mind, and manner; although to me not half so lovely as——"

The name was spoken in a tone so low that it was heard only by the ear for which it was intended.

"Hush, Martin! You are forgetting yourself all around," Mrs. Glandville returned, pleasantly. "But go, and do as I wish you. Let me see you in the next set with Helen for your partner."

The young man gave a smiling assent, and turned away towards the part of the room where Albert and Helen were standing.

All this passed while Mrs. Godwin was by

the side of Mrs. Glandville. Of course she heard the whole conversation.

“Your niece is quite a favourite, you see,” the latter remarked, as the young man she had addressed moved away. “And, let me add, deservedly so. Even my own son is so far forgetting himself, as to be negligent of his attentions to others, in the pleasure he derives from her society. This cannot but be gratifying to you, who love her so well.”

“To me it is doubly gratifying,” replied Mrs. Godwin. “The attentions she wins are but a just tribute to her real worth. To see them bestowed is very pleasant. But the gratification I feel has a deeper source. My aim, in all my instruction and example, has been to imbue her mind with those genuine graces, which, when they flow forth into external life, are lovely far beyond any mere artificial accomplishments that can be given. I have constantly striven to give her the spirit of those external graces that make our conduct in life beautiful to be seen. Opposed to this, since her return, has been her mother’s system, of which I have heard much during my visit. A rigid adherence to fixed and arbitrary forms, without a thought of anything beneath them, is the all-in-all of this system. I have been told, that no one is received into good society who is not *thus* refined—the outside of whose cup and platter is not thoroughly clean. What is inside it seems is of little

or no importance. But I have seen and heard enough this evening to satisfy me that in your higher circles there prevails a just appreciation of those external beauties of conduct that spring spontaneously from an overflowing good will to all, united with a refined taste, and an intellect highly cultivated."

"And ever may such an appreciation of internal worth remain," replied Mrs. Glandville. "Mere rules of etiquette are for those, and those alone, who have no innate perception of how a lady or gentleman ought to act in social intercourse. For such, these are necessary, and an observance of these rules makes them tolerable. Without them, they would give offence to good taste on all occasions."

"The evil is, that they are so often substituted for the real gold," returned Mrs. Godwin. "The counterfeit passes current with far too many, who cannot tell the real coin from the spurious;—who are dazzled with the gilded surface of the one, while they turn away from the less showy but genuine exterior of the other."

"We have far too many of the class you designate," Mrs. Glandville said, in reply to this. "But their number is, I believe, fast diminishing. Good sense is becoming daily more fashionable. We have among us men and women, whose standing gives them con-

sideration, who dare to think for themselves, and to act for themselves independent of all arbitrary forms, or the dictates of any mere prevailing custom. These exert a silent, but powerful, and salutary influence. In a few years, I trust that a mere servile imitation of the foreign man and woman of fashion will be esteemed a disgrace in American society;—that, to be well-bred, will mean to be a gentleman and lady in heart. But I must not, in thus discoursing of what is right in external deportment, forget that all here require attentions alike.”

As Mrs. Glandville said this, she led Mrs. Godwin to a group of ladies, presented her, introduced a subject of conversation, and then turned away to see that others of her guests were enjoying themselves as well as these.

The young man whom Mrs. Glandville had called Martin, soon had Helen Pimlico for a partner, not much, however, to the satisfaction of Albert Glandville, who, in spite of himself, felt stupid the moment he found it incumbent on him to make himself agreeable to other young ladies. Although he had already, danced twice with Helen, he watched for the opportunity of asking her to be come his partner again, so soon as the cotillion in which she was engaged to Martin should be finished. But he was not quick

enough. Her hand was secured before he could make his way to her side. And so it continued throughout the evening. He was not again favoured with her as a partner either in dancing, promenading, or at the supper-table. He could not conceal from himself that he felt strangely dull, and that it required his utmost efforts to compel himself to be agreeable to other young ladies.

As for Helen, she was pleased with his attentions, but in no way disappointed when others asked her hand in the dance, or lingered with pleased interest by her side. Her young heart beat in unison with the happy circle of which she made a part. It was a festive occasion, and she entered into it with a glad spirit.

CHAPTER VI

Mrs. PIMLICO returned home silent and gloomy. She had not taken half a dozen steps on leaving the little circle whose free expression of opinion upon her conduct had excited and wounded her, before she was painfully conscious that she had forfeited her claims to being well-bred, by enacting a *scene*. The manner of Mr. Glandville satisfied her that he was innocent of any intention of insulting her. There was, therefore, no excuse for her loss of self-possession, which she ought, as a lady, to have maintained under all circumstances. The consciousness of this painfully mortified her, even more than the censure that had been passed upon her conduct. What she had done, had been done in accordance with the requisitions of a law of etiquette. She had acted in obedience to that law, and there rested her justification. Still, there was a common-sense truthfulness about Mrs. Godwin's remarks, which had been received with evident satisfaction and full assentation by all who had heard her; and among these were those who stood high as exponents of true social laws. The fact that they approved these sentiments, gave

them a force in her mind, far above what the mere annunciation of them by her sister-in-law could possibly have had, especially as they were strongly condemnatory of her conduct, which was merely the offspring of pride. These facts awoke in her mind conflicting thoughts, with suddenly awakening doubts as to whether she were not, in her eager desire to be a thorough-bred gentlewoman, actually violating the real principles from which every lady ought to act.

Thus mortified, pained, and perplexed, did Mrs. Pimlico return to her home, after leaving the brilliant and happy company at Mrs. Glandvilles. The fact, that her sister, of whose vulgarity she had been ashamed, should have made such a favourable impression, and have been pronounced by one whose opinion in such matters none would think of questioning, a genuine lady, stung her a good deal, more especially as she had not attracted any attention at first, and had been finally condemned by all who had expressed an opinion, as having acted in most gross violation of lady-like principles.

In silence she rode home — in silence entered the house — and in silence retired to her chamber and her bed ; but not to sleep. Her mind was in a tumult, that seemed less and less disposed to subside, the more her thoughts dwelt upon the events of the evening. For, the more abstractly and intently she reflected

upon what had taken place, and pondered over what had been said, the less satisfied did she become with herself. Every now and then a truth, opposed to her peculiar notions of things, would gleam up distinctly in her mind, contrasted with her opposite views, and cause her heart to bound with a quicker pulsation, and the blood to burn upon her cheeks. The consequences of her conduct towards the Misses Malcolm, much as she tried to persuade herself that she had acted right, too palpably demonstrated the folly of making arbitrary laws superior to common perceptions of right. But what tended partially to dash the scales from her eyes, was the fact, that, while she had built so much upon a strict adherence to form, under all circumstances, the very persons whom she had supposed equally tenacious with herself, did not hesitate to declare, that the internal spirit of kindness to all was superior to the mere dead external. That they were right, some remains of common sense plainly told her, although she but half believed this kind of vulgar testimony.

On the next morning, she met Mrs. Godwin and Helen, with perfect self-possession, and with her usual calm manner. The latter was entirely ignorant of the reason of her mother's withdrawal from the party. In fact, she was not aware that she had gone home until about to go herself, and then the remark

that her mother had wished to leave at an earlier hour, satisfied her. Mrs. Pimlico avoided any allusion to the previous evening; and Helen, fearful that some breach of propriety had been observed by her, shunned any allusion herself, lest a rebuke and lecture should follow. As for Mrs. Godwin, she was too much of a lady to touch upon any subject that she knew would give another pain. The party at Mrs. Glandville's, was, therefore, by tacit consent, an interdicted subject. Much to Helen's relief, the day passed without any allusion to the Glandvilles, or any rebuke for violated laws of social intercourse.

On the fourth day, a good deal to Mrs. Godwin's surprise, the carriage was ordered, and Mrs. Pimlico gave notice that she was about to call upon Mrs. Glandville, and wished her sister-in-law and Helen to accompany her. They went, of course. Mrs. Pimlico met Mrs. Glandville, and even her husband, who happened to be at home, with the most perfect ease and self-possession—sat for some ten or twenty minutes, conversing freely all the while, and then returned to her carriage with Mrs. Godwin and Helen, and proceeded to make several other calls, and, among others, upon one or two of the ladies who had made so free to condemn her conduct. With these she was as self-possessed as she had been at Mrs. Glandville's, and interchanged with

them the compliments of the day, and entered into the passing gossip of the hour as freely as she had ever done before.

At all this, Mrs. Godwin was somewhat surprised. She could not but admire the perfect acting of Mrs. Pimlico, which involved a most powerful effort of self-control. Few women could have so admirably sustained a part in life as difficult to perform; but pride was a powerful motive in the breast of Mrs. Pimlico, and carried her safely over the trying effort to break down the barrier that her own want of self-possession had thrown up. But, from that time she was a changed woman. Conscious that she had carried her rigid practice of rules of conduct to an extreme that had attracted toward her annoying attention, and stirred up in the minds of even the most fastidious a question as to the superiority of form over substance, she deemed it but prudent to take an unobtrusive course, and thus suffer matters quietly to come back to a state of equilibrium. Satisfied in her own mind that Helen knew all about the occurrence at Mrs. Glandville's, she avoided saying anything further to her about the observance of all the arbitrary forms of an over-strained etiquette; and, in a little while, her daughter began to feel more freedom, and to act with the ease, grace, and propriety so natural to her. This was a source of much gratification to Mrs. Godwin.

A few weeks passed away, and the time for Aunt Mary to return home arrived.

"I am no doubt a little selfish," she said to Mrs. Pimlico, a few days before her departure; "but I cannot help wishing to rob you of Helen, even though she has been with you so short a time. Don't you think you could spare her for a month or two, or three?"

"I hardly know what to say, about that," was the somewhat indifferent reply of the mother, who had given up all idea of gaining Albert Glandville for her daughter's husband, since her own unfortunate blunder. "You must sound Mr. Pimlico on that subject. I don't know what he will say. But, as far as I am concerned, if it is Helen's wish, I shall not object to her return with you for a short time."

Mr. Pimlico, after some reflection, consented, and much to Helen's delight, she learned that she was, once more, even though for but a short period, to become a member of her aunt's quiet and well-arranged household.

CHAPTER VII.

"It seems that we are going to lose Helen Pimlico, just as we have become so well acquainted with her as to admire her for her elevated character and simple manners, and love her for her purity of heart," Mrs. Glandville said, one evening, after the tea things had been removed, and the family had assembled for social intercourse.

"How so?" asked her son Albert in a voice that betrayed some surprise and disappointment, and a good deal of interest.

"Mrs. Godwin called to-day, and mentioned that Helen was going to return with her and spend a few months in B——," replied Mrs. Glandville.

"I wish her aunt were her mother," Albert said, half to himself, yet aloud.

"Why so, my son?"

The young man looked up with a slight air of confusion into his mother's face, and said—

"Because, her aunt is a real lady, while her mother is only one in appearance, and not always even in that, as much parade and pretension as she makes."

“But what has that to do with Helen?” asked Mrs. Glandville, looking steadily at her son.

“Oh! as to that—it’s a pity for any young lady not to have a true gentlewoman for a mother, that is all,” Albert returned, smiling with recovered ease and self-possession.

“So I think myself,” Mr. Glandville remarked. “But a good aunt is an excellent substitute in the case, especially if a niece have the privilege of residing with her, even for a short period. I am glad Helen is going home with her aunt, even if we do lose the pleasure of her society. She is better with Mrs. Godwin than with her mother.”

“Perhaps so,” was the rather absent reply of Albert Glandville, who had thought a good deal more about Helen in the last few weeks than he cared that any one should know.

Mr. and Mrs. Glandville exchanged quiet, intelligent glances with each other, and then changed the theme of conversation.

On the afternoon of the next day, Albert Glandville went into his mother’s room, and seating himself by her side, asked, in a voice intended to be careless and unconcerned, but which, nevertheless, was far enough from being so,

“What do you think of Helen Pimlico, mother?”

“Why do you ask, my son? Or rather, in what that respects her do you wish my opinion?”

“O, of nothing particular. But what is your general opinion of her character? Do you think well of her? But I needn’t ask that, for I know you do. What, then, do you —I mean—that is——”

“Nonsense, Albert! Speak out like a man.”

“Well, then, to speak out like a man, as you say—I have taken quite a fancy to Helen. What do you think of that?”

“I can’t say that I much wonder at it. Everybody is pleased with her, and it would be a little strange if you formed the exception.”

“But I am particularly pleased with her. That is, pleased with her in a particular way.”

“Are you indeed!” Mrs. Glandville said, with a smile that set the young man’s heart at rest as far as she was concerned. “But, are you not aware,” she resumed, with affected seriousness, “that Helen is not the pink of good-breeding? that she betrays, at times, the fact that she has a heart warm and generous?”

“I am well aware of that defect, or peculiar merit, just as you please to consider it. She certainly is not quite so high-bred as her

mother; but as society is fast degenerating in this respect, it won't matter a great deal. Her want of true polish will not attract very marked notice. Seriously, however, I wish to consult with you, as my mother, in regard to Helen. I have never seen any one whose character has so pleased me; nor any one whose person and accomplishments so won my admiration. There is something so pure about her feelings, and something so chaste and appropriate in all she says and does, that I never meet her without being charmed. Tell me, then, in a word, how you would like to have her for a daughter?"

"Then you are really serious in this matter?"

"I am indeed."

"I know of no reason, my son," Mrs. Glandville said, "why I should make the slightest opposition, so far as Helen is concerned. I love her already almost as tenderly as if she were my daughter. Her mother, however, does not please my fancy, altogether. Her outrageous violation of true lady-like conduct in the case of Lizzy Malcolm and her sister, I can neither forget nor forgive."

"I have thought of all that," replied Albert, "and found it hard to get over. But it seems to me scarcely right to visit the mother's sins upon the child."

"It certainly is not. And if you are willing to tolerate Mrs. Pimlico, I, of course, ought not to object. But Helen is going to leave us, as you are aware, in a day or two."

"I know that. And this is why I have introduced the subject to you just at this time."

"Do you wish to prevent her going?"

Albert paused some time before he replied. He then said—

"No—I believe I do not care to do so. I will let her go, and then think more seriously of the matter. If my mind retains its present preference, I will write to her, and thus ascertain how far my regard is reciprocated."

Mrs. Glandville fully approved this course.

"In her aunt," she said, "she has a perfect pattern. You need have no fear for her, while under the roof of Mrs. Godwin. Indeed, seeing that matters have taken this turn, I cannot but feel glad that Helen is going to spend a few months with her. She is just now at that age when her habits and principles are beginning to harden into permanent forms. The moulding hand of Mrs. Godwin will be everything to her."

"You are right," the young man returned. "Let her go. It will be best for her in any event."

A few days afterwards, Helen parted with her father and mother, and went back to her old home. To the father, this was a strong trial. The short period that had elapsed since his daughter's return, after having completed her course of instruction, had served to make him better acquainted with her character, and the affectionate sweetness of her disposition, than he had ever been. But he was a man of sense, and saw that his wife was not the one to bring to a healthy maturity Helen's rapidly developing mind. In Mrs. Godwin he had full confidence; and for the sake of his child, he was willing to make some temporary sacrifices. As for Mrs. Pimlico, she deemed all hope of making an impression upon young Glandville at an end. Helen, she could not conceal from herself, was becoming less and less refined every day, according to her standard. That calm, dignified exterior under all circumstances, which was so essential to a well-bred woman, it was too lamentably apparent Helen did not possess. She had feelings, and what was more, let those feelings too often express themselves in appropriate language. Under these circumstances, she was rather pleased than otherwise, at Mrs. Godwin's proposition for Helen to return with her. In parting, some natural emotions were felt, but nothing in the expression of her countenance, or tone of her

voice, betrayed them. She was still resolved to be a lady, even if she had, once in her life, been betrayed into the enactment of a *scene*.

About three weeks after Helen had become again a member of Mr. and Mrs. Godwin's family, her uncle handed her, one evening, when he came in from his office, a letter, directed in, to her, an unknown hand. She broke the seal, and, glancing at the signature, perceived the name of Albert Glandville. A quick throb of the heart sent the blood to her cheeks, and produced a slight agitation. Perceiving that she had lost her self-possession, she arose and retired to her chamber, there to read her letter alone. Of its contents, we need say but little, except that it contained, among other things, a direct offer of marriage. Neither need we present Helen under the various aspects of a pondering, consulting, and finally consenting maiden. Matters like these are better left to the reader's fancy, who will dress them according to his or her own taste.

No less surprised was Mrs. Pimlico, a few weeks afterwards, to learn from her husband that a formal application had been made to him for the hand of their daughter, by Albert Glandville. She could hardly credit the fact. It seemed improbable that so highly polished and refined a young man could prefer Helen,

of whose defects in regard to external accomplishments, no one was more conscious than herself, even if she were her mother.

But the early return of Helen, and the subsequent brilliant marriage festivities, finally expelled all doubts. And while, as a mother, she could not help feeling deeply gratified at the event, yet, as a lady, she was compelled to mourn over the melancholy declension that had taken place in regard to those high-bred usages that so palpably distinguish the true gentlewoman from the mere *parvenue*. Had this not been the case, a woman like Mrs Godwin could never have eclipsed one so refined and polished as herself; nor could her conduct in the case of the Misses Malcolm have been so broadly condemned; and last, though not least, in these palpable evidences of declension, a man of Mr. Glandville's standing, polish and pretensions, would never have chosen her daughter for a wife, if a strange disregard to well-bred forms had not begun to prevail in society to an alarming extent!

All these plain indications of a change, were, to Mrs. Pimlico, sources of deep regret. As a high-bred woman, she felt her power and influence. No one possessed a more minute knowledge of social forms in fashionable life than herself. And no one could act them out with more ease or grace-

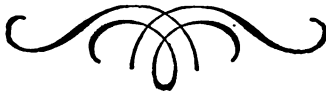
ful self-possession. But to act the lady from genuine good-will towards all, and in doing so, even to vary from prescription, and know how to do so without compromising the conventional lady, was a task too hard for her. Any woman of fine feelings could, at this rate, be a lady, and that she was not prepared to admit. A lady, in her eyes, as she had often said, was something far above the woman—yea, even above the Christian. There were a few who considered her a perfect exponent of her own doctrines, and not without cause, as the reader will be able to determine from what he has already seen. And now, he will, doubtless, be able to determine for himself the question—**PRIDE, OR PRINCIPLE. WHICH MAKES THE LADY?**

THE END.



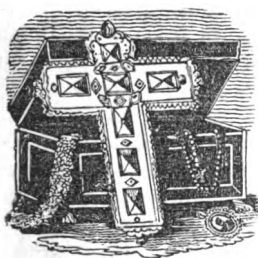
FAMILY PRIDE,

BY T. S. ARTHUR.



FAMILY PRIDE.

CHAPTER I.



HERE are but few persons in the city of B——who do not recollect that ancient pile of buildings which once stood on the northern suburb, just beyond what was formerly called ——'s Orchard. Embowered

amid branching sycamores and tall poplars, the home of the pauper presented an appearance both imposing and attractive. Not until after its sad, life-wearied inmates were removed to their more splendid home at C——, did I enter its halls and chambers. I cannot soon forget the emotions that were called up, as I passed from cell to cell, and from room to room, in which was no sound but that of my own echoing footsteps;—nor the multitude of thoughts that crowded upon my mind. Within those time-worn and crumbling walls, how many a victim of unrestrained passions, of the world's wrong, had closed up the history of a life, the details of which would thrill the heart with the most painful sympathy! And

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numbers of these were of my own city; and of those who had once moved in brilliant circles of wit, of talent, of fashion. The impressions then made, the thoughts then called into activity, have never passed away. While engaged in business, one of my customers was an old man who had been for years employed about the Alms-House. He was intelligent, and much given to reminiscence. The incidents about to be related are founded upon his narrations, and will be given as if detailed by him to the reader. And if they awaken in the heart any emotions of human kindness, the writer will not have woven in vain the many-coloured threads of human life into a tissue, with forms and figures, whose actions may be seen and read of all. But I will step aside, and give place to one whose narration, I doubt not, will hold the reader in bondage to intense interest.

