

LEISURE MOMENTS.

THE
LEISURE MOMENTS

OF

MISS MARTHA HAINES BUTT, A. M.

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MISS MARTHA HAINES BUTT, A. M.
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

TO THE
BEAUTIFUL AND HIGHLY ACCOMPLISHED
MISS NARCISSA P. SAUNDERS,
OF
NASHVILLE, TENN.,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED AS A TOKEN OF HIGH REGARD

AND AFFECTION, BY HER SINCERE FRIEND,

THE AUTHORESS.

A WORD.

At the earnest solicitations of many friends, the writer of these "Fugitive Pieces" has finally concluded to place them, in book form, before the public. The greater portion of them are her earliest efforts, and as such must be received. With them are connected many associations, both pleasing and painful.

In glancing over some pages, the image of one, whose eyes are closed to all earthly things, seems to linger. The smile of approbation, when he looked over the youthful efforts of his "only daughter," and showed his delight in a way one who knew him so well could not mistake, is no longer seen. Now, my book goes before the world, to be criticised by those less lenient and charitable.

The writer offers no apology. If her book should serve to while away a few hours pleasantly—if there is a word or thought which will drive away a tear, and cause a smile to take its place

—then will the most sanguine wishes of the writer be realized.

The one to whom these pages are dedicated is in every way deserving of a more worthy offering; yet, let her remember that it contains not the sayings of a well-experienced person, but of a young girl who has divided her time between gaiety and study—who, though at times seemingly engrossed in amusement and frivolity, was “taking notes”—was learning true character from something better than books.

In making her appearance for the second time before the public, she does not forget that her simple wreath of thoughts may be dealt with severely. Yet there is a satisfaction in knowing that there are at least some who will receive it with a cordial welcome, and find, here and there, something to strike a responsive chord within the heart.

MARTHA HAINES BUTT.

NORFOLK, Va., 1859.

TO MISS NARCISSA P. SAUNDERS.

Fair one, thine eyes of brightest hue,
Doth fill my soul with rapture great;
They speak a silent language, too,
The music doth my soul elate.

Methinks they have a power to charm,
Whene'er I meet their lovely gaze;
Methinks they'd keep me safe from harm,
While shelter'd 'neath their soft'ning rays.

Lady, thy placid smiles to meet,
When pearls thy parting lips disclose,
Affords to me a sight more sweet
And fairer than the blushing rose.

Think not I speak of smiles divine
Alone, or of thy sparkling eyes;
In thee the mental graces shine,
Like stars that deck the evening skies.

Who would not court the heavenly bliss,
The bliss thy gentle charms impart?
Oh! were I only sure of this,
Would cease the throbbings of my heart.

CONTENTS.

Paragi; Or, The Secret Revenge,	9
Not Alone, When Alone,	102
Julia's Choice,	105
Twilight Thoughts,	113
A Leaf from a Bachelor's Journal,	115
Robert Hayden,	118
The Secret Serpent,	124
Life's Similes,	127
The Coquette,	129
Blanche,	132
In Memory of my Pet Canary,	170
Keeping up Appearances,	122
Woman's Work and Influence,	178
Leaves from my Journal,	185, 188, 349
A Leaf,	188, 359
A Fragment,	190, 206, 373
A Peep out of the Window,	192
The Lottery Ticket and the Prize it Drew,	194
Suggested on seeing a little Child at Prayer,	202

Reflections written on my return home, after the great Epidemic of 1855,	203
Tableaux,	208
Yet Wanting,	210
Christmas,	215
A Portfolio Leaf,	213, 375
The Valentine,	219
Thoughts on Spring,	223
The Influence of Music,	225
Nettie Harvey,	229
I've Wandered in Dreams,	240
On the Close of the Year,	242
A Mother's Love,	245
The Angel Trio,	246
St. Valentine Story,	250
A Page from Every Day Life,	253
Life's True Pictures,	234, 255
Nora Grey,	259
A Thought,	308
The Consumptive,	309
Aunt Lucy's Story,	311
Rachel,	315
A Stray Thought,	318
Beatrice,	320
Clara Manvers (or Aunt Deborah's advice),	323
That Ugly Man,	329
Lola Wildham (or the lost Treasure),	333
Why was he Taken?	344

Impromptu on "Galt's Bacchante,"	347
A Stray Leaf,	352
The Mysterious Casket,	355
Voices of the Night,	357
Only Waiting for an Offer,	362
Departed Worth,	368
Meta,	371
Consistency,	377
The Echo of a Mother's Heart,	381
Not in Fault,	384
Patches,	394
Which will you Choose,	396
Whisperings,	398
Blossoms <i>versus</i> Fruit,	400
Where does Beauty Dwell?	404
Mrs. Snip's Shopping Notice,	406
The Young Mother,	409
My Withered Bouquet,	416
Ellen May,	418
Daisy,	420
The Phantom,	423
Aunt Tabitha's Rag-Bag,	429

Paragi; or, The Secret Revenge.

CHAPTER I.

"BRAVO, bravo, Signor Paragi. I've won the victory—I have made a conquest. Yes, I have brought at my feet, Figaro, the proud Italian nobleman; they call him austere, incapable of loving; but I deem him quite the reverse. Ha! ha! ha! how happy was I when he knelt at my feet, and sang so sweetly!"

"When was that, pray, Signora?"

"As late as last evening. We were gliding softly and sweetly o'er the waves in the gondola. Figaro was all devotion; he looked into my eyes as though he really saw heaven reflected there. Kneeling gracefully at my feet, and gazing into my face, he sang, 'Oh, yola, oh, timbo, e presta reca!' I was really enchanted; indeed, the oarsman had to be reminded several times that the gondola was perfectly motionless, and that they must ply the oars. By the by, another gondola passed us, in which was the gallant Signor L., and Lind. I suppose you have heard of their expected marriage! Well, if

you have not, it matters but little; suffice to say, it will not be very long before she will become his bride."

"Speaking of expected marriages, Signora, I have heard that Figaro was the favorite one with yourself. Ah, he is, no doubt a fine fellow. I have something I desire much to tell you, Signora, respecting Figaro."

"Pray, tell me, Signor, what it may be."

"If you will swear to profound secrecy; it would not be well for Figaro to hear of it. Dost swear to keep the secret?"

"By this ring which Figaro placed upon my finger, do I swear to reveal it never."

"Did you not tell me, Signora, that Figaro sailed up to the castle with you last night in the gondola, knelt at your feet, and sang 'Oh, yola, oh timbo e presta reca!'"

"Even so, Signor."

"He surely then swore his love to you?"

"That I dare not reveal."

"But I am your friend, Signora; confide in me, for perhaps it were well. Figaro is the friend of my bosom. Although such he may be, yet I would not have him pain the heart of any one, although I know it might give him pleasure."

"What mean you by thus speaking, Signor Paragi? Has Figaro made you his confidant? Tell me, and then I will be better prepared to speak."

"But, fair Signora, I promised to reveal not the secret entrusted to my care; enough for you to think that he loves you, but would to Heaven it were not so. I speak thus, although I know he is my friend. I would not be his friend, nor yours, were I to speak otherwise."

"Then Figaro loves me?"

"Did he not swear to you that his heart was yours? But I am inclined to believe it to be nothing more than pretence on his part; indeed, I almost know it. Have a care—let him not know that I have spoken thus; keep the secret, and I will be your friend. Give me your hand, and accept this ring as a pledge of secrecy."

"I give you my oath."

"I will confess to you, that Figaro has made me his confidant. Now tell me the secret breathings of your heart. Tell me, do you love Figaro? could you love him? Can you believe him true?"

"Who could but love him? Surely he never looked more beautiful than on last evening. The raven plumes which were in his velvet cap waved as the breeze blew gently over the sea; the snowy ermine on his mantle assumed a more livid hue as the rays of the moon fell lightly upon it; his mantle was thrown gracefully around his form of symmetry; he held his guitar with his beauteous hand, on the finger of which sparkled a costly diamond ring. A tear started in his full black eye fringed by silken lashes; he would first gaze upon my face, and then up to heaven, and his very eye seemed to speak a language to some bright star. Oh, Paragi! his words fell upon my ear. I listened enraptured. Dost ask me if I love him? Ay, with all my heart!"

"Do you think Figaro happy, Signora?"

"No, no! Signor Figaro is most miserable. I believe him true; I believe him constant; though many have sought to win his heart, yet none have succeeded save myself."

"Hold, Signora; be not too hasty, for I will a secret reveal. Trust not Figaro—he is false-hearted."

"False-hearted?"

"Ay."

"Why looks he then so sad at times? Surely he wears not a mask, for it would fall unawares from his face. Why tarries he thus by my side—why desecrate Heaven so much as to swear that he loves none but myself?"

"Signora, the heart of man is vile; believe him not. Figaro has powerful charms; yet know you not that the serpent entices the innocent dove? But believe me, when I tell you that Figaro pretends to love you only."

"Oh! Paragi, I believed Figaro true; and all would deem him so were they to hear the words which he pours into my ears."

"Signora, I pray you keep this matter a secret, for I would not have Figaro know that I have betrayed his confidence. But tell me, do you still love him after all that I have told you?"

"Love him! Heaven knows that I fondly, fondly love him; and though I knew he was plotting my death—though he should plunge a dagger into my heart, yet would I still love him while my feeble breath lasted. Figaro surely sins against Heaven by acting thus, Signor; I cannot believe that he would deceive me."

"Let him not suspect, for a moment, that it is through me that you deem him false."

"But if I let him not know I think him false, how shall I prove him to be true?"

"Oh! you know that he is false, for I have told you so; treat him coldly."

"Oh! coldly I cannot, for he has such a tender heart; I would not be the one to sear it willingly; yet I feel that I ought to possess it, just for the sake of testing his love, and seeing what effect it may have upon him."

"Remember not to mention my name, for I am a friend to Figaro."

"Why, then, speak thus of him!"

"Because, if I were not to undeceive you, then I would not be your true friend. I would not see you plunged in the depth of misery, nor would I willingly allow him to be the cause of your unhappiness."

"Are you sure that Figaro is deceiving me?"

"I am, Signora."

"It cannot be. Why looks he so downcast, when I tell him that I cannot be his bride for months to come? Why does he urge me so ardently to listen to his prayer?"

"Oh! he has some secret motive in so doing, I dare say. But we will talk of this matter no more at present. I have told you Figaro's true character; and if, after all I have said, you plunge headlong into misery, I will not have myself to reproach, for I feel I have done my duty. It is a beauteous night; the gondola is in readiness, and with your permission we will sail up to the castle. I prefer a sail to rowing this evening. Come, Signora, I have all things in readiness; the sails have been perfumed, and we will have music; I engaged it expressly for the occasion. I shall almost fancy myself seated by Cleopatra herself, the proud Egyptian Queen, who brought all at her feet on account of her powerful charms."

"But, Signor, if Figaro were to see us—"

"What matter would that be?"

"Oh! it would grieve his heart sadly."

"Bah! his heart!—he has none. Let us hasten. Come, Signora, now for a delightful sail up to the castle. 'Let us lightly o'er the waves together.'"

CHAPTER II.

"My life is one long loving thought of thee."

"Oh, woman's love! at times it may
Seem cold or clouded; but it burns
With true, undeviating ray,
And never from its idol turns."

"How vain the task to make my lyre
In rapture's thrill, with passion's fire,
While sorrow o'er my heart strings plays,
With trembling touch, her saddest lays."

"Signora, why this coldness? why thus so distant? In Heaven's name what have I done to offend thee? Oh! look not upon me so chillingly, lest thy bright eyes may act upon me as the deadly basilisk. Oh! Signora, Heaven knows I would rather thou shouldst plunge this sword into my heart; thou dost from those eyes arouse keener, aye! even more keen, more deadly than the point of the sword. But say the word, and I will at once put an end to this life. No cordial welcome did I receive; no friendly hand was extended to me; no soft smiles shed their rosy tints upon my heart. Thou lookest upon me the blackness of midnight; and amid those darkening clouds rises no bright star to dispel the gloom of my soul. Have I

not sworn my love to thee? Did I not call Heaven to witness that thou wert the idol of my heart? Signora, Signora, tell me, oh! tell me why thou art so changed!"

"Figaro, love is ever mistrustful; my countenance is not always the index to my real feelings. Dost know that something might have occurred to dampen my feelings?"

"Ah, Signora! that coldness is not without some cause; 'tis the first time I have ever met you without receiving a welcome—without being greeted with a sweet smile. But here is my guitar; I will put to music words which suggest themselves to me at this moment; they will tell the anguish of my soul, and perchance cause some faint hope to spring up within my heart."

"I am in no mood for music this evening, Signor."

"Will you only permit me to sing but once what I so much desire; and then, at your command, I will put an end to my existence, for I wish no longer to live; life hath lost all its charms for me; aye, when the brightness fades from thine eyes, the smile from thy brow, then there is no longer sunshine in my soul."

Now in tones softer and more plaintive than were those which fell from the lips of Eve when she addressed her sole companion in the bowers of Paradise, did Figaro pour into the ears of Signora Pozzolini the deep, deep feelings of his soul. For a moment he forgot his manly pride, and seized the hand of the one to whom he addressed the faltering words; and from his lips escaped thoughts which burned within his heart—thoughts which he had long wished to reveal, but dared not, lest they should be responded by words of coldness.

Signora saw it all—felt it deeply. Now within her heart

rose a suspicion that perhaps Paragi was self-interested, or else wished to accomplish some end; and, in order to do this, had spoken falsely of Figaro. Yet she dared not reveal what had been told her; for, as her eye would fall upon the brilliancy of the diamond upon her finger, she remembered her oath. Oh! gladly would she have released herself from it now—gladly have told Figaro the cause of her coldness. Ay! even worse—contempt. Oh! there is anguish, the deepest anguish felt when the loving, faithful, confiding heart meets with no return save frigid looks. Oh! how like a dagger does it lacerate the heart; it causes a cloud to spread itself over hope's brightest star, and the spirit of love to weep the tears of bitterness.

Figaro still knelt at the feet of Signora, and played the most plaintive airs; he no longer sang, for his tongue was paralyzed with grief. Now laying aside his guitar, he pressed his hand on his throbbing brow, and then wiped away the tears which had already started. His pride would fain have made him hide that token of grief—but, oh! he had no power to conceal it then.

Thus mused Signora as she watched the tear stealing softly down the manly cheek of Figaro; he saw that her powerful charms had overcome his pride, and she could no longer restrain the words which welled up from her heart.

"Figaro, forgive me. I have deeply wounded you by my coldness. Yet, one knows that within my heart glows the same feeling; it has been again re-kindled, and it shall never be quenched. I have tested your love, and found you true; fidelity has ever governed you in all circumstances; you have been the same when I looked upon you with scorn as when I

smiled. You drooped as doth the flower, when the sunlight of my smiles ceased to beam upon you; but when words of gentleness would fall from my lips, then you were all brightness again; I cannot deem you false; I cannot think that you wear a mask; surely, I see you in your true character."

"My true character? Yes! angels are witness that I dissemble not. You know my heart, for I have laid it bare to you. I live but for you; I would, at your command, blot myself from existence, for I have none but in yourself. Life without you would be to me as one long, gloomy night, when not one star is seen. I would have nought but ill-omened visions to haunt me. Oh! I would not live but for you."

"Speak not thus, Figaro; be not so rash: deem me not essential to your happiness; you esteem me too highly—I am not worthy of it."

"List to me, Signora; there is but one gem on earth that I value, and it is yourself. I have sought long to win you; if success attend me, I am happy; if my hopes are thwarted, perhaps reason itself will leave me, and I will be as the poor maniac who drags out his wearied life, perchance unpitied and uncared for."

"Figaro, you grieve me by thus giving vent to your feelings, which I know full well comes from the secret depths of your heart. Be not thus despondent—have a bright hope for the future."

"Signora, if I had but one hope, then would seem to dawn upon my soul a radiance which would gild my pathway in life—cause brightest flowers to bloom around me; skies would then be cloudless; every thing would be perfect gladness on

which my eye would fall. Oh! Signora, will you not let me have that hope! I will then chase away the gloom of my heart, and wear upon my brow a wreath of love's softest smiles. Say, Signora, may I, can I hope that you will one day be the bride of Figaro?"

"Be not too hasty, Signor; first study my character; reflect, whether or not our union would be a happy one."

"A happy one? If that be all, then my heart is at rest. To be near you is happiness of itself; to hear your voice is music to my ear; to do you the smallest service is my greatest pleasure. But, Signora, oh! Signora, to obtain your heart is all I hope for, all I live for. Say, will you not take this hand and with it my heart? Will you not give in return that treasure, that gem, your own?"

Signora Pozzolini was resolving in her own mind what Figaro had said. She felt that words like those emanated from no other source than the heart. She watched the expression of the eyes, which told that he felt keenly all to which he had given utterance. Now, in imagination, Paragi stood before her and frowned; she fancied she heard him say, "Beware;" yet, amid all this, there was a soft, sweet voice, as if from the spirit-land; it whispered, "Figaro is true," "Paragi is false." Now uplifting her beauteous eyes, she met the gaze of Figaro, who had watched her. He trembled for the reply which she might make; but when he saw that smile, that blush, a sudden light flashed upon his soul, and he felt himself happy.

"Signora, why thus silent? Speak, oh! speak to me. I await my doom with patience; if you will be my bride, that is all I ask on earth. Signora, answer."

"I love," she faintly faltered; and now the deepest blushes spread themselves over her cheek, while Figaro gently kissed her hand.

There are moments in life when all hope seems to have fled, when sunshine shuts itself from view, when even the flowers seem to weep, and the zephyrs heavily sigh. Oh! yes, there is a time when darkest clouds hang over us in life, and we tremble lest a dread storm should break upon us when we least expect it. Suddenly, that cloud passes over; the flowers in the garden of memory are revived; the past comes up before us like some long-remembered dream; and we forget that sadness was intermingled with its joys. The spirit of despair now spreads its wings and glides from view, while hope stands before us in all its pristine loveliness.

Thus it was with Figaro, whose life had well nigh began to grow dark. The one whom he thought the friend of his bosom was his most bitter enemy—a viper indeed, which was waiting some auspicious moment to infuse its deadly poison. Each word which Figaro had breathed in confidence to Paragi was remembered—and he, a false-hearted, heartless being, had revealed them. It was through him that Figaro had grown gloomy; for he, to gratify self, had falsely sworn that Figaro was unloved by the one who, in reality, made him a very idol. She, too, listening to the honeyed words of Paragi, allowed her love in a measure to grow cold, and by this means seared the heart of him who loved life but for her alone.

Oh! deceitful, deceitful man, how black is your heart—how wrongful and how relentless! For self-gratification, you would inflict an unhealing wound upon another, and then exult.

Remorse shall some day be yours, and you will then see that Heaven abhors your deeds, and gives you a just reward for them. Perchance your life may be brightness for a while, and prosperity will smile upon you—but tremble, for the time will come when the clouds of adversity will spread themselves about you. No kind friend will then come; they, too, who joined you perchance in deeds of wickedness—you, who would give a willing pang to the heart of one, and then pretend to be his friend—oh! beware, for the sunshine seems to frown upon you, even when most bright.

Thus whispers "a still small voice" to Paragi, while listening to Figaro, who was relating what had passed between him and Signora. He little dreamed of what Paragi was thinking—little knew that he was almost within the fangs of a deadly serpent. But Paragi's revengeful spirit gained the ascendancy over him; he gloried in retaliation; and now, absorbed in the thoughts of it, he forgets whisperings of his conscience, and determines to gratify his own insatiable desire, however offensive it might be in the sight of Heaven.

CHAPTER III.

REVENGE! revenge! yes, revenge shall be mine. Figaro, in his boyhood days, committed a bold insult, and I will not forget, Heaven knows I will not forgive. Figaro little dreams that I am his most bitter enemy; but some day he will feel the weight of my displeasure. Yes! although I know that Heaven will not smile upon so great a crime.

An Italian! I would not be worth calling one were I not to resent the wrong. But it hath passed, yet it comes up before me as t'were but yesterday. Revenge it? Yes, I would willingly tear the dearest object from his heart, and then laugh to see my end accomplished; such is, and such should be, the character of every true and noble Italian. Now I feel armed for the battle; but it is not an auspicious moment; I will wait a more expedient time, and then I will have my revenge. Oh! this night, while yon moon shines in all its radiance, and innocent stars softly twinkle (would that my own heart were as innocent)—while flowers gently whisper—this night, yes! this very night, could I willingly wrench from the bosom of Figaro his betrothed bride—could willingly lay her a lifeless corpse at his feet, and then laugh with delight to think that I had done such a deed—and for what? Revenge! revenge! But hark! surely I hear Figaro's step.

"Good morning to you, friend Paragi."

"Give me your hand, Figaro; things work not well this morning; I imagine I see a thousand fiends flitting before my sight; my heart is ill at ease."

"What causes this tumult within your breast, Paragi? Methought, when I first entered, that your countenance indicated a troubled mind; who has wronged you?"

"Oh! it is not wrong that I grieve for. The reason for this inquietude I cannot divine. But have there not been times when you felt as though you had not a friend on earth?"

"I have. But come, do not feel thus, for full well you know that I am your friend, Paragi. 'Tis true that at one time in our younger days we had a slight quarrel—that, though, has passed."

"But——"

"But what, Paragi? Why do you thus color?"

"Oh! it was only the shame of it that caused me to flush; I was about to say, it has long been forgotten."

"Come, we will not talk of that now; it has passed, and is remembered no longer. Tell me when last you saw Signora, and what is the state of affairs?"

"All things glide on smoothly, Paragi; I am now the happiest of mortals!"

"The happiest of mortals?"

"Aye."

"Would I could feel that I were; but tell me why you are so happy."

"Signora meets me no longer with coldness and contempt; she smiles on me still. I am now but waiting for her to appoint a time—the day when our marriage will take place."

"The day of your marriage? And so you are bound to be united to one whom I know loves you not!"

"Oh! say not so, Paragi. Signora swore that she loves me; and had I not believed it before, I surely would have done so when I saw the tear trickle down her velvet cheek. Say not again that she has no love for me. But I must bid you "good morning," for business of importance calls me up to the castle; the gardener is waiting for me to give directions with regard to some shrubbery."

"Then you are putting all things in readiness for Signora Pozzoloní; I know she has quite a passion for flowers. By the by, I begin to suspect that is where the mysterious bouquet came from. Ah! I am in the secret now. I suspected, when I saw

her passing the flowers to her lips, that they had been plucked from your garden. Well, flowers breathe a language, they say; surely that did. Signora by accident dropped a slip of paper upon the floor; to tease her, I snatched it up and read it; let me see—I believe it was—

'In eastern climes, as sages tell,
There grows a magic flower,
Which, gently gathered, can dispel
The gloom of midnight hour.
And all be joy above me,
Could I but win thy youthful heart,
And teach thee how to love me!—

"And teach thee how to love me!—how very deeply were these emphasized. I should judge so from the black lines drawn under them. Then you are still doubtful of her love?"

"No, Paragi; but I was then. But Signora has dispelled all that doubt. I must haste away—the gondola is waiting for me. Friend of my bosom, a short adieu."

"Ha! ha! ha! What a dupe I have made of Figaro. Well, I believe after all he is a right good sort of fellow; but when I think of my revenge I forget it. Ha! ha! he called me the friend of his bosom—it should have been my 'bosom serpent;' it would have been a better appellation. I could scarce refrain from tearing out his eyes when he was speaking of Signora; although I gave him my hand, I would much rather have pierced an arrow through his heart. But I must still pretend to be his friend, or else my design will be baffled. I might forgive him the insult, if he would but banish all thoughts of Signora Pozzoloní from his mind. I see he has so fascinated her that no

one else could hope to win her heart. Heaven knows that I love her; she is the only being on earth that I could love—she will never be mine. Oh! how I have most shamefully abused Figaro to her; how oft have I told her that he loved her not; and yet she will still love. If I could but persuade her that Figaro is false, then perchance she would consent to be my bride. Oh! how I curse the day when first I brought into her presence the one who is now sole possessor of her heart; but I little thought that he would love her; he seemed to abhor anything like marrying, and I verily believe he did it all for the sake of getting the introduction. He shall not marry Signora—no, she shall never be his bride. Oh! bitter will be my curse upon him, and he shall rue the day on which he led her to the altar. What means shall I take? I know not, for things have already gone too far—he is now planning his gardens, and I have heard that he sent to Florence for some paintings of the most choice kind. Oh! would that some deadly viper were concealed among the flowers, and infuse its deadly poison into his very heart. Oh! Signora is the idol of my heart—but alas! how shall I ever gain her affections? The fates are cruel, for they are against me. Oh! you little dream, Signora, how eager I am to have revenge upon your betrothed both for a trivial circumstance which occurred in my boyish days, and above all for having won your heart. Oh! if prayers and tears will be of any avail, surely you will hear me. Though my heart has ebon blackness, yet it has love for you. Your charms have led me captive, and unless I gain your heart—Oh! great will be my revenge upon Figaro.”

Thus in silence mused Paragi, the resentful Spaniard; his

black, flashing eyes showed plainly that the most heinous crimes lurked within his heart; yet, amid all this, he had charms too powerful to resist. Yes, he could draw a veil over that wicked heart, and place upon his brow the most winning and softest smiles. His voice was like music, causing a thrill to steal o'er the soul; his manners were enticing, and failed not to charm all who came within his reach. He dearly loved Signora Pozzolini, but had never told her so, lest she might discover his reason for thus speaking of Figaro. He sought first to banish all thoughts of him from her mind, and then win her heart; and, although he might gain it by stealth, yet that mattered not with him, so he could call her his bride—that would serve as one means of revenging Figaro. If this design was baffled, he had in view another and still more horrible design, which was offensive even in the sight of angels. Surely he loved Signora; but his reasons for marrying her were not so much from pure and devoted affection, as for the sake of revenge. What horror would creep o'er his soul at midnight when he reflected upon his wicked intention—a thousand spectres would arraign themselves before him, and he shrank within himself; he hears the silent tread of midnight, or the solemn moaning of the wind, and it seems to be voices from the grave, which speak loudly to him, saying, “Beware! beware!”

CHAPTER IV.

"Pancino, meet me to night in the bower by yon hill; I have a great secret to make known to you. Of your skill in setting diamonds and other precious gems I have heard, and there is something within me which tells me that with your aid my end can be accomplished. Hear me. Oh! Pancino, as we stand upon this spot—the lonely grave-yard, with my foot resting upon the green grass, which silently waves above the head of some being over whom many tears have been shed—give an ear, Pancino, as here we stand. Promise that you will never prove my betrayer; if the secret is found out, it would sentence me to death. Hark! who come? hear footsteps—what if I have been heard? Look around, Pancino, and see if you discover any one."

"Signor, it is but the footsteps of the hunter. I see him in the distance; he approaches very near. I hear, too, the baying of his dogs; there seems to be several persons in company."

"Thank Heaven, I have not been heard, then. When one hath a black crime lurking within his heart, there seems to be a constant dread of every one. At times, methinks I see spectres about me, with grim visages frowning upon me, and I start; if I look above me, the sun seems not brightly to shine; a horror creeps within my soul when I hear the loud peals of thunder—aye! the very elements are angry with me. But say, Pancino, will you meet me to-night?"

"At what hour, Signor?"

"At midnight, for that were a meet time; ever the little birds

will slumber then, and the streams cease to sigh. We must have a care lest some one discover us. Meet me, then. If you aid me, I will give you what your heart most desires. What the world calls wealth I possess; gladly will I share it with you if you promise to execute my wishes. But we will settle that to-night. It were not well for us to remain here longer, lest some one should suspect. Remember to-night, at twelve, in the bower. Be faithful to your promise, Pancino."

"I will, Signor."

Oh! unhappy, revengeful Paragi, why not at once banish all thoughts of that most dreadful deed which thou art about to commit? Why not rather share the smiles of heaven, than the most dire curses? Why attempt thus to plunge one as deep into sin as art thyself? Why seek to bring to an untimely grave one so young, beautiful, confiding, full of hope and joy? Why be the means of one dragging out a miserable life? Why so soon cause the darkest cloud to spread itself upon a sunny sky?

Oh! Paragi, thou dreamest of success, but heaven will resent the harm done. Calm thy turbulent bosom; think no longer of revenge; be a friend in heart as well as in name. Oh! poison not the cup of pleasure with thy vile deeds, for they are darker far than the ebon clouds of midnight; think no longer of revenge—think upon thy folly. If thou hast not won the heart of Signora, why seek to crush that of another who is her idol? Let her still live and be happy, for life hath many charms; the flowers bloom to delight her; the birds sing to make her happy; the stars look admiringly upon

her beauty. Why, then, seek to blot from existence one so fair? If thou wouldst but relent, life would have more joys for thee, the cloud would pass from thy brow, and thy heart would again be buoyant.

"What means this mysterious whispering?" exclaimed Paragi, as he awakened from a slumber. "Who hath given me such counsel? Perchance it was the whisperings of conscience, or else it were a dream. But I will not listen to the admonitions; conscience is a troublesome thing; I will not heed her voice. You sun is about to set; how beautiful is the scene, yet how sad.

'The last high, upward slant on the trees,
Like a dead soldier's sword upon his pall,
Seems to console earth for the glory gone,
Oh! I could weep to see the day thus die—
The death-bed of day, how beautiful!'

And the death-bed of innocence, how sad! Oh! fatal, thrice fatal, that day to me, when first I closed my eyes upon innocence, and received into my heart the blackest guilt. But I will not feel thus, lest I should falter, and cease to care to have my design accomplished. A few more hours and midnight will spread her wings o'er me. I will talk to Pancino of my plan, and he will aid me. Look now, the evening star hath commenced to shine, but its light is not for me; no, it looks upon me with contempt, upon such sin as mine, and it even weeps. Why speak I thus? It is not manly to be thus cast down. I will dash the tear-drop from my eye, I will laugh at my own faint-heartedness. Oh! heavily will time hang on till midnight

comes; but time is ever tedious to the wicked. "Oh! that I could dash my soul to atoms like a glass!"

—

"Signori Paragi, muy dispuesto a servirle."

"Good night, friend Pancino; how punctual you are to your post. Come, sit here, and listen to what I have to tell you. I had a dream to-day, and it troubles me much. I in vain have tried to forget it, but it still haunts my soul."

"Paragi, dreams are but dreams; they are not harbingers; the mind at times becomes disturbed, and it is natural that one, mingling as doth yourself in the varied scenes of life, should dream strange things at times. Let not dreams trouble you, for 'tis unmanly thus to fear."

"Pancino, give me your hand, for I feel that you are my friend, and I will no longer fear to confide my secret to your keeping; full well I know that you will aid me in my scheme."

"Pray tell me, Signor, what that may be."

"Dost swear to profound secrecy?"

"I do."

"Knowest thou not, Pancino, that ere this moon shall wax old, that Figaro will be united by the bands of wedlock to Signora Pozzoloni?"

"You astonish me, Signor."

"'Tis even so. Figaro confided the secret to me. Oh! it is no secret now, for every one knows it. I was at Madrid a short time since, and it was rumored there that the proud Signora was about to become the bride of Figaro; he has a gardener, whom he obtained from Barcelona, and has purchased

some rare flowers. I am told that it will surpass any thing in Italy in the way of a garden. The castle is elegance itself."

"But now to your secret, Signor Paragi. I have come at the appointed hour to hear what it may be."

"This were a meet hour, Pancino, to communicate the secret, for the crime is blacker than midnight. I tremble to relate it; I fear lest you should deride me. But you would not, be a true Spaniard did you not possess the spirit of revenge in your bosom. Now to my secret. This same Signora Pozzoloni, to whom Figaro is to be bound by the most solemn ties, is the object, the idol of my heart; she is the only being that could bring me into subjection. I love her with deep devotion. Yet, oh! heavens—I dread to say it, for it chills my very heart's blood—she loves Figaro. I want revenge, Pancino, and I will have it. Apart from this, Figaro committed an insult upon myself when we both were quite young; I determined in my own mind to resent it when I arrived at the age of maturity, and I am determined to carry my plan out. You, Pancino, are the only person to whom I could confide my secret, and you must promise to aid me."

"I most faithfully promise to do any thing to please you. I give my oath."

"Pancino, you have long dealt in diamonds and other precious gems; you can discover the true and most costly diamonds, having had long practice in the art. I wish you to obtain for me the most costly and glittering, those which emit an alluring light, dazzling the eye; place them (ten in number) in a richly wrought ring, of the finest gold, which must be filled with minute pores, so small that they cannot be seen

except by the aid of a microscope. I care not at what price you obtain the diamonds. You have ample time to seek for them, and make the ring. By some process infuse throughout the ring the most deadly poison. I would not have it act rapidly, lest suspicion should be aroused; let the poison be slow, but very sure. I wish by this means to affect the death of some one. Pancino, I charge you not to breathe this to any mortal."

"Paragi, fear not. I will never betray you. Pray, tell me who this fatal ring is for."

"For! why, for no other person than Signora Pozzoloni. I am determined to revenge Figaro in that way—that is, by effecting the death of his bride in three months, or perhaps in less time; it depends entirely upon how the poison acts; it is not to be given until after they are married, and Figaro has become most devotedly attached to his wife, and feels her to be essential to his happiness. He shall not know what it is to have her heart long—no, for I will still the blood which so freely flows there—aye! it shall be icy cold."

"Pray tell me, Paragi, how shall the said ring be given her so as to avoid suspicion?"

"Oh, I will bribe Francisco, one of the oarsmen, to give it to her; he shall pretend to have found it on the beach side, glittering in the rays of the moon. So soon as she sees it, she will discover it to be a diamond of the rarest kind. Francisco must offer it to her as a gift, and tell her that he presents it to her as a token of his fidelity in faithfully discharging his duties, and his efforts to do all in his power to win her favor."

"Capital, capital plan, Paragi; yet methinks this were a dark

deed, for us to conspire against an innocent and beautiful woman. She goes to the castle, and will be as the pearl in a crown, diffusing its beauty over all—the rarest flowers have been planted there to please her. Oh! think, Paragi, what would be your feelings on such an occasion!”

“Feelings! bah! talk not of them. An Italian must have none. Do you promise to do what I request?”

“I do. At what price shall I obtain the diamond?”

“Price! I care not for the price—though it cost half my fortune. All I ask of you is, to keep the secret, and obtain the rare diamonds, and let it contain poison *el veneno ó la ponzoña de las víboras* (the poison of vipers). Remember, Pancino, I do not wish to effect the death of Signora under three months. Her cheek will by degrees wax pale; the lustre will leave her eye; suddenly she will droop as a flower. I must pretend to sympathize much with Figaro, lest he might suspect. But I do not for one moment think that he would suspect me. I can very easily get out of the difficulty by laying it upon some one else; you know I am extremely lucky; I can accomplish anything I undertake. We have talked the plan over, and it is settled.”

“I will keep the secret, Paragi. Do not fear. *Es muy tarde*. ‘Good night.’ I will see you again.”

CHAPTER V.

“There are whole veins of diamonds in thine eyes,
Might furnish crowns for all the queens of earth;
Oh! I could sooner set a price on the sun,
My love, than on thy lightest look;
I would rather look on thee one minute
Than Paradise for a whole day—such days
As are in Heaven. I love thee more and more.”

“They know not my heart who believe there can be
One stain of this earth in its feelings for thee;
Who think that I see thee in beauty’s young bower,
As pure as the morning’s fresh dew on the flower,
I could harm what I love, as the sun’s wanton ray
But smiles on the dew-drop to waste it away.”

Oh! is there not beauty in the warm, pure love, which gushes from the youthful heart? Is there not something transcendently lovely in that dream of bliss? The soul is buoyant—the heart is cheerful; all around is gladness and sunshine; it seems as if our very souls would leap from within us, and soar away to its loved idol. Happiness! they know not happiness who do not love; the cold, selfish heart knows no contentment, for it loves none but itself. The gentle, docile being, who is easily moved to tears by the sorrows of others, must ever find a resting place within the hearts of all. Who would willingly inflict a wound upon such an one? None, save the unfeeling and revengeful.

Signora Pozzoloni, now confiding in the love of Figaro, and conscious of sharing his heart’s purest affections, feels that no joy is like hers. Soon her dream of happiness will be realized, for to the bridal altar will she be led by Figaro. Mistrust! she would not mistrust him for the moment. She had turned a

deaf ear to all Paragi said. Yes! for love will conquer all things—blind all defects—convert the greatest inconsistencies into proprieties. It sees no beauty save in the object beloved—knows no contentment save within its presence.

Thus it was with Figaro, who was looking forward with impatience to the day when he would clasp within his own hand that of Signora's. He looked upon the flowers which ornamented the gardens with pleasure, and thought what delight they would create within the heart of his affianced bride; little dreaming that a deadly viper was slumbering amid the leaves, and would soon awake to poison his happiness.

* * * * *

One by one the hours glided by; one by one the flowers bloomed and faded; clouds smiled and wept. The appointed time came, and Signora Pozzolini was the bride of Figaro. What joy filled the heart of him who stood beside her. As he gazed upon the Italian beauty, a feeling of admiration would spring up within his bosom; her soft, dreamy eyes contrasted strongly with the black of his own; her ebony hair was elaborately braided, and confined by sparkling diamonds. Figaro had never shown to a better advantage than upon that night. Many of the nobility of Italy convened, and each one looked admiringly upon the happy pair. Paragi (the bosom serpent) stands beside the lovely bride, and pours into her ears the most flattering words; he, at the same time, was plotting her death. In the innocency and purity of her heart—she blushed as he spoke, and thanked him for his kind wishes.

Oh! wicked and deceitful is the heart of man; how he will

dissemble; how he will seek to injure those around him, and put on at the same time the mask of friendship.

Paragi, indeed, envied the heart which Figaro had won, and was eager to put to death the innocent creature who stood beside him; he would give him ample time to become so attached to Signora as to find it utterly impossible to live without her. He dared not lift his eyes to Figaro, lest his guilty soul should be reflected in that mirror: he felt as though he saw all his wickedness, and frowned upon him. Oh! what deceitful smiles did he wear when he invited Signora to be his partner for the dance! how meaningly did he extend his hand, and expatiate on the beauty of her own! how attentively did he pretend to listen when she sung, and how much enchanted he appeared to be! With Figaro, too, he conversed, and repeatedly expressed his feigned delight in having claimed Signora as his bride. As he gazed upon the diamonds which decorated her beautiful self, he thought of what he had told Pancino; each ray of light which was emitted from them, seemed to pierce his very soul. The evening entertainment was at its height; never seemed an assemblage to enjoy themselves more; they danced, they chatted; all, yes, all were gay and happy; each heart throbbed with delight save that of Paragi. For one to have seen him, he would have thought him to be the gayest in the room; he participated in the dance, the drinking toasts, and everything which might be suggested; but if one could have drawn aside the veil which was over his heart, he would shudder at the sight—the deep guilt.

Happily for us, we know not what sorrows await us in life; ever prone to look upon the bright side of all things, we nat-

urally hope that no clouds may darken our pathway through life. At times, when most happy, a small cloud rises and soon enlarges, spreading itself upon the horizon of pleasure; the raven plumed bird of despair, will fold her wings and nestle closely to us; the star of Hope will burn dim, while the spirit of joy will shed tears of blood. Oh! well it is for us, that we know not what evils await us through life. While enjoying luxury, we think ever to be thus at ease, never dreaming that future will take a reverse step. Those who feel the piercing winds of poverty blowing upon them may hope for better days to come for them. Thus we are ever disposed to cast away all thoughts of trouble and anxiety, and think only of our present happiness; there is not room left in the heart to reflect upon what grief may come.

Figaro was too intoxicated with the delight of having succeeded in gaining the heart of Signora Pozzolini to think of aught but happiness. He looked around the assemblage of beauties, and thought that Signora was the most beautiful flower of all; the gems she wore seemed more brilliant, and to possess more value; he gazed upon her beauty, and inwardly whispered—

"This shadow of a cloud upon a lake,
O'er which the mind hath all day held his breath,
Is not more calm and fair than her dear face."

He looked out from the massive windows upon the beauty of the night; the evening air stole sweetly and softly upon her cheek; he then looked around the saloons filled with the gay and beautiful, and among them his bride; he thought the night without beautiful,

But the in-door scene still lovelier,
Yes, for "all is beautiful where beauty is!"

Figaro, thou art happy now—and would that it could ever be thus with thee; your lot in life bids fair to be one unsullied joy, and may it so prove.

CHAPTER VI.

"STELLA" (such was the given name of the bride of Figaro), "see this beautiful bed of flowers. I planned it myself, and had your favorites planted. Here is the rose of Sharon; the damask, tea, and tuberose; see, I have planted cedar in among them, and have bordered them with white violets and the lily of the vale. The whole presents the appearance of a magnificent bouquet, which Flora placed in the garden to feast her eyes upon, and admire its grandeur. I knew, Stella, that you loved flowers; they are sweet, innocent little creatures; well might they be called 'the alphabet of angels—the smiles of God.' Here is the beautiful laurustinus, it is an evergreen; in the winter its tiny white flowers delight the sight, when the roses and all the sweet flowers of summer have passed away, this still retains its brightness; it, however, must not be neglected; the emblem of it is, 'if neglected, I die.' I think the emblem applies to me. Then,

'Will you cherish me, dearest, through good and through ill,
Life's summer I'll bless, and its winter defy;
'Mid sunshine and tempest I'll smile on thee still—
But oh! if you ever neglect me, I die!"

Are not the words very beautiful? They convey so much; they speak what a whole volume of other words could not convey to the mind."

"You, Figaro, are the idol, the pride of my heart; never would I neglect or grow cold toward one whom I so dearly love and for whom I left the parental roof. The garden is indeed beautiful, mine own one; here are many other sweet, sweet flowers. Oh! I could gaze upon them forever! how can one pass these fairy beings without giving one smile, or imprinting a single kiss? Indeed, they seem to be messengers borne to earth upon angel's wings, to tell us how beautiful is Heaven. See this sweet violet, how witchingly it gazes upon me; I love to watch its soft tints, and the beauty of its form, seeing it reminds me of some lines I've read upon it:

'The violet droops its soft and bashful brow,
But from its heart—sweet incense fills the air,
So rich within, so pure without art thou,
With modest mien, and soul of virtue rare.'

How appropriate, indeed; but we can scarcely gaze upon a flower without being inspired; words will seem to glide from the tongue like soft light from stars. Tell me, Figaro, what is the favorite flower with yourself?"

"I love them all, Stella, for they are all so beautiful, so innocent! But come, and I will show you the one I most admire."

"'Tis the moss rose, then?"

"Yes, the sweet moss-rose; I like it for the emblem; you know it possesses no thorns—symbolizing a life of joy, without a single thorn springing up.

'Yes, I love my moss rose, for it ne'er had a thorn,
'Tis the type of life's pleasures unmixed with its woes;
Yes, all things must yield to my pretty rose.'

Stella, may our life be a continued sunshine; may it be as the thornless rose which you now behold. Since first I knew you, life has been more bright; and the world has seemed more bright and more enchanting. Oh! you little know with what delight I planned this garden, and planted these flowers; it was but to give your heart joy; each day I watched them, and watered them with my own hand; it was all for you; it was because I thought that some day you would call them your own."

"Much I thank you, Figaro, for anticipating my wishes; and I could not have been better pleased had I chosen the flowers myself. But what a world of beauty you have around you; that fountain is certainly superb; the marble is almost transparent; how gaily the gold and silver-fish are sporting; what an admirable design; how gracefully those swans swim upon the surface, their plumage is so snowy. I think that green tree, too, adds much to the beauty, it affords such a cooling shade. I shall visit this spot at sunset, for I am sure that the scene will be enchanting then. How noble the castle looks in the distance; I like its appearance, for there is something antique about it. See our little gondola, how the sails are sporting in the breeze; oh! what sweet notes I hear; a little bird is very gay this morning. Where is it, Figaro? I hear it, but see it not."

"You will find it directly. Come, we will go to the other end of the garden, Stella. I have named it Paradise; see the

design; here are enormous cages, which hem in trees; you see they are constructed of such fine wire that one can scarcely tell but what they are nothing but trees filled with various birds. I obtained them all while very young, and put them together, so they feel perfectly at home, and are very friendly toward each other. Here is the bird of Paradise; how gorgeous and beautiful is its plumage; how it contrasts in size with the little humming-bird. I obtained all the most rare and beautiful that could be found. A captain, who went to sea some time ago, brought me this collection, together with the gold-fish. You have not seen all yet; there is a little gazelle a most playful, yet a timid creature; I have had it a long time and it will come at my bidding. I named it Stella. Shall I change it; or will you permit it to change its name?"

"Oh, retain it by all means! I must endeavor to learn it to love me, but I hope it will not be as one has sung:

'I never nursed a gay gazelle,
To cheer me with its bright black eye,
But when it came to know me well,
And love me, it was sure to die.'

"Oh, no! I heartily wish that may never be the case, Stella. But we must go on further still. You have not seen the bower?"

"Oh, there it is! what a delightful place, to be sure. This must be where fairies hold their court. Just see those little flowers all peeping up from among the grass, looking like emeralds set with rubies and sapphires; this stream makes it still more lovely. What a delightful resort this will be at evening's hour."

"I had it made for that sole purpose; little birds have those bowers, and it delights me so much to sit and watch them as they wing their way to their little homes. The bower is covered with the poet's favorite—the 'Eglantine.'"

"Yes, I have been observing its fragrance ever since I scented myself here. Oh, Figaro! when I look around and view this beautiful spot which you planned just for myself, I feel that you have such a noble soul, such a generous heart! Oh! you have been so kind to me. I thought that my own home could be surpassed by none; but I find you have brought me to one still more inviting. As I walk about these grounds I see every thing heart can desire, and more than one can reasonably ask for. So soon as I step up on the door-sill of the castle, my eye meets every thing that is magnificence itself; my foot is instantly as if in velvet, and my eyes are dazzled by the light emitted from mirrors and jewels. Tell me, Figaro, how shall I ever repay the kindness?"

"Repay? You have more than repaid, you have given me your heart. What would all this be in comparison to the heart which you have given me? Or what enjoyment would life have if you were not here? Ask me not again, dear Stella, what you shall give me in exchange. The sun is getting warm now, I will take you into the verandah, and order the servant to bring some refreshments. I have the most excellent Spanish wines, I believe. Name your favorite, and I will have it brought immediately."

"I think I would relish sherry, this morning."

"A few minutes, and it will be brought."

Now, Figaro and Stella, happy creatures, we will leave you

awhile to enjoy yourselves with a delightful repast, and at the same time inhale the perfume of the flowers around you, a meet emblem of what life is now, for they are so bright and beautiful. We will see what the future unveils.

CHAPTER VII.

"PARAGI, I have at last succeeded in obtaining the diamond of rare value. I have sought a long, long time for it, and have often given up in despair, for I feared that I would never obtain it. There are, as you know, various species of diamonds; but to find such an one as you desire is difficult. Those I have obtained are magnificent indeed; to see them once will convince you that they cannot be surpassed in Spain, or anywhere else; the lustre of them is great, and in sunlight it is dazzling to behold them; the finest gold I have obtained, and it is richly wrought; the diamonds are cut, but have not as yet been set. I will bring them to you for inspection on the morrow."

"How long since you arrived, Pancino?"

"But an hour. I have been a long time in search of the diamonds; but your strict injunctions were, that I should obtain none but the best. I have succeeded, and kept my word faithfully."

"Signora has married since you left, Pancino?"

"So I heard; they tell me that the castle is almost as beautiful and inviting as Paradise."

"Well, all this splendor will soon be turned into bitterness, I

wager. Figaro will soon find that he is a most miserable man, and will wish himself dead."

"Oh, Signor Paragi! it makes me shudder to think of it. Oh, I cannot bear the thought of a young and gay creature like Signora, being the victim of your revenge!"

"You are a faint-hearted fellow, Pancino; when you have mingled in crime as much as myself, then you will laugh to see how weak you were."

"I must away, Signor Paragi."

"Promise to call, then, at an early hour to-morrow."

"At nine I will come."

"Keep faithfully the promise, Pancino."

"Fear not, I will be here."

A long, dreary night did Pancino pass after he left Paragi—such a night as is known to those alone who feel deep guilt and remorse of conscience. At times, he would fall into a broken slumber, but would suddenly start as if terror had seized his soul. He dared not look around, for the very moonbeams which danced about his chamber seemed transformed into fiery fiends. O, he had a barbed arrow within his heart, and it would enter his grave with him. But wearied nature must eventually sink into repose. Once more Pancino closed his eyes for sleep, nor awakened till the sun spread his golden wings afar, shedding a dazzling lustre upon the streams. Remembering his promise to meet Paragi at nine, he hastened to fulfil it.

"Signor, it is a little beyond the appointed time that I promised to meet you; but Somnus did not open his gates for me

at so early an hour this morning; I rested not well last night, for unpleasant thoughts haunted me."

"Pray, what were they?"

"I was reflecting upon the sin which we are about to commit. Signora is an innocent creature, and is so happy! just but think of the magnificence which surrounds her! Why, her death would be as much lamented by Figaro as was the banishment of Eve from Eden. Her beauteous flowers that she tends with her own hands—and shall they too have to say—

'Who shall water thee now, O flowers?'

The little birds, too, will miss her voice, for she seems to inspire them."

"Pray, who told you of all this elegance?—you arrived here but last night."

"After I left you I took a sail up to the castle; I saw Otto standing on the beach, and he invited me to take a view of the garden. It was such a soft moonlight evening, everything could be seen as plainly as though it was day; all was in a perfect state of repose; nought disturbed the stillness save the rippling of the fountain. Paragi, if you were to take but one view of that delightful spot, I know that you would banish this plot from your heart."

"O, I have seen it all! and it only makes me feel the more as if I desire revenge."

"Paragi, listen to me a moment. If Signora were your bride, the flower of your hope, the brightest gem that adorned your household, the only being capable of giving you any joy in life—what, O, what, I ask you, would be your feelings to see her

fade away each day, and at last be numbered with the dead? Would life then be life to you? Oh, no! you would rather wish to die. How can you tear, as it were, the heart of Figaro from his body?"

"Oh, I could do any thing for revenge! I never listen to such weak things myself; a man should be a man, a Spaniard should be a Spaniard. Come, away with all this, Pancino, I will amply repay you for all your troubles."

* * * * *

Oh, is it not astonishing! passing strange, what an effect glittering gold will sometimes have upon the heart of man? It will cause him to take the life of another without any hesitancy. Alas! what is the paltry coin to virtue and feelings of humanity?

No sooner did Pancino behold the purse of gold which Paragi drew from his well-filled coffer, than he forgot all sympathy. He gazed wistfully upon it, and thought that soon it would be his own.

* * * * *

"Pancino, show me now the diamonds."

"Here they are, Signor."

"They seem to be indeed of great value; they delight me much, Pancino; I do not think that they could be surpassed; they are of the purest water, and their brilliancy is alluring."

"Observe how exquisitely the gold in which they are set is wrought; I never have seen any thing to equal it. I have left a cavity for the purpose of inserting the poison; the gold, too, is extremely porous, so that the venom can exude freely, and come in contact with the surface of the skin."

"Then you have obtained the poison. I was fearful that you

might not succeed in getting the right kind. I would not have that which acts rapidly, for it might cause some suspicion."

"Have you not heard, Paragi, of a flower which is very noxious indeed? It bears a blossom of a delicate blue, and, it is said, contains the most virulent poison in nature."

"I have often read of it, but have never seen it, or tested its properties; that is said to act very slowly, but surely; if you have found it, then that will answer the purpose."

"I was rambling, Signor Paragi, in the woods some days since. I saw this flower, which attracted my attention by its beautiful color. I saw a peasant woman coming along, with several peasant children; they were evidently as much pleased with the flower as myself, and seemed anxious to pluck it. The mother seemed much alarmed, and, calling loudly to them, bade them touch it not. I suspected, at once, that it might be the very flower of which I had read and heard. On questioning her, I found that it was very poisonous; and, as I plucked the stem (which was perfectly hollow on the inside), a stream of liquid oozed out. I waited until she was out of sight. I took from my pocket a small vial, and pulled many flowers (taking great care that it should not come in contact with my skin), then filled it with the liquid. I brought it with me for the purpose of putting it in this ring."

"Capital! capital! when you are ready to fill the cavity of the ring with the poison, let it be done in my sight."

"Ah! I see, Paragi, that you are afraid to trust me, but I would not deceive you."

"Oh, I know how faint-hearted you are, and if I see you infuse the poison myself, I will be better satisfied. I wish the exterior

of the ring, Pancino, to have pores large enough to emit the liquid in a slight degree—large enough, any way, so that it can come in contact with the skin."

"By what time shall it be completed?"

"A month hence will be time enough. I think the ring will produce the desired effect in about two months; she will, doubtless, wear it for a constancy, being so large and so valuable."

"That will be a capital idea, to bribe Francisco to pretend to have found it on the sea-shore."

"But I have thought of a better plan, and a less suspicious one."

"What is it?"

"Why, place the ring on the beach, exactly by the side of the gondola; none are about the castle save the servants. Some of them will find it, doubtless. Francisco will be the first one to see it. It would be of little or no use to the servants if they were to find it; they would sell it for a small amount. Besides, Figaro would give them a good price for such a ring."

"That plan seems to be the most advisable, for we cannot trust servants with a secret, for they are so apt to betray one."

"What say you, Paragi; bribe Francisco, or act upon the plan I suggest?"

"I think your scheme the safest and best. You can have the ring in readiness."

"How shall we plan to go up to the castle without being seen?"

"Oh, there are ways enough; we need not fear being detected. All you have to do is to execute my orders about the

ring, and the rest will be left to me. Remember, Pancino, that profound secrecy must be observed."

"Paragi, the secret is within my breast; no power of earth could make me unfold it."

"Here, take this gold, Pancino, and when you bring me the ring, you shall have more."

"Signor Paragi, my conscience smites me as I take this gold, for it has bought, indeed, the life of an innocent and unoffending woman."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Love thee! so well, so tenderly
Thou'rt loved, adored by me:
Fame, fortune, wealth and liberty,
Were worthless without thee."

"COME, come, Stella, we will now to the bower; the sun is just setting, and our paradise will look inviting indeed. Oh! a more glorious sunset I never beheld; watch those purple and golden clouds; how superbly they blend! every thing seems bathed in a rosy light; we will go to enjoy the scene. Never before did my possessions render me so happy. What would they avail me, if you were not here? Oh! Stella, much I love to live now; the cloud has gone, the sunshine has come, my sweet, fair bride.

"The moments I am with thee
Are like stars peering through my life,"

"And to be near you, Figaro, is happiness! What bliss for

me! Every thing that could be thought of has been obtained, and I am the happiest of mortals!"

"Glad am I to hear you speak thus, Stella, for it is happiness enough for me to feel and know that you are happy. But how like you Rosina, your dressing maid?"

"Oh, she is a kind, devoted creature; she seems to think but of me, and anticipates my slightest wish; she has noble, noble principles; indeed, I cannot look upon her in the light of an inferior."

"I am well pleased to know that she suits you; but you, Stella, would inspire love in the heart of any one. I know that you fully appreciate true merit."

"It makes me feel sad to look upon her; there is something so truly beautiful in her dreamy, dark eye. I have noticed, too, that she wept, at times. Her history is, indeed, a sad one; she was once the child of affluence, but fortune took a reverse step. I pity, deeply pity her misfortunes. She is an humble, confiding, devoted creature. I would not part with her upon any consideration. I have watched her, sometimes, while Otto played; it seemed to me that her very soul would drink in the melody. Sad songs seem to please her the most. Sad, sad Rosina, I pity her misfortunes. I will ever be kind and affectionate toward her, for she deserves it truly."

"Stella, I have often thought that Heaven never placed within the breast of mortals a more compassionate heart than in your own; it seems almost to melt when witnessing the misfortunes of others."

"That is our mission on earth, Figaro. Heaven designed that we should pity and relieve the distresses of others, and if

we neglect to do so, then we must abide by the consequences. Our wealth was given us that we might share it with those who had none; our bosoms should never be the resting-place of pride and scorn; we should not consider ourselves superior to those around us, for we are all constituted alike, and have the same Parent, the same great Protector."

"But, Stella, true as is all you have said, yet there are very few who will be governed by those principles; many there are who will deride the poor, when they should let fall the tear of sympathy."

"Oh, Figaro, how could I, who have shared all life's luxuries and joys, turn a deaf ear to the misfortunes of others? I would not, could not do it."

"No; yours is too kind a heart, dear Stella. Would that all were like you. * * * Look, how those clouds are fading from view; the day-king has closed the curtains around his couch, and slumbers quietly. Oh, how beautiful is sunset! every thing is so still and calm, I feel as if I could watch those burnished clouds forever, could weep as I see them fade away; but the beautiful must die, however much it may delight our heart."

"Figaro, methinks this sunset is as beautiful as though this spot were Eden itself. Look, how the birds are quietly resting upon the trees; the majestic swan has pillowed her head upon soft down; see what a rosy tint diffuses itself upon the fountain; the blush is as delicate as that which slept upon the cheek of Eve. Oh, this is a spot, beautiful, indeed! ay, thrice beautiful. Who would not willingly live always amid the beauties of nature, and ever enjoy a continual feast? The voice

of nature seems to speak to us; every stream, every flower whispers, 'Our Father made them all!' Figaro, seeing these trees reminds me of a strange, strange dream I had last night. Methought I was wandering in a beauteous vale; on either side were trees of the most superb foliage; yet among all these there seemed to be one particularly beautiful; an angel rested upon the boughs of that tree, with its snowy wings wide spread I looked upon its face, and Oh, a tear was in its eye, which had the appearance of a sparkling diamond, which had stolen from the lids; by accident, the tear fell upon my own cheek; I wiped it (as I thought) away, and on opening my hand, I held in reality a diamond—a more beautiful and brilliant one I have never seen. I went on a little farther, and, much to my terror, I saw emerging from the grass, a serpent; it seemed to be an adder; in my dismay, I dropped the diamond; the serpent caught it up and crept away. I advanced on still, and found the gem, which it had let fall. I again took it up; it was as bright and beautiful as before; but the serpent had instilled within it a deadly poison. The angel called to me, and said, 'Touch it not.' I immediately threw it upon the ground; at that moment the serpent came forth again from amid the tall grass; the angel whispered, 'Beware!' I saw that there was something about the serpent which was peculiarly fascinating; what it was I knew not. I became so completely enraptured, that I stood in awe. I looked above me, and saw that same angel, with its wings spread as if to protect me. But, Oh, one moment, while I gazed so steadfastly, the serpent held me within its grasp! What my feelings were then no mortal could depict; in my terror I awakened. I was icy cold; it seemed

as if every nerve within my system was relaxed. I shuddered. I trembled. Oh! I can almost fancy now that I see that frightful creature creeping before me. I had forgotten my dream until now: it is strange that I should not have remembered it. But it portends nothing, or else it would have weighed upon my mind."

"Stella, I like not this dream; would that you had never told me. I hope that no one is conspiring against you."

"Figaro, who would conspire against me? I have not injured any one, and surely no one bears any malice against me; do not let such thoughts trouble your mind. Think no more of it, or else I will have to keep my dreams to myself hereafter. I was so intent upon relating my dream that I was not conscious night was creeping over us. Look, there is Venus now; the moon, too, is fast rising. Oh, does not all appear too charming! I shall, hereafter, call this 'Sylvan bower.' Do you not think that a very appropriate name?"

"Truly so. I think the jessamine, eglantine, cluster-rose, and Egyptian honeysuckle are flowers sweet enough to decorate any bower; and, since they are combined here, I think that 'Sylvan' will be an admirable name."

"Since you call the aviary 'Eden,' I shall call the spot near the spring 'Shades of Daphne.' Our home is as poetical as romantic; they are, I believe, more or less combined. But there comes Francisco; no doubt but he is waiting us; so, Daphne and Sylvan, we bid you both 'good night.'"

