

EMILY.

THE BEAUTIFUL SEAMSTRESS;

—OR—

THE DANGER OF THE FIRST STEP.

A STORY OF LIFE IN NEW YORK.

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'THERESE,' 'THE MASKED NEEDLE-VENDER,' Etc.

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## EMILY.

### CHAPTER I.

'Alas, sir,  
In what have I offended you? what cause  
Hath my behavior given to your displeasure,  
That thus you should proceed to put me off,  
And take your good grace from me? Heaven  
witness,  
I have been to you a true and humble wife,  
At all times to your will conformable;  
Ever in fear to kindle your dislike,  
Yea, subject to your countenance; glad, or  
sorry,  
As I saw it inclin'd.'

'GRACIOUS heavens! husband, what scream  
was that I just heard in the street!' ex-  
claimed Mrs. Borland, looking very anxious  
and running to the window to look into the  
street. 'It was the voice of a female that  
tokens much distress. Do, husband, go out  
and see what has happened. Perhaps some  
brute of a man has insulted a woman! It  
sounded like the voice of some young girl.'

'May be it was, but I guess no great harm  
is done,' replied the husband, in a voice and  
manner that told his perfect indifference.  
'There's a great deal of screaming among  
the women of this city. If I should run for  
every scream, I should not have time to at-  
tend to any other business.'

'Great deal of screaming among the wo-

men!' replied this tender-hearted and good  
wife. 'True, there is; and strange you can  
feel such indifference in matters of that kind.  
There would not be such doleful lamenta-  
tions among the women if the men possessed  
better hearts and more virtue. Ah! hus-  
band, we live in a very vile and wicked  
age.'

'The same old tune!' said Mr. Borland  
in a gruff voice, and impatient manner. 'I  
wish, wife, you would move a slide and give  
another tune on the old hand-organ; I'm  
heartily sick of hearing the same ding-dong  
music.'

'The same old tune!' she repeated.-  
'Would to heaven, husband, you could but  
appreciate that same old tune, and then  
might feel disposed to sing you another.  
There are some persons in this world who  
entirely overlook the most simple lessons  
and strain away after something more lofty  
and elevated. There are many little things  
in morals, or those that seem small to some  
minds, which are indeed absolutely essential  
as the basis of a good character. Without  
them men are corrupt at heart, however high  
and honorable they may be esteemed in the  
world.'

'Well, well, wife, you will always ha-

your say, and it is characteristic of the sex to have the last word,' he replied, taking an evening Journal from his pocket, and beginning to read as if all his wife could say upon the subject of morality was of little consequence to him.

This good woman did not press him further with her remarks, but sat down at a centre-table and commenced some work with her needle. She was not the woman to bore her husband to death on any subject, and especially upon one in which they could never agree. True, she never failed to express her honest convictions upon any matter which happened to be the subject of conversation, but she never spun long yarns. What she had to say she properly condensed and then said it, giving the mind time for reflection, and the conscience opportunity to do its work.

Mrs. Borland was a very sensible woman, and one whose heart was in the right place. She was in some respects a reformer, yet she was not ultra, or so opinionated that she closed her mind against conviction. Her husband was esteemed by the world as an honorable and even benevolent man, but the world did not know the peculiarities of his character so well as his wife did, notwithstanding he was anxious to conceal from her view his true character. But no art of his could blind her, and for a few years past she became convinced that he was inclined to be a libertine. They had always lived together in as much peace and harmony as usually falls to the lot of married life; at least, there had never been between them any dispute more severe and virulent than that which is recorded above. In conversing with him upon the subject of women, their rights and the treatment they often received from bad men, she found he was not so sound in his morals as she once thought he was. Recently it had appeared to her that he viewe

woman more as a plaything than a companion for life. The truth is, had she dreamed that he was such a character when she married him, she probably would never have appeared before the Altar of Hymen and interchanged vows with him, but as she had become his wife according to legal forms she sought and improved every opportunity to secure their domestic peace and comfort.

Mrs. Borland had given birth to but one child, and that was a daughter who had seen seventeen summers when these chronicles of city life commenced. Her name was Elizabeth, and no pains nor expense had been spared in her education. She was beloved by both her parents. Having just returned from Philadelphia where she had been attending school during the past year to receive the finishing touch of her education, she was about to make her *debut* in that high and aristocratic circle in which her father and mother moved. Elizabeth was beautiful, accomplished and full of life and animation. But few young ladies of her age possessed more personal charms than she did. Her heart, too, was kind and good; for the plastic hand of the mother had been upon it, moulding it into the right shape, and giving its impulses a proper direction. Major Borland, as her father was always called, was proud of his daughter, and any man might well be proud of such a daughter. Having a fine musical tact, she had devoted much of her time to the study and practice of music, insomuch that she was an excellent vocalist as well as player.

When her mother heard that female shriek in the street, Elizabeth was in her chamber, and heard it too. She came down, but not until her parents had finished the conversation to which the circumstance gave rise. The father had but just entered the

house when the noise was heard, for he had been out during the whole evening. It was nearly ten o'clock when he came home, and Elizabeth had just gone to her chamber for the night. The habit of staying out had increased upon him, much to the regret of his wife, but she never scolded him very severely for such delinquencies. 'Occasionally she reminded him of his duty in this particular, but he could always find some excuse which he thought was reasonable, or one which his wife would consider reasonable as he supposed, but she was never perfectly satisfied with his excuses, although she did not condemn them outright.

'O, father, you've come home!' said Elizabeth as she entered the room partially in her night-clothes. 'Didn't you hear some female shriek in the street? I heard it and thought it might alarm mother, so I came down.'

'Yes, dear, I heard it, but it might have proceeded from some worthless woman whom the watchmen have taken up for drunkenness, or some other offence,' he replied. 'Go to bed and think no more of it.'

'O, it pains my heart to think that a woman can be so bad!' replied this good girl. 'I wish you had gone out and seen what the trouble was.'

'I expressed the same wish, but your father did not deem it worth his while,' said the mother. 'The woman may be innocent, and some foul monster of a man may have frightened her, if not done worse. The voice sounded to me like that of a girl not so old as you are. Who knows but some brute in human shape may have hurried her off to some den of iniquity? Such things have taken place in this city. There's that poor widow, Mrs. Thompson, who occasionally works for us. She had a daughter forced away by a brute of a man, and she was not found until several days had elapsed; and

then she was found in a house of ill-fame.—The poor widow's heart was almost broken, but her daughter escaped innocent and virtuous. I have no patience with men and women who live such a vile and terrible life. Our laws are not half severe enough. Such a crime is deeper and darker than murder itself.'

'I think so too,' replied the daughter.—'It makes my blood freeze in my veins when I reflect upon such wicked crimes.'

The father was silent, and let his wife and daughter have their own way. He was more cautious of what he said in the hearing of his daughter than he was in what he uttered before his wife. And before both he was cautious to a certain extent. He had never talked so plainly before his wife as he had that evening. There was a reason for that which may be brought to the notice of the reader before he finishes these pages. The Major this evening was not in one of his most pleasant moods, and his wife's keen eyes saw it, but she felt much more than she expressed.

'Well it may, my daughter,' said Mrs. Borland. 'If I were a man, I would have more stringent laws, and make people suffer for their crimes.'

The husband turned his eyes upon his daughter and forced a smile upon his face which he did not feel in his heart, but he was not disposed to join any farther in the conversation lest he might say something of which he might have reason to repent. He felt as if he had already said enough that evening, and therefore prudence dictated that he should keep his mouth closed.

'You smile, husband,' continued Mrs. Borland, 'but I really mean what I say. I think men are too apt to wink at certain crimes, especially at those in which their own sex are more particularly concerned.'

'Well, well, my dear, I have no inclina-

tion to controvert your opinions,' he replied, manifesting some impatience, and wishing to end the conversation upon the subject.

'I rejoice to hear you express so much,' she replied. 'I hope you will do all you can to have more stringent laws enacted. The world is growing more and more wicked every day, and it is high time that men should wake up out of their sleep. Strange that men who have daughters should look upon gay deceivers with so much allowance. There's a great responsibility upon them, and let them beware how they discharge the duties they owe society.'

'Well, my dear, I should like for once to see a legislature composed of women,' he answered, laughing, and playing with one of the curls of his daughter's hair.

'If you should, I dare say the community would have more wholesome laws for the regulation of human action than they now have,' replied the wife. 'At any rate, I think some of our laws would be more severe than they now are, and much to the discomfort of many men who now mingle in society and pass for kind, benevolent and even virtuous members of the community.'

'Why, my dear wife, you're really severe upon the rougher sex this evening,' he answered. 'I'm thinking the Woman's Right Convention you were reading about yesterday in the Tribune has given you a new impulse and increased your enthusiasm and zeal, I will not say your fanaticism, for that might offend you.'

'No, no, husband, I have seen too much of the world to take offence at every thing which I deem wrong,' she answered. 'However, you might just as well have said fanaticism as to have thought it. Every reformer now-a-days who goes in advance of public opinion or public morals is called a fanatic, for that is the easiest way to get rid of him or her, and to turn into ridicule the severe

moral lessons which are taught by them.—We live in a strange age, and there are many developments which I approve and rejoice at, but then there are other things I mourn and weep over.'

The husband dropped the evening paper upon the table, looked at the time-piece and observed to Elizabeth that it was bed-time.—She took the hint and retired. He then turned his eyes upon his wife and looked as if there were some thoughts in his mind which labored for utterance.

'You look rather serious, husband,' she said, after a short pause. 'What peculiar thoughts are in your mind?'

'I have been thinking,' he answered, 'that you and I ought not to converse upon topics in which we cannot agree, especially when Elizabeth is present. To witness the disagreements of parents must have an injurious effect upon the mind and heart of a child. I wish you would understand me distinctly and duly appreciate what I say.'

'I think I understand and appreciate what you say, but I must be permitted to suggest some qualifications,' she replied. 'It is well for children to hear their parents converse upon questions where there is fairly two sides, and the right may not be seen so clearly, but upon topics where there is but one side, I think it behooves the husband to see to it that he always takes the side of good morals, and thereby teach his children the way in which they should walk.'

'Enough for one evening,' he said, showing unusual impatience.

No more was said, and they retired for the night. The wife had never passed with her husband a more unpleasant evening. It seemed to her it was the beginning of sorrow.

## CHAPTER II.

*The character of a bachelor. His emotions*

*of love and grief commingled. The sick mother, and her beautiful daughter. Poverty finds relief.*

In an obscure street in the city of New York resided a poor widow who had been reduced to poverty and want by the intemperance of her husband who was now dead. She had seen better days, but that was before her husband had become addicted to the frequent use of ardent spirits. Hers was not an uncommon case, for there are tens of thousands just like it in all large cities.

This woman and her husband were once happy, but the demon Intemperance had entered their house and laid waste all their domestic joys except one, and that was a daughter some fifteen years of age. The father had been dead about two years, and this daughter had struggled hard against the tide of adversity, for her mother was of very feeble health and could do but little towards their support.

The name of this girl was Emily. Her mother's name was Pangbom. She was once a very beautiful and animated girl, and for some years after her marriage with Mr. Pangbom, she was considered not only a lovely, but also a handsome woman, but sorrow, poverty, and disease had changed her looks and made her as much an object of pity as she had been one of admiration. Emily was patterned after her mother, but she was more beautiful than ever her mother ever was. Notwithstanding her hard work and severe trials in supporting herself and mother, still she was exceedingly beautiful and bewitching in her looks, tone of voice and manners.

During her short life she had attracted many an eye upon her as she walked in the streets of the city on errands for her mother, or in carrying back and forth the work for her needle which she plied early and late.

But, alas, how beggarly was her reward for such a service! Apt and ready as she was in her employment, it was exceedingly hard work for her to earn two shillings a day, and often she could not earn more than half that sum.

The man for whom she made shirts was hard-hearted and selfish, and if he could have had his own way he would not have given so much as he did. Thus it is in large cities, thousands live without manual labor and upon the hard earnings of sewing girls who labor night and day for a bare subsistence.

Emily complained not, but worked on as if she expected no reward in this world.—Often she was met by libertines, both young and old who whispered in her ears very flattering tales, but she heeded them not, and pursued the even tenor of her way. Her mother had taught her many valuable lessons which she never forgot in the most trying hours of temptation. Although her apparel was cheap, yet her taste was such that she always appeared exceedingly neat and nice.

The house she and her mother occupied belonged to Mr. Charles Colburne, a rich old bachelor, who had seen eclipse a few years more than a half century. In his earlier days he had been somewhat of a gallant, and very fond of female society, but some how or other he could never love any one long enough at a time to warrant him in committing matrimony. Like many other gentlemen in the same category with himself, he always expected to be a husband and a father.

He was exceedingly nice and particular and called by some ladies of his acquaintance very fussy, a term which is applied to a bachelor for the want of a better one. It is a word which conveys a good many ideas. Now a single gentleman may be bussy, and yet possess a good heart. It was so with

Charles Colburne, for no one ever accused him of corruption.

True, he had been somewhat gay in his earlier years, but he never told a fair maiden that he loved, and thereby won her affections, or gave any one a promise of marriage.—From such crimes he always steered clear, and gave them a wide berth in his journey thus far in life.

To say that he had never fallen in love would be doing injustice to his warm heart, for he had felt the talismanic power of love many a time and oft,—yes, too often to have the passion lasting. No one was more conscious of that fact than he was himself. Even ladies who had sometimes hoped that they had fastened him in the silken cords of love were not more sensible of his fickleness than he was himself.

He frankly acknowledged that he never had loved longer than a lunar month at any one period. And that fact made him partially believe that the moon had some influence in matters of love. Some of the more shrewd ladies, and those best acquainted with him, nicknamed him Charley Fickle, but even that never disturbed the equanimity of his temper, for he had self-knowledge enough to confess the justice of the sobriquet.—And although many ladies thus nicknamed him, yet there was not one of them who could not have gladly had him for a husband. Hundreds had plied their arts upon him in vain, but he was proof against them.

Mr. Colburne was really a fine looking man, and every woman who saw him called him handsome. He knew the fact without being told it, for the large mirror that hung in his room, revealed it several times every day and evening. He was scrupulously neat in his dress, although in later years he had not followed up the fashions very closely. He had too much good taste for that, for he

knew very well what color and cut corresponded best with his portly person and florid face.

This nice bachelor had often seen Emily Pangbom, and marked well her symmetrical form, sparkling eyes, and expressive countenance when she came to pay the rent her mother owed for the house in which she lived. As the rent was always promptly paid, he supposed the widow Pangborn was not very poor. Emily never complained, and therefore he supposed that she and her mother were in comfortable circumstances. When she came to pay the rent she never tarried longer than was absolutely necessary to transact the business. Sometimes he attempted to lead her into conversation for the express purpose of detaining her and gazing upon her charms. It seemed to him he had never seen so much bewitching beauty in any female as he discovered in the person of Emily Pangbom. And that conviction grew stronger and stronger every time he had an interview with her. Now she had paid him rent for six months, and came every month to do so, and she grew more beautiful at each of these business interviews. He began to think she was a very extraordinary person, for no other woman had ever pleased him more than a month, and now Emily had pleased him during six months. He often said to himself after she had paid him and took her leave, that he was fearful that he really loved her more than he had any other female.

Young as Emily was, still he began seriously to think that her charms had made a lasting impression upon his too sensitive heart. And yet he determined to drive such thoughts from his mind, for he was almost old enough to be her grandfather. But notwithstanding the great disparity in their ages, he could not help feeling a kind of sentiment nearly akin to love according to the opinion

he had formed of the philosophy of love.

It is not unreasonable to suppose that Mr. Charles Colburne had devoted much of his time and great attention to matters of the heart. To the philosophy of the tender passion he had given much reflection, and his theory was often more splendid and captivating than his practice was judicious or wise.

No man could talk more fluently of love-matters than Mr. Charles Colburne, but his practices in relation to such topics were very injudicious at times, not to say foolish and ridiculous. Some ladies called him a fool outright, but then they were generally such as had been disappointed in his attentions, giving false constructions to them, and foolishly hoping too much from them. For all these things he was not to be blamed, for the fault was not with him but with them. He was naturally polite, and attentive, especially to the ladies, but then he always kept himself within the bounds of reason as well as within the limits of modesty.

A few days before the conversation happened between Major Borland his wife and daughter, Emily Pangbom came to pay this gallant bachelor the month's rent that was due him from her mother. It seemed that she appeared more beautiful and enchanting than she ever had before on any similar occasion. As she placed the small sum in his white, delicate hand, for he had such hands and felt proud of them, and turned to leave his room, he could not resist the temptation of trying to detain her in conversation.—Strange as it may seem he had never before thought to inquire about the family of which she was a member. He supposed she had brothers and sisters, but he knew her father was not living.

'Have you any sisters?' he asked, gazing into the liquid depths of her dark blue eyes, and feeling peculiar sensations from the view.

'I'm an only child, sir,' she responded, turning again to leave.

'But stay a few minutes,' he said, 'I wish to talk with you.'

'I must not tarry, sir, for my mother is not so well to-day as usual, and her health is quite feeble all the time,' she answered.

'Indeed, is your mother sick?' he asked in a serious manner.

'She is quite so, and every moment of my time is occupied,' she answered. 'I fear she will never be any better. Her cough is severe, and her flesh is fast wasting away.'

'Consumption then!' he said, while his countenance expressed the feelings that pressed his heart at that moment.

'I fear that is the disease she is laboring under,' she answered. 'And God only knows how long she will live. I fear she cannot continue many weeks.'

The tears came freely into the bachelor's eyes, and his emotions so choked him that he could hardly find utterance. She noticed his tears, and answering ones glistened in her own eyes. It was the first sign of sympathy she had witnessed from any human being, and she could not refrain from shedding tears. He struggled against his emotions which had well nigh overcome him.—He was not in the habit of shedding tears himself, and would not then have been in that melting mood, if the beauty of Emily had not previously prepared his heart. At first he almost felt ashamed of his tears and tried to conceal them, but when he saw the same precious jewels trembling in her bright eyes, he no longer desired to conceal his grief, but let his tears flow freely, for he felt willing to do just as she did at that particular, and to him, important juncture. His emotions were strange to him, for they were the mingling of love and grief, such as he never felt before.

For some moments the bachelor struggled

to speak, but his heart was too full for utterance. Never before had his tongue refused to exercise its office. That member had never been paralyzed by any emotions which had previously agitated his heart. His previous love impressions had always found vent, but now he was completely overcome by his own feelings. However, he struggled as well as he could, and before he could speak he handed her back the money she had just placed in his hand. She was somewhat surprised, and at first hesitated to receive it. She knew not what to do.

'Take it, my dear girl,' he said in broken accents. 'I'll never receive any more rent from your mother while she lives. She may have the use of my house in welcome. Why have I taken any rent at all from her? I'm rich enough, I will pay back now all I ever have received from her.'

And suiting the action to the word, he nervously thrust his hand into his pocket and presented her with several gold pieces. He was not particular in reckoning the sum they amounted to, but offered her all he took from his pocket. She was perfectly astonished at such an outbreak of generosity in him, for he had always before very willingly received his rent. She hesitated and trembled, while the tears were fast chasing each other down her fair cheeks.

'Take it,' he continued in a voice that told how deeply he felt. 'I wish it were twice as much. Your dear mother shall not suffer while I have a dollar in the world.—Take it, and be happy.'

And he forced the gold into her trembling hand, while she stood amazed at such a demonstration of liberality. It was a good gift and very opportunely made, for she had scarcely a shilling left when she paid him the rent. She received the money, and thanked him in a voice which was the sweetest music he had ever heard, and hurried to her sick mother.

'Gracious heavens!' he mentally exclaimed. 'What an angel that girl is! I wonder how old she can be? She looks quite young. But what a symmetrical form, and what a heavenly expression on her countenance!—What eyes! heaven's own light shines in them! I must go and visit the mother who has bore such a daughter. Such a woman shall not suffer the pangs of poverty if she does those of sickness. It can't be that I'm in love with a girl so young! And yet I feel very much like a person in love. Ah, she's the most beautiful creature in the world.—Heaven be praised for such gifts to men.—O, if I had such a daughter, how happy I should be! I will adopt her as my daughter, if her mother dies! I cannot live without her. I have loved her for more than three months, at least it seems so now. No other female has ever made such a lasting impression upon my heart. I will see her mother to-morrow morning!'

Thus this good-hearted bachelor communed with his own thoughts until his bedtime had come. He then retired, but it was a long time before sleep visited his eyes.—And when he did slumber, it was only to dream of that beautiful girl whose image was mirrored in his soul. Mr. Charles Colburne was in love—at least so he verily believed when he awoke in the morning.

### CHAPTER III.

*The sick mother's caution. The joyous emotions of the lovely shirt-maker. Her meeting with a strange lady. The mother's fears. The plot thickens. Different phases of character.*

'O, MOTHER, I shall not be compelled to make shirts to-day, but can take care of you!' joyfully exclaimed Emily Pangbom as she came running into the house and hold-

ing out to her sick mother the gold coins the tender-hearted bachelor had given her that evening.

The sick woman gazed upon the sparkling eyes and animated countenance of her daughter, and then taking the money in her emaciated hand, she gazed upon it with strange emotions. She knew the money was greatly needed, but she feared it was a present from some vile-hearted man who might have some dark designs upon her daughter. A thousand conflicting emotions agitated her bosom.—She counted the money over several times in silence while Emily stood watching her trembling fingers as they felt of each of the gold pieces.

'More than thirty dollars!' said the mother in a feeble, tremulous voice, partly to herself and partly to Emily.

Both were now silent for a few moments. The sick woman was intently gazing upon the money as it lay in her skeleton hand, and seriously thinking what her duty was in relation to it, while Emily stood holding a small lamp, whose feeble rays lighted up her lovely countenance. 'More than thirty dollars!' the mother again muttered, in a subdued tone of voice.

'Yes, mother, and the gentleman cheerfully gave it to me, while tears stood trembling in his eyes,' said Emily.

'The gentleman!' repeated the mother, in a low, deep voice. 'Ah, Emily, I fear such presents. You must carry it all back to him. We must not receive his money. He may be looking for such a reward, as we cannot give him. Some men are very wicked, who can even shed tears at a tale of distress and give their money to relieve the misery of poverty. No—no—we must not keep the money.'

Emily was much surprised to hear her mother thus talk, forgetting to tell her who gave the money. And the sick woman had

even forgotten to ask that question herself, she was so much agitated. At last she asked Emily what kind of a looking man he was who made her such a liberal present, how old he was, and what he said.

'Why, mother, it was Mr. Colburne,' said Emily. 'I intended to tell you, but I was so overjoyed that I didn't think of it. And he said we might live in his house for nothing.'

'Mr. Colburne!' repeated the mother, thoughtfully. 'Mr. Colburne! Strange he should have been so generous all at once. What did he say?'

'O, he couldn't say much, he appeared to have so much feeling when I told him you were very sick,' she replied. 'He even shed tears and wished he had more gold in his pocket to give me.'

'It is very strange!' said the mother. 'He has always received the rent due him very willingly, has he not? Has he talked with you much when you have seen him before?'

'Very little, because I could not stay to hear him,' she replied. 'He's a very social man and always appears pleasant. I think he is a good man, for he always treated me kindly.'

'Did he never offer to kiss you?' anxiously inquired the mother, looking her full in the face.

'Never!' mother, never!' replied this good girl, expressing much surprise that her mother should ask such a question. 'Why he wouldn't think of such a thing.'

'I'm glad to hear you speak so well of him,' said the mother; feeling much relieved of a burden which had been pressing her heart, and beginning to change her mind about keeping the money.

'You will not now wish me to carry the money back, will you mother? He gave it to me most cheerfully, and would feel sorry



if I carried it back, I know he would from his looks when he gave it me. I like him much better than I do that gentleman who gave me a gold piece some week or two ago.'

'I wish you would find out his name and where he lives, so that you might give him back his gold,' said the mother. 'You must try to find him. Always carry the piece in your pocket so that if you should happen to meet him you can give it to him.'

'I always do, mother, but I have not seen him since. I am as anxious to give the money back as you are to have me do so. I don't think he's a very good man, although he is good-looking. He held my hand some time when he gave me the money, and I had hard work to get it away from him.'

'Yes, yes, I know it all!' said the kind mother. 'You must try to find him. Perhaps he may come here. I think you said you told him where we lived.'

'I did before I thought what I was saying. I'm sorry I did tell him.'

'I'm sorry, too,' replied the mother.—'Sometimes I wish he would come here, so that I might see him and ask him some questions. I fear that man; I dreamed last night that he had hired some ruffian to steal you away from me.'

'O, mother, he will never do that. If he should, I would raise the whole city.'

'Ah, Emily, little girls have been carried away in this city, and ruined by our own sex too. And I blush to say it, I'm often afraid to have you go on errands in the evening there are so many vile men and women too, prowling about the streets. It is really very dangerous. Don't you never feel afraid?'

'No, indeed!' replied Emily. 'No one will hurt me, especially when they know you're sick.'

'That would make no difference with some people. They would care nothing about me.

You judge persons too favorably. Every body is not so good as you are. There are thousands of very vile, wicked men and also women in the city.'

'I suppose there are, but I trust they will not attempt to injure me,' said Emily.

'Hand me down that little vial of drops,' said the sick woman, beginning to cough violently, and feeling very distressed at the lungs.

She had quite exhausted herself in talking with Emily. Her lungs were very weak, and her body much emaciated, being apparently in the last stages of consumption that terrible disease that defies the power of medicine, and flatters its victim down to the very portals of the grave. Mrs. Pangbom often hoped she might recover from her sickness, and yet she had no reason to hope.—For several days her hopes of getting well had almost died away in her heart, but she had never fully revealed to Emily her fears. That evening she was convinced that she must die and leave her child to the cold charities of the world. The thought of parting with Emily was more distressing than the fear of dying. If she could be assured of Emily's happiness, death would have been welcome at any time, but that assurance she could not have.

'O, mother, how distressing your cough is!' said Emily, as she placed her arm under her mother's head and supported her.

'It is, indeed, but it is my duty to be resigned to my fate,' feebly replied the good woman. 'O, Emily, I fear my stay on earth will be short. And O, my child, what will become of you?'

Emily was silent and thoughtful; for her heart was troubled within her. She felt that her mother must die before many weeks elapsed. And that evening she was more painfully convinced of it than ever she had been since her mother's sickness. At last

the tears of the good bachelor, his benevolent countenance, his kind voice, pleasant manners and generous deed of charity came up fresh in her memory, and it seemed to her that he would protect her after her mother was placed in the grave.

'O, dear mother, perhaps Mr. Colburne will protect me,' said Emily.

'First place your trust in your Heavenly Father,' said the mother, turning her yet brilliant eyes towards the ceiling overhead, and raising her feeble body, trembling as if she was uttering a prayer to heaven in behalf of her daughter. Her lips moved, but no audible sounds escaped from them. Emily bent over her mother, in silence, and gazed upon her expressive countenance. The feeble light of a solitary lamp, shone into the patient's face, revealing the anxious thoughts that pressed a mother's heart for her first born. All was silent as the tomb for some minutes. No sound was heard save a gentle breeze that sighed round the corner of the house, and the rumbling of some distant carriages that bore along the busy and thoughtless crowd.

'There, dear Emily, let me try to sleep now,' whispered the mother. 'You had better lie down and get some rest, I may feel better in the morning.'

'I trust you will, dear mother. You seem to be more easy now. Sleep will do you good.'

Soon sleep, that great comforter of human life, visited mother and daughter, and they rested quietly for some hours. The morning sun rose bright and beautiful upon a gay and thoughtless world. The sick woman had been much refreshed, and Emily awoke from her slumbers fresh as the morning breezes.

The prayer of the good woman seemed to be answered.

In the course of the forenoon Emily went

out to purchase some necessary articles.—As she passed into Broadway, she saw a young lady coming down street, dressed in the most fashionable style, and walking lightly along as if she felt not any of the sorrows which sometimes afflict humanity.—They met, and for a moment gazed into each other's faces. At last the lady spoke.

'It's a beautiful morning,' she said. 'If you're going down street, I should be pleased with your company.'

'I'm not going far, only to the first apothecary's shop to purchase some medicine for my poor sick mother,' replied Emily.

'Indeed, is your mother sick?' inquired the lady, gazing upon the beautiful countenance of Emily, with mingled feelings of admiration and pity. I should like to visit her, if you will tell me where she lives.'

Emily told her the street and the number, and began to feel a strange interest in this lovely young lady. And the latter began to feel a deep interest in Emily. It seemed to be the meeting of congenial spirits, and but a few moments of time were necessary to their becoming well acquainted with each other.

'I will go to the apothecary's shop with you,' said the lady, taking Emily's arm in hers, and walking along.

'Your'e very kind,' said Emily; 'I don't often meet young ladies in Broadway who take any notice of me.'

'Perhaps not, but I dare say the gentlemen do,' replied the lady, smiling. 'Such beauty of face and form as you possess will not pass unnoticed in such a thoroughfare as this.'

'I scarcely ever look up at them,' replied Emily; 'I have to work hard, besides taking care of my sick mother.'

'And what work can you do, being so young?' asked the lady.

'Make shirts for Mr. Jones, in Williams Street,' answered Emily.

'Make shirts, and so young!' said the young lady, expressing much surprise.'

'O, yes, I have made hundreds, and mother used to make them too, before she was taken sick,' answered the young shirt-maker.

'And how much can you earn in a day?' asked the lady.

'A shilling, and sometimes nearly two, if I work late in the evening,' replied Emily.

'Good heavens!' exclaimed the lady.—'Only so much! You ought to have three times as much. Father gives much more to a woman who makes his shirts. You must not work so cheap. I'll tell father, and he will employ and give you more wages.'

They had now arrived at the shop, and the medicines were purchased. Before they parted, the lady slipped a gold dollar into Emily's hand, and whispered to her never to make shirts so cheap again. They parted with feelings of friendship.

The reader must not imagine that this lady was a bad character and harbored evil designs against this beautiful shirtmaker, for if he does, the sequel of our story will show that he was much mistaken.

Emily was delighted with her newly-found friend, and hurried home to tell her dear mother.

'See here, mother, what a beautiful little present a young lady made me this morning,' said Emily, holding out the gold dollar, and looking much delighted.

'A gold dollar!' replied the mother, taking the piece between her thumb and finger, and gazing into her daughter's animated face.

'Yes, dear mother, a gold dollar,' replied Emily. 'And the lady who gave it me is a very beautiful person, I have seldom seen one so beautiful. And then she was so kind, and talked so pleasantly, I really love her.'

'Dear Emily, beware of such presents even from your own sex,' said her mother.

'That lady may not be so good as she appeared to be, I fear her. Did she ask where you lived?'

'She did, and promised to call and see me,' replied Emily.

'No doubt she did, and will probably keep that promise,' said the mother.

'And she asked me to call and see her this afternoon,' answered Emily. 'She said she would give me some of her silk dresses she had outgrown. I never had a silk dress.'

'True, you have not, Emily, but I dare not let you receive presents from the lady, until I know more of her character. It is possible she may be a good girl, but the chances are against such a supposition.'

'But you will let me go and see her, will you not?' asked Emily. 'She cannot be a bad girl, she is so young and so handsome. She's not more than four years older than I am.'

'Well, well, I'll think of it,' replied the mother, feeling some strange emotions, and not a few misgivings at what had happened during the past twenty-four hours.

'O, I hope, you will let me go, for the lady is so very kind,' said Emily.

'Very kind!' repeated the cautious mother. 'Yes, I fear she may be too kind for your good. Did you ask her name, or did she tell you without asking?'

'I never thought of that, neither did she ask what my name is. O, I should like to have some of her silk dresses! She said, too, that her father would pay me more for making shirts than Mr. Jones does.'

'The man whom she calls father may be no relative of hers,' said the mother. 'There are all sorts of deception in this city. She may be a good girl, but all the circumstances look suspicious. O, dear Emily, I tremble

when I think I must leave you alone among so many wicked people in this city! But we must hope for the best, and trust in heaven. I must not talk any more now, but try to rest.'