I never was disposed to indulge in gloomy reflections on my own destiny. To me, every thing in external nature has, all my life long, worn a smiling face. And, as I have never desired the blessings which others have received at the hands of a bountiful Providence, my state of mind has been that of contentment. But no one can live in this world without feeling "a brother's woe," and many a heart-ache have I had, and many a tear have I dropped, over the misery of others. My

station at the Alms-House made me familiar with wretchedness in a thousand distressing forms; but did not touch my feelings with the icy finger of indifference. Motherless babes were there, and old men tottering upon the brink of the grave. And both were wretched. The first, just entering upon the world, orphaned by death or desertion, unconscious of their sad condition, and yet miserable from neglect. The others, numbering the last grains in Time's hour-glass, and looking back in dreary wretchedness over the rough and thorny paths of a mis-spent life. No fond mother can tell, when a child is born unto her, and she clasps it with a thrill of maternal delight to her bosom, what will be its future destiny. How often have I looked at the old men and women, at the middle-aged and the young children, who crowded that last refuge of the indigent and distressed, and said musingly to myself: "Little did she dream, when the small piping cry of her new-born babe touched her ear, that her child would ever be in this company!" More than all did I pity the babes that were brought in. The Alms-House is no place for infants. Hired nurses, with a dozen or two of children to attend, are not usually possessed of many maternal feelings; and, even if they were, what woman can properly minister to ten or twenty babes? Little kind nursing did they get. Lying upon their backs for

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hours, , many of them did nothing but moan and cry, during all their waking moments. But more than two-thirds of all the little ones that were brought in speedily found rest from their troubles. I was always glad when it was said—"another child is to be buried." Few visits did I make to their apartments. I could not better their condition, and I did not wish to witness their sufferings.

Those of all ages and sexes, and from all conditions in life, were there. And in each face was written, in lines too legible, characters that told of hereditary evils. Sin and misery are united as one. They are joined in inseparable union. The sure price of transgression is pain. But I will not weary, by giving way to the tendencies of age—a disposition to moralize. The young reader looks for active life.

Standing one day upon the small porch that led into the entrance of the building on its northwest front, I observed a common wood-cart driving up the avenue, and went down to the gate to open it, in order to let the vehicle pass. As it was driven in, I saw that it contained a female, who was seated upon the bottom of the cart, leaning against one of the sides, with her head resting upon her bosom. Although her garments were worn and faded, and her face entirely concealed, I instinctively felt that she was one who had fallen from some high place in so-

ciety. I never liked to see such coming into our institution, and could not help the passage of a shade of sadness over my spirits. When the cart stopped before the main entrance to the buildings, I went up to the side of it, and touching the woman, who did not lift her head, or make a motion to rise, said in a kind way—

“Let me assist you to get down, madam.”

“Ha!” she said, in a quick voice, suddenly turning her face toward me. It was a pale, thin face, but full of womanly beauty. Her large, dark eyes seemed to flash, and the point of light in each was as bright as the ray of a diamond. I was startled for a moment by such an apparition. But recovering myself, I said again,—

“Let me assist you to get down, madam; you are at the end of your journey.”

“Ha! ha!” she laughed, with an expression on her countenance of bitter irony. “I should think I was. But what is this?” looking up at the time-worn structure in the shadow of which we all were,—“where am I?”

“This is the Alms-House, ma’am,” I replied.

“The Alms-House!” she said, clasping her hands together and looking up, with a face convulsed and still paler,—“Merciful Father, has it come to this?”

Then, covering her eyes with her hands,

and bowing her head again upon her bosom she seemed lost to all consciousness of the presence of any one.

“I’ll bring her out for you, Mister, in less than no time,” said the carter, a stout Irishman, at the same time making a motion to seize hold of her feet, and drag her down to the bottom of the cart. This I of course prevented. Taking the commitment from him, I pretended to examine it very minutely, for the purpose of giving the poor creature time to recover herself. After a few minutes, I said to her in a mild, soothing voice—

“You will have to get out here, ma’am. Let me assist you. You shall be kindly treated.”

She made no reply; but rose to her feet, and, giving me her hand, allowed me to help her down. Mechanically she accompanied me into the house, and, after her name was registered, she was given over, without having uttered a word more than the necessary replies, to the matron.

“Who is this woman? Do you know?” I said to the carter, as I paid him his fees.

“Faith, then, and I don’t know nothing about her. Only I heard somebody say, as I drove up the street—‘If there ain’t General T——’s poor daughter Emily, in that cart!’”

“It can’t be her, surely!” said I, “for she gave her name as Mrs. Watson.”

“That don’t matter at all, sir,” said the

Irishman. "Names are plenty in this country."

"Who sent her here? Where did you take her from?" I asked.

"As to who sent her, that is more than I can tell. Them that did it seemed anxious enough to have her taken away from off the steps of a big house in York street, where she had seated herself, and wouldn't be persuaded to move. I had to take her up in my arms, and put her into the cart by main strength."

"General T—— lives in York street, does he not?"

"Yes, I believe he does. And now I mind me, it was on his very door-step she was seated."

"Then, I suppose, she is no other than his unhappy daughter."

"I suppose so," responded the carter, indifferently; and, cracking his whip, he dashed away, leaving me to my own thoughts.

CHAPTER II.

IN the course of a day or two, I learned from the matron that Mrs. Watson was no other than the accomplished and once brilliant Miss T——, who had been, some ten years before, the bright particular star of the fashionable hemisphere in our city.

Among the many suitors who flitted about her, was the son of a rich merchant named Darwin. This young man had received his education in one of the first institutions in the country—was accomplished and highly intelligent. He soon won upon a heart not easily affected—a heart that had withstood already many well-directed assaults. Between General T—— and the father of Darwin, had long existed the warmest feelings of friendship and both were interested in seeing their children united by marriage.

Nearly a year had passed since Darwin became pointed and particular in his attentions to Emily, but he could not determine to propose for her hand. He found no objection to her existing in his mind, and yet there was a something that held him back. Others had yielded up the field to him; and, urged by a principle of honour, he felt the reluctant and opposing spirit growing stronger and stronger within him. The quick instinctive perceptions of one like the daughter of General T——, were not long in detecting the aberration of her lover's affection, and all of her woman's pride was roused into indignation. After taking counsel of her own thoughts, and debating the question for some days, she determined to satisfy herself of his lukewarmness, and then to throw him off indignantly. On the evening after this resolution had become fixed, Darwin came to see

her as usual. She seemed to him greatly changed; to be colder and more reserved.

"You appear thoughtful to-night, Emily," he said. "You are not wont to be serious."

"Nevertheless, I must own to being in rather a sober mood to-night," she replied, fixing her bright black eyes upon his face, with an earnestness that showed her determination to read his very thoughts, if possible.

Darwin did not understand, and felt strangely uneasy under their searching expression.

"May I presume to ask the cause why Emily T—— is in so unusual a mood?" he said, with forced playfulness.

"Are you conscious of possessing the right to ask me such a question, Edward Darwin?" she said, again looking him so searchingly in the face, that his eyes fell beneath her gaze.

"I claim not the right to know your thoughts, Emily," he replied, seriously. "I asked you lightly."

"And you never will have the right, sir!" she said, with a sudden, passionate energy, her eyes flashing as she spoke. "You have been trifling with me too long, Edward Darwin. But that is past. Now we will understand each other. Do not interrupt me," she continued, seeing that he was about to speak; "I must be heard first. Did you think that I could not detect the insincerity of your at-

tentious? You mistook, sir, the woman with whom you were trifling, day after day, week after week, and month after month. From this hour I reject your false attentions. From this hour we meet, if we meet at all, as strangers. I will neither forgive nor forget the insult you have offered me, nor the violence you have done to my feelings;" and rising to her feet, she made a movement to retire.

"We part not thus!" he said, rising also. "Your hasty resolution, Emily, has cut me off from the power of showing the sincerity of my regard. You have rejected me, in anticipation. It is well! And I submit, without a murmur or a word of reproach. But I will say that my regard for you has been sincere, my esteem unbounded."

"Your regard! Your esteem!" she said, quickly interrupting him, while her lip curled in indignant scorn.

"Yes, and my love—" but he could not utter the word. She knew what he would have said, and understood the cause of his hesitation. Turning instantly away, she glided from the room, and he was left alone with his own perplexed thoughts and agitated feelings. For a moment he stood irresolute; then ringing the bell, he directed the servant who answered the summons to request General T—— to afford him an interview. To him he detailed, in a few words, the scene

that had just occurred; and then, without waiting for a reply from the astonished and confounded father, left the house.

Three months after, Edward Darwin led to the altar a lovely maiden, and claimed her for his bride. She was in every way the opposite of Emily T——, and her disposition harmonized more perfectly with that of the man who had chosen her from all her beautiful companions. She was not so imposing and brilliant as Emily, nor so much under the influence of strong passions. The one was the mountain stream, now sparkling and glancing in the bright sun-beams, and now dashing over some barrier with ungovernable power,—the other was the gentle rivulet, winding through green, quiet meadows, or gliding along, in light and shade, far down in the bosom of some lovely valley.

Early upon the evening that was to witness the happy union of Edward Darwin and his lovely bride, Emily T—— was seated in her own chamber, her head leaning upon her arm, that rested upon a small table. An observer would almost have taken her form for that of a statue, with drapery of free and perfect arrangement. But, within, all the elements of her mind were in wild commotion. She had loved Edward Darwin—deeply, passionately, fondly loved him. And when, in obedience to the dictates of a proud indignation, she had cast him off, the effort

to do so had well nigh unseated her reason. Nor were all her struggles to hate and despise him successful. His image, that she would fain have blotted out from her memory, still held its place; and the sound of his voice still echoed through the inner chambers of her heart. Three months had wrought wonderful changes, externally as well as internally. Her full, blooming beauty had passed away, and her large bright eye lighted up her thin pale face, that bore the expression of concealed but wearing internal sorrow.

She had sat thus, motionless, for some *twent* minutes, when suddenly the door opened, and her mother entered. Mrs T—— was a woman of tall stature, with a proud carriage, and an expression of hauteur and conscious superiority in her face. This evening her countenance was lowering, and she seemed agitated by contending emotions.

“Are you not going to Darwin’s to-night?” she asked, in a quick voice, approaching the table at which Emily sat, and looking her steadily in the face.

“No, mother, I am not!” was the prompt and positive answer.

“Emily! You have disgraced yourself, and the whole family, and nothing will wipe it out, but your presence at Edward Darwin’s wedding to-night. You have been invited, and you must go.”

FAMILY PRIDE

"It is no use to urge me, mother, I cannot go. It would break my heart!" and she allowed her feelings so far to overcome her, as to burst into tears.

"Shame! shame on you, Emily! Have you not a drop of your mother's blood in your veins, nor a spark of your mother's spirit? Did you not cast off Edward Darwin as unworthy of your love, and will you let the world see that you have repented? Where is your pride? where is your woman's true dignity? Your father is ashamed of you, and deeply mortified at your conduct since Edward was so hastily rejected."

"Spare me, mother! In pity spare me!" replied the daughter, in a mournful tone. "I miscalculated my strength when I resolved to cast off Edward Darwin. I would do anything to gratify you. But not that, mother—not that!"

"Emily, your father will be satisfied with nothing short of your attendance at Mr. Darwin's to-night. He has ordered the carriage to be at the door by seven, and will accompany you."

"O, mother!" said the distressed maiden, in a tone of deep despondency.

"Rouse yourself, Emily! Be a woman! Let no man who prizes not your love, see that you value him a jot. He is unworthy of you. In the strength of pride stand boldly up, and see him wed another. Even if your heart

should be breaking, let your face wear a smile of careless mirth! Be a woman, Emily! Prove yourself to be the daughter of one who has cast off a dozen suitors, nor felt a pang. What will the world say if you are not there? You have already made yourself the subject of remark by your weakness, and if you brave it all off *then*, you will regain your character. Come, there is no time to be lost."

Mechanically Emily arose from the table, and proceeded to dress herself for the wedding. With the active assistance of her mother, she was quickly arrayed in a style of costly elegance.

"But your cheeks are too pale, Emily," said Mrs. T——, surveying her with a look of pride.

"That is easily remedied," replied the daughter in a low voice; and soon, under the careful application of rouge and powder, her pale cheeks presented a natural and healthy bloom.

"That will do. Now you look like yourself," said her mother. "One thing more. The carriage has driven up, and it is full time for you to be away. Promise me, that you will be yourself to-night!"

"If I have the power within me to control my feelings, then, mother, I will do as you desire!" she replied, firmly; for she was beginning to rally herself. Her pride was coming to her aid.

Struggling against her feelings with all the energy of a proud spirit, now fully roused, from necessity, into firmness, she met her father, below, with something like a cheerful air, and in a few minutes was seated in the carriage. No words passed between them on the way. When the carriage stopped, her heart fluttered wildly for a moment; but, one brief struggle restored her self-control. With a light step, and a high bearing, she entered the rich and crowded apartments, and none who saw her face could detect the trace of a single hidden emotion of pain. The mask she had assumed was one of perfect concealment.

The first shock of entering the house, which, of all others, she desired most to avoid, being over, her spirits gradually rose, and she found herself fully self-possessed. Her father watched her closely and anxiously, and soon ceased to fear.

Half an hour after they had arrived, it was announced that the nuptial ceremony would begin. Again her heart fluttered—but in an instant all was calm as the surface of a mountain-encircled lake. The crowd gave way, and, for the first time since the night of their painful interview, Emily beheld Edward Darwin, with the beautiful creature leaning upon his arm who was soon to be pronounced his bride. Again a thrill passed through every nerve, and again every emo-

tion was hushed into stillness. She stood close by his side while the imposing ceremony was progressing, and heard him promise to be all in all to another, without showing the existence of a single internal pang. And when it was over, no one congratulated the blushing bride with more seeming cordiality, or appeared on better terms with Darwin than she.

"I am pleased to see you in such fine spirits to-night," said Edward to her, on one occasion during the evening, when they happened to be thrown together.

"A happy time makes a happy company," she replied, smiling. "But I always enjoy myself."

"A cheerful disposition is a great blessing. You are favoured in that respect," he said.

"Yes, highly favoured. I endeavour always to be governed by a conscious sense of right, and then I have nothing to check the even and natural flow of my spirits. The secret of happiness is, to act from an obedience to reason, and not from a slavery to passion."

"There is, no doubt, much truth in your remark, Miss T——, but, how few of us can thus act! I, for one, must own that I have not yet learned that happy art."

"To each one is given, if he chose to exercise it, an internal power of self-control under all circumstances," she replied, looking him

steadily in the face. ‘ No one who chooses to command the strength that is a constituent of the mind, need ever be enslaved by passion, or held in bondage to feeling. I would lose my own self-respect, if I did not possess entire control over every temporary weakness of character.’”

Edward Darwin was puzzled. He had heard, of her as having secluded herself from society, and every report that had reached his ears, represented her as pale and emaciated—the image of distress. His heart had ached with every thought of her.—He could not forget, that, in their last interview, Emily had exhibited a powerful feeling of indignation; that she had declared, that, if ever they met, it should be as strangers. Now she seemed, intentionally, to throw herself in his way, and to exhibit a degree of cheerful self-possession that he could not account for. He felt, by no means, as easy in her company, as she seemed to feel in his. He inclined to the opinion that she playing a part, for he knew her to be a woman of strong mind. It was for its very masculine character that he had been unable to give her his entire affections. To her last remark he was about to reply, when some one proposed that Miss T—— should favour the company with a song. She was an exquisite performer, and had a voice of surpassing sweetness. This was known, and when she was led to the piano, all con-

versation was hushed, and every eye turned toward her.

At that time, the passion for overtures, waltzes, etc. had not banished from fashionable circles those touching old ballads, and sweet airs, that it is now considered almost treason to introduce. Even the school-girl's first and second lessons, "Days of Absence," and "Bonny Doon," were sung and listened to with emotions of delight. On taking her seat at the piano, Emily T—— paused but a moment, and then touched the keys in a prelude to the air "Their's na leuk about the house." Almost breathlessly did every one present listen to the rich, warbling melody of her voice, as she sung with unsurpassed skill and feeling the simple words of the song. Never before had Gen. T—— felt so proud of his daughter.

"Now give us 'Bonny Doon,'" said a lady, standing near her, as the lingering sweetness of her voice died on the ear, in closing the last line of the song.

Without hesitating a moment, Emily turned over the leaves of the music book, and then again let her fingers fall gently upon the keys of the instrument, before which she was seated. The first verse of the song was given with great tenderness of style. The tones of her voice were sweet and low, and trembled as from deep emotion. But when she commenced the second verse, it was evi

dent to all, that she was losing the command of her feelings. Her voice rallied with inconceivable power and sweetness upon the lines—

“Wi’ lightsome heart I plucked a rose,
Full sweet upon its thorny tree.”

But when she sung,

“But my false lover stole my rose
And left, alas! the thorn with me,”

It fell to a low, wailing sound, that brought the tears into every eye, and made every heart throb with a sudden and painful interest in the singer. In the pause that followed, there was a stillness as profound as if every human form had on the instant changed into a marble statue. This silence was broken by the exclamation—

“Merciful Heaven!” from a lady who stood near. In the next moment, Emily fell insensible into the arms of her father, who had sprung forward at the instant he perceived her condition.

CHAPTER III.

Without waiting for medical attendance, or even for the usual temporary efforts to restore fainting persons, General T—— had his daughter removed at once to his carriage, and taken home.—She showed no signs of re-

turning consciousness for several hours afterward. When the vital energies of her body again revived, it was many days before her mind was restored to any degree of activity; and, even then, it was painfully apparent, that it was with enfeebled powers.

For months General T—— and his wife made use of every means they possessed to dispel from her mind the gloom that pervaded it, and to rouse within her an activity that should restore the lost vigour of her intellect. To effect this, without exhibiting her sad condition in the circles where she had once been the centre, they removed temporarily to Washington City during the winter. Here she was dragged into company, and stimulated with fashionable excitement. This, with time, gradually changed her settled indifference to almost everything. She began to be something like her former self while in company, and to find, in dissipation, false fires to animate her. But it could not be concealed from her parents, that the bright star of her once brilliant mind no longer burned with a steady light. At times, clouds would come over and obscure its lustre. There was in her eye a constant unnatural wildness, and in her temper an unsteadiness, that could not be relied upon. A year or two, made no very great change in her. She still continued the victim of nervous excitement or depression.

Gradually her disappointed parents lost all interest in, or care for her. The obstinate disposition which she would at times exhibit, estranged them more and more, and when, finally, she married a poor man into whose company she had been thrown, while indulging an erratic propensity to visit at the houses of several neighbours of whom she knew nothing, they threw her off as an encumbrance. The man, whose greatest fault was idleness, had hoped to obtain money enough by her to enable him to live without labour, and with this hope he had persuaded her to marry him clandestinely. He was, by trade, a carpenter. With manners somewhat polished and a soft and winning address, he had succeeded in influencing the weak-minded girl to accept him. His name was Watson. The change from a rich and spacious mansion, to a very small house, poorly furnished, added to a peremptory refusal of her parents to see her or to communicate with her, startled her to a sudden and distressing sense of the rashness of an act which could not be recalled. Nor was her husband at all disposed to believe that, in gaining a wife, he had added very greatly to his stock of happiness, when he found that no money was to come with her, and that she possessed none of the qualities requisite for a poor man's companion. Let us look in upon them three weeks after their marriage.

The house they occupy, is a small two story house, without a passage. The parlour in front, has a neat, plain carpet on the floor, and contains, in the way of furniture, six windsor chairs, a table, a looking glass, and a pair of small andirons, enclosed on the hearth by a green wire fender. The back parlour is used as a sitting and eating room, and here we will find the *un*-happy couple; the tea things having been carried down into the basement kitchen, by a black girl, the servant, and in the middle of the floor stands a pine table, stained red. An old ingrain carpet covers the floor, and upon the mantel-piece are two high plated candle-sticks, in one of which burns a candle. A half dozen common chairs make up the completement of furniture.