CHAPTER IX.

SEVERAL months of unalloyed felicity were spent by Stella at the castle; she was full of life and vigor, and suspected not that so soon she was to be torn as a flower from the bosom of Figaro. But thus it is in life; those whom we most love are the first to be called away; yes, the favorite flower is the first to wither.

The wicked and revengeful, who are plotting and conspiring against others, are ever ready to accomplish their designs. Paragi had all the instruments in his own hand; he determined to use them, and that very soon. He knew what a blissful life Figaro led, and he determined to turn it into bitterness.

We will leave Stella for a while, and see what is going on between Pancino and Paragi.

"Pancino, I have thought differently of the plan which we made with regard to the ring. You remember I agreed to have it dropped on the beach; but I think that not the surest way; for, perhaps, Signora might never get it. I will bribe Francisco; the secret of the ring he need not wot of. I will exact a promise of him; viz., that if he will take this ring to Signora, and pretend to have found it upon the shore, sparkling in the moonlight, I will give him whatever sum he may ask. If he desires to know the secret, I will tell him to inquire not into the matter any farther, as it does not matter to him. You know that Francisco is a right good sort of fellow; he is not

given to babbling; beside, he is not to remain there long, for he is going to his friends, and I believe they are in India. He is much attached to Figaro, but he feels it his duty to assist a widowed mother, with several small children dependent upon her. This will be a capital time for putting my plan into execution, for he is in great need of funds. I know the offer I make him, that is, to give him a purse of gold if he will agree to take the ring to Signora, will incite him to do it; it will not seem at all strange to her that he should wish to give her the ring, for she would feel assured that he expected some pecuniary return, as he wishes so much to go to his home."

"That will be the best plan, after all, Paragi; but when can you see him?"

"Most any time, for he often brings messages to me from Figaro. I have some documents belonging to Figaro now, and he will, doubtless, send for them in a day or two; we will have to keep matters very quiet, so that all ground for suspicion will be avoided. Give me that spy-glass, Pancino. I think I see the gondola coming up from the castle now. Yes, it is Francisco. I can tell by a peculiar sort of hat he wears."

"I prefer not being here when you name the subject to him; seeing two engaged in it, he might become suspicious; whereas if you merely made the simple request of him, he may not give it a thought."

"Well, perhaps it is best; you can retire to the next room, for the gondola is about to land. We must not be seen together. But I have not seen the ring myself; however, that matters not. I can wait until he goes. It shall be so planned that he must call at some other time for it. I will give him

some papers to take to Figaro, which must be returned in a few days, and that will be an excuse for him to come. Hark! I hear steps. Retire to the next room, Pancino."

"How is your lordship to-day?" asked Francisco, with a low bow to Paragi.

"In fine health and spirits this morning, Francisco. What news from Signor Figaro?"

"He bade me bring this bundle of papers to you; they contain something of importance; he desires that you will read them as early as possible, for they must be returned in two days."

"Say to Figaro that I will do as he wishes, and you can call for them on the evening of the morrow; being much at leisure, I can peruse them without any interruption. Francisco, seat yourself for a while. I have something of great importance to communicate. I heard that you intended leaving Signor Figaro, for the purpose of going to your mother in India. Have you determined, as yet, to go?"

"If I can raise the funds, Signor Paragi. You know that a poor oarsman like myself has command of but little money. I fear that I will have to wait a long time before I can go, though I so much desire to aid my widowed mother."

"A noble, a generous heart you have, Francisco. I will aid you if you will promise to do me a favor, and keep it a secret."

"A favor! pray, what may that be? Surely, any favor that I can, I will most gladly do; and as to a secret, I feel assured that you might trust me with a thousand, for I am not much

given to tattling, Signor; and, beside, I would not betray you for the world."

"Listen to me, Francisco. I have a diamond ring of rare value. I wish much for Signora to have it, but do not wish to present it myself; reasons for which I cannot make known to you. It is merely a little scheme which I have in hand—not one of much importance, however. If you will pretend to have found the ring upon the seashore, and take it to Signora, begging her to take it, as it will not be of any use to you, only so far as obtaining means to take you to your mother, I will place in your hand gold enough to bear you to India; and, beside this, will give you a bountiful sum to present her; this, together with what Signora gives you for the ring, will be quite a little fortune for you. She will not suspect any plot, for you have always acted honorably and openly on all occasions. Tell me, will you agree to do it? Here is the gold when you say the word."

"Signor Paragi, I see no harm in so doing, only in telling a falsehood; but I suppose if I do not that, then it could not be accomplished; well, I must say that I found it on the beach, and beg her to take it; she will of course give me some remuneration for it, and that, little as it may be, will serve to gladden my mother's heart, for it will bear to her her long absent son, who can be a prop to her so long as his life shall last."

"You agree to it, then?"

"Ay."

"And keep the secret?"

"Most assuredly."

"When you come for these papers I will give you the ring;

wait a minute until I write a note to Figaro. Here, take it; tell him that I will see him shortly."

"Good day, Signor Paragi."

"Remember, Francisco, that on the evening of the morrow I will deliver you the ring, and with it a purse of gold. Be careful that you mention it to no one. It is only for secrecy's sake that I do not wish it known to any one. You know that sometimes we like to indulge in a plan of our own."

"Have no fear, Signor, for I will be faithful to my promise; the secret shall never escape my lips; no, I would rather have my heart torn from my body."

"What a noble, noble feeling, Francisco. I feel that I can safely trust you. It has been some time since you left the castle; you had better hasten back, lest Figaro should get impatient for the answer to his message."

CHAPTER X.

How often is it, indeed, that the innocent and unoffending are made the dupes of the wickedness and folly of others. It is to be lamented indeed that those who have deeply plunged into the gulf of sin, care not how many they bring within its yawning mouth. The innocent child may be led astray by the unconscientious so deplorably, that when it has arrived at the age of maturity, he considers nothing a crime.

Paragi, the revengeful Spaniard, had made a poor, unoffending oarsman his instrument, and he cared not how dark was the

deed which he was committing. Francisco could think of nothing else but the money he would obtain; he dreamed not that he would convey to Signora something which would be a death-blow. No sin did he impute to the act of giving her the ring; in fact, the only crime he thought it to be was the uttering of a falsehood. But he forgot this in the thought that he would soon be with his mother. Ardently did he wish for the morrow to come, for then he would be in possession of that which would convey him to a devoted but needy parent. Yes! that which would serve to gladden the home of four small children. Ah! that mother's heart would have recoiled within her, had she known that the son of her bosom had brought it to her at the expense of the life of another; but she knew it not, and it was well that she was unconscious of the fact.

The morrow came. Oh! that fatal day! Paragi placed in the hands of Francisco the ring. Yes! he placed in that hand the instrument which so soon would still the heart's blood of Stella—but Francisco knew it not.

"Words of gratitude poured from his lips as he received the promised sum of Paragi; his heart indeed leaped with joy. But alas! the innocent are often made subservient to the recklessness of the wicked.

We will leave Paragi for a little while, and see with what success Francisco met regarding the ring.

On the morning following the interview between Francisco and Signor Paragi, a rapping was heard at the door of Signora's boudoir. On opening it, she found Rosina, her dressing maid.

"Signora, Francisco wishes to know if he can see you this morning?"

"Tell him that I will see him in a few minutes."

In a little while Signora permitted Francisco to see her.

"Good morning, Signora," said Francisco, at the same time making a low bow. "I have something which I much desire to show you, for I think it suits no one so well as yourself!"

"Pray, tell me what it is of so much importance."

"Yesterday, Signora, after having completed all my duties, when night came I thought to recruit myself a little. I prepared the gondola and took a sail; while I was sporting with my oars in the water, my attention was much attracted by something which glittered very brightly; at first I thought it was nothing more than a small piece of glass or metal, which lay on the shore; as I came nearer it sparkled still more; in fact, it almost dazzled my eyes. I fastened the gondola on coming up to the beach, and went to see what it was; on picking it up, I found it to be a massive ring, and to contain diamonds; I would have brought it to you last night, but thought it better to wait until the morning; here it is, Signora see for yourself—examine it carefully."

"Oh! it is very, very beautiful; what rare diamonds! I never saw one larger than that in the middle of the cluster; the carving on the gold is exquisite; some one must have dropped it; surely it must have belonged to some rich person."

"I wish you to take it, Signora; you know that I am going to London soon, and am endeavoring to obtain means to get there. I will part with this ring for a small recompense."

"You are too generous, Francisco. I will take the ring if no one comes to claim it. I will use means to find out who lost it,

and, if no one calls for it, then I will give you money in return for it."

"You can keep it till then, Signora."

"Oh! I will keep it safe. I would not pretend to place an estimate upon a ring like this. However, I will consult Figaro about it. Speaking of going away, Francisco; the reason you have for going is indeed a noble one; you go to relieve the wants of a widowed mother and fatherless children. You leave not this castle without the kindest and best wishes of Figaro and myself. We both have ever noticed your noble and generous spirit, and the faithful discharge of every duty. Although I feel a reluctance in giving you up, yet I would not for once ask you to remain, for that would be unfeeling and ungenerous; I forego all this, when I know what joy you will give to the heart of your mother."

Francisco listened with attentive ears to all Signora said; he felt the force of her words, and appreciated the source from whence they came. He was almost determined in his own mind not to take any return for the ring; but he thought that to urge this would be useless, for he very well knew that Signora was too generous to take it without an ample remuneration. Never was the heart of Francisco so light before; he reflected with delight upon the commendations Signora had bestowed upon him, and felt that when he bade "adieu" to Signora, he would leave a friend indeed; and had not the thought of being folded in the arms of his mother preponderated over his other feelings, tears would, in spite of himself, have trickled down his cheek. But oh! the love for a mother is so pure, so powerful, that nothing can overbalance it. No, no, it will overcome

every thing; for there is no heart on earth which beats so warmly for us as that of a mother. Her voice is the sweetest of all sounds. Yes,

"Music lives within her lips,
Like the nightingale 'mid roses."

CHAPTER XI.

DAY after day passed. Figaro had used every possible means to obtain the owner of the ring, which he thought had been lost by some one on the beach; but none came. He at length concluded to buy it from Francisco, for it certainly contained diamonds of the purest water; and the gold in which they were encased was of the finest quality and most exquisitely carved.

"I think, Stella," said Figaro one day, "that we had as well give up all hopes of ever finding an owner for the ring; it is indeed a magnificent one, and Francisco shall be amply repaid for it. I would not permit you to have it by any means without giving him a fair exchange; the ring will be of no service to him, for he would sell it to any one who would buy it, if you refused to have it; and they might not give him a fair price for it.

"Francisco begged that I would take it, and offered it for a small amount; but I told him that I must consult you upon the subject, as I could not place a proper estimate upon it, having the appearance of being so valuable. He has been making some preparations for going home; and so soon as we come to some conclusion respecting the ring, he will take his departure. I

know his extreme anxiety to see his mother, and of course the sooner he gets there the better it will be."

"Well, Stella, we will send for him and name a sum. I will ring the bell now; I believe he is in the garden; I saw him a few moments ago doing something to the rose-bush. He is always among the flowers; he seems to watch them with so much care, I shall miss him very much when he goes away. Every thing around seems to come at his calling; even the little gazelle, which is so timid, comes running toward him when he hears his step."

"Francisco has been faithful, Figaro, in discharging his duties to us both. It is seldom that we find one so true when thrown among so many others, some of whom have no principles at all about them. There he comes now."

"Signor Figaro, I am at your service."

"Francisco, be seated. I wish you now to come to some conclusion about the ring. I find, on examining it, that it is extremely valuable, and very beautiful. Signora was telling me that you offered to sell it to her. I will give you any price that you may ask—not so much for the ring itself, but because I think you are deserving of a reward for your fidelity. You will go to India, soon, and it will cost much to take you there. Say, what sum do you wish?"

"Signor, a small recompense is all I ask."

"No, Francisco, that must not be; but, since you will not name a sum, take this purse of gold; consider not that I give it to you for the ring alone, but for the good will I have for you. To-morrow you can get in readiness to return to your home."

"Heaven bless you, Signor, for your kindness. I am but a

peasant, yet I possess a noble heart—a heart capable of appreciating the charity of others. Will Signora not wear the ring? It would please me much to know that she would condescend to place it upon her finger, after having been in my hand."

"Yes, I will wear it, Francisco. I would not consider it contaminated by being in your hand. No, no, it is very beautiful, and I will keep it on my finger. I would never tire of gazing on its beauty."

"Then you will wear it, Signora? That is all I ask; the ring will receive three-fold value after having adorned your hand."

The conversation was here interrupted by visitors, who were awaiting Signora in the parlor.

On entering the parlor, Stella found several of her young and gay companions, who came for the purpose of apprising her that a grand fancy ball was in anticipation, and it would come off in three weeks. Stella's name, of course, was on the list with those who were to be invited.

"Stella, you must not fail to be there," said Lindor; "your company would be indispensable."

"Oh! I dare say you would not miss me much, for Signor M—— will be at your side all the time. Ah! I see from your tell-tale eyes that something is in view; I remember one evening, while I was taking an excursion in the gondola, of seeing you with the person in question. I have heard some rumor of late—be sure to invite me to the——"

"The what?"

"Why, the wedding, to be sure. Oh! Lindor, you can't make me believe that there is no wedding on the tapis. I shall notice you well at the ball."

"Do go, Stella; I tell you whom I most desire to have you personate."

"Who is it?"

"An Eastern bride. I declare, that will be the very thing; you are of that style of beauty, and have so many splendid jewels—promise me that you will personate her."

"I will first consult Figaro, and then tell you."

"Oh! that is just the way; when a lady is married, 'my husband' is all she can say: well I have no doubt but that he will consent."

"And who do you personate?"

"The flower girl of Florence, and my friend Adalina, a Grecian lady. I am thinking we will have a very merry time; indeed it will be the first ball of the season, and the first one of the kind for some time. Oh! I shall go by all means."

"You certainly would not miss, under any circumstances."

"No, not without something beyond my control occurs."

"We must now bid you a 'good morning,' Stella, and we will be much disappointed if you do not come to the ball; all the nobility of Spain will be there."

After the usual compliments passed, the friends separated. Figaro was in the library, glancing over some documents; he could but smile to hear the conversation which passed between the visitors; he wondered to himself if there was any end to woman's tongue; if there was, he had never found it. He could scarcely refrain from smiling while they were discussing the ball. They were not at all conscious that Figaro heard the conversation which passed between them, or they might, perchance, have blushed.

Figaro prepared himself to be attacked the first thing by Stella as to whether she should go, and if she might appear as an "Eastern bride." He could never deny her any thing, for she would come around him in such a way, so coaxingly and so affectionately—every thing was "*cara mia*"—she was almost like an angel hovering around him. Figaro lived but for her, and he felt that the society of no one was half so charming, or so much delighted him, as that of his own "idol."

CHAPTER XII.

"Her matchless wreath of beauty beggars all her queenly form.
Her majesty of mien would grace a throne."

We will pass rapidly over three weeks, during which time the ball took place. Figaro gave his consent for Stella to go and appear, agreeable to the wishes of her friend Lindor, as an Eastern bride. Her dress was beyond all description; it was magnificence itself, in fact it was pronounced to be the most superb and tasty in the whole room. Though there were such a number of females all sumptuously decked, yet there was not one so elegantly attired as the bride of Figaro. He stood and gazed upon her, and thought that never was woman so beautiful before. Adalina and Lindor could but pronounce her the very essence of beauty itself.

Signor Paragi was there, and as he viewed that fatal ring upon her finger, he thought how soon would she change those garments of a bride to a robe for the grave. Each time, as the

brilliancy caught his eye, it seemed to be the stroke of a basilisk. It was easily perceived by him, too, that Stella had lost a part of her very brilliant color, and ere long it would all fade away. Oh! what a deceitful mask did Paragi put on that evening; he was always the first one to claim her hand in the dance.

Stella complained several times of being very faint; but, so soon as she would get to an open window, she felt revived. Paragi bethought that it was time he was endeavoring by some means to get the ring from Stella. After having danced with her, he led her to a little recess in one part of the saloon, to enjoy the delightful breeze which came in. He complimented her on her fine appearance, and pretended to be delighted that she was so much admired. After enjoying a *tête-à-tête* of some few minutes, Paragi looked with pretended surprise upon the ring, and asked her where she obtained it.

Stella related its history, at which Paragi professed to be much surprised. He thought this the most advisable time to get it within his possession.

"Signora, permit me to look at that ring; it is certainly the most beautiful one I have ever seen—the setting is so peculiar, and I like it so much. I am going to Madrid in a few days; if I call for it, will you permit me to take it with me for the purpose of getting one made like it? I admire the carving on the gold so much, and would like to get one as near like it as possible."

"With pleasure, Signor Paragi. You may take it to Madrid since you admire it so much, and wish to obtain one similar."

"I will not return probably for several weeks, but the ring will be safe with me."

"Yes, I know it will be as well cared for as if I had it in my possession. There comes Figaro, no doubt to remind me that it is getting quite late; we have no idea of the flight of time when we are enjoying ourselves so much. But I am really glad the ball is almost ending, for I feel fatigued."

"How have you passed your time, Stella?" asked Figaro of his beautiful wife; "have you realized as much pleasure as you anticipated?"

"Oh! yes, fully as much; but I feel unusually fatigued."

Paragi heard this remark and began to fear a little; he thought it best to take the ring then, for he did not know how soon the poison would come to the crisis.

Before leaving, Signora took the ring (for she thought she had as well give it to him then) from her finger, and gave it to Paragi. Oh! how relieved did he indeed feel, for he had wished for some time to get the ring from her; he felt assured that she had worn it long enough; that the poison was fast circulating through her whole system, and ere long she must die under its effects: even he felt a chilliness creep over him when he glanced at the ring. He determined to remain in Madrid as long as possible—anyhow until Signora should be prostrated. He thought that Figaro would forget all about the ring, or else think it was among her other jewels, which he of course highly treasured.

Paragi, like all others who carry on deeds of wickedness, was not at a loss how to carry out his plans. He always boasted himself to be a lucky man,—but, reader, the wicked will some day be checked in their career, and wish from their hearts that they had never known what it was to sin.

CHAPTER XIII.

READER, have you never, on a beautiful morning in the leafy month of June, ere the sun has commenced to pour his torrid rays upon the earth, while yet the dew-drops rest upon the flowers, like tears on the silken lashes of angels—have you not wandered in some beauteous flower-garden, where there were flowrets of every tint, and of the most regaling fragrance? Did you not behold them until you were so much enraptured that you almost bowed in adoration to their shrines? Ah! full well I know your heart thrilled with delight, and you scarcely knew which was the most beautiful of them all. But look you to yon quiet nook, where smiles a flower so modest that it almost shrinks and blushes to meet your gaze. Mark its grandeur and elegance—inhalé its perfume. Oh! did you not love to behold its beauty? Did you not watch it from day to day, and ever pluck it to press it to your bosom? But what were your feelings, kind reader, when you saw, day after day, that the loved flower was fast fading, and the glow leaving its cheek—and oh! worse than all, life itself becoming extinct? Oh! did you not experience a grief too deep to give utterance to words? Did you not in your agony exclaim,—“My sweet flower has gone!”

But sunshine cannot dwell with us always. No, for clouds will come. Dark, gloomy days were coming for Figaro. Yes! Orlando Castle was now to be deprived of its most lovely of all flowers. Oh! that it had never shed its bloom there, for then there would have been nothing to lament.

It was the evening after the ball. Never seemed Stella more gay. She was delighted with the events of the evening before, and could scarcely talk of any thing else. Sweet creature, you little dream that soon you will be but a lifeless corpse.

We will listen for a few minutes to the conversation at the breakfast-table the morning after the ball.

“Figaro, did not Signora Valencia look bewitchingly beautiful last night? Indeed, I was led a perfect captive to her charms; how gracefully she danced, and how winning was her conversation!”

“Yes, Stella, she is truly a beautiful woman; but I think there was one present still more beautiful, more graceful, and more attractive—she was to me, at least. Her dress was pronounced to be the most elegant and tasty in the whole room. I think that, so far as dancing was concerned, no one could possibly have displayed more grace.”

“Who was that very important person?”

“Ah! I see that you have woman’s natural curiosity; they are, I verily believe, the most inquisitive sort of beings in the whole world.”

“Come, Figaro, you shall not slander our sex so; we do not possess any more curiosity than the gentlemen. Do tell me who it was you thought so very beautiful.”

“Do you really wish to know?”

“I do, most certainly.”

“It was none other but the lady whom I now address.”

“You astonish me, Figaro. I did not once dream that it was myself. Oh, you are much, very much mistaken, for

Senora Spezzio was the star of the evening. I was scarcely a satellite compared to her."

"I differ with you there. I think we must give a complimentary soiree soon, for the benefit of her friends."

"I am willing to accede to that, nor care I how soon it is given."

"We will say, then, in the course of two weeks."

"Very well; I assure you that nothing could give me more pleasure. I hope, though, that I will feel in better health than I do this morning; of late, I have not felt so sprightly, although I manifest the disposition; there is something so prostrating, that really at times I am almost tempted to give up."

"Oh! a little medicine will soon bring all right again. I will send for a physician, and he will see what can be done to regain your spirits and strength."

"That might be very advisable, for I feel my strength failing every day."

"Oh! do not say so, Stella, for I would not have that be. I have of late noticed your color fading, but did not think it was from any particular or serious cause."

"I have a violent throbbing in my temples now, and all my nerves seem to be completely relaxed."

"I will hasten for the physician. Rosina, be very watchful while I am gone—see that nothing is omitted on your part."

"I will attend strictly to your orders, Signor; trust me, for I assure you that you have left her in faithful hands."

Figaro with all possible speed went in quest of a physician. Never did he before feel so perfectly miserable; it seemed as

if he shrank from every sound, and dared not look upon a shadow. Why he had such sad forebodings he could not tell; but yet he feared that it portended something fearful. In vain did he endeavor to chase it away from his mind; but it was of no avail, for it lingered around his thoughts. His mind was ill at ease until he had an interview with the physician, whom he entreated to hasten to Stella, whom he feared had become much worse since he left; but knowing that he had left her in the charge of a faithful nurse relieved his mind a little; but he very well knew that if the Conqueror of Conquerors came, he would meet her sweet smile no more on earth. Busy with these thoughts he hastened away.

CHAPTER XIV.

"The church-yard bears an added stone—
The fire-side shows a vacant chair!
Here sadness dwells and weeps around,
And death displays its banner there;
The life has gone, the breath has fled,
And what has been no more shall be;
The well known form, the welcome tread,
Oh! where are they? where is she?"

"Oh! earth, that to thy matron breast
Hast taken all those angel charms,
Gently, I pray thee, let her rest—
Gently, as in a mother's arms."

TURN ON now, dear reader, to the dark side of the picture. Though brightly it gleamed for a while, soon a deep, dark shade passed over—such a cloud as steals o'er us unawares, when we are least prepared for it.

Figaro, instead of finding Stella better on his return, had the sad misfortune to see that she was fading rapidly. Many physicians convened to see what could be done, but found that her disease was far beyond their skill. Oh! what were the feelings, think you, reader, of Figaro, when he saw that his flower was fast losing its glow of life? Oh! what were his pangs when a dread delirium stole over his beloved Stella?

Day after day passed, and each day found Stella fast fading away! The fatal ring was indeed doing its work of death upon an innocent being, who was almost as free from sin as the angels who watched her couch.

Figaro left her not for a moment. Sleep visited his eyes night nor day. The faithful Rosina, too, still staid beside her; and as she saw life fast ebbing, she turned away to weep. Otto, to whom Stella had been a mother indeed, kept vigils, and each moment felt her pulse to see if life was of long duration.

Many indeed were the friends which gathered around her—but oh! their tears were of no avail, though they had been tears of blood.

Oh! that day, that fatal day! it came. Stella's last hour came—the poison had reached its crisis—but a few more minutes, Stella—the light-hearted, the joyous creature, the flower of Orlando Castle, will pass from earth.

Figaro stood watching by her, and he saw that she would soon leave him. Stella looked into his face with her lovely eyes, and faintly said—

“Give me one kiss—the kiss of life and death—the only taste of earth I will take to heaven.”

Twilight was fading rapidly, and with it the life of Stella.

Softly now the moon hath risen from her eastern bed; the rays pour through the chamber in which Stella lies, but her spirit hath soared away to Heaven.

“Weep not for her, she is an angel now,
And treads the sapphir'd flowers of Paradise;
All darkness wiped from her effulgent brow,
Victorious over death to her appears
The vista'd joys of Heaven's eternal years—
Weep not for me.”

Figaro, now in wildness throws himself upon the lifeless body of Stella and weeps. He feels that his best friend has gone.

Oh! how it pained him to think that she had faded so soon—but one brief week since, and she attired herself for the ball. Oh! the sad, sad change. In his frenzy he exclaimed,

“Oh! memory runs to madness, like a river to the sea. Happy as heaven have I been with thee, love! thine innocent heart hath passed through a pure life, like a white dove, wing-sunned through the sky. A better heart God never saved in heaven. She died as all the good die—blessing—hoping! Stella, I loved thee when we sat side by side—when you whispered sweetest words into my ear, and I lived in your smiles. I loved you then—I love you now. Death can never rob me of the jewel which is still within my heart. Oh! fain would I possess this lifeless body—but it must return to the dust. What! this form, which I now behold, must it be forever hidden from my sight? Must I hear the gratings of the keys upon the vault? Just Heaven! it must be so. This indeed is a mysterious death and the enigma must be solved. Otto, come here with your guitar and ere Stella is taken from our view, sing that sweet,

sweet song (in heaven she sings it now) which she used so much to delight me with. No one shall watch beside the dead to-night save ourselves. But I feel that I would rather be alone, Otto, with her; so soon as you have sung that song, leave me and take your rest, for you need it."

"No, I will not leave you, Signor Figaro, for I desire to be one more night with Signora. Oh! the friend of my heart has gone. Alas! who will love Otto now? Who will brush away the ringlets from his brow, or imprint a kiss of love."

"I will love you—I will love you, Otto—I will be to you as Stella was. Look to me, Otto, as your friend, for such will I prove."

* * * * *

Gradually the stars faded. At last, the first glimmering of day was seen. Figaro was slumbering upon the bosom of his loved one, though dead. Oh! she spake not, moved not, for no life was there.

When Figaro awakened, then returned all his sad, sad realities; he again gave vent to his feelings, and at times reason seemed to desert him entirely; the only thing which could restore him was the little song which Otto used to sing so sweetly.

* * * * *

The physicians looked upon the death of Stella as something very mysterious; they thought from her symptoms, that she had been poisoned; and, with the consent of Figaro, they would have a *post-mortem* examination.

Oh, terror! Oh, dismay! both to Figaro and the physicians, when they indeed found that she had been poisoned; in every vein, every muscle, the venom was infused; it at last reached its crisis, and she could no longer withstand it.

They knew not whom to suspect, nor what to think of it; but all they could do was to pronounce it strange, very strange, and they determined to find out the offender.

For a while we will leave this part of the subject, and note something of the funeral rites of Stella.

The coffin in which Stella was placed, consisted of Parian marble, shaved thin enough to be quite light; it was most superbly inlaid with silver; the rings by means of which the coffin was held, were of solid silver; the pillow on which her fair head rested was eider-down covered with the finest satin elegantly embroidered with gold, and set with diamonds and pearls. The burial dress consisted of India muslin, almost as light as the air we breathe, that fell in graceful folds about her form, and seemed proud that it was the apparel of one so beautiful; her tiny hands were clasped upon her bosom, and the exquisitely rounded arms, which were bare, looked purer than the new-born lily. Around her neck hung clusters of curls, such as she always wore during her lifetime, and on her brow was a wreath of white moss-rose buds. Oh! never was one so beautiful in death! her skin was as transparent as a sunbeam, and her eyelids looked too beautiful to be closed forever to all earthly scenes.

Reader, wonder not that Stella, who was now a corpse, should be decked thus. It was the wish of Figaro, and none would oppose him. No, he was troubled enough already; he wished to see her look as she did in life; he revolted at the idea of her being enveloped in a shroud. Oh! when he looked upon her now, his heart bled; for, but a brief time since, Stella was arrayed as an Eastern bride—but now she slumbered, no more to awaken.

Figaro now stands by her tomb—O! how these words welled up from his heart:

“O! snatched away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom.”

The resting-place of Stella was indeed a spot of beauty—the snowy marble vault reared its high head amid the branches of the willow and cypress. The railing around the vault was silver, beautifully cut in various designs; the gates were massive and elegantly wrought; all around were silver lamps, which burned during the hours of the night. Seven guardsmen watched it at all times carefully, and a skilful gardener was employed to attend the flowers which bloomed there. Vases of gold cemented in marble were placed around for the reception of flowers, and fresh bouquets were placed in them each day.

Figaro had determined, during the lifetime of Stella, to have her bust in marble, so he employed an artist from Florence to execute it; after her death he had it copied, and one of them was placed at her tomb and the other he kept himself to gaze upon.

The tomb, though so beautiful, was not half so fair as the one who slumbered within its walls. Every passer-by was struck with the beauty of the bust, and would exclaim, “If that be so beautiful, what must the original with sparkling eyes and a sweet voice have been?”

Figaro, under the weight of his grief, would at times lose his

reason; indeed, it would be some days at a time before he would recover his right mind. But we must leave him in all his sadness for a while, and see what was determined on in the case of the poison which was given to Stella.

CHAPTER XV.

“The dungeon walls were dark and high,
The narrow pavement bare—
No sunlight of the blessed sky
Might ever enter there.
In all the melancholy week
The prisoner chained had lain,
No breath of heaven kissed her cheek,
Or cooled her fevered brain.”

PARAGI, who had so boldly taken the life of Signora, the young and lovely bride of Figaro, was now about to make another his victim. So long had he been committing crimes of the darkest hue, that now he shrunk from nothing. No, he would not hesitate to take even the life of an own brother.

There was much excitement caused by the sudden death of Stella; and its being the result of poison made it still more so. Paragi was on the alert all the while; he who had so long devised plans for his escape, when having acted sinfully, knew very well how to act. He could persuade those whom he called his friends to do any thing for a little money. Since the death of Stella he had endeavored to think of some plan by which he could escape without being detected. But the wicked are not long at a loss for means to get out of a difficulty.

Stella had for some time previous to her death, been in the

habit of taking a very delicate wine; it was prescribed by her physician, who thought it would be of great service. It was administered by her faithful and devoted Rosina, who never neglected a duty toward her mistress, particularly one concerning so important a thing as her health.

Paragi knew that the castle would be searched to find the poison, so he determined to put some of the same kind which was placed in the ring into the decanter of wine, and then get some one else to swear that Rosina did it. Poor, innocent Rosina, much we pity you; you, who were so devoted and kind to Stella—who held her hand until the last moment, and wept bitterly when she died. Oh! much do we pity you; to think that you too will be in the power of that wicked, depraved Paragi. Yes, he, the guilty, will make you, the innocent, suffer for his sin. But he has well nigh run his race, for Heaven will not much longer permit him to go on thus. No—for each day he is frowned upon.

We will see how Paragi succeeded in his fiendish attempt, and what was the result.

“Pancino, I am much troubled. You know that Signora is dead now, and they have had a *post-mortem* examination; the physicians of course all agree that poison, by some means, was introduced into her system. You know I hold that fatal ring in possession; and when Figaro asks me for it I am sadly afraid that my countenance will tell I am guilty. I have been thinking of some plan to devise; and I feel assured that I would then come off without a shade of suspicion, for the excitement would

be so great that Figaro would forget all about the ring, for some time at least.”

“Well, what scheme do you think of?”

“There is a decanter upon the dressing-table in the boudoir of Stella; it contained wine, which had to be given her every day, and the person who performed the office was Rosina. You know that she is a poor, dependent orphan, and no one cares but little about her, if any thing. I thought I would pour the contents of this phial into it, and get you to swear that you saw her putting something in the decanter one day, when you called to inquire after the health of Signora.”

“They know, though, that I was no visitor at the castle; my rank in life is very different from that of Signora Figaro.”

“Oh, well, you can say you heard she was very ill, and that out of respect to Figaro you came to inquire about her health.”

“Very well, I will do so, then.”

“We must be the very ones to aid them while they are searching the house. I will, during the bustle, slyly put the poison in the wine. After having searched a long time, let us propose going to the boudoir; you take the wine up and pretend to taste of it; say that it has a peculiar flavor. You then propose to examine it; the physicians will test it. Then you must say that a thought has just occurred to you; that on the day you came over to the castle for the purpose of inquiring after the health of Signora, you happened to pass the door of the boudoir, and saw Rosina putting the contents of a small phial into the decanter; that you did not then speak of it, for you thought perhaps the physician had prescribed something-

I will then swear that I heard you say that Rosina was preparing wine for Signora to take—perhaps some drug to make her sleep. Of course Rosina will be brought up for trial. You must take good care in case of cross-examination. I will say that I verily believe her to be guilty. I must be the very one to pronounce her guilty, so as to throw all suspicion from my own shoulders. What do you think of the plan, Pancino?"

"It is a very good one. But what if the ring should be found?"

"Oh, that will never be, for I have buried it deep in the earth."

"What if Figaro should ask for it?"

"I can tell him that I lost it, but will have another made; he, of course would not hear to that, for it would be of no value to him, since it is not the one Stella used to wear. All I could offer him would be of no avail; besides, he is so troubled in his mind that he thinks not of any thing. I will fix all, if I can get you to swear that you saw Rosina put something in the wine."

"I will do that very readily."

The reader will, no doubt, think that Pancino had a very hard heart, and a very peculiar disposition, to accede to any whim of Paragi; but the truth was, that Signor Paragi was very much above him in life, and Pancino was one of those men who "hang on prince's favor," and would do any thing to win it; not for the world would he have aided any one else; but as it was Signor Paragi, he thought it would never answer to refuse any thing that he might ask. He was not aware of the fact that Paragi seldom bestowed a thought on him except

when he required his aid in some scheme. But all persons have their weak points, and that was Pancino's greatest failing—a desire to court the favor of the rich and great. If we were to search the world over we would very soon find that Pancino is not the only one, by many thousands, who scorn the poor, but smile upon the opulent.

When Figaro was told that it was Rosina who had poisoned his wife, his rage knew no bounds; his extreme grief for the loss of Stella, together with the thought that his lovely bride had been murdered by her who professed so much fidelity, almost drove him to madness. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "who can I trust—who will act openly! Alas! I fear that I look in vain for friends; now that Stella has gone, I am left to drag out my life in the best manner I can."

He became much incensed at what he heard of Rosina, and examined the wine himself. He ordered that Rosina should be put in prison immediately, to await a trial. Among those who were on the jury was Pancino. Paragi was now satisfied that she would be condemned.

When Rosina was informed that she was suspected of having poisoned Stella, her grief knew no bounds. Innocent creature, the death of Signora had weighed so heavily upon her mind that she was reduced to a mere skeleton. Her looks were enough for Paragi to seize upon, for he made the slightest thing an evidence against her now.

"Yes," said he, to those who came to arrest her, "her looks prove her guilt. See her haggard appearance—there is some cause for it."

"No, no, I am not guilty. Heaven knows that I have

grieved night and day for the death of my only friend. I poison her? No, rather would I swallow it myself."

"But the wine is here to prove it," said one of the men who came for her.

"I did not put one drop of poison in it—I am innocent."

But all her entreaties were vain, for she was conveyed to prison, and the iron key was turned. As she looked around that horrid place where scarce a breath of air lingered, she became almost frenzied. The thoughts of the time when once she was the child of opulence; and now contrasting it with her miserable condition, it almost deprived her of reason.

The day of trial came. Paragi and Pancino falsely swore, in the sight of Heaven, that she was guilty. The judge of the court was deeply affected by the tears which Rosina shed; he marked that soft, sweet face, and those languishing eyes, which seemed almost too weak to bear the weight of their lids.

The judge asked, "Guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty. Heaven knows I am not guilty. They who say I am, swear falsely."

Now the court was deeply affected, and the judge himself wiped away a tear from his eye. But Pancino and Paragi so positively swore that she was guilty, that the judge scarcely knew what to do. After the final examination had concluded, the judge pronounced Rosina guilty of murder in the first degree, and determined upon her execution.

The dread day arrived Rosina was conveyed from the prison, and the robes in which she was to be executed were put on. Paragi was the very one, too, who assisted in adjusting them.

Several times did he grow pale, and his heart almost ceased to beat.

Rosina came to the place of execution in a calm mood, for full well she knew that Heaven saw her innocence. She asked permission to say a few words, which request was granted her.

"Alas!" said she, faintly, "a poor orphan, without friends, without wealth, has none to care for her, and no one to take her part; they will accuse and condemn; the rich and powerful will rejoice to know that they can prevail. Once I had friends, had money; but when the keen winds of poverty fanned my cheek, all left me. I found one friend—she died a short time since, and I am accused of poisoning her. I die for it—but I am innocent. Yet my soul will soon be among the blessed in heaven; and perchance the one who committed the deed for which I am executed, will lift up his eyes as did the rich man in the parable. But may Heaven pardon him. I die knowing that I am innocent, and will soon be folded in my mother's arms in Heaven."

Here Rosina ceased speaking, for she had grown very weak under the excitement of the occasion. The whole assemblage was moved to tears, and among them were many who had stout hearts, yet they could not withstand this.

The cap was drawn over the face of Rosina, who stood alone; the motion was then given to the executioner, and in a few brief moments her spirit had soared to heaven.

CHAPTER XVI.

READER, think you not that Paragi must have suffered deeply the remorse of conscience? What, oh! what joy was there for him in life? None—for he seemed to have no friends, and those with whom he mingled were as selfish as himself.

After the execution of Rosina, he became almost frantic at times. Ay! he even trembled in the sight of Heaven; something seemed to tell him, that not very long would he engage in his wicked acts. His mind knew no rest; if he slumbered, he found no real repose; for, when waking hours would come, he reflected on his past conduct, and dreaded what might be the result. He endeavored to drown his feelings by plunging in the deepest dissipation; he was a frequent visitor at the halls of revelry; the gaming-table was his favorite resort; and when the excitement of all that was over, he was a very misery to himself.

One evening, thinking to dispel the gloom of his mind, he attended a large fête which was given by some Spanish nobleman. Many were convened, and the wine-cup was used a little too freely. After supper, a game of cards was proposed, to which they all agreed. Among the first who flocked to the table was Paragi and Signor Spezzio. They were shuffling the cards at the greatest rate, and using the faro-bank. Paragi put down the ace of spades, and it was now Spezzio's turn. Paragi having, by accident, looked over Spezzio's cards, now endeavored to arrange his own by slipping them slyly in his fingers.

Spezzio was much excited, for he expected to win the game;

seeing Paragi (for he was very keensighted) slip the cards, enraged him very much, and he spoke to him about it.

Paragi could not brook the idea of being reproved in the presence of so many, and he determined to resent it; he drew a dagger from his bosom, and plunged it into the heart of Spezzio, within the presence of that whole assemblage. Ah! his time was come—he gave himself up, for there was no escape for him now. He had openly and wilfully taken the life of Spezzio, and the lookers-on became so much enraged that they, without any ceremony whatever, had him put in prison. Paragi felt that he deserved it all, and he knew very well that there was no alternative now but death. Many indeed witnessed the sight—that of stabbing Spezzio. How freshly did every thing rush into his mind—the death of Stella—the execution of the innocent Rosina—all, all came up into his mind, and he actually hated himself. He was torn from his own palace, and placed in a dark, dark prison cell; it seemed as if the very spirit of Spezzio haunted him all the while; in imagination he could see his heart's blood pouring out, while the dagger still remained there.

Long, long, seemed the days to him now, how much did he wish for the end of each, although he knew that the close of every one brought him nearer to eternity. It was agreed that he should be executed on the fifteenth day of the following month. He heard his doom with calmness; but, oh! the words went to his very brain like a thousand arrows. He had led a miserable life, and now was to die an ignominious death, without one single tear to be shed for him. Ay! the very spot on which Rosina was executed was he to stand, in the presence

perhaps of that same assemblage. He asked not for forgiveness—hoped not for it. Now all the good counsel which his mother gave him when he was a mere child, rushed into his mind. Alas! she would weep over the sight in heaven. His wicked, his revengeful spirit had done it all.

He was arrested in the very midst of all his sin, and borne to prison; what a cold horror must have crept over him when he entered the gates, and more when they placed him in the cell from which daylight was almost excluded. Now heavy chains were put upon him, and the key of the cell was turned; he was left alone, with conscience and his God. Now came the time for mature reflection, but it was too late. Oh! he heartily wished that his spirit had left this earth when that of his only and best friend departed (oh! most too sacred the word to use)—his mother.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Thou art a friend, indeed,
Most truly true and kind;
Thou givest me in my spirit need—
Thy wealth of heart and mind."

"Shame on those hearts of stone that cannot melt
In soft adoption of another's sorrow."

Oh! shine on still, ye quiet stars! Luna, emit but one faint smile to cheer my careworn soul! A condemned criminal am I; and, ere another week shall have passed away, I must die an ignominious death! Heaven has indeed frowned upon me; methinks I hear reproaching voices all around. I have no friends—I deserve none. I too late saw my folly, and now

must bear my fate. My heart hath one earnest desire, and if that be granted, then I am content—content as a criminal can be. Oh! how many infamous deeds have I committed, and how often escaped; but now have I had my reward. I, the guilty, have caused the innocent to suffer for the wrongs committed by myself! Oh! to see one being who would sympathize and offer a word of kindness!

The prison-keeper hears Paragi, and enters.

"Paragi, I have heard your solemn warnings, and the words of anguish which escaped your lips. I possess the feelings of humanity, and can but feel a sympathy for you. Alas! a criminal has but little to hope for; he feels that all around him are any thing but his friends. Hear me, Paragi, for I am your friend. I would not be otherwise; you, who soon must quit this stage of life to enter into eternity, tell me what the desire of your heart is, and I will grant it if within my power. My own conscience would not permit me to leave unsatisfied the simple wish of one who has been sentenced to death. No, no! for it would be like refusing the desire of a dying mother to see her only child. I, who can enjoy the beauty of sunshine, inhale the soft perfume of flowers, and have my liberty, could not, would not be so rash as to deny a simple request. Tell me, Paragi, what it may be. I wept as I listened at the door, for full well I know how to sympathize with you. Name the desire."

"Esmareldi, like the rays of yon moon suddenly emerging through the midnight clouds, shedding a momentary joy over my soul, is thy sympathy to me. If one had announced to me that I had been pardoned, not more welcome would have

been the tidings than were thy words. Esmareldi, it is a good thing for men to have sympathy; and had I once possessed it, it would have been better for me. Oh, to breathe but once again the air of heaven! Oh, to be without the limits of this dreary prison, to throw off from these hands the massive iron chains! I feel as though my very soul was fettered. I shudder, I tremble in the sight of heaven, for I feel that I am despised, even in the sight of angels."

"Paragi, speak not thus, for it harrows my very soul. I like not thus to see a fellow-being labor under remorse of feeling, and anguish of mind; it is enough for me to know that you are confined by massive iron chains; for, as I hear the clanking, it grates upon my ear; but the night is passing away; again I ask, what is your wish? Hasten and tell me, for I must be on my watch. The prison is entrusted to my care, and it is not well that I should betray confidence reposed within myself."

"Esmareldi, let me but feel the pressure of your hand upon my fevered brow; list to me a moment, and I will tell you what I so much desire. Have you not heard of Otto, the Italian boy, who lives at Orlando Castle? He has great skill in singing. Estella, the bride of Figaro, loved him much, and found great pleasure in hearing him sing; she taught him a song which no one knew but herself. Often this same song would serve to wile away many hours. Figaro would sit and listen to the cadence of her voice until he became almost enchanted. He desired that Otto should learn it, so that when Signora was otherwise engaged, he could sing it for him. There is something mysterious in the history of the Italian

boy. You, perchance, remember that he is very beautiful. Signora, too, was much attached to him, and took great pains in instructing him to sing. It is said that the only thing which can bring Figaro to his reason is that song. I fain would see him ere I die, for there is a deep, deep secret within my heart; I cannot die content until I see him. Permit Otto to visit me at daylight in this cell, for I must speak with him. Esmareldi, I would not have you know the secret, for it is too heinous. I beg that when Figaro comes, that you will permit me to be alone with him for a little while."

"At dawn, then, Paragi, I will send up to the castle for Otto. You can communicate to him the message, and he shall bear it to Figaro. The request is simple, and I am willing to grant it; would that I could do more; but you feel, Paragi, that you have my sympathy; and it is a pleasant thing to know that there is one who cares for us. Good night, Paragi; may sleep soon rid you of all care, and make you forget your condition for a while. I leave you now, with no companions save the little stars, and may they whisper something to soothe you. Your brow seems feverish; no one sees me—wait, and I will bring you my own pillow, so that you may better slumber. I need not sleep so much as yourself; besides, I have to be on my watch till late. Alas! it has been many nights since your head rested upon a pillow. I will bring you some wine from my flask, for it may serve to revive you a little, at least."

"Esmareldi, it has been a long, long time since a prayer escaped my lips; bring me the crucifix. Alas! my mother, who now slumbers in death, taught me once to pray; it was at her feet that first I knelt, and invoked the blessing of the Holy

Virgin. Oh, that time comes up in my memory like some long-forgotten dream. Ay! I even forgot my own mother. Oft have I seen the tears steal down her cheek; oft have I heard her softly whisper my name in prayer; but the guide of my youth has gone where I dare not hope to go. Oh, when the mother of our childhood's years has gone, then the brightest star in the horizon of pleasure is indeed dimmed. Oh, Esmareldi, scorn me not when I tell you that it was I who broke my mother's heart. I shed tears but once (till now), and that was over her grave!"

"Be calm, Paragi, and take, I pray you, this wine. Your brow is now feverish with pain; be composed awhile, and then you may, perchance, sleep. The Holy Virgin bless you, Paragi! Once more, good night."

It is only they who have been banished from society, who have been estranged from the affections of all, those who have suffered the remorse of conscience—ay, it is only they who can know the heartfelt gratitude of Paragi, when he reflected upon the kindness and sympathy of Esmareldi, the prison keeper; he for a while forgot the rude manacles which bound his hands, the rude floor which composed his bed. Oh, never rested his head upon so soft a pillow as now; no, not even when he was within his own princely halls. The slightest, the most trivial act would be valued, even though it came from the meanest slave. With what bitterness did he reflect upon the night on which he murdered Spezzio; he thought to escape—en—but, Oh, he had already committed crimes enough, and his career was now ended indeed.

With a prayer (the first one for many years) upon his lips, he fell asleep; but not sweet was that sleep. Oh, no! a kind of dark delirium stole over his wearied senses; he was dreaming, dreaming of the mother who gave him the first kiss of affection—who stood beside him—pressed her hand upon his fevered brow, and washed it in tears. Paragi saw the heavenly light which shone upon her face, and he softly whispered,

"Mother, mother!"

He fancied that she was endeavoring to break the manacles which bound his wrists, unloose the chains which were about his feet. She wept to see them thus lacerated. Once more his hand rested upon her bosom, and she whispered the words which he had not heard since his childhood's years. But that bright vision must vanish as rapidly, ay, more rapidly than the dew from flowers. That fond mother now folded her gossamer robes around her delicate form, spread her wings, and soared away to her spirit home: for, when the goddess of day comes, she chases away the visions of night. Now, half smilingly and half musingly, she gazes upon the prisoner in his lonely cell, and was sad that she must chase his dreams away—the sweet dreams of the criminal.

Paragi awakened; it was but to remember his sad doom. Gladly would he have slumbered on still, for then he would be forgetful of the realities. Life was not life to him. At times he wished for the day of execution to come, for life was but a heavy burden.

He remembered the conversation with Esmareldi, on the evening before, and wished much to see him; he was desirous

of communicating his secret to Figaro, and impatiently awaited the arrival of Otto.

Esmareldi's heart sank within him as he turned the iron key of the cell in which Paragi was confined.

"Oh," thought he, "if this was my condition, what would be my feelings? But I will be kind to Paragi, so long as he shall remain within these walls. Who knows but that some day I may be glad to share one smile, or hear a word of kindness! I know that Paragi has committed a hateful crime; yet the heart is depraved, and we must treat all kindly; 'do as we would be done by.'"

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Paragi had grown impatient waiting for Esmareldi; he felt that he was the only friend he had on earth, and the only one to whom he could look for any sympathy.

But the prison keeper did not forget Paragi, for he prepared with his own hands a repast, and brought it to his cell. Oh, never was a meal enjoyed more, even within the precincts of a palace. Esmareldi seated himself by Paragi, and entered into conversation.

Many days had Paragi been confined in this gloomy spot, without a single person to exchange a word with him; but, fortunately, he enlisted himself into the good will and friendship of Esmareldi.

"My friend, you have not forgotten the request I made of you last night?"

"Forgot! no; at early dawn I despatched the messenger up to the castle, and he informs me that Otto will be here during the morning."

"How is Signor Paragi?"

"Happily, he is much better; time, perhaps, may serve to wear away his grief for the death of Signora, and physicians think that his reason may return, indeed, it does return at times, for a few moments."

"Happily for him, Esmareldi, (as people say), if one wishes to communicate a message of importance to him, there is a song which Otto sings, the one Signora loved so well and taught him."

"It is early yet, Paragi, be not impatient, for Otto will come."

"You will permit me to see him alone?"

"If you desire; any request that I can reasonably grant, I will. I feel a sympathy for all who are condemned to death. I lament that they have committed any crime. Paragi, I once had a much loved brother in this self same cell. I was permitted to see him but seldom. Oh, how my heart bled when I reflected upon it; but I knew there was no alternative—he must be executed. Aye, on this day, one year ago, he was guillotined! he had but one request to make, and that was to see me the morning before he was executed. I came, Paragi; he turned pale, and wept. I was overpowered. Oh, words could not tell what my grief was on that day. Even now I see his form flitting before me now. I hold this cell almost sacred for my brother's sake."

Paragi listened to this tale of woe until tears came to those eyes unused to weeping; his heart had once been tender, but crime had so hardened it, that now it was seldom affected. Now he suffered for it all. A revengeful spirit must have its reward, and crime its remorse.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"You are a welcome visitor, Otto; long have I desired to see you. I have counted the minutes, the seconds, since I heard that the despatch had been sent you to come. I distinctly mark sorrow in your pale face, Otto. Oh! you sadly grieved for the loss of Signora Stella; and well you may, for she was indeed a friend to you; she loved you, Otto, so tenderly as doth a mother love her only child. You cherished that love—you know how to value it. I marked your sad visage when you stood by the bed of death; I felt that you had indeed lost a friend. But, I will not speak of it since it makes you sad, for I would fain chase all gloomy thoughts from your mind. Otto, I have met with one who has a noble, a gentle heart; he is compassionate and kind, or else I would not have been permitted to see you at all—much less alone."

"Who is that kind friend?"

"Esmareldi, the prison-keeper. Oh! Otto, I little hoped to gain a friend within these walls; I felt that I must despair; but some little spirit must have sent him to me! My mother was a pious soul, and it may have been through her that I was permitted to gain a friend."

"This same Esmareldi had a brother in prison, and was executed."

"So I learned from him this morning. I perceive that he is one who has known many sorrows. Misfortunes have brought him to pity another's more. But Esmareldi has naturally a feeling heart. Last night, in the anguish of my soul, I ex-

pressed my feelings, not perceiving that any one heard me. I expressed an earnest desire. In a little while Esmareldi entered this cell, and wished to know the request of my heart. He brought his own pillow for me to rest my head upon; he gave me wine to revive my spirits, and this morning prepared with his own hand my breakfast. Oh! what a goodly friend he is to me. I have seen the time that I would have esteemed that a trifling act; but now I feel a gratitude to heaven for permitting me to have a friend; 'tis true, indeed, that 'blessings brighten as they take their flight.' Otto, I sent for you for a particular purpose. I have a message to communicate to Signor Figaro. You must be the one by whom it is sent. But tell me, how seems he now?"

"His reason returns at times; does not remain very long. Physicians still have a hope of him; I have a greater influence over him than any one else; and when I sing that sweet song which Signora taught me, his reason seems to come to me for a while; but, when he reflects upon the death of Signora, it goes again. He seems more rational now than ever; for the last four days he is less violent in grief, and I think that time will subdue it. Alas! he is the only friend poor Otto has now; he loves me for her sake."

"Does he know that I have sent for you?"

"He does; he entreated me to comfort you if I could; he deems you his last friend; I have seen him shed tears for your sake. He remembers well the many days of his boyhood, when you both sported together; but that time has passed, and heavy, sad changes have come."

"Speak not of them, Otto, for it makes me sad."

"Paragi, I would not willingly leave you yet, but it is important I should be at the castle; no doubt Signor Figaro is waiting for me; what shall I tell him?"

"Otto, I have much to communicate to him. Tell him that I much desire to see him. I have a secret to reveal, and he must know it ere I die. Tell him to come as soon as convenient; I fain would see him to-morrow. Oh! Otto, but one more week is left me to drag out this gloomy life—but one more week to bear these heavy chains, and hear them grate upon the floor at my every movement! This was the most auspicious time for Figaro to come."

"It is, Paragi, for he seems more natural now."

"Well, bid him come to me by all means; I care not how soon, for the sooner the better. Tell him I shall be permitted to hold converse with him alone. Esmareldi has given me permission."

"I will give him the message, and he shall come ere the sun shall set. Trust Otto, for he will execute your command faithfully, and ere many sands shall run from the glass of time, you will behold Signor Figaro."

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"Just heaven! can it be that Figaro has sympathy for me? I, who have more than wronged him—who have made him suffer almost the pangs of death? Oh, what a wretch am I! Would he not pour his most bitter curses upon me did he know what I am about to divulge? But I deserve them—aye! the worst maledictions which could escape his lips I deserve. And he has shed tears over my doom; he grieves to know that I am within these prison walls. Never mind—he

shall know all. He shall know that I have been the bane of all his happiness—the frustrater of his designs. Oh, how great is the remorse! it is worse than death.

"So great are the pangs of conscience that each second seems an hour, a year. Even the very daylight is shut from my view; now and then a wanton ray perchance will peer through, but soon is gone away; for it scorns to shed its brightness upon such a criminal. Oh! how oft have I wished to leap from these iron bars upon this craggy rock, and end my life. Would I had died when but a child within my mother's arms, and then her own gentle hand would have closed my eyes, and she would have imprinted a kiss upon my brow ere they laid me in the grave; her tears would have fallen silently upon the grassy turf, and her own hand planted flowers. But now, crowds of idle gazers will come to witness my death; not one tear will be shed—none will pity me, for all know full well that I deserve it. Some will mark me—some will laugh me to scorn. Oh, 'tis too much for human man to bear! But I should have reflected upon all this when I was contemplating the death of Spezzio. Oh! that the sword had pierced my heart at the time. Alas!

"Sin pours from my soul like dew from earth,
And, vamping up before the face of God,
Congregate there in clouds between heaven and me."

CHAPTER XIX.

"HARK! what tones are those? what angel voices are whispering around me? Methinks I hear again the sweet tones of Stella softly chanting, '*vivi tre, te ne scongiaro*'—and is Stella here? Where am I?"

"Signor Figaro, 'tis Otto who now plays and sings for you that song; glad am I to see reason return again, for I have something of much importance to communicate—a message from Paragi."

"And how seems he since his imprisonment? It has all been like a dream to me; I had forgotten even that he was in prison—a dark cloud of some kind has been over me—have I been asleep?"

"Signor, grief at times destroys your reason, the cloud is but a delirium; Oh, will you not for the sake of Otto, forget your sorrows, and be yourself again?"

"I will, Otto; but you know how sensitive is my heart, and it were harrowing indeed to have the most loved idol torn from us. But what is the message you have for me?"

"Signor Paragi bade me say he fain would see you ere the day of his execution arrived."

"And is he, then, to be executed?"

"Even so, Signor; I believe but one brief week will pass ere he must die. He begs to see you immediately."

"I will go, then, by all means, and that very quickly."

"The gondola is in readiness now."

"What can be his reason for seeing me? Perhaps nothing

more than a friendly feeling he has for me; he no doubt pities my misfortune much; I will repay his kind feeling, then, by going to see him, and receive him with the cordiality my heart prompts. He was very unfortunate indeed, to get in any skirmish with Spezzio. So much for wine and the gaming-table. Here we are, Otto; see the walls of the prison; what a horror creeps o'er me when I reflect that a fellow-man, my friend, is confined there!"

The first person they met on entering the prison was Esmaraldi, who bade them walk in to the cell of Paragi.

But why does Figaro start? He can scarcely believe that he beholds the form of Paragi; how haggard he has grown, how pale his cheeks, and his eyes have sunken to a fearful degree.

"Oh, Paragi! is this indeed you, my friend, whom I now behold before me?—you, who was once so proud and manly?"

"Call me no longer your friend, Figaro, for I have been your most bitter enemy. I deserve none but the most horrible death. Come, seat yourself for a while, and I will tell you all; I desire that you will see me executed! Do not shed a tear for me then; but I know that you will not, when you know how much I have wronged you."

"Wronged me! no, it cannot be—you have not wronged me."

"Yes, it is true! and most shamefully, too."

"And how?"

"Listen, and I will tell you. Well do you remember, Figaro, that Signora died a very mysterious death. Start not, when I tell you that I poisoned her! yes! I did it all. Remember you not the diamond ring I took from her finger on the night of the ball?"

"Yes, I remember well!"

"That was the means by which I effected her death; by some secret process I had poison instilled in it, and that caused her death. Hear me out, Figaro; I falsely swore, and got others to swear, that Rosina, who was so devoted to Signora, administered the said venom in the wine which she gave her mornings. Heaven knows I put it there myself! and made an innocent one suffer for a crime committed by myself."

"Oh! greatly you shock me, Paragi; I never knew you had such a wicked heart. But let me not pain you, for you will suffer enough. I feel as though I could revenge it; aye, could exult to see you put to death, but I forgive you."

"Thank Heaven! You forgive me, then?"

"Alas! Paragi, I feel that it is all I can do, for you are almost at the very gates of an awful eternity, and I could not refuse your request. But tell me why you thus inflicted so much misery upon me? Me, who, but for you, might now have been enjoying the society of my beloved Stella? Oh, tell me, why did you inflict me so severely?"

"For revenge."

"What injury have I ever done you?"

"Figaro, I loved Signora. I endeavored to win her heart by shamefully abusing you; but I found that she loved none but you, and determined that, if I could not obtain her, you should not long possess her."

"Oh, Paragi, I tremble for you—you have committed such a wrong."

"Oh, Figaro, would to God I had never sinned; but it is too late. One week more, and I am to be executed; stand by,

Figaro, and see the man who has injured you blotted out from existence, drop not a tear for me, no, not one."

"I pity you, Paragi, yet something tells me you merit none."

"No, do not pity me—I am not worthy of it."

"Give me your hand, Paragi, for it is the last time I shall see you. I forgive you, and pray that heaven may pardon the offence; I will not see you executed, for I like not to see one suffer the pangs of death."

"Figaro, look not so kindly upon me, rather frown, for I feel that it would be more deserved."

"Paragi, once more, adieu."

Reader, we must bring our story to a close; it is not necessary to enter into the details of the execution of Paragi, but we will add that he was guillotined in the presence of thousands. Not a tear was shed save by one; and that was his mother in heaven. Oh! mournful was the tolling of that bell which fell upon the ears of Figaro, the one whom he had so greatly injured.

The vengeance of the people was upon Paragi, and they all exclaimed with one voice, that he had met a just reward; and they could stand, could coolly stand and see him die, for no death was too severe for Paragi, the Avenger.

Not Alone, When Alone.