#### CHAPTER IV.

*The libertine's curiosity. Another shade of character. Female sympathy. A wife's suspicions. The headlong progress of a bachelor. His singular propositions. The sick mother's surprise.*

It is as well that the reader's mind should be relieved at once. The young lady whom Emily Pangbom met in Broadway, was the daughter of Major Borland to whom the reader was introduced in a previous chapter. She was an exceedingly kind-hearted and beautiful girl. And strange as it may seem, she really entertained a most sincere regard for the lovely shirt maker the moment she met and conversed with her in Broadway.—There was something in Emily's form, gait, tone of voice, and expression of face that at once interested her, but why, she could not tell even if she had been asked. She had never seen a young lady among her large circle of acquaintances who interested her so much as Emily Pangbom. Soon as she had finished her morning promenade and reached home, she told her parents all she had seen, and told, too, with an earnestness that proved also the sincerity of her feelings.

'O, father, I saw this morning in Broadway the most beautiful girl that ever stepped upon the sidewalk!' she exclaimed as soon as she entered the parlor where her parents were seated.

'Indeed!' he replied, feeling quite a curiosity to hear more of the great beauty. 'And who was she? Does she belong to the city?'

'I don't know, for I didn't ask it,' she re-

plied. 'She lives with her mother in the city, who is very sick and poor. I gave her a gold dollar, and wish I had had more to give her, she appeared so good, so kind and so beautiful. Only think, mother, she has to work all day for a shilling, and she's quite young too, not so old as I am. I told her, father would give her more than that to make his shirts. Wouldn't you, father?'

'I think it is worth more,' he replied.—'But perhaps she can't make nice shirts.'

'O, I dare say she can,' replied the daughter. 'I wish you could see her, for I know you would be interested in her. I told her, if she would come to our house I would give her some of my old silk dresses which are too short for me now. May I do so, dear mother?'

'We must see the girl first,' replied the mother. 'She must be an extraordinary girl I think, or you would not feel such a sympathy for her as you appear to feel.'

'She is an extraordinary girl,' answered Elizabeth. 'I have never met one more so.'

'Is she as handsome as you are?' asked her father, smiling.

'Yes, ten times more beautiful,' she replied. 'She was dressed in a coarse calico gown, and yet she looked neat and beautiful. Her motions, too, are very graceful. I never walked so easily with a girl in my life.'

'Well, Elizabeth, it is fortunate that you are not a young man, for if you were, you would be over head and ears in love with the strange girl,' he said, laughing.

'I'm in love with her, and it is a shame that she is obliged to work so hard. If I had money I would freely give it to her. I intend to go and see her sick mother. They must be very poor according to her account.'

Major Borland was much interested in the story which his daughter told of this young



shirt maker. He was quite too fond of beautiful young girls, and his good wife suspected as much. The reader is already made aware of some of the peculiar traits in the Major's character. Having accumulated a fortune and retired from business, he was continually seeking new sources of pleasure, and nothing gave him so much pleasure as female beauty.

The Major ruined more than one innocent girl, and brought upon them poverty, shame and degradation, but his wife was yet ignorant of the dark stains upon his character, although she began to be suspicious that he was not so good as he ought to be. If his true character could be made known to her, she would not live with him another day.—She was a woman of high spirit, and loved virtue for virtue's sake. There was not a particle of hypocrisy in the elements of her composition. And her daughter was very like her. Both were high-minded, kind, benevolent and full of good works.

This mother had sought out and relieved more human distress than many others who made so much show of their good deeds in the world. In this respect she was very different from her husband, although he was esteemed quite a liberal and benevolent man. In all she did her whole heart was in it, but his works of charity were more conventional and heartless. He would sometimes open his purse for charitable purposes because his neighbors did so, and it was fashionable, but he never sought for human misery for the express purpose of ministering comfort to it as his good wife did.

Mrs. Borland was glad to see her daughter so much interested for this poor girl, for she knew her motives were good, and she always encouraged her in works of charity and kindness.

Elizabeth often accompanied her mother in her visits to the abodes of poverty and

wretchedness. The lessons she learnt in such places never failed to make a good impression upon her heart. Her mother always told her it was the most powerful kind of preaching, and such as she would be likely to remember. She hoped the poor girl would visit them, but she would be willing her husband should be absent on the occasion, especially as the young shirt maker was so exceedingly beautiful.

While Elizabeth was thus telling her parents about her interview with Emily Pangbom, the good bachelor, Mr. Charles Colburne was on his way to visit the sick woman and her daughter. Never was mortal so deeply and suddenly in love as this good bachelor was. True, he was always pleased with Emily, and much struck with her personal beauty, but he did not believe he was so much in love as he was until his last interview with her.

When Mr. Colburne awoke in the morning from his pleasant dreams, it seemed to him that he had been transferred to a brighter and a better world. Although he had been in love with a score of pretty forms and faces, yet he never felt the full power of the tender passion as he then felt it. He began to seriously believe that he could not exist without the society of the beautiful and bewitching Emily. His housekeeper, a maiden lady of some forty years, who had served him in the capacity of housekeeper some eighteen months noticed at the breakfast table that a change had come over the spirit of his dream.

Now this housekeeper's name was Betty Osgood, and she was one of the nicest and most particular ladies in the world. She understood her duties well, and performed them to the entire satisfaction of the good old bachelor. He had never before employed a housekeeper who suited him so well as Aunt Betty, as he used to call her, and yet

he never thought of such a thing as loving her, although she might have had some very pleasant dreams in that direction. Housekeepers think more sometimes than their employers dream of. Never was a woman more attentive to a man's wants than she was to Charles Colburne's. She anticipated them all, and flattered herself that she was every day making stronger and stronger impressions on his heart.

Alas, how vain sometimes are housekeeper's hopes! He treated her kindly, and she began to construe every act of kindness into tokens of love. But we'll let her pass for the present, and follow the good bachelor to the house of poverty and sickness. He hurried along with light steps and a beating heart. He was sometimes almost ashamed of his excited feelings, still he would not have them changed for the whole world. He put one hand upon the latch of the door, and knocked with the other, and at the same moment saw Emily's beautiful face at the window. His heart fluttered and his knees trembled under him; but he summoned courage as well as he could and met her face to face at the door. He felt as if he could have eaten up the little witch, so fresh and beautiful she looked.

'Walk in, Mr. Colburne,' she said in a musical voice. 'My mother will be glad to see you.'

'And are not you glad to see me, too?' he anxiously inquired.

'O, certainly, sir, very glad,' she replied, leading the way into the house, and he following her.

The sick woman sat in a chair, pale and emaciated, but she was apparently some better than she was the day previous. Such is the nature of that flattering disease. To-day the patient may feel quite encouraged, and to-morrow may breathe hard, as if

there were but a few more breaths to be drawn in this world.

'I'm glad to see you, Mr. Colburne,' said the mother. 'Please be seated. I don't look as I did six months ago when I saw you and engaged this house. I was then quite well, but now you see me very feeble. I fear my stay on earth will be short.'

The tender-hearted bachelor was so overcome that he could scarcely speak. He saw distinctly in the emaciated countenance of the woman and in her bright, sparkling blue eyes, the same expressions that pleased him so well in Emily. He sat and gazed first upon the mother and then upon the daughter, without uttering a single word.

'I feel under great obligations to you for your kindness and generosity,' she continued, in a feeble, tremulous voice. 'I fear I shall never be able to requite the favor.'

'Don't speak of that, madam, I pray you,' he replied. 'Had I known you were sick I would have helped you sooner, but I supposed you were quite well off, the rent came so punctually.'

'I have always endeavored to pay my rent punctually, even if I deprived myself and daughter of some of the necessities of life. When I was well, we could get along without much trouble, but since I have been sick, my daughter has had hard work. However, she has never complained.'

'Heaven bless her for that!' he replied, in great earnestness. 'Heaven bless the dear girl for that! You nor she shall ever feel the stings of poverty! My only regret is that I had not known your situation and circumstances before. Emily must not make any more shirts. O, no, not while I have a dollar to give her!'

'You're very kind, indeed, sir, and you must look to heaven for your reward,' said the sick woman, while tears stood trembling in her eyes.

He was so sympathetically affected that he tears fairly ran down his cheeks in streams, and his breast heaved with strange motions. Never before had he found himself in such a situation.

'I will look to heaven and your daughter or all the reward I ask,' he answered.

She was somewhat astonished at his reply, especially to that part of it which related to Emily. His full meaning she did not apprehend, and remained silent.

'Dear madame, I'm not a wicked man,' he continued. 'Give me your daughter, and she shall never want for any thing in this world.'

'Do you wish to adopt her as a daughter?' she anxiously inquired.

'Indeed, madame, I will take her in any way you may propose. I have loved her ever since I first saw her. There is something in her voice, manner, form, movements and expression of countenance which deeply interest me, and which I have never discovered in any other young lady. Excuse me for being thus plain spoken. I speak nothing but the truth.'

The mother did not like to have her only daughter hear the bachelor discourse in such a manner, and requested her to go into another room to do some work. Emily very quickly obeyed her mother, and retired.—His eyes were rivetted upon her until she shut the door and was out of sight.

'You greatly surprise me, Mr. Colburne,' said the sick woman. 'I don't know as I fully comprehend your meaning and intentions. You spoke of loving my daughter.'

'Yes, madame, and I spoke truly,' he replied, in a voice that told but too plainly the peculiar emotions he felt.

'But, Mr. Colburne, of what kind of love do you speak?' she asked, gazing full into his honest countenance as if she would read his inmost thoughts.

'The best kind of love that ever moved a human heart,' he replied.

'But, Mr. Colburne, is it that kind which seeks marriage as its consummation?' she inquired, feeling her surprise increase, and gazing upon the white hairs that were quite thickly scattered over his head.

He noticed that she turned her eyes upon his gray hairs, and read in the peculiar expression of her countenance the thoughts which occupied her mind.

'I perceive, madame, that you are much surprised,' he continued. 'I wonder not at it, for I'm greatly surprised myself, but I have no power to control my emotions. Your daughter's beauty has excited them, and I trust in heaven they are free from all corruptions and impurities. I would not marry your daughter at present, but send her to school some year or two and then make her my wife, if her own heart may consent to such a union. Such feelings on my part may appear strange to you, considering the disparity of years between myself and your daughter, but they are honestly entertained and shall be faithfully cherished.'

'How old are you, Mr. Colburne, if I may be allowed to ask the question?' she inquired.

'O, certainly, madame, I would not conceal my age from you, although I might conceal it from others under certain circumstances,' he replied. 'I was fifty-two last month. There, I never told that before, although many ladies have attempted to draw me out.'

'Fifty-two!' she repeated, in a trembling voice. 'And my daughter was only fifteen last January.'

'Heaven be praised that she is in her sixteenth year!' he exclaimed, but in a subdued tone of voice. 'A few more fleeting months and she will be eighteen! What an interesting age! Ah, madame, believe me, I love youth and beauty.'

## CHAPTER V.

*The expected visitor. The progress of the jealous spirit. The happy meeting. Giving back the gold coin. The silk dress. The false and delusive hope of the sick mother.*

'WELL, Elizabeth, it is past five o'clock and your beautiful shirt maker has not been here, has she?' inquired Major Borland, as he came into the parlor where sat his wife and daughter, having been detained away from home by some business matters longer than he expected or desired, for he was quite anxious to behold a girl so beautiful as Elizabeth had described the poor girl she met the morning. His wife had hoped that she would come while he was absent, but the good luck was not for her.

'No, father, she has not come, but it is not too late yet,' replied Elizabeth. 'I do hope she will come, for I know you will say she is the most beautiful girl you ever saw.'

'Come, come, my dear, your'e quite too extravagant in your praises of the girl, I fear,' said the mother. 'You've said so much in her favor that I'm afraid that we shall be disappointed.'

'No danger of that, mother. When you see her you will say I've told no more than the truth, and hardly so much as that.—You'll not call me extravagant or enthusiastic when you see her.'

Just as she finished her last sentence, the door bell rang, and Elizabeth, not waiting for the servant, flew to the door herself and soon had hold of the beautiful shirt maker's hand. She was overjoyed to see her new friend, and kissed her with all sister's affection. Emily returned the sweet and innocent kisses. The Major, hearing the report of them, rose and went into the hall where he had a fair view of them in each other's embrace. His keen and prying

'Why, Mr. Colburne, you're old enough to be her —'

'Speak it not!' he said, interrupting her before she finished the sentence. 'I know too well what you were about to say. I understand all that, but no matter. I love your daughter, and will cherish and make her happy.'

'But suppose she cannot reciprocate your affection, Mr. Colburne?' asked the surprised woman. 'Would you compel her to become your wife against her own inclinations?'

'God forbid!' he exclaimed, with great earnestness. 'Never shall it be said of Charles Colburne that he married a wife who did not love him. No, no! Madame, I prize my own domestic peace and comfort too much for that.'

The truth is, this bachelor had great confidence in his own powers to please the softer sex. Having never yet seen a woman whom he believed he could not induce to love him, he entertained no apprehensions but he could succeed in winning the heart of the beautiful Emily.

'Suppose I should give Emily to you, upon the conditions you name, and while she was attending school, another and a younger man than yourself should win her heart and propose marriage to her?' she asked.—'Should you in that case be willing to give her up to your successful rival?'

That question was a hard one, and he could not readily answer it. The very consideration of it made him exceedingly nervous, but his confidence in his own powers was not destroyed, and yet somewhat shaken he was obliged to acknowledge to himself.—His frankness and honesty compelled him to answer the question in the affirmative. This love affair was not definitely settled, for the mother took time for reflection and consideration, which he granted.

ed eye told him at a glance that his daughter had not painted the beauty of the girl in to brilliant colors. But he had seen her before, but that fact he desired to keep a secret in his own bosom. Why he should wish to do so may appear in the following pages. It is not necessary now to make out the reason. Suffice it to say that she had her own reasons, which were enough for him.

Elizabeth first introduced her friend to her father, and then ushered her into the parlour, where she made her acquainted with her mother. Mrs. Borland fondly believed that her own daughter's beauty was excelled by none in the city, but when she gazed upon the face and form of Emily Pangborn she was free to acknowledge that the young woman's beauty far excelled that of her daughter.

"I understand you have a sick mother," said Mrs. Borland, addressing Emily, and slyly turning her eyes upon her husband, to see what effect her beauty might have upon him.

"I have, indeed, and I fear she will never recover," replied Emily, in a sweet and subdued tone of voice, still keeping her hand in the grasp of Elizabeth's, and looking at the Major who was apparently somewhat excited.

"What is the matter with your mother?" asked Mrs. Borland.

"Consumption of the lungs, so the doctors say," she replied.

"I'm very sorry to hear it," said this good woman. "And I understand your mother is very poor as well as sick."

"She has been poor, and I have been obliged to work hard, early and late to support her and myself," answered Emily. "But we have money enough now; and mother is quite happy."

"Indeed!" said the Major. "Where did

you get your money?"

"Mr. Colburne gave it to us, and let's us live in his house free of rent," replied Emily.

"He's a very generous man."

"What, that good-natured old bachelor?" said Elizabeth.

"The same, I presume," answered Emily.

"Well, I'm glad of it," said Miss Borland.

"I always knew he was a good-hearted man, and strange he has never been married.—He is quite a lady's man I have heard many persons say. But then he is so particular that he wouldn't dare to marry any body for fear of being cheated."

The father laughed at his daughter's remarks, and yet he, somehow or other, regretted that the bachelor had given the sick woman money. The Major could not fully appreciate any but bad motives, and he naturally supposed that Mr. Colburne gave money for the same reasons that he would give it under similar circumstances. He came very suddenly to the conclusion that the old bachelor was actuated by sinister motives in giving his money to a woman who had borne such a handsome daughter as Emily Pangborn. He began to envy the bachelor and to lay plans to defeat him.

"He appears like a very good man," said Emily, feeling something like a blush coming up from her heart to her face, young as she was.

"You'll find him just such a villain as I am," thought the Major. "He has an eye for beauty as well as I have, but he must not seek the honey from that beautiful girl's sweet lips."

Such were the vile thoughts that passed through the mind of the Major, but they were concealed from all eyes excepting the All-seeing One.

"I know he is a good-hearted man as ever lived," replied Elizabeth. "Every one speaks well of him. Don't you think so, mother?"

"I have known him for several years, and have always thought well of him," answered Mrs. Borland.

"Yes, the ladies will speak well of him, because he flatters them," says the Major; forcing a smile upon his fair round face which he did not feel in his heart.

"Now, husband, you do injustice to the bachelor," said his wife. "I'm not aware that Mr. Colburne is a great flatterer. True, he has been fond of female society, but he has always treated them kindly."

"Yes, very kindly," he replied, with a sort of sneer.

"Well, it was never said of him that he ever deceived a woman in his life," said the wife. "He has always fulfilled his promises. For my part I consider Mr. Charles Colburne quite above the average of men in moral character."

"Perhaps, my dear, you're not acquainted with his tricks," he said; seeming to conceal something, which, if revealed, would tarnish the good name of the bachelor.

"I don't believe he was ever guilty of any tricks," answered the wife. "I have never heard a single accusation brought against him."

"My dear, you've not heard of every thing that has happened in this world, for the old adage holds true now as it ever did, that it takes every body to know every thing."

"Well, well, husband, let us not dispute more upon the subject," said the wife.—"When persons are convinced against their will, they are of the same opinion still, so we shall not probably gain any thing by farther talking upon the matter."

Emily heard the remarks of the Major with sorrow and regret, but they did not shake her confidence in Mr. Colburne in the least degree. She thought much more of him than she did of the Major, and she believed she had good ground for her opinion.

It will be recollected by the reader that Emily carried a gold coin in her pocket in the direction of her mother that she might have it ready to return to him who gave it to her.

The Major was the man who gave it to Emily, and the motives that prompted the gift are now somewhat apparent. Emily had not seen the Major since he made her the present in the street, and now believed the proper time had come when she ought to give back the money.

Putting her hand in her pocket, and drawing forth the identical coin, she held it out towards him, saying: "Sir, there's the gold piece you once gave me in Pearl Street. Mother told me to give it back to you the first opportunity."

The Major suddenly started as if some sharp instrument had pierced his flesh, and his wife gazed wildly at him. For a moment he lost his balance and showed embarrassment which his wife noticed. He soon recovered his balance and forced a smile upon his face. Her feelings were very much disturbed.

"Then you've seen this girl before, have you?" asked the wife, in a manner and tone of voice that told him that she meant something by asking the question.

"True, I once met her in the street, and gave her a gold piece like that in her hand," he replied, assuming an indifference he did not feel. "She said her mother was poor and sick, and so I gave her something to relieve her distress. Is there any thing remarkable in all that? I believe you occasionally perform similar deeds of charity."

"I hope you'll take back the money because my mother desires you to do so," said Emily; still holding the money in her hand and gazing upon him.

"I will take it back, if your mother does not want it," he said, endeavoring to appear

firm and unmoved. 'I gave it to make her comfortable, and if taking it back will make her more so, I shall be pleased to do it.'

'It will, indeed, sir,' she replied; placing the money in his hand.

Never had this good wife's suspicions of her husband's fidelity to his marriage vows been more completely awakened than on this occasion. The circumstance was apparently trivial in its character, yet it spoke volumes of this woman's soul. When a woman begins to suspect her husband's fidelity, she will always find circumstances enough to confirm and strengthen her suspicions. However true it is that jealousy makes the meat it feeds on!

Mrs. Borland knew very well that her husband was not in the habit of seeking out objects of misery to relieve them, and it seemed strange to her that he should be so liberal under such circumstances. If this girl had possessed less personal beauty and charms, the affair might have passed off without awakening her suspicions, but as it was, she could not feel envy. Her belief now that her husband was a libertine was stronger than ever before. She was not naturally a jealous woman and he knew it, but he began to be apprehensive that she suspected him. Some circumstances had happened, which had a tendency in that direction. Elizabeth was surprised at what had happened, but she knew not the feelings that pressed her mother's heart.

'Why don't you keep the money?' asked Elizabeth. 'No doubt father gave it cheerfully.'

'Indeed, I did, my dear, replied her father. And now I find you like Emily so well I wish she would keep it as her own.'

'No, no, I never do any thing contrary to my mother's wishes,' said Emily. 'She may be too particular sometimes, especially now she is in feeble health, but then I would

not disobey her for the world. She's a good mother and I love her most dearly.'

'Your'e right in that, my good girl,' said Mrs. Borland. 'Obedience to parents is a becoming virtue in children. I always highly respect such children.'

'I think you and mother would agree perfectly,' said Emily. 'I wish you would see her.'

'We'll go and see her; will you not, mother?' asked Elizabeth.

'Perhaps we will,' she replied.

Elizabeth now left the room, and soon returned with two silk dresses, which she and her mother had selected for Emily. One was a pink and the other was a purple.—Elizabeth had outgrown them, and she thought they would just fit Emily.

'Come, Emily, go to my chamber and try on this purple dress,' said Elizabeth. 'I think the color will become your complexion nicely.'

They now hurried up stairs. Emily was delighted with her new companion and friend, and well she might be. After they had left the room, the Major and his wife sat in silence for some minutes. Neither was at first disposed to break it. He felt a consciousness of guilt, and she was much disturbed in her feelings. In every light in which she viewed the gift of that gold piece to this girl she could not make it look like charity.

'Husband,' at last, she said; 'It seems to me that you travelled out of your ordinary course, when you gave that money to this girl.'

'The immortal Shakespear has recorded that trifles light as air, to the jealous, are confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ,' he replied, smiling, and whistling a kind of tune to show an indifference he did not feel.

'I'm not a jealous woman,' she replied.—

'And you ought to know that.'

'My dear, I have never so considered you, but recently you have given me some occasion to fear that you are becoming kind of jealous,' he answered.

'And are you quite sure you have not given me some occasion to be a very little suspicious?' she inquired.

'Well, my dear, let us forever bury all that has now passed between us,' he said. 'I hear the girls coming down stairs, and I trust you have too much good sense to be willing to have our daughter hear us dispute about any thing.'

Elizabeth entered the room, leading her friend by the hand, dressed out in purple silk. She looked more beautiful than ever, at least, so thought the Major.

'The dress fits admirably,' said Elizabeth. 'Don't you think so, mother?'

'I do, indeed. Your forms are very similar,' answered the mother.

'Only Emily's is the best,' said Elizabeth, smiling.

'No, no! yours is the most genteel,' said Emily. 'I will leave it to your mother to say.'

'I fear I should not be an impartial judge,' said the mother. 'Your forms are both very genteel, and if you only behave as well as you look, you will be very good girls.'

'I gave her one of my collars, too,' said Elizabeth. 'The one I used to wear with the dress. It becomes her finely.'

'It does, indeed,' replied the mother. 'I am glad you were so thoughtful.'

'How shall I pay you for all this kindness and generosity?' asked Emily, gazing into Elizabeth's joyous face, and then glancing at her own form as it was reflected in a large mirror before which she stood.

'Never mind that,' said Elizabeth. 'I'm paid in the pleasure I feel in your company as sufficient reward for me.'

'Emily's old calico dress and the other silk one was tied up in a bundle, and the young shirt maker started for home with a light step and a lighter heart. Elizabeth kissed her at the door as she went out, and gazed after her, until she turned the corner out of her sight. When she arrived home her mother did not at first recognize her, changed was her appearance in her purple silk. She told her mother all that happened at the house where she had been, and especially about giving back the gold piece. The sick woman continued to feel quite well, and even hoped that she might recover her health. Alas, how delusive was her faith!

## CHAPTER VI.

*The character of a housekeeper. An elder maiden's curiosity. A discussion in relation to adopted daughters. Aunt Betty's opinions on the subject. The bachelor's progress in love.*

'WHY, Mr. Colburne, your dinner has been ready and waiting more than two hours,' said Betty Osgood. 'I have tried to keep it nice and warm, but I fear it will not be so good as it was when it was first done.'

'I dare say, Betty, you've done your duty faithfully,' he replied.

'You know, Mr. Borland, I always try to please you,' she said.

'Indeed, I do, and you always succeed most admirably, too,' he answered.

Aunt Betty hurried the dinner upon the table, and thought that compliment meant more than fell upon the ear. In her opinion it was just about the best thing the good bachelor ever said to her. It revived her hopes, and made the blood course more joyfully through her veins. In fact, a few faint tinges appeared upon her cheeks, and

small gray eyes twinkled with more than their wonted brilliancy. It was a happy hour for this good housekeeper. There was but a single drawback upon her pleasure. She had some curiosity to know where the bachelor had been so long, and what he had been doing, but she didn't like to put a question to him direct, lest she might offend him. Now she had not only seen Emily Pangbom but often heard the bachelor speak in most extravagant terms of her beauty. But all that had not much disturbed her philosophy, for the youth of Emily, she thought, was a safe guaranty against any thing like that love which seeks its enjoyment in marriage; but still she had some misgivings, if not doubts. The thought had more than once occurred to her that he was so much pleased with the girl that he might be induced to adopt her as a daughter. The truth is, she had heard him express a wish that he had such a daughter, and that expressed wish was yet fresh in her memory. Now Aunt Betty did not wish to have in the house, over which she was mistress, a beautiful girl, however young she might be, to share any of the bachelor's attention, for she wanted every particle of that herself!—besides, she desired to have no one about the house but herself with whom he would like to converse. In these respects she had become really selfish and mercenary.

'Succeed most admirably too,' kept running in her head almost to the exclusion of every other thought. 'Ah,' she said to herself, while she was filling the bachelor's cup with clear, well made coffee, for he always had that kind of beverage with his dinner.—Mr. Colburne begins to find what a difference there is among housekeepers. I dare say he likes my management far better than he did the old thing who used to keep his house before I took the care of it. When I came here there were cobwebs in every room

in the house, but he finds none now. I wonder if he thinks of marriage! He often speaks of wives and little babies! I really think he loves children.'

Thus ran her thoughts while she was waiting upon the table, but his thoughts ran in a different channel. She began to notice he was unusually fidgetty and absent-minded, and she anxiously desired to know the cause. She wondered where he had been, and what he had been doing. It was very unusual for him to be absent from dinner, or any other meal. He was very punctual in all such matters. There was another thing, too, that troubled Aunt Betty's mind. When he happened to be late to any of his meals, he always told her the cause, but now he was entirely silent upon the subject. That circumstance troubled her spirit, and the more she thought of it, the more it was magnified in her mental vision.

'I hope you have a good appetite for your dinner,' she said. 'Is your coffee agreeable? It has been standing so long that I was afraid it would not be so good as usual.'

'It is excellent!' he replied, taking a sip, and peering over the edge of the cup at her. 'I believe you don't know how to make a bad cup of coffee, Aunt Betty.'

'Why, Mr. Colburne, how full of compliments you are to-day?' she replied, gazing into his pleasant blue eyes, as seen just above the coffee-cup, and trying to read in them what thoughts were coursing through his mind.

'Not particularly so, am I?' he asked.

'It seems as if you were,' she answered. 'But then you're always so pleasant and full of kind words for every body that it is difficult to distinguish between one day and another.'

She had never spoken so plainly to him before, nor directly complimented him so highly. She began to fear that she might

have gone too far,—stepped beyond the bounds of propriety, even overleaped the bounds of modesty which she prized so very highly; but the words had gone out, and she could not recall them.

'So far as compliments are concerned, I think we are now on an equality,' he said, smiling.

No man could smile more graciously than Charles Colburne. The ladies in general thought so, and Aunt Betty, in particular.

'Why, Mr. Colburne, I'm no hand at compliments!' she replied, while a few red spots appeared upon her rather sallow cheeks, and ran up towards her temples. Aunt Betty was excited, and she felt her heart beating more than usual.

'I don't accuse you of any thing wrong in that respect,' he replied, noticing her great excitement, and wishing to calm her nerves.

'O, I didn't dream of such a thing!' she exclaimed. 'You didn't suppose I could be offended at such a remark. O, no, Mr. Colburne, I'm sure you never say any thing you don't mean, and that is the reason why you are so pleasant to live with. Some men are hypocritical, but you're not one of them, Mr. Colburne.—I hate hypocrites. No one knows when to believe them, or how to take them. They are the worst persons in the world to get along with. I have seen a good many in my day.'

Now if Mr. Charles Colburne had any fault it was that he did sometimes say things he did not mean, but never in any very serious matters. It is true, he occasionally complimented the ladies and bestowed praises upon them which he knew they did not deserve.—As an illustration of this peculiar trait in his character, he would always praise black eyes when he was conversing with a lady who possessed such dark orbs, and when one might happen to have blue eyes, he would always speak of that color as the most mild

and beautiful in a woman's eye. He was was not fulsome in his adulations, however, but in such matters he did not appear to have any fixed standard. He was once conversing with a lady who had very sparkling black eyes, and the conversation turned upon the subject of the different colors in eyes.—He gave his opinion very freely in favor of black eyes.

Soon after he was conversing with a lady who had rather light blue eyes, and he spoke of blue eyes as being the most beautiful.—The lady of the blue eyes had previously been talking with the lady of black eyes, who told her what Mr. Colburne's opinion was in relation to the color of eyes. Being somewhat nettled at his want of sincerity, or what she supposed to be such a want in him, she could not well refrain from speaking of it.

'Then Mr. Colburne, you really think blue eyes are the most beautiful, do you?' she asked.

'Decidedly so, madame,' he replied. 'In black eyes there is too much sharpness, too much of a kind of sparkling brilliancy that dazzles more than it pleases. It is the blue eye that seems to shine with heaven's light. There is a radiance from it which satisfies the soul.'

'But, Mr. Colburne, I fear you are not always of the same opinion,' she replied.—'Mrs. Sandborn told me not an hour ago that you were decidedly in favor of black eyes. You told her that blue eyes might have mildness, but never that peculiar and sparkling brilliancy which a black eye sends forth.—How do you get along with that, Mr. Colburne?'

'The easiest thing in the world, my good woman,' he answered, smiling. 'Tis not so much in the particular color of the eye after all, as it is in the handling of it. Every thing depends upon the handling of the eye.'



Neither a black, or a blue eye will please, unless they are well handled. Now you and Mrs. Sandborn always handle your eyes most admirably, so that when I'm with you I think a blue eye is most pleasing, and when I'm with her, I think, or am inclined to think, that a black one is the most beautiful. After all, madame, it is the soul of the woman that gives beauty to her eye.'

The above dialogue will serve to show one phase in the bachelor's character, and how adroitly he always managed to keep along with the ladies and to ingratiate himself into their favor and good graces.

'True, some men are indeed hypocritical, but then you know that hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue,' he replied.

'True, very true, Mr. Colburne,' she answered. 'There is much wisdom in that remark. I never thought of it before. It is first rate.'

'Remember, Aunt Betty, I take no credit for the remark,' he said. 'It is not original with me. A wiser man than I am, made it before me.'

Miss Osgood did not like to be called Aunt Betty, because it seemed to remind her of age too much. She wished the bachelor would not call her so; but she hardly knew how to tell him of her displeasure in relation to it. He called her Aunt Betty, a great deal without bestowing a thought upon the subject. Had he known it displeased her, he would have desisted at once from it.—And he might have suspected it if he had maturely considered the subject, but he did not dream that she was setting her cap for him. She managed her cards very adroitly, and never let him get so much as a glimpse of her hand.

The conversation now lagged, and there was silence between them. Both were occupied with their thoughts. He was intently

thinking of the beautiful shirt maker, and she was wondering where he had been.—That question she did not want to let pass.—He did not eat quite so heartily, and finished dinner ere she was hardly aware of it.

'Dear me, Mr. Colburne, have you finished your dinner so soon?' she anxiously inquired. 'Why you have not made half a dinner and I fear there is something in the cooking that don't please you. I told you the dinner would not be so good as usual after standing so long.'

'The dinner was very good, indeed, but you know our appetites are not always alike,' he replied. 'I did not feel quite so hungry as usual.'

'But, Mr. Colburne, your appetite is always very regular, more so than any gentleman's I ever saw in my life,' she said, gazing into his full, round, smooth face. 'I fear you're not well, or perhaps, some business affair has perplexed you. Certainly, you don't look so well as usual. Don't you feel so, Mr. Colburne?'

'I'm not aware of having any particular disease,' he answered. 'I believe I'm about as well as common. Perhaps, going past my usual dinner time may have somewhat changed my appetite.'

'I hope there was nothing very extraordinary that detained you so long from dinner,' she said. 'It is quite unusual in your habits, you're always so punctual. It is much easier to keep house for a gentleman who is always regular in his habits and punctual at his meals.'

'I'm aware of that fact, and endeavor to govern myself accordingly,' he answered.

'You do, indeed; Mr. Colburne,' she replied, wondering why he did not as usual make known to her the cause of his absence.

Her curiosity grew more and more intense, and she began to suspect there might

be a woman involved in the case. That suspicion greatly enhanced her desire to know all the facts. It seemed to her that she had given him hints enough.