Watson sits moodily by the table, upon which he rests his elbow and reclines his head upon his hands, His young wife, nearly in the same position, occupies a chair at the opposite side of the table. The eyes of both are averted from each other. The appearance of Mrs. Watson shows that she has been weeping, and the distressed expression of her face, indicates, that the cause of her tears is still active within. A deep-drawn sigh, and a sob that seems to force itself up from her heart, in spite of strong efforts to keep it down, causes her husband to make an uneasy and irritable movement. In a minute or so

they are repeated, and Watson can no longer refrain from speaking.

“I declare, Emily, I am out of all kind of patience with you! You’ve done nothing but sob and cry for a week. No mortal man can endure it!”

Hitherto, he had steadily endeavoured to soothe her distress, but the small share of patience which he possessed had become as he truly said from large draughts, entirely exhausted. His words roused up the stricken spirit of his wife, and something of her former fires were kindled within.—Lifting her head, she looked him steadily in the face, while her dark bright eye assumed an expression of wild defiance.

“What do you mean, sir, by such language to me?” she said, indignantly. “Is *this* the pleasant home I was promised?” glancing her eye around the small apartment, and upon the poor and meagre furniture, while her lip curled with a scornful expression. “You have deceived me in every way; and, now that I am cut off from my father’s house, and all its comforts and elegancies, I am to be denied the poor privilege of weeping over my condition! Let me tell you at once, sir, that I never have allowed myself to be trifled with, and never will.”

“Well, never mind, Emily,” he replied soothingly, for he was something of a quiet man, and had no wish to have his wife remain

many minutes in the passionate mood to which she had been roused; "I spoke rather warmly. But indeed I would feel much pleasanter, if I saw you more contented. Let us make the best of our condition, now, and, I doubt not, but that it will soon be bettered."

"And how are *you* going to better it, I should like to know? What more can *you* offer me, than this dog-hole, and a prospect of starving on ten dollars a week?"

"Many better people than either you or I, let me tell you, madam, have lived in a house no larger than this, and on ten dollars a week too!" retorted Watson, a good deal irritated at her remark in reference to the provision he had made for her, and which, in his idea, was very comfortable and genteel.

The eye of his young wife seemed to flash and her face grew dark from suffocating passion. Her lips parted in the effort to make some angry reply, when her shattered intellect yielded, temporarily, to the force of excitement, and she sunk to the floor, sobbing and crying hysterically.

Watson's angry feelings were instantly changed to alarm, and lifting the body of his wife, he carried her up to their chamber, and, by endearing words, and gentle manners toward her, endeavoured to soothe her agitation. After a long time she grew calmer, but took no notice of her husband. In vain

did he speak of his love, and of his willingness to make any sacrifice that would promote her happiness. She turned her face away from him, and neither by word nor gesture indicated that she even heard him.

It was two months from this time, before she again gave utterance to a word in his presence. Though her mind was somewhat impaired, yet neither her pride nor her passions were in any degree weakened; and as they were no longer under the steady control of reason, their influence over her was of course more potent. Neither the threats, nor entreaties, nor neglect of her husband could move her. Sometimes for whole days together she did not rise from her bed, and but rarely came down stairs. But, gradually, she became weary of her own perverseness, and showed some little disposition to recede from her state of moody reserve. This, her husband quickly perceived, and, although his angry feelings and indignation had been roused so high as to cause him seriously to think about abandoning her, his relief at finding that there was a prospect of change for the better caused him to make use of every kind attention toward her in his power. This had a good effect, and she soon recovered, in some degree, a more cheerful temper though still there was a shadow upon her feelings. Unexpected by her husband, she began to busy herself about the house, and

to take an apparent interest in the management of its internal and economical arrangements. He could not but exhibit the pleasure he felt at this change, and this manifested pleasure gratified her, and caused her to increase in her domestic attentions, and to study in many ways to add to his comforts. Thus were they drawn to one another, and something like true affection kindled up in their bosoms. She seemed to forget the condition in life from which she had fallen. Her little world appeared circumscribed to the interior of her own dwelling, and beyond this she never appeared, even if her thoughts wandered away from its quiet confines. For a few times her husband urged her to go out with him, but he soon ceased to do so, for he saw that she was always disturbed by such requests.

The wild turbulence of her temper did not again break out. There was a subdued and quiet air about her, that was ever sad, unless when her husband was present, and then there was a visible effort to appear cheerful and interested for his sake. She was beginning to entertain for him a tender affection, and gradually her feelings became intensely interested in him. At the end of a year a babe blessed their union. A new fibre of Emily's heart was touched, and a new emotion given. She was a mother.

And now the couple so ill-assorted at first,

began to be happy in each other. The even-going temper of Emily's mind for so long a time, and the absence of all causes for false excitement, had tended in a good degree to strengthen it, and to give her distinct perceptions. She was beginning to see what was right, and to choose rationally. Still, she felt no inclination to go out, and steadily avoided doing so, although from so long a state of confinement, her health was beginning to suffer.

CHAPTER IV.

NEARLY four years from the time Emily left her father's house had passed away, and in that time she had not yet suffered herself, from inclination or persuasion, to venture upon the street. Her babe had changed to a little girl of three years old, that all day long played about her mother, and with its innocent prattle made music for her heart. Mr. Watson, from a mere journeyman carpenter, had commenced business for himself, and, being a pretty fair draughtsman, had made several very profitable building contracts. He still occupied the same house but it was furnished in a style much superior to what it was when the reader first glanced at its interior arrangement.

One pleasant Sunday afternoon in June, Mr. and Mrs. Watson were seated on a sofa near the window, watching with mutual interest the innocent gambols of their little girl, and listening to her wandering prattle.

"I want to go a walking, papa," said the child, pausing suddenly in her play, and coming up to where her father and mother were sitting.

"Do take her out a walking," said Mrs. Watson. "Will you, dear, if I get her ready?"

"Yes, Emily, if you will go along," he said, smiling.

"O, no. I don't care about going out," Emily responded, with a slight change of manner.

"Indeed, indeed, Emily, I wish you would only consent to go out with me once; you will, after that, go out often enough, I know. You are getting paler and thinner, every day," he added, looking her tenderly in the face.

"Do come, mamma!" urged the child taking hold of her gown, and pulling at it with all her might.

"See there, little Emily wants you to go," said her husband, with an appealing smile. "You can't resist her, I know."

"Come, mamma, do come!" continued the child, still pulling at the gown.

For a minute or so she sat almost motion-

ess, endeavouring to decide against her own reluctance in favour of gratifying her husband and child.

“I will go out a little way with you,” she at length said, in a voice slightly changed from its cheerful expression. “Come, dear let me put on your bonnet.”

Taking little Emily by the hand, she went up stairs with her, while her husband’s heart trembled with a feeling that was a mingling of delight and fear. Mrs. Watson soon had her little girl equipped, and then sent her down stairs to tell her father that she would be ready in a few minutes. She was exceedingly pale and attenuated, and her dark eyes shone with an almost supernatural brightness, yet their light was tempered by the out-beamings of woman’s gentle spirit. For a moment after her little girl had gone down, she stood by the side of the bureau, leaning against it, with an irresolute air. Then going slowly to a closet, she brought out a bandbox, and, removing the lid, lifted from it a beautiful bonnet, that had lain there untouched for three years; in all that time she had not once looked upon it. A sigh struggled up from her bosom, and her face seemed to grow still paler, as her eyes fell upon this relic of other days. After removing from it a bunch or two of rich French flowers, the bonnet had nothing obsolete in its appearance, and none would have perceived that it

varied materially from the then prevailing fashion.

A beautiful silk dress, that had not been worn for a time equal to that during which the bonnet had lain untouched, was next taken from a drawer. In the course of twenty minutes she came down stairs, elegantly dressed, and ready to walk out. Her husband surveyed her with a look of pride and pleasure, but when he perceived that she was paler, and agitated, and felt her arm trembling within his, he half repented that he had urged her to go out.

They walked slowly up the street, and, in a short time, Mrs. Watson's mind became interested and revived by the fresh air, and by the happy voice of little Emily, that fell upon her ear incessantly. Their walk was extended some short distance, and then they turned toward home.

An air of cheerfulness was pervading the mind of Mrs. Watson, and she was beginning to converse freely upon the unimportant subjects suggested by the walk, when, as they came along on their return home, she started at perceiving her father and mother rapidly approaching them in an open carriage. In a moment more they were whirled past,—not, however, without the eyes of both parents and child meeting. But no expression of pleasure or of recognition, was in the face of either parent. The look they gave their child

was cold and stern. Dark, and sad, and all-pervading, was the shadow that fell upon her spirit. In an instant was the light extinguished that had shed over her mind a cheerful ray. Her husband noted the change, and knew too well the cause; and his heart trembled as much as the arm that rested heavily upon his own. In vain he attempted to rally her from the instantaneous shock and depression. Sadder and sadder grew the shadow that rested on her pale face, after their return, and her eyes seemed looking inward, as if uniting with the spiritual vision in contemplating the gloomy spectres that were passing before her mind. In this state of abstraction she remained for several days. From it she was suddenly aroused, one afternoon, by the servant entering her chamber, where she was lying on the bed lost in sad musings, and putting the question with a concerned manner—

“Is little Emily up here?”

“No, she is not. Is n't she down stairs?” responded Mrs. Watson, rising up with an alarmed expression in her countenance.

“No, ma'am, she is not. I thought she was up here.”

“Mercy on me! Where can she be, then?” ejaculated the mother, with a look of terror, all her maternal fears at once aroused.

“She must have gone out of the front door. She was playing in the parlour while I was

at work in the yard, and the door was open I will run out in the street and see if she is there," said the servant, hurriedly.

"Run, run quick, then!" exclaimed Mrs. Watson, her face almost as white as snow.

The black girl ran up and down the street and into the houses of the different neighbours, but she returned in about ten minutes with no tidings, during which time the poor, almost distracted, mother was in an agony of suspense. Her fears, easily excited owing to the nervous state in which she was, were now overpowering.

"O ma'am, where *can* she be? Nobody haint seen nothing of her," said the girl, coming in with breathless alarm.

"Go quickly for Mr. Watson! O, run quick!" and the sentence was scarcely half uttered before the coloured girl was hurrying off at full speed for Mr. Watson. It seemed an age to the distracted mother before her husband arrived. He at once commenced by searching the house, cellar and yard, thoroughly, all over. This convinced him that the child had wandered away from the front door.

"Don't be frightened, Emily," he said, with an encouraging look that but ill concealed the trembling anxiety that was at his heart. "She has only wandered off up or down the street, and has, of course, been picked up by some one, and will be kept

safe.y for us until we can find where she is. No harm can certainly happen to her."

But such a representation brought no comfort to the terror-stricken mother. There was an awful sensation of fear about her heart: a brooding conviction that she should never again behold the face of her dear child. Finding all efforts to soothe her feelings vain, the father hurried away in search of his dear lost one, now rendered doubly dear. He went from house to house for more than a square on each side of the street, above and below his dwelling—enlisted as many neighbours in the search as possible, which was extended in a much larger circle—and, finally, employed a bell-man; and yet to no purpose. Night came rapidly on, and, with its sombre shades, brought double gloom and terror to the hearts of the distracted parents. Even until twelve o'clock were bell-men employed to sound the alarm in all parts of the city; but it was sounded in vain. Advertisements were handed in to the newspaper offices at that late hour, offering a liberal reward to any person who would restore the little innocent.

"Have you found her?" was the eager question, asked in a tone of agonizing suspense of the husband, as he entered pale and agitated at the hour of midnight. He shook his head mournfully. His poor wife could endure this terrible state no longer; with a

groan of despair, she sunk insensible into his arms.

All the night through she remained in a state of unconsciousness. From this she began slowly to revive, as the dim light of the morning came into the chamber, its cold rays struggling with the flickering taper. She was soon restored to full consciousness, and then came back upon her, with overwhelming agony, the idea that her little angel was lost to her, perhaps for ever. There stood the empty, untumbled crib; and in it lay the mimic babe, that ever rested within her arms at night, her untutored mind investing with life the unconscious effigy. For the first time, the mother's feelings softened, and the fountain of her tears was unsealed. For a long, long time she wept upon the bosom of her husband. But again the waters were sealed, and a stern and terrible sense of her loss fell upon her.

"I shall never see her again, husband! I know I shall never see my sweet angel again!" she said, looking him in the face with a strange and fearful calmness. "She is dead—dead" she added, shaking her head mournfully—"dead—dead—and I shall never see my sweet babe again."

"Do not give way to such thoughts, Emily," urged her husband. "We must find her. Our advertisement in the papers will surely bring tidings of her."

“No—no—no,” murmured his wife sadly. “We shall never see her again. Do you know,” she said quickly, and with startling emphasis “what I have just thought has become of her?”

“No, Emily. Where do you think she is?”

“*Somebody has stolen her!*” she said, in a low thrilling whisper, leaning over toward her husband, and looking him in the face with a countenance as white as marble.

“*H-u-s-h!*” ejaculated the husband, half averting his face, while his heart seemed almost to die in his bosom at the terrible idea.

“It is true. I am sure it is,” continued the wife, in the same ominous whisper. “Have you never heard of babes like her being stolen away? I have, many a time. And somebody has got her! I know they have—I know they have,” and she began to rock her body backward and forward, moaning and muttering to herself incoherently.

CHAPTER V.

POOR Watson was dreadfully shocked at the idea so suddenly suggested by his wife, and also greatly distressed at the evident imbecility that was again stealing upon her mind. Through the whole of that day he looked in vain for some tidings of his child. But no word of her reached his anxious ears. And day after day, and week after week passed, and yet nothing was heard of her.

From the morning on which his wife had started the idea that she had been stolen away, she evinced no anxiety, no hope. She soon fell into a state of musing melancholy, and evinced no interest in anything, not even in her husband. In this condition she continued for many months.—Gradually, however, she began to recover from this gloomy state, and to show some little care for her husband. But even in him, she became little interested. Two years passed away from the time the child had disappeared, and the mother was still moping, gloomy, and uninterested. From this state she was aroused by the sudden and alarming illness of her husband. Ten days were enough to work destruction on his frame; at the end of that period he passed into the world of spirits.

Every perception of her mind was now acutely sensitive. The tenderness and affec-

tion that had slumbered for two years were all awakened; but alas! were active now, only to bring intense and abiding grief. The body of her husband was soon buried out of her sight, and she was left, in every sense of the word, *alone*. During the six years of her marriage she had not paid a single visit, nor made a single acquaintance. And now, besides the family servant, there was not a familiar face for her, nor a familiar voice. The image of her lost child had never once faded from her mind, during all the months of her gloomy abstraction, and now its sweet face came up before her more vividly than ever, and her bosom yearned toward it with a more fond and maternal desire.

The new impulse which the character of her husband had received, had made him more earnestly bent upon accumulating property. His sudden death occurred just as his prospects were rapidly opening. During six years he had saved something like two thousand dollars, and this was paid over into the hands of his widow by the executor. In a condition of aimless and gloomy isolation, never once venturing beyond the threshold of her dwelling, did Mrs. Watson live for the next four years, when she found the means which had thus far supported her, just upon the eve of exhaustion. This aroused her from a state of lethargy into one of anxious solicitude. What could she do? No single

available resource did she possess within herself, and almost her last dollar was spent. Finally, all her money was exhausted, and the stern necessity of her condition drove her into action. By the aid of her black hired servant, who had become attached to her, she procured the services of an auctioneer, who sold for her every piece of furniture that she could possibly spare. The proceeds of this sale was two hundred dollars. With her few remaining articles of furniture, she removed into one room, which she had rented in a house where her servant could have the use of the kitchen and garret.

It was about six months from this time that she found herself reduced to extremity again, and with no further resource. Absolute starvation stared her in the face. A willingness to do something for a living arose in her mind, but she could think of nothing. In this state of acute distress of mind, after a long debate, she finally resolved to seek, humbly, in brokenness of spirit, a reconciliation with her parents, and to beg a home where she might find rest and protection for the few brief years that she felt were to bring the hour of her release from temporal evil. Once resolved, she lost no time in putting her resolution into effect.

It was about ten o'clock in the morning, when she stood, for the first time in ten years, upon the door-stone of her father's house—that house from which she had been banished

The pulsations of her heart were quick and fluttering while she waited almost breathlessly an answer to the summons she had given. In a few moments the door was opened by a well-known servant, one who had grown old in the family.

"Miss Emily!" she exclaimed, starting and lifting her hands in astonishment, as the attenuated and trembling form of her young mistress stood before her.

Then turning suddenly, she ran up stairs, and bursting into the chamber where the mother of Emily was sitting, exclaimed, hurriedly—

"O, mistress, Miss Emily is down stairs! I don't know what she wants, but she looks as white as a sheet, and trembles all over."

"Tell her to go out of the house!" said Mrs. T——, rising up instantly, her face flushed with anger, and sudden alarm. Tell her to go away at once! She can't come here!"

"O mistress!" said the old servant in an appealing voice.

"Do you hear me, Nell?" she answered in an excited tone, stamping her foot upon the floor.—"Obey me this instant!"

The servant descended the stairs, into the hall where Mrs. Watson was standing with an aching heart.

"Your mother will not see you, Miss Emily," she said to her in a mournful tone.

"But I *must* see her, Nelly! Tell her I *must* see her."

"Indeed, indeed, Miss Emily, it's no use; mistress won't see you. She is very angry."

"Is father home?" now asked Mrs. Watson

"No, he has been out an hour."

"Then I'll wait here until he comes," she said, seating herself in the hall.

For nearly an hour did Mrs. Watson sit, trembling between hope and fear, and struggling against a depressing gloom, under which she seemed every moment about to sink. While seated there, a little girl, about nine years old, came dancing and singing along the passage. When she saw a stranger, she paused suddenly, and then with a child's curiosity, came slowly up to her, surveying her all the while with a look of curious interest.

A strange and sudden thrill passed through the heart of Mrs. Watson when she heard the voice of the little girl, and as she approached, her eyes were riveted upon her young and innocent face, with a look of intense and yearning interest. The child seemed slightly alarmed by the steady gaze that was fixed upon her, and, slowly retreating, she went up stairs, turning at every step to catch the earnest look of the stranger. Mrs. Watson felt an impulse to spring forward and follow the child, she scarcely knew why, when the front door was swung open

and her father came in with his usual measured and heavy tread.

“*O my father!*” exclaimed the poor creature, suddenly springing to her feet, and standing before him with clasped hands.

“Away!” he said angrily, hurrying past her. “*I have no child!*”

“Father! father!” she cried after him, but he passed up the stairs at two or three strides, and disappeared from her sight.

In a few minutes a strange man-servant came down, and told her she must leave the house. She went out of the door mechanically, and seated herself upon the marble steps. Here she had remained for nearly an hour, motionless, and almost in a state of unconsciousness, when an order was procured by the direction of her father, for her admission into the Alms-House, whither she was removed, as the reader has seen.

CHAPTER VI.

THE particulars just related, I learned subsequent to her admission into our institution. They increased the interest awakened in her on the day of her entrance, and led me, frequently, to converse with the matron as to her condition of mind. For the first week or two she seemed stupefied, and sat

for the greater part of the time, moping and melancholy in the apartment allotted to her. By the special direction of the Board of Trustees, who were made acquainted with her relationship to General T——, and whose sympathies were awakened by a knowledge of her condition, she was not required to perform any menial employments, but left almost entirely to act as her inclination might dictate.

She had not uttered a word, unless in reply to a question, for the first three weeks succeeding her admission. She was sitting one afternoon, about this time, as the sun was going down, looking out of the window. The expression of her face indicated an unusual excitement of feelings. The matron, whose duties called her into the room where Mrs. Watson was sitting, could not help observing that she was disturbed more than usual. A tear or two stole out from either eye, and passed down her pale cheek, while a heavy sigh struggled painfully up from her bosom. The matron's feelings were touched, and approaching her, she said, tenderly;—

“All affliction, Mrs. Watson, is for our good. Try, my dear madam, to feel this, and then you will extract some comfort, even from your present condition.”