ALONE! say not I am alone! Do you not see that little sunbeam dancing so gracefully? It peeps ever and anon over my shoulder, and now shrinks back as if blushing to see itself the subject of eulogism. Welcome, sunbeam! for thou hast come from a world far brighter than this; 'tis thou who gildest the angel's crown, and throwest a halo of light where'er thou dwellest. The ocean welcomes thee, and ceases for a while its heaving; for to its bosom a sacred guest is clasped. The sea-nymphs woo thy gaze; the untold wealth of the sea thou beholdest, while man cannot give one glance at the many mysteries and beauties concealed beneath its profound depths. Thou hast come to bring good tidings to the weary, and thou whisperest, "There is rest in Heaven." And thou hast visited the lonely cell, too, where the poor criminal is incarcerated in chains; thou art kind, indeed, to think of him; to wander from so bright a home to cheer the unfortunate.

Alone—no, no! A bouquet of early spring-flowers greets my sight; how I love to read their language; how I love to inhale their rich perfume; myriads of smiles rest upon the

brow of each tender flower, and from all I learn a lesson. What would earth be without flowers? What joys would crown spring, if none of those pledges of "Our Father" came? Ever let me enjoy the presence of flowers, for no companions are purer; none more calculated to point us heavenward.

Alone, no! Hear you not the song of the pet canary-bird? How he exults in the departure of winter, and the triumph over the "Ice-king." His music is so sweet and clear; how it fills me with lofty emotions, when I listen to the carol of the untaught songster; all are brought to reflect that God gave birds a voice in order to create a friendship with man. Should we not love, then, to listen to their eloquent music? Sing on, sweet bird, for I could not be alone when thou art near.

Alone! Impossible! with that huge pile of books, also so inviting, so interesting. What rich gems of thought does "Festus" contain. How Byron, Moore and Campbell cause the chords of the heart to vibrate. Then come a number of books of the current literature of the day, from which we may make a choice. What charming companions are agreeable books; one could never be alone while they can be obtained.

Alone! Behold the beautiful Beatrice de Cenci, copied by a first-class artist from the original at Rome. What a lovely face, and how much more beautiful it must have been ere crime stamped its seal there. How the mind will dwell upon the account given us of her in the pages of history, and how sad we feel when we reflect that even her rare beauty was not a shield from crime.

There is a beautiful landscape; how charming the scene; it represents Thomson's Summer. What pleasing emotions fine

paintings awaken in the mind. A room without paintings always looks unfinished; it never seems properly furnished or tastily arranged; gorgeous furniture, rich curtains and carpets have no effect, if paintings are not included.

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One is indeed "never less alone, than when alone." There are times when solitude (if it may be so called) is necessary; the mind must have moments for reflection. The sunbeams, the flowers, the birds, are all suggestive of beautiful and refined ideas, and one who finds it a pleasure to have such companions, to enjoy the refined and exquisite pleasures emanating from such a source, is indeed blest, for he can ever have society, though he may be what the world calls "alone."

Julia's Choice.

THERE was quite a new cra in the fashionable world. The beautiful Julia Raymond, who received the first premium, and read the valedictory address at the celebrated seminary of Madam L. (which, by the by, was a great honor conferred), had returned home; her summer vacation was spent at Saratoga and Newport, where she was the cynosure of all eyes, particularly fortune-hunters, who frequent such places for the purpose of making a brilliant match. What a sensation the arrival of Julia created; but who wondered that so beautiful and accomplished an heiress should excite so much talk, especially among the class of famous gossips who are ever on the *qui vive* for something new and wonderful—which, like a great epidemic, naturally seizes upon the new-comers; if their conversation is not at all edifying, it is so interesting for tea table-chat, for too many happen in at that hour, enticed, no doubt, by the thought of the nice supper they will get in return for their budget of scandal.

That Julia was lovely none could deny; her beauty might be compared to the soft mellow of a summer sunset. Though she courted no admiration, all worshipped at her shrine; for intel-

lect, when combined with a charming physique, ever has its scores of admirers.

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The gay season had commenced. The invitations to Julia's grand party of the season were issued. What a tremendous excitement there was; the event would, no doubt, be a grand one, for Julia was to make her *debut* on the eventful night.

Such an ado! Some who were honored with invitations had kept up appearances so long that their purse was considerably lightened; that "horrid dress" had been turned and made new so often that it is now fit only for the scrap-bag. What was the alternative? Why, buy another, and let some merchant suffer for it—a year sacrifice must be made for that party.

Such a fluttering of hearts was never known before. No doubt a very brilliant match would be made on that auspicious evening (and if so, we sincerely trust they will not be lucifer); and this idea was not to be scorned at, for some had waited for an offer "till patience ceased to be a virtue;" they grasped, as it were, firmly the last thread of hope; when that was sundered, then they must give up in despair. Last, though not least, the celebrated Grant Leslie was to be there—the gentleman of wealth and elegant leisure was to be present. The heads of nearly all the romantic young ladies were turned, and some did nothing the live-long day, but address impromptu lines, and send them anonymously; but all this was of no avail—he was so accustomed to this sort of thing, that he had grown indifferent, as most people do, to compliments when frequently received. Many, no doubt, had the vanity to suppose that they

would stand some little chance of making an impression, even if the beautiful belle, Julia, would be a formidable rival.

Strange to say, this charming girl had no desire whatever to emulate or excite envy among her own sex. No, for hers was a much higher and nobler aim.

Neither did she wish to follow in the footsteps of the brainless, giddy girls who had no thought beyond the ball-room or moustache. No, Julia was a sensible woman; had stored her mind with that which would fit her for any sphere in life. The mere idle, mince-meat, highly embellished scandal of the day had for her no interest. Though courted and caressed by thousands, she knew precisely what value to place upon it. But we have digressed.

The much talked-of party took place: what a crowd there was assembled. Some talked scandal, some flirted, some danced, while a few enjoyed themselves innocently—that is to say, did not dissect their neighbors' characters. Oh, how Miss Envy directed her shafts to every part of the room. One young blooming girl, with a neck Venus even might envy, very much shocked a tall, angular miss of a very uncertain age, who thought no one ought to be seen with a low-neck dress; of course plump shoulders were never meant to be seen—we mean by the envious. Even the lovely hostess, Julia, was not exempt from remarks of no very flattering nature.

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The announcement of Grant Leslie, the highly accomplished, double-refined gentleman, caused all to look with astonishment. His arrival had been anxiously expected, consequently many hearts were at rest when he entered. Grant was quite a lion

among the ladies; he danced well, dressed in the latest style, and supported a magnificent moustache, over which many went into ecstasies. A person of much discernment could at once see his inordinate vanity; but this was excusable in him. He was Julia's most devoted when she would permit. What killing, unutterable glances were directed toward him from bright eyes; but all was lost on him, for he saw no eyes save Julia's. He remarked to her, while in conversation, that there was "more peril in her eyes than twenty swords." Many heard this remark, and it went like a barbed arrow to their heart. It was no exertion on the part of Julia Raymond that caused Grant Leslie to pay her such attention, for she made it a point to introduce several very beautiful girls, and among the number quite a famous belle, and insisted at the same time that he should divide his attentions among them. But this was of no avail, for he lingered ever by the side of her whom he so much admired.

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"Will you sing, Miss Raymond?"

The person who addressed the question was a gentleman of fine, manly bearing. His noble face spoke for itself, his broad, expansive brow was not to be mistaken. The few silver hairs that mingled with his rich ebon locks, made him the more interesting. There was something about him irresistible—his dignified manner, his full, round voice, and open, generous face. The person to whom we allude is James Montgomery, a chancellor, who stood very high in the opinion of all, as a man of great integrity of character. Seven years since he buried a lovely and amiable woman, to whom he had faithfully devoted

himself. The party of Julia Raymond's was the very first he had attended for seven long years. His appearance on this evening surprised many, because they knew he had excluded himself from society for so long a time, rejecting heretofore all invitations tendered him. He had stood aloof from Julia all the evening of which we speak, for so many had paid her homage: he waited until a fair opportunity offered itself for addressing her.

"Will you sing, Miss Raymond?" asked the chancellor.

Julia smiled very sweetly, and wished to know if he had any choice. Of course any thing would suit him—all he wanted to hear was her—that of itself was music to him. He accompanied her to the harp, beside which she sat, and sang some exquisite airs from the favorite operas. Though all, a few moments before, was bustle and confusion, now a deep silence reigned; for music is a voice to which all love to listen—it elevates and refines the soul. Grant Leslie, for the first time in his life, felt a pang of jealousy steal over him, when he saw James Montgomery seated beside the peerless Julia; not that he had any visible reason to be thus, but a something he could not describe came over him, and he wiped his brow with a trembling hand.

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The hours waned, daylight came unawares; for when a gay and merry crowd are assembled, they take "no note of time." The party dispersed, and soon the spacious drawing and reception-rooms were deserted. Grant Leslie was the only one who lingered for a moment. Julia answered not the gentle pressure of his hand, nor his looks of love. From that

moment he was truly a miserable man. Julia, he well knew, was firm and immovable.

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One month has passed since the party at Julia Raymond's; during that time party calls were made, and several soirees had been given through compliment to herself. Chancellor Montgomery had been her escort on one or two occasions; he had visited her at home during the interim. Julia ever met him cordially, yet he could not make up his mind whether or not he was the favorite, for it was a very difficult matter to judge, since Julia was so generously disposed toward every one, and had too much delicacy of feeling to show any preference, however much she might feel. But the chancellor had fully determined to investigate the matter in the most delicate way imaginable. Julia, like the sex generally, had some degree of vanity, and wished to try the chancellor a little, before she was too positive about the matter. Julia truly felt more than an ordinary interest in James Montgomery, but had the good sense to keep it to herself. She did not, fortunately, fall upon the very worst of plans, viz: trust her secret to a woman's keeping. She knew how treacherous the sex is. Certainly, the chancellor was a man who commanded great respect at all times. He was many years her senior, but that was a matter of little moment. Perhaps a person having such a tinge of romance as that of Julia, would have very naturally preferred Grant Leslie, who was all a polished man of the world could be. He had certainly plead his case most eloquently; sometimes she was almost tempted to accept, but her better judgment taught her how to act upon this all-important occasion.

She looked upon James Montgomery as a man who would be her counsellor and adviser—who was capable of teaching her how to act in all things. Grant Leslie, on the other hand, was one whom any would envy; who had won the admiration of all the giddy girls. Yet, thought Julia, he might perhaps tire, for such a pet among the ladies will never make a good husband. She gave the matter considerable thought, and finally came to the conclusion to dismiss Grant Leslie. She knew full well that she was pursuing a wise course, for matrimony is a life-time affair. The chancellor lost no time in pressing his suit, for he almost worshipped Julia Raymond. He spoke of the difference of ages; he said that she was a mere child to himself, but he loved her as he had never loved since the death of his wife. How eloquent were his words, his look—what a dignified, manly bearing. Is it any wonder that she loved him? She consented to become the wife of chancellor Montgomery.

It is needless to say what was the language of the gossiping world. Chancellor Montgomery and the beautiful heiress, Julia Raymond, to be married! "Why, he is old enough to be her grandfather. This is her first winter in society: she might have made such a brilliant match. Grant Leslie will surely become insane, for he was one of her greatest admirers. What a pity! Who would have thought that so romantic a person would have made such a choice?"

Julia and the chancellor were married. She gave no heed to what the world said. What if she had been led to the altar by an old man? What if she did look like a child-wife? It was her choice.

Did she regret it? You would not have thought she did had you taken a peep now and then into her palatial mansion, and seen her happy, smiling face when she was seated beside the chancellor. What a lucky miss she made not to marry Leslie, for he caught the gold-fever, and left a young and beautiful girl, to whom he had been married but a few months, and returned no more.

Julia truly loved wisely—she made a happy choice. One never to be regretted.

Twilight Thoughts.

ONE less to meet me? Whose heart have I touched; to whom do these words come home? Who has felt too deeply the import of them!

One less to meet me? Yes; return to that sacred spot, Home, where is centered all your affection and find a—blank. You feel that one smile less beams upon you; there is one voice less to welcome you. Go into the room in which you have passed many hours with the near and cherished one in health; and when disease fastened itself upon that form reducing it almost to a mere shadow, you lingered beside the couch, and feared to feel the pulse lest it might throb faintly. Look around at the familiar objects, some favorite book, perhaps, with pages turned down. The Bible is in its accustomed place, you open, and find the passage "The Lord is my Shepherd," distinctly marked while the form of the departed one seems to flit before you.

There is the invalid chair—alas, 'tis vacant; the very walls seem sacred; the smallest object upon which those eyes rested is dear to you. The ticking of the old time piece is heard, the same one which so oft was gazed upon by the invalid, who little dreamed that the sands of life had nearly run out.

Mark the vacancy at the table, ah! we look in vain for the one who once sat there. Let us walk into the garden; note the trees wreathed in delicate blossoms; how he loved to watch them in spring time. E'en now the glorious season is in our midst; but he will behold earthly flowers no longer. The green grass is growing upon the grave; perchance some gentle spirit will plant the little wild flowers. But ah! all this but makes us the more sad.

One less to meet me, one less to love me; every bird of spring seems to whisper—aye! the very waves told me so, as o'er their bosom I was borne.

Ye who have never lost a near and dear one, feel not the true import of the words, "One less to meet me—one less to love me."

A Leaf from a Bachelor's Journal.

CAUGHT at last! I thought so: I mean to say I did not think any lady could possibly take me by storm; but it is just what has been prophesied by everybody; for Clara Fleetwood, I am told, fascinates every one. I flattered myself that I could withstand her, but I pretty soon found out that I could not. Just imagine an old bachelor at forty falling in love! Why, I would not take anything for the new sensation: a thought has just occurred to me—I do believe she fancies me. I can tell something about sweet glances, if I am an old bachelor. I do not intend to remain so any longer. No, I'll just go at once and propose, for, "procrastination is the thief of time."

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Accepted! I thought so; it is the very first time I made up my mind to propose to a lady. Only think, I succeeded the very first time—"better late than never." The right one has at last come along; I consoled myself with this idea for a long, long time—often I was tempted to give up in despair, but a sweet voice would whisper, "Hope on, hope ever." Accepted! I must be dreaming. What! Miss Clara Fleetwood accept me

from her host of admirers? I must be a good-looking man—never thought of that before. Well, “we live to learn.” Oh dear me! I am as crazy as a cat in a strange garret.

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I leave these halls to-day, where so long I've staid alone, with no one to cheer or console me in my solitude. No more will I have occasion to break the ice in my pitcher when winter comes along. How dingy the window looks—wonder I never thought of that before. How did I ever content myself to stay in this deserted place so long? Just look at that old smoking-cap, that old dressing-gown, those old slippers. Never mind, they will be replaced by new ones before long. Seven o'clock! Quite a long time before that hour arrives, but one must learn patience. I will have to learn it, and now is as good a time as ever. Patience is a heavenly virtue.

What a glorious day! Ominous. Have heard old people say it is a good sign for the day of the wedding to be bright—clouds foretell sorrow.

Married and at housekeeping! Quite a new era in my life. A pretty, amiable little wife (I have no fancy for tall people) who is all smiles. Why, it is a treat for me to go home; how glad I am when the hour arrives for me to wend my steps homeward. Dear Clara! as Bulwer has so beautifully said, “Thine eyes would call up smiles in deserts.” What could have induced me to remain a bachelor for so long a time? Why, in my opinion, a man is no man at all, nor does he hold a dignified position, until he is married. What a charming home—a perfect Paradise! I am really afraid I will violate the first commandment.

Thunder clouds and pepper-grass! Summer has come. The season has arrived when every body goes to the springs; those who can afford it and those who cannot. Clara says she *must* go to Saratoga. Let me see: *must*; that is a word that I do not fully understand. There is another, too, “I will.” What a queer being a woman is, when she determines to have her own way. Clara says she *must* and *will* go to Newport or Saratoga. Dear me! what an array of rustling silks and jewels come up in my mind. It is no use for me to say that I cannot afford it, for Clara knows very well that I am rich. Oh, dear! this going to the Springs is perfectly terrible to think of, particularly with a pretty young wife. I know very well that people say, “I do wonder what that young girl married that old foggy for, when she could have made a better choice.” But don't I wish she was homely? Oh, pshaw; Clara knows she is pretty, for every body has told her so. I believe I will set to work and break all the looking-glasses in the house. True, then I would have to go to the expense of getting new ones; for woman could dispense with any thing sooner than her mirror. I will go; yes, I'll have to do it, for Clara has laid the case down. Dear me! how the girls do make us bend to them. Why, if here isn't Clara peeping over my shoulder—but very fortunately for me she saw only the last line. Now isn't that something? She has seen the words, “I will go,” and throwing her dimple arms around my neck, with her face lighted with smiles, says, “I tell you, I cannot stand that.” Yes, Clara, we will go to the Springs. A woman can lead us by her little finger, when she pleases, take my word for it.

Robert Hayden.

"A friend in need is a friend indeed."

"WALTER, you had just as well sign this note; I am sure that I would grant you so simple a request if you were to come to me under the circumstances. We have been intimate from our boyhood up, and now you hesitate to do an act which will probably save me from a lasting disgrace. Come, just do it for friendship's sake, if nothing else; why, you are pondering upon it as if it were the most serious matter in the world. You need not be afraid to trust me, for, I will venture to say that I can pay it back to you again very soon. Any thing in the world that I could do for you, I would gladly. Do, Walter, consent to endorse this note; you cannot tell what a burden it will take from my mind. I do not wish my wife to find out about this affair; and I am confident she will, if I am not very expeditious about paying the amount."

"Robert, I am willing to do any thing in the world to oblige you, and to prove the friendship which I possess and profess for you; but, consider what an amount—*twelve thousand dollars*. I do not mind endorsing the note, but I absolutely declared that I would never sign another, since I lost that sum when Messrs. Farland, Green & Co. failed. I do assure you twelve

thousand dollars are not so easily gained; it can very easily be spent, but when gone, it is gone sure enough. I have a large family, Robert; you know that I am in duty bound to give my children a good education, and if I do not use economy, I of course cannot. Beside, I must say (although I do not wish to hurt your feelings) that the races is rather the wrong place for a man of business, particularly if he cannot go without betting. I might go a thousand times and not make one wager, for I should be sure that I would lose."

"But I felt certain, Walter, that 'Jenny Lind' would gain the day, who, any one to have seen her, when she was brought to the stand, would have been certain she was going to beat—she looked so spirited and full of life. Before the two got within a quarter of a mile of being around the track, Roman looked as though he was going to give out; Jenny galloped away, and I immediately made a wager. After making it, I of course was in duty bound to pay it, since I was the loser."

"Why did you bet again after you lost?"

"I was so excited, Walter, that I scarcely knew what I did. It seems, I was determined to win at all risks. I lost and lost until I found that my wagers amounted to twelve thousand dollars."

"Candidly, do you not think that was a great weakness on your part? Why, if I could not go to the races without losing so much, I think I would stay at home. Really, your pleasure has cost you a very dear sum."

"Oh, well, do not talk any more about it; just sign the note, if you intend doing so. I will pay you at the time specified."

"Not if you go to the races so much; it was only a month

ago that you lost five hundred on a watch; you could as well have let that alone."

"Oh, that was a small amount—a mere trifle."

"Well, small as it is, you lost it; and, if you don't mind, you will get rid of all you own in a very little while. I tell you, Robert, this betting business will do you a very serious injury—now take my word for it. I scarcely know what to do about signing this note, for I do not believe it will make you any more careful in the end."

"You certainly do not think, Walter, that I would be so ignoble as not to make any returns of what I borrowed. Do you think I would allow you to be the loser of the amount, particularly when you were such a friend?"

"No, Robert, I do not believe that you would willingly; but then I know your propensity for betting, and it will lead you to do much to injure yourself and family—why you should be more rational—just think, the idea of bringing a lady to poverty, when you took her from a home of opulence. Why, what can you be thinking of? You know very well that all her property is in your hands, and you should take good care of it, since you are her protector. I will sign this note, but faithfully promise you, that I will never indorse another; so if you get into any more trouble about betting, you will have to get out the best way you can."

The heart of Robert Hayden was much relieved of its burden when his friend indorsed the note. He had one of the best dispositions in the world, but, then, he was so addicted to betting; ten times out of twelve he was the loser; and when he did chance to win, he would continue betting until he lost enormous

sums. His friend Walter, the one whom he desired to sign the note, had for some time noticed the course he was pursuing, and often remonstrated with him. Sometimes, he would faithfully promise never to make another wager, but the very first opportunity which offered itself, he was at it again. He had married quite an heiress, but was fast spending her property, so that now he was compelled to borrow money of whoever was kind enough to loan him. His wife, a gentle, unsuspecting creature, could not, for some time, inquire what he did with the enormous sums he squandered, and when she did find out, it pained her sensitive heart. Much did she speak to him on the subject, but it was of no avail; not that he turned a deaf ear to what she said, but his companions led him off, and then would take the advantage.

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"Robert Hayden has failed, Walter; they say he owes a large amount. I feel truly sorry for his wife; she has always been used to every thing in the world, and the best of it, too. What will she do now? How will she ever bear the reverse of fortune? I pity her so much."

"I suspected that something of the kind would happen soon; I knew the way that Robert was going on, that he lost twelve thousand dollars by the races; prior to that he lost five hundred dollars on a watch. I never saw his match for betting; I have told him about it so many times, too, but I could not make him see the folly of it at all."

"What do you think was the cause of his failure?"

"Wagering was at the bottom of it all; instead of attending to his business, he would go off to all the races and every other

place where there was any betting to be done; the funds he should have kept to liquidate his debts were spent in that frivolous way."

About a month after the failure, Robert met his friend Walter; what his feelings were, we will leave the sympathizing reader to imagine.

"I told you, Robert, that the manner in which you were going on would bring poverty at your door. You see my words have come true; I am sorry for your misfortunes, and hope it will teach you a good lesson—not to gamble any more."

This sad misfortune was indeed the best instructor that Robert Hayden ever had; he learned that "blessings brighten as they take their flight." He learned the true value of money, and every time he looked upon the wife whom he had reduced in circumstances, his heart sank within him. He determined to give up wagering forever; and if he ever should be in the possession of means again, he would take good care of them.

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"I will make a bargain with you, Robert, but, if you enter into the contract, you must promise to keep it faithfully: I see that your misfortune has brought you a good lesson. But, what I was going to say is, if you will make a solemn promise never to bet any more, I will be your best friend. I will do all I can toward getting you into business again, and, in a very little while, if you are careful, you will have the means to restore to your kind and amiable wife a desirable home."

"Thank you, thank you, Walter, 'a friend in need is a friend indeed.' Yes, I will promise; I have promised, however, never

again to make another wager, though I were in possession of a mint of money."

"I am glad to hear you have made such a resolution; I have good news to tell you; do you remember that you lost twelve thousand dollars by the races some time ago?"

"Yes, perfectly well, and you indorsed for me and then was the loser."

"Never mind about that, hear me what I am about to say: After your failure, I went to those who won the money from you, and laid the case before them; after much deliberation, I persuaded them to give it up. Here it is, Robert; now see that you take good care of it, my friend. I will loan you any amount that you need, if you will forever give up betting. If you are very careful, in a very little while you can place your wife in a comfortable and happy home."

Reader, imagine the feelings of gratitude which sprang up within the bosom of Robert Hayden. Gladly did he carry the joyful tidings to his wife, who had the happiness of again seeing him an altered man. His seat was vacated at the races, and every other place where betting was apt to be going on. Walter had indeed found a friend, the best of friends—"a friend in need." He had restored to Robert his lost home, and was the means of bringing joy to the household over which gloom had presided. Like some kind ministering angel came he, to brighten and to cheer.

In a beautiful mansion, in a very desirable street, in the city of ———, lives Robert Hayden and his lovely wife; he is the happiest of men, and will ever feel under a lasting obligation to Walter, who was a friend in need.

The Secret Serpent.

A LOVELY child lay sleeping, the moonbeams kissed its forehead, and in every ray of light an angel sported. No wonder they should leave their Eden home to linger a while on earth to gaze upon aught so lovely. Pure as the snow wreath which mantles the Alpine hills, or the lily with its brow bedecked with pearls was this infant—sin had ne'er touched it. Its little heart was far from guile as was the seraph's which looked down upon its beauty. Nor was the angels alone gazing, no, no, a fond mother watched it, and as the moonbeams played around its cheek, she thought of the innocency which dwelt within the heart of her cherished infant.

I saw a youth seated by a cooling stream; his face was reflected in the limpid waters, but it bore not the light and joyousness of other days. He seemed weary and sad, for now he was fast verging to manhood and met with disappointments. The seraphs which played around him while a sleeping infant had departed save one; that was the "guardian angel." But even that seemed to frown upon him, and as the youth beheld it looking thus sad, he sighed. By accident the youth placed his

hand upon a rock and it sent forth a sound; from 'neath it suddenly sprang a little Nereid. She waved her opiate wand, then spread a gossamer net over him. The youth lay slumbering on a grassy couch, but oh! he was in a dangerous place, for from 'mid the tall grass a serpent crept, and while he was sleeping so sweetly it coiled around his heart. The hidden serpent, as if by magic, had bound him to that spot, and now, its deadly coils had well nigh entwined themselves within the bosom of the youth. The venom had so poisoned the air around, that it almost suffocated the sleeper; in his struggles he awakened and looked wildly around. The secret serpent was in his heart.

I saw a youth in the halls of revelry; bright lights were gleaming and the wine cup flashed, and shed a most tempting influence on all present. The din of music was heard, and a thousand voices broke the stillness of the night. Ah! the hidden serpent had entwined itself 'round the heart of the youth, and so fascinated him as to lure him away; now he participates in that mirth, and grasps the wine cup. He is no longer innocent, for he sought not to extricate himself from the coils of the serpent, which had crept upon him unawares.

A mother was sitting by the few remaining coals which glimmered upon the hearth, but she felt not the winds, nor heard them as they mournfully howled. She looked toward the spot where once slumbered so sweetly her only child. No longer now does that convoy of winged spirits hover there; no, at the sight of the deadly serpent they glided away, for it was not meet for them to linger in that poisoned atmosphere. They saw

the serpent as it crept by the youth and entered his heart, and now plumed their snowy wings and sped away.

Hark! footsteps are heard; the mother knoweth well that sound and goes to meet her son. Oh! sad scene, see how he reels about the room and madly raves. To Bacchus he has consecrated himself, and now, within the power of the secret serpent, he is bound by its deadly poison alone, and no longer listens to the voice of conscience, or the entreaties of a doating mother. The serpent which was ever fast at work within his heart, led him on and on, tempting him to mingle in the scenes of revelry, and thus he drags out his weary existence, a burden to himself, and an object of distress to a fond mother, who once looked upon him while he sweetly slumbered in the cradle of infancy, and thought surely that he would bring joy to her tender heart. But ah! the secret serpent lurked within, and listening only to its deceiving words, he at last fell a victim to its deadly poison.

Life's Similes.

'Twas sunset; a beautiful cloud floated in the vault of heaven. It seemed to blush, as I gazed upon it, and shed a roseate light upon all around. Brighter and brighter it grew. Oh! what rapturous delight, to behold aught so lovely. A little warbler was soaring and caroling away toward heaven. I stood, and looked upon the cloud, till methought it was conscious of my joy; but soon its beauty vanished; the spirit of change touched it with her tiny wand, and I said within my heart, "It hath faded!"

I loved a flower. Day after day, I watched it unfolding its petals, and inhaled its fragrance. I cherished it fondly; and it almost seemed to acknowledge my presence. The angel sunbeams hovered around it; the dews of affection watched it; I thought it too sweet to die. One morning, I sought my flower; and lo! its petals were drooping; I approached it, yet it heeded me not; I imprinted a kiss upon it, but, alas! its brow was lifeless! Sadly my soul exclaimed, "It hath faded!"

A song bird cheered me in my lonely hours. I decked its cage, each day, with early roses; and, at the dawn of morning, it would chant its gratitude in tender melody. I loved the glad

bird; for, though torn from its forest home, it would not make my heart sad with repinings. One morn, the sun rose brightly; the flowers were fair; yet in my heart there was a foreboding of sorrow. I listened, but heard no song; I twined a wreath to deck the cage of my bird, and, ere I had finished, it was withered. My spirit sank within me; I sought the companion of my lonely hours, and it was cold in death. Life and song had fled together, and another joy had faded.

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A little star gleamed gloriously upon me; it had watched over me from infancy. At times, it had grown dim, and, since I had lost so much that I loved, I feared I might lose it too. But, suddenly, it would brighten up again; it would keep vigil during my hours of slumber, and send bright visions from its blissful sphere. It was the star of Hope. Often would it speak to me, in articulate music, promising to watch over me, and imploring me to despair not. Stronger and stronger grew its rays, in life's darkest and most gloomy moments; and the inner and oracular voice whispered to me, "It will not fade!"

A sunbeam reposed upon a flower; it clothed the delicate form in a robe of burnished gold. The flower was the Past; memory, like a silent worshipper, knelt before it; and the sunbeam was Love. Though many frosts had nipped the flower, still, in the light and warmth of that sun-beam, it was happy.

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Yes; the pleasant scenes of the past will live in the orisons of memory. The flowers of the Past, illumed by the star-ray of Hope, and the sun-beam of Love, will fade not! The flowers of love, hope and memory, 'tis they which "fade not."

The "Coquette."*

OUR admiration of this exquisite piece of statuary becomes enthusiasm. One, to watch the smile sleeping upon the lips, feels almost as if it were chiseled by a supernatural hand. The expression so exquisite, so much in keeping with the subject, leads one at once to acknowledge it the work of a rare genius. The limbs so perfectly, so elegantly proportioned (not exaggerated in point of beauty, a fault many eminent sculptors have fallen into), the undulation caused by the slight movement of the muscles, are true to life. The position is easy, natural, and graceful, that it is no wonder "she seizes hearts without consent."

While gazing upon the beautiful Coquette, we were forcibly reminded of an extract from Ossian: "Fairer than the ghost of the hills when it moves in a sunbeam at noon over the silence of the morn."

The more we see the Coquette the more our desire increases to see it; each moment do we discover a new beauty, which

* A beautiful piece of statuary, executed by a Virginian genius, W. Randolph Barbee.

flashes before the sight like a bright star suddenly rising before us.

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Nothing seems to have been forgotten in preparing the Coquette; the rose lies at her feet, and she seems to be in the very act of trampling upon the thorns, which she has not discovered. The dimple, which, by-the-by, adds to beauty, is perfectly and distinctly marked.

The Coquette, we are informed by Doctor Barbee, is the first effort of his brother's chisel, and we are proud to say he is a Virginian. What then may not the future promise, since his first attempt is so worthy of one older in the heaven-born art of sculpture? His star is decidedly in the ascendant, and we may safely predict for him laurels upon laurels.

Only a short time ago we lamented the death of the great Crawford, who showed to the world that he was indeed a genius, and "mocked his own Creator's skill." He has left a monument that will withstand all the mutations of time. We have a consolation in knowing that there is yet another so skilled. Mr. Barbee is the author of the Coquette; we entertain for him the highest opinion as an artist; indeed, we must now yield the palm to him—Hiram Powers has a rival.

Many ladies have false modesty, which prevents them from going to see any specimen of undraped statuary. This is a very great error, and should be guarded against. There can be no impropriety whatever in going to see the Coquette, her only fault consists in playing havoc with so many hearts, making all her captives. She represents beauty, grace, elegance, and her air is decidedly coquettish. No mock modesty should deter

any one from taking a peep at Miss Coquette. One should blush only at the idea of imitating her example in piercing so many hearts with Cupid's relentless arrows. Let all Miss Prudies remember—

"True modesty is a discerning grace,
And only blushes in the proper place;
But counterfeit is blind, and skulks through fear,
When 'tis a shame to be ashamed to appear."

We render our thanks to Miss Coquette for visiting our city, and assure her that her presence has afforded us unspeakable pleasure. May she meet with hosts of friends and admirers who will applaud her for her beauty and elegant simplicity, and add laurels to the wreath which is destined to entwine itself around the pillars of the Temple of Fame, upon which will be carved, in bold letters, the name of "Barbee," the gifted son of genius.

CHAPTER I.

"BEAUTIFUL, beautiful child," said Evyline Grey, as she sat looking through the panes of finely-polished glass, shaded by richest curtains. Oh! what a pretty child! She is playing with that bouquet of flowers, just as if she were as happy as a prince; and I dare say she is, too; for what should one so young know of aught else? She is poor; that I plainly see by her dress; but there is still something which tells me she is above the common run of people."

"Why need you trouble yourself, Evyline?" said Mrs. Grey, with a haughty toss of the head. "I cannot see how it is you can take such a wonderful interest in that which does not concern you. I suppose it is some pauper whom the cart-man is taking to the alms-house."

"To the alms-house!" exclaimed Evyline. "Oh! it cannot be that so beautiful a child is to be taken there; and she is very young, too—not more than six years old. I presume it is some little orphan, once the pet and pride of a darling mother's heart, who thought nothing too good for it. It is a great pity for the child to be sent there."

"That is the most proper place for paupers. I would like to know who will take care of them if they are not sent there? It is certain that the public must provide some place for those who are too poor to take care of themselves. There are quite enough of such people, and they are a complete nuisance to the whole community."

"Surely, mamma, such a beautiful child as that could never be a nuisance to the public. I say again it is a great pity for her to go to the alms-house."

"Pray, where should she go, then? I do not know, nor do I care any thing about the little pauper; but I am perfectly satisfied, in my own mind, that those that send her there know perfectly well what they are doing."

"Ah, mamma!" replied Evyline, "many persons invested with that authority know but little how to use it. They think of nothing but their own comfort, and care but little how much the rest of the world suffer. I cannot be reconciled to the fate of that poor angel of a child. Perhaps those very persons who sent her there are, at this very moment, reveling in luxury, all the result of their ill-gotten gain, enjoying that, perchance, which the widows and orphans should have. I tell you, mamma, there are very few humane societies of which I approve. If they were conducted on the proper plan, and managed by those who dealt honestly and justly with what was entrusted to their charge, Heaven would smile upon and bless their labors; but as it is, I am sorely afraid that, at the final day, when all are judged fairly and impartially by the Great Ruler of the world, many will be condemned for robbing the widows and fatherless. If all were dealt justly by then, there would not be so many inmates in the alms-house."

"Why, Evyline! what a train of thoughts are passing through your mind this morning; what is the matter with you? If I were not acquainted with your sudden freaks, I should pronounce you insane."

"It were enough, mamma, to cause any one to lose their reason, while reflecting upon those who are suffering for the common wants of life, when others have more than they can well dispose of; it would not seem quite so deplorable if those persons did not seem void of all sympathy."

"Ah! Evyline, you are a strange child. I never could comprehend you, for you are an enigma; I expect you will marry some missionary, and go to China, or some other place."

"There are a great number, mamma, beside the heathen, who need reformation; if not in the same particular, there are various other ways in which they sadly err; but every one will have to be responsible for his or her faults."

CHAPTER II.

"Here we are, little missy. I guess you don't care no great deal about coming here. I shouldn't myself; but you cannot do better, I s'pose; people that's poor has a site o' hard things to put up with. Here's your posy" (gives her the flowers); "stop, I believe I have a bit o' cake in my pocket; I bought it for my little Nell, but I guess I'll give it to you; a crumb was never yet given to the poor, but that the giver got it back agin, and three times as much, too. I guess how I'll jist give you a

lift, as the cart is pretty high, and you can't very well get down yourself. It warn't no will o' mine that I brought you here; but I has to do what I am told; was too poor myself, or I might have taken you. The Lord knows my will is good, but I ain't got a way; a poor man like me, with a family, can't take other people to support, for it is as much as he can do to take care of his own. 'Good bye,' my little purty; take good care of yourself; don't let the folks make you vain by telling you about them purty eyes. I should not have told you myself, but somehow I could not help it. Here, give me a kiss. Lor bless me, how you blushes. It won't do for you to blush here, my sweet child. I only hope your little fat cheeks will never bear the impress of unfeeling fingers upon them. Good by again; the Lord bless you, my little pet."

* * * * *

"What is your name?" asked a sturdy looking man, who was known by the name of Hughes, but better by the keeper of the alms-house.

"Blanche, sir," was the modest reply.

"Blanche, umph; a pretty name. Well, if you are as good as your name is pretty, you will do well enough. I guess I'll take you to the children's apartment, and have a suit of clothes put on you, for you stand much in need of them."

Little Blanche was led into the room, where there were a great many little children. How bewildered she looked, as she glanced at the many strange faces before her. No wonder she hung her head and wept, for she felt alone among those who were, to her, such entire strangers.

It was a warm summer's afternoon. The little children were

all seated in the room allotted to them for reciting lessons; but few of them felt any thing like studying immediately after dinner. Some were nodding, some fast asleep, while others did their best to keep those little weary eyes propped open, so they might not feel the weight of the birch rod, which was sure to come down upon them with a vengeance, if they were caught asleep. The tall gaunt spinster, who filled the office of school teacher, had quite forgotten she was young once herself, and was as fond of going asleep as any one. She never allowed any, except herself to nod in the school-room, and it took up so much of her time to watch the little paupers committed to her charge, that she found but very few moments to indulge in a slumber.

CHAPTER III.

WE will now go back to the space of about ten or twelve months prior to the time little Blanche became an inmate of the alms house. It was a cold, star light night; a beautiful and young looking invalid sat in rather a richly furnished boudoir; her slight form rested upon a large velvet chair, provided expressly for her use by a kind and affectionate husband. Everything around her had an air of comfort; the gas, too, lent a still more cheering aspect to every thing around. A little girl stood by the invalid, who played with her soft curls. The two who occupied the room were none other than Blanche and her mother. On that day Mrs. Woodville had experienced a world of sorrow; had endured pangs which had almost crushed her

heart; she had witnessed the burial of her husband. As she gazed upon her darling Blanche, and listened to her innocent prattle, tears filled her eyes.

"Here are papa's slippers," said little Blanche; "poor papa! he will not ask me to bring them to him any more; nor tell Aunt Dinah, my good old nurse, to draw the chair closer to the fire. Oh! mamma, I am so sorry dear papa is dead!"

Mrs. Woodville could hear no more, but relieved herself with tears. She was truly a beautiful woman, and though sickness, had in a measure, robbed her form of its wonted symmetry and roundness, yet her face still retained that beauty of expression so lovely and angelic. Her pure and lofty mind was reflected in her dark, melting eyes; and one, to gaze for a moment upon that face, could see that she was all a sweet and interesting woman could be. Now that her husband was no more, her whole soul was wrapped up in Blanche, whom she had watched from day to day, gradually unfolding, like a sweet flower of rare beauty. And now she felt her health declining, serious thoughts entered her mind with regard to her dear and only child. She knew a mother's influence was great, and the early impressions of children were not easily erased; was it not important, then, that they should be of the proper kind? Ah! what would one so tender and pliant in character be, without a mother to guide and direct her? Gladly indeed, would she have given up life but for her child—that link bound her to earth. No tears are like those of a mother; none can feel so deeply for a child as the fond and cherished parent; no little acts can compensate for those of a mother.

But little Blanche was too young to permit thoughts like these

to come into her mind; and when her mother would look sadly upon her, and sigh, she wondered "why mamma was so sad." Ah! she knew not, dreamed not, that life itself was fast passing away from earth; and soon she was to be left alone, to face the cold, unfeeling world. When a mother's sweet smile is gone, every thing seems dark and gloomy. Could wishes be of any avail, gladly would Mrs. Woodville have had her stay on earth prolonged to the time when Blanche might be old enough to act and think for herself. But, alas! it was not as she willed it; for an all seeing Providence ordained it to be otherwise. While the young, innocent child was replete with life and gaiety dark clouds were hovering around; and those, who should have been her protectors, cared not for the cherub child entrusted to them.

CHAPTER IV.

"Be kind—act a mother's part, James, toward my little Blanche. Life is fast waning, and I must soon leave her. Oh! that it was the will of Heaven for me to remain longer, or that she might go too. She is young, innocent and pure. Much do I fear lest she become contaminated by contact with the world—that she may not place such a stress as I would have her upon her high and noble principles. Surely, as you are her uncle, you will feel some interest in her; and when she is taken from this home, provide one equally as comfortable for her. Dear child, she has never known a want, and I trust she never may; I could not die content if I thought she would suffer. During

my life-time I gratified her every wish, so far as I could with propriety. I sadly fear she will miss me, dear little one. She is far too young to know a mother's loss. All she has is entrusted to your care, and you must discharge your duty faithfully toward Blanche. See that she is properly educated, and give her all the necessary accomplishments. Will you promise me, James, to do all in your power to repair the loss she will sustain by my death? Will you be kind and gentle toward her? She is so young, and kind words will always gain the victory. I have ever chided her in the mildest manner. Promise what I ask of you."

"By all means I promise to do as you wish by your child. Come here Blanche," said the uncle; "let me kiss you. We must be the best of friends; would you not like to live with me?"

"If mamma goes too. I cannot leave mamma, for I love her so much. Poor mamma is so sick now; but she will be better soon, and then she can play with me, like as she did once when she was well, and made dresses for my dolly, too."

Little child! you dreamed not that even then your mother was fast leaving you, and soon her smiles would no more beam on you—that you would miss her kind and gentle words. Alas! for the young and innocent; they too often share a hard fate in the unfeeling world.

The tie was severed—the mother had fallen asleep; but it was that sleep from which there is no waking. Blanche called, but called in vain, for she heard her not. No, her eyes were closed for ever upon the scenes of earth—her spirit had winged its certain flight to realms above, where no sorrow or care invades.

Blanche gazed first at her uncle, then at her mother. Ah! that was a scene calculated to melt the sternest of hearts—but ah! it had no power upon the uncle.

“When will mamma awake?” said Blanche.

When would she indeed awake? No more would those eyes beam on Blanche, for they were sealed by angels. To whom could the little creature go for comfort? Her uncle had no sympathy to offer, for he was too hard-hearted—too obdurate. He could not appreciate the kind and tender feelings of the child. He had lived too many years on ill-gotten spoils of orphans, to lend an ear to the sorrows of the afflicted.

It was sad news, indeed, for little Blanche, when she was told that her mother was dead. She wept bitterly, and all alone, too, for none could participate in her sorrows. She went from room to room, seemingly at a loss what to do or where to go. More times than one was she told by her uncle not to disturb him while he was writing; this was all the sympathy the sweet child received from the cold-hearted man of the world.

CHAPTER V.

THE funeral was over; little Blanche had seen the “old sexton” throw the clay upon the coffin, and heard the rattle as it fell. Young as she was, this made her heart sick. She occupied the carriage with her cold, haughty uncle, who instead of trying to soothe her sorrows, was even then devising some means whereby he might rid himself of her. They reached the

house, the home of Blanche. Oh! what desolation was there. No mother's voice to soothe her now when her little heart was almost breaking. As she would seat herself near her uncle, she felt as if she would give any thing to nestle her head on some fond breast. Old Dinah, her nurse, offered sympathy, and thought how different the uncle was from the mother. Fatigued and grieved, Dinah finally succeeded in persuading her to retire; and now undressing her as in days gone by, she laid her snugly in the bed and lulled her to sleep. Little Blanche slumbered sweetly. Once more she was with her mother, happy and gay as in passed days. She forgot all her sorrows in sleep. Happily for children, they soon forget their grief; their minds being too unformed to retain any thing permanently. During the time Blanche slept, the uncle was examining the will left by her mother. As he gazed around the room, where so late sat the wife of his brother, he almost trembled at his own thoughts, and fancied he saw her spirit frowning upon him. But he soon chased thoughts like these away, and continued to scan the will. The fortune, though not very large, was ample enough to educate Blanche in the best manner, and afford her a competency through life. The uncle considered over this, and thought what an addition it would make to that he already had, and obtained too in such a manner as he dare not reveal. For the eye of God he cared not; he wanted the world to think him an honorable, high-minded man; so it would not answer for him to give any publicity to the mean acts he committed—the frauds practised upon orphans. No! for that would cause him to lose the good will and opinion of the world—that was what he most coveted. He thought not of the account he

would have to give at the final day, of the many dollars he had hoarded up from time to time—the luxury in which he reveled was all the result of cheating orphans. He was partaking of every comfort that life afforded, while those who were in want of the common necessities might have had all heart could wish had they been dealt justly by. But there is a secret Judge of judges, who will lay bare all secret wrongs.

CHAPTER VI.

BLANCHE was equipped for her journey to go with her uncle. The elegant mansion heretofore occupied by herself and parents now presented quite a different aspect, for the auction that took place a few days before, completely stripped the house of its contents.

Sweet Blanche, with face as colorless as a lily, stood gazing around the spacious rooms, as if taking a farewell glance at every door and window, for naught else remained. Oh! had she been old enough to know the loss she had sustained, what emotions would now have sprung up within her breast. The death of her mother, the sale of the furniture, her departure from the "old homestead." And old Dinah, as she bade "adieu" to the little one she had nursed from infancy, wept bitterly, and would gladly have gone too. But Blanche's uncle had a stratagem in his mind, and fully determined that no one who cared much about the orphan niece should accompany them. No, no, the wicked wish to be by themselves when

about to carry out any dark crime. Alas! that the heart of man should be so vile—should stoop to acts of meanness. What a thick veil bath hypocrisy.

"Come, Blanche," said her uncle, "we must be going. I think Dinah has made quite fuss enough now. I do not believe in so much crying; and all that sort of nonsense. Why not say 'good-by' at once, and be done with it?"

"Ah! master, you don't know how I hate to part with this child. I have nursed her from infancy, and I loved my missus, her own sweet mother. I hope Dinah may have the good luck to see her child once more; won't I, master?"

"I can't tell any thing about that; how can I look into the future? I do not know whether you will or not. Come, let us be off, Blanche; the carriage is at the door."

"One more kiss, my little honey," said Dinah, with a good shake of hand. And Blanche left her dear home forever—yes, forever.

All that day Blanche traveled. She was delighted with the scenery. Riding in the cars was something quite novel to her; she had rode almost every day, either with her father or mother, in their own carriage, but never much in the cars. The many strange faces she saw; the broad, extensive forest, the rivers, etc., delighted her much, for the orphan was nature's child. She loved all that was beautiful; the gorgeous clouds of sunset enchanted her; the bright stars of evening sent a thrill through her heart; every little flower seemed to have a language for Blanche. Amid all these scenes she forgot her grief. She was happy and gay, as young children soon forget their troubles, and their grief for the moment is gone. She

fell in company with some little girls of her age, after she left the cars and went on board a steamboat. Time passed away very pleasantly, and she was sorry to leave her young companions when the boat arrived at its destined place.

After the boat was fairly landed, they went up to a hotel to stay all night. Blanche was fatigued and sleepy, and was glad enough to get quietly asleep. How she missed good Dinah's tenderness! The Irish girl who undressed her was not her own Dinah. Although she was kind (for no one could possibly be otherwise to Blanche), still for all this there was something wanting—she knew not what. Soon Blanche was sleeping, unmindful of what was going on in the same room. But there are some persons in the world who seem to have no conscience at all—who will commit any act for gold, however black. Guilt and innocence were in the chamber of Blanche, the gentle and unoffending orphan.

CHAPTER VII.

Two men were seated at a table; champagne and other refreshments were placed on a waiter, while a box of cigars completed the programme. One was a sturdy, dark-visaged man, who looked as if he might be a fit subject for the state prison, more than any other place. He held in his hand a roll of bank-bills. His companion was less stern, still there was something about him that looked mysterious at that particular moment. One was the uncle of Blanche; the other, a person with whom he was entering into a contract.

"Talk low, talk low, else the child will hear you; perhaps she is not asleep. If we were detected, we would, indeed, be in an awful fix."

"I do not fear the child," said Woodville; "she is by far too young to tell a straightforward tale about it."

"But I think we had better be cautious. You know there is nothing like prudence."

"I tell you the child is fast asleep, so you may rest content on that score. She has not heard a word of our conversation. If she did, she would not know the meaning."

"A thousand dollars! That is a pretty large sum."

"What of that, since it does not come out of your pocket? You have that orphan's money, and it is a pretty large sum. If you don't say one thousand dollars, then I back out entirely."

"Let me consider—five hundred dollars more—one thousand! Well, I say, I will give it."

"Count the remainder out (he held five hundred more in his iron grasp), put it down on the spot, and to-morrow morning I carry your plan into execution punctually."

"Do you understand me perfectly?"

"I think I do; but there will be no harm if you tell me over again. Will it?"

"Listen attentively, then. If I pay you the sum of one thousand dollars, you agree to take the child to ———, put on her the pauper's suit of clothes, and represent her as a poor child you found somewhere. Tell her I am not her uncle, but only pretend so. You must go to the overseer of the poor, and get a permit to place her in the alms-house. Put it in her head not

to mention her mother's name; tell her the people will do something dreadful if she does. I will pretend that a friend of mine insisted on taking her home for some time, and perhaps adopt her. After a little while, we can manage to put the report in circulation that she is dead. Do not let her be known as Blanche Woodville at the alms-house; the first name does not make any difference, so we are very careful to suppress the other. The will, you know, is made out in such way that all the property is hers; but, in the event of her death, it all comes to me. That, you know, is a good thing for me, and I am anxious to hurry her off. If you can get her safely in the alms-house, then all will work like a charm. Do you agree now, positively?"

"If you pay me the sum of one thousand dollars, cash down."

"Here it is," said Woodville, as he counted out bill after bill.

Alas! sweet orphan Blanche, thou wert sold; indeed, for a paltry sum; but heaven will frown upon a deed so foul.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE next morning was one of unusual brightness; how beautiful all seemed to the little Blanche. She was awakened by the sun, which gleamed brightly through her window; late had she slept, for fatigue had given her a keen relish for slumber.

A stout daughter of Erin sat watching her while she sweetly slept; she could not summon up courage enough to disturb the little one, for she slept so quietly. Biddy had a kind and feeling heart, as she plainly showed by attention to Blanche, that kindness was one of her predominant traits. She saw a slight movement; in a moment Blanche opened her soft eyes.

"Come, sweet child, your breakfast is all ready, and I know you must be hungry."

"Yes," said Blanche, "I will get up now. Have I slept very late? Aunt Dinah used to dress me every morning. Poor Aunt Dinah! How much she did cry when she told me 'good-by,' and said that perhaps I would not see her again."

"And who is Aunt Dinah?" asked Biddy, eagerly.

"My nurse; she loved me very much, and I loved her."

"A nurse; none but rich folks' children have them. Well, whoever nursed this angel must have had a pleasant time of it, for she aint the child to give a cross word to any one. I wish I could go and take care of her all the time. Sweet child! it is a great pity she has no mother, for other folks won't treat children like their own parents. But if she is rich they will; there is no telling what money won't do in this world. My prayers shall be for her any how."

All this language was unheeded by little Blanche, whose attention was attracted by a playful little kitten, which seemingly pleased her very much; Blanche was kind and respectful toward Biddy, for her good and pious mother had taught her to make no difference whatever between the rich and poor, but to treat all civilly. A lesson impressed so deeply upon the mind of one so young, was not likely to be forgotten soon. She had

been taught never to evade or practice deception at any time. Oh! what a legacy was that for a dead mother to leave an only child—one that would make the world love and revere her. There is nothing on earth which can compensate in life for a strict regard for truth, and the feelings of others. One who possesses these will be sure to find good friends. The Irish servant, blunt as she was, saw something in Blanche to love and esteem; she felt her gentle presence; as one would the perfume of some rare flower.

CHAPTER IX.

THE plotters had hit upon a plan to deceive Blanche: they knew too well that one so young and unsuspecting would never be any the wiser; and while they enjoyed the wealth which was her's by the best right in the world, she would be placed in the alms-house as a pauper.

The design was put into execution. She was enticed away, and fed with stories that had no foundation whatever. Her unfeeling uncle cared not what became of her if he got possession of her property, and used it as he chose. And Robbins, his partner in the crime, was satisfied enough with the money he had received, to dispose of the orphan in any way. Conscience was something that never troubled him in the least. Now that he had attained the age of manhood, he was as hardened as it was possible for him to be. Money was his god, and

was fast paving his way to the dark regions of endless misery. But of this he gave no thought.

* * * * *

Early one morning, a sturdy looking man might have been seen wending his way to the office of the overseers of the poor; he led by the hand a little child, which was none other than Blanche. Can it be possible that it is indeed her—one so accustomed to every luxury heart could desire? Ah, yes! it was too true: Blanche was now like the little beggar who has no home, no friends.

"Where did you meet with the child?" asked one of the proper authorities.

"I found her strolling about, sir; her parents are both dead: feeling a sort of sympathy for the child, seeing she was very young, I thought it best to get her a place in the alms-house. I would take her myself, but am not married; a man without a wife cannot do much with a child."

"Your mother is dead, then?" said the officer.

"Yes, sir," replied Blanche, meekly, with a blush.

"Poor child! I am truly sorry for you, because you look by far too pretty and sweet to be sent to the alms-house; but it is the best I can do for you as yet."

Robbins, the iron-hearted man, fearing lest he should be detected by the replies which Blanche might make when thrown off her guard, hurried as much as possible, and soon the little orphan was on her way to the alms-house. Blanche had not the least idea where she was going. She was told by Robbins not to answer too many questions, for people would not love her if she did; furthermore, that the gentleman who came with

her was not her uncle, but only pretended to be: After saying this, he bade her "Good-bye," and gave her some flowers to pacify her; he well knew how she loved them, and thought that perhaps it might make her forget to cry.

Stern and cold-hearted as was this man, he felt something akin to a deep pang of conscience when he gave up the child to the man who was to convey her to the alms-house; all seemed darkness around him, and he was almost tempted to falter even at the last moment; but he could not, for the weight of the money in the purse kept him from so doing.

CHAPTER X.

"You are a pretty thing to be talking about fine houses, flower gardens, big arm-chairs, birds, and the like of that; I would like to know where you ever saw any!"

"My mamma had them in her house."

"Don't tell me that again," said the enraged spinster, as she looked menacingly at Blanche; "a pretty tale for beggars to tell. If you were ever so rich as all that, you would not have been here. No, no; when you tell a story, let it be a probable one; this has too little foundation to support it. It isn't very likely that such rich people's children would be landed here."

These words were addressed to little Blanche by the spinster school-teacher, who had charge of her, and was as well fitted for that station as the wolf among lambs. Blanche, it seems, had been talking about her mother, and in her childish way, spoke

of the house, etc., but the spinster could never be made to believe that she had ever been accustomed to any thing of the kind; at least she tried to make Blanche believe so; but honestly, she thought the orphan had been used to better days, for there was a degree of refinement about her not found in the common run of children.

"You are awful sensitive," said the spinster to Blanche one day, whom she saw weeping because she was whipping a little child of her own age or size; "I guess you will cry more when you get it yourself. What matter does it make to you how many times a person gets a whipping, so you don't?" (Blanche knew not how soon her turn might come.) "Children never seem to know they have any thing to learn, and those who have to instruct them must put up with every thing. I never saw such a set in my life before; to be sure, it is a warm summer's day: I feel as sleepy as any body, but you don't catch me nodding. The first one I catch asleep I will soon awaken, and in such a manner, too, that they will be apt to remember."

Little Blanche heard these words, and trembled from head to foot; she tried her best to keep her eyes open, but it seemed in spite of herself she could scarcely keep awake. She remembered the time when she was laid on a neat little lounge to take a nap, while good nurse Dinah gently fanned her; but how different were all things now. She commenced life with sunshine around her; but how soon was all this turned to bitterness—at the time, too, when she should have enjoyed life to its fullest extent. Very long and tedious were the days to sweet Blanche; though she had been an inmate of the alms-house twelve months, still it seemed as if she could not get acquainted with those

around her, for they were not congenial. Many times she was reprimanded for her pride by the unfeeling teacher, but it could effect no change. Often did she wish for some one to love; she looked around, and found none suited to her taste. The only person she fancied was a poor little boy, who had a good ear for music, and would sing songs for Blanche—some of those songs, too, she had heard her dear and darling mother sing so sweetly. It brought to memory other days, and Blanche would weep while her friend sang. Yes, for the tender chords of her heart were awakened. Those who are void of that tenderness and delicacy of feeling which actuated the sweet child, of course cannot appreciate them at all, as was the case with the stiff spinster, who said it was all put on to make people pity him. She who dissembled so much herself, thought all the world guilty of the same: this is ever the way of suspecting, designing people.

CHAPTER XI.

WE will now pass rapidly over the space of five years, all of which time Blanche remained in the alms-house. Her cruel uncle, James Woodville, had enjoyed, or rather made use of, her wealth, while the one to whom it rightly belonged was debarred the smallest indulgence. He speculated largely in stocks; kept a box at the opera by the season; put large sums in the contribution-plate.

He was a great man, too, for lecturing on the importance of aiding the destitute; was the principal officer of the Humane

Association, &c. Oh! what a hypocrite—what a monster in the sight of Heaven, to make such boasts—pretend to possess those virtues which were entire strangers to him, while he revelled all the while in the wealth belonging to his orphan niece, whom he promised to defend and protect, both in property and in person! Alas! how had he fulfilled that promise—the sacred promise he had made to one in the dying hour?

But Heaven will not permit those who act so unjustly to remain quiet and at peace; no, no; for there are moments when feelings of remorse will steal over them, and they will desire to die rather than drag life out in such a wearisome way. And though they seem to enjoy all around them, yet are they truly miserable. The poorest are infinitely better than he who appropriates another's wealth to his own use. There came to him, at the still hour of the night, recollections of the wrongs he had committed on his orphan niece; and he feared almost to look around him lest the spirit of the mother might be hovering over him. If he slept, the most fearful dreams would cause him to startle; and he imagined, at times, that he was grappling with the evil one. If he walked in the open fields, every flower seemed to shrink from his gaze; the very sun itself was not bright; no dish, however dainty, tempted his appetite, but was insipid. Alas! what profited all his unkindness to his niece? What good had her wealth afforded him? It was rather a curse than otherwise. Now did he wish he had dealt justly by his little charge; but his pride would not permit him to claim one who had been an inmate of the alms-house; and, beside this, the law could take hold of him, if all

his foul deeds were brought to light. He was truly a burden to himself—a meet reward for the crime he had committed.

CHAPTER XII.

"EVLIN, I do wish you would say nothing more about that little pauper; it has been a long, long time since you saw her going to the alms-house, yet, for all this, it does seem to me as if you will never forget her."

"A sweet face like hers is not so easily forgotten, mamma."

"You are the most perfect devotee to beauty I ever saw, Evy; how you can fancy that pauper, I cannot imagine; to be sure, she is not so homely; but, then, she is by no means pretty."

"Why, mamma, how can you say that? I am sure she has one of the sweetest faces I ever saw. She is the very personification of goodness."

"I do not wish to take her, Evyline; for what do I want with a pauper? Just as sure as you bring her here, and make much of her, she will get completely above herself; I do not care to litter my house up with people of that kind; beside, I do not wish any addition to the family. It is quite enough for your father to do to dress you."

"As to the dress, mamma, I could do well enough without it. I would be willing to wear the plainest clothes, if you would only consent to give that little orphan a home."

"I never yet saw that pauper you did not feel some interest in."

"I pity the sorrows of all, mamma, and think it my duty to do so. But I feel an uncommon interest in that child—I would like to have her for a companion. I have nothing to do, and it would be employment for me to instruct her."

"The paupers are instructed at the alms-house."

"I know that, mamma; but they have to associate with all kinds of children, you know."

"Well, the orphan you speak of is no better than the rest of them."

"I can see at a glance, mamma, that she is no common child; and I think, if we knew her history, we should learn that she is an orphan who has not been dealt justly by. It is a lamentable fact, that there are too many in the world who are rendered homeless through the unkindness of others. The day of judgment will indeed be an awful one for such people."