'Have there been any failures among the merchants or the banks?' she asked, after a pause.

'None, that I'm aware of,' he replied, wondering why she asked such a question.

'I did not know but there might be, you were absent so long,' she said.

'O, I'm not much troubled with such matters,' he said. 'My money is safely invested I trust and believe.'

'I hope so, indeed,' she answered. 'Perhaps you have some friends who are in trouble, you were gone so long from your dinner.'

It had now occurred to him that she was curious to know why he had been so long absent, for she kept harping upon it so much that he could not but know what she was driving at.

'I suppose you deem it strange that I've been away so long,' he said.

'It does seem rather strange, but then there was sufficient cause, no doubt,' she replied.

'To be plain and frank with you. I have been to see a poor widow woman, who lives in one of my houses.'

'A poor widow woman!' she repeated, apparently somewhat surprised. 'I suppose she is so poor that she cannot pay you her rent.'

'She has always paid her rent very punctually, but she's now far gone in a consumption, poor woman,' he said in a very tender voice, full of pity.

'Consumption!' she repeated. 'That's a fatal disease. Has she no children?'

'She has only one child, and that is a daughter,' he replied.

'A daughter!' she repeated. 'How old is her daughter?'

'Between fifteen and sixteen,' he replied.

'A very young girl,' she said. 'I hope she is a girl of good habits.'

'I think she is,' he answered.

Aunt Betty was silent and thoughtful for a few moments. At last the thought struck her that it might be the same beautiful girl who came to pay the rent, and she asked him the question.

'It is the same one,' he replied. 'You have seen her sometimes, and don't you think she is very beautiful?'

'I never took particular notice of her,' she replied, assuming an indifferent manner, that she did not really feel. 'I believe she was decent in her looks. Is her mother an Irish woman? I thought the girl looked a little Irishy.'

'O, no, there's no Irish blood in their veins,' he replied. 'I believe her father and mother both were from the State of Maine. They were once well off, but the father became intemperate, and consequently poor, for that is generally the result of intemperate habits. The mother appears to be an excellent woman, and from her looks now, I should judge she must have been a very handsome person. Her daughter very much resembles her.'

'Do you think the girl is very handsome?' she asked, feeling somewhat troubled.

'Indeed, I do think she's the most beautiful girl I ever saw, and she appears to be as good as she is beautiful. I have been thinking of adopting her as a daughter after her mother dies.'

'Adopting her as a daughter!' repeated Aunt Betty, in evident surprise. 'A strange girl, and adopt her as a daughter! I would never do that, Mr. Colburne. She may prove a terrible plague to you. No—no! I advise you to keep clear of such girls. They are always very troublesome, especially, when they are taken from the abodes of pov-



erty and placed in fine houses. She would not be here a month before she would consider herself the mistress. Why, Mr. Colburne, your furniture would not look as it does, if she had the handling of it. These young girls are terrible on furniture. They don't seem to have any discretion about them.—I once lived in a family where there was an adopted daughter, and she was the ugliest little thing I ever saw. They had no children, and so they thought they must adopt one, but they were sick enough of it. She rattled and banged about the house and turned every thing topsyturvy. I never was so sick of any girl in my life. And she was as proud as Lucifer, too, although she came from a very poor, low family. Such are quite apt to be proud and haughty when they are placed in nicely furnished houses, and more especially if they are adopted daughters. No, no, Mr. Colburne, my advice is not to adopt any girl as a daughter. It is a very dangerous experiment. Besides, it is married persons and not bachelors, who adopt daughters. People would talk, if you, being a bachelor, should adopt a daughter.

Thus she talked unto the very end of the chapter, scarcely leaving a place for the bachelor to put in a word edgewise.

## CHAPTER VII.

*The trio of blacklegs. The novice in gambling. His progress in vice. The gambling fraternity. How money is lost and won. Whist.*

'Now, boys, I've got ye!' exultingly exclaimed Job Snyder, a great gambler and a ruffian; holding up his hand of cards, and peering over the top of them at his companions. 'This is a hand that will prove a "dead open and shut" upon ye. I'll double the bet, if you dare. I'm going to play a desperate game.'

'Done!' answered one of the gambling fraternity; chuckling over his own hand, and throwing some additional money upon the table, which was instantly covered by Snyder.

They played, and the young man who accepted the challenge won the money.—Snyder appeared to be much affected at his loss, and the young man was greatly pleased with his luck. There were but three playing at the time, and he who won the money was rather a novice in the business, but he had the funds, and that was the essential thing in the estimation of the other two gamblers. They had played before several times, and the young man had been the loser.

Snyder and his companion had selected this young man as their victim, and had him under pretty good train.

It is a mistaken notion that many entertain, that professional gamblers always let their intended victims win at first in order to encourage them. Such is not the fact.—Nine times out of ten the fellow who loses will desire to play again that he may make up his loss, and the professional gamblers understand this matter.

Gain does not so injuriously affect the mind, and drive one to play desperately as loss does. True, the gamblers sometimes suffer the novice to win, but not at first, especially, if they believe he is bountifully provided with funds. Nothing hurries a young man on so furiously to games of desperation as the loss of his money. The more he loses the more earnestly will he play in the hope of regaining what he has lost.—Frequent losses seldom fail to make one love to gamble, especially, if he is not broken, and even then he will pledge any thing he has upon which he can raise money to continue his demoralizing work.

'There, Snyder, he's down upon ye, this

time,' said the third gambler, when the hands were played, and the money placed in the pocket of the young man.

'By heavens, he has won!' exclaimed Snyder. 'I didn't think the dog had so good a hand.'

'Ah, you supposed you could bluff me off,' replied the novice, or amateur player. 'I've seen you make such attempts before, but I'm not so easily alarmed as you may imagine. Several times you have made me give up the money, when I might have won it. You must remember I can keep some run of the cards as well as yourself.'

'I begin to think so,' answered Snyder, exchanging a very sly wink with the other gambler.

Another gambler now entered the room and seated himself at the table. Three of them were professional blacklegs, who understood each other perfectly, having formed an alliance for the express purpose of cheating the sons of wealthy men. Each one was constantly upon the look out after victims, and we are sorry to say, they found many whose money they won, and whose characters they destroyed.

They often visited gambling places without taking any part in the play. Their object was to find some young men who were fond of cards and could furnish the funds.—Whenever such an one was found, he would be invited to their room and engaged in play. The victim knew not they were associated against him, and had agreed to divide the spoils. Very innocently he would take one of them for his partner, and the result may be easily imagined.

They had won thousands of dollars from young men who never once dreamed that their partners were cheats, supposing all the while their partners lost as much as they did, when in fact, they were ever the gainers in equal shares with their brother blacklegs.

Such was the situation in which this young man was placed who won a small sum of money from the blackleg, Snyder. As there were four present, partners were soon made, and the play went on.

All the young man had won was soon gone, and hundreds of dollars with it; but his losses made him desperate, and he continued the game with the more earnestness. At last the young man's partner proposed a change of partners, saying that the luck might turn when there was nothing like luck in the game.

There was no such thing as a game of chance with these gamblers for this novice. It was a clear dead open-and-shut so far as he was concerned. The partners were changed, and, with the change, luck seemed to turn in favor of the young man and his partner, but that luck did not last long.—After a few games he began to lose again as fast as ever. Still he was not at all discouraged.

The name of this young man was George Homer. He was the only son of a very wealthy merchant. He had received a liberal education, and was a student at law in one of the Offices of Wall Street. He was naturally a young man of fine talents and amiable disposition; but while in college he had acquired a great fondness for games of chance, and, especially of the game at cards. Before he graduated he was considered the best whist player in college, and after he came back to the city with his collegiate honors upon him, he dove still deeper into the vice of card-playing. The more he played the greater was his propensity for playing. Job Snyder found him one evening at a gambling hell, and fastened upon him. Having ascertained young Homer's history, prospects, and present possessions. Snyder was exceedingly anxious to make friends with this young man, and get him to his gambling

room. And he was not long in obtaining his object.

George Homer was not only the sole heir apparent of all his father's wealth, but he was also in possession of a large sum of money left him by his bachelor uncle, who died about a year before he took his degree at college.

Job Snyder had wormed out of young Homer all the above facts, and consequently, considered him but game. Under the training of these three blacklegs, gambling became a passion with him, and he plunged deeper and deeper into the hellish vice.

When our records find him he was flush in funds, and full of the spirit of gambling. He was neither broken down in funds or heart, neither was his naturally good temper and disposition much degraded. He was still a gentleman, but intemperance as well as gambling had begun their work of destruction upon him.

The brightest intellect, the fairest face and form, the best heart and the most polished manners become degraded, and finally destroyed under the influence of these terrible vices. No strength of intellect, no goodness of heart, no physical power can withstand the inroads of these demoralizing practices. The only question is one of time. Some hold out longer than others, but all at last fall beneath their scathing power.

George Homer possessed a strong physical constitution, and a fine intellectual organization. His form was symmetrical, his face handsome and his manners easy, dignified and graceful. But few young men were his superior in scholarship, and none in beauty of person. He was the idol of his parents, and the beloved in a large circle of his friends and acquaintances. At his father's house whist parties were quite frequent, and all strove to have George for a partner.

But, alas, how dull was the parlor game

of whist compared with the excitements of the gaming table! So this young man found it. Yet he occasionally played to please his parents and their guests.

His father was a fine whist player and so considered by all who played with him, but he freely acknowledged that his son was more than a match for him. And, fatal delusion! he was proud to make such an acknowledgment. He was not aware that his son had such a violent passion for gambling, neither did he once dream that this passion began at the whist table. Thousands of young men have commenced their downward career of gambling at the fashionable game of whist. Even parents have instructed their children in the game of whist, not knowing that they were preparing their sons for the terrible vice of gambling.

Many gamblers, when reduced to poverty, degradation and misery, have dated the commencement of their downfall at the whist table, and even warned young men to beware of the fashionable game of whist.

Had Mr. Homer known how strong was his son's passion for gambling, and could he have foreseen the inevitable consequences of that passion, he would have burned every pack of cards in his house, and forever quit his beloved game. But he could not foresee, or was blind to these fearful consequences.—

But in giving a faint outline of young Homer's character, we had almost forgotten his evening's performance among the blacklegs. After playing a few games with Job Snyder, losing and winning as the tide of luck, as he vainly supposed it, ebbed and flowed, he chose his partner, and the exciting game commenced.

Their first games were 'Seven Up,' and they played for small stakes for awhile, but the excitement increased and so did the stakes. Homer and his partner occasionally won a game, but they were losers even at the beginning.

The gamblers very well knew that Homer was not the man to flinch or back out whatever might be the fortune of the game. And they also knew enough of his temperament to be quite certain that his losses would drive him deeper into the game than any gains they might permit him to make.

An hour passed, and our young novice found his pocket minus about two hundred dollars, but that by no means discouraged him. He had just begun to feel the interest of the game. The blacklegs found that he was in the right vein, and were determined to bleed him quite freely.

Job Snyder whispered to his partner, and said, 'he will bear to have a good deal of blood taken, and not faint.'

'I see it, and we must govern ourselves accordingly,' replied the partner, in the same tone of voice.

Yes, he was, indeed, in a condition to bear the loss of much blood as these villains conjectured, and they were fully resolved to have it. Gamblers and rumsellers reason very much alike. They say of their victim, 'if we don't fleece him, somebody else will.'—And in that way they quiet their consciences, if consciences they have. Homer and his partner had just won a small sum, after losing largely for several games.

'Come, Homer, your luck has turned,' said Snyder. 'Let us go and imbibe, for I'm as dry as a contribution box.'

'Agreed!' replied Homer. 'The excitement of the game has made me dry as a last year's robbin's nest.'

'And, I'm as dry as a goose pasture,' said his partner, laughing.

They all joined in a laugh, at their own coarse wit, rose from the table, and entered a drinking saloon. There is always one of these establishments where the liquid poison is sold adjacent to a gambling room. They prosper together much better than they do

apart. Brandy was called for by Homer, and the glasses were filled.

'Here's to our sweetheart's,' said Snyder, drinking off his liquor, and smacking his lips.

'If mine knew I was here I reckon I should not be received very warmly at my next interview with her,' said Homer. 'At any rate, I'm thinking her good mother would have a finger in the pie.'

'Very likely,' answered Snyder. 'These old dames pretend to have a mighty horror of playing on a card as they sometimes call it. Tell her, Homer, that the world is full of gambling. The lawyer, doctor, and even the minister gamble for their fees, and mothers often gamble away their daughters.—Yes, I'm bold to say it, the world is full of gambling, and happy is he who wins the stakes.'

Such was a specimen of Job Snyder's sentiments, and the most of the blackleg fraternity entertain the same opinions. They believe, or try to make themselves believe that every man has his price, and that all are cheats in different ways. Such a doctrine is not only dangerous to the community, but exceedingly corrupting to all who advocate it. Young Homer was not prepared to believe, or advocate such a doctrine, but then he was fast travelling in that direction.

'A little too fast there, I fear,' said Homer, taking another sip at his brandy. 'It is true, there is much gambling of various sorts in the world, but still I must believe there are many conscientious persons in human society.'

'Your sweetheart's mother may be one, but hang me, if I believe her husband is,' said Snyder, laughing.

'Why, do you know any thing of him?'—asked Homer, manifesting some surprise.

'I reckon I do,' replied Snyder. 'Cards may not be his playthings, but you may swear for it, pretty girls are.'

'He may have a taste for beauty,' answered Homer. 'But after all, I think he is a pretty good old fellow.'

'O, so, so,' said Snyder. 'But let him pass. Now fill your glasses again at my expense. What I have swallowed only has waked up an appetite for more. Fill up, and let us be merry. The world owes us a good living, and we will have it. Now, a toast from you, Homer.'

They filled their glasses once more, and stood waiting for the toast of Homer.

'Here's to all good mothers and their fair daughters,' said Homer, draining off his glass, and feeling quite excited from the fumes of the liquor.

'A capital toast,' said Homer's partner. 'I wish I could win one of the fair daughters with her pockets full of rocks.'

They now went back to the gambling room in high glee. As they were on the way, Snyder whispered to his partner.—'Homer makes fine progress. The dog is rich, and let us fleece him as much as he can bear.'

'He's in the vein,' whispered his partner. 'He's a glorious fellow.'

Again, they were seated at the table, and Snyder commenced shuffling the cards in a way in which only a finished gambler can shuffle them. It was a new pack with figured backs, and the gamblers knew them as well by their backs as they did by their faces, a secret which young Homer had not been taught, but it gave them great advantage over him.

The game was changed from 'Seven Up' to Bragg. Homer thought he was well skilled in that game, and so he proposed it.

'Homer is a "science player," in this game,' said Snyder. 'And so we must keep a sharp look out, partner, or he'll catch up and run by us.'

'I fear it, for his luck turned just before

we took our drinks,' said the partner.

'Well, it is time it had turned,' said Homer's partner. 'You've fleeced us pretty essentially, but we don't fear you. If fortune don't favor us this evening, there are others to come.'

They commenced, and played with great earnestness. Homer and his partner won the first two games, and the novice was full of courage. He played bold, and was ready to double the stakes at any moment, but Snyder refused at first. Soon, however, he was ready, and the bets ran high. As might be expected, Homer and his partner began to lose, and the excitement to increase.

Bold and desperate games were played, until Homer had lost over two thousand dollars, and yet the excitement increased.—The time was fixed when they should quit. They played up to that time, and Homer lost nearly another thousand. He had never played so desperately before. He went home with a heavy heart, but his passion for gambling was only increased.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Traits of a good housekeeper. The great skill and tact of a woman of uncertain age. Discussion about adopted daughters. The sleeping chamber of a bachelor.—The keyhole, and Aunt Betty.*

AUNT BETTY OSGOOD doubled her dilligence in her household affairs, and seemed to be more careful and nicer than she ever was before. In an especial manner did she care for the bachelor's chamber. Never before had his bed been so nicely made. It was always well made up before, and it seemed almost impossible that any improvement could be made; but still there was improvement, for Aunt Betty's ingenuity in housekeeping knew no bounds.

There was not a single wrinkle in the bachelor's bed, the sheets seeming to be ironed out after they had been spread upon the bed, and the quilt lay as smoothly and evenly as the surface of the large mirror that hung in the room. Several articles of furniture had been made to change places, and the whole chamber looked better than ever before. In addition to all this, the faithful housekeeper had placed a beautiful bunch of flowers on his dressing table directly under the looking-glass. The flowers were selected with rare taste, and the atmosphere of the chamber was perfumed with their delightful fragrance.

All these improvements were made the next day after Mr. Colburne had been to visit the widow Pangborn and her daughter Emily. He was not aware that so much had been done in his chamber until he went up to retire for the night. As he entered the room he smelt the fragrance of the flowers, and soon he beheld them in all their beauty and freshness under the mirror. The sight of them opened his eyes to the other improvements and innovations which Aunt Betty had made in his dormitory.

Mr. Colburne was struck with astonishment, for he could hardly believe his eyes that so much improvement could be made in so short a time, and in his well-ordered room, too. It seemed at first that he had entered some other person's room, so changed was every thing, and so admirably arranged.

'Where am I?' was the bachelor's first mental exclamation, after he entered his chamber. 'Is this my old sleeping room which I have occupied so many years?—How changed every thing is, and how nicely arranged! I wish the beautiful Emily could view the place where her admirer sleeps!—Aunt Betty, has, indeed, a wonderful tact at housekeeping. Why has she made all these improvements and innovations and never said

a word to me about them? I wonder she had not mentioned the circumstance, for she always consults me in regard to any new order of arrangements in the house. But then I suppose she intended to surprise me, and she has surely done it. She's a nice body. I have reason to be thankful that I have such a housekeeper. I wonder if she ever thought of setting her cap for me. I hope not, for it must be in vain. Ah! she's too old for me. I couldn't think of wedding one half so old; besides, all women lose their charms for me when I think of that angelic Emily. But some will say I'm too old to wed one so young. Perhaps, I may be! but then I will wait a year or two.—That time will make a great difference in her, but none in me. I shall probably remain the same for a good many years, and she will be ever improving in beauty, at least for some time.'

While he was thus communing with his own spirit, Aunt Betty had stolen softly up to a room adjoining the bachelor's in her stocking feet, and stood with her sharp, gray eye to a keyhole in a door that opened into his chamber. She had previously removed the key and prepared the way, for she desired to know how he would look and act when he saw what new arrangements she had made in his room. The keyhole did not give her a view of the bed, as that stood in a corner, but she could see quite distinctly over a large part of the chamber.

Aunt Betty watched every movement he made, and frequently obtained a fair view of his face. When she first placed her right eye at the key-hole, her heart began to palpitate, and it beat so loud in the stillness of the little room where she was that she was almost afraid that he might hear its pulsations through the keyhole. She raised herself up from her stooping posture for the purpose of quieting her agitation. It relieved

her, but she could not long keep her keen eye from the keyhole.

'He's pleased, I know he is!' she said to herself. 'How he stares round! Not a thing escapes his notice! Now his eyes are fixed upon those beautiful flowers. He must be delighted with their beauty and fragrance! See, he bends his head and smells them! O, how he loves them! I always knew he was fond of flowers? Now he looks into the mirror and sees his fine manly features reflected there. He is a handsome man. Every body acknowledges that. Now he brushes his hair, but he has more gray hairs in his head than I have, that's a fact. I wonder if he is thinking of that young girl. He adopts her as a daughter! I'll convince him of the impropriety of such a movement. No, no, he must not do that, if he values his reputation. People all over town would talk about him, and I reckon he begins to think so since I talked with him yesterday, for he has not opened his mouth on the subject from that time to this.

'Good gracious! he looks towards his bed, and smiles! He'll find it softer than he ever did before, for I have now filled the under-bed. He must be pleased. He never had such housekeeping before. And he'll find his sheets perfumed, for I sprinkled them with Cologne water! He will like that, because he is very fond of good perfumery, more fond of it than gentlemen in general. Now he walks back and forth. I wonder what he is thinking about? Every thing in the room must remind him of me! Now he looks into the mirror.'

Aunt Betty now raised herself up to take the kinks out of her back, for her stooping had given her some pain. But she couldn't patiently remain long without seeing his movements. Down she stooped again, and her eye was close at the key-hole, twinkling like a star in the opening of some dark cloud.

'He begins to take off his coat,' she continues to speak within herself. 'How carefully he folds it up and lays it in a chair!—He is a very particular person, but then he is reasonable in all his requirements. He is a good man to live with, scarcely ever finding fault, but I suppose he would find fault if he had some housekeepers, and well he might. Now he takes off his vest and carefully folds that up. Now his neckerchief! He'll find his nightshirt perfumed also! I've left nothing undone. But ought I stay here? I must not much longer. There! There! Dear me!'

With these exclamations, the modest Aunt Betty rose up from her stooping position, and retreated back as softly as the cat when she is in the trail of a mouse. Soon she was in the parlor and reclining upon a sofa. She was quite exhausted. Her long stooping to reach the keyhole, her intense watching and extreme anxiety had produced a very debilitating effect upon her system. It caused her to feel more fatigue than her house-work. It was not long before she fell into a slumber. She slept until nearly midnight, and was awakened by a dream. As she awoke, she raised her arms, for she thought the bachelor was just bending down his head to imprint a kiss upon her lips.

'Good Lord!' she exclaimed, raising up, and gazing wildly about the room. O, it was only a dream! I didn't think I should have fallen asleep so quick and slept so long. I declare it is almost midnight! I wonder if Mr. Colburne sleeps well, I dare say he has had dreams. Well, I must retire. Dear me! What if I had tarried longer at the key-hole? I wouldn't have done it for worlds! Some women would, but I haven't yet lost all self-respect, I trust and believe.'

She now retired to her room to sleep and to dream. The bachelor prepared himself to sink into his soft bed. But a few minutes elapsed after Aunt Betty left the keyhole

before the fair form of the bachelor was stretched between the perfumed sheets.

'This is a heavenly odor,' he said to himself, as he turned down the bedclothes and sprung into bed. 'It is the best perfume I ever smelt. What a woman Aunt Betty is! How nicely she does every thing! Can it be that she ever thought of becoming my wife! It may be so, for quite as strange things have happened in this world. But really I hope she does not cherish such thoughts. Perhaps, if I had never seen that most bewitching beauty, Emily Pangborn, I might have thought more favorably of such an union, but no other female can find even a corner in my heart, Emily, that beautiful creature occupies it all. There's no place for another.'

Thus he thought until sleep closed his eyelids.

Aunt Betty was up in the morning, and prepared an unusually good breakfast. She rang the bell precisely at eight o'clock, and the bachelor made his appearance. He was dressed in the best articles from his wardrobe, and that was out of the common course. It betokened something, but what, Aunt Betty could not conjecture. She found, however, that he intended to make another visit to the sick widow. But then why should he put on his best suit for such a purpose? That was a question that troubled her, and she would like to have it solved.

'Your coffee smells good this morning, Aunt Betty,' he said, as he entered the breakfast-room.

'I think it is good,' she replied, wishing he would never again call her Aunt Betty.—'I hope you had a good night's rest.'

'Indeed, I had,' he replied, with one of his sweetest smiles. 'I never slept better. How admirably you arranged my room! I didn't think such a pleasing innovation could have been made, but there are no bounds to

the skill, taste and ingenuity of some housekeepers.'

'Then you like the new arrangement, do you?' she asked.

'It is most admirable!' he replied. 'And what delightful perfume in the —'

'No matter about the particulars,' she said, interrupting him before he had to finish the sentence and pronounce a word that might shock her modesty.

'Ah, Aunt Betty, I was a fortunate man when I engaged you to keep my house,' he continued, again smiling, as he seated himself at the breakfast-table.

'You flatter me, Mr. Colburne,' she said, placing her handkerchief to her face, as she would hide a blush. 'I don't feel as I deserved such high compliments.'

'You do, indeed, deserve them, Miss Osgood,' he answered.

She was perfectly delighted to hear him call her Miss Osgood, it sounded so much more respectful than plain Aunt Betty.—What a trifle will sometimes revive a hope which had almost died away in the heart! A new impulse was suddenly given to the maiden, and the pulsations of her heart were greatly quickened. She began to flatter herself that the new order of things in the bachelor's room had produced upon her heart the effect she so much desired. Her eyes sparkled with unwonted fire, and even her lank cheeks assumed a rosy hue.

But alas, how evanescent are human feelings. As she cast her eyes upon his best suit, the one he only wore occasionally, the image of the lovely shirt maker came up fresh in her mind and again awakened her suspicions. Her spirit was restless, and all his fine compliments and pleasant smiles could not quiet them but for a moment at a time.

'Mr. Colburne,' she said, in a somewhat altered tone of voice, as her eyes glanced at

his beautiful buff vest and bright buttoned blue coat, his favorite garments. 'You seem to be unusually dressed this morning. Do you expect to be absent from your dinner to-day?'

The question rather embarrassed him, but he soon controlled himself, and answered.

'I think not; I may be absent awhile this forenoon, but will be at home for dinner.'

'I didn't know but you might stay away as you did the last time,' she said. 'And if you do, it would be well for me to know it that I might not hurry your dinner, and have it in good order.'

'No danger, Aunt Betty, but the dinner will be as good as usual,' he replied.

'Aunt Betty, again!' ran through her thoughts, but she controlled her emotions.

'Perhaps you are going to visit that sick widow, again,' she said, looking very slyly at him, as if she would read every thought of his mind.

'I don't know but I shall call and see how he is, poor woman,' he answered. 'I pity her from my very soul! She can never recover! Her lungs are fast wasting away, poor woman! She must have been very beautiful once, but that terrible disease, consumption, spares neither youth, beauty, nor goodness!'

'It is a fearful disease!' she replied.— 'Don't you think it runs in families?'

'It does in some families, I doubt not,' he answered.

'I have known whole families swept off by it,' she said. 'And especially the female members. Don't you think the woman's laughter has a consumptive look?'

'Indeed, I was not aware of it,' he replied, manifesting much feeling which he endeavored to suppress, and conceal from her view.

'She looks to me as if the seeds of that fatal disease were already in her lungs, the

tubercles I think the doctors call them,' she answered, assuming a serious look.

'I did not suppose it!' he said. 'What makes you think so?'

'O, there's a kind of expression in her face, and the shape of her neck which makes me think so,' she answered. 'I've known many girls die of that disease when they were but little if any older than she is.'

'I suppose you have, but that girl appears to be remarkably healthy,' he said.

'Ah, Mr. Colburne, appearances are deceitful!' she replied. 'She may appear to you to have a good constitution, but she is delicately formed, and comes from a consumptive mother. Think of that, Mr. Colburne. Suppose you should adopt her as your daughter. But I ought not to make such a supposition, for I feel quite confident you will never try such a hazardous experiment as that. But suppose you should so forget yourself and all rules of propriety as to do it, what might be the consequences?— Only think what a trouble her lingering sickness would be! She might linger along for some years before she died. And how unpleasant it would be to have a sick girl so long in the house. O, Mr. Colburne, I have seen sick girls and had the care of one several years ago, and she caused me more trouble than the care of two such houses as this. The creature was fretful, peevish, and often ill-natured. Nothing pleased her, and nothing was done right, in her opinion.'

'Was she a handsome girl?' he asked, feeling some interest in Aunt Betty's story.

'Nothing remarkable for her beauty,' she replied. 'She would have looked well enough if she had behaved as well as she ought to.'

'Did the girl die?' inquired the good old bachelor.

'O, no, she got well, after being sick more than six months, and glad was I to see that day,' she replied.

'If it may be proper, I would ask what her disease was?' he inquired.

'Very proper, Mr. Colburne,' she replied. 'It was what the doctors call a spinal affection, but I never believed any thing was the matter with her spine.'

'I should think the doctors ought to know,' he said.

'Perhaps they ought: doctors sometimes don't know more than other people, although they may pretend to,' she said. But, Mr. Colburne, I trust you will reflect seriously before you take that girl home, for I feel confident she would make you as well as me a great deal of trouble. I can assure you these young girls are troublesome creatures. Now, Mr. Colburne, for heaven's sake, reflect seriously upon this matter before you proceed too far in it. Depend upon it, she will give you trouble, and you'll wish your cake was dough again. I've had the experience, Mr. Colburne, and I know all about it. An adopted daughter, indeed!— The very thought of one makes my heart sick, and because I've had the experience, Mr. Colburne. Depend on it, I have.'

Again this elderly maiden has talked to the end of the chapter, and even talked the bachelor up from the breakfast-table and quite out of doors on his way to the sick widow's.

## CHAPTER IX.

*The game of whist. The danger resulting from it. The danger of parent's teaching their children games. Great fires from little sparks. A timely caution.*

As may reasonably be expected, Mr. Colburne would not keep himself away from the widow Pangborn's. The reader has already seen that Aunt Betty had fairly talked him out of doors, and soon as he was out of

reach of her tongue, he hurried away to the abode of sickness and of sorrow.

This good bachelor had never before felt such a deep interest in a case of sickness as he did in this widow's. The sympathies of his whole soul were enlisted in her behalf, and he really felt towards her like a good Christian. As he passed down one street into another, he might have seen far back had he looked, Aunt Betty Osgood following on his trail. But he did not look back for the very good reason that he was anxious to go forward. She felt such an intense curiosity to know where he was going that she could not resist the temptation of following him, and seeing herself. She knew not the house where the poor widow lived, but she was fully resolved to mark well any house he might enter. She kept at a good distance behind him, but not so far as to lose sight of him. He walked quick, and it was quite a task for her to keep up with him, but succeeded in her object and saw the house he entered.

'There,' she said to herself, 'that's the house that widow lives in! I know it is, for I've heard him say he owned some houses in this street. What a foolish man he is! Who knows but he really loves that young girl?— It would be just like old bachelors. They seldom love any woman their equal in age, but often marry young girls who know no more about taking care of houses than babies in their mother's arms. And yet silly bachelors will marry them and fondle round them in a terrible silly way. I have seen a good many such exhibitions, and never desire to witness more. Some of them can hardly wait till the girls are out of their teens. I'm heart sick of such silly works. Men do act like fools, and especially old bachelors. I dare say Mr. Colburne has been in love forty times, but he is so very nice and particular that he dared not to take a wife. It often



happens with such that the last act of their single lives is the most ridiculous. It may be so with Mr. Colburne; but I think I can talk him out of such silly notions. There, sure enough, that is the house, for I just saw the girl standing in the door with a silk dress on! Can it be possible that Mr. Colburne has bought her a silk dress? I must find out. I wish she would come out into the street. There! she has gone back. A silk dress on such a girl in the morning! Did ever any body see the like of that? O, she'll show him pride and haughtiness with a vengeance! Strange, he can't see it now! But I will not believe he can be so very foolish.'

Thus she thought while, gazing upon the house that sheltered the sick woman, and at last turned towards home. Her heart was heavy within her, and her steps slow and measured as she wended her way back to the bachelor's home. Far different were his feelings and emotions. He found the widow quite as well as could be expected, although she was very feeble, for she was only gaining a little strength to be sick with. When he entered, Emily greeted him with a smile and extended her hand. He seized it and shook it with more than a grandfather's love. The touch of her warm palm and delicate fingers thrilled through his frame like a shock of electricity, and he hardly knew when to let go his hold, for he held her hand some time and gazed silently into her bright blue eyes. Emily had on one of the silk dresses her friend had given her. And if she ever looked beautiful she did that morning: at any rate he thought she was more beautiful and lovely than any creature born on earth.

'Mother will be glad to see you,' said Emily, in a voice all music and with a countenance all radiant with beauty.

at 'And I shall be happy to see her,' he re-

plied, as she led him towards her mother who was reclined upon the bed.

The sick woman held out her thin, and almost transparent hand, and he grasped it with strange emotions. It seemed to him for the moment that he had hold of the hand of Death, so cold and icy was the sensation.

'Welcome to the sick bed once more,' said the mother, in a feeble, trembling voice.—'Your kindness is indeed beyond all praise I don't know what we should have done but for you. And yet our Heavenly Father might have sent us another, for He is good, and his tender mercies are over all the works of His hand.'

'Indeed, madam, all I have done, has been done cheerfully,' he replied, while the tender emotions of his heart almost choked his utterance. 'And I thank heaven that I have found you, because I now have an opportunity of doing some good. I freely confess I have not felt for human misery and distress as I ought to feel; I have not sought it out and ministered to its relief with as feeling a heart and liberal hand as it was my duty to do, but now my eyes are opened and I shall do more.'