Mrs. Watson shook her head mournfully, but made no reply.

“Let me urge you.” continued the matron.

“as one who has known much sorrow, to look upward in your affliction. There is a strong consolation for all who will seek it. A haven of repose for all who choose to escape thither.”

The tone of voice, so tender and maternal, or the words, so unusual to her ear, caused the poor child of affliction to fix her eyes, with an expression of inquiry, upon the face of her kind admonitress. But still she replied not, and the matron, encouraged to proceed, went on.

“In the Word of Life, it is said—‘Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’ This is addressed, particularly, to you, for you are heavy laden.”

“O yes—yes—I am heavy laden,—pressed down, never to rise again,” she said mournfully.

“Do not give way to such a despairing thought. While there is life, there is hope for days of comfort. And such days are for all.”

“Not for me — no — never — never,” responded Mrs. Watson. “Can I receive back my only treasure? Can there be for me days of comfort, and my stolen child not restored to me? No, no! never, never!”

“Of one thing be certain, Mrs. Watson,” said the matron, slowly and impressively. “In all things that befall us, there is a direc-

tion or a permission of Providence, and if we duly submit to them, great good will result to us. The same over-ruling Providence that permitted your child to be stolen from you, as you say, can so control circumstances, that your lost one will be restored."

"Say that again! say that again!" exclaimed the half-distracted creature, springing to her feet in an instant, and looking the matron in the face with a wild expression of hope, that seemed like a faint and flickering ray glancing up from the stagnant waters of despair.

"Be calm, my dear madam!" said the matron, half alarmed.

"Say it again! O, madam, say those words again!" urged Mrs. Watson, entreatingly.

"I said," repeated the matron, "that the same over-ruling Providence that permitted your child to be stolen from you, can so control circumstances, that your lost one will be restored."

"And the Lord is said to be good and very merciful, is he not?" she asked eagerly.

"His tender mercies are over all the children of men. He pities us, even as a father pities his children," said the matron slowly and distinctly.

"And does he pity me?" asked the almost broken-hearted woman, the tears running in streams down her face at the thought that she was pitied by One so able to help her.

“He has for you, my dear Mrs. Watson, a yearning tenderness. He loves you with unspeakable love, and desires, of all things, to make you happy.”

“And then he will, surely, give me back my child, if I ask him,” she said. “But what if my dear little Emily should be dead?” she added, the eager flush of hope that had lighted up her countenance giving way to a hue, pale and death-like.

“Then, Mrs. Watson,” said the matron, “your child is an angel in heaven, and is, no doubt, often near you. She is happy, unutterably happy.—And it is for you to wait patiently, in obedience to all the precepts of our holy religion, until you are called to join her, to be no more separated.—But why thus distress yourself by indulging such thoughts? He that ruleth all things well, can out of this affliction bring you a great comfort; and he will do it, if you look up to him in patient faith and calm obedience.”

Mrs. Watson bowed her head upon her bosom, and stood some moments, evidently in self-communion. After awhile she looked up with a calmer expression upon her face, but with something intensely earnest in her eyes, and said—

“What ought I to do?”

“That is, Mrs. Watson,” replied the matron, with a glow of heart-felt satisfaction, “the most important question you could have

asked, and I am glad that it is so earnestly made. In the first place, then, you ought to make a strong and constant effort, to feel confidence in the Lord, as ruling and guiding all things for the good of his creatures, and as never sending, or permitting any affliction, unless for the purpose of working a greater and more lasting good. As soon as you can begin to realize such a confidence, your mind will re-act, in a great measure, from its state of gloom and despondency."

"I am willing to try," she responded thoughtfully, "for I clearly perceive that there is much truth in what you say. But I fear that my mind will soon go back into gloom and despair, in spite of all my feeble efforts to help it."

"If you will be advised by me, I think I can help you here also," said the matron.

"I will be advised by you in any thing," replied Mrs. Watson, earnestly.

"A mind, unoccupied in some useful task," said the matron, "will prey upon itself, and make even those who have no real trouble miserable. How much, then, will a sorrowful mind, unemployed, add to its own distress! It will be necessary for you to employ yourself in something that will divert your thoughts. To have something to interest you, and to awaken a feeling of care in your mind. In a place like this, I need not tell you, that there are numerous ways of passing your time in useful employments"

"I feel the force of what you say," responded Mrs. Watson. "But I also feel reluctant, I must confess, to tasking myself in any way. Still I will be governed by you."

"To-morrow, then, I will suggest to you some employment that will be pleasant, and at the same time draw upon your attention. But my duties call me away, and I must leave you. Do not, let me entreat of you, suffer your mind to go back again into its state of inactive gloom. If sad thoughts begin to steal over you, endeavour to look up to Him whose ear is ever open to the cry of the mourner."

It was a long time since Mrs. Watson's mind had been roused into such a state of sudden and healthy activity; and that activity continued until her senses were locked that night, in the oblivion of sleep. On the next morning she awoke from more pleasant dreams than she had known for a long time. Early after the frugal and coarse breakfast had been served, the matron came to her with a small bundle in her hand.

"Good morning, Mrs. Watson," she said, "I am glad to see that you look better than you did yesterday."

"I think I feel a little better too," she replied, while a faint smile flitted across her pale face.

"I am sure you do, for your countenance expresses a much calmer state than you have

experienced since you came here. I have brought you a garment to make. Are you willing to work upon it?"

"Certainly, I am. If I would not be unutterably miserable, I must not be idle."

The matron smiled upon her encouragingly, gave her some plain and brief directions about the work, and then left her, to attend to other numerous duties. Frequently through the day, as she came into Mrs. Watson's apartment, would she drop a cheerful and encouraging word.—None of these were lost upon her, and they frequently came, just at the moment when her spirits seemed about to sink under the weight of sad emotions that, ever and anon, swept like waves across her mind.

CHAPTER VII.

GRADUALLY, and by small accretions of strength, did Mrs. Watson, now fairly in the effort of reformation, aided by a kind and constant monitor, gain a degree of power over herself, that promised an entire change in her character. Of course, the re-acting energy of evil in her mind, would often bring into temporary subjection the good principles which were forming there; but the good only retired for brief periods. It rallied again with renewed activity.

This process of reformation had been progressing slowly but surely, for nearly six months, when the matron, who had become much attached to her, came into her room one day, and said,—

“Mrs. Watson, I have just learned something that I think it my duty to communicate to you. Your mother died yesterday.”

The matron could not calculate the effect of such a communication upon a mind but half restored to fortitude and self-control, and under circumstances of privation and mortification. She had hesitated and debated some time before determining to make the communication. The shock was painful in the extreme. The sudden consciousness that all hope was forever cut off of again seeing her mother's face in reconciliation, a hope she had not ceased to cherish in the inner chamber of her heart, like a solitary and dim taper, serving only to reveal the surrounding gloom, weighed down her spirits, and paralyzed every energy of her mind. All through the day she sat in dreamy abstraction, scarcely answering any question put to her by the matron, and not offering to resume the work she had lain aside.

On the day preceding, a solemn scene was passing in the house from which, for ten years, Emily had been banished. But two persons were present, besides a poor trembler on the brink of mortality. One was the hus-

band, General T——, and the other a slender and beautiful little girl, not much beyond her ninth summer. The former sat upon one side of the bed, his face expressive of deep affliction. The latter stood upon the other side, her hand clasped within that of the dying woman, while large drops were stealing slowly down her young cheeks. A profound silence reigned for some time through the chamber where death was about to enter; at length the dying woman said, in a feeble voice, looking at the child,—

“Go down stairs a little while, Agnes, dear. We will send for you again in a few minutes.”

The child obeyed. As the door closed after her, Mrs. T—— turned toward her husband and said:

“We have never suffered ourselves to breathe the name of Emily for years. But I must speak of her, now that the fatal and ruinous pride of my heart has lost its power over me. I wish to see her!”

“You cannot!” ejaculated General T—— with sudden energy, a dark passionate shadow passing over his brow. “She is no longer our child!”

“No reprobation of ours can change the relationship! She is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh! Years ago I thought all natural affection for her extinguished, but it is swelling up in my heart with unutterable

yearnings. Oh, husband, let me see my child before I die!" and she raised herself up, and leaned over toward him with a look of pleading agony.

"You cannot!" was the brief stern answer.

The face of the dying woman became convulsed with the wild energy of her maternal feelings, now rushing with the force acquired by their long accumulation.

"On my knees I plead with you!" she said, endeavouring to raise herself in the bed.

"No—no—no!" he responded, taking her in his arms and laying her gently back upon the pillow. "Why will you poison the last moments of your life by a vain and weak desire?"

"Oh, my child! my child! my child!" murmured the dying mother, sinking down upon the pillow. "My poor child! My poor child!"

In a few moments the powerful struggle that had convulsed her frame, subsided, and with her face nearly hid in the pillow, she lay for a long time as still and as motionless as if the sleep of death had passed upon her. **General T**— sat by her side, with his thoughts and feelings in a whirlpool of agitation. Suddenly she started, quivered as if struck by an invisible arrow, and half raising herself up, looked her husband in the face with a terror-stricken countenance.

‘ One word !’ she said, in a husky whisper, leaning over toward him.

General T—— bent his head down and listened.

“ Promise me !” urged the dying woman, “ promise me, in the name of Heaven !”

The proud, stern man, drew himself up with forced composure.

“ Anything but that !” he said, impatiently, while his frame shook with deep internal agitation.

“ God will require her of our hands, and it is now, for me, too late to be merciful, or I would hope for mercy. Promise me, then !”

The eye of the dying woman, dilated to its full extent, glared wildly upon General T——. Her lips were again about to part.

“ I promise,” said her husband, in a low, hesitating voice.

“ It is enough !” murmured the dying mother, clasping her hands together, and sinking back upon her pillow. In the next moment her spirit had taken its flight.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mrs. Watson was sitting in her room one morning, about a week after she had heard of her mother's death, her mind much calmer than it had been since the painful intelligence had reached her, when the matron entered with a bundle of clothing and a bandbox.

"An order has been received for your removal from this uncomfortable home, Mrs. Watson," she said. "Here is a change of clothing and a bonnet, which some one has sent. A carriage is waiting for you at the gate."

"O Mrs. —, do not trifle with me!" she said. "I cannot bear it!"

"I could not trifle with *you* thus, Mrs. Watson. What I say is true."

"Who sent for me?"

"Indeed I do not know."

"Is any body waiting for me?"

"No one but the driver. He came alone."

For a few moments, Mrs. Watson paused to take counsel of her own thoughts, and then said firmly—

"I will go."

In a brief space of time she was dressed in the garments which had been sent, and they fitted her as well as if they had been her own. Taking an affectionate and even tearful farewell of the matron, who had been

a mother to her, she got into the carriage and was driven off.

A ride of ten or fifteen minutes brought her in front of a neat house in — street, before which the carriage stopped. The driver handed her out and rung the bell. The servant who opened the door, ushered her into one of the handsomely furnished parlours, where she started to perceive, standing in the middle of the floor, in tears, the same little girl she had seen when last repulsed from her father's house.

“My mother!” said the child, advancing hurriedly toward her.

“My child? My little Emily? O, yes! yes!—You are my long-lost darling!” she said, catching her to her bosom, after looking into her dark eyes for a moment with a searching yet fond expression.

“My name is Agnes,” said the child, with something of doubt in her tone.

“They have only changed your name, that is all. You are my own child! My heart tells me so! But what are you doing here? Whose house is this?”

In answer to this the child pointed to a small package upon a pier table, which she immediately handed to her new-found relation. It was addressed—“Emily T——.” On breaking it open, she found it to contain certificates of stock to the amount of fifty thousand dollars, and this short note:—

"Your child is restored to you. This house is your own, and also the enclosed property. Forget the past, and be happy."

"Who is here besides you?" she asked, turning to her child.

"No one but the servants. It's your house now," replied the child, looking up earnestly and fondly into her mother's face.

Mrs. Watson again clasped her to her heart, and imprinted kisses all over her blooming young cheeks.

"I fear this is all a fond dream," she murmured to herself, looking earnestly around her. "But where is your grandfather?"

"I don't know," said the child, sadly. "He brought me here an hour ago, gave me a letter which told me all about how I was stolen from you when I was but a little child, and then he kissed my cheek, while a tear fell upon my face, and said, 'I shall never see you again, Agnes. Be a good child. Love your poor mother, who will soon be here, and don't forget your old grandfather, who will never forget you.' Then he held me to his breast, for a long time. After that he kissed me again, and went away."

The child wept bitterly on making this recital, and the mother's tears flowed as freely.

From that hour, a new morning dawned upon the heart of Mrs. Watson. Her lost

one, long mourned, was restored, and under circumstances more favourable than any she could have hoped for. Still, she could not disguise from herself, after the passage of a few days, that the child pined for her grand father, towards whom she entertained the most tender affection.

“He said he would never see me any more,” was her only reply to the oft-repeated hope expressed by her mother, that he would come to them again; and this was generally uttered with a trembling voice, and tearful eyes.

“You loved your grandfather very much?” Mrs. Watson remarked, one day, about a week after she had been restored to her child.

“O yes! For he loved me, and was always good to me. And so was grandma. But I don’t know what ailed her for a good while before she died. Almost every day, if I happened to go into her room after she had been alone there for a good while, I would find her crying. If I went up to her, and asked her what ailed her, she would sometimes try to smile, and say that nothing ailed her; but very often she would draw her arm around me, and look for a long time into my face, so strangely that I used to feel afraid. Once, I remember, she said, after looking at me for a good while, as if to herself—

“How like her mother!”

“Then she started, as if something had frightened her, and said—

“You can go down stairs, dear: I wish to be alone.”

“Then she never told you anything about me?”

“No. But I heard about you often from old Nelly. Once, I remember coming down stairs, and seeing a woman in the passage who looked at me very strangely, so that I felt a little afraid. I went up to grandma, and told her about it. She seemed very much troubled about something, and said I mustn't go down while that woman was in the passage—that she would carry me off if she could.”

As the child said this, Mrs. Watson burst into tears, and wept violently for some time. But regaining, at length, her composure, she asked of the bewildered child—

“Did you hear anything more of that woman?”

“O yes. She staid down in the passage until grandpa came home. He was terribly angry about it, and made the waiter put her out into the street. Old Nelly cried a whole day about it. I heard her say to the waiter that it was a cruel shame, and that no good ever came to people who acted in that way—that Miss Emily, as she called her, was the

best of the whole of them, and that she would work her finger-ends off for her, if she knew where to find her. After the woman had been put out, I went down stairs, and heard Nelly talking in this way. I listened to all she said, and once or twice asked her who the woman was; but she wouldn't tell me then. But one day, about a week afterwards, she said it was my mother. Oh! how quickly I ran up to grandma, and told her what Nelly had said, asking at the same time, with eagerness, if she was really my mother.

“I never saw grandma so angry as this made her. Her face grew very pale, and she couldn't speak for some time, while I kept asking her if what Nelly had told me was so. At last she took me upon her lap, and said—

“‘I am your only mother, Agnes. You have no other. You must not think about the idle stories of the servants. I shall see that Nelly is well punished for this.’

“‘O no, grandma, don't punish her,’ I said in alarm. ‘She didn't mean anything wrong. She only said the woman was my mother.’

“But grandma seemed very angry when she thought about what Nelly had told me, and said something in a low voice that I could not understand, while her face was very angry. Poor Nelly! I never saw her after the next day. Grandpa sold her off, no

one knew where. I cried for a great many days after she had gone away, for she had always been good to me, and seemed to love me more than all the other servants did."

"Poor Nelly!" murmured Mrs. Watson, half aloud, as Agnes closed the last sentence, while she could with difficulty restrain a gush of passionate tears. "And was thy love for me thus cruelly repaid?" Then, rallying herself, she asked—

"Have you never heard where Nelly was sent?"

"No. I have often asked the other servants, but none of them knew. But tell me, mother, was it you, indeed, whom grandpa put out of the house?"

"It was, my dear child, your own mother, who was so cruelly treated. But let us try and forget that. The recollection of it is too painful to me. At some future time, when you have learned to know me better, and to love me and to confide in me as indeed your mother, I will explain all to you. For the present, I will merely say, that the offence against my parents, which it seems is not to be forgiven me, was no act for which my child need blush. My father and mother's pride of family was very great. In marrying, I offended this, and was disowned by them. You, by some means, they managed to steal away, and leave me to bear the un-

speaking of your loss. But you are again restored to me, and by my father. Thus far he has endeavoured to repair the wrong I have suffered, and for all that is past I forgive him, as for all that I have done of evil, I hope to be forgiven of my Father in Heaven."

As Mrs. Watson said this, she once more drew her little girl to her bosom in a long and close embrace, kissing her dear young face and watering it freely with her tears.

Time passed on, and Mrs. Watson continued to live in deep seclusion with her daughter. She rarely went out, and then only for the purpose of attending to necessary business. One or two friends of the family ventured to call upon her, and with these a pleasant, though, at first, quite a reserved intercourse was entered into. A year passed, and no word from her father reached her. It was said that he had gone abroad, but even of this she had no certain intelligence. It might, or it might not be so. Between her and her child, had come to exist, the most confiding tender, and unreserved intercourse. After having explained the past events of her life fully enough to make Agnes (as she continued to call her) feel satisfied that her mother had been guilty of no moral defection, she ceased to allude to them altogether, but spoke of her father with great kindness, and sighed as

earnestly for his return as did her child. While at the Alms-House, under the kind promptings of the excellent matron, her mind had gradually been elevated to those higher and purer considerations that regard our duty to Him who is the Father of us all. It was this that had sustained her while there, and enabled her, when removed from that painful condition to one so pleasant as that which awaited her, to look up still, and bless the hand that gave her benefits. The confidence in Divine Providence, upon which her heart continued to repose, she endeavoured, as far as Agnes was capable of understanding it, to impart to her. Gradually, she led her young and tender mind to look up to Him who governs all events by infinite wisdom from infinite love, and who, both by prosperous and adverse circumstances, is ever trying to lead us to himself, that he may bless us with unspeakable blessings. The result of all this was salutary in a high degree. Agnes feels the beauty and sacredness of a religious principle in life. Its purity accorded with her innocence. God she felt to be over all and in all, governing events for good.

“Even the absence of your grandfather,” her mother said to her one evening, about two years after Gen. T—— had gone away, while leading her tender mind upward, where alone she had found true peace, “will, I cher-

ish continually the hope, prove ultimately a blessing both to him and us. He will, I feel sure, yet return. He must return. Advanced in years, and alone among strangers, his heart cannot but turn towards you at least, and you will draw him home. I pray for his welfare daily. I pray that he may be restored to us. And I feel every day a strong and a stronger assurance that he *will* be restored to us, if alive."

At the last word, the voice of Mrs. Watson trembled, while Agnes burst into tears. The thought of death melted down both of their feelings in an instant.

The hour had worn away until nearly the time for retiring for the night. As had been the mother's custom for nearly a year, she opened the Bible, after having recovered her usual calmness of mind, and read a portion of Sacred truth. Then, bending with her child, she offered up to Him, whose ear is ever open to the petitions of his creatures, her humble acknowledgments for past mercies, with prayers for future good, such as His wisdom might see best for her. Nor did she forget the loved absent one, for whose return her heart pined daily and nightly. Thus bending before Him who seeth the secrets of all hearts, we will leave, for the present, the mother and her child.

CHAPTER IX.

Early one morning, two years from the day on which General T—— had restored Agnes to her mother, an elderly man was pacing backward and forward, with hurried steps, a room in one of the largest London hotels. He was evidently suffering from painful reflections. Sometimes he would take up from a table a small richly-set miniature of a child, and gaze upon it long and earnestly; then he would lay it down with a sigh, and continue his walk, but more hurriedly than ever. At length he sat down beside the table, and again fixed his eyes upon the picture.