"Why, Evyline, how you do talk! I do not know what to make of you."

"I speak just what my heart prompts me. Only consent to take that little orphan, mamma, and I will not tease you any more."

"How do you know that she is still at the alms-house?"

"I only presume she is; at all events we can find out."

"That would be quite a new business for me to go to the alms-house, to inquire for paupers."

"I am sure, mamma, that a good, sensible person would not think any the less of you. Heaven would smile on you and bless you for giving a home to the orphan. Only say, mamma, that you will go, or let me go, to the alms-house, and bring the child here."

"I will think of it," said Mrs. Grey, with a haughty toss of the head. Evyline said no more upon the subject, but hoped her mother would finally consent.

CHAPTER XIII.

'Twas the hour of midnight. James Woodville paced up and down the floor of his chamber; he had retired once, but thought would not permit him to sleep. On a table near him, lay pen, ink and paper. Taking from a richly cut glass decanter some rosy wine, he sat down once more and commenced to write. Line after line he penned. He again paced the floor, again sat down to write; his movements evidently showed that he was much troubled in mind. The last page was written; getting up from his cushioned chair, he took a small box and laid in the writings very carefully, locking it afterward. All this would have seemed very mysterious to one who might be looking on; the words he uttered, too, were very incoherent.

"Yes, I will restore Blanche's property to her; this letter will reveal all the wrong I have done her; probably she will not know of it till after my death. Oh! if I had heeded the words of her dying mother—had discharged my duty faithfully—then might I have been at peace with God and all the world, and when the hour came for me to resign my fleeting breath, then might I feel as if I were going to a better world; oh! how can I escape my awful doom. Poor Robbins! he was hanged the other day, one crime led to another, till, at last, he had the con-

science to murder a man for the paltry sum of a thousand dollars—the very amount I paid him to get my poor orphan niece, Blanche, in the alms-house. Ha! well, he has his reward, and I shall, no doubt, get mine—an awful thought to meet such a fate. Dear Blanche! how I did deceive her; she was too young and unsuspecting to know that I was taking her from her home of elegance and splendor, for the purpose of conveying her to the alms-house. Could I recall the past, but alas! it is too late now; I feel each day that life is gliding away from me. Had I pursued an upright and honorable course, I might have been spared longer; but, alas! I must ere long slumber in the dust, and my spirit go—I know not where. Alas! what does all the ill-gotten wealth of the earth profit one? It only gives them the keenest pangs in their dying hour, and causes the soul to be sent to perdition. Day nor night can I rest; the Scripture saith 'There is no peace for the wicked;' 'tis only the good and virtuous who can hope, or deserve to be smiled upon by heaven, which always gives merit its reward."

CHAPTER XIV.

ONE bright and beautiful morning, Evyline Grey and her mother, set out for the alms-house. By her gentle and winning way, she often gained the ascendancy over her mother, who, by the by, could seldom refuse any request she might make. Evyline was a kind and amiable creature; and though reared in opulence, and surrounded by any thing that wealth afforded—unlike many others upon whom prosperity smiled—she did not

forget those less highly favored than herself, but pitied and relieved them so far as she could. Had she not been interfered with many times by her mother, she would have committed three-fold acts of charity; but she was often compelled to give up to her mother, who always happened to disagree with her on most every point. Evyline, so kind and meek, submitted without a murmur. Evyline cared but little for the gaieties of the world, in which she was compelled to mingle so often against her wishes. She would much prefer visiting the poor, and catering to their wants, than any thing else; she felt it her duty to do all that lay in her power, with a cheerful and willing heart. She never disdained to drive up in her carriage to the door of some lone widow; on the contrary, nothing afforded her more real pleasure than to feel that she had added to the happiness of any one.

After much talking and reasoning with her mother, (making at the same time many promises,) she prevailed upon her to visit the alms-house, in quest of the little girl, to whom she had taken such a wonderful fancy. There was something which seemed to draw her toward the child; and she had fully determined to find her out, and to bring her to her own home, and act as near as she could, in the place of a mother. The young Evyline was not void of all those feelings and experience, so often wanting even in older heads. After a pleasant drive, Mrs. Grey and her daughter arrived at the alms-house; they, of course, were very politely received. The splendid carriage and dress of the two ladies, did not fail to attract the attention of the keeper. After a few moments they were shown around.

"I wish," said Evyline, "to go to the children's department."

"In a few moments, Miss; you came just in the right time for that; they are all now in the school room; that is about the only time you are apt to see them all together; for after school hours they are scattered—some in one place, some in another."

Evyline was so extremely anxious to see Blanche, that she scarcely listened to a word the keeper said. Much to her delight, she soon reached the school room. How eagerly did she look around to find the child she was so anxious to see. Little Blanche, was, at that time, saying her lesson. Evyline, who caught a glimpse of her, beckoned to her to come; but Blanche was uncertain whether or not to obey the summons, as the spinster eyed her so intently and peculiarly.

"I wish," said Evyline, pointing to Blanche, "to speak to that little girl."

"Certainly," replied the keeper; while he went immediately to bring Blanche to them.

"What is your name?" asked Evyline, taking her hand within her own, and brushing back her soft, glossy hair.

"Blanche," she replied; blushing like a rose.

"A very pretty name you have, my little pet."

The kind words brought tears into the eyes of Blanche, and Evyline saw it too.

From this moment, the strongest attachment sprang up for the little orphan.

"Would you like to go home and live with me?" asked Evyline of Blanche.

"Yes, ma'am; and I will love you if you love me. Mamma loved Blanche while she lived."

"Your mamma is dead, then?"

"Yes, ma'am."

The tender chord had been touched, and little Blanche wept.

"Do not weep, my sweet child. I am going to take you home with me soon; and you shall be my own sister, and I will love you very much."

Blanche smiled through her tears, while Evyline kissed her, and told her not to forget her before she came to see her again.

CHAPTER XV.

BLANCHE could think of nothing but the lady, who talked so kindly to her. The time appeared twice as long as it used to do. Day after day did she look for Evyline to come.

"I am going away soon," said she to her little friend Willie, the day before she left the alms-house. "Who will you sing for then?"

"Oh! I am so sorry, Blanche, that you are going to leave me. I will not have any one to love me. Poor Willie! you must not forget him."

"No, no; I will always think of you, Willie."

"And love me, too?"

"Yes, I will always love you."

"Then I will be happy. Will you not come sometimes to see me?"

"If I can, Willie, I will come. You must sing just the same as if I were here, or you will forget how."

"I am afraid you will forget me, when you go to live in that fine house."

"No; the fine house could not make me forget you."

"If you promise that, I will not be sad."

"Oh, how lonesome for poor Willie! Nobody to love him but Blanche."

"Sing me a new song now, for I love to hear you; perhaps I may go to-morrow, and then it may be some time before I hear you again."

* * * * *

The morrow came. Blanche was informed by the keeper to be ready at a certain hour to leave the alms-house. Evyline, who was all anxiety to conduct her to her house, was not tardy in getting ready at an early hour to go for her little pet.

"So you are willing to go, then?" said Evyline to Blanche.

"Yes, ma'am. Oh, if Willie could only go too!"

"And who is Willie?"

"Come here, Willie, and see the lady who is going to take me home with her."

Immediately he came at the bidding of Blanche, to see her benefactress, who was almost unwilling to part the two children; but she knew she could render Blanche far more comfortable than she was there, and could make her much more happy. Thoughts like these, in a measure overcame all other feelings.

"I will bring Blanche to see you sometimes," said Evyline; "so you must not be sad when she is gone."

"Oh! you are such a good lady. Blanche will love you, I know, and so will Willie."

"Come, tell Blanche 'good bye;' she must go now, for it is quite time."

Who, to have seen the parting between the two innocent children, could have kept back the tears? They whispered a few words to each other, and then separated.

* * * * *

How happy was Blanche in her new home! Evelyne reminded her somewhat of her own mamma, for she was so kind, so gentle; she studied every wish, and spared no pains whatever to make her happy. Such toys and books as she thought Blanche might fancy were purchased for her, from her own purse, and placed where she could get them any time she wished. Evelyne took her under her special charge; and it was her greatest delight to teach her, for she found her little *protégée* had a very quick mind, and could easily comprehend any thing she undertook to learn. Blanche had a great taste for music. Evelyne delighted in playing for her, and determined to instruct her soon.

Who could but love one so good and gentle as Evelyne Gray; Blanche, though young, discovered much to love; and permitted no opportunity to pass that she could prove to Evelyne how much she loved her, and how great was her delight to do all she could to please her benefactress.

CHAPTER XVI.

WE have said Blanche was happy. Yes, she now felt as though her mother was replaced in a measure. The only thing she had to mar her felicity in the least was the tidings of the illness of Willie. Oh! how she pleaded to go to see him. Evelyne felt she must grant the child that favor, for it was so simple. One morning she told Blanche she would take her to see Willie on that day. It had been six months since Blanche had left the alms-house, and she had seen Willie but a few times; however, if she did not see him as often as she wished, Evelyne permitted her to send him many little dainties she thought would please his appetite. Evelyne, it seems, anticipated the wishes of every one, and loved to make all happy whenever it lay in her power. Willie was exceedingly ill; and as Blanche stood by his bed, and held his hand, she saw how thin he had become since the last time she had seen him. At the sight of Blanche, the poor child seemed to revive, and he looked at her most imploringly. The poor child was sick indeed, and no kind mother was there to soothe him or to smooth his pillow. He wished much to see Blanche, and persuaded the keeper of the alms-house to send word to her.

"I am going home soon, dear Blanche. Yes, for I saw the little angels beckoning to me this morning. My dear mother, too, was with them. Will I not be happy, dear Blanche?"

"Yes, Willie, very happy; for you will go to heaven."

"You will hear me sing no more, Blanche, on earth, but I will sing with the angels."

Blanche's eyes filled with tears.

"Do not weep for me, dear Blanche, for Willie will be so happy in heaven. You will meet me there, won't you, Blanche?"

"Yes, I will meet you."

"You have always been so good to me, and good people always go to heaven."

Blanche still held his hand; it was fast growing cold, and the damp dews of death were gathering upon his brow. He faintly murmured—

"Blanche—Blanche."

"What, dear Willie?"

She gazed upon him for a moment. A most heavenly light illuminated his countenance. One more glance at Blanche—his eyes are closed on earth, to open in heaven.

CHAPTER XVII.

'Tis the dying hour of James Woodville: physicians are there; friends are there; but all this is of no avail, for not long can he remain upon earth. A clergyman is sent for to pray for him, but, alas! he feels that there is no hope. A member of the bar stands by him, to whom he gives a small key, telling him it belongs to a certain box containing papers of the greatest importance.

"Give the box," said he, "to Blanche Woodville; she is an inmate in the house of Mrs. Grey, in ——— street. Be sure to deliver it yourself. Attend to it faithfully, for if I had done

so, not now would I feel the pangs and remorse of conscience.

She will pay you well for your trouble. Oh! Blanche, Blanche, had I but performed my duty faithfully, not now would I have felt as though I could not see my God!"

These were the last words of James Woodville. The clergyman looked at him, and was deeply moved. He had seen many resign their fleeting breath, but no death was more horrible than that of James Woodville; for fiery demons taunted him on all sides, and he expired without one ray of hope. Those who deal so unfairly with the orphan surely cannot expect a better end, for Heaven will not smile upon those who wilfully wrong the orphan. No, no; great is the punishment of such persons. But James Woodville had expired—had gone to try the realities of another world.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"MAMMA, I told you I thought Blanche was something more than an ordinary pauper when I saw her going to the almshouse. She talks of her mamma's harp, piano, fine house, and every thing."

"Well, you know children will sometimes dream such things, Evelyne, and imagine they really existed."

"No, mamma; I think Blanche was wealthy once. There is something very mysterious about her, any how. I cannot understand it at all."

"Nor any one else, I presume. I think her a perfect enigma myself."

"I find so much in her every day to love. She is so docile, so meek. Poor child! she grieves so much about Willie, the little boy who died at the alms-house some time ago. All this proves to me that she has a tender, sensitive heart. Some children would have forgotten him entirely by this time; but she talks about him as though it were but yesterday he died. She has been used to better days. It was a pity she was left an orphan so young; but she has not contracted any bad habits, as I see. It is my opinion she may be moulded almost into any form."

"Depend upon it, Evy, there is nothing like beginning right with children. I think you commenced in a most admirable manner with Blanche, and I doubt not she will come up to your mark, for she loves you so much that it seems a pleasure for her to do all she can to please you."

CHAPTER XIX.

BLANCHE'S life was indeed one of pleasure; the most powerful attachment existed for Evyline, whom she regarded as a mother to her, for such had she proved. But still brighter days were in store for Blanche; yet of this fact she was entirely ignorant. She was quite happy, for Evyline did all in her power to make her so.

* * * * *

The person in whose charge the mysterious box was placed, happily was one governed by highest principles of honor and integrity of character. He discharged his duty faithfully in

every particular; and, even, had he not felt so disposed, the words of the dying man who had so wronged his own niece, were enough to deter him from acting in any way but that which was strictly right.

* * * * *

"A gentleman wishes to see you, Blanche, dear," said Evyline one morning. "He has some news of great importance to convey. Be expeditious, as he may not have time to wait very long. He looks to be a lawyer."

Blanche immediately hastened to the parlor, and there found a gentleman who introduced himself as John Bateman, counselor and attorney-at-law. Blanche, after finding out the nature of his business, excused herself for a few moments and went in quest of Evyline, whom she thought proper to be present, so that she might hear all that was said.

"This box is for you, Miss Woodville; it was given me by your uncle, on his death-bed."

"My uncle!" exclaimed Blanche; "I have no uncle."

"You know him not as your uncle, but such he truly was. The contents of this box will amply explain all."

"And pray how did my uncle find out I was here?"

"That question I cannot answer. I only know he was aware of the fact. I have kept the promise I made him on his death-bed faithfully—that is, in delivering the box in person. Any advice or assistance you may need, I offer my services, and promise to do all in my power for you. Here is the key; the box has never been unlocked since the death of your uncle, James Woodville. I bid you good morning. If you choose to appoint me as your attorney, here is my address."

After the lawyer left, Blanche hastily opened the box, and drew from thence a will, the legacy left by her mother. Blanche, though only ten years of age, had more discernment than some girls at sixteen. She could scarcely command herself at all while examining the contents of the mysterious box. What! Blanche Woodville, once the inmate of an alms-house, now an heiress! No, it seemed impossible; she fancied it must be a mistake; but on reading the letter, written by her own uncle's hand, containing the wrong he had committed, the truth flashed upon her mind like lightning. She scarcely knew whether to be glad or sorry. And as she read the heart-rending words of her uncle, she wept bitterly. Though he had seriously wronged her, still she pitied and forgave him from her heart.

What could possibly have exceeded the joy of Evyline Grey, when she found out that Blanche was rich, and now could be educated in the best manner possible? This was a desire that had been uppermost in her thoughts for a very long time; and yet, she dare not broach the subject to her mother, who, though not by any means unkind to Blanche, did not show any decided affection.

Happy the day when Blanche was put in possession of the wealth which justly belonged to her. Now she felt it in her power to do so, she had a simple, yet tasteful monument erected in memory of Willie, of whom she so often thought; and deeply regretted she was not put in possession of her wealth before, so she might have made some provision for him—made him, indeed, as comfortable and as happy as herself. Though Blanche felt the need of a thorough education, she could not tolerate the idea of leaving Evyline: she loved her too well to leave her.

But she often assured her that she would never lose that deep regard she felt for her, and would ever look upon her as her benefactress. As she grew older her gratitude increased, and she embraced every opportunity to prove to Evyline that she was uppermost in her thoughts and affections. Never could she forget one who was a friend to her when she so much needed one.

In Memory of my Pet Canary.

"SUCH is the end of the beautiful!" I exclaimed, when my maid awakened me early one morning and told me my pet bird was no more. "Take the cage away, for I would not see my bird lifeless; no, but rather remember it as when last I saw it, hopping from perch to perch—would rather think of it as in spring-time, when it poured forth its sweetest song, as if welcoming the festive season. The tears come, no power of earth can keep them back—and why should no tear be shed? Could a purer creature demand them? Summer is in her fading glory; the falling leaves tell me that ere long the chill autumn wind will sear the tender flowers and leaves—and with sweet summer fled my bird. In the hours of winter it will not be here to gladden me with its untaught songs; it will no longer demand my watchful care.

"Oft times when I looked at it, it would teach me a lesson; for, though caged while the forest was in verdure clad, though birds would pour forth their notes, birdie murmured not, but seemed content with its lot. How pleasant it was to watch it folding its head under its tiny wing to sleep. How I loved to watch it skipping so gaily from perch to perch!

"But my sweet bird is gone! In memory will I erect a monument, one more permanent than man can make, with all his skill. My heart will turn to thee, sweet one; I will think of you at twilight's soft hour, when you were wont to sleep. And morning's bright dawn but makes my heart the more sad, for with it comes no longer your sweet songs. No other pet can replace you. No, no, birdie, for that sunny nook in my heart I give to you alone."

"Keeping up Appearances."

"PAPA, it is high time we were giving a party; only think how many have been given this winter; full well I know that the people are wondering among themselves if the Wilburns do not intend giving any. We have been to no less than seven this season, and I think it high time that we were giving one. Yes, yes, papa; only think what the fashionables will say, if we do not! We must 'keep up appearances,' any how."

"Keep up appearances at the risk of getting largely in debt? When pay day comes, what would then be done, if my funds are not sufficient to defray my expenses? I tell you candidly, my daughter, that 'keeping up' appearances' is a hard matter with me. I know my circumstances too well, to wish to give way to the follies and extravagancies of the 'beau monde;' there is, indeed, a sort of splendid poverty among some of them, because they are not contented with the solid pleasures of life, they endeavor to eclipse each other, in mere shadowy appearances. Many a one who could count his thousands, has been reduced by the extravagant notions of his wife and daughter. Pray tell me, if those very persons who will attend your parties during your more flourishing condition in life, while you 'kept

up appearances,' would visit you if you had a downfall? No, no, depend upon it, my daughter, they would not."

"Papa, do not talk in that manner, for it sounds more like a funeral dirge than any thing else. Only say that you will consent for us to give the party. It will not be such an expense, I'm sure."

"Then let us make a slight calculation. First of all are the kid gloves."

"Only two pair, papa."

"Another item, sash ribbons—humdrums, of course, for you would not wish to wear what you have—a hair dresser must be employed, of course, since it is not fashionable to dress one's own hair."

"Another little item, papa, you left out."

"Well, what is that?"

"You know we must employ the violin; it is awfully insipid to dance by a piano—why, there is not the least animation in dancing, unless we do have a violin. To be sure, I like piano music for a parlor, but oh, give me a violin to dance by; it gives me panics to think of not having one. Now, papa, I am quite sure you will consent for us to give the party."

"Well, my daughter, I suppose I must. We are far from being rich. Of course, your dressing is tolerable; you do not wear the most expensive kind, nor do you change your velvet cloaks every season, nor wear the most costly laces and embroideries, yet you dress very well, that is, as well as I can afford, to 'keep up appearances.' It is my will to attire you both in the most elegant style, but a person must go according to the ability of his purse. I never like to go beyond my in-

come. I do not object to the party at all; I was thinking of the many expenses which would necessarily be incurred. My bills at the grocer's, dry goods merchant's, etc., have already run up high. But I suppose we must 'keep up appearances.'

"We may have the party then, papa?"

"Yes, my daughter."

"Delighted! delighted!" exclaimed the two girls in one breath. "We must have as brilliant a one as possible. We must be about the dresses, which, by the way, we will have to make ourselves. Oh, dear! how I wish we were rich."

"I will write the invitations, and have them sent out this afternoon. To-day is Thursday—well, what day shall we name for the party?"

"Why, next Thursday."

"Agreed. Papa, will we not have a charming time? It is not the party I care so much for, but the 'keeping up appearances.' Why, what would the L's and C's say if we permitted the whole season to pass without giving a party? I could not think of any such a thing—I knew papa would consent; for he never refuses any thing we ask him."

The invitations were written and very soon despatched by the waiter. Many smiles pervaded the countenance of those who received them, and great preparations, of course, would be made for the party, to take place at the Wilburn's, for it would, no doubt, be a very brilliant one.

A week rolled round. How much had been done in that one week by the fair sex to outvie each other! Gorgeous was the dressing, and large the sums of money expended for it. Anxious grew the heart of many an over-indulgent father and

husband, when he listened to the extravagant wishes expressed by his wife and daughter, who had determined upon looking as well as the rest. Many a father looked doubtful as he surveyed the endless variety of dressing purchased by his daughter, whose vanity and folly taught her to eclipse every one, if possible.

The long looked for evening came at last; a beautiful one it was, too. Each star in heaven was brightly beaming, while the moon was resting amid a few fleecy clouds, whiter than the new-born snowflake. A brilliant party it was, indeed; and much too brilliant, we fear, for the purse of Mr. Wilburn. He looked upon the scene, and a doubtful shake of the head was all that he gave utterance to.

Merrily glided the evening away; many were the compliments passed, and, we might add, that a little slander might now and then have been heard, for woman is indeed, after all, the most bitter enemy to her own sex.

The hours wore on; the first glimmering of morning was seen in the east ere the company dispersed. But time waited not for them, and soon the parlors were void.

For a week or more the party at the Wilburn's was the chief subject of conversation. Many were the remarks made upon the different styles of beauty and dress, not unmingled with a little jealousy and envy.

The Wilburns were, no doubt, delighted with the *furor* which their brilliant entertainment occasioned, and congratulated themselves that after all they had given a party which had competed with any they had attended during the season. Gay and thoughtless girls! They thought not of the shadows

which were gathering thick and fast, that their own light would be o'creast with clouds. But such is life!

* * * * *

"Mr. Wilburn has failed!" exclaimed Pauline Grey, looking up from the paper which she had been reading intently for some minutes. Why, it cannot be! it was only two months ago since they gave the brilliant party—you know we went to it. Well, it must really be true, since it is in the public papers."

"I thought it would come to this, after all," replied Laura Merton, who, by the way, was among the guests at the party. "I always thought the Wilburns lived beyond their income; they strain every nerve to pattern after us wealthy people, and all for what—merely to 'keep up appearances.' I think they were entirely too extravagant, but I will wager any thing that their high notions will have to come down now. What a check it must be to their pride. I am not at all sorry for them, for they should not have been so extravagant."

"I do not think, Laura, that they were at all extravagant in their dress."

"They were as much so as they could well be. Anyhow, be that as it may, the party they gave was too much beyond their income."

"Well, that was given through compliment."

"I suppose it was. Did you observe what a quantity of expensive confectionaries they had at the party. I thought at the time they could not afford it."

Laura was not the only one, by a great number, who thus spoke (and they were present, too, at the party), after hearing

of the misfortunes of Mr. Wilburn. So much for the charity of the world.

The Wilburns saw the folly of "keeping up appearances," and heartily wished they had led a less fashionable life. But repentance came too late, and they were compelled to suffer the ills resulting from it. It is needless to say that they no longer found favor in the eyes of the fashionable world, who were the very first to triumph over their misfortunes, and say that it was the final result of persons who are not wealthy attempting to pattern after those who are; in other words, going too far for the sake of "keeping up appearances."

8*

Woman's Work and Influence.

"Is aught so fair,
In all the dewy landscape of the spring,
In the bright eve of Hesper of the morn,
In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
As that refinement found alone in woman."

A certain writer has said that woman can be talented, witty and gifted, but can never become truly great. A more erroneous idea never existed.

What, woman never become great? And why not? Is she lower, in an intellectual point of view, than man? Certainly not. She possesses just as much talent, and is as capable of understanding the arts and sciences, and subjects of deep thought as man. It is true she is not allowed a place in the Legislature; she does not plead at the bar; she is not a politician. Woman should not fill such places; she was not designed to make laws—it is not her duty to acquit or condemn at the bar; she wishes not to mingle in the political world, for she feels that hers is a different sphere altogether.

And why is not woman truly great? If she be the means of instilling the seeds of true greatness in the bosoms of her sons, can she not then be said to be truly great herself? Who was it implanted the spirit of true greatness within the breast of

Washington, West, Patrick Henry and many others? Ask them—they will say, "My mother."

The same writer remarks that woman has not the patience to study any thing long or think deeply upon any subject. It is false. It is true, she does not dive deep into the sciences; she will never have to put it into practice, granted she did understand the theory. She will not dwell upon the pages of Blackstone with the deep interest of the lawyer, and why? It is not for the want of patience; it would only be useless for her to make it her study, for it could be of but little profit in the end.

Woman has patience and perseverance; she is capable of studying upon any subject, however deep, and she can comprehend it, too. She has the capacity of revolving any thing in her mind; it does not fly out with lightning speed, for her mind is not so giddy as to allow any thing to pass in that manner.

"She can never become a Washington," says one; nor does she wish to be, in any sense of the word. She does not wish to command armies, be amid the din of battle. No! in that point she would not wish to be a Washington. She would only imitate his true greatness and nobleness of character; she would have her name immortalized for good deeds alone. She could not be a Clay; she has no ambition to stand in the forum and deliver orations; she would not discuss the great political questions of the day—slavery or anti-slavery, hard or soft shell democracy. In that she does not wish her true greatness to consist.

We are fully aware that women's rights' conventions have been held by those who are fond of Bloomer costumes. This is

only sanctioned by a few who love to make themselves conspicuous. Those who hold them, digress much from the true dignity of woman, and she should blush to be a member of such an association. But we must not judge all by a few, nor must we imagine that woman wishes to usurp any place belonging, by proper right, to man.

The heart of woman is the resting-place of all that is high and noble. Woman is alive to every feeling of sympathy; the compassionate tear; she soothes the sad and careworn; she is the guardian angel to man, the light of his pathway, the brightest star in the crown of man's earthly happiness; she graces his fireside; and is a meet companion for him when the cares and toils of life oppress his soul.

A true woman! she is the brightest gem upon earth; her dazzling lustre illuminates the pathway of man; her kindness and gentleness exerts a most powerful influence over his heart; she can accomplish more by one kind word than the monarch with his mighty sceptre. God placed her upon earth to adorn society: and what, we ask, would be that society apart from that holy influence which woman exerts? Would not man be less refined, less social? Certainly he would. This fact has been demonstrated many times, for we find that those gentlemen who are the most polished are those who spend most of their time in the society of ladies. There is something in woman which commands respect; she must, she will be revered.

Woman has been too frequently censured on account of her loquacity; some one says "it is as natural for a woman to talk as a Canary bird to sing." And why should she not talk? Was it not to defend herself? She carries no weapon of de-

fence but that, and, when properly used, can do no mischief. But sometimes great harm is done by the injudicious use of her tongue, but she must be very careful how she uses it, in order to prevent herself from being censured.

The tongue, like all other members, may be of great use or abuse. *Æsop*, on one occasion, was told by his master to purchase the best thing in market; when the time came for dinner to be served, his master was chagrined by seeing nothing but tongue, and reprimanded *Æsop*. "Well," replied he, "I was told to buy the best in the market, and the tongue is the best." The next day he ordered him to get the worst article. On entering the room, his master found tongue again. He became much enraged. *Æsop* told him that the tongue was the very worst thing when not put to a good use. This all goes to show the use and abuse of the tongue.

And where is the true sphere of woman! Where should she preside? Is it not at home?—is not this the place designed by her Maker? Should she not be in the social circle as a brilliant star in the midnight heavens?—should she not be as an angel of mercy to others?—should she not be the instructor of his children?—should she not plant the gem of true greatness within their bosom? Should she not, like the mother of Washington, teach her child to revere the truth? Yes! surely this is her sphere. In the family circle her influence is great; she is the best teacher for her little band; she can best train their minds and open for them the secret springs of literature and cause the crystal waters to flow. She can point them the road to heaven; she can lead them in the path of virtue;

she can guide their wandering footsteps so they may falter not, but press on to the mark of their high calling. Such is the powerful and salutary influence which woman can exert, and for such will be given her a crown of glorious immortality. Through life she may have borne many ills, yet, when she draws near to the end of life, she will feel that she has endeavored to do her duty, of having faithfully performed the work of her Creator, and give a good account of her stewardship.

Leaves from my Journal.

CALM, placid, aye, beautiful in death. No sign of rebuke, no frown. A sweet smile lingers round, as serene as the unruffled lake sleeping in moonlight. The cheek is pale; the roundness is gone; the eyes have receded—but what of that? Is there not something to tell the path beauty trod? The blood no longer circulates; the pulse has ceased to throb; the voice is hushed; the mirrors of the soul have closed.

He lies in death's cold embrace, silent as the pale watches of night. The scene could but awaken emotions, call to mind memories of the past—the casket has lost the jewel heaven now claims. That was a noble youth; a rare combination of virtues one seldom finds; but alas! he was not appreciated; his hopes were nipped in the bud, and he sank prematurely into the grave; gradually life wasted away—he was now no more. And if no spark of love had been kindled in the heart he loved, he hoped for, aye, died for; though he had been regarded with feelings of indifference; though she repulsed the affection by coldness and indifference, could the tears even then be kept back, when one reflected what a world of affection was

lavished upon the one who gazed upon the lifeless body. Was it not pleasant to know and feel that we were worshipped, though not one kindly feeling was returned? Ah, whatever might have been the feelings of indifference through life; however cold and insensible to the earnest instructions of one who makes you the idol of his dreams, when life's "fitful dream is o'er," a still small voice will tell us that perhaps we might have prolonged the life of him who passed away from earth so soon. But there are emotions of the heart over which one has no control, and there are times when "conscience makes cowards of us all."

Leaves from my Journal.

FASHION has its many fascinations and allurements. The favorite watering-places, Newport, Saratoga, etc., are each season thronged with those who flock there for pleasure and amusement. Many and varied are the scenes presented. The butterflies of fashion flit from flower to flower, gathering the nectar from honied lips which are ever ready with compliment for those to whom they are so well adapted. For it is there the envier and the envied meet; the "green-eyed monster" could not have chosen a better place to give vent to his spleen. The less attractive and beautiful are eyeing those who are considered "stars," and pass encomiums not very flattering, to say the least of it.

Dinner time arrives; now matrons, dressed no less gaily than their daughters, make their way to the dining-saloon. Young ladies, with the most coquettish smiles that one can possibly imagine, are stealing glances across the table (taking good care to keep one eye on mamma all the while). Dinner is over; now the piazzas are thronged; soon a drive is proposed, and, perhaps, before night a very desirable match is made.

Evening comes; the ball-room presents, indeed, a gorgeous

spectacle. What an array of diamonds, pearls, etc. The dance begins; now faces seem to grow, if possible, more bright, while the rose mantles the cheek.

But fatigue naturally follows, and when the small hours come, the ball-room is deserted by the gay throng, who become suddenly sensible that sleep is, after all, a luxury.

* * * *

The season is over; the gay and fashionable crowd return home. Their temporary happiness has ceased for a while. How shall they employ themselves? What shall they find to do? What shall they do to kill time? Ah! there's the rub. No longer surrounded by a galaxy of admirers: no envious ones to eclipse in dress; no rival ones to make jealous. But, say you, why do they not read? Alas! literature has no charm for some of them; they have no love for the beautiful (except a beautiful dress). They can know no permanent happiness, for they seek such transitory pleasure; time hangs so heavily on, and they look in vain for something to cheer. The books are lying on the table, likely not to be opened at all. The only happiness they promise themselves is the return of the next season, when they shall enjoy the same routine of gaiety.

Oh, happy are they who can find pleasure, not only in that which is sought at watering-places, but are not dependent upon it. With so many books from which we may make a choice; so many sources from whence we can obtain knowledge, one cannot reasonably say that "time hangs heavily on."

—
Moonlight sheddeth her gentle influence o'er me, tranquil,

soft evening hour, calm and beautiful as twilight in Eden. Wondrous enchantress, why lurest thou me? Why lead me to Eden's bowers! Is not earth less bright than thy own home? I am mortal, thy companions are angels. Oft hast thy magic influence been felt, and yet one cannot tell why thou wilt thus enrapture. Who hath not loved to watch thy silent majesty? Who would not woo thy gaze? Thou art a bright-winged messenger sent to cheer us. Without thee earth would seem nought but a barren waste, a desert without an oasis. 'Tis thou who givest cheer to the benighted traveler, and doth lead him through the trackless forest. Day seems to smile upon us even after she hath departed, for thou wearest her apparel. Magic moonlight, all feel thy power, all are led captive to thy witching charms.

—
Oh, music! thy power is boundless; neath thy mighty voice the most turbulent heart must bow. Oh, music, sweet music, thou heaven-born spirit, thou messenger of light and peace, dwell thou with me ever! Methinks I could live upon thy harmony—oh, lonely spirit, my heart is filled with rapture, and, as I list to thee, my ear seems to drink in the melody. Thy whisperings bring to memory other days. Oh, that it were thy mission to waft thoughts and wishes to loved ones far, far away; gladly would I choose thee for my messenger. Thou art my talisman, gentle one, I dream of all that is beautiful when near thee, for thy cheering presence brings peace and joy.

A Leaf.

UNDER his wife's thumb. I pity him. No, I don't either; for in my opinion he might find an escape-valve somewhere. It is rather unpleasant, I should think, to be nudged every now and then, or else have a pet corn trodden upon, because the eyes would be a little truant sometimes. What a face! why it is as long as the Moral Law. Poor man, he sees his own troubles—wonder if he thinks he has drawn a prize in the Lottery of Matrimony? Wonder if he wouldn't be willing to sell his ticket for half price. But he has made a contract in which there is no backing out. He gets affectionate pats on the cheeks (that is, when he does not look at the pretty girls). A kiss greets him every time he comes in; but he would be willing to forego all these little luxuries (?) if he was only permitted to breathe when he felt like it, or go out one or two hours in the evening to meet a friend on business without being catechised an hour prior to starting, and then the strict injunction to come home precisely at ten.

But Mr. Longface is not so much under his wife's thumb as one might imagine when he is seated by his fair and lovely (?) spouse; "still water runs deep," and so do his thoughts. A

capital one he is at planning, his phrenological developments in that particular are prodigious.

Haven't I seen him chatting and enjoying himself as the mouse does when the cat is away? Don't he like to play sick, and by that means go to the sea shore just long enough to have a few delightful flirtations? What sweet letters he writes to his darling after enjoying a promenade with some famous belle.

Doesn't he express a great desire to be in his charming wife's presence in his letter of love? and winds up with a pressing invitation—even positively insists that she shall join him for the purpose of returning home. How he groans when he finds she has actually consented to come. What an astonishing effect the sea air and baths have had after her arrival; "Richard is himself again!" The sooner the better he gets out of sight of those bright-eyed belles and the sound of their merry voices. He always knows which way the wind blows and when the storm is likely to rise, since he is advised of that fact by the roar of distant thunder, which is the voice of Mrs. Longface. How he laughs in his sleeve when he reflects what a farce he is sometimes compelled to play in order to get a little recreation and keep peace in the neighborhood.

A Fragment.

You have never lost a dear one—then you know not what pangs lacerate the heart when entering the chamber so lately occupied by that friend; you know not what it is to feel that there is a vacancy every where; by the fireside, at the table, in the pew at church. No scalding tears roll down the cheek at the sight of the “old arm-chair,” that was sure to be brought forward at a certain time. You know not what painful emotions fill the bosom, as one listens to the howling of the winds; Ah! you have not lost a dear one; it were not well, for those who have never known sorrow cannot sympathize with those who are deeply grieved—ah! no. Every thing with them is sunshine and brightness. You dream not that clouds may come, you reflect not for a single moment that ties may be broken, that near and loving friends may be called away; you know not that a cheerful home may be made gloomy; that its halls will all seem deserted.

I have lost a dear parent, a loving, kind father; one who doated upon me; one who felt that I was the sunlight of his existence; who delighted to have me as his companion during the tedious hours of illness. Aye! and I know what it is to

stand beside the couch while the angel of Death was on its way to call him hence; and though the cold dews of death which gathered thickly on his forehead, were wiped quickly away by my own hand, still did hope, the golden star, beam and bid me imagine he would not die yet. Alas! even while I watched so eagerly for signs of recovery he was called away. I felt the hand as it grew cold, and noted the pulse when it ceased to beat. Ah! there is a great vacancy, one that can never be filled; everything too forcibly reminds me of the stern fact. But with him it was not death to die. Ah! no; his pure spirit is now free and untrammelled. Angels hath borne it away to their home in Paradise. Our loss is indeed his gain.

A Peep out of the Window.

PAT, pat goes the rain against my window; now and then the shower grows more copious. The threatening clouds seem prophetic of rain for all day, if not for several. Every body is perfectly drenched, children are hurrying to and fro, market-women with baskets well filled sufficient to last two days (remembering Sunday). A few have been caught out in their best bib and tucker, and are not very well pleased with the idea of having them rendered unfit to appear in again. The streets certainly look any thing but inviting, nothing but mud puddles to step over; dresses are raised just high enough to display various styles of feet—some are pretty enough to be seen (and those who are fond of scandal might hint that such days were generally taken advantage of for displaying them), while others are not exactly of such a mould as an artist would take for a model.

I have stood by my window for about two hours highly interested and amused—a rainy day never makes me gloomy; no, no, not while there are so many looks both in and out doors. We often read a volume in a face; frequently the introduction is better than the finale. A rainy day does seem,

above all others, to be the very one to see people unmasked; it is not well to see the best side of a character always—we like variety.

What gallantry (?) here, like the knights in the age of chivalry (?). On the opposite side stands a young girl, who has been accosted by one we suppose passes for a gentleman. There she stands chatting away, and looking as coquettish as possible. The rain had nearly ceased. Still an umbrella was requisite. What a perfect model of a gentleman (?). Barnum ought to have him for certain. There he stands like a post, unmindful of the broad hint the fair one gives for the aid of his umbrella: he is as deaf to that hint as a delinquent debtor when a bill is handed him. She finally finds that it is no use to waste her killing glances on him, for he may, evidently does not intend to play the gallant. He very politely makes a bow (so he thinks), says "Good day," and is off, would you believe it? with his umbrella. What gallantry! I exclaimed. How incongruous it did seem to me, for a man to be so entirely void of politeness, and the only way one can account for it is the same the old woman gave, when some one wanted to know why cows had horns, "It is the nature of the beast."

The Lottery Ticket,
AND
THE PRIZE IT DREW.

"WHAT makes you so dispirited and dolorous of late, Roland?" remarked a dark-eyed sister, as the young man alluded to entered the parlor and took a seat on the sofa. "Really," she continued, fastening her dark eyes on him, while a mischievous smile lingered on her fair features and her delicate foot tapped the pliant carpet petulantly, "I cannot tell the day when I saw you look so solemn and gloomy as you now do; in fact, brother, you look as melancholy as a weather-beaten gable on a rainy day. Now, I should really like to know the cause of this, and if there is any remedy or antidote that I can prescribe, I shall be most happy to do it. I am sure the day never was fairer, the sky clearer, the meadow more beautifully carpeted with soft, green grass, nor the peach trees fuller of gay blossoms, than now. Then why this sombreness, if I may be allowed the use of the epithet, of your deportment?"

When she concluded, Roland looked up as grave and awe-inspiring as a deacon when exhorting his hearers to repentance, and inquired, in a corresponding tone—

"Have you got through, sister?"

"Through? No. I can give you a whole lecture, if you wish; but first, how do you like the tone of my remarks?"

"I have nothing in particular to say, either *pro* or *con*, because they were anticipated. You charge me with being gloomy, and I, with equal propriety, can retort by calling you querulous; because, if I am merry and jubilant, I am foolish in your opinion and estimation, and when I am thoughtful and serious, you say I am as doleful as a funeral train. Now, is this not true, sister?"

"I must, like the culprit at the bar of justice, plead guilty as to part, while to the remainder I will plead the general answer; whereby I controvert each allegation and deny the same."

"Of a verity, Amelia, I should advise you to enter some lawyer's office and commence reading Blackstone and Kent, as you quote legal phraseology as fluently as an infant does the Hebrew tongue," said Roland laughingly.

"Arrest to your joking, especially at the present time, as I wish to learn the true cause of your late conduct."

"There it is, again; when I do make a pleasant remark, you repudiate it immediately; but I don't feel disposed to enter into any altercation with you; and will, as you appear to be so anxious to learn it, tell you why I have been somewhat thoughtful for the last month or so."

"Now you begin to talk as a brother should; and, by all means, go on."

"To gratify your womanly curiosity, then, I was just ruminating over what I have lately done, and ——"

He dropped his head and paused, as though the thought was terrible and too painful to relate.

She saw with astonishment this singular manoeuvre, and said, in an agitated manner—

“Go on, brother; tell me all! You surely have not committed a mur——”

The remainder of the word was uttered in an inaudible whisper.

After sighing nervously, he raised his head and replied—

“No, 'Melia; I have not committed any thing that is strictly criminal, other than in a moral view, and even then, I might be exonerated.”

“You have excited my curiosity to its highest pitch; so please tell me all about the matter, so that, if necessary, I can aid you; and if it is so that it will not admit of aid, that I can sympathize with you.”

“Thank you, sister, for your kindness, but I do amazingly hate to tell you any thing at all concerning it, as it in no wise relates to you; and, furthermore, I am sorry that I have been the unhappy means of arousing your curiosity.”

“Oh, plague take you, brother, for thus tormenting me. I never thought you were so cruel. Pray tell me all, as you have told me a part.”

“Well, I have taken a ——”

“What, brother, what?” she eagerly asked, interrupting him.

“Do not permit yourself to become so excited; I have done nothing so very outrageous.”

“I was too fast, Roland; but will now remain silent till you get through.”

“As I was saying, I have taken ——”

“Nobody's life, I hope; have you, brother?”

“You appear very apprehensive and mistrustful lest I should have done that which is wrong; so much so, in fact, as to totally disregard your promise to cease interrupting me while I relate that which gives you so much uneasiness and dissatisfaction. If you will endeavor to keep as quiet as you conveniently can, I will proceed.”

Perceiving that her eagerness had led her too far, she slightly bit her lips, and requested him to tell his story, and she'd “do the best she could.”

“To commence anew, I have lately taken a chance in a lottery which has caused all this (so called) ‘seriousness.’”

“I am sincerely sorry, Roland, that you have been again allured from the path of strict integrity, by the tempting inducements held out by these lotteries. Don't you remember you promised me, not long ago, that you would never risk any more in those fraudulent concerns? I should think, too, that your experience in that business was sufficient to steel your heart against them all. You know the manner in which they are conducted, and that a prize scarce ever leaves the firm who own the lottery. They are nothing more nor less than a fraud and an imposition, where the community is annually robbed of many thousands of dollars. You have purchased ticket after ticket, and package after package, and what have you realized from it? Why, sir, nothing, aside from an empty purse and a burning anxiety to try again, only to lose more. If you have purchased another ticket, and whether you draw a prize or another blank, let it be the last one. Harken to the advice of a sister, and you will never fill a suicide's grave.”

“St. Peter, St. John, St. Michael, and St. Dominic, deliver

me from being obliged to swallow all the orthodox morality that you can preach; but this is quite immaterial, as my determination is concluded, and it precisely corresponds with your advice. I should not have purchased this last chance had I not been confident of securing a prize. Indeed, I am so sure of it that I would not sell my chance for a thousand pounds sterling, which amount Ned Harris offered me, yesterday."

"So you choose rather to make him your confidant, than your sister!"

"Ha! ha! 'Melia, I wonder if you think I could trust you with a secret of mine, with any degree of certainty that you would retain it? I never yet came in contact with a woman who could keep a secret in any other way than to keep it a-going."

"How provoking you are, this morning! Now that you have taken a chance in a lottery, please inform me when you expect to receive the prize."

"As you haven't asked me *which* particular lottery I have procured the chance in, I will tell you something as to the time of its being drawn. I think in about a month. That I shall get a prize, rest assured; but I must now fulfil an engagement previously made."

Saying which he sprang to his feet and left the house.

"What a diffident set of beings these brothers are," mused Amelia, after Roland had quitted her presence. "No doubt he thinks my curiosity is excited to its highest degree; and by his conduct he appears determined to keep it there; but I am not foolish enough to permit such a small matter as the purchase of a lottery ticket—a mere piece of paper—and as worthless as it is small—to agitate *my* feelings a particle. No, no; he may

do as he has a mind to. I shouldn't have said a word about his looks, hadn't I suspected something more radical in effect was in his head.

"Well, well," she continued, after a moment's pause, "things have arrived at a pretty pass, when a brother can't or *won't* trust his sister. I'm sure I don't care any thing about his 'chance,' other than I wish he would lose, just because he cast such insinuations upon the ladies. Talk about a woman's not being able to keep a secret, when he knows I kept one for him a whole week; and when I did tell it, it was purely accidental. But never mind, I may yet be the possessor of a secret that he would like to know, when I will retaliate this conduct of his."

After thus relieving herself of her pent-up thoughts, she seated herself before her piano, and commenced drumming away just as though she was going to drown her curiosity with "the concord of"—of—*any thing* but "sweet sounds." Alas! such was not the case; and the more she played the more agitated she became. Finding that music was but a poor antidote for a disturbed mind, she reclined on the sofa and began reading "Bleak House," which possessed the "sovereign balm" sought for, because in less than ten minutes she was wandering in the fairy realms of dreamland.

Roland, in the meantime, sauntered down the street, and called upon a certain young lady of his acquaintance, to whom he had already applied the endearing epithet of "my dear Sarah;" and he might have changed it a little, with equal propriety, and read thus: "My *intended*."

A pleasant hour, or an hour was very pleasantly spent in her society, when he journeyed on, down the shadowy vale of life.

I will not deign to tell or even presume the nature of their conversation, being yet but a novice in such matters.

Time passed onward as rapidly as usual, until a month had disappeared, when Roland entered his sister's apartment, one evening, and said, in a meaning tone—

"There, sister, is the ticket of which I spoke, some time since."

On receiving it she hastily glanced at it, and found it to be a wedding card.

"Oh, you cruel wretch, you!" she exclaimed, in well affected astonishment, "to thus fool me."

"Why, sis, I did not try to deceive you; you tried to fool yourself."

"I don't know whether to construe this as real, or another ruse of yours. Is it or is it not a ruse?"

"I am perfectly honest in this; the card means just what it says; and now that you have learned *which* lottery I purchased the chance in, will you tell me whether or no you deem my course and selection a judicious one, taking into consideration the fact that I was so sure of getting a prize."

"Yes, with all sincerity, I can say, in biblical language, 'Thou hast done well,' for a better girl never smiled over a cook-stove than Sarah Kayton. While I disapprove of your having kept all knowledge of your courtship from me, I must say that you have made a good selection."

"So you have relented in a measure, and don't cherish such feelings of animosity against *all* lotteries?"

"No, not a particle. When I made that remark, I had direct reference to money lotteries, and never even thought of

what the old poet said when he sung, 'Marriage is a lottery.' No, no, brother; I entertain the same opinion of money lotteries now that I did then."

"Well, I concur with you, and shall always remember that sage advice you gave me."

* * * * *

A month afterward, if you had entered a pleasant little vine-clad dwelling on ——— street, in the village of N——, you might have been a witness to a practical demonstration of "love in a cottage."

There dwelt Roland and Sarah, as contented and happy as two earthly mortals possibly can be.

Although many years have since passed, and reverses have crossed his threshold, yet he has never had occasion to regret the procuring of his last "*Lottery Ticket*, nor the PRIZE IT DREW.

Suggested on Seeing a Little Child at Prayer.

A CHILD at prayer—a beauteous sight! Dimpled hands clasped; eyes lifted heavenward imploring a blessing upon the youthful one. An orphan of six summers—God help the orphan—though not one word was breathed, her looks would be eloquent enough. An orphan! sweet child, like a frail bark upon the uncertain sea of life, to battle with the waves of sorrow and disappointment. But a mother's spirit watches over you, and though the canopy of heaven veil her from view, yet she is a talisman. The evening hour bears upon its fleeting wings your orisons to the shrine of heaven; angels there the record write. Who could harm you? Who could say one cruel, unkind word when they gaze upon you and reflect that you are indeed an orphan? An orphan! What does that word convey? It is but a name, alas! of too many thrown upon the unfeeling world, trusting to kindness when so little is to be found. Heaven shield you from all harm; pluck the storms from your pathway, and strew sweet flowers. As I watch you on your bended knees, does it not seem an example bidding me to "go and do likewise." And as the sweet words, "Our Father," fall from your lips, angels are the listeners. Let it breathe its simple prayer. He who hath said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," will hear your voice, sweet one.

Reflections.

[WRITTEN ON MY RETURN HOME AFTER THE GREAT
EPIDEMIC, 1855.]

GONE! whispers the passing wind—yes, gone. Those dear and cherished friends upon whose familiar faces we loved to gaze—no more will that sweet smile beam upon us; ah! that well-known voice is hushed in death—that step which we never mistook will never be heard again—"gone," "gone."

Yes! the fond husband, who watched with so much anxiety at the bedside of his loved and cherished wife while sickness had seized upon her frame. At the midnight hour he watched untiringly as if to chase away the angel of death. But soon returning health came, and lo! in a few days he was indeed "gone"—oh! the bitter agony of that dark, gloomy hour.

The mother, as she gazed upon the pallid features of her dear and only child, felt that she must go too, should the messenger of death come and bear it upon its wings away. And yet, she was the one destined to leave the child whom she had prayed to Heaven to spare, to face the cold, unfeeling world.

"Gone"—the young maiden just on the very verge of the marriage altar, while the orange wreath is being twined to deck

her brow, is suddenly seized, and in a few moments an angel gently whispers—"gone."

The noble pastor who still clings like the good shepherd to his little flock, day after day, administering to the wants of his people—ah! how welcome is his presence, it is so like the sunbeam peering through a dark cloud, or a bright star rising at the midnight hour.

But his work is done on earth—spirits at the evening hour tell him ere long he will be among the blessed. Now the good pastor hath bade adieu to his little band on earth to join with those who have gone before—oh! the happiness of welcoming him home to his celestial mansion.

The saddened orphan as she mourns in her desolate home, remembers the accents of a loving mother—oh! how dear, yet how sad the thoughts of the past—now cometh the remembrance of scenes which live but in memory. The mother's gentle voice is hushed, yet still the sweet echo lingers in her ear.

And Christmas is in our midst. Oh! what a sad, sad change hath taken place in a few months. Death hath been among us, and, like the woodman in the forest who fells down the most stately and healthy oak, so hath death laid low those whom we thought bid fair to dwell long in this beautiful world of ours. Yes! the world is beautiful—are not the twinkling stars which shine in heaven beautiful? whisper they not some tale of other days? or bring us tidings of those who dwell above? Are not the flowers which bloom in spring time fragrant and fair?—are they not the "alphabet of angels?"—have they not a story of their own? The rising sun, too, in its golden splendor,

sheds a lustre over all creation, gilding the streams and tall spires, adding a brightness and joy to the landscape of nature. Oh! yes, the world is beautiful. But we have digressed.

Ah! how many will be absent at the Christmas dinner—how many will be wanting at the fireside. Every thing will seem to whisper—"gone," "gone."

Many a sweet and artless child who hailed the dawn of Christmas with joy, and smiled with happiness when the expected gift was presented, is now no more.

Strange faces we meet every where; but oh! we cannot give up those dear friends to whom we have been so much attached—no, no, our heart is with them, and we love them in their graves. We dreamed not that when last Christmas dawned upon us, so many would be missing when this festival season came around again. We trust that we never will be called upon to witness such scenes as the past few months have presented to our God-forsaken cities, Norfolk and Portsmouth. May the dark clouds clear away, and many a heart which is now bowed down with grief, see yet a brighter day.

We must not close without adding a word for the "Carrier." Remember him liberally, for while you rested he toiled silently to present you with the paper. Bear in mind that he has but little of this world's goods. Ye, upon whom fortune hath smiled, should ever lend a ready hand in assisting those who are less highly blessed. "A merry Christmas," a "Happy New Year," and many returns of the same.

A Fragment.

You never knew old Hannah; perhaps not, for one so obscure and familiar with poverty is not likely to attract attention. Slowly and silently she trudges along this vale of tears unheeded and unmasked. Not one spot bath she to call her own, yet she is not to be respected any the less for this. No, no; her gray hairs should be regarded with reverence.

Old Hannah has passed her three score years and ten, and is now truly in second childhood. The times had changed and she had changed with them. One day, coming to ask her little bounty as usual, she held up a coin to me and asked, "How much is this?" "One cent," I replied; it was the new cent. It was with much effort that I made her hear, for she was very deaf; she seemed surprised at my answer. How was she to know the changes going on in the currency? she could not read, and there were none to tell her, for so few cared to talk with her.

Oh, how it makes my heart bleed when I look at her emaciated frame. But she does not forget to smile; when she comes in her face seems to lighten up; it makes me feel a thousand times more happy when she seems so; why, I would meet her with a smile, if my heart were breaking with grief the while.

I love to take her thin hand within my own, and lead her to the warm fireside. What if the alms-house is her home? What if my Heavenly Father has blessed me with every comfort while she has none? Should I not be the more charitable for all this? Our hearts should ever be open to give freely to the poor.

Old Hannah has none of this world's goods, but she is rich in those virtues which should ever cluster around a true Christian's heart. Benignant Heaven has not forgotten to reserve a place for her; for there is "no respect of persons." Though the burning suns of summer scorch her brow, and the keen winds of winter howl around, while she has no comfort, yet the time will come soon when old Hannah will land in that haven "where the weary shall be at rest."

Tableaux.

SPARKLING eyes shedding their softest tints upon all; yon star beameth not more brightly nor giveth greater joy to my soul. How they seem to kindle anew while gazing upon the lovely scenes in nature, the soft tinted flowers, the beauteous night—all, all so lovely. Those cheeks, like the downy peach in its pride and beauty; not more beautiful is the virgin moon when she peeps, as it were, from behind the veil of night, blushing as if fearing to meet Venus, with sparkling diamonds shining upon her brow. May that brightness ne'er fade from her cheeks. Ruby lips parted by two smiles which play hide and seek with the pearls they encase, aye! the most gorgeous ruby would faded seem when compared with those lips.

That voice! not sweeter or more enchanting is the strain borne from *Æolian* harps, or whisperings of nightingales which lull the weary one to rest. The spring bird might pause as on light wing it speeds away to its forest home, while the cadence of a voice more sweet is poured forth. Ever let me hear that lute-like voice. Form of symmetry and beauty! to what shall I compare thee? A goddess indeed, yet more beautiful! With what care and grace doth she move along, not more hath the swan upon the gentle lake. Truly this is a picture of life.

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Closed forever are those bright eyes! are they destined no more to gaze on me? have they indeed been shut by some unseen hand? shall they behold no more the beauties of this lower world? But hark! methinks I hear a spirit whisper "they have opened in a far brighter world than this." What, faded and gone, ye roses? Ah! too soon hast thou withered; much did I love to watch thy timid beauty. Alas! alas! too true: ye have been blighted by an untimely frost. I would not that thou should have died so soon. A whisper, a voice tells me they bloom in Paradise.

That voice! I hear it no more—like a harp whose strings have been severed, or the mute lyre o'er which no fairy fingers now pass. Shall I indeed hear that loud voice no more. Oh, sad reality! an echo from the spirit world—it chants the song of angels!

That form! is it indeed marble cold? Shall I see it glide along no more? must it moulder away in the tomb? must it be the prey of worms? What, that form God hath made so beautiful, decay? Will it no more be imbued with life and beauty? This surely is Death. That being, whispereth a seraph, will again live, aye! it was made in God's own image; and while it seems to decay, the grave shall hide it from view. Hast thou not seen the flowers fade away at early summer, and e'en the parent stem wither—did'st thou not in spring-time behold it bud forth again? Know thou then this being shall live again; an immortal soul cannot die but will live in a still brighter world. Surely this is not death, but a gentle, quiet slumber from which the seemingly dead shall awaken into new life.

Yet Wanting.

To say that Lena Worthington was truly beautiful, would be to pass but a common-place encomium upon that rare charm we so seldom find in persons. Her soft, dark eyes mirrored forth a high and noble soul—one ever alive to the keen sufferings of others. The world pronounced Lena proud and cold; she stood aloof from the common mass of people, because they were not congenial with herself. They could not approach her, because she was so unlike them. Her's was a heart replete with fondest love and devotion. Surely, then, it could not be impervious to the shafts of Cupid. Ere she knew it, that gem, priceless, indeed, was bestowed upon one whom she almost worshipped. He was noble, good and kind. Lena saw in him every virtue the heart could possibly desire—she thought. Consenting, she was soon led to the bridal altar. What joy sat enthroned in her heart while she twined the orange-wreath 'mid her dark tresses!

* * * Time passed on; Lena's brow had a shade of care, and yet, she knew not why. He to whom she had given herself, was kind in the general acceptance of the term; if she expressed a wish, it was immediately granted. Yet wanting!

What could be wanting? every kindness possible was shown. Ah! Lena was a solitary star whose beams found no congenial spot to centre upon; a weary and wandering dove which hath no haven where to alight and fold its wings in peace.

There were moments when more than kindness was needed; more than the external demonstrations of affection. But, alas! she found it not in him who had led her to the altar; and though he loved her with the purest devotion, still something was wanting. He could not fully appreciate those sentiments and feelings which would arise spontaneously within the bosom of Lena. If he saw the tear steal down her velvet cheek, he thought it woman's weakness. Not once did he reflect that a single kind word from himself was like the dew-drop at the presence of the golden sunbeam.

Yet wanting! something would seem to whisper to the gentle Lena while she brooded over her sorrow, and the more was added to the weight of her grief because none could enter into her feeling. But few in this cold, matter-of-fact world can fully appreciate those tender sentiments which are so often awakened within the bosom of those whom the world calls dreamers. Ah! they know not, feel not, the richness and beauty of that heart which lingers o'er some sweet dream of other days, that was too light to be of long duration. Oh! that there were some spot where one could soar away and find a congenial spirit to partake of its grief—that grief the cold and callous world calls folly.

Yet wanting! Ah! how many a fair and lovely creature pines away like sweet Lena, who had given her heart to one whom she thought could value it, and though he was what the

world called "the best of men," Lena found him "yet wanting."

Heaven grant that each lone and wandering spirit may yet find one to love them as they would be loved—who can mingle their joys and sorrows—who may never feel the force of the words, "Yet Wanting."

A Portfolio Leaf.

Oh! it is sad to see the young die; to stand beside the couch, and watch the cold dews of death as they gather upon the brow—we wipe them away; but, ah! they come but the thicker and faster. Ah! it is heartrending to see one of the group snatched away in its very bloom and loveliness, and perchance the gayest of them all; who enjoyed life to its fullest extent—one who made father, mother, sisters, aye! all, happy, whose presence was like a ray of golden sunlight bringing joy even in sadness. It is as if a choice flower were suddenly blighted by the withering touch of death.

One link in the domestic chain has been severed—one is missing from the household—every thing brings forcibly to mind the "loved and lost." The chamber so long occupied by the sick one, is now deserted indeed; no footsteps tread lightly, no feeble voice is heard, no faint light glimmers at the midnight hour, no anxious mother keeps the watch nor takes the feverish hand, as if almost fearing to feel the pulse—the great watch of life—lest it beat even more feebly. It was painful to see her upon the couch of sickness; yet there was a great satisfaction to know she still lived, and that converse could be

held; it was pleasant to see a sister's smile of love, or hear a word of gratitude spoken by the sufferer.

But alas! all is changed now—she is gone—oh! it was a sad hour among the dear friends upon earth, when the jewel left the casket. It was a triumphant hour when the angelic host opened the gates of Paradise to admit that spirit, and place upon the brow the unfading wreath of immortality. She whispers in the calm evening hour, "Weep not for me, for I'm happy now."

There is a vacancy every where—the accustomed place in the house of God, which she was wont to fill each Sabbath in the hours of health; the fireside; the table, every where!