'I can't think you were ever hard-hearted, sir,' she answered, turning her beaming eyes full upon his face.

'I trust not so much as some, but I have not thought enough of the poor, madam,' he answered. 'I'm now fully satisfied of that. True, I have relieved human want and misery whenever it has fallen in my way, but I have not sought after it as I ought to have done. Heaven has provided me with the means, and I am determined henceforth to be a better steward than I have been.'

'You talk like a Christian as I trust and believe you are,' she replied, while tears stood trembling in her bright eyes, and a prayer went up from the unseen altar of her

heart to heaven for a blessing on this good bachelor.

They were silent for some minutes, while Emily gazed upon them with emotions that cannot be described. She loved this good-hearted benefactor, but not with that love which seeks its greatest joys in marriage.—Neither was it the love a daughter feels for a father, and yet she loved him.

'O, sir, I wish mother could live to thank you many years,' said Emily, breaking the silence that had become oppressive to her young and glowing heart.

'Would to heaven she might live to teach you to be as good a Christian as she is,' said the bachelor, hardly knowing what he did say, but feeling as if he must say something, for the music of her voice never failed to awaken strange echoes in his own heart.

Feeling that what he had said might need some qualification, he immediately continued. 'I don't know but you may be as good a Christian as she is now, but, dear Emily, you are not so old a one, and have not passed through so many temptations unharmed as she has.'

'True, indeed, what you say,' replied the mother. 'Emily is a good girl, but she has not been old enough to witness many of the temptations that beset our path in this world.'

'And may I, dear madam, have the privilege of guarding her against these temptations, he replied.'

'Heaven's will be done,' said the mother, in a voice scarcely above a whisper.

She was evidently exhausted by the efforts she had made, and lay quietly with her eyes turned upwards as if she were engaged in silent prayer. Mr. Colburne softly left the bedside and took a chair near a front window where he sat in deep meditation. Emily sat gazing upon the emaciated face of her mother. All was silent as the tomb. The

thoughts and emotions that filled the mind and heart of Colburne, we will not undertake to describe. We leave him and the mother and daughter, and turn to other scenes and other incidents which are part and parcel of these chronicles.

Major Borland and his wife, since Emily Pangborn had visited them, did not agree so well as they had previously. This good woman could not satisfy her mind by any construction she could place upon his giving money to that beautiful girl. She prayed in secret that she might not be uncharitable in construing any acts of her husband. Feeling the sacredness of that relation she would not willingly commit any act to mar or disturb it; but she could not reconcile all his recent conduct with that fidelity which a husband owes a wife. True, she had not seen much, but his conversation and the doctrines he advocated alarmed her, and excited her suspicions.

He did not appear to be the same man he did in happier years gone by. She had always been a strictly religious woman, and he had in times past rather favored her belief than otherwise, gone to church with her and in some degree observed all the outward forms of religion. He always paid the minister under whose teaching they sat, and with apparent cheerfulness; but recently he had shown more indifference in such matters, and seemed to be impatient of such restraints upon his conduct.

Mrs. Borland always endeavored to impress upon her daughter's mind the importance of religion and to bring her up in the way she should go, still her daughter had never joined the church of which she was a member. However, she was a young lady of excellent moral character and of a benevolent disposition. She had a heart to feel for the poor and distressed, and that was a great qualification to her, for she had en-



deavored to teach Elizabeth that one of the first duties of religion was to visit the widow and the fatherless. That lesson had been taught her both by precept and example, and she acted it out in life. But after all the father was not without his influence over the daughter.

A game of whist was one of the Major's favorite amusements, and he had learnt his daughter to play exceedingly well. The mother from principle was opposed to such and all games. She could never be prevailed on to take a hand of cards under any circumstances, and she would have been glad if her daughter had adopted the same course, but Elizabeth was fond of the game, and her mother did not strenuously oppose her as she knew such opposition would offend her husband and induce him to call her a fanatic. Quite often there was a whist party at his house, and he and his daughter were always sought as partners because they were such good players.

Now George Homer was a frequent visitor at the Major's house, especially since Elizabeth had returned home from her school in another city. The reader has already been informed of this young man's character.—That he was a most excellent whist player every lady acknowledged who had played with him. Major Borland considered him among the first. And Elizabeth was by no means displeased to have him for a partner.

A few evenings after he had lost his money in playing with that associated band of black-legs and robbers, he visited Major Borland's family in company with his father for the purpose of having a game of whist. But for the accomplished and beautiful Elizabeth the game would have had no charms for him, for he was in the habit of playing much more exciting games, but his friends knew not that lamentable fact. His father often pressed him to visit the Major's when he

preferred to be elsewhere.

True, he was fond of Elizabeth, and often sought her society in the day time, but his evenings he desired to employ in gambling saloons. However, to please his father and Major Borland, he often joined in the game, and invariably took Elizabeth for his partner. They were all smart players and enjoyed the game well, with the exception of young Homer, still he played well and with apparent interest. Having such an interesting partner he could not do otherwise, and yet all the game was dull and uninteresting, compared with the terrible excitement of gambling.

Major Borland was highly pleased with young Homer, and his wife looked upon him as a very superior young man. That he had a good fortune in hand and one in prospect the reader already knows. These facts were also known to Elizabeth and her mother, but what effect that knowledge might have upon their minds we leave others to consider.—One thing is certain, Mrs. Borland would not willingly value any young man's character according to the wealth he had in possession or might have in prospect. Neither would the good Elizabeth willingly be governed by such motives.

Aside from such considerations, George Homer to all appearances was a desirable match for any gentleman's daughter. He was so esteemed in the circle in which he moved.

Soon after the arrival of George and his father, the card-table was placed in the proper position, and the party seated round it. A brilliant gas light illuminated the room, and every thing wore the aspect of cheerfulness.

Elizabeth was in excellent spirits, and so were the two fathers, but George felt the loss of his money a few evenings previous, and a desire to regain it; still he assumed a

cheerfulness which he did not really feel, and commenced the game in apparent good earnestness. In casting round for deal, it fell upon him, and he dealt the cards with an ease and grace that showed the practised player.

'My son handles the cards as if they were not strangers to him,' said Mr. Homer.

'He does, indeed!' replied Mr. Borland. 'For my part I could never learn to deal the cards adroitly, nor with any quickness. I'm too clumsy I suppose.'

'This is called the game of whist, but you are not very fond of whist,' said George, smiling.

'O, I always love to talk when I'm playing,' said Elizabeth, looking over and sorting her hand. 'I think this will do to begin with.'

'Yes, you're always lucky,' said Mr. Homer. 'I suppose you've got all the pictures in the pack.'

'I have got a few of them,' she replied.—'George always deals me a good hand.'

'And when I do, I'm quite apt to deal myself a poor one,' replied George, examining his cards, and sorting them very quick.

'No matter, George, what you lack in trumps, you can make up in skill,' she said. 'I think I may come pretty near going out in this hand.'

'Now, Elizabeth, don't begin to boast before you are out of the woods,' said her father.

'That's right, partner,' said Mr. Homer. 'They may bless their stars if they get out before us in this, or any other hand. Don't let us be frightened before we are hurt. I can do something, partner.'

'I think I can, too,' replied Mr. Borland, running over his cards.

The playing now commenced in earnest, and Elizabeth took the first trick.

'Make the most of that, Lizzy,' said her father. 'You'll come short next time.'

'Shall I, father?' she asked, smiling, and throwing down the ace of trumps. 'I think I'll draw out all your trumps, and then we'll manage you quite easy.' Don't you think we can, George?

'A capital play, if I may be allowed to say it,' replied George.

'Say any thing, but don't tell your partner what you've got in your hand,' said Mr. Homer. 'Any thing but that or what to play.'

'He didn't tell me what to play,' answered Elizabeth, laughing, taking the second trick, and throwing down the king of trumps.

'Well, two honors!' said her partner, again running over his poor hand.

'And one more,' said Elizabeth, gathering up the trick, and throwing down the queen.

'Well, well, George, you have dealt her a hand with a vengeance,' said his father.

'It shows very well,' replied George.

'Now, partner, I depend on you for the other honor,' said Elizabeth, placing on the table a small trump.

'I'll take care of that,' replied George, covering it with the Jack of trumps.

'All the honors, by Jupiter,' said Mr. Borland.

'Yes, father, and soon all the tricks, if I reckon right,' she answered, smiling.

'I'm out, partner, how are you?' asked Mr. Homer, gazing across the table upon the animated, and joyous countenance of the fair maiden.

'I'm not much better off,' replied Mr. Borland. 'We'll give up this hand, and try again.'

'No, no, father, play it out!' she said, laughing. 'Do you begin to feel the presence of that black and white animal?'

George laughed, and his partner was in high glee. They had all the honors and

took every trick, an occurrence that does not often happen. Elizabeth said it was a glorious beginning.

'Yes,' said her father. 'And such a beginning often makes a bad ending. I shall shuffle the cards myself, this time, and see if I can't make a more equal distribution of them. There's not much fun in having but one side to a question.'

They played on with increased earnestness, and Elizabeth and her partner won the second game, but the third game, the luck turned, and their opponents were conquerors. The game continued until nearly midnight. But George Homer's heart was not in that game. It was in the saloon of the gamblers. Having lost largely, he was determined to regain it or lose more with it.

Such is the power and fascination of gaming. He who has a passion for it never knows when to stop; especially, if he has the means of raising a single dollar. Fathers who learn their children the fashionable game of whist and play with them, know not the appalling consequences such a practice may produce. Let them beware!

## CHAPTER X.

*Interview between the bachelor and housekeeper. The dinner. Arrival of the lovely shirt maker. The chamber of sickness. The value of good impressions. The work progresses.*

Our good friend, the bachelor, returned home from his visit to the poor widow, just as Aunt Betty had got his dinner ready.—She had exhausted all her skill in preparing this dinner. Every thing had a finishing touch, and the very best dishes in the house were placed upon the table just as if some distinguished guest was expected to dine with the bachelor. A third plate was also placed upon the table, and every thing was

arranged in the nicest order. A beautiful and fresh bouquet had a place in the middle of the table, and was quite ornamental.

Aunt Betty had never taken so much pains before, nor displayed so much taste as she did on this occasion. The third plate was of a smaller size than the others, and the knife and fork by its side were also of a smaller size.

As the bachelor entered the room, the first object that met his eye was the bouquet that graced the centre of the table, and then his eyes fell on the additional plate and knife and fork. He could not understand the meaning of such an unusual display, and didn't know but his good housekeeper expected some one of her young relatives or friends to dine there. She noticed that he gazed upon the table with astonishment, but kept silent. He puzzled his brains but he couldn't cipher out what it all meant. After he was seated at the table, and no one to occupy the spare plate, he thought he would ask his housekeeper to solve the mystery.

'Did you expect company to dine to-day?' he asked, first gazing on the flowers, and then on the spare plate.

'I didn't know but you would bring home your adopted daughter, and so I thought I would make preparations for her,' she replied; straining every nerve to control her feelings, and appear honest and sincere.

'My adopted daughter!' he repeated with evident surprise, and blushing clear up to his temples, in spite of all his self-control, and he usually possessed a very good share of that.

'Yes, your adopted daughter!' she replied. 'You know you have spoken of one, and as you dressed in your best suit this morning and went out, I didn't know but you might invite her home to dine to-day.' And a good housekeeper ought always to be prepared for company, and not be flustered when it comes.

'Very thoughtful in you, Aunt Betty, but I had no expectation of making such an addition to my family at present,' he answered, partially smiling.

'O, it's all very well, Mr. Colburne,' he said. 'It was no trouble for me to make the preparation. I know, if such a thing should happen, you would wish to see things in good order.'

'True, I should, and when I contemplate bringing home with me company to eat at my table, I shall always deem it my duty to give you notice. You may depend upon that. Any other course would not be just to a housekeeper. But after all, Aunt Betty, you keep things in such nice order that I should not be afraid to invite a friend to dine with me without giving you notice.'

'You speak very flattering words, Mr. Colburne!' she replied. 'But such things come quite easy to some gentlemen.'

'I hope you don't allude to me, Aunt Betty,' he said, smiling, and yet feeling a little vexed.

'O, no, Mr. Colburne, not to you in particular, but to men in general,' she replied.

'The world and all the ladies know that I am no flatterer,' he said.

'That may all be true, Mr. Colburne; but you have a very smooth way with you,' she answered. 'I believe all the ladies will bear witness to that.'

'If you're not more sparing of your words I don't know but I shall be compelled to call you somewhat of a flatterer,' he said, laughing.

'Dear me, I'm any thing but that,' she replied. 'But to change the subject; did you see the sick woman?'

'I did, and I believe she's a Christian, if there's one upon earth,' he answered.

'And her daughter, I suppose, you consider an angel, do you not, Mr. Colburne?' she inquired.

'I confess she's very like one, according to the ideas I have of angels,' he replied.

'There, there, Mr. Colburne, don't go any farther, for pity's sake,' she said, feeling, and manifesting great impatience.

'You ought not to object to having your own sex elevated,' he said. 'I presume, if there is any sex in angels they are all of the feminine gender.'

'I don't know how that may be; but, I'm quite sure there are some men who can never be angels, if what information I have of angels be correct,' she replied, assuming a very wise look.

'I perfectly agree with you there,' he said, smiling. 'And permit me to say, that I think there are some women who will never reach the angelic state.'

'I'm quite certain some adopted daughters I have seen never will, unless they undergo an entire change,' she replied.

'That makes us even, Aunt Betty,' he said. 'I think no more can well be added on either side.'

They had now finished dinner, and the bachelor went up into his chamber, to take a siesta, for he felt quite fatigued both in body and mind.

Aunt Betty busied herself about her work, but she was not happy as she might be, nor as she had been. There was a canker worm gnawing at her heart, which rendered her present movements unpleasant. Her prospects of winning the bachelor were somewhat clouded and dim; and yet the night of despair had not settled down upon her soul. Amidst all the gathering darkness, there were yet some rays of hope that kept her heart whole.

Mr. Colburne had not been in his chamber long, before the door bell rang, and Aunt Betty ushered in Emily Pangbom, all rigged in her silk dress.

The housekeeper, in spite of all her preju-

dices, was compelled to acknowledge to herself, that the girl was the most beautiful one she ever beheld; but it would have been a hard task to make her confess as much to any one else. Aunt Betty gazed upon Emily with emotions which she could hardly understand herself, and surely no pen can describe them.

'Is Mr. Colburne at home?' asked Emily, while her eyes sparkled, and the lily and the rose were contending for the mastery on her cheeks.

'He's in his chamber taking a little rest,' replied Aunt Betty.

'I should like to see him,' said Emily, looking very anxious.

'I don't think it will do to disturb him now, for he has not been long in his room,' replied the housekeeper. 'He don't like to be disturbed, especially after dinner.'

'I think he would, if he knew I was here,' said the girl.

'The impertinent and conceited creature!' thought Aunt Betty, but she kept in her temper, and replied. 'What makes you think so?'

'Because my mother is not so well, and wishes to see him,' answered Emily.

'He's not your mother's nurse, is he?'—asked the excited housekeeper.

Emily made no reply, but turned her eyes upon the woman in one burning gaze, which made her feel strangely. She had never met such a gaze before, and she began to regret that she had put such a question to the girl.

'You needn't be offended, for I meant no harm,' continued Aunt Betty, in a kind of coaxing voice, and imploring manner.

'I'm not offended, but mother is very sick, and she has but few friends or acquaintances,' replied this good girl. 'Miss Elizabeth Borland is there now, or I could not have left my mother. Will you call Mr. Col-

burne? I know he would not be offended he is such a good man and so very kind-hearted.'

The housekeeper hardly knew what to do. She couldn't bear the thought of seeing such a handsome girl, and she was afraid she might seriously offend him if she did not yield to the request of Emily, and call him. The excited woman was in a dilemma, but she was saved any further trouble, for the bachelor heard what he imagined was the music of Emily's voice, and was coming down stairs.

What quick ears all true lovers have!—Down came the excited bachelor, with a hurried step; for he was sure he had heard the music of the beautiful girl's voice. No voice in the wide domain of Nature was like it to his ears, and no earthly music could be compared with it.

He entered the room, and soon held the delicate hand of Emily. Aunt Betty saw him thus holding the girl's hand, and her heart sunk within her. A thousand conflicting emotions agitated her bosom. She was terribly excited. It seemed that all her extra pains to please the bachelor, and all her hard work for the past eighteen months were to pass for nothing. For the first time she felt, and deeply too, that Mr. Colburne was ungrateful. That feeling troubled her, and begat others in its train.

This maiden was travelling on a sinful path, or rather she had taken the first step in it. And when the first step is taken in a wrong direction, others follow the more easily, until sin is rolled as a sweet morsel under the tongue.

'Why, my dear Emily, I didn't think of seeing you here,' he said, gently pressing her hand, and gazing fondly upon her.

'Mother is not so well, and wishes to see you,' she said.

'Then, my dear girl, I go directly,' he

replied, leading her from the room into the street, where, hand in hand, they hurried along, while Aunt Betty stood at a window, gazing upon them with the most embittered feelings.

'My dear girl! dear Emily!' repeated Aunt Betty to herself. 'What a fool he must be! Strange, that such a young girl can have such an effect upon his heart so many as he has seen in his day. Adopted daughter, forsooth! Why, the fool already loves that girl and would marry her! I have always heard that old bachelors were fools, and now I have additional proof of it.—Adopted daughter, indeed! He never intended any such thing! He intends to keep her! Good heavens! can I keep a man's house under such circumstances? Shall I slave myself and cook for such a thing to eat? Shall I sweep her room and make her bad? No, no! I'm not reduced yet to such a degrading work, thank Heaven! O, Mr. Colburne, thou art beside thyself! Love hath made thee mad! Didn't I see how he held her hand, and how fondly the little forward jade gazed up into his face? Can I keep a man's house and endure such things? Never! No! Never!'

Aunt Betty stamped her right foot violently upon the floor as she uttered the last words, and turned away from the window. The excitement exhausted her physical powers more than a month's hard labor. She threw herself upon the sofa, and even wept, but they were tears of anger, and not those of refined, chastened grief.

Her true character began to develop itself. She was surprised that there was so much sin and corruption in her own heart. She could hardly believe she could feel so. She never felt so savage in her life. Her heart began to hate the bachelor. Yes, she did now hate him, but she was resolved to conceal her ill-nature as much as possible, and

still endeavor to frustrate all his plans. She didn't like the idea of leaving her situation, for it was too good a one to be relinquished willingly. We leave her upon the sofa in all her agitation and trouble.

'I'm so glad that Mr. Colburne is your friend and the friend of Emily,' said Elizabeth Borland, as she bent over the sick woman, and supported her.

'He is a friend in need and a friend indeed!' replied the patient, in a voice scarcely audible.

Mrs. Pangbom had one of her severe 'coughing spells,' as nurses term them, and she was really afraid that she could not live long, so much disturbed for breath was she. But she had somewhat recovered and was easier then.

'I think you are some better now,' said Elizabeth, smoothing back her fine hair from her polished forehead, and placing her soft hand upon its marble surface.

'I believe I am,' replied the widow, while she gazed into the benevolent face of Elizabeth, and a heavenly smile sat upon her countenance. 'I was so distressed for breath that I began to fear I should not breathe much longer in this world. I'm almost sorry now that I sent Emily after Mr. Colburne, but I wanted to see him and say some things to him about Emily, ere I died.'

'He will be glad you sent for him,' replied this kind girl, gently rubbing the temples of the sick woman, and trying to minister to her comfort.

'O, Elizabeth, you're a good girl!' said the patient. 'Remember you are young, beautiful and accomplished, and that the world is full of temptations. Be careful how you receive the addresses of the young men of this city. There are many wicked ones here, and it may be hard to distinguish the virtuous from the vile.'

'You talk just as mother does,' replied

Elizabeth. 'I intend to be cautious. O, if I should marry; and my husband become an intemperate man, or a gambler, my heart would break!'

At that moment, the bachelor and Emily entered the room. He had walked so fast that he was quite out of breath, while Emily seemed not to mind her walk at all. Her form was so symmetrical, and her muscular power so nicely adjusted that her motions were easy and graceful. It didn't fatigue her to walk.

It was not long before he was at the bedside of the sick woman, and held her emaciated hand in his. The widow could not restrain her tears when she saw his benignant features and felt the friendly grasp of his hand.

'I'm better now,' she said, in a voice choked by her emotions. 'I've suffered from coughing, but I'm more easy now.'

'I rejoice to hear it,' he answered. 'Your daughter told me you were not so well as you were in the morning. I'm glad you feel better now.'

'O, Mr. Colburne, I thank heaven I have found such kind friends!' she said. 'This young lady here has been very kind. She seemed like an angel round my sick bed.—One can almost afford to die when surrounded by such friends. Once I didn't know I should find such good friends, but our Heavenly Father teach the young ravens when they cry, and feedeth them. And O, He has heard my prayers, and answered them!'

All were silent for a few moments. The tears were streaming down the good bachelor's cheeks, and his heart was too full for utterance. Emily stood by his side, and her hand was gently placed upon his shoulder. He was full of feeling, and the soft pressure of Emily's hand upon his shoulder made him happy. He cared not for the world, and

heeded not its splendors. He felt as if he was ready to pass the narrow isthmus which divides this material world from the spiritual, if that hand could still be upon his shoulder. His love was such as sighed for immortality. It could not bear to be confined within the boundaries of time. He first gazed upon the mother, and then upon the sweet face of the beautiful Emily, and his heart was full.—Never did bachelor love so intensely as he did.

'Such a good woman will always find friends,' said Elizabeth, after a pause of some minutes.

'Heaven bless you for that!' he said.—'You will have your reward for manifesting such kindness to this sick woman.'

'I'm already rewarded,' replied this good girl. 'She is more blessed who gives than she who receives.'

'True, very true,' he replied. 'Mercy is always twice blest.'

'I'm glad to hear you thus talk!' said the sick woman. 'It falls pleasantly upon my heart, and smoothes my passage to a brighter and a better world.'

All were so much affected that they enjoyed silence and their own thoughts more than conversation. While their tongues were silent and their lips moved not, their hearts communed with each other. They were happy even in the chamber of death.

They had not remained silent long, before a gentle knocking was heard at the door, and George Homer entered. He was struck with awe at beholding so many serious, yet pleasant countenances. Elizabeth met him at the door, and she was glad to have him witness such a scene.

'The woman is not dying, is she?' he asked, in a whisper.

'O, no, she is quite easy now,' replied Elizabeth. 'She has had a very ill-turn.—She may live many days yet.'

She led him to the bedside, and the sick woman silently extended her hand to him. She was glad to see even a stranger, for she thought he would not be there unless he came from good motives. But, alas! he came after Elizabeth more than to visit the sick, and yet young Homer was not destitute of good and kind feelings. The sick woman blessed him, and warned him to beware of the world's temptations. Soon he and Elizabeth took their leave. The bachelor tarried, for he liked no place so well as that sick chamber.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Interview between the gambler and libertine. A new character introduced. A good mother's preaching. The galled jade winces. Hard hits and guilty consciences.*

'A VERY good evening to you,' said Major Borland to Job Snyder, the gambler, who met the Major by appointment in a drinking saloon, in Park Place.

'The same to you, Major,' replied this ruffian. 'I have not yet been able to procure any fresh beauties for our establishment very recently, but I'm on the track of some.'

The reader may as well be told here as elsewhere in these pages what Job meant when he said, 'our establishment.'

Gamblers sometimes have wives, but often mistresses. Job Snyder had once been married to a very worthy woman, but he did not live long with her. He treated her so cruelly, that she left him, and went back to her father's in one of the Eastern States.—Fortunately, she had no children by him. And she was ever thankful that she had not been instrumental in perpetrating a breed in whose veins run the blood of the Snyders. Soon after his wife left him, he formed a

connection with another woman, whose heart was as black and corrupt as his own. She was some few years older than he was, but there was a kind of sympathy between them, that held them together. It was, however, that kind of sympathy which one dark and selfish spirit feels for another.

Job and his mistress had made money, and were then in a prosperous business, so far as 'filthy lucre' was concerned. The truth is, they kept a house of assignation, in one of the most fashionable streets in the city. The house was well, and even splendidly furnished, and looked upon the outside fair and respectable. It was not intended especially as the resort of gamblers, although the blackleg-fraternity often visited it, but as a house for more respectable members of the community, if really respectable they could be called. But it is certain, that this vile establishment, was visited by such gentlemen as Major Borland. More husbands were its inmates, than their wives ever dreamed of; to say nothing of the thousands of young men who wasted their substance, and debauched their souls within its walls. But few knew or suspected, that this whitened sepulchre was so full of dead men's bones—few, we mean, compared with the great numbers who live in the city. The real name of his mistress was Julia Pierce, who was a native of the State of Maine; but Job always called her Madame Pussy, and by that name she passed among the 'knowing ones.'

'I'm sorry you have no fresh importations,' replied the Major. 'I'm afraid you'll find your gambling saloon more profitable than Madame Pussy's establishment, and therefore neglect the latter.'

'I frankly confess, Major, I have recently found some fat victims which I have slain on my altar, but then I keep a sharp look out for other games,' answered Snyder. 'Not

many evenings since I raised a young girl opposite your house, but before I could stop her mouth she screamed like thunder, and fearing the watchmen might be alarmed, I quit her and run.'

'Were not the watchmen friendly?' asked the Major, smiling and looking slyly.

'Not on that beat, that evening,' replied Job, returning the Major's sly look.

'Then you can't make friends with all our watchmen, can you?' asked the Major.

'A few dollars go a good ways, but there are some guardians of the night, whom I'm a little afraid to approach,' replied Snyder.

'I thought you believed every man had his price,' said the Major.

'True, but then the price may sometimes come too high to make it profitable to pay it,' answered this vile scoundrel.

'There may be something in that,' said the Major. 'But was the girl young and handsome?'

'She was, so far as I could judge in the light of the lamp near which she stood when I raised her,' answered the villain. 'I didn't think she was over fifteen, and appeared to be waiting for some one. I thought her face was quite handsome.'

'But Job, how do you work it when you forcibly carry the young girls to your establishment?' asked the Major. 'Don't they cry? How are they quieted?'

'O, Major, I leave that to my Pussy,' he replied. 'She can handle 'em as well as a horse-enchancer can handle a wild colt. Her skill is great, Major. Her charms are almost irresistible over young girls. There's not her equal in the city.'

'But I conclude she finds more than her match sometimes,' said the Major.

'That depends upon circumstances,' replied Job. 'When these girls have drunken parents and have lived in poverty and

wretchedness, they are more easily tamed. We generally make it a point to obtain such if their personal beauty will warrant it. My Pussy understands her part of the business most thoroughly. She will transform a dirty ragged girl in a short time into a very beautiful one. The change is so great that her mother would hardly know her. Madame understands all the weak points of her sex. She's a woman of talents, Major.'

'I believe that, Job,' said the Major.—'I've seen enough of her to satisfy me that she is a woman of extraordinary tact and skill. Where did she come from?'

'She was one of the Maine girls,' he replied. 'She says she was first led astray by a Boston gentleman, and then she turned the tables and led the gentlemen astray. She has reduced many a young Boston dandy, and deceived hundreds of the aristocracy, but then that was when she was younger, and had not so much flesh upon her bones as she now has.'

'I should think so,' replied the Major, smiling.

'You may smile, Major, but Madame is no man's fool, even now,' said Job.

'I conclude not,' said the Major. Now, Job, be diligent and look after your household. I meet many beautiful girls in the street every day. You certainly can entrap some of them. You know I pay liberally. Let me know soon what success you meet with.'

'Your name is first on my list,' said Job. 'There are more than a dozen men about your age who are making similar inquiries; but, Major, your first on my books. Madame Pussy thinks well of you. She often speaks in your praise. Let her alone for understanding human nature. It is a science she is skilled in.'

They now took a drink together, and departed.

What if his wife could have listened to their conversation? She would not have lived another day under the same roof with her husband. How many wives are totally ignorant of their husband's true character! What developments must be made in the spiritual world where its inhabitants have not the power to conceal their real characters. These men must speak what they think and show what they are. In that state they can neither weave nor wear any veils to conceal their iniquities. If it were so in this world, what a convulsion in human society there would be. Its very foundations would be broken up, and men and women would stare upon each other with strange emotions who now live quietly together. It is said from high authority that the whole world lieth in wickedness.

No wonder that the doctrine of total depravity should form an essential part in some religious creeds.

But it is not our intention to preach a sermon upon the sins of the age, but to record facts, and describe events as they are found upon the ocean of human life, and especially upon that portion which lies in our cities.—Let men, and women, too, read and beware of the temptations of city life, for there is corruption in high places as well as in low places.

Soon after the Major entered his own house, his daughter and George Homer came in on their return from the widow Pangbom's. Elizabeth was much gratified to think she had visited that sick woman. She was much interested in her, as well as in her daughter Emily whom she loved as a sister. The Major had just inquired after his daughter as she came in, accompanied by young Homer.

'O, Father, I have been to visit the best woman, or one of the best, I ever saw in my life,' said Elizabeth.

'And who is that, pray?' he asked.

'That sick woman, the mother of Emily, that beautiful, good girl to whom I gave some of my old silk dresses,' she replied.—'O, she is an excellent woman, what I call a good Christian. Don't you think so, George?'

'The woman appeared very well,' George answered, apparently indifferent.

'Now, George Homer, that's not enough to say,' she replied. 'I'm sure she blessed you, and prayed that you might be good and not led away by temptation.'

That very evening coming, George had agreed to meet the associated band of gamblers, and hoped to regain some of his losses, which had made quite a hole in his ready funds. He was really anxious for the shades of evening to come that he might again indulge his increasing passion for gambling.

'Come, come, wife, let us change the subject,' said the husband. 'Preaching one day in seven is about enough. What say you, George to a game of whist this evening, either here or at your father's. I feel as if I and your father can conquer you and Lizzy.'

'I believe I have an engagement this evening with a literary club,' said George; feeling his conscience smite him for uttering that falsehood.

'Can't you put off your engagement?' asked the Major, growing more and more anxious to have a game of whist that evening.

'Not well,' replied George. 'They will expect me, and I don't like to disappoint them, if I can help it.'

Now there was virtually another falsehood; but he felt less conscience-stricken for uttering that than he did for uttering the first one. The principle is a plain one, and let all young men fully understand and appreciate it. *The first step taken in crime, renders the second more easy.*



'I don't care about playing this evening, father,' said Elizabeth. 'My visit to that poor sick woman has unfitted me for the whist table. I should be thinking about her and not remember the run of the cards.'

'I'm glad to hear you say that, answered her mother. 'I believe such thoughts and feelings have a much more salutary influence upon the soul than taxing one's memory with the run of cards. For my part, I can't see any good resulting from these games of chance. True, they may amuse an idle hour, but then they often beget a passion for gambling, one of the most corrupting vices that beset humanity. Thousands of young men in our city have been ruined by that vice. Don't you think so, George?'

'I presume such may be the fact,' replied young Homer, feeling the blood rush from his heart to his face, and his conscience upbraid him.

'No doubt of it,' she continued. 'Don't you believe, George, that many young men have commenced their career in gambling at the fashionable whist table?'

'It is quite possible,' replied the young gambler, hoping she would not pursue the subject further, and wishing he was out of her sight and hearing.

'And it is so of every step in the long catalogue of human affairs,' she continued, much to the annoyance of the young man and her husband. 'Even the libertine has to take the first step or he would never be a confirmed sinner. Now, husband, don't you believe that?'

She meant something in putting such a question to her husband, and he felt it most severely; but he, too, was compelled to give an affirmative answer. She noticed, or she thought she noticed some little embarrassment in him, but did not particularly observe any in young Homer, for she had not the most distant idea that he had already in-

dulged a passion for gambling. And she did not know that her husband was a libertine, but she sometimes suspected him. Although he studied to conceal his crimes from her, yet her suspicions were aroused as the reader has already witnessed.

'If I thought playing at whist would make father or George gamblers, I would never play another game in the world,' said Elizabeth.

'I suppose your mother don't apprehend that there is any danger of our becoming gamblers, said the Major, feeling somewhat clear of that crime himself, and believing George to be so, too.'

'Indeed, I hope and trust such sins will never be laid at your doors,' replied the mother.

The conversation soon ended, and George Homer was rejoiced to pass out from under that roof into the open air where he could breathe more freely. Such close preaching was far from agreeable or at all pleasant to him.

## CHAPTER XII.

*A maiden testing the virtues of another herb. The bachelor's fear. His theory of love. The work progresses. A glance into a den of iniquity. The losses of the amateur card-player.*

A CHANGE, a great change had come over the spirit of the bachelor's housekeeper.—She was much less talkative than usual, but the household affairs were attended to with her wonted neatness and dispatch. There was no lagging in that department, her hands being busily employed while her tongue was silent. She even assumed a melancholy countenance, and when she did speak, her voice seemed but the echo of the grief her heart felt. She was evidently trying another

herb, knowing that the bachelor was a man of tender sensibilities, she thought she would work upon them. It was very humiliating to her pride, nevertheless, there was so much at stake that she made a sacrifice of her feelings, and appeared to be suffering that keen grief which results from disappointment in love.

'Do you feel unwell this morning, Aunt Betty?' he asked, gazing upon her sombre face and wondering what could be the matter with her.

The tears in her eyes were the only answer, for she had the power to force those precious drops into her small gray orbs.—He saw them, and his heart was troubled.

'I hope you have received no sad news from any of your friends or relatives,' he continued, in a voice of more tenderness than when he first spake to her.

'No, Mr. Colburne,' was her laconic reply, while she wiped the tears from her eyes with a clean white napkin that lay beside her plate.

'Then you must be sick,' he said, wondering at such an expression of sensibility, and beginning to feel the touch of pity.

'O, Mr. Colburne, the world looks gloomy,' she replied, in broken accents. 'It seems as if a black pall were stretched across the whole heavens, hiding the sun, moon and stars!'

The thought at first struck him that she might have a touch of insanity, and he was somewhat alarmed; for he always felt great horror in beholding crazy persons, especially crazy women. She saw at a glance that his nerves were affected, and was determined to follow him up.

'The last hope I had has gone down in darkness!' she continued. 'And what have I to live for, now? The sun once shone brightly on my path, the stars glittered beautifully over my head, and the moon shed her

silver beams on mountain, and lake; but now, alas! all is darkness to me!'

'She's crazy!' mentally exclaimed the excited bachelor, rising from the table, and gazing wildly upon her. 'Her eyes don't look as they used to! I fear a crazy woman! she may shortly break the dishes and dash the coffee-pot against my head!' She too, rose from the table, and that circumstance increased his alarm. He retreated to a window in the back part of the room, and there stood trembling in his morning slippers.

'Mr. Colburne, dear Mr. Colburne! do you never feel the pangs of unrequited love? She asked, assuming a manner somewhat more natural, and gazing intently towards him.

He began to feel a little less alarmed, and indulged a faint hope that his dishes might not all be broken, and that his head might continue safely on his shoulders for awhile longer at least.

'Indeed, you ask me a very strange question!' he replied.

'Why is the question so very strange?'—she inquired. 'Such things have happened in this wicked world, and may they not happen again? The world is full of strange exhibitions, and all play their parts. O, God! I wish I had never seen you, Mr. Colburne, and then I might have escaped these terrible pangs!'

And she pressed her hands upon her bosom, and appeared much distressed.

'What pangs?' he anxiously inquired, gazing upon her agitated and wild countenance, and beginning to fear she was about to have still more severe spasms.

'The pangs of unrequited love, dear Mr. Colburne!' she answered, still pressing her trembling hands more nervously and closely to her bosom.

'Dear Mr. Colburne!' he repeated to him-



elf. 'She never called me so before! What can she mean? She must be crazy! She can't love me to such distraction!'

'You may think I act strangely, dear Charles,' she continued. 'But do you know the depths of a woman's love? O, no!—no man can never sound its depths, nor measure its height! It is woman alone who can do that!'

'Have you, indeed, loved to such a degree?' he asked, gazing upon her hands so nervously pressed upon her bosom, and upon her tearful eyes.

'Heaven can bear me witness, and angels as they look down from the bright world above do know that I do love and most deeply too!' she replied. 'Dear Charles, it is painful for me thus to confess before you, but I was compelled to speak, or my heart would break!'

'Dear Charles!' he repeated over to himself. 'Dear Charles! how tender, endearing and familiar! It is, indeed, the language of love! No other sentiment could have found utterance in such language! Have I thus inspired the tender passion in her heart, and so long remained ignorant of the fact?'

'I can speak no more, now, and would to heaven I had not spoken so much!' she continued, still pressing her hands upon her bosom, and leaving the room.

He retired to his chamber, and there was the same branch of flowers her hand had placed under his mirror, but they were somewhat withered, although she had given them fresh water every morning.

Fastening his eyes upon the withered bouquet, he thus soliloquised. 'Fit emblem of the heart that prompted the hand to place it there! They are withered, but they were once fresh and beautiful! Would to heaven she had never become my housekeeper!—Who could have thought that she would have loved so deeply, so warmly! Such love

should never go unrequited, had not my heart received the image of that angelic Emily! No earthly power can efface that from the tablets of my memory, nor destroy a single one of its beautiful features. She is heaven's own gift, and I will cherish it while life and immortality lasts. Such love cannot be given only for time! It reaches beyond the grave, and will flourish in immortality.

'We were created male and female, and not for time only, like the birds in lovely spring, we shall pair off in the spiritual world, and walk together on the heavenly hills; and, hand in hand, and heart to heart, wander over the beautiful fields of paradise. Such must be the divine appointment.—Were it not so, it would seem that our creation had been in vain.

'For more than a half century I have been wandering in this world, and my heart has never found its true mate before. And suppose I have continued single so long!—What is a half a century compared with a never ending eternity! It is but a drop in the great ocean itself. That dear girl will be with me always! And am I not grateful to heaven for such a gift? Yes, I trust and believe I am. O, how I pity my housekeeper! When my other one left me, I wish I had boarded instead of keeping house. But I could not scarcely endure such a life. I had enough of that in my younger days. But I pity Aunt Betty.'

But we leave them for the present, and turn to other characters in the drama of human life, such as is constantly being acted in our large cities.

'Well, my dear Pussy, we made a fine haul this evening,' said Job Snyder, as he entered the house after midnight.

'Indeed, I'm glad to hear it, for our rent becomes due to-morrow, and I do not wish to disturb our deposits at the bank,' replied

this vile woman. 'How much have you won, and of whom?'

'Of George Homer, of course,' he replied. 'He is our victim at present. I have nearly twelve hundred dollars for my part of the spoils.'

'Bravely done, my dear Job!' she exclaimed, throwing her large arms about his neck, and kissing him. 'But you must be careful and not bleed him until he faints.—Manage, dear Job! Manage!'

'No danger of his fainting until his cash is all gone,' he replied. 'And the dog has a pile of it yet; besides, his note would be good on the strength of his father's estate.—Ah, he loves the excitement of the game; and he plays well, too. If we didn't understand some tricks he is ignorant of, and did not cheat him, he would be a good match for either of us. I must confess he plays a good game. And he's a capital fellow, too, generous, open-hearted, and very pleasant. He felt a little sorry this evening when we wound up, but challenged us for another setting.'

'And of course you accepted the challenge,' she said, smiling.

'You may well say that,' he replied. 'We are sure to win every dollar of the money that was left him, and then we can adopt the credit system. I think his father is the fattest victim we have ever slain on our altar.'

'Ah, Job, you're a cunning dog,' she replied, chucking him under the chin, and putting on one of her blandest smiles. 'By-the-way, who do you suppose has been here this evening?'

'I can't say, perhaps, Captain Simpson, Deacon Comstock, Squire Murdock, Judge Thomas, or—I don't know who,' he replied.

'Neither, but Major Borland,' she answered. 'He's a funny man, and a liberal

one, too. There is none of the sneak about him; but I can't say so much of all you have named.'

'The Major is a noble fellow, and now think on't, did you know that young Homer was engaged to his daughter?'

'No, you don't say so!' replied Madame looking surprised. 'I mistrusted he had a daughter, but he would never acknowledge it.'

'Well, he has; and she's a beautiful girl too,' replied Job. 'Homer is really in love with her, and they'll be married ere long.'

'Strange young Homer never visits us,' she said. 'I should like to see him.'

'I reckon the fellow don't visit such houses,' said Job. 'At least I have never heard him intimate any thing of the kind. His great passion is for gambling; and that's enough for us.'

'Does he drink?' asked this she-devil smiling. 'I conclude he has one more sin besides gambling.'

'He does begin to drink rather freely,' he replied. 'He was the farthest over the hay this evening than I have ever known him. He became quite merry, and tried to drown his losses. Another thing, dear Pussy, I have my eye upon a young girl whose beauty will make the Major's mouth water.'

'That's good,' she said. 'The Major was speaking about one this very evening. Do you think you can coax her away, or will you be compelled to use force?'

'That's more than I can say; but I have seen her, and know where she lives. I think I can entice her away under some pretence or another. She's a beautiful girl, and no mistake.'

'Well, Joby, bring her on, and I will educate her,' said the wicked procuress.

Here the conversation ended; for late as it was, a gentleman rang the bell and Pussy

shered him in. He was not a resident of the city, but a merchant from the South.—The hackman drove him to the house from the theatre. These establishments, no more than the theatres, are not wholly supported and sustained by the residents of the city. Much of their patronage, if such a word can be properly used in such a connection, comes from the country. It is much to be regretted that such is the fact; nevertheless, truth compels the recording it. This Southern merchant was not a stranger to this woman, for he had been an inmate of her house several times before. The first thing he called for was a bottle of Champagne. All kinds of wine were kept here and sold at a good round profit, too. No hotel, however fashionable it might be, kept a better assortment of wines, or sold them at more profit than this vile woman. She could drink off a glass of wine with as good a gusto and grace as any gentleman. But we'll draw the curtain over this den of iniquity, and shut it out from view.

### CHAPTER XIII.

*A good mother's care. The age of Progress. Feelings of a young gambler. Street interviews. Prejudices of education. A gambler's notions.*

'Why, George, you don't look well this morning,' said his mother to George Homer. 'You stay out too late altogether; I don't see the necessity of these literary clubs keeping such late hours. For my part, I can't see why you don't break up in better season so that you can have your proper rest.'

'O, mother, we have a great deal to say and many questions to discuss,' replied George.

'Well, I suppose so; but then you might meet earlier so as to get home before morn-

ing,' she said. 'You wouldn't look so woe-begone, if you enjoyed proper rest. It has got to be a very foolish fashion in this city of turning the night into day. It was not so when I was a girl.'

Mrs. Homer was a plain, sensible woman. She was not carried away by the fashions of the day, and never lost her individuality in the whirl of fashion.

'Ah, wife, you will always have your way,' said her husband. 'You must remember we live in a progressive age.'

'Progressive fiddlestick!' she replied, laughing. 'Because we ride on railroads and steamboats fifty miles an hour; young people think they must do every thing by steam, and so sit up all night, and feel stupid all day. Doesn't your head ache, George?'

'Very little, mother,' he replied. 'I think I shall feel better after breakfast.'

'My dear, I think you're over anxious this morning about George,' said her husband.—'I guess he's not very sick.'

'Ah, husband, these constant inroads up on the constitution will destroy it after awhile,' she answered. 'Nothing like taking care of one's health.'

'True, mother,' said George. 'And I think I'm not very careless.'

'I don't know as you are particularly so,' she replied. 'You know there was the widow Watson's son; he was once a young man of fine robust constitution, but how soon he wasted his health and found a premature grave!'

'Yes; but, my dear, he was a very hard drinker, and spent his nights in gambling,' replied the husband.

George suddenly started as if he had received a shock of electricity; but he soon recovered his balance, and concealed his emotions from his parents. For a moment he feared he had betrayed too much feeling, but they did not appear to notice his embar-

rassment, and he was calm and collected, again.

'I'm aware of that,' she answered. 'How his last days and his death wrung his poor mother's heart with anguish! I shall never forget her lamentations! It seemed for a long time after his death, that she could not be quieted. He had gambled away all his property and died a miserable death. No wonder her heart was almost broken. If I ever pitied any woman, it was the widow Watson. She was a kind mother, and her life was bound up in his.'

George could not well stand it any longer, but finished his breakfast with more than ordinary despatch, and walked out.

As he passed out his mother told him the morning air might make his head feel much better.

'The morning air!' he mentally exclaimed, as he reached the sidewalk and put his hand to his throbbing temples. 'The morning air! Can that be a sovereign remedy for the evening's dissipations! Ah, mother, you have a strong mind and a good heart, but you know not the sin that most easily besets your son. How happened it that she spoke of the widow Watson's son? Did some unseen power prompt her to speak thus? Strange that gambling should be thus dragged into every social conversation! Mrs. Borland alluded to it a short time since, but she could not—did not know how hard the hit was upon me! It does seem as if some unseen hand was in all this! But no, it must have been accidental. Shall I heed all these warnings? Is it not time for me to stop in my career? Several thousand dollars have already taken wings and flown from me!—And what if my parents, or Elizabeth Borland should know of my loss and how it happened? Ah, there would then be trouble! I must quit gambling! And I will forsake it when I win back my money!'

Ah, there's the rub! He will quit the practice when he has won back the money he has lost! That is the plea of all young gamblers. But when will he win it back? Not until he has become more confirmed in the vice than he now is! The time for him to break off—is now; for after another loss, he will be less able to abandon this, his most besetting sin.

As he passed down Broadway, he met the busy, bustling crowd; and every person he met seemed to be more happy than he was. He had not travelled far, before he recognized the face and form of Emily Pang-bom coming towards him with a small bundle in her hand. To him she appeared as blithe and happy as the early bird that always finds the worm. As she met him, she stopped, and spoke.

'I'm glad to see you,' she said. 'How is my good friend, Miss Borland? I suppose you have seen her this morning. O, how I love her! She seems like a sister to me!'

'No, dear, I have not seen her this morning,' he replied, but she was well yesterday. How is your mother? I hope she's no worse.'

'O, sir, mother is failing!' she answered. 'She can't live many weeks if she can days. Her strength is almost gone, but she is happy. I hope you will come and see her.'

She left him and tripped lightly along.—Even the sight of her made him feel still more sorrowful and downcast.

'How happy that lovely creature seems to be while her only parent is fast hastening to the grave!' he said to himself. 'And it is because she is so good. She knows nothing of the creeds which divide the religious world and yet she is a Christian. How pure is her heart, and all its affections! May they never be less so.'

She had but just gone, before he met Job Snyder. What a contrast in the two beings!

the one a type of heaven; and the other of hell.

Young Homer felt that, and yet he greeted the gambler with a smile.

'Good morning,' said Job. 'Out rather early for a walk.'

'Rather for me,' replied George. 'But my head cracks some this morning. I took a little too much last night.'

'Perhaps so, but a little more hair of the same dog will cure you,' replied this heartless gambler. 'Come, let us go into yonder saloon and imbibe. I feel somewhat thirsty, I believe my coppers were rather hot last night.'

The young man felt the need of some stimulus to rouse his spirits, and accepted the invitation. They entered one of those splendid drinking saloons on Broadway, where they took the social glass, and where thousands of young men commence the drunkard's career. They sat down and smoked their cigars. Homer began to feel some better; yet there was a load upon his heart which was not easily shaken off.

'By the way, Homer, what girl was that you were talking with just before I met you?' asked Snyder. 'I have seen her before in the street.'

'Very likely,' answered Homer. 'She's a poor widow's daughter, and her mother can't live many days.'

'She's a girl of extraordinary beauty, let who will be her mother,' said Snyder. 'Such girls don't grow on every bush.'

'I think she is surpassingly beautiful,' answered Homer.

The villain, Snyder, now ascertained her name, the street and number where her mother resided, and all her history so far as Homer knew anything about it. He thought some what strange that Snyder was so particular in his inquiries respecting this young girl, still he knew not his motives. They

were best known to the scoundrel himself.

'I hope you have no evil designs upon that girl,' said Homer.

'O, no; but when I see a young and beautiful girl, I'm some how or other much interested,' replied Snyder. 'And I suppose every man is who is not so corrupt as to lose all regard for the sex. Now, I always feel a deep interest in the little angels, and often wish I was the father of a beautiful daughter.'

'I wonder you had not married some beautiful woman, ere this time in your life,' said Homer.

Snyder was silent and thoughtful for a few moments.

'What are you thinking about?' asked Homer. 'You seem to be thoughtful.'

'To be frank with you,' replied the scoundrel. 'I have a wife now in one of the Eastern States; but she was so mighty nice and particular in her notions that she one day took it into her head to leave me; and so I let her go.'

'What was the trouble?' inquired Homer.

'O, nothing very alarming, only she had a great horror of my playing cards, and told me if I didn't quit that she would quit me. I was somewhat angry, and felt my pride alarmed, and so I told her to go. She was a very spunky little woman; and took me at my word.'

'And have you not felt unhappy since?' asked Homer.

'I felt a little odd at first, but I soon got over it,' answered Snyder. 'I have too much spirit to ask too many favors of a woman. I endeavored to treat my wife kindly; but she wished to control me, and wanted to wear the breeches, and I couldn't stand that. She is very handsome, but thought the government of the whole world was upon her shoulders. The truth is, Homer, she was one of those fanatics who want to bring

every body to their standard of belief. I profess to be a man myself, and never design to give up my individuality for the sake of any woman. Soon after we were married she became a Methodist and enjoyed a camp-meeting, and the society of the Methodist friends more than she did mine. My doctrine is to let such a woman go; I did let her go, and have not seen her since.—There's no one woman in the world so good but there's another as good. There as good fish in the ocean as those that have been caught.'

'That may all be true; but then parting with a wife must be an unpleasant business,' said Homer. 'I think it would be so to me.'

'Well, it is rather disagreeable at first, but then if a woman will imbibe foolish notions and try to lord it over a man, it is best to let her go, at least such is my opinion,' replied this heartless knave. 'I'm thinking, Homer, that if you were married and afterwards found that your wife liked the company of priests better than she did yours; your proud spirit would not bear it more willingly than mine did. No—no, my friend, there's reason in all things, even in roasting an egg, as my mother used to say. The world is full of all sorts of characters, and we must take things as we find them. All are not what they seem to be. There are a good many hypocrites in the world, and our long-faced parsons are among the number.'

'I think your mind has become too much soured by prejudice to judge righteously,' said Homer. 'Your trouble with your wife has clouded your mind, and darkened your judgment. I believe I know a good many ministers who are real Christians, and endeavor to do all the good they can in this world.'

'You may be right, Homer, but I'll be

hanged if I can see much difference in men, after all,' replied Snyder. 'True, there may be, and is a difference in outside appearances; but don't you really think that every man has his price, and woman, too?'

'No, no; I can never subscribe to that doctrine,' answered Homer, with some earnestness. 'I have a mother who could not be bought for any price. In my opinion, nothing could induce her to commit a crime knowingly.'

'Well, well, Homer; men don't like alike, neither can they think alike,' said Snyder, feeling disposed to end the conversation upon that topic.

They drank again, and soon after separated; not a word about Homer's losses having been exchanged between them.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

*Disguises of Character. Shameless mockery of Religion. Evil designs upon an innocent girl. The pretended Parson. His great skill. Instincts of the young sometimes a better guide than reason.*

THERE are some characters in our cities whose wardrobes contains suits for several occasions as circumstances may require.—Job Snyder belonged to that class. He wore one dress as a blackleg, and other suits according to occasions. Soon after his interview with George Homer, recorded in the preceding chapter of this narrative, Snyder conceived the project of visiting the sick woman, Mrs. Pangbom and her daughter.—From their characters as he learned them from Homer, he very sagaciously concluded that he must assume a serious manner, and dress himself accordingly. Now, he hated Methodist priests as he did poison; yet he had more than once personated their charac-

ters, and had purchased suitable apparel for such occasions.

Snyder no sooner conceived the project than he hurried home and dressed himself in a very becoming and humble style.— Even his most intimate friends would hardly recognize him had they met him in the street. His white neckerchief was tied in the right kind of a knot, his hat had the requisite brim, and his dress very much resembled the 'customary suit of solemn black.' Madame Pussy lent her skill in rigging him out for the occasion, and this scoundrel looked and could act the priest exceedingly well.

'Well, dear Job, you do, indeed, look exactly like a Methodist parson,' said Pussy.— 'I think you could deceive the very elect.'

'I have done so on more than one occasion, and can do so again,' he replied.

'But, suppose, the sick woman should ask you to pray with her?' inquired this hellish woman; for we can call her by no milder epithet.

'I never did that, and don't know how I should succeed, if I should try,' he replied, laughing. 'However, I could excuse myself. I believe I should not undertake that exercise lest I might make some blunders; all other parts of the performance I can act to a charm.'

True, as this villain said, that exercise is difficult of performance. But few men in this world, we hope, would look up to heaven for a blessing under the circumstances in which Snyder was about to place himself.— To address our Creator in mere mockery, requires a depth of depravity such as devils possess. Even Job Snyder was hardly up to such terrible wickedness, for in him there was sometimes a dread and an awe of the Supreme Being; and the less he thought of Him the less disquietude he felt. There were periods even in the life of this heartless gambler when he felt the dread of an

hereafter. All his crimes and constant career in sin and wickedness could not entirely shut that out from his mind. There was a something within him that would occasionally call him back and inspire him with fear, and yet that power he resisted with all his might, and with the devil's help he resisted it successfully.

'I thought, Joby, you could do any thing in the parson's line,' she said, smiling, and patting his cheeks with her soft, fat hand.— 'But never mind, I think you can succeed in pleasing the mother, and get her consent to take the charge of her daughter after she is dead. If the girl is as handsome as you say she is, the object is worthy of your highest efforts in the ministerial department.'

'She is a beauty,' replied Job. 'And I must ask her into a love feast.'

'A capital idea, my dear Joby,' she replied, laughing.

Thus rigged and encouraged, the ruffian started off to seek the abode of sickness and sorrow. And what more hellish motives could prompt a man to action? Darker and more damning motives could not be formed this side of the infernal regions; and yet this scoundrel proceeded on his mission with a fair exterior, a pleasant face, and a heart filled with corruption. What more damning mission than this? Who can say there is no devil when such dark deeds are perpetrated on earth?

There was a young girl; innocent and beautiful, watching by the bedside of her sick mother, and scarcely knowing that sin had entered this world, and here was a vile scoundrel who sought to make her as wicked as himself! It seems almost impossible that such purity could be corrupted, or that such a girl could be seduced into the paths of vice by the wicked arts of man, and yet such deeds have been done, or Job Snyder would not make the attempt.

He found the house and gently knocked at the door. Emily came to the door, for she and her mother were alone. Mr. Colburne had been there but a short time previous, and had left, promising to return soon. The widow was comfortable as one in her situation could be, but her strength was gradually failing, and the lamp of life burned feebly.— She was in a calm state of mind; for she felt that her Heavenly Father had heard her prayers, and answered them.

'I understand, my dear, there is a sick woman in this house,' said Snyder, assuming a very serious voice, and solemn manner.

'Yes, sir, my mother is very sick; but, thank heaven, her sufferings now are not greater than she can bear,' replied Emily. 'Will you walk in, sir?'

'I thank you, my dear,' he said. 'It does my heart good to hear one so young speak so wisely. You do well to thank your Heavenly Father for every blessing. Does He not hear the young ravens when they cry, and think you He will forsake the widow, and the fatherless?'

'Walk in, sir; mother will be glad to see you,' she said, leading the way, and he following her to the bedside of her mother. 'A gentleman has come to see you, mother.'

The sick woman turned her eyes upon him, and held out her emaciated hand which he gently grasped, and slightly pressed.

The pressure of her hand gave him a sensation which was not pleasant to him. It seemed to be extended almost from the grave, and made him at first shudder; but he soon recovered his balance, and appeared like a Christian. The sick woman was pleased to behold a man who she supposed belonged to the clerical profession.

'I perceive you're quite low, and feeble,' he said. 'I heard there was a sick woman here, and thought I would call. I hope I don't intrude.'

'O, no, sir; I'm happy to see you,' she answered, in a feeble voice. 'I ought to be thankful that my sickness gives me so little pain. And I trust I feel thankful to Him whose rod and staff can support me in this hour of need.'

'I rejoice that you feel such reconciliation to the will of Heaven,' he said. 'Such a feeling takes away the sting of death, and smoothes the passage to the tomb.'

'It does, indeed, sir,' she replied; gazing upon his serious countenance. 'We must all die; that is the condition upon which we receive life, and it were well, if we were all duly prepared for the exchange of worlds.'

'True, very true, indeed, madam,' he replied. 'It is a great thing to be prepared for that change you speak of. This is your daughter, I presume.'

'She is, sir,' replied the sick woman.— 'Emily is a good girl, and it is hard to part with her; but God's will, not mine, be done!'

'Amen!' said this consummate scoundrel and hypocrite. 'Have you any relations or friends with whom you can leave your child with safety? She is a precious charge and ought to be cared for in the right way. I have a wife and no children, and will take of your daughter and treat her as if she were my own child. My wife is a Christian woman, and would be pleased to have your daughter live with us. We have been talking about adopting some little girl for some time, but have not yet found one who exactly pleases us. My wife, I'm fully persuaded, would be pleased with your daughter. I can assure you, madam, she would be treated kindly.'

'No doubt of that, sir; but a gentleman has already spoken to me on that subject, and I have given him some assurances,' she replied.

'I hope he is a good, Christian man,' he

said. 'Has he a wife and family?'

'He has no wife or family,' she answered, feeling as if she wished Mr. Colburne were a married man.

Snyder cast his eyes upon the floor, and appeared wrapped in deep meditation. She noticed his apparently deep study and meditation, and imagined what he was reflecting upon, for the same reflections had passed through her own mind. At last he seemed to rouse up from his deep study and broke the silence.

'No wife nor family,' he repeated, in a solemn voice and manner. 'And has he never been married?'

'He never has,' she replied. 'He's a bachelor, and appears to be a very good man.'

'Never has been married!' he repeated, in a still more solemn tone and manner.—'Never has been married! How old is he, madam?'

'Fifty, I should judge,' she answered, feeling anxious to know the parson's thoughts.

'Fifty, and not married!' he said, manifesting some astonishment. 'Rather a suspicious circumstance; and yet, madam, he may be a very good man! But would it be entirely safe to trust your daughter to the care of a single gentleman? It seems to me that there ought to be some one of your sex to have the care of such a girl, and not a man alone.'

'I have thought anxiously of that, sir, but he appears to be one of the best hearted men I ever knew,' she said.

'Appearances are often deceitful, madam,' he replied; assuming a very wise and a very serious look. 'If your daughter was less beautiful my suspicions would not be so strong as they are now; but I would not do the gentleman any injustice even in my thoughts.'

'I don't think you would, sir,' she replied, with much feeling.

'Heaven forbid that I should!' he said, turning his eyes to the ceiling overhead.—

'This city is a very wicked place and filled with wolves in sheep's clothing. I hope, madam, you will seriously reflect on these things, and pray to heaven for discretion, in a matter of so much importance as disposing of your only daughter. Remember, my good woman, that a bachelor has no guiding star. I may say he's like a world without a sun. Be cautious, but heaven's will be done.'

'O, sir, you talk like a Christian,' she said, in a voice of trembling. 'I will reflect on what you have said, and humbly pray for guidance and direction.'

'It is well,' he replied. 'It is woman, virtuous, Christian woman who ought to have the principal care of such a girl as your daughter. What can compare with a mother's love? The poet has well expressed it in a single verse:

'A mother's love! the fadeless light  
That glimmers o'er our way;  
A star amid the clouds of night,  
An ever burning, quenchless ray.'

'The lines are beautiful!' said the sick woman, while a tear fell from her clear eye, and stood trembling on her wan cheek, like a dew-drop on a withered flower.

'And can man, a bachelor, become a fit representative of that love?' he asked.—'Can he know the wants of a young girl, and provide for them? I mean not physical wants merely, but those of a higher and more spiritual nature.'

'I understand you, sir,' she answered; feeling more and more the danger and impropriety of committing her daughter to the care of an unmarried man.

He saw by the workings of her emaciated countenance that he had touched the right chord in her heart. He had succeeded thus far in his mission, even beyond his own most sanguine expectations.

Emily had listened in silence and thoughtfulness to his remarks, but they did not affect her heart so seriously as they had her mother's. There was an instinct in her soul that made her feel that all might not be right in the pretended parson; besides, she could not endure the thought that Mr. Colburne could be a bad man. All his motions, all his actions, the accents of his voice, his eyes beaming with benevolence, the general expression of every lineament of his countenance; all had strongly impressed her with a conviction and belief that the bachelor was an honest, virtuous, sincere man.

Even a stronger battery than this consummate and artful villain had erected against that conviction and belief might shake them, but could not destroy them.

How keen are the instincts of a child!—Often they are better guides than the reason of adults, especially so far as human character is concerned. To such instincts the human countenance and the tones of the voice are an open book which they often read correctly, while maturer reason and older judgment may be at fault.

'I would not wish to control you or insinuate aught against any man,' he said. 'I only speak of general principles and of their bearings upon human society as at present organized. I know many dangers and temptations beset our paths in this life. The ocean we sail over has many shoals and dangerous rocks, and it requires skilful navigation to make the voyage successful. O, madam, I am much indebted to my wife!—She has been a helpmeet to me, indeed. I sometimes regret, that I'm not a father, but the Lord's will, not mine, be done. He knows what is best for us.'

'I should be pleased to see your wife,'—said the widow.

'Nothing would give her more pleasure than to call upon you,' he replied.

The scoundrel had now proceeded as far as he thought prudent. He was glad that she wished to see his vile mistress, for he intended to send her there. After calling down blessings upon the widow and her daughter, he departed.

'That gentleman appears to be an excellent Christian man,' said the widow to her daughter, after Snyder had taken his departure.

'He may be a good man, but I did not like his insinuations against Mr. Colburne,' replied Emily. 'I believe Mr. Colburne is as good as he is, any day.'

'He did not, my dear, say aught against Mr. Colburne,' answered her mother.

'I know he did not, mother, in so many words, but I did not like his looks nor the tone of voice,' said Emily. 'His eyes don't look half so pleasant as Mr. Colburne's, neither is the expression of his mouth half so good, but he may be a good man for all that. But I know Mr. Colburne is good.'

The mother's suspicions were somewhat excited that Mr. Colburne might have taken some improper course to make her daughter love him. Such suspicions had entered her heart previously, and now Emily's remarks had strengthened them in some small degree. Yet she could not bear to think Mr. Colburne was a bad man. All his conduct she had seen impressed her with the belief that he was virtuous in the strictest sense of that word; and yet after all, there might be something she had not witnessed. Emily had always been at his house to pay him his rent, and she did not know but he might have artfully toyed with her young heart as bachelors are sometimes apt to do with young and beautiful girls. If such had ever been the fact, she was anxious to know it.

'Emily, did Mr. Colburne ever tell you that he loved you when you went to pay him rent?' asked her mother in a subdued tone of voice.



'O, mother, never!' replied this innocent girl. 'He never intimated any such thing!'

Emily was astonished that her mother should ask such a question, for the bachelor had always treated her with respect and kindness, and never attempted to make love to her.

'Emily, I never knew you to utter a falsehood,' said her mother. 'And do not believe you ever will. Mr. Colburne never held your hand nor kissed you, did he?'

'Never, mother, never!' answered Emily. 'O, yes, I forgot. He held my hand here in this room, yesterday.'

'I don't mean recently!' said her mother, closing her eyes, and feeling almost sorry she had asked Emily such questions.

They were silent for some time. At last, the mother opened her eyes and said, 'Dear Emily, I believe what you have told me, and now let me ask you one more question.'

'O, yes, mother, as many as you please, I always love to answer your questions.'

'Do you love Mr. Colburne?' asked the mother.

'I like him because he is a good man and has been kind to you,' answered Emily, in all the innocence and simplicity of her heart.

The mother felt it not in her heart to ask Emily any more questions upon that subject. She believed Emily had answered her truly, but the scoundrel, Snyder, had made an impression upon her mind.

## CHAPTER XV.

*The gambler's Hell. How the Victim is managed. Loss and Gain. Their comparative effects upon the mind of the Tyro in gambling. A Murder. A drunken Woman. The corruption of cities.*

ANOTHER appointed evening came, and George Homer met the tyro of blacklegs

who were fully bent on stripping him of all his ready funds, and even push him into the credit system, if their power extended so far. Never was a child more anxious of the coming of Christmas and the beautiful gifts that always accompanies it, than young Homer was for the arrival of the time when he could sit down with those cut-throat gamblers, and become immured in the excitements of the game. His passion for gambling, had increased to 'rush on an extent that he almost forgot every thing else, even his love for the beautiful and accomplished Elizabeth Borland, whose heart had already become bound up in his. Young Homer loved her whenever he could drive the passion for the gaming table from his mind, long enough to seriously reflect upon her charms.

The last games young Homer played, have not been recorded on these pages; and at the very last one he was permitted to win a small sum of money; but by no means an amount to half cover his losses for the same evening. If only gains had increased his passion, he might not have advanced so rapidly in the downward road to ruin; but his losses had even more power than his gains to hurry him.

As he entered the room, the three blacklegs were apparently hard at play with each other, and the stakes were upon the table; but this was all a ruse to deceive Homer. He was rather late that evening, because he had taken tea at Major Borland's. Elizabeth expected him to spend the evening there, but he found some very plausible excuse and departed soon as decency would permit.

'Ah, George, how are ye?' asked Snyder, as George entered the room. 'We begun to suspect that you wouldn't be here to night. And we were just saying that it might be as well for us if you didn't come, or at least for some of us; for at our last game, your luck begun to come.'

'I'm always on hand; but then you know the ladies must all be attended to,' replied George.

'Yes, especially when one has such a sweetheart as you have to attend to,' said Job, laughing. 'Ah, George, you're a lucky dog, She's beautiful and accomplished, and the old man's rich—three pretty essential qualifications.'

'You may well say that,' replied another of the blacklegs. 'I wish I could get into such a pew as that. Ah, some folks are lucky, that's a fact! Why couldn't fortune have favored me? Why should she be so partial in the bestowment of her gifts?'

'You a'int good looking enough to expect such lovers,' said Snyder, laughing.

'The less you say about good looks the better,' replied his companion.

'Why, the ladies always took a great liking to me,' said Snyder. 'There's something in the manners as well as in the mere looks of the face to attract the divine creatures.'

'Heavens! manners!' exclaimed the third gambler. 'That puts the rub on. [Manners, eh? Why, Snyder, you don't pretend to have good manners, do you?'

'Ask the ladies, and they can better answer that question,' replied Snyder.

'Some ladies hav'nt much taste,' said his brother blackleg. 'But let those things pass. Now for making a fortune or losing one.'

They agreed to divide the money upon the table, and commence a new game. All were apparently anxious to have Homer for a partner.

'I think he will play with me to-night,' said Snyder. 'We can give you fits. What say you, George.'

'I was thinking I would try my luck with you this evening,' replied George.

'There, friends. I hope you are satisfied said Snyder, appearing to be very much

rejoiced that young Homer had selected him as a partner in the game.

Much time did not elapse ere the game commenced in good earnest. The stakes were not very high at first, but they were soon increased with the excitement of the game.

'There, by heavens!' exclaimed Snyder, as Homer played his last card, took the trick and the game. 'It is just like playing alone. We have too much science for you, gentlemen. Fortune always favors the brave. We double the stakes!'

'I agree to that,' said Homer, feeling quite excited with his good luck, and throwing some gold coins upon the table.

It was agreed all round to double the stakes, and now the game waxed warmer and warmer. Every eye was first on the cards, and then upon the money which glittered upon the table in the brilliant light of a lamp that hung overhead.

Again Homer and Snyder won the money, but like desperate gamblers the losers were by no means discouraged.

Again the stakes were increased and the excitement run high. A third game was won by Homer and his partner.

Homer's face was flushed, and his heart beat with joyous emotions. The gamblers noticed his excitement with pleasure.

'Now for a small drink all round,' said Homer. 'Tom, bring us four brandy smashers.'

The tumbler-washer was near at hand, and soon the brandy smashers were upon the table. They drunk about half the distilled damnation, and again commenced the game. Homer won another game, and finished the remainder of his liquor, followed by the others. He began to feel new life and vigor. The gamblers eyes were upon him, and they gloated over his folly and excitement, for they knew they had him in their power.



'More brandy smashers!' shouted Snyder, while he pretended to look very cunning at his two friends whom he had thus beaten, and slyly winked at the excited Homer. 'It is my treat now. Come, take a little something for your stomach's sake, and keep your courage up. Don't play beat now, for the evening has but just commenced.'

'Don't be alarmed, Job, we're not in the habit of flaxing out so early as this,' replied one of his confederates.

'I glory in your spunk,' said Job, laughing, and triumphantly holding some of the gold pieces he had won in the palm of his hand. 'There are the yellow boys old Benton used to talk about in Congress, bless his old heart. They create a fine feeling in a gentleman's hand.'

'Put them into a gentleman's hand and see,' said his confederate, holding out his hand to receive them and laughing.

'Win them first, my boy,' exultingly replied Job.

'We'll try,' as one good lover of his country once said, answered the blackleg, smiling.

Another game commenced with heavy stakes. They played in silence, and all were intent on the game. Now commenced the cheating and tricks of the inveterate gambler of which young Homer was ignorant. The excitement ran high, at least so far as Homer was concerned. The others were apparently excited, but they knew what the result would be. The game closed and Snyder and Homer were the losers for the first time; but Homer was too much excited to feel the loss very sensibly; besides, he believed he should win the next game. Hope seldom forsakes the gambler until his bank is broken and his means are entirely exhausted.

'These yellow boys create a fine feeling in a gentleman's hand,' repeated one of the winners, scraping up the money and looking

very cunning at Snyder.

'Never mind,' said Snyder. 'It is a long lane that has no turns. How grand a little luck will make some persons feel.'

'I admit you're a good judge in such matters,' replied his associate.

The play went on and Homer continued to lose. They played and drank till the city clocks told the midnight hour, when they heard a rapping at the window, and a female voice, asking for admission.

'A spiritual knocker,' said Job; laughing and gazing to the window whence the sounds proceeded.

Homer, trembled for a moment, for the thought struck him that his beloved Elizabeth might be in search of him. Such is a guilty conscience! But the second thought assured him that she would not be found there at all, and especially at the hour of midnight when all honest folks were in bed, or ought to be.

'Your sweetheart, by heavens!' exclaimed Snyder, addressing one of the gamblers.

'Mine!' answered the gambler, rising from the table, and gazing to the window.

And true enough, there he saw the agitated face of his mistress.

'Let me in, Bill, for the watchmen are on my track,' she said; looking through a pane of glass, and then gazing back behind her. 'Be quick, for heaven's sake!'

He raised the window and hauled her in to the great amusement of Snyder and the others. The girl was much agitated, and looked as if she had had a hard race.

'What's the trouble?' asked Bill, as she called him.

'Trouble enough!' she replied, in a voice that showed she was almost out of breath.

'Well, what trouble?' he inquired, looking somewhat anxious.

'Two gentlemen got to fighting in the house, and one shot the other,' she replied

'Let me in, Bill, for the watchmen are on my track,' she said; looking through a pane of glass, and then gazing back behind her. 'Be quick, for heaven's sake!'

He raised the window and hauled her in to the great amusement of Snyder and the others. The girl was much agitated, and looked as if she had had a hard race.

'What's the trouble?' asked Bill, as she called him.

'Trouble enough!' she replied, in a voice that showed she was almost out of breath.

'Well, what trouble?' he inquired, looking somewhat anxious.

'Two gentlemen got to fighting in the house, and one shot the other,' she replied. 'The watchmen came, and I escaped out of a back window. I wouldn't have been found by them for the world!'

The time they had appointed to quit had almost arrived, and he kept increasing the stakes, and plunging into the game like a crazy man as he was. But, alas! the young gambler did not realize his hopes that night. Nearly two thousand dollars had taken their flight from him, forever. And yet his passion for gambling was not cured, but actually increased.

Homer went home with an excited brain and a heavy heart. In the bitterness of his spirit, he cursed gambling as he threw himself upon his bed, and tried to swear he would never touch cards again; but the memory of his losses, and of how lucky he was in the first part of the evening, destroyed his half-framed resolution. He fell asleep, but only to dream of cards.

'We've bled him freely, to-night,' said Snyder, after Homer had departed.

'Yes, but he stands it like a hero,' replied Bill. 'Well, his money came easy.'

'And goes quite as easily,' replied the third gambler, laughing. 'How much of a fortune has he?'

'Over thirty thousand left him by his rich

uncle, besides four times as much when his old father dies,' replied Snyder. 'His father's not a gambler, but he's one of the other things.'

'Do you know him?' asked Bill, being somewhat surprised to hear Snyder talk of Young Homer's father in such a familiar manner.

'Let me alone for that,' answered Snyder, winking very slyly. 'Didn't you know that some of the biggest bugs in the city are my best friends and most familiar acquaintances? I move in the upper circles, among the upper-ten.'

'The devil you do!' said Bill, laughing. 'I should think, then, your manners might improve.'

## CHAPTER XVI.

*The art of a wicked woman. The depths of depravity to which females sometimes descend. The garb of Religion. A mother's love. Still further developments of the plot. A timely arrival.*

THE next morning after Snyder visited the sick widow, Julia Pierce, or as she was more familiarly called, Madame Pussy, was on her way to make a call upon the same woman, and with motives black and hellish as those which actuated the heartless gambler. She was dressed in a plain black silk with few or no ornaments. Her costume was quite becoming and her appearance was very respectable. She had dressed for the occasion, and although not so thoroughly metamorphosed as Snyder was when he went on the same errand, yet she was as well calculated to deceive and make as favorable impression upon a sick woman as he was while assuming the garb and manner of a Methodist priest. She was possessed of quite as much cunning, tact and skill as he was, and in some respects she greatly excelled him.

This vile procuress hastened on and was soon seeking for admission into the chamber of sickness and poverty. When Emily heard the gentle knockings she thought Mr. Colburne had come, for she expected him that morning, but Madame Pussy had got the start of him.

'My sweet girl, I understand a poor sick woman is here,' said this she devil in petticoats. 'I should like to see her, and her daughter.'

'I am her daughter, Madame,' replied Emily.

'I concluded so from what my husband told me yesterday,' said the woman.

'Then you're the wife of the gentleman who called yesterday?' asked Emily, gazing up into her fair round face as if she would read her inmost thoughts.

'I am,' replied the woman, gazing back upon the girl and feeling almost abashed and rebuked by the heavenly expression of her face and the beauty and benevolence beaming from her brilliant blue eyes.

She thought she had never beheld such a beautiful countenance before; but she wondered why the girl should so sharply gaze upon her. It seemed as if she suspected her true character, her objects and her aims.

'Will you walk in, Madame?' asked Emily, still keeping her eyes fastened upon her in a fixed gaze.

'Very soon, my dear,' answered the woman. 'How is your dear mother this morning?'

'She rested tolerably well last night, but she is very feeble,' replied Emily.

'I hope you don't take care of her alone,' said Madame.

'I have as yet; but Mr. Colburne is going to bring a nurse here to-day,' replied Emily.

'I expect him here this morning. He told us last evening that he had engaged one.'

'Mr. Colburne!' she repeated, manifesting

surprise. 'Is he a relative of yours? Perhaps he may be an uncle, or a cousin, or—'

'O, no, Madame, he's no relation to us!' interrupted Emily. 'But we live in his house, and he's very kind to mother.'

'Why don't his wife visit your mother?' asked the woman, looking surprised.

'He has no wife, Madame,' replied Emily, still fixing her burning gaze upon the woman as if she suspected her of something wrong.

And the girl did suspect her; but why she could not have told if she had been asked.

'No wife!' repeated the woman, expressing in her countenance still more surprise. 'No wife! A widower, perhaps!'

'No, Madame, he was never married,' answered Emily. 'And that may surprise you still more.'

'It does, indeed!' answered the woman, 'It is very strange that a bachelor should thus interest himself in a work of benevolence and charity towards a lone woman and her daughter. It is not usual in that class I believe. How old is he?'

Emily told her his age, and that appeared really to alarm the woman.

'Over fifty!' she repeated after Emily.—'Over fifty, and never married; and thus interest himself in behalf of your mother!—A singular circumstance, indeed! Is he a member of any evangelical church—a religious man, my dear!'

'Indeed, Madame, I don't know,' answered Emily. 'But he is a very good man.'

'Perhaps he may be, and I fervently pray heaven he is for your sake, my dear girl,' said this vile hypocrite, turning up her eyes, and assuming a long and lugubrious countenance as if she had but one thought, and that was for Emily's happiness.

'O, Madame, he is a good man and you

would think so, if you were to see him,' replied Emily. 'He is so kind and benevolent I know you would believe him to be a good Christian, whether a member of a church or not.'

'My dear girl, beware of old bachelors who appear so very kind,' said Madame.—'All is not gold that glitters, and all bachelors who appear so fair outside may have wicked hearts, I would not for the world say ought against the bachelor who has befriended you and your mother, but bachelors are dangerous characters among young and beautiful girls. Remember that, my dear girl, I had a little niece living with me once who resembled you very much, but a fatal disease hurried her into a premature grave. O, it was painful for me to part with her, while the blush of beauty was upon her cheeks and her voice rung out so merrily; but it was the will of heaven to take her from me, and my duty was to be resigned. Ever since her death I have felt an aching void in my heart; and my husband told me your society would fill it, for you looked just like her. And now my eyes see what he said is the truth. O, how happy it would make me to have you live with me as my adopted daughter. Would you not consent to that if your mother is willing? You would be happy in our house. You should learn music; for we have an excellent piano-forte, and every thing to make you happy and contented. But I must go in and see your dear mother. May I hope you will consent to take the place which my little niece once filled?'

'I can't say,' replied Emily. 'Come, go in and see mother.'

'I will, my dear,' she answered, following Emily to the bedside of her mother.

She approached softly and with measured tread to the bed on which the sick woman was reclining.

'Pardon me, Madame, for thus intruding,

but learning you were sick, and feeling deep interest in your daughter from the account my husband gave me of her yesterday I could not resist the temptation to call. I hope my presence will not disturb you quiet.'

'O, no, I'm glad to see all good people, my stay on earth must be short,' replied the sick woman. 'I well remember your husband's visit yesterday, and he said many things to comfort me.'

'I rejoice to hear it,' replied this hypocrite. 'He often visits the chambers of the sick and the dying to comfort and sustain them in such trying moments. He delights in doing good, and in relieving the distressed. He spends much of his time on such benevolent missions.'

'He's very kind and heaven will reward him,' said the widow.

'He spoke to me of your daughter and told me I should find a strong resemblance in her to my little niece whom I lost several years ago. I do find a very striking resemblance, indeed, and feel exceedingly anxious to adopt her as my daughter with your consent. May I indulge the hope of a consummation so much desired by me?'

'O, Madame, I hardly know what to say,' replied the widow. 'A very kind gentleman has spoken to me about her, but he is an unmarried man!'

'A gentleman and an unmarried man,' she repeated.

The hypocrite remained silent for a short space, and gave the widow time for reflection, believing silence would work more in her favor at that particular moment than anything she could say.

At last she said in a voice of solemn tone as if her fears for the girl were much alarmed:

'Dare you, my dear woman, commit the care and keeping of your daughter to such

nds? I know nothing against the man, but he is a bachelor, and knows not the moral training such a girl as your daughter needs.'

'I feel, deeply feel, what you say,' answered the mother, in broken accents.

'Your daughter is beautiful, my dear woman,' said the vile procuress. 'Heaven has bestowed upon her that dangerous gift—dangerous when not properly guarded, in a world of temptation in which our lots are cast. And can man who is, alas! too often

a tempter, properly protect her? I hope I trust you will reflect, seriously reflect before you adopt such a course. We are full of women, and have experienced, more or less, the dangers that surround our sex in a world like this! We know how to admonish and protect the young and beautiful of our time.

And against what power do we know how to guard them? Against the blandishments of men—against their seductive arts and their unsubdued passions. It may do in some cases to set a rogue to catch a rogue, but it will never do in this. I feel—I think I know the dangers of such a course.

As I before stated, I know nothing at all against this bachelor, but I speak of a principle—a vital principle! I love your daughter and would make almost any sacrifice to keep her from the temptations that surround, or all surround her after your spirit shall have taken its flight, accompanied by angels, to a brighter and a better world.'

She then turned her eyes upon the lovely Emily and continued.

'I knew, my dear woman, you must die more contentedly if your daughter is left in my care,' continued the procuress; 'than given to an aged unmarried man. Should I not?'

'I hardly know what to say,' replied the feeble widow. 'Dear Emily; what do you think?'

'I think, dear mother, that Mr. Colburne is a kind man,' replied Emily.

At that moment the bachelor and nurse arrived, and Emily flew to the door.

## CHAPTER XVII.

*A new character. Arrival of the Nurse. Emotions of the Procuress. Her art and cunning. The bachelor's strange feelings. The progress of events.*

MR. COLBURN entered the room, followed by the nurse who was a tall, thin spare woman about forty years of age. Her name was Tabitha Wrinkle. She was a maiden lady and had devoted many years to the cure of the sick.

The good and loving bachelor was somewhat surprised to see a plainly dressed, good-looking woman at the bedside of the widow; but he hoped and believed no female would be found in that scene of poverty and sickness who had not come from good motives. He was gratified that the widow had found a female friend in the time of trouble. He passed the compliments of the morning to the strange woman; asked the widow how she felt; introduced the nurse to her, and fastened his eyes upon Emily who stood near him.

Tabitha Wrinkle proceeded at once to discharge the duties of her office; and immediately busied herself in making up the sick woman's bed without regard to any one, or asking any question, knowing what to do she had no occasion to ask for any information.

'I'm glad the gentleman has brought you so good a nurse,' said the procuress; wishing to conciliate the good feelings of the nurse, and flattering her over upon her side.

'Flattery ill-becomes the chamber of sickness,' said the nurse, her eyes sparkling as if she needed no such praise.

'No, flattery, my good woman,' said the procuress. 'I only expressed an honest feeling.'

'Well, well, we've not much time for such discussions here,' said the nurse.

She began to hate the nurse, but concealed her feelings, and replied.

'Surely I do not pretend to understand the duties of a sick chamber as well as those who have devoted long lives to them.'

'Of course not,' was the short reply of the nurse.

By some means or the other, the bachelor had worked himself to a part of the room farthest from the place where the mother sat, and carried along with him her daughter.—The procuress noticed the circumstance and hoped the mother did. It convinced her that the bachelor was a libertine and doing all in his power, even in that chamber of sickness, to prepare the way for the subsequent ruin of Emily. It is by no means strange that she should entertain such notions, for she had always been accustomed to the society of bad men, and of such as she supposed him to be.

Bending her head forward the vile creature in a whisper, said to the mother:

'See there, I don't like that! That man is now making love to your daughter, even here in our presence! It makes me tremble for her fate! And yet he may be a very good man! May God help thee!'

The sick woman sighed, and leaned her head upon her left shoulder. The quick eye of the nurse saw her and hastened to her assistance.

'Do you feel faint?' asked Tabitha, putting her hand upon her patient's forehead.

'I don't know as I do much,' replied the widow, in a trembling voice.

'Perhaps you had better lie down,' said the nurse.

The patient consented, and soon the nurse

removed her to the bed. As she bent over her, Tabitha asked her in a whisper what the woman had said to her; for she had noticed that something was said.

'She fears for my daughter,' whispered the sick woman. 'Do you think there's any danger?'

'Danger of what?' asked the nurse, and wondering what she could mean; for she had been long acquainted with Mr. Colburn and didn't dream of what was passing in the widow's mind.

'I can say no more now,' murmured the patient. 'I'll tell you another time.'

'Does she appear to be more unwell than nurse?' asked the female hypocrite.

'Nothing serious, I trust,' replied Tabitha. 'I hope you will say nothing to disturb her quiet. It is very wrong to disturb the sick with too much talk.'

The nurse spoke in a whisper, but with earnestness and feeling.

'I only spoke of her beautiful daughter and the dangers that might surround her after she was dead,' said the procuress.

'Well, you had no business thus to trouble her mind,' whispered the nurse. 'There are folks enough to take care of her.'

'But see there,' whispered the courtesan, turning her eyes towards the bachelor and Emily who were conversing together in a low tone of voice.

'Fiddlestick!' said the nurse! in a voice above a whisper. 'I've known him for years and I'm quite sure he will never attempt to injure her. He has loved a hundred times and never ill-treated a female in his life.'

'He wants me to give him Emily,' said the mother. 'And that woman wants to adopt her as a daughter, too.'

'Well, give Emily to him,' said the nurse. 'I'll warrant he'll bring her up like a lady.'

Emily now came tripping along softly towards her mother with beaming eyes and glowing countenance.

'How do you feel, mother?' she asked.—  
Mr. Colburne says you will be well taken  
care of now. • He has bought an easy-chair  
for you which he expects will be brought here  
soon! O, I'm so glad!

'He's very kind; but I'm afraid we put  
you to too much trouble,' said the mother.

'You needn't be afraid of that,' said the  
nurse. 'I know he loves to do all the good  
he can.'

'I must leave you now, dear woman, for  
there is another sick woman I must call upon  
before I go home,' said this hypocritical and  
lying creature. 'May the God of mercy sus-  
tain and comfort you!'

She then bent down her head and whisper-  
ed in the ear of the widow. 'Beware of  
wolves in sheep's clothing. May heaven open  
your eyes to your daughter's danger.'

She could say no more, for the watchful  
nurse gently took hold of her skirt and pulled  
her back.

'The patient is under my care, Madame,  
and her quiet must not be disturbed,' said  
the nurse.

'A holy wish expressed in the ear of the  
weak that God would sustain and support  
them in their hour of need never disturbs  
their quiet,' said the vile woman.

Then directing her eyes to the sick wo-  
man, she continued:—

'May heaven bless you and give you that  
wisdom which is from above.'

She now went out in soft, slow and meas-  
ured steps, while the sick woman's eyes  
were upon her until she passed out.

'I wonder who that woman is!' asked the  
bachelor. 'She appears to feel a deep in-  
terest in Mrs. Pangbom.'

'I don't know her from Eve,' replied  
Abitha. 'She belongs to that class who  
have more zeal than knowledge, I reckon.  
For my part, I don't like her, and yet she  
may be a very pious person for aught I

know. She appears to feel mighty anxious  
about Emily, but she needn't worry, for I  
guess Emily won't suffer.'

'Well, well, Miss Wrinkle, don't say no  
more about it,' said Emily. 'Perhaps the  
woman's motives are good, but I'm not so  
much pleased with her as she pretends to be  
with me.'

'The woman appears to be sincere,' said  
the mother, whose ears were open to the con-  
versation.

'O, yes, mother, I suppose she is,' replied  
Emily.

Mr. Colburne was not in the habit of  
hating any of the softer sex, especially those  
whom he believed to be virtuous; but he did  
feel a sentiment towards that woman very  
near akin to hatred. His eye followed her  
as she left the room, and his heart felt, in  
some good degree the spirit of hatred and  
revenge, and he was determined to ascertain  
her character. Love has many eyes as well  
as instinct has, and he thought he saw in her  
some bad marks. The instincts of Emily  
had made the same discovery.

'Does that woman who has taken her  
leave desire to adopt Emily as a daughter?'  
he asked, addressing the mother, after a long  
pause.

'She does, indeed!' replied the mother,  
in a voice that told truly the many mingled  
emotions of her soul. 'What do you think  
of her?'

'I dare not say what I think least I should  
do her injustice,' he replied. 'I will en-  
deavor to find out more about her; I wish  
you had asked her name.'

'I never thought of that!' she replied, ex-  
hibiting much surprise. 'Strange that I  
should have been so thoughtless on the sub-  
ject. But I was so feeble and she said so  
much; but I must not think no more about  
it, now; I feel exhausted.'

The bachelor tarried awhile longer and

then went out to purchase some necessary  
articles for the patient which the nurse had  
ordered.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*The easy-chair. The housekeeper and the  
Irishman. The seducer. A new female  
character. A guilty conscience. Scene  
in a chamber. Woman's revenge.*

THE door bell rang out a loud peal, and  
Aunt Betty Osgood answered the summons.  
She found at the door, a large, robust son of  
the Emerald Isle, and asked him what he  
wanted.

'It is an aisy chair I would be after,' an-  
swered Pat.

'An aisy chair!' she repeated, in much  
surprise. 'What on earth do you want that  
for?'

'The maister of the house called it his  
mother's aisy chair,' he replied. 'And he  
tould me to get and bring it to him.'

'Told you to bring it to him?' she repeated.  
'In the name of—good gracious, what can  
he want of his mother's easy chair?'

'And by the powers, I didn't ask him at  
all at all,' he answered. 'He said you'd find  
it in the front chamber which he called his  
good mother's room.'

'Heavens and earth!' she exclaimed.—  
'What will he be after next, I wonder?'

'I couldn't tell ye, marm, what he'll be  
after looking for,' he answered. 'But may  
be some woman to put in't.'

'Some woman to put in't!' she reiterated,  
gazing wildly upon poor Pat. 'Some wo-  
man to put in't! What do you mean,  
sir?'

And her gray eyes snapped most furiously  
and her heart made nearly one hundred  
pulsations every minute. Pat was really  
astonished, but he knew not the secret  
springs of her action.

'Bother my eyes, and don't they put wo-  
men in aisy charis?' asked Pat. 'The dar-  
lint's always like the aisiast sates.'

'You bother my head!' she said, staring  
at him anxiously.

'And it's no great thing that will bother  
your head if an aisy chair can be after doing  
that same thing,' he answered, smiling.—  
'Come, bring down the article, for the maister  
of the house wants it.'

'Where is the maister of the house as you  
call him?' she asked.

'At a poor sick woman's in Orange Street,'  
he replied.

The whole secret had now got through her  
hair, and she was provoked enough to tear it  
all from her head. She knew the sick wo-  
man for whom he had sent for the chair, and  
trembled in every joint as if she would shake  
in pieces.

'And are ye afraid to be after going for  
the chair?' inquired he. 'It's not a crathur  
that will bite you, is it! If you are afraid I  
will be going after it meself. I'm not afraid  
of an aisy chair, if a woman has sat in it.'

'You've wonderful courage!' she replied.  
'I'll not have your great muddy boots any  
farther into the house than they are now.'

'And thin ye'll be after going for it your-  
self, marm,' he said.

'Perhaps I may, when I'm ready, but  
shan't be hurried by you, nor any other bog  
trotter from Ireland,' she said, manifesting  
not only impatience but anger also.

'And ye needn't be in such high blood,  
marm, for I'm as good as you any day,' he  
replied, while a scorn was upon his rough  
sun-burnt face.

'Have you seen the sick woman?' she  
asked, being a little more calm.

'No, büt I saw her darlint of a darter with  
her rosy cheeks, bright eyes and curling  
locks,' he answered. 'O, marm, she's  
beauty for an American gal.'

Aunt Betty could hear no more, but started up stairs like a steam engine, but she had not gone up but a few steps before she made a blunder and struck her nose upon one of them.

'By the powers,' mentally exclaimed Pat, hearing the housekeeper's fall, and laughing in his sleeve,' and she's after falling up stairs I think!

Aunt Betty rushed into 'Mother's Room,' seized the chair and holding it up for a moment, thus addressed it—

'So you're to be carried away to be used by a little witch that knows nothing of house-keeping, I wish your bottom was stuck full of pins and needles! A pretty use you will come to! He has always been very choice of you, because you were once his mother's, but now mother is forgotten and every thing else but that blue-eyed girl! O, heavens, what fools men are!

After saying that she hurried down with the chair and delivered it to Pat, her eyes sparkling, and her heart beating as if it would burst its narrow bounds.

'There, take it, and hurry away with it,' he said, pushing it up against the Irishman and almost knocking him over backwards.—

'Take it away out of my sight!

'And I reckon ye've got a flea in yuur ear.'

said Pat. 'Or, perhaps, a pin's got loose and after pricking ye.'

'Away! away!' exclaimed the excited housekeeper, motioning her long, slender arm towards him as Pat moved off with the chair upon his head, whistling some tune to show his contempt of such a housekeeper.

Breathing hard and much excited, Aunt Betty went at her house work with a vengeance.

We will now call the reader's attention to other characters in this drama of city life. Major Borland had long been intimate with a beautiful and once innocent girl. He had after many and wicked attempts succeeded in

seducing her, but he was now somewhat sick of her, and wished to be rid of her. When he first became acquainted with her, he represented himself as a bachelor. If he had not thus represented himself, and had not given her many and the most solemn promises of marriage, he could never have succeeded in thus ruining her prospects for ever. But he had thus represented himself, and thus promised her; and the work of ruin was accomplished. He had supplied her with money and paid for her board at a house of very doubtful reputation.

The Major had even kept alive his solemn promise of marriage after she had passed that climacteric in woman's life which is looked forward to with such deep interest, and expected to give birth to a child before many weeks should elapse. She was in the deepest agony lest that event should happen before her marriage with him. He began to think it was time to undeceive her and tell her it was impossible for him to marry her; but he dreaded to come up to such a point, and had delayed it long, quite too long, even in his own opinion.

He having seriously thought of the subject for some weeks, and sought for many expedients, such as hiring some person to marry her, or sending her into the country out of his sight and hearing; he finally concluded he must let her know the worst, and trust to chance for the rest. He did not know but that he had degraded her so much that he might induce her to lead a life of prostitution after the birth of her child. That was also one of his plans, and the one that to him seemed the most feasible; but he sadly misjudged the character of the woman whom he had thus abused and dishonored.

She was boarding on his expense at a house of assignation, but she was not aware of the character of the house when she took up her residence there. She had, however,

begun to be suspicious that all was not right, and determined to question the woman who kept it, on the subject. She thought she had seen enough to satisfy her that iniquity was practised within its walls.

True, this poor girl had fallen from woman's first and highest virtue; still she was not yet in the lowest depths of degradation, sin, and pollution. There was yet hope within her, that she might live a respectable life, and in some good degree atone for her past transgressions.

To her marriage with her seducer she yet looked with the deepest interest; believing that would hide her shame from the world and give her opportunity to recover from her present degradation.

The keeper of the house came into her room one morning, very smiling, and self-complacent as she always appeared, to hold a social conversation. The name of this girl was Mary Dillingham. Her native State was New Hampshire. She came to New York city as pure and innocent as the mountain breezes of the Granite State; but the wily arts and blandishments of a city bred gentleman had overcome her in an evil hour. Her father was a man of much spirit and energy, although poverty was his luck. And Mary possessed much of her father's high spirit.

'A pleasant morning, Mary,' said the housekeeper, smiling.

'It may be pleasant to those who are in a situation to enjoy it,' replied Mary.

'Why, you look gloomy!' said this housekeeper. 'Any thing happened of late?—Perhaps the Major does not call so often to see you as you would like.'

'Perhaps he don't,' replied the girl. 'It is true, he does not call so often as he once did.'

'Ah, these men are strange creatures, Mary,' said the mistress. 'Sometimes they love, and then again they don't.'

Miss Dillingham looked wild, and stared upon this heartless woman in surprise; but she made no other reply. The mistress noticed her wild desponding look, and continued—

'You seem to start and look troubled!—What is the matter?'

'What gigling, laughing and noise was that in the house last night and until nearly morning,' asked Mary.

'Why, did it disturb your slumbers?' impertinently asked the woman, while a sneer was on her face, and a leer in her black eyes.

'It was enough to disturb any one's slumbers, I should think,' replied Mary. 'But the noise was not all. Were they respectable people who made it?'

'Respectable people!' repeated the somewhat excited woman. 'Respectable people!'

'Yes, respectable!' reiterated Mary, emphasizing the word. 'Yes, respectable. Is there any thing very remarkable in the question?'

'There might not have been, if a *respectable* person had asked it,' answered the woman; placing a strong and significant emphasis upon the word respectable.

'O, God!' exclaimed this fallen girl. 'I did not once believe I should ever be thus taunted by one of my own sex!'

'Come, come, Mary, don't talk thus,' said the woman, regretting that she had thus spoken lest she might lose a profitable boarder, for Major Borland had paid well for the girl's board.

'But I must speak thus, or do violence to my own feelings,' replied Mary. 'I ask again. Is this a respectable boarding-house, or is it a house of —! O, heavens! I dare not speak the word!'

'Well, you have really broke out in a new spot,' said the mistress, sneering. 'I should

not suppose *you* would be interested to ask such a question.'

'O, my God! would that I had remained among my native hills where I could have breathed a purer atmosphere than I can breathe in this city! There, I was innocent and happy; but now I'm miserable, indeed!'

'Cheer up, Mary, and make the best of your condition. I hear the door-bell ring, and perhaps the Major has come to make you a morning call.'

The mistress hurried down stairs, and met the Major in the front hall.

'Major, I'm glad to see you,' she said.—'Your girl appears to be in some trouble. Don't you think she just asked me if I kept a respectable boarding-house!'

The woman laughed, but the Major had so much upon his mind that he did not feel like joining in her laughing. He had come to reveal some secrets to the girl which he had always kept dark.

'I pity the girl, but I may as well tell her all first as last,' he replied, after a pause of some minutes. 'It must come out, for I can keep her in suspense no longer. I must tell her this very morning that I am a married man!'

'Well, Major, it will strike her heart like an ice-bolt,' she said. 'But then she has a good share of spirit and may bear up under it. What do you intend to do with her?'

'That is more than I can tell,' he replied, 'I must first see how she takes the disclosure I am about to make her.'

The Major now went up and entered the room. Mary was weeping, but she wiped away her tears as he came in and tried to greet him with a smile, for she loved him and had given him her heart's best affections.

'Good morning, Mary,' he said, smiling, and shaking her hand.

She returned the compliment, and gazed with deep interest, a deeper interest than she ever felt before, upon his fair, plump face. He noticed by the expression of her countenance that deep emotions were agitating her soul. He wished he had taken some other occasion to confess his own deep damnation to a girl whom he had thus made miserable, and was about to sharpen that arrow already pierced her heart.

'Mary ——' he said, and then paused, his voice being choked by his own emotions.

'And what would you say?' she anxiously inquired, gazing intently up into his face.—'Speak and keep me no longer in suspense! O, God! I fear you have some terrible news! For Heaven's sake. Speak!'

'Be calm, Mary,' he said, recovering from the embarrassment into which his own feelings had thrown him. 'Be calm. That I have loved you, is most true, and therein lies my worst fault.'

'Have loved me!' she repeated, with great agony. 'Have loved me! O, God! I wish I had never been born, or had died ere I ever saw your face. But, speak!—What mean you?'

'Do, Mary be calm,' he said, trying to calm his own feelings and appear as he had been wont to appear before her.

'Then relieve me from this terrible suspense, and I will endeavor to be calm,' she said.

'Accidents will happen in this world even in the best regulated families,' he replied.

'Good heavens!' go on,' she exclaimed. 'Go on, sir. Go on, and let me hear the worst. I already suspect what is coming.—O, God! you have a wife already! Speak it, and extinguish the last ray of hope that still illumines my soul!'

'You have spoken truly!' he replied. 'I have a wife and daughter!'

Her head suddenly dropped upon her

bosom which heaved violently under its load; but her lips gave no utterance to the storm that was raging within. Both were silent for some time; and a terrible silence it was, more terrible than that of the tomb. At last she slowly raised her head, and turned her eyes upon him in one burning gaze that pierced his guilty soul like a poisoned arrow shot from the bow of a powerful enemy.

'You see me, a fallen, degraded girl!—she sobbed in broken accents of grief and despair. 'Behold the ruins of innocence which your own wicked arts have wrought! Have you a conscience? Yes, and its worm will never die! You have a wife and daughter! O God! and soon you'll be the father of another child! Know you not that woman's love can be turned to hate!'

She then rose up and stood confronting him, casting a wild and terrible look upon him that made him tremble in every muscle. Never had he seen such an exhibition of her spirit and power before.

She was once all love, and her face beamed with pleasing smiles in his presence; but now dark and frowning clouds were on her brow, giving token of the storm that agitated her soul. He began to fear that she might attempt some violence on his person, so enraged she seemed to be, and he stepped back a few paces.

'Guilty man!' she continued. 'No wonder you retreat; but I leave you to the stings of your own conscience. The time for my revenge has not come; but come it will, when you may feel how strong a woman's hate is when her love is turned into it.'

He expected a sighing and swooning, but dreamed not of such a storm. His conscience lashed him most severely; and he attempted to calm her feelings, but without success.—He tarried some time in her presence, but the longer he stayed the more sorely was his heart pressed. No arrangements could be

made with her at that time, for she utterly refused to be comforted. He finally left her, promising to see her again; but she heeded not his promises now that he had broken so many.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*Domestic troubles increase. Severe headaches. A wife's suspicions. Meeting of the libertine and gambler. The disguised parson once more. The bargain. The bitter bit. Woman's instinct.*

HUSBAND, don't you feel well to-day?—asked Mrs. Borland at the dinner table the same day he had visited Mary Dillingham. 'Surely you look uncommonly sober.'

'I think so, too,' said Elizabeth, their daughter. 'Perhaps father is afflicted with one of his headaches. Are you, father?'

'I am a little, my dear,' he replied, glad of any excuse to cover his shame and conceal his feelings from his family.

'You were out too late last evening,' said his wife. 'A man of your age must have his regular sleep, or he will feel the effects the next day. Men when they get to talking politics never know when to stop. I wish they would sometimes converse upon more important matters so far as the soul is concerned.'

'So far as the soul is concerned!' ran in the Major's guilty mind, but gave no audible expression to his thoughts.

He made no farther reply. As he stood at the window, he saw Job Snyder pass who looked up, nodded and smiled. The sight of that villain at that particular moment, made him feel still more guilty and depressed and lent on additional sting to his conscience.—There was a load upon his conscience and heart, which he was exceedingly anxious to shake off. It seemed to him that if he could



fix upon some plan by which he could get rid of Mary Dillingham, he should be comparatively happy. Some how or other, he feared she might do him some injury, if not bodily, at least she might find out his residence and appear in the presence of his family, perhaps, with her child in her arms. When he left her that day, she appeared desperate enough to do that, and even worse things.

The thought struck him that he might engage Snyder to help him in this his extremity. That villain was full of expedients and ready to do anything short of absolute murder for money, and perhaps he had a price for committing even that horrible crime, one at which humanity revolts more than at any other in the whole catalogue of human offences.

With such thoughts he left the house and followed in the wake of Snyder, as the gentleman promenaded down Broadway. He was dressed in the extreme of fashion, and walked as if he felt his own consequence. The excited Major followed him into an oyster saloon.

'Ah, Major, I'm glad to see you,' said Job. 'Will you take some oysters?'

'No, I thank you,' replied the Major. 'A few words with you, if you please.'

They retired to a private room. Job noticed that the Major felt an unusual degree of anxiety, but knew not the cause.

'I have not yet procured that beautiful girl,' said Job. 'Don't look so sober. We shall obtain her I think, and so does my Pussy.'

'We'll talk of that at another time,' said the Major. 'I've a girl now on hand of whom I wish to rid myself.'

'Ah, she sticks to you like a burr, does she?' asked Job, smiling.

'Ten thousand burrs would't trouble her so much as she does,' answered the Major,

'Sick of her, eh?' said Job, looking very sly and cunning. 'She has not become a mother on your hands, has she, Major?'

'No, but she soon will, unless I get rid of her,' replied the Major.

'Rather a bad fix, Major, that's a fact,' said Snyder. 'But sicker children have got well.'

'True, this case is a desperate one and requires a powerful remedy,' said the libertine. 'She has a thousand times as much spirit as I thought she had, and fear she may do some desperate deed.'

'What, poison herself?' asked Job. 'If she does that, there's an end of your troubles as well as of hers.'

'Not that, Snyder,' replied the Major. 'There's more danger of her cutting my throat than of poisoning herself. I can assure you, she is proud spirited and the love she once bore me is all turned into hate.—She is desperate. You see I could not overcome her virtue except upon the promise of marriage and—'

'The old story,' interrupted Job, laughing. 'But go on, Major.'

'And I told her this morning that I was a married man,' continued the Major.

'Ah, I see, there's the rub,' said Job.—'She now understands that you can't make your promises good. That always makes them squirm. I have seen similar cases.'

'And what do you advise me to do?' asked the Major. 'Money is no object.'

'Faith, it's an object with me, although I'm not entirely destitute of funds,' said Job, running his fingers through his long hair as if he would start up some new ideas for the emergency. 'Let me see! You say she has a devil of a spirit?'

'She has indeed,' replied the Major. 'If you could have seen her this morning, you would have thought so I'm thinking.'

'Well, I like these spirited damsels better than I do the stupid ones,' said Snyder.

'But you mustn't calculate on her want of virtue,' said the Major. 'Although she will soon become a mother, yet she could never be persuaded to pursue the career of a courtesan. She would resist that unto death. She must be approached in some other way.'

'Under the garb of virtue or religion I suppose,' said Snyder. 'I'm fully adequate to such tasks, for I have had some experience in that one. Now I can act a Methodist parson to a charm.'

'I wish she could be taken into the country away from my sight and hearing,' said the Major. 'But should I make such a proposal and offer her money enough to support her for a year, or two years, she would spurn me from her presence, if not run me through the heart with a dagger.'

'You are really nervous, Major,' said this gambler. 'I can do that thing for you as easy as a cat can lick her ear, but it will cost money, Major. It is money, you know, that makes the mare go. I should be compelled to give her a handsome sum, and must have a little myself to pay expenses.'

'The money is ready to any reasonable amount,' said the Major.

'Well, Major, taking every thing into consideration, do you think a thousand dollars beyond the bounds of reason?'

'That's rather heavy, but I'll give it, if you will take her out of my sight and hearing,' replied the Major.

'I'll try what virtue there is, either in the clerical profession or in the garb of a good orthodox cleric,' answered Job. 'I can personate either character to a charm.'

'I think you had better see her soon before she leaves her present boarding place,' said the Major.

Snyder said he would go that day or evening. Here the bargain was closed and the conversation ended. The Major left, and Snyder ate his oysters, and washed them

down with a glass of brandy. Before the Major left he drew a check for the money and gave it to Snyder. After tarrying a short time in the saloon, the rascal and gambler walked out with a cigar in his mouth, and mingled with the busy throng in Broadway, as much of a gentleman in his own estimation as any one in the crowd.

It was not long before he reached Madame Pussy's establishment and consulted with her upon the best course to be adopted, in order to insure the success of his enterprise. Upon any occasion in which a woman was concerned, he always took council with her.

She gave him direction and advice. As he succeeded so well in personating the character of a priest, he concluded to act in that capacity, and dressed himself accordingly.

It was agreed between themselves that he was to give the shibboleth to the keeper of the house where Mary Dillingham boarded, because if he did not she would not be likely to grant him admission, as priests were not in the habit of visiting that establishment. Ringing the bell and giving the sign, he was readily admitted, and took a seat in a private apartment, there waiting for Miss Dillingham, while the mistress went to call her.

'A strange gentleman wishes to see you,' said the mistress.

'I've no desire to see any gentleman,' replied the unhappy girl, in a voice deep and full of meaning.

'But I think he's a minister of the Gospel,' answered the housekeeper.

'A minister of the Gospel!' repeated Mary, with evident surprise, and trembling lest he might be a priest from her own native town, for there was one there who used often to visit her father's family.

'Yes, but how he came here, the Lord only knows!' said the mistress. 'You must go and see him. I dare say he has something of importance to communicate to you.'

'I can't see him,' said Mary, covering her face with her hands and weeping.

She did not, however, remain long in that state, but roused up and felt her spirit come again to her relief. The thought struck her that Major Borland might have sent the man, and she concluded to see him. Soon she was in the room with the pretended parson.

Snyder cast his eyes upon her face, and thought he never in his life saw such expression in a woman's face. She was not what some would call beautiful, but there was certain lineaments in her countenance that would always arrest the attention of a stranger and fix it upon her. There were marks of strong intellectual powers in her face, and the peculiar expression of her lips and mouth showed her undomitable spirit. Although she had fallen, yet her spirit was not broken. Snyder almost felt as if he was in the presence of a being intellectually superior to himself, but he plucked up his courage and addressed her in a humble serious manner.

'I suppose you deem it strange that one of my profession should call upon you,' he said, sighing and elongating his face.

'I confess, sir, I am somewhat surprised,' she replied, fastening her keen eyes upon him as if she would penetrate his inmost thoughts.

He saw that fixed gaze, and almost quailed before it. Her dark eyes shone like diamonds.

'I wonder not, but I'm here for your good,' he replied.

'But how knew you that there was one here that needed help?' she asked, while her eyes brightened, and her countenance grew more expressive.

'Ask not the source of that knowledge, but trust in Heaven,' he answered. 'Though your sins be red like scarlet, yet they can be washed white as wool.'

Her first thought was, that he had come there in disguise, being sent by her deceiver,

but his quotation from Scripture made her seriously doubt.

'Heaven knows my sins are great, sir, and that my repentance has been long and severe,' she replied.

'Such repentance always finds forgiveness for sins of commission or sins of omission,' he answered. 'Yes, dear woman, God's mercy is over all the works of his hands.—By repentance of your sins, and faith in his mercy and goodness, you will find pardon.—Well I know how shamefully you have been abused and what promises have been made you by a heartless man, but that is past, and I trust duly repented of, and the future only remains to be provided for.'

'Then you have seen Major Borland?' she said.

'Ask no such questions; dear woman,' he replied. 'I trust the arrows of conviction from the quiver of the Almighty has entered his soul, and he is a better man than when you last saw him. I came to you on an errand of mercy. I am an executive officer of a charitable institution whose object is the comfort and happiness of such ladies as you. We have funds contributed by the benevolent and good, to supply your present wants.'

'And what do you propose?' she asked, again more strongly impressed that ever that her visitor appeared to her in a disguised character, for she had watched most narrowly the expression of every lineament of his face, and believed she saw through his disguise. He saw that she watched him closely, but was not aware of the extent of her researches into his true character.

'To carry you into the country, supply you with money, and place you in an agreeable boarding house among good people,' he replied.

She was now almost certain that he was an agent sent in disguise to hurry her away from the city, and that Major Borland was at

the bottom of the enterprise. Believing this, she governed herself accordingly. She would scorn to take money from Borland himself, as any satisfaction of the wrongs he had inflicted upon her, and yet no one needed money more than she did. She had a few presents from her seducer, which she could turn into money, and she intended to do so, for she desired not to keep such mementoes about her person, or in sight of her eyes.

'You're very kind, sir,' she replied. 'But I can earn money in this city, whereas I might not be able to earn any in the country to which you propose to convey me.'

'Dear woman, I shall give you enough from our charitable funds to support you for a long while,' he said.

'Well, sir, I'm indeed an unfortunate woman, and will accept your charity,' she replied. 'When do you propose to convey me to the country?'

'To-morrow, if agreeable to you,' he answered, laughing in his sleeve, to think how admirably he had again personated a priest, and she smiling to herself to think how easily she saw through his pious covering.

'Then I suppose, sir, you can pay me now what you intend to pay, as well as at any other time,' she said, eyeing him very closely.

'O, certainly,' he answered. 'How much will answer your purposes?'

'O, sir, beggars mustn't be choosers,' she replied. 'I leave that to you.'

'Will a hundred dollars answer?' he asked, intending to pay her as little and keep as much for himself as possible.

'O, sir, I couldn't think of going into the country with that sum,' she answered. 'I should rather stay here than go with that amount.'

'I will make it two hundred,' he said, believing she would take that.

'O, no sir, I dare not go with that sum,

but should venture with six hundred,' she said.

He offered three, four and five hundred, but she said she ought to have a thousand, but would take six hundred. He began to think she was as singular an object of charity as he was a priest, but he finally paid her the sum she demanded. The time appointed to go was on the morrow, and he departed. The biter was bit. The viper gnawed at a file.

## CHAPTER XX.

*A bad bargain, or one not so good as expected. The pain of suspense. The improved appearance of a bad husband. The gambler's progress, and his feeble resolves. The fight.*

JOB SNYDER did not succeed with Major Borland's victim so well as he expected, or wished; for he intended to save more of the money for himself. After his interview with the unfortunate and unhappy girl; he sought the Major to inform him of the success he met with, in his enterprize. They had agreed upon a place of meeting; for the excited and even cowardly Major was extremely anxious to know the result of the villain's mission. Snyder had finished his work with all possible despatch in accordance with the expressed wishes of his employer. They met early in the evening.

'What success?' anxiously inquired the major.

'Not so good as I anticipated,' replied Snyder. 'I found her a mighty shrewd girl. I wonder how you succeeded so well with her. Ah, Major, you're death on the women. A pretty person, smiling face, agreeable manners, money and a few promises of marriage occasionally thrown in, did up the work; and yet every man couldn't have accomplished so much. That girl has a strong head, even if she had a loving heart.'

'There, there, Snyder, no more of that,' impatiently said the finished libertine.— 'Could'nt you make a bargain with her?'

'Don't be agitated, Major,' replied this cool villain. 'We have time enough for a full explanation. That girl is not to be caught with chaff, I can tell you. When she bargains she wants more than half the profits. She's a real shrewd Yankee, and her eye-teeth are well cut. I hav'nt met a more cunning jade this many a day.'

'But, what is the result?' asked the Major; growing more and more impatient.

'I shall get that out directly; but don't you think I ought to have had in the bargain half the funds?' inquired Snyder. 'Half is fair; but she's a hard one, Major. There is but one side to that question. If she's a fair specimen of New Hampshire girls, why then they can cheat the world, and the devil himself.'

'But what is the result of your interview?' asked the excited libertine.

'Why, the jade would'nt take a red cent less than six hundred dollars,' replied Snyder. 'I tell you, Major, she's a hard customer.'

'And then she agreed to go, did she?'—asked the Major.

'To-morrow,' replied Snyder, smiling at the Major's anxiety.

'Heaven be praised for that,' said the Major, breathing more freely.

'Yes, but then we ought to have shared the money equally,' replied Job.

'Never mind, I'll make it up to you if you get away out of this city,' said the Major.

'You're a gentleman and a scholar,' said Snyder. 'The work shall be done faithfully. You shan't hear that child cry, Major. When it comes into this breathing world, its crying voice can't reach your ears, nor its lips call you father.'

Such words from such a man, seriously effected the Major's mind for a brief space. He was silent and thoughtful. What little of humanity that was left in him was aroused and he felt a father's ought to feel. The brutes forget not their offspring, and can man be worse than the brutes that perish?—The Major's emotions for a short time were keen and cutting. His conscience was awakened, and he felt its stings. He wished from the bottom of his heart that he had never committed that, nor destroyed the happiness and character of that innocent and virtuous girl. For the moment he saw his guilt, and even trembled under the lashings of his aroused conscience. But, alas, how soon such feelings pass off, and man's evil propensities gain the ascendancy!

'Why, Major, a penny for your thoughts?' continued Snyder. You look even more solemn and serious than I did when officiating as priest on the occasion.'

'Your remarks did make me feel rather serious, but the girl will do well' enough,' said the Major, shaking off his serious and troublesome impressions. 'The money will sustain her handsomely until she is able to take care of herself. Be sure to carry her back into the country so far that she'll not be back again in a hurry.'

'Let me alone for that, Major,' replied Snyder, smiling. 'You won't hear from her, again; I am thinking of making a bargain with her for her child, especially if it should be a female. I think it will be handsome whether it takes after father or mother.—My Pussy could bring her up, and learn her to be as cunning and winning as her father.'

'There, Snyder, don't speak of that!' said the Major. 'For heaven's sake, don't wake up in me such thoughts! Convey her out of my sight and hearing. I wish to hear no more of the girl.'

They now parted. The Major was re-

joiced in the prospect of being rid of the girl whom he had so greatly deceived and abused, but still he could not shake off certain impressions which haunted him like ghosts.— Sometimes he thought he would abandon his evil practices, and never again attempt to destroy the character and prospects of a female merely for the gratification of his own bad passions, but these impressions and thoughts were not abiding. They formed no basis for moral principles which actuated his life. His habits had been practised too long to be easily abandoned. And although he might occasionally form resolutions of reformation; yet they were forgotten when temptation assailed him. It is much easier to form a new habit than to get rid of an old one.— One great burden was now removed from his heart as he firmly believed. For months this girl had been a source of great trouble to him, but believing he had shaken her off he was comparatively happy. He went home to his family and appeared much more cheerful than usual.

'Your head feels better, father, does it not?' asked Elizabeth.

'Very much improved, my dear,' he replied, smiling.

'Well, wife; have you and Mrs. Homer agreed upon the wedding day?' he asked.— 'I understood you were going to take council to day upon the subject.'

'We thought of next Wednesday evening,' replied the wife.

'Very well; and do the parties most interested agree to that?' he asked, turning his eyes on Elizabeth, and smiling.

'That's not too soon! is it, father?' she asked.

'O, no, my dear,' he replied. 'If your hearts are right, no matter how soon comes the happy day that makes them one.'

George Homer now entered the parlor, and endeavored to be cheerful and happy; but, there was a burden upon his soul that

weighed it down in spite of the near approach of his wedding day when he was to be united to a beautiful and accomplished girl, the loved one of his heart.

'Just in time, George,' said the father.— 'I understood the bridal day is fixed upon by the mothers, the high contracting parties in such cases.'

'I believe it is, if agreeable to you, sir,' replied George.

'Perfectly agreeable to me, George,' he answered. 'I was just saying to Elizabeth that when hearts are right, no matter how soon the day comes that unites them.'

The conversation did not lag, and all seemed to be unusually merry. Elizabeth and her mother, too, were glad to see the Major so cheerful. Young Homer did not pass the whole evening, but tarried as long as his passion for gambling would permit him.

That same evening before the city clocks told the hour of nine, young Homer was in a gambling hell, but not in Snyder's. He sought another place that evening, in the vain hope that change of place might produce change of luck.

That night he lost heavily, and at a late hour went home and sought his bed. But for a long time he courted sleep in vain.— It was nearly morning before sleep came to his relief. Having drank more freely than ever on such an occasion, he was quite intoxicated when he left the gaming table; but he staggered home and up to his chamber. That night his mother sat up much later than usual, and wondered why he didn't come, but she became tired of sitting up and retired some two hours before he reached home.

Never had Homer felt more miserable than he did that night after he left the gambling hall. It seemed to him as if the Fates had turned against him, and yet he cherished a hope of better luck in the future.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*The victim fled. The married man's trouble. The cunning of a housekeeper. The coolness of a gambler. Sharp-shooting between maiden ladies. The independence of a nurse. The sick chamber.*

ACCORDING to his promise, Job Snyder called at the house where Mary Dillingham boarded early in the morning, for the purpose of conveying her into the country.

'You've come after that woman, I suppose,' said the housekeeper.

'I have,' he replied. 'Has she packed up her things and all ready? I hav'nt much time on my hands now to spare.'

'Not two hours after you left her, she did pack up without my knowledge; a carriage drove up to the door, and away they went, bag and baggage,' she replied.

'What gone?' he asked, being much surprised. 'Gone!'

'Yes, and I hav'nt seen her since,' she answered. 'The thing was managed very adroitly.'

'Then by heavens she has outwitted me and the Major, too!' he said, looking down upon his ministerial garb. 'And I appear in costume for nothing. She's an artful woman.'

'You never spoke truer words,' she answered. 'What will the Major do, now?'

'I cannot tell; but he is round the corner of the street waiting to see her get into the carriage and pass from his sight forever. I will call him and let him know that she has escaped.'

Snyder now called the Major, and they entered the house together.

'Gone!' repeated the Major. 'Gone!—How? where? when?'

'Yesterday afternoon, in a carriage, but where heaven only knows!' replied the housekeeper. 'Ah, Major, I thought she would serve you some trick. She was desperate after you told her you were a married man.'

'Serve me a trick!' he said. 'She has, indeed, but if she has left the city, she is welcome to the money that I have given her.'

'And then you had given her money?' inquired the housekeeper.

'A cool six hundred this good parson gave her by the direction of the Major,' replied Snyder.

'This good parson!' repeated the housekeeper, laughing, and being joined in the laugh, by Snyder.

The Major felt like doing any thing but laughing. His face was as long as a boot-jack, and his emotions can be better imagined than described. He could not imagine where the victim of his seductive arts could have gone to. Her thus leaving the house at such a time and under such circumstances boded no good to him he feared. It seemed to him his condition was worse than it had ever been before.

Betty Osborne visited the sick woman; and much to her surprise and disappointment Tabitha Wrinkle answered the summons.—They gazed upon each other for a moment in silence.

'There is a sick woman here, I understand,' said Betty.

'When I'm seen in a house it is a pretty good sign that patients are within,' replied Tabitha. 'Will you walk in. The woman is fast wasting away in consumption, but she's quite comfortable this morning, considering her extreme condition.'

'I'm glad your patient is so comfortable,' answered Betty, following the nurse into the room.

The sick woman sat in that same easy chair, and looked really beautiful. The nurse had just finished combing the hair of her patient; every lineament of whose countenance expressed kindness, benevolence and Christian resignation. Her deep blue eyes shone with remarkable lustre, and a heavenly smile played round her thin lips as Aunt Betty approached and shook hands with her.

'Quite feeble, I perceive,' said Betty, gazing into the woman's beaming eyes.

'Yes, madame, my days are almost numbered,' replied the patient. 'But I have great reason to be grateful to God that my sufferings are no worse. We must all pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death; and happy is she who sees the star of hope lighting her way to a happy immortality.'

Aunt Betty was not in a suitable frame of mind to relish such conversation or sentiments; yet she endeavored to suit herself to the occasion.

'True, indeed,' replied Betty, assuming a very serious look and tone of voice. 'I'm

glad to find you so comfortable. You have friends who visit you and supply all your needful wants. I thought I would just drop in and see.'

'You're very kind,' replied the sick woman; feeling grateful to all who interested themselves in her behalf. 'I have many kind friends, even more than I deserve, I fear. Mr. Colburne has been very kind and permits me not to suffer for any thing which money can purchase.'

'Indeed!' replied Betty, looking very wise, and making no other reply.

'Then you know Mr. Colburne, do you?' asked the sick woman, noticing Betty's peculiar expression of countenance, and her laconic answer.

'I've often heard of the gentleman,' replied Betty.

'I hope you know no ill of him,' said the widow, feeling her suspicions aroused; and yet she was slow to believe any ill of him.

'I would not do injustice to any person; but I feel an interest for your daughter,' replied Aunt Betty.

'You cannot feel a deeper interest than a mother does,' said the widow, feeling somewhat alarmed, which the keen eye of the nurse noticed.

'I presume not,' answered Aunt Betty, very seriously. 'Young girls, when left without their natural guardians, are often placed in delicate situations, and the more especially if they possess an extraordinary share of beauty.'

'I ought not to suspect him!' said the widow. 'And I don't suspect him. He has shown himself a good man, as I trust he is. He wishes to adopt Emily, as a daughter.'

'Adopt Emily as a daughter!' repeated Aunt Betty. 'Did ever any body hear the like of that? An unmarried man, adopting a handsome girl in the sixteenth year of her age, as a daughter! Who ever heard of such a thing?'

'Madame, as I before said, I feel a deep interest in the prosperity and welfare of your daughter,' said Aunt Betty. 'Some persons might consider such things of little importance; but to me, and I dare say they are to you, all important.'

Shaking the sick woman feelingly by the hand, Aunt Betty took her leave very much to the gratification of the nurse. As she

stepped upon the sidewalk she met Emily on her return home. She gazed upon the girl and O, how much she hated her beauty.—She did not wish to be recognized by Emily, and covered her face with a veil to conceal her sharp features from the keen eyes of the girl. Emily passed her but did not notice who she was, a rather fortunate circumstance for Aunt Betty who hurried home without delay.

The nurse told Emily she was sorry she had not returned sooner, for she might have seen a gray-eyed, sharp-nosed and very pious female who pretended to feel a wonderful interest in her favor. Emily expressed indifference, and merely inquired if it was the same woman who had been there previously. In spite of the nurse's influence, Aunt Betty had succeeded in making an impression upon the widow's mind.

## CHAPTER XXII.

*The varieties of human life. Its joys, sorrows, virtues, vices, poverty and riches.—The dance. The games of whist. The scene changes. The chamber of death.—The blessing of a good woman.*

THE curtains of evening closed over the city, and many hearts were glad and joyous, while others were sad and sorrowful. The air was calm and pleasant, the stars came out one after another in the azure firmament and looked down upon a city filled with joy and sadness, wealth and poverty, virtue and vice, and all those varieties of fortune incident to human life.

In the upper part of the city, in a fashionable street where the wealthy and aristocratic had their abodes, carriages might have been seen driving up to a splendid house brilliantly illuminated for some joyous occasion. It was the residence of Major Borland, and the occasion, the marriage of his daughter to George Homer, whose acquaintance the reader has already made.

The guests had all assembled, and at last the priest arrived who was to join their hands and pronounce George Homer and Elizabeth Borland man and wife according to the statute in such cases made and provided.

The bride and bridegroom were dressed in the richest and most fashionable style,

and the former never looked more beautiful than she did on this occasion. All eyes were turned upon her as she and the partner of her choice entered, hand in hand, the brilliantly lighted room. Some, more observant than others, thought they discovered a shade of gloom and sadness upon the face of the handsome young bridegroom; but they knew not the cause. That was deeper than their keen eyes could penetrate. The evils of gambling and drinking had not yet become so telegraphed in the flesh as to be noted by casual observers; but the young man felt and sincerely regretted them on this occasion. It seemed to him that he would never gamble again, and yet the memory of his losses, coming fresh into his mind begat a desire to regain them.

The parties stood up and the ceremony was performed, making them one in the contemplation of law. The happy bride was kissed, and the festivities of the evening commenced in good earnest. The wine flowed freely, and the cake was pronounced by the young ladies perfectly delicious. Under the influence of the wine and the hilarity of the occasion, many jokes were cracked by the older guests. And Major Borland endeavored to be as cheerful and happy as any of the company; but there was a load like lead upon his heart which the stimulus of the wine nor the happy jokes of the guests could not raise. It was fixed there as a dead weight upon all the pleasures of the evening. How true is the saying—'A guilty conscience, who can bear?' This old libertine, even on this joyous occasion, found the words too true for his conscience.

We turn now to another scene in this drama of city life.

Through the day Mrs. Pangborn had been in a very bad state. Madame Pussy had been there, but the nurse absolutely forbid this woman's having any conversation with the patient, and so she was compelled to leave without accomplishing her object. She hated the nurse and told Snyder after her return home that she should delight in wringing the long neck of that impertinent and saucy nurse. The good bachelor had been present a great part of the day, but towards sunset he went home, promising to return again in the course of the evening.—During his absence a marked change had occurred in the sick woman, and the nurse

knew her end was nigh. Consumptive patients often drop away suddenly and before they are aware of it themselves. The practiced eye of the nurse noticed the change, and saw the shadows of death creeping over the countenance of the patient.

'Do you feel any worse?' asked the nurse, rubbing the sick woman's temples, and feeling her pulse.

'I don't know as I do,' feebly responded the sick woman, turning up her brilliant eyes upon the nurse, and gazing steadfastly upon her as if she would read the thoughts of the nurse. 'I feel very weak, but no more pain than usual. Mr. Colburne has not returned, I think he said he would come back again this evening.'

'He did, but I think I will send Emily after him,' said the nurse.

The patient was silent, but thoughtful.—Emily hurried along, and soon rang the doorbell of the bachelor's house, and Aunt Betty came to the door.

'Is Mr. Colburne at home?' asked Emily, in a voice of trembling; for she was almost out of breath, she had walked so fast.

'Why, what's the matter? You seem to be in a terrible flurry,' said Aunt Betty.

'My mother is very low, and the nurse would like to have Mr. Colburne come over to our house,' replied Emily. 'Is he at home?'

'He's in his chamber and wouldn't like to be disturbed now,' answered the cold-hearted, envious housekeeper.

'I know he would, if he knew the nurse had sent for him,' said Emily.

'You seem to know a great deal, even more than older people,' said Aunt Betty; feeling mad enough to bite off the little jade's head, as she always called her.

The lover's ears were open and heard the music of his beloved one's voice. Soon his footsteps were heard on the stairs, and Emily's hand was in his.

'Miss Wrinkle, sir, wishes you to come to our house,' said Emily.

'I go immediately,' he replied; taking Emily's arm, and hurrying away.

The bachelor and Emily tripped along lightly and in exact time. He thought he never walked so easily with a female in his life, and he had walked with thousands.—Soon they entered the house. The sick woman remained about the same; but she

was evidently about to close her eyes upon all earthly things.

'Do you think she is dying?' anxiously inquired Mr. Colburne, in a whisper.

'She may continue till morning, and she may breathe her last in less than an hour,' answered the nurse, in a low voice.

'I would like to speak with her,' he said. 'Will it do any hurt?'

'Not for you to converse with her, if you don't talk too long,' she answered.

He now slowly and softly advanced to the bedside when she looked upon him and sweetly smiled. Such a smile, so calm, so resigned, he never saw. It was like sunshine upon his soul.