“Dear, dear child!” he murmured, in a low, broken voice. “Shall I never look upon your living face again? Living!” he added with a shudder, as a new thought flashed across his mind—“How do *I* know whether she be living or dead! Heaven be merciful!” he continued, his face assuming an expression of terror. “What if she be dead!” and again a nervous shudder went thrilling through his frame.

For some time he sat leaning his head upon his hand, as if debating some question,

and still irresolute about coming to a decision.

"I have been a fool,—a madman!" he at length muttered to himself.

"Yes, worse than a fool or a madman!" he added, after a few moments' pause.

"I will see my child!" he at length said, springing suddenly to his feet, as if he had consummated a growing resolution by a sudden and violent effort.

Three days from that time saw him on board of a New York packet, gently gliding down the Thames. His eyes were not cast back upon the mighty city he was leaving, but eagerly forward; measuring with his eye the distance from object to object, that indicated the progress of the vessel. Now that he had resolved to cross the ocean, he was all eagerness to hurry on his way. Morning after morning would he seek the deck of the vessel, even when but a few days out, and strain his eyes musingly, and with a vague hope of land in his mind, far over the mountain billows. Thirty days of pleasant weather brought him safely into New York. It was but an hour before the Philadelphia steamboat was to start, when the vessel arrived; when the steamboat drew off, the old man was one of her passengers.

It was night, owing to an unusual detention on the day after, when he arrived in

B——, and he was fast failing in strength under the powerful excitement of mind that had prevailed since he left London.

Just at nine o'clock a carriage brought him to the door of Mrs. Watson's pleasant dwelling in —— street. He was trembling all over like a leaf.

"Where is Mrs. Watson?" he asked of the servant who opened the door.

"She is in her chamber," said the servant, in surprise at the strange earnestness and demanding tone of the question.

Without pausing, he glided by the servant, and hurried up stairs. Just as he placed his hand upon the lock of the door, he heard a voice, and he was suddenly impressed with a desire to listen.

It was the voice of Mrs. Watson. And the tones were those of supplication.

"And my dear father," she said, "wherever he may be—O send him consolation! Soften his heart, and, if it be Thy will, grant that we may yet meet before we die."

"Your prayer is answered, Emily," said her father, for it was he, throwing open the door, and staggering toward her with extended arms.

Instantly springing to her feet, in momentary alarm, Mrs. Watson turned toward the door. One glance told all: and, in the next

moment, father and child were clasped in each other's arms.

"O grandfather!" cried Agnes, by which name her mother continued to call her, as soon as she perceived who was the intruding stranger, also starting forward.

"Do I indeed see that angel face again!" he said, disengaging an arm that was around his daughter, and drawing Agnes to his bosom. "I could not live without you, my dear child! and so I have come back to go away no more."

This was said in a broken voice, while the tears wandered down his time-worn cheeks. Two years of intense and almost constant struggles of pride against affection—of reason against blind and powerful passion—had done more to break down and enfeeble his frame than twenty years of a life unmarked by such fierce contests with cherished evils. His head had whitened, his cheeks had become sunken and pale, and his body was slightly bent.

How wild and tremulous was the joy that fluttered through the heart of Mrs. Watson! Two years of calm devotion to her child, so unexpectedly restored to her, with the earnest cultivation of a religious principle, had restored her mind to a sober and rational perception of the good and the true in all things. She was no longer the slave of pas-

sions and feelings that found excitement in false perceptions. She had passed through the fires of affliction, and out of them she had come with the dross of her character consumed, and the gold refined. Now, the joy of her heart, although it swelled almost into ecstasy, was not a selfish joy at the restoration and reconciliation that had taken place. It looked to the happiness of her father, as well as to her own delight.

"I am so happy!" she said, after they were all calmer, and had become seated, leaning her head back upon her father's breast, and looking up into his face, while the tears of joy rolled from her eyes.

"How can you ever forgive me?" he said, "for—"

"Don't speak of that, dear father," she said, hastily. "Out of the painful afflictions of the past we have all come wiser and better. All these things may have been necessary for our good. Let us now forget them. We have the present to improve and to enjoy. I wanted only your return to be happy. May our presence restore you to all lost delights."

General T—— did not reply,—for his tongue could not have obeyed the impulse of his thoughts,—but he bent down and kissed the cheek of his child with fervour.

But I will dwell no longer on this scene

of joy. General T—— had sought, in travel to wean his thoughts and feelings from their intense and yearning desire for the presence of his grandchild, whose gentle spirit had touched his heart with unaccustomed tenderness. But he sought in vain. Gradually, his abiding state of unhappiness purified, in a good degree, his moral perceptions, and he was led to see and to shudder at the wickedness and cruelty he had so wantonly indulged. An emotion of pity for the child he had so injured begat some feeble touches of affection; and these increased, until he was at last forced back, as the reader has seen, to consummate the eager wishes of himself and his children.

The introduction of Mrs. Watson into the Alms-House, under circumstances so distressing, was one among the most singular of those reverses of fortune, to which nearly all who found their way there had been subject. The knowledge of it prevailed, I believe, in certain circles; but it was not known in the city generally. Few who saw her afterward, with her beautiful daughter, moving in the most select and intelligent circles in B——, would have dreamed of such a passage in her life. She was ever cheerful in conversation, and pleasant and easy in manners. But the shadow that had been so long reflected upon her brow, never became en-

tirely effaced, though every passing year softened it more and more. Old General T—— has been dead many years. Agnes married a rich southern planter, several years ago, and, with her mother, removed to the South. Where they are, or what is their condition, I know not.

ALICE MELLEVILLE.

CHAPTER 2.

‘If I loved a man, and Pa wouldn’t consent to my marrying him, I’d run away with him, that I would!’ said a young lady, at the mature age of fifteen, half in fun and half in earnest. She was one of a group of three or four lively maidens, who were spending an afternoon with Alice Melleville, at her father’s house, near a pleasant village in Virginia.

‘You’d do more than I would, then,’ remarked one of the gay circle. ‘I’d be afraid; for runaway matches hardly ever turn out well.’

‘I’d risk it,’ responded the first speaker.

‘It’s more than I would,’ said another, who was older, and more thoughtful. ‘If I were a man, I would care very little to have that woman for my wife, who could thus deceive and forsake her parents. The adage, that a dis

obedient child cannot make a good wife, has always seemed to me a true one."

"Spoken like a sensible girl, as you are, Sarah!" said Mr. Melleville, who was present

His daughter Alice had not joined in the conversation, though her manner indicated that she was by no means an uninterested listener. When Mr. Melleville made the remark last recorded, an attentive witness might have observed the color deepening on her cheek, and a shadow flitting quickly over her bright young face.

"I don't care what you all say," broke in the first speaker, gaily. The law is, that a man must leave father and mother and cleave to his wife; and it is a poor rule that won't work both ways."

"You jest with a serious subject, Helen," remarked the young lady whom Mr. Melleville had called Sarah. "For my part, I have always felt that no good can, but harm may, often arise from the indulgence of undue levity, and the expression of hastily formed opinions on these subjects. Some one, while we thus utter sentiments approving such a doubtful course, may be debating the momentous ques-

tion; and a half-formed resolution may be strengthened and matured by our thoughtlessness."

"I hope no one here is going to run away," said Helen, casting her eye over the little circle. "But if any one is, I would say, be sure your choice is a good one. and then die rather than be untrue to your heart's best affections!"

Helen spoke with warmth, and something of energy in her tone.

"Well, young ladies," remarked Mr. Melleville, walking backwards and forwards through the room as he spoke, "you can all run away if you like, and your parents may forgive you if they will; but as for me, my mind has long been made up to utterly and for ever renounce that child who marries against my consent."

Alice cast her eyes upon the floor when her father commenced speaking. She did not raise them immediately after he had ceased, but her cheek was paler, and the heavings of her bosom quicker and more apparent.

"That's only said to frighten Alice, here," Helen said, gaily. "All fathers talk that way, and forgive their truant daughters in a week after the elopement."

"I earnestly hope that no child of mine will presume on the anticipation of such a result. Sad, sad indeed, will be her mistake," Mr. Melleville said, seriously.

"I'd risk you, if I were your daughter," Helen responded, as gay as ever.

"But you would find, to your sorrow, that you had risked too much."

There was an air of seriousness about Mr. Melleville's manner that was felt by the young ladies; and Helen, among the rest, finding herself oppressed by it, did not reply, nor did any one allude further to the subject.

On the evening of the same day in which this conversation occurred, Alice stole quietly from her father's house, and passing through the garden, came to a pleasant lawn, which was concealed by a few trees, from the view of any one in the dwelling. Here she paused timidly, and looked eagerly around.

Brightly the moonbeams fell upon her snowy garments, and sweet, innocent face. Could there be thoughts other than pure and innocent, and obedient ones beneath that lovely countenance? But on so sad a thought as that we will not dwell. For more than a minute

she waited just upon the edge of the lawn, looking and listening with earnest attention.

“He promised—” just passed, murmuringly, her lips, when a quick step caught her ear.

“Alice, dear Alice!” said a young man, bounding to her side, and catching hold of her hand, while he pressed his lips fondly and familiarly to her cheek.

“I was afraid you would not come,” said the maiden.

“Fire and water could not have kept me away! I saw you the moment you left the house, and my eye was on you at every step. I think of only you, and am happy only in your presence. How cruel is the fate that interposes such barriers between us!”

“Cruel indeed!” sighed Alice, leaning trustingly upon the arm through which she had drawn her own.

“Is there any hope that your father will think more kindly of me, Alice?”

“I fear not, William,” Alice replied, sadly.

“And must we, then, be separated for ever?”

Alice clung to his arm more earnestly, but did not reply.

“If this be our fate,” continued the tempter

“far better for us to meet no more; let us try to forget each other. For me, too keen a sense of pain must attend an intercourse like this, when all hope is destroyed.”

Still the maiden replied not, but shrunk closer to his side.

“You love me, Alice?” he said, in a changed and earnest tone.

Alice looked up, the bright moonbeams falling upon her face, and making perfect every line of expression.

“Forgive the question, Alice. I did not doubt you. As tender, as earnest, as confiding as is your love for me, just so tender and earnest is my love for you. We were made for each other, and separate, cannot be happy.”

“I know it, I know it!” returned Alice, in a low and trembling tone.

“Then, why should we be separated?” urged her lover.

“I would rather die than endure it, if separation is to be permanent,” she murmured.

“It need not be; it shall not be!” responded the young man, earnestly.

“It will be, and it shall be!” exclaimed Mr. Melleville, loud and angrily, laying his

hand heavily upon the shoulder of Alice, and drawing her with a sudden jerk from the side of her lover.

The young man, taken thus by surprise, raised his arm to strike down the intruder, but recollecting himself in an instant, he turned from the frightened child and angry father, and strode hastily away.

No further word was spoken by Mr. Melleville, until with his trembling truant he reached his house.

“Now, Alice,” he said, in a calm, determined tone, and with a severe expression of countenance. “Remember what I tell you this night. If you forget it, or disbelieve, and thence disregard it, the sorrow be your own. William Justin I should not approve of as the husband of my daughter, even if he moved in the same station that we do, and were a man of correct principles. But, as I know him to be a low-minded fellow, of bad morals, and bad habits, I am doubly determined not to countenance him. And now, that with my own ears I have heard him basely tempt you to forsake father and mother, I would see you in your grave before I would resign you willingly. I

have lived longer than you have, Alice, and I know more of the world than you do ; and, more than all, I can read character better than you can. Now, from all I have seen, and I have sought opportunities to know him, I am certain of what I say, when I pronounce William Justin a man so selfish in his feelings and aims, as to be utterly incapable of rendering any woman happy. He does not love you, Alice, half so much as he loves my property : one farthing of which neither he nor you shall ever touch if you are so mad as to marry each other. Believe me, Alice, when I tell you," and there was much tenderness in his voice, "that I have loved you too well, to resign you willingly into unworthy hands. But, if into unworthy hands you throw yourself, then, as I have already told you, *Alice and her father will never be reconciled!*"

And so saying, Mr. Melleville turned from the room, and left his daughter sitting in a state of mental stupefaction. The words of her father rung in her ears, but she could not realise their threatening and fearful import. In a little while she stole off to bed, but not to find that sweet sleep that had heretofore hovered round

her pillow. Once she fell into a profound slumber, and dreamed vividly. Her lover came for her, and her father gave her up to him willingly, and she, with maiden confidence and delight, yielded to him the hand he sought. Swiftly the days seemed to pass—happy and innocent days; but a change suddenly took place in her perceptions. The body of her husband seemed to grow transparent, and she could look beyond the surface. The beauty and symmetry of his form became lost in the horrid skeleton beneath, that seemed joined to a mass of loathsomeness; and every day this became more distinct to the eye, and more revolting. She shrunk from his touch, and shut her eyes when he came near her, but she could not escape from him. Even as close as her own shadow, was he by her side. Imploringly she sought her father, but he was deaf to her petition for relief, and turned coldly away. Long, long years seemed to pass, and still the horrible skeleton was by her side, with its mass of adhering loathsomeness, more livid and more revolting. One night, it seemed that she was lying by the side of her husband, and his hand was upon her bosom. That hand grew heavier,

and heavier, until it seemed crushing in her chest. In vain she endeavoured to rise—all power was gone. And she was sinking it seemed into insensibility, from a feeling of suffocation, when the door of her chamber suddenly opened, and her father came in and lifted the skeleton arm.

“Take me away, take me away, dear father!” she cried, in an agony of hope and fear, as her father, having relieved her, turned slowly to pass from the room.

The sound of her own voice, for she was uttering the words aloud, awoke her. All was dark in her chamber, and she shrunk, trembling, beneath the bed-clothes.

This strange and fearful dream haunted her imagination for days, and caused her to think of William Justin with an affection somewhat diminished in its ardor. But the impression gradually wore off, and, in her thoughts, he was all that her fond heart could desire.

CHAPTER II.

“How is William Justin, to-night?” asked a young man, in a familiar tone, coming into the room of the individual he had named.

“Ah, Tom! Is that you? How are you? I am glad to see you! Come, sit down. You are the very man I want to have a talk with.”

“Am I, indeed! Well, I wonder what grave matter our united wisdom can accomplish? But, as you seem to have some important matter on your mind, say on, and I will make one of the best of listeners.”

“You know Alice Melleville?”

“No, I don’t, though.”

“But you understand me, Jones; you know that there is such a person?”

“It would be strange if I didn’t, and you one of my cronies. But what of her?”

“The old man, her father, won’t have any thing to do with me.”

“That is not very strange.”

“Nonsense, Jones! I am serious to-night,

and want to talk with you on a serious subject."

"Say on, then, and I'll be as grave and thoughtful as a judge on the bench."

"I love Alice; that I find a settled business."

"Ha, ha, ha! Do you, indeed? That is a good one!"

"Tom!"

"Bill!"

"I tell you that I am in sober earnest."

"Well, well, I grant it. But it did sound a little ludicrous, to hear you assert so gravely that you were meshed at last."

"And she loves me, too; in that I cannot be mistaken. But her father will never consent."

"What will you do?"

"Run away with her."

"Of course. That is talking like a man. And you want my advice and assistance in the matter?"

"Exactly."

"Then I am at your service. But, Justin, I have no wish to help my friend into a bad scrape. You have nothing on which to sup-

port a wife, and Melleville is a hard-hearted old dog. Ain't you afraid he will remain incorrigible?"

"Oh, no, not he. No father can cast off utterly so sweet a child. It isn't natural. We read of such things in novels and romances, but they never take place in real life."

"I suppose you know best; but my advice is to look well before you leap."

"Trust me for that, Tom."

"Have you everything arranged?"

"No, I have nothing arranged, and it's for that very purpose that I want to see you. I haven't been able to get a sight of her for a week, but I have managed to have a letter conveyed to her, asking for an interview this very night. She will steal away from the house after the old folks are asleep, and meet me at a spot I have designated. She will be reluctant, I know, to leave her father and mother; but as they will never consent, I can easily overrule all objections."

"Well."

"When this is settled, and the time appointed, I shall want you to have a carriage in readiness to convey us with all speed to Richmond."

“That I will do, of course. And see here, Justin, when you *do* get your fingers into the old chap’s money bags, you must not forget my urgent demands at all times for cash.”

“O, never fear for that, Jones! I can sympathise with you most warmly in that matter.”

These two young men were clerks, at very moderate salaries, in a small town in Virginia. Their habits created demands for money far beyond their income; and as neither of them had any hope of rising by individual merit, or strength of character, into the possession of even a moderate share of wealth, they laid it down as a settled principle, that for them rich wives were an indispensable appendage. Fine clothes and an easy, polished exterior, were assumed, as prerequisites to the accomplishment of the end they had in view. At a party in the village, where Alice Melleville was present, Justin had first seen her, and by his attentions had attracted her notice, and awakened something like an interest in her bosom. Her father was known to be very wealthy, and he was also known to possess a large share of aristocratic pride. In consideration of the former, Justin was assured enough to disregard

the latter, and ventured to call upon Alice in a few days after he had met her at the party

“Is Miss Alice at home?” he asked of Mr. Melleville, whom he met at the door of the old family mansion.

“And what do you want with her, pray?” inquired the old gentleman, eyeing the spruce young man with a glance of haughty pride.

“I met her a few evenings since,” Justin said, with a bow and a smile, “and have merely come to make her a friendly call.”

“Indeed! And who are you, pray?”

“My name is William Justin.”

“It is! And who, pray, is William Justin?”

“I am salesman in Mr. Koster’s store,” replied the young man, a little dashed.

“Then I would advise you to go back and mind your sales,” Mr. Melleville said, sneeringly.

Justin turned on his heel and strode off—not, however, before he had obtained a glance of Alice’s glowing face at one of the windows. Its expression by no means discouraged him.

“I’ll have her yet, see if I don’t! if it’s only to spite that ill-bred old aristocrat,” he said to himself, as he walked hastily away.

On the very next afternoon, Alice came into the village, and William happened to meet her on the street. He at once accosted her, and, as she was then returning home, he attended her a portion of the way. He readily perceived that she was interested in him, and this gave him confidence.

During the next week, they met again, and during that which succeeded, twice. He now grew bolder, and ventured to speak of the pleasure her society gave him; and thus progressed from step to step, until the heart of Alice was fully pledged.

At length the father was informed by some one of the fact that his daughter was in company with Justin whenever she came into the village, when he took prompt measures to check the growing intimacy. This he hoped he had accomplished effectually, when his suspicions were excited on seeing his daughter steal off from the house, on the evening before alluded to. Following her, he was maddened to find that at night, and in a lonely spot, she had dared to meet the man with whom he had forbidden her to hold intercourse.

CHAPTER III.

"DEAR Alice!" exclaimed William Justin, taking her hand, and pressing it hard within his, at the same time kissing her cheek, "I was sure you would come. Oh, it has seemed like a year since I saw you. And you are not afraid to meet me at this lone spot and lonely hour?"

"Afraid, William!—oh no!" And she leaned trustingly upon him, and looked up affectionately into his face.

"You may fear others, Alice, but not me. I would rather die than harm a hair of your head, or give your innocent heart a moment's pain. But now that you are here, and as the minutes are precious, I must open to you the principal object I have in asking this interview."

Alice listened with eager attention, and in the pause that Justin made, he could perceive that her breathing was labored.

"Your father, I fear," he resumed, "will

never consent to our marriage. Have you any hope that he will?"

"None at all," replied the maiden.

"Then, Alice, what is to be done?"

There was no answer

"Do you love me above everything else?"

Her arm, tightening within his, was the only response.

"And above everything else in the world, do I love you, Alice."

The maiden's arm again clasped his tighter to her side.

"Will you not leave all for me, Alice?" he now ventured to ask.

"You ask of me, William, a fearful sacrifice," she said, trembling all over. "I cannot answer the question now."

"You do not then love me truly."