But thou hast gone to thy resting-place; like the weary dove, thou hast folded thy wings in peace. The evening hour will seem to bear upon its wings the message of love to the household band who mourn thy loss.

Thou art not dead—no! for with thee it was not death to die; thy spirit hath burst its prison fetters, and soars away to those realms of joy; even now thou roamest at will through the amaranthine bowers of Paradise, whose unfading flowers bloom; where stars are ever bright and skies cloudless. Like some star did'st thou recede from view whilst we watched its brilliancy. No voice can call thee here again; no tears can bring thee back to earth.

Thou wilt not be forgotten—no! no!—thy virtues, like the perfume which lingers around the flower ever after it has faded, will ever serve to bring thee to mind. No time can ever efface so bright an image from memory.

"Christmas."

CHRISTMAS is coming! Christmas is coming! burst forth from the lips of a merry group of children. Now their little heads are filled with the thoughts of the pleasure they will then partake of; the number of presents "Santa Claus" will bring them, and the sugar-plums kind papa and mamma will have in store on that occasion. Great talk is made of the Christmas-tree, which will be loaded with every article to fascinate the little creatures. Gladly would they hasten the two remaining weeks which remain ere Christmas would dawn upon them. Kind, indulgent parents have they, luxuries surround them; of money they know no use, save in gratifying their every childish whim and wish. Brightly blazes the fire upon the hearth; they all cluster around it, and, while nurse is preparing them for bed, they talk of Christmas, and wonder if "Santa Claus" is not thinking about what he shall get for them; each make a wish, as to what they most desire, and hope that kind "Santa" is within hearing. Now, being ready for bed, kind nurse tucks them nicely away, and draws the curtains around; soon they are sleeping, and dream of Christmas and its joys.

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"Christmas is only two weeks off, Papa! will you not promise to give that elegant diamond set? Only think, I will be seventeen on that very day. I am sure you could not refuse, dear papa, to grant that simple request. I would prefer that to any thing else you could give me. Now, do not forget, dear papa, for I shall look for it among the numerous other presents which I expect to get on that day."

Thus spoke a young and gay creature. Ever since the hour of her birth had she shared largely of the luxuries of life. Her home was elegance itself. Every thing that money could purchase was hers. Much had she desired the gorgeous diamond set, and kind papa had already obtained it, unbeknown to her. Great will be the joy of her heart on that auspicious morning. Lovely and beautiful was she; in soft rings lay her auburn locks on her brow of snow, and upon the neck on which the diamond necklace was destined to be placed. Although womanhood had dawned upon her, yet she still retained that childishness and innocence which characterized her earlier years. She was the only child, and no wish could be left ungratified; life for her was one perpetual sunshine; no dark cloud spread itself o'er her pathway, and no rude storm had seared the petals of the tender flowers of love and hope, which sprang up in her pathway. Thus may life ever be with the fair child of fortune.

* * * * *

"Christmas is coming, mother; I have been laboring harder these two weeks than usual, for I wanted to have a nice turkey for you and my little brother. We have been debarred from any dainties of late, because I was out of work; but,

mother, I will spur up and keep good courage; I will try to save money enough, after our rent is paid, to get something to make some pies, too. It makes me sad to see you look so pale and wan of late; I will use all my endeavors to get a good supply of wood for the winter, to protect you from the cold; I am not at all anxious about myself, it is for you and my little brother I care."

So said the devoted daughter to her widowed mother, whom she had supported for two years; her health had so failed her that it became necessary for her to depend entirely upon the exertions of her daughter. Christmas was coming, but it was not looked forward to with joyful feelings for the kind and gentle mother thought of her child who had been laboring so hard to gain a sustenance and to obtain something to make Christmas appear more joyful to them. Pale and wan was the cheek of Lettia but she toiled on faithfully and performed her work, hoping by this to gain the necessary comforts for her widowed mother and orphan brother, who numbered but six summers.

* * * * *

"Christmas is near dear mother and you will then get paid for that work; you know Mrs. — told you to call on that day and she would then pay you." Still closer clings the little orphan boy and he nestles his head in the lap of his mother.

Just glance kind reader around the apartment and see the picture, a few broken chairs and a scanty couch constitutes all the furniture; a few coals are upon the hearth and dimly burns the lamp upon the table. The cold wind is howling without and the orphan clings to his mother as if to screen himself from danger. Christmas hath no joy for them—no, it only serves to

remind them of former years when a home of comfort was their's; but now all those days have passed away.

Oh! how many hearts throb at the thoughts of Christmas; how many preparations are being made. Those who have every comfort that heart can wish, know not the pangs of those upon whom poverty rests. A cheerless day indeed is Christmas to the destitute; no dainty table is spread; no fire brightly glows upon the hearth; no merry voices are heard. Many are the sad changes which each year brings around. To the opulent, perchance some freak of future may frustrate their many plans; to the desolate, a new joy may dawn upon their hearts, and they will exclaim "a merry Christmas for me."

* * * * * This festive season is looked forward to with much delight. Many are joyful at its dawn, while others shed the tears of sorrow when they reflect what hath passed since the last twelve months first commenced their rapid flight upon the unstable wings of time.

A "merry Christmas" to you all my dear friends. May it ever be thus with you through life. May future ever smile joyously and each returning Christmas be hailed with gladness.

The Valentine.

A VALENTINE! a Valentine! yes, I was sure I would get one. I knew that Clarence would not forget. Oh! he is a noble soul, and worthy is he of the love of all. Just think, he is now in China—yet distance makes no difference with him. I knew very well that he would not forget, for he told me that he would prove true. Oh! constant Clarence, ever will my heart beat warmly and truly for you; absence can never make me cease to love one so faithful. Truly can I speak what my heart now prompts me. Yes! these words come from the innermost chambers of the heart—they are not mere lip service.

I love thee yet, I love thee yet,
Ne'er can this faithful heart forget
The pledge of love thou gav'st to me,
My sailor of the deep blue sea.

Art faithful? yes, I know thou art—
And though from thee I'm doomed to part,
Yet still my heart e'er clings to thee,
My sailor of the deep blue sea.

Haste, haste, ye winds, oh! bear him here,
And then I'll wipe away the tear,
Which hath been shed so oft for thee,
My sailor of the deep blue sea.

Methinks I see that smile so sweet,
Which did my gaze enraptured meet;
No more that smile now beams on me,
My sailor of the deep blue sea.

These were the ecstatic expressions of Claudia Leslie, as she opened a most superb Valentine, containing a chaste ring, and a large gold heart, with plaited hair beneath the glass. She found, on looking at the direction, that it came from China. She knew the hand-writing of Clarence Marvel too well to be mistaken. She had parted with him some six months since, and they had corresponded punctually. She never once mistrusted him, for his letters were so frequent, and the same affectionate tones ever breathed in them.

Claudia gazed upon the richly wrought ring, and discovered that the initials "C. M." were carved on the inside.

"Oh! is it not exquisite?" exclaimed she; "what a beautiful design it is. Here is the ring, which is emblematic of his increasing affection, and the heart symbolizes that I have his. By the way, here is a piece of cedar; I did not discover that before; a rosebud, too, nicely pressed. Sweet, sweet Valentine, I give you one fond kiss for the sake of the donor."

Clarence Marvel, (the one of whom Claudia spoke), was a youth of extreme beauty; his talents, too, were very rare, and his conversation calculated to please all; hence, wherever he went, his society was courted. Being in the Navy, he had the advantage of seeing distant parts of the earth, and was a great observer of all that was passing; consequently he had much to converse upon when thrown in company. He fondly loved Claudia, and when they parted, many tears were shed by both

He admired none so much as his own Claudia. She was, indeed, a specimen of the warm-hearted and whole-souled Southerner.

He was first struck by her unequalled beauty at a soirée, held at the mansion of Mrs. ——. She certainly was a most graceful dancer, and very winning in her manners; there was too, that roguish expression in her eyes which told that she was full of mischief at any time. Clarence, being very desirous of making her acquaintance, soon succeeded in getting an introduction, and was her partner for the evening. His acquaintance extended beyond that of the ball-room, and he became very intimate indeed at her house.

But this delightful acquaintance must be broken off (for a while at least), as Clarence was ordered to sea. Oh! how sad did he feel when he found that he must go away; and Claudia's grief knew no bounds; but promises of fidelity soon served to cheer her a little, and she endeavored to bear the parting bravely.

Letter after letter came, and each breathed that same love to Claudia, and she in return promptly replied. Her happiest moments were spent in perusing the lines penned by his own hand. She never once mistrusted, for she thought him to be too true; and, as she would gaze upon the beautiful Valentine, her heart swelled with delight. But oh! inconstant man—his vows are so soon broken; and, though he may swear eternal fidelity, yet he will forget and love another, who little dreams how deceptive he is.

'Tis St. Valentine again—but, ah, that pledge of love comes no more! Clarence has forgotten Claudia, the idol of his

dream. Yes! her brave sailor remembers her no more; her name even sounds strange in his ears. In vain does Claudia await the arrival of the post-boy; no letter comes; no Valentine brings its message of hope and love.

"Oh! he must be ill," exclaimed Claudia; "or perchance he is dead—who knows? He may slumber beneath the ocean's briny waves. Oh! that I knew where his grave was—I would haste there, and slumber with him too. Yes, I would fly like a bird into the foaming surge, for then I would be with Clarence. It has been three months since I have had a line from him. Oh! it cannot be that he has forgotten me; he is too loving, too faithful to forget me."

But, Claudia, he has forgotten, yet you little dream of it. He now breathes his vows to another. The Valentine has been sent to the dark-eyed Spanish girl; he thinks no longer of Claudia. Yes, strange as it may seem, he loves you no longer. In distant lands he roams; and you, who were once so near to him in thoughts, are now most distant. He remembers the Valentine as some long, half-forgotten dream; and the ring he now disowns, and has placed another upon the finger of one who now holds his heart. Oh! trust him no longer, faithful Claudia, for he is false-hearted; erase his name from your memory, and love him no longer, for Clarence Marvel is not worthy of the affection of one so innocent and true.

Thoughts on Spring.

GLORIOUS morning! All nature smiles: surely every zephyr speaks of joy and rapture. The spirit of spring smiles upon the altar of winter. Witching goddess, thou hast come to linger a while in our midst. The sky above wears a cerulean mantle; oh, how soft, how balmy! Every thing hath a voice for me. Yon bird, as it soars along chanting a lay, tells me of a brighter clime; see how his wings seem to kiss the fleecy clouds—how light and gay! Would that every heart was thus free from care and sorrow! Would that we could fly from earth to a land more glorious! Sweet bird, bear me on thy wing, for e'en now do I envy thy freedom.

Behold that wanton sunbeam—how it plays hide and seek with the golden curls of that little child; the zephyrs, too, are lifting those rings from their resting place, as if to take a peep at that brow purer than the fairest marble. How it laughs as it gambols like a fawn so gracefully. May thy heart, sweet child, ne'er feel the weight of that unbidden guest—sorrow!

There are a row of stately trees extending their branches to the sky—how they have a semblance to the evening of life. At early spring they were clothed in emerald robes, sparkling

in the glare of dewdrops, or sang to the music of the sportive breeze. Now, divested of all, they stand as remnants of former grandeur.

But there is an evergreen looking as bright and fresh as when summer smiled. How that resembles a true friend! one who will cling to us when the cold, chilling winds of winter fan its brow, as when the balmy zephyr of summer chanted its song. Oh! what an emblem of constancy! How the wreath of love remains unfaded! as unchanging as yon sun. A little bird lingers round it, as if spell-bound to the spot.

Another scene presents itself. See the cattle as they exult in the glory of the morning—how they raise their heads as if to meet the gaze of the gorgeous sun. "How fragrant is the breath of morning," they seem to say.

And shall not my heart, too, rejoice? Shall I be unmindful of these beauties? Will not orisons arise to the great King of the world? Shall I view these scenes with coldness? Ah, no! My heart shall ever feel a gratitude to Him who hath made earth so beautiful, who hath gilded the streams, added a hue to the flowers, given a lustre to the diamond, and, above all, a mind to appreciate so much loveliness and harmony—who has given the stars to gild the crown of night, the flowers to bring joy to man, the balmy air to fan our cheeks; in a word, he created all things for our enjoyment.

The Influence of Music.

HARK! what voice comes stealing so gently over the waters? I see no form; but tones that seem too sweet for earth are floating around me, and like my dreams of the lays of angels. 'Tis the voice of Music—that sweet messenger from heaven who comes to cheer the hearts of weary mortals. Sweet Spirit, of invisible form, thy whisperings tell me thou art near, and thy mission is a joyful one. I look upon the mighty ocean lulled to calm repose, yet there is a gentle murmuring, like the deep breathing of the slumberer, that tells of thy presence. The playful Naiads welcome thee, and in their pearly grottoes respond by their songs to the whispering of the waves. And when the storm-cloud rises darkly, thou dost speak in the voice of thunder and the dashing of wave upon wave—in the tinkling of rain-drops and the solemn moaning of the distant wind.

Music has an influence o'er human hearts—the tyrant's adamant nature is melted by her presence, and while she lingers near him she shrinks with horror from deeds of cruelty, and sheathes the sword just ready to be bathed in innocent blood. To the despairing she whispers that happiness is a child of earth still lingering round him, and he imagines care to be a

deceptive fancy. The saddened orphan, as she mourns in her desolate home, listens to some long remembered song, and the voice of melody restores the joys of happier years, the father's love and the mother's fond caress. Then, as the sweet voice of music is lost to her senses, a calm delight reigns in the breast of the sorrowing girl.

The mission of Music is not confined to any station of life: she visits all, high and low; her voice is heard from the lordly palace to the humblest cot. When the young and gay are assembled in Fashion's brilliant halls, her richest tones awaken emotions of love and joy in their hearts; she bids them move in unison through the dance. When the brilliant crowd has retired, and fair heads are pillowed beneath snowy curtains, their repose is broken by her voice as the serenade arouses them from slumber. They wake to brighter dreams than those which cheered their hours of sleep, for Music breathes to them her most powerful spells.

The soldier owns her influence as her voice leads him on to victory. He hears her tones in the clarion blast, and his heart is filled with a spirit of fearless daring and his hand strengthened for the fight. When the camp fires burn brightly and the foe is far away, perchance her gentle tones fall upon his ear—he forgets his rude couch and imagines himself in a lordly palace, surrounded by the loveliest of the land. And when morning dawns, he hears her voice in the notes of the song-bird, and his thoughts fly to his childhood's home, where a mother's prayer is ever breathed for him, or a sister counts his weary days of absence.

Nor does music disdain to dwell in the peasant's lonely cot.

She comes to him through the murmuring of the streams, the early notes of the lark, or the sweet voices of children. As he listens to these varied notes, they bid him be content with his lot, though he seems to lead an humble and solitary life, and assures him that he is happier, amid these voices, than the monarch on his throne, surrounded by perils. Night draws her mantle around the cottager's home. The sky is lighted by burning sapphires, and sweet Philomel has commenced her songs. But music speaketh in a sweeter strain as the evening hymn of the little band ascends to heaven. Again the same sweet tones arise from the chamber where there is one of the youthful flock. List! as she chants her evening song of praise to her Maker, how sweetly her voice ascends in harmonious strains, and blends in heaven with the melody of angels.

Music dwelleth in all the scenes of Nature's beauty. The breath of Night fans the tender flowers, and they raise their drooping heads to listen to its music as it moves on perfume laden in its way. She speaks to us in the merry carol of the feathered songster, it falls sweetly upon the ear, and it greets the heart as we listen to his thoughtless song. Ere morning dawns they commence their favorite themes, and grove and forest are filled with sweet music. With a gently murmuring course the rippling streams speed onward, kissing the rocks as they pass over them, and, perchance, an autumn leaf may lightly fall upon its surface, adding another note to the almost inaudible melody.

Music is heard in the speaker's voice. The mother's tones are always sweet to the ear of an affectionate child, though she even chides her faults. Music speaks in every tone of that

cherished voice; but is saddest and sweetest in the long remembered tones of a dying mother's last words. There is a melody in poetry when unsung, for thoughts of beauty are clothed in words that fall harmoniously upon the ear—and it seems as if the spirit of music had plucked the flowers of sentiment, and kept them alive by her revivifying breath.

But the holiest mission of this blessed spirit is to lift the soul of man in adoration to his Maker. When the work of creation was finished, and the "morning stars sang together," ever since that hour has music been chosen to bear the worship of the human soul to heaven. From the deep organ peals of the lofty cathedral, to the simple hymn of the peasant's child, her strains are heard in the home of the blest. She cannot die when this earth and the things thereof pass away, for we are taught in the Holy Volume that the golden harps of the redeemed shall be tuned to sing the praises of God forever and ever.

Nettie Harvey,

OR,

THE DEBT OF IMPATIENCE.

"Isn't it too bad? Here I have been waiting for half an hour. I declare I am just tired to death; one's patience is forever tried. I have half a mind to lay aside my bonnet and say that I won't go at all. I verily believe some gentlemen think they can make engagements and then break them when they choose."

"Why, Nettie! at it again? O, I fear your impatient disposition will yet cause you a great deal of trouble. Pray, what is the matter now?"

"The matter? Why, enough's the matter! Here I have been waiting a half-hour for Edmond Laurie, and he has not made his appearance yet; I am sure he will never come."

"Wait with patience, my dear; you must not expect every desire of your heart in a moment. I have lived much longer in the world than you have, and if you will take an aunt's advice you will be more patient."

"I am sure I do not see how any one in the world can keep their temper when they are disappointed; besides, if he does

not come very soon, it will be too late to take a walk. I verily believe the sun is most down now."

"Wait, dearie, be patient; he will come directly; if you do not mind, you will distort your face so much that it will be almost impossible to get it in its proper place again. There is the door bell now. I'll wager it is Edmond."

The entrance of Laurie interrupted the conversation between Nettie and her aunt.

"Well, really, Mr. Laurie, I think you have taken your time indeed; more than a half-hour has elapsed after the appointed hour. I began to get out of all patience in the world, and have a good mind not to go at all. I don't like to wait a minute on any occasion whatever."

"I am extremely sorry, Miss Harvey, but circumstances, over which I had no control, prevented my coming before. However, I hope it has not put you to any inconvenience."

"O, no! not any in the world; but then I cannot bear to have to wait a minute."

The reader can readily imagine the surprise which Nettie's conduct caused on the occasion, and what strange thoughts must have sprung up in the mind of Edmond Laurie. He never knew that Nettie had that deplorable trait of character—impatience; before, she had ever appeared perfectly lovely in his eyes, but now much of that beauty had vanished, for he had obtained a fair insight into her real character.

Now, while Nettie is taking a promenade, we will give a slight description of her character and person.

In the first place, Nettie was extremely pretty, and as a matter of course, was vain. She was much admired, too, by

the beaux, for several reasons. We cannot say that she possessed a bad temper, not by any means; but then the slightest circumstance would try her patience in a moment. Her mother died when she was but an infant, and her aunt assumed the whole control of her. Again and again did she remonstrate with Nettie upon her impatient disposition, and did all in her power to effect a reformation, but it proved a fruitless attempt. Nettie never seemed to think her impatience to be a disadvantage to her, and when her aunt would speak of its evils and the pain it might some day cause her, she would console herself with the idea that she could conceal it from those she wished. But Nettie, unfortunately, betrayed herself. Edmond Laurie could but see, the moment he entered the room, that Nettie had become very impatient, because of having to wait a half-hour; it was evident from the manner in which she spoke that she was displeased.

Edmond was truly hurt at her conduct toward him on the occasion, but endeavored to overlook it. He was not very sure, however, that Nettie would make him a happy wife, because of a propensity to become impatient. He thought of some plan to devise in order to test her patience. He at last thought of a scheme. Accordingly, one evening, having made an engagement with Nettie to take a ride, he waited a half hour after the time before he called for her. She had completed her toilette, and was talking at the greatest rate.

"I do think Edmond Laurie has a great deal of assurance to treat me thus. This makes the second time he has acted so. I declare it is insupportable, and I will not stand it. I intend to give him his walking-ticket the moment he proposes

to me, for I feel assured the parson would have to wait a half-hour after the time."

In one of Nettie's numerous gestures on the occasion, she slapped her hand violently with a very superb fan which Edmond had given her, and broke it.

"There," said she, "I do not care if I have broken it, for I do not think any more of the fan than I do of the giver."

"You don't, Miss Harvey? Then I am perfectly satisfied, for my end is accomplished."

Nettie started and turned pale. Was it indeed Edmond Laurie who stood before her?

Yes, he had been listening in some hidden spot, and he thought it best to interrupt her in the midst of her exclamations.

"Miss Harvey, my end is accomplished."

"Your end! Pray, tell me what you mean?"

"I will be very plain with you. I do not wish to hide any thing whatever. I have long desired to put your patience to the test, for I doubted whether you possessed that very important quality. I thought once of asking your hand, but I find that it would only cause me to be miserable, and to such a life as that I would prefer death at once. Nettie, adieu: we meet hereafter as friends."

Ah, Nettie had learned a sad lesson, indeed; she now saw the evils of impatience. She had proved her own betrayer—had lost the affections of one who almost adored her. But 'twas too late, for Edmond Laurie was of a very determined mind, and he feared to marry Nettie, lest he might run a risk, or take a step which would cause him a life-time repentance.

Nettie was more careful in future, and obeyed the injunctions

of her aunt. Day after day she had the pleasure of seeing her niece endeavor to overcome the habit of impatience, and always thought that the circumstance of Edmond Laurie overhearing her talk in a fit of impatience "happened for the best."

In about two years after the affair, Nettie was married to one who loves her with the same devotion as Edmond Laurie, and now she is one of the most amiable creatures in the world. She never thinks of the manner in which she acted toward Edmond Laurie on the evening she took the walk, without blushing, and has made up her mind fully to wait patiently under whatever circumstances she may be placed.

Life's True Picture.

TABLEAUX I.

UPON a couch of eider down lies the rich man; his head rests upon a snowy pillow—the apartment is furnished in the most magnificent style. But why looks he so pale and emaciated? Why is each sound hushed—why physicians so troubled? Ah! the man of opulence hath been seized by disease, and amid all this elegance he is not happy. Every hour in the day anxious friends are sending for miles around to learn whether he still be in a dangerous condition. The prince and the king forget not to pay their visits, too; in coaches of richest livery they come; in finest purple and linen they attire themselves. Mark with what cautious step they enter the sick man's chamber.

The mind of the sick man is in a state of inquietude; his whole frame is tortured with pain; he thinks of the vast possessions which have so occupied his attention during the hours of health and strength. Now they must all be given up, and he is to fill one narrow place—the grave. He forgot that he must die, and amid the luxuries of life he had remembered not his God. A few more hours, and the physicians tell him that there is no hope! “No hope!” gasped the terrified one—and must

I die? My life has indeed been a vain one, for I have laid up no treasure in heaven.”

* * * * *

Evening hath quietly stolen over the earth. Silence reigns in the chamber, for the voice of the rich man is hushed. The spirit hath taken its everlasting flight, and now naught remains but the lifeless body. Mark those features in death; they are not placid and calm; they plainly show that the mind was ill at ease.

Alas! what profited him all the gorgeous draperies and luxuries around—for he had forgotten to lay up his treasure in heaven. A long funeral train followed the rich man to his grave; coaches of state, drawn by splendid steeds—every thing presents a gorgeous appearance. What profited all this glittering exterior? The rich man is about to be consigned to his grave—the dark, gloomy abode; and beyond that he had no hope, for his treasures were all on earth.

TABLEAUX II.

IN a scantily furnished apartment, where scarcely the comforts of life are known—where luxury would indeed be a stranger—lies one upon whom fortune has never smiled. His couch, though formed of rude straw, is refreshing to his body. He has suffered long the buffetings of the world; but he despaired not, for he had lived in the fear of his Maker. The sweet consolation of having done his duty seemed to soften his pillow.

None came to inquire about him, for he was "the poor man." None of those dainties which are so palatable to the sick, were offered. But few knew that he ever filled a place upon this earth. Amid all his sufferings the angel of mercy consoled him by these words, "Thou hast laid up thy treasure in heaven."

* * * * *

Night comes; a dark, gloomy one it is. None watch by the dead, save the loving wife and child. Oh! what a comfortless air has the whole apartment; no bright lights gleam to cheer; no, 'tis but a small taper which lends but a feeble ray. It is the "poor man's" abode.

No funeral train has he; no coaches of state; no rich coffin is prepared for the poor man; no costly stone is raised to tell that here his remains lie. Naught but a rude grave is prepared for him. Few knew that he lived, and fewer still knew that he died. But he cared not for pomp and splendor, for that would have gained him nothing.

The rich man had laid his treasure up on earth; the "poor man's" was safely placed in heaven.

TABLEAUX III.

"JAMES, had we not better send our coach to the funeral this afternoon? You know that the Weston's are some of the Ton, as well as ourselves; for appearance, if nothing else, we should do so. By the by, we have not much time to spare, for I believe the funeral takes place at four o'clock."

"To be sure, my dear, send it by all means; why, I certainly thought of doing so. I did not think it worth while to mention it to you. I will tell Robert to put every thing in readiness."

"Yes, do; see that he has his white kid gloves; and get a piece of white muslin to put on his hat. Take care that everything is in the nicest order possible, for I know that the funeral will be a very large one. The Western's are very wealthy people, you know, and it would not do for us to slight them, by any means.

The elegant coach was sent; all was put in the nicest order imaginable. It drove up to the splendid mansion of the Westons, and every one knew that it was the coach of James Holdman, Esq., for it was the only one of the kind in the city. Its elaborate silver mountings attracted the attention of the stranger, who would always desire to know whose coach that was. But this was not the only fine coach in the procession; no, indeed! for the Westons were a very wealthy and aristocratic family; hence it would not answer to slight them, under the penalty of losing their favor—on such an occasion as that was—great respect should be shown.

* * * * *

Mr. Holdman was seated in his counting-room, looking over the numerous piles of bank notes, and counting up the immense sums of silver and gold, for the purpose of depositing it in the bank. A rap was heard at the door; one entered with a pale, wan countenance. Oh, that face? It betokened worlds of care. Surely such an expression could not fail to arrest the attention of any human being.

"I have come, sir, to ask a simple pittance at your hand. My father has died, and we have not the means wherewith to bury him; all I ask is just money enough to hire the hearse, which is used principally for those who are not able to hire the best one. As for myself, I can walk to the grave; perhaps some, out of pity, may follow me. Oh, sir! my poor father is indeed dead, and what we shall do now, Heaven only knows! He was our only stay. I am as yet a youth; I find it hard enough to get along in this cold world—for I have neither friends nor money. Ah! you who live in luxury little know the wants of the poor—who seldom enjoy the common necessities of life. Our humble home is darker still! The last ray of sunlight has gone. Yes, forever gone! And my poor widowed mother weeps sadly! She knows that her only stay is gone. But I will do all in my power to assist her. Poor broken hearted mother, my heart bleeds for her.

The rich man knit his brows as if hearing with impatience the tale of woe. "Enough—enough," said he. "Here, take this money; perhaps this will be enough to defray the expenses. Beggars are entirely too numerous now-a-days; they do not seem inclined to work at all, for if they did, I would not have to listen to the same woful tale so often. I have no time to talk longer, for I am extremely busy this morning."

Ah! the poor youth's heart bled as he took up the small sum of money given to him so grudgingly. After having expressed his thanks to the rich man, he turned his steps homeward. Oh, what a comparison! the home of elegance—the home of the poor.

And did the rich man send his coach to the funeral of the

destitute one, to whose pitiful tale he had listened? Oh, no! The coach was sent to those only who could afford to hire any number. The remains of the poor man were consigned to the lonely grave, and but few followed. Oh! how unequally are favors distributed in this world of ours. What if Heaven should mete us out thus unequally. Oh, Charity! where is thine abode? Surely thou art not a dweller upon earth.

"I've Wandered In Dreams."

I've wandered in dreams to eastern climes, where flowers are chosen to be the bearers of love-messengers to the cherished one; and sweetest perfume ladens the zephyr as it passes; and whose orisons are poured forth at the shrine of beauty. Ah, yes! I've wandered in that clime, and watched the blushing sun-set of a mid-summer's sky. I've gazed with rapture upon a soft moonlight scene, till my soul was as it were, lost in ecstasy. Lovely forms of beauty have appeared and enchanted my sight with their unparalleled loveliness.

I've wandered in dreams in the portals of Paradise; have gazed upon the Peri, with her sad countenance, till a tear filled my eye. O'er the velvet turf I've lightly tripped, regaling my senses with the perfume of sweetest flowers. Through the diamond path I've trod, scarcely knowing upon which sight to first feast my eyes. Above me is the soft blue sky, interlaced with gem-clouds of gold and purple; perchance a pearl may here and there mingle its modest beauty. At my feet are a countless number of gorgeous flowers, each rivaling in perfume and beauty. Around are trees of the most inviting hue, affording a soft and delightful shade. Further still, and birds of

the most gorgeous plumage make their bowers, and ere they retire to their nightly couches, in one harmonious choir they join to pay their tributes to the spirits which watch at the gates of Paradise.

I've wandered in dreams to some bright star, whose trembling brilliance awakened a sympathetic chord of my soul. A sad story, indeed, hath it told me of its nightly watchings upon the sea; of its bitter tears at the sight of the wreck of some noble ship. The voice of the deep hath it heard at the lone hour of midnight, and it trembled to gaze upon a sight so terrific.

I've wandered in dreams to the golden bowers of fancy, where brightest pictures were drawn by the muses and fairies to give joy to the dreamer's heart.

Yes! I am a dreamer, a happy dreamer.

Oh! how sweet to close the eyes as it were, upon the cold realities of the world, and soar away on Fancy's wings. Oh! how buoyant, then, is the soul, and how careless to all that is going on in the world without, while one is indulging in the sweet dreams of poetic fancy. Oh! ever let me wander in dreams.

On the Close of the Year.

On fleet wings another twelve months have passed away; another wave upon the ocean of Time hath been hurled into an endless eternity. The bright visions which spread themselves upon fancy's canvas when the last twelve months dawned upon us, have fled; aye! like the cloud passes over the noon-day sky, so have those rainbow tints faded from the horizon of anticipation. Where are the flowers which bloomed at early spring? They have been blighted by the frosts of winter. Flora has sought a more genial home, till Spring, virgin goddess! shall mantle each tree and lawn with an emerald robe.

Many, yes, very many have been the changes during the past year. The orange wreath which we twined for the bride hath withered, and the wearer, too, perchance may slumber in the cold, dark grave. The mother who hushed her cherished infant to sleep, has endured the pangs of parting: yes! those bright eyes she saw closed in death: now, as another year commences, she thinks of the past—the happy past, the sad, by-gone days; and like a dream cometh the recollection of them stealing o'er, she feels that those ties can no more be united save in the spirit world.

Among many of you, my friends, no changes of a serious nature have taken place; no cloud has passed to mar the home which, as a true and shining guiding star, ever looms o'er your pathway; and may it continue to glow in all its pristine splendor—may each ray of that bright star, as it penetrates your heart, shed a lasting joy.

But the broad, uncertain future is before us: the ocean of life, though unruffled now, may in one moment be troubled—the flowers of memory that bloomed in the garden of the past, will fold their petals in despair. As we stand by the tomb of the year which has just closed upon us, think we not of the many joys which filled us with so much ecstasy? and do we not reflect that some of our dear friends have been torn from us, severing the links in the chain of friendship, or plucking some favorite flower from the garden of love? Once those friends laughed as gaily as we; the beautiful things of earth delighted them as much: but where are they now? Ah! in the solitary shades of death sleep they. The weeping willow waves its branches; and as the night wind passes over the silent graves, and when the quiet stars look so mildly down, they drop a tear.

* * * * *

Year multiplies upon year, until at last the locks of youth are frosted, the brow is furrowed, the rose leaves the cheek, the firm step grows less elastic—finally we make our exit from earth. There is something in the close of the year that bears a semblance to the end of life: at its dawn we are all joy and vigor, but at its close come the sad thoughts of the past moments which have glided away. There is something that seems to tell us that another year has fled; even the solemn moaning of

the midnight wind whispers, "Gone, for ever gone!" The little gems that sparkle upon the brow of night seem to say, "It hath passed." Watching spirits forget not to remind us of its close.

"May all of you, my dear friends, who have hailed the "New Year" with so much gladness, have many returns of the same; may the future smile graciously upon you; may angels ever guide you aright through life; may no tear of sorrow fall upon your cheek, but the flowers of peace and happiness strew your pathway.

A Mother's Love.

"A MOTHER'S LOVE!" and the orphan sighed. "Alas!" exclaimed he, "I have no mother to lavish upon me her world of affection, her fathomless devotion. A Mother's Love! the words like music fall upon my ear; they have a semblance to the last lingering strain borne from Æolian harps while the sporting zephyrs play around it. A Mother's Love!" again sighs the child; "'tis like some long cherished dream too beautiful to endure." The orphan boy bowed his head and wept.

A Mother's Love! and the ocean wave sends back the echo to the ear of the sailor boy whose brow hath already been exposed to the burning rays of a tropical sun. Far, far away from that cherished parent he thinks of that unceasing affection, that pure, immutable devotion, while the tears well up from his heart. "My Mother!" "Thine is a Mother's Love," whispereth the wave. Ah! that love is a talisman to him; it keeps him from acts he might otherwise commit.

A Mother's Love! the angels in unison exclaim 'tis pure, 'tis holy, fathomless and unbounded; the only remnant of Paradise, the only thing that escaped unblemished after Eve committed the fatal sin. 'Tis the only fadeless flower, the mighty inseparable chain which binds the child to its mother. Cherish then ever a Mother's Love.

The Angel Trio.

THE storm raged in all its violence; the black clouds having a semblance to funeral palls, hung in heavy festoons from the vault of heaven. The very elements seemed to wage war with each other; the rain fell in mammoth drops; the wind howled fiercely. Those who were reveling in all the luxuries wealth affords felt not the keen winds, nor heard the pelting of the rain upon the massive panes of glass; for the rich, heavy curtains seemed to subdue the sound. Oh! what a night was this for those who had not the most common necessities of life. Yet, of this the opulent thought not, for they were comfortable enough—too much so, to imagine that there were any who were otherwise.

'Twas a wooden house; for many years had it faced rude storms, and now it seemed almost to totter. One would hardly imagine that it was tenanted; for it seemed a meet haunt for nightly spectres to roam at random unmolested. Now as the storm raged, it shook as if another stroke of Æolus would fell it to the ground. But this humble dwelling was occupied; for there were many who would gladly accept such a shelter from the storm on a night like this. Though unin-

viting in every particular, yet those who were its occupants deemed it quite a home. It was a home to them, for they could afford no better.

The old couple sat side by side, each "bending with the weight of years," and as they looked at the little group about them, and thought what sad changes time had wrought, they sighed heavily. Time was when they knew not a want—when life was a sunny scene, gilded with every pleasure imaginable. They little dreamed that in their old age such a home would be theirs. Scanty was the table spread for so many, yet it was all they had, and who would supply them with the next meal. Heaven only knew! But, hark! who cometh at that hour of the night, while the storm reigns supreme? Who hath a thought for the needy ones seated around that table? Behold, a lovely form entereth; how beautiful, how serene is that face! She seemeth not of earth, and yet hath a mortal's form. Softly she speaks, and now presents to their view a well-filled basket—enough to supply the wants of to-morrow. But, who is this? Surely heaven hath sent a messenger, an angel, into their household.

'Tis Charity! that lovely angel-being, whose heart is ever open to the wants of the poor, who ever considers the sorrows of Heaven's less favored children. How beautiful, how graceful her mien! How serene and placid her countenance, all radiant with angelic smiles! She scorns not to visit the hovels of the poor; but feels it her calling to administer to the wants of others. In the quiet midnight hour, a gentle spirit whispereth, "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord."

* * * * *

An infant slumbered; a mother sat watching it with anxious eyes. The day was serene and beautiful. Summer had passed away, and now came Autumn in all her queenly beauty. A few flowers remained upon the grave of sweet Summer. The tall forest trees were equipped in garments of a varied hue; the leaves lay scattered on the ground, and ever and anon some wanton breeze would bear them away on its sportive wing. The mother looked for a moment upon the scenes without, and then upon her lovely infant. How cautiously she felt its pulse, as if fearing life was fast ebbing. The sweet babe smiled; then softly came a being to console the mother's heart. She knelt and breathed a prayer to Him who heareth always. Oh, what a consolation did she now feel! The mother was not alone with her child—no, no—for Hope, soothing spirit, was there. And though the cheek of the child was pale, and the fever increased, yet did the fond parent despair not, for Hope, with her healing balm, came to cheer her heart. The burden no longer rested on her heart, for hope dispelled the gloom; her presence brought sunlight and joy to the chamber of sickness.

* * * * *

The sailor-boy stood upon the deck of the ship. The body of one of his comrades had just been consigned to a watery grave. He heard the dread splash, and turned to wipe away a tear. Ah, that was a true tear, if it was shed by the rough sailor-boy. Though the scorching suns had tanned his once fair brow, they had not hardened his heart—no, no, he too well knew what sympathy was.

As he stood gazing upon the ocean, his thoughts were varied; many times had he witnessed the burial of the ship's crew. A

disease had broken out, and was taking them away rapidly. Would he ever behold the face of his fond mother again? Would he feel the gentle pressure of her hand within his own once more? Death had been doing its work of destruction, and how could he hope to escape? Did he not remember the last words of his near and cherished mother? "A mother's prayers for your safe return, my son. God will protect you."

Behold, a phantom seems to glide upon the waves; it hath no mortal form; the sailor-boy beholds it, yet trembles not. The dark cloud lingers around his heart no longer.

Faith, the angel-spirit, tells him that God heareth the prayers of his mother, and he will be spared though the disease should seize him.

What a beauteous night! The sailor-boy kneels and raises his eyes to Heaven; his heart is filled with gratitude to his Maker for having thus given ear to his mother's prayer, and faith to him, who had rejoiced in the answer it had brought.

St. Valentine Story.

"WELL girls," said Aunt Fanny, "I will tell you a little story. It is freezing cold without and a blustering night, so I do not think any of your beaux will come. They tell me, though, that love will surmount any barrier; if that be the case, then I will be debarred the pleasure of your society this evening. However, draw up nearer to the fire and wait a few moments—if no visitors come within the next half hour, then I think I may make sure of you all for the night."

We all did as Aunt Fanny bade, and heartily wished no one might intrude upon our agreeable *tête-à-tête*. But pretty soon the door bell rang, and who should be announced but a boy bringing a Valentine; of course we were all extremely anxious to ascertain what direction it bore, and after gratifying our curiosity, we sat quietly down again. "How late," thought we, "to receive a Valentine; it should have come this morning; but the motto is, 'Better late than never.'"

"I was just thinking, my nieces, what story I should tell you, when the entrance of that Valentine suggested one immediately."

"Let us hear it, let us hear it," we all exclaimed in one breath.

"You have, no doubt, wondered why I am sad on St. Valentine's Day. On this great occasion every one seems so happy and gay; the Post Office is thronged at an early hour in the morning, waiting for the mail to open. The young boy with eyes beaming brightly, is in just as anxious expectation of this pledge of love as the full grown man—even the colored population hold a claim to St. Valentine.

"I once ever looked upon this day with the greatest pleasure imaginable, for I was sure to be remembered by many. And now as I look over those I received from time to time, my eye rests upon a particular one I hold as the greatest of treasures.

"The last Valentine I received;" (here Aunt Fanny paused to heave a heavy sigh,) "Yes, the last one—how boldly and beautifully were the lines traced. It bore a Foreign stamp. Ah! I was still fondly remembered: although miles separated us, yet we were together in spirit. How high beat my heart when I took the Valentine from the postman, and felt that hundreds of dollars could not sufficiently repay him for bringing it to me. A tiny note accompanied it, saying that on the next St. Valentine he would be with me. Oh! how wearily and heavily hung on the hours. I would have done any thing to hasten the flight of time; but, alas! I could not.

* * * * "The year rolled around; how happy and free was I on that morning, for the ship was due and Arthur would soon be with me. The sun looked gloriously bright and beautiful; every thing in nature seemed to respond to my smiles. Many messages of love did I receive on that day, but I scarcely gave them a passing thought, for I was so happy in the thought that Arthur was coming.

"An hour passed away; 'I will see him soon,' thought I. Another and another glided by, and yet he came not, but still I hoped he would come directly.

"Papa sat talking over his wine, teasing me about my Valentines, &c., when a post-boy handed me a letter; it was the handwriting of Arthur, and yet the seal was black; how could that be?"

"Do tell us the contents, Aunt Fanny."

"I will show it to you, for I could not read it, even at this late day; though it occurred a very long time ago, yet it is as fresh in my memory as though it were but yesterday."

"FANNY DEAREST:—You await my coming on the day you receive this letter. Not long will these eyes behold the things of earth, for they will be closed for ever. Oh! how I prayed that I might have strength to write before I died, and Heaven hath heard my prayer. We will be united in the bright world above, to be separated no more. God bless you, ever,

"ARTHUR."

The story was told by the perusal of those few lines, and we no longer wondered that Aunt Fanny should be so sad on St. Valentine's Day, for with it the most painful associations were connected.

A Page from Every-Day Life.

"She never sees the Sun save through her tears."

LILLY GRAY was fading rapidly; the world could not account for her sadness of late—she scarcely ever smiled, but looked as if not one ray of hope was left to cheer her heart. Her friends were astonished, for they could not divine the cause of her grief. Her husband was certainly a very cheerful man; he was extremely polite and attentive to her (that is when the eyes of the world were upon him)—he always answered her so smilingly when she asked him a question (of course when any one was around).

He was a very correct, upright sort of man; never used spirituous liquors (only when he could not get it). He was a regular church-goer (for he took religion as a very convenient mantle to cover his hypocritical heart). He was very talkative and agreeable (every where except at home). The world was completely blind to his faults—no wonder, when he had such a tact for throwing pepper into their eyes.

We said sweet Lilly was fading—her round, plump cheeks had grown hollow, and the rose had fled. Her soft blue eye, which, as the poet has so beautifully said, looked as if it opened

first in Heaven, lost all its former brightness. Her merry laugh, once so musical, was now no longer heard.

The world wondered at Lilly's grief, for they could see no cause.

But had they known how many hours certain evenings in the week Arthur Gray spent at "the Club" room enjoying himself in a social way (those who belong to Clubs know what is meant by a social way of enjoyment), spending the funds Lilly really needed—did they know at what "small hours" he came home in such a state that he might well blush to have his wife see him—could the world but know how patiently she bore it all, her secret trouble, how she waited for him till the fire had died out and her delicate fingers were blue with cold, and the spark of life burned as dimly almost as the flickering taper—did they but mark the tears—silent messengers of grief—as they glided down her cheeks while she bent over her sleeping "Willie," and wondered who would care for him when she was gone—had you heard that prayer which only a mother's heart can pour out at the shrine of Heaven—then the world would not have wondered at the change.

* * * * *

But two years had glided away since Lilly was led to the altar. Alas! in that brief time her heart had its own sorrow, and her soul had drooped—yes, sweet Lilly.

"There is a kind of mournful eloquence
In thy dumb grief, which shames all clamorous sorrow."

Life's True Pictures.

SCENE I.—A WATERING PLACE.

"How lovely and smiling you look this morning, Miss Harcourt; why, you are as fresh and blooming as a rose. We will now proceed to breakfast. I have been waiting for you fully an hour, expecting every moment to see you come dancing along."

"And have you not read the morning papers, Mr. Smith? Surely you might have passed your time very agreeably in that manner. But really, I was not aware that you were waiting for me so long a time, or I most certainly would have hurried myself."

"No excuse at all is necessary. You ask me if I have not read the morning's paper. What care I for that? I would not give a *sous* to read the morning's paper before I caught a glimpse at your bright eyes—it would be insipid I do assure you. I am at your command, Miss Harcourt."

"But I insist, Mr. Smith, on your reading the paper before we breakfast; for I am quite sure you will relish your repast much more."

"Never mind the paper just now; we will settle that matter after breakfast."

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"Shall we not ride now, Miss Harcourt, since we have got through breakfast? It is really a delightful, charming morning, and I feel quite sure that you will enjoy it." (*The paper still unfolded.*) "Believe me, Miss Louise, I have not thought of it a single moment. My attention was so completely engrossed with the idea of a ride with your charming self, that I really forgot there was a paper in the world. Go get yourself in readiness."

"I must say, Mr. Smith, that I think you are so very different from the most of gentlemen. You do not seem to feel as if you must read the paper before you attend to any thing else."

"Oh! I assure you, Miss Harcourt, that your society compensates amply for any loss I might sustain by detaining myself from reading the paper. You are an exception to the general rule. The carriage is ready, now for a delightful ride. A beautiful morning we have for it."

It will not seem strange when we say that during the ride, Mr. Smith offered his heart and was accepted.

TABLEAU II.

[Two years have elapsed. Mr. and Mrs. Joe Smith at home.]

"Mr. Smith!"

[Mr. S. is too much absorbed in the morning's paper to hear his wife.]

"Mr. Smith, are you deaf?" [Still no answer.]

"Mr. Smith, I would like to know if you do not intend to come to breakfast to-day."

[Mr. Smith still so much absorbed he does not hear.]

"Mr. Smith, I cannot stand it any longer. I am out of all patience in the world; the coffee is getting cold, and so are the waffles and every thing else, except myself."

Mr. Smith still responds not. Louise, not in the most amiable mood in the world, goes up and taps him not very lightly upon the shoulder, at which Mr. Smith springs to his feet and exclaims, "Yes! well, I think it is quite time."

"I think so too."

"It is the fact, I say, Louise."

"Why not long before, then, Mr. Smith?"

"Well, my dear, I cannot tell."

"Don't call me love any more. Yes, it is time."

"Yes, it ought to have been taken long ago."

"Mercy on me, has the man lost his senses?"

"No, not quite. But say it is time it was taken."

"What?"

"Why Sebastopol, and all the cross women in the world."

"I was not saying any thing about Sebastopol. I was telling you it is high time you had taken your breakfast."

"What, breakfast ready?"

"Certainly, a half hour ago."

"Well, I beg your pardon, my dear, but I was reading some very important news from Sebastopol, and did not hear you."

"No, I presume not. I suppose you have forgotten by this

time how very pointed you were in your attentions two years ago at Saratoga. Oh! you could not read the papers then before breakfast, before riding, nor any thing else. You said when a lady was about you could not look at a paper."

"I beg pardon, I said when an agre——, I meant, meant ——"

"Yes, you meant just what you said, when an agreeable lady was about. I suppose I was agreeable then. I tell you, Mr. Joseph Smith, if I was single to-morrow, I would not marry the best man in the world; no, not if I knew what I know now. I'll guarantee you would find me much harder to take than Sebastopol ever was. Catch me marrying a gentleman who would take up the morning's paper, and read it as though he thought his very existence depended upon it; his wife, too, calling him some twenty minutes before she can get him to hear; and, besides this, keeping her waiting till her patience is threadbare. This is just the way with the whole of you; it is a great pity we get taken in so."

The scene closes. Mrs. Smith does not perceive that Mr. S. has left the table, and is diving still deeper into the "Foreign News," while she has been talking all the while to her own sweet, amiable self, and the breakfast table.

Nora Grey.

CHAPTER I.

"It is nothing but a foolish, romantic idea you have, Harry. I always thought you would, some day, be guilty of something wonderful; but never, no, never, thought you would ever stoop so low as to marry a poor girl. Why, Nora Grey is only a dependent in her uncle's family; and, so far as I can understand, is quite an intruder. But, if I were in her place, I would have more pride than to stay when I felt assured my company was not acceptable."

"Ah! sister, it is well enough for you, who have wealth, to talk thus; but if you were poor, as is Nora Grey, you would then be compelled to do what you deride now. A poor dependent! She shall not be so much longer."

"Why, Harry, what do you mean?"

"I mean just what I say."

"Then have matters come to a close. And do you intend to marry Nora Grey?"

"Yes, Nora Grey is the one whom I have chosen to be my companion through life; and I do glory in the thought, too."

"Only think, Harry! There is her cousin Pauline, who is in love with you; that I plainly see; she is wealthy."

"I do not sell my heart to any one; that is a gift I bestow freely; but, as to any one imagining, for a single moment, that she will purchase my love, is an idea perfectly ridiculous. 'Love gives itself, but is not bought.' Nora Grey will consult the wishes and happiness of her husband; she will not seek for admiration from any one. No; Nora Grey is by far too sensible a woman for any thing of that kind. I tell you, sister, there are more heartless, insincere women in the present day, than one can tolerate; some marry from policy. There is Emma Wheeler, who married quite an old man; he took her from a store where she had been accustomed to tending for some years, and placed her where she would not be compelled to seek her livelihood; and what is the result? Why, she does not care a fig for him; but will flirt with any and every body who comes along. Did I not hear her actually abuse her husband, on one occasion? She was sitting, conversing with a gentleman, whom she thought was much pleased with her. She remarked to him: 'Do you see that old fellow sitting over there?—he is my husband.' Then followed a hearty laugh. 'Old fellow!' If it had not been for that, 'old fellow,' as she pleased to term him, she would not now enjoy so many comforts. Oh! how some people in the world will forget. I made up my mind, long ago, never to mind a word a heartless woman told me; but, when I was in search of a partner for life, to find one who would prefer me above every body else. Yes, that's the woman for me."

"Marry the 'poor cousin!'" vociferated Claudia St. Clair.
 "Yes, the poor cousin! How crest-fallen I will feel!"

"You must feel so then, sister. I study my happiness. As

to Pauline Walthall, I would not marry her on any account, for she will certainly lead any man a miserable life. Nothing but fashion, fashion, fashion. Oh, dear! I would rather die at the stake by far. I will never marry any woman without a heart, sister."

"Marry the 'poor cousin,' then. What will the world say?"

CHAPTER II.

How beautiful is the early dream of love! how like a gentle fountain gusheth forth the heart, in all its purity and affection! Every thing in nature seems to wear a more beautiful aspect; the flowers are more fragrant, skies brighter—in a word, love gilds every object.

Love had found its way into the heart of Harry St. Clair, though but eighteen summers had shed their bloom over his brow; and Nora, the gentle, good Nora, was queen of his affections. Oft did he wander, at the sunset hour, to take a fond look at the little cottage where first he met Nora, ere her mother's death. Oh! how dear was each flower, each leaf, to him; every note poured forth by the sweet song-bird was familiar to his ear; once had Nora listened there with him. Now she dwelt in a splendid mansion; but oh! how miserable was she—like some sweet and rare flower, transplanted from its native clime. She felt herself a dependent; but, alas! what was she to do? What can an unprotected female, left without a fortune, do? Nora's heart bled as she entered the home of her proud cousin, for she felt herself an intruder.

Beauty ever has its train of worshippers, and this Pauline Walthall knew too well, and felt that Nora, her beautiful and lovely cousin, would win, by her charms and artless ways, that which her own wealth could never obtain. And why did she dislike sweet Nora? Why, on every occasion, seek to treat her in a manner most unbecoming? Why had she told her, many times, that she was only a "poor cousin?" Ah! it was because Nora had won the affections of him whom her cousin loved—or, rather, thought she loved; for she was incapable of that deep affection, that pure devotion, which characterized Nora.

Harry St. Clair saw in Nora all those virtues so attractive in woman. It is not strange, then, that he loved her. His proud sister had, more than once, endeavored to turn his affections away from Nora; but it was all of no avail. She pronounced it "boy's love." But Harry knew his own heart, and trusted to his own feelings alone. His sister wished to gratify her pride and ambition; Harry thought only of his future happiness; he was not attracted by the glare of fashion and heartlessness. No, no, that could never make him happy. Nora was his world—Nora the pride and joy of his heart; he lived but for a cherished being, which life would be an entire blank without. He felt that, though she was poor in this world's goods, yet in her heart was a mine of wealth—a casket of richest gems, whose value could never be told. What a wealth, indeed, is this!

CHAPTER III.

"YES, I suppose it would not look exactly right for Nora not to come into the parlor this evening. You know how people will talk; and, treat her as we may in private, we must be exceedingly careful in public. I have an idea that it is whispered already that we do not treat Nora well. That is a falsehood; for, I am sure, we could not be more kind. I could not think of granting her the liberties I do you, Pauline, because you are my daughter. People of any kind of sense at all would know that."

"But, mamma, I do not wish Norah to be in the parlor to-night. It is my company, and I cannot see what use it is for her to come down."

"Well, well, child; you must make the best of it; we cannot do any better, you know very well. I assure you she does not go with my consent. We will have to ask her to come; but, if she has any sense, she will not accept the invitation, for she knows very well that we do not care to have her company."

But, to change the subject, Pauline, I wish you to make yourself as beautiful as possible to-night; perhaps you may yet succeed in winning the heart of Harry St. Clair. I know it would be the most severe cut Nora ever had if you were to win him from her. It does seem so very strange to me how he can fancy her; to be sure, she has a pretty baby face—just like her mother, for all the world; she attracted every body toward her; but she had no such rival as you, my dear. You dress elegantly; you are wealthy; in a word, a fit match for any one. I shall ever regret the day I consented to have her come here;

but what could I do? It would have seemed so unnatural for me to permit my own sister's child to starve; poor creature! it was her misfortune to marry unhappily. I am, indeed, sorry for her. Her husband was a fine-looking, dashy gentleman, and won her heart; he became dissipated, and squandered her property; so, after her death, it was the least I could do to take her child. I would not say it where Nora could hear me; but she is, truly, a sweet and interesting child; she looks well in mourning. I do not believe I can ever persuade her to take it off; she says she feels better in that than any thing else—a romantic idea of her's, no doubt. Girls in love will sometimes get peculiar notions in their heads, in spite of all you can say or do."

"Do you think Nora really loves Harry?"

"I know she does. I will show you a slip of paper I picked off the floor; she dropped it from a book she had been reading. You know she is always scribbling some thing. Shut the door; she might hear us."

"Do, do let me see it, mamma," said Pauline.

"To HARRY:—If all the wealth of earth were mine, (she feels her poverty) each diamond that decks the monarch's crown—each star that gilds the evening hour—each gem that hangs from beauty's ear—each flower that blooms in Eden's bowers—if all were mine—if all could purchase thy changeless, fondest love—even then would I consider it cheaply bought."

"What nonsense! Did you ever hear such a strain? I verily believe that the girl is half crazy, for she seems to take

no notice whatever of any body but Harry. I think it presumption on her part, to dream of him, for he is so far above her."

"So far above her!" Ah! why should Nora be inferior to him, even though he possessed wealth? What ideas the proud and wealthy will have.

CHAPTER IV.

"Unkindness, do thy office; poor heart, break;
Those are the killing griefs which dare not speak."

"COUSIN, I wish not to participate in the gaiety of this evening. Alas! my heart is but little fitted for such amusement. One dressed in deep mourning seems not suited for the ball-room."

"Oh! that is just the answer I expected. There is no need of your wearing mourning, for it has been quite a long time since your mother died. You only wear it because you think it makes you look interesting."

"Ah! no, cousin. It is that I mourn the loss of my dear mother. Though I knew but poverty, yet with her I was happy. I could not be reconciled to lay aside my mourning. It is but the emblem of what my heart feels, and will ever continue to feel. There are but few pleasures on earth for me."

"Foolish, romantic girl. You should be grateful that we even consented to let you come here at all. But it is generally the case that those people for whom we do the most are the most ungrateful."

"Ungrateful! Heaven knows I have not such a feeling in my heart. I only feel my dependence."

"That you ought to feel. People should not forget those upon whom they are entirely dependent."

No reply was given. Nora felt her cheek crimson, and her blood flow faster in her veins. For a moment she scarcely knew where she was; all things seemed to reel before her. Gladly would she have sought some spot where she might give free vent to her emotions. Alas! that heart was almost breaking. If she was but a dependent in her uncle's family, that was no reason why she should be subjected to unkind remarks, or treated with contempt. But Nora hoped for brighter days to dawn upon her, and that buoyed up her soul at times. O! Hope, thou golden star; 'tis thou who bids us be of good cheer, when all seems gloom and sadness around—thou who dispellest all sorrow.

The brilliant company had assembled. Pauline never looked more bewitchingly, nor felt more gay. What added to her mirth was the absence of her cousin Nora; she felt that no one would eclipse her that evening, for she was the wealthy heiress of "Belvidera Hall." Anxiously did she await the coming of Harry; for she was sure of his attentions that night, and hoped, by her cunning wiles, to win him entirely from Nora.

After a while Harry came. Pauline was seated at the piano; when he entered the room, her eyes seemed to kindle, and a smile pervaded her countenance. He approached her, and stood, for a few moments, listening to the music—rather seemingly listening, for it was very evident, to a close observer, that he was a little dissatisfied in mind about something. In vain did he look around for Nora. She was not to be found.

After chatting awhile, he excused himself, and joined a young lady who was standing some little distance off.

"You seem to be lost," remarked she to Harry; "but I can account for that easily enough—Miss Nora is not present. I wonder at it, too. I saw her on the verandah a few moments ago, and she seemed very sad."

Harry could scarcely refrain his joy at finding out the whereabouts of Nora; and, as soon as he could with propriety, he joined her.

Is there not one step for which we anxiously listen?—one sweet voice we love to hear?—one glad smile we fain would see?—one fond heart which throbs for us? Yes; and if there be heaven on earth, surely this is heaven.

These were the thoughts that passed through the mind of Nora, as she sat there alone; she preferred not to mingle in the gay scenes, for her heart was too heavy. Well she knew that Harry would be there; but, then, she was aware of the feelings of her cousin, and would not show any anxiety to be where she knew Harry was sure to go. On every occasion did she avoid any thing she thought would offend her proud cousin; for, having herself such a refined and delicate heart, she could not add one pang to another. She felt sure of the love of Harry; and yet she sometimes thought she must be mistaken—for, surely, he might prefer Pauline, who was wealthy, and by far a more queen-like person.

But it is not always the most brilliant who attract. Ah, no! Like some gorgeous flower, they may have a fine exterior, but contain no intrinsic merit whatever. The good, the beautiful and true, are sure to find some one to love whom they are worthy

of, and who will study their fondest wish. Yes! the innocent and pure never lack for some one to love them. Thank Heaven for it.

CHAPTER V.

NORA was a little startled at the appearance of Harry, for he was unexpected. She knew that he would be present at the entertainment, but dreamed not that she would see him. And, when he did come, his presence was most welcome.

"Alone, Nora?"

"No, Harry, not alone. I was busy with my own thoughts."

"And why not amid the gay and happy to-night?"

No reply was made; a sigh was all the answer.

"I am too happy, Nora, to find you here alone. I care not to mingle with the crowd, since you are not there."

"But, Harry, you must not stay here, for I fear it will give offence to others."

"I care not, Nora. I am in your society, and that is all the happiness I desire."

"Say not so."

"And why should not I speak the true and honest dictates of my heart? I love you, Nora. Ay! and no other mortal can I, will I, love. If you spurn me, then I am indeed a most miserable man, and wish no longer to live; for earth will, indeed, seem a blank to me. Nora, what answer do you give me? To-night am I to be made the most miserable or the most happy of men?"

"Harry, I am poor. I am but a dependent in my uncle's family."

"Nora, I care not how poor you may be; I will love you all the better for that; I glory in your poverty for my sake."

"But, Harry, there are others more gifted, more beautiful than Nora, the 'poor cousin,' as I am frequently called."

"If you but say the word, I will render you independent of the favors of any one. Yes, dearest, and I will give you all heart could desire. I paint no scenes like these to fascinate your fancy. No, no. Say, Nora, for what may I hope?"

The voice faltered; she could not raise her eyes, which, even then, were suffused with tears of joy. No word was spoken. Ah! there was an eloquence in that silence, which expressed more than words could ever speak. And, though Harry knew this, yet he was impatient to hear the words from her own lips.