'You feel easy I hope,' he said, in a tremulous voice; for his heart was almost too full for utterance. Such emotions never before agitated his breast.

'Quite comfortable, considering my extreme weakness,' she replied, in a voice scarcely above a whisper.

There was a short pause; and a solemn stillness was in that room. All felt as if unrelenting death was about to enter the windows and close the scene.

'Mr. Colburne!' she continued. 'My time is short, I may never again see the sun rise to gladden the scenes of earth, but I'm prepared. But one tie holds me to this world! That is now severed, and I'm ready to go hence to be here no more forever! I have silently prayed to Heaven to give me faith. I feel that my prayers are answered. My hope for a bright world beyond the grave is strong and bears me up; and my fears that you might abuse my daughter have flown from me. I give her to you, and pray God to bless you both.'

After uttering these words; she extended her trembling hand and placed it in his. He pressed it; the tears flowed from his eyes, but he could not make any other reply. It seemed to him that years of bliss were crowded into a single moment; so intense were his feelings.

'Come here, Emily,' she continued, in a voice still more feeble and tremulous.

Emily obeyed the summons, and stood beside the weeping bachelor. The mother withdrew her hand and placed Emily's in his. That was the crowning bliss of all his joys. The soft touch of the hand went

through all his nerves like an electric shock, and gave him new life.

'Be kind one to another,' she continued. 'Live the life of Christians; and we all shall meet again beyond the shores of time where there will be no sickness, no sorrow, no parting!'

The nurse took a seat nearer the bed; and the bachelor and Emily rose and advanced a few steps, in the same direction.—The nurse's eyes were upon the patient, watching every movement she made, and expecting every inoment to hear the death-rattle in her throat; but she was disappointed; for this Christian woman fell into that sleep which knows no waking, ere the nurse was hardly aware that the spirit had taken its flight to a brighter and better world.

The nurse softly rose and bent over the lifeless form; and gazed upon it intently as if she could hardly believe her own eyes.

'How easily she breathed her last!' said the good and faithful nurse; placing her hand upon the cold, marble forehead, and sighing.

'Is she dead?' asked Colburne; straining his eyes upon the pale face.

'She is; and how calmly the Christian dies!' she answered.

Emily stood weeping; but uttered not a word. She was calm, yet she was deeply affected. The sad event had long been expected; but it was now past.

Mr. Colburne called in some female help to assist the nurse; and took Emily home with him that night. As he entered the house with his beloved one, Aunt Betty wondered if the girl was going to remain there that night.

'The good woman is dead,' he said to Aunt Betty. 'You'll prepare the bed in "Mother's chamber" for Emily. She will sleep here to-night.'

A thunder-bolt from a clear sky could not have shocked the housekeeper more; but she concealed her bad feelings, and flew up to the chamber to prepare it for the 'little jade.'

But we must drop the curtain over that domestic scene; and leave the parties to their own reflections.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

*The dead are buried. Southern gamblers. The wife's suspicions and discoveries. A new combination of rogues. The bachelor's troubles. The libertine's defeat.—Virtue triumphant.*

Time passed on. The good widow was buried and a handsome marble grave-stone marks the place where she sleeps. Emily, the beautiful, as she was called, was taking lessons in music for which she had an excellent tact, and attending to other and more solid branches of an education. She had her home at Mr. Colburne's in spite of all the influence which Aunt Betty had exercised to prevent it.

George Homer and his wife occupied a splendid house in a fashionable part of the city. Major Borland was still in trouble, having not been able to ferret out the hiding place of Mary Dillingham. He began to hope she had forever left the city; and, consequently, felt better as that hope grew brighter as days wore away.

For some days after his marriage, young Homer was quite attentive to his wife, and had not visited the gaming table but one evening during the space of a week, and that evening he did not tarry so long as usual, but he tarried long enough to lose a large amount of money.

Two gamblers from the South were in the city and visited Snyder's saloon on the same evening when Homer played. Even Job Snyder and his associates had found more than their match in their Southern blacklegs. They knew more tricks than Snyder did, for he lost heavily.

Now gamblers cheat each other as often as they do others, if they have the power.—It was some relief to Homer to know that one who had bled him so freely had been copiously bled himself.

The Southern blacklegs took quite a liking

to young Homer and proposed a partnership to him for the purpose of cheating Snyder and his associates. Homer consented to the arrangement, and began to learn some of the cheats and tricks by which he had been so thoroughly swindled.

The second evening he played with them, he and the Southerners won a handsome sum of the other three, which they divided equally. Homer just began to see into some of the mysteries of gambling; but he was not aware that the gamblers from a more sunny clime were setting a trap for him.—He was in high spirits, and played a very skilful hand. His new friends had taught him some tricks, but not all.

For the first time his eyes were opened to the fact that Snyder and his confederates were banded together for the express purpose of cheating him, and he thanked his Southern friends for the information.

The playing became desperate and heavy stakes were up. There seemed to be no lack of funds. Homer and his new associates won largely; and Snyder and his associates had found their match, and even more.—They soon knew enough that their intended victim was leagued with the gamblers from the Mississippi and Ohio rivers; nevertheless they played on, planning out all sorts of new tricks, and practicing the old ones; but after all, their skill, or tricks could not save them. Snyder's bank was almost broken; but such fortune he had experienced before, and went on playing the more desperately.

But we drop the curtain over the gambling scenes for the present, and turn to others.

In less than two weeks after her mother's death, Emily did not return in the after part of the day from her music lessons at the usual hour, and Mr. Colburne began to get quite uneasy.

The sun had set and twilight had fallen upon the city and yet the beloved Emily had

not returned. As might well be expected, the bachelor was in great agony of spirit.—He began to think he must be up and scouring the city.

'Did she say she should be gone longer than usual?' anxiously inquired Mr. Colburne of Aunt Betty.

'I made no conversation with her,' replied Aunt Betty, with apparent indifference; yet she was glad the 'little jade' was gone, and hoped she never would return.

'But where can she be?' asked the excited bachelor; going to the window, and looking down street in the vain hope of seeing her beautiful form and graceful motions among the crowd that was thronging the sidewalks.

'I know not,' replied Aunt Betty. 'Perhaps, she has found a younger gentleman than you are. You know my opinion of adopted daughters, especially of young and handsome ones. I should not wonder if she had a sweetheart long before her mother died. Some of these young girls are very forward, Mr. Colburne. Mark that!'

'O, my God! I'll hear no more from your tongue! I must find her, if it costs all I'm worth!' he exclaimed, rushing out of the house, and hastening to the place where she received her music lessons.

Much time did not elapse ere he found the music teacher, who told him that she took her lesson at the usual time and went away. He rushed up and down several streets, like one almost crazy, but heard no tidings of the lost one. He hastened home again, hoping she might be there; but no Emily had appeared.

'Tea is ready,' coolly said Aunt Betty, as he entered the house.

'Has Emily returned?' he anxiously inquired; breathing hard, and looking wild.

'I have heard nothing from her,' she replied. 'Come, tea is ready, and you never like it when it has been standing long.'

'I want no tea!' he replied; rubbing his forehead, and gazing upon the chair Emily used to occupy. 'Where can she be?'

'Mr. Colburne, if I were a man, I think I should not fret so about a young girl who was no relation to me,' she answered, manifesting a cold indifference which was like ice to his soul. 'I've given you my opinion about the girl, before, and after she came here and I think you'll find them correct.'

'Gracious heavens! where can she be,' he exclaimed.

'Mr. Colburne, you've asked that question several times,' she replied.

'And would to heaven, I could get an answer!' he said, again rushing into the street in the hope of meeting her, or picking her out of the crowd.

'Ah!' chuckled the housekeeper to herself. 'There's a tempest in the tea-pot!—He'll begin to find it out one of these days that my opinions are worth something, although he has heeded them so little. I hope he'll never again set eyes on that little jade and I begin to think he will not. Something has happened to her, no doubt, or she would have been at home before this hour. He'll begin to see the folly of loving such a young thing. I believe the man thinks he loves her! What a farce! ha, ha, ha. After all I must confess the little jade behaved well. She did not seem to be proud or haughty in her new situation, but then I think that was all cunning. She is cunning, that's fact.'

Thus Aunt Betty exulted over the misfortunes of the bachelor, while he was exerting every nerve to find the lost one. In the course of an hour he was at home again, to see if she had not returned. Finding he was not at home, he hurried to printing office and offered a reward of a thousand dollars to any one who would find the lost girl. The advertisement came out in the morning jour-



nals, and many engaged in the search in the hope of obtaining the reward.

The bachelor passed a sleepless night.—His troubles were great; but Aunt Betty was cool as a cucumber, and exerted herself to keep the household affairs in excellent order; for hope again revived in her heart. The bachelor had been taught a very severe lesson, and she indulged the hope that he would improve by it, and at last consent to take her to share his joys and divide his sorrows.

Time passed, and nothing was heard from the beautiful Emily or the much injured Mary Dillingham. Snyder had given up the search for her, he had enough to do to take care of his own concerns; for the Southern gamblers had broken him and his confederates, and began their work upon George Homer, who now began to absent himself from home greatly to the sorrow of his lovely wife; but as yet she had made no complaint. However, she began to suspect him of gambling. The truth is, when he was having such good luck with his new confederates, he very foolishly showed his wife a roll of bills which he confessed he had won at cards as a mere matter of amusement. She believed him; for she knew he was a scientific player, and at the same time cautioned him against the practice. He assured her there was no danger of him, and he felt so at that time; for his luck seemed to have turned.

A few evenings after that, he came home very late. It was nearly two o'clock in the morning, and she had not retired, but sat up waiting for him. She feared some accident might have happened to him, but she feared more that he was engaged in gambling. He entered the house as softly as he could, and was greatly astonished to find his wife in the parlor. He had lost very heavily and drank freely. She noticed that he looked unusually wild, and that his face was much flushed.

'Why, George, where have you been until so late an hour?' she asked.

He was so excited, that he knew not what answer to make. Lying never came easily to him, especially lying to his wife; but the passion for gambling had induced him to utter many falsehoods to screen his one great sin, that sin which most easily beset him.—Alas, that it should lead to so many others! He hesitated.

'Why George, don't you speak?' she continued with more earnestness. 'O, heavens, I fear you have been gambling!'

'What makes you think so?' he asked, blundering into a chair; for he was more intoxicated than she ever knew him to be.—That circumstance also increased her alarm.

'O, my God!' she exclaimed, covering her face with her handkerchief, and weeping. 'Have I come to this? George Homer, you've been drinking to excess! Gambling and drinking! All is lost!'

And she wept as if her young heart would break. He, too, was seriously affected; for all the finer feelings of his soul had not yet been destroyed.

They sat a long time in silence, until he fell asleep in his chair and muttered in his dreams strange and incoherent sentences.—She listened to his utterances, and occasionally heard 'doubling the stakes, that trick's mine,' &c.

They sat till daylight had streaked the east and then he retired to the chamber, but she did not follow him. The truth is, she was almost afraid to lie in the same bed with him, he looked so wild and had talked so strangely in his dreams.

This was her first really sorrowful night. She began to regret that he had ever been taught the game of whist. And the thought of ever playing again herself was really painful at that time. How quickly other steps follow in the road to ruin when the first one is taken!

Job Snyder was a poor man, but he was not in despair. He had only lost the money he had cheated out of George Homer and others, and hoped and believed he could find more victims. He endeavored to persuade Homer from playing with the Southern blacklegs; not from any good motives, however, but that Homer might not lose what he yet hoped to win of him. But Homer had cut his acquaintance, and would not speak with him.

The Southern gamblers had convinced Homer and pointed out how Snyder and his associates had swindled him and he believed them; hence he would have no more connection with him.

The blacklegs from the South had played a deep game. It is no wonder that they could deceive and blind the eyes of young Homer when they had skill and tricks enough to win Snyder's money and break him.—Biter's are sometimes bitten, especially among gamblers.

Long days and painful nights had been passed by the sensitive bachelor; but no tidings of his lost one had reached his ears. He had increased the reward in the newspapers to two thousand dollars; such a reward induced many to engage in the search.—The city was scoured in all directions, but without success.

Aunt Betty was tully confirmed in her belief that the girl would never come back to live with Mr. Colburne, and that belief was a source of great joy to her. She redoubled her attentions to the affairs of the house; and hope kept her heart whole. She plied all her arts to make the bachelor believe that Emily was not only a very forward, but even a bad girl before her mother died.—She could see it all in her eyes, while her beauty had blinded him as she often told him. But he would not believe her, yet sometimes he had doubts and misgivings.

But we will not keep the reader in suspense, if the sensitive bachelor was.

The same evening Emily was lost, the old libertine, Major Borland, was with her in a richly furnished room in Madame Pussy's house of assignation. The way she came there was this, Job Snyder had for several days watched her and ascertained where she took her music lessons. He disguised himself in his old character of the Methodist parson and invited her to his house; telling her that his wife had some presents for her on account of her looking so much like her niece she had lost. Although she had no fancy for him, and had even suspected he was not so good as he pretended to be when he visited her mother; yet he prevailed upon her to accompany him to his house, for a short time.

Emily was reluctant to go; but his consummate arts won her confidence, and she went. The procuress received her with open arms, and covered her face with kisses; pretending the while that it seemed to her that her beautiful niece had come back from the spirit land.

After tarrying a short time, the procuress presented her with an elegant gold watch and chain, but Emily was reluctant to receive it. The woman forced it upon her, and placed the gold chain about the girl's neck.

After awhile Emily said she must go; but the vile woman could not think of it. She must stay and take tea, and that she had sent her husband after Mr. Colburne to spend the evening there, and accompany her home.—That in some good degree quieted Emily. But Snyder returned and said Mr. Colburne could not come; but was called out of the city on important business and would not return for some days, requesting Emily to tarry where she was.

Matters looked suspicious to Emily; but Snyder produced a letter, written for the occasion, purporting to be signed by Mr. Col-

burne, requesting her to stay. The letter together with her dread of living with Aunt Betty when the bachelor was absent, overcame her objections, and she remained.

The same evening Major Borland called, and was ushered into a room where the procuress and Emily sat. Soon the vile woman went out. Borland was charmed with her beauty and talked pleasantly about such matters as he thought could interest her. At last he ventured to seat himself beside her on a sofa, and began to play with the curls of her hair; calling them beautiful, and praising her blue eyes. At last he gently took her hand; but the teachings of her good mother coming fresh to her recollections, she instantly withdrew her hand from his grasp; rose, and seated herself in another part of the room.

The Major was thrown *hors de combat*, but he renewed the siege with the more zeal, until she pushed him away, and stood before him like an accusing spirit. She told him in words which had an emphatic force and deep meaning; never to place his hand upon her again.

Her eyes flashed, and the expression of her countenance brought to his memory his former victim, Mary Dillingham. That memory made him somewhat cowardly, and he gave up for that night; but was determined to make other attempts after the artful procuress had trained her. Emily told the woman how rudely she had been treated by the gentleman, but she answered that he was a very fine man and did not intend to insult her.

Emily retired for the night; but she was unhappy in spite of the kindness and attentions of the procuress.

The next day, the woman commenced her artful training; but she found the girl was not so easily induced to stray from the path of virtue as she hoped. The instructions, warnings, and advice she had received from

her mother were a formidable barrier against all this woman's arts, a more formidable one than she had ever encountered before. She had been in the habit of training girls whose parents were either drunkards, or bad characters, and who had never received the good lessons Emily had, and therefore such girls were more easily overcome.

The Major made his second appearance with no better success than attended his first. Emily desired to go and take her music lessons; but she was told that Mr. Colburne did not wish her to do so until his return; besides, there was an instrument in the house on which she was urged to practice. She did so, but with a heavy heart. She thought it strange that she was not permitted to walk out, but again she was met with Mr. Colburne's orders as the excuse.

Thus she was kept day after day, until her heart almost sank within her. Major Borland was a constant visitor and had several interviews with her; but each succeeding one was more discouraging to him than those which had gone before.

The virtue of this imprisoned girl was more than a match for all the combined arts of Borland, of the procuress, and of Snyder himself.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

*The troubles of the wicked. The lost found. Great rejoicing. Rogues absconding.—The lunatic, &c.*

'We must give it up,' said Snyder to his mistress. 'The girl can never be conquered by all our arts combined. Her mother's voice is continually sounding in her ears.'

'I begin to think so, too,' replied the procuress. 'I never saw such a piece of humanity in my life! The creature grows worse and worse every day, and begins to suspect us. In fact she has always enter-

tained some doubts about us. And the Major says his powers are about exhausted.'

'Well, there's the reward of two thousand dollars offered,' he said. 'Had we not better try to get that, for I'm quite satisfied the girl will never yield.'

'But how?' asked the wily woman. 'If we give her up, she will let all be known, and we shall be entangled in the meshes of the law. I don't like that.'

'You would like it as well as I should,' he answered. 'But she never saw me except as a pious priest, and she could not inform against me.'

'But here stands the house, and she will not be likely to forget that,' said the artful woman.

'True,' said Snyder, scratching his head. 'But we must contrive to get that reward, for you know those Southern devils have won all my money.'

'Yes, and you ought to be ashamed of it,' she replied, showing some anger.

'But they know some tricks, the New Yorkers have not yet been taught,' replied Job.

'The more's the shame,' she answered. 'Well, something must be done, for the girl is in great distress, and even threatened to leave this very morning. I am obliged to watch her every moment. She often leaves her room and sits at the front windows; and I've told her it is not proper to be looking out of the windows into the street.'

'You must put a stop to that, for hundreds are upon the look out,' he said. 'The two thousand dollars reward must be had. The money is needed now. The profits of our business has very much fallen off recently.'

While they were thus conversing, one of the searchers for the lost girl in hopes of getting the reward, saw the beautiful face of Emily at the window. He knew the character of the house; and at once suspected that she might be the girl he was in pursuit of,

and immediately took measures to search the house.

The sorrowful and despairing bachelor was informed; but the reader must imagine what his emotions were on receiving such information; for no pen can describe them. The name of the person who made the discovery was James Talford, one of the Police, who had devoted several days to the search. He engaged an athletic fellow to assist him, and the bachelor in rescuing the girl from her imprisonment.

'I will put a stop to that foolish practice,' said this heartless woman going up stairs, and calling Emily into her own room which was situated in the back part of the house. Emily came at her call, and inquired what she wanted.

'My dear, you must not sit at the front windows so much,' said the woman. 'It is not becoming in you to be gazing into the street so much.'

'I want to go out and walk,' said Emily. 'I'm tired of this confinement.'

'Mr. Colburne gave me strict orders not to permit you to go out until his return,' said the lying woman.

'It is very strange that he should be absent so long,' answered Emily, gazing into the face of the woman as if she would read her most secret thoughts.

'Keep away that vile man who comes here almost every night to insult me,' said Emily. 'I have borne it as long as I can, and will not endure his company any longer. I am fully resolved upon that. I will die first.'

'Well done, little bravo!' said the vile wretch; grinding her teeth, and yet trying to conceal her feelings from Emily.

At that moment the door bell rang, and Talford stood at the door. Snyder answered the summons; but when he saw Talford he was for closing the door again, but Talford was too quick for him.

'Wait, don't be in a hurry,' said Talford, standing against the door while the others came up.

'What do you want here?' asked Snyder, attempting to push the door back.

'I reckon from your appearance, I want what I shall get,' replied Talford.

Snyder's mistress heard the noise at the door, and hurried down; not, however, before she took the precaution to lock Emily in her room and thrust the key into her pocket.

'What's the trouble here?' she asked, with a face as red as fire.

'No particular trouble; only your man wishes to shut the door, and I stand against it, that's all,' replied Talford, very coolly.

'Well, matters have come to a strange pass, when a man has not a right to shut his own door,' she said, assisting Snyder to push back the door and push Talford out.

'Be cautious how you resist the officers of the law,' said Talford; bracing against the door with all his strength.

He would have been pushed out and the door shut and locked, if the bachelor and the other man had not come to his assistance at that moment. Bill Saunders, for that was the name of the man whom Talford had employed, just placed his body against the door, and it stood fast.

'Be quiet, marm,' said Bill, smiling.—'You're a pretty stout woman; but I reckon you might as well take away that fat body of yours.'

'Where is she?' exclaimed the bachelor, the moment he entered the door. 'Where is she?'

And the good bachelor looked very wild, and could not stand still a moment.

'Where is who?' demanded the vile procuress.

'The lost and the beloved one,' replied Colburne, at the top of his voice.

'Here I am!' screamed Emily, recog-

nizing the voice of the bachelor, and thumping the door.

Quick as thought the excited bachelor flew up stairs and went at the door of Emily's room as if he would stave it down. He pushed against it, kicked it; but without success.

'The woman has the key!' screamed Emily, within.

The well-known music of that voice fell upon the bachelor's ears in the sweetest tones and made him struggle against the door with the more violence. There were scarcely two inches between his head and hers.—And pine boards do not obstruct the passage of animal magnetism; at least, they did not in this case.

'Here she is!' shouted the bachelor, and pushing his shoulder against the door with all his might.

At that moment the enraged procuress seized him by his coat-collar and struggled to pull him back; but Bill Saunders's huge paw was on her shoulder, and soon she stood some distance from the door, trembling in her rage.

Job Snyder had cut stick and run; for he was determined not to be caught in the scrape. He very well knew the consequences.

'Make room!' said Saunders, as he hurled the procuress back, and smiled at the agitation of the sensitive bachelor. And at the same time he pitched against the door. Under the severe pressure, the bolt gave way; and the loving bachelor had the beautiful Emily pressed close to his beating heart.

Talford received his reward; and Bill Saunders was most generously remunerated for his efficient services.

The procuress was arrested and placed in the Tombs; but Job Snyder was not to be found.

It seemed as if the bachelor would never finish his embrace of the lovely Emily.—

Such a moment of joy is seldom experienced by mortals in this world as the bachelor experienced.

A carriage was called, and he and Emily were soon in his house. But the feelings of Aunt Betty when she saw Emily who can describe? She stood, trembled, gazed and almost cursed the day she was born! It was a painful shock upon her nerves.

Soon after their arrival a carriage drove up and the wife of George Homer alighted. She had heard the joyful news, and came to see Emily. Soon they were in close embrace.

It was a happy meeting between the two young friends; for, save the bachelor, Emily had not a more sincere and loving friend than this young wife of the gambler.

A change became necessary in the household affairs of Mr. Colburne. Aunt Betty had received such a shock when Emily was found and returned home, that her mind became shattered, and she was unfit to discharge her duties as a housekeeper.

She was not raving, but sat in stupid silence, neglecting household affairs, and groaning over her troubles. Mr. Colburne had great sympathy for her, and kept her in his house so long as he thought it prudent to do so.

For some days Emily had the principal care of the house, and she performed her duties most admirably, at least so thought the bachelor.

But Aunt Betty grew worse and more helpless, and he engaged Miss Wrinkle to take charge of his household matters.

When Miss Wrinkle came to take charge of the house, and the fact became known to Aunt Betty, she awoke from her stupid, melancholy state, and was quite raving, so much so, that Mr. Colburne was obliged to send her to the lunatic asylum, where she remained nearly a year without any visible improvement. But before a year expired

after she became an inmate of the asylum, she took a violent fever, which hurried her into the grave.

Thus ended the career of this housekeeper. Mr. Colburne always cherished her memory with proper respect and regard.

Emily in her familiar and frank conversations with Mr. Colburne, she had told him all the particulars of her imprisonment, how she was led away, the treatment she had received, and the conduct of Major Borland, but she urged upon him not to say aught about the Major, lest it might reach the ears of his daughter whom she loved as she would have loved a sister. The bachelor kept that secret to himself, but he could never look upon the man again without the utmost abhorrence. He viewed him as a great villain and a worse libertine, and he believed the righteous judgments would at last overtake him. Although the bachelor had never become a member of the Church Militant, yet he hoped he should join the church triumphant. Mr. Colburne was a good man, and all his deeds bore witness to the fact.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*The closing up of the drama of human life in the city.*

Time wheeled its flight into the ocean of eternity; and humanity remained with but little change. George Homer pursued the road to ruin with redoubled diligence in spite of the remonstrances of his wife and all his friends.

His father and stern good mother tried all their powers to arrest his downward course; but they could not save him. The hellish spirit of gambling and its ever accompanying vices, swallowed up every thing else, until no avenue to his soul was open for the admission of a single ray of truth or reason.

The money that was left Homer was all gone, and gone too, into the pockets of those Southern blacklegs, who had also swindled Snyder and some other gamblers of the city. These two accomplished villains had feathered their own nests well, and knew enough not to tarry too long in a place where their dark deeds might be publically known and punished.

These Southern blacklegs having fleeced young Homer of all his property, they started for the West in time to save themselves from legal process; for young Homer's father had found them out, and the officers of the law were upon their track when they made their escape.

But the justice of heaven never sleepeth. They were on board a steamboat on the Ohio river, and engaged in gambling at the moment she struck a snag and sank with all on board.

Many were saved, but these blacklegs found a grave; and the waters of the Ohio flowed silently over their dead bodies.—Again, Holy Writ was verified: 'The way of the transgressor is hard.'

Some weeks had passed since Emily the beautiful was found; and Major Borland hearing nothing from her, began again to be quiet and to seek for new victims. His eyes were always upon every young girl he met, especially upon those who ply the needle, or engage in other industrial pursuits. It was from such classes that he expected the most of his victims.

One evening as he was sitting with his wife and daughter; a letter was brought to him which he opened and read as follows:

'Sir—The writer of this brief note will expect to find a letter addressed to her in the Post Office, containing your check for one thousand dollars. Your child is born; and the six hundred dollars I received from you through the hands of a scoundrel are

fast being expended. The check, or exposure to the public. You understand me.'

The letter was signed Mary Dillingham.—The moment he opened it and saw that signature; he suddenly started as if he had been pierced with a sharp instrument. His wife and daughter noticed his sudden embarrassment; and wondered what it could mean, but neither said any thing at the moment. He collected himself, and read the letter as coolly as he could; but he was evidently much agitated, and could not entirely conceal his emotions.

He left the room and passed out into the street among the crowd. 'Your child is born!' kept running in his thoughts. He was an unhappy man, and even wished he never had been born. His nerves were never so much wrought upon before. In fact he grew more nervous, and less able to bear his troubles, as each succeeding one came upon him.

One thing he made up his mind to do, and that was to obey the instructions of the letter. 'The check or exposure to the public. You understand me,' he repeated over to himself as he walked down street, not knowing nor much caring where he went.

The husband returned at rather an early hour for him; but not before he had deposited a letter in the Post Office containing the check demanded. He endeavored to be as cheerful as possible; but he did not succeed so well as he could wish. All the deception he endeavored to practice could not entirely blind his wife's eyes. She hoped he had told the truth; and yet she had very serious and troublesome doubts. She passed an unhappy night, and so did her daughter; but unhappy nights were no strangers to the latter, neither were unhappy days. The carrier left their morning paper, and Elizabeth commenced reading it after breakfast.

'O, my God!' she exclaimed, dropping

the paper from her hands, and throwing herself upon the sofa, in the utmost bitterness of soul.

'What is the matter?' anxiously inquired the mother.

'See the paper!' she answered, in broken accents. 'George——! Here her utterance was checked and she could not finish the sentence.

'Do read it, husband!' said the wife, while she sat holding Elizabeth's hand, and gazing into her wildly rolling eyes.

He read in the paper that the body of a young man was found in the North River, whose name from some paper found in his pocket was George Homer. Such was the fact.

The young gambler in a fit of delirium tremens jumped from one of the docks and was drowned.

Elizabeth retired to her chamber and tried to console herself.

Major Borland was much affected, but his wife was still more.

The husband did not as usual argue against his wife upon the subject, but let it pass in silence. He felt the power of her arguments more forcibly at that time than he had ever before.

An inquest was holden over the mortal remains of George Homer, and the verdict was that he came to his death by suicide. There was not a great parade at his funeral. His agonizing widow was not able to attend on account of ill health; but the parents of both and some few friends followed the body to the cemetery, where the cold clods of the earth cover it from human sight. It was the grave of the gambler and the drunkard whose prospects in life were once brilliant and elevating.

Major Borland had very serious thoughts occasionally for several days after the funeral of his daughter's husband; but such thoughts were 'like angels, visits, few and far between.'

Nearly a month had passed after he put the letter into the Post Office, and no further tidings of the abused girl had reached his ears. Every day made his hope brighter that she had left the city.

His wife and daughter were sitting in the parlor about an hour before sunset, conversing about the tragical death of George Homer, when the door bell rung and a woman with a young child in her arms, sought admission. Major Borland was then absent, but soon expected. The woman was admitted to the parlor; for Mrs. Borland was a kind and charitable woman.

'Is Major Borland at home?' asked the woman, in a voice of peculiar accents.

'He is not, but I expect him soon,' replied Mrs. Borland. 'Have you business with him? Perhaps you live in one of his houses.'

'No, Madame; I live not in one of his houses,' replied the woman. 'But I have some business with him.'

Mrs. Borland's suspicions were excited; and yet she could not believe her own thoughts. She had too much politeness to ask the woman what business she had with her husband. The child began to play with its mother's bonnet strings and to claw her dress.

'You have a beautiful, healthy looking child,' said Elizabeth; taking the child from her arms, and playing with it.

'She is very healthy,' replied the mother. 'But, perhaps, I am not a judge of her beauty.'

'It is a daughter then?' said Elizabeth; bouncing the child up and down, and kissing its clean, sweet face. 'What is her name?'

'I have never given her a name, yet,' replied the young mother.

'Name her Elizabeth, after me,' said Elizabeth; still fondling the child, and kissing it. 'There, father's coming in; I know his step.'

The Major came straight into the room, and saw the child in Elizabeth's arms; but did not notice the mother, as she sat back from his view.

'Why, Elizabeth, whose child have you?' he asked. 'It's a sweet pretty one.'

'You, sir! are the father of that child?' said its mother; rising from her chair, and confronting him.

He turned to look at her; and when his eyes met hers, he staggered back, and gazed wildly about the room. Mrs. Borland rose up, and gazed in astonishment upon her husband. She knew it all at a glance.

'No wonder you stagger back, and look wild,' continued the undaunted woman.—'You would have been glad to see me live the life of a wanton; but thank heaven I'm not yet driven to that extremity. Behold your child in that young lady's arms; and may she never meet a man in her maturer age, so deceitful and wicked as her father! I told you I would be revenged, and I am!'

The old libertine was struck dumb with surprise and astonishment; and could not speak. Elizabeth trembled so that she came near letting the child fall from her arms.

'Gracious heavens!' she exclaimed. 'I didn't once believe I should ever see such a scene as this! But I'm not so much surprised at such a demonstration as this as I should have been a few years ago. O, God, wilt thou flash conviction on his guilty soul and make him feel the enormity of his crimes!'

'I do see it!' he exclaimed, in the agony of his soul. 'I do see it! I am a great sinner; but I here kneel before you all; confess my sins, and ask the pardon of an offended God!'

'Those are the best words I ever heard from your lips,' said his wife. 'A wife's prayer shall join yours; and may God answer them.'

'I thank heaven for what my eyes behold, and what my ears have heard!' said the young mother. 'A repentant father may take his child; but without evidence of your repentance, I would have given it to a savage sooner than have given it to you.'

'No, no! keep the child, and let it still be in a mother's care,' he replied. 'You shall not want for money to bring it up and educate it as you please.'

'I will keep it since its father disowns it not,' replied the young mother.

The young mother soon departed with her child. She had sought revenge; but she went away rejoicing that her mission was attended with such happy consequences.

Major Borland was as good as his word, and liberally supplied the young mother with money. A change came over him that lasted during his life; and he and his wife lived more happily together than they had for years.

Elizabeth, the young widow, sorrowed for many months; but time is a great healer of certain wounds. She sprang into life again; and in the course of a few years became the wife of a man who was worthy of such a woman.

And now our story of city life draws towards its close, and the worthy bachelor and his beautiful charge must be cared for.—He continued Emily at school until she was seventeen, and then became her happy and loving husband.

The reader will give him credit for his honesty and sincerity, however much he may condemn the practice of a man of his years marrying a girl so young as she was. No doubt there was too great a disparity in their years; and it is a hazardous experiment for men in general to make; but Mr. Charles Colburne was an exception to the general rule. The circumstances under which he fell in love were extraordinary; and he enjoyed an extraordinary share of domestic bliss with his young and beautiful wife.—But let not bachelors take this case as an example and romantically ask for partners too young.

THE END.

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