The poor girl burst into tears, and leaning her head upon his shoulder, sobbed aloud.

"Dear Alice," he now said, tenderly—"Dear Alice! forgive me! I spoke hastily. You shall choose your own course, and I will still love you, even if we part this evening, never to meet again."

"It is a hard thing. William," she at length

said, looking up, "to forsake father and mother, dearly loved, and, more than all, bear up against their anger. I shrink from such a trial."

"But this trial cannot be of long duration; they will speedily relent, and you will then be happy in the love of a husband as well as of father and mother."

"I fear not, William. My father is a stern man, and rarely changes. He solemnly declares that if I marry without his consent, he will cut me off forever."

"That is only to frighten you, Alice. It is not in human nature thus to shut up the heart."

"You do not know my father, William."

"I do not fear the result. Your affection for him and your mother makes you fearful. Trust me, there is no danger of the result you dread."

"I cannot, William, indeed I cannot."

"Then we part this night, and forever! Why should we meet again? You are convinced that your father will never agree to our union, and yet will not wed without his consent. Let us then, part now and forget each other."

Justin made a movement as if he were about to leave her, but she clung to his side.

“Then you will forsake all for me?”

“I will, I will,” murmured Alice, again leaning her head upon his shoulder, and again bursting into tears.

“Will you be ready to meet me here in a week, at this very hour?”

“I will,” replied the maiden, mechanically.

“Then I shall be here at the moment. Good night! good night, dearest!” And kissing her cheek fervently, he left her, and glided out of sight in a moment.

With senses shocked and bewildered, Alice stole softly back, and, entering the house silently, went up to her chamber. She scarcely retained a distinct consciousness of what she had done, so sudden and unexpected had been the result of her interview with her lover. Sleep visited not her pillow for many hours, and when she did fall into a troubled slumber, she was soon awakened in alarm by the very dream, so strange and fearful, that had before come, like a warning of evil. Again she slept, and again dreamed the same horrible dream.

So vividly did the impression of this dream

remain upon her mind, that many times, through the next day, she was on the point of going to her father and confessing all. But something prevented so wise a course; and as the remembrance of the night-vision grew less and less palpable, she began to think with less of acute mental suffering of the rash act she had pledged herself to take.

The time passed swiftly, and the appointed hour came. True to her promise, Alice met her lover, and they were married.

CHAPTER IV.

“ALICE is late, remarked Mr. Melleville, on the next morning, as the family were gathering around the breakfast-table.

“Shall I go up into her room and call her?” asked a little girl, about eleven years of age Mr. Melleville’s next oldest child.

“Yes, run up, Mary. Perhaps she is sick.”

The child returned in a few moments, with the news that Alice was not there, and that the bed was untumbled.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Melleville started from

the table, and went hurriedly to Alice's chamber. The child's story was too true. She was not there, nor were there any indications that she had passed the night in her room. On examining her drawers, a large portion of her clothes, it was found, had been removed.

Mr. Melleville sat down, and remained for some time in deep self-communion, while the mother burst into tears. Of the worst they were both assured. He loved his child with a strong and natural affection, but pride was in his heart an over-mastering principle. A powerful struggle agitated him as he sat thus, for many minutes, in deep, painful thought. Pride at last conquered, and, rising to his feet, he turned to the mother, and said, in a calm but resolute tone,

“Alice is our child no longer; from this hour we cast her off. I thought her a girl of high-toned feelings, but she has proved herself unworthy of the name of Melleville. Better it is that she should change it.”

“And yet she is——”

“Tempt me not, Jane, neither deceive yourself. Alice has separated herself from us, and never again can claim a place in our hearts.

Forget that you ever bore such a child. Let her name and her memory from this hour pass from us. We have other children,—let them be all in all to us.”

From that day and from that hour, the poor girl's name was not suffered to be mentioned in the presence of either parent. But neither the servants nor her younger sisters could forget her, nor was her name banished from their lips, when alone, nor were tears for her strangers to their eyes. How far the memory of their child lingered in the parents' hearts—how often they dreamed of her, and in these night-visions yearned towards her with unutterable tenderness—no one knew. As far as others could determine, she was forgotten—or, if not forgotten, unforgiven.

And now let us leave the heartless parents, and turn to the poor, deluded girl, blinded and deceived by a spurious passion, under the semblance of true love.

There was a hurried, agitating flight to Richmond, a hurried and agitating ceremony, and then came a long—long pause for reflection.—The party, consisting of Justin and his bride, Jones and a young lady friend, returned to R..

the place from which they had started on their questionable errand, and Alice was established at a private boarding-house, to await the course of events. Eager as they were to look away and turn away from Mr. Melleville, but a day before, were they now as eager to look towards him. But, although pains were taken to let him know where they were, no word, no token came to them.

On the fifth day, Alice wrote a humble letter to her mother. But day after day, she waited, in vain, for an answer. None came. And in that time, she had learned a sad lesson. It was that the love of her husband was not sufficient to compensate for every other love; that the affection which is borne by a daughter for her parents, cannot be set aside, even for a husband's deeper and more passionate love.—And as time passed on, and not the slightest notice was taken of them by any of her family, Justin himself began to feel uneasy. His income was, in amount, far less than he had demands for himself; how, then, could he support a wife; one, too, who had been, from childhood, used to every comfort and every luxury? Such thoughts it may naturally be supposed, could not be enter

tained, without becoming apparent in some form. Alice perceived that, day after day, her husband grew more thoughtful and serious, and less tender in his attentions towards her.

One month from the day of their marriage—criminal on one side, and thoughtless on the other—Justin and Alice sat alone, in gloomy self-communion; he, brooding over his disappointment and embarrassments, and she, thinking of her lost home and its dear inmates. At last, turning towards her, he said,

“It is strange, Alice, that no one of your family has come near you.”

Alice looked up, while her eyes filled with tears, but she did not reply.

“It is now four weeks since we were married. Surely in that time we ought to have heard from them.”

“I fear very greatly,” Alice said, “that my father will never see me again.” And she burst into tears.

“Do not distress yourself with such a thought Alice. He will, he must relent. Surely your mother loves you, and will overrule the anger of your father.”

“My mother cannot, and I believe never

attempts to influence my father," Alice said, looking up, with the tears flowing over her cheeks.—“He told me, that if I married you, he would never forgive me or see me, and few men keep their word more strictly than he. I am sadly afraid that I have nothing to hope for there ; that I am alone with you in the world !”

Her tender glance, and the affectionate, confiding tone in which the last sentence was uttered, touched the heart of one as cold and selfish as her husband ;—stooping down, he kissed her cheek, and said, with more of sincerity and true feeling than he had ever yet spoken to her,

“Dear Alice ! I will try to make you as happy as I can ! But you ought to know it, at once, that I have not the means to make you as comfortable, nor to provide you with the luxuries that you have been used to from childhood. But I will do my best.”

He spoke from the impulse of a sudden resolution to change his habits, for her sake, and to do all in his power to make her happy.

“I ask only to share your lot, dear husband ! I forsook all for you. Love me, and I will try to be happy.”

Justin kissed the cheek of his young wife with more of an unselfish affection than he had yet felt, and, inwardly resolving that he would, for her sake, be a man of energy and principle, he left the room, and returned to his place of business. There he was met by an officer, with a writ against him for debt.

"I cannot meet this just now," Justin said.

"I am not a collector, but an officer. I cannot 'call again,' " the officer said, half ironically.

"Well! well! I will answer to this on Monday," the young man replied, quickly

"I would advise you to come prepared to pay it then; for when judgment is rendered up, the money will have to be forthcoming. Such are our orders." And so saying, the officer turned away.

A similar process for fifty dollars was also served on him within an hour, the whole amounting to upwards of a hundred dollars. This sum would not cover over one-third of his debts in the city.

On the same night, at about nine o'clock, he returned to the store in which he was a salesman.

"I have come in to have some talk with you," Justin said to his employer. "I am in trouble, and want your advice and assistance."

"I am sorry you did not ask that earlier, William ; I might have saved you from an act of which it is now too late to repent."

"No doubt. But the past is past. I want to talk of the present and future."

"Say on."

"Two writs have been served on me to-day, and I have until Monday to appear in. I cannot pay them, and it is of no use to think of it."

"Well !"

"I owe a good deal besides. Debts foolishly contracted. Before I was married, no one hoped to get anything by troubling me. Now, a different game will be played."

"Well ?"

"I must leave here."

"Where will you go ?"

"I have, to-night, made an engagement to go to Washington City, and keep bar."

"At what salary ?"

"Six hundred dollars."

"Your best plan is, certainly, to go."

"But I have no money to take me there."

And I have come in to know if to your many and long-continued kindnesses to one who has not always deserved them, you will add another."

"William," said his employer, in a serious tone, "if it had not been for your father, I would have discharged you long ago. For his sake I have borne with your irregularities, and too frequent neglect of business. For his sake, I will now advance you fifty dollars."

"And promise to keep my secret until I am beyond the reach of the processes from the court?"

"With that I have nothing to do, and shall therefore not speak of it. But when do you leave?"

"I must be off in two days."

"In your new home, I earnestly hope, William, you will resolve to lead a new life. Remember, that another's happiness is now connected with your actions; if indeed, anything you can do will ever make that too trusting, deluded creature, who is now your wife, happy."

"That act was a great and foolish, aye, I will call it a wicked one. But it is past now, and cannot be recalled. I vainly hoped that Mr

Melleville would soon relent, and then all would have been well."

"You should have known his character better, before you presumed so far. Had you consulted me, I could have dissipated your error in in that respect."

"But I did not. And if I had, I would not, probably, have heeded your warning."

"Perhaps not. Well, now that the deed is done, let me beg of you, for her sake, to do the best you can."

"I will, I will!" Justin said, much moved, and then withdrew to return home and break the painful intelligence to his wife. He found her sitting alone, and weeping.

"Dear Alice," he said, with unwonted tenderness, as he sat down by her side, and took her hand within his, "what can I do to make you happy?"

"Nothing, nothing, dear husband; I am happy now!" she said, brushing away her tears, and trying to smile cheerfully as she looked up into his face.

"I have wronged you much, Alice. But what is past cannot be mended. Are you willing to share my lot with me?"

"I am, William, be it what it may," she said earnestly.

"Then, Alice, I must go away from this place."

"O William!" ejaculated his wife, with a look of painful surprise.

"I had better tell you the simple truth, and then leave you to decide. I will not urge you or try to influence you. You shall be free to go or stay. Perhaps when I go away, your father may take you home again, where I am sure you will be happier than I can make you. Know, then, Alice, that I am in debt here several hundred dollars more than I can pay. Writs have been served on me, and if not satisfied by Monday next, I will be lodged in prison."

Alice looked at her husband with a stupefied air, but did not reply.

"I have secured a situation in Washington City, at a salary that will support us if we are frugal. Now, Alice, will you go or stay?"

"I will go with you, William. Why should I stay here? And who is there in the wide world to care for me but you? But how soon must we go?"

"In two days."

“Then, I will make one more appeal to my father. Who knows but that his heart will soften towards me, when he finds that I am about to go away, never perchance to return?”

“Do, Alice, do. And I will write also.”

Before retiring to her bed, Alice wrote to her mother, and through her to her father, an humble, penitent and touching epistle. Urging them, if they would not see her before she went away, just to drop her one word, saying that they forgave her.

Her husband also wrote, stating plainly that he went away through necessity, and urging upon Mr. Melleville to take his daughter home.

“I have not the means of supporting her comfortably,” he said in his letter, “and unless you take her again, she must suffer in many ways. Will you not again receive her?—Solemnly I promise, if you will take her home, that I will never come near you. I do not write this because I do not love, or am not willing to take care of Alice. I should part from her with exceeding pain. But I am sure that I cannot provide for her as she has been used to live, and I am well convinced that away from you she never can be happy. Come for her, or send

for her within two days. After that it will be too late."

The first day passed, and there was neither word nor letter, nor token of any kind from Mr. or Mrs. Melleville to Alice. All through the next, she looked and longed in painful, heart-sickening suspense, but in vain; and night fell gloomily around, yet no word had come.

With a feeling of hopelessness, did poor Mrs. Justin prepare to accompany her husband on his flight, for such it really was, from her native village. At ten o'clock at night they took their places in the stage-coach, she silent, sad and heartless. Just as the driver was mounting the box, Alice felt a hand upon her arm, and looking up, she saw standing by the stage, an old colored servant of her father's; one who had nursed her when an infant. She held in her hand a letter, which was eagerly seized by the unhappy girl.

"Who is it from, Nancy?" she asked, much agitated.

"From little Mary. *They* would not write, and don't know about Mary's writing or me coming to see you. But I couldn't let you go, Miss Alice, without seeing your dear face once

more. O, if they only loved you as I do!" And the tears streamed down the cheeks of the affectionate creature, as she stood clasping tightly the hand of her young Mistress. At that moment the driver cracked his whip, and the coach moved off.

"God bless you, Miss Alice!" fell from the lips of the servant in a fervent ejaculation,—in the next moment she stood alone, looking sadly after the retiring stage.

Full two hours passed before Alice had an opportunity to read that precious letter, warm, she knew, from an affectionate and innocent heart. But for the trembling, eager desire she felt to know its contents, her feelings on thus leaving, perhaps forever, her home and dearest friends, would have been indeed terrible.

By the dim light of a flickering lamp, at the first stage-house, she opened and read her letter. It ran thus;

"*Dear Sister Alice*—I happened to see your letter on mother's table to-day, and then I knew what father meant yesterday, when I heard him say to her—'No, no, no! I will have nothing to do with her.' But if they don't love you,

Alice, I do, and if I had dared I would have been to see you every day. O, it is so lonesome, and so sad now you are gone. Father nor mother ain't like they used to be. He never seems pleased, nor she happy. And you are going clear away. O, how I cry when I think of it. And what will become of you? O sister, I wish I could go with you, for your sake; I know you must feel so bad, never to see any of us, nor know anything about us. Nancy will take this to you. She don't forget you; nor none of us, except mother and father, and I think it is hard work with them. Good-bye, dear sister, and don't forget, wherever you are, your sister

MARY."

Alice sobbed two or three times, convulsively, as if she were struggling hard with her feelings, and then turned slowly away from the dim light by which she had read the letter, and re-entered the coach.

CHAPTER V.

IT was five years from the period at which occurred the scenes detailed in the last chapter, that Alice sat, sewing, near the hour of midnight, in a meagerly furnished room of a small house in Washington city. In one corner, sleeping soundly on an old quilt, with a bundle of rags for a pillow, lay a little boy, about four years old. An infant slept in an old cradle, that had been bought somewhere at second hand, to which ever and anon the young mother gave a slight motion with her foot. And Alice, what of her? A sad, sad change had, alas! passed over her sweet young face; that was now pale and thin, and wore an expression of sorrowful endurance. The quality of the garment upon which she wrought with hurried industry, indicated, in comparison with her own apparent condition, that she was working for money. And such was really the case.

Through many heart-searching and heart-aching changes, the years had worn away

until the present time—years, whose history was engraven in lines of suffering and sorrow that were too visible upon her brow and cheeks, and looked mournfully from her still bright eyes, shadowed ever, except at brief intervals, by their drooping lids. The records of those years, as indicating her awakening to the realities of a changed and almost hopeless life, would occupy us too long, and only add emotions of pain to the painful ones that must be excited in tracing onward her checkered course. It is sufficient to say, that her young heart's ardent promises proved altogether fallacious. That soon her husband's true character of unfeeling selfishness stood revealed to her in a light that destroyed even a lingering hope that the estimation might be a false one. His humble condition in life would have given her little cause of unhappiness; for the young affections of her heart, luxuriant in their growth, had already entwined themselves about him. All she would have asked would have been a tender and constant return for the pure and fervent love she gave. But this he could not give. The end which he had in view was not realized; and he was too selfish to fall back and be satisfied with

the wealth of affection that was ready to be poured out upon him, when gross, material riches, were all he had sought after, or really cared for.

And here let us pause, and drop a word or two, in the form of general principles, that may not be without a good effect upon such as have minds evenly balanced, and thus capable of acting, in some degree, from the promptings of rational thought. The end which any one has in view, will, of course, influence, modify, and enter into all his actions. It will govern him not only in the pursuit of an object, but in his enjoyment of it in possession. This principle we shall apply to the subject of marriage, as one of the first importance, and as naturally growing out of our story. Happiness in the married state results, and results only, from mutual affection. Just so far as this affection is not perfectly reciprocal, just so far will unhappiness result from the union. This is an immutable law, founded in the very nature of things. Whatever then, in the motives which induce marriage, is foreign to this, is so much of an alloy to true felicity, and will always be felt as such. No matter in which party the

base motive exists, (we call it base in contradistinction to the purer principle,) whether in the woman or the man, the result will be equally fatal to the happiness of both. The real motives of any one lie quite interior, and are not always apparent to the individual himself; to ascertain them requires some degree of self-exploration. Thus, a man or a woman, in deciding to marry, may think that the love which is felt is the strongest motive for the union, whereas one, or even both, may have a motive so concealed as hardly to be self-acknowledged, that leads all other motives. This may be a love of wealth, a simple admiration of the beautiful, a desire for elevation and distinction in society, the anticipated pleasures of a high intellectual intercourse, without reference to moral perfections, or some motive of a kindred spirit. If any of these govern, the marriage cannot be perfectly happy, because they are base in comparison with the high and holy affection which should rule in marriage unions, and make these subordinate. How necessary is it then, for each one to determine, for himself, what his own ends are, and endeavour to ascertain, as far as possible, the end of the one he

proposes to unite with himself—and so in the opposite case.

The end which William Justin proposed to himself, was the gaining possession of a portion of Mr. Melleville's property, for selfish gratification. Disappointed in this, the feeble flame of affection that had been kindled for Alice, soon expired. Had he obtained the money he sought, its possession would have been as fatal to the incipient love that was germinating in his mind, as had been his disappointment. Thoroughly selfish, he would have pursued the broader field of gratification that wealth afforded him, with but little consideration for the woman to whom he owed his elevation.

And so it will be in all the varieties of false principles that govern in marriages. If the real end which a woman has in view in deciding to marry a man, is to obtain a position in society, and enjoy the luxuries and refinements that wealth affords, it is hardly to be expected that, in case of reverses, she will share her husband's changed lot with contentment and increased affection. Nor will she, influenced by such a base and selfish principle, be satisfied to see others occupying a rank far above her.

Envy on the one hand, and disappointment on the other, would both be antidotes to conjugal love.

And again—but we need not amplify. The hints we have given are enough for the wise. To return.

Alice had not seen her husband for several months, and all the burden of providing for the wants of her children, devolved upon herself. He had become idle and dissipated, and had gone off to Baltimore under the pretence of obtaining a situation, and she had not since heard of him. On the night in which she is again presented to the reader, her thoughts were more than usually occupied about her husband. Many of the first emotions of tenderness which she had felt for him, returned upon her, and pity for his wretched abandonment of himself, mingled with her kindling affection. As the time wore on, she would sometimes pause, involuntarily, and listen, as if for the sound of his approaching footsteps. Then she would become conscious that she was listening in vain, and resume her wearisome duties. At last the impression that he was near became so strong, that she could sew but a few minutes without

pausing to listen. All at once her heart gave a sudden bound, as her quick ear detected in the sound of hurrying footsteps, her husband's familiar tread. The sound was distant, but it neared rapidly, and soon it became apparent that others were in quick pursuit. Nearer and nearer came the sounds, and more and more agitated did the lone wife become. She laid down her work quietly, went to the door, drew back the bolt, lifted the latch, and stood with the door in her hand, her heart answering with a quick bound to every hurried footfall. The sounds came nearer and nearer still—were at the very door, which she swung open, when in bounded her husband, pale, bloody, and frightened.

“Shut the door, Alice, for Heaven's sake!” he cried.

It was closed, bolted and locked in a moment, but not an instant sooner than were his pursuers on the spot, who, finding him safely housed, vented a few loud threats and curses, and then went away.