"Tell me, tell me, dear Nora, what I may expect. What do you offer me in return?"

"A heart replete with devotion."

"Then I am, indeed, too happy. Oh! that words could express my joy. We will know no sorrow, love; for you, as a bright star, a talisman, shall guide me through life. Oh! I am too happy."

"Harry, will you not leave me now? I entreat you to, because I do not wish to incur the displeasure of any one. However much I enjoy your society, yet I must consider."

"Nora, I obey your every wish; believe me, you have made me too happy, and it will be my aim in life to do all I can to

prove it. Yes; I feel now as if I had something to live for. Adieu, dearest, adieu."

Harry entered the spacious and brilliantly illuminated parlors. Oh! he was too happy. All noticed how gay he was, and attributed it to every cause but the right one. He felt as though a leaden weight was removed from his heart. Pauline was as distant and dignified as possible; she knew he had been on the verandah, conversing with her cousin, and thought it was decidedly rude. But if he had been talking to her, in the same place, it would all have been very proper. "Circumstances alter cases;" so thought Pauline, as she bit her lips spitefully; she did not show any desire whatever to talk to any body during the evening; but, of course, she had to force herself to converse with any one and every one, lest she might elicit some remarks. Her pride always got the upper hand of every thing. She knew not what the feeling of humanity was.

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NORA'S JOURNAL.

"Oh! could I but wander in some sweet clime, where perpetual spring-time crowns the year; inhale the perfume of flowers, transplanted from the bowers of Paradise; could, at my bidding, call yon star that trembles upon the altar of heaven; could I pluck unnumbered treasures from the mines; could bedeck myself with diamonds most rare;—in a word, call all the world my own—even then would I be desolate, feel deserted, unless some fond and faithful heart throbbed for me. You, dear Harry, first taught me how to love; and I will ever fondly cherish that heart given to me. Yes, I will live for you—will

'know no joy, save in thy smile.' But the hours are gliding swiftly by, and I must to 'Dream-land.' Peace to thee."

* * * * *

In its beauty, innocence and purity, what can exceed that gift which woman sacrifices at the bridal altar? What can compare with its value, its lustre? Ah! she makes a step, a doubtful step; she trembles, like the light of a star fanned by angels' breath. Oh! that man deserves to die a thousand deaths, if he returns not that world of wealth—a heart of fidelity and truth. Ah! woman dreams not that some dark-eyed one may yet usurp that place which so justly belongs to her. But "they who love most, suffer most."

Nora had no such forebodings as these, nor need she have; for Harry was, indeed, one in every way worthy of her, and she felt it to be the case. She might have searched the world over, and yet not found one so well suited to herself in taste, feeling and sentiment, as Harry.

CHAPTER VI.

"The ocean, lashed to fury loud,
Its high wave mingling with the cloud,
Is peaceful, sweet serenity,
To anger's dark and stormy sea."

"You, no doubt, enjoyed yourself much last night," said Pauline, the next morning, while they sat at breakfast. "I thought you had some design in not coming into the parlor. I know too well the whims and caprices of women not to understand you. It was all affectation; on your part, pretending

not wishing to come. I dare say you had a plot made. As for myself, I would never use all my power to see any gentleman, but let him seek my company, if he wishes it."

"Cousin, I knew nothing of St. Clair's movements. I was sitting on the verandah, as I felt very lonely in my room. He came out there of his own accord; how he ever knew I was there, is more than I can tell."

"Oh! that is a pretty excuse to make. I would not let a gentleman see I loved him, it mattered not how much I thought of him. It was decidedly rude for him to leave the room; there were enough without him, I know; but then it was his place to remain with the company, and ask for you, if he wished to see you particularly. It will not make him think any the more of you, I can tell you. I do not believe he would marry you. It would seem very strange to me if he were to marry a poor girl, like yourself, when there are so many rich ones, who would be glad enough to have him. Some persons are very presumptuous. I tell you, it is rather a difficult matter for a young lady, without any fortune, to marry, now-a-days. Most gentlemen are fortune-hunters."

"If I were wealthy, cousin, I should never wish to marry one whom I thought a fortune-hunter. It is safer to be poor, then, according to what you say."

"It will do very well for you to console yourself with that idea. But I would never push myself into the company of any gentleman."

"I did not seek the society of Harry St. Clair; he sought mine; he knew me long before the death of my mother. It was not by any will of mine that he came on the verandah last night."

"If you thought him an intruder, you ought to have told him so, then; and not entertained him for full two hours."

"I did not mean to say he was an intruder; but that he came on the verandah entirely unexpected to me."

"A very agreeable surprise, no doubt. I will never be the one to let a gentleman know I have any partiality. On the contrary, however much I may love one, I will always lead him to believe that I am not by any means easily won."

Nora made no reply, for she knew if she did that it would only add more fuel to the fire. She was too well acquainted with the disposition of her cousin, and that it was her chief delight to tantalize her whenever she could. She thought it best to conceal her feelings on all occasions, and made it a point never to speak unkindly. Many would deem such a course of conduct a want of pride; but such was not the case with Nora; she was governed by the highest principles of the strictest integrity; her mother had taught her to speak kindly to all, and that to return good for evil was the noblest revenge. The good example set by a mother has a salutary effect; and a fond, dutiful child will never forget the lessons taught by a parent. No, the young mind retains, and is very apt to be guided by them through life.

* * * * *

Nora Grey was engaged to Harry St. Clair. It was indeed true that her youthful and pure heart pined for some one to whom she could unbosom her every thought and feeling, now that she felt the need of a mother's counsel. It is true she was entirely satisfied that Harry was well worthy of all the affection she could possibly bestow, and that he would prove true

and faithful to her; yet, under such circumstances as these, woman feels that she must have some one to whom she can breathe freely every thought and feeling.

Nora should have found in her aunt a proper person to unbosom her thoughts. Yes, for that one should have supplied a mother's place; yet how different was she, and how unfaithful did she discharge the duty devolving upon her.

Nora knew that it was her duty to tell her aunt of her intended marriage with Harry St. Clair; but she dreaded to do so; for she too well knew the answer she would get, and her aunt might possibly do all in her power to prevent her marriage. How inconsistently did Mrs. Walthall act; she had repeatedly told Nora that she was a poor dependent upon her bounty, and yet she was unwilling to see her marry well. But this world is made up of strange people, who are selfish and exacting to the greatest extent. How often are the innocent and the good compelled to suffer because of them. But the day finally comes when they are released from their prison-like fetters, and are happy in their glorious freedom.

CHAPTER VII.

ONE morning, while Mrs. Walthall sat reading, some one tapped gently at the door; but this was something so usual that she paid but little attention to it, and carelessly said, "Come in."

Nora's heart failed her for a moment, as she heard the

words; she scarcely knew whether to enter or not; but she had gone that far, and of course had to enter the presence of her cold, haughty aunt. Mrs. W. was much surprised at the entrance of her niece, and, for a moment, scarcely knew what to say. Nora noticed her extreme uneasiness, and it made her feel the more embarrassed.

"Wonder not, aunt," said Nora, "at my very unceremonious visit this morning. I came on the most important business; perhaps I ought to have done so ere this, but could not make up my mind. One who feels that her confidence is an intrusion, cannot, of course, place it upon the person whom she well knows will perhaps refuse it. I owe it to you as a duty, aunt, to acquaint you of the state of affairs, and beg that you will hear me through, say whatever you may afterward."

"Well, Nora, why not come to the point? I cannot endure all this parley about nothing. Remember that I do not wish to be disturbed; so make your interview as brief as possible."

"I will tell you, aunt, in as few words as possible, that I am engaged to be married."

"Engaged to be married!" exclaimed Mrs. Walthall. "Impossible—impossible! A poor girl, like yourself, dependent upon the bounty of an aunt."

"Strange as you may deem it, aunt, nevertheless it is true."

"And, pray, to whom?"

"Harry St. Clair."

"Harry St. Clair! When will wonders cease? Truly, this is the age of wonders. I did not dream of any thing of the kind. I say that you shall not marry Harry St. Clair! But for you, Pauline would have won him."

"It was no fault of mine, aunt, that she did not win him. A poor girl, like myself, can be no rival for an heiress. But you, aunt, have no right to oppose me in the matter."

"I say that I have, and will do it, too."

"How can you wish to interfere with a marriage that will make me no longer a dependent?"

"Ah! I see that you marry for mercenary motives. You, like many others, can be caught with a golden bait."

"No, aunt; it is not Harry's wealth I marry him for; no, I love him truly."

"No, you do not love him; it is only a foolish notion you have in your head. You shall not marry him. I will not consent to it."

"Then I must marry without your consent."

"Elope, I presume. I suspect notes have been carried; I know that Pompey likes you, and will do any thing for you. But, if I find him taking or bringing notes, I will sell him. I will not own a slave who will not obey my orders. I am mistress of this establishment, and intend to be so always. Would it not look well for a young lady to be the cause of having a poor slave sold away from his friends!"

"The person, aunt, who sells one for the mere act of carrying or bringing a note, would be rather the worse of the two."

"Disobeying orders! No, Pompey shall obey me; and, if I do detect him doing any thing of the kind, I will offer him for sale. And as to you, Nora Grey, I wish you to leave my room, and not enter it again to-day. You have offended me, and I wish you to quit my presence. As to marrying Harry St. Clair, you may just discard that notion altogether, for I say

you shall not marry him. It is just as well for you to give up all notion of him at once. Do you hear?"

Nora left the presence of her aunt, undecided as to what course to pursue. She wished to write a note to Harry, and knew that Pompey would gladly take it; but, then, the consequences. She felt that her aunt was indeed a tyrant, and was offended merely because Harry chose to offer himself. She wrote him a note, and, seeing Pompey in the garden, gave it to him.

"Take it to Mr. St. Clair, Pompey; and, if you are sold because of it, I will get him to buy you."

"God bless you!" said Pompey. "Dat I will, missus, do any ting, case you are good to poor Pompey."

Nora's heart felt lighter as she saw Pompey vanish from view. She knew that Harry would do any thing to please her, and, if Pompey was sold, Harry would purchase him. Pompey was never tardy; so, in a few moments, he came running back. Harry requested her to meet him, at six o'clock, in A. M——'s ice-cream saloon, and there they would settle matters satisfactorily.

CHAPTER VIII.

"She is as constant as the stars
That never vary, and more chaste than they."

"Am I wrong? I do not feel as if I were about to commit an act unjustifiable. Am I disobedient? My aunt is proud and tyrannical; she has never acted a mother's part toward me. Whenever I ask her counsel or advice, she treats me with

levity. Alas! what am I to do? Harry loves me; I love him with my heart's purest and fondest devotion. Is it right for me to elope? There is no alternative, for my aunt most positively affirms that I shall never marry Harry St. Clair. What am I to do? Shall I drag out a life of misery to myself, or shall I be made truly happy by marrying one who fondly and devotedly loves me? I know he marries me for myself alone. I have no wealth; I am very poor; I have told him so, and yet he says he loves me the more. I take but one more thought—shall I, or shall I not go?"

"Go!" said a voice. "Yes, Nora, for your heart is with Harry."

"Rocks have been shaken from their solid base,
And what shall move a firm and dauntless mind?"

Thus soliloquized Nora, while she made her toilette. She was to meet Harry at six o'clock. She stopped to reflect but a moment more. She faltered once more; her better feelings overcame her, and, in a few moments, she was in the company of Harry, who had waited with all anxiety for her coming.

Nora, of course, was a little agitated; not that she felt criminal at all; but she knew what would be the feelings of her aunt when she heard of it.

"Do not have any fears, Nora. No matter what your aunt may think or say. Has she positively forbidden you to marry me?"

"Even so, Harry."

"Who shall dare forbid any thing of the kind? Am I, are not you free to marry whom you may choose? Yes, and all

the combined forces of earth shall not prevent it. Would you hesitate to marry me because she forbids it?"

"No, Harry."

"Then am I satisfied. There is no other way the marriage can be effected than by eloping."

"Aunt would call that a romantic freak," replied Nora, laughing.

"I care not what she may call it."

"Is it wrong, Harry, for me to elope?"

"Wrong! why, no; you would not do so, if she permitted you to marry in her own house. But she says that she will not; so, of course we must elope. We can get Pompey to assist us."

"Oh, Harry, my aunt has told me if she caught him bringing or carrying any notes, she would sell him."

"Well, I promise to purchase him; and, if he will do all he can to assist us, I will liberate him. Will that not please you?"

"Oh! you are so good, so good," said Nora, clapping her hands for joy. "I told Pompey I knew you would do any thing to repay him for all his trouble."

"Yes, dearest, any price, so that I obtain the precious prize—Nora Grey. To-morrow, then, Nora, at dawn, we must make our escape. I will have the carriage in readiness; and we must get Pompey to watch, and bribe the dog with a plenty of fresh beef, so that he will not be likely to make any noise. Remember, then, at dawn. Do you promise it?"

"With all my heart, Harry."

CHAPTER IX.

"Yon gray lines,
That fret the clouds, are messengers of day."

NORA returned home; her absence, of course, caused no wonder, for it was nothing unusual for her to walk at that time in the evening. She endeavored to appear as calm as possible, although she was very far from feeling so. Tea being over, she went up on the verandah, and, seeing Pompey standing below, she descended the flight of steps and beckoned to him—

"I know all 'bout it, missus, for Mas' Harry done tole me. What you want put in the carriage in the mornin', just heave out de winder, and Pompey will 'tend to it. You had better go, Miss Nory, case ye know how Missus is; if she catch me talkin', she tink I do somethin' I no bisuis."

Nora hastened to her home, and, looking in her trunks, she found dresses given her by her aunt; she took them out, one by one, for she was determined not to take away any more than she was compelled to. Pompey ascended to the window by a ladder, and threw a rope in, to which was attached the trunk of Nora. Descending, he watched very carefully for the trunk, which he took and put safely away.

This being done, Nora's heart felt lighter. She lay down for a little while, but it was quite impossible for her to sleep; even if her mind had been in the proper place, she would have feared to do so, lest she might oversleep herself. At dawn she was to be ready to meet Harry.

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When one is awaiting the arrival of any particular time, how very long and tedious seem the hours; we almost fear to hear a footstep, lest it may be one to betray us. Nora scarcely knew how to while away the time. She read till she was weary; then watched the soft, beautiful light without. "Oh! will the day never dawn?" thought she. "What a long, long night."

Exhausted and overcome from fatigue, Nora fell into a quiet slumber. Hush! breathe not a word, for Nora sleepeth; the quiet stars look mildly down and smile. Nora hath forgotten her troubles, for 'sleep knits up the ravelled sleeve of care.' Why does she so sweetly smile? Ah! she dreams of Harry. Soon that sweet dream will be realized, for already hath the spirit of night commenced to leave her haunts.

* * * * *

"Look, love what envious streaks
Do lace the severing east;
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops."

The bright morning star told that day had come. Nora awakened, for it seemed as if some little fairy kept watch, lest she might oversleep herself. She looked out upon the beauty without. Oh! what a glorious morn was that; indeed, all nature smiles joyously. The tender blades of grass, laden with their pearly necklace, now raised themselves, as if to kiss the golden wings of morning. The gushing of the fountain in the garden seemed to sigh as Nora gazed upon it; the song of the bird was not merry and free. In a word, all things lamented the departure of the lovely Nora. She gazed amid all these

scenes, and yet no regret was in her heart; for what regret had she to make? She was not a welcome inmate of that home.

With what a noiseless step did she descend the steps that led to the gate; she almost feared to breathe, lest she might be detected. Soon she reached the destined spot, and there found Harry waiting with a carriage. What could exceed his joy? Nora, his dear and lovely Nora, would soon be his forever!

Fearing that Pompey would get the worst for his trouble, he gave him a note, which ran thus:

"MR. MAURY—*Dear Sir*:—If this man, Pompey, is put up for sale, purchase him; I care not what price you may give. I promise to buy him from you on my return. He has served me faithfully in a certain way, and I feel that I wish to reward him. Do not part with him until I see you.

"Yours truly,

"HARRY ST. CLAIR."

"Be sure to give this to Mr. Maury, Pompey, because it will benefit you. Here, take this purse. Good-bye. You have been a faithful friend, and I will reward you."

"God bless you, mas'."

A few moments and the carriage is out of sight. In a few hours they arrive at the place where persons under a certain age are married.

We will not attempt to portray the happiness of the happy couple, but leave the reader to imagine.

CHAPTER X.

"There is not in Nature
A thing that makes a woman so deformed, so beastly,
As doth intemperate anger."

"UNGRATEFUL, ungrateful creature, Nora Grey, thus to marry without my consent—to steal out of my house by daylight; and, what is worse than all, marry a man I positively forbade her. See what thanks persons get for their pains and trouble. When I took her she had neither house nor home. She, only sixteen years old—a mere child; never mind, she will see her folly soon enough; I hope so, at all events. Is not this a very pretty example to set my daughter? But Pauline is a girl of too much good sense to do any thing of that kind. I think she made a good miss, truly, not to marry Harry St. Clair; for a man who will persuade a young girl to clope, is, in my opinion, no better than a thief."

"What is the matter, mamma?" said Pauline, as she entered the room.

"What is the matter? Why, matter enough. Nora has actually run away. Do you see her trunk is gone? There are the dresses I gave her left out. I do think her intolerable."

"Eloped, mamma? Impossible!"

"Impossible as it may seem, nevertheless, it is true. At daylight this morning did she make her escape. Well, well, I must say that things have come to a pretty pass. A girl of sixteen marrying. Who ever heard any thing to equal that? Never mind, Pauline, you will yet marry some one far above

Harry St. Clair. I cannot get over this at all. It is not that I mind his marrying Nora, but what people will say. The very idea of eclipsing you is more than I can stand. But, my child, we shall have to submit to it. I told her, a few days ago, that she should not marry Harry; and yet, on the very face of this, she eloped. Pompey is concerned in the matter, and I will not own him any longer; for I told him, if he persisted in taking notes, that I must certainly dispose of him, no matter how little I might get for him. You are invited to the grand entertainment given at Madam Ravel's to-night, and perhaps you will captivate somebody. We should rather be glad that Nora has gone. I do not wish to see her any more, and; if she ever presumes to come here, I will actually order the doors to be shut on her. I consider that she has acted a most ridiculous part, and I intend she shall feel the might of my displeasure. Who would have thought that one with such a saint-like face, would ever run away; but it is generally the way with these straight-laced people; they will do more mischief in one hour than a reckless person in twenty years. I really am glad she has gone, and Pompey shall go. It was his place, instead of carrying notes to St. Clair, to bring them to me. Never mind, they will both be sorry for their conduct."

Pompey feared that he should meet with some difficulty, for he knew too well the disposition of his mistress; so he hastened to Mr. Maury, to whom he gave the note. That matter being settled, his heart was at ease. He was happy in knowing that he had been of service to Nora, and he was willing to suffer the consequences.

CHAPTER XL.

MADAM RAVEL was a fashionable woman—that is to say, she lived in a splendid mansion, furnished in most elegant style; gave large parties; kept a box at the opera; owned a pew in one of the most fashionable churches; gave large entertainments to her numerous friends, who went for different purposes—some because it was a passport into the aristocratic circles, some to talk sense, some to talk nonsense, and some to scandalize. One lady was not dressed well; another was a consummate flirt; a certain married lady showed more attention to another gentleman than her own husband. These, and a thousand other remarks, too numerous to mention, was the amount of the conversation generally among those who met at Madam Ravel's one evening in every week. The lady in question was rather more fashionable than learned, as one might soon discover; five minutes' conversation was all that was necessary to find that out. She did not, for a moment, dream she was the subject of ridicule among those very persons who were entertained so handsomely at her place every week.

"What an old goose," says one; "how ignorant," says a second; "how extravagantly she dresses for an old woman," says a third; "she tries to look so young," says a fourth; "I should think she would keep her mouth shut, since she is so ignorant," says a fifth. Such were the encomiums passed upon Madam Ravel on the evenings of her soirées. Alas! for the deceitful world.

"Ah! that deceit should steal such gentle shapes."

Among the crowd was Pauline Walthall. Rich, and rather elegant-looking, of course she was the cynosure of all eyes, particularly fortune-hunters. She was introduced to many by Madam Ravel, who was quite proud of her guest.

Pauline has fastened her eye upon a very handsome gentleman; and it seemed the admiration was mutual, for he sought her hand for every polka and quadrille; stood by her when she played on the piano; and, after a little while, wished to know if she would allow him the pleasure of escorting her home; true, much to the chagrin of both, it was an utter impossibility, as Pauline was compelled to return with the gentleman who escorted her there.

Eugene Du Pont was the gentleman who was so much attracted toward Pauline; he heard it whispered that she was wealthy, and of course that was no objection. He had made up his mind to marry as soon as he saw one he thought suited him; and, upon the whole, he thought Pauline the very one for him.

The evening passed rapidly and pleasantly away with Pauline, and she was indeed sorry when the time arrived for her to leave.

"How were you pleased, dear, with the party last evening?" asked Mrs. Walthall the next morning of Pauline.

"Oh! mamma, I could not begin to tell you; I was perfectly delighted. You ought to see Mr. Du Pont. He is truly charming; dances and waltzes most beautifully; and he has such delightful manners, too. I never passed an evening more agreeably; indeed, I would not have missed going upon any consideration."

"I told you, Pauline, that you would meet with some one far above Harry St. Clair."

"Do not speak of him, for he is not a circumstance; how blind I was to admire Harry."

"You did not admire him; you only thought you did, that was all."

"Mr. Du Pont is truly elegant. I do not know of any one I admire more, he was so particularly attentive to me."

"Well, my dear, I am very, very happy that you are so much pleased with him. Perhaps he will offer——"

"I have not the least doubt of that at all, mamma. Perhaps I may accept, too."

CHAPTER XII.

AFTER the marriage of Harry and Nora, they proceeded to the nearest city. Nora was compelled to remain a week, in order to get some dresses made, as she was not in a fit trim to visit any of the fashionable watering places. Harry persuaded her to lay aside her mourning. Nora, of course, would do any thing to please Harry; whatever was his will was her pleasure.

After getting through the tedious job of completing her wardrobe, they went on their journey. How charming did each scene appear to her! How could it be otherwise? She felt no smiting of conscience, because she did not, for a moment, imagine she did wrong to clope with Harry; for she had laid the whole matter before her heartless and exacting aunt, who ridiculed every thing she said, and plainly told her she should

not marry St. Clair. If there had been any plausible reason why she should not have done so, Nora would not have persisted; but so soon as she saw it was only a selfish movement of her aunt, she felt that she could not possibly give up to it, particularly as her happiness would have been at stake.

A woman, perhaps, never feels more fearless and free than when about to accomplish a particular wish of her heart; it seems to give new vigor, and she feels dauntless. She would dare the eagle, stand at the cannon's mouth, scale the heavens,—do any thing for the one who reigns supreme in her heart. And thus it should ever be with every true and noble-hearted woman who values her happiness. She should permit no one to choose for her. No, let her choose for herself; and, if she is not then made happy, then she can blame no one but herself. Nora felt this; she had studied and pondered the question well ere she took the responsible step. So far from any feeling of doing wrong entering her heart, it was the contrary; and, though she knew her aunt wished her all misery in life, yet she hoped that all her happier days were yet to come. Many sad and painful hours had she passed in days gone by, but now her's was to be joy indeed.

"I cannot express my indignation, Harry, at your conduct. You were well aware that I was most bitterly opposed to your marrying Nora Grey, the poor dependent. Well, I must say that I feel as though I could never raise my head again. I had hoped you would marry some one more worthy of you—Pauline Walthall, for instance. I am quite sure you could have gained her hand without the least trouble at all; but no, you chose

rather to marry Nora Grey, and, what is worse than all, you eloped with her. It has created quite a sensation in our city, and every body is asking me about it. I do wish people had better sense than to keep me continually subjected to mortification. And I very plainly show, by my looks, that I feel crest-fallen; but every one knows it is no fault of mine that you married as you did. I never wish you to enter our house with Nora Grey. What would father and mother say if they were living? Why our old housekeeper, even, seems to feel it as much as I do. I sometimes think you must have been crazy, surely, to have taken such a step. But I am satisfied that you will repent of your folly before long. I had a good mind not to write at all, but I wish you to feel my indignation.

"Your Sister, ANNA."

It was well for Harry that Nora was not by when he read the letter, for he could not refrain from giving vent to his anger after reading it. The very idea of his good and lovely Nora being spoken so lightly of was more than he could stand. As to Pauline Walthall, he had actually learned to hate her: he saw nothing lovely or interesting about her in the least; and, as to marrying her, that was something he never intended doing.

"Let every one make his own choice," said Harry to himself. "Heaven has granted that right to all. We are in a free country, and are a free people. Anna has no cause to speak thus of Nora Grey, and I will never intrude the company of Nora upon her. No, she need have no fear of that, I can tell her. I am just as proud as she is heartless, and she will see it, too."

CHAPTER XIII.

EUGENE DU PONT continued his visits to Pauline regularly; went riding with her; was her escort to all the parties, balls, &c. Every evening he was at her side, no matter where she might be. Mrs. Walthall was much pleased with Eugene, and considered him a most capital man. "He had every accomplishment," &c. Pauline thought him the "*ne plus ultra*." If he had any faults, she was perfectly blinded to them, or did not wish to see them.

When a person makes up his mind with regard to any thing, he is not very long in effecting his purpose. It was the intention of Eugene to make a proposal to Pauline, and felt quite sure he would be accepted, since she had given him every reason to think so.

One beautiful evening, as they rambled together, Eugene felt courage to express the sentiment of his heart; fatigued, they sat upon some rocks, by the bank of a lovely stream, that sang as it sped gaily along. For a few moments silence ensued; then, taking her hand, he said—

"Tis you alone can save or give my doom. Yes, Pauline, as Dryden has most beautifully expressed it:—

'This hand I cannot but in death resign.'

Tell me, Pauline, what is my fate?"

She gave one glance, and, in a low voice, said:—

"Forever thine, whate'er this world betide—
In youth, in age, thine own, forever thine."

"Then am I most happy, Pauline, for mutual love is the crown of all bliss. I had hoped to call you mine; but, so many sought your hand, that, alas! I feared another might claim it; admired and caressed by all, I trembled lest I might not gain the object of my heart; but I am too happy in thus having won the prize."

The sun was slowly sinking in the west. Oh! what a gorgeous scene. Clouds of gold and purple floated above. Ah! that was a sight no mortal limner could portray with pencil. All around was quietude and peace. Pauline thought she never felt more happy, and in that moment did she forget Harry; and it were well that she did, for, if she cast one thought on him, it was sure to make her most miserable; and, though she was by far too proud to acknowledge it, yet did she love him sincerely. At times, it seemed as if she could not banish his image from her mind. Pride at all times will not overcome love; very often, when one uses all her endeavors to strive against it, in spite of herself, it will gain the mastery.

CHAPTER XIV.

THREE weeks had passed very pleasantly away at N——. Nora was much delighted with her trip; her health and spirits seemed to gain new vigor. Harry, finding she enjoyed herself so much, determined to make as protracted a stay as possible.

One morning he came into his room very much agitated; this being so unusual, of course caused Nora to feel somewhat uneasy.

"Anna is extremely ill, Nora: I have this moment received a telegraphic despatch, and must hasten home. I regret much taking you from a place where you enjoy yourself; but, under the existing circumstances, I cannot do otherwise."

"Dear Harry, I would not have you remain one single moment longer. No, no; your sister is ill, and you should, by all means, go to her. I will promise to nurse her faithfully."

A tear filled the eye of Harry; he could not keep it back: he thought of the unkind letter he had received from his sister, only three weeks before, saying she did not wish him to return to her home any more.

"Yes, Nora, we must go, for no one is there except the housekeeper, and she is not over and above amiable, you know."

"I dare say Anna needs some one to comfort her; true, there are plenty of servants; yet there is nothing like having some one to be gentle and kind during illness. She always loved me very much; we are, however, so entirely different in our dispositions, that I wonder we could ever assimilate at all. However, we generally managed to agree very well. It is my desire to go, Harry, to do all in my power to aid her. I assure you nothing can give me more real pleasure than to attend to her during her illness. Although I know full well she was most bitterly opposed to my marrying you, and has spoken unkindly of me, yet do I forgive it all most freely. Yes, I will forget it if possible."

"Noble, noble girl!" exclaimed Harry. "Oh! I feel that, in

'Wooing thee, I found thee of more value
Than stamps in gold, or sums in sealed bags;
And 'tis the very riches of thyself
That now I aim at.'

Yes, Nora, you are very dear to me, and will ever be: it were vain for mortal tongue to tell half my love for you. You are a gem to me indeed. What a noble revenge will be that, to befriend one who has treated you unkindly. Noble girl—a very angel in human form: my life shall be devoted to your happiness alone. My heart was set upon you the first moment I saw you, and I fully determined to call you mine. And, Nora, I have succeeded in winning the great prize, and could not possibly place a greater estimate upon it than I do."

"I feel assured, Harry, that you married me solely for love; fortune I had none."

"A person like you, dear Nora, so good and gentle, I consider in possession of a great fortune indeed, and one much to be coveted."

"It shall be my aim to prove, in every way, most worthy of you, Harry."

A few days, and Harry reached his home; there was a cautiousness about the step of every one, that made him fear that his sister might be dangerously ill; physicians consulted each other, and shook their heads doubtfully. Harry watched their every movement closely, and almost feared to ask them what they thought. In so brief a time Anna had, indeed, changed; the roundness and *embonpoint* was gone. She was pale and wan; and, as Harry stood gazing at her, he could scarcely realize that it was his own sister. Like the rose fading, looked Anna; one would not have thought that, in so brief a time, she would be so sadly altered.

Nora sat by her side constantly; each day did she watch

the suffering one, and do all in her power to minister to her happiness. No one could persuade her to leave the couch of the sick one, and it was almost by force that Harry could prevail on her to take necessary repose. Anna, though so ill, was not insensible to the kindness and tenderness of Nora; no, no; and often did her conscience smite her for penning the letter she did to Harry. And then Nora was so like a ministering angel—always giving good cheer and hope to the sick one; gently did she smooth the pillow, and prepare with her own hand every thing she ate.

One evening, while Nora sat watching Anna, she heard her name called. Taking the hand of Anna within her own, she asked:

"What is it, dear Anna?"

"Nora, I am so unhappy."

"And why should you be so unhappy?"

"Ah! I have not treated you as I ought."

"Hush, dear Anna; do not say any thing about that; you are by far too ill to talk much."

"But I cannot until you say you forgive me."

"Forgive you, dearest? With all my heart."

"And will you love me as a sister?"

"I do love you as a sister, Anna. Yes, and I wish to do all I can to prove it."

"Oh! you have already done more than I really deserve."

"You must not talk any more, Anna, for you are too weak. I shall have to leave you if you talk, and that I shall be very sorry to do."

"Oh! do not leave me, for I feel that no one can do half so well."

Now imprinting a sweet kiss upon Anna, she bade her go to sleep. Oh! what an angel of goodness and mercy was around that couch.

CHAPTER XV.

THREE months have passed away. A great wedding is in contemplation. Pauline Walthall is about to marry Eugene Du Pont. What a sensation the news created among her friends; it seemed everybody knew of it, and regarded it as one of the grandest weddings that had come off for some time. No pains were spared to obtain every article of the most elegant kind. No expense considered too great. Mrs. Walthall was indeed delighted at the conquest her daughter had made, and wished to gratify her every whim. Such a talk as there was—the marriage of a great heiress! To be sure, it was nothing strange for her to have admirers; and the event of her marriage was looked forward to with great pleasure by some, for then they would have the whole field to themselves. Pauline, as a general thing, was no great favorite with her own sex; yet this gave her no uneasiness whatever, since her society was courted by the gentlemen. Every one was on tiptoe as to the time when the marriage would come; they knew the time was not far distant, because the wedding apparel was already purchased.

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The much-wished-for time at last arrived. Pauline was married to Eugene Du Pont; great pomp and parade there was

on the occasion, and everybody seemed to have something to say about it. Hundreds of invitations were extended, and everybody seemed to accept. Nora, of course, did not receive any invitation, nor did she expect it. Even had she been so honored, it is not very likely she would have accepted, under the circumstances. Many times was she passed on the street by her proud aunt and cousin, who did not deign to recognize her at all, but only treated her with the most perfect contempt imaginable. But Nora did not return any thing of the kind, for she was a person of too much good feeling and refinement to resent it. She had done nothing to merit her displeasure at all; and, having a clear conscience, she was perfectly satisfied. If we are at peace with ourselves, it is, indeed, a most happy feeling.

Madame Du Pont, for such was Pauline styled, now figured very extensively at — Springs. She was surrounded by a host of admirers, and seemed perfectly delighted. She received the attention of a host of gay butterflies, and had a pure relish for it, too. It was plainly to be seen that Eugene Du Pont (who, by the by, was not the least jealous person in the world) did not altogether admire his wife's course of conduct. She seemed to like the society of any one else quite as well as his own; and, indeed, for some she showed a decided preference. But Pauline seemed to disregard him altogether, and gave him to understand that she intended to receive the attentions of whomsoever she chose;—not very pleasing tidings to Eugene Du Pont, to be sure, who, like all other men, are jealous in matters of love.

Pauline, who had never been accustomed to being opposed

in any way, was not the one to permit a tight rein to be held over her now. Eugene Du Pont saw it was no use to say aught against her conduct; for he could not convince Pauline that there was any possible harm in it. So blinded was she by the inordinate love of admiration, that she cared only to be the great centre of attraction—the admired of all admirers. She enjoyed herself, and that was all she desired; for she gave no thought whatever as to what might be the feelings of others.

CHAPTER XVI.

ALAS! for vain hopes—alas! that the bright sky should suddenly be o'ercast with clouds—that flowers should fade even while we watch their budding beauty. Harry and Nora had fondly hoped, fondly expected that Anna would recover; they dreamed not that soon she would bid them all “adieu.” Day by day sat the faithful Nora by her side, for Anna could not bear the thought of her leaving her. Pain seemed to be soothed sooner if she was near; no hand was so soft, so tender; no words so musical as those of Nora. And she, too, had pointed her the way to Heaven—had shown her the follies of all earthly enjoyments, and turned her thoughts where she hoped her soul might wing its flight. At midnight, at early dawn, at noonday, did many prayers ascend to that throne where sits the “King of kings.”

Anna felt that she must die—that no hope was now entertained of her recovery; and, when she asked the doctor to tell her the truth, she saw, by the expression of his countenance,

that earth would not long be her abiding place. But she received the summons not with fear; ah, no! for, through the prayers of Nora, she was prepared.

Oh! how beautiful indeed is it to stand beside the dying-bed of one for whom death hath no fears; to watch that calm, serene countenance, lighted up with angelic smiles; to see one waiting patiently, till death should release it of its prison-like fetters; to hear a sweet voice talking to the convoy of angels that surround the dying one.

And such was the death-bed scene of Anna St. Clair—the once proud, gay, and heartless girl; now a meek, quiet, gentle, and trusting Christian, placing full confidence in the God who gave her being, who had wrought a most wonderful and powerful change in her. And, though Nora would have her live, to show a bright and true Christian example, yet she felt that her soul was indeed purified for Heaven; and it would be almost a sacrilege to wish for her to remain on earth.

Anna, awakening one evening from one of the sweetest slumbers, called Nora to her side.

"Dear Nora, I wish to say many things to you; I feel that, ere long, I must bid 'adieu' to you and dear Harry. Oh! that words could express what I feel—my gratitude to you for your prayers, and my gratitude to my Maker for hearing them. I feel that you are a very angel; that you were sent to point me to the way of the good and the pure. You have taught me how to die; to appear before the great tribunal of a just God. You have been so faithful, dear Nora, both as a wife and sister. I need not ask you to supply my place when I am gone, for I feel that you will more than fill it."

"No, dearest Anna, I can never fill the place which you will vacate; but will promise to do all in my power to minister to the happiness of Harry."

"Yes, my dearest Nora; and though you did not promise that, I feel you would do so. Harry has, indeed, a gem in his possession—that warm, true, and faithful heart which throbs in your bosom. I can die in peace, for you are here to console Harry in his grief and trouble; you can heal the wound none other could."

Anna looked up mournfully, and called for Harry; he came just in time to get his farewell. Joining the hands of the two Anna said:

"Peace to you, my sister, my brother; meet me in Heaven."

Silence reigned. That gentle spirit had fled to its heavenly home. A purer and brighter one had never left earth. The grief of those who stood beside can never be told—it was too deep to give utterance to words.

Harry did not feel alone, for Nora was with him, and would do all in her power to supply the place of Anna. How he blessed the day when first he saw the choice of his heart. Now came to mind all the recollections of the past—the unkind letter written by Anna, the conversation which we had noted at the beginning of the story. But Harry could not rebuke her now, no, no; he felt that she had made up for all past unkindness, and freely forgave her. He was satisfied that her gentle spirit was at peace with God. She was his only, his dear sister—his sole companion since the death of his mother; and now that she was gone, he mourned her loss.

As he looked upon the lifeless form, so emaciated, he could

scarcely realize that it was indeed that of his beautiful sister Anna. He thought, as the poet has beautifully expressed it—

"Death lies on her like an untimely frost,
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field."

"This gone! forever gone! the King of Terrors
Lays his rude hands upon her lovely limbs,
And blasts her beauties with his icy breath."

Nora looked a moment more, ere her form was hid from view by the coffin-lid, and exclaimed—

"Early, bright, transient, chaste as morning dew,
She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to Heaven."

CHAPTER XVII.

MATTERS, instead of getting better, became worse. Eugene Du Pont found that he was entirely mistaken in the character of Pauline, and now saw the folly of having linked his destiny with her. She found no pleasure whatever in home, but cared only for the fashion and gaiety of life. Eugene was naturally inclined to dissipation, and Pauline's conduct made him the more; and now he sought pleasure in gaming, etc., with a number of his former reckless companions, whom he might have abandoned, had the proper means been taken. Alas! Pauline was not the one fitted to effect this change. She used none of her endeavors to make home happy, and cared but little how

or where he passed his time, and she had her train of admirers.

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Matters began to take a very different turn. The mother of Pauline was riding one evening; the horse took fright, and ran away. Mrs. Walthall was severely injured about the head—so much so that she became delirious. Nora, hearing of the accident which befel her aunt, went immediately to her aid. In her delirium she called for Nora loudly.

"Ah! Nora, Nora, how cruelly did I treat you—you who were so kind and unoffending—my sister's own child. Oh! how could I ever reconcile it to my conscience to treat you thus?"

Nora wept as she heard her aunt's words; there was no feeling of resentment. No, no; it was sorrow alone. Faithfully she performed her duty to her aunt, watching and attending to her every want. Pauline, as unnatural as it may seem, showed but little attention to her mother; and but for the kindness of friends, she would have suffered.

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Mrs. Walthall began to recover from her severe stroke upon her head, and the light of reason was once more restored. What was her astonishment when she beheld Nora, the wronged, the injured Nora.

"Is it indeed you, Nora?"

"Yes, my aunt; I've not left your bed-side for many days."

"Good, blessed child that you are. I am not deserving of your kindness. No, no, dearest; I was cruel, cruel to you. I attempted to prevent your marriage from self interest alone. Oh! how I used all my endeavors to keep you from marrying

the one upon whom you had set your heart. But I have suffered, oh! how deeply because of it. I have indeed pangs the world knows not of. My daughter has not married happily, and that, of course, makes me very miserable. I have felt more than once that I deserved all my punishment. I determined to send for you, but my pride would not permit me."

"Dear aunt," replied Nora, "you must not talk any more; you are too weak."

"Only say you will forgive me."

"I do, from the very depth of my heart."

"Then I am content; I feel as if I will never recover again; no, no, though reason has returned, yet I feel that my injury is past cure. In case that I may never again speak to you rationally, dear Nora, I would say that I repent of my past conduct to you, and ask, in your prayers, that Heaven will forgive me."

"I do, I do, my dear aunt," replied Nora, while she clasped her hand still tighter in her own.

The presentiment of Mrs. Walthall regarding her recovery was just as she expected, for she gradually grew worse. Physicians were called to her aid; but the brain became so much affected, that, ere many days passed away, Pauline was an orphan.

It was now that she realized the true state of things, and the manner she had treated her own mother. Even Eugene was noticed; but it was too late, for he was fast passing away. Constantly imbibing spirituous liquors, it had so preyed upon his constitution that he was very feeble. And not only that, but was exceedingly reckless, and would not heed a word that

Pauline said. Time was when he would have listened to any thing she might say, and would have been led by her. But, all! time had changed, and Eugene Du Pont was an altered man, and the picture of the most abject misery.

Pauline felt as though she had no friends to lean upon but Nora, who was the very essence of kindness, and gave her all the encouragement and hope in her power. Oh! what a noble, pure heart has woman; how she will faithfully serve to the last, and forgive the many injuries received. What a lovely picture is woman, in all her beauty and innocence; no friend can express, no mortal paint aught so enchanting as woman, in all her loveliness and purity.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"A villain, when he seems most kind,
Is most to be suspected."

"CAPITAL, capital plan, is it not? I thought I would bring Du Pont's wife over to loaning me that amount; if she can get it back again, I will not be the one to pay it, I can tell you. What a fool Eugene is. Why, he gets so inebriated that a person may rob him of every cent he owns. I found out the weak point in his wife, and took advantage, too. You see I flatter her up; told her she was so wealthy, etc., finally persuaded her to loan me the sum. I wonder what she would say if she knew Eugene had been so generous. I am thinking poor Du Pont is out of funds. He has had his pocket picked many times; and I do not wonder at it, for he carries very

large sums about him generally. He is declining every day; poor fellow! he will not live long; and when he dies I am afraid he will not have enough to bury him decently, for he lost some very large sums at the last race. To be sure, I won it from him; but that makes no difference; a man of honor always pays his debts."

Thus spoke one whom Pauline had entertained so handsomely at her house, little thinking that he was fast leading her husband to the brink of ruin; and scoffed at him, too, when he plainly saw that he could not live much longer. But such is the way of the world.

"Impossible! impossible!" said Harry St. Clair, as he dropped the paper from his hands.

"What has happened, dear Harry?"

"I will read you an item."

"FOUND DEAD:—About eleven o'clock, on Tuesday night, Eugene Du Pont was found dead in Vine Street. His head was most terribly fractured, and one of his limbs was broken. He was very much intoxicated an hour or two previous to his death."

"Dreadful! dreadful!" exclaimed Nora. "Poor Pauline! what will she do? Truly did the poet speak, when he said, 'Troubles, like vultures, always come in flocks.' I am indeed sorry for her."

"I was told, this morning, that he was very much embarrassed in a pecuniary way. He had lost large sums of money

of late. He married unhappily, poor man. Pauline, Nora, is the one, sister was so anxious I should marry; but, thank heaven, I made the fortunate escape. I could never have loved her; I tell you candidly, she could never make me happy; for she is, by far, too fond of gaiety and fashion. I am domestic, and find more real pleasure in my home than any other spot on earth."

"Yes, Harry, to me there is no spot like home. Ours has ever been a happy one, and I sincerely hope it may ever be."

CHAPTER XIX.

"They who forgive most shall be most forgiven."

"Go, Harry, I cannot consent for Pauline to apply for a situation as governess; she has never known misfortune till now, and is but little fitted to provide for herself. In her case she scarcely knows what or how to do. This morning she told me she would write to Mr. Mills, and see if he would not employ her as governess; but I know that Pauline is not fitted for that position. It is true she has a splendid education; but, then, it requires so much patience and forbearance—more than Pauline could ever be mistress of. What a sin, a double sin, it was for the profligate companions of Eugene Du Pont to rob him of so much money. I call it nothing else but robbing, for such I consider it. Any one who will take the advantage of a man while he is intoxicated, is no better than a villain. But Pauline was somewhat to blame, too, because she did not pursue

the proper course. I will not censure her. I pity her too much for that. Alas! she has troubles enough to crush her to the earth. It was only twelve months since she was married, with so much pomp and array. See what a reverse has come!"

"Let us offer her a permanent home, Nora. I feel perfectly willing to do so provided it is agreeable to you."

"Agreeable to me? Yes, dear Harry, that is what I most wish; for I could not permit her to leave my home to wander among strangers. I could not enjoy the luxuries that surround me at all, if I knew she was depending upon her own labor, day by day, for a support."

"Speak to her, Nora, upon the subject; tell her we most cheerfully and willingly offer her a home, and that we will do all in our power to make her happy, and forget her troubles."

"I will, I will!" exclaimed Nora; "it will give me joy to be the bearer of such tidings to her. It would give me pleasure to know that I had brought happiness to any one in so great distress as is cousin Pauline. Yes, Harry, methinks it would make my dying pillow softer."

"You have healed many wounds, dear Nora, and your reward shall be great; so true and pure a Christian need never fear the dying hour."

"Say not so, Harry, for I feel that I am indeed unworthy in the sight of my Maker; but I will endeavor so to live, that, when the messenger comes, I will be prepared to meet him."

* * * * *

Nora, at the earliest moment, communicated the intelligence to Pauline, who was so overcome that she gave vent to tears.

"I am not worthy such kindness and generosity, Nora; I had

not expected so much of you as to offer me a home. Alas! once I thought reverses would never come to me. But my bright days have all passed away, I fear."

"Say not so, Pauline, dear; but rather hope there are many bright and happy hours for you in the future. It shall be my constant aim to make you happy, dearest, and we will forget the past."

"And will you forgive it?"

"Forgive it! with all my heart, dearest Pauline; but you must never recall it again, for it only makes you the more unhappy. The past shall be buried in oblivion, Pauline, and we will live but in the present."

"Dear, dear Nora, I cannot express the feelings of my heart—you, to whom I have been so unkind, so cruel, now to prove to me the dearest and best of friends; you were surely created to be my talisman, my guardian angel through life. I will show, by my future conduct, that Pauline appreciates your kindness and generosity; and my constant prayer shall be that every blessing of life attend you, my darling friend, who has proved such an angel of mercy in my distress."

What a noble revenge, indeed, was this!

A Thought.

It is certainly quite astonishing to see what an intolerable amount of vanity some men do possess. Let your eyes, by the merest accident (eyes will wander), rest upon one. See with what eagerness he seizes his moustache (if nature or art has furnished him with one), and gives it a curl, as if determined to make it go the way nature never intended it should. How their faces seem to brighten up, when their vanity is touched. A look is given at himself; the very first mirror he chances to pass to discover (if possible) the captivating feature. How frowning he looks upon the one whom he has chosen, I should have said who has chosen him for better or worse (worse, we are inclined to believe), and wonder why he married so soon, when he might have done so much better; and where in the mischief the attraction was (forgetting all the time how the dimes dazzled his sight). How disconcerted he seems the while, flattering himself that he is excruciatingly handsome in the eyes of every member of the fair sex—when lo! if the truth must be known, the gentle ones only glanced by way of feeding their vanity, and wondered how some men could be so vain. It is my honest opinion that all had better steer clear of vain men—they never make good husbands.

"The Consumptive."

How transitory, how fleeting is life! Like the sweet flower which smiles at the dawn of spring when nature rejoices with a gladdened heart, so are the golden hours of health. Yet fragile, indeed, for some unbidden storm may come over the tender plant, and perchance crush forever.

The maiden may be gay and happy; life wear its most bright and cheering aspect; the rose blushes not more brightly, stars have not a greater lustre than her eyes, no music is sweeter than her voice—fairest of the fair is she; all bow at her shrine, for even is beauty worshipped and caressed. The cynosure of all eyes, the envy of her sex, the most brilliant star which illuminates the fashionable world.

* * * * *

Months pass, and a change hath come. The blush keeps not its wonted place, but burns for a while, and, like some brilliant meteor which suddenly flashes across the heavens, it is soon gone. The roundness of her form hath vanished; the beautiful cheek grows pale, the voice is low and sad, the echo of her laugh hath died away with that of the fabled Nymph. Consumption hath seized upon her, and soon a being so fair and beautiful must die.

"Oh, earth!" exclaimed she, how can I give thee up? Oh!

how many pleasures hast thou for me, indeed. Sweet flowers, must thou bloom no more for me? Gay birds, shall I hear no more thy songs? Bright stars, wilt thou beath no more on me? My friends, my gay companions; must I leave thee all? Must I, indeed, slumber in the cold, dark grave? Oh, how can I leave this beautiful earth. Saddening the thought to lie in the tomb, while sweet summer smiles; and, sadder still, while the storms of winter howl furiously o'er the grave, like some ill-omened bird.

"And Horatio, too, will I never more behold thy face? For thee have I lived, thee only do, I love with my heart's purest devotion. Oh! will you not come to my grave and drop one tear for me? My heart throbs in thy bosom; oh! keep it forever there, and, though another may be thine, yet think, oh, think of Helen."

Day by day wasted the form away, and like the petals of a withering flower, which fall one by one, so did life's moments glide away from her. Her deep regrets cannot prolong the stay on earth; the untiring devotion which she feels for one cannot bind her here—no, no, for consumption hath seized her for its victim.

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Oh! it is sad to see one in the very bud of life fading prematurely; 'tis like the death of the lovely rose which delights the sight so much. But death spares none, for all must become its victims; and though we are reluctant to leave earth, yet when the messenger comes, all the prayers, the tears of friends, can be of no avail, for on its tireless wings it beareth those we so much love from us.

Aunt Lucy's Story.

"It is all wrong, very wrong, Julia; you should not trifle with the feelings of a young gentleman in that way. It may be very nice for you; but you remember the fable of the frog and the boys. You should not be so careless in a matter of this kind, for it is a greater sin than you now imagine."

"Law! Aunt Lucy, what a mountain you do make of a mole-hill. One, to hear you talk, would think I had been guilty of some heinous crime, and after all it is nothing but a little innocent flirtation in which I have been indulging by way of fun."

"Only an innocent flirtation, Julia! And do you not know that flirtations sometimes end very seriously? You have, I am very confident, discarded Louis Rand."

"To be sure I have, long ago! ha! ha! ha! I do wonder if he thought I would be goose enough to marry him."

"If you gave him reasons for thinking so, (and I am confident you did) of course he was under the impression you meant what you professed."

"Well, to be very candid, Aunt Lucy, I did make him believe

I thought all the world of him; but, honestly, I was only flirting with him; I could never marry such a man."

"What is the fault?"

"The fault, why he has a thousand. He is, in the first place, too diminutive; I like tall, commanding looking men (provided they do not want to command me after I am married) whom everybody will admire, and say to themselves, 'I do wish I might be so fortunate as to get such a husband.' But this is not all the objection. I have a hundred beside."

"You should have found out this before; I see the cause full well; you have become infatuated with some one else. Aunt Lucy can see farther, much farther than you think for. But, laying aside jesting, it is a great sin to indulge in flirtations. Now sit down awhile, by me, until I relate you a little story; and, after I shall have finished, answer me candidly whether or not flirting is a sin?"

"Once upon a time, there was a young lady who, though far from being beautiful, was, nevertheless, a great belle. Her admirers were numerous, too numerous for her own good. Her propensity for flirting was very great; yes, as great as that of my own niece, Julia. Among her admirers there was one whom she favored more highly than all the rest. She gave him every reason to believe his devoted affection was reciprocated. She would correspond with him, receive presents, etc. At last, he proposed and was accepted. No particular time was appointed, however, for the marriage to be consummated. In the meantime, a very handsome young gentleman arrived, he had taken a degree at Paris as the D——, and came crowned with honors. He, like the rest, soon became infatuated with

this belle. She thought she fancied him, and was indiscreet enough to accept his proposals of marriage, when she knew she was engaged to another.

"At length, being urged by the first one to whom she had given herself, relative to fixing the all-important day, she, in the most playful manner imaginable, told him she was only flirting? What a death-blow was this to the hopes of one who had thought of no one but herself. He gave one look, (such a look was enough to have smitten her forever) he turned away from her. He took passage in a steamer and sought his home elsewhere, in hopes of burying in oblivion scenes that alas! would ever loom before him.

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"One morning, on taking up the paper, the gay belle found him among the number received in the lunatic asylum. A promising, fine-looking youth, just in the bloom of health and vigor, so full of hope for the future, now delirious. Alas! what profited him all his fortune? Now earth was dark indeed; there was no oasis in the great desert of life. The bright star of hope had gone out. Not long did he survive; for ere two months had passed away he had sunk into the grave.

"His friends, upon examining the contents of his portfolio, found lines addressed to the young lady in question, soon after he left her presence. The lines were headed, 'Idol of my heart;' and they were most beautifully and touchingly written. The last word he uttered, in his wild delirium, ere the flame of life had expired, was her name. And—

"Go on, go on, Aunt Lucy; why do you weep?" said Julia, who looked up with tearful eyes.

"He died with no kind hand to close his eyes. And, Julia, my dear niece, though I blush to tell it, I was that gay, heartless creature who caused it all. But that sad lesson has taught me much. Heaven grant you may take warning from it."

*"Rachel."**

Oh, how pale appear
Those clay-cold cheeks where grace and vigor glow'd.
Oh, dismal spectacle! How humble
Lies that ambition which was late so proud."

HEAVEN could not paint a smile upon a more lovely face than was Rachel's. Brighter diamonds than were in her eyes never shone; an infant smiling in its dreams of heaven could not vie with her. A fairy's form not more lithe and graceful. She was all poetry or painting could express, a sort of pet with the gods, who lavished upon her gifts in profusion. Genius was her handmaid. As a tragedienne she stood alone upon that pedestal none other could mount.

Ah, lamented Rachel, you, like a brilliant meteor, flashed across the horizon of our pleasure for a brief time only. You came among us to make us deeply regret when you were gone. Beauteous vision to our enchanted sight; glorious were those eyes—now melting and tender, now flashing with pride and scorn, now roguish, now forgiving. You came among us not

* The great tragedienne, who died recently.

in your vigor and strength of body, for already you were declining, yet your genius was none the less brilliant and captivating. We saw "passing away" plainly written upon your fair and classic brow. Ah! was there one who did not see your fragile form bending 'neath the weight of disease, like the lily when the storm sweeps over its tender petals? Surely none could be so insensible as not to regard you with feelings of sadness.

* * * * *

Seldom is nature seen upon the stage. In Rachel we find it. There is such a witching grace in her every movement, each finger, as she uplifts it, speaks a volume—your eyes are riveted to the spot—you pause almost breathless lest you may lose a word—you feel that a great artist is before you. She takes parts no one else could portray! Her Hermione, Andromaque, Camille, and Adrienne, stand unrivalled. To see her in one character only, is like taking a view of some enchanted isle through a small crevice, and while we gaze enraptured, the eye yearns to see still more of the gorgeous beauty and figures.

We saw her play at death in Adrienne Lecouvreur—this she portrayed to a painful perfection—the mimic death all so true to nature—rigid and white grow her cheeks, her eyes assume a glassy hue, her hands fall lifeless at her side, and Adrienne dies! Alas! she was called upon so soon to die indeed.

* * * * *

A bright star has set. Rachel, the lone star tragedienne, has passed away; but, "whom the gods love, die young."

We will not think of her faults; we will let them be lost in the unquenchable blaze of her genius. We will hope that

Heaven has been merciful to her, and her spirit is at rest. Glorious is that name left to be carved upon the highest pinnacle of fame, to be envied by generations yet unborn.

Ah! Rachel, now lost to us forever.

"No storied urn nor animated bust
Back to life can call the fleeting breath,
Nor honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Nor flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death."

A Stray Thought.

WHAT, Oh! what would life be without its romance—the sweet, poetic dream of love? Love gives such a roseate hue to every thing; it gilds the streams, paints the flowers, ladens the wandering zephyr with rich perfume. It makes the bright orbs of night more enchanting, the star of hope burn more brightly, e'en when the very soul seems to be crushed with despair. Without this dream, life would be a desert with no oasis to gladden and to cheer the weary traveler on his journey, he scarce knows where. 'Tis the very sunlight of our existence; the genial dews that revive the withering heart.

Every thing in nature whispers of love; the sweet flower as it uplifts its chalice to meet the gaze of some disconsolate maid, seems to see at once her heart's deep grief, and becomes willingly a member of the bouquet she is forming, to convey in flowers—love's truest and most eloquent language—the message of love. The bird will stop on its way at her bidding to chant one little song, to soothe the sorrow of her soul, for a sympathetic chord has been awakened within its own bosom.

The wanton waves are unwilling to wash away the name she has traced in the sand; and as her bright eyes fix their gaze

upon the spot they retire abashed; and if, perchance, they do cover the loved name, many are the sighs borne from them to the sweet maiden. And then the zephyr will come dallying with her soft curls, lifting them from a brow pure as the new-born snow-flake; then kiss her cheek till the roses come and jealously chase it away, for it would be the sole gazer upon that rare beauty.

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Oh! this earth is very beautiful, and it is the romance of life that makes it so. If none saw the rich and rare beauty painted by the Great Artist, alas! all would seem cold and sad. Happy, happy is that heart which exists in every thing beautiful and bright; which loves the sweet flowers, aye! every thing God made to adorn our earth. What a thrill of joy must every new born beauty give; how it must elevate the soul, making it, as it were, more fit for Heaven!

Beatrice.

DEAR Beatrice! I stood beside her grave this afternoon, just as the sun was sinking to rest. What a host of thoughts crowded into my mind as I looked at the silent tombstone, which told but a tithe of her many qualities, too good for language to describe. A month dead, and to me it seems long years, for grief adds to time, while joy steals all the golden moments rapidly away. Good Beatrice! methought her too beautiful, too pure to die—but death chooses the fairest and sweetest flower upon which to lay its withering touch. Beatrice was an angel! but for her, I would have been—alas! I know not where. She turned my footsteps heavenward; taught me to reflect that there was yet another life—another haven where I must eventually land. Her gentle, soothing words fell like dew-drops upon the flowers. If I was reckless and careless of her happiness, did she rebuke me? If I kept her waiting till the lamps upon the altar of heaven were extinguished by the god of day, did she scorn me? If, at any moment harsh and unkind words were spoken, did she frown or reply in the same manner? If I seemed at times entirely to forsake her and forget that she lived, was I met any the less kindly? Ah, no!

and as I now wipe away the scalding tears which fall upon the paper, my prayer is that I might forever obliterate the sad, sad past—the hours when Beatrice was so unkindly treated. She was so kind, and all the reproof she gave was a tear, and that tear should have been as a barbed arrow to my hard, hard heart.

One incident of my life I now vividly call to mind; it was indeed a trying moment with me, but Beatrice, like a good angel, accomplished the task. One starry evening in December, I returned home just as the lamps in the streets were being lighted—I had to knock at the door but once, for Beatrice was ever ready to open. The room had not the comfort of other days; the fire on the hearth had died out, the little infant was wrapped as warm as blankets could make it—my brain was all on fire with the alcoholic stimulant so detrimental to both soul and body. As I entered the room and sat down, Beatrice looked at me steadily for a moment with such an expression as only such dark, lustrous eyes can give—although not quite myself, I could but observe her. She approached the spot where the infant was sleeping, and threw her arms around it, and wept in such a manner as Heaven grant I may forget. It seemed as if an evil spirit was working within me, and I was “halting between two opinions.” In a few moments I rose to go; Beatrice seized hold of me, and entreated me not to leave her. “Oh! it is so gloomy and cold,” I exclaimed, “I cannot stay here.” “Edward, Edward,” she replied, “if it is so gloomy and cold for you, what must it be for me? The night without is so dismal, and oh, it is so cold. We have but little fire; the wood is nearly exhausted, and where shall the next be obtained? See

how scant has grown the furniture of late; you have sold it all to satisfy your thirst. What, oh! what are you bringing yourself, Beatrice, and your child to? Alas! we will be paupers, indeed, and that dear boy, sleeping in all its innocence and purity, what will become of him? Oh, you have surely forgotten the promise made only two years ago to a fond mother, whose head lies low now—the mother whom you so faithfully promised to protect from all the ills of life. You have not kept it, Edward. Oh, why will you not restore the joys of former days, and bring sunshine once more to the heart of your Beatrice? Heaven knows that I forgive you freely. We could be so happy again. Will you, oh! will you not, then, determine to commence? Each day I am fading rapidly away, and who will take care of Charlie when I am sleeping in the church-yard? Let, oh! let the few remaining days I have, to remain be passed quietly.” She ceased, for her emotions had quite overcome her; then, throwing herself at my feet, she remained silent for some moments; then, raising her eyes heavenward, uttered a prayer, which my heart, had it been adamant, could not have withstood. We wept together. I solemnly promised in the sight of Heaven to reform and live for Beatrice and my child.

And did I keep my promise? The angels will answer for me. But repentance comes too late sometimes. Would that I might call dear Beatrice again; gladly would I prove to her that her happiness is far dearer to me than all the wealth of the Indies. But I have the consolation of knowing that she was made happy for a brief time at least.

Dear Beatrice, it is by your gentle and angel-like influence I cherish the hope of meeting you in the Better Land.

Clara Manvers;

OR,

AUNT DEBORAH'S ADVICE.

“WELL, well, Clara Manvers is to be married! and pray, what is she going to do? She is a young creature and knows nothing of household affairs. But children now-a-days will do as they please any how, and their over-anxious parents are afraid to have them taught anything. As for my part, I always thought Clara was a spoiled child, but I can tell her, she will have to be brought out of it all some time.”

Thus soliloquized good old Aunt Deborah as she sat knitting a pair of stockings, every now and then placing them in her lap to think of the news she had heard. Now Aunt Deborah was as kind and as good hearted an old soul as ever lived; but she was one of that sort (as all maiden aunts generally are) who thought that unless one could make a pudding or pie, that she must necessarily be a perfect “blue stocking.” She was not at all in favor of boarding schools, for she thought that girls always learned more nonsense there than any thing else. Aunt Deborah had arrived at quite a good old age, consequently had seen much of the world. She really thought (as she often said)

that the girls of the present day were the most giddy set she ever knew, for they thought of nothing else but beaux, (forgetting at the same time that she had been disappointed in love, and had found as much pleasure in the company of the dapper beaux as any one.) Just go to a little drawer which she keeps locked up and you will find a few letters which she received in her "young days," that will convince you at once that she used to write "billet doux." Dear good creature, she has no confidence in them now, for they are but counterfeits, and every one she sees "the girls" reading, she denounces severally against them.

But we have been saying so much about Aunt Deborah, that we have almost forgotten Clara.

At the age of ten she was sent to a fashionable boarding-school to be educated. Now to this Aunt Deborah was strictly opposed; but her mother being a highly educated woman, saw the importance of her mind being properly cultivated, and well knew that it could never be accomplished at home. Clara remained there until she had completed her eighteenth year, and then returned home. She was indeed a beautiful creature, and withal, possessed those airs which are peculiar to boarding-school girls. She was ushered into society immediately after her arrival home, and became the belle of the season; she was admired and caressed by all. Often she received a reproof from Aunt Deborah who saw that she was totally enwrapped with gaiety and fashion. It seems that Clara could never agree with her aunt on any one point, consequently, when they met, their conversations were of a very opposite nature.

Aunt Deborah puts on her old fashioned black bonnet and

goes around to see Clara; we will first stand behind the curtain and listen a few moments to the conversation. Clara sits there, playing with her lap-dog; her good old aunt looks at her for a while in silence. But soon the slumbering volcano bursts, and Aunt commences:—

"Well, Clara, I hear you are to be married soon; and now, my child, take the advice of one who is your senior by a good many years. Now put the dog down and listen to me. The first question (of course), have you learnt to make a pie yet?"

At this Clara starts. "Now pray tell me, Aunt Deborah, if you think that after I get married I am going to turn washerwoman, cook, and every thing else?"

"Well, my child, I see all that you think about is visiting, chatting, beaux, and all those sort of things. Now, what are you going to do after you get married? It is, I believe, three months yet before you marry, so just set to work and learn to be domestic. You have all the accomplishments and all the ornamental education, now, seek to learn some of the useful branches; for I assure you that when you get married, you must not only be a parlor companion for your husband, but his housewife. Now, my child, I must go, for I have some stockings to finish knitting; the winter is coming on, and I must prepare for it, being very rheumatic. Good bye, my child; attend to my injunctions, and I know you will never regret so doing."

"Well, well, I do wonder what put it in Aunt Deborah's head to come around here this morning and give me a curtain lecture," said Clara Manvers. "It is a great wonder that she did not ask me who I was going to marry, but I suppose she

knows. I should not be much surprised if she were to lecture Carlos, too. I do wonder how he would take it; laugh in his sleeve, I warrant. I know Aunt Deborah means well, but then she judges me too harshly, and besides, I have a plenty of time to learn."

We will pass over the space of three months, during which time many preparations were being made for the wedding. Among the number invited, Aunt Deborah, of course, was not forgotten.

On receiving the invitation, Aunt Deborah exclaimed, "Why, bless my heart, the child is to be married next Thursday! let me see, it is only a week off. A short time, indeed," and she shook her head. "I must go around and see if she has taken my advice; I will wager she has not heeded a word."

"There, now, I knew aunt would be here to-day," said Clara, as she heard her infirm tread upon the steps. "Mary, tell her to come in my room; I will prepare myself for a good lecture."

Just as expected! After the usual greetings, Aunt Deborah commenced questioning her, but found that her advice had been cast upon the desert air.

"Depend upon it, depend upon it, my child," said her aunt, putting on her spectacles to take a view of the superb dressing which was scattered about the room; "this will never do."

Clara said not a word, neither was she vexed, for Aunt Deborah was so good natured that no one could get angry with her. She made quite a prolonged visit, as it took some time to give all the salutary advice so essential to a young girl on the verge of matrimony.

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Six months more passed away; Clara's mother was absent, so also was the seamstress; Carlos wanted some repairs—in consequence of this the good aunt was sent for. How cheerfully, too, did she come—not without reminding her wayward niece of the folly of not learning something useful, particularly when a woman is about to fill so responsible a position.

We will put our ear to the key-hole a moment:—

"Don't you remember what I told you Clara, before you were married? Have not my words come true? I will show you how to do any thing, and will be most happy in the undertaking."

After cutting out and fixing the work, Aunt Deborah gave it to Clara, saying that she must do it herself, or she would never learn in the world. After all necessary explanations were made, she left Clara, telling her, at the same time, that when she needed her services, she must not for a moment hesitate in sending for her.

"I must really acknowledge, after all, that what Aunt Deborah told me was true, and had I heeded it, I would never have regretted it. But I hope this is the only trouble I will have to surmount."

Ah! Clara was much mistaken, for very often she had to send for Aunt Deborah.

One day, shortly after the return of Carlos, several gentlemen were invited there to dine. Clara knew exactly how every thing ought to be, and when a table was tastefully arranged, but did not understand how to go about it herself. Her pastry-cook had been taken suddenly ill; and what in the world was she to do? here was trouble sure enough.

After spending some time in quest of some one, she at last had to stop at Aunt Deborah's door.

Clara explained all to the good old lady, who very kindly offered to assist her.

"You see, my child," said Aunt Deborah, "how necessary it is for one to know how to do every thing; and had you taken my advice in time, it would have saved you so much trouble. But we must hurry, for it is getting late, and every thing is to fix.

But these were not half the troubles that Clara had to encounter, in consequence of her ignorance in household duties. She no longer thought it unnecessary to know how to do every thing, and very plainly saw that the useful education was as requisite as the ornamental. She found that, in order to make a useful wife, she must have a knowledge of household affairs; and that a young lady's education is never complete until she is versed in every thing relative to domestic affairs. In a word, Clara found that Aunt Deborah's advice would have saved her much trouble had she taken it in time.

Under the instruction of her good aunt (which she now gladly accepted) she improved daily. Carlos saw how industrious Clara had become of late, and felt as if he could never thank Aunt Deborah enough for thus instructing his young and beautiful wife in those duties which renders the home an Eden.

"That Ugly Man."

"DEAR me!" exclaimed Geraldine, "what an ugly man! I declare, he is enough to make the very ants wink. Who can he be? Only see what a nose he has, and how singular he is in his dress.

"Of whom are you speaking?" said Lillian.

"Why, I am talking about that man coming down the street; wait a minute, and then you can see him better. Here he comes—just see how peculiar he is dressed. I do hope he is not coming here Lillian, for I declare I would not go in the parlor."

"Oh! he would not come to see us, for we have no acquaintance with him whatever."

"You know well enough, Lillian, that papa must insist on our going in to see him."

"Papa is not at home, Gera."

"Well, that does not matter; for, if he were to call, and find him out, he would leave his card for papa, stating a certain time when he would call again; and then papa would be at home. There, I told you so; she is coming up the steps now. Do look," said Geraldine, "what large teeth he has, and what an aquiline nose. He is perfectly hideous."

This conversation was going on behind the blinds, between the sisters. They were great advocates for beauty in the opposite sex, and nothing (save high titles), could compensate for it. Many a dashy beau was the subject of their remarks, as he went past, and often caught a word or two, but looked in vain for the speaker.

At dinner time Mr. Smithers said to his daughters that a young gentleman might be expected up in the afternoon, and they must be in readiness to receive him.

"Who is it?" asked Geraldine.

"Do tell us, papa," exclaimed Lillian.

Mr. Smithers, knowing the unbounded curiosity of his daughters, he, for his own amusement, kept them a little in suspense. At last he told them that it was a count, in whose company he had been thrown, and he gave him an invitation to call.

"I do wonder who that was called here this morning."

Mr. Smithers said not a word, for he suspected that he had called that morning; and afterward found it to be the case, on the presentation of a card by the servant. Wishing to take his daughters by surprise, and to have the pleasure of communicating the news himself, he had given the servant his orders to conceal the card.

Geraldine and Lillian hastened to beautify themselves, having a great desire to create quite an impression with the count. Toilette being completed, they went to the window, hearing the rattling of wheels near. Looking out, they saw a magnificent coach, drawn by four horses; the driver and footman were splendidly equipped, and every thing presented quite a dazzling appearance.

"I know that is him," said Gera.

"Yes, for that is such a splendid coach," replied Lillian.

"Wait, the footman is opening the door, and we will have a peep at him as he gets out."

Who should the count be but "that ugly man" they had seen in the morning coming toward the house.

"Why, Lillian! it is the very same person whom we saw this morning."

"Yes, the same one that stopped at the door!"

"Well, really," said Geraldine, "I do not think him ugly; on the contrary, I think he is quite handsome."

The sight of the splendid coach and livery, the fine equipage of the count, and the high sounding title, caused him to appear very handsome, now, in the eyes of Geraldine. The same morning he was, she said, ugly enough to make the ants wink; but now, if any one had even hinted that he was ugly, she would have got into a passion, and declared them devoid of all taste and sense.

The count being announced in the parlor, Lillian and Geraldine were introduced to him. His nose had become quite pretty since the morning, his teeth no longer projected, and his features were decidedly fine—in the opinion of Geraldine; she thought his voice extremely musical, his manners very winning. In a word, he was pronounced, by Gera, to be a very handsome gentleman.

But, reader, do not start when we tell you that Geraldine accepted the hand and heart of "that ugly man" in less than six months!

There are a thousand Geraldines in the world, and this but

shows us how people alter their opinions. Great titles and wealth will transform the worst specimen of humanity into a being of perfection, and will cause him or her to have a thousand adorers.

As for Geraldine, we will only add, that she often wondered how she could ever have thought a man of so great a title unhandsome; and we dare say, that if she had known what a handle he had to his name, she would never have called him "that ugly man."

Lola William;

OR,

THE LAST TREASURE.

Oh! this cold, unfeeling world! how fortune changes! and, as her wheel performs its rotations, how people alter with it! In prosperity friends smile upon us, and flock to our stand, but when adversity frowns, see how they forsake us. Not one is left to offer a word of sympathy.

Thus mused Lola, as she sat alone pondering upon the past. Her fortune had indeed changed; for already the keen winds of poverty had touched her brow. 'Twas at the close of a cold December day: no bright fireside cheered her; only a few coals glimmered faintly on the hearth; there she sat, while tears of sorrow tickled down her youthful cheek, soft as cider down, and lovely as the morning cloud which meets the eye of the weary traveler, who has journeyed the long, lone night. By her side was seated a little child, her only sister, who had been left to her guidance by a mother, now laid low in the grave. The child spoke not, but sat in a thoughtful mood. No light filled the apartment, save the rays of the moon, which threw her beams compassionately into her lone chamber. The snow had

fallen deep, mantling each hill, while the stars reflected a halo of light upon its surface, giving it a more beautiful aspect.

Lola had never known sorrow until within a short time. Fortune had ever smiled upon her; but now proved a gay deceiver. At an early age death deprived her of a devoted father, and she was left to the protection of a doting mother, to whom she was rendered more dear after his death. Just as Lola was verging on womanhood, her mother was taken too. Now, all she had to love was a little sister, to whom she devoted her utmost attention.

Why does Lola look so intently upon one corner of the room? And why does she sigh so sadly, and softly whisper, "my treasure! my treasure! must thou go too? My mother now slumbers in the grave, and all friends have forsaken me; and oh, Heavens! it is too much you must be taken away. Alas! what will serve to cheer the sad hours of the day—to chase away the gloom that steals over my soul? Alas! alas! my mother loved it too. She bid me, on her dying couch, ever to cling to it for her sake alone. It served to soothe her bed of pain at the gloom of midnight. Ere she breathed her last, she called me to her side, and bid me part from it never."

But of what is Lola speaking, and what means this incoherent language? Would you know? Ah! I will tell you. She speaks of her harp, her last treasure. An unfeeling and cruel one has demanded it of her for a small debt—he, too, who once desired her hand and heart, but, since fortune had so changed, loved her no longer. Probably the incidents relative to the harp will be of interest to the reader, hence we will give its details.

After the death of Lola's mother, there were not funds enough to defray the expenses of the funeral, and the only object of any value left was Lola's harp. Oh! she loved it fondly; and when, in fits of despondency, she would play upon it, its very vibrations seemed to be an echo from her own heart. For awhile she would experience, in imagination, "by gone days." She often played the air her mother so fondly loved, and tears would fill her lovely eyes. Lola felt as if she could never part from it, and would make any sacrifice rather than give up her harp. She felt as though, if she could still retain it, it would render her more happy, if it were merely because it were fulfilling the request of her departed mother.

One morning as she sat alone, reflecting on the past, her attention was arrested by a loud knocking at the door. Who can it be? thought she. On opening the door, who should she see but Clarence Leston; she was perfectly amazed, and could not divine why he came there. For though he had loved her fondly once, he scarcely recognized her now. He accosted her thus—

"I am very sorry, Miss Wildham, to intrude upon you; but demands are made about the payment of your debts, and I came to see what could be done." Lola turned pale, and her heart was too full for utterance of words. Leston resumed speaking. "The debt must be paid."

The word *must* echoed in Lola's ear. Leston looked around the almost destitute department, and his eye rested upon the harp. Lola followed his gaze; and, as she saw his eyes riveted there, she sighed. She well knew that the person to whom she was speaking had no compassion whatever, for he was a heart-

less being, and his love for money would lead him to do any thing for the acquisition of it. After a silence of a few minutes, Leston told Lola that her harp would probably defray the expense, and that it must be sent to the auction room, on the following morning.

"Oh! spare me that," said she, "for, alas! I have nothing else to love. It was my father's gift in my brighter days, and you—yes, you have heard me touch its sweetest chords, and poured out flattering words into my ear; and now you are ready and willing to deprive me of the simple object which consummates all my happiness. My mother loved it, and perchance her spirit weeps for the fate of her child."

Leston possessed a heart of adamant. He was not alive to any feelings of sympathy; he was avaricious, and allowed that passion to rule him. Uncouth as avaricious, he answered Lola only by harsh words. He replied—

"It is useless, Miss Wildham, to plead thus; and pray what do you, now so poor, want with a harp? Remember it incurs expense to keep it in order, and, instead of contracting more debts, you should seek to settle those you owe now. But I have not time to parley longer; all I desire is, that you will deliver the harp to-morrow to the servant whom I will send for it." He left the house, and Lola sank into the chair.

It was on the evening after this interview with Leston that she soliloquised upon the unfeeling world. "Oh, my treasure! my last treasure! must I part from it! Oh! my mother, look upon your child, and pity her fate." Lola lighted a taper, which gave such a faint glimmering light, that she could scarcely see to read by it. She thought by reading to divert

her mind; but oh! her heart was sadly troubled, and she found that her thoughts wandered far from the book before her, while a tear stood in her eye. Now and then she would give her last treasure a wistful look, and pray that it might yet be spared her. Wearied with sad thoughts, she went to her harp, and commenced playing a soft, melodious air, accompanied by her voice. How sweet! how sad! She played the air which her mother requested previous to her death. She fancied she heard her whisper, "Lola, Lola, my child, there are yet bright days in store for thee." She was almost absorbed in a reverie, and scarcely knew she was playing. Suddenly she heard a gentle knocking at the door. She bade her little sister open it. She was accosted by a gentleman of tall stature, and withal an intellectual face. She blushed deeply, and it gave to her face more beauty. The stranger gazed upon her with admiration, and wondered that one so accomplished and beautiful should be thus destitute. Lola's appearance was certainly never more lovely. She was attired in deep mourning, which contrasted strongly with her delicate complexion. A modest blush mantled her whole visage, and a soft light shone from her eye.

"My attention," said the stranger, "was arrested by hearing the harp, accompanied with a sweet voice; and, having heard your history, I determined to seek your acquaintance. I have been looking for the house, and, but for the music I heard just now, I might not have found it. I knew your mother previous to her marriage, and in boyhood was quite a frequent visitor at her father's house; but, somehow, the acquaintance got broken off. I went to sea, having a desire to visit foreign lands. On my arrival at Paris, I addressed several letters to her, which

were promptly answered until her marriage. Perhaps my name will be familiar to you; it is Hubert Stanley whom you now see!"

"Stanley!" exclaimed Lola; "yes, well do I remember of hearing my mother speak of you. Did you not once address her a letter from Naples?"

"Yes, I recollect the day, the hour that I wrote it; it was just as the sun was setting, for, as she had desired me to give her a description of a sunset in Italy, I took advantage of that hour to write it. But do not, I pray you interrupt your music."

"Ah, me!" sighed Lola, "that is my last treasure now; my piano was sold yesterday, and this must go too. Necessity compels me to sacrifice it, and I must be resigned to my fate."

"Who is the one so cruel as to deprive you of your last treasure?" asked the stranger.

"A lawyer by the name of Leston."

"Leston! Oh! I am not surprised that such an one as he should deprive you of it. If it costs me my life I will restore it to you; and this night I will go and shame him for thus daring to intrude upon you, who were once the child of fortune, nursed in the lap of luxury, and reared as a hot-house plant. The harp is yours; and if any one dares to take it from you, they will first have to deprive me of my own eyes."

Lola knew not how to express her gratitude for this unlooked for kindness. Oh! how soothing it was to her soul, for it was the first word of kindness that she had heard since her mother's death, and like an angel's message it came. Yet she felt as

though she were thrown upon an unfeeling world, and must seek a livelihood.

What to do she knew not. She was well qualified to instruct, but her heart recoiled, as it were, at the idea of being a governess. Not that she was too proud, but she well knew she would have much to bear, and then, she was not accustomed to sedentary habits, and she was conscious that it would impair her health, for already she had suffered much from grief caused by her mother's death.

Hubert Stanley was so enraptured with Lola's conversation, that he could scarcely take leave of her; but he well knew that if he followed his own inclination he might remain till too late an hour. After giving Lola necessary directions with regard to the harp, he withdrew, and requested permission to continue his visits.

Lola felt she could not remain at the house, for, after the quarter's rent was due, she must leave it. Each day she endeavored to devise some plan to pursue, but gave up in despair, yet hoped that Providence would pave a way for her.

The next morning Lola woke cheerful and happy, for she felt that her last treasure was restored to her. Oh! who can tell her heartfelt gratitude when she looked upon it, and knew that she was permitted to keep it?

Hubert Stanley's visits to Lola were very frequent, and each time he saw her he liked her the more. In the first place he admired her intellectual attainments, and these, united with physical beauty, rendered her peculiarly lovely in his eyes. He felt as though he had found a diamond in some sequestered

spot, and determined that its beauty should be no longer hidden. He knew that he loved her, and his heart yearned to tell her so, yet he dared not, but hoped that ere long he might be enabled to open his soul to her, and that she would accept his proffered hand.

He saw that she was indeed a prize, and preferred her acquirements and merits to worlds of gold. His was a noble soul, and he knew how to appreciate the true worth of woman, and considered her as earth's greatest ornament. Lola was conscious that he loved her, and reciprocated it. She felt that Heaven was benignant in sending to her one, who, perhaps, would, at a future time, be her protector. Each day her attachment grew stronger, and when in his society she was perfectly happy.

Early one morning, she, with her little sister, took a ramble in the fields. Nature had never seemed to her so lovely before; every flower was more fragrant, and every song the birds uttered, was more joyful. She came near a spring, and seated herself on a rock. Her little sister Ittie went forth to chase the butterflies; it reminded Lola of the search for pleasure; she thought as ephemeral as was the life of that insect, so transitory is happiness. She heard footsteps near. On looking round, she saw Hubert Stanley.

"What chance breeze has caused us to meet this morning, in this romantic spot?" said he. "Look how beautifully the waters sparkle; and how sweet the perfume of flowers. Oh, is it not an enchanting place? It reminds me of Elysian fields. Would that a little naiad might come forth now, and promise to fulfil all my wishes."

"And pray, what would be your wish?" said Lola in a playful manner.

Hubert felt that this was a fine opportunity of offering her his heart in the reply which he would give to the query.

"Do you ask me, Lola," (it was the first time he had not affixed Miss to her name,) "do you ask me what I would desire? Can you not imagine? I would have a faithful heart. I would gladly give worlds if I possessed it. That is the height of my ambition, and when I attain the zenith I shall be supremely happy. Lola, will you not be that kind fairy, and grant my desire by giving me your heart?"

What could exceed Lola's astonishment? The deepest blushes spread over her cheeks, and tears fell from her eyes.

Hubert, seeing her thus overcome, became more passionate in his declaration, and exclaimed,

"Be but mine, Lola, dearest; you have my heart and hand would that I had more to give thee. Speak, oh, speak to me, and say that you will be my bride. This were a meet place to exchange our hearts. Look how beautiful are all things around us; see the blue canopy of heaven—not one cloud obscures it; thus should thy life ever be, and if thou wilt but be mine, nought shall disturb thy pathway. All I have on earth is thine. Would that I had the wealth of Ormus to offer thee. Would that I had a diadem to place upon thy brow. But I will crown thee with my smiles, my love shall be my wreath, and thou shalt make my home an Eden. Lola, speak to me—say that thou wilt be mine."

Lola's blushes answered, and, as the poet says,

"'Twas then the blush suffused her cheek,
Which told what words could never speak."

Hubert felt that she loved him in return, and now his measure was filled. They lingered some time, planning for the future. Lola soon arrived at her humble abode, but she was not to remain there long; soon she would be in the hall of luxury, and all happiness was in store for her. She gazed at her harp, and regarded it still as a treasure, but not her last, for her heart had found another. It was through the voice of her harp that Hubert first found the way to her home. Bright indeed were her dreams for the future; a fond heart beat truly and warmly for her, and she would be revived by the dew of love. The days passed less heavily on, for each one brought the time nearer when she would be united to Hubert. He counted the hours, the minutes, the seconds, until the time should arrive when he should call her his own.

She never looked at her harp but that she thought of Leston's unkindness—it might, with propriety, be called cruelty. He soon heard that Hubert Stanley was to be married to her, and heartily repented of the manner in which he acted. Hubert always felt a contempt for him, and Leston could never look him in the face.

We will pass over six months after the time alluded to, when she thought her last treasure was to be taken from her. Lola is no longer dependent; she is the bride of Hubert Stanley and is as happy as aught could be. Her home is indeed the picture of elegance and comfort; her treasured harp occupies a place in the boudoir, and oft she sweeps its chords, as if with magic fingers. Hubert's leisure hours are devoted to the

society of his loving Lola, who ever seeks to make him happy. Many friends who had discarded her when adversity passed her threshold, now courted her society, but it only excited more contempt, and brought to mind more forcibly the deceit and cold-heartedness of the world. She saw that friends were few indeed; many caress when prosperity smiles, but forsake us when fortune changes.

She could not countenance those who had slighted her at one time, for she knew that they wore only the mask of friendship, beneath which was concealed a cold heart. Leston's conduct showed her forcibly what men are, for he would have deprived her of her last measure had not Providence sent some being to protect her. It seemed as if some bright angel ever hovered around her, for her home was a scene of domestic happiness; in it she forgot for a while the deceit and false-heartedness of mankind.

Hubert sought his happiness in the society of Lola, who ever greeted him with a smiling face and an overflowing heart. She remembered with delight what her last treasure had brought to her, and Hubert never regretted the choice he had made. He felt indeed that he had found a mine of wealth, surpassing every earthly boon which Heaven could bestow. Their days passed on as tranquilly as the limpid stream, or the evening star which moves on in its unimpeded course, shedding its soft light and beauty over the landscape.

Who would not rejoice at the happy fate of Lola, and heartily wish that those who are placed in the same circumstances may meet with the same good fortune?

Why was he Taken?

Oh, why was he taken? He was so lovely, so interesting—at the very age, too, when I so much wished him to live; every day he was more endeared to me by ties a mother's heart can only know. The dear child has passed through so many trying ordeals! I looked upon my bright bud of promise with delight; I thought of the time when he would make me feel proud of him—when he would show by his actions that he had not forgotten a mother's kindness during the years of his helplessness. But alas! how deluded I was! his dark eyes shall behold my face no more on earth. Oh, why was he taken? The form before me, strewn with flowers—all seems a mockery. Would that I might awaken from this dream, and fold my child to my bosom again. Spring-time comes—all, all will be gay but my heart will be bowed down with deep, deep grief. Earth is beautiful to me no longer; for a dark shadow has come o'er, a cloud no sunbeam can penetrate. The last look was given, the cherished one was hidden from view.

The mother could not fathom this mysterious affliction; she who was buoyed up with every hope of recovery, now sank but the deeper in distress. Other mourners there were, but ah!

whose tears are like a mother's? Who feels as if her darling is riven from her bosom? Who treads, as it were, alone, though in a crowd? She hears no voice now that makes her heart pulsate with joy; she no longer waits for nurse to bring her cherished one, to kiss the bright roses the balmy air has brought to his cheeks; no toy books are to be hunted for, no tops, no marbles to amuse her pet. When night comes, no little one to be put snugly to bed and lulled to sleep with songs, no voice at morning's dawn is heard with the lark to welcome the glorious day; no little chubby face or dimpled hands to wash. All this was such a delightful task to perform, and though mamma did not go through the regular routine herself, she "looked on" to see that it was well done. Now all was ended, all was dark. Why was that sweet, sweet flower taken?

A few years rolled by. Time, though it had in a measure softened the grief, had not obliterated the memory of it. No, no; it was a sadness of the soul, a grief too deep to take counsel. Each day was the churchyard visited, and each time a true tear dropped. The sweet flower planted by that hand bloomed and faded each season.

As the mother wended her way to and from the churchyard she would exclaim in her own heart, "Why was he taken?" A great change had passed over her; pale and emaciated grew the faithful mourner, she was not the being of her former days, a disease developed itself rapidly. A month since the father was buried by the side of the pet; and now, as she lay upon a couch of sickness, thoughts of other days flit o'er her brain. A bright angel seemed to come as a solace for her: it softly whispered, "Why was he taken?" Alas! what would she

have done, now that fortune had fled? The father was gone, and she was ill-fitted to bear fatigue. What if her darling lived now, would it not make her the more reluctant to die? for who would then care for it, and watch faithful even in its youthful years? It had been consigned to the best of father's protection; she now saw why it was taken, and calmly said, "It is well with the child."

*Impromptu on Galt's "Bacchante."**

Oh! faultless art thou, gem of grace;
I in thine every feature trace
All that's lovely, all that's fair—
Yes, every grace is figured there.

I watch that smile—I watch those eyes
In which enchanting beauty lies—
And feel that truly thou must be
A form of spotless purity.

Perchance some little fairy sprite
Didst bring before the artist's sight
Thy gentle self—an angel too!
That he might thy beauties view.

He, then enraptured, sought to give
To marble, form which seems to live;
And to those eyes seraphic fire,
Which did his lofty soul inspire.

* The Bacchante is a beautiful specimen of sculpture, executed by Mr. Galt, of Norfolk, Va.—a native genius.

I stood as if in awe before
 The form which heathens might adore.
 I'd rather feast my eyes on thee,
 Than brightest stars—fair Bacchante!

Then toil on still, thou gifted one!
 Thy laurel wreaths already won
 Are pledges of that future fame
 Which shall immortalize thy name.

Leaves from My Journal.

Isn't it nice to have a romp? What if we have been let out the boarding school cage for a year or two, and are dignified by the name "young lady?" What if we do wear flounces, hoops, etc.? Will all this subdue the desire to romp? No, no; we love to get with a group of merry ones, and be the greatest child in the crowd. We love to skip over the green lawns and hills, even if we do lose a hoop. It is quite a recreation to be released a while from company, where we are compelled to play the dignified, whether we will or not. All the Miss Prudence Prims in creation could not stop us when we feel just in the humor for mischief. We love to hide mamma's work basket, let the big dog into the parlor, and get him before the mirror, where he will bark most vehemently at himself. We love to steal grandma's spectacles and put them where she will have a little hunt, and find them, at last where she least expected—any thing for us for mischief.

It is pleasant to be a wee child again—in imagination if not in years—for then we are so gay and free. Wasn't that a nice time, when we were not obliged to be on our P's and Q's? We had no anxiety to captivate any particular one—no rival to

make jealous; and when we went to the watering places, we were not compelled to dress so many times a day, just because it was fashionable to do so; no parting scenes to go through; no heart to leave behind us.

Yes, we love to live those golden days over in memory. No demure one can deter us from it by telling us "that it is not dignified." We will romp and play when the spirit moves us.

How much a man is to be sympathized with who has a jealous wife. It is far better that he should have no eyes at all, for it would save him a vast deal of trouble. If he is at a hotel where the gay and beautiful are assembled, the very loveliest young lady in the whole group seems destined to sit directly opposite him. Look! why, how can he help looking, when there is something like a magnet all the while attracting him? It would not do for a note to be handed him, if the autograph is at all suspicious; he must not mention that he has any choice of seats at the table—no, rather bribe the waiter to show him to the one he prefers. It is as much as his head is worth to say any lady is pretty. He must have eyes for none except that jewel of a wife he has had the ill luck to marry. Now he becomes fully sensible of the fact that marriage is a lottery, and that he paid dearly enough for his ticket. He must not call the youngest any nick-name, for it will be sure to be done in honor of a pair of black eyes which captivated him.

And lastly, though not leastly, he must not stay out later, any night, than nine o'clock; for his good lady does not approve of "Clubs," and thinks gentlemen should discard every thing of the kind after marrying—particularly when one chances

to get such a lump of perfection as herself. No note is taken of the fact that the husband is closely confined to business all day; he needs no recreation, certainly not. He has to pay the bills—he ought to do it.

That is a second Mrs. Caudle. Why, one could tell that by merely glancing at her; only see how she watches her husband; he is afraid to look either way. We only hope he won't glance at us, for we should certainly expect to see a fork aimed at us, and that would be quite a scene for a hotel table.

A Stray Leaf.

"MEN are so contrary." What a face the one wore who made this remark. Oh, I wouldn't be that woman's husband for all creation, such a mouth—it tells for itself—no comment is needed. The whole contour of that face would grace the frontispiece of any almanac or "Yankee Notions." "Contrary!" I'd be contrary too if that face was my *vis-a-vis*, for three hundred and sixty-five days in succession. Just think of it! What a prelude to coffee and rolls in the morning! Wouldn't I forego the breakfast, rush right off to the "office," minus breakfast, and live like the chameleon on air. Oh! I tell you Mrs. Snip is a great woman. She finds Mr. Snip contrary because he will not hand over his pocket-book every time it is asked for without some little hesitation—she wishes funds (she says) to buy materials for clothes to be made (by guess), and sent to the Orang Outang or Kangaroo Islands. She takes no note whatever of the immense bundles of clothes needing repairs. Mr. Snip positively affirms that he does not own a pair of socks without holes, and his coats are in a sad plight, all the linings coming out. Nellie, Johnny, Bobby, and a score of others (it is Mr. Snip's good fortune to be blessed

with a household of juveniles who inherit the amiable (?) temper of their mother), never know the luxury of finding buttons on their clothes; they returned from school with faces scratched with pins that their attentive mother put where buttons were intended to be. She has no time to attend to her own children's clothes while so many far away need care taken of them. You must know that Mrs. Snip is a great pillar of the church (with what a sanctified air she folds her hands, and thanks God she is not as others are; how many have reason to be very thankful they are not as Mrs. Snip)—every week the "sewing circle" meet to gossip—I mean to say, to sew for the benefit of the friendless. Mrs. Snip is very philanthropic; her very heart bleeds at the thought of the good left undone. There is nothing so effectual as a little diplomacy, you see. Mrs. Snip knows this fact very well. She will (if perseverance can accomplish any thing) get herself into the good graces of those she calls the "Tons," by inviting them to join her sewing circle, not forgetting at the same time to spread the dainties on the occasion.

Mr. Snip chooses to be "contrary," not that he is at all unwilling to give his share toward doing good, but he knows too well how amiable (?) Mrs. Snip disposes of the funds—banqueting her friends (?). All her sham piety is perfectly understood by himself; full well he realizes the sad fact that the "winter of his discontent" has been a long and tedious one; but is consoled with the thought that "it is a bad tide that never turns." If it would only turn speedily; then he would not be bored to death with long-winded sermons that go in at one ear and come out the other. He thinks wisely, that "charity begins

at home"—that people ought to make their family neat and comfortable before they undertake to spread so much tinsel before people who are weak enough to believe all "that glitters is gold."

The Mysterious Casket.

AN ALLEGORY.

I ROAMED in a Fairy realm; forms as light as sunbeams floated round me. Flower-queens were taking recreation in their gardens and giving friendly advice to the haughty flowers, who, with proud tosses of the head, shook the dew-drops from their resting places. Soon I came to a coral grotto; fairies were holding court there; their queen rode by in a dainty chariot, fashioned from a large diamond, carved like a cameo; and to it were harnessed innumerable humming birds, of every hue.

She alighted, and entered the hall; her voice resounded through the grotto, like the notes of a silver bell. The assemblage appeared to be much absorbed in conversation. I endeavored to divine the important subject they were discussing, when suddenly my eyes glanced toward a magnificent casket; every one seemed to be looking at it eagerly. One of the tiny nymphs, of imperial bearing, commanded keys to be brought forth; one of gold, one of silver, and another of inferior metal. The queen spoke thus: "Whoever can unlock this casket, shall possess the power to understand all things." The first one upon whom her eyes rested, was Pride. "Come forth,"

said she, "and essay thy skill." Now haughtily advancing at the summons, with the golden key she attempted to unlock the casket;—but alas! it was all in vain.

The queen called another, another, and another; but none could accomplish the task imposed. At length but one remained—she sat in the most retired spot, and looked as if wishing to be screened from the view of all—much did she resemble the modest violet in some hidden nook. Her name was Wisdom; she possessed, apparently, no charms whatever; her person was unadorned by any costly gems; she was clad in the simple attire of innocence. The queen knew well that she was present, but allowed her to be the last. At this moment, her gaze fell upon her, and she said: "Come forth, and see if thou can'st reveal the prize which lies in this mysterious casket." With light step, her cheeks suffused with the blushes of roses, she took the iron key, and lo! what a magic touch! she had unclosed the casket. All eyes were turned toward her. Pride and Envy, with all the rest, looked down, at last abashed. In the casket, was a roll of parchment, on which was written the single, but regal word, "Knowledge." Suddenly her eye became animated, and she seemed to understand all things. She expounded all mystery. What an imperishable treasure did she possess, through that key which had thrown open to her, the Casket of Knowledge.

Voices of the Night.

NIGHT, how beautiful in all thy princely majesty; thy brow bedecked with jewels rivaling each other in splendor. Thy sable robes, interlaced with myriads of stars, hang in graceful folds around thy form, adding still more gorgeous brilliancy to thy beauty. Oh, what shall I compare to thee? Peri would stand abashed in thy presence, though her form were as peerless as thine own. All the proud queens of earth at thy feet might fall and shade their eyes from thy dazzling charms. The sun e'en hides his face ere thou comest, and though he lingers for a while beyond yon western hills, he feareth to meet thee.

Beauteous queen, tell us thy messages, for we would gladly be the bearer of them. Thou dost whisper to everything in nature and all heed thy gentle voice. Let me hear thy whisperings. Timid bird, to thy nest away; cover with thy wings the tiny ones who await thy coming. Haste thee lest the breeze should chill the unfledged offspring—chant one sweet song ere thou goest, for I would hear thee.

Man of toil, cease thy labor, for I come to close the gates of day; wind thy steps homeward, where near and dear ones await thy coming; the cheerful fire gleaming on the hearth and all

within is so inviting. Comfort shall be the reward of thy diligence, for thou hast truly earned it.

Little children : I come to close thy eyelids in sleep ; cease thy prattle and I will lull thee to rest with sweet music. Dreams shall cheer thee 'till morning cometh, and then with the lark shall ye join in music to welcome the rising sun. Fear not, for though my garments are sombre, nought shall harm thee. I leave thee for I have other messages for a sphere more bright and beautiful than this—yet I do not forget those less highly favored while seated on my regal throne.

A Leaf.

"The evil that men do lives after them ;
The good is oft interred with their bones."

Nor true—no, indeed ! Shakspeare never spoke more incorrectly in his life, than when he wrote the above lines. A man never was known to die, but possessed more virtues than he ever was entitled to during his life-time. A splendid or simple monument is erected in memory of him, extolling his good qualities, etc.

Jonathan Snubbs, for instance, may die ; a more intolerable man perhaps never existed ; he whipped his wife no less than twice a day ; frightened away all the servants ; made the children's hair fairly stand on "end ;" the yard dog to run yelping away at the very sound of his footsteps. The widow has been turned out of doors ; the orphans sent to bed minus a supper—and why ? because Mr. Snubbs could not live without people who rented his houses paid him.

But he is not to blame for all this, since his income is only about ten thousand per annum. This is but a paltry (?) sum for a man with an extravagant wife, who wishes to figure pretty extensively at some watering-place during the summer season. Beside this, the many comforts of winter are to be taken into

consideration; his store-house must be well filled, for Jonathan loves the luxuries of life as well as the next one. To do all this, he can with impunity turn the widow out of doors, unless she pays promptly the last month's rent. Oh! he is a very lenient landlord indeed; all he requires of them is, to promptly pay that rent—he will not exact any more.

The said Jonathan is held in great esteem by the people, for he is deacon of the church, and of course could not do any thing improper. He argues warmly upon the subject of charity, little dreaming that he is even as "sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal."

But Jonathan, after all, has to pay the debt of nature; there is no possible chance of getting out of that. He feels the truth of it too well, and thinks in the mean time of the possessions which he must leave behind; he cannot carry the last month's rent which he collected from the widow with him. Now seeing there is no alternative, he leaves a large portion for the purpose of establishing some charitable institution, so that his name may be handed down to posterity, for some good and noble act. A goodly sum is laid by, too, for the purpose of erecting a stately monument. Some of the wealthy friends whom he left behind see that every thing is properly attended to, and at the shortest notice, for it would be highly unjust for a man of so much "departed worth" to lie in the grave-yard long without every one knowing him to be there.

How all his imaginary virtues glow in deeply traced letters upon his tomb-stone!—a good man, kind and benevolent to the poor; they have indeed lost a friend (?)—a friend not easily replaced. The Scriptures saith, "blessed are the merciful, for

they shall obtain mercy"—"he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord."

A pious, devoted, self-sacrificing life he led.

Oh, Jonathan Snubbs, how they have slandered thee in the grave! Couldst thou but behold what is here inscribed, if thou hadst any shame, surely thou wouldst be appalled.

It is my private opinion (though I tell it to the world) that, instead of all these eulogiums, it should have been written, "he that seeth his neighbor hath need, and shutteth up the bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Only Waiting for an Offer.

"WHAT a nonsensical, shallow-pated concern that James Atkinson is. I declare, if I were Lucy Bowers, he should not walk in the street with me. How fantastically he lifts his hat; he just does it to show his kids, which, by the way, make his hands look like stuffed bags. He cannot meet any one, when he is with Lucy Bowers, without saying, 'Ah, Miss Lucy, what a *distingué* air Mr. So-and-so has; and what a degree of *hauteur* Miss L. possesses.' You see, he only does this to make Lucy believe that he knows how to speak French, and I'll wager he does not know the meaning of the words he uses; I believe his whole thought is upon dress, and I know he practices his gestures a whole day before the glass. There they come now—only see his manœuvres! If I were Lucy, I would push him off the side-walk. I see him casting his glances up this way—he only wants to see if any one is looking at him; if he only knew what a perfect eye-sore he is to me, he would certainly not pass here so often. I do declare, I would not have him, if he were the last man in the world—no, not if I felt assured I would die an old maid. It is no manner of use for a young lady to sacrifice herself for the sake of getting married; as for my part, I go in for handsome, sensible gentlemen."

"Why, Gertrude! you astonish me. Why do you speak thus of Mr. Atkinson? I am sure he is not shallow-pated, as you said just now, for he graduated with the highest honors; I do not think it very likely that he would have attained the Valedictory if he were a numskull. I would be willing to stake any thing that there is not a young lady in the city (myself not excepted) who would refuse the offer of such a gentleman as Mr. Atkinson."

"Oh, that is just the way with you, Kate; if a boy has been to college, it matters not if he stay but a single day, you think he must of necessity be a Plato or Socrates."

"No, Gertrude, you are mistaken. I know too much about Mr. Atkinson to sanction the eulogiums which you passed upon him just now."

Gertrude and Kate Manning were sisters; there was all the difference in the world between them. Gertrude was certainly one of the most envious persons in the world; if any of her associates (even her most intimate friends) should eclipse her in any way, she would directly say some thing against them. Envy was her most predominant trait—it seemed to take possession of her completely. She had very frequently heard of the attentions of Mr. Atkinson to Lucy Bowers, and always felt a jealousy arising when ever she saw them. Atkinson was a young gentleman of fine talents, and withal very accomplished: his manners were exceedingly refined and winning. Gertrude knew all this, and being among that number of young ladies who have no admirers, never liked to see any one have them.

Kate was quite the contrary; she always treated every one kindly, and was not at all disposed to be jealous. Every one

could but love her, for she was so gentle and good. Why, often she would speak to her sister about the manner in which she expressed herself with regard to people, and assured her that it would never gain her any friends; but Gertrude never listened to a word she had to say on any occasion, but would endeavor to bring in some thing to justify her remarks. Kate felt that all her advice was useless—that a deaf ear was turned to all she said.

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"There has been quite a change in the state of affairs," said Mr. Manning as he sat at tea.

"What do you mean, papa?" said Gertrude.

"What do I mean? Why I mean that Miss Lucy Bowers is to be married next week."

"I thought so," replied Gertrude. "I knew that she and that dummy James Atkinson would make it up. Well, all I have to say is, she will get a man without any brains."

"You are mistaken, Getty; she is not going to marry Mr. Atkinson."

"Well, I thought after all, that Lucy would see the folly of marrying that booby."

"That booby, indeed! James Atkinson is no booby, I tell you; he is a very accomplished and sensible gentleman. Have you ever been in his company?"

"Never."

"Well, some evening I will invite him up."

At this remark, Getty's eyes brightened up a little, for she had never had a beau in her life, nor is it very probable she would ever meet with the luck to have an admirer, for no one

could admire her, but she might manage to induce some one to think that he loved her.

"Papa, do tell me who the gentleman is to whom Lucy is to be married."

"Mr. Frank Jennings."

"Frank Jennings! he is a charming young gentleman—I admire her taste very much; a great goose she would be to marry that James Atkinson. I am thinking he will have to wait some time before he is married, for no one would have him any how."

"Ah! Getty, I would not trust the girls. I will go so far as to say, that I would not trust even you."

"Even me! I had as lief be an old maid as to marry him; indeed I would prefer it a thousand times."

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"Well, Gertrude, Mr. Atkinson will call up this evening, and as your sister is out of town, the whole of the entertainment will fall pretty much upon yourself."

"Oh, papa! what did you invite that bore up here for? I declare I do not wish to see him."

"Never mind; you must entertain him to the best of your ability, as I have invited him up to see you."

Evening came. Mr. Atkinson called at the residence of Mr. Manning. He was introduced to Miss Gertrude, with whom he was left. Mr. Manning stated that he had some little business which would detain him in the library, but would join them in a little while.

Gertrude did her best; all the smiles she could muster up were put on that evening. She, of course, wished to make a deep impression upon the gentleman in question.

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"Well, well, what is the world coming to? That old maid, Gertrude Manning, is going to be married to James Atkinson. I do wonder what he sees in her to admire. I am sure she is not pretty by any means. She is certainly very wise to get married now, for I am sure if she misses this opportunity she will never get another."

Such was the language of the gossiping world, when the news of the intended marriage was spread. Many knew how bitter she was against Mr. Atkinson, and wondered what had changed her notion.

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"Well, what do you think, Kate?" said Mr. Manning to his daughter on her return home.

"Now hush, papa," exclaimed Gertrude, coloring.

"Really you surprised me, papa; I cannot tell. Gertrude has not certainly made any attempt at a runaway match since I've been gone."

"Oh, no; she is to take 'the leap in the dark,' or in the light, just as you are pleased to term it."

"Indeed! Pray tell me who is the one to assist her?"

"None other than James Atkinson."

"James Atkinson? Impossible."

"It is true. Nothing is impossible now a days."

"Well, well, Gertrude," said Kate, laughingly; "what are you going to marry that shallow-pated, nonsensical numskull for? You certainly have changed your mind very much."

"Oh, she was only waiting for an offer," said Mr. M. "There,

did I not tell you that I would not trust her, Kate? Do you remember the reply she made me?"

"Yes, yes, I remember very well."

And so it was sure enough. Gertrude, like a great many other young ladies, was only waiting for an offer. Very readily did she accept the proposal of Mr. Atkinson—her eye-sore, as she was once pleased to call him—and she no longer thought him a booby or a dummy, particularly after she found out the quantity of dimes he had in his possession. Nothing now could excite her ire more than for Kate to call him, in a jesting way, a shallow-headed concern, although Gertrude once thought that Lucy Bowers had a very perverted taste to receive the attentions of such a piece of humanity, and wondered where her eyes (if she had any at all) could be to fancy James Atkinson. All she wanted was a chance, and she was only waiting for an offer.

"Departed Worth."

SILENCE reigneth, for death, with noiseless tread, hath entered the household. Lo! what a mass of rich drapery meets the eye; what superb carpets, what an array of mirrors, reflecting the forms of spectators. Silence, around; aye! for surely death is there.

The man upon whom fortune hath lavished her many gifts, now lies in the cold embrace of that sleep, from whence there is no waking on earth. The richly finished coffin is brought, and the precious remains, clad in finest fabric, are laid in carefully. Many are the sobs of loving friends, who come to take a farewell glance at the lifeless body. Soon must the tomb receive it, and the clay rattle like a death-knell upon the coffin lid. But what pomp and array! 'Tis the funeral of the rich man. The news of his death has spread far and wide. Coach after coach follow in succession, slowly too, as if reluctant to reach the cemetery.

The gate of the church-yard is entered at last; now the old sexton waits to perform his accustomed duty.

'Tis done—the grave has been closed. Friends group around and seem to cling to the very grave. This was the rich man's

burial. The costly monument is not long being prepared to his memory, so that all may know his merits. Each page of the newspaper glows with the words "Departed Worth;" all lament the death of one so worthy. And, why should they not? He, surely, was departed worth. His coffers were well filled; he once occupied a splendid mansion—but alas! "death levels all distinction," and the rich man was in his "narrow cell forever laid."

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The widow's home; oh, cheerless spot, grief and sorrow are indeed there! The faint taper glimmers feebly on the little pine table. There she lies upon the rude couch. Poor widow! her only child sits beside her, and buries his little head in his hands. Young he is, yet not too young to know his grief. The night wind is howling mournfully; the cold, icy air penetrates every crevice. The fire has nearly died away, and there is no fuel left for another. Oh! the misery of poverty. Alas! where are friends? Where the charitable? Echo answers, "Not in the widow's home!" The door opens—perchance 'tis some kind friend. Yes! like the good Samaritan, the physician comes to heal the wounded heart. He shakes his head doubtfully, for full well he knows life hangs by a single thread. He consoles himself with the thought that she will soon be with the Mighty Physician.

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A stained wooden coffin is brought; the remains of the poor widow are laid carefully in. Soon the hearse is at the door. But what a funeral! Where is that stately array of coaches? Ah, they go only to the funeral of the rich, who are able

enough to hire them. None follow the widow. No monument stands to tell who lies beneath the sod. Here should have been traced in letters of gold, "Departed Worth," for she had devoted herself to the service of her Maker, and committed more acts of charity in her heart than all the men of wealth who placed large rolls of bank bills in the contribution-box "to be seen of men." The poor widow, like the one of old who contributed her mite, found favor in the Saviour's eyes. And, though men wrote not "Departed Worth," yet her name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life. There was One who knew her worth, and he will repay tenfold.

Meta.

I SAW lovely Meta as she, with slow steps, wended her way to the bridal altar; the delicate veil was drawn aside, and revealed a face—of joy? say you. Ah, no, there was a gloom upon her brow as if a dark cloud loomed o'er the fair forehead where nought but sunlight should have lingered. The aisles of the spacious church ne'er seemed more gloomy; and when the ceremony was over—aye, when the minister pronounced them one, the sentence fell upon her ear like a death knell; and when her gay companions, one by one, imprinted a kiss upon her cheek, she felt as if it were all a beautiful mockery. None knew why Meta wept. He who stood by her side was noble; his locks were mingled with silver; his voice was full; his brow was stern. Meta was many years his junior; he had, when she was but a tiny child, dandled her upon his knee; now she was his wife! It was like mating May and December. Yet, this would not have made the gentle Meta unhappy, had she been allowed to choose for herself. Ah, no: for the young and gay girl can fix her affections upon one many years her senior, and be truly happy. Yes, the happiest and brightest moment of her life is the one when she resigns her heart in the

safe keeping of one, though old in years, is young in affection still.

Meta was bartered away for wealth. Her proud father made the contract, and she submitted because he willed it—not that she wished it; ah, no; for much rather would she lie in her final resting-place, than wed the one whom her father had chosen. Now indeed was all the world to be gloomy and dark; the sun would lose its golden hue; the song of the birds would die away; the flowers would wither 'neath her gaze.

I entered the lone church-yard, and beheld a newly-made grave. But why should that arrest my attention? Ah, he who stood beside that grave I recognized as the father of Meta; bowed down with grief and sorrow, he scarcely raises his eyes to Heaven, as if fearing she will wreak her vengeance upon him still worse.

"Death lies upon her, like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the vale."

"Yes, dear Meta, thy youthful heart was crushed, indeed; thy warm affection was frozen up just as it gushed forth like the fountain.

But thou wert too pure for earth.

Meta, Meta!—oh, how that name echoed in my ear as it fell from the lips of her father. But that repentance came, alas! too late.

A Fragment.

How many precious hours are wasted in doing what is termed ornamental work? How many bright eyes are impaired by sitting steadily day after day doing embroidery? Exercise is sadly neglected, too; no fresh air can enter the lungs if one will sit constantly in a close room. It is essential to health to take exercise every day; walking briskly causes the blood to flow more freely through the veins, making one vigorous and hearty.

The mind suffers too, for the hours which are spent in embroidery should be devoted to reading. What can it profit a person to be gaudily decorated by her skilful hand, if the mind is left untilled and choked up with weeds that will require a lifetime to eradicate?

There is sometimes a decided objection to what is termed a "sewing circle." A group are seated around, not for the purpose of sewing exactly, but they dissect a neighbor's character—"at every word a reputation dies." Some sit crocheting tidies or purses; every skein used for the purpose represents a skein of scandal. These persons are the ones, too, who never talk

about any body; no, they are the leading pillars, and but for them the church might tumble down.

But this does not apply to all. No! for there are too many noble people good and pure at heart; they would as soon traduce their own character as that of a neighbor. While this is true of many, it is too lamentably the case that visitors are frequently entertained, while sipping the social cup of tea, with a rehearsal of all the faults (imaginary and real) of Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Jones. They take very good care to see the mote in the eye of others, not for a moment imagining the beam (and a very large one too) in their own. We have discussed but one thing; the female mind generally suggests another, hence from embroidery to slander. Some will argue the necessity of doing their own embroidery—it is cheaper. What, cheaper to put one's own eyes out?—to have stooping shoulders, sunken and sallow cheeks? Lastly, though not least, to have one's conscience blunted? Southern girls should give more attention to literature—read more—reflect more—talk less about their neighbor's failings instead of magnifying them beyond all computation.

We would not encourage idleness by any means; on the contrary: we censure employing the time in doing ornamental work so far as it consumes the precious time one should devote to reading and cultivating the mind. A person who reads and reflects, has but little time to heed

“Soft buzzing slander—
A silky moth that eats an honest name.”

A Portfolio Lent.

“Neglected beauty now is prized by gold
And sacred love is basely bought and sold,
Wives are grown traffic, marriage is a trade,
And when a nuptial of two hearts is made
There must of money too a wedding be.”

MISS BREMER has said “many a marriage begins like a rosy morning but falls away like a snow wreath.” How truly spoken, for do we not every day see instances when the most promising marriages have alas! doomed many to a life of misery?

While gold is held up and worshipped as a God, it will ever be the case. The innocent unsuspecting young girl consents to resign her heart and hand to the keeping of one who is actuated by mercenary motives alone; she little dreams her row of elegant houses or servants were the great magnets, and not herself; that he so much wishes to be a gentleman of leisure and considers her the best chance for that. Others will stake their happiness for the sake of getting a position among the order of “mushroomdom,” who are far from being the *creme de creme*, but merely the skim milk and that of rather an inferior quality, too. A very great mistake is made by one who permits herself to be led to the altar by the “gold worshipper.” The “fortune hunter” should never be chosen; he has a heart of steel, and

though he manages to steal hearts yet he takes good care to give none in return.

An incongeniality is a very great source of unhappiness; a woman possessing an affectionate, confiding disposition, should never marry a morose, callous man who knows not the meaning of affection; let her be assured he will never see a tear she sheds, and if, by the merest accident in the world, he does discover it, it will not move him any more than if he were a rock.

Husbands sometimes are too apt to lay aside all their polished manners after matrimony, this is a very great mistake; for any woman of delicacy and refinement could not pardon this great fault; she feels it equally as important for him to be exceedingly polite and polished after marriage as before.

Every woman should show out her true character; should never affect amiability if she has not been so fortunate as to have been gifted with that heavenly trait.

If she acts openly and candidly, and then one chooses with all her faults to select her from the world, he can blame no one but himself if he gets a terragant for a wife.

It is the duty of every husband to be as lenient as possible, (for women are not angels by any means), making the best of everything, and acting upon the philosophy of enduring what they cannot cure. Remember a woman will never be driven; but kind words will work wonders.

Love is the only sceptre that should be wielded; "you shall," "you must," are two phrases never to be used, for one had as well try to remove a mountain as to hope to persuade a woman against her will.

Consistency.

"CAN'T think of such a thing! What, pay that large bill these hard times? Wife, you are entirely too extraragant; it must be stopped at once, or else I shall be compelled to fail," said Edward Jones to his pert little wife, as she held before him a bill of \$60.00. Her eyes beamed with mischief, and now making the wryest face imaginable, she said—

"Now Edward, I hope you do not call sixty dollars a large bill."

"Sixty dollars! yes, I do call it a large amount for these hard times. Where in the world do you think I can get all that money from? It is very certain that money cannot be picked up in the street. I verily believe that women think it makes no kind of difference at all how much money they expend upon dress; why in the world do you all wear so much finery? It certainly does not add to your looks at all. 'Beauty when unadorned is adorned the most;' so says the poet."

"It is my opinion, Edward, that the gentlemen are far more extravagant than the ladies. They are for ever puffing away at a cigar which costs at least six cents. But it is nothing, I know,

for them to smoke up sixty cents per day—oh, no! that is not extravagant, by any means—not a bit of it.”

Minnie tossed her head and pouted her pretty lips, which looked like newly ripened strawberries. She was waiting to hear the answer which Mr. Jones would give to her remarks.

Well, you know, Minnie, that smoking is a luxury which gentlemen so much enjoy.”

“Well, now I want to know if we don’t enjoy dressing?”

“But fine dressing is something so superfluous.”

“I suppose, then, that smoking is not superfluous at all; would you not think me deranged, if I were to roll up a parcel of bank notes and burn them? I know you would: I consider smoking cigars the very same.”

“Well, now, Minnie, do you know how many I smoke during the day?”

“No; for I never took the trouble to count them.”

“Well, I am exceedingly moderate in smoking—only six or eight.”

“Oh, I do not care how many cigars you smoke. Tell me, are you not going to pay this bill? A small one it is.” An ironical smile followed the last remark.

“Small bill, Minnie! nonsense; where am I to get sixty dollars from?”

“That I cannot tell.”

“You ought, then, to be more prudent, and not incur any such expenses, since you know it is out of my power to meet the payment of such large bills.”

“You say, then, that you cannot pay it.”

“I do—and furthermore, that you must not contract any more large bills, or small ones either.”

“You do not owe for any cigars, then?”

“I pay for all I use—yes, all to the very cent.”

Mr. Jones seated himself very complacently in his arm chair, and commenced puffing away at a cigar. Minnie could not refrain from smiling at his appearance, for she knew very well, when she drew the curtain aside, that he would not look quite so composed.

“What pleases you so much, Minnie? It cannot be hard times. Do tell me, so that I may enjoy the laugh too; I do not believe in people keeping all the fun to themselves.”

“Would you really like to know what pleases me so much, Edward?”

“I would, most certainly. Tell me any thing to make me forget ‘hard times.’”

“Oh, I was only laughing at this little note.”

“What note?—let me see it.”

Minnie handed it over, and the contents were—

“MR. EDWARD JONES—To Rayson, Tyler & Co., Dr. To 1 box cigars, \$60.00.”

Mr. Jones looked at the bill, and in his confusion threw the lighted cigar into the fire. He found that Minnie had been playing some of her pranks upon him. He never felt worse in all his life; he had no other alternative but to take his hat and leave for a little while, till he recovered from the shock.

"Oh, consistency, consistency!" were the words which rung in his ears as he made for the door.

Minnie heard no more of hard times. Mr. Jones affirmed that Minnie was "wide awake" that time, and he, no doubt, took good care in future how he disputed an account, for the cigar bill would rise before him like some dreaded spectre to haunt his brain.

The Echo of a Mother's Heart.

You wonder that the mother should look so pale and wan; you cannot understand why she should grieve for the loss of her child, while so many are left to comfort her. You watch her, as she handles the tiny dresses, that once enwrapped the form so cold in death; you note her, while she looks over the little toys, now laid away carefully. Ah! for her, each of these trifles hath a value, dearer than imagination can conceive; each hath a history. The group of happy children, romping and playing merrily as ever, seem solace enough for her; yet she grieves the more, as she listens to their voices. One loved sound is not there. The house is in mourning; the halls are desolate; you cannot but feel that a great loss has been sustained. The father returns to his home, with a sad face; he takes up some toy, with which the lost one was wont to play; and a tear steals down his manly cheek.