“O, William, what is the matter?” asked his wife, in a tone of tender anxiety.

“A minute later and I would have been

murdered!" he ejaculated. "How fortunate it was that you opened the door for me when you did."

"It was Heaven's mercy, not mine," she said, meekly. "But you are bloody, William," she continued, her pale face blanching, "are you much hurt?"

"O, no. It's only a scratch. I'm safe and sound enough. I came to the city to-night, and dropped into a tavern on the avenue for a little while. Some men were playing, and I took a hand just for amusement. I won at every game, until I broke 'em all, and then they tried to pick a quarrel with me. One of them called me a cheat, when I knocked him down. Then they all fell on me, and I barely escaped being murdered. They were so angry, that if they had got their hands on me, I am sure they would have killed me. But I've won fifty dollars," he added, exultingly, throwing a roll of notes upon the table, near which he had seated himself.

"And a gambler, too!" were the words that formed themselves in Alice's thoughts—but she uttered no reproof. Her heart sunk within her at the idea, (although she had experienced

enough already to know that her husband possessed little, if any true affection for her,) that after an absence of months, during which he had not once heard from his family, he could return to the city, and seek first to mingle with old, corrupt associates, rather than search out the wife and little ones he had left to suffering and want. But she did not chide him, or in any way allude to the neglect.

“How have you been, William?” she asked, kindly, after the first silence that followed the hurried interest of his return.

“I’ve not been well, Alice,” he said. “I went to Baltimore in hopes of getting a good situation there in a store, but was disappointed. I didn’t write to you, for I had nothing to write, and nothing to send to you. And then I was taken sick, and it was several weeks before I could get about again. At last I got a place in a store, and now I have come on for you and the children. I hope we shall have better times. But how is James and little Alice? And how have you got along?”

“The children are not very well, William,” his wife said, while her voice trembled, and the moisture gathered in her eye. “Poor little

things!—James has missed you so much!—He asks every day, ‘when will pa come home?’”

“Well, I won’t leave you any more, Alice,” he said, with assumed feeling. But the disguise was too thin to deceive a woman’s heart, yearning for a true affection. “To-morrow we will get ready and go to Baltimore,” he added.

“But have you a good situation there, William?” inquired his wife, anxiously. “I am just beginning to get known here by a few kind persons, who give me now as much sewing as I can do. If we go to Baltimore, and your situation should not prove a permanent one, I shall be in a strange place, and not able to get anything to do. I could not bear to hear little James asking and crying again for something to eat, and I not a mouthful in the house!”

This touching allusion to former sufferings, seemed to irritate rather than soften William Justin.

“O, that’s all past!” he replied, impatiently waving his hand. “And let the past go! I know what I am about; and I tell you that my situation is a good one, and permanent too, and will yield us plentifully.”

"You know best," Alice said, with a meek, patient look of endurance. "If you say so, I am ready to go there."

"Very well. We will pack up our things to-morrow, and put them on board of a packet, and then go off in the stage."

"But what will we do when we get there, William?"

"Board, of course, until our things arrive," was the dogmatic answer.

On the next morning, sure enough, Justin commenced packing up his things for the purpose of removing to Baltimore. Alice assisted with an air of patient resignation. Her manner, and the expression of her eyes and face, showed plainly that she was looking up for sustaining power. Earthly hope and promised happiness had failed; and now, desiring to live for her children, she turned, in her feebleness of spirit, to the Strong to sustain her in her duties.

In two days they were on their way to Baltimore, where Alice looked, again, for the suffering stranger's lonely heart, as her portion.

CHAPTER VI.

"SHALL I read to you, Ma?" asked little Alice, now six years old.

"Yes, dear. Draw a chair up to the table, and while I sit here in bed and sew, do you read for me."

Thus do we again introduce Mrs. Justin, five years from the day she removed, with her husband, from Washington to Baltimore. The store in which her husband had engaged, was a liquor store, or low tavern, where he spent most of his time, becoming more and more dissipated and brutalized in his feelings every day. For a short time he provided scantily for his wife and children, but soon he neglected them again, cruelly. The burden of almost their entire maintenance fell, of course, upon his wife, in whose delicate frame disease had begun to make painful inroads. Her nervous system had become much shattered, and there were, besides, too apparent symptoms of a pulmonary affection, but not of the worst kind. Still, she was

a daily sufferer, and much of her time she was unable to sit up in her chair, but had to prop herself up in bed with pillows, where, half seated, half reclining, she would ply her needle all day, and frequently for half the night. James, her eldest boy, who was nine years old, had, with sympathies and right thoughts developed at that tender age, sought and obtained a situation in a sugar factory, and was earning for his mother a dollar and a half, and sometimes two dollars, a week. He had been taught to read well, and write a little, by her for whom he was now devoting his young years, cheerfully, to daily and often nightly toil. Alice has numbered six summers, and has also learned to feel for and sympathise with her mother. She, too, has been taught to read. As directed in the opening of this chapter, she brought a book and laid it upon the table, which had been drawn up to the bed, on which reclined her mother. She then sat down, and opening the book, commenced reading. It was the book she most loved herself to read, and which her mother most liked to have read—the Bible. Turning to the book of Psalms, the little girl read slowly.

“The Lord is my shepherd—I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me: Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.”

A sound like that of a sob caught the ear of the child, and she paused and looked anxiously up into her mother’s face. But her mother’s eyes were bent as usual on her work, and her hand that held the needle was moving regularly. Alice again read, and continued reading thus for nearly an hour, when she became wearied and closed the book.

“Ma,” said the child, looking up into her mother’s face, as a sudden thought occurred to her, “Hav’n’t I got a grandmother, too? Mary Ellis has a grandmother.”

“Yes, dear,” Mrs. Justin replied, after a moment’s thought, while her heart trembled.

“Where is she, ma? I’d like to see her,” pursued Alice, leaning on the side of the bed,

and looking up with a countenance full of newly awakened interest.

“She lives a good way from here, Alice.”

“Well, I should like to see her. Won't she love me as well as Mary Ellis's grandmother loves her?”

This was probing a wound that time could not heal. But the mother endeavoured to bear the pain.

“If she saw you, Alice,” she replied, “I am sure she would love you very much.”

“Why don't she come here, ma?”

“She lives a great way off, dear.”

“Well, I wish she would come, for I would love her so much,” the child said, half musingly, and then remained silent.

“You love to read in the good book, do you not, dear?” asked Mrs. Justin, partly because she felt inclined to ask the question, and partly to suggest other thoughts for the child than those which were occupying her mind.

“O yes, I love to read in the Bible.”

“And why do you love to read in the Bible, Alice?”

“Because, I always feel good when I am reading it. I don't know what the reason is,

but no book makes me feel like the good book does."

"How does it make you feel, dear?"

"It makes me feel kind of warmer here," the child replied, laying her hand upon her breast. "And just as if I could love every body."

Mrs. Justin mused upon the answer of the child, and mentally ejaculated, "Blessed book."

Thus, amid pain, and wrong, and exile, and privation, were the consolations flowing from a genuine religious principle, beginning to dawn upon the troubled heart of Alice Melleville, or rather Mrs. Justin.

Towards nine o'clock James came in. He was a delicate looking boy, with his mother's fair face and dark bright eyes.

"I am afraid you work too late, James," said his mother, as he came in.

"Who works latest, Ma? and who is best able, you or I?" he asked, with earnest tenderness, and with a tone and manner that were meant evidently to settle the question at once.

Mrs. Justin smiled affectionately upon her noble-spirited boy, and said—

“You are considerate of your mother, James.”

“Not more considerate than she is of me,” he replied, smiling in turn. “But come, Ma, put up your work; I know your head aches badly, and the pain in your breast must be bad, for you look paler than usual. I’ll work harder to-morrow to make up for it.”

The tears came into Mrs. Justin’s eyes, in spite of an effort to keep them back.

“I have promised this shirt to-morrow,” she said, “and if I don’t get pretty well on with it to-night, I shall not have it done in time. You know I always feel faint and sick in the morning, and can’t do much until towards the middle of the day.”

“And that is because you always sit up so late at night.”

“That may have some effect. But I cannot change to-night. Mrs. Mansfield is very kind in getting me work, and giving me a good deal from her own family. I know she wants the half-dozen shirts, of which this is the last, to-morrow, by the middle of the day. Her husband is going away on the day after, and she must have them in time to do up.”

The boy saw the force of what his mother said, and was silent. He now read for his mother a chapter or two in the Bible; and then, as he had to rise very early in the morning, retired to his bed, which was in one corner of the room, on the floor, with a curtain drawn before it, prepared and arranged by the hands of his mother. Justin rarely came home, and Alice therefore slept with her mother. Both of the children were soon fast asleep, while their mother continued her wearisome task until the hour of midnight, and then, after lifting her heart upwards, resigned herself to slumber, which was now becoming sounder and sweeter than it had been for years, notwithstanding her fast failing health

CHAPTER VII.

THREE years more passed away, during which no change for the better occurred in Mrs. Justin's health. She had still to toil, in weariness, beyond her strength, and with all her toil, could but scantily supply the wants of her two children. What added seriously to her burden, was the fact that her husband had grown so dissipated and idle, that no one would employ him, and he had now fallen back for support on the feeble arm of the woman he had so cruelly wronged from the beginning. While he was away, and staid away from his little family, they were as happy as they possibly could be under the circumstances that surrounded them; but now, the constant presence of their debased father, and his ill-nature and frequent authoritative, arbitrary manner, robbed them of that pleasure which they once enjoyed. Whenever he could get liquor, he would drink until intoxicated, and then come home to sicken

the hearts of his wife and children, not only by his revolting appearance, but by his crossness and interference in almost everything. James, now twelve years old, could earn his mother three dollars, and sometimes more than that, every week.

Little Alice was growing every day dearer to the heart of her mother, Amid poverty and distress, she had labored to sow in her young mind the seeds of pure thought and gentle emotions. Every Sabbath, and frequently in the evenings when her father was out, would she read to her mother from the Holy Book. It was a touching sight, to see that child, not nine years old, tracing with her tiny fingers the lines of the Holy Record, and to note the pale countenance of the sick mother, over which would pass the quick flashes of pious emotion, when the low sweet voice of the child lingered on passages of comfort to the afflicted. And it was a sight to make an angel weep, when the drunken father would come in, and sometimes with wicked oaths and blows, drive that trembling child from her low seat by her mother's side, and fling the sacred book with imprecation to the floor. Thus were even the new

sources of comfort springing up for her, turned into active causes of pain.

One morning Alice drooped about, and, after dinner drew a small stool up to a chair, and laying her head upon her arms, and her arms down upon the chair, was soon fast asleep. Much occupied, her mother did not notice that anything ailed the child, until late in the afternoon, when casting her eyes more particularly upon the face of Alice, who still slept, she thought it looked very red, and placing her hand upon her cheek, found it hot with fever. She roused her immediately, when she complained of a sore throat, and a burning all over her. In great concern, Mrs. Justin waited until dark, when her husband came in.

"I wish you would go for the doctor, William," she said; "Alice is very sick, and I feel a good deal alarmed about her."

"What's the matter with her?"

"She has a high fever, and complains of a sore throat."

"Well, I don't think it worth while to send for a doctor. She's been eating too much, I suppose, and will be better by morning."

"Indeed, William, she has eaten hardly any

thing to-day. Do go for the doctor. You do not know how very ill she is."

"I shall *not* go for the doctor, then; for I don't see any use," he replied, angrily.

"Well, never mind, then," his wife replied, soothingly, for she dreaded his becoming excited; "James will be home by eight or nine o'clock, and he can go."

"No he can't though," was the drunken father's reply. "No doctor shall come into the house this night. There is no need of one."

Mrs. Justin said not another word. She knew that it would be useless to waste words with her husband, who had as usual been drinking. With excited and alarmed feelings, she made use of all the means in her power, to allay the fever that was burning through every vein of her beloved child. Though so feeble herself as to be scarcely able to move about, she was buoyed up with an artificial strength, and spent most of the evening in bathing Alice's feet, preparing her hot drinks, and using every means that suggested itself, for breaking the fever and restoring moisture to the skin. But all her efforts were vain.

About eight o'clock, James came home. The father had gone out an hour before.

"What is the matter with Alice, mother?" he asked, alarmed at her ill looks, and his mother's distressed countenance.

"She is very sick, James, and is getting worse all the while."

"Then I will go at once for the doctor."

"No, James, you needn't go after him to-night."

"Why mother? she is very sick."

"I know that. But she will no doubt be better by the morning."

"But suppose she is worse? See how much time would be lost?"

"True—true. But your father says we must not send for the doctor to-night."

"Why?"

"He does not think Alice very sick."

The boy's lip curled. But a single steady glance from his mother, made him hide the thoughts that were in his mind.

"But she is very sick now," he said, after a few moment's pause, "and surely he would rather have you send for the doctor, did he know how bad she was."

"You cannot go to-night," his mother replied, mildly.

By nine o'clock, the fever had increased greatly, and Alice now tossed herself about and moaned as if in much suffering. Still the father came not; and the two who loved the child and sister with an affection increased ten fold, at the sight of her danger and misery, stood by the bedside in silent agony. At length James, whose thoughts had been busy and exciting, started from the bedside, saying passionately—

"I don't care what father says! I *will* go for the doctor!"

"James! James!"

But the excited boy heard not, or regarded not, for he passed out swiftly, and was soon at the office of a physician.

Fortunately the doctor was in, and seeing the alarm depicted in the boy's countenance, instantly attended the summons.

The father, the son, and the physician, all entered the room where lay the sick child, together. The former just drunk enough to be cross, unreasonable, and tyrannical.

"Didn't I tell you not to send for the doctor?" were his first angry words, regardless of the

presence of the physician. "There's nothing the matter with Alice. Come, get up, you little hypocrite!" addressing the sick child, and making an effort to pull her up from the bed.

Quick as thought James was by his side, and with a force and decision beyond his years, pushed his father, who, staggering away from the bed, fell over a chair upon the floor. Recovering himself, Justin made towards the boy, who kept out of the way until the physician, who was a stout strong man, took hold of the inebriate, and placing him by main strength upon a chair, told him in a stern voice, that if he were not at once quiet, he would call in a watchman, and have him removed. This threat had the desired effect.

While this was passing, a grey headed old man, stood just outside of the half-opened door, looking in upon the excited group. He seemed moved by the scene, for he dashed off a tear that fell unbidden to his cheek. The mother stood near the bed, with her face, expressive of the keenest anguish, turned partly towards the door. There were no tears in her eyes. Her hands were firmly locked together, and she was glancing steadily upwards as if earthly hope

had utterly failed. The sick child had raised herself in alarm, and was staring wildly around. All this the eye of the old man took in. A moment or two he gazed, as if horror-stricken, and then turned and passed hastily out. The slight noise which this movement occasioned, attracted the attention of those within the room, and broke the spell that bound them.

The humane physician proceeded immediately to examine into the real condition of the child. The mother eagerly watched his countenance, again all alive with interest for the little sufferer. But she gathered no consolation from his countenance which seemed to express much concern and some anxiety, as he felt the pulse long, and thought longer before he made any remark.

“What do you think of her, doctor?” at length inquired the mother, in an earnest, trembling voice—her nervous agitation increasing her anxiety and alarm tenfold.

“She is a sick child, madam. But her disease will no doubt yield to active treatment. Send your son to my office in a few minutes for medicine.” Then turning to the father, he said, sternly :

“The life of your child depends upon her being kept perfectly quiet. If you make any more disturbance, you may consider yourself, if she dies, her murderer.”

This nearly sobered him; and he remained quiet, and showed much interest in the condition of little Alice.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON the next morning, when the physician came, he found the child worse, instead of better. The medicine he had prescribed, failed entirely in the effect he had anticipated. Her fever was still high, her throat very sore and inflamed, and her skin, in many places, as red as scarlet. Whether the disease were small pox, measles, or scarlet fever, he could not tell, and was much perplexed what course to pursue. The child labored much in breathing, and complained of great oppression in the chest. He prescribed, and called again in the evening to find his patient a great deal worse. Her throat had become exceedingly painful; and on looking into it, he found it not only highly inflamed, but

in many places beginning to ulcerate and turn black. The mother was greatly distressed, and even the father was beginning to exhibit the existence of some few remains of humanity.

On the next day hope began to fail in the mother's heart, and the physician saw little to encourage him. Up to this time, every symptom had continued hourly more and more aggravated. The action of medicine had produced not a single favorable result. It was with great difficulty that the sufferer could swallow even a draught of water. Her throat and tongue were black and putrid, and her skin continued to be of a scarlet hue.

On the evening of the eighth day after she was taken sick, the father, and mother, and brother, were gathered around little Alice to see her die. Though suffering greatly, she was perfectly sensible; but the disease had rendered her so completely blind that she could distinguish no one by sight.

Mrs. Justin's mind had been gradually more and more convinced, as the disease grew worse, that her child must die. And the stronger this conviction took hold of her mind the less she could conceive how she would possibly be able

bear the loss. Still, she had endeavored to school her mind to resignation, and to look upward for strength. On this evening, while sitting beside the bed, she sobbed out, unable to restrain her feelings.

“O mother, don’t cry about me!” said the dying child, turning her face towards her parent, in which was an expression of deep sympathy and concern.

The mother answered not; but there was a struggle within, a violent struggle, when the expression of her countenance grew calmer, but fixed and almost vacant. She had resolved, for the sake of her child, to give no audible token of grief. Suddenly Alice started forward, stretched out her hands, and rolled her vacant eyes staringly about the room—then she fell back in a slight convulsion upon the bed. The mother knew that the hour was come, and she knelt by the bedside of her dying child—still as death—while the large tears trickled through the fingers that concealed her face.

“Mother,” said the sufferer—“I can’t see you, but if you can see me, kiss me.”

A sudden, but quickly stifled, convulsive sob agitated the mother’s bosom, as she bent over to

kiss the dear lips of her child, who was just falling beneath the sickle of the "reaper Death." The slender white arms of Alice were thrown about her neck and firmly clasped for a few moments—then slowly withdrawn, when, with a long sigh, she turned her face away.

For nearly half an hour, she lay with her face turned to the wall, the mother, the while kneeling by the bedside, the father standing near, much agitated, and James seated upon the foot of the bed, making no effort to conceal, or wipe away the tears that were rolling down his young cheeks.

"O mother, mother, what makes my heart jump about so?" suddenly cried the dying one rolling her sightless eyes wildly—"O I shall die if I can't get breath? Open the windows! Fan me!—take off the clothes! oh!—oh! oh!"

While Alice in an alarmed tone was uttering rapidly these words, which passed like electricity through the nerves of father, mother, and brother, the door of the room softly opened, and an old man, the same who had lingered near the door on the evening Alice was discovered to be so ill, stole quietly in, accompanied by an elderly woman, respectably at-

ired. Mrs. Justin did not observe them—she was too much absorbed in the one dear object before her.

The paroxysm that had seized Alice soon subsided, and she again lay motionless, almost gasping for breath. The strangers and intruders, seated themselves in a far corner of the room, as if unwilling to break the spell that wrapt the senses of all. In the course of a little while Alice again roused up.

“Mother,” she said, in an altered voice, “let me kiss you before I go to sleep. I am going to sleep, mother, and I am sure it will be a good sleep; and then I shall be well again.” As her mother bent over her, the tears fell fast upon the face of the child, who resumed, in a fainter tone :

“O mother, why do you cry so? But I know you are sick—sick and in pain—and father scolds so, and calls you such bad names—and you have got no mother with you like I have, to be good to you, and help you when you are sick. But don’t cry, mother! It won’t be always so—I am going to sleep now, good night.”

And she did sleep a sweeter sleep than had

ever before locked her senses in forgetfulness. The struggle was slight and quickly over.

At this moment, the female stranger, yet unnoticed by Mrs. Justin, came eagerly forward, and catching her in her arms as she was about to sink to the floor, whispered a single word in her ear.

How the poor, bereaved, heart-broken mother started at the word!—listening eagerly, not daring to raise her eyes, lest the spell should be broken, and reality mock a sudden hope.

“Alice!” murmured the stranger again.

“My mother, my own dear mother!” she almost shrieked, turning and hiding her face in that bosom which had so often pillowed it, ere a breath of life had blown roughly upon her.

Half staggering forward, came the old man, the tears streaming down his cheeks. “Alice! Alice! my long lost child! Alice, speak to me or my heart will break.”

Mrs. Justin looked up,—there was a placid, heavenly smile upon her countenance.

“Dear father! you have scught your erring

child at last," she said in a subdued tone, and again hid her face in her mother's bosom.

And thus were they reconciled, after long years of estrangement and sorrow.

CHAPTER IX.

ABOUT six months previous to the occurrence of the exciting incident detailed in the preceding chapter, Mr. Melleville came home from an absence of a few days and found, greatly to his alarm, that all of his children, three sons and two daughters, all nearly grown, had been taken dangerously ill with a malignant fever, then raging throughout the neighbourhood. A physician had been in attendance already, for two days; but thus far, he had not been able to make the slightest impression on the disease, which continued to increase in violence until the tenth day. Then came the crisis.

"Doctor," said the father, with a pale, anxious face, as he met the physician at the door on the tenth morning, "I want the very truth from you. Look at my children, and then tell me if there is any hope."

The doctor passed in to the sick rooms without replying. He first went to the bed of a young girl, about fifteen, and examined all her symptoms with much care. A heavy sigh escaped him, as he turned away to another bed. Here he found still less to encourage him. An examination of all showed the painful fact, that in each one the disease had assumed its most malignant type, and that recovery would be little less than a miracle. He then gave a few directions to the attendants, and went out.

“Well, Doctor?” And Mr. Melleville placed his hand upon the physician’s arm, heavily, and stood looking him in the face, in pale suspense.

“There is but little hope, Mr. Melleville.”

A quick shudder passed through the father’s frame.

“I have done my best,” resumed the physician. “Your children are in the hands of a merciful God.”

Mr. Melleville clasped his hands upon his forehead and staggered back a few paces, as if from a heavy blow. But rallying himself with a strong effort, he said:

“Doctor—I have often known persons to recover after all hope was gone. You do not mean to say that my children will certainly die?”

“No—no—Mr. Melleville. I mean to say no such thing. You asked me for the truth. That I have given you. He only can restore them, who, after all, is the physician who heals even in the remedies that we prescribe. Leave them, then, in his hands—and do so with the assurance, that, whether taken or not, their greatest good will be the end secured.”

“But, sir,” the agitated father said, again catching hold of the physician’s arm, and looking him eagerly in the face, “I cannot give them up! *They are my children! Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh!* Save them for me, and name your reward. Let it be the half of all my worldly goods. But save my children!”

“I could do no more than I have done, were my life at stake,” replied the physician, with solemn earnestness. “They are in the hands of Him with whom are the issues of life. Look up to Him”

The physician turned away, but Mr. Melleville would not let him go.

“Doctor! Is there nothing that I can offer you to save my children?”

The physician was deeply moved.

“Mr. Melleville,” he again said, “they are in God’s hands, not mine. I have no power to cure but what I receive from Him who has given to medicine its virtue. All that I can do, I have done.”

“But you will not leave us, Doctor,” urged the father, in a tremulous voice. “Some change for the better may take place—a change that will require to be immediately seconded by your skill.”

“I will return in an hour,” was replied. “Two other patients are in like peril with your children. I must see them.”

“Doctor, do not leave us!” almost implored the distracted father.

“My other patients are children, loved as tenderly as you love your children. To-day is the most critical period in their disease. I must see them.”

“I will send for another physician to attend them. Do not go away, Doctor.”

“My duty is plain, Mr. Melleville, and I cannot neglect it. I must see my other patients. But I will return in an hour.”

And he moved towards the door.

Again the father urged and implored, but to no purpose. The selfishness of his affliction could not bend the inflexible physician from the course of duty. He went away, leaving Mr. Melleville half stupefied under the appalling sense of his children's danger. The mother was much calmer, though no less really appalled at the thought of the impending danger that threatened her offspring.

In an hour the physician returned, and again examined the sick children. There had been a change in their symptoms even in that short period—a change for the worse. This his quick eye at once detected.

“How are they now, Doctor?” This was asked by Mr. Melleville, in a husky whisper.

“There is no change for the better,” was the reluctant reply.

The father sunk upon a chair and groaned heavily. His head fell upon his bosom, his hands were tightly clenched, and his brows

corrugated. 'The strong, stern man was broken in spirit, and weak as a woman.

"For the love of heaven, Doctor,' he at length said, low and mournfully, lifting his head, and looking at the physician with a sad, imploring face, "try and save me my children, for I cannot give them up. If they die, life has no more charms for me. Take them away, and you leave me nothing."

The Doctor sat down by his side, and taking hold of his hand, said—

"Let me again urge you to look to the Great Physician. Whom he will he setteth up, and whom he will he casteth down. He giveth us life; and, at his own good pleasure, takes back the boon. I am but an instrument in his hands when he restores the sick to health. When he wishes to recall any of his creatures, my skill is unavailing."

But Mr. Melleville could look to any other source for aid rather than to the one pointed out. He had no confidence in, and nothing to hope for from God. He had ever been more inclined to turn away from Him, and set at nought his precepts, to follow out the leadings of his own selfish heart. When life went smoothly, he had

forgotten God. Now he felt that to look to him would be all in vain.

The well-skilled eye of the physician had not deceived him. Death speedily claimed, first one, and then another of the children for his own, until four of them slept calmly the everlasting sleep to earthly things. One yet lingered,—Mary, the eldest of the five. Though flickering in its socket, the slender flame of life still burned feebly on. Upon her were now concentrated all the parents' anxiety and hope. Those that had died were beyond the reach of human hope. They could only be mourned—but Mary still lived on. How eagerly did their shattered and aching affections cling to her. Others rendered to the dead the last sad offices, but their thoughts were all for the living, whose side they left not for a moment, except to join, for a short period, in the funeral train. While they stood by the graves of their dead children, their thoughts were with the living one. It was this that saved them. Nature could not have borne the agony they must have endured, in parting so suddenly with their household idols, if there had not been in their minds an all-absorbing anxiety for the one that yet remained.

One more day of agonizing suspense, and then there was a dawn of light. The wasting disease that had clung to the vitals of their child, relinquished its hold, and left her as weak as a new born infant. Gradually, a healthy action supervened; and under the constant judicious care of the physician, she slowly, but surely recovered.

Lonely, sad, and desolate was the household of Mr. Melleville after this afflictive dispensation. The father wandered about with drooping head, and his eyes turned dreamily inward. The mother hovered around the bed of Mary with trembling interest, fearful lest the destroyer had not passed over. But death had fulfilled his mission. One jewel was spared to them—now, in their estimation, of princely value.

In about two weeks Mary had so far recovered as to be able to sit up. The silence and desolation that reigned around oppressed her heart, that mourned over its lost ones with a grief that could not be comforted.

One morning, three weeks after the shadow of death had fallen darkly over them, Mary, who was able to sit up for a few hours at a time, was leaning back upon the pillows that a

careful hand had arranged around her, with her eyes closed. Her father and mother held, each, a hand, and were gazing upon her face. They spoke not, for she seemed sleeping. But no, she slept not; for her eyelids quivered, and seemed tightly pressed together. In a little while a tear stole quietly forth, and rested upon her cheek. The hearts of both father and mother were touched. That drop they knew was for the lost ones she had loved so tenderly. Their own eyes grew dim.

“Mother,” said the invalid, in a little while, ere closing her eyes, that were swimming in tears, “I had a strange dream last night. May I tell it to you?”

“Yes, love. Let us hear your dream.”

“I dreamed,” said Mary, her voice trembling with suppressed feeling, while tears came slowly from her eyes and rolled over her face, “that I was well enough to walk out. It was a calm summer evening, and the air was sweet with the odor of May blossoms. I wandered out, I thought not whither, but I soon came into a little enclosure, where were four new made graves. I knew them to be the graves of my sister and brothers. I sat down beside them

and cried bitterly. I wished that I had died also, that I might still be with them. I had been weeping there, it seemed to me, a long time, when I heard my name called, and turning around, saw Ellen standing near me, all dressed in white garments—her face radiant of heavenly beauty. She held by the hand a pale, wasted, sad-looking creature, in tattered garments and with a lank body. It was Alice! My own, long lost sister Alice!

“‘There is one left to you,’ Ellen said. ‘Forget not the living while mourning over the dead!’ All vanished from my eyes, and I awoke.”

A deep groan, half repressed, escaped Mr. Melleville, as he arose and left the room, in an agitated manner. For more than three hours he paced the floor of his own chamber, his mind in an agony. He was suddenly self-convicted of the most unnatural and cruel conduct towards his cast-off child, whose condition, if living, he had too good reasons for believing, was in all respects as bad, if not worse than that of the apparition in Mary's dream. During all this time, the mother, with whom Mary had been pleading for her sister, did not go near him.

At length, however, she left the room and joined her husband. Mary's tears and entreaties had not been needed. Long, long before would Alice have been received into her bosom, but Mr. Melleville was proud and inexorable. Now, she thought it best to leave him to his own thoughts, and she did so for the period we have named. When she, at length, entered their chamber, where he had retired, she found him seated with his face buried in his hands and his head resting upon a table. He did not move at the sound of her footsteps.

"Let us forgive her, as we hope for God's forgiveness," Mrs. Melleville said, in a low, quivering voice, touching the hand of her husband with her own.

A quick shudder passed through his frame. Then he lifted his head and looked at his wife with a countenance greatly changed. It was sad, subdued, and full of remorse.

"I have been worse than a beast of prey," he said, with bitter emphasis. "My poor, poor child! Who can tell to what depths of wretchedness and misery thy father's hard heart hath doomed thee!"

“Let us search her out, and bring her back,” said Mrs. Melleville.

“If she yet lives, I will find her,” was the firm reply to this. “To-morrow I will begin the search. May heaven, in mercy, give me success !”

With anxious feelings on the morrow, Mr. Melleville commenced his search. The last intelligence of Alice was the news that she had gone to Washington with her husband.— Learning from Justin’s old employer that the young man had been offered the situation of a bar-keeper in that city, Mr. Melleville set out upon his errand, trembling lest his hard heart had relented too late. Arriving in Washington, his first enquiries were made at Brown’s and Gadsby’s, but without success. No person answering his description had ever been employed by the keeper of either of these houses. He then commenced the descending scale, prosecuting his inquiries from tavern to tavern, until he had gone through nearly the whole series of drinking houses with which the city abounded,

“Did a young man, named William Justin, ever keep bar for you ?” he asked for the fortieth time, going up to a bloated wretch who

stood behind the counter of a grog shop, and looked as if he might be the best customer of his own wares.

“No,” was the gruff reply.

As he was turning away, a customer, several degrees lower in the scale of sensual degradation than the landlord, got up from a bench, and staggering forward, said—

“Did you ask for William Justin?”

“Yes, I did,” quickly replied Mr. Melleville, turning towards the speaker: “Do you know him?”

“I did know him several years ago. But hav’nt seen him for a long time.”

“Do you know where he is?”

“He went to Baltimore seven or eight years ago.”

“Was his wife with him?” asked Mr. Melleville, in an eager voice.

“His wife? O yes. He took her along, and his two children, also—poor things!”

“Was he very poor?”

“Poor! Yes, as Job’s turkey. Poor as a sot! Just such a poor sot as I am now. Look at me—and imagine that I am William Justin.”

"Did you ever see his wife?" Mr. Melleville ventured to ask.

"Did I! O yes. Many a time have I seen her with her poor, half clothed little boy by the hand, going to the shops for work. They said her father was a rich old fellow in Virginia, and that he had cast her off for marrying against his will. I don't know about that. If it was so, and he really did leave her to drag about after such a man as her husband, he must have been the hardest hearted wretch in creation."

"They went to Baltimore?" Mr. Melleville said, as soon as he could venture to speak, and not betray his real feelings.

"Yes—about seven or eight years ago."

"Do you know for what purpose he went there?"

"To tend bar, he told me."

"For whom?"

"That I don't know. But it was for some low grog shop keeper, no doubt."

Mr. Melleville would have inquired farther about Alice, but he dreaded to hear more. She had gone to Baltimore with her husband. That much he had learned. To Baltimore he at once proceeded and commenced his search for Justin

amid the lowest haunts of dissipation. Weeks passed, and he could hear nothing of him. He was about abandoning the pursuit in that way, and resorting to advertisement, when in passing along a narrow street one evening, he saw a man staggering into the door of a poor tenement, followed immediately by a well-dressed man and a boy. A sudden impulse prompted him to follow. The scene he witnessed has already been described. Once more he looked upon the face of his child. But O, how changed! The bright young cheek, rich in its hue as the summer blossom, had lost its glow, and was now pale and thin—her eye, that had shone with a happy sparkling lustre, he saw but once lifted from its drooping position, and then it was wild for a moment with agony, and then fixed almost in despair. Her whole face beaming, the last time he saw it, with youth, health and beauty, was now moulded into a cast of heart-touching sorrow, and marred with the lines of suffering.

For a few moments he gazed with the tears upon his cheeks, and then turning away, sick and faint, he was, in the next hour, hastening back to his home. An hour after he arrived

with Mrs. Melleville he was returning again, and was just in time to witness the closing scene of little Alice's life.

The sad duties required were paid to all that was left of the sweet, innocent child, and then Mr. Melleville went back to his home, with Alice and her boy. The father was left by the old man to die in an almshouse, or lead an honest industrious life, just as he might choose. He had no sympathy for him.

CHAPTER X.

"DEAR sister!" ejaculated Mary, now recovered from her illness, folding the attenuated form of Alice in her arms.

Alice laid her head upon Mary's shoulder and wept for a moment or two; and then lifting her face, asked for Ellen, and George, and William and Thomas.

"They have all been taken away from us, Alice!" her father said, with a strong effort at composure.

"Not dead!"

"Yes, my child, all dead," the tears gush

ing from his eyes. "We have but you and Mary left."

It were needless to picture, or attempt to picture the wordless grief of Mrs. Justin's heart, when she found that the dear little ones she had so loved, years before, and whose bright young faces and glad voices she had so often yearned to see and hear, had all passed away like the figures in a dream. Sadly did she mourn for them many, many days. How often in her lonely exile had she thought of these dear ones! How often had she dreamed of them! How often had her heart fluttered like a caged bird, eager to fly back to the parent tree, and gather those little ones again in her arms. During her journey homeward, with her father and mother, she had not once asked for them. She had feared to do so. Thirteen years had rolled away, and she dared scarcely hope that changes had not been wrought in her father's house, that death had not been there. As the carriage that conveyed her back to her old home rolled up the broad avenue that led to the family mansion, her whole frame became agitated. She bent eagerly out of the window, and took in at a glance the old familiar objects

and places that were dearer to her than any other upon the whole earth.

But only one of the dear ones she had left behind stood amid the group of servants that crowded about the door. It was Mary. She was soon in her arms. Her heart foreboded an evil answer as she lifted her head from the bosom of her sister, and asked for those whom her eyes would no more see upon the earth. That answer confirmed all she had most dreaded to hear. They were sleeping their last, long, dreamless sleep! How silent and desolate the old mansion seemed to her, as her footsteps echoed along its walls! She was home again. The long banished one had returned—but she found not all as she had left it. There were, alas! too many vacant seats at the board.

Thirteen years, spent in exile, sorrow, pain and cruel neglect, had wrought a great change on Alice. She did not seem to be herself; as she really was not, the same being who had left her father's house a long time before, fondly confiding in one who had basely wronged her. To her father and mother it appeared almost impossible that the pale, bent, emaciated, care-worn creature they had brought home could be

the wanny child once loved with such deep tenderness. Not less changed was everything to the eye of Alice. Home, in all her day dreams, and night visions—home, the Paradise for which she ever sighed like the banished Peri—was a spot invested with all that was lovely. The old mansion, the tall trees that clustered majestically around, and spread their leaf-laden branches as if in benediction over it, —no spot on earth was so lovely as this. But now, when her eyes had been blessed with the long-desired vision of home, now, when she again trod the halls and familiar apartments of the old homestead, and looked out upon the tall trees, green lawn, vine-clad arbors, and fragrant garden walks, a change was visible. The trees were the same old forest monarchs, and their arms depended with the same protecting grace, but the brightness and beauty with which her fond imagination had invested them were gone. She wandered from room to room of the spacious mansion. All was familiar, and yet all was changed. Why was it? Alas! the change was in her own heart. She saw with different eyes. The deep, heart-searching trials of thirteen years of banishment had taken off the

charm from external things. They had no longer the power to delight that they had possessed, when life was fresh and young.

"I am not the same being I was, or else things have greatly changed," she said to Mary, a few days after her arrival at home. "Nothing looks to me as it did before I went away."

"And yet, all is as it then was. I see no difference," Mary replied.

"The change is no doubt here," Alice said, in a mournful voice, laying her hand upon her heart as she spoke. "I see with different eyes. But I wish it were not so. I wish it were to me as I had fondly hoped it would be—bright and beautiful as before."

"But why is it not so, dear sister?" Mary said, twining her arms fondly about her neck, and pressing her lips to her cheek. "This is home—your own home. And we love you as tenderly—yes, far more tenderly and purely than we ever loved you."

"I can hardly tell, Mary. Perhaps it is because there are so few to love me. Dear little Willie! How often have I dreamed of him! How often have I folded, involuntarily, my arms tightly across my bosom, when thinking of the

sweet child, fondly imagining that he was in them—bending, as I did so, my face, to lay it upon his downy cheek. Dear child! I shall see him no more! And sprightly Ellen—she, too, is gone—and George, and Thomas! All—all gone! And my own innocent child is numbered, too, with the lost ones!”

As Mrs. Justin said this, her feelings gave way, and she wept for a long time. Mary's tears were mingled with hers.

Gradually, however, Mrs. Justin became more cheerful; and this, with the fact of her restoration to them, helped to buoy up the spirits of her father and mother, deeply depressed on account of the great affliction they had sustained in the loss of their children.

It was not long before Alice and their grandchild filled a large place in the aching void that had been left in their hearts. A light began to fall here and there in mellowed spots through the household, gradually diffusing itself, until, even to the eye of Mrs. Justin, home wore something of its former charm.

One day, while the sisters were alone in their chamber, Alice drew a soiled and rumped paper from her trunk, and holding it up, said :

“Mary, you know not how often my heart has blessed you for this letter. It has remained the one dear link that has bound me to my home, telling me, that if all the rest had forgotten me, there was one heart whose love no circumstances could change. I cannot tell how often I have read and wept over this earnest of your young and pure affection. ‘One heart is true to me still! One heart bears faithfully my image!’ I have often said, when thinking of home.”

Mary did not reply. Words, though forming on her tongue, her tongue refused to utter. But she silently threw her arms around her sister's neck, and with hearts full of tenderness that separation and change had only rendered more fervent, they embraced each other.

In reclaiming his child, Mr. Melleville had acted with entire disregard to her husband, as much so as if he had not been living. Against him, his heart felt a strong resentment. As for Alice, cruelly as he had abused her, he bore still to her the relation of a husband, and she could not think of him without some movement of that tenderness she had once felt. Months passed away, and she heard nothing of

him. At length a letter came. It was from the keeper of the Alms-house at Baltimore. The intelligence it brought was, that her husband had died there a few days before. A few natural tears were shed, and then her spirits rose as if reacting from a heavy pressure. He had lived to be the loathsome skeleton of which she had dreamed, and from whose disgusting and horrible presence she could not get free, until, as in her dream, her father had lifted the bony, putrescent hand from her bosom.

And now we must drop the curtain on the history of Alice Melleville, or rather Mrs. Justin. The stream that has long been fettered and wasted amid rocks, and tossed over precipices, has found at last a peaceful vale, where it moves along in stillness and purity.

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