Why all this gloom? Little Allie is gone! That portrait, so smiling, has not half the rich beauty, with which nature blessed the dear original!

They have laid her low in the ground; a simple stone marks

the place. Upon it are the words: "Death found strange beauty on that brow, and dashed it out!" Yes; it was a beauty we seldom gaze on; a lustrous dark eye, fringed with draping lids—a bright intellect beaming clearly forth from every glorious feature.

Had you known that little Allie was the angel of the household—had you known that the happiness of her father had its source in her soft dark eyes—had you seen that sunny smile, when she would throw her dimpled arms around his neck, and press her velvet cheek against his own—had you heard her musical tones, when she said, "Allie is going to heaven,"—had you known how much she was missed, when her fairy-feet no longer tripped upon the floor—you would then have understood why the mother wept, when she stood by the tomb in summer, when earth was clad in its gorgeous robes of beauty. She saw everything that Allie had loved—the gay wild flowers—the soft blue skies; she heard the songs of birds; and all these scenes reminded her of the one loved and lost—the one, whom the grave had veiled. And, in the dreary winter, when the snow-wreaths, twined by seraphs' fingers, encircled the tombstone, she would wander there, melancholy and alone, to give vent to her grief. The tears, that fell upon that grave, were sacred.

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A mother clings fondly to her little lambs. 'Tis she who shields them from harm; 'tis she who tends them faithfully in health; and, when sickness comes, no vigilance is like hers. The last coin will be taken from the slender purse. Ever watchful and untiring, she guards the couch, through the long

weary hours of night; and, at early dawn, her heart is cheered, when she feels the pulse, and finds that it still throbs. And, when the angel of death comes, first is she, in the soul's deep grief; last is she, to quit the shrine of memory.

Not in Fault.

CHAPTER I.

"Nor the happy girl of five years ago," sighed Alice Neville, as she threw herself carelessly upon a lounge. Her dreamy eyes, such as only Sir Peter Lely can paint, wandered about the richly furnished parlors. The rosy curtains, as the shower of sunbeams fell upon them, bathed the room in a flood of oriental light. Every thing, to the casual observer, was there—paintings of every description; the Madonna of Raphael, with her holy face, seemed to look admonishingly down; next in rotation was Beatrice Cenci, with her wealth of sunny curls. And then, there were Claude Lorraine's pictures, with their exquisite tints. And thus might we go on enumerating. But the portrait of Alice must not be overlooked. It represented her as she was at the age of eighteen—beautiful, gay, light creature, the picture of joy, song, and gladness. The drapery flowing around her graceful form added, if possible, more beauty. As her eyes fell upon the portrait a shade of momentary sorrow seemed to pass over her. "Am I happy?" was a question she many times asked herself. What was wanting? Wealth was surely at her command; no fairy foot trod upon softer velvet; no epicure had more sumptuous fare; no belle enjoyed a greater

share of admiration; the less lightly favored envied her, and she knew it. Her's was a warm, impulsive heart—a generous nature. Never was a beggar turned from her door. No! they knew where to come for aid in time of need.

Alice Neville was a woman of too much good sense not to keep her troubles to herself; she knew that by relating them she might subject herself to the extreme pain of hearing them repeated by the gossips. By prudence and caution, she escaped thus far the sneers and jeers of the world. To all appearances she was a happy woman. If she gave vent to her feelings, it was when no one saw her; and yet there were times when it seemed quite impossible for her to keep it any longer concealed. Yet, a person of discernment might have discovered that she was troubled.

"Alice," her intimate friends would say, "is such an enigma and will ever be thus; as to understanding her, that is a matter quite impossible; she is too sensitive—too tender."

* * * * *

Perhaps nothing is more painful to a woman of delicate sensibilities than a feeling that she is not appreciated—that her love is treated with a sort of indifference. A woman, though she may possess all the wealth of Ormus, could not be happy, if she meets with disappointment in one whom she has trusted and placed the most implicit confidence. She would gladly give up all, and share the humblest cot, if she could by this means reign supreme in the bosom of one to whom she has given all she held dear to herself.

"Not the happy girl of five years ago," she again sighed, and sank, as it were, into a reverie.

* * * * *

Five years ago, Alice Hawthorne, the belle and heiress of "Hawthorne Castle," married Arthur Neville. In making her choice, she had no one to consult—no kind, tender mother to advise—no father to suggest what was the best course to pursue.

She loved Arthur Neville, and made him her husband, consented willingly to be led to the "bridal altar." Trusting and confiding in his love, and placing full confidence in his promises, her heart throbbed with joy when the reality burst upon her that she was indeed the wife of Arthur Neville.

CHAPTER II.

In a verandah beautifully ornamented with jessamine and woodbine, sat two persons. One was a young girl of about eighteen summers; her soft, golden hair shaded partially a beautifully moulded neck; her eyes were beaming with delight. The other person was a gentleman of elegant exterior and polished manners. It was none other than Arthur Neville. The peerless Rosa Brighton had met him at the various watering places which he had visited during the summer. Strange to say, although he was the husband of so beautiful and accomplished a woman, yet his heart had wandered involuntarily at times. He was fascinated by Rose Brighton, for she was, beyond the shadow of a doubt, a beautiful woman. It was very evident, from the blush that suffused the cheek of Rosa when

he spoke, that something very graceful and complimentary was uttered.

* * * * *

"Mr. Neville, you must not stop here so often on your way home. It is true, I am delighted to see you, for you always have something pretty to tell me. However much I may relish your company, you must reflect what the uncharitable world would say—you know too well the shafts aimed by the envious at the innocent. And apart from this, Alice, your wife, is very beautiful and a highly educated woman: the time not engrossed in your business should be devoted entirely to her. I feel that I am doing wrong to take one moment of your society, when I reflect how much pleasure you give her when you are at home. Mr. Neville, I tell you in a very friendly, yet serious manner, that I will no longer permit you to stop here on your way home—you must not come again, unless accompanied by Alice. Remember, now, what I say to you."

"But, Miss Brighton, it is not your fault that I stop when passing. You could not treat me impolitely or unkindly. I come, and you as a lady must feel it a duty to treat me as a gentleman. Come, Miss Rose, do not begin to put on any airs to an old friend. My heart has quite room enough for two, you see."

"Mr. Neville," replied Rose, blushing deeply, "if you ever utter such sentiments in my presence again, I will never recognize you as my friend. You certainly forget. Alice is very beautiful, and then she is such a sweet woman, that I deem it your special duty to do all you can toward making her happy. She may perhaps blame me if you were guilty of the least slight.

I cannot imagine why I permitted you to visit me so often without saying something. I tell you, Mr. Neville, that I am very much displeased with the sentiments you have uttered."

"Pardon, pardon me, Miss Brighton. I confess that I spoke hastily—it was merely the impulse of a moment; pray pardon me for uttering them. You are very beautiful. Our Heavenly Father made the beautiful to be admired."

"If this be the case, that the 'beautiful were made to be admired,' then surely Alice, your wife, deserves a great share of admiration. She is not only beautiful, but the impersonation of goodness, purity and sweetness. A man may admire a woman, but should love none except his wife. I am sadly afraid that I have permitted you already to spend too many hours in my society, and it was all, too, through thoughtlessness. I do assure you that I would never be the person to cause the heart of Alice a pang—she is too much like an angel. But time is stealing on and you must away. Remember, now, that you must not visit me any more, as I have before told you, unless you are accompanied by Alice."

"Do come over and spend the evening with us, Miss Brighton; I really fail to deliver, every time I come, the invitation; Alice begs me not to forget."

"Not this, but to-morrow evening, Mr. Neville, I will accept your invitation. Tell Alice I will come, and anticipate a charming evening. Remember what I have told you, and be very careful in future."

CHAPTER III.

"What, asleep, and so late in the afternoon, Alice! I should certainly have thought you would be up and have your toilette made for the evening. You remember who takes tea with us—Miss Rose Brighton, the beauty of the city. Come, Alice; you seem so cold and indifferent—why, just as if no one was coming. Have you forgotten the engagement?"

"Forgotten? No, Arthur, I never forget anything you tell me—but strange to say, you seem not to remember the little orders I frequently give you to execute."

"Have I not proved my punctuality in coming up so soon from my office to remind you of the engagement made by Rose Brighton? I was certain that I would find you as usual—asleep!"

There was a tone of bitterness in the words of Arthur Neville, as he uttered the last sentence, which lacerated the heart of Alice. What could she do to while away the tedious hours? Arthur was so seldom there. The time he should have spent with her, when he should have been at her side, he was not present. She looked sadly into his face. Arthur felt the gentle rebuke.

"Do you not intend to make any preparation, Alice? If not, I will say to Miss Brighton, that you are indisposed, and I will go somewhere, anywhere to spend the evening in order to get rid of that doleful countenance; I cannot enjoy myself at home, hence must go elsewhere."

Looking tenderly at her husband for a moment, she said:

"I would see any one, Arthur, rather than Rose Brighton—"

she has been the bane of my happiness. If she does it willfully, I must say that she is a very cruel woman. She has attention enough from all the young gallants of our city—and I cannot tell why she would seek to rob me of your love, when she has so many to worship at her shrine. She ought to remember that I must find my happiness in my home, and if my husband who is so dear to me, prefers her society to mine, then must I pass indeed a gloomy time. Why she finds any pleasure in your love, I cannot tell. It is not from the promptings of jealousy that I speak—no—but I feel myself dealt by unjustly. I am not deserving of it either.”

The light, the truth flashed suddenly into the mind of Arthur Neville. How prophetic, indeed, had been the words of Rose Brighton! How innocent of what she had been accused!

“Alice, you are in the wrong; Rose is not in fault; but, on the contrary, entirely innocent of what you have accused her. I am sure she would feel very unhappy if she knew you cherished a thought that she was endeavoring to win my love. But, Alice, dry your tears, and dress, else I must make some excuse.”

“I will do as you say, Arthur, but my heart is very heavy. Of late I have been the most miserable of women; but of this the world knew nothing—I kept it all to myself. For hours have I sat all alone when you should have been with me to comfort me. Those hours, Arthur, were spent with Rose Brighton.”

“Rose Brighton is innocent, Alice, and you will find it so.”

“Would that I might, for then my unhappy hours would

pass. Time is hastening on, and I must prepare to receive your friend—your guest,” she added, as she left the room. It was gently, kindly, yet firmly said.

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Arthur Neville reflected seriously for the first time in his life perhaps. He was young, handsome and wealthy; but his wayward propensities sometimes caused him to do many things he afterward regretted. He loved Alice, and yet Rose occupied a very sunny nook in his heart. He felt that he had unintentionally caused Alice to feel very sad at times. The whole truth came rushing upon his mind. He would have thrown himself at the feet of Alice had not his pride triumphed over every thing else. His reverie was broken by the entrance of Rose Brighton, who was ushered into the parlor by the servant. At the sight of Rose, he felt for the first time a pang through his inmost soul. Alice appeared in a few moments, and Rose was pained to see her unusually pale; her hand, too, was cold and nervous. Arthur, in order to prevent being betrayed by his violent feelings, left the room for a while, under the pretence of having a note of importance to dispatch, promising to join them at tea.

* * * * *

Rose removed her bonnet, and Alice thought she never before beheld her so beautiful. Her golden curls were in profuse masses over her fair parian-like shoulders. It seemed as if the admiration was mutual, for never appeared Alice so lovely, though she was so pale; there was such an angelic beauty in her classic face. Alice, ever amiable and gentle, tried to smile for the sake of Arthur. She remembered that she had promised

to make herself agreeable; and, like a true woman, would do any thing to afford pleasure to one whom she so tenderly and truly loved. For a moment the two—Alice and Rose—sat silent. It was very obvious to the mind of Rose that Alice was quivering with emotion. Taking her hand gently, she sweetly asked—

"Alice, dear, what is the matter? You are not yourself; it pains me to see you serious. Come, tell me your grief, and if I can by any means make you happy, I will, dearest, with all my heart. I love you tenderly and truly; yet of late I have fancied that you are so cold and indifferent to me—all, too, without a cause."

Alice could hear no more, but, falling upon the neck of Rose, she wept, and unbosomed all her troubles to her.

Rose was awakened as if from some dream. She could not believe that Alice was weeping for the wrong she imagined she had done. Ah no! for she would never be the one to bring a pang to the heart of so sweet a being as Rose Brighton.

"I would not see you thus cast down, Alice; for my friendship is too great, too pure. Thoughtlessly, I received the attentions of your husband. I told him to come no more; for I would not receive him. Though there was no harm, yet the world would censure me, and, above all, Alice, you might accuse me unjustly. I made him faithfully promise that he would come no more unless you were with him."

"He promised, then?" exclaimed Alice, while a new joy seemed to have entered her heart.

"Yes, he promised. And has this been the cause of your coldness of late? If such was the case, then I am very sure

that we can be friends again. Rest satisfied, Alice, and know that your husband tenderly, truly loves you. He is, perhaps, a little wayward, but forgive him; for I am sure that, in the future, he will be more careful. Let me see you smile as in days gone by, dear one. Perhaps my errand here has been a holy one. I came to offer a word in time—to prove that I was not in fault. Believe me, my dearest friend, that I am, indeed, innocent."

* * * * *

Alice seemed to have gained new life—the cloud was dispelled—she was at once convinced how great was the error under which she labored.

Arthur entered; Rose joined the hands of both.

What a happy trio, indeed, was there assembled around the table. Arthur declared that Alice never looked so beautiful and lovely; and, as he kissed his bright-eyed boy, as it lay sleeping, he prayed that he would never again have cause to make Alice sad. He blessed Rose Brighton for thus clearing away the clouds, and made a firm resolution to be very cautious in the future not to wound, by word or action, the feelings of his amiable and faithful "Wife."

Patches.

"SEE what patches he has on his jacket and shoes. Boys, don't play with him, for people might take him to be our company, and then you see our companions would slight us if they saw us playing with 'Patches.'"

I stood for a moment looking intently at the one who was the target for those rude, unfeeling boys. Such a bright, open face as that boy had—there was energy and force of character in every feature. How he struggled to keep back the tears which the unkind remarks called forth; he had too much pride to permit them to discover that he noticed what they said. His patches were no disgrace, nor had he worn them always. Time was when every luxury of life was his—he wore a fine suit, lived in a splendid house—in a word, was wealthy. But misfortune overtook him, and he, with his broken-hearted mother, left their native country to avoid the unpleasant feelings which naturally arise when the world sneers and jeers at them because fickle fortune takes a reverse step.

Little Freddy was only nine years old. He was a child of uncommon talents, and excited the envy of his classmates because of his readiness to answer any questions put to him.

United to native genius was application—this made him first in his classes. He looked many times at his patched, yet tidy clothes, and the tears would come. He was quite old enough to know the opinion of uncharitable people who passed remarks upon him. Though cast down and sad, his mother never saw him weep. No; he always had for her a smile; he possessed too much good, noble feeling for her, to permit her heart ever to know a single pang on his account. How he talked of brighter days yet to dawn, when he would become a man.

"When I am old enough, mother," he would say, "I will do all I can to aid you. You shall again enjoy what you have been accustomed to."

Noble, generous boy! In spite of his patches, he was far better than those who derided him. He may yet fill a position they would gladly occupy.

* * * None but the unfeeling will scorn a person because he is compelled to wear clothing of a cheap kind. Patches often show honest poverty and industry—the wearer of them should not be entitled to ridicule because he cannot afford better.

Which Will You Choose.

"Oh! dear! What a stupid man my husband is! It is no use for me to ask him any thing, for he never knows. People tell me he belongs to the order of "Know Nothings" and I am fully convinced that he does. Dear aunt Tabitha, you cannot tell what a perfect bore a man is who knows nothing. Why, as to reading, he never thinks of taking up a newspaper. If I ask what the news is? He says I ought to read the papers myself; just as if I had time to do any thing of that sort—with such a quantity of clothes to mend—to say nothing of the socks wanting to be mended. Oh! dear! what did I ever marry him for? I am sure I am at a loss to know. Every new book that comes out I want him to buy it—he says women must not want every thing they see. The moment he comes into the house he romps and plays with the children as if he were a child himself. If I only had a literary man for a husband—a senator, member of Congress—any thing but the one I have."

"You should not murmur Maria—for you certainly have a capital husband—so fond of home and his family. If you are not happy, the fault is all your own. Take aunt Tabitha's word

for it; you should be very thankful that it did not fall to your lot to marry a politician or literary man."

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"Oh! What an insipid man my husband is—he is no company for me at all. The moment he comes into the house, he takes up either a book or paper, and never thinks of talking to me. If I ask a question, he tells me not to talk to him when he is reading. In the morning, the first thing he does is to take up a paper and read as if his life depended on it. If he chances to come in during the day, he props his feet up and reads unmindful of every thing going on. I only wish everybody knew what perfect bores literary men are. There is a proper limit to every thing, but when a man, on all occasions, gives his wife every reason to suppose he prefers a book to her society; I say with all emphasis *it is too bad.*"

"Now Maria, you who said that you wished your husband was a literary man, let me ask which will you choose? Your husband is agreeable and attentive—not immersed too deeply in politics to give any of his time to his family. Let me ask you again which will you choose?"

Whisperings.

"QUIET stars, you who look so mildly down, cheering earth's mortals during the gloom of life's darkest hours, what say ye? Tell me, for I fain would hear what Nature whispers to you."

"Nature hath created us to tell that there is a God. He formed us to raise the heart of man, in adoration, to his Maker, and point the way to Heaven. Do we not add a beauty to the night? Are we not brighter far than earth's greatest and most costly gems? Gaze upon us and learn thy duty."

"Sweet flowers, can you not speak? Tell me if this earth be not too cold for you, and why you have left Eden's bowers for a less genial clime."

"God made us to beautify the earth. He hath given us the various tints, He paints our cheeks, He fills our chalices with the richest perfume. We were transplanted from our homes to gladden the sight of man. When winter comes, our tender petals are crushed by the nipping frosts; but when spring returns, we again come forth in all our loveliness and beauty—fit emblem of thyself, oh, man! for though thy frail body shall pass away in the cold dark tomb, yet shall thy spirit soar away to everlasting bliss. Not long wilt thou be an inmate of the tomb,

for, like us frail flowers, you will again flourish in all your wonted brightness and beauty."

"Gay birds, what is your mission? Why were you blessed with such musical voices?"

"We are heralds of the spring; we gladden men with our simple notes. God gave us a voice to create friendship with thee. He gave us our existence. He protects us from the storms of winter. By this man is taught that God careth for every thing He made."

"Little earthworm, tell me thy story. Why should aught so insignificant be permitted to dwell on this majestic earth."

"Man, though small I be, though powerless I seem, yet my Heavenly Father careth for me. I enjoy life to its fullest extent. By me do you learn lesson, that though a mere worm, I have a space allotted me on earth. I can feed on the most choice fruits, and have my resting place upon the bosom of the most lovely flowers. Despise me not, for God hath made me; permit me then to pass thee, without being crushed by that foot; oh! harm me not."

Man, speak for thyself.

"Above all others I reign supreme. God hath given me a heart, a mind, a soul. I am the most perfect of all his works, yet I am as frail, and like the most delicate flower will I pass away. To-day I bloom, to-morrow I die; yea, ere the morrow's sun may set, my spirit may have passed into eternity. I was created to admire the works of my Creator, and to adore him. He made all things for my enjoyment, and me to enjoy them."

Blossoms versus Fruit.

"How beautiful my tree looks, Cecile; only see what a load of blossoms, and so early, too. Why, this is enough to make me fancy that spring is here. What a promise I have of an abundance of fruit. I know I made the best choice when I selected this tree. Why, it casts yours completely in the shade. It is quite enough to discourage you, Cecile; why, see how forlorn your tree looks beside mine. It, no doubt, views mine with the eye of envy. How chagrined it must feel to see itself eclipsed."

"Oh, I do not give myself any uneasiness at all, Bertha. It is true, mine has not a single blossom; it is, no doubt, a wise provision of nature, and I feel perfectly satisfied."

"Perfectly satisfied! why you cannot call any one to take a view of the tree you planted, for it looks the very picture of despair—not a blossom yet."

"Never mind, that is no matter. These beautiful sunny days in spring sometimes deceive us; for the blossoms which put forth are apt to be nipped by the cold, frosty air; then what would all the array of blossoms profit? Why, you would not have any fruit in the end. I prefer to see mine less promising

at first, and am much indebted to Dame Nature for keeping my tiny blossoms under her kind protection a while longer."

"You know very well, Cecile, that you envy my tree, and prefer it to your own this very moment."

"You may think as you please about it, but I tell you candidly that I would not make an exchange with you, if you were to plead with me for a whole week."

"It is my opinion that you had better have your dilapidated tree cut down."

"No, not for any thing you could offer me would I do it. I am not at all impatient."

We will see in due time.

* * * * *

"Oh, dear, what a cold, disagreeable day! It has been raining the whole morning. How delightful a fire feels this weather. I really thought a few days ago spring had surely come for good, but I see she was only joking with us. It does seem as though I cannot get near enough to the fire, while I thought only yesterday we would dispense with them altogether."

"I wonder how your peach-tree, with all its blossoms, looks! fine, I dare say."

"Oh! this weather will not injure it at all. I dare say it will put an end to your forlorn-looking tree—that is, if an end has not been put to it long before."

"Suppose we take a walk into the garden after the weather clears up, and see the condition of your favorite tree. I dare say it will bear up bravely against the storm. We will see at all events."

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"Dear me! scarcely a blossom left—all, all are scattered upon the ground, and some of the boughs are broken, too. Surely this cannot be the very beautiful tree only a week ago. And yours, Cecile, is scarcely injured at all. I had expected that yours would have looked wasted by the storm. Oh! it is too bad to think that it should have been thus blighted by the storm. It looks as though it never boasted of a blossom. Alas! I will not have any fruit, for it has all been nipped in the bud."

"Just as I thought, sister; trees that put out their blossoms so soon, are not apt to thrive so well. The keen air is not beneficial to them."

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"What a balmy, sunny day! I must take a look at my tree. Come, Cecile, you must accompany me."

"Oh! what a pleasant sight—my tree full of delicate blossoms; see how it is loaded. Before very long we will enjoy a delightful repast upon peaches. The weather is so charming and settled now, that I do not fear for my blossoms at all. My forlorn tree presents rather a cheering aspect."

"And mine a most gloomy one. I never dreamt that I would thus lament over my favorite tree. Ah! well, I regret much, but lamenting will do no good."

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"A fine lot of peaches," said Mr. Justin to his daughter one day, as he came in from the garden. "Allow me to congratulate you on your good luck. I thought some time ago that it would not come to any good, but I find it has proved to the contrary. Cecile's promised so much, and has scarcely any fruit

at all, and what there is, is so very indifferent. The two trees, my daughters, will, no doubt, teach you a good lesson. Often that which promises the most brings forth nothing, whilst that of which we expect nothing agreeably disappoints us in the end. It is the way with every thing in life. We should not get discouraged if we fail in any attempt, but try again, hoping after all to accomplish something. Appearances are too deceptive, and we should not trust to them, lest in the end we may be so unfortunate as to discover that it is merely blossoms, which will soon be nipped in the bud, and when harvest comes there will be no fruit.

Where Does Beauty Dwell?

Ask ye where doth beauty dwell?
Look to Nature, she will tell
Thee, that true beauty's there;
For beauty lieth everywhere!

Ask the bird on airy wing,
As he his matin song doth sing,
To tell thee where is beauty's home—
He will say, she loves to roam!

Ask the yew-tree's leaves that wave
Their evergreens above the grave,
To tell thee if true beauty's there,
They will say, she's everywhere!

Ask the beauteous orb of night,
Who sends to earth her silvery light,
To tell thee where true beauty lies—
And she will whisper, in the skies!

WHERE DOES BEAUTY DWELL?

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Ask the lovely flowers which bloom,
If beauty lies within the tomb?
Yes, there the germ of beauty lies,
To spring and bloom for Paradise!

But there's a priceless gem of worth,
Surpassing far all gems of earth;
Its beauty lies in secret dells,
Ah! yes 'tis there true beauty dwells!

Oh! 'tis, indeed, where beauty lies,
Like gems amid the deep blue skies,
Would ye search, ye sure would find
The gem lies hid in *Human Mind*!

Mrs. Snip's Shopping Notice.

"It is no use for me to think of giving up shopping this morning, for go I must. I intend to demand of Mr. Snip (oh horrors, what a name!) one hundred dollars; but I know full well he will make such an awful face that I will tremble from head to foot. One h-u-n-d-r-e-d dollars; there's that *moiré antique* at Stewart's, which comes to just forty-five dollars, at the lowest cent; and that superb velvet mantle (it is quite excruciating, I declare), at fifty dollars (I consider that a great bargain); then I would have but little left. I'd like to know where that exquisite set of Mechlin or Honiton lace is to come from? By-the-by, the hoops, too (I must go the whole figure, while I'm about it). But Snip (plague take that name) won't hear me when I begin to reason with him; he tells me that we feminines and fashion are both alike, perfect weather-cocks, keep changing all the time.

"Since I commenced to think more upon the subject, I find I will have to have two hundred dollars—for there is the ruffling for Pauline Claudia Melodia's pantalets (she will be compelled to have them to correspond with the velvet overcoat). But Mr. Snip (that name will be the death of me) thinks that I am

by far too extravagant. I don't care if he does. There will sure be a tempest here to-day, for it always ensues whenever I ask for a little of the needful. Here comes Snip (dear me, how did I ever make up my mind to take that awful name?) but I must look as smiling as a May morning. Dinner is all ready, too. There is nothing like understanding how to get around people."

[Enter Mr. Snip; much to his astonishment dinner is all ready; his wife so smiling, too—begins to feel uneasy, and, at the same time, for his pocket-book.]

Mrs. Snip, loq.: "My darling Snip (how I like that name, it is so uncommon), only see how neatly I have hemmed your pocket handkerchiefs."

"What, finished them so soon? I thought you were going visiting this morning?"

"I did think of it, dear, but changed my mind, as I felt as if I might go shopping this afternoon."

[Mr. Snip begins to tremble for the next.]

"Say, darling (Mrs. Snip pats his cheek very affectionately), can't you spare a little change to-day, only a little? (Mr. Snip becomes suddenly very deaf.)

"Ah, I thought you would, 'silence gives consent.'" (Mr. Snip more frightened than ever, looks upon the floor as though he would burn a hole in the carpet.)

"Money, Clara, the times are very hard. How much do you need?"

Mrs. Snip, kissing his forehead, replies, only two hundred (Mr. Snip springs up suddenly and is not quite sure whether he is on his head or his feet). "Two hundred dollars! I don't

own that much. Let me see?" (He takes a small piece of paper which falls unperceived on the floor, but Mrs. Snip, like the most of women, pretty sharp-sighted, eyes it immediately and takes it up.)

"Why, I haven't got fifty dollars in the world."

"Pray tell me, Snip, what use you made of that large amount you collected yesterday?"

"Oh! that was paid away; a man must pay his honest debts, you know. One should be just before he is generous, as the old saying is." (Mrs. Snip becomes much absorbed.)

"What are you reading, Clara?"

"What am I reading? See for yourself."

"Mr. Solomon Snip:

"To Coleman, Stenton & Co.,

"Furnishing Supper to twenty persons . . . \$250 00

"Received payment, C. S. & Co."

Mr. Snip grows lenient immediately.

"My dear, here is a check for that amount. There is nothing after all like a woman; it is no use trying to get the better of her, for all we know she got Adam into a terrible difficulty."

The Young Mother.

"SAY, isn't it a little dear, Aunt Torrey? Only see its lovely eyes of heaven's own blue; the tiny dimples in its little cheeks I tell you, Aunt Torrey, that there is nothing, to my mind, so sweet as this dear child; now I know what it is to love."

"Just the way with all you foolish girls," said Aunt Torrey, as she gathered the folds of her elegant brocade still closer to herself, as if fearing the little babe might touch it. "Yes, you are all foolish alike. Now what is there about that fussy child to love? But I suppose it is natural enough for you to love it a little while."

"For a little while!" exclaimed the young mother in utter astonishment. "Why, I will always love Byron."

"Byron! just like all the rest of the foolish, romantic, novel-reading, poetry-mad girls! yes, he is named Byron; why didn't you name him something sensible—James or John, or even Bill, rather than Byron!"

"Oh, they are entirely too common; I do hate those kind of names."

"Yes, I suppose you do," said Aunt Torrey, as she gave little Bruno (her lap dog) an affectionate pat upon the head.

"Oh! do listen! how sweetly little Byron is talking. He is the dearest child in the world," said its mother.

"So every other young mother would think; I don't see anything so wonderful about him; I only hope he will have better sense than his mother has; but I think it likely he will, for, as a general thing, men have more sense than women."

"Why, Aunt Torrey, his father makes just as much fuss over him as I do. You ought to see him sometimes."

"Well, as for my part, I cannot see any beauty in babies; they are so troublesome; all the time squalling and making such a noise. If they take a notion to have the moon, all creation could not persuade them they couldn't get it. To me children are nothing but nuisances. Some people make themselves perfectly ridiculous about them, and cannot pass a baby without kissing it."

"Ah! Aunt Torrey, that plainly shows that they are fond of children, and know full well how to appreciate them. Bless their dear little hearts! it seems to me that the world would be a perfect blank without them."

"A blank indeed. I wish there were no children in the world. Once or twice every week I am persecuted; the children upset my work-box; my knitting needles are taken out of the stockings I am so intent upon knitting. Toys, and the dear knows what, all strewn over the floor by those troublesome little vixens, my nieces and nephews. I only wish sister would not bring them when she comes to spend the day; if I was mistress of that establishment she should not. But as I am only a boarder, I must bear it patiently. The nursery is the most proper place for children."

"You have much to learn yet, Aunt Torrey; life can have no charms for you if you do not love children."

"Well, I do not imagine it possible for me ever to love them now, as I never have all this time."

"Aunt Torrey, you remember how much the Savior loved little children. There is something truly interesting and lovely about the little creatures. They are like sweet flowers springing up in our pathway. Only think what the world would be without them."

"It would be a great sight better off. I tell you there would be less vexation and trouble. You might talk to me till doomsday, and then never get me to think as you do. No, no, I am much older than you, and know too well the folly of such things." (Clara wonders to herself how Aunt Torrey knows any thing about it.)

"Do look, do look, Aunt Torrey! Byron has fallen asleep; oh, can any thing be more lovely?"

Lovely did the cherub-like child look as it lay nestled in its mother's arms—the very picture of innocence and happiness—a smile lingered round its ruby lips, or nestled in the dimples of its rosy cheeks. The bright eyes of blue were gently closed by some unseen hand. Oh, what a pride and joy did the young mother feel as she gazed upon a picture drawn by the Creator's own hand. It held converse with angels during its slumbering hours; for what seraph would not court the smiles of one so lovely and fair?

Yes, Aunt Torrey, that was a picture upon which you might gaze with admiring eyes, and say in your heart, "Earth hath some who are innocent."

* * * * *

"I must go, Clara, for I want to finish that silk bed quilt. It does seem to me it will never be finished. I love to do patchwork; I think, Clara, if you had something like that to employ your time, it would be better for you."

"Little Byron takes up all my time."

"So I suppose. What good is there, then, of your having a nurse? But I quite forgot; it is fashionable, you know, to have a nurse—a piece of extravagance, that is all. If it takes up all your time to tend to him, you had better discharge Bridget."

"Who could take him out, then, during these lovely mornings?"

"Oh, I forgot he had to be taken out for a show, once in a while."

"No, no, Aunt Torrey, not for that. He must have the fresh air. Flowers cannot thrive without it: neither could little Byron."

"Yes, I suppose they would, too."

"Aunt Torrey, the nurse is not the proper instructor for children, either."

"I suppose not. But what can such a child as you teach him? It is just like the 'blind leading the blind.'"

"I confess I am not a very good instructor; but still, for all that, I can learn him to talk."

"Can't Bridget do that?"

"Oh, yes, but——"

"But what? Just nothing at all; only you want to be dangling him all the time, just as a child does a mere toy; and,

after a while, get tired of it. He will be a spoiled child, I tell you."

"It is most likely he will, Aunt Torrey."

"You had better try to find something better to occupy your time than nursing children."

"But there are its little clothes to make."

"It is your place to do that: I suppose you do make them. But such a quantity of useless stuff as you do put on them—edgings, and fixings, and the dear knows what. That is all right, though. Women need some employment to keep themselves out of mischief. Why, sure as I am alive, he has a gold chain."

"Well, Aunt Torrey, that was a gift from his papa."

"I suppose it was. I tell you that you are going to bring that child up to be entirely too extravagant."

"Let me ask you some questions, Aunt Torrey: there is Bruno, your pet dog, with a gold collar around his neck; now, do you call that extravagance?"

"Lor bless you, child, no! why that chain will last him his life-time."

"But that is the second one he has had since my knowledge."

"The other was stolen."

That stands the same chance. And, Aunt Torrey, just look at the jewelry you purchase—the elegant dresses you wear at your time of life.

"At *my* time of life!" exclaimed Aunt Torrey, sitting up more erect; "I hope you do not call me old."

"Oh, no," said Clara, perceiving she had touched a weak point.

"I only thought you lectured me too severely about Byron."

"Well, that is a different matter altogether; a baby is a baby, no matter what you put on it."

"I cannot see how you can lavish so much affection on a lap-dog."

"No, I suppose not. But a dog is no trouble; I only have his food cut up; water given him, washed once a day in the winter, twice in the summer, take him out for a little stroll once or twice a day. That is all, you see. But a child is so much trouble." (Clara could not help smiling to herself while Aunt Torrey enumerated the *only* trouble a pet-spoiled lap-dog was).

"Well, good morning, Clara; come and spend the day with me; but don't bring Byron."

"Oh! I could not leave him for the world."

"I suppose not. Good morning."

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Aunt Torrey was one of those persons whom the world calls an old maid. She had her own peculiar notions about every thing, and one had as well try to bind the wind as to turn her opinion. Children were her abhorrence, and she often said she could tolerate any thing except a child. One great consideration with her was, when they came near her, she thought of some serious detriment they might do her dress, or else get her collar awry, or get one strand of her hair out of the right place, where she had been so careful to put it.

Her affections were lavished upon lap-dogs! Only think! a lady to prefer something incapable of speech, to that to whom God hath given a soul, and breathed in it His own image. But Aunt Torrey had her own views about such matters. Ah!

"Bruno" knew too well the meaning when she raised one of her menacing digits; he knew just how far he could go by a single glance of her cat-like eye. But children now are not so easily governed, and are apt to do pretty much as they may fancy.

Aunt Torrey was sadly deficient in one particular; she was inconsistent, too; for she seemed to think that little children—the very sunbeams of the world—ought never to have any thing except what was of the plainest and cheapest kind. She pronounced all mothers foolish if they lavished nothing more than the ordinary caresses upon their little gems.

There was indeed a dark film over the eyes of Aunt Torrey, through which she could not see. Her heart had not been educated in the right school, or else she might soon have discovered how and why it was young mothers make so much of their children. She had never loved any thing apart from a lap-dog, or she might have looked with more admiring eyes upon what she so much disliked. Instead of looking frowningly upon children, she might have had a smile or a kind word.

Depend upon it, Aunt Torrey, all is not right with you. Perhaps if you had not resigned yourself to a life of single blessedness, you would love the little creatures, too, and think with Clara, that life would be a desert without them. Bless the sweet little creatures—may you ever find some one to notice your innocent prattle, and have a kind word of encouragement to cheer you on. There are some in the world who do not look upon you as a nuisance or trouble; but rather take a delight in catering to your every wish.

My Withered Bouquet.

BEAUTIFUL in death! one long, lingering look I gave to my withered bouquet, once so blooming and bright. Flowers yet fragrant, though time's relentless touch had seared their petals. How they bring to mind friends of other days, Bertie, Ella and Lucy, whose pictures are as bright in memory's gallery as the day when first nature's true limner portrayed each feature—they have gone from my gaze now.

Bertie was my rose; her sweet but fragile form draped, ere yet sixteen summers had shed their bloom; how oft her dear hand was clasped in mine, and when I twined a wreath of white rose buds to place upon her coffin, I felt that earth had lost one of its rarest flowers. Ella was my Cedar; her friendship and constancy endeared her to me. No new friend could turn her thoughts from me; often in a playful mood she would say, "old friends like old swords are trusted best." We parted to meet no more on earth; her fondness for traveling led her to make a long tour; an epidemic laid its scourging hand upon her—and lo! Ella was no more. Lucy was my Sensitive plant; a tear fills my eye when thoughts of her come over me; her gentle, confiding heart was given to one who loved money;

who was totally unfit to have the care of sweet Lucy. She dreamt not that it was her fortune he sought, and after he had squandered all, would treat her unkindly. Alas! that matches should be so ill assorted, or the rose bear a thorn—but Lucy was transplanted soon; she could not withstand the cold, chilling winds of indifference. Thank Heaven, Lucy is happy now. Her little tomb in the church-yard is never passed by any who knew sweet Lucy without weeping the true tear—the memory of the good and pure is ever sacred.

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My bouquet teaches me how mutable are all things—beauty so witching to gaze upon, vanishes away like my flowers withered before me now. It points me to the altar of the Most High, where my heart should bow in grateful adoration; it tells me of the beneficence of the great Architect of the world, who made sweet flowers to please our sight and teach a lesson. Flowers beautiful even in death; I turn away from thee, and thoughts flit before me of the time when you were so fresh and smiling, when the dewy gems rested upon your bosom, or a moonbeam lingered near to court your smiles.

* * * Oh! what would earth be without the sweet, sweet flowers; what could be the bearer of love's message? Surely thou dost "unite upon the hills and dales mysterious truths."

Ellen May.

I NEVER could persuade myself that that is a happy match. The very idea of a young girl of eighteen marrying a man old enough to be her grandfather. Why, the thought drives me quite frantic. Only think of a fidgety, fussy, old fashion, notion foggy, wedding a gay young girl like Ellen May. What will she do for balls, parties and flirtations now, I would like to know. Every time he gets a fancy for being petted he will pretend he is awful sick, so you see Ellen will be fixed for the day, since she will be obliged to stay home and nurse him—but I would pretty soon tell him another story. There is that handsome nephew of his—but wasn't the old uncle cunning not to permit him to show his face outside of the college door until he succeeded in securing his prize first? If I was Ellen, wouldn't I get up a tremendous flirtation; and if there was any jealousy in the old man, wouldn't I bring it out with a vengeance? Wouldn't I let him see he had woke up the wrong one? Wouldn't I take a notion to go to the opera or somewhere else when I knew he could not go, just for the sake of having his nephew as an escort? It was all folly for Ellen to marry that old man; I feel satisfied gold was the bait there, for he has no

other attraction as I see. But girls will make themselves ridiculous occasionally.

Not a happy match! You would not have thought so were you to take a peep at Ellen's bright face as she presides with so much dignity at the table; it is her pleasure to do every thing she thinks will please her husband. What if her marriage was like mating May and December? Who did every thing to make her happy? Who selected the choicest fruits and rarest flowers? Who insisted upon her going to the opera and everywhere else with the "Nephew" when he could not make it convenient to go himself? Who put no limits whatever to the purse? And who folded dimple arms around the old man's neck, and said in her heart (in spite of the many disappointed ones who smiled at the bare idea of her making fond of the "old grandfather," as they pleased to term him), that she would rather have married him than all the flirty popinjays in the world? The sweet Ellen May, the pride of the old man's heart.

"Daisy."

A SKETCH FOR OUR YOUNG READERS.

Ah! I was quite sure I knew that voice, for it is one I seldom mistake.

"And is it you, my little Daisy? Why, bless me, if you haven't been crying. Your eyes look this very moment like violets bathed in dew. What has disconcerted you this morning? I see the trouble now; some wayward boy has disarranged the pretty bouquet you were so kind to make me. I will think all the more of it since your tears have fallen upon it. It is none the less beautiful for having been robbed; you only imagined so. Never mind! Let me kiss the tear upon your cheek away."

Sweet Daisy! how I love that artless innocent child; (Heaven bless little children! who can help loving them?) her voice is as lovely to me as the sweetest strain of music. Come when she will, (if the day is ever so cloudy, she seems to bring plenty of sunshine with her. A prince might well be proud of little "Daisy;" her lithe and symmetrical form, her sparkling eyes, were enough to make any one feel as if they must not let

"DAISY."

421

her pass without getting a kiss; her mouth seems to have been made for it.

What if she is in the humble walks of life? What if her poor widowed mother does keep a "penny grocery?" What if little Daisy never wore anything more expensive than a six-penny calico? She looked far more lovely and beautiful than many a pampered child of fortune, who wears the most costly fabrics. "Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self." She was the light and joy of her widowed mother's home; even the little birds which built their nests in the trees in the yard were not afraid of her, but would come when she strewed crumbs on the ground. And though the children of wealthy parents, who lived not very far off, were forbidden to make a playmate of her, yet they were often tempted to disobey the order, for little Daisy was so "nice and pleasant," they used to say. Very often a bundle of something was brought her, for very well did they know that dainties fell to her lot but seldom. "Daisy" is indeed one of nature's true nobility.

* * * * *

One, two days have passed, and yet my little pet comes not. What can be the matter? I will go and see the cause.

I start at the sight of the black crape on the door-knob; something tells me my "Daisy" is dead. I enter, and lo; her form is marble cold before me. I came but an hour too late; her grief stricken mother tells me my name was the last word she uttered. Sweet child! I can scarcely realize that you have indeed gone.

I placed upon her bosom a bouquet of white roses, as pure and as beautiful as her own sweet self. Her life was a brief

one; but "that life is long which answers life's great end."
 Daisy always seemed to me like an angel rather than a child.
 Her lifeless form lies before me now, but sweet Daisy blooms in
 Paradise.

The Phantom.

'Twas midnight's calm and holy hour,
 The night wind fanned the tender flower,
 And earth in quiet slumber lay,
 Until the blush of dawning day
 Was seen amid the roseate hues;
 When flowers, laden with the dews,
 Enameled mountains, fields, and dales,
 Shed their sweet perfume o'er the vales,
 Our ravished senses to regale—
 How sweet such fragrance to inhale!

* * * * *

A youthful one in slumber deep—
 Her very soul did seem to sleep;
 She was alone—yet not alone—
 For God beheld her from his throne;
 He watched her while she gently slept,
 And angels 'round her vigils kept.
 But list! she hears a gentle sound,
 Which echoes through the air around;
 She oped her eyes, beholds a sight,
 And lo! it is an angel bright!

Behold ! a spirit clad in white !
 And robes of Heaven's purest light
 Fall gently down in graceful folds ;
 And, in its pure white fingers holds
 A casket of the finest gold,
 With gems, whose worth can ne'er be told.
 And soon a golden key revealed,
 The gem which this bright case concealed.

* * * * *

The spirit now the casket fair
 Unlocked, and showed her jewels rare ;
 She gazed upon them with delight,
 Those costly gems, so pure, so bright,
 While radiant smiles lit up her face,
 So full of Nature's charm and grace.
 And then the kindly spirit said,
 Of Heaven thou art the favored maid ;
 Those gems, tho' bright, are not so rare
 As thine own native jewels are.

* * * * *

Unwavering and unerring truth
 Hath e'er attended all thy youth ;
 Oh ! may this gem be never sold
 For beds of pearl nor mines of gold !
 Remember that this gem is worth
 Far more than every gem of earth.
 Yes ! Truth, in all its purity,

Is Virtue's best security—
 The ægis of sincerity
 From vice can ever keep thee free.

* * * * *

The Spirit closed the case of gold,
 When she her secret thus had told ;
 But midnight's past ! 'tis blushing day !
 And fields are clad in livery gay !
 The maiden now shall see no more
 The Spirit which she saw before ;
 'Twas but a dream, a phantom bright !—
 A fancy picture of the night ;
 But truth this vision will impart
 To every understanding heart.

7

AUNT TABITHA'S RAG-BAG.

Aunt Tabitha's Rag-Bag.

SCRAP NO. I.

"WHAT a beautiful child!" exclaimed some persons. Truly spoken, for it was really a lovely child; such soft, hazel eyes (the very ones an artist always selects for his master-piece), and such a gentle, winning way it had. Alas! that so much beauty should have been spoilt by those horrid curls; they did seem to me to be out of place. Boys were never intended to wear curls, nor men either. Never give a boy a doll to amuse himself with, nor curl his hair, for both are as unsuitable as crinoline and flounces. Let them play rough and tumble; let them make dirt pies, run wild, scamper over hill and dale, tear their pantaloons, wear out their shoes as fast as they choose. Exercise will give health and vigor to their constitutions, and make them hardy men in time to come, with such nerves and muscles as men ought to have in order to render them fit for labor. They will have to work, or ought to at all events, if they wish to fill any dignified position in life.

We were once thrown in company at a large and famous hotel, where many charming and beautiful women boarded. Among the number was a lady whose only child was a boy of

about eight years old. His was such an interesting, attractive face, and he, naturally, very active; but his over-good mamma kept him so constantly in view, that he could not enter into the out-door amusements (even if he were allowed) for fear of getting his elegantly wrought clothes soiled; else his hair out of curl. Poor little creature! what a martyr he was to dress at that early age. How did he long to throw off his fetters, and wear clothes he could play in like others. He was so pale, his kind and anxious mamma was very uneasy about her little darling, for he seemed so drooping. Like flowers, he needed a plenty of sunshine and fresh air. His careful nurse would only permit him to roam through the heated halls. But the little creature felt the need of the pure, untainted breath of heaven. Often have I looked at his beautiful mother, and thought how very soon she was in danger of losing her darling, and it would be all her own fault, too, though she was not aware of the sad fact. Yes! the angel form would lie in the tiny coffin before her, motionless and cold, like the "untimely frost upon the flower." Alas! that so sweet a being, one of the little stock the Saviour took in his arms and blessed, should thus die a martyr at Fashion's shrine.

* * * * *

Let the boy roam free and untrammelled; let him have the necessary exercise without restraint. Clip off his curls (if he has any) instead of permitting them to fall upon his shoulders. Dress him warm and suitably for the season, and let him enjoy the life God intended he should, so that when he arrives at the age of maturity, he may be a vigorous, hearty man, instead of a feeble apology for one.

SCRAP NO. II.

PINKS.

GRACE HOLLAND has gone to house-keeping at last—what a wise conclusion she came to, and I wonder she did not think of it long ago. The fact of the business is, Grace has no taste for domestic affairs, having been a spoiled child, and never acting or thinking for herself. She is a diamond in the rough; all will come out well. To be sure, she has too great a fondness for literature; but literary women are not half so bad as people make, or try to make them out; for they will attend to the cultivation of their minds—if they marry, they do not turn out slatterns (do not dress elegantly, to be seen by every body but their husbands), as some we wot of, who have no pretensions to literature nor any thing else. But Aunt Tabitha has digressed. Grace will be tidy, for that is second nature with her. We will see what sort of a house she keeps (and we venture to say she will succeed in keeping her husband, too, and that is more than some can say, if the truth is to be told at all times). Poor child, what a martyrdom she has undergone! What a relief it was to get from that boarding-house, where no less than six young (?) ladies of either a certain or very uncertain age took up their abode. Just think of it—six! Why, a shower-bath of hail is not a circumstance to the shock they produce—Miss Rose, Flora, Violet, Lily, and Betty; why was not one named Pink? Oh, they are truly the pinks of that establishment. When they were assembled at the table, what

meaning glances did they direct toward Grace, and with what astonishment she would take a sidewise view of them when she could get a chance, and wonder which was the stiffest and hardest in their manners or faces, and which the toughest in their consciences or skins.

What a tornado would have ensued if she had given vent to her thoughts. How interesting it was to hear the many encomiums they lavished without mercy upon their neighbors—how edifying their remarks. The truth was simply this: the six flowers, or rather the pinks, of that boarding-house had grown sorely vexed in consequence of not succeeding in their designs to entrap some lord of creation; hence their chief amusement (not having lap-dogs to amuse them, such pets not being attainable in boarding-houses) was to dissect character. No anatomist could have been more skilful with his knife than these vinegar-faced ladies were with their tongues; that weapon did not lie idle—it had no time to collect rust, and if the blade had not been so durable, it would have worn off long ago.

Now that Grace has left, they will never cease wondering how she can take the responsibility of house-keeping upon her shoulders. If she would only give a brilliant party, invite the six pinks and six bachelors, and be the means of making a match for each, she would have their everlasting friendship. But such a thing is quite impossible, for the young and beautiful girl can have no effect upon them (the more to their shame!) and I am sure the precious pinks may not expect it. Charming pinks! what a pity it is you should thus be doomed to “waste your sweetness on the desert air.” Is there no balm in Gilead? Comes there no wail from a bachelor heart?

Here Aunt Tabitha gave vent to tears in behalf of the unfortunate pinks, and added, by way of P.S., that “it was a pity that widows would sometimes fall into the same error.”

SCRAP NO III.

“UPPER story for rent,” (Aunt Tabitha looked over her spectacles for a moment, then through them on the paper.) In my opinion there are a great many “upper stories” which might be labelled “for rent.” How many living specimens are every day to be seen to verify the assertion. If the right sort of tenant (brains) could be obtained, we would not see so many fops walking around supporting a bogus watch chain; twirling a cane around their little finger; kid gloves on (as if they owned Astor’s fortune.) How slowly he walks from dinner to the store, to which place he repairs whining somewhat like Shakspeare’s school-boy. Oh! what an exertion it is for him to get those gloves off, if he could only walk around—he ought to, for “the world owes him a living.” He is supported in a very mysterious manner (like some people who live so extensively, fare sumptuously by means best known to themselves, and which is far best to be kept secret.) People surmise, but what if they do? They go upon the principle of the Spartans; it is not the crime of stealing the fox but the detection of it. It is no body’s affair if others do suffer; if their coffers do hold funds belonging to other people, and deposited for charitable purposes—if they choose to reap the benefit it is

their own look out. It is all well enough to tell a fair tale to those who have upper stories for rent, as they are credulous. I know a most perfect cork-screw-dandy who has an "upper story" for rent; he stands upon pipe-stems; he dresses exquisitely; quotes Shakspeare, Byron, etc.—hasn't his promotion wrought wonders—don't he forget his "play boys"—Buchanan could not be mentioned in the same day with himself; he piles the agony on when he talks to the young ladies. Oh! I tell you, the sensation he creates is tremendous—all the crinolines go into ecstasies when he appears. In his opinion he might send his pocket handkerchiefs to Eugenie and she would feel herself complimented to hem them, while Louis Napoleon would deem it no light compliment to black his boots. Oh! he stands very high (except on his feet.) He is an Apollo, if he is to be estimated according to the height of his opinion of himself. What a pity he has an "upper story" for rent. Wonder if he will ever find a tenant?

SCRAP No. IV.

I WONDER why literary women are chosen as targets. Men wont marry a literary woman! wont, eh! please reverse that. If a woman cannot make pies and puddings, she does not know anything—what a pity it is that some don't know anything else. Are we to suppose that the end and aim of woman's existence is to know how to preside over the kitchen? Is she designed to cater to her husband's appetite alone? Let men eat bread

and butter for desert. What is the use of spoiling them by giving them puddings every day. If one is blessed with good cooks (and they are scarce as good wives), who know how to make pastry instead of gutta percha, then let husbands enjoy every luxury they wish. They wish to marry a woman who knows how to do everything—delightful life to lead—to broil one's brains over the fire and to have your liege lord come home and look daggers because dinner is not ready—he can't wait a moment—never saw a man that could.

It is an awful sin to read. It is by far better to put your eyes out working fine embroidery. To know how to make "fancy fixins" is by far more important than to know your letters. Men dread literary women—truly spoken, perhaps, for they cannot find so much credulity among them. Very fine tales can they tell to the silly girls who giggle at them (giggles and brains are never found in partnership). What a topic they make of literary women! Calling them unfit to fill any responsible position in life; while their own wives and sisters let them wear socks full of holes, also coat-linings hanging in fringes.

But Aunt Tabitha does not harbor the thought for a moment that men are given to scandalizing. No—it is the privilege of the other sex—believe me, it is the *normal* state of young girls—they couldn't live without it. They must talk about something, and I suppose literary women are worth talking about. The beaux (whether they have any serious intentions or not) must be entertained, so the most worthy subjects are chosen.

This would be a nice world if every body were blockheads, and men only lived to eat pies and puddings. What would crinoline do for the last fashion? Who would write the de-

scription of fashion plates, and who would publish them? How would the bashful bachelors make known their love if they were deterred from writing "billet-doux?"

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Let literary women follow their own inclinations. If they have no taste for making pies and puddings, they have for eating them—take my word for that.

P. S.—If gentlemen object to women for being literary (which is to be hoped they do not) why do they find still more fault with the generality of women whom, they say have no conversation at all—that it is quite *impossible to kill even an hour in their society*; for they know nothing to talk about. Take the piano from the parlor, the highly-embellished books—Court of Napoleon, &c.—then you will see how soon conversation gives out.

Aunt Tabitha would suggest to the girls that "fancy fixins" wont make up for conversation, as gentlemen soon get tired of them. They prefer to find intelligence and graceful conversation. Depend upon it, a silly woman with a pretty face cannot long attract a sensible man.

SCRAP NO. V.

"How we corks do swim," as the boys used to say when I was a child. Aunt Tabitha had just returned home from shopping, doffed her bonnet and cloak, and sat down quietly to knit and reflect upon what she had seen. "How we corks do swim,"

again repeated the worthy dame, with great emphasis. "This morning's jaunt has certainly made me open my eyes with astonishment. I went into ——— dry-goods establishment to make some purchases, and who should I see but the Gilnans. Of all airs, I think they certainly assume the most; one to have seen would have imagined (without knowing them) that Baron Rothschild had left them a large legacy; such a tossing of the head, such an air of would-be something." Now, Aunt Tabitha does not object to airs at all times, and affected by some certain persons, but they don't become every body.

Mr. Gilman died insolvent, this fact all the world knows; his daughters need not gather up the folds of their dresses (which, by the bye, would not bear very close inspection as to the quality) a little closer when they happen to come in contact with those who are not their associates. No, a man never died in debt yet but every body knew it, and too many laugh in their sensible sleeves at the way traders act sometimes. An immortal one has said, "Pigmies will be pigmies though perched on the Alps."

The Gilman's would not call forth half the remarks they do, if they would only move along in a quiet, modest way; for every body knows how hard it is for them to "keep up appearances." They should be very careful how they turn up their would-be aristocratic noses when they meet their creditor's friends. But what is the use of Aunt Tabitha's talking? it has and always will be the case, for "corks will swim," and so will the Gilmans, if other people do have to suffer for it. What if they did go to the Springs, and not pay their just debts. What

if they do owe a hundred here, fifty there, to say nothing of the fives and tens—they are the Gilmans, you know.

No matter what may be the opinion of sensible people, so they are classed among the "upper ten." If they could only keep the great and troublesome secret of not paying their debts from their wealthy friends!

Aunt Tabitha pays as she goes—

St. Paul says, "Pay what thou owest;" perhaps the Gilmans have either overlooked that all-important passage, else do not approve of it, and even if they do, certainly don't act accordingly.

SCRAP No. VI.

WHAT a good thing it was for me that I was young when I was young (Aunt Tabitha sighed), for if I were just from boarding school and a candidate for matrimony (the market is overstocked now), what would ever have become of me? It won't answer for a woman to be pretty now-a-days; for the sex are too ready to eulogize (?) What a pity it is that all the ugly women are not married, or else expect to be soon; some are waiting for an offer like "Patience on a monument." When will they get one? Echo answers "Never." How different are compliments paid by gentlemen to ladies, to those passed by our own sex. But what am I talking of? Don't I know that women never pay each other compliments? It is said that compliments coming from ladies are far more valuable than those paid by gentlemen; no wonder, when they are as scarce

as Koh-i-noor diamonds. A gentleman will meet a lady on the street and say, "What a beautiful color the cool air has given you." One of the opposite sex will say, "How that woman is painted." Sallow skins are so numerous that when one by the merest chance happens to look as if blood flowed through her veins, she is "painted."

It is perfectly absurd to think that a person who is healthy, takes plenty of exercise in the open air, travels much, should be blessed with a healthy hue—no, but rather look like the "Last Rose of Summer."

"What a beautiful figure!" a gentleman remarks.

"How that woman is laced!" is the response. It is perfectly ridiculous to presume that nature ever made a handsome form; no, it is but the ideal dream of an artist portrayed in marble—what angular Miss ever saw a beautiful or symmetrical form?

"What a pretty little hand!" exclaims a gentleman.

"She never does any work," is the reply. Now many I know of might wrap their hands in feathers plucked from an angel's wings (if such a thing were possible to procure) and yet they would never look the better for it. A hand not pretty by nature, will never be so, no matter what precaution is used.

"A beautiful foot that lady has."

"What tight shoes that woman wears, and then goes out rainy days to show them."

"That lady has a lovely set of teeth; so white, so even and so sound." What reply can they make? How they would delight to say, "They are false;" for too well is the fact established, that gentlemen have a great antipathy to false teeth—

no one fancies a set of teeth which his wife leaves on the dressing table when she retires. No woman can be pretty if she has false or bad teeth.

If a woman wishes to be a favorite, she must not be pretty. Let her have red hair, light eyes looking as if they were bound with red tape, a very faulty form, and you may take my best cap if she will not be a favorite; for Aunt Tabitha never knew it to fail, that ugly women are liked by their own sex; but for the other sex's opinion, it is perhaps best to leave the remainder to the imagination.

SCRAP NO. VII.

THERE are some things for which I have the greatest antipathy: corns, cruel omnibus drivers, dog catchers and—and— (here Aunt Tabitha hesitated for a moment) a woman with a slanderous tongue. A woman who exhorts people in auction rooms and stores. The first of the above mentioned abominations is a great impediment in one's way for gratifying the vanity in getting a particularly beautiful and tight fit in slippers or gaiters. The second, subjects one when walking quietly along to the street to the annoyance of feeling in a revengeful humor, in consequence of the great cruelty practised by men, who are in fact greater brutes than the poor animals which they punish. The third makes us tremble in dog days, for fear lest our pet Newfoundland or poodle dog (here Aunt Tabitha wept at the thought) may be snatched up when we least expect the

awful shock. But the fourth and *greatest* of all, A WOMAN WITH A SLANDEROUS TONGUE, who would rob you if possible of all, as Shakspeare says, that is in man or woman "the soul's immediate jewel." Would tear in shreds your good name; despise you for your beauty or superiority in any respect.

Oh! how woman dismantles herself of all that loveliness and beauty with which the Great Creator adorned her—how she becomes a monster dreaded by all—the bosom and "parlor serpent" who darts its relentless fangs into the blood of the unsuspecting victim, while she smiles. Lastly, (though not least) come those women who exhort in auction rooms and stores; who beseech their neighbors to go in the road they were never so fortunate as to get in themselves. How sham piety puts on the armor of righteousness, and in auction rooms the CREDULOUS will drink in the words of exhortation, thinking they come from the heart—how they pronounce them pious, good people all ready for the journey to the "better world,"—how they wish themselves as ready. Ah! did they but know how these "would be" christians slander their neighbors when they are confined to bed from sprained ankles at a noted watering place not a thousand miles distant; how they entertained the gaping crowd dissecting their neighbors characters. Oh! in one breath they talk piety and scandal. What notes they behold in the eye of their fellow creatures while the beam in their own is prodigious. Among this number you will find the auction room exhorter. Aunt Tabitha is sadly afraid that they will be like the "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals." Such religion is disgraceful to the "holy temple." None can

be acceptable except it comes from the heart. We are taught that we must worship in spirit and in truth. Remember Holy Writ says, "If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain."