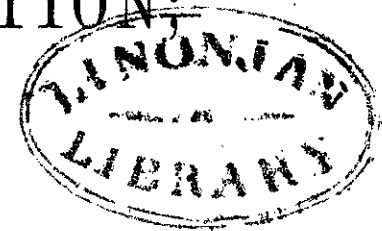


COMPENSATION;



OR,

ALWAYS A FUTURE.

BY

ANNE M. H. BREWSTER.

"In the pleasant orchard closes,
'God bless all our gains,' say we;
But, 'May God bless all our losses!'
Better suits with our degree.
Listen, gentle—ay, and simple!—
Listen, children on the knee!"

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

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PREFACE.

I SHOULD have no need to write a preface, if I had not some explanations to make to my musical reader. The counsels to teachers, and the analytical descriptions of some of the compositions of those great masters, Mozart, Beethoven, and Chopin, which this book contains, are not given presumptuously on my own opinion solely. Although I have enjoyed valuable opportunities of musical culture, not only from artists as masters, but from artists as friends, having listened to fine instrumentalists in their hours of leisure, and thus formed my taste and opinions; I have also studied very closely the writings of those excellent critical authors, Berlioz, De Lanz, Oulibicheff, Liszt, Scudo, and others. I am sorry we have not such writers on musical æsthetics in English; and still more sorry that translations of their masterly works, so useful to the musical student, could not be given to the public. But after seeing a cultivated woman spend her time in translating that exquisite and difficult book, "Liszt's Chopin," just for the pure love of art, with the hope of being useful to the musical scholar, and then knowing that her fine, conscientious translation traveled from publisher to publisher, each one, shrugging his shoulders, saying, "the book is clever, but will not sell," I thought it would be labor lost to give the time I have devoted to the construction of this book to the translation of even one of those valuable works; but, wherever I could use their excellent counsel, or give their technical analysis, I have done so. To Berlioz, De Lanz, and Liszt, particularly, I refer my readers, that they may see how useful such works are to the musical student.

I wish I could now mention also my artist friends, in acknowledgement of the valuable service they have rendered me; but I

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cannot with delicacy. However, those of them whose characters and genius have served me as originals—as life-studies for the artists, which I have, with my weak pencil, striven to paint here in my book—are not only gifted, but young; the artist world may yet hear of them; and as great a future may be before them as I have, in my fiction, given to Marie Merle, Ehrenherz, and Henzler.

And now, a word for my poor little fiction itself. Mrs. Norton sang, to an ugly child,—

"The loved are lovely, so art thou to me,
Child, in whose face strange eyes no beauty see."

And thus I feel toward this little book. I commenced it at a season of great sadness—at a period when the very ground on which I stood seemed reeling. Old ties were rent asunder, old faiths, old hopes; all I had lived, loved, and prayed for, swept from me; links severed, never to be clasped together in this state of being. To keep my sorrow from feeding on me, I gave *my* "serpent a file." The world has nothing to do with all this; but my little public may look more favorably on my book-child when they know what an angel of blessing it has proved to me. It has done its duty well; it has cheered me when hopeless; given me fresh spring and impulse when failing health and morbid spirits refused their aid. Now its work is finished with me. It will go out into the world to take its chance by the side of lovelier and cleverer ones. I have done all I can for it in return for its good done to me. I am only sorry that my doing has been so weak.

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COMPENSATION.

CHAPTER I.

GOOD-BY.

"It will tire you too much, give you useless pain, to spend this day in your new home. Send Dora to make all the necessary arrangements. We do not have to leave you until five o'clock this afternoon. Stay the day with us, and this morning we will go boating on this beautiful lake."

Thus kindly talked my friends, and Dora, my maid, urged their proposition so earnestly that I yielded, and let her go with my luggage and a note of apology to my hostess, Madame Bouvreuil: then off we started in the pretty little boat with a gondola screen and American flag on the mirror-like waters of this lovely Lake of the Desert. The sky was of a deep purply blue, soft and tender like an Italian sky, with hazy clouds hanging around the tops of the mountains. Dents du Midi coquettishly veiled its serrated heads; and even Mount Catogne and Mount Velan, the St. Bernard peak rising in the center of the Rhone valley, were dim and misty looking; but these graceful wavy clouds did not detract from the beauty of the landscape; on the contrary, they gave to it a more charming effect. We skirted along the doubling shores of the lake, stopping at various points, as some beautiful shady hill or old chateau attracted our attention. At Zillium we spent a pleasant hour: in the *souterraines* we listened to the guide's stereotyped descriptions, and hunted

up with idle curiosity the many distinguished names cut on the stone pillars commemorative of their sympathy for an imaginary martyr who never merited it. Beautiful sprays of the maiden-hair fern grew around the high narrow arched windows; the walls were covered with a soft green mold: the blue of the heavens mingling with the green color of the waters of the lake near the shore, aided by the sun's rays, shot in at the windows and played over

"the seven columns of Gothic mold"

in fantastic broken gleams of the most delicate shades of purple, blue, and emerald, reminding us of Capri's Grotto of Azure. Then we mounted to the bedchamber of "le petit Charlemagne" of Savoie, and lingered in the adjoining bower-room of his duchess, the view from her window recalling to us what the old chronicler had said of Count Wala's imprisonment in this same old fortress, nearly four centuries before Pierre of Savoie's birth.

"The Empress Judith wickedly instigated Louis le-Débonnaire to seize the good Count Wala, the cousin, friend, and wise counselor of his father, the great Charlemagne, and they threw him into a fort surrounded on all sides by water, and from its windows could only be seen the heavens, the lake, and the savage Alps."

"He was the true Prisoner of Zillium," said C., "and yet no one has ever written a poem to his memory; and how few even know of him and his noble career!"

As we rambled off from the castle up the shady mountain road which looked so tempting from its picturesque beauty, we talked rebelliously, as people will, over the injustice of history, forgetting that it is a human thing, a creation of man, and necessarily unjust. The charming young husband and wife dwelt with tender sadness on Count Wala's beautiful character, his courageous truthfulness and simple unostentatious piety, which make his memory stand out in that

distant period of history as the light of one pure clear star in a dusky night; and as we strolled along, bringing back the golden days of Charlemagne, they gathered fern leaves, and moss, and forget-me-nots, as graceful memories of this spot so rich in historical associations. A little cascade came bounding and leaping down the hill-side,

"with its light foot of pearl."

"What is the name of that pretty waterfall?" I asked of a peasant who was lounging lazily along.

"Oh! ce-ça, ce n'est rien!" he answered in a pooh-pooh sort of style; "c'est seulement une source."

La Source! How the name and the sound of the dancing waters, and the cool mist arising from it, brought back —'s music. "La Source" of Blumenthal rang in my ears, and filled my eyes with heart-spray; the unison of memory's melody was in perfect diapason with the tone of the little chime bells of the waterfall, and they rang together in melancholy but sweet harmony. While my heart was running over with regrets for the lost and gone, the old life broken rudely off, and the dreaded unknown new life so chill and lonely, C. and A. were talking of their home across the broad waters; they had left the good old Count Wala to fall back into his gray misty past, and with hearts full of sweet young hope and love, they were talking of the cozy library in their quiet country home,—that little library room whose windows looked on the setting sun, and where the sweet twilights of their honeymoon had deepened into bright happy starlights. The old chronicler, who had led to the memory of the Abbot of Corbie, had also guided their thoughts peacefully back to their quiet happy fireside.

The sun's rays growing warmer, and the shadows stealing back into the bushes, reminded us of the hour, so we retraced our steps and returned to the boat. We had a hard row back, for the bize, a northeast wind, blew up and caused

quite a little sea: cunning white caps, petits moutons, crested the miniature billows: the boatmen lowered the screen and raised the pretty lateen sail, which causes our lake boats to look like birds skimming over the surface of the water, and we rocked swiftly and merrily along. We were so near the shore as to be free from danger, and yet just enough tossed about to give the appearance of insecurity; it roused our animal spirits, and we sang and laughed aloud in as mad glee as three children frolicking in the breakers. Soon we were at the steps of the hotel terrace, and a few moments after were seated at our early dinner,—the last dinner we should take together for many years. We drank each other's health in the wine of the country, the light golden Yvorne; then we sat under the trees in the beautiful garden, while we sipped our coffee, gazed dreamily on the glorious lake and opposite mountain shores, and talked pleasantly and lingeringly together; every moment was growing so precious to us.

At last the time approached for them to leave, and I accompanied them on their way to the diligence; how jealously memory holds on to every incident! We loitered awhile in a wood-carving store, then to the post where C. mailed his letters, and I left my new address, then to the diligence. We arrived just as they were putting the horses to the heavy lumbering vehicle. While we were standing on the corner of the Rue du Lac and the Rue de Simplon, four or five Italian musicians came along, looking like the Zampognari bagpipers from the Abruzzi, who are to be seen in the Neapolitan streets in winter, "virtuoses ambulants," as Töpffer calls these street artists; they wore ragged, dirty, but picturesque dresses, pointed hats, brown cloaks, short leathern breeches tied with gay-colored worsted cords and tassels that left their brown legs bare from the knee down, and sandals on their naked feet; some played on the bagpipes, others sang, and one danced carelessly but in perfect time to the wild mountain melody; some had sheepskin cloaks hanging from their bare shoulders, and their shining black elf locks streamed in

ragged curls from under their hats; they were all beautifully formed and moved with classic grace and ease. The dancer was the tallest and best made of the group; he was a handsome dog, with sparkling eyes, teeth glittering white like the ice tops of these Savoy Alps, brown skin, and a merry saucy laugh on his broad, full, red-lipped mouth, while his gait had a glorious swing as if he knew and felt his superb proportions.

"He is the twin brother of Teverino," said C., laughing, "the handsome impudent rogue!"

But while our eyes followed them up the road, as they sang, and laughed, and swayed about with careless *insouciance*, it was announced to us that the diligence was ready. I bade my friends good-by, and stood watching with filling eyes the care and tender attention bestowed by the young husband upon his pretty little wife, as he arranged her and her shawls and numberless feminine accessories in the coupé.

"It is so sweet to be loved! How a woman's heart naturally yearns for the protection and care that springs from a man's love!" were the words I felt rushing to my lips.

C. turned to wave a good-by, and seeing my filling eyes and quivering lips, shook his finger playfully at me, while his honest handsome face showed the sympathy he felt; A. looked as though she must spring from the coupé window to come and comfort me. I dashed the weak tears aside with resentment, and forced a laugh. What, after all my enduring bravery, to fail just at the end? My expatriation, my solitary new life, though a wise conclusion, had it not been a voluntary one? Now was not the time for weakness and tears.

"Voilà!" I cried, pointing to the gaudy driver, who, springing to his seat, seized his bright horn which hung from his shoulder on a gay-colored leathern strap. "C'est le Postillon de Lonjumeau!" And turning abruptly on my heel, I walked off rapidly to the sound of the cracking whip,

the running chords of the horn, and the rumbling wheels of the diligence, which rolled away in its cloud of dust up the road to F. It all sounded in my ears, this mass of confused noises, like the thundering clang of a heavy iron gate. I felt shut out, Hagar-like, in my wilderness. "And not even an Ishmael to comfort me!" I said with a choked voice to myself.

I had a long, lonely walk, and weary enough was I when I reached my new residence. I lifted the latch of the iron-clamped door softly, walked quietly up the stone staircase over the brick-paved hall of the massive old house, which hundreds of years before had been an old convent, to my salon door. I opened the door and entered the room; there sat Dora at a window, with her eternal crocheting hanging from her fingers, looking out with that vague German rapture on the beauty of nature spread before her. Beau, my pet dog, a King Charles spaniel, leaped from her lap and greeted me with a howl of delight.

"Voila! my little Ishmael!" my heart said.

CHAPTER II.

MY NEW HOME.

I CAN scarcely imagine a prettier, cozier scene than my little salon presented the first evening of my arrival at Peilz. From the windows could be seen a view of ravishing beauty; there were the grand Alps topped with snow, the beautiful lake that swept between me and them, and then a pretty rustic garden and orchard lay beneath. Inside the room everything bespoke the presence of comfort, mixed with the picturesque, one sees so often in Europe. We are so practical, so positive in America, that our domestic interiors rarely possess this charm; wealth and culture may bring magnificent elegance; the regular, industrious habits of our people of moderate means procure cleanliness and orderly arrangements; but rarely picturesque attractions decorate our homes. In America we are all living to work; in Europe there is little of this feverish unrest, they barely work to live; and it is folly to say which is right—each people do as an unseen destiny impels them. A great overruling power quiets the life-pulse of one nation, and sends bounding along in a hot, feverish, throbbing tide, the life-current of another, and it is only when cycles of ages have passed, that the great events intended to be gained by His wise direction are shown; but individual man, like the silly fly on the wheel in the fable, will continue to fret and fume, and fancy he creates all that is made; he may mar for awhile, and cause jerks and harmless confusion in the great whirling machinery, but that is all—he is still but the fly on the wheel, or one of the trifling accessories to a great system. But I

am wandering out of my woman's sphere, and far off from my simple salon in Suisse.

Thin fleecy white mull curtains were looped back with crimson cords from either side of the windows; in front of these windows was a soft-cushioned canapé, covered with a gay bright chintz, over whose light ground wandered vines covered with roses of the most brilliant hues; a round table stood in front of the canapé; and half advanced from one of the corners of the room, that the light might fall on it, was a tall, carved walnut cabinet, with a falling desk and brass-mounted drawers. A semi-grand piano stood in front of the doors of the alcove chamber of my maid. On the other side of the room a door opened into another fine airy chamber as large as the salon, which was also draped in snowy-white curtains, bound and looped with crimson; that was my sleeping apartment. Dora, good creature, had done all she could to make the rooms look natural and comfortable to my eyes. She had unpacked all my books and scattered them about to the best of her knowledge. Voltaire, Jeremy Taylor, Molière, Pascal, and Rousseau, were piled in friendly companionship on the mantel top of the brass-bound, white earthen stove. She knew little of books except by their bindings, and when left to her own judgment in arranging them, was very apt to make odd groupings. Shakspeare, Cowper, Byron, and Shelley, my four literary gospels, were ranged around the table, with Mrs. Browning's dearly-loved volumes piled up in the center, suggesting Joseph's dream: the stronger brethren bowing to the weaker member of the great family circle of poets, only weaker because she is a woman, and in her weakness is her strength. That soft, low woman voice of this age! It rings out pure and clear, like the silvery tone of an angel's trumpet music, as heard in one of those dreams that come to us when sorrow or sickness almost emancipates the soul from the body. Thrice blessed and happy should this woman poet be, for her poems have sustained many a sister woman in life's weary journey,

elevating her above its petty but cutting miseries, and consoling her for its shortcomings. Oh, that glorious state of existence into which the works of genius lift us! To many of us it is the only real being, and this feverish state of "distorted wills" called life, is but a horrid dream.

The desk was open, and all my writing materials out,—the portefeuille and locked journal, as if I had sat there at work for months. A comfortable fauteuil, covered with the same cheerful chintz as the sofa, stood in front of it. Even the piano lid was laid back, and Schubert's volume of Romances was placed on the music stand, opened at the girl's favorite song, "Lobe der Thränen," the very sight of which sent a thrill to my heart. Could I ever sing again? Would music be a comfort to me in my loneliness? For when I am sad and suffering, my own music is always a scourge. The sound of my voice acts like the magical sesame; it unfastens the doors of memory, and straightway phantoms surround me; phantoms of the past, forms of joy and sorrow, rapture and agony,—all these cluster and press close upon my heart, demanding tribute, the memory of the past joys more keen in its pain than the sorrow even,

"Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria,"—

and the melody breaks sharply off in a sob which shows how bitter is the anguish.

Dora, as I have said, was sitting by the window in front of a little sewing table. Good girl, she knew how much first impressions affected me, and she wished to create as much as lay in her power the appearance of a home. "Home! ah that is so hard to recreate after physical and moral death step over the threshold," my rebellious heart murmured. She sprang up as soon as she saw me, and hastened to take off my wrappings. She looked so bright, and the room so pleasant and cheery, everything was so much more comfortable

than I had looked for, that—shall I confess my naughty weakness? yes—I felt provoked; I shivered from head to foot in my peevish misery.

“Mademoiselle is cold,” she said tenderly.

“Of course,” I answered in a husky voice, made rough by the unshed tears which clouded over me; “in these bleak mountainous countries one is always cold.”

The girl made no answer, but hastened to unfasten my dust cloak. I hurried past her, leaving the mantle behind me, and entered the bedroom; as I did so my eye caught sight of a little table in the corner near the door, on which she had put all the miniature cases, my work-box, and one or two little keepsakes; my heart clutched tight like the gripe of a hand; I grew blind, and reeled, and but for her strong arms should have fallen to the ground. She laid me on the bed, over which the curtains fell like a tent-covering, from a gilt eagle beak, and commenced undressing me as if I had been an infant. But I would be uselessly brave, so I arose and hurried with fretful haste to help her in the work.

My eyes glanced around the room, where I saw new proofs of the thoughtful care of my kind maid: on the table under the long mirror was my dressing case, spread open, neat and tidy, showing no marks of the long journey it had taken, or the hasty rude usage it had been forced to receive in the past few months; every one of my old bedroom luxuries was out, as though I had dressed and undressed in the chamber from childhood; the pincushion, with its clean, fresh cover, had the pins put in carelessly, and also two or three common morning brooches hung from it, as if my own hands had stuck them there after the morning's toilette. On an easy-chair by the bed lay spread out temptingly my dressing wrapper, whose rosy lining and border shone gayly against the snowy fringe of the bed curtain which fell beside it, and on a footstool were the crimson crocheted slippers. Everywhere was displayed the graceful orderly disorder of occu-

pied rooms. On a little table in the corner at the head of the bed, she had piled my Bible and devotional books, placed on either side a blessed candle, and in the center a little round porcelain altar lamp, all the furniture of a simple bedroom altar; upon the wall she had tacked a small engraving which she had found in my book trunk, a Madonna della Sedia, and around it she had, with simple grace, woven a rustic frame of the dark woodbine leaves, and with some white rose-buds and leaves she had formed a cross, which she had fastened to the wall inside the canopy covering of my bed, and from it hung my prayer beads. Now she was a good steady Lutheran, this Dora of mine, so this part of her work was a touching evidence of her Christian liberality and charity. Would that all Christians in this world could live together as affectionately as my Lutheran maid and her Catholic mistress; the season of peace and good-will would surely be near at hand. And her reasoning is so simple on the subject of my Catholic observances and ceremonies:—

“What is meant good is good; God makes it good with a blessing.”

She had used the day industriously as well as lovingly, and I could not but acknowledge it to myself, if I did remain so ungraciously silent; but still I was miserable; “a spring of tears welled back o’ my eyelids,” and I would not allow myself to be comforted.

“Madame Bouvreuil,” commenced Dora, as she unfastened the buttons of my under sleeve.

“I do sincerely hope,” I interrupted in a bored tone, “that I am not to be annoyed with seeing any one this evening.”

“That is just what madame thought,” answered Dora, as she gave me a chair to sit on, and stooped down to unlace my boots. “She said mademoiselle would feel too weary to see any one to-night, so when she brought in the *jolie bouquet* on the table, she left her compliments, and hoped if mademoiselle wished for anything——”

By this time the boots were off, and I sprang up so hastily and jerked my collar off so impatiently, that poor Dora, with admirable tact, seeing that I was not in the mood for conversation, remained quiet and said not a word during the rest of the undressing. I wrapped my soft gown around me and crept into the little bed; my senses were steeped heavily in the black opium tide of sorrow; I longed for a sleep of forgetfulness. Dora smoothed the pillows, giving them that comfortable slope some women hands understand as by instinct; she then drew the curtains around me and over the windows in pretty folds, on which she knew my eyes would rest gratefully, arranged Beau's basket,—even that detail she had not forgotten,—and I laid there apparently ungrateful, so selfish does extreme grief sometimes make us. But Beau, like his mistress, would not take what was prepared for him in kindness and love, with pleasant grace; he growled and snapped, and crouched close to my feet on the outside of the bed, scarcely allowing her to throw a shawl over him, the thankless little beast; he intended that we should be cross and miserable together. She then brought me a plateau, on which were a cup of fragrant tea, some tempting slices of beurrée, and some delicate confitures, with a little panier of large anana strawberries in a huge grape leaf. I swallowed the tea chokingly, then turned my back, and buried my face in the pillow. The girl lighted the night lamp, set it up in the niche above the porcelain stove, and withdrew silently into the salon.

Sleep, little Fanny Fauvette, and dream of that past which, with all its miseries, will always be dearer than the most golden-hued future.

CHAPTER III.

THE FAMILY.

Now of that past of Fanny Fauvette there is nothing to say. Like the buried towns on the Sorrentine promontory of Southern Italy, a hot wave had passed over it, burning out all life and quieting to sleep even restless hope; its only future, like that of the grave, rested on God's hereafter. In Peilz the new life was to commence, and its happiness or content depended upon circumstances; the characters of my new associates would affect it greatly, but the principal things required were physical and moral ability on my own part to enable me to take it up with strength and courage; and this I faced steadily from the beginning.

The first morning I awakened to a glorious sunrise. I sprang from the bed, and, wrapping my dressing gown around me, stepped out on the gallery in front of my windows to enjoy it fully. It was only four o'clock, and the whole human world seemed asleep, except that in a neighboring yard two men sat listlessly talking together in front of a grange. The Rhone valley was lighted up with the most gorgeous colors, and Dents du Midi and Dent du Mercles, on either side, seemed as if holding out banners to herald the approach of the day-god. The opposite mountains reared their snow-crested heads, and up their rugged sides crept little clouds that grew rosier and rosier in their ascent, like the graceful mountain nymphs in classic legend. The lake lay smooth as a plain; two boats stood on its surface with their shadows clearly defined beneath them. I sat as one entranced, and enjoyed the varying beauty of the scene.

"Ah!" I said over and over again to myself, "I can find contentment of spirit surely here, for the sublimity of these glorious mountains, the loveliness of beautiful nature, must give rest and stillness."

I had so lately known the bitter experience of sorrow, that it seemed in the very rustling of the leaves I could

"hear the stir
Of his black mantle trailing in the dust;"

and this made my bruised being, struggling for strength, turn toward sweet mother Nature, to claim kindred with her, and ask her gracious healing aid. I sat and drank in sweet comfort, and also sweet pain, from the mountains, sky, and lake; there was the regret for the absence of the dead-lost, which became milder grief when I recalled how much of my agony they were spared; then came grander, holier thoughts, as if the high mountains had bowed down and lifted up my spirit to their level, and it seemed as though I too was made capable of

"drinking in the soul of things."

So much strength and wisdom did that morning reverie give me, that I was courageous enough, after my solitary breakfast, to occupy myself industriously. I arranged my books, ordered my hours, and laid out my plan of study. Oh yes! I would accomplish an immense deal, for is not occupation the great secret of a certain kind of happiness, that negative happiness which arises from satisfaction with one's self? The dinner hour arrived, and then I had to break through my morbid desire for solitude, and unite with the family of my host and hostess. I may as well give here an outline of the characters and appearance of the members of my new domestic circle. The family consisted of a father and mother, one son and daughter, both grown, and a young man who, like myself, was unconnected by blood with the Bouvreuils.

Professor Bouvreuil, the father, was a man of great learning and pleasant manners; he was over mid-age when I came to Peilz, of middle height, with a figure inclined to stoutness; he had a cheerful, kind face, with fresh complexion, thoughtful, dreamy blue eyes, a fine Scipio Africanus brow and head, with thin silky gray hair, which hung in sparse locks over his clear blue-veined temples. The outline of his face was slightly Jewish, the nose being half way between the Italian and Hebrew type, and the eyes were set in oblique angles from the nose, having a drooping of the lid at the outer corners which added a sad look to the dreamy, speculative expression of the eye itself; but for the cheerful, almost merry smile which played about his full good-natured mouth, his face would have been a melancholy one. The very first look at him convinced one that he was never intended by nature for an actor on life's stage. He was a thinker—not a very positive or practical one, however; and I have heard superficial judges call Professor Bouvreuil inexact in his knowledge; but he was not; his speculative, inquiring habits of mind, his vague manner of thinking aloud his undigested ideas, which was his way of giving them form and shape for the satisfaction and benefit of his own mind, produced this impression on persons who did not know him intimately, or who judged all minds by one narrow positive rule; then his entire freedom from ambition made him indifferent about bringing his speculations to any practical result. He loved and wooed learning for learning's sweet sake, not for what learning could procure for him of worldly goods or reputation. He always recalled to me those lines of Wordsworth:—

"what happiness to live
When every hour brings palpable access
Of knowledge, when all knowledge is delight,
And sorrow is not there."

His father had been a wealthy merchant of Berlin, and had educated this son and two daughters with infinite care

and cost. They had studied under the direction of the great Neander, and were all marvelously clever. As they grew up, the poor father failed in business, and died; then they found their learning truly better than house and land. One sister, Ottilie, a girl of great promise and beauty, went to sleep at the same sorrowful period, and was laid in the grave with the poor broken-hearted father and the mother, who had died seventeen years before, when she gave birth to this lovely creature. Often I regarded, with dreamy admiration, an exquisite portrait they had of this young girl, whose Sappho-like fragments of poetry, filled with lofty tenderness, and journals containing high glorious thoughts, showed how well she had merited the tears of regret and admiration shed over her remains by the solemn, taciturn Neander, of whom she had been a favorite, even an idolized pupil.

The other sister, with her husband, had established, soon after her father's death, the college for which Peilz is and has been famous for many years, and in which the brother became a professor. Professor Bouvreuil was one of those men so often met with in these old countries of Europe, with enough science and acquirements to endow a whole faculty; his fine head contained a library of knowledge, but he was quite out of place in this practical age. Had he loved mankind as he loved *bookkind*, he would have been one of the philanthropic reformers of the day; but he had been brought up under the mild, reasonable rule of the Prussian government; happiness and public rights had never seemed rare or difficult to him; the simple, unostentatious living of the Prussian nobility makes life more easy for the poorer classes; he had never seen the violent contrasts, the injustice arising from the ostentation and selfish indulgence of wealthy rank. He was one of Guizot's *esprits exigeans, caractères complaisans*. He was content, after the daily routine of class lessons and lectures, which brought the quotidian bread, to bury himself in his library, working

at his book on India, (where he had gone as chaplain to some government mission the first few years after his father's death,) his geographical studies, and the plan of an immense map on a new system, for geography, treated in a philosophical light, was his favorite study; he had some curious notions of the effect of certain geographical formations and changes upon the human mind and character; he could account for all the great events in the history of humanity by his geographical system. How often I have listened to his *thinkings aloud* on this subject, for they could not be called conversations; but his vague shadows of thoughts thrown on to the cloudy, dreamy mirror of my mind, which had never produced an exact reflection of any scientific or metaphysical idea during the whole time it had dwelt in my body, of course left no trace behind them. I loved, however, to listen to him, to his mild musical voice; and the very vagueness and disjointedness of his talk gave a poetical dreaminess to the abstract subjects, while from the lips of a more positive talker they would have been tedious. Then he liked to talk to me next best to his wife, for we both listened without requiring exact definings of his position; and I must say he gave me credit for possessing more cleverness than I merited, just because I listened to him in a quiet understanding manner, and this he valued all the more as he did not meet with many such patient listeners; his wife listened from a habit born of a deep sympathizing love; I did, as I have said, because I loved to hear him talk, and also because he let drop from the richness of his acquirements, historical facts and associations, suggestions that gave me food for sweet poetic thought—"imp feathers," as it were, to the weak wings of my own imagination.

I have described thus minutely the peculiarities of the professor's mind and manner, not that he played any prominent part in my new life, but because I think he had a character *à lui*, as the French say, and I always loved to analyze

it even in my unskillful manner; it was one of which a word-portrait might be made by a clever pen, that would resemble one of those suggestive portraits of Holbein, Cuyp, or Rembrandt, some of those curious life-like faces in which the looker-on can read a life history; no idealization of the countenance, but all the individual characteristics speaking out in some curious details of the features; nothing symbolic or romantic, as in Raphael's or Da Vinci's, but a close imitation of nature, such as some certain furrows on the brow, some cunning unknown lines about the mouth, or a sly wrinkle in the eye-corner, which betray the workings of the hidden soul, and that will show themselves on the face after long years of secret life-labor, no matter how calm may be the countenance, or self-concentrated the nature, or harder than iron the will.

Madame Bouvreuil was just the wife for such a man: intelligent, appreciative, and at the same time fond of domestic life, home duties, and home pursuits. She superintended her house, which was no easy business; her skillful fingers seasoned the white sauces so pleasant to the taste of the professor, who, unconsciously, was just on the edge of being a gourmand; prepared the delicious confitures, ordered the quarterly *lessive*, directed the huge ironings, made every one comfortable in the house, and yet did it orderly and quietly. She had a peculiar tact about such things as domestic affairs. Her husband was one of the few appreciative husbands I ever knew, and probably that contributed to make her more successful. Domestic praise, that rarest of all kinds of praise, is a great incentive and spur to perfection. The professor used to say that his wife had brought as much intellect to bear on a nursery and household as would have sufficed to have governed a kingdom. She possessed some clever qualities that fitted her well for her position in life; she was prompt and decided, without being opinionative; energetic, but not disagreeably so; then she had a natural tendency to classify everything, and this aided

her in what would have been for any one else very laborious housekeeping. She was a little woman, well made in her form, and without personal vanity, although she paid great attention to her appearance—to the cut and fit of her robe, and dressing of her hair. Morning, noon, and night, Madame Bouvreuil always looked the lady, whether in the neat print morning wrapper or dark silk evening dress, whose cut defined well the slender roundness of her pretty waist, the graceful fall of her shoulders, and the full proportions of her exquisite little figure. She had a clear olive complexion, deep dark gray eyes, a firm mouth, and a great quantity of dark-brown hair, over which she wore, more for ornament than necessity, a lace kerchief folded in half, with the point falling over the front of the head—*à la Marie Stuart*—and tied in light soft folds under her round pretty chin; it was excessively becoming. The general character of her face was rather serious; it indicated a firm, concentrated nature, and an even, well-balanced disposition and mind; she soared far above all littleness of life and of people; she took a wide extended view of things, and seemed always to act as one who thought everything that interfered with the quiet and happiness of life as unavoidable but mysterious mistakes and errors, that should not happen, but at the same time should not be fretted over. Madame Bouvreuil's domestic life had had enough of *contretemps* in it to have made it to many women insupportable. Her husband, though a loving and appreciative one, did not care for any one's comfort, scarcely his own; he had been brought up with all the appliances that wealth procures, and needed, or rather expected, certain domestic comforts which, with his income and position, were positive luxuries, and cost great labor to his wife; but he always acted about them as if they grew spontaneously. Then his sister, Madame Eperveil, the principal of the institution at Peilz, a most provokingly imperious woman, would have been an unceasing cause of torment to a sister-in-law of a different disposition. Madame Bouvreuil mildly

and quietly managed all these domestic difficulties as if they were *faiblesses* and errors in her domestic machine, which must be accommodated, but not dwelt on or fretted over. She loved her husband tenderly, and her son with more anxiety than she showed about anything else, but she adored her daughter.

Hélène Bouvreuil was not at home when I first came to Peilz, being absent with her aunt on a summer visit to some relatives in Berlin; but I will sketch her here in this collection of family portraits. She had all her mother's attractions of form, but was much taller, and her features were more strikingly beautiful. Madame Bouvreuil's face was too thoughtful and elevated in its expression to be merely pretty, yet it had not the points to make it what her daughter's was—beautiful. Hélène resembled her father a little, and the portrait of her Aunt Ottilie more; she was just a little above middle height, and to her form could be applied those expressive French adjectives, *svelte, élancée*; she was full enough for beauty, and every movement was attractive and graceful; it was a pleasure to see her move about a room, she handled everything and used her well-proportioned fair hands so agreeably. She had a well-shaped head, which was set finely on her beautiful neck and shoulders; a clear fair skin, very pale at times, and then a color flushing over it as delicate as the soft pink of a shell; her eyes were a brown gray, with long lashes and drooping lids; her hair might have been called black, but for a shade of golden brown that played over it in some lights; she wore it with one rich tress braided and bound around her temples, and the rest all gathered in a large knot of plaits low down on the back of her head. The outline of her face resembled her father's—the same blending of the Italian and Jewish—and what an indefinable beauty a slight expression of the Jewish type gives to a certain style of womanly loveliness! There is a poetical dreaminess in it, an exquisite charm hangs around the full red lips, a delicate feeling in the quivering

nostril of the slightly curved but beautiful nose: then in the expression of the eyes there is all the Rachel love and Mary-mother tenderness,—deep, adoring love without passion; love so intense that it seems a little still and sad, as do all human emotions when very profound. There is a Holy Family by Carlo Maratti, whose Madonna-mother has just this beauty that Hélène Bouvreuil had when I saw her in her first flush of early womanhood.

Though Hélène took her beauty from her father's family, she had more of the disposition of her mother; there was the same quiet, calm, self-control, but not the same self-dependence; she was more clinging and demonstrative; she needed expressions of tenderness; she had to love and also to be loved to be happy. Madame Bouvreuil had no such need; she loved others profoundly, but although she valued their love in return, it was not a necessity as it was to Hélène. Like her mother, Hélène was very domestic in her habits and tastes; she was born to be a wife and mother, capable and loving her work.

I have said that Madame Bouvreuil loved her son with more anxiety than she showed for anything else; and well she might, for Octave Bouvreuil was one of those young men who, when they can make a true, clear-minded woman love them, it is against her better judgment, and the love is deeply blended with fear and trembling. To some families the gift of beauty seems given in its richest fullness, and so it was to the Bouvreuils; this son was one of the most attractive young men one could possibly imagine; he was of just height and proportions, neither too tall, nor under size; he had exquisite hands and feet, like his mother; like Hélène, every movement was graceful, but he was not active as she was—an indolent languor hung around him that was indefinitely attractive. His eyes were superb; they burned and glittered, and were the only part of his body that did not seem to partake of the careless indifference that appeared to be part and parcel of his nature; he had a steady gaze that was a lit-

tle embarrassing, and would have been impertinent had it not been unconscious. The varying expression of his eyes was no index of his character, however, for they were sometimes grave, then gay, then stern, then irresistibly tender; and I do not believe the master of them ever felt all these changes of feeling, certainly not so often as the eyes expressed them—it would have bored him excessively.

He had a well-outlined face, a beautiful mouth, and over the upper lip curled the softest brown mustache, which set off finely his superb teeth when he laughed; his head was good, not remarkable in its shape, but gentlemanly looking; his hair was a deep chestnut, that curled in rich masses, and which he had a habit of throwing off from his clear brown temples in a picturesque style that showed to advantage his well-made hand and graceful gestures; he was so handsome that his very presence was a pleasure. There was something of the quiet concentrated manner of his mother about him; but while it arose in her from a truly elevated mind and character, a habit of looking at things *en grand*, in him it came from coldness and indolence. He was eminently distinguished looking, although without any air of native nobility about him, even with all his beauty; he was gentle, graceful, and polished; had a winning, musical voice, and a little *empressement* of manner at times, as if he wished to serve you particularly and no one else, which was very agreeable, even though one might feel right sure that it invariably meant and ended in nothing. He talked well, but if the conversation grew earnest, or conflicted with his feelings, he assumed a steady, calm silence which was very gentlemanly, but which built up straightway a barrier between him and those who loved him, and who would fain be one with him.

The first time I saw Octave Bouvreuil, his beauty attracted me as beauty always does; his sweet low voice, his gallant, elegant manners delighted me; but I did not from the first moment feel any dependence on him, and it was well I did not, for it would have bored him and disappointed me; and

I remember thinking as I sat listening to and looking at him,—when the first novelty of our acquaintance made him display himself agreeably before me, showing off all his fine points,—how miserable any woman would be who loved him, and how thankful I was I had not met him in my own enthusiastic spring season of life.

He had seen a great deal of what men call “life.” From the age of eighteen he had been out in the world as his own master, and he was seven-and-twenty when I came to Peilz. He had been adopted, when very young, by his aunt, Octavie Eperveil, the Principal of the Peilz College, and she had taken every pains she could to both educate and spoil him. She wished him at some time to take charge of her institution, but this was an affair of the future, and for many years he had done little else besides making pleasant but useless preparations for this mythical position. Some winters he spent at Vienna, or Paris, or some of the great continental capitals, under the pretence of studying; but the past year he had been a sort of tutor or traveling companion to a young Englishman of fortune. He knew everything and everybody; was *au courant* in literature and the fine arts; with a graceful smattering of science; and was the most charming companion, for the mere amusement or occupation of conventional society life, one could imagine. His aunt thought he was exactly what he ought to be, and yet she must have had some misgivings about what the opinions of others might be, for she was constantly saying,—“Octave is so peculiarly fitted by nature and by management for his future position; the chief of an institution like mine does not need profundity of learning, so much as general intelligence, a popular easy manner, and gentlemanly habits and pursuits.”

Well, if those were the qualities she required, Octave was just the man for her purpose, as he certainly had, as much as any man I ever knew, what are called out in the world “the habits, requirements, and principles of a gentleman.”

And now I come to the last member of the little family circle of the Bouvreuils, Kinnaird Graham. He was the very opposite in every way of Octave; he could not be called handsome, and yet there was in his appearance all the evidences of that natural nobility of character so wanting in Octave, and which is so much better than mere physical beauty. How true is that distinction which some clever writer has made: "Nobility of appearance arises from the character, and is the work of nature; a distinguished air that of art: one is born with a person, the other is acquired." He was tall, erect, and slender; his head was a fine intellectual one, and his face cold and classic in outline as some antique bust; his brow was always slightly knit, and his clear-cut, firm lips a little compressed, which would have made him repelling but for the serene expression of his thoughtful brown eye, and winning sound of his kind voice. His movements and manner were as quiet as Octave's; with one, however, you felt that a total absence of interest, a *laissez aller* prevailed, a *cui bono* indifference caused the calmness; with the other, you could almost see every nerve and muscle tightly reined up for action and struggle if necessary. He talked very little, but it was evident his silence proceeded from thought and preoccupation; he was as intelligent as Octave, but in a different way; his knowledge was positive, exact, and proceeded from hard study; Octave's from a natural brightness and an early intercourse with what are called "men of the world."

From the first moment of my acquaintance with the two young men I commenced drawing a contrast between them, and as years went by and my intercourse with them grew more intimate, this contrast shone out more vividly. As I do not intend to develop either of them gradually by any events in this account of my new life at Peilz, I will conclude here this contrast which I have commenced, and which displayed itself more strongly month by month to me; then in the account I give of their different acts, as connected with

my little recital, will be shown only natural effects proceeding from their causes.

Octave had the reputation of being a brave, generous fellow, and yet I never saw courage, self-denial, or self-sacrifices in his daily acts, although in some emergencies excitement did make him perform startling acts of bravery and generosity, concentrating years in one ebullition, and this produced more effect than if he had hourly given quiet evidences of a truly generous nature; this was the reason why Kinnaird was never talked of by any one; he applied to his daily life, with himself and others, the principles dictated by his noble generous character, without regard to effect, and therefore he produced none. With one, doing right was a question of emotion; with the other, a question of duty—or, rather, no question at all; it seemed a matter of instinct. Octave gained more praise for some trifling but showy act of generosity than Kinnaird did for his constant life of simple duty performance; few noticed his influence; indeed it was only after living with the two, and suffering from the cold selfishness of the one, that you learned to appreciate the unobtrusive excellence of the other, and to feel that he was a truly brave, strong man, on whose unwavering character you could rest as securely as on anything human.

Kinnaird Graham's youth had been severely disciplined. He had lost father and mother early in life, and had been educated at Institution Eperveil, where he was glad to obtain a sub-tutorship to bear part of the expenses of his education, before fairly through his studies. By dint of severe application, he had surmounted all the obstacles naturally surrounding him, and had risen to the position of a useful and respected assistant professor in the very institution at which he had received his education. All this had resulted from early self-control and his native dignity and reserve of character. He was of English birth and parentage, and had wealthy, proud relatives, it was said; but the relationship was too remote to give him influence; the shap-

ing of his future rested on his own good strong energy and industry. He was younger than Octave by some two or three years, and Octave always acted impliedly as if he were still the senior and Kinnaird the junior, although Kinnaird was so far before him in usefulness and actual position. Kinnaird seemed to show a desire to be cordial with Octave, and never evinced any restlessness under the cool gentlemanly air of superiority which Octave affected; but there was little sympathy between the two, as might well be imagined. It was evident that Octave thought himself the finer gentleman of the two; like his aunt, he regarded Kinnaird as a good drudge, or one of his subordinates, and he expected him to possess in detail all the industry and knowledge necessary for his future purposes. When he spoke of him, which was rarely, he called him "a quiet, good sort of fellow, full of tedious text-book knowledge, fitted for his position, but no life, spirit, or taste in him." And yet, of the two, Kinnaird was better fitted than Octave for life's purposes, even for the gay worldly life he and his aunt valued so highly; for though Octave possessed a physical courage that would have led him up unflinchingly before a storming of Sevastopol, he had not, like Kinnaird, a moral courage that would enable him to face and pass unscathed through a life full of fiery temptations.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIZE.

OCTAVE BOUVREUIL liked new pleasures, new places, and new people; therefore, a little while after my arrival at Peilz, as I came under the category of the last named of his likes, I was honored with his attentions. He accompanied me daily in my walks; to him I owed my first introduction to Hauteville, a beautiful Swiss estate in the neighborhood of Peilz; to Chatelard and Les Crêtes, rendered famous by Rousseau's charming descriptions in that excessively *fâde* love story, "La Nouvelle Heloise;" to Blonay, so dear to the lover of Moyen Age legend; and to many a pretty little mountain village and charming point of view.

He took me also boating, and to him I was indebted for my first hearty fright on the water. We had a habit of going out on the lake at sunset, although constantly counseled not to do so by the worthy professor, on account of the sudden changes of wind which take place on these Swiss lakes at sundown; the bize, a northeast wind, which is very violent, is apt to spring up at nightfall and lash the calm lake into a fury of white-crested waves. But, notwithstanding all these warnings, I had great confidence in my handsome *batelier*, and though I am a nervous woman, I am not a timid one; then there is a spirit of contradiction in human nature which impels us to brave sometimes a threatened danger, especially when the danger is an attractive one and there are many chances of escape.

One beautiful afternoon we embarked in great glee, leaving Madame Bouvreuil, Dora, and Beau standing on the

Leignitz terrace, watching our departure, for the boat was too small a cockle-shell to hold many passengers; moreover, of the trio Beau was the only one who had any desire to accompany me.

"I cannot imagine, Octave," said Madame Bouvreuil, as he lifted me with graceful courtesy into the pretty little dancing boat, "why you bring Mademoiselle Fauvette all the way up here to embark; the Merle terrace is nearer and so much more pleasant."

"Mademoiselle Fauvette does not know the Merles," he answered in a careless manner, as if only half hearing his mother, and replying at random.

"Nonsense!" said Madame Bouvreuil, laughing. "You know very well that is no reason. Any one of our family can use the Chateau terrace, even for strangers, if we wish. You are growing very ceremonious all at once. But I trust, Mademoiselle Fauvette, that it will not be long before you do know our friends of the Chateau. It is the family of our good pastor, as I have already told you, who live there. I promise myself great pleasure in introducing them to you; they have been absent from Peilz since you came, or you would have met with them long since, as we are, especially when Hélène is at home, almost daily together. They are expected back to-day, are they not, Octave?"

Octave had been standing as if waiting for his mother to stop talking, looking down on the pebbly shore with that affected air of courteous patience which is neither courtesy nor patience, because so apparent and intended to be annoying. As she addressed this question to him, he shrugged his shoulders saucily, and replied in a cool, half laughing tone, lighting his cigar and puffing it as he spoke,—

"Upon my word, madam, you should have told me—puff—this morning that you wished some information—puff—puff—about our estimable and worthy pastor's family, then—puff—I could have inquired. I really—puff—cannot inform you; nor—puff—puff—puff—must we delay much

longer even to listen to your agreeable conversation;—puff—if we do, we shall miss one of the prettiest sunsets of the season"—puff—puff.

And his cigar by this time being well lighted, he bowed courteously and jumped lightly into the boat. As he rowed off, she shook her finger in playful menace at him, crying out,—

"You saucy fellow! Remember, Mademoiselle Fauvette, that is none of my training."

He made no other reply than a polite inclination of the head, while he rowed rapidly away from the shore. The clouds were beautiful; some hung in brilliant masses around the summits of the mountains, looking in some places like higher peaks; others, agitated by contending currents of air, rolled and folded together like huge masses of rich drapery. The sun shone out brilliantly, and hung its round red orb, swaying as it were, in a fiery flood, over the dim line of the distant Jura; its rays shot out a gorgeous stream of light, bathing the whole landscape in a golden glow; the clouds grew purple and a fiery red, and as they gathered together in superb folds, hanging curtain-like over the mountains in the Rhone valley, I fancied they looked like royal funeral mantles.

Octave commenced discoursing eloquently, using Goëthe's striking theory relative to clouds, mountains, and air, as if it was his own original idea, for he could appropriate the thoughts of others in the cleverest manner imaginable; and I listened admiringly, without showing that I was aware of the *ruse*; indeed, his graceful poetical elaboration of the simple theory made it so much his own, that I felt ready to pardon his unacknowledged appropriation of it.

He called the mountains and clouds great spirits, warring with and striving to conquer each other, and the air a pretended neutral power, but treacherously in league with the mountains, thus giving them the mastery over their cloud-

enemies. He dwelt on the "magnificent come and go" of the pulsations of these huge granite heights, their electric weapons, their attractive and repellent strength; he pointed out the cloud summits which hung so solidly over some peaks, and called them conquered mist spirits, held immovable by the relentless mountains until the internal labors should be completed for their final destruction. Other mountains were still at war with their cloud enemies, and the rolling, and flying, and changing about of the huge masses of vapor, told of the combat going on which would inevitably terminate in a complete rout and destruction of the misty warriors, for the electric forces of the mountains would make them fall, Beelzebub-like, in rains, fogs, and whirlwinds, as mortals call them, each terrific explosion containing huge rebel giants; and after the destructive rout and defeat, the treacherous elastic air would spread itself invisibly around and devour the remains of the vaporous host.

All this he told in glowing words, with his rhapsodical brilliant manner, of which my poor *resumé* gives but a bleak idea, I am sure. Then he directed my attention to the thin cloud which hung, as it so often did, mantle-like around Dent de Jaman. We observed with earnest gaze its evolutions and changes. We could see it devoured, as it were, by some invisible power: the last rays of the setting sun rested on it; it grew purple and golden; its edges detached themselves and mounted up to the mountain peak in fine, light, fiery threads, looking like the ribbons drawn from the mouth of a sorcerer, or the slender thread of flax spun off from a swift-revolving distaff. At last the whole brilliant vapor disappeared under the mysterious influence of this unseen air-enemy. As the last fiery thread hung its raveled end over the mountain peak, I turned toward the west to look at the clouds hanging above the sun, and saw a long black spiral cloud ascending into the sky from the port of V., which was to the west of us. We were always cautious not to embark in our little

boat until after all the lake steamers had passed, but this cloud told plainly that we were near one, unfortunately.

"Mr. Octave," I said, "surely there is a steamer at V."

I had to repeat my remark twice before he heard me, he was so engrossed in watching the beautiful cloud-weaving in the unseen hands of the invisible mountain spinner.

"Mille pardons," he cried, starting as I touched his shoulder and pointed to the ascending smoke. "By Jove!" he exclaimed, as the little steamer swept out of the port of V., "that is the Hironnelle, as I live! I thought I saw it pass when we were in the garden an hour since drinking our coffee."

"No, I remember well that was the 'Rhone,'" I said.

"Eh bien," he replied, with a cool shrug of the shoulders, as he seized the oars. "You must summon up all your courage, for I shall have to row you further out into the lake, for I cannot possibly reach the shore against this wind."

For while we had been watching the beautiful cloud-changes, we had left unnoticed the springing up of the bize. A few vigorous strokes of the oars carried us out of the line of the steamer, which came puffing by us a few moments after, so close that she threw over us a shower of the sparkling raindrops made by the sharp cut of her prow, and we danced merrily up and down in the swell she left in her wake. Octave looked frowningly up at the sky; and, after the rocking of the waves had subsided a little, he seized the oars with more eagerness than I had ever seen him show in anything. The bize was fairly upon us, and the waves mounted around, in great rage, threatening every instant to engulf us.

He rowed with intense energy, large drops of sweat stood on his forehead, the veins in his neck and on his temples looked like whipcords, while his nostrils dilated and his eyes gleamed fiercely—it was the expression of a superb animal goaded on by the presence of danger. I remained

perfectly silent, and there swept up before my memory vivid recollections of the different times in the past when I had foolishly trusted myself with daring male friends behind their fast trotters, and I tried to imagine we were in no more danger than I had been then. A grand white-crested wave burst over us. Octave rested his oars and panted fiercely. He looked at me earnestly: there was no expression of fear or cowardice in his face; it was an inquiring look, to see if I was a screaming or fainting woman. I returned his look as calmly as possible. I knew that was no time to weaken or discourage him by showing any of the fears I felt.

"It is impossible," he said, "to row against such a sea." And his words came out low and hissing between his set teeth, sounding like drops of hail on a hot furnace. "Could you light me a cigar?" he asked, after a few moments of silence, for he did not dare loose his hold on the oars.

I took out of the breast pocket of his gray paletot a cigar and match-box, struck a light with hands that I could not keep from trembling, and, putting a cigar in his mouth, I lighted it. He puffed it as coolly almost as he did the one a half hour before on the Leignitz shore, and sat holding on to the oars while the waves dashed relentlessly around us. As long as there had been a hope of reaching the shore, he had struggled bravely; now that hope was gone, his excitement was over, and he looked as calm and indifferent as usual, puffing his cigar, and gazing steadily out on the waves and sky; the only show of emotion he displayed was in the elongation of his eyelids, through which the brilliant eye glittered curiously.

When I had first discovered the steamer, I had taken out my watch to see what time it was, and had forgotten to replace it, holding it in my hand mechanically, even while I lighted the cigar. I became suddenly conscious of having it, and touched the spring of the cover to see the hour,—as if human time was of any consequence to me! This thought rushed over me, and with such force that for an instant I

could not distinguish the marks on the dial-plate; at last they stood out dimly, and I saw the hands pointing to twenty minutes past seven, but only as one sees in a dream. I remember closing the watch and putting it quietly up. Then I unclasped a little garnet rosary from my wrist, and commenced slipping the grains through my fingers, endeavoring, by a repetition of the familiar prayers, to rouse my stunned thoughts. Were they prayers, those words that fell mechanically from my lips? Already my body and soul seemed separated, for the simple, comprehensive Lord's Prayer, the beautiful Angelical Salutation, and the child-like, touching appeal of St. Bernard, passed from my mouth, but did not bear sense or meaning to my soul.

My mind was filled with thick thronging memories of friends far from me. I looked appealingly up into the gray clouds that swept to and fro in fierce combat, and seemed to see their faces dimly gazing down on me; those who loved me, and those over whom I had poured the full libation of my own love without sharing even "the wild-berry wine" of their hearts in return. Ah! why did their faces come there at such an awful moment! I had no time for them. My thoughts should be with the fast-approaching solemn future, not with the bitter unavailing past; and yet that keen, burning sorrow of loving longing filled my heart and brain, and I sighed out my lifeless prayers with agony. Just to see them in the flesh one instant; before all should be over, to meet them spirit to spirit; but for the space of a breath, and in that last moment of life, surely might be understood the great intensity and truth of the love I had felt for them. On went the prayers, and this hot tide of mortal yearning toward earthly things rushed rudely by the side of the holy current.

While this acute human pain was pulsating within me, and darkening with noisy agitation the moments that should have been still and resigned, the wind tossed the dense clouds aside, sweeping away all these loved but torturing faces, and

there seemed to rise in the pale light two other forms over whose graves I had shed the bitterest tears that can be shed by a mortal—tears not of sorrow for them but for myself; then for the first time the words of my prayers reached my soul. I grew quiet and still. I felt strangely detached from earthly ties, and thought only of those toward whom I seemed to be fast speeding. All these emotions passed through my mind much more rapidly than any words can express them.

Suddenly I heard a dull, rushing sound. I knew it the instant I heard its muffled plash; it was the *tourbillon* of the Rhone torrent! Then I became conscious of Octave's presence, for while

“voyaging through those strange seas of thought alone”

he had faded quite out of not only my thoughts, but even my physical sight. He leaned forward to put the oars in my hands, sprung to his feet, and unfurled the little sail. I thought he was mad, for I had not noticed that the wind which had swept aside my torturing spirit faces was a wind from G., a favorable one for us, and that the bize had passed over. While he was unfurling the sail a second and a third wave dashed in on us; it was a dangerous expedient, for a sudden gust of the capricious wind might easily upset us, but it was his only resource, as the current was growing stronger and stronger, and in a few moments we would have been inevitably dragged into the *tourbillon* of the Bouches du Rhone. I fancy Octave had little hope, and felt that he would rather go over in a struggle than wait calmly for death. But the sail saved us; so soon as it was up the little boat scudded over the bounding waves along with the wind, light as a soaring bird.

Octave's eyes glistened like those of a snake; he gazed earnestly forward; one hand grasped firmly the sail rope with such a strong gripe that I saw little drops of blood

oozing out from the grasp, for the sail, filled with the wind, buried the cord deep into the flesh of his hand, and the other hand managed the rudder. We were only a few minutes in this mad rush for life, but it seemed hours; and in a little while we were able to land about seven or eight miles above Peilz. My companion sprang on the shore as soon as the well-directed boat rattled up on the pebbles of the beach.

“Ha! ha!” he shouted out in a fierce exulting laugh; “we've gained the day!”

Some boatmen ran up to us and dragged in the boat while he handed or half lifted me out, for I was trembling and very weak. He laughed with thoughtless boyish merriment at me.

“Courage, courage!” he cried; “now is not the time to give up after holding out so bravely through all the danger. Here, drink this.” And pouring into the little goblet-shaped top of his pocket flask some wine, he made me swallow several times some of that “valor-giving drink, good Sherris sack.” After I had revived a little, he said: “Now if you will take my advice, you will walk from here to Peilz; it will help you over your excitement and save you from being ill.”

I knew he was right, and unpalatable as was the wise counsel, I took his offered arm and tottered along the lake road, gaining strength as I advanced.

“Do you think you could light me another cigar?” he asked, some time after we had started; “for this hand of mine is too lame to help me to such a luxury.”

Lame it was, indeed, and it took both of our kerchiefs and my hat vail to stanch the blood. After wrapping it up, and making of his broad black neck-ribbon a sling in which he rested the lacerated hand, I lighted his cigar, while he laughingly recalled the solemn lighting of the “funeral torch,” as he named it; and then he described, with graphic but sarcastic humor, my absurd holding on to the watch,

"clutching fast to old Father Time," he said, and the still, quiet whiteness of my face, and steady, unflinching gaze with which I had met his look in that fearful moment.

"I felt certain," he added, "that you were going to die game, especially when I saw you timing our run-away gait to eternity; and I can assure you it was my greatest consolation, for it would have bored me excessively to have had my last moments disturbed by feminine shrieks and faints."

I could not enjoy his gayety. I felt too solemn to appreciate even the most exquisite and brilliant humor. I had so lately stood face to face as it were with

"the pale-fronted images of my own true dead,"

that the chill damps of the grave seemed still hanging around me. I longed for the warm caressing touch of a loving human; and kept pace willingly with the swift, light tread of my companion, looking earnestly forward to the end of our journey, while he rattled on with unusual excitement; for the near approach of death, and his sudden escape from it, seemed to have intoxicated him, and his words mounted up like the sparkling beads of foam on a champagne goblet.

The clouds had floated off, and the stars shone out on a sky that looked like steel. The Peilz lights glimmered as we descended the road by Maison Monnet, and I hailed them with more gratitude than I had ever felt before at their sight. At last my trembling feet reached our door, and on the inside steps of the entrance we met Madame Bouvreuil. Luckily the professor was absent, therefore no one had known of our real danger. Madame Bouvreuil had felt anxious about us, but had concluded that Octave had rowed up the lake to another landing, at the commencement of the bize, and was waiting for a change of wind to return. We had agreed to say nothing of the real state of the case, therefore I pleaded fatigue, and went immediately to my apartments, leaving Octave to take tea alone with his mother.

How glad I was to reach my rooms, to hear Beau's frantic cries, see his bounding leaps, by which he testified his joy at my return, and be able to look again on Dora's honest, good face! But still the heavy, stunned feelings hung over me. I sat by the open window in silence, and felt as one does when awakened from a terrible nightmare; the familiar objects of furniture and books seemed almost strange; I looked at Dora while she prepared the evening meal, and poured the hot water from the steaming little urn on to the tea whose fragrant vapor filled the air, as if I had never seen her do it before. I ate, almost without tasting, the delicious anana strawberries and cream, and fed Beau with sponge-cake listlessly, and listened to the plashing swell of the naughty lake, as its beautiful waves rose and fell and rippled playfully on the pebbly beach; then I gazed out on the starry heavens that peeped in like little consoling angel heads between the branches of the large Marron d'Inde under my window, and wondered that my gratitude for my strange relief from danger was not more lively. But there was no bounding chord within me to sound; I was unstrung and voiceless.

While trying to rouse myself, a delicious melody came floating on the air from a brilliant-toned piano in the distance, a snatch of some Sclavic modulation, so peculiar in its rhythm and melody, filled with fantastical wildness, and a capricious mingling of sadness and gayety. Then there was a wandering over the keys, detached chords leading to curious weird resolutions, as if vague thoughts or the conversation of some one broke in upon the instrumentalist. Then, tenderly stealing on the ear, rose up softly that delicious nocturne of Chopin, in Re bemol, which floated and soared like a graceful vapor filled with volcanic heat, and tinged with a *dorée* violet hue. It darted to and fro like the reflected beam of the young crescent moon on the waves of a southern sea, breaking into golden sparkles or flashing with phosphoric light across the waters.

I drew Beau close to me and let him sleep in my arms,

while my cheek rested on his soft silky coat, and I gave myself up to the delicious reveries suggested by this exquisite music. Memories of beautiful creations in painting, poetry, and sculpture came before me, blended with the charms of the flower, cloud, and ocean realm of nature. The executant at one time appeared to trace capricious arabesques; then Shelley's exquisite versification seemed to be attained; a new harmonic formation followed, and there lay mirrored in the glassy flood of the melody the *svelte* form of that half angel, half woman creation, Angelini's Eve, sitting in graceful questioning reverie, meditating over the first sin. With flying rapid runs and trills, introduced by the instrumentalist, the music passed over curious modulations, suspensions that were like pleading justifications of some coming event, and sad, solemn, anticipated tones, followed by a descent of notes, all sounding

"As if the soul of melody were pent
Within some unseen instrument
Hung in a viewless tower of air,
And with enchanted pipes beguiled its own despair."*

The instrumentalist then floated off into that other realm of feeling belonging to the soul, in which sensuous emblems were no longer suggested; there was not the chaste and gracious form of the Italian sculptor's Eve to be seen, but the pulsating music unveiled the heart of that same Eve, innocent still though fallen, throbbing with anxiety, anguish, and fear; the sad secret of love once known, her peace forever gone.

All this may seem fanciful, but so that music sounded to me on that still, solemn August night. How intensely sad grew the fantastic melodies! One passage after another of that weird master followed, each wedded to the other with a poesy of feeling and expression as correct as it was effective.

* Read's "Realm of Dreams."

There were fears, and sad presentiments, and devouring jealousy, and inconsolable sadness, passing like shadows over the stream of harmony, as the invisible fingers swayed to and fro, holding chords with magnetic power, in which predominated "those mournful black keys." Gradually the flame of *triste* melody grew fainter: it languished. Suddenly, like a dying lamp, it shot up a vivid brilliant light; then abruptly ceased, as the hands seemed to throw off into air a keen, sharp high chord.

I drew a long delicious breath; the music had dissolved the icy death-damps which had seemed to envelop my whole being, and I lived again. The silence continued for some time, broken only by the ripple of the lake waves and the rustle of the sweet west wind through the leaves of a young acacia-tree that stood near the rail of the balcony on which I was leaning, when again the music began. This time it was of a different *genre*. A brilliant symphony poured out like a rich flood of wine; then came the richer flow of a fine manly baritone voice in a spirited passage from *Il Bravo*. The accompaniment was crisp and clear, and told well against the voice and melody in its reiterated *martellements*.

"The Merles have come back," said Madame Bouvrenil, entering my room just at that moment to bid me good night and inquire how I felt after my fatiguing walk; "and that is Octave singing with Marie."

"Surely," I cried, "it is impossible that a woman's touch can produce such music as I have just heard."

"Oh yes!" she replied, "it is Marie you have heard; she executes wonderfully well. She will be a great source of pleasure to you; she is such a clever girl, and good too; I am sure you will love her. She is totally different from my *Hélène*, although both are darling girls in their way. Sometimes I fancy I love Marie as well as if she were really my daughter, which I wish she was," she added, laughing. "If she and Octave would stop their quarrels and settle down into quiet affianced lovers, like *Kinnaird* and *Hélène*, I

should be much easier in my mind about Octave's future happiness."

"Then Mr. Graham and Hélène are betrothed?" I asked.

"*Pas du tout*, as Germans understand it; that is, we have had no regular betrothal; my sister-in-law would have to be consulted, and my husband does not like to undertake such a difficulty. Madame Epervail, though a good-hearted, excellent woman, is an odd one; she loves to make a little teasing opposition by way of showing her authority, and in a case like this she might take the fancy of giving trouble, so we have concluded to let the affair rest until Kinnaird should have some independent situation offered him; then, when they are all ready to get married, opposition will be useless. They are sincerely attached, have known each other from infancy, and Kinnaird is an excellent young man, in every way calculated to make Hélène happy."

"And Mr. Octave and Mademoiselle Merle?" I inquired, as the glorious full finale of the Bravo passage swelled out, and voice and accompaniment rode boundingly on the air together, filling the ear with sounds as brilliant

"as meteors fleet,
Struck from the invisible feet
Of Night's wild coursers."

"Oh!" said Madame, smiling, "they have been quarreling and making up since childhood. We cannot any of us tell how that affair will end. They parted in a ferocious pet some weeks ago, but I fancy separation has done them both good, and they have made up their difficulty, as I hear him singing there."

"Is Mademoiselle Merle a capricious lady love?"

"Not in the least. She is a straightforward, earnest girl, full of enthusiasm and deep feeling; she is Octave's equal in mind, very brilliant as well as good, and for that reason would have more influence over him than a woman of weaker

mental parts, for she will hold him by the intelligence as well as by the heart."

Dear Madame Bouvreuil! She who was so just in everything else was showing herself unjust on this subject. While talking of Hélène and Kinnaird, she had dwelt only on Kinnaird being calculated to make Hélène happy; but when speaking of Octave, it was Marie upon whom she placed the burden of responsibility.

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CHAPTER V.

MY NOVEL.

THE following day Octave was summoned to Berlin, to meet his aunt and sister, in order to accompany them home, and we all persuaded Madame Bouvreuil to go with him; thus the professor and I were left quite alone, for Kinnaird Graham had been absent for some days, with a detachment of boys from Institution Eperveil, on a most interesting pedestrian excursion in the Savoy Alps, to visit there a little Catholic village, which is so overshadowed by the mountains towering around, that the sun shines on its streets but one day in the year. Every season there was a party of the students, especially among the new-comers, who felt a natural curiosity to visit the village on that day, in order to be present at the rejoicing fête celebrated by the *paysans* over this angel visit of God's blessed sunlight, and this year it had fallen to Kinnaird's lot to guide and manage the little party.

Left thus to myself, a positive fit of industry took possession of me. I ordered my own time and Dora's, and I fancy I would have made Beau work also if I could. I laid down rules of occupation in the most tiresome manner. What monuments of learning and goodness there would be in this world, if persons ever once adhered to the rules their exacting minds and consciences at certain seasons devise! But, alas! like poor Sheridan, they not only content themselves with making the discovery that their aim is too high for poor mortal strength, but frame an excuse from that for falling far short of it.

By way of keeping myself to regular work, I resumed the daily lessons I had commenced taking soon after my arrival, in Italian and German, of Professor Bouvreuil. This was a delightful occupation, for my preceptor was a most pleasant teacher; he was thoroughly grounded in the genius and construction of modern languages; and then, his memory was so full of history and biography, in short, of every subject connected with mental pursuits, that to study with him was like opening the flow of a sparkling stream over a dry land; the current of learning poured out generously, beneficently enriching the minds over which it flowed.

His own tongue being French, of course all my studies were made in it, and this led to a critical examination of my knowledge of this language, which I had kept up for many years, more by reading than study or conversation. He suggested the making of compositions on various subjects, in order to give me a better command of its construction, and I soon became interested in the study of idioms and the curious formation of vernacular phrases, and had all sorts of out-of-the-way works, on the genius of the language, supplied to me by my master: such as Charles Nodier's clever sarcastic dictionary, which afforded me as much amusement by its cutting, ironical ridicule of the French Academy, as it did information by its scholarly analysis of the sparkling language, of which this author's own beautiful prose is such an ornament and model.

But I could not confine myself entirely to study. I found I needed some other pursuit to give me relaxation. In former times music would have been my comfort, but in the state of mind and feeling I was in then, it tortured instead of relieving me, and brought on melancholy morbid thoughts, which unfitted me for study or any healthy mental pursuit. Reading proved a great resource; and, as I was beginning to command the literature of three languages besides my own, I ought to have found sufficient relaxation in enjoying the creations of others; but the books would fall from my

hands, and thought grow busy in following out my own speculations and creations. If I read a psychological autobiography or romance, it would set me to analyzing my own mind, and to peering down with curious scrutiny into recesses and depths I had never sounded before. Recklessly I would unfold and examine the most delicate petal of feeling, no matter how scarlet might be the tinge of suffering caused by the relentless inquiry, and I often found myself dwelling on acts and mistakes of the past over which I had had no control, and condemning, with morbid restlessness, innocent causes from which had proceeded sad effects.

One day, while occupied in framing different results and imaginary scenes, producing happiness that had never existed, I exclaimed to myself, "I will write a novel!" I fancied that I felt a pressing necessity to express all these imaginary conclusions for my own mental satisfaction; and yet, when I strove to render into words my idea of a fiction, it remained unexpressed. The harmonies and chords were there in my mind and memory, but the resolving into melodic form would not come. I had had experience enough to have supplied sufficient incident for the most startling fiction. I had felt passionate emotions, and had seen their effects. It seemed as if my mind and memory were just ready to produce fruit; but some powerful influence worked against me and deprived my productions of originality, under whatever form I represented them. And this was the cause: there was a burning tide of overflowing feelings struggling to find vent; but passion, even tenderness, every warm emotion that enriches and beautifies a narrative or creation, especially a woman's, lay stunned and lifeless from the experience of the past.

After various fruitless efforts, I gave up the attempt discouraged, and concluded I had not the disposition or capability to find comfort by throwing my own experience into verse or prose or imaginary heroes and heroines. I should have been happier, may be, if I could, but I could not. I

often read "Jane Eyre" and "Aurora Leigh," and sighed, as I wished to possess gifts like the two marvelous women who have created those two fine artistic narratives; and then, when sad at the thought of my inefficiency, my inability to relieve my pulsing, throbbing brain, I would read "Leila," and thank Heaven that I could not express the bitter tide of resentment at injustice as that other great woman has done—

"That large-brained woman, and large-hearted man—
True genius, but true woman,"

whose writings show so plainly what Mrs. Browning calls

"the wind-exposed distorted tree
Blown against forever by the curse
Which breathes through nature. Oh, the world is weak!
The effluence of each is false to all:
And what we best conceive we fail to speak."

But, in order to gratify this impelling desire for mental creation, I turned from imaginary beings and scenes to history, to give me characters and events on which I could bring my imagination and experience to bear, and I hoped, by speaking through them, to avoid the personality that wounded me. I searched out my favorite characters. There they all stood before me, clothed by my fancy and memory in correct costume, exact in detail; but whenever I endeavored to use them, it was like taking the lifeless stone effigies over their monuments. I could not put life and breath into them; and yet, so many of them had heart-warm incidents in their histories which connected them closely with my sympathies.

The half-told romance of the gay, beautiful widow, Joanna of England, and her cousin, the Black Prince; the vain, frivolous, but fascinating Marguerite of Navarre, and her impetuous lover, the unfortunate Constable de Bourbon, who threw away his love on a heartless woman and his honor and

fame to gratify his temper; Mary Tudor of England, and her deep abiding love for her cold husband, Philip of Spain; and, blended with this narrative, could be woven the silvery gleaming thread of calmer romance, the friendship so tender that it was almost love felt for her by her cousin, that pure, great man, Cardinal Pole; Mary of Scots and Bothwell, and a host of these sweet love stories which touch a woman's heart the quickest, passed a leisurely examination in my mind.

Then swept up before me women nearer my regard, Anne Clifford, Countess of Derby, and her beautiful mother, that Countess of Cumberland whose virtues and charms, disregarded by a neglectful husband, were commemorated in "deathless verse" by the poet Daniel, who loved her with a reverential love such as one feels for gentle, beautiful saints. To merit such pure love and win such immortality as was bestowed on her in that exquisite "Epistle" of the poet's, in which the sublimest lessons of resignation and noble disregard of human injustice are taught, a woman might be willing to suffer sorrow. What proud consolation should have thrilled her high, chaste heart, as she read—

"I see you labor all you can
To plant your heart and set your thoughts as near
His glorious mansions as your powers can bear,
Which, madam, are so fondly fashioned
By that clear judgment; that hath carried you
Beyond the feeble limits of your kind—
As they can stand against the strongest head
Passion can make; inured to any hue
The world can cast, that cannot cast that mind
Out of her form of goodness; that doth see
Both what the best and worst of earth can be."

Many hours of sweet pondering I gave to this charming mother and daughter; then passed on to another one of my favorite characters in history, Marguerite of Austria, daugh-

ter of the lovely Mary of Burgundy, and she became my chosen heroine, because I fancied I could find more material to work with in her own life, as connected with history, which would save me from drawing on my own experience or imagination for incidents. I searched out a neat little blank-book, given me for a journal by a friend, and which had a nice clasp lock; in it I began my wondrous tale. What laudable industry I evinced in that commencement! I wrote the title and motto on the first page, taking her famous *mot* or *device* for the motto,—

"Fortune, infortune, une forte une."

"In fortune or misfortune there shall be one woman strong of heart."

Then I collected, on the first pages of the neat industrious-looking book, all that my memory could tell me of her life,—little incidents that proved her intelligence and happy disposition, her merry *spirituelle mots* in her girlhood, when she was sent wandering about from one European court to another in search of a husband,—"she did not wonder that fruit should not ripen on a year when monarchs forgot their oaths and troth-plights." I talked to the worthy professor about that epoch of history connected with her life, and took down notes from his conversation. I hunted up books on costume, not many to be found unfortunately in Peilz; then—I stood still. My materials were all collected; but my first chapter was a dead failure. I wished it to be striking and vivid; it did not possess the least originality or life. How I envied James his possession of Wouvermann's white horses! Two young cavaliers "pricking along the grassy road," or even one, would have helped me amazingly.

At last I hit upon what I imagined fondly was a capital idea: I opened with her shipwreck voyage to Spain. I gave as spirited a description as possible of her calm, philosophical preparation for drowning; the quiet wit of her epitaph, which she wrote and fastened to the folds of her robe,—

"Ce gist Margot, la gente demoiselle,
Qui ha deux maris, et s'y mourt pucelle."

"Here lies Margret, the young gentlewoman who had two husbands, and yet died a maid."

I was fairly launched; such a relief! I described her landing, her marriage, her boy-husband, and his mother Isabella of Spain, the loving wife who, with all her tenderness for her selfish husband, had the power, so seldom possessed by a loving woman, of preserving her personal independence. Then the sudden death of the young bridegroom, and the return of the girl-widow to her Austrian home, I dwelt on. To be sure, with all the aid that history gave, I had to admit that my first chapters were dull. However, I comforted myself with the thought that it was a historical novel, and that it did not comport with the dignity of such a fiction to be gaudy and brilliant in commencement; it should advance leisurely and with repose; it would be impertinent in the first chapters of such a book to go trotting off familiarly like any common story. Ah, that blessed gift of self-esteem! What a soothing comfort it is; what a fine atmosphere it creates around us; in it we float and soar, and, no matter what others may say or think, we are content, for it finds excuses for everything, softens down each defect!

"And every author must possess it," I said one day to myself, apologetically, as I found myself indulging rather too conceitedly in excusing praise over my novel, "or how else should one ever have the courage to publish a book?"

CHAPTER VI.

NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

Tired out with close application, and feeling a little dull in "Margaret of Austria," the August weather also growing too oppressive for any kind of mental exertion, I spent a great deal of time in the open air and woods. I now appreciated the advantage of Octave's assistance, given me the first weeks of my arrival, by which I had obtained pleasant places to visit. Hauteville and Les Crêtes were my favorite resorts; and often Dora, Beau, and I would leave our house in Peilz at early morning, with an India basket of two compartments, containing in one food for the mind, and in the other the quite as needful food for the body, and in some part of these beautiful places stay until nightfall.

Hauteville is situated on the side of Mount Pleiades, on the road to old Blonay. It is not a very spacious estate, nor is the chateau remarkable for any architectural beauty; but the situation, which is very fine, gives it some invaluable landscape points of beauty. The park is the grand feature of the place, and it would be difficult to find a more lovely spot: long avenues of trees; a mountain torrent gliding peacefully through one part and breaking out into a wild cascade in another; hills and slopes and elevations, and openings from which can be seen one of the most beautiful views in the world, for they command the sight on the west and south of the rugged Savoy Alps, Dents du Midi, and the mountains of the Rhone valley, with the more *riante* Vaudois, spreading out its richly-cultivated terraces of vineyards, on the east and north; there is the whole grand view

from Mount Velan to Jura and Peilz, and the lake shore, dotted with nestling villages beneath, like a living border to the blue waters.

Then Les Crêtes, the famous "Bosquet de Julie," was another one of the places I loved to visit. This is a little cluster of hills nearer the lake shore farther east, and overhanging the fine lake road, with winding hilly walks, covered with a superb bosquet of chestnut trees. Some of the old trees are still standing, and I often thought of the sad, wild enthusiast Rousseau, while sitting under their shade, and fancied I could see him coming there at early morning when he had risen from solemn, feverish dreams,

"Which, like winged winds, had borne
To that silent isle which lies
'Mid remembered agonies—
The frail bark of his lone being,
And its ancient pilot, Pain,
Close beside the helm again."

Here he must have sat and gazed over the beautiful expanse spread out before him of mountain, forest, and wave, and drank in draughts of inspiration as he dwelt over the resolving harmonies of his fiction and tried to picture forth "one green isle in his deep, wide sea of misery." Surely if any place in nature could give soothing thoughts to this "self-torturing sophist"—whose minor triads in romance would modulate from minor to minor, instead of following natural rules and rising into a clearer, higher key—Les Crêtes was well calculated for this gracious service; for

"There was soft sunshine, and the sound
Of old forests echoing round,
And the light and smell divine
Of all flowers that breathe and shine."

Above hung Chatelard, whose very name seems fraught with poetic loveliness; and it is as beautiful as the dreams of

the most imaginative poet could make it. One afternoon, Dora and I, after spending the day at Les Crêtes, wandered up the beautiful, well-made road to this fine old chateau. It is much larger and more imposing near to than when seen from the lake road. It consists of one grand square tower, and was built in 1441, by a certain Jacques de Guinguin, on the ruins of an ancient tower called "Castellum Arduum." It is on the very summit of a hill three hundred and seventy feet above the lake, and this hill is covered with terraced vineyards from summit to base.

We entered the large, old court-yard gate, and passed out down into the narrow terrace walk which winds around at the foot of the castle on the side opposite the lake, and which is a species of hanging garden, as it were, having espaliers, fig, and apricot trees trained up against the court-yard walls, and rose vines, intermingled with other sweet climbing plants, covering the stone-border wall which forms its division from the first vineyard beneath. Pots of brilliant exotics were ranged along the walk, and luxuriant *réseda* vied with *verveine* to fill the air with sweet odors. The view from this narrow walk was charming. Below us lay spread out vineyard after vineyard, lying in terraces one below the other, filled with golden fruit ripening in the August sun; then came Tavel and Clarens, and then the glassy glittering lake. The sun was just setting behind Jura, sending up its flame-like rays above the horizon, gilding with a red light clouds and mountains; just above the Rhone valley hung a young harvest moon, with its attendant star; a variety of shades floated over the landscape, and an opal-like glory seemed to hang above, beneath, and around us.

As I stood, lost in contemplation of this rapturous scene, I heard, with some vexation, voices near me, and thinking they might be some of the residents of the chateau, to whom I was a stranger, I turned to leave the place, and met, face to face, two ladies. I bowed, and prepared to pass them,

when the elder one of the two said: "Pray do not let us disturb you; we have come here purposely to meet you; we have called frequently on you at Professor Bouvreuil's, but you have been engaged or out every time, and this afternoon when we called again the professor told us we might find you at Les Crêtes or here, and as we intended taking this walk, we concluded, if we should be so fortunate as to encounter you during our promenade, we would take the liberty of presenting ourselves, as we really wish to contribute what little we can toward making your new home in Peilz pleasant to you. I am Cecile Merle, and this is my niece, Marie. I am sure you have heard the Bouvreuils talk of us enough to feel half acquainted with us; so pray let us lay aside ceremony, and forget that we have not known each other always."

She said this in a sweet, languid, lingering voice, and extended both her hands to me with a frank courtesy, as sincere and warm as her words. She was a woman of mid age, neither handsome nor ugly, but very pleasant looking, tall, slight, and fair; everything about her bespoke a kindly, gentle disposition. She spoke French in the slowest Swiss style, but being a great purist in her language, this peculiarity took away all the *paysanne* sound, and gave more music to her words than if she had used the quick, sharp, hailstone accent of the Parisians, so much affected by the well-educated Swiss. She was the only and maiden sister of Mr. Merle, the pastor of the Peilz Constitutional Church, and had been his companion from their orphan childhood, and his housekeeper and a second mother to his only child from the time of the early death of his wife, which had taken place in the second year of their marriage. Everybody loved "Tante Cecile," for this was the name every one gave her, she was so gentle, loving, and indulgent.

Of course, after so frank an introduction, no *gêne* could exist, and in a few minutes we were all three leaning over the parapet wall admiring together the sunset. Soon after, Dora,

who had been around the corner of the castle gathering some yellow acacia leaves, came up with Beau, and I introduced this very prominent member of my little domestic trio to my new friends. He barked most insolently at them, and received their proffered courtesies and caresses with gruff growls in his usual uncivil manner, and Marie told him he needed all his beauty to make him endurable.

While she stooped to examine his various fine points, to which Dora with partial pride always directed the attention of strangers—the long, black, silky ears with fiery tan lining, the rich tan spots over the large melancholy brown eyes, and the finely-formed muzzle and silky tan-colored fringe to his little legs and flexible paws—I observed also with equal interest my new acquaintance. Octave had made himself sufficiently charming to me, during the time that the novelty of our acquaintance had lasted, for him to make me feel interested in seeing and knowing the woman he was supposed to love—the woman who might be his wife. I noticed that she was very small, but her head was superb. It was not too large in proportion to her form, and yet the shape and carriage was as grand as the Pompeian Sappho, which beautiful bust hers always recalled to me. The golden sunset atmosphere, I thought, gave her luxuriant brown hair its peculiar tinge, but I afterwards found that it was its natural hue. I have never seen more beautiful hair than that of Marie Merle; it was so long and thick that, when unloosened, it enveloped her slight form like a drapery, its silken ends sweeping the ground. Her features were very regular: the brow and eyes, and delicate nose with its quivering nostrils, bore a striking resemblance also to the beautiful antique Sappho I have already mentioned; but there the likeness ended, for the mouth and chin were totally different: no soft, voluptuous beauty hung around them; the lips were delicate and firm, and they had a varying expression, sometimes not very agreeable, because almost mocking and sarcastic. She was not generally considered pretty, and this

was because her face was so powerfully affected by her feelings; notwithstanding the exquisite outline of the upper part of her face, I have seen its effect entirely destroyed by the influence of a cold or discouraged mood; a dull, gray, stony shade seemed to hang around her at such times, as if the soul was absent; but when pleased or animated, it was like the lighting up of a finely-cut transparent onyx head; every feature glowed and pulsated with beautiful life.

Her little delicate fingers played with Beau's long ears; for he quickly yielded to the powerful magnetic gift she possessed, and I thought I had never seen such infantile hands on a woman; the fingers were slender, *effilé*, and so flexible that they could be turned back to touch the upper part of the wrist without pain. She was quite as cordial as her aunt, though not so gentle. She had a positive, rather abrupt manner about her, which, if she had been a large woman, might have appeared coarse and uncultured at first sight; but she was so delicate in form, her voice had such a melody in it, and there was that unmistakable presence of genius in her which rendered even these defects of manner attractive. I looked at her critically from the first, as one examines a piece of sculpture, a gem, or a painting; but, from the very first moment of our acquaintance, I could not bear to think of her ever belonging to Octave Bouvreuil. Had I been a man, I should have become his rival on the spot; as it was, I am sure I stood many times in his light when in the loving presence of his mistress.

The sun sank lower and lower behind Jura, sending up long rays across the sky some time after its setting; then we turned to leave the chateau terrace. As we descended the fine road, we stopped to read the inscription carved on the stone embankment wall, which told of the building of the road by some *Sieur de Chatelard*, and the completion of it under some *Dame Jaqueline*, his widow, *née* some other lordly name of old *Savoisien* descent; then we lingered by the picturesque fountain in the main street of the little vil-

lage of Tavel, while Tante Cecile inquired after the well-doing of some old Swiss grandame; then we skirted Les Crêtes and entered the shady road that led through pretty estates and by the sides of high-walled vineyards, until it joined the lake road near Maison Monnet. The young moon silvered the road, creeping in between the branches of the trees; the sky still looked golden around the sharp-cut edges of the mountains; women passed us with straw hottes fastened on their shoulders filled with the evening meal of their goats, and around them hung the long grass and vine branches, a bulky but not a heavy load; and men, with wooden brandes strapped on their backs and implements of labor in their hands, returning home to the second *gouter*, after a long day spent at work in their vineyards. It is not possible for people to be more steadily industrious than these same *Vaudois paysans* are in the culture of their vignobles; their houses and domestic life are all neglected for this work; all the year round they are in them, except when the snows of the two first winter months drive them reluctantly into their dark uncomfortable homes; men, women, and children—every generation from grandparent to grandchild—unite in the labor and feel an equal interest. But no married woman can gather a basket of grapes from her own vineyard and sell them in the public markets, without the permission of her husband; *he* may have spent his spring, summer, and autumn, like the Prodigal Son in the parable, "in riotous living," and she and her children may have *fossoyéé* all the laboring days, and done all the needful work to bring the fruit, with the gracious aid of the sun, to autumn perfection; yet, after all this, she holds no ownership in republican Helvetia over one *grappe*, even to exchange it for bread for her children.

Can it be true, that which the inhabitants and advocates of despotic governments have so often told me triumphantly, that under no governments are women so despotically treated, and hold so few independent rights, as under republics? But we did not talk on such mooted points as this during

our twilight and moonlight walk from Chatelard to Peilz. We got on the subject of music in this way: it was on hearing me sing in a low tone, to a Neapolitan melody, this verse from a little song in the Neapolitan patois, which was recalled to me by the tender smile which graced Marie's mouth and softened down its natural severe expression,—

“Quant 'e doce chella vocca,
Quant 'e bello chillo, riso,
Tu te cri dempara di so,
Quanno sta vicino a te.”

As I sang these words in a low voice, playfully, she laughed, in acknowledgment of the intended compliment, and said: “I must tell you that my father and aunt have listened with great delight to your singing; for we can hear you quite well at the chateau.”

“And you?” I asked with a laugh; “of course my singing has also given you pleasure, although you only mention your father and aunt, has it not?”

“I am not very fond of vocal music,” she answered, frankly, “unless united to the orchestral accompaniment and effect of the opera. Simple salon singing by amateurs tires me, it is so bleak. I miss the rich harmony of instrumentation.”

“Marie!” said her aunt, in a remonstrating tone. “You are a little too candid for courtesy.”

“By no means,” was her answer. “I have told the truth, and I am sure Mademoiselle Fauvette would rather I should have said what I have, than evasively complimented her. What little I have heard of her music has proved to me that she is too good a musician to prefer unmeaning compliments to the truth. It is a mere matter of taste, after all. But I think I should like your ballad singing; there is an improvising tone you sometimes give it which is totally distinct from and superior to the style in which you sing operatic passages.”

“Pray do not think that your niece's clever and just criticism can offend me,” I said to Tante Cecile, seeing her look anxiously at Marie. “I am sure she is right, so far as it applies to my own singing, and I have often thought the same thing; like her, I am not very fond of operatic passages off the stage, and that is why I cannot sing them with as much pleasure or with so much *abandon* as a simple ballad.” Then, turning to her, I took her little hand, and put it in my arm cordially, holding it affectionately, to prove to her my perfect satisfaction with her candor, saying, as I did so: “I have heard you also; but so remarkably fine is your execution, and particularly your expression, that I could scarcely credit Madame Bouvreuil when she told me that it was a woman; now that I see you, I feel still more surprised. How can such tiny fingers perform such marvels? There is a grasp, a power, and also a pertinacity in the music I have heard, that seems impossible for a woman to possess.”

“Then you do not think a woman's clear perception and quick feeling heart able to produce as much as a man's muscles?” replied Marie, sharply. “I am afraid you are like many others. You have not yet reached the knowledge, that true music does not come from labor of the body so much as from strength and feeling in the soul.”

I laughed heartily at her playful petulance.

“Oh, I am in earnest,” she continued, her mouth assuming its most mocking expression; “about music I am very rigid.”

“And, consequently, unjust,” I answered; “of course, as all ‘poets born, not made,’ are. Because the thing comes easy to you, because you can by force of natural cleverness cover over or dispense with grammar rules, I will answer for it you will have no patience with less gifted ones like myself.”

“Yes I shall,” she cried merrily; “I shall have great patience, or pretend to have, whenever you play humble and modest, as you are doing now.”

"No, I assure you," I said, "I am not playing either humble or modest. I have often felt of myself what pretty Brulette said of poor Joset, in Madame Sand's *Maîtres Sonneurs*. Do you remember it?"

"No, repeat it to me."

"Joset, I can very well believe that all this is in thy head, but I am not sure of its coming out. To wish and to be able are two things. To dream and to execute differ greatly. I know that thou hast in thy ears, or in thy brain, or in thy heart, the true music of the good God, because I have seen it in thy eyes when I was little, and when more than once taking me on thy knees thou didst say to me with a charmed air, 'Listen, do not make any noise, and endeavor to remember it.' Then I would listen faithfully, and I could only hear the wind which rustled in the leaves and the water which rung its little foam-bells over the pebbles; but thou! thou couldst hear other things, and thou wast so assured of it that I became so likewise."

"Beautiful!" exclaimed Marie, with beaming face. "Tante Cecile, I must positively read *Les Maîtres Sonneurs*. You know, of course, Mademoiselle Fauvette, that Madame Sand's works have been to me *les œuvres défendues*; but I think papa and Tante Cecile must be more indulgent, and let me draw inspiration and information from this artistic woman's writings."

"It is a great pity," I said, "that Madame Sand allowed her passions and resentments to dictate to her so much oftener than her judgment and taste. To the artist-student, however, many of her works are invaluable. The most objectionable of her writings appear to have been written during a transition state of her nature, for in them we find principles and opinions different from her better works, and plots and characters developed and offensive subjects dwelt upon, repulsive as well to good morals as to good taste. She made a mistake, according to my fancy, in unsexing herself; in wishing, or rather demanding for our sex the in-

dulgences and weaknesses of men, resentful at the injustice meted out to the daughters of Eve; despising

'the gauds and armlets worn by weaker women in captivity,'

she has contented herself in breaking and casting away chains as useless to contend against as the pretty jeweled ornaments. She has not striven to make women stronger for well-doing, but she has claimed for us what we do not want, license for evil-doing. To smoke cigars, haunt cafés, and wear pantaloons, seems to have been her first crude idea of woman's rights. But, setting aside all this, and overlooking her melodramatic Byronic rhapsodies, Madame Sand is a most suggestive writer to the artist."

"You have read Liszt's Chopin?" asked Marie eagerly.

"Yes," I replied, "and he gives, in his description of Madame Sand, just the idea I wish to convey of this remarkable woman, this one of the three great literary women of our day."

"Three?" repeated Marie inquiringly.

"The written recognition," I answered, "of Elizabeth Browning and Charlotte Brontë, entitle us to class this great French woman with her equally great English sisters."

We had wandered into the Leignitz grounds, and were sitting on the broad upper platform of the flight of steps leading down to the lower terrace. The moon was just sinking behind the Corneilles de Bize, peaks of the Savoy Alps; the waves of the lake washed musically up over the pebbly beach; the snipes screamed, Rousseau's bécassines, sounding like necessary discords in a composition rendered tame by too perfect harmonies. We sat for a few minutes in silence; then Marie asked,—

"Do you remember what Liszt says of Madame Sand in the description of a soirée at Chopin's?"

"I remember the description you allude to, but not the particular passage; pray repeat it," I answered, for I loved to hear the sound of my new young friend's voice, and judge

of her taste and character by her language and choice of passages in her reading.

"It is after he speaks of Madame Sand's being one of those elect," said Marie, "who perceive the beautiful under all the forms of art and nature, and also of the divine word to be obtained from close intercourse with nature, that word which lies hidden in her infinite harmonies,—harmonies composed of graceful outlines, exquisite sounds, lights, shades, noises, and warblings,—then he adds: 'To have listened early, like Madame Sand, to the whisperings by which nature initiates the privileged to her mystic rites, is one of the appanages of the poet; to have learned of her to fathom that which man dreams, when he in his turn creates, and which in his works of all kinds he uses and adapts like nature, the fracas and the warblings, the terrors and the delights, is a gift more subtle still, which Madame Sand, as woman and poet, possesses in a double right, by the intuition of her heart and her genius.'"

"I do not wonder," said Tante Cecile, laughing, "that you are so anxious to read the books of that naughty unsexed woman, when she is described in such a fascinating style to you; and now that Mademoiselle Fauvette has come to your aid, I suppose permission must be given to you."

"It depends, dear Mademoiselle Merle," I answered, "entirely upon the character of the young girl into whose hands Madame Sand's books are placed, and the kind of education she has received. There are many girls to whom her books would be very injurious; but I fancy your niece has sufficiently clear notions of right and wrong, which will enable her to pick out the good grain and throw away the chaff. Moreover, she need not read the objectionable books; *par exemple*, those written under the influence of resentment against her husband's unmanly tyranny and dishonesty, or those in which she wishes to advance her St. Simonian principles."

"Mrs. Browning," said Tante Cecile—for the Merles, like the Bouvreuils, were good English scholars, and quite *au*

courant in English literature—"Mrs. Browning, of whom you just spoke, I remember has written two very beautiful sonnets to Madame Sand. As we are in such a quoting mood, Mademoiselle Fauvette, before we leave this terrace, pray repeat 'The Desire,' if you can remember it."

Luckily, Mrs. Browning's poems were in my basket, and by the fading light of the moon, aided by my memory, I read it aloud to them, and our conversation was closed by this generous and just poem of Mrs. Browning.

"Thou large-brained woman and large-hearted man,
Self-called George Sand! whose soul, amid the lions
Of thy tumultuous senses, moans defiance,
And answers roar for roar, as spirits can;
I would some mild miraculous thunder ran
Above the applauded circus, in appliance
Of thine own nobler nature's strength and science,—
Drawing two pinions, white as wings of swan,
From thy strong shoulders, to amaze the place
With holier light! That thou to woman's claim,
And man's, might join beside the angel's grace
Of a pure genius sanctified from blame;
Till child and maiden pressed to thine embrace,
To kiss upon thy lips a stainless fame."

CHAPTER VII.

MY FIRST VISIT TO MARIE MERLE.

ON my return that evening I found Madame Bouvreuil; but she had come back alone, having left her son and daughter with their aunt, who was to be detained at G. a few days on business. Two or three days after meeting the Merles at Chatelard, they sent for Madame Bouvreuil and me to drink tea with them. Mr. Merle lived in the habitable part of the old Tour de Pierre, or Peilz, which stood on the borders of the lake, and had been built in 1249 by *le petit Charlemagne*, Pierre of Savoy, a famous son of that family, who mingled the blood of the counts of Savoy with all the reigning houses of Christendom. His sister Beatrix, although only a simple Countess of Provence, married her four beautiful daughters to the principal European monarchs of that epoch. One, Sanchie, was an empress; another, Eleanor, the queen of Henry III. of England, whose husband estranged his nobles and people to pay court to his lovely wife and her foreign train; the two others were selected by Blanche of Castile, as daughters-in-law; Marguerite became the wife of the saintly Louis IX., and Beatrix the wife of his brother, the warlike Charles of Anjou, who defeated that hero of old romance, Dante's

"Biondo era e bello e di gentile aspetto,"

the unfortunate Manfred, and ascended the throne of Naples, the first of that Neapolitan house of Anjou, whose women, like those of the Stuart race, were celebrated for their beauty

and their misfortunes; from the first Joanna, "so lovely and so sad," to the last daughter of the line, the imperious, broken-hearted daughter of the Troubadour King René, Margaret of Anjou.

This Tower of Peilz, and the little village attached, had been built and fortified by Pierre of Savoy, at the time when he stood at the zenith of his power, after he had received the homage of the lords of Eastern Helvetia, and the seigneurs of Berne and Morat, and had taken his father's place as Duke of Savoy. The little village of Peilz has still the remains of the old walls and fosse, which forms a northern boundary to it. In passing out of our own street in the village, and taking the road which comes up from the tower on the lake that leads out to Hauteville and "old Blonay," we always pass under a grand old arch, which is part of, and on which rises, the beautiful spire, with its ogive windows, of the Peilz church, built also by Pierre. This arch spans the road, and from the church, on both sides, extends the wall and fosse of the ancient fortifications.

This village and tower Pierre built to command that side of the lake, as he built the one at Martigny to protect himself at the Pass of St. Bernard, and the one at Evian to control the southern shore of the lake; and on the ruins of Count Wala's prison, Zillium, he raised the present castle, so celebrated by the great English poet, who, if he had known better the history of that remarkable place and its more meritorious heroes, would have devoted his verse to the praise of a much more interesting martyr than the renegade priest and unworthy Protestant, Bonnivard.

He was an ambitious and warlike prince, this Pierre of Savoy, and would have been glad to have erected his aspiring house into a European monarchy, and had a kingdom of Helvetia ranked among the sovereignties of Christendom. "Fier, hardi et terrible comme un lion, si preux qu'on l'appelait le second Charles Maygne, et sachant se tenir tellement qu'il devait mettre à subjection moultz de gens; et

quand il se fut montré, tous se rangèrent autour de sa personne, criant à l'envi, Vive notre redouté Seigneur!" says the old chronicler of this hero, whose history is so mingled with poesy and legend that it quite loses itself in those hazy regions, while those of his no greater, only more successful rival, Rodolph of Habsburg, is familiar to every school-boy.

As we approached the chateau, Madame Bouvreuil and I talked over these historical associations, which hang around every old ruin and wall in Europe. In America we have as beautiful nature as one finds in Europe; we have huge forests, immense inland seas, flood-like rivers, great waterfalls, and mountains whose white snows, violet vapors, and graceful outlines are as lovely as the most celebrated European ranges. But in Europe every road and every old castle, and almost every stone is as a page of history. The American scholar can scarcely feel the reality and life of all that he studies of olden times until he visits Europe; then the tales of old chronicler and bard take form and shape to him and possess a living memory.

Only one tower and side building of the chateau had been repaired and kept in habitable order; the other tower and side were quite in ruins, and its architectural beauty made of it, as of the fine old Peilz church and old wall and fosse, favorite studies for the lovers of the picturesque. The habitable parts were the tower and side extending on the terrace overhanging the lake, near the little port of Peilz. The entrance was by a large gate, near the habitable tower. One part of the court-yard wall had formed also the wall of the castle chapel; the chapel had disappeared, but a window remained in the wall, whose ogive top gave it its date; this formed a picturesque frame to a bit of blue sky, and it was decorated with hanging festoons of lichen and ivy, and other graceful pendants of the scarlet bindweeds that crept over the old walls, combining with the velvety moss and delicate maiden-hair fern to make a beautiful foliage over this fine ruin.

Michel, a gardener, with his family, occupied the lower part of the chateau building, and rented the grounds attached, consisting of a little mounting hill outside the chateau walls, which was laid off in a neat terraced vegetable garden, with rows of well-kept dwarf fruit-trees. This hill sloped off beneath my windows, and from them I could look down on a pretty winding walk that mounted up over it. The hill had been tunneled, to make a passage to the lower part of the garden, and this mounting walk, with the tunnel arch beneath, made a very picturesque sight; there was a broken column and a bit of ruined stone wall, and from the garden beyond rose an old ivy-covered Marron d'Inde, whose long branches threw a friendly shade over the tunneled walk and extended its leafy arms quite over to my balcony, as if to seek the acquaintance of a graceful young acacia that grew quite near my balcony posts.

The house which the Bouvreuils occupied had been part of an old convent, and near my window rose a circular tower which had been its staircase and belfry. The picturesque walk and part of Michel's vegetable garden, probably all of it, must have belonged to the community; and I often amused myself with conjuring up pictures of the past, such as some lovely lonely Chatelaine of Peilz—whose knightly husband was far away emulating the prowess, and infidelities may be, of the legendary Paladins—passing out of her courtyard gate and mounting the shady hill walk to seek counsel from the Mother Abbess, or to find spiritual consolation in the performance of her meek matronly devotions before some precious shrine in the convent chapel, or followed by her maidens, carrying some gracious offering to the community.

The court-yard of the chateau was always neatly kept. A large fountain in the center poured out a generous stream of sparkling water from an old Savoisien lion's mouth into a large stone basin, rudely sculptured in the form of a huge scallop shell with river-god supporters, once very grand, but now sadly dilapidated. Two or three trees, some walnuts

and elms, stood there; probably planted in more peaceful times, when that large court-yard was no longer needed for military retainers. Around these trees Michel had made little flower rings, and against the side of the old wall—near the house, under the old chapel window—lay spread out a fine large flower-bed filled with beautiful geraniums and roses. A yellow rose vine and white jessamine clambered up the wall and mingled with the ivy and bindweeds. There were the China asters, petunias, and verbenas of midsummer, and a few rich dahlias of autumn, partly opened, and a border of superb fuschias; Michel was very proud of them and of his fine geraniums which stood inside the fuschia, the scarlet ones as brilliant in hue as those of Southern Italy. Some delicious tea roses and réséda threw out a lovely odor; a few late blooming yellow roses peeped here and there on the rose vine, and also some of the starry white blossoms of the jessamine. I stood for a few moments looking up at the beautiful old ruined wall, covered with such various shades of green, and at the waving tree-tops and the little bit of blue sky peeping in between the leaves at the old chapel window; then I turned toward the ruined tower, whose turreted top set cuttingly clear against the blue sky.

"Is not the old tower a fine ruin?" asked Marie.

I started; my new friend stood close beside me; she had seen us from an upper window, and had run down to greet us.

"You are a real Fenella!" I answered, "for you spring up beside one so unexpectedly. I suppose you never go up and down stairs like common folk; but, like Scott's uncanny creation, you leap and spring from landing to landing on the old staircase in the most reckless and terrifying manner."

"Come into the house and I will instantly prove to you how properly I can go up stairs; and do not be afraid to leave this fine old tower, there is a view from the salon windows and tower room that will quite repay you for the trouble."

A large hall swept through the house from the court-yard

door to the door which opened on the terrace overhanging the lake. On one side of this hall were the Michel apartments; on the other the *cuisine* of the Merles, and the broad stone staircase which led to their principal apartments on the second floor. But next to this stairway, and fronting on the lake terrace, was one of those large old rooms always found in these chateaux, and which had probably been the assembling hall of the officers of the little army of the Savoisien duke; here he had doubtless held his miniature court. The banqueting-room must have been above this, on the second floor, but it had been altered by being divided into a salon and bedroom. This large hall or room on the first floor had also been divided for modern uses; one corner, with a fine old window, Mr. Merle had partitioned off for his library; the rest was used as a dining-room.

The western tower, which stood at the end of the chapel wall and close to the lake shore, had in the second story a room which opened on to the salon. This west tower stood a little in front of the main building, so that on entering the salon from the upper entry almost the first thing that arrested the sight was a view into this tower room. It was lighted by a fine Gothic window filled with stained glass of great age and value; but the principal charm of this tower room to me was a beautiful plaster cast of two figures, which stood on a revolving pedestal in the center of the little room. The rich lights which fell on it from the gorgeously-colored window produced an admirable effect. It was one of those happy combinations of conception, arrangement, and surroundings which cause a feeling of perfect satisfaction to the beholder. The cast was of a group by a celebrated Neapolitan sculptor, Tito Angelini, one of his most poetical creations,—Francesca di Rimini and Paolo,—expressing that exquisite passage in Dante, commencing at the line,—

"Noi leggevamo un giorno per diletto."

"One day we read how Launcelot gazed his fill
At her he loved, and what his lady said;
We were alone, thinking of nothing ill.

"Oft were our eyes suspended as we read,
And in our cheeks the color went and came—
Yet one passage struck resistance dead:

"'Twas where the lover, mothlike in his flame,
Drawn by her sweet smile, kissed it. Oh, then, he
Whose lot and mine are now for aye the same,

"All in a tremble, on the mouth kissed *me*.
The book did all. Our hearts within us burned
Through that alone. That day no more read we."*

A very halo of beauty hung around the group. I looked up at the window from which streamed down the glorious golden and purple and crimson lights, then on this representation of the poet's lines, in which Angelini has proved himself Dante's peer, and felt as if floating in the atmosphere of beauty it created. Francesca and her lover are at the very moment when the poet's line reveals their love to each other, that one passage which "struck resistance dead." Her eyes seem swimming with rapture, though cast down as if conscious that in her cheeks "the color went and came." The droop of her graceful form, the very fall of her beautiful hand on the book, shows how heavily steeped her senses are in the perilous magnetic fluid of love, while the lover's whole being seems palpitating and throbbing; one hand and arm are extended over her shoulder, the other draws her little hand close to his heart; and his face, formed in that beautiful Italian type, is expressive of the delicious enjoyment of the bliss just in reach,—that precious, costly kiss; that fatal embrace for which they were condemned to float through Dante's Inferno in endless misery.

"Ah, Dante, surely love's *faiblesses* and sins were more severely judged in your heaven and hell than in our world of to-day!" said Madame Bouvreuil.

* Leigh Hunt's translation.

"Then we have improved in charity, dear madam?" I asked.

"Probably in indifference," said Tante Cecile, softly.

"Oh, stop speculating!" cried Marie, impatiently. "As Tante Octavie would say, 'Do not get into deep water, with your crude, feminine philosophizing.' I want Mademoiselle Fauvette to have her first impressions both agreeably and indelibly traced. Be so good, mademoiselle, as to sit down on one of these little canapés, this one opposite the window, and study the group, while I play for you the music which, according to my fancy, belongs to it."

"So, you saucy girl," said Madame Bouvreuil, playfully, "with your usual conceit you wish to have all the deep water to yourself! *Eh bien*, go off to your piano, you shall have Mademoiselle Fauvette all to yourself; for Tante Cecile and I have a variety of talk to get through with on subjects much more practical, and probably more useful than your divine high art."

And the two elder ladies left the room, laughing at Marie's mock horror at the shadow of heresy contained in Madame Bouvreuil's reply.

Marie's full grand Erard piano, which stood in the center of the large salon, fronted the little tower chamber; she seated herself at it, and commenced the *Adagio* in Chopin's second concerto. The passage was indeed well fitted to illustrate the poet's and the sculptor's creation.

"The accessory designs in it belong to the best manner of this great musical artist, and the principal phrase is of admirable breadth. It alternates with a recitative which establishes the minor tone, and of which it is an antistrophe. The whole passage possesses an ideal beauty; its sentiment is by turns radiant, then pitying and sorrowful. It makes one think of a magnificent landscape inundated with glorious golden lights; of some fortunate Vale of Tempe that had been selected as the place for reciting some sad history, some grievous, lamentable event. One might say an irreparable

regret filled the heart, even in the presence of an incomparable splendor in nature—a contrast which is sustained by a fusion of tones, a succession of graduated tints, as it were, which prevents any *brusque* shock that might cause a dissonance to arrive, and which might injure the touching impression that is being produced, for while the joy is clouded the grief is soothed.”*

After Marie had finished playing this exquisite passage, so eloquently analyzed in the above quotation, she came to me, and we examined together the sculptor's beautiful work. She then told me its history. The original had been sculptured for a wealthy Swiss merchant living at Naples, a friend of Mr. Merle's; they had been boys together. After they came to manhood their paths in life widely diverged. Mr. Merle became a Swiss pastor, while his boy friend was a successful trader; but the wealthy merchant had so many and pleasant associations connected with the excellent intellectual companion of his youth, that their friendship had continued unchanged through all the circumstances of different positions and pursuits which might naturally have affected it.

“Then,” said Marie, “he admires papa's daughter; and when he heard me play, about a year since, on this exquisite *Erard* of mine, which a kind old cousin's legacy enabled me to buy, he honored me by being touched to tears—just fancy the compliment!—and a few months after, on his return to Naples, he sent this lovely creation to, as his note said, ‘the daughter of his boyhood's companion and manhood's counselor and friend.’”

I admired the prosperous merchant's good taste, and thought surely none of his numberless piastres had ever been so well spent, as in placing such a marvelous conception of poetic beauty in the home of this gifted girl. We looked out of the tower window down on the lake, whose mimic

* “Chopin,” par F. Liszt, pp. 11, 12.

sea-waves dashed finely against the wall of the tower; then on the rugged Savoy Alps, and the misty line of Jura, which seemed to end this little inland sea, giving no promise of the sunny towns spread out farther down on its picturesque borders.

Then Marie made me observe the interior of the tower room. From the center of the ceiling hung a fine bronze copy of one of the exquisite antique Pompeian lamps, another gift of the munificent friend; and this lamp was so arranged by chains that it could be lowered or raised in different positions in order to throw the light at will upon the group. The floor, like that of the salon, was inlaid in diamond form, of brown and yellow wood, well waxed, and shining like a polished table surface; two sofas were inserted in the wall on either side of the window and door, covered with crimson, and in front of them lay little crimson foot-rugs of tufted work,—Tante Cecile's clever hands had made them; a mirror was behind the statue, and the remaining part of the wall was hung with French paper of a neutral tint, bordered at the ceiling with a narrow, gilt cornice.

We then left the tower room and went into the salon. Two grand old windows, with deep embrasures, opened to the floor, and, protected on the outside by shallow balconies of iron spears, lighted the apartment. The piano was the greatest treasure in the room to Marie; but on the walls hung some fine engravings and three curious old pictures, which, with some relics of Pierre of Savoy, were very precious to Mr. Merle. The pictures drew my attention first; they were three panel paintings by the Zurich artist, Manuel, who lived in the fifteenth century. They had golden backgrounds: one was a Blessed Virgin, another a St. Catherine, and the third, John the Baptist. They were not remarkable for beauty of form or feature; but they had that charm which is so often observed in all these old devotional pictures—calmness, serenity, and purity of thought. They

seem fitted for the places for which they were designed, altars and shrines, before which the heavy hearted or anxious knelt in prayer. The very sight of one of these peaceful old pictures of the Virgin or saints quiets down all unrest. The Virgin may be angular and the saints may be wry necked, but there is around them an atmosphere of perfect peace. They were created at an era when Faith was settled, before the birth of the hydra Doubt; every picture had a symbolic meaning; was a representation of some Divine mysterious legend; hope, faith, and sinless love, expressed in a tranquil, pious spirit, constitute their attraction. The artists felt and believed, and for that reason their creations, though faulty in drawing and full of defects, to a cultivated eye, possess a power greater than any modern production—that of raising the heart and thoughts into the purer region of the spiritual world, where all is perfect peace.

The evening shades darkened the room and prevented me from examining the other curious contents of the salon, and Marie and I leaned over the balcony and looked out into the waters of the lake dancing coquettishly under the moonbeams, while I described to her other pictures I had seen of that epoch, the peaceful dawn of art which was heralded in by such angelic spirits as Il Beato Fiesole. While deep in our pre-Raphaelitism, we were summoned to tea, and I was presented to Marie's father. Mr. Merle was a tall, spare man, very like his sister in appearance and disposition—the same genial tone, the same quiet playfulness and simplicity. A sincere and pious Christian, a generous and charitable man, and a scholar, Mr. Merle was as modest as a girl; he always made me think of that condition which was the stumbling-block to Nicodemus, "Unless ye be born again, and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven," for he had the innocent, guileless spirit of one of those little children of whom the blessed Christ said: "Suffer them to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

CHAPTER VIII.

TANTE OCTAVIE.

A FEW weeks went by pleasantly, and one sweet day in the latter part of September, Hélène Bouvreuil and Octave returned with their aunt, Madame Eperveil. Institution Eperveil looked inhabited again, and its grounds, at noon-day or sunset, were filled with a crowd of youths engaged with their tutors in a variety of terrific gymnastic exercises, which made me expect to see some violent death whenever I passed by there. The professor and Kinnaird Graham resumed their class duties, and were busily occupied morning and afternoon. Octave stayed only a few days at home, as he found it necessary to take a journey to Paris, under the pretense of purchasing books and instruments for the Institution, which could just as well have been ordered.

Hélène Bouvreuil, with whom I soon grew intimate, and Marie Merle and I, cultivated cordially the pleasant young friendship which had sprung up between us. Hélène was as perfect a contrast to Marie as Kinnaird was to Octave, though in a different way; for while Kinnaird was the type of a large class of mankind, Octave, it is to be hoped, was *sui generis*. But Hélène and Marie were types of two classes of women, both excellent, complete, and useful, according to their development and position in this state of being. Hélène was, by nature and disposition, calculated to perform the difficult but tender duties of wife and mother. She was a Rachel and Rebekah of the old law; Marie was a Miriam, a Jephtha's daughter; an artist-soul fluttered its wings within her, but luckily it was not voiceless. Many

artist-women are dumb in this state of existence; the divine thoughts struggle to take form and shape in vain; they remain vague shadows of thoughts.

"The yearning to a beautiful, denied you,
Shall strain your powers;
Ideal sweetnesses shall overglide you,
Resumed from ours!"*

Sometimes, from necessity or ignorance of their inability, they take up the labor of their sisters; then comes the struggle, the attempt at and recoiling before the almost impossible duty of their woman-life; a spirit lies wailing within them while they go about doing ineffectually the work not made for their hands. All this is a mystery that will be resolved in another state of being; there the Mary-mother women may love without sadness and inquietude, and the Miriam artist-women be complete and joyful.

Hélène was like her mother, active and capable; she loved home duties and a quiet domestic life. She was not so self dependent, as I have before said, as her mother; she was more clinging and demonstrative, but this added a greater charm to her. One of the prettiest sights was to see her and her mother together in the garden beneath my windows at sunset, with their arms about each other's waists, walking up and down the little hill, or leaning against the old column and stone wall, talking about house affairs, making their little confidences to each other,—the one receiving sweet counsel, and the other taking her mother-reward of complete companionship and content. Often I have shrunk back behind my curtain, after I had been looking down unseen on them, with my cheeks wet with tears and my heart wailing out hopelessly the never-ending cry, "Lost is lost, and gone is gone." There is no mortal love so beautiful and complete as mother and daughter love.

* Mrs. Browning's "Drama of Exile."

Hélène and Kinnaird were very quiet, contented lovers. I do not know that I should have guessed their position toward each other without Madame Bouvreuil's information; they had lived together from childhood, and were more like brother and sister, or very dear friends, than the usual accepted notion of lovers. Octave and Marie resembled much more the favorite novel type. But do such make happy married people? The calmer, quieter loves are better for human nature's daily food, I fancy.

I had not seen Octave much with Marie until after his return from Paris, which was about the latter part of September. I watched them closely; I could not help it; Octave dazzled me, and I was beginning to love Marie very deeply. I liked to talk to Octave; we had many subjects in common; we had both traveled a great deal, both seen noted people, and had both read the same books with pleasure. He did not, nor did Marie, object to allowing me to make a third in their tête-à-têtes. He was very fitful in his attentions to his lady love; but when he condescended to be devoted, he was irresistibly attractive, he showed so much gallantry and grace. I never knew much of the detail of their love affairs, nor did any one; we could only judge by the appearance of things. I say *we*, for soon after the commencement of our acquaintance, Tante Cecile and I became very good friends, and it was not long before she communicated to me her hopes and fears on the subject. She could not bear to think of her darling being thrown away on such a brilliant *vaurien* as Octave, and rejoiced over each misunderstanding between them, which was frequent enough.

Marie, though so frank and open on every subject with me, never spoke with me directly about Octave. After we grew to be very dear friends there was a sort of tacit understanding between us about it, and many allusions she would make, apparently to other things, were often intended, as we both knew, to apply to this *sujet défendu*. And yet she did not hesitate to talk freely of Hélène and Kinnaird, and I was

wicked enough many times to be amused with her sharp, witty remarks upon the quiet tenor of their loves. Marie considered Kinnaird "lamentably slow;" like many others of her sex, she admired just the sort of men that would make her miserable, and I am ashamed to confess that I did not at first value Kinnaird Graham as much as he merited; he was cold and reserved, and did not enter into the rather reckless merriment between Octave, Marie, and me.

There was one very prominent member of the Bouvreuil family I had not yet met with, although I had been an inmate of their house for several months, and this was Madame Eperveil. Since her return from Berlin she had been busily occupied in ordering and directing her establishment; moreover, she never visited; indeed, never went anywhere but to church. Had I been a Protestant, I should have met her there; but on Sundays I generally walked to a neighboring town, to a little Catholic chapel, and thus missed the only chance I had of being presented to her without calling on her. I was not so foolish as to expect that one so much my senior as Madame Eperveil should lay aside her usual custom and make a call upon me; but although I received general and courteous invitations to visit her, through the family, some indefinable repugnance kept me from going. Marie Merle had often talked to me of Madame Eperveil, and, without desiring to produce a wrong or harsh impression, had given me the idea of her being a repulsive and overbearing woman. Indeed, everything I heard and saw convinced me that she was the petty tyrant of not only the Bouvreuil family, but nearly all Peilz; she had one of those dictatorial dispositions and imperious natures that value obedience and submission more than friendship and love. So I put off going to see her from time to time, until one day, on receiving an invitation to the first of a series of concerts and dramatic readings, to be given during the winter at Institution Eperveil, according to an old-established custom, I felt a little awkward and surprised, and wished I had performed

the disagreeable duty of calling on her before. The card of invitation was accompanied by so gracious a verbal one, through Madame Bouvreuil, that I could not refuse to accept it. As the concert was to be on the following evening, I had not even time to make amends for my negligence, and could only write a formal acceptance of the invitation, which Madame Bouvreuil assured me was all that was necessary.

At eight o'clock the next evening we were all *en route* for Institution Eperveil, for Madame Bouvreuil had said at *gouter*, "Let us be early, girls, for Tante Octavie is so annoyed at late arrivals;" and this made me very prompt in my toilet, which, I am sorry to say, I should not otherwise have been, as I had that sad fault of procrastinating inherent in my nature, and which was very apt to keep me from being punctual. Mr. Graham and Hélène, then Octave and I, and after us Professor and Madame Bouvreuil, formed the family procession. We entered the salon first before going to the exhibition room, because it had been announced diplomatically that Madame Eperveil wished to have me presented to her with some extra ceremony, by way of making up for my neglect of calling on her, I supposed. And at last I was to see this petty empress, this Elizabeth or Catharine of the little Suisse village of Peilz.

We found her in the salon, with a few friends around her—a miniature court. I was presented in due form, and she received me with charming affability and grace. Tante Octavie must have been about fifty when I first saw her. Though of a French Suisse family by blood, she looked more like an English woman or a German, being a pure blonde. She was tall and finely proportioned, but though feminine in its development, her figure was very hard and iron looking, and her large well-formed white hand had a grasp like that of a man. Her skin was fair, her eyes a clear bright blue, but her great pride was in her fine forehead and superb hair; this forehead swept up high and grand like a man's, and her hair was indeed beautiful, of that tint called *cendre*, and very

luxuriant; she always dressed it well: a rich, heavy plaited knot on the back of the head, and full bandeaux over her noble forehead. Yes, I had to admit that Tante Octavie was a fine, grand-looking woman. She was not at all attractive, however, to my fancy; there was such a hardness about her, and then her countenance was so imperious and obstinate in its expression. Her features were all good, her eyes finely set, her nose straight and well outlined, and her hard, firm lips had the same chiseled look, but it was that very chiseled look which repulsed me. She looked as if made out of white iron—if one could imagine such a substance—not painted iron, but some substance harder and sharper than marble in its points. We looked so little beside her, or at least the rest did; I do not remember feeling little myself, although I was the smallest of the party; I only remember remarking how *pétite* the other women looked, even the graceful, tall Hélène.

The introduction over, she resumed her seat on a small *canapé*, only large enough in these days of ample skirts for two persons. She motioned with her head to the rest to be seated, and taking me graciously by the hand, begged me to sit beside her. I did so, and we entered into a conversation about Suisse in general and Suisse scenery in particular. Tante Octavie talked well, but there was no warm sympathetic tone in her voice, as in Madame Bouvreuil's and Tante Cecile's. Her words were all on the surface; not of the subject—for she always understood well what she talked of—but on the surface of feeling. I have heard of the fairy who spoke pearls: Tante Octavie's words dropped hard and clear and polished, like little pebbles of marble on a glittering icy surface. We were singularly gracious to each other, however; Marie Merle said saucily, "it was too good a beginning to last."

It was not in the nature of things for two such opposite characters to draw well together. I was little in stature, and frail and delicate in health, with a nervous temperament;

disposed, from various circumstances, at times to be morbid and irritable; and, like all such little people, I had a will as large as Tante Octavie's. The world is so apt to think the little and frail are always gentle and yielding; this is a great mistake; they are a very troublesome set if taken hold of in that way, and are apt, like little bees, to show a pretty fierce sting. Tante Octavie no more understood me, nor indeed any other human character, than she understood Syrio-Arabic; and yet it might be that she understood that; for, as I before said, she had been a pupil of the great Neander, and that high white forehead of her's held a great deal of cunning knowledge. But Tante Octavie, like the great Anglo-Saxon men she resembled,—though she could manage and control a crowd of people,—was totally and entirely ignorant of the "*open sesame*" to those human hearts who were constrained by circumstances to follow her lead and bidding. If I had been her daughter, she would have governed me too, for such nervous enthusiastic natures as mine are capable of deep admiring love for characters like Tante Octavie's, when duty and the ties of blood connect them together, and I often felt how merciful it was that I had not been bound by natural ties to such a disposition. She would have broken me in regularly, and what a miserable unhappy being I should have been! I should have loved her deeply and feared her painfully; she would have been a living torture to my heart, soul, and body, for I could never have been natural, never myself. The effect of her influence over such a character as mine would have been to produce that saddest of all creations by human influence, a species of cracked, trembling inefficiency, which might have ended in hopelessness or despair. But meeting Tante Octavie on equal ground, she aroused all the antagonism of my nature; a sort of instinctive dread of the danger of her influence, I suppose, made my whole being brace itself erect against her at all points. She had good strong health; she could swim, row a boat, walk over a mountain, manage a

large institution of young men, keep house, cook a dinner, talk every living tongue, do anything; she was a grand, strong, capable woman, and a superb tyrant. I was just the reverse of all this; and when she found I was not humiliated and mortified, but even admitted my inefficiency, she was as surprised as enraged. She had but one standard to judge people by, and when those with whom she was connected by blood or business did not or could not reach that standard, she treated the deficiency either as a personal insult to herself or a contemptible weakness in them; she made no allowances for differences of temperament or constitution, and she had no charity for physical inability. If she could have made the world, she would have had no feeble-minded or sick people in it; she had sublime patience with a broken leg or a crushed head, when caused by accident, but for delicate constitutions, or nervous temperaments, she not only felt no sympathy, but she felt and showed contempt. Then she worshiped utility and constant doing, acting and achieving. I was content with mere living. I had great faith in that line of Milton,—

“Those also serve who only stand and wait.”

There was always delicious, exquisite repose for my spirit in the idea of those angels on either side of the throne of heaven who float with hands folded meekly over their breasts, adoring in silence for evermore. She thought the heart a useless appendage; duty was her great word; caresses and sweet affectionate words between mother and child she just barely endured, but between friend and friend was too much for her patience, or rather impatience, to support; “affectation” and “nonsense” were her favorite terms for such “exhibitions,” as she called them. Such natures as Marie’s and mine could not live without showing the feelings and emotions of our hearts; we were demonstrative to those we loved, cold as death to those we did not; kindness, and tenderness, and sweet loving words, were to us as breath and

sunshine to the plant. God made the strong eagle to face the sun unwinkingly, to live up in the high dreary clouds; but he made also the beautiful flower-world, and the happy floating butterfly, and the sweet warm atmosphere of the brilliant garden part of the globe. How many times I tried Tante Octavie’s patience by not talking these views—for I have never had courage or self-possession enough to argue with any one—but for acting them! I aided the rebellious and helped to fortify the weak subjects in her little kingdom. I think at one time she positively hated me; I was her Mordecai, sitting at the gates of the palace content; I have no doubt she often wished to be an autocrat, just to punish me. And yet I could do Tante Octavie justice. I appreciated and honored all that was great and excellent in her. I will give here a little sketch of her history, that all may have the same reason to appreciate her as I had, and I can do it while the company is assembling in the lecture-room and Tante Octavie and I are talking platitudes over Suisse scenery.

She was married young to a man she loved fondly—for she had loved once in her life, to be sure, in her way. Her husband was a professor in an institution something like her own. Their income was a modest one, but ample for their wants, for Madame Eperveil was a woman of the simplest tastes. A few months after their marriage a difficulty arose between her husband and his chief, and he lost his place. Thus they were without anything in the world to live on. Mr. Eperveil was an industrious man, but he needed work to be prepared for him; he luckily had a wife who loved just that sort of business.

“Let us go to Peilz and set up an institution of our own,” she said, the first night after he lost his professorship; and they sat looking at each other and talking over their position. Her husband stared at her; he must have thought his wife *daft*, so impossible seemed such a proceeding; but he had too much respect for his own peace and quiet, as well as his wife’s capability and judgment, to say anything. She

proceeded to state how it could be done, and ended by convincing him of the possibility of her plan. Of course she did, for Tante Octavie had always a way of morally "*neck-ing*" people and forcing them to be convinced. They first rented a small house—on nothing; issued circulars, and opened school on the same intangible substance; but pupils came—first little boys, then larger ones. After a decade of years, they found themselves sufficiently prosperous to purchase a wood and a vineyard adjoining the house they had first rented, and which they by this time owned. This land they turned into the beautiful grounds of Institution Eperveil. Gradually rose the fine center building, with lecture and recitation rooms, and dormitories for the unmarried tutor and elder students; then the surrounding houses for the professors and their families; and at last their own commodious house. Her gift for command, her great power in managing, made the thing go like clock-work.

After the institution was fairly established, Mr. Eperveil died. He was no great loss in a business way to his wife, as she never allowed him to be anything more than head master. However, I have no doubt she felt as sorry for his death as her well-occupied time would permit, for he had always been to her a faithful, meek, and obedient husband. But she had her hands too full to think or feel for mere sentimental troubles; as she would have said, "She had her living to earn and other people to look out for; she had no time to indulge herself in useless laments over events that must occur in the ordinary course of nature;" and to do her justice, she did a great deal for "other people" that was of infinite service. She helped her husband's father to educate and establish the younger children of his family, each one of which, however, detested her most cordially, and resented her assistance instead of being grateful. She had not a gracious way of bestowing her favors, and was apt to destroy gratitude by ungenerously exacting it. She never had a child of her own, poor woman! That was the great defect

of her condition. To have borne and brought forth a little child would have touched her cold heart and caused a well-spring to gush up and overflow her whole being with the beneficent tide of tenderness and love. Once, when very much incensed against her for some cruel speech she had made about my acute nervous sufferings, I said,—

"Poor Madame Eperveil! God has left her imperfect—motherless; this is the reason why she is so unfeeling."

She overheard me, and it caused a suspension of hostilities between us for some time, and I am sure she must have felt the truth of my retort. Yes, Madame Octavie Eperveil was a remarkable woman; it was a great pity she had not been born empress or queen, that she might have had full scope for her governing abilities, and God was very good when he placed me, timid, trembling, fierce little Fanny Fauvette, quite out of her kingdom. I believe I have said all the good and bad that I know of Tante Octavie. Oh, no! I have forgotten one thing; she had a weakness; yes, an actual weakness, and it was for the brilliant good-for-nothing Octave Bouvreuil. He was her idol, her object in life. Being her god-child and bearing her name, she had early begun to regard him as her own child. He was too *insouciant* and selfish to care for her iron rule. But she never attempted to rule him; he might have governed her, had he not been too indolent to control any one. It is very odd, to be sure, that just such people as Tante Octavie, when they do have a weakness, are apt to have a worse one than all the *faiblesses* put together of the other part of mankind whom they despise, and for this weakness they will sacrifice blindly so much.

But the company have assembled in the lecture-room, and it is time for Madame Eperveil and her cortege to go also, that the performance may commence.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CONCERT.

THE lecture-hall was a fine large oblong room, plainly furnished; the walls and ceilings were painted a neutral shade, with the simple decoration of panel outlines and cornice in gold. The long windows were shaded by folding blind shutters on the inside, and the semicircular tops filled with crimson moreen plaited into a gold crescent, which gave a little cheerfulness in its effect on the cold hue of the walls. Neatly painted benches filled the greater part of the hall, but toward the upper part were comfortable chairs and sofas covered with crimson, which were intended for Madame Eperveil's guests and the professors and their wives. An elevated platform extended across the upper part of the room, which had broad steps leading up to it. Part of this platform was cut off by a heavy crimson curtain falling from the ceiling, which concealed behind it the arrangements of a little theater; for sometimes the students played French dramas—not entire, but scenes which required only male actors. Two pianos and some musical instruments occupied each side of the platform on the outside of the curtain; a movable desk ordinarily stood in front, for the use of the professors who lectured there daily to the students; this was removed and some music stands stood in its place. I was surprised to see a row of foot-lights extending around the outer edge of the platform, and on expressing my astonishment to Marie and being overheard by Madame Eperveil, she turned graciously to me as if very well pleased to have a subject for conversation with me.

"Whenever I have young artists to play for me," she said, "like those of to-night, who intend to appear in public, I always give them the benefit of foot-lights; it accustoms them early to this often embarrassing accessory of the stage; also when our young gentlemen give us dramatic representations, it produces a better effect."

"Oh, they certainly add to the illusion intended to be created," I replied, scarcely knowing what to say.

"I do not like too much stage illusion," she answered rather quickly. "I think with Girardin, that theatrical illusion and emotion are two different things, so I have our stage as simple as possible. The art of decoration and *mise en scène*, as we call it, has been developed to excess in our day. We ought to have dramatic emotions a hundred times more lively and strong than our ancestors, who had such coarse and imperfect stage accessories. But, *au contraire*, although the illusion produced is perfect, the emotion is nothing, and the taste and desire for the drama are very weak when compared with those which reigned an age or so back."

"But," I replied with some exertion, for she paused and looked as if she expected an answer of agreement or dissent, "an age or so back, you forget that on your own stage you had Molières, and Racines, and Corneilles. No wonder there existed then a taste for the drama, when one could go nightly and see such *chefs-d'œuvre* as their works."

"We have Molières now," she said in a positive tone, "if the public will demand them; moreover, Scribe has in him twice the cleverness of a Molière, because he produces an effect on a *blazé* public."

"The public taste has turned toward the opera," I remarked; the people prefer new operas from favorite composers to the drama."

"Yes, and for such amusements," she replied in a tone which was intended to show what an indifferent opinion she entertained for the opera; "for such amusements decoration

is necessary, as music is only an amusement, not a study, like the drama, capable of elevating the mind; and how well they understand all that sort of thing in Paris! My nephew, who has lately returned from there, was telling me yesterday of the preparations he saw being made for the bringing out of Halévy's *Magicienne*. The ballet is to occupy a large place in it. The painters and scene decorators are at work night and day, and he tells me it would be difficult to imagine anything more superb than it will be."

I wanted to combat her unjust opinion of music, but the curtain rose, showing a simply furnished salon occupied by a middle-aged man with two young girls, his daughters, standing by a center-table, sorting over some music. The father advanced to the foot-lights with the girls and bowed, then seated himself at one of the pianos, while one girl with a violoncello and the other with a violin took their position near the music stands. They were very young; the eldest, the violoncellist, being apparently about fourteen, the violinist a year or two younger. They were dressed simply in rose-colored and white-checked silks, made close up to the throat and tight to the wrists. Their waving hair was cut short, and lay in little soft curls around the temples and back of the neck. The figure of the eldest showed the effect produced by close practice on her heavy instrument; already one shoulder was partially elevated and her chin was thrown forward, giving a pained expression to her countenance. She had good firm features, but a serious expression of the eye told she already felt the weight of the future on her, and which said, like Shylock, "sufferance is the badge of all our tribe." This is, alas! the truth, so far as the mediocre are concerned who choose the stage for their livelihood. The younger one looked well fitted for her profession; there was no suffering or sufferance about her business to her. She took her stand with the most perfect *aplomb*; her whole little figure was erect and well poised. She was prettier than her sister, had brilliant black eyes, finely arched brows,

and a beautiful mouth and chin. "There was the same *froid* that characterized her sister's face, but in her it amounted to almost positive scorn, and the cool manner in which she looked at her audience was amusing. Afterwards I discovered that she was near-sighted, and was spared that one great trial of her profession—the clear perception of "the sea of heads and waves of eyes" beneath her.

Their opening piece was an arrangement from *Lucia*, very cleverly selected and not too long. The fine *finale* of the second act, always popular, formed the first movement, and it closed with the touching finale of the opera. The little violinist displayed as much feeling as talent, and when she repeated some of the phrases *à mi voix*, the effect was delicious; it had the mysterious silvery sound of the nightingale song, as heard by moonlight in an orange-grove, a sort of *crêpuscule vocal*. The piece put the whole audience into a good humor, and the artists were applauded and complimented to their full contentment, and the curtain fell as they retired bowing, with lowered eyes. I had observed during the piece a person fluttering uneasily about, crying "*Brava*" and "*Bene*," officiously; and when the audience testified their approbation, although one of the audience himself, he seemed to take the applause as a personal compliment.

"Who is that man?" I asked of Marie, after the curtain fell and Tante Octavie left me to go to the rest of her guests.

"Who?"

"That fussy person talking now to Octave, evidently boring him to death. What a shrill voice he has!"

"That! Oh, he is our village Thalberg, Tante Octavie's *professeur de musique*, Mr. Wolfmaister."

"A German?"

"Yes; that is, of a German family from Berne, and educated by good masters; he was a pupil for two years of Chopin."

I looked at the man with more respect. "He is a clever musician, then?" I inquired.

"*Passablement*. But how pert and presumptuous I am! Yes, he is indeed a very fine executant and well skilled in the theory of music; he can explain to you in the most profound and difficult style all about the Septime Chord and the Diminished Septime Chord, and every triad to be mentioned, Diminished, Dominant, Major, and Minor Triads. He has been the only master I have ever had, and I ought to speak more respectfully of him; but, to tell the truth, we are beginning to disagree in music; he does not like my 'sprouting wings,' as he calls my independent opinions as to expression, etc."

"What, the color or the shape?" I asked laughingly.

"Indeed, I fancy he does not like me to have wings at all," she said, shrugging her shoulders; "he treats me and all my musical fancies pretty much as Tiennet did poor Joset's performance on the cornemuse in *Maitres Sonneurs*."

"Ah, you have read that far, have you?"

Just then Octave approached and presented Wolfmaister, more from the desire to rid himself of a bore than to give pleasure to any one of us. Wolfmaister was a tall, slender man, with small, sharp gray eyes, and straight, dark hair, which he wore *à la Liszt*; he had a shrill high voice, and a manner of expressing himself that denoted settled opinions and a great desire to be considered perfectly rational and free from nonsense. We talked of the interesting young artists we had just heard; they were friends of his. The father was preparing them both for public exhibition.

"The eldest looks already as if she suffered from too close application," I said.

"Yes," he replied, "her father spoke of it to me to-night; he intends resting her as much as possible, which she can scarcely spare the time to do, as she is not half so quick as her sister, although very clever."

"Pity her father should make a violoncellist of her. Does she like her profession?"

"Not very much; but you see it looks better; it will produce a finer effect, the two sisters playing together."

"Poor child! has she a mother?"

"No, their mother died many years ago."

The curtain just then rose, and the little violinist played for a solo a passage from Euryanthe, and made her violin sound like a woman's voice, full of deep feeling, at once passionate and chaste. Her management of the harmonics gave a delicious sound, crystalline and fairy-like, carrying my imagination off into that supernatural world of which Weber is the high-priest and ruler. The elder one sat near the piano, a little in the background, and while her sister drew out her beautiful music, she sat listening with a sad, wearied, hopeless look. How my heart yearned toward her, and I longed to take the poor child in my arms and be a mother to her!—she needed tender nursing and loving care.

Some four or five years after I heard this same young violinist, Michela Casini, at the San Carlo, in Naples. The whole musical world were in ecstasies with her great genius and her fine execution on this instrument, so rarely seen in the hands of a woman. I looked in vain for the poor suffering sister; a celebrated violoncellist supplied her place, and was proud to accompany Michela. I met her afterwards at a soirée at Mercadante's, and made her acquaintance. After I was sufficiently intimate I inquired about the elder sister, and heard that she had died about two years after I had first listened to them at Institution Epervail; the disease of the spine just showing itself then had increased, and God had mercifully relieved her of her painful life-burden. Michela Casini has led a spotless life in her dangerous position of successful and flattered woman-artist. I often think, fancifully perhaps, that her sister's spirit has been allowed to float around and protect her from the temptations surrounding her; for the memory of this sister is a treasured thought to

her, and her calm resigned sorrow for her death gives depth and feeling to her music.

But I have wandered far away from the concert at Institution Eperveil. After this exquisite solo of Michela, we had an animated conversation on a variety of subjects. Octave condescended to be amusing and kept our little circle in convulsions of laughter. He told us a droll story of Berlioz. Some one had said that the author of the Symphony of Harold would not dare to attack *realism* in music, for in that symphony he had imitated the boiling of lentils or haricots in a porridge pot. Instead of getting angry at such an absurd charge, as many sensitive artists would, he very coolly replied,—

"My musical critic has made a great mistake, but I have a soul sufficiently large to pardon him, as I know it is necessary to be a musician by profession to understand such beauties as are so flagrantly misunderstood by him. My critical amateur's ear should have more experience before he presumes upon describing such delicate expressions. The sound alluded to in the Symphony of Harold is not the boiling of lentils or haricots, but the boiling of a porridge pot of—beans! My critic has mistaken the vegetable entirely, and it is a grave mistake. Just think for an instant. Beans! The doctrine of Pythagoras! See the concatenation of suggestions. Words fail me to express all that can be conjured up by the classical imagination. I have put him on the scent now by this disclosure. I have opened up a world of ideas to him. I do not ask for gratitude, but leave my brother amateur-critic to his meditations."

It would be in vain to attempt to describe Octave's inimitable manner of giving this story. Every gesture, every inflection of the voice was filled with that delicate bitter humor of the Parisian, which is like some pungent scent, as biting as it is volatile. Some of the elder students who were his *protégés* gathered eagerly around us, and a small minority, not of the elect, tried not to listen in the background;

but he received a full share of applause, which was very grateful to him, for he had that morbid desire for approbation which Jefferson calls "a *canine* love of praise." While we were enjoying his good humor, word came that the elder Casini had been taken very ill, and that the trio they had intended to play would have to be given up.

"Casini wanted Michela to play another solo, but she refused with a show of temper I should not like to see a daughter of mine display," said Wolfmaister, shrugging his shoulders. "Strange, that elder one is mortally afraid of her father, while this little termagant rules him like a tyrant."

"I am glad to hear it," I replied. "That selfish, calculating-looking man needs something like that to keep him in order. He will kill that eldest girl!"

"Oh," said Wolfmaister, "you are allowing your prejudices to exaggerate the matter. Casini is only a thrifty father, with a commendable deal of forethought for his children. He wishes to give her a lucrative profession; it is not his fault that she is sickly. How many are there who would leave her to earn her living as she best could at seamstress work or the like."

"And I have no doubt he would," I answered, "if he could make as much fame and fortune by it."

Wolfmaister shrugged his shoulders and walked off, while Marie gave me an approving nod. Soon after he ascended the platform and played a solo on the piano in the place of the *Trio manqué*. It was a sonata of Hummel, as clear and liquid as a mountain spring; but it suggested no thought, no idea for the imagination to dwell on or develop; indeed it was nothing but fine musical versification. After he left the piano and joined us, I complimented him on his touch, rapidity, and clearness of execution.

"Your trill is exquisite, it has all the *battement du gozier* of a bird's warble."

He looked immensely gratified, and twisted the gummed

ends of his black mustache with an amusing air of gratified self-conceit as he said,—

"Hummel I place among the first masters of the piano. If I have any merit as an executant, I owe it to my close study of his works. There is a limpidity, a clearness of tone obtained by studying Hummel, which no other master gives."

Marie yawned impatiently, and looked entreatingly at me to answer him.

"You mean," I said, "that his works are useful for study of execution, not for any benefit that one can obtain in the way of expressing musical thought, certainly. To be sure, I am not an instrumentalist; the little I do in the way of music is with my voice, and therefore I should not depend on my fancy and liking as correct instrumental taste, yet I must confess Hummel's works do not satisfy me."

"Oh," replied Wolfmaister, in that civil overbearing tone so many men use when discussing with a woman, "that is because you are not sufficiently acquainted with his works. His rondo in La, *par exemple*, and indeed the majority of his musical compositions, are of the purest and highest style."

Wolfmaister looked profound and learned as he enunciated this settled opinion as a fixed fact, and I remained silent, as I always do when put down by a noun of the masculine gender. Had he been an intelligent woman I should have given my reasons for my difference of opinion, certain of being allowed to express myself calmly and clearly without any assumption of superior knowledge on her part to silence me; and even if we continued to differ, we would do so with mutual courtesy and respect for each other's right to have a different opinion. But with very few men can women argue; the man grows imperious, the woman resentful, and the conversation is apt to end a little too volcanic in its temperature for peace-loving dispositions.

A little while after Marie came to me and said, "I am going to play."

"What?" I asked.

"I shall not tell you. I shall leave you to be my Brulette."

The permission to read some of Madame Sand's works had been given by her liberal-minded, indulgent father, with the responsibility placed on me of selecting them for her, a responsibility I was quite willing to take; and the first ones I had given her were "Maitres Sonneurs" and "Lettres d'un Voyageur," which two had made a strong impression on her; she was constantly repeating some striking artistic description or some concise artistic definition. From her last words I supposed she was about to play one of her own compositions or arrangements, which she was just in that transition state to throw out freely; she had mastered the difficulties of form,—the mysteries of counterpoint, which are like feet, accent, and grammatical rhythm to the poet,—and her fresh young imagination, thus untrammelled, was eager to use its wings. The characteristics of Marie's compositions at that time were a very lively feeling for certain beauties; an accent of grandeur and melancholy ran like a burning lava stream through all her chords and resolutions; there might have been observed a little too free a use of difficult modulations, strange combinations of distant intervals, which arose from a natural exultation she felt at the power she had obtained by mastering so difficult a study as harmony; but her taste, if it was not always free from the exaggeration of mere technical difficulties, was never common; and in her arrangements of the themes from other authors she displayed a skill which was very clever, of taking to herself the *motifs* that she was developing, marking them with her own personal seal, as it were, giving them an originality and making of them veritable creations.

This étude or sketch which she played was full of grandeur; but the thought was imperfectly developed and the execution inexact. The idea she desired to express was evidently beyond her powers; it was an *ébauche* of some vision of her spirit; as she advanced in it I fancied that it was the

memory of some of those dreams we have at certain seasons, when it seems as if the spirit had been emancipated by sleep from its mortal part and able to soar off into a purer element. But in sketching from memory, in endeavoring to give her recollection to mortal ears, it was evident that her own mental and mortal nature had interfered. One felt as if, at the period of composition, her whole being had been influenced by the preoccupation of some sad thought, like a remembrance or anticipation of trouble. The impression it produced on me was *déchirante*, though the whole piece was vague and disjointed; it affected me deeply because I was beginning to understand the girl's character, and learning to love as well as admire her. But the composition naturally fell lifeless on the ears of her audience; with the sensitiveness of a true artist she felt this, and rose from the piano wearied and dispirited, looking as gray as a moth in her ashen paleness.

"See if I deserve the name of your Brulette," I asked, taking her little cold hand affectionately. "Your piece was *un rêve*, was it not? With visions and fancies far beyond rude, dull mortal comprehensions."

Her eyes grew bright, and the pupils of them dilated in a manner peculiar to her when she felt deeply touched.

"Yes, you are my Brulette; God bless you!" she said, pressing my hand. "You are right; it is *un rêve* suggested by that passage in 'Lettres d'un Voyageur,' where Madame Sand speaks of being visited in her dreams by unknown friends who, while she is seated on a sandy shore, alone and sad, come to her in a gay bark and invite her to join them, saying, 'Why have you tarried? we have waited so long for you.' She goes with them, and they float off to an unknown land, a land of enchantment, where all is brilliant and gay—the flowers unfading, the odors ever fresh, fountains whose perfumed sparkling waters fall into silver basins; blue roses bloom in rare China vases; from the long vistas of trees open enchanting perspectives; the ground is covered with a moss-

like velvet, on which they dance unshod; the men and women are young and beautiful, crowned with flowers, their rich hair floating; they hold in their hands goblets and harps of strange forms; their songs and their voices are not of this world; their emotions are holy, pure loves; and they feel a happiness also unknown to poor mortals."

While she was repeating this to me in an earnest, low tone, Wolfmaister came up to take leave and to present his wife, a sweet, gentle little Suisse woman, whose unaffected, *naïve* manners pleased me exceedingly.

"Ah, Marie," he said, "the composer of your *rêve*, whose name you will not tell me, is one of those incomprehensible æsthetical composers so plenty now-a-days, who take unformed, crude, vague imaginings for thought, and exaggerations of *sotto voce* for an expression of deep feeling. You had better keep clear of all such eccentric productions, and get your style and taste firmly based on solid models. Study Hummel more, *mon élève*."

Marie winced, but said nothing. After he left, she burst out with "Wolfmaister is right; it is a crude, vague thing: I know it as well as any one can tell me," and a hot tear of bitter mortification rolled down her cheek. "I do not satisfy myself," she continued. "Oh, Fanny Fauvette! it is in me, and surely the power of expression will be given me some day."

I laughed at her for taking his rough criticisms so much to heart, and encouraged her by telling her all the pleasant thoughts I felt about her and her genius.

"Hush!" she said, kissing me on either cheek affectionately; "you must not flatter me so, or I shall never do anything but grow conceited."

"I do not believe that," I answered; "the good opinion of those we love is an incitement. We have enough disparagement from the envious or indifferent; enough discouragement and misgivings in our own hearts to depress us; we have nothing to hold us up and spur us on but the ambi-

tion to attain to not only our own standard, but to that which the faith of those who love us indulgently has made for us."

We were interrupted, and I went to bid adieu to Madame Eperveil and thank her in the prettiest words I could find for the pleasure of the evening. She gave me earnest and gracious invitations to visit her frequently and sociably, and after a multitude of courtesies—as Octave said with playful malice, like two ladies of olden times preparing to dance a *minuet à la cour*—we parted; I joined the Bouvreuils and Merles, and we left Institution Eperveil.

CHAPTER X.

LES CRETES.

THE autumn weather had opened so finely that it tempted me out almost daily. My gipsy way of enjoying open-air life caused some surprise and amusement to my Peilz friends. They were accustomed to making long excursions, taking long mountain walks for some particular purpose, such as to see a fine extended view, or to visit some remarkable waterfall or little mountain lake; expeditions where the fatigue always counterbalanced the pleasure, to one who had so little physical strength as I had to spare. But they had not the pleasant habit of taking baskets of books and work and spending the whole day in some woody nook, where they could read, and talk, and sew, to the sweet accompaniment of the wind rushing through the trees, and the rush and plash of the waters of mountain streams.

Tante Octavie said it might do well enough for people who had plenty of time, and a dozen coaches and valets to transport their luggage and wait on them, while they did nothing but lounge about in picturesque costumes; but so far as the performance of any real work or study was concerned, the four walls of a house made the best place for its accomplishment. I do not know whether it was the announcing of this opinion of the family oracle which influenced Madame Bouvreuil and Hélène, or whether it was that they really did not like such excursions; for while they good humoredly endeavored to understand the pleasure it gave me, they never joined me, except once in awhile, when they would come in the after part of the day to meet me and accompany me on my

walk home, and confined their sympathy to the preparation of nice dinner baskets—a sympathy, however, which was not without its value, and which I fully appreciated when at mid-day my appetite would be finely sharpened by fresh air; but at the same time I should have liked also to have had their society. Marie and Tante Cecile, however, took to these “days in the woods” immediately, especially the latter, who, whenever she could arrange the home department in a manner to work well without her, joined me, and always urged Marie to do so when she could not.

“I remember with so much pleasure,” she said one evening, “some years of my girlhood which were spent with an uncle who lived in the North of Germany. He owned a handsome estate in the country, on which were all the agreeable accessories of a forest, with moss-covered walks, and banks, waterfalls, hills, and dales, and even a pretty little glassy lake. There was a large family of cousins, a bright intelligent set, all dead now,” and the old lady sighed gently. “Well, these days in the woods remind me of those pleasant times of my youth. During all the favorable months of the year my uncle and his family lived in the open air—that is, all the waking hours of the day. We sang, danced, read, talked, and even took our meals in this charming silvan place. My uncle and his children were all passionate lovers of the drama, especially of the works of the great English dramatist Shakspeare, and they often acted those of his plays which suited their forest glades. We used to act ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream,’ ‘As you like it,’ ‘Two Gentlemen of Verona,’ and ‘Love’s Labor Lost,’ with great glee, under the old trees.”

“Your way of visiting the woods, however,” I replied, “was in the way Madame Eperveil condescends to approve of, ‘with plenty of valets,’ etc.; but I am content to enjoy the woods more humbly and without so much luxury.”

“And enjoy it quite as much,” she rejoined, “and probably more than if you had a half dozen liveried valets, for

with great wealth are apt to come conventionalisms, and they mar all natural pleasures. No, I think you and Marie enjoy your woodland sojournings, and will recall them in after years with as much pleasure as I do the more luxurious memory of my youth. I have no doubt, conventionalisms often spoiled the enjoyment of my uncle and cousins; but I was too young to recognize such artificial constraints, and at that happy age when one sees only the brightest and easiest side of a pleasure.”

I had gone around to the chateau to tell them of a sweet day I had spent at Les Crêtes alone, the day before, and also to urge them to go with me the following day to the same place. While we were talking, Octave and a student from the institution, a young Englishman named Gardner, who played on the violoncello tolerably well, came in. They had brought their instruments, and wished to practice with Marie some trios. They took up the grand trio of Fesca, that brilliant production of that remarkable, wayward genius, and I sat listening, with my heart full of memories, which this trio summoned up as if by magical power. Octave played the violin very well; his tone was clear and just, not tender, but full of *diablerie*, which characteristic told well in the Fesca music; he gave it just that cutting, sarcastic expression it needed. A wild, merry, careless imp seemed to sit astride the bridge when his bow played across the strings, and sang out with fearless, mad glee the reckless melody of the composer, whose works seemed to repeat his own life-faith, which was like that of Marshal Saxe: “*La vie est un songe, le mien a été court, mais il a été beau.*”

After hearing them play twice over this beautiful trio, I asked Octave to sing, and he selected Don Giovanni, out of which, with Gardner’s help, who had a pretty good basso voice, we sang the exquisite trio, *Ah taci ingiusto core*. Then Octave sang *La ci darem la mano* with me, and then alone *Il mio tesoro*. His voice was a delicious baritone, very mellow and flexible. He sang with a great deal of

expression, and sometimes it even sounded like deep feeling. After the singing, we got into a long talk over the music of Don Giovanni, or rather Octave did the talking and we the listening. It arose from my saying that when Beethoven was asked which one of Mozart's operas he preferred, without hesitation he pronounced *Il Flauto Magico* his *chef-d'œuvre*.

"I should suppose," said Octave, sneeringly, "that would have been the opinion of a man who wrote a symphony, put words to it, and then wished to have it called an opera."

"Not a word against Fidelio, heretic!" cried Marie.

"Not unless you persist in calling it an opera, which it is not. However, do not let us get on that never-ending Beethoven argument. Don Giovanni, Mademoiselle Fauvette, is the greatest opera, indeed the only opera of that epoch."

We did not pretend to dispute with him, for we all loved to listen to him in his eloquent moods, and the music had just excited him enough to make him superb. He walked up and down the chateau salon, and discoursed on the Mozart *thème* until near midnight, his graceful form shown to every advantage by his animated motions, the eloquent action of his beautiful hand, and the expression of his sparkling, handsome face, with the brilliant eyes and luxuriant dark hair floating picturesquely over his temples. I could not pretend to give even a slight idea of his eloquence, for it was like that of the improvisatore, as evanescent as the rainbow on the fast, rushing ocean wave.

He illustrated his subject by singing different passages of the opera to Marie's fine accompaniment, and threw in every variety of expression as it was needed; there was the lubberly Masetto, and the roguish Leporello; the sighing, sad Don Ottavio, and the elegant rascal Don Giovanni. Then he made Marie and Gardner help him in the scene in the cemetery, where Don Giovanni gives the defiant invitation to the statue of the Commendatore. First, he brought up before us by rapid, vivid word-sketchings, the appearance of

the graveyard, the dark gusty night, and the remorseful wind moaning through the trees. When he sang the bold bravado of the murderer to the stone effigy placed over the grave of his victim,—

"Parlate! se potete: Verete a cena? Verete a cena?"

and the reply of the Commendatore, "Si!" came out in the solemn note of the piano,—that strange *mi major*, which makes just in that passage such a peculiarly ghastly sound,—it made us all shudder; and the powerful effect produced was heightened by Octave hissing out, in snake-like tones, the mad, reckless, even devilish rejoinder,—

"Bizarra è in ver la scena, verra il buon vecchio a cena,
A preparar la andiamo, partiamo via di qua."

At last we bade good night, and separated; Marie agreeing to go with me next day to Les Crêtes, Tante Cecile, with real sorrow, regretting her inability to accompany us.

According to agreement, Dora, Beau, and I were ready *de bonne heure*. Marie did not keep us long waiting, and before eight o'clock we were *en route* for Les Crêtes. It was a delicious autumn day. The grapes were hanging in rich golden clusters on the vines, the hay lay in fragrant heaps on the little fields, the nuts and fruit were weighing the tree branches down to the grassy earth, and everywhere the ground was covered with the delicate lilac-colored autumn crocus. The ivy and moss crept over every old wall and chestnut trunk, and their various shades of vivid green mingled harmoniously with the purple flowers and young red leaves of the bindweeds, while tufts of delicate fern peeped out here and there.

While Dora was arranging our books and shawls behind the little western hill of Les Crêtes, where we might sit sheltered effectually from the sight of other pedestrian visitors to this lovely spot, Marie and I clambered up and down the

banks, stood on the edge of the woody hill overhanging the terraced vineyards which led down to the lake road, and admired for the thousandth time the beautiful shore of our lovely Lake of the Desert. There lay Clarens and Vernet, basking in the morning sun; and Veytaux and Montreux, nestling behind the mountains, seemed scarcely awakened. Numberless little boats stood perched on the glassy bosom of the lake, looking just ready to flap their sail wings and soar aloft, like some huge *Grébe*, into the clouds. The surface of the lake was like a polished steel mirror, showing different shades of light, but not one ripple that could give a sign of its being water. A steamer passed, cutting swiftly through the blue glassy mass; it made a path for itself, and threw up, instead of spray or feathery foam, hard sparkling balls, which fell on the surface of the lake like hailstones, shivering into numberless smaller balls, which rebounded off and disappeared as if touching some hard icy substance; and behind the steamer the path seemed to close instantly, leaving only a line of a little lighter shade to mark the track of the boat; it looked tempting and made one long to walk on it.

"Now Kinnaird Graham," said Marie, "would give us scientific, philosophical reasons for that appearance of the lake,—atmospheric pressure, and all that,—but I like to forget all sensible reasons for it, and would rather imagine it to be some strange mysterious power that weighs over it at early morn, noonday, and sunset."

"You would have a morning, noonday, and evening demon then, Marie?" I asked, with a laugh.

"As many as you please, Fanny, if you will only take some of the material out of life and give it a little more fancy. Do you remember what Töpffer said, when he visited the Intermittent Fountain, on his *Promenade au Grande Chartreuse*?"

I did not, and Marie repeated this fine passage:—

"It belongs to the learned to seek out and tell the cause

of this phenomenon; for my part, I do not wish to know it; with the ignorant who visit this spring, or, still better, with the poets who contemplate it, I love better to drink of its bright waters than sound them. It is still a question to be decided, if science and poesy are two sisters who can live in good friendship under the same roof—the one dreamy, with distaff in her hand; the other, restless, active, and incessantly occupied with weighing, pounding, and filtering; or if they are to be two irreconcilable enemies, one striving to stifle the other, or at least chase her from the dwelling. So long as science remained as she was in antiquity,—religious, conjectural, and contemplative,—she was poesy itself; and instead of the two sisters who now-a-days have so much difficulty in agreeing, there were then nine who lived peaceably united under the shades of Helicon, where they related to each other a fine verse, as well as the marvels of the firmament, the enchanting loveliness of the earth, the eloquence of passion, and the secrets of human destiny. But now-a-days, science, distrustful of belief, hostile to everything which cannot be verified by sensation, sets herself up as a supreme dictator; she has become the study of mere matter. Despoiled as much as possible of her sumptuous appearance, of her numberless graces, all the beneficent attributes with which the Creator ornamented her, each step of her progress causes a stone to fall in the crumbling edifice of poesy, and each one of her lights destroys, it is true, on all sides, every mystery; but it is a fire which, while it illuminates, devours!"

Then we talked of music; and, naturally, of Octave's playing, and singing, and eloquent talking.

"What a bewitching, captivating *diablerie* he threw into that allegro of Fesca!" I said; "and how his superb eyes glowed! Then, when he sang *La ci darem la mano* with me, I thought, very charitably, of the naughty little Zerlina's dubious flirting, as I listened to his seductive voice. He was the veritable Don Giovanni for the nonce."

Marie stood half leaning, half swinging against an old

chestnut-tree, which, growing very crooked, hung over the upper vineyard; and she seemed lost in deep reverie as she looked down on the brilliant mirror of the lake. I almost doubted if she heard my praises of Octave.

"It is very sad!" she said slowly; then paused.

"What is sad?" I asked.

She looked up sharply at me, as if suddenly becoming conscious of my presence, and her large brown eyes dilated as do those of a bird. She continued:—

"Music, you must admit, Fanny, is to a great extent a matter of sense. I grow more and more convinced daily that the execution of this art, which seems to have so much that is divine in it, is not elevating in its influence over every one."

I wanted to combat her opinion, but I felt sure she was only thinking aloud, like the professor, and working the subject around in her mind in order to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. After a little silence, she resumed:—

"You find that great composers are always better in their lives than great executants; these last have to give mortal sound to the voluptuous expression, the tender rise and fall of the sweet sighing sounds, or the bursts of passion which the composer imagines. I may be wrong, *mon amie*, I have so little knowledge of the outdoor world; but indeed it seems to me that the artist-executant, to give to the vibrating throbbing tone-feeling, mortal life, must be filled with sensuousness."

"Thank you for that word," I said, with a laugh and a long breath of relieved mock anxiety, "and for no worse one. I have been waiting to see what you would arrive at. Pray go on, for you are not quite clear yet."

"Oh!" she answered quickly, "you could not have thought I meant sensuality, for that would chill and vulgarize all expression; but the artist-executant must have his feelings correspond with the music he wishes to express; the mysterious throbbing that beats in Chopin, *par exemple*, or the

tumultuous ocean of feeling we find in Beethoven, where the poor human bark toils along, struggling against a head-wind and a fierce, contrary surging current; or the hot lava-tide of love, passion, and mortal appetite, coursing through Fesca. And this is sad, this curse of mortality resting on music-utterance in this life, for the artist-executant is but mortal; and being in this dangerous state that only an angel could bear, he may sway and fall."

I did not contend directly with her, as I would have done with another situated differently, for I knew she was thinking of Octave, and of the various temptations that she tried to fancy his many gifts of mind and person exposed him to. I wanted to cite numberless instances where as rare gifts had been allied to purity of character,—artist-executants I had known whose lives were as spotless as their genius was sparkling,—and to tell her that what was faulty in Octave did not arise from that which was beautiful in him, but from that which was unlovely: from his selfishness, his indolence, and his "canine love" of that which gave him unlicensed gratification in every desire. I could not tell her all this. I felt that her mind must work it out itself. I had faith in her. I knew that love might blind her for awhile, but that the true knowledge was in her and would clear away all mists of infatuation.

I turned the conversation on the different styles of execution of various pianists we had heard in public, and the effect or influence they had produced on us; this led her to say:—

"I heard during two different visits to Vienna those great artists, T. and L. One, you know, is said to be material and calculating, the other just the reverse. Let me tell you the effect produced on me by each. I heard T. first. After hearing him, I returned home cold, dry, and hard, but very industrious. I attacked Bach for the first time effectually. T.'s playing is the perfection of one kind of expression; not of feeling, however. It is, as De Lanz says: 'The playing of

a man of the world; it is this which excludes all idea of poesy attaching itself to his music.' I felt that something was wanting; it sounded like ice-rain on a plate of steel. He seemed resolute and business-like in his art, as if he made of it what other men make of their buying and selling—a trade. He did me this good, however: I studied hard for months; no fire, no poet heat, to be sure, but at the same time no poet languor. My touch grew exact, and my tone clear and crisp, for I was always thinking of that ice-rain. Again I went to Vienna, and heard L. Oh, Fanny, what an awakening to my whole nature did his music cause! it was the ice-rain still, but the steel plate was burning, seething hot. Do not laugh at me when I tell you that every piece was delicious agony. He seemed the poet of the instrument, an inspired rhapsodist; and everything he played appeared as if it sprang from his brain and the instrument, created in its perfect loveliness at one and the same moment. One night he played one of his own Hungarian marches. What fire, what archangel life! And at the close, when the applause was deafening, he returned to the platform and resumed his seat at the piano. The room was silent in an instant; he sat as if unconscious of the presence of the audience, and gazed for a moment or so up, just as he looks in that picture there of the 'Matinée at L.'s; the same inspired, youthful expression; then there came pouring out that largo of Beethoven, in the sonate *Re minor*, Opus, 29. What unearthly strength he displayed! it roared like the dash of the waves of our beautiful lake in a storm, when the waters seem to rush madly up as if to avoid the cold Rhone torrent; the recitative passage made a solemn pause, to tell all its woes; in vain, the stern necessity rolled on and it was like the cold, icy flood penetrating to the quivering heart-core of the poor lake, while there thundered out the rushing turmoil of nature, the roar of the wind, the tossing of the forest tree-tops, the muffled tramp of a distant avalanche hurrying down a ravine, all sweeping on in the renewed combinations of chords! I leaned my head on my hands,

and wept. That night I could not sleep; I tossed to and fro in troubled, inexplicable pain. I returned home a few days after. No Bach, no study for me after that revelation; or, at least, not what Wolfmaister would call study. I just rambled over the keys of the piano in a reverie, sometimes exquisite, sometimes painful. About that time Chopin's music first fell into my hands, and it was like a new world to me—a world lighted with rays more brilliant and more divine than any earthly light. I lived and breathed only in his compositions, and for the first time I felt born within me the desire to be a poet. For, O, Fanny Fauvette, it is sad to be only the artist-executant, not the composer, the creator!"

Dora came just then to tell us that our little woody nook was ready for us, and we established ourselves there for the rest of the day. On one side we could look down the bank, and through the branches see a little bit of the lake, and on the other side gaze out through the leaves of the old chestnut-trees on Dent de Jaman, whose tower-like peak lay gray and clear against the blue sky. We had brought with us books and sewing, and by turns read to each other; then talked pleasant nonsense and compared our embroidery, or leaned back lazily against the trees and watched the clouds winding around the mountains, and listened to the fall of the nuts, and repeated snatches of poetry. One little poem of Bryant, the "Death of the Flowers," pleased us both so much that we repeated again and again together this verse, as we would have lingered over a fresh little idyl that breathed of forests and mountain rills:—

"And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such days will
come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home;
When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees are
still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he
bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more."

Near sunset our two quiet lovers and Octave made their appearance on the bank above us. Beau and Octave had a fine romp, while Hélène and Kinnaird talked to us; then they strayed around the hill out on the bank, to watch the sunset and be alone. Beau and Octave by this time were weary, and the dog came panting to rest beside me, while Octave threw himself on the ground in a graceful position.

"Well, woodland nymphs," he said, "what have you been at to-day? Marie Merle, you and Mademoiselle Fauvette are playing pretend that you are like ladies of old—Angelinas, without your Rolands. But it will not do; you are too artificial, with all your make-believe love for romance and nature; your *tableaux vivants en plein air* are always Watteauish. Now look at that shawl! Mademoiselle just hitched it up there on purpose, because she knew it would look picturesque."

And he pointed up, with a malicious laugh, to an old red French cashmere shawl which always accompanied us in our rambles, to be used as a bed for Beau or a temporary screen from sun or air, just as the need required, and which Dora had hung up on the branches of the tree to keep the sun off. I looked up and saw that the shawl did really produce a capital effect, and that, unconsciously, the whole grouping of our arrangements made a beautiful little picture; so I admitted his charge, saying that we must have succeeded, as the effect had struck him so forcibly.

"You are very cunning, Mademoiselle Fauvette," he said, with saucy playfulness.

"The only weapon of the weak, Mr. Octave."

He yawned, criticised the grouping of our tableau, then dragged out the dinner basket, (to Beau's excessive delight,) in order to discover what *gourmandes* we had been, and made a great rejoicing over the wine bottle.

"Empty, by Jove!" he cried. "Pardon, Mademoiselle," he added, with mock courtesy.

After exhausting his raillery on that point, he examined our embroidery.

"Mademoiselle," he said, "has worked laboriously over one little leaf; it would take a microscope to see the stitches, and there is no beauty in it, after all her labor. Marie has galloped—or "*basted*," I believe you ladies call it—one whole corner of her handkerchief, making all sorts of tipsy roses and dropsical buds; and, by the gods! here are books; and music, too, as I live! 'Don Giovanni,' 'Festin de Pierre,' 'Mémoires de Lorenzo da Ponte,' 'Oubilisheff,' etc., etc. Upon my word, ladies, your inquiries to-day have been not only profound, but on a decidedly fast subject; as rapid, mademoiselle, as your American trotting gait. Rather deep water for you women. Ha, ha! funny to be sure, to see such gentle innocents peeping curiously into what you cannot understand; better let it alone."

Marie Merle grew pettish and biting; he rallied on, and the two quarreled, half in play half in earnest.

"I should like to know," he said, after remaining silent awhile over Molière's "*Festin de Pierre*," "I should like to know," he repeated, as if scarcely knowing what he was saying. He stopped, and continued reading.

"*Eh bien*, Octave," asked Marie, impatiently, "what is it you would like to know?"

"Patience, mocking bird!" he answered indifferently, without stopping his reading; then, after a short silence, he looked up quizzically, and said: "Now just tell me candidly, what do you two feminines, you babes in the woods, make out of that sad fellow, Don Giovanni? Beg pardon, mademoiselle, I am sure you do not mind my nonsensical familiarity in calling you, as well as my old friend Marie, such pretty names."

"Not at all," I answered, but I felt like a fool.

Here was this clever man of the world, younger than I by some years, but very much older in all sorts of Satan knowledge, thrusting himself into our little temple of opinions, and fine feminine philosophy, and delicate poetry of feeling; and such was the influence of his sarcasm, the atmosphere of

sparkling, biting wit which hung around him, that it crushed our little temple into nothingness. Yes, all the gracious pillars and delicate adornments faded and crumbled away in the meanest and most cowardly manner. I knew that all our opinions about Don Juan would sound *fâde*, insipid, and crude to his ears, and instead of combating him as a courageous, bright-witted woman would have done, I just defended myself with the weapons of the weak.

"Come, mademoiselle," he continued, mercilessly, "you commence. What is your opinion of this terrible fellow, Don Juan?"

"As Shakspeare says of the devil, Mr. Octave," I answered, "Molière has certainly made him a gentleman."

I gained my point, and disarmed my opponent of his sneering raillery, by turning his attention from us.

"You are right," he said, and turning the leaves of the book quickly, he read aloud the last scenes in act third of Molière's "Festin de Pierre" with great grace and excellent expression; those scenes so filled with chivalric courage, and which always make the reader of the play feel sad and deeply interested in the worthless hero. Octave's voice was very impressive, and when he reached that part in scene five, where the elder brother of Don Carlos enters and proves him to be Don Juan, and the detested seducer of their sister for whom they are searching, he threw such a full expression of manly courage into the reply—"Yes, I am Don Juan; and the advantage of number on my own side does not oblige me any longer to hide my name"—that it made our eyes kindle and cheeks flush as if the elegant rascal merited praise for mere animal courage, forgetting how sadly deficient he was in manly honor and truth.

"By heavens!" cried Octave, after finishing the passage and throwing down the book so violently that he scared Beau into a fierce barking fit, "you are right, mademoiselle; Don Juan was a gentleman!"

We then talked of the different renderings of this old

story of Don Juan; and that curious but interesting book, "Mémoires de Lorenzo da Ponte," lying beside me, led to a talk on the life of this eccentric genius. I happened to know something of this poet, who connected eras so far apart together—Metastasio, Mozart, and almost the present day—and interested Octave for a short while by recounting to him all my little *ana*. This Da Ponte succeeded Metastasio as court poet to the Emperor of Austria. It was in 1785 that Mozart first met him at Vienna; and the poet, under anything but pure or elevating influences, wrote for the great maestro the libretto of Don Giovanni, which is nearer in character to the English poet's material conception of Don Juan than the Frenchman's. Molière's Don Juan is a reckless, bad fellow, to be sure; but his occasional misgivings show that there is a feeling of something better left in him: "One must think of repentance some time, Sganarelle." But Da Ponte's is a heartless, unbelieving, scoffing demon, for whom there can be no hope; he never thinks or talks of repentance.

I did not tell all this to Octave. Oh, no! If I had, I should have provoked and lighted up all his fire of sarcasm and ridicule of my feminine inexperience. I confined myself to anecdotes of Da Ponte; accounts of how his rival, the poet Casti, after the death of Joseph II., succeeded in having Da Ponte exiled from Vienna, in 1792; but that, although he ousted him, he did not receive the laureatship; it was given to Bertalli. Da Ponte emigrated to the United States in 1803, and lived many years in New York, leading a true poet's life of penury and obscurity. I made Octave laugh heartily over a story I had heard from an old friend who had been present when it occurred.

In 1825, when Garcia visited New York with his daughter Malibran, Da Ponte went to see him. He introduced himself by taking Garcia's hand, and saying, with pardonable pomposity, "I am Lorenzo da Ponte, the author of the libretto of Don Giovanni, and the friend of Mozart."

Garcia made one bound, and, embracing the old poet, sang out in a loud, ringing voice,—

“Fin ch’han dal vino
Calda la testa,
Una gran festa
Fa preparar.”

Da Ponte was so affected that he shed real tears of joy, and of sorrow too, it might be, poor old man! Times were sadly changed with him since the merry days when, as an emperor’s favorite, a petted court poet, he had written that famous bacchanal, the very words of which seem dripping with the rich, golden grape-juice. Octave picked up the *Mémoires*, and dropping the book in one of the deep pockets of his paletot, said,—

“By your leave, mademoiselle,” and sprang down the bank, singing

“Fin ch’han dal vino”

so clear and loud, that long after we had lost sight of his fine form, his rich voice came rising up on our ears, brilliant as the beaded bubbles on a fresh filled champagne goblet.

The crimson sunset colored the Vaudois mountains with a golden violet hue, and the cloud-like mantle around Dent de Jaman was rich as the robes of a king in state. Marie had her arms clasped over a pendant branch of the old chestnut-tree, and was silently swaying to and fro. The red folds of the shawl fell gracefully around her, its richly colored palms giving an oriental effect as they lay gathered together under her arms; the atmosphere seemed dissolving around her; and as I lay leaning against a tree, with half-closed eyes, looking up at her as at some fine picture, the golden and violet particles in the air seemed to mingle in the tresses of her rich brown hair and in the warm hue of her cheeks and the thin red line of her trembling lips, which were just then bearing their most scornful expres-

sion. Her large brown eyes were looking far, far off—farther even than those brilliant clouds; her soul was growing, almost visibly, and surmounting its weaknesses. Had I been a younger and more inexperienced woman, I should have sought and obtained her confidence, for only the modest timidity of girlhood kept her from telling me all her struggles with her love. And had I possessed faith in that love, even one atom of hope that Octave would make her happy or that her own love could continue for him, I might have encouraged her confidence, little as I approve of confidences of such a sacred feeling; but I had no faith in him nor in the love on either side; I saw Marie growing above and beyond him daily. He and his like might sneer at such spiritual growth, but still it was none the less true; so I sat in silence, apparently admiring the brilliant cloud changes, but in truth admiring and studying the development of the girl into the woman—the struggles of the young poet spirit to throw off all unworthy bonds, and feeling strong faith in the complete victory that would be gained after such a quiet but stern combat with Pandemian love.

Hélène and her lover joined us, and we walked quietly home together, Marie carrying little tired Beau in her arms. Poor child! her heart filled with sad longings for earthly love, to which her spirit said sternly, No! and insensibly turning to the lowly little dog and pouring out her love yearnings on it. I could not help repeating aloud Mrs. Browning’s sonnet to “Flush or Faunus;” and Marie gathered little Beau closer in her arms, as she murmured in a low voice,—

“thanking the true PAN,
Who, by low creatures, leads to heights of love.”

CHAPTER XI.

CONGÉ AT INSTITUTION EPERVEIL.

It was a brilliant autumn. October was as golden as the luscious grapes on the vines. It is the custom in most of the Swiss institutions of education to allow detachments of students to make pedestrian excursions in the mountains, during the summer and autumn months. Töpffer's delightful "*Voyages en Zigzag*" give a graphic account of these *promenades*. Several excursions had been made by the students and tutors of Institution Eperveil during the vacation; but the autumn had opened, and continued so fine, that the boys grew quite restless from their desire to have one more course in the Alps before the winter set in. Accordingly, one fine sunny Saturday in the first part of October, a petition, signed by all the students, was presented to Madame Eperveil, asking for a few days *congé*. She graciously consented, and gave them all the following week, only stipulating that Monday should be the day of preparation, and that they should return on the last day of the week, in order to have the following Sunday as a day of rest.

Institution Eperveil became a scene of commotion. The following day the students could scarcely endure the restraints imposed upon them by Madame Eperveil's prohibition against employing the Sunday for any of the preparations. Routes, however, were discussed, parties made up, and favorite tutors squabbled over, disturbing effectually the Sabbath peace and quiet. To Kinnaird Graham's lot had fallen a pleasant party of young men, about ten or a dozen.

On Sunday he was talking about his good fortune in having been allowed by Madame Eperveil to head this little band. "Generally," he said, laughingly, "I have the most troublesome *garçons* given me, and the anxiety I feel causes me much more fatigue than pleasure, I assure you. There is but one element wanting to make this perfect," he added, with a playful gallantry rarely indulged in by him.

"And that?" asked Madame Bouvreuil.

"Two or three ladies," he answered, looking at Hélène.

"Where do you go?" I inquired.

"To Chamouni; and the route is so beautiful and easily accomplished that I am sure you would enjoy it."

"I could not wish anything more pleasant," I cried; "and, indeed, I think you are very kind to ask me."

"What can you possibly see at Chamouni, Graham, in three or four days?" said Octave, who was lounging listlessly over my balcony railings, and had been talking in a low voice to Marie on some subject which did not seem very agreeable to either of them. She had been dissatisfied about something, relative to Octave, for several days past, but I had no chance of talking with Tante Cecile for more than a week, or I should have learned through her the cause of trouble; therefore, I was ignorant of it.

Kinnaird explained his route, which was to make the pass of Tête Noire; spend part of a day, and sleep at Chamouni; while at Chamouni, perform any one of the numberless exploits the ladies wished; then return by Col de Balme. Octave drew a long breath.

"By Hercules! but you have energy, Kinnaird!" he cried, "to undertake three such difficult things: the care of a lot of hobbledehoyes; two ladies—for, of course, Marie will not go—to whom you give, imprudently, a broad margin of whatever they please, and then cram a week's work into three or four days! I do not envy you your post of honor."

"If you held it," said Marie, petulantly, "you would

never have thought of inviting us—certainly not, if it had added to your labors.”

“Most assuredly not,” he answered, coolly, yawning, and speaking in a fatigued, bored tone, which he always employed whenever he wished to be particularly disagreeable. It was evident that their previous conversation had not ended satisfactorily, for he was in as ill a humor as he ever allowed himself to be. “I do not like to see ladies on such excursions,” he continued; “they are in the way. Then, another powerful reason, it makes them look ugly; the wind tosses their hair, and the sun browns their skins; any woman who expects to captivate and attract a man should studiously avoid all such exposures. I am sure I should grow *dégoûté* with Venus herself, if I happened to see her strapped on to a mule tramping over one of these mountain passes.”

“How absurdly you are talking, Octave!” said his mother.

He bowed, with mock courtesy. Kinnaird and Hélène looked and acted as if they had not heard a word of Octave’s saucy speech, and occupied themselves with explaining to me the route and manner of accomplishing it, and what we should prepare for the journey. I could not help stealing a glance at Marie, who stood leaning against one of the pillars of my balcony, looking earnestly down into the misty Rhone valley, as if seeking there for counsel. Her fine Sappho head and brow looked grand in the moonlight, but her thin lips were very stern and scornful. She made no reply to Octave; presently she turned toward us, and asked, “When do you start, Kinnaird?”

“Tuesday morning, in the seven o’clock boat, for Villeneuve.”

“And what must we prepare for the expedition?” she said, coming to the window in which we were seated; and, taking a little *tabouret*, she placed it at my feet, and sat down upon it; then, clasping her hands over my lap, leaned her head on them like a poor, tired, discouraged child. I

smoothed her silky, brown *bandeaux*, and united with Hélène and Kinnaird in telling her our arrangements.

“Mademoiselle Fauvette should be proud of her power,” said Octave, sneeringly; “she is making quite a courageous amazon of Marie.”

“But, Octave,” said Hélène, in a mild but remonstrating tone, “Marie has always gone with us in our mountain excursions heretofore, except sometimes, when she has generously stayed at home to please you.”

“Not much generosity in anything you young girls do; you generally seek your own pleasure, both in your attentions to and neglect of men,” he answered, mockingly; and it sounded so absurdly pettish that we could not help bursting out into a laugh, and I injudiciously added to his temper by crying out,—

“Why, Mr. Octave, you are positively Byronic to-night!”

We annoyed him excessively, but he tried to control his anger, and contented himself with saying, in a very polite manner, that Mademoiselle Fauvette was so refined that even her intended sarcasms were elegant compliments, and then left the balcony. Soon after we heard him enter his own room, which was beneath my salon; after awhile, a heavy clang of the front door informed us that he had left the house; but no remark was made by any of us, either as to his silly pettishness or absence.

The next day was occupied in preparations; and we had much merriment in trying on our mountain costumes: short, gray woolen dresses, knit woolen Montreux jackets, round, felt hats, stout leather boots with flexible soles, and thick gloves with gauntlet tops. On Tuesday morning, by seven o’clock, we were down at the V. port in time to take the “Hirondelle” steamer. We were a merry party, and quite large and noisy enough to disconcert some elegant tourists on board the steamer. At Villeneuve we left the boat, and took the railway for Bex, that “spot for landscape painters,” as Töpffer says. There Kinnaird engaged a carriage for us,

and he accompanied us, leaving the young men to proceed by diligence, agreeing to meet them at the Hotel de Cygne, at Martigny. The road from Bex to Martigny is beautiful. We took the left side of the Rhone until we reached the Bridge of St. Maurice, which is a bold arch, spanning the rapid, mountain river, resting one end on the base of Dent de Morcles, and the other on Dents du Midi, which mountains advance their bases so far forward as to crowd the river into a narrow space of about seventy feet.

This Bridge of St. Maurice took us from Canton Vaud into Canton Valais. On the other side of the Rhone we passed the beautiful little waterfall of the Bas Valais; its leap down the mountain's side is broken by an intervening bit of rock, which causes the water to dash, as it were, into atoms, forming a spray more brilliant than gems, as the rays of the mid-day sun fell on it. We reached Martigny before the young gentlemen, and had a savory dinner ordered for them by the time they arrived. During our noisy, merry dinner, Kinnaird engaged mules and guides for the journey. The mounting of mules, and the getting under way of our cavalcade, created as great a sensation among the people as happiness to us, and we trotted off to the merry measure of the mule bells, laughs, songs, and huzzas of the excited students.

The ascent of Tête Noire is very bold and grand. At the commencement of the ascent we had a beautiful view of the Rhone valley and the course of the Rhone through it, from Col de Forclaz. The path after that gave fine views of the valley of the Triente, sometimes skirting precipices, sometimes running through *riante* pasturages. We reached the inn near the summit about sunset; this was our resting-place for the night. We found it to be a rude but a comfortable and clean place. While supper was preparing, and Kinnaird and Hélène were busied in examining into the accommodations of the house and making arrangements for the night, Marie and I sauntered out on the road. Behind

the inn is a deep gorge, through which the Eau Noire rushes; mountains rise upon the opposite side, covered with pasturages, chalets, and patches of tilled ground; the cattle grazing, their bells ringing, and the noise of rushing waters, gave Marie a host of ideas for mountain idyls. From a steep height came tumbling down a mountain rapid, called by the peasants *cordon* or *ruban blanc*; it looked like a white ribbon streamer, woven with a silver weft, flung to and fro from one steep to another, and so far distant that we could not see its liquid flow or spray, only its dazzling light as it caught some golden violet rays from the setting sun, or a soft, silver beam from the nearly full moon. Beyond the inn was the dark forest of Triente and the brow of Tête Noire. While we were admiring these ravishing sights and sounds, Kinnaird came, with the troop of students, to summon us to *gouter*; and, romantic and ethereal as we had felt while enjoying the enchanting outdoor view, we did full justice to the landlady's good supper. Golden honey and delicious little biscuit, fragrant coffee, made yellow-white by the boiling, creamy milk, and piles of the little Alpine strawberries,—surely all these were tempting enough to have seduced an anchorite as well as romantic women. We grew gloriously merry over the feast, and quite forgot the grand scene of mountain, torrent, and moonlight, outside the house.

After supper, all the party were too fatigued to enjoy the outdoor beauties, and retired almost instantly, in order to be fresh for the early morning journey. When they were all quiet in their rooms, and Hélène had fallen off into a calm, sweet sleep, Marie and I stole down the staircase and wandered up and down the road until after midnight, talking of everything but—Octave. Poor Marie! To some women love is like silly Eve's apple of knowledge, once tasted, all trust and faith are gone forever. The night was glorious "with sights and sounds divine;" and the wild, mountain melody, caused by the rushing noise of the Triente

forcing its way into the Eau Noire, gave to the scene a sublimity almost supernatural.

The next morning by five o'clock we had made a good breakfast, and were mounting our mules. We entered the dark forests of Triente and those which cover the mountain's brow and give it its name, "Tête Noire;" as we left them, the valley of the Triente opened before us in the midst of precipices and steep mountains. Formerly the passage of Tête Noire was very dangerous; now the road winds skillfully around the mountain's side, avoiding the old zigzag and terrific *mal pas*. A rock is tunneled in one place, and Marie and I arrested our mules at the entrance, to watch the part of our band emerging from this superb road suspended in mid air. Then came a succession of gorges and mountain torrents, and at last, we arrived at Argentière, where we saw our first glacier, the Glacier d'Argentière, which comes streaming its icy mass down into the vale between Aiguilles d'Argentière and De la Tour. We arrived in Chamouni at mid-day. We gazed around this wild, desolate-looking village with dissatisfaction; we could not endure the grand, incongruous hotels and crowds of stylish dressy travelers, which give it a watering-place look, quite at variance with the landscape, like a vulgar discord caused by an ignorant hand striking the keys or strings of an instrument in the midst of wild, weird music; nor could we any better endure the clouds and fog that veiled the summit of Mont Blanc.

While we dined, we discussed the afternoon plans; and, after taking the votes, the gentlemen gallantly allowing each one of our votes to count for two of theirs, the decision was found to be for Mer de Glace. We mounted our mules, crossed the Arve, and the meadows in this wild valley, to the foot of the Montanvert, then ascended the steep, picturesque road. Sometimes we crossed wild, desolate-looking paths that seemed as if some avenging angel of destruction had swept his blighting wing over them; they were the paths of winter avalanches, and were more dreary looking than

the black lines of a lava stream. Over the lava the fern and grass will grow; but where once the ice has touched, all vegetation ceases; even if it recedes or sways aside, and takes another course, the spot on which it but rested for a period is blasted forever. And it seems as if the Italian Dante must have known this, although he never saw these fearful ice regions; for the throne of his *Inferno* is the region of eternal ice. The pines were hung with beautiful, long, hairy moss, that streamed, like the torn locks of ravished virgins, in the wind.

When we reached the summit, we dismounted and hurried down to the shore of Mer de Glace. The fog hung heavily, covering all the numberless pinnacles of the wilderness of mountains that surround the vale, which forms the couch for this marvelous ice sea. It is over seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, and above and around it rise up those precipitous summits some of which are so steep that the snow cannot even cling to or rest on their sides. The sea is two miles wide, and it occupied nearly two hours in crossing it. We had excellent guides; mine was a son of the Payod immortalized by Dumas in his clever, sparkling *Impressions du Voyage en Suisse*, and cousin to Töpffer's Jean Payod. He, my guide—Jean Marie Payod—had just returned from London, where he had been employed by Albert Smith in his exhibition of Mont Blanc. When he heard from Marie that I was an American, his admiration was without bounds, and he was prodigal of care and attention.

"Our *paysans* are very enthusiastic about America, Fanny," said Hélène, in English; "they look upon it as a land of promise, a mother republic."

"Yes," said Kinnaird, whose English prejudices prompted him to let off a little raillery against Hélène and me; "'our *paysans*' believe firmly that every man, so soon as he lands in the States, owns a large farm; and 'Government,' that wealthy individual, has immense tracts of luxuriant fields, all fenced in, ready to give gratis, with polite pleasure, to any

Swiss who can scrape enough francs together to pay his passage across the Atlantic."

Hélène and Marie attacked him womanfully in defence of their *paysan* brethren, and I joined with him against them for awhile. But the wonders of the ice sea soon made us forget everything else.

Marie and I let Kinnaird and Hélène pass on with the leaping, bounding boys, and we stood on the center of the sea alone; our guides, seeing we wished to talk together, drew off at a little distance. The surface near the shores is covered with dust and stones, and does not give a satisfactory impression of the color and solidity of the ice. The waves, near the center of the sea, rise at least three feet above the surface; long crevasses cleave some of these huge frozen waves asunder, and one can look down into them an unfathomable depth. We leaned over a crevasse and gazed down, admiring the clear amethystine color of the cloven ice, which was more intensely blue than the heavens that seemed to draw far away from us above.

"Not a 'dissolved amethyst,'" said Marie, "but a frozen one, harder than the gem, stone as it is."

Then we talked of fearful dreams we had suffered during seasons of intense anxiety, when specters, with eyes of just such an icy blue, had haunted us. The fog rolled and surged, sometimes showing the snowy and icy tops of the Aiguilles that surrounded us; the sun, striving to pierce through the driving clouds, gave them the appearance of smoke and smoldering fire—it seemed like a world being destroyed by flame and ice. This wondrous sea is calm and quiet; its cresting waves, its whirlpools, and its rage, are still as the death-sleep; it is like an ocean in high fury, suddenly held still by an icy hand of power. The waves rise as if ready to engulf us, the whirlpools threaten to drag us under, the crevasse trough yawns—but all is transfixed, silent, and immovable. And yet it is said that a silent change is always going on in this quiet sea; that these waves, so firm and

still, insensibly decrease and new ones arise, and that the impurities and stones on its surface, the *moraines* of the glacier, as they are called, are ejected from its mysterious, unknown depths. This thought coming over me as I stood there,—far away from our mortal land, leaning beside one of the apparently immovable waves, one arm thrown across its "*icy mane*,"—caused in me an emotion like what Shelley calls "a sentiment of ecstatic wonder not unallied to madness." And yet there was no fear mingled with the thought.

"How can one feel fear in the presence of mere physical danger?" said Marie, in a low voice. "It is but death that comes at last, and death of this poor body has no terrors."

"Human tyranny, human injustice, frightens me," I replied. "I feel helpless to contend against it, and the thought of unjust oppression crushes down my heart. There are some human influences, some inflexions of the human voice, that in time would, I am sure, make a hopeless idiot of me; but never God's nature, nor the voices and sounds of God's great world-creation of mountain and ocean."

"They elevate me," said Marie, her whole face glowing with the emotion which caused her beautiful soft-toned voice to vibrate and thrill through me like the cadence of the nightingale. "I feel light and soaring, as if I were one of the little loving angels whose heads make up the heavenly background in some of the old pictures. Oh, you are right! one cannot feel fear of God, even though one may sometimes tremble in the presence of his poor creature man."

Shelley's fine lines rose to my lips:—

"Is this the scene

Where the old earthquake-demon taught her young
Ruin? Were these their toys? Or did a sea
Of fire envelop once this silent snow?
None can reply—all seem eternal now.
The wilderness has a mysterious tongue
Which teaches awful doubt, or faith so mild,
So solemn, so serene, that man may be,
But for such faith, with nature reconciled.

Thou hast a voice, great mountain, to repeal
Large codes of fraud and woe: not understood
By all, but which the wise, and great, and good
Interpret, or make felt, or deeply feel."

"I feel no doubt, but more and more reliant on God," said Marie, with sweet, solemn reverence.

"Yes," I replied, "more certain of a hereafter, more disposed to be patient and forbearing under life's bitter disappointments and contradictions, and humanity's injustice and shortcomings. This life and its trials seem here, under such influences, so petty—the future and its developments so infinite."

We stepped forward and joined our guides, and continued the passage over the sea in silence. A grand, solemn "word" we learned there on the center of that frozen ocean, as we stood "looking up from nature to nature's God."

The end of the passage is very difficult. There is a part called the *Mauvais Pas*, which is quite dangerous; it is a path cut in the face of a rock, nearly perpendicular, on the east side of the glacier; a precipice lined with ice and sharp-pointed rock lies beneath; the path is narrow, and slippery from the constant drip of the snow. This path is but just barely wide enough for one person, and for support there is only a rope on one side, fastened to the rock by iron rings. The guides advanced in front of us, placed their sure and steady feet in the places where we were to tread after them, and grasped us at the same time firmly by the wrists. After we had passed over, we stood for a few moments to take breath, and looked at each other and the perilous passage in a sort of bewilderment.

"Persons subject to dizziness should not attempt this *pas*," cried Marie, with a gasp.

"Non, en vérité, mademoiselle!" replied Payod, earnestly. "Day before yesterday, Jean and I had an English gentleman and his lady to take across. When she reached this place, she leaned over to look into the precipice, and was

seized with such a vertigo that we were forced to bind her eyes and carry her across."

"But that was more dangerous than if you had returned to Montanvert," said Marie.

"*Je crois que oui!*" cried Payod, shrugging his shoulders; "but madame determined to finish the journey. Mesdemoiselles are stronger headed than most ladies, however."

"In more senses than one, probably," said Kinnaird, in English, as he ran down the bank of Le Chapeau to meet us. "How do you feel?"

"Tired enough. Where is Hélène?"

"Resting at Le Chapeau."

And I was glad enough to reach there to rest also, for I felt very bruised and weary. Just before reaching the *Mauvais Pas* I had slipped on a base of one of the frozen waves, and my foot plunged deep into one of the cold blue crevasses, touching a fluid as icy cold as the chill damps of death. My guide's strong arm dragged me up, and a muttered ejaculation showed his terror; a wet ankle and cut boot, however, was all the harm done beyond the fright.

We had to wait at Le Chapeau a little while for the mules, which had gone around from Montanvert to meet us in the ravine beneath. We sat and looked down at the curious pinnacles and obelisks of ice, into which the glacier has broken in its descent into the valley. While looking, we saw the mules below, and we descended the muddy path leading from this hill, which is called Le Chapeau, to its foot, where the mules were waiting for us. We found the descent very rapid and steep, and, as it was nightfall, quite difficult. Our journey to Chamouni, after we entered the vale, was one of quiet, peaceful beauty. The fog floated off, the bright October moon rode out majestically into the heavens, greeting with a flood of silvery light the soft, white-bonneted head of the "Monarch of Mountains." The sky was pure and blue; and to the left of one of the Aiguilles, which form

a sort of body-guard to his mountain majesty, shone a little crimson point in the heavens—a tiny, flaming star.

"*Voyez, mademoiselle,*" said Payod, lifting his cap reverentially, "*c'est l'étoile des Bergers.*"

The scene was calm and peaceful; and I, bruised and tired, leaned with my two arms over the neck of the patient mule, which Payod led along and carefully held me on at the same time. I gazed up at the high heavens, the snowy mountains, the flaming star-point, and the round, full autumn moon, and drank in rest for both body and soul. "Tired and weary way-worn travelers" were we, when we dismounted from our mules at the Hotel de Londres.

"What glorious visions you two girls should have, in the midst of all these strange weird noises!" said Hélène, as she stood by the window of our bedroom, sipping her tea, and looking out at the glaciers and rushing torrents. Her *leste* fine form showed less fatigue than ours.

We smiled grimly; we were too tired to be sublime. Some time after midnight I was awakened by a loud, booming noise, which made me sit straight up in bed.

"Marie," I said, in a low voice, and stretched out my hand to awaken her. "Marie, there goes Mer de Glace!"

We both sprang lightly out on the floor, and, wrapping blanket shawls around us, ran, with a smothered laugh, to the window as quietly as possible, in order not to disturb Hélène, who was enjoying one of her usual good-girl sleeps, that

"Sound child-sleeping,
Which the thunder cannot break."

We looked out on the Glacier du Bois, which is the termination of the Mer de Glace; there it lay, spread out white and bleak looking in the fading moonlight; and the source of the Arve came pouring down as steadily and beautifully as when we bade it good night at ten o'clock. But how

glorious was the scene, both for sight and hearing! There was the sound of rushing torrent and dashing waterfall, and the sight of high mountains towering around. "Nature was the poet, whose harmony held our spirits more breathless than that of the divinest earthly one."

We sat for some time, in silence, by the window. At last I found myself nodding, with sleepy familiarity, to the opposite glacier, and I crept off shivering to bed, saying, as I wrapped my blanket shawl more comfortably around me and nestled cosily under the *duvet*, "No grand convulsion of nature is going to commemorate our visit, Marie Merle, I will vouch for it; so come to sleep, my friend."

But Marie was horribly sure we should hear in the morning some terrible account of an avalanche, and a village or two destroyed. What Neros travelers become! But no such agreeable horror was granted to us for our breakfast. The noise which had awakened us was only the booming of a little cannon, announcing the return of a company of gentlemen, who had ascended Mont Blanc a day or two before.

After breakfast, commenced the journey of the day. At Argentière we began the ascent of the Col de Balme. The path up the mountain is a regular zigzag, and recalled Töpffer's piquant and graphic descriptions to us. I could not help expecting to meet at every turn the good fat *femme*, whose child had the *coquelouche*, or the two *goître cretins*, guiding a cow, which—having the most sense of the three—was the veritable guide.

Mont Blanc, sans cloud, shone resplendent in the midst of his superb court of Aiguilles, Dents, and Cols. His soft, round, white head looked like a gracious monarch. The other mountains shot up, cleaving the heavens with their sharp, cutting, icy-peaked crowns; but the monarch of them all could dispense with a peak, and his soft snows blended with the melting blue of the sky like a wavy, changing cloud. From summit to base he stood before us; and then there

was the beautiful wild vale beneath, with the roaring Arve coursing through it, bordered with steep mountains, and the still, cold, white, creeping glaciers, which unfolded themselves with desolate grandeur down into its poor bosom.

As we neared the summit we passed large herds of cattle on the different mountain pastures. Near Châlet de Balme we saw over two hundred cows, some ruminating, some drinking peacefully at the numberless mountain torrents that streamed over our road. As we passed across one of the rude bridges, spanning a little torrent, Marie drew her mule near mine, and said,—

“When the storms rage, is there not here the finest music? And the currents of water which rush into the ravines, and go leaping out over one tree root after another, bearing along pebbles and leaving their foam on the stems of the fern, do they not also sing wild songs, which bring us pretty dreams when we sleep in isles that in one single night they can form around us?”*

It was some fête day, and the inhabitants of the different villages were out in their pretty holiday costumes, every group making a picture, *à la Girardet*. The air was filled with pastoral sounds: the cow bells, the horns of the herdsmen, the village chapel bells, and the roar of torrents and little waterfalls. We dined on the summit of the Col; after dinner we dispersed in various directions, in order to enjoy for an hour or so, and in perfect freedom, the glorious view from this summit. Tired with rambling, Marie and I sat down on some broad stones, and gazed down into the vale of Chamouni entirely through its length and breadth, from Col de Rosa to Col de Balme.

We found the descent of Col de Balme fatiguing, but filled with savage beauty. After awhile we struck into the route over the Forclaz, which we had made in ascending the

* *Maîtres Sonneurs*.

Tête Noire, and again enjoyed the beautiful view of the Rhone valley. At Martigny we discharged the mules and guides, and pushed on to Bex, in carriages, in order to sleep there that night, and arrived in Peilz the following day, with fatigued bodies, but filled with impressions of beauty which remained unfading in our memories for years.

CHAPTER XII.

A DAY AT BLONAY.

AFTER our return from Chamouni we found Octave absent. He had left for a journey, one scarcely knew whither, but he expected to be at Vienna during the winter to meet Lord S., a young English nobleman, and remain with him as a sort of tutor or companion. This Lord S. was a nephew, by marriage, of a grand, wealthy friend of Madame Eperveil, a Mr. Landsnecht, an Englishman, who had made a fabulous fortune in trade; and, by means of this fortune, had been able to marry the penniless aunt of this young lordling. In course of time the merchant became, to his great satisfaction, guardian to his wife's nephew. A month or so before, he had applied to Madame Eperveil to provide him with a traveling companion or tutor to this young gentleman, who had just left the university, and wished to travel on the continent, and Madame Eperveil had recommended Octave.

"I am glad he is gone," said Tante Cecile to me, one sweet twilight, as we were lingering in Michel's garden, and admiring together his fine fall pears and plums. "But his caprices do not worry and distress Marie as they used to. Formerly she fretted, when, after a quarrel, he would leave in this cavalier style. I think, however, she is outgrowing her love for him, for she scarcely noticed his absence; and the first morning after your return from Chamouni, she went to work as hard as ever at her music. This time last year she would have looked gloomy for a week, and not opened the piano."

Madame Michel, just at this moment, joined us. She was a tall, slender, old-maidish-looking woman, who held herself

absurdly erect; the expression of her countenance was very droll; it was the personification of primness; she had little, sparkling, black eyes, a nice brown complexion, black hair, streaked with gray, and she wore a white cap with fluted border, the universal head-dress of the Vaudois *paysannes*. She was a character, this same Madame Michel, in her humble way, and afforded infinite amusement to us; but we respected her, for she was an excellent woman, and our laughs against her were not malicious. She had been an old maid, the daughter of the old gardener of the chateau; and, after his death, had married her father's assistant, Michel, a widower, with one child; and a pretty good girl was this daughter, Elise Michel. Madame Michel had never expected to marry. I do not suppose it had ever entered into her head to take such a step; not that she was ugly or disagreeable, but she had always been a stiff, prim, old-maidish person from her earliest youth, and had "never fancied the *garçons*," as she said. After her father's death, Michel had wisely concluded she would just suit him, especially as she held a sort of right in the garden, and if he did not marry her, he would have to pay her a small sum annually. He was a shrewd, calculating fellow; and, without being cruel or positively and openly a rascal, was more cold and selfish than many who were less trusted in. He was industrious, however, and generally temperate; although, at certain seasons, he would take a frolic, as will, unfortunately, very many of the Vaudois *paysans*. They are a liberty-loving, wine-drinking set, these Vaudois *paysans*; and sometimes Michel would have a fresh *accès* of *paysan* patriotism, which he would show by a three or four days' visit to the neighboring cabaret, where he let it off by playing disque, drinking the new heady wine of the Canton, and howling, in barbarous, inharmonious shrieks, patriotic songs out of the Zöfingue: "*Au bord du Lac*," "*Sur nos champs*," and, above all, "*Remplissons nos verres*;" which last song always raised him and his companions to a seventh heaven of Swiss re-

publican bliss. But his wife ignored all this, and talked incessantly of the great prize she had drawn in the matrimonial lottery.

"Si vous saviez, mademoiselle," she would say, with the true Vaudois strength of emphasis; "si vous saviez comme il est bon; c'est d'une bonté inexprimable; il est perfection; il est un ange!"

Now, it was difficult for us to unite our idea of an angel with Michel, who was a peculiarly insignificant-looking and ugly man, with whitish-yellow hair and beard, and very *sournois* in his manners. But, of course, Marie and I were wicked enough to encourage her in this innocent and laudable weakness; so, when she interrupted us on the afternoon in question, I commenced praising her husband's fine fruit and industry, concluding with,—“Ah, Madame Michel, it is not every one that is so lucky as you are!”

"N'est-ce pas, mademoiselle—n'est-ce pas?" she burst out, exultingly, drawing up her prim chin in a self-satisfied manner, which was so inexpressibly funny that Tante Cecile had to turn aside to hide her smiles,—“n'est-ce pas! eh, c'est d'une bonté inexprimable. Et moi, mademoiselle, vous voyez;" and she spread out her hands as if to give generously a full view of her whole person; "je ne suis plus jeune, et il est si joli garçon, si aimable, si tendre, comme nous sommes seuls. Il est froid, mademoiselle, devant le monde; mais il est pour moi un ange, un perfection; eh, quelle bonté—c'est d'une bonté mais d'une bonté, mademoiselle!" And she folded her thin, long-fingered hands, and threw up her sharp little eyes in an attempt at a rapturous expression, leaving the sentence unfinished, as if words could not express this "*bonté inexprimable*."

I could not help laughing; and, to cover it over, I said, reproachfully: "Ah, madam! you make *vieilles demoiselles* like me envious."

She never dreamed of being absurd—who does, especially when the most so?—but commenced saying consoling things

to me, in a confidential tone, about my matrimonial hopes in the future. "But where is your pretty niece Emilie?" I asked. "I want to see her bright face again; and Dora needs the assistance of her clever hands in renovating our winter clothing. She must not leave Peilz without giving us a week. I promised my Dora to engage her this afternoon."

Madame Michel's pale face grew red, and she stammered out that Emilie had left Peilz that morning; that she had been called suddenly home to Sallanches, and would not return probably all winter.

"She left this morning, then?" said Tante Cecile, eagerly; "and you are sure she returns to the Valais?"

"Oh, yes, mademoiselle," replied the woman, seriously; "Michel had business at G., and he took her himself."

"I am very glad to hear it," said Tante Cecile; "and she had better remain in the Valais; she is much too pretty and inexperienced to go out into the world to earn her living. I hope soon to hear, madam, that she is married suitably; that would be the best thing for her."

"Yes; and married as satisfactorily as madame," I added, with a laugh and shake of the head; and we bade Madame Michel good evening, while she was just about recommencing her enunciation of Michel's "*bonté inexprimable*."

"You do not know, then, about Emilie?" asked Tante Cecile, as we walked off down on the lake shore.

"What about her?"

"Why, poor Emilie is the cause of the quarrel between Marie and Octave. He has always shown a disposition to flirt with her; but it went so far this autumn as to give us all great anxiety. Elise, it appears, has been very uneasy for some time at Emilie's altered manner, and her fits of weeping at night; but when Emilie told her she thought she would go to Paris to work at her trade, where she could make more money, she grew alarmed, and told her mother.

Madame Michel remonstrated with the girl, but she answered her aunt pertly; and, on throwing out some conceited hints of expecting to be a lady some time, Madame Michel asked my advice, and I counseled her to send her home to her grandmother, at Sallenches."

"How wicked!" I cried, "for Octave to play upon the vanity of that silly girl!"

"Marie thought she had better remonstrate with him," said Tante Cecile; "but he did not receive her remonstrances amiably; he expressed himself very much surprised at what he called her 'unmaidenly interference in an affair that ought to be quite out of the knowledge of a delicate, refined woman.'"

"She must have felt awkwardly enough when he chose to put such an unjust construction on it."

"No; I do not believe she did," answered Tante Cecile, shaking her head; "although I am sure I should. But it showed his good-for-nothing impertinence, to endeavor to abash her so. I asked Marie what answer she made him, and she said, 'I told him I did not think it unmaidenly to endeavor to save a weak young girl from the thoughtless, unmeaning attentions of an attractive young man, who was only amusing himself; that I had hoped, by appealing to his good sense and honor, he would see the impropriety of his conduct; that I was much more surprised at his ungenerous way of trying to make me feel ashamed of what was a creditable act—indeed, a duty;' and then she said she refused to talk any more about it."

Here Marie and her father joined us; and we made arrangements to spend the following day "under the forest trees."

"You have never visited Blonay yet, have you?" asked Mr. Merle.

"No; is it not too far?"

"By no means, for such pedestrians as you are; more-

over, you can take the donkey along to relieve you when you feel tired in the ascent. It is only three-quarters of a league from here; that is, about three miles, as you would call it, on the Pleiades, and you take the same road that passes through your favorite Hauteville. It is a grand, old chateau; it was built in the tenth century, by Otho Grandson; and, at this very day, belongs to a descendant of this same old Otho. In the middle ages, the family were so powerful that it held dominion over twenty-five villages. At the time of the Reformation, the family being divided in religion, divided their property; the Catholic branch established themselves in the Chablais, where they possessed an estate above Evian; the Protestant remained at Blonay. Oh, you must go, by all means, to Blonay, if for nothing else, to see the fine view from the balcony of the *salle à manger*, on the second floor."

So, to Blonay it was decided we should go the following day. The morning was very clear and bright, and though we started early, at seven o'clock, we found the *paysans*, three hours in advance of us, at work in their vineyards. The autumn was singularly long; the vintage had begun some weeks before, and the *récolte* was very fine; the vineyards were filled with crowds of people: men, women, and children, gathering the *grappes de raisins*. Large wagons, with heavy *cuves*, stood in the roads, and men, bending under the brandes—wooden vessels, strapped on to their backs—came swaying to and fro, from the motion of the golden grape-juice, as they descended with care the steps leading from the terraced vineyards to the road, and there deposited, in the hogsheads or *cuves*, the juice and pressed mass of the grape.

They all gave us good-natured greetings, and gifts of huge *grappes* were forced generously upon us with all the warm-hearted kindness of the Vaudois. We reached Blonay about ten o'clock. Tante Cecile, Marie, and I, with Dora and

Beau, made up the party. Mr. Merle had agreed to dine with the professor that day; and Tante Cecile had given her two maidens permission to go grape-gathering in the vignobles of some relatives, which is a great amusement for the young girls and *garçons* at vintage-time. Madame Bouvreuil and Hélène were to join us in the after part of the day, as Kinnaird, who had no lessons on that afternoon, was to drive them out in a little wagon. We did not visit the chateau first, for we were tired; so we sought out a warm sunny place in the woods to rest, where we talked or read aloud alternately.

"Beau is the most sensible one of the party," said Tante Cecile, going to the donkey, and taking off the panier of provisions, while we arranged the books, shawls, rugs, and camp-stools. "He has been courteously inviting us to take some refreshment, after our long walk, ever since we arrived."

Beau sat looking very sternly at the provision basket; he did not notice our laughs, or anything but the place and position of the darling panier. As we were all hungry, we opened it, to his great satisfaction, and soon he had the pleasure of crunching chop-bones on the velvety moss, which formed a tufted carpet under the old chestnut and walnut trees.

After our collation, we leaned back against the old tree-trunks, and enjoyed, luxuriously, our rest, and listened to Marie, whose memory was stored with legends of all these old chateaux. How I wish I could transport my readers to the delicious spot and its surroundings! From an opening in the wood we could look through and see the fine, old chateau tower above us; and, beneath us, long terraced roads, descending, like tripping maidens, through the magnificent chestnut forest. Tante Cecile and I, sat embroidering, Dora crocheting, Beau, serious as a judge, dozed solemn slumbers beside the provision panier, and the donkey fed peacefully, near at hand, in the meadows of the chateau,

while Marie sat on a cushion, on the soft mossy ground, and told her wild legends in the quaintest old French, that sounded like some one of those lark songs

"that glorious Chaucer sung
Away in England's morn."

In the afternoon, Madame Bouvreuil, Hélène, and Kinnaird joined us; then we rambled over the old chateau, and grew antiquarian wise over old *bahuts* and *buffets*, some covered with inlaid armorial bearings, and some sculptured with "annunciations" and rich garlands and clusters of the symbolical pomegranates and grape, which told of their old use in chapels in ages long gone by. We stood in the large balcony window of the salon on the second floor, and gazed peacefully over the gracious landscape spread out beneath and beyond us; then turned lingeringly away to commence our walk homeward. We found in the vineyards a merrier scene than the early morning presented. Most of the courting among the Vaudois *paysans* is done during the vintage-time. After the gathering of the day is over, it is the work of the *garçons* to go and examine the different parts allotted to the young girls, to see if they have culled the *grappes* well, and every young *paysanne* who may, by chance, have left a bunch, is subject to the punishment of a kiss, to be given to her by the lucky *garçon* who finds it. From many a vineyard rose merry shouts, announcing the rustic gallantry of the young men; and old fathers and mothers, who stood by the reeking and dripping *cuves* in the road, laughed heartily; for many an old couple remembered their own frolicsome young days.

Light had faded; every golden-tinted cloud had grown gray, and bright stars glimmered and sparkled out in the sky, and peeped out between the waving folding clouds, as we came down the road that led to the old Peilz church. A long line of wagons, with wine *cuves* and peasants, passed

under the church arch with us, and entered the Peilz street, suggesting to the professor and Mr. Merle, who came up the road to meet us, the comparison to an ancient procession in honor of Bacchus; but the merry shouts of the peasants proved that their labor had wearied them less than our pleasure had us; for we were forced to admit that we were very tired, and quite willing to woo "sweet sleep, nature's kind restorer," under the friendly warmth of our silk *duvets*.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WINTER.

THE cold weather soon after set in. One morning, on awakening, I found the tops of the opposite Savoy Alps covered with snow, looking like the mountains that surround Chamouni. There had been a long rain of several days, which rain-storm had been snow on the mountains. How dreary it looked to me! and I shivered and drew closer to the porcelain stove, and wrapped my fur tippet close about me whenever I crossed the brick-paved halls and stone staircases, on my way to the *salle à manger* or *salon*. Marie, and especially Hélène, laughed at me, and told me I must learn to enjoy their Swiss winters as well as the summers, for the winters had their sports also. Snow fell on our roads, and the ice hardened on the ponds and inlets at the head of the lake; sleigh horses jingled their merry bells, and the students of Institution Eperveil sallied forth with their skates.

Madame Eperveil gave *congé* every Saturday during the skating season, and the boys were always off early to a favorite skating spot, a little inlet of the lake, above Zillium. One morning I wrapped myself up carefully, and accompanied Hélène to the scene of action—for, being as good a skater as the boys, she rarely missed a Saturday's skating. It was a merry sight: the surrounding mountains were gray and grim enough, and the air biting cold; but though nature seemed inhospitable, everybody was bent upon making amends for her rugged humor, and disposed to find amusement even from it.

Booths were scattered about, in which were sold to the boys and other people attracted to the place, coffee, cakes, and even sausages, which were kept hot over little chafing dishes and boilers. The women who guarded these booths were mostly puffy, pincushiony-looking dames, in short, brown and blue stuff petticoats, Montrueux jackets of tricotted worsted, and Montrueux caps and hats, which last are remarkable pieces of toilette; the cap is made of black silk, shaped like the old mob cap, and has a broad border of stiff, black lace, which stands out around the face in all its fluted grandeur; the hat is as often hung on the arm as perched on the top of this cap, and is a yellowish-white coarse straw, with a crown shaped *à la bouteille*—the narrow neck of the bottle forming the top or center of the crown.

There were stronger drinks than coffee at these booths: various fermented liquids, and the pungent, fresh wine of the country,—of which the *paysans* are unfortunately so fond,—and, pure grape-juice as it is, it causes as disgusting drunkenness, duty neglecting, and wife beating, as our own more homely rum and apple-jack.

The students were mostly fine skaters; but none were better than Kinnaird, whose large, athletic form was shown to great advantage in this manly amusement. But my greatest pleasure was in looking at Hélène. I had never seen a woman skate before, and had hardly expected to think it so graceful an exercise. Her costume was very pretty: a short skirt and basque of dark, garnet-colored merino, edged with a narrow border of black fur; a collar and wristbands also of fur, and pantaloons of the same material as the dress, slightly full into the band, which encircled the ankle at the top of the high-laced morocco boots; a brown felt hat and feather completed this very becoming dress. Her cheeks grew brilliant, her eyes danced, and a prettier woman than Hélène Bouvreuil could hardly be found; and so her lover thought, evidently, as I noticed that he stole many a quiet,

admiring glance at her, when he fancied no one saw him indulging in such a weakness. I stayed some time, enjoying the wonderful performances of the best skaters, who cut my name on the ice, and did a variety of remarkable feats; then I drove back to Peilz, with Madame Bouvreuil, long before Hélène or the students and tutors had any idea of returning.

The extreme cold weather, even during that slight exposure, affected me seriously; and for many weeks after that gay Saturday, I was too much of an invalid to enjoy any outdoor amusement; and even during the whole season, I did little beyond visiting at the chateau and Institution Eperveil. The concerts, lectures, and dramatic readings continued weekly there, and generally, when I felt well enough, I went to them; but my closer acquaintance with Madame Eperveil did not make us like each other even as well as we promised to at first. I was not strong enough in health to be very patient with her dictatorial manners, and our opinions were so diametrically opposite on every subject, that it was difficult to avoid discussion. My state of health caused her great annoyance; of course, she sneered at it behind my back, considering it imaginary; and to my face, she threw out hints against my mode of life; late hours, long days in the open air during the autumnal fogs, and want of regular occupation, formed her usual themes of conversation; which preaching grew so wearisome, that I rarely condescended to reply to her, and listened so indifferently that I even provoked the good professor to take up the cudgels in my defence. It was amusing to hear him represent to her, that as to late hours he indulged in them himself, and that no one could dispute his actual possession of good health; that outdoor life was excellent for the spirits, and that Mademoiselle Fauvette was the most industrious person he had ever seen. When it arrived at this personal crisis I generally withdrew, for I did not admit the right which Madame Eperveil wished to exercise over me,—as

over every one else,—of sitting in judgment on me and my pursuits.

Madame Bouvreuil and Hélène were so tender and kind that it was a pleasure to be nursed by them; and Tante Cecile and Marie united with them in loving care and sympathy. They made me spend several days at a time with them at the chateau; and, as the guest-chamber opened on the salon, I could lie on the bed in it and enjoy from the open door all Marie's music. One day, I had suffered so much from languor, succeeding an attack of severe pain, that I was forced to remain in bed. Marie played for me, and Tante Cecile read her favorite Emile Souvestre aloud, and talked her soft, soothing words. At twilight, Tante Cecile tied on me a pretty lace cap, her skillful fingers had been fashioning for me; and we were admiring its becomingness, when the salon door opened, and we heard the voices of strange gentlemen talking to Mr. Merle and Wolfmaister.

"Heinrich Henzler!" cried Marie joyfully, and she ran into the salon, followed by Tante Cecile.

I had so often heard them speak of this German friend, that I could well understand their delight at his visit. He had been a student of Institution Eperveil, but his decided genius for music had induced his father to allow him to devote himself to it as a profession. Tante Octavie had pronounced it a piece of madness, and had prophesied beggary, and worse than that, for the young lad; but his success had been as remarkable as his ability. He had shown great capability in orchestral direction, and at the time I first met him he was chief of one of the finest public orchestras in Vienna. His concerts were crowded, his waltzes and orchestral arrangements all the rage; and Heinrich Henzler was considered the principal German composer of that very attractive and popular *genre* of music.

His troupe had also a great reputation, and his management was highly commended. They were all young, un-

married men, and he required they should all possess a certain amount of education on joining his troupe; and he made them enter into solemn engagements also against all habits or indulgences that could lead to dissipation. But their chief was their friend as well as their director; he associated with them, and took great pride in arranging the hours of study and practice, both alone and in concert. They had traveled in America, and all over Europe, giving famous concerts. Although his dancing and military music was so popular, he also prided himself on the style in which his troupe executed Mozart and Beethoven. Certain days were given to the study of these great masters, and his classical concerts were no less celebrated than the gayer miscellaneous ones. Presently Marie came back to me, saying,—

"Oh, I am so sorry you are not able to be out in the salon, for Heinrich can only stay this evening with us. He is *en route* to Paris, where he and his *troupe* are going to be present at the inauguration of the Beethoven Salon; and he says he has stopped just to have a practicing with me. However, you can listen to us from this room, and you shall hear that grand trio in *Mi bémol*, of Beethoven and Mozart's Swan Song."

"And the Ghost Trio?"

"Oh, yes, the Ghost Trio by all means, for he knows that there is a ghostly lady to listen to him here in the guest-room."

"Surely, if Heinrich could only see Fanny in her bewitching little cap," said Tante Cecile, laughing, "he would feel doubly inspired. I think, my child, we must arrange you on the lounge, near the door of the salon; such a picturesque effect must not be lost on our merry young artist Heinrich, who loves a bit of funny romance amazingly."

The dear old lady playfully insisted upon carrying her point, and summoned Louise, the stout, sturdy maid, who gathered me up as if I had been no heavier than her empty water *brande*; and I was snugly placed on the *canapé*, with

shawls and cushions, near the salon door—only just light enough thrown on me to show “the bewitching little cap to advantage,” as Tante Cecile said. The gentlemen had gone down to *gouter* while these arrangements were being made, and I was so exhausted after they were over that I laid back on the cushions, and feared that I should not be able to enjoy the music. Tante Cecile’s delicious cream-cakes and fragrant tea could not tempt me even to eat, and I closed my eyes, begging them not to mind me, to let me lie there in silence, and probably with the music the strength would come.

Marie returned to the salon, and soon the music commenced. Henzler’s principal violoncellist was with him, and Wolfmaister took the viola, while Marie played the piano. They executed first, as a quartette, the allegro in Mozart’s Symphony, called the “Swan Song,” but I was too exhausted to appreciate it as I wished; it was grand and noble; and as thoughts of death came with reviving strength into my mind, I felt how much the agony of one’s last moments might be softened by such sounds. They then played the grand trio in Mi bémol, of Beethoven. Marie and I had just been reading together that admirable book, *Trois Styles de Beethoven*, by De Lanz; and his fine description of this glorious trio was remembered with satisfaction, as I listened to the music. The masses of sounds poured out like grand chorals. Then followed tearful, sorrowing minors; and after these the melody came floating out airily and lightly, like hope in the midst of apprehension. But in the finale, the suggestions crowded one upon another; there was the delicious repose of bubbling fountains, the whirl of feeling while looking at a wild mountain course, and the sublime elevation caused by rolling storm-clouds and a raging sea, with fierce, driving waves, lashed by the wind; then the tumult of harmonies mounted up higher and higher, as each instrument vied with the other. I covered my face with my

hands, for my mind seemed bewildered with the thick, thronging fancies crowding up before it.

After this was over they had a great deal of merry, sparkling talk, and then they tried over some new music Henzler had brought with him. One trio—a serenade by Chopin’s friend, Hiller—struck me forcibly, especially the passage called “Ghazel,” toward the close. The violin and violoncello rang out the solemn *fatum* relentlessly but pityingly, in answer to the childlike complaint of the piano, which resents, in rebellious but sweet modulations—sometimes as if in dumb pain—the undeserved sorrow. The last, despairing remonstrance, poured sobbingly out in broken sounds of octaves, replying to the base; and then there came the mute chord in the time, which sounded like the dumb, voiceless interrogation of the heart, when despairing humanity dares to turn its glazed eye to heaven, feeling, but not asking, “Why this fearful pain, this unmerited judgment?”

I began to fear that I should not hear my favorite trio of Beethoven, in Re major, Opus 70, called the Ghost Trio; but after a little delay, the simple, singing theme of the opening of this beautiful trio commenced. Hoffman’s admirable analysis of it seemed more true and just than ever I had thought it before.

“In this artistic construction,” he says, “the most wonderful pictures vie and mix with one another, and in them are portrayed gladness, grief, and gentle happiness. Strange forms begin a merry dance, and then vanish in a point of light—then return, and, gleaming and flashing, dart to and fro; and for an instant the enchanted soul seems to be in a spirit-kingdom, where she hears and understands the unknown tongue, and comprehends all secret warnings and thoughts.”

The largo of this trio is very peculiar, as De Lanz remarks. The violin and violoncello perform the principal theme, and Marie’s fine piano and excellent execution pro-

duced an effect that even made Wolfmaister, so chary in his praises, cry "*Brava*" and "*Bene*." She put both pedals down, then poured off, as it were, the glittering, liquid stream of accompaniment lightly, almost murmuringly, producing an effect like a soft atmosphere thrown over a delicious picture; or an opaline haze, such as one sees bathing the landscapes on the Mediterranean shores; or, still more like the rich autumnal golden, purple mists, hanging at sunset over our beautiful Swiss mountains. The violin and violoncello talk together, as the human being might question its spirit, at a moment when all human counsel is helpless; the guardian demon remonstrates and reasons with its mortal charge; and after the dialogue, the flood-like, descending scale of the piano, throws a brilliant flash of light over the solemn converse of the two—mortal and spirit. The trio then mounts up grandly; it is as if the ghostly counselor had left the mortal, filled with glorious and beautiful presentiments, high and holy hopes, which make it glad and joyful; it turns away freely from this shrunken world, in which, only a little while before, all its hopes and wishes had been centered, and looks hopefully and yearningly toward an unknown land—the warm, delicious life-breath of which seems already stealing over it, while the pure instrumentation of the close gives the grandest expression to this poetical thought.

Henzler and Wolfmaister discussed Beethoven enthusiastically; and yet Wolfmaister was one who, if he had lived in the days of Beethoven, would have condemned his music as eccentric and exaggerated. Marie sat looking gray and dull, as if her soul had gone out with the music. Presently her face lighted up, and I saw Henzler lean over the piano to talk with her. While they talked, Mr. Merle and the other gentlemen left the room, to go down and smoke awhile in the library; but Henzler remained with Marie. They talked long and earnestly, and part of the conversation was a generous expression of admiration on his part of Marie's

execution and expression; then he told her, as freely as a brother might, all his musical schemes and plans. After some time he rose up, as if to take leave; and, to my surprise, both approached the bedroom door. Tante Cecile advanced toward them, and, after a few pleasant compliments, Henzler said, in a tone of playful but courteous freedom,—

"Tante Cecile, I want you to present me to Marie's mysterious unknown, whose delicious little lace cap, fitting to and fro in the indistinct light of this room, gave me so much inspiration this evening."

I bent forward and half rose up, with as much strength as I possessed, and, extending my hand to him, told him that we needed no introduction; that his music, if not his well-known name, made me feel already as a friend to him. He leaned his tall, slender figure against the door, and received with jesting gracefulness our compliments and praises; after that a little pleasant conversation, then a hearty grasp of the hand, a merry, ringing laugh, and Heinrich Henzler was gone.

CHAPTER XIV.

DE LANZ AND CHOPIN.

SORROW and suffering reach an end, like everything else in this world; and "*the yesterdays to come*" arrive at last, and make us forget that "*spirit of the day deceased*," which so often walks solemnly beside us, clouding the present pleasure. With the approach of spring my physical pains began to disappear, and I was again free to enjoy God's blessed sunlight, out on the glorious hills. March opened pleasantly; snow still lay on some of the sheltered vineyards and by-roads; but on the mountain sides the spring sun poured down its rays, and melted off the winter drapery, which joined, with the thawing snow from the mountain-tops, to swell the streams that came coursing down into the lake, and made of them roaring torrents. Our mild-spoken Oignon, which had wandered so graciously through Hauteville, and played its cascade so peacefully that the professor teasingly questioned its existence, now became a fierce, impetuous flood; its rushing noise could be heard at a great distance; and the Hauteville cascade became a waterfall of the most approved grandeur and style, threatening to carry away all the picturesque obstacles of rocks and old tree-trunks, that stood between the upper and lower waterfall. The vineyards grew noisy, and inhabited with the industrious *paysan* world, who were hard at work, digging around and tying up their vines neatly with straw to the supporting sticks.

The winter was over, and with spring came new plans for every one. Our whole little village world was busy; and

this epidemic of new projects and plans attacked even the well-poised principal of the long-established Institution Eperveil. She had her capable hands and strong head also full of momentous affairs, and, as usual, acted as if all other arrangements should be subservient to her own. Her distinguished acquaintances, the Landsnechts, had written to her to engage a *cottage ornée* for them, near Peilz, as they intended making this part of the country their headquarters during the summer; and they also wished to have a day governess for the young daughters. The family were in Vienna, where they had been wintering, and were expected to arrive in May, with Octave and Lord S. Madame Eperveil announced to her niece, that she should have the enviable position of governess to the Misses Landsnecht, and Wolfmaister was commissioned to find an extensive cottage for the wealthy family. Accordingly, a grand Swiss *châlet*, on the road to Clarens, was procured, with every orthodox ornament that a *châlet* should possess, of wood-carved eaves, and outside staircases and decorations.

Madame Eperveil had, however, a cause of annoyance, to make a shadow to all this brilliant sunshine of importance. Mr. Serin, who had been her head master ever since the death of her husband, had dared to announce, that at the approaching vacation he should like to retire from his honorable post. Madame Eperveil could scarcely credit her eyes and ears, when she read aloud the good old gentleman's note, bearing this information—for he had not possessed sufficient courage to tell her by word of mouth. His reasons were good: a son, brought up and educated at the institution, and who had only left a few years before, had commenced an institution of his own, in North Germany, and offered his father a quiet home, wishing to have the assistance of the old gentleman's counsel, and also the benefit of his presence and name—which, in the eyes of his patrons, would be of great consequence.

One should have supposed, to have heard Tante Octavie talk and believed her view of the case, that Mr. Serin and his son were monsters of ingratitude, in taking this step. "A boy, educated under her own roof! A man, employed by her; who had ate of her bread for thirty years! She believed it to be a plan they had meanly and secretly nourished for years;" always winding up her unreasonable anger with her favorite expression, "*C'était impayable.*" She never reflected that she had been paid the full sum for the board and tuition of Serin, Jr., and had received honest, steady service from Serin, Sr., for the thirty years' salary she had paid him. So skillfully did she represent her imaginary injury, that both father and son were silenced, and felt, at the first dash of her egotistical resentment, as if probably they might be in the wrong. She coldly told them that the thing was impossible—at least, for some time yet; that she must consult with her nephew, Mr. Octave Bouvreuil. The position of head master he intended to take, after his engagement with Lord S. should be at an end; that engagement was an indefinite one; it might last some two or three years yet; and until he decided upon the affair, she certainly must decline making any new arrangements; and she said all this in such a masterful, grand manner, that the Messrs. Serin, struck aghast, were quite amazed at their involuntary, unintended show of ingratitude.

Serin, Jr., however, was not so perfectly convinced of this as was his father, and he returned to Germany a little grumbling; resolved—as he mustered up enough courage to whisper in confidence to Tante Cecile, Marie, and me, just before he left—to keep the thing in view; that he did not see why his father should dance attendance on the capricious decisions of Mr. Octave, who was about as fit to be head master of an institution for education, as he was to be an archangel. Then, startled at his temerity, he bound us to strict secrecy, and left, muttering unutterable things, in order to convince himself that he was not selfish or ungrateful, in wishing to

have his own father assist him in his honest endeavors in establishing a school by which he wished to earn his living.

In April, part of the Landsnecht cortege made their appearance, in the persons of some stylish-looking little girls and boys, headed by a nursery governess and tutor, with an army of *bonnes* and *valets*. Hélène was installed into her new office of day governess, by Madame Eperveil, who acted on the occasion as an empress might, after conferring a great title, with lands attached thereto, on a young and obscure relative. This threw me more on Marie and Tante Cecile for society, as Hélène's new occupations not only filled up all her time, but gave fresh duties to Madame Bouvreuil.

The spring fever for work had shown itself in Marie, by the commencement of a very close study of Mozart's and Beethoven's sonates, arranged for four hands, which she played with Wolfmaister. On the evenings of their practicing together, I always took my embroidery, and went to the chateau to listen to them. One evening, when I arrived, I found her in high argument about our musical high-priest Chopin, with Wolfmaister. The master was striding up and down the salon, with his long elf-locks tossed wildly off of his forehead.

"Mon Dieu!" he cried, in his shrill, high-pitched voice; "I should know something about the matter surely, Marie. I knew Chopin personally. I was his pupil for six months. This very waltz I studied with him, when it was composed; and I pride myself upon playing it 'close to the letter of the tradition,' as you would say."

"I cannot help it if you did," answered Marie. "All I can say is, if you willfully misunderstood your great advantages, it is not my fault. You certainly did, or you would not insist so obstinately upon a faulty expression and accent, which is so widely different in effect from the very evident meaning,—the poetical thought contained in the composition."

I was appealed to, and found that the cause of dispute was that exquisite waltz of Chopin, in Re bémol, major. Wolfmaister played it, to prove to me his idea of the style in which it should be executed; but, by his regular beat and measured accentuation, the waltz did, indeed, lose one-half of its beauty. Then Marie played it, and the difference was marvelously striking. Under Wolfmaister's fingers it had sounded like a piece of crotchets and quavers, beats and measures. Marie made of it a poem. There was an irresistible hurrying up of the time during the first eight measures, with a run up to Si bémol, ending with a click on this note, as keen as a heart-clutch, at the first moment of the certainty of mortal sorrow; then a slight relapsing, with rainbow lights and transparent shadows, for four measures; the *motif* then commenced restlessly again, bringing back the old torture,—“the old wound, ever aching.” On it rushed recklessly, with mad swiftness, sprinkling the way with tears precious as pearls, faster and faster, until it reached a resolution that seemed like some desperate resolve, at which hope appeared to beam out; a gleam of peace shone over the heart; the lovely, rocking *rubato* melody, consoling it with sweet promises and gentle sobs of relieved anguish, fell from the broken measures. But suddenly, dissonances were heard; the tocsin of Fate struck out in the preparatory trill, as if to remind one of the stern dictum of destiny,—that the heart cannot have rest; the melody, as a type of human feeling, relapsed again into sorrow, and then came the finale,—the whirlpool of passion, which seemed to engulf all human hope.

“Can this be played slowly?” cried the enthusiastic girl. “Can one bind one'sself, in such an inspiration as this, to cold rules of time? You might as well ask the wind to blow to the measured beat of the metronome, as attempt to curb this desperate measure.”

Wolfmaister was touched with the earnestness of Marie. With any other pupil he would have been irritable and

dictatorial, as he was very often with her; but at times her genius overpowered him, and although he could not understand her, nor hear in music all that she heard,—and even sometimes presumed to doubt the truth of this tone-tongue,—there were moments when her strong faith impressed him, and this was one of those moments. He shrugged his shoulders, with the true Parisian impertinent shrug, which says so much more than any saucy Anglo-Saxon word can express, saying: it was preposterous ever to reason with a woman, as she invariably made it a matter of feeling; then, all argument was at an end, and in this way men were always terribly imposed upon, as they had to give up, even unconvinced. He said all this with such a droll air of injured innocence, that we could not help laughing.

We then talked of Chopin, and his six months' knowledge of him; and he told us many charming stories. Among them was one De Lanz also tells.

“De Lanz and I were pupils of Chopin about the same time,” he said. “Meyerbeer, who was then working at his ‘Prophet,’ interrupted De Lanz one day, while taking his lesson. At Paris, the persons one wishes most to see are met with the least, therefore Chopin was delighted with the visit of the celebrated maestro. ‘Since I find you there,’ said Meyerbeer, pointing to the piano, ‘remain there for love of me.’ Chopin did so, and played some mazurkas. The one in Ut, Opus 33, No. 2, gave rise to some lively discussions between the two artists; Meyerbeer pretending that it was in 2-4 time, instead of 3. Chopin did all that he could to combat this opinion, for Moscheles had already told him that Meyerbeer had said this. He played and replayed the mazurka: it was the only time I ever saw his pale face kindle; a hectic flush lighted up his cheeks and eyes. Meyerbeer persisted. ‘Give me your mazurka,’ he said at last; ‘I will make a ballet of it, and put it in my opera; you will then see that it is in 2-4 time.’ And,”

added Wolfmaister, pedantically, "*adhuc sub judice lis est.*"

I made Wolfmaister tell me all he could remember of his intercourse with this poet-artist, "who consecrated his great talents to the glorification of noble sentiments in works of art."

"After our lessons," said Wolfmaister, "Chopin always played for us whatever music we had brought with us, of the great masters. I remember one day, De Lanz had with him Beethoven's sonate, in *Ut dieze mineur*, the one generally called 'The Moonlight Sonate.' The allegretto of this sonate, Liszt had been playing for De Lanz, and he asked Chopin to play it, in order to see the difference between the two. There is a suite of chords in it which Liszt bound together by his own peculiar style of fingering; when Chopin played it, he produced this tying together by the shades and softness of his own peculiar touch. De Lanz played it over after him, using Liszt's fingering. 'This fingering is not yours?' asked Chopin, in his little, agreeable voice. 'No, it is Liszt's,' answered De Lanz. 'Ah!' cried Chopin; '*vous voyez*. Liszt has ideas no one else would ever think of;' and he sat down to the piano, trying over the fingering, saying again and again, with the generous frankness of a true genius, 'This fingering of Liszt is perfect; I shall make use of it.'"

"Tell Fanny about little Filtsch," said Marie.

I had heard of him before, and read of him in De Lanz; but I was very well pleased to hear Wolfmaister's reminiscences, so I said nothing, but listened with interest.

"Little Filtsch was a young Hungarian," said Wolfmaister, "who had the most marvelous musical talent one can imagine. When he was ten years of age, he was sent to Paris by some rich patrons, to have his musical studies directed by Liszt and Chopin. They both grew very fond of him, and he made such rapid progress, as to excite the attention of the circle surrounding him. De Lanz and I

were sometimes allowed to be present during the lessons he gave to young Filtsch. One day we were there, when the child, accompanied by Chopin on a second piano, played his concerto, in *Mi mineur*. Chopin's eyes glittered with actual tears. The day was a glorious one for little Filtsch. After he finished the concerto, Madame Sand caught him up in her arms, and embraced him with rapture. Chopin said nothing of the gratification he felt, but simply invited them all to accompany him to Schlesinger's music-store. Chopin, you know, spoke very little; words seemed too heavy and inexpressive for his use, I suppose you æsthetical ladies would say; nor was he sociable, or apt to give invitations of this sort—therefore this one was quite an event. They all accompanied him mechanically, not knowing what to understand by it. Few words were exchanged, during the way up to the Rue Richelieu. When they reached Schlesinger's, Chopin asked for the *partition* of Fidelio, for the piano, and putting it into the hands of little Filtsch, said, with his sweet-toned voice, 'Take this, my child, as a souvenir of me; thou hast well merited it to-day.' The boy, who had not expected anything, and who had modestly thought himself already forgotten, was so surprised and pleased that he burst into tears."

"Poor child!" I said. "How soon after that did he die, Mr. Wolfmaister?"

"Not long, he was about fourteen when he died, poor little fellow! If he had lived, he would have been a most marvelous artist. Even Liszt said of him, one evening while listening to him, at a soirée of the Comtesse d'Agout,—as he played the 'Morceau' of the 'Lucia,'—'When that child travels, I shall shut up shop.' Chopin also interested himself particularly in him, and entertained the most sanguine hopes of his future."

"But Chopin interested himself in each one of his pupils," said Marie. "Just think, Fanny, what an invaluable master he must have been; he concerned himself as much about the

pursuits, occupations, and mental habits of a favorite *élève*, as about his music."

"Oh, yes," interrupted Wolfmaister, "he constantly bored me about my reading, which annoyed me excessively, for I never cared much for books. Then he would get very much irritated at me, because I did nothing but practice, and say, in his little, broken voice, 'It is quite useless, *mon ami*, to cultivate the fingers, when the mind lies barren.'"

Marie and Wolfmaister then recommenced their practicing. They played Mozart's sonata in Ut; and, after that, a romance of this composer, in Mi bémol, to which Marie directed my attention, as being the one De Lanz called "the ancestress of all the '*songs without words*'" of the present day, "the grandmother of all possible and impossible nocturnes." Then they played the *Symphonie Heroïque*, of Beethoven. After the last solemn chords of the "*Marche Funèbre*" died out, Marie said,—

"I do not like the story some writers tell of this symphony. They say that the '*Marche Funèbre*' was added to it by Beethoven, resentfully, after he heard that Napoleon had made himself Emperor of the French; that he regarded his republican hero as having gone down to the tomb, and therefore sang his requiem instead of his hymn of glory. I know Schindler says that the *Symphonie* was commenced in 1802, and not completed until 1804; but he also says it was finished and ready, even with the dedication, to be sent to Paris, when Beethoven heard the news; so, according to that, the *Marche* was already in it. Two years ago, when I was at Vienna,—where, you know, Henzler's orchestra plays these symphonies superbly,—I heard this *Symphonie Heroïque*, with all the grand orchestral effect, several times; and every time I listened, my own musical reason rebelled against such an erroneous idea. Both Schindler and De Lanz argue rightly. The *Marche Funèbre* is an integral part of the whole symphony, necessary to make it complete; indeed, intended from the beginning; for

a composition like this must be one great thought, not a piece of inlaid work, or mosaic. See, how grand and calm is the first movement! the thought of death shows itself even there; and the great tone-poet has given this poetical shadow to the entire composition; the knowledge of the inevitable law of humanity possesses it. There is in it the solemn mournfulness of tragic beauty, which is the loftiest point of art; the consciousness of the *fatum* of all human grandeur breathes through the whole symphony; and when we arrive at the *Marche Funèbre*, it is not a '*chant de deuil*,' but a grand martial hymn, bearing the hero, with pomp, to his mausoleum. The *Symphonie Heroïque*, without the *Marche Funèbre*, would, to my fancy, be imperfect—it would lose its high poetical merit."

I loved to listen to Marie, when she was in a *raptus*, like the present; but Wolfmaister sneered, and found technical faults, such as men are apt to find with a woman when she talks enthusiastically, and said she was rhapsodizing.

"Yes," I cried out, laughing, "now, Mr. Wolfmaister, you are like Madame Eperveil. I overheard her say, the other day, that 'Marie Merle rhapsodizes, and Mademoiselle Fauvette is her audience; and a pretty couple of fools they are, with their divine philosophy. It's all music and high art with them; just as if music and high art ever built a house, or kept it after it was built.'"

Wolfmaister and Marie joined in my laugh, and asked me if I had not been tempted to go into the salon, and give the old lady an æsthetical lecture.

"I had not the courage," I answered; "she puts me down effectually, with her cold, material words. I sat silent, and listened patiently to her attacks on us and our pursuits, feeling very sure she could not have done the same thing. She would have bounced in on any one, in a fury, had she overheard herself thus judged unjustly; so I comforted myself with talking *at* her, and said to my invisible opponent, Newman Nogg's fashion, 'Yes, Tante Octavie, "music and high

art," as you contemptuously say, not only beautify existence, but purify the disciple; the soul draws nourishment from them, and the intelligence develops.' Poor Tante Octavie! she fancies herself far beyond us, and yet she does not know the first word of real life philosophy."

"I must confess," said Wolfmaister, who felt this attack not a little,—for he often united with Madame Eperveil in ridiculing us; "I must confess, however, ladies,—much as I have studied music, and love it,—your æsthetical flights go quite beyond my comprehension; and many compositions that you elaborate over with your fine talking, seem very confused and muddled to me."

I felt tempted to frighten the saucy master out of his assumed courage, and pluck out Tante Octavie's feathers of sarcasm, which he was wearing so pertly, pretending to be angry; but I was prevented by Marie saying,—

"Yes, there is a divine language in some musical passages entirely untranslatable; it is the spirit, not the word, that speaks to the imagination. Directly one attempts to analyze these feelings, the words sound exaggerated to the uninitiated, and inefficient to the one who comprehends all that is conveyed by the sounds of this marvelous tone-language. *Par exemple*, there are many passages in Hoffmann, De Lantz, Berlioz, and many other writers on musical criticism,—even Beethoven's own conversations,—that sound what you would call incomprehensible. How often has Tante Octavie, and you also, Mr. Wolfmaister, exclaimed, 'What stuff!' over a passage in which the author, in the most conscientious and serious manner imaginable, was kindly endeavoring to convey to the mind of the reader, and the ear of the listener, an idea of the musical composition; and I could not attempt to defend the composition. Indeed, it seems there is no way of avoiding hyperbole, when one attempts to translate emotions, some expressions of music, into words."

I felt disposed to punish Wolfmaister, and determined he

should hear what I had to say also, so I continued: "Words are powerless in such explanations; and this shows that music is the only true language fit to express some emotions of the soul. Such is the inferiority of our mortal nature, that our words never express to others, nor to ourselves, that which we are feeling deeply. Let the warm tide of some noble feeling, some generous appreciation, some tender sympathy well up in our hearts, and we are speechless; or, if we attempt to speak, we utter only the same words and expressions we should use hourly, in the most insignificant conversations; the hot tears rush to our eyes, our pulses throb, our whole being palpitates; but we rest dumb. We can produce the physical cries of the animal, but we cannot—when experiencing some keen emotion of grief, or joy, or admiration of beauty, as seen in works of nature or art—attain, by words, the delicate, poetical feeling we wish to express. We cannot give the cry of the soul. A grand, generous emotion does not ask to be materially represented by words; these are too realistic, and give either an insignificant or false impression of that which is stirring within us. Only in music do we find the expression interpreted intelligibly."

Wolfmaister pursed up his lips, and elevated his eyebrows. Marie noticed it; and turning full on him, with mock solemnity, shook her pretty little forefinger playfully in his face, and said,—

"Renegade student of the great high-priest Chopin, remember the words of one of the worthy disciples of your great master: 'One arrives at art only by roads barred to the vulgar: by the road of prayer, of purity of heart; by confidence in the wisdom of the Eternal, and even in that which is incomprehensible.'"

Wolfmaister drew a long breath. "Phew!" he half whistled, in a low tone. "Incomprehensible!" and, turning to the piano, he played one of De Meyer's compositions, with admirable crispness and delicacy of touch; such scales, such

fiorituri! so clear, that the sunlight danced brightly through every part, saying, as he played: "Now, this is what I call music; there is no need here of any of your æsthetical, incomprehensible words, to explain it, 'making confusion worse confounded.'"

"Yes," said Marie to me, in a low voice, "that is simple enough, Heaven knows; that music can be put down in plain nouns and verbs, moods and tenses; that is all grammar rule, *horlogerie*; no need of any exercise of faith there."

"That's right, ladies," said Wolfmaister, good naturedly, while he modulated into an exquisitely graceful waltz, of his own composition; delicious to listen to, but giving no subject for thought; suggesting not one poetical idea, or spiritual experience. "Keep all your high flights to yourselves; for I assure you, just so soon as you get up into that fine æsthetical talking, it is incomprehensible to me—and I am glad it is. I think, with Madame Eperveil, that music and high art never built a house; and such music as you admire never makes the money to buy one. I am very glad I never was afflicted with such reveries; if I had been, I should have turned out another old Wehrstaedt. I should never have built my pretty little cottage, or had Clarens lots to sell to rich Russians and English, out of my music lessons at four Swiss francs an hour."

The man was right, so far as he was concerned; his reasoning was good, for him and his like; and we wasted no more of what he called our "æsthetics" on him.

CHAPTER XV.

NEW ARRIVALS.

MAY came, and with it Tante Octavie's great friends, the Landsnechts. Octave and Lord S. did not accompany them, as they had spent the latter part of the winter in Paris, but were to arrive in June. Octave was anxiously expected, for many reasons: Mr. Serin hoped he would conclude upon taking the head mastership; so did his family, especially his mother, who thought, if he would once settle himself at the institution, he would be out of temptation; and, to the temptations that surrounded him out in the gay world, she attributed all his faults. Clear sighted as she was about other things, her mother-feeling made her blind on this subject; she could not see that he was selfish and heartless; she believed him to be only thoughtless and indolent, and looked to a regular quiet life, and a marriage with Marie Merle, to make him all he should be.

The Merles wished to see Octave to ask him about poor, pretty Emilie Michel, who had left her home, in the Bas Valais, during the winter, saying she had received a fine offer from a grand *modiste* in Paris, which would make her fortune; and, despite the entreaties of her friends, had gone to Paris. Rumor, that noisy demon, said that she had been seen, by some Sallanches people visiting Paris, dressed very gayly, in a fine carriage, in the Bois de Bologne, with some dashing-looking men and women; that they had spoken to her, but that she had pretended not to know them, although she had colored very red, and showed much confusion. The poor misguided girl had not many near relatives: an old

grandmother, and a maiden aunt, with whom she lived, and Michel, the "*incomparable mari*," who was her uncle, were all. Michel, of course, gave himself no trouble about her; but poor Elise Michel! she remembered Emilie as her play-mate in childhood; to her this story caused great sorrow and bitter tears. Madame Michel was also distressed; but her gentle little step-daughter's affliction grieved her more than Emilie's misconduct. For Emilie she felt great contempt and anger; and when away from Elise, she expressed herself with much bitterness; she did not like to wound her daughter by saying before her what she said to us: "that she believed the worst of the worthless little minx." What wrath she displayed! She was like Rose Maylie's chaste maids; she evidently thought as they did, "that it's no use being proper in this world;" and when speaking of the probability of the story, she seemed to dwell on the report of Emilie's fine clothes and gay doings with a sort of resentful feeling, and indulged in short sayings as expressive as the one used by the Dianas above alluded to, "that brass can do better than the gold that has stood the fire." She had not passed through her forty years of spinsterhood to stand by and see such an outrage on feminine virtue and morality pass unscathed; and when we represented to her that poor pretty Emilie was as much to be pitied as condemned, she looked as horror-stricken as if we had also gone over to the immoral enemy. We could only appease her by telling her that if the story were true, Emilie's future was sure to be as wretched, and her punishment as severe, as the most grievous sin could merit; then she showed the greatest satisfaction, and looked as if she wished she could see that punishment meted out in its severest and fullest measure.

Our indignation was poured out on Octave, for we did believe that he had enticed the pretty, silly girl to Paris. Marie never spoke of it to me; but Tante Cecile and I indulged in as violent denunciations against him as did poor Madame Michel against Emilie.

The first part of June he came, accompanied by Lord S.; and, on the first opportunity Marie could get, she asked him frankly about Emilie. They parted in high anger; for Octave wounded Marie to the quick, by such sneers and impertinent assumptions of ignorance and astonishment, as only a man like Octave could employ to a frank, enthusiastic, guileless woman. Had Marie consulted me, I should have counseled her not to appeal to Octave; but she acted in accordance with the promptings of her innocent nature; she knew nothing of the cold, heartless, licentious feelings that filled his breast; she appealed to him as she would have done when a little girl, to coax a bird's nest from him, or to save a poor dog from cruel punishment, or an inoffending cat from drowning. And even when they parted in anger, only the tenth part of his real character beamed on her; she could not fully comprehend his hollow, polished wickedness.

Tante Cecile told me some of the details of the interview. Octave, she said, had striven to evade the charge by expressing a sneering surprise at a delicate, modest young woman's having anything to do with such matters, and still more at her selecting it as a subject of conversation with a gentleman. A woman more experienced than Marie would have been baffled and humiliated; but she was not; she told him there was but one manly, honest course for him to take: to say whether he had or had not anything to do with Emilie's going to Paris; and, whether he had or not, to assist them in reclaiming her. Then when, with a mocking laugh, he said he hoped he should not be made responsible for the peccadillos of all the pretty little milliner girls who chose to go up to Paris to seek their fortunes, and that he had fancied that she had more self-esteem than to feel jealous of such persons, she sternly bade him to cease talking in that style before her; and added, that until he could clear himself satisfactorily of the charge, she could not regard him as a friend, and hoped he would cease visiting at their house. Octave, bowing coolly, left the chateau, and com-

menced forthwith the most devoted attentions to Miss Landsnecht, who, in default of any other more available cavalier, was very willing to accept his devotion. He rode, drove, walked, played, and sang with her, took her boating—in fact, gave his whole time to her.

Miss Landsnecht was a tall, dressy young lady, in her second season. She was what is called in society a stylish *distinguée*-looking woman. She dressed in the height of the mode; her *crinolines* and flounces expanded in the most approved style; her bonnet was of the smallest possible size, and her head, by the aid of rolls, and bandeaux, and cushions, was of the largest possible dimensions. She had been educated for society, and lived for it; she was accomplished and elegant; was a linguist, an artist, a musician,—in short, was everything that society might require of a rich but *plébeian* Miss Landsnecht, who coveted a high-born titled man for a husband from society, in return for all the exertions and sacrifices she made. But as we had nothing to do with Miss Landsnecht, nor she with us, there is no need of wasting more words on her.

Before we leave poor Emilie, however, I may as well tell here all I know of her history, that the sad, disagreeable subject may be dismissed. We rarely heard of her with any certainty. Once in awhile reports would reach us of her reputed life in Paris, where she was said to be leading one of the fastest and most dissipated. It was told that she drove handsome horses, and could be seen at the opera and play as gay in jewels and costly laces as a duchess. Persons were employed to seek her out, but in vain; she eluded all inquiries, and none of us knew any direct way of approaching her. Then, in after years, came another story, of a poor miserable wretch, worn down with illness and poverty, being found dead in some den in Paris; and we had reason to believe that this poor creature was Emilie Michel; and when we heard it, we all solemnly prayed, with tears and fervent earnestness, that Octave Bouvreuil might not have

been held answerable for the wretched girl's ruin. She has no more to do with this recital; so good-by to pretty Emilie Michel.

Mr. Serin, like every one else, was disappointed in Mr. Octave. Madame Eperveil did not deign to allude to the subject of the head mastership; but it was announced that Octave would, with Lord S., accompany the Landsnechts to the Baths of Lucca, in August, and that the two gentlemen purposed spending the following winter in Naples; this, of course, proved that he had no intention of becoming head master of Institution Eperveil, for this year at least. So meek old Mr. Serin submitted to the disappointment with as good and patient a grace as possible.

Before the closing of the Institution in June, for the summer *congé*, Madame Eperveil always gave a grand soirée, which came off about three weeks before examination day, when the distribution of honors and grades to the students took place. This soirée was an announcement of the closing of the gayeties of the institution for the season, and was generally a very brilliant affair. After this soirée, the students "turned in," as Brown, an American boy, said, "and *polled* hard" for the examination, which never was a gay affair, but one of strict business. On the present occasion, Tante Octavie's measure of glory was to be filled to the brim, thrice pressed down, and running over; her first of June soirée was to be honored by not only the Landsnechts and Lord S., but a Baron and Baronne de W., who inhabited a neighboring chateau, which they had rented for the season. They were old Berlin acquaintances of Madame Eperveil, and the Baronne had known the Bouvreuils in their more prosperous days. The de W.'s had with them a great guest; and this guest was no less a personage than a real live prince, the Prince de P., who had graciously signified his intention of honoring the soirée with his presence. To be sure, the prince was a valet-made, not a God-made man; and looked like one of those simpering wax-

heads in a barber's window; still, he was a prince, and Tante Octavie knew very well the effect that would be produced by his appearance.

And now, the old lady condescended to express a desire that Mademoiselle Fauvette might be induced to sing at the soirée. Early in the winter, I had refused to sing at the *musicales* held in the hall, and had given so much offence to Madame Eperveil, by the refusal, that she would never listen to me when I sang at our more private *réunions*; and when I "took coffee" at her house, as the little family-parties were called, she steadily persisted in never asking me to sing. She considered my refusal the result of a silly affectation, and she made no secret of her opinion to others; while to me, her manner was plain enough, without words, to prove to me what she thought.

The afternoon of the soirée I met Mr. Wolfmaister at Marie's, and after they had finished their rehearsal of the pieces to be played in the evening, he mentioned Madame Eperveil's wish, and urged it by saying, how much singing would add to the interest of the soirée, as we so rarely had any.

"I cannot, indeed," I replied; "it is not pique, I assure you, neither is it an affectation of timidity. Singing is such a pure affair of feeling to me that I cannot sing in a crowd. I could as soon rise up before the assembled company and tell them my whole life-history, or fall on my knees and say my prayers before them."

"Ah," said Wolfmaister, shrugging his shoulders; "music is a terrible agony to you and Marie, with your sublime, poetical notions, or *æsthetical*, I believe you like to have them called. Your 'thirst after the infinite,' your 'inner revelations' and 'spiritual elevations' are quite awful. Thank God, I do not understand such refined miseries! my feeling for music is more practical and positive."

"That it is," cried Marie; "like bread and cheese, sauerkraut and lagerbier. Any one might know that, by the way

you play. Musicians like you, make me think of the line in holy writ, 'Many are called, but few are chosen.' But you know the maxim, *mon maître*, 'In art the great is not for all, and all are not for the great.'"

"Now, there is the presumption of the thing," he answered, with a good-natured laugh; "however, I will let you have it so. That being great in art is beggarly business, after all; if it is any comfort to you to have such greatness, pray take it—I want none of it. You should have known old Wehrstaedt, of Geneva—he was a musician of your *great* sort. What a droll fellow he was, to be sure!"

"Yes," interrupted Marie; "God bless his memory! I wish I had him here in your place. Fanny, Wehrstaedt was one of those who verily gave up all and followed his divine music."

"With his old hat on, *à la quakre*," said Wolfmaister, laughing, immoderately. "I took lessons for several years of the crazy old fellow, and I never once saw him, night or day, without that shocking old hat, nailed tight to his head."

"Oh!" I exclaimed; "is it the odd genius De Lanz speaks of?"

"The very one," said Marie; "just think, this heathen had the priceless blessing of his lessons, and dares to laugh at him."

"And is all true De Lanz says of him?"

"True as gospel," replied Marie.

"I give you my word," said Wolfmaister, his voice hoarse with the laughter which the recollection of the quaint old maestro had caused, and tears of merriment actually rolling down his cheeks, "he knew only five things: three Exercises of Cramér, a Sonate of Weber, and the last Variation in the Grand Sonate of Beethoven. Whenever I would find him alone, he would be sitting at his old piano, his wretched hat nailed tight to his head, and he, gazing into vacancy with his pale-blue eyes, playing this,"—and Wolf-

maister played over the last Variation in the Grand Sonate in La bémol.

"Mr. Wolfmaister," I asked, "have you ever read De Lanz's account of this eccentric artist?"

"He!—no!" cried Marie, impetuously; "did you ever know a man, who talks as he does, ever read anything beyond the business part of a newspaper? If I could know of his reading a book on musical criticism or musical history, I should have some hope of meeting him hereafter in my musical heaven, where Wehrstaedt, I am sure, will be found as one of those meek spirits

'Who inherit, instead of motive powers,
Impulsions God supplied;
Instead of vital spirit,
A clear informing beauty;
Instead of creature duty,
Submission calm as rest.'

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried Wolfmaister, with well-affected agony, snatching up his music and hat; "you are getting decidedly too transcendental for me. I sincerely hope, Marie, you will descend from your aerial heights in time for our opening duo this evening." And he rushed out of the room, muttering, in a voice of feigned suffering: "Mon Dieu! just think of quoting poetry about old Wehrstaedt, and making an angel and all that out of him! Ciel! and this is the insanity to which their æsthetics bring them! Gare! gare! au secours!"

We laughed heartily at his flight, and also at the punishment we had inflicted on him, for playing off on us Tante Octavie's harsh, rude opinions; for although we firmly believed and felt all we said about music, but for his pert repetitions of her unamiable speeches, we should not have expressed ourselves so enthusiastically.

I sat for a little while with Marie, listening to her reading over some music Hofer had sent that day for her to

examine; then we both went into the little tower room, and watched from the window the beautiful sunset; and leaned over the "Francesca di Rimini and Paolo," across which were passing soft, golden lights, thrown down from the armorial bearings which the lunette of the window held, and flecks of brilliant color faded, and brightened and faded again. Poor Marie! though she talked cheerfully, she looked worn and unhappy. Her late difference with Octave had grieved her very much; his conduct showed such true meanness of character. So strange it is, that we may know people for almost a lifetime, giving them credit for points of character which some sudden flash of light near the end shows us were not inherent, but only the effect of an outward coating of good breeding, or the still more powerful influence of custom or social opinion. Marie had always considered Octave unreliable and weak, when exposed to temptation; but that he should be so really heartless and wickedly selfish, in the indulgence of his passions, as to ruin a young, ignorant girl, was a sad revelation to her. Then, when she showed her disgust and sorrow at such conduct, to have him treat as low, vulgar jealousy what was a high-toned feeling of wounded love and generous sorrow for the disgrace of one who, though beneath her in the social scale, still was a sister woman, and thereby entitled to her aid and sympathy,—all this made him fall lower and more hopelessly in her opinion. She never noticed his attentions to Miss Landsnecht; and when, by chance, we met them in society or our walks, not a look betrayed whatever she might be suffering; she said nothing of the affair to Tante Cecile nor me; but there was a sharpness in the tone of her voice, sometimes an irritability and impatience, and restless, quick movements in domestic life, which proved that she did suffer.

Tante Cecile called us to *gouter*, and, after drinking a cup of her fragrant black tea, whose odor was as fresh as *réséda*, and eating enormously of a magnificent *gâteau*, of

the usual immense Peilz size, and listening to Mr. Merle reading bits out of yesterday's *Journal des Débats*, I rose to go home to dress for the great soirée. Marie walked through the court-yard with me. Michel and his wife were there, arranging the lettuce and fine vegetables for the next morning market at V.; the garden fruit looked very pretty, grouped together with the good natural taste of Madame Michel and her "*incomparable mari*." It would have made a beautiful subject for a Flemish artist; the high court-yard walls, with the ruined chapel-window, draped

"with many a gay festoon
And fragrant chaplet, recompensing well
The strength they borrow with the grace they lend."

Then the court-yard and old fountain, and the *paysan*, with his tall, slim wife, in her scrupulously neat dress, and snowy, fluted bordered cap—the simplest and prettiest head-dress of all the European *paysannes*; she, occupied in washing the fine heads of lettuce, and he, arranging them with taste and care in the long, shallow baskets, thinking undoubtedly with pride of the good effect they would produce the following morning in the justly celebrated market of V. Then the surrounding accessions of flower-beds, filled with gay, flaunting tulips and hyacinths, and the stands of pot plants scattered about, made of the place as pretty a subject of that *genre* as an artist might wish. Madame Michel told us that Tante Octavie had ordered some fine bouquets for her supper table, and invited us into the house to see them. Elise was hard at work over a brilliant basketful.

"Why, what is the reason of this?" I asked. "I thought Madame Eperveil had enough flowers of her own."

"Voilà, mademoiselle! Henri, her gardener, wishes to have the conservatories lighted for the evening, and some of the tallest plants are to be put in flat pyramidal stands in the large windows of the grand salle; so Madame Eperveil, by that arrangement, needed at least a dozen more bouquets.

Henri came to Michel for them, and we have had to cut all our flowers and Légère's, too, at Montrueux. Poor Michel is tired out with his hunt after them; and coming on market eve makes it so much harder for him, *pauvre enfant!* he is so kind, he does not mind trouble for others; c'est impossible de dire, mademoiselle, toute la bonté de cet homme!"

"How fine Tante Octavie's rooms are going to be!" said Marie, laughing.

Just at that moment the outer door opened, and a smart footman entered, and asked for the bouquet Mr. Octave Bouvreuil had ordered for Miss Landsnecht. A superb one, filled with the choicest flowers, was handed to him, and he left.

"*Maman!*" said the pretty, kind Elise, "in that basket by you are the bouquets for Mesdemoiselles Marie, Fauvette, and Bouvreuil. I made them first, mesdemoiselles, and they have in them the very prettiest flowers."

The good girl had undoubtedly felt incensed at Octave's neglect of us, and particularly of Marie, whom she dearly loved, and had showed it in this *naïve*, kind way. We thanked her heartily for her courtesy; and I hurried off with my two bouquets, and some gay flowers for my hair, having stayed already too long for the good of my evening toilette. I found Hélène and her mother quite ready, sitting with Kinnaird under the Marron d'Inde, on the bridge walk; Hélène, beautiful as an angel,

"In her virginal white vesture gathered closely to her throat."

I hastened up to my room, and found Dora in a fidget of uneasiness, with all my "*fineries*" spread out on the table and bed. As we had all agreed to go in simple, white gowns, and my hair needed no fresh dressing, except to arrange in it Elise Michel's starry, white jessamine and brilliant scarlet sage, my Creole robe was quickly adjusted to Dora's perfect satisfaction, and we were *en route* in ample time.

CHAPTER XVI.

SOIRÉE AT TANTE OCTAVIE'S.

WE reached the gate of Institution Eperveil just as Marie Merle, with Tante Cecile and Mr. Merle, came up. Kinnaird and Professor Bouvreuil were our cavaliers, as Octave was with the Landsnechts, where he and Lord S. had been dining. Tante Cecile walked with me through the hall and conservatories, admiring the arrangements, for we were an hour too soon. We talked, very naturally, about Octave.

"Madame Bouvreuil has been remonstrating with Madame Eperveil, about Octave's going to Italy," I said. "She told me yesterday she intended to."

"Yes," replied Tante Cecile, "I was in the garden at the time; we were taking a cup of coffee together, and I heard the most of the conversation. I fancy I understood more of Tante Octavie's reply than Madame Bouvreuil did, and I should not be surprised if she meant it for Marie and me. Octave had, undoubtedly, given his aunt his own version of poor Emilie's story."

"What did Madame Eperveil say?"

"Madame Bouvreuil begged Tante Octavie to use her authority, or at least influence, to induce Octave to take Mr. Serin's position, and remain settled at home, saying that she feared the roving life he led would injure his habits. Madame Eperveil replied, very coolly, that she and Octave perfectly understood each other. The kind of life he led was agreeable to them both; she did not care about his set-

ting at Eperveil just now; when he should be thirty-five, would be time enough. As to his habits, they were those of a gentleman; she had perfect confidence in him. There might be some little freedoms about him, such as all young gentlemen once in awhile indulged in; but she thought a modest, delicate silence would be more proper about them; that they would be of no consequence, if not made so by scandalmongers. No young man's life, out in the world, could bear the magnifying glass of stiff, starched prudes."

"Well," I said, indignantly, "if Octave ever goes to the bears, as the naughty children did who cried 'bald head' after Elisha, I shall not care one fig for all that Tante Octavie may suffer."

"I think only of the suffering he has already caused," replied the dear old lady, as she drew a long sigh; "one disappointment, such as Marie has had in him, shakes faith in humanity terribly. It is sad to see a young heart so early filled with bitter hopelessness and suspicion."

I looked into her sweet, gentle face, and wondered what old romance of her youth had been revived by her niece's trouble. An hour passed; and all the other guests were assembled, before Tante Octavie and the grand quality friends descended to the hall. I have already mentioned, that Madame Eperveil liked to receive those guests to whom she wished to show favor, in her own salon; I had been honored in that way,—only once, however. Accordingly, on this occasion, the Prince de P., Baron and Baronne de W., and the Landsnechts, were waited for in solemn, solitary state, by our Peilz empress. They kept her waiting until ten o'clock, although the invitation cards had the usual request,—

"Madame Eperveil begs her guests not to be later than eight o'clock, as at that hour the music will commence."

How often we had heard Tante Octavie talk severely about the want of breeding shown, by being only ten minutes too late in an engagement, or at a soirée!

"Better send a regret at once," she would say, "than be guilty of the gross vulgarity of keeping a company waiting for you."

"But 'circumstances alter cases,' and rank alters the rules of good breeding, I suppose," said Marie, while we were commenting rather freely on the tardy guests.

Wolfmaister looked grave; he was a thorough aristocrat, and Marie's Swiss republican notions always shocked his ideas of propriety and good taste. He affected not to hear her, pulled down his white vest,—which, from its *accès of amidon*, seemed disposed to have an individuality,—and then flew to the music-stand, and busied himself in sorting over the already well-arranged music. Marie, Wolfmaister, and I were on the platform; Professor, Madame, and Hélène Bouvreuil were receiving and entertaining the guests, which they always did in the absence of Madame Eperveil; and Tante Cecile, Mr. Merle, and Kinnaird were assisting them.

The hall was arranged beautifully; the windows were filled with Henri's finest, tallest plants; the benches had been removed, and sofas and chairs were grouped together in different parts of the large hall, around tables, on which were baskets, or bouquets of flowers,—giving the place the appearance of a grand reception or drawing room. By doing this, Tante Octavie had avoided the necessity of giving her grandee friends reserved places, which would have been very repugnant to the republican feelings of her other guests.

"What excellent taste Tante Octavie has shown!" I said to Marie, on noticing this.

"Has she not?" replied Marie; "and how well the hall looks! no stiffness, and but for this arrangement, the presence of these strangers would have thrown a little *gêne* over the people. The conservatories being lighted up is another happy idea; it gives the company a chance to move about and feel independent. Tante Octavie's friends will be doubly obliged to her for this pleasant evening; she has

given them a chance to stare at great people, which, republicans as we are, we like immensely, and at the same time be able to meet them on an equal footing." The institution clock struck ten. "It is really too provoking!" continued Marie, "for them to be so late; we shall have to leave out some of our pieces, or keep up the soirée until the early hours."

A bustle and a buzz were heard; the large doors of the hall were thrown open for the accommodation of the distinguished guests, who entered, with Tante Octavie at their head, leaning on the arm of the Prince de P. She seated her friends; then, after presenting her brother and his family, and Mr. Merle and Tante Cecile, with some others who stood near, she left them, and—taking her nephew's arm—went graciously around to welcome her other guests. How handsomely the old lady looked! She was dressed in perfect taste. She wore a rich, dark-blue silk robe, with costly black thread flounces, and *berthe*; her arms and neck, which were still very fine, were only shaded by a superb lace scarf, of the same web and pattern as the dress lace. Her beautiful, rich blonde hair had its heavy bandeaux and braids ornamented (not hidden) by a black thread lace *barbe*, without ribbons or flowers, and fastened only by two diamond star pins. She moved about in a gracious, stately way, and looked like an empress, receiving her court. Much as I fancied, I disliked Tante Octavie; and surely I had every reason to; there was a nameless fascination in her appearance that always attracted me. I loved to look at her when she was *en grande toilette*, she made such a superb Rubens picture. The first sound of her voice, however, always dispelled this fascination; its dictatorial tone and overbearing insolence were insupportable to me, and I grew rude and unnatural on the instant. She made both Marie and me *brusque* and contradictory, as Madame Bouvreuil said; we were never ourselves in Tante Octavie's presence.

Octave, after a few words from his aunt, left her, and

walked, with graceful *nonchalance*, up the hall to the platform or stage; and young Lord S. left the Landsnecht party and joined him. As Octave walked toward us, I could not help observing how very distinguished looking he was; like his aunt, he was perfectly satisfied with himself and all his surroundings; the world went well with him, and he was content; every selfish feeling was gratified; and he also knew that he was making a woman, who loved him fondly, miserable—which pleased and tickled his vanity amazingly. I think I never drew the distinction between egotism and selfishness, until I knew Octave Bouvreuil and his aunt. He was cold, and too indifferent to disturb his personal comfort in order to gratify any one; then, if he committed an injustice toward another, he never acknowledged it, and never felt regret, but dismissed it from his thoughts as a disagreeable subject; and even disliked the one he had wronged, if the affair caused him any annoyance. Such characters are surely hopeless. But his aunt—though unlovely and unamiable—had more in her; her egotism arose from her imperious, overbearing disposition; and when her injustice caused her to wrong another, though her pride forbade an acknowledgment of the injury, you always felt sure she suffered even more than the one she oppressed, for her nature was naturally grand and noble. There was a warm life-pulse beating under her husk of egotism; but nothing ever showed the existence of even a spark, in the dry ashes of her nephew's selfish heart.

They ascended the platform steps, and Lord S. was presented, in a cool, wholesale manner, to the "artists," by Octave. This Lord S. was a pale, washed-out-looking young man, and seemed as if his name should be "Lord Verisopht." He wore an eye-glass, stuck in his right eye, and the exertions he made to keep it there gave a rigidity to his face as absurd as it was painful to look at. He seemed to be about two-and-twenty, was making desperate attempts at raising an excessively blonde mustache

and *favoris*, and the only things in the world he seemed to think of, were his eye-glass, shirt collar, and cravat. The presence of a real, royal prince appeared to stagger him a little; and I rather think it was this stunning thing which drove him among the "artists." I do not remember his saying a word during the whole evening, except some gasping "Oh!" or "Aw!" when he would snatch convulsively his tumbling, refractory eye-glass, or settle his head and neck carefully around in his precious collar. Once or twice he frightened me half out of my wits, for I thought he was strangling; and more than once Marie suggested the propriety of our helping him out of his toilet difficulties.

"Madame Eperveil thinks," said Octave, talking to all of us, and thus coolly avoiding the necessity of addressing Marie, "that we had better begin with the Beethoven trio, and leave out the opening duo and quartette altogether."

Marie quietly removed her music from the piano. Wolfmaister looked a little dashed; but his reverence for authority, and his happiness at having the chance of playing some time during the evening, before such distinguished individuals, reconciled him in some measure to giving up the duo. Marie moved away from the north piano, and beckoned to Wolfmaister to take her place.

"This piano," she said, "is better for the trio accompaniment than the other; it is more singing, and the action more easy."

"But shall you not play the piano part of this trio?" asked Wolfmaister, almost bursting in his attempt at generosity.

"Certainly not," answered Marie quietly; "do you not see, by this new arrangement, that my fantasie and sonate comes next, and our other duo just after? I should be too fatigued."

Octave bit his lip with vexation, for he was to play the violin part, and he detested Wolfmaister's piano accompaniments. Formerly, Marie would have remembered this; but

she was growing hard and indifferent to his likes or dislikes. I felt glad to see it, until the thought flashed across me—as I saw his mouth settle into a gratified smile, and his beautiful head toss with a saucy jerk—that his vanity was attributing her indifference to pique, and a contemptible desire to vex and annoy him. How I wished to be a fairy, that I might transform myself into a little bee, and give him a sharp, stinging bite! for physical punishments are the only kind such selfish, obtuse natures can feel.

The trio was the beautiful Ghost Trio I had heard Heinrich Henzler play, the past winter; but how differently it sounded! Octave's part was executed well, for sometimes he played more like an artist than an amateur; but he was not capable of understanding the poem which the composition contained, therefore he could not give it its true expression. Then Gardner—who, like Lord S., was stunned with the presence of royalty—jerked his violoncello part, making it sound, at times, as if “all the breath had,” as he expressed it, “*clean gone* out of the instrument;” and Wolfmaister played in his usual cold, orthodox style—“traditional,” as Marie said. Octave knew that it had not gone off well; he was thoroughly vexed; and as soon as it was finished, he left the platform, without deigning to give a word to any of us.

Then Marie placed herself at the piano, and played Mozart's *Fantasie and Sonate, in Do*. The adagio of this sonate is expressive of the quiet, dignified sorrow of a heart suffering from neglect, but never fearing desertion; indeed, the whole passage expresses, dramatically, deep grief,—but not passionately; for hope lives, even through the solemn wailing. But when it reaches the allegro, then the despair first breaks forth. This allegro is in 3-4 time, *Do mineur*, and is full of dramatic points; it lasts but three or four minutes, and is like the heart-break attendant on a lost hope,—the expression of a first, bitter instant, when the unworthiness of, and eternal separation from, one dearly loved

and trusted in, first breaks on the mind. This passage just suited Marie's declamatory moods, and she always reminded me of some great lyric actress, giving a scene from high tragedy.

“She plays that adagio entirely too fast,” grumbled out Wolfmaister, as deafening applause rang through the hall. “*Mon Dieu!* just think of three hundred and odd measures fired off in about three minutes!”

“No one but you,” said Marie, with *brusque* irritation, “would think of timing such a passage as that. I cannot play it slower; the working up of the composition brings me to it; I need just such a fierce rapidity to make the expression complete.”

A flutter and bustle around the other piano announced the preparation being made for a new *executante*. Miss Landsnecht came up the platform steps, leaning on Octave's arm; looking, in her exaggerated *crinolines* and flounces, like an inverted pen-wiper, or allumette holder. She murmured out, in execrable French, and voice

“Low with fashion, not with feeling freighted,”

the timidity she felt at playing before such “immensely clever artists;” but nothing about her showed that she felt any such becoming modesty; and after she had ungloved, and unringed, and unbraceleted,—making more preparations than a Clara Schumann would have needed for the execution of one of her gifted husband's most difficult compositions,—she broke out into a noisy, boisterous piece, “all sound and fury, signifying nothing;” a chaos of chords and scales, pelting rains of octaves, stormy chromatics, but not one attempt at chiar'-oscuro, or expression; it was a sort of tight-rope, or circus riding performance, with bangs in the base, and twitters in the treble, and a furious pursuit of octaves, without one single thought or feeling suggested. Marie and I had withdrawn from the scene of action during the heroine's preparation for combat, and we had joined Madame Bouv-

reuil, who was sitting with Tante Cecile, at one of the tables, near our end of the platform.

"Now Wolfmaister will praise that girl's execrable noise; see if he does not," said Marie.

"And all the world will say you and Fanny are envious," answered Madame Bouvreuil, with a laugh. "Pray go to her, and try to say something civil."

I declined doing so, saying it would be presumptuous in me, as I was not an artist; and Marie exclaimed,—

"Never! Music is to me what faith was to the old martyrs—I cannot lie about it. Now, pray look at Wolfmaister. Oh, mon maitre, mon maitre! Indeed, he makes me nervous. Just see how he bustles around her, and rubs his long-fingered hands together, and throws up his eyes, as if he really believed all the fibs he is telling!"

Miss Landsnecht had finished her grand thundering piece; and while she was going through the ceremony of regloving, etc., she was receiving Wolfmaister's praise, Tante Octavie's gracious thanks, and Octave's most winning whispers, with a bold attempt at shyness and humility.

The next piece on the programme was Mozart's sonate, in Do, for four hands, which was executed by Marie and Wolfmaister. The andante is cold and classic, and has been compared to a piece of antique sculpture; so the two went on well enough together; but when they reached the joyous, laughing rondo, they did not do so well, for Wolfmaister never worked it up enough to please Marie. After it was over, she rose from the piano with tingling cheeks.

"He is so stupid, so dull!" she whispered to me. "I only wish I could have got the pedal in time, I would have made him move faster; but he was cunning; he had his long foot on it before I thought of securing it. How it is that musicians can have heads and hands, and no souls, is a mystery to me. Wolfmaister never uses his judgment, but binds himself to written rules; just as if music can be put upon paper in such a way as to express all that one means. The

executant must read with his heart, with his imagination, as well as with his eyes."

"Seeé," I said, a few moments after, "the Prince de P. is honoring Miss Landsnecht, and Mr. Octave's occupation's gone—he is coming to us."

Marie turned to the piano, and commenced preluding softly, in order to be occupied when Octave approached the piano. He addressed himself to me. A few platitudes passed between us, about the beauty of the flowers, the fine arrangement of the hall, how well the soirée was passing off, etc. etc.

"*Klavier Werke, von Mozart,*" repeated Octave, mechanically, as he turned the leaves of Wolfmaister's precious Haslinger edition. When he reached the sonate, in Si bémol, he said, with that cool self-possession he could so well command, "Marie, let us shock Wolfmaister, and mystify these people, by making a baritone solo of this andantino, as we did last summer."

He placed the book before her, and, finding his key-note himself,—without waiting for the accompaniment to begin,—his rich baritone voice poured out this melody, so closely associated with the loving memories of their past; and it sounded as smooth as the note of a horn on the lake by moonlight. But Wolfmaister was not shocked, as he used to be, for Tante Octavie and the grand guests were pleased; and when the Prince de P. condescended to cry "*Brava*" and "*Bene*," and even applaud almost hard enough to burst his gloves, the accommodating music master shuffled about, in his animated rapture, and, pitching his voice in its sharpest full-dress key, declared, "It was really very pretty; Mr. Octave was so very clever."

Miss Landsnecht came up to the piano, leaning on the Prince de P.'s arm, swaying to and fro, to thank Mr. Octave for that "*delishoes morsow*," saying, "She was sure she had heard Mario sing it the last season in London. Pray, what was it?"

"An *andantino*, from the finale of *Il Sonati*," answered Marie, looking Miss Landsnecht full in the face.

We, who knew what the passage was, were struck dumb with Marie's saucy *aplomb*.

"Ah!" continued Miss Landsnecht, affectedly humming something she intended to sound like it. "I knew I was right. I really have the most marvelous memory and ear; they never deceive me."

The prince wagged his head up and down, like a Chinese mandarin, and simpered out some flat compliment.

"Oh, Mr. Octave!" said Miss Landsnecht, "you should hear that love of a Mario sing it; he is divine!" and she threw up her large blue eyes, with an expression that she evidently thought might resemble a St. Cecilia.

"Probably you sing something from the same opera?" asked Marie, in a cool, saucy tone.

This was almost too much for my self-control to bear; and while Miss Landsnecht was fluttering every flounce, and flower, and steel spring about her, at the bare proposition of singing before such a crowd, and the prince was disturbing the expression of his face in his gasping attempts at persuasion, I leaned over Marie, as if to fasten up the shell and coral caul which held her thick knot of brown hair, and whispered, "Marie, you wicked child! *veux tu te taire?* For Heaven's sake, play something. Suppose the girl should sing, we should disgrace ourselves by laughing, and gain Tante Octavie's everlasting enmity."

Marie's little hands fell sharply on the piano, and struck some brilliant chords, breaking right in the midst of some flat speech of Miss Landsnecht to Octave, and startled the poor prince to such a degree, that he was nearly knocked off his feet; then she rolled away grandly into Liszt's magnificent "*Marche Hongroise*," No. 1, in which can be heard the tramping of horses, the ringing of sabers in their scabbards, and the rich coloring of the music suggests superbly caparisoned steeds, and jeweled sword hilts, and the gorgeous Sclavic costumes of the cavaliers.

The company, soon after, bade adieu to Madame Epervail, who was so filled with satisfaction at the success of her soirée, and the excellent good opinion she felt of herself and all belonging to her, that she received us, when we came to say good-by to her, with the most winning suavity. She even insisted upon our taking some supper with her; for although supper had been served during the evening at various times, we, like Madame Epervail, had been too much occupied to take any. Tante Octavie was very hospitable at all times, but particularly gracious this evening, and we all seemed to forget our old causes of discontent against each other; she even offered me her arm, and made me accompany her into the supper-room, where we all enjoyed, with cheerfulness, the very elegant entertainment spread out before us. It was, indeed, what Marie called the "early hours," when we bade Tante Octavie a hearty good night, for the hands of the old clock of Peilz pointed to three, as the beams of the morning moon shone on its dial-plate. We parted with merry good nights, and with snatches of song, and playful bursts of laughter; but many, many times in the coming year, did we recall that first of June soirée at Tante Octavie's.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DISMISSAL.

AFTER a few weeks, the elder members of the Landsnecht family, with Lord S. and Octave, left Peilz for their summer's gay journeying; intending to visit various famous baths during the season. Before they left, Mr. and Mrs. Landsnecht expressed their great pleasure and satisfaction with Hélène's management of the children, and made her an offer of a large salary if she would go to England with them in the autumn as governess. To Madame Eperveil's surprise, the offer was refused, without an instant's hesitation, by both parents and daughter. She said but little at the time; but during the summer, she returned to the subject so often, and with such management, that we all observed that both Madame Bouvreuil and Hélène regarded the proposition more favorably. They both looked very sad, and clung to each other with redoubled tenderness.

Madame Eperveil represented to them that she and Octave had been forced to have various heavy expenses for outside purposes of the institution; that Octave did not scruple to fulfill the duties of tutor, in order to earn a good salary; she thought it was a pity Hélène should not feel the same interest in the family welfare. All this she threw out in various forms during the summer. No one replied that as Octave and Madame Eperveil were the ones who would be likely to reap the most benefit from the institution, they were the ones who should do the most for it; no one asked what outside expenses Octave had; the whole ground was left

open for Madame Eperveil to expatiate plausibly on the above text.

The first of September, the Landsnechts returned, and urged more earnestly on Hélène their proposition, and she requested to have a little time to consider, before giving a positive refusal. This surprised me; and I expressed my astonishment one evening to Tante Cecile, as we were walking together alone on the road from Hauteville. Marie had left us to accompany Dora on a hunt after the seed-tuft of the wild clematis, the feathery beauty which tempted them to clamber up quite a rugged vineyard bank.

"Well, Octave spends a great deal of money," said Tante Cecile; "and Madame Eperveil's style of living has been very costly the past year or so—this naturally hampers them very much."

"But that is no reason why Hélène should go away from home," I answered; "and, moreover, why should Octave spend so much money if it interferes with the comfort of his family?"

"Oh, Madame Eperveil says his expenses are necessarily large, in order to give a reputation to the institution; that he is making himself extensively known, and thus improving the future of the school."

"How absurd!" I replied; "surely Madame Eperveil has too much good sense to believe all this."

"Of course," answered Tante Cecile; "but do you not see? She says all this to hide the truth. If she were to acknowledge Octave's extravagances, or throw a shadow of blame on him, she has sense enough to know that it would reflect on her. He has played on her weakness for show and ostentation, for the society of the rich and titled, and I fancy she is beginning to see this; but she will not admit her error; and, moreover, she is so blindly fond of Octave, that she dreads looking upon the truth in regard to him."

Madame Eperveil did indeed show, by her testy manners and careworn face, that she was annoyed about something.

In this volcanic state of the domestic atmosphere, Mr. Serin very injudiciously made a proposition to her, which threw her into a furious rage, and altered the whole family arrangements. He again proposed leaving her; suggesting, very modestly, that Mr. Kinnaird Graham should take his place until Mr. Octave should be ready. Now, I always fancied that Madame Eperveil regarded Kinnaird as a sort of rival of Octave; she was never gracious to him, and never treated him as anything beyond a common tutor, although his acquirements, his abilities, and calm, dignified manners, gave him a high position in the school. He had, moreover, written some *feuilletons*, on scientific subjects, for the Parisian journals, which had excited favorable attention, and procured for him valuable acquaintances, of much more worth than all Octave's titled friends. Madame Eperveil knew this, and every step Kinnaird made in advance seemed, to this unjust and unreasonable woman, an attack upon Octave. To have him, then, proposed as head master of Eperveil, was a rude shock to her.

On the same evening, while she was full of gall and bitterness, Madame Bouvreuil and I being out walking, concluded to call in and take coffee with her; unfortunately, Tante Cecile and Marie were also there. Madame Eperveil was talking of Mr. Serin's proposition, in a cold, sneering tone, as if it were something very ridiculous and absurd. To our surprise, Madame Bouvreuil replied, quietly, that she saw nothing absurd in it; Kinnaird was quite as well fitted as Octave for such a place.

"I have heard my father say," said Marie, "that Kinnaird's reputation is a very enviable one for so a young a man; his articles in the *Journal des Débats* command a great deal of attention; and already they have procured for him, as we know, the friendship of the celebrated L., whose works on Egypt we admire so much."

They were as injudicious as Mr. Serin; but her gross injustice, and their liking for Kinnaird, made them forget their

usual prudence and tact. Madame Eperveil sat, stupefied with rage. At last she rose, and rang the bell for her maid; after giving some trifling directions, she said, in a quiet voice of suppressed rage, as she returned to her seat,—

"I am very glad to hear all this which you have been telling me about Mr. Graham, as it renders it easier for me to do what I have been wishing to do for some time. Mr. Graham is a most useless person to me, and always has been. I have only retained him out of regard to his friendless position, or at least what I thought friendless. As he has such powerful friends and excellent abilities, he had better be employed by the one, and make use of the other. In Institution Eperveil he is not needed; and I shall see that he is speedily placed, so that he can employ, to his own advantage, these influential acquaintances and shining talents."

Nothing more was said on the subject, and soon after we all rose to take our leave. A hanging, porcelain lamp, which swayed to and fro in the door leading from the salon into a little adjoining conservatory, was the only light in the room; but it was a moonlight night, and the silver rays streamed in between the vines of the balcony, and fell placidly down, on the inlaid floor, at Madame Eperveil's feet. She only half rose to say good night; and, as I leaned down to take her hand, I saw that her face was deadly pale, and the touch of the tips of her fingers, which was all she deigned to give me, threw a chill over me, they were so very cold.

Naughty, imperious Tante Octavie! She was in such a state of white heat, that I could not help feeling an indefinable dread of some ugly thing she would do by way of venting her spite; and it came in this shape: Kinnaird Graham was dismissed without any warning. One morning, soon after the little ill-advised scene with Tante Octavie, when Kinnaird went to the college, as usual, to meet his English class, he found no scholars waiting for him, and, on

his desk, a cold note from Madame Eperveil, telling him that his services were not needed any longer in the institution.

Marie Merle and I, with Dora and Beau, had started off early that morning to spend the day in the Hauteville woods; Hélène was to join us in the afternoon. I remember the day well; it was a sweet, soft day, in the early part of September. An ocean of golden light seemed to fill the heavens; the mountain-sides were green; the vines hanging heavy with luscious fruit; the woods rich in foliage, and the Jura horizon misty and wavy, where one could lose sight at times of the mountain outline, in a vague, dreamy indistinctness; all objects united to make a harmony full of calm and grandeur, and my soul felt deeply the influence.

After rambling about all the morning, down to the deserted farm, along the shady borders of the quiet, solitary stream, that breaks away from the mountains, to dwell for a little while in this lovely spot, at noon we clambered up to the group of rustic seats on our favorite hill, and ate, with good appetite and pleasant talk, the nice cold dinner Dora had brought in the basket for us. Ham sandwiches and cold chicken, a bottle of red wine, some delicious Montroux strawberries, and a few bunches of early-ripened grapes, made quite an attractive feast for us. We were very happy, though each one of us had one solitary chamber in our hearts, in which lay the skeleton, and over which we had quietly drawn the solemn, black drapery of silence. Yes; even my loving, faithful Darmstadt girl, with her good bright laugh and merry ways, had her secret of sorrow. Indeed, I think some of us never learn to laugh generously until after we have sorrowed sorely.

During dinner, Dora told us of a beautiful view she had seen in some part of the estate where we had never been; and Marie, after dinner, insisted upon going there, very certain we could not show her any new place; and yet, she could not recognize it from Dora's description, which, it must be confessed, was not very graphic, and would have done as

well for one pretty point of a landscape as another. I felt languid, and not at all in an exploring mood; so I made Dora give me my writing-box from the basket, and concluded to "write letters." This "writing of letters" was my usual excuse when I wanted to work upon my novel; and it had grown so common a one as to make Hélène and Kinnaird smile quietly, and provoke Marie's raillery, whenever I used it; for, like all amateur authors, I was excessively shy about my poor novel.

After they left me, a little time was spent in making Beau comfortable; for he would not go with them, a sudden *accès* of affection for me having seized him, which I was fool enough to believe in, as usual, until I discovered, after they left, that he had stayed to keep guard over a piece of chicken in the basket; so I gave it to him, after making him look as serious as an owl at it for some time, and do a variety of cunning tricks. Then I unlocked my MS. book, unscrewed my inkstand, shifted my pen-holder, leaned back against the tree, looked down from the hill on to the lake, counted the boats, the shadows of whose little, white latteen sails, reflected on the water-mirror, seemed like two butterflies kissing each other; then I watched the graceful floating clouds and their shadows thrown on the lake and hillsides, that moved so mysteriously along like dim specters; then I looked on the opposite mountains, whose white summits had melted at last before summer's hot smiles, and were showing their grim, rugged tops. I did everything, in short, but work at my poor story.

Beau, not liking the cool ground, jumped upon one of the tree seats, over which hung his faithful old friend, the red shawl; this he snuffed at and scratched most furiously, to make himself a bed, but with poor success, for he caught his foot in the fringe, and tumbled backward on the ground, coming well-nigh rolling down the hill; this misadventure discomposed his little dog-ship to such a degree, that I pushed my Margaret of Austria unceremoniously aside and

took him up in my lap, to soothe his offended dignity, and soon he was sound asleep. Then I remembered I had left at home the memorandum of costume necessary for a description, in the twenty-seventh chapter of my second volume, which was sufficient excuse to my conscience for not working; so I clasped my book, shut my pen and inkstand, and leaned back comfortably against the tree, to enjoy the ravishing, living picture before me. It was one of those scenes the painter artist would despair over; for there were those varying shadows, those numberless and nameless *nuances* of color flitting over the sky, and a hazy atmosphere that subdued and softened the whole. Music can suggest such a landscape, but the composition must have sentiment, and that which gives a charm to poetry—a dreamy, undefined character. It can only give suggestions to the imagination, not attempt vulgar, tangible descriptions; and this it can do, for it has a language of its own, and a coloring. The tone tongue, the tone palette, are widely different from the word language the poet uses, or the tangible colors of the painter; and the true artist and executant in music suggests, not describes, to the cultured or gifted imagination and taste, by an adroit and poetical use of this beautiful, and, to some, mysterious knowledge.

Mingled with the beautiful landscape on that, to us, memorable autumn afternoon, were rural sounds; some cows were grazing in a pasture beneath me, on the sloping hillside, and their bells rang so slowly and soothingly, that I was soon as sound asleep as my dog. I do not know how long I had been sleeping, when I was awakened by Beau's bark. He sprang from my lap, raced down the bank, and gave a sign of recognition to some one; not receiving the notice he thought he merited, he came back with a pooh-pooh sort of air of "Oh! it was nobody after all!" and, jumping up into my lap, coiled himself cosily down, and resumed his nap. I leaned over, and looked down through the branches, and

saw sitting on the bench of the terrace beneath me, Hélène and Kinnaird Graham.

"Where did Beau go to?" asked Hélène of Kinnaird.

"He followed Marie and Mademoiselle Fauvette down the stream," answered Kinnaird.

"No, he did not," I said, in a sleepy voice, "he is up here with me." But they were too much occupied with each other to hear me. It was some time before I understood their conversation,—being in a half dreamy state,—but a strange tone in Kinnaird's naturally sweet, quiet voice, startled me; he was angry; and angry, too, at his lady love.

"It is preposterous!" he said, "this manner you all have, of yielding to your aunt. Absurd!"

"Remember, Kinnaird," urged Hélène, mildly, "how much we owe to her."

"Pshaw!" said the young man, springing up, angrily, and walking rapidly to and fro on the little terrace.

"Heyday!" I thought; "young man, this is odd love-making, to be sure!"

"Gratitude, generous acknowledgment of favors generously bestowed, is one thing," he continued; "but that is quite different from this childish slavery of obedience you all observe toward her; then the disgusting consciousness of this imaginary generosity, that Madame Eperveil shows, takes all credit from her, and makes your gratitude meanness and cowardice."

Hélène remained silent, as she always did, when others lost their temper. Kinnaird stopped in his rapid walk.

"Listen!" he said, standing in front of her;—and how handsomely he looked: his fine, manly face lit up with the mingled tide of anger and emotion rushing through him! "Listen! I do not believe, Hélène Bouvreuil, much as you love me, that you would ever dare to marry me. First, you would need to have Madame Eperveil's gracious consent, and there is not one member of your family that would dare

to ask it; then—even supposing it should be asked—if refused, I would be whistled off without any hesitation.”

Hélène looked up, with a pretty, winning air of sly merri-ment, and said, half playfully, half pleadingly, “But, Kinnaird, why make our present worse than it need be, by anticipating trouble? We are not ready to face any such difficulty yet.”

“And if we were?” asked the young man, in a deep, earnest tone, which must have thrilled through his mistress’s whole being,—for it made my little heart feel oddly, even though I had no right to have any feeling about it. He stooped down in front of her, and, taking both those beautiful hands, looked straight into his mistress’s blushing face, with his keen eyes.

“Madame Epervail calls him a polished stick,” I said to myself; “I wish she could see him now.”

“Hélène,” he continued, taking from his pocket two letters, “here are two proposals; before we leave this place you are to decide which one I shall accept. One is an assistant professorship at B. The salary is the same your father receives; on it we can marry. The other is an offer from my friend L., who has received his appointment and appropriation for his Egyptian researches, and he wishes me to accompany him to Egypt, as secretary.”

“Oh, Kinnaird, I must not decide—I cannot!” said Hélène, in a trembling voice.

Kinnaird stood erect, wounded to the quick. Hélène buried her face in her hands, and wept bitterly.

“What am I to understand by this?” he asked, in that cold, steel-like tone, his voice could so well express in some moods.

Hélène seemed to shrink into herself, and continued weeping silently, but made no answer.

“I cannot understand you, Hélène,” he said.

“Oh, it is so cruel!” she sobbed.

“What is cruel?” he exclaimed, fiercely. “To be offered

honorable marriage by a man you say you love? I see no cruelty in this.”

“No, no, Kinnaird,” answered the girl, striving hard to control herself; “but my position is so cruel. I am just so placed, that for a year I cannot say yes or no to you.”

“And why?” asked the exasperated young man.

“Patience, Kinnaird, and listen to me.”

“God knows it requires the patience of a saint,” he muttered.

“I have this morning accepted,” said Hélène, with forced calmness, “the position of governess in Mr. Landsnecht’s family. I heard of your dismissal, from mother; and, thinking we were to be separated in any case, I concluded to no longer refuse so good a salary. I go to England with them next week, for all is concluded between us.”

“But,” said Kinnaird, looking like ice and fire mingling, “you can, if you please, break this engagement, by announcing your approaching marriage with me.”

“Next year, Kinnaird,” urged the young girl, nervously.

“No, not next year—nor ever! No, Hélène Bouvreuil; you have not enough decision of character to act for yourself; nor have you sufficient love for me to give you courage to face a disagreeable trouble. Good-by; God bless you!” and he rushed down the bank rapidly.

“Kinnaird!” cried the girl, convulsively. “Kinnaird, do not leave me. I have not told you all. Oh, Kinnaird, come back!”

But it was too late—Kinnaird was gone. I could no longer endure the agony of the poor child, so I put the lazy Bean on one side, and ran down to her. “Darling!” I said, “I have been a listener to this scene, but it was unintentional; I could not well help it.”

“Oh, is that you, Fanny Fauvette?” she cried. “I am so glad you are here. Is it not dreadful? What can I do?”

I put my arms around her; she laid her head on my

shoulder, and cried as though her heart would break. Beau was not going to let anything like that go on, so he came busily tripping down the bank, to dispute her place in my arms; this diverted her thoughts a little, and the violent sobbing passing off, she told me that which she had wished to tell Kinnaird. They had received a letter from Octave, that morning—that is, the mother had—and he had applied to her for 2000*f*. He was in debt, and did not wish to ask his aunt, as he had very lately applied to her for money, and they did not dare to ask Tante Octavie themselves, after the hesitation shown about the Landsnecht offer. Just then, Mr. and Mrs. Landsnecht called, offering an increase of salary, raising the first sum of £100 to £150. Hélène accepted it at once, on condition of having the first half year's salary paid in advance. Mr. Landsnecht immediately drew a check for the amount, which was inclosed to Octave the instant Mr. and Mrs. Landsnecht left; therefore, Hélène could not break her engagement with them, in order to accept the unexpected offer of her lover.

Natural sisterly delicacy had prevented her from telling Kinnaird at first what she knew he would call her brother's selfish extravagance; but when her misery made her overcome this feeling, his angry impetuosity had prevented her from doing so.

"Oh, never mind!" I said, consolingly; "to-night, when we take our walk down on the Point du Pays, after *goûter*, you can tell him all; and next year we shall have a merry wedding."

We then talked about her winter in England; her dread of the cold, proud family; her hard work,—for she was to give the youngest boy lessons in Latin, prepare the lessons of the two other boys for their tutor, and assist in the duet practicings of Miss Landsnecht, besides taking entire charge of the whole range of studies of the three girls. These "*extras*," as we Yankees say, had been added when they proposed the increase of salary.

The sun was near setting, when Marie Merle and Dora made their appearance, laden with branches of the feathery seed-tuft of the wild clematis and blood-red and yellow acacia leaves.

"Do not tell Marie about Octave," Hélène said, as we saw Marie in the distance. "Heaven knows, she has reason to think badly enough of him already; and the only hope mother and I have in the future for Octave, rests on the little bit of love left for him in Marie's heart."

I made no reply; but I thought, obstinately, "If that is all the hope you have, it is slight enough; and whatever I can throw into the scale against it, shall be given. Marie Merle shall never be sacrificed to Octave Bouvreuil's, or any other man's selfishness; he may sacrifice mother and sister, if they please,—and father and aunt into the bargain, for tally weight,—but not my artist darling."

By this time Hélène had grown calm, and the traces of her weeping were accounted for, by my announcement of her approaching departure for England, as governess in the Landsnecht family. Marie protested loudly against it; and Dora looked ready to burst out crying; but Hélène shook her head in sad silence, and we walked home very sorrowful. At the Peilz church we found Mr. Merle, looking up at the beautiful old tower, draped with ivy and the trumpet vine, whose leaves were tinged blood red. Hélène and I stood a few moments, admiring it with him, and listening to his gentle, dreamy raptures, over the festoons hanging around the ogive windows of the tower; then, bidding Marie and her father good night, we hurried on home. Madame Bouvreuil met us at the door; she looked very sad and tired. *Goûter* was ready waiting, so we went into the *salle à manger*, with our mantles and hats on our arms, in order to be all ready for the peace-making walk on the Point du Pays. Professor Bouvreuil had not returned from his lessons at the Landsnechts; thus Madame, Hélène, and I were the only ones at table. Hélène watched the door, with nervous

anxiety, for Kinnaird's entrance. At last, not being able to endure the suspense any longer, I asked,—

"What makes Mr. Graham so late to-night?"

"Hélène has not told you, then?" replied Madame Bouvreuil.

Hélène looked up inquiringly at her mother. Madame continued: "Mr. Graham has left us."

"Yes, I know he is no longer at Institution Eperveil," I said.

"Oh, not only that," answered Madame Bouvreuil, "but he has left Peilz."

"Left Peilz!" I cried. "Impossible!"

Hélène rose up silently, and went out of the room, without stopping to hear another word.

"I thought she knew it," said Madame Bouvreuil, as the door closed after her daughter. "He told me he had bidden her good-by, and asked me to say adieu to you and Marie, for him. He has received a fine offer from his friend L., to be his private secretary; they are going on that business he spoke of, to Egypt. He left, *en route* for Paris, an hour ago."

I then told Madame Bouvreuil all that had taken place at Hauteville; and, after grieving a little while together over the trouble, we separated—Madame Bouvreuil to join Hélène, and I to go to Dora and Beau for consolation. I walked up and down the gallery, in the soft light of the autumn moon, hugging my dear little dog to my lonely heart; I was like poor Siebenkäs; I felt so inwardly sorrowing and discouraged, that I longed to caress some outward thing; and I listened to Marie's music, which came in rich wafts on the evening breeze, from the chateau. My own past, and its sad memories, rose up before me, as I dwelt on the trouble of the family; and my heart seemed overflowing with a tide of bitter resentment at the injustice meted out in this world to the unoffending, and it blinded me to the blessed harvest to be reaped from such mortal wrong. Dora

leaned on the balcony railing, looking up through the branches of the acacia-tree at the moon, in that state of sweet, vague German dreaminess, so peculiar to her nation. I put my hand on her shoulder: "What are you dreaming about, little woman?" I asked.

"My mother can see that same moon, mademoiselle," answered the girl, in a clear, firm tone, that bespoke most perfect faith and trust.

An old nursery song of my mother's swept up before my memory, almost as if an angel had sung it in my ears:—

"The moon looks
On many brooks—
It shines upon both great and small;
And God's love
Beams from above:
It guards around, and leads us all."

I smothered my inward cries of anguish, and tried to look up at the heavens with the same childlike, hoping faith of my handmaiden. But the memories of that happy childhood recalled by the old nursery rhyme; of that mother-voice, soothing my childish griefs tenderly to sleep; then of the lonely hours of unsoothed sorrow, after death had hushed her gently to her long rest,—all these memories grew closer and tighter in their gripe around my heart. The lake waves dashed against the chateau walls; Marie's music rode out in full, solemn grandeur; she was playing that mysterious *Warum*, of R. Schumann, whose persisting doubts and obstinate questionings seemed to make the same demand my rebellious heart was making. I leaned, shivering, against the pillar of the gallery, with hot, dry eyes; but my heart would weep over the "*Living Lost*," and the life-desolation left by "*the dead gone before*."

CHAPTER XVIII.

DEPARTURE.

Now, if I had been Hélène Bouvreuil, with such a charming lover as Kinnaird Graham, I should have written immediately to him, and explained the whole misunderstanding; but Madame Bouvreuil did not like that Octave's disgraceful conduct should be disclosed.

"In a year, Kinnaird will return," she said; "then all can be explained, with less injury to your brother. You are both young, and can wait, especially in such a case; moreover, one's own personal happiness or justification is not what one should seek in this life. Sacrifices for others are far better than a just gratification of our own rights. Even when these sacrifices seem unjust, *le bon Dieu* rights the wrong; the gain in the end is to our immortal spirits; and if not, if no gain results, a generous mind feels easier."

I had to listen patiently to dear Madame Bouvreuil's gentle sermonizing, for I knew she not only preached, but practiced. Her whole married life had been passed under the harrow of Madame Eperveil's power, and *harrow* it was truly; for the old lady had, from girlhood, so encouraged the disposition of depending haughtily on her own judgments, and trampling indifferently if not rudely on the rights of every one within her reach, that domestic life, when associated with her, was anything but a blessing. And yet, how she could talk of personal independence! and into what eloquent rages she would burst out, upon some cowed tutor whose daily bread depended on his position in her employ, if he dared to have or exercise an opinion about the manage-

ment of the business intrusted to him! She called it always "taking a liberty with her;" and one of her expressions on such occasions of wrath used to amuse us all excessively, though, of course, we never uttered a word in her presence. It was the same speech that Haydon, in his autobiography, puts into the mouth of the Duke of Wellington: "The reason why I have a right never to have a liberty taken with me is, because I never take a liberty with any one." This was Tante Octavie's pet *finale*; and just so soon as she would get fairly out of hearing, Marie or I would exclaim, "No fear of having liberties taken with one, if one does not meddle with others. Generally, when people talk with such temper about liberties, and all that, they are consciously or unconsciously interfering with the rights of those around them."

And this was true; no person could be more interfering and overbearing than Tante Octavie, and her intense egotism stood in the way of her seeing the immense injustice she committed constantly, not only toward others, but to her own naturally noble character; for much as I inwardly chafed and fretted against Madame Eperveil, I could not but see that she had superb qualities of mind and indefinable magnetic attractions, which would have made her irresistibly charming but for this unfortunate disposition. She did one good, however—she taught patience to others; she might irritate and fret young people; but, in the end, she gave them a philosophy, in regard to the petty details of social life, they never could have attained but for her spiritual microscopic exaggeration of trifles. The families of the different professors lived in a state of resigned tranquillity; the men found so much turmoil and *exigence* in the atmosphere surrounding Tante Octavie, they were happy to find peace in their own interiors. How patiently the wives bore the shortcomings of their servants, because the husbands never noticed unjustly the naturally resulting shortcomings of wives! That great secret of the mystery of social life,

so little understood,—the necessity of yielding to and bearing with sweet, loving charity, unmingled with contempt, not only the individual characteristics, but also the constitutional weaknesses and physical incapacities of others, acknowledging generously the rights of even children and inferiors, every one in Peilz comprehended and practiced but Tante Octavie—and yet she taught it to them. But while she helped them, they injured her. A passage in the life of Currer Bell, relative to the peculiar trials of an only boy in a family of girls, altered a little, will explain this. By her family she had been regarded, from her capability, as one who could and would act a part in life; she was to *do*, while they were only to *be*; and the necessity of their giving way to her in some things, was exaggerated into their giving way to her in all, and thus rendering her utterly and blindly selfish.

Hélène was so hurried in her preparations for leaving with the Landsnechts, and so sad at parting with her mother, that she had little time for dwelling on her love troubles; it was not that she was wanting in warmth of heart. People are very apt to imagine that such abnegation proceeds from feebleness of feeling; and it is only when a terrible heart break, when some sad scene of acute physical suffering ensues once in awhile, that all the effect of the accumulated torture, borne in silence for years, proves the existence of this depth of feeling. Poor Hélène! her love for Kinnaird seemed to be too great a happiness to indulge herself freely in. She had been educated by her mother in such a strict idea of self-sacrifice, that she would have felt it almost easier to have cut off her right hand, for the trifling benefit of another, than to have occupied that same beautiful right hand in any work of pleasure for her own enjoyment. Emile Souvestre makes Leon say to his wife Marcelline, "You women love, not only to wear the crown of thorns, but even to plunge the points in your bleeding temples." So it was sometimes with Hélène, her con-

science was quiet when sacrificing self, uneasy when enjoying innocent pleasures, and, but for her naturally happy disposition, healthy organization, and sweet life with her mother, she would have grown morbid and melancholy. Then the mother's and daughter's anxiety for Octave, and their feeling of imaginary dependence on Madame Eperveil, made them sensitive. Marie and I, when alone, fretted over this indefinable influence of Madame Eperveil, and called her hard names, and vowed we would not submit to such tyranny—not we! But my declarations on this point were growing fainter; I was beginning to understand how a strong, capable character, like Tante Octavie's, could bear down everything before her, so I avoided her more and more.

One evening, at sunset, we all met at Point du Pays; it was the evening after the departure of dear Hélène. Marie and I had taken Madame Bouvreuil there, to brighten her up. Tante Cecile remained at home to read the *Journal des Débats* aloud to her brother—Mr. Merle's greatest luxury of the day. The intercourse existing between this old brother and sister was exquisitely touching; no husband and wife could be more devoted than they were to each other. While we were enjoying our quiet ramble, and watching the passage of the "Rhône Numéro 1," the last steamboat of the day, on its way up to Villeneuve, and noticing, as if we had never noticed it before, the dancing of the little row-boats as they fell in the wake of the steamer, Madame Eperveil came up with old Mr. Serin. Marie and I bowed stiffly to her, and then tried, in the most absurd manner, to ignore the old lady's presence, showing by that how much we felt it. We entered into a high argument about the clouds, of which a *bize* just springing up, and a glorious sunset, combined to make quite a grand affair; they were floating and rolling about beautifully; one rich gold and purple one was enveloping Dent du Jaman like a lordly mantle, and the Rhône valley was being filled with a succession of vapory forms, folding and gathering together in

the sublimest groups. Marie was just at that time quite enthusiastic about Ruskin's works; his magnificent word-pictures had so fascinated her that she could not endure the shadow of a difference from his testy dictum. This is a spirit that the first reading of that clever but opinionative writer always begets. I had it myself years before, and had survived it; so, of course, it was a fair opportunity for a lively discussion between us. Very likely our conversation sounded, to a woman as superior as Madame Eperveil really was, a little absurd and crude; I have no doubt it did; the very spirit which influenced us made us unnatural, and seem forced and affected. Then she needed not to listen to us, as we were not addressing her. But, oh no! she must meddle; of course, it was in her nature so to do.

"Veux tu bien te taire, Marie Merle!" she burst out; "do stop this affectation and exhibition. You are talking of what you know nothing about, just to show yourself off. I cannot conceive of a greater piece of absurdity than for an ordinary-minded young woman like you, to go off in such an addle-brained manner as you do, on these subjects you are pleased to call *æsthetical*. Descend from your Icarus wax-wing flights, child, and be natural! then simple matter-of-fact folk like us will be able to understand you."

We were two irritated, angry women, and she was the cause of our anger; therefore, her words were as kindling to the fuel, and a very disagreeable, painful scene ensued. Madame Bouvreuil took Mr. Serin's arm at the commencement of it, and walked off out of hearing, so we were left uncurbed, even by the gentle restraint of her presence. We said some very rude things to the old lady. I remember that we both told her we were tired of her dictation, and implied that she might tyrannize over her family if they were weak enough to permit it, but not over us. She deserved all we said, it is true; but we put ourselves in the wrong by shifting the issue, and in doing so, we gave her a chance to go off in flying colors, which, of course, she had wit enough

to avail herself of. Heavens! how the old empress kindled up!

"She was sick of this sort of thing," she said. "Who did she tyrannize over? Her family affairs were her own business. What right had we to interfere in them? We had been taking, for some time past, great liberties with what was none of our business. She had discharged a useless, inefficient, do-nothing tutor, and provided her own niece with a situation where she received an elegant salary—and here two intrusive young women, perfectly unconnected by blood with her or hers, one a stranger and a foreigner even, were presuming to sit in judgment on her doings; *c'était impayable!*"

"Bravo, Tante Octavie!" I thought to myself; "you have gained the advantage over us now." So I just did what we should have done at first, held my peace, until the tempest-wrath of the old dame had passed over. When she reached the end of her speech, she looked as if exasperated with her own arguments, which success quite put her out of breath. I took advantage of this breathing spell, and, in a low, quiet tone, begged her pardon for interfering with her or her family matters, saying,—

"You are quite right, madam; I have nothing in common with you at least. However, you must admit that this disagreeable temper might have been avoided, Madame Eperveil, if you had not seen fit to intrude yourself, rather officiously, into a conversation with which you had nothing to do; so I think we can draw off on even ground, as both sides have been in the wrong. Our wrong we acknowledge frankly, and ask pardon for it; of course, as you are our senior, we do not expect you to do the same; but I sincerely trust you will silently see your error, and do us justice in your own mind. So good evening, Madame Eperveil!" And, taking Marie's arm, I walked away, trembling from head to foot, toward the Chateau de Leignitz.

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed Marie Merle, as we stood on

the broad top of the breakwater wall belonging to this cha-teau. "If I were Tante Octavie's niece I should just lay myself down some night in the waters of this lake, and ask God, trustingly, to forgive me for going to sleep before he called me. I should feel so discouraged with life, that I would rather face my Heavenly Father, after the disobedience of suicide, than live in the world under her control."

We sat down on the grand flight of steps leading to the upper terrace of the Leignitz grounds, waiting for Madame Bouvreuil, whom we saw in the distance, coming toward us, and had a good, comforting cry together. She came down the steps, looking distressed and fatigued; and to see her thus annoyed, of course added to our vexation.

"A pretty way, to be sure," I cried, "of fulfilling our promise to Hélène; we were to keep her mother as happy as possible."

Madame Bouvreuil tried to smile, and begged us not to think any longer about the disagreeable affair; then, after loitering around long enough to give our "enraged lioness time to reach her menagerie," as Marie saucily said, we walked sadly and silently to our lonely home.

Oh, how we missed Hélène! Her pretty little expletives rang in my ears for weeks after she left us. Her sweet intonation of "*Je vous en prie*," when I would rebel against some trifling but sweet act of self yielding for my comfort; her peculiar pronunciation of various words, such as the musical lengthening of the first syllable of *beaucoup*, sounded in my memory like one recalls a favorite melody, associated with the dear, sad past. Then her merry laugh; her quick, light step; her constant presence about the house, making herself useful to every one, unobtrusively,—all this we missed. As Dora said, "it was like the sunshine gone." I was very lonely, for Marie Merle did not take so much pleasure in being with me as formerly. She was working very hard, it is true, over some new music, just come from Paris and Vienna, and that was her excuse; but I could

divine readily the real reason; she had doubtless heard of Octave's misdoings, and she could not bear to think of him before me, knowing the contempt I must feel for him. Not that she was weakly mourning over him; on the contrary, she was fast floating off from him; but still, she *had* loved him, with all the force of her warm, artist nature; she had mistrusted, but hoped and prayed for him so many years; and now, though all was over between them, though they never could be aught to each other in the future, she could not endure to be in the presence of any one, who she felt had not the same reason of having once loved him, for excusing his misdoings. There are times when the society of our best and dearest friends is a burden and a weight to us, and this is one of those seasons, when their condemnation of another we know to be just,—indeed, for them to think otherwise would be unjust to us,—and yet it wounds and frets us. It is the feeling Bryant so well delineates, in his tender, touching little poem of the "Living Lost:—

"But ye who for the living lost,
That agony in secret bear,
Who shall with soothing words accost
The strength of your despair?
Grief for your sake, is scorn for them
Whom ye lament and all condemn,
And o'er the world of spirits lies
A gloom from which ye turn your eyes."

Instead of seeking me as she used to, after breakfast, and making me come to her for the day,—or joining me, with Dora and Beau, in our mountain rambles,—I would receive from her, as excuses for her absence, little notes full of musical talk, throbbing with feeling; although she thought they were analytical, poor child! One morning she would write, "I cannot go to Les Crêtes, or anywhere with you, for some days yet. I am getting up my new music for you, and somehow I can study better just now, alone. Am I

becoming a better student? I am sure I hope so." Just as if I did not know that such rambling musical reading was not study. No, it was her poor heart that needed to be alone; for if solitude does not give strength, still it does not wound. Another day her written greeting said, "Some day, soon, I shall come for you to hear my new musical acquaintances; and some of them must be your friends, through my introduction. I have five new compositions of your American composer, Gottschalk. The one I love best is the *Ricordate*, a ballad, written upon those lines from Dante's *Inferno*,—

'Nessun maggior dolore
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria,'—

in Re bémol, with a sweet measure; distant, and almost like death in some thoughts; bringing back regret and remembrance. Then another, *Reflets du Passé*, from a passage in a poem of Victor Hugo, full of openly-expressed tenderness. But one darling thing of his, is a little, dimpled, coquettish Hebe of a *Valse Poétique*; it is like what Liszt says of some of Chopin's—it is fantastic and joyous, like the playful stampings of a delicious little teasing sylph." Again she wrote, "I am devoted to Heller just now; to his tarantelles, and wonderful waltzes, so involved in their working; they suit me, for they are so full of *diablerie*, and no regret. It is all a happy present with this joyous Heller. He sports and flaunts about in the musical stream, like a flecked, dancing trout, on a summer's day. But to return to Gottschalk. We must talk him over again, after you have heard these new things. Do you know, I do not agree with your opinion about him? His music is not so Hebraic as tropical; it suggests present and keen pleasures; it is too warm; and like all the sweets and enjoyments of that region which gave birth to his genius, it is apt to pall; even the sweet, luscious *Ricordate* overwhelms one with its exuberant, fond, sensual

melody; it is not pure enough for the stately pomegranates and bells of the synagogue. No, Mendelssohn alone is Hebraic, Fanny Fauvette. I compared the two together until after midnight, last night, and could not but be struck with the difference. Both composers have rich, warm coloring,—expressions of exquisite sentimentality; but in one, it is a present, vivid enjoyment; in the other, a deep, melodious echo of a solemn, poetical past. In Mendelssohn, 'Le passé y joue un plus grand rôle que le présent; qui dit passé, dit poésie; le passé n'est il pas la jeunesse de notre imagination!' We must argue this out together some day, little lady."

I comforted myself for Marie's solitary mood by long, whole-day rambles to Chatelard and Blonay, and exploring mountain roads; then, on cloudy days, I set to work studying German industriously, with my excellent master; and sometimes I gave myself the headache over my poor historical novel, my "Margaret of Austria." If Professor Bouvreuil had not been one of the nicest, kindest, tenderest men in the world, Hélène's absence, united to her keen anxiety about Octave, would have killed the mother. But he even left his work on India, his geographical studies, and his great map, to occupy himself about her. How it ever got into his wise, old head,—so filled with science,—that his wife might possibly miss her children, I do not know. God sent a little angel to tell him, I suppose. He used to make her come into his library, with her basket of sewing, in the evenings. At first they invited me, and I went, and sang ballads to amuse them, to the accompaniment of the professor's little old cracked cabinet piano; but, after awhile, I thought it best to leave the dear old doves alone, to console each other; so I excused myself at least five evenings out of the seven, by pleading the never-failing occupation of "writing letters," and left them to themselves. Many a lonely evening I passed, almost like those stern, solemn first ones after my arrival in Peilz, near two years before; sitting by

my little salon window, with Beau nestled asleep cosily in my lap, and I watching the sweet, cool moonbeams peeping tenderly through the acacia branches, and the love rapture of the lake's palpitating bosom, as in the distance it broke into quivering ripples, under the full silvery light of the cold lady orb; while the swallows whirled through the air, and wheeled around their nests in the old convent tower; and once in awhile a gust of melancholy autumn wind would bring me a waft of Marie's full, glorious music, dropping sometimes on my shoulder or arm a cold, dead autumn leaf, which would lie, in its crimson or yellow glory, on my white gown, "*beautiful even in death.*"

CHAPTER XIX.

ARRIVAL OF AN OLD FRIEND.

Just as I was beginning to feel impatient about this awkward reserve of Marie, and wondering how I should overcome it; it was broken in upon, in a very natural manner, by the arrival of a friend of mine from America, and just the one of all others Marie wished most to know. This friend was a German composer, Gustav Ehrenherz; of whom and his sister I had often talked to Marie. One day, about a month after Hélène's departure, Dora came into my little salon, her face beaming with delight. I looked from my desk, and, as I noticed her radiant eyes, and smiling mouth, I said: "You have a letter from your mother, my child."

"Oh, no, mademoiselle! But who do you think has come all the way from America to see us?" And then she quickly added, as she saw my startled look, and cheeks paling with hopes and apprehensions, to which no definite expression could be given: "Mr. Ehrenherz, mademoiselle; he is here, in the passage, waiting to come in."

In a few minutes my friend was seated beside me, and I, trembling with delight and sad pleasure, listening to all the sweet information of those dear ones, between whom and myself the solemn, dark wave of separation and circumstances flowed, possibly forever. And his own reason for coming to Europe was such a happy romance. He had been appointed musical director at L. This post, which had been filled by Mendelssohn, was a position at once flattering and honorable for my young maestro friend, and a pleasant reward to him after the laborious years of teaching and composing spent in America.

Of course, Marie was quickly informed of his arrival, and an invitation, for us all to come and take one of the old-fashioned *gouters* with them, at the chateau, was brought immediately around by dear old Mr. Merle himself. Marie and Ehrenherz grew quickly acquainted; for he, though a distinguished artist and a highly-cultivated man, was modest and appreciative, as true artists always are. Then, he had a cheerful, healthy mind, and though he had quaffed the bitter draught from the goblet of sorrow, extended to all of us born of woman, he had drank the absinthe with meek, childlike patience and trust. He had laid, in an American grave, a gifted sister, who had been to him more than any wife or friend could ever be. An artist herself, a composer of merit, the two had led from youth their artistic career together; they had united hopes, united ambitions, a generous appreciation of each other's merits, and the deepest, tenderest love for one another. Just as she had reached a ripened womanhood, with her genius bringing forth its richest fruit, she sickened and died. I had known her, enjoyed her friendship, had loved, and mourned over her. Often I had described both brother and sister to Marie Merle, and, in my letters to Ehrenherz, I had dwelt on Marie and her musical gifts; thus, the two, when they met, were more than half acquainted. So simple and cordial was their greeting, both clasping each other's hands heartily, and calling each other by name, without the ceremony of introduction, as though they had been friends for years.

After doing full justice to Tante Cecile's hospitable *gouter*, and eating, to shameful excess, her delicious cream-cakes, we walked out on the terrace. The sun was just setting, sending up its flame-like rays above the mountains. On the opposite shore, many of the peaks of the Savoy Alps were white with the winter's snows, for it was late in November. Les Corneilles de Bize, back of the Val du Novel, had their peaks and sides covered with heavy masses of snow; also, Mont Chaumeni, which caught the golden

crimson of the sunset, and looked dazzlingly beautiful; but Mont le Blanchard, from not being so high, kept its brown and red autumn tints, producing a charming effect, when contrasted with its icy-clad neighbors. A young November moon hung over the Rhone valley, and this same valley was superb; from Dents du Midi to their *vis à vis* Dent du Morcles, the vale was one mass of snow mountains; Mont Velan, Tête Noire, and Mont Catogne, all wrapped up for the winter, and their peaks flaming in the sunlight with brilliant radiance. Ehrenherz enjoyed the scene with an artist's keen appreciation; then, as the twilight darkened, we ascended to the salon. There the Francesca di Rimini group had its share of admiration; and Ehrenherz sank on one of the little sofas, drawing a sweet sigh of satisfied enjoyment, as Marie, at my request, played the Chopin Adagio. After that, she played some of her new pieces, and I could see very well that she pleased Ehrenherz amazingly. He approached the piano, saying: "So you hold to the Erard pianos, mademoiselle?"

Marie replied, by using Chopin's own words: "When I play on a piano of Erard, I find easily a sound already made."

"Ah," answered Ehrenherz, "but that speech of Chopin has a pendant which you, with true woman cleverness, leave out, because it does not suit your purpose. Chopin also said, you remember, 'But when I feel myself *en verve* sufficiently strong to find my own sound, *mon propre son à moi*, I must have a piano of Pleyel.' But I am very fond of an Erard piano, also."

"Ah, if I were rich!" cried Marie, "I would have one of each; one for my week-day moods, and one for my gay holiday ones."

Day followed day, and evening followed evening, with unconscious rapidity, during this charming visit of Ehrenherz; the days were devoted to long walks, during which Marie and I did the honors of our beautiful Vaudois country;

showing off every lovely point, within walking reach, to Ehrenherz. Les Crêtes, Chatelard, Hauteville, and even Blonay, were displayed with all the pride of ownership. To Chatelard terrace we took him first, as the place dearest to Marie and me, because from it we dated the commencement of our friendship. Then, in the evenings, we would meet in the chateau salon, and have music together.

Ehrenherz had with him his precious Straduarius violin; and, with young Gardner's assistance, we had, once or twice, some of the Fesca Trios, played as I had heard them in those dear old times. One evening, I made Ehrenherz give us the history of his rare Straduarius; how it had belonged to Paganini, and Vieux Temps had bought it, and sold it to Ehrenherz. He made us notice its nice balance, graceful outline, high finish, and the brilliant varnish. I held the delicious, singing little thing in my hand, and thought of the hundred and fifty years that had passed over its little body so graciously; for old Antonius Straduarius, of Cremona, was a scholar of the most ancient Cremonese maker, Amati. While I was looking at it, Mr. Merle said: "Mr. Ehrenherz, I heard once, and even held in my hand, at Vienna, one of the famous Elector Steiner violins."

"They rank with the Cremonese," answered Ehrenherz; "I once heard a Steiner, also; but I was very young, and can scarcely recall its peculiar tone; however, I remember it had a remarkably pure tone."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Merle; "it had a ringing note, like a woman's voice of the mellowest sound. The shape was very elegant and graceful, highly finished in every detail, and the varnish was diaphonous, of a rich, golden hue. Girls," added the old gentleman, turning to us, "the history of these Steiner violins will please you. Old Jacob Steiner, who made this famous violin I speak of, lost a wife he dearly loved; he mourned her so deeply that he forsook the world and retired to a monastery, like good Fra Bartolomeo, after the death of his friend Savanorola. While in the monastery,

Steiner made sixteen violins in the most perfect manner. He sent one to each of the twelve electors of the empire, and the remaining four to the emperor. Of the whole sixteen, only three well-authenticated ones remain, and they are known by the name of the Elector Steiners."

"Now, Mr. Merle," I asked, "be so good as to give us a date for these famous violins? When did this dear, loving, faithful old Jacob live? You know I love to have facts classified clearly in my mind by associations."

"Oh, I can give you a brave, historical association with old Steiner," replied Mr. Merle; "the emperor to whom he sent the four violins was Leopold I., the same who was emperor when Vienna was besieged by the Turks in 1683, and saved by the Poles under John Sobiesky; and this Leopold, you know, was grandfather to Marie Thérèse, and great-grandfather of the luckless Marie Antoinette."

We gained not only historical, but a variety of other information relating to violins, during that evening's talk. Ehrenherz described to us the build of a violin, pointing out to us its separate parts. Each violin contains fifty-eight different pieces; and when the purfling and tail-pieces are doubled, there are seventy-one bits of wood in the simple, smooth-looking little instrument. Then the wood must be of three sorts: Sycamore for the back, neck, sides, and circles; Tyrolese soft red deal for the belly, base bar, sound-post, and interior blocks; ebony for the finger-board and tail-pieces. The red deal requires the greatest care and judgment in selecting; it should be cut only in December or January, and only the part used which has been exposed to the sun.

"Then Amati, Straduarius, and Guarnerius were the three great Cremonese makers?" asked Mr. Merle.

"Yes," answered Ehrenherz; "and they handed down their craft to each other. Guarnerius, the last, and the pupil of Straduarius, though he made superb instruments, was not so even in his make; they were often slovenly in their build.

His large violins were better than his small ones; but they are rare. In a large concert hall they sound very well; Paganini's favorite violin was a large Guarnerius; he bequeathed it, when he died, to the City of Genoa. He owned two of these Straduarius, this one and another, and also an Amati."

"When I heard De Beriot," said Mr. Merle, "he played on a violin of an old Italian maker also, but not a Cremonese. I forget the name. The tone, though not so soft as your lovely Straduarius, was very melancholy and tender."

"De Beriot's favorite violin," replied Ehrenherz, "was one of Magini, an Italian builder, of Brescia, contemporaneous with Amati."

"Yes, that is the name," said Mr. Merle; "Magini—I remember well its pleading, mournful tone; it was as if the voice of his wife had gone into it, in order to dwell ever near him."

Ehrenherz drew his bow over his Straduarius, and soft, pleading tones poured out from it, which thrilled us to the very heart; our thoughts grew tearful and sad, as he improvised from his own memories of the past. After awhile, Mr. Merle and Tante Cecile left us, and he laid down the instrument, and, leaning his head on his hand, said, half reproachfully: "Mademoiselle Merle, you have never played Beethoven for me."

"Because," answered Marie, "I have not dared to."

"And yet, you play Chopin for me without timidity?"

"Yes; because Chopin has not yet grown so trammelled with conceits and traditions of pedants. In another twenty-five years one will feel timid in playing Chopin."

"What a wide difference there is between the music of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn, and Chopin!" said Ehrenherz; "and each so beautiful in his own peculiar *genre*, each one telling his own tale of 'hopes, and fears that kindle hopes!'"

"De Lanz," I remarked, "that clever Russian writer, says, 'that Haydn's loves end in hymeneals, and Mozart's in festivals.'"

"That is a pretty idea!" cried Marie; "then Weber's end in a wedding also; but not a wedding like Haydn's; it is during the age of chivalry, and the lover is a princely, valorous knight, and his lady love some gentle, lovely young Chatelaine. Mendelssohn's loves are also satisfactory, ending in lawful, honorable marriage—but more calm and domestic."

Ehrenherz smiled sadly, as he added his tribute to our fanciful comparisons: "But Beethoven's loves," he said, "lead to no such happiness; they follow a solemn harmony which seems to descend to a tomb. Sometimes they tell, indistinctly, of a sad, mournful tragedy, too awful to give in detail, and over which his profound chords draw a heavy veil; sometimes a glorious, funereal hymn, as if mourning for a love that gave one pride to dwell upon."

"Chopin's loves," said Marie, "lead also to the tomb, but not a hopeful tomb, like Beethoven's; a wild cry of despair rings out, as if there was no hope of meeting hereafter; then a sob of remorseful agony, as if the love had been for a lost spirit. Never, never do his loves lead to the belief that his better nature had been gratified or elevated by them. What wild cries of sorrow pour out in his Nocturnes; what despair in his Scherzos, and hopelessness in his Preludes! This, *par exemple*,"—and she played over the touching, beautiful Prelude in Re bémol, through the whole of which one feels "the old wound, ever aching." "What solemn tales of remorse they tell!" she continued; "of a high-toned spirit, humiliated and abased at the desecration of that one feeling, which should never be profaned! And then it seems as if through all the wailing there rises gloriously, from time to time, a heavenly strain, breathing out 'thus could my spirit have loved, had my baser nature let it soar aloft.' Sometimes the melody sounds like the cry of a Francesca di Ri-

mini; the accessories of the composition suggest the cloudy depths of an *Inferno*, and, through the gloomy space, sweep those two weary souls, with 'no loving prayer to stay them,' solemnly chanting their lost heaven, their bitter remorse, and yet their mournful happiness even in hell,—

'piacer sí forte,
Che come vedi ancor non m'abbandona.'"

We both remained silent; we could not speak, for we were so touched with the enthusiastic girl's tone of voice and sweet, young, solemn face, both expressing deep, sincere emotion and feeling, which is woman's most powerful eloquence. Her hands rambled over the keys of the piano as if searching for some thought. Chopin's wild *Lament* came stealing out first, with its choking, proud sorrow; then, after a short preluding of chords, filled with uncertainty, she dashed off into one of Chopin's wildest Pyrrhic Polonaises—that Polonaise Fantasia of which Litz gives this poetic analysis:—

"In the *Polonaise Fantasia*, which belongs already to the last period of Chopin's works, to those which are *surplombée* with feverish anxiety, we find no trace of the bold, bright pictures of the others; we hear no longer the joyous steps of cavalry accustomed to victory; the songs which stifle and drown all forebodings of defeat; the words which display the boldness that sets well on the victorious. In this an elegiac sadness predominates, interrupted by startled movements, melancholy smiles, unexpected shocks; even the repose is filled with watchful starts, as if those who lie in wait feared a surprise, and were surrounded on all sides, without any hope breaking out from the vast horizon, and to whose brains at last despair mounts, like a large draught of Cyprus wine, which gives a more instinctive rapidity to all their gestures, a keener point to all their words, a more burning sparkle to all their emotions, and which causes the mind to arrive at a key-note of irritability bordering on delirium."

CHAPTER XX.

MUSIC TALK.

THE next evening, when we all assembled in the chateau salon, Ehrenherz said: "*Mais vraiment*, Mademoiselle Merle, I wish I could hear you play Beethoven."

Marie, without further urging, commenced the allegro of the sonata, in Sol major, Opus 14, No. 2. Never had it sounded so bewitching, and yet so sad; the half querulous, and yet tearful remonstrance of the entreating treble to the resistant base,—that base which one is sure is a very naughty person,—all this Marie expressed with the most delicate tenderness, and exact comprehension of the meaning of the sonata. She threw in every varying expression with great skill; there was earnest gravity, then tenderness; then came the coaxing entreaties of a patient love that will not be wearied out. In contrast with this, she brought out firmly the determined interruptions of the base; at times, the contention raged furiously. At last the "resisting principle," as Beethoven called it, grew more reasonable, and the dialogue was carried on peacefully. She expressed the delicate shades of gentle interrogations and lingering pauses; and at the end of the sonata, when the "resisting principle" yields, she pointed the assent so well that it was clearly heard in the closing measures. After the satisfactory affirmative of the la, fa, and sol died out, Ehrenherz came up to the piano, and said,—

"Be so good as to play the allegro over for me, will you?" He watched her hands closely all through the pas-

sage; as Marie finished the last measure, he asked: "Where did you get that fingering from?"

"Do you like it?" was her smiling, playful reply.

"It is exquisite; it gives the exact expression," he said.

"It is Chopin's," she answered. "You will find it in De Lanz; and Wolfmaister, who taught me the piano, was Chopin's pupil; I got it from him also, as well as some other peculiarities of fingering, which I have found invaluable."

"Play that again, if you please. Commence at the beginning," urged Ehrenherz; "I wish to examine your management closely. How exactly you produce Mendelssohn's 'perfect touch, fingers shod in velvet!'" He watched her attentively, especially one passage in the fourteenth measure, just before the close of the allegro; there she slackened almost imperceptibly on the *La dieze*, which note she took with the second finger of the right hand, then slipped the same finger from the extremity of the black key, on the Si natural, which follows; the effect of this *legato* is very striking, as De Lanz says. "Now," said Ehrenherz, "the third finger on that Si would not be wrong; but how much better is Chopin's management! Then the fourth finger on those eleven staccato notes gives that velvety touch so often described to me as a peculiarity of Chopin's playing."

"You never heard Chopin, then?" I asked.

"No, unfortunately; but I have often heard Liszt; and the shades and coqueties of expression obtained by his fingering are innumerable. The modern school of fingering has been of great service."

"Ah, what a weary task was that finger business to me!" I said.

"Yes," cried Marie, "one might think so. Mr. Ehrenherz, her copy of Clementi's *Gradus ad Parnassum* is as thickly covered with lead pencil and ink figures, for the fingering, as a study of figured base."

"Oh, how that recalls the summer I did it!" I said. "It

was a *pensum* I set myself when I was far away in the country, and had no piano to practice on—so many, many years ago. My poor master, a pupil of the great Trajetta, was dying of consumption, and I knew I never could have his invaluable lessons again; and by doing this I hoped to impress upon my memory, as well as on my book, the principle of his excellent system of fingering."

Ehrenherz then asked me many questions of my poor master, and of old Trajetta, that great Neapolitan maestro, who died, unhonored and unknown, in America. This led us to different systems of teaching, and I made Ehrenherz smile with the pleasure of a teacher, over the descriptions I gave of the enthusiastic pride with which I had received and treasured Trajetta's scribbled, blotted copies of the old Neapolitan solfeggi, on which Agujari and Gabrielli had been trained; and how I sang them, and the duos of Durante, with such pious zeal and earnestness; submitting patiently to the severest practice, with various instruments, in order to fix, exactly and firmly, the different registers of the voice, according to his orthodox notions of voice training. Then Marie described Wolfmaister's mode of teaching, and Ehrenherz gave us his valuable experience.

"A master should be so conscientious," he said, in his gentle, earnest manner. "To be sure, few young pupils can comprehend the high end and aim of music, and its elevated poesy; but we should, however, respect youth enough, to prepare the virgin soil to receive, some time in the future, the grand conceptions of great musical minds. For beginners, a little, very little of Hüntén; then Czerny, in order to arrive at the exercises of Cramer, which are like the fables of La Fontaine—nothing can take their place. After these, some of the simplest compositions of Haydn and Mozart will show the end to which these preparations tend. By practicing constantly '*many scales*,' the pupil, under the direction of an intelligent master, will be able to arrive at the more elevated style of Mozart; from that—*par exemple*, from Mozart's

Fantasie Sonate—he can enter into the world of Beethoven. But before I allowed any of my pianists to touch Beethoven, I gave them always some of Weber's early sonates; there are six of his I have used a great deal, arranged for piano and violin, and also arranged for four hands. Then, when I could give them an opportunity of studying or practicing with other instruments, the two quartettes of Mozart, for piano, violin, alto, and violoncello; and the trio, for piano, violin, and alto, brought them along famously."

"Wolfmaister gave me the 'Kinderstücke' of Mendelssohn, two years ago," said Marie, "when I was just beginning this higher order of compositions."

"They are delicious," replied Ehrenherz. "Have you ever read over the 'Kinderscenen' of R. Schumann?"

How Marie's full brown eyes lighted up! Now she was repaid for her quarrels with Wolfmaister; for Ehrenherz appreciated, as she did, the works of this great weird composer. "Yes, with delight!" she cried out. "How beautiful is the 'Frühlingsang,' and 'Erster Verlust,' and 'Erinnerung!'"

"Also, 'Mai, lieber Mai,'" rejoined Ehrenherz. "These, however, may be 'Kinderscenen' for us, but not for the ordinary pupil. Of course, Mademoiselle Merle, your master has made you study Bach?"

"I made myself study him," said Marie, pointing to her well-used copy of Bach's *Clavecin bien tempéré*. "Wolfmaister would never give a woman such strong musical food as that."

"No study," said Ehrenherz, "so well develops the mechanism and musical intelligence of a pupil as a gradual study of the preludes and fugues of Bach."

Then, turning the pages of her volumes of Bach, he selected two or three of the fugues, and played them over for her, pointing out and explaining some of the difficult managements and *motives*.

"I am as great a heretic about the fugue," I said, rather

flippantly, "as Wolfmaister is about the poetical language we read in music, and which he calls 'musical transcendental stuff.' The fugue seems to me not only tiresome, but useless. Why need modern musicians employ it?"

"The fugue is out of vogue, now-a-days," answered Ehrenherz, "because it is not in the feelings. The dialectic style is the spirit of the fugue, and that spirit is not in many composers now. The fugue is useful, nay necessary; but to carry it to an extreme, as it was at one time in musical compositions, is folly; it does no good; it is like the dry, close reasoning of a logician, on a useless point, which gains nothing when proved."

"Or like many philosophers," I added, "who waste a lifetime over the study of some minor point in science, of service only to the little world of *savans*; leaving unexamined, on either side, marvelous things, from which might be gained or discovered inventions and improvements of benefit to the whole human race. Therefore, let us give our musical veto on all fugue passages in future musical compositions."

"But," said Ehrenherz, smiling at my rather presumptuous tirade against the fugue, "then you must banish all musical reasoning from compositions, and that would leave us sorry works. Cherubini has a sentence in his 'Course on Counterpoint,' which will do very well to quote to you, Mademoiselle Fauvette: 'Every composition, in order that the management of it be well understood, should have the style of the fugue in it, if it has not precisely its character and form.' The fugue is to music what a knowledge of the human frame is to the sculptor or painter. It is the skeleton of musical form. The dry composers of the fugue, who would sacrifice everything to it, are like those painters of the eclectic schools, who succeeded Leonardo da Vinci, Michel Angelo, and Raphael; in their eagerness to imitate the old masters, they forgot the great aim of art; they grouped figures together with academic exactitude, but without regard to the natural positions the subject required; they exagger-

ated muscles, and indulged in needless foreshortening, merely to show their knowledge of drawing,—and thus sacrificed beauty and true feeling to the mere letter.”

Ehrenherz's rebuke was so courteously given, I could not feel piqued at any one but myself; so I laughed heartily over the mild but well-merited snubbing I had received.

“I think I deserve some reward for taking your civil reproof so good humoredly,” I said, as I turned over the leaves of a volume of Beethoven's sonates. I came to the twelfth sonate, Opus 26,—the grand sonate, in La bémol. “Is it too much to ask this to-night?”

“Not in this atmosphere,” answered Ehrenherz, graciously. “One can fly great lengths and heights before such an audience. But,” he added, as he sat at the piano, and turned over the leaves of the music, “it makes me wish for the fingers and poetical coloring of a Liszt.”

“Oh, Mr. Ehrenherz!” cried Marie, “have you ever read what De Lanz says of Wehrstaedt, of Genève, in reference to this twelfth sonate?”

Ehrenherz had not, and we read to him the amusing story De Lanz relates, in his admirable work, *Trois Styles de Beethoven*. The theme of the first part of this sonate was the life occupation of this eccentric but simple-minded artist, Wehrstaedt, who, in 1837, was considered the best master of the piano in Genève. De Lanz says,—

“When he came to give me my lesson, at the *pension* of the celebrated Swiss pastor, Bouvier, Wehrstaedt seated himself, after giving me a dry salutation, beside the horrible piano of the pension, without saying a word, or without removing his hat from his head. I opened the twelfth sonate of Beethoven, and placed it on the music-stand. He threw on me a sad look. ‘Why this piece?’ he asked, in a mournful tone. ‘Why not a *galop* of Herz?’ ‘Because I like it,’ I answered, ‘and I have played it a great deal.’ ‘What a pity!’ he said, sorrowfully. ‘Why, do you know,

you cannot possibly understand what this first page contains?’

“I commenced playing it, as people play who have had what are ordinarily called ‘good masters;’ masters who are like the mice, that comprehend nothing of the architecture of the grange through which they scamper. ‘Stop!’ he said abruptly, and, pushing me away from the piano, took my place. Shall I tell you how he played? I am not able. His fingers seemed glued to the keys, as inseparably as the Siamese twins to one another. The Beethoven theme and the piano appeared to make one individual. Never have I heard a similar *legato*; a coherency so exactly calculated for the tones of a piano, an expression so penetrating, or a rhythm so severe. After that was over, he held out the encouraging hope to me that, by following his counsels, I might possibly play, after a year's practice, the first eight measures of the *motif* ‘tolerably’ well. The crescendo would exact a new and serious study of crescendo in general, and this one in particular. As to the *contre partie* of the *motif*,—here he drew a hopeless sigh, saying, ‘I have had to give up playing this myself, on account of that diabolical trill on the *re*. A conscientious study of twenty years, young man, has not enabled me to do it properly.’

“This trill, to which the executant can only give the third and fourth fingers of the right hand, while the thumb and the first finger are occupied, is just saved,—barely accomplished, as all pianists admit. Wehrstaedt had made the trill of the third and fourth fingers, in these difficult positions, *the study of his life*! But the equality of his trill, its fullness, the sharpness of its termination—and the force, above all, with which the little finger attacked the *Mi bémol*, which follows in the passage referred to—was something approaching to the marvelous. During a long sojourn at Genève, Wehrstaedt, like Madame de Stael, never visited Chamouni; that says enough for the musician, as it does for the great authoress. To exercise this trill, to give enough

lessons to the Genevese to enable him, as he said, 'in an appreciable time to espouse' some great unknown damsel of Berne—whose charms he celebrated daily in the four exquisite sonates of Weber—such was the existence of this excellent man, the most inoffensive of human beings."

Ehrenherz laughed heartily over this humorous story, then commenced the captivating theme of this epic of sonates. It is one of those inspirations that can come only once in the life of an artist. As I sat listening to the five variations on the theme, I thought of those exquisite "Sonnets, from the Portuguese," of Mrs. Browning; each variation repeated, in a ravishing style, the subject of the theme, as each one of those beautiful sonnets repeat the sweet confession of love. Then the last variation was calm and complete in its expression; the love had arrived at its "perfect purple fullness," as in the last sonnet is sung with quiet rapture, the sweet mounting up to the full completion of the heart's bliss,—

"I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears of all my life."

Then the melodic phrase at the end of the variation seemed to say,—

"And, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death."

The scherzo, Ehrenherz rolled off grandly. The shafts of the treble responded sharply to the volleys of the base, and this glorious base sounded like the dashing of the waves of our beautiful lake, during a storm, against the terrace walls of the chateau. The third part is the famous *Marche Funèbre sur la mort d'un hero*. How different from Chopin's *Marche Funèbre*! and yet equally grand in its genre: one is subjective, the other objective. In Beethoven's, one sees the funeral procession passing, the troops drawn up on either side; the rolling of the drums salutes with solemn reverence

the lifeless remains of a man who must have been the glory and pride of a nation, as, with gloomy pomp, he is borne into the superb mausoleum; it is a grand military display over the burial of a great warrior. But Chopin's sonate and "Marche Funèbre" are widely different. The sonate seems the gloomy reverie of the mind, on the approaching death of its mortal part; whether death will extend to the soul, which it has fondly hoped was immortal, agonizes the thoughts. How confused and involved grows the harmony of the last pages of this sonate! There is expressed the doubt, the horror of nothingness, the dread of annihilation; all this presses in upon the poor, shivering spirit; and dumb, despairing chords and modulations bring the reverie to the solemn close of death,—to that moment when the great secret shall be disclosed! Then follows the "Marche Funèbre," which seems as the resolving of all this suspense and dismay, for it sounds like a solemn chant of spirits, bearing the soul aloft to higher, purer realms, with soothing strains and full glorious harmony, fully compensating for the terrible, gloomy, discordant doubts of the sonate.

But to return to Beethoven's. After Ehrenherz finished the "Marche Funèbre," he grasped the finale of this marvelous twelfth sonate. This allegro displayed to great advantage his cleverness as a *pianist*. The chromatic *grupetti* flew like arrows through the wind, and yet his right hand rested calm and firm, while it threw off, with masterly dexterity, the brilliant groups of double crotchets.

"Ah, Beethoven, Beethoven!" cried Marie, her soft brown eyes swimming with emotion, as Ehrenherz finished the last measure. "How true it is, that one cannot be taught his music! it must be felt and understood. I cannot express my thanks to you for this piece of execution. I have always felt how this sonate should be played, but have never heard it before, satisfactorily. Wolfmaister always makes of it what Chopin used to call 'a pigeon chase.'"

"'Finger tanz,' as Beethoven called the style of playing

you mean," said Ehrenherz, laughing. "The *legato* is the principal thing to aim at. You have the idea exactly, Mademoiselle Merle; just as you execute that sonata in Sol, Opus 14, that you played for me this evening,—that is the true style. See, how you change from left to right hand, in order to save break or interruption,—that is the great charm of piano-forte playing. The *lié* style alone produces a beautiful tone; the sound must be coaxed out, as it were, when the executant touches the keys."

A little more pleasant talk, and then Ehrenherz bade us good night, promising to be with us early the next morning.

CHAPTER XXI.

EHRENHERZ'S LAST EVENING.

It was Ehrenherz's last day with us. He had already stayed longer in Peilz than he had dreamed of, when he stopped for a few days to see me once again. But Marie's wonderful talent, the musical atmosphere surrounding us—united to the pleasure of being with an old friend, who could talk with him about at least one period of his sweet past with his beloved sister—had proved irresistible; and he had stayed on, week after week, insensibly. We had walked with him everywhere; for, luckily, while he was with us the weather had been remarkably fine: no snow on the roads, and only enough cold weather to make icicles on our beautiful little cascade d'Hauteville, and to whiten the tops of our mountains.

That afternoon, Ehrenherz and I had walked to Hauteville, with Dora and Beau. We spent an hour or more, exploring the beautiful points of that lovely Swiss estate; we descended the narrow, ivy-covered steps, leading down the woody hill to the ravine beneath the second cascade, and looked at the long, pendant icicles, the soaring pine trees, and the rugged rocks; then down on the Oignon, moving slowly across the jagged tops of its rocky bed, over which, in spring, it would dash so madly. Some two or three years after, the Parisian critics were writing learned articles over a new symphony of Ehrenherz. One passage confused these modern Athenians; it was called, as they expressed it, "from a caprice of the composer, the Cascade." "But," said B., that cleverest of all musical æsthetical writers

of the day, "if it is a waterfall, it is a frozen one; rugged and wintry is the landscape, and sluggish is the flow of the stream."

Ehrenherz wrote to me at the time, "I wish you could hear my symphony. You should, of all others; for it is a memory of our last visit to Hauteville, that January afternoon, three years ago. Have you read B.'s clever criticism on it? Which, by the way, is far superior to my humble symphony, doing me a great deal too much honor; like 'Shakspeare's critics, bringing to view, more than Shakspeare ever knew.' But how well he sees into my waterfall!"

I little imagined, when we stood looking at the wild, picturesque spot, that our visit would be thus grandly commemorated; and have often thought since of the speculations of biographers, some generation or two after our time, over the meaning of this name, given to that part of this great composition by the wonderful young maestro.

Then we slowly clambered back, and went up to the Belvedere, near the green-houses of the chateau, and sat on its steps for a long while, looking down on the lake,—

"which, like a shield
Some giant long had ceased to wield,
Lay with its edges sunk in sand and stone;"—

and over into the beautiful Rhone valley. Dents du Midi were enveloped in a poetic sunny haze; the white, glittering snows of Mount Velan and Mount Catogne shone resplendent; and the graceful outline of Dent de Morcles stood clearly out against the deep blue sky, so graciously chiseled by nature's master hand. The weather was bland, and warm as early spring; the sashes of the green-houses were pushed aside, and the exotics sent out their balmy greeting on the air to this lovely young spring day, lying with such bewitching coquetry "in the lap of old winter." All the laborers, men and women, were out in the vineyards, digging

around and tying up the vines; the air was filled with their merry voices: first the words, then the laughs, then a distant, broken song; and mingled with all these rustic, pastoral sounds, was the warbling of the little birds, rejoicing over Dame Nature's soft, indulgent winter. On our left stretched up the beautiful Pleiades, from whose *riante* sides Blonay's old towers stood clearly out; numberless little mountain villages peeped out here and there, and Ehrenherz pointed to the soft blue vapor hanging over each one, telling the hour of the evening meal—the *gouter*—which, to his "home-loving" German tastes, added a sweeter charm to the scene.

"How often," he said, "shall I think of this, when shut up in a dark city, in the close atmosphere of our winter rooms! a draught of fresh air, blowing from an open window over a pot of violets or a box of *réséda*, will remind me of it. I will shut my eyes, and invoke from memory a sight of this picture, the imprint of which I now commit to her faithful charge,—and it will cheer and refresh me."

He did more, for he has commemorated that afternoon gloriously; and that is why my memory brings back so vividly each detail. Often, in the crowded concert rooms, I have listened to the divine pastoral sounds of his marvelous symphony; and while the enthusiastic crowd have watched the beautiful unfoldings of harmony created by this young modern master of instrumentation, dazzled and entranced by his gorgeous orchestral coloring, I have closed my eyes, and straightway memory's magic doors would fly open, showing me as complete a representation of that Swiss scene as if it had been really present; not only the sounds, but the poetic, hazy sunlight, and even the atmospheric fragrance and vapor.

Hugh Miller says that metaphysicians have not yet entered some provinces of the mind: "That there is a mysterious cabinet of daguerreotype pictures, of which, though fast locked up on ordinary occasions, disease sometimes

flings the door ajar." To this myterious cabinet, music also possesses the key,—the magical sesame; and the pictures are not mere daguerreotypes, for not only are forms found there, but sounds and odors—odors unthought of at the time, but whose fragrance remains in the pure atmosphere of this sanctuary, fresh and unfading; the very tones of loved ones, the dead lost and living lost, ring in our ears; those short, kind words, spoken by them without thought in the past,—and only one instant, it may have been, in the utterance,—but whose echoes are endless!

"The world is wide—these things are small;
They may be nothing—but they are all!"

While Dora and Beau walked up and down the beautiful avenue of tilleuls, Ehrenherz and I talked of the past, of the darlings "gone before," of the tarrying place, the loss of loved ones made of earth.

"A little more work," he said, "a little more patient endurance of the separation, and then our eyes will be truly opened, and we shall see them again. But life is so calm and sweet to me now, so without the unrest of ambition, that I fancy her spirit must be hovering ever around me, smoothing away all roughness,—‘making straight distorted wills,’ as that beautiful poem you read last evening says. Life has no rude points since she left me—or, rather, since our eyes closed on her presence. At first, you know how hard it was for me to think of taking up life without her; but it seemed mercifully arranged for me; even my weary lessons, formerly such a leaden round, became brightened to me,—every pupil seemed imbued with a portion of her presence. Then came this gratifying offer from Europe, and, strange to say, that very nonette I composed during the last summer of her life, and which she loved so much, had a great deal to do with the decision in my favor. Oh, my friend! it surely cannot be mere fancy, this idea I have, that she is my guardian spirit,—loving me as she did in life, and pos-

sessing more power to work good for me, after the emancipation of death."

In a chapel of Saint Francesco de Paolo, at Naples, is a painting representing a guardian spirit conducting a youth; the life path is covered with sharp thorns, on which the boy treads with bare, bleeding feet; before him lies the tempter Sin, holding the mirror of vanity up in front of him, to dazzle him; but the youth looks steadfastly into the face of his angel guide, rests lovingly on the encircling arm, and is borne safely along. So looked Ehrenherz, as he said these words. "I felt awe stricken; I thought I could see the violet wings, and snowy vesture of an angel; it seemed as if we were on holy ground; and most exquisitely the adagio of his symphony, in that dorée violet key of *Si bémol*, expresses all he said on that sweet day, and all I felt.

The beautiful moon rose, and hung over the lake its pure orb, mingling its silver rays with the orange and crimson light of the setting sun. The snowy tops of the Savoy Alps looked as if chiseled out of pure white marble, and stood cutting and clear against the sky. We walked slowly home, Beau fast asleep in Dora's arms, completely tired out with his afternoon's race; and Ehrenherz and I lingered along the road, turning every little while and stopping, as though we never expected to see the place again, and were bidding it adieu.

We drank tea with Marie; and Mr. Merle and Tante Cecile had a long talk with Ehrenherz over his American reminiscences. Then we ascended to the salon, and Marie played for him his favorites, "Lament" and "Consolation" of Chopin; her own beautiful "Etudes;" and the "Wedding March," from Mendelssohn's "*Songe d'une Nuit d'Été*." Then she poured out, like a rich golden wine, her arrangement of the "Adelaide" of Beethoven. The beautiful andante flowed from beneath her fingers as a delicious idyl; and that allegro, so ineffective for the voice, from her exquisite accenting and rich accessories, mounted up glori-

ously, and became all that my taste exacted of me in vain, when I sang it.

"It is so provoking," I cried out, as she finished, "for a singer to love a passage as I do that allegro, and yet feel that it is so completely untranslatable into the language of song!"

But they both made me sing it to them, their ears of loving friendship giving the piece all that it lost by being sung. Then Ehrenherz took the piano, and played for us those exquisite improvisations on thoughts and feelings, so different from improvisings on given themes. At last he remained silent for a moment; then, striking a chord in *Mi bémol*, commenced the adagio introduction of Beethoven's "*Les Adieux, L'Absence, et Le Retour*," Opus 81. How touchingly the first three notes seemed to utter "*Lebewohl!*" I think I never, before or after, heard Ehrenherz play that difficult but powerful sonata so well; it was an execution of inspiration.

In the "*Adieux*," the parting friends appeared to return again and again, to say, tenderly, "*Lebewohl!*" the descending gamuts were like the lingering steps of departure; and the curious effect in the finale of this first division of the sonata—of the redoubled blows of the tonic and dominant—was like a bodily presence of those clanging doors, invisible to the eyes, but so sensibly heard and felt at certain epochs of our lives, when one phrase succeeds another, and the past, and all connected with it, is shut out from us irrevocably.

Ehrenherz's touch and accent, always so faultless, became heightened by inspiration; and this passage, which ordinarily needs the orchestral effect to present the poetic idea intended to be conveyed by this curious expression, was made as clear to us as if we had had all the grand *timbre* of a full orchestra. Then followed the "*andante*," which expresses the sorrow of absence. There was the magic circle of memory; the three tone syllables, as of one loved name; the dwelling on the sweet words, as it were; then came that

ravishing episode of the flute solo, so soft, so tender and trusting,—this gentle grief of "*Abwesenheit*."

The "*Return*" then rang out grandly a hymn of joy and gratitude; Ehrenherz's hands seemed gifted with double power, and Marie's Erard was possessed with a sympathizing spirit, for the glorious lights and shadows of an orchestra hung around the grand picture, as his skillful fingers rapidly sketched it out.

He struck the last notes, rose from the piano, took both our hands together, kissed them, and left the room in silence. Our hands were wet, telling us that his cheeks had been tear-washed as well as our own. A touching and fitting farewell from our young maestro. Often in the future, as it unfolded more and more gloriously for those two gifted artists, did I recall that night with happy pride.

CHAPTER XXII.

BAD NEWS.

THE snow fell silently and heavily; all around us towered white peaks, and the ravines, stretched down to the lake, looking like frozen mountain water-courses. "The hardest winter for many years," so every one said, and the dullest one Peilz had known since the establishment of Institution Eperveil, thirty years before. The usual weekly exhibitions of the students, in the lecture-hall, were lessened to monthly; then they had dramatic scenes, sometimes a lecture on chemistry and natural philosophy, with interesting experiments, but no music. Wolfmaister was absent on business speculations in England, relating to his Clarens lots, and making preparations for a terrible railway, which was to tear ruthlessly right through the pretty green heart of our walk above Territet, but which, if it did spoil the picturesque beauties of this lovely shore, would raise the prices of Wolfmaister's cottage property to a mythical height.

Madame Eperveil gave no grand soirées, no dinners, nor even any pleasant social coteries, in her own salon. The old lady lived in solemn, solitary state, having but little to say to any one. After our unfortunate scene at Point du Pays, at the time of Hélène's departure, we had been very cool to each other. The Professor and Madame Bouvreuil dined with her, as usual, on Sundays, and I went to the Merles. Always, as I returned from the V. chapel on Sunday noon, I would meet Marie and Tante Cecile coming out of the old Peilz church, where Mr. Merle preached; and the dear old pastor had a regular standing joke for the occasion; as he

stretched out his hand to give me a friendly greeting, he would say: "Now the lion and the lamb will lie down peacefully together at the same repast. Brother Martin and the Mother Church have ceased their battles; surely the day of millennium is at hand."

During the first part of the year, just after Ehrenherz had left, Tante Octavie sent us all a special invitation to dine with her. The old lady received Marie and me graciously, but coldly, and the dinner was a little stiff. We all noticed how thin and haggard Tante Octavie looked; and I saw, as we stood on the balcony, after dinner, to watch the sunset, that in her rich bandeaux of hair there were many shining silver threads. I felt sorry for the old lady, very sorry; but her stately tread, and sternly compressed lips, and slightly-knit brow, showed that she did not want any one's sorrow or sympathy.

Octave's name was never mentioned; even when letters came from him, which was not often, Madame Bouvreuil said nothing of their contents; but I noticed that she and the professor always looked solemn and anxious after the reception of them. Weekly we heard from Hélène, short, dull, dry letters. Poor child! she was being worked too hard in her new English home. Every hour, from seven o'clock in the morning until nine at night, was filled up with occupations. One of her letters to me gave an account of her daily routine.

"You ask me for a detail of my duties, Fanny," she wrote, in part of the letter; "weary enough they are. I awaken at six; at seven Arthur and Edgar are ready in the school-room for their lessons; at half-past eight we have family prayers and breakfast—a half hour generally finishes both ceremonies. O Fanny! I often wonder, while listening to the cold, dry devotions, if God listens to our formalities. At nine o'clock the little girls come to me, and I teach them *everything* until one o'clock, when they go out to ride, or walk, while I mark and look over Miss Landsnecht's music,

and select those pieces I think may suit *her style*. Then follows luncheon, which is the dinner for the children and governess. In the afternoon, I go to the music-room, and give the music lessons to the little girls, and sometimes play duos with Miss Landsnecht. An hour before the family dinner I go to the sitting-room of Mrs. Landsnecht's mother, a dressy old dowager, Lord S.'s grandmother, and from whom he certainly inherited his great amount of sense; to her I read French novels aloud, and if Miss Landsnecht is through with her dinner toilette, she listens, for the improvement of her pronunciation and ear, which surely need all the culture I can possibly give them.

"After that, I am free for about an hour, but I am so weary that I throw my poor, tired body on my bed to rest. Then comes the summons that Masters Arthur and Edgar are ready, and I go to look over their classical lessons, and help them prepare for their tutor; this said tutor being quite too elegant a person to do anything but read prayers, in a drawly tone, give careless lessons in the morning to the boys, and flirt with Miss Landsnecht; he being allowed to do all this because he is the son of a younger son of a poor lord somebody, and this, to my rich but *bourgeoise* patrons, is something worth regarding. At nine the bell is rung for prayers—those '*dreadful prayers*!' as Marie Merle would call them, if she felt about them as I do. These evening prayers are like some festivals in the church, movable, being dependent on the will of the tutor; and, if he wishes to go to the opera, or has any other engagement, he is apt to summon us earlier, for he need not be courteous or thoughtful, as his congregation consists only of children, governess, and servants.

"Sometimes I receive a courteous invitation to spend the evening in the drawing-room; kind, to be sure, this invitation sounds, but I groan inwardly whenever it comes, for I know they only mean that I am expected to go and grind

out quadrilles, mazurkas, and valse for some little company of Mrs. Landsnecht and her daughter.

"I am ashamed of my sharp, complaining letter, Fanny. Do not let *maman* see it, please; that is why I send it, under cover, to Marie Merle. I do wonder if I shall grow used to being a governess? However, one comfort, if I have to be one to the end of my life, that life, in such a case, will not be very long in the world. Fanny, life is solemn business, after all, as I have heard you say; and I was so happy in those days, only one short year ago, that I wondered to hear you say so.

"Good-by, dear friend; write often to me; tell me everything you can about *maman*; how she looks, and talks, and feels. Do not let her work too much; do not let her assist Fanchette in the fine ironing. Remember your own mother, Fanny, and watch over mine. No one can tell how I long for her; sometimes in the night I awaken, and think she is by me; then my very heart stands still with agony, when, as I grow fully awake, I realize that I am so far away from her."

Poor Hélène! Tante Cecile, Marie, and I mourned a great deal over this letter; the tone of it was so unlike Hélène. It seemed strange to see our merry, graceful, gentle friend so transformed as to be writing and feeling bitter thoughts; there was a hardness and hopelessness in her words, which proved how desolate and dispiriting must be her mode of life.

One day I was sitting with Tante Cecile, embroidering, listening to Marie, who was playing in the salon, and talking, in an under-tone to the old lady; it was in the spring, and the weather was sufficiently warm for us to sit in the tower room. We were on each side of the beautiful stained-glass window, quite out of Marie's sight and hearing, and Tante Cecile took the opportunity to tell me some sad news of Octave.

"He is behaving badly enough," said Tante Cecile, lean-

ing over to me, and in reply to a remark of mine about him. "Brother Leonard has been consulted by Madame Eperveil, for her suspicions about him are beginning to be roused."

"Beginning!" I repeated over, impatiently; "just as if she has not had reason enough to open her eyes to his habits any time since I came to Peilz."

"Yes, to be sure," continued Tante Cecile; "but I suppose affairs are so bad now that she finds she must open her eyes to the truth. Poor Octavie Eperveil! she is very anxious. She says she has sent him large sums of money, at different times, during the past two years, whenever he has been absent; but, that since last summer his demands upon her have been enormous; she has exhausted all her resources; and when she wrote, telling him this, he answered that he must have money, or he should be disgraced, as it was for debts of honor!"

Poor old lady! Now I understand the reason of the discontinuance of her winter amusements; she had had to observe strict economy to meet even the regular expenses of the institution. How her haggard, worn face rose up before me! I wished sincerely I had never quarreled with her in the past; and I thought over with remorse of the foolish subjects of difference between us, which caused such a separation now, when I might be able to comfort her by pleasing, gentle attentions. My heart yearned to be something to her. I forgot all her unkind tyranny; I thought only of her lonely hours, her age, and her sorrow. Something like this I said to Tante Cecile, who replied: "All this is very natural, my child, but it would be hard work to comfort Octavie Eperveil. Such stern natures as hers have to bear trouble alone. It's the old story of the Spartan boy, with such people."

A few mornings after this conversation, while Madame Bouvreuil and Fanchette were at market, the door bell rang violently. Dora answered it, and returned with a telegram in her hand. I knew it could not be for me, but still my

heart throbbed painfully as I took it hastily from Dora's hands. So long as I live, the arrival of a telegram will cause me this suffering; for one sunny June morning, I was awakened from a bright dream, to read one, in which I expected to find the joyful news of a birth, and read death!

"It is not from England, Mademoiselle Fauvette," said Dora, with affectionate eagerness, seeing my agitation; she knew we were anxious about Hélène's health, and hastened to relieve my mind on that score.

No; it was from Naples, where Octave was with Lord S., and it was directed to Professor Bouvreuil. I sent Dora with it to Institution Eperveil, telling her to see Mr. Serin, if possible, first; but on her return, she said Madame Eperveil met her, and told her she would attend to it, that she need not wait. A short while after, Fanchette returned from market alone; she said, that as they passed Eperveil, Mr. Serin had come out to meet them, and told Madame Bouvreuil that Madame Eperveil wished to see her. The dinner hour arrived, but neither the professor nor madame came. Fanchette slipped off, without my knowledge, to the institution, and came back sobbing, ready to break her heart. She burst into my room, exclaiming: "Oh, Mademoiselle Fauvette—Mademoiselle Fauvette, Monsieur Octave is dead! The poor Dame Bouvreuil! The poor Mademoiselle Hélène!"

And she sat down on the cushion at my feet, and, throwing her apron over her face, sobbed bitterly, while Dora and I gazed at her, stupefied. Dead! Octave Bouvreuil dead! It seemed impossible. I had dreaded some indefinable bad news, but never once thought of death. Indeed, it was hard to associate death and the gay, bright Octave Bouvreuil together. I tried to make the girl talk intelligibly, but the poor creature was too stunned to know anything clearly; all I could gather was, that Madame Bouvreuil was so occupied with Madame Eperveil and the professor that she could not return home. Then out burst the girl again: "Oh, the poor

Dame Bouvreuil, she bears it like a Christian angel, as she is !”

I hurried around to the chateau, not knowing in what way I could make myself of service. Tante Cecile and Mr. Merle were already at the institution, and I found Marie pacing the salon floor, pressing her temples with her hands; her large, brown eyes were horribly dilated, and around them were deep dark rings; every vestige of color had left her lips and cheeks, and every feature was pinched and convulsed—but not one tear fell. When she saw me, she gazed at me wildly; then, covering her face with her hands, and shivering from head to foot, she sank on a seat, saying, in a hoarse, husky whisper: “Is it not fearful? And to die so terribly !”

I did not attempt to soothe her; I sat in silence beside her. What mortal sympathy can soothe the grief we feel for the death of those we love? Resignation—patience! What idle words! All that is human rises up resentfully under the blinding pain of the blow death gives; the soul lies stunned, and the poor mortal beats helplessly around.

“But God gives patience; Love learns strength;
And Faith remembers promise.”

Yes; and something like resignation comes at last—a quiet submission; but always, always throughout life, there will be seasons when the heart will suffer over again the sense of the loss as keenly as at the first moment of misery, and again will come the blinding, reeling despair.

I knew this; and I knew also how wickedly impatient all mortal soothing make the truly suffering; so I sat, in silence, before her. At last, I thought I might rouse her by making her talk, and I told her I knew nothing but that he was dead; this made her give me, though unwillingly, what little detail they knew about the sad affair. The exertion, however, was of service to her, and took away from her glazed eyes the fearful, stony look which had alarmed me.

The telegram was from Lord S., and merely contained

these words: “Mr. Octave Bouvreuil is dead. A pistol went off accidentally in his hands an hour ago, and killed him.” A few days after, there came sadder details. It appeared that Octave had quarreled with some one of the friends of Lord S., who had insulted him; and when Octave challenged him, the young man refused to fight him, giving, as a reason, that he did not pay his gambling debts. When his second brought him back this offensive answer, Octave was standing by a table, examining a pair of dueling pistols. He listened to the answer without making any other reply than a sneering laugh. His second stood by the table, and watched him, while he loaded the pistols, without thinking of anything but of how they should arrange the disagreeable affair. Octave put the pistol to his temple, saying, coolly: “*Eh bien*, if Captain M. will not do me the favor to blow out my brains, I suppose I shall have to do it myself.”

The words ended as the pistol was fired, and the unfortunate young man was a horribly mangled corpse, before his startled companion fairly comprehended the words. At first, the affair was represented as an accident; but, after the above details were told, there was little doubt in any of our minds about the real truth—horrible though it might be. We all believed that Octave, stung to the quick by the double insult, and the thought of his disgraceful position rushing suddenly over him, it had rendered him, for the instant, insane with anguish; in this state of mind, he had rashly chosen his own selfish way of ending life and all its difficulties. This sorrowful story was mercifully kept from his family; no one connected with him, except Tante Octavie, nearer than Mr. Merle, Tante Cecile, and I, ever knew the sad truth; we never even told Marie.

Poor, gay, brilliant Octave Bouvreuil! it was so hard to realize his being dead! Many years have passed since that sunshiny May day of his death; and yet even now, sometimes when I am listening to some passages of music,

or walking in the grounds of Institution Eperveil, or talking in the balcony window of my old salon at Madame Bouvreuil's, I start, and think I hear his musical voice, his keen, sarcastic laugh; or in the twilight I fancy I see his graceful form, moving to and fro, under the old Marron d'Inde, smoking his meerschaum. Death is hard to realize when it takes place under one's eyes—even when the glazed eye, and cold hand, and hushed lips of the one who never failed to respond lovingly to you, lie before you; but when it takes place far from you, there can be no reality in it to you; the world still contains the living memory, even if the friend lie mouldering in the earth.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HÉLÈNE.

SUCH a sad, sad week as it was, after the tragic news of that bright May day! Poor Professor Bouvreuil lay as one stunned with a heavy blow, and Madame Eperveil raged like a wild woman. The mother bore it better than any one,—the mother whose violent outbursts could have been more readily sympathized with; and she moved about calmly and seriously, encouraging and rousing her husband, and endeavoring to assuage Madame Eperveil's fury, whose grief was like "one who mourned without hope." Not a reproach fell from Madame Bouvreuil's lips,—not a word, reminding them of her misgivings and remonstrances in the beginning; she who should have been sustained, had to be a support; but Tante Cecile, Marie, and I did all we could to help her. When alone with us sometimes, she would let Marie and me caress her, and then give up gently to her grief; a quiet flow of tears was all; no passionate, hopeless sobbing, only the mortal part of the mother mourned; her calm, naturally well-poised mind soon righted itself, and enabled her soul to rest on God.

"Ah!" she said one evening, "how is Hélène ever to know this? I have tried several times to write to her, but cannot summon up the courage. Poor child! I fear she is very miserable in her dreary home. I do not like the tone of her letters; they sound not only *triste*, but hard. She must come home, and shall, directly this year's engagement is finished. She shall never leave me again; she is the only child left to us, and we must guard her well."

We were sitting in my little salon at the time. I heard a knock at the outer door; Dora went out, then returned with Fanchette, who said Madame Eperveil was in Madame Bouvreuil's salon, and wished to see the ladies.

"She wishes to see Madame Bouvreuil," I said.

"Oh no, mademoiselle!" answered Fanchette, stepping forward, "Madame Eperveil inquired who was with madame, and then said particularly that she wished to see all the ladies, madame and mesdemoiselles; she even called me back, and asked me if I understood her."

We stared at each other with surprise, but, without making any remark, we proceeded to the salon. I had not seen Madame Eperveil since the sad news had arrived. She looked very pale and gaunt,—like some great Norsewoman might, after a combat. She bowed in a stately manner to us as we entered, and I noticed that she had in her hand a letter, which she clutched rather than held. She was in the deepest mourning; and as I saw the heavy, widow-like weeds, and the long, thick crêpe veil hanging in heavy black folds around her, I remembered having heard Madame Bouvreuil say that her grief for Octave's death was greater than she had shown after any other trouble; and yet I knew she had buried her father, an only sister, and an excellent husband, with a calmness amounting to *sang froid*; and these were all estimable people; while to this nephew, whose whole life had been a disappointment and a mortification, she was giving all the pent-up tears of her life.

We sat down, but Madame Eperveil did not remain long seated; she paced up and down the room with long strides. We looked from her to Madame Bouvreuil, who was observing her sister-in-law's movements anxiously.

"Octavie!" exclaimed Madame Bouvreuil, "what is the matter?"

Did the mother's instincts forebode fresh trouble? Madame Bouvreuil's voice startled us, it was so hot and hissing. Madame Eperveil came up to her sister-in-law, and, taking

her hand with a trembling grasp, said in a hoarse, choked voice, "Lolah, do not be alarmed; all will be, *must* be well."

"My daughter, my daughter!" shrieked the poor mother; then, starting up in the middle of the room, she added, in a quick, low tone that struck to my heart, "Where is she? I must go to her instantly. Oh, Octavie Eperveil! have you taken both from me?" and fell senseless to the ground.

I called Dora, and with her aid we lifted the poor afflicted mother on the *canapé*. Madame Eperveil stood dumb; at last she turned to me and said, "Mademoiselle Fauvette, Hélène has been very ill, but they assure me she is better; she must be, for she is now on her way home. Here is the letter I received a half hour since; be so good as to read it, for I see my *belle sœur* is too much overcome to be able to assist me with her counsel."

There was a little struggle evidently going on, to hold fast to her old, grand manner. I read the letter; it was from Mr. Landsnecht, and, like himself, cold, dry, and proud; he seemed to wish to resent upon the whole family the little trouble Octave had caused them, without feeling any sympathy for them as the greatest sufferers.

"Under present circumstances, madam," said the letter, after telling of Hélène's illness, "Miss Hélène Bouvreuil cannot possibly remain in our family. I have offered her her salary in full for the year, ending the coming September, the whole of which she refuses to take; I have placed the balance, however, subject to your order, at my banker's, and you can draw upon Genton & Co., in V., for it, whenever you please. Of course, she is ignorant of the late disgraceful event; I did not wish to have any unnecessary suffering going on under my roof, my family having been sufficiently annoyed already. Miss B. will be accompanied to the continent by my valet, George Wilkins. They will be at G. on the seventeenth, where George will have to leave her, as he is *en route* for Italy."

"A fine specimen of manly feeling!" I thought. And these were Madame Eperveil's grand, holiday friends; for whom she had sacrificed the comfort, and even happiness of every one connected with her; and to be acquainted with whom she had considered such an advantage. Step by step her punishments were coming thick upon her; but how vainly I prayed, that her chastisements need not strike down the guiltless and unoffending! By the time I had finished reading the letter, Madame Bouvreuil had revived sufficiently to hear its contents; and the expectation of Hélène's speedy arrival relieved somewhat the mother's anxious fears. That day was the sixteenth of May, the next would be the day appointed for Hélène to be in G.

"And to-morrow night, dear Madame Bouvreuil," I said, "you will have your daughter."

But who was to go for her? It should be some one who could break the sad news to her; for it would be not only cruel, but dangerous to let her arrive at that house of mourning, and receive the news suddenly, in her delicate state of health.

"Mr. Serin will go," said Madame Eperveil, "but——" and her voice faltered.

She meant to say, that a man was not the proper person to perform such a delicate office; and yet she felt too helpless to offer to go herself. She, the capable woman, here in the real emergency of the family was useless.

"Madame Eperveil," I said, "Mr. Merle, Marie, and I will go."

"Thank you, thank you!" exclaimed Madame Eperveil, in a tone of unfeigned gratitude; and so it was settled.

The next morning, in the early boat, our excellent pastor, Marie, and I proceeded on our way down the lake, to G. That glorious lake of ours! But we were both too anxious, to notice our favorite points; in vain Mr. Merle tried to interest us. The terraced vineyard slopes of the *riante* Vaudois, and the rugged but picturesque sublimity of the Savoy

Alps, on either shore, were most beautiful to behold, as the young morning sun, in streaming down out of the Rhone gorge, poured his rays full upon them; but we could not find pleasure in looking at them. We even let the chance of seeing Mont Blanc go by unheeded, when we passed Morges; we were too tightly reined up with indefinable anxieties, to look patiently at anything. As we neared G., Marie said,—

"*Voyez vous*, Fanny Fauvette, have you arranged in your mind how we shall tell Hélène?"

"No," I replied, "I always let such approaching disagreeabilities shape themselves, and trust to *le bon Dieu* to help me."

As I spoke, I saw Mr. Landsnecht's valet on the wharf, looking out for us. Good, kind, old George Wilkins! There was more of the real gentleman in his heart than in a score of such as his would-be elegant master. He hurried up to us as we landed, and the mixture of extreme respect and deep sympathy which his manner showed, was very touching.

"Miss Hélène is at the Hotel de B.," he said, touching his hat. And as we walked up to this hotel, which was near the landing, he added to me, "Ah, Miss Fauvette, the poor young lady is very pining and weakly. She has been dangerously ill; my wife, who nursed her, thought she never would raise her. She knows nothing of the dreadful trouble yet, and I do not know how she can bear the hearing of it."

My heart sank within me as we ascended the stairs to her bedroom, for George had persuaded her to lie down soon after her arrival, which had been early in the morning. She was lying on the bed when we entered, but sprang immediately into the middle of the floor, with a sudden, quick bound. She greeted us with more haste than tenderness; asked after her mother, and when the next boat would leave, all in one sharp, feverish breath. She was very much altered; six or eight months in an uncongenial home, leading a life of severe application, cut off from affectionate

companionship, and all this following suddenly upon her disappointment with Kinnaird, had made sad havoc in her health. Her cheeks were almost purple; and her eyes, formerly so tender in their expression, looked like balls of fire; her merry laugh, her playful ways, her graceful, gentle movements, were all gone. I never could have imagined Hélène Bouvreuil fierce, but fierce she was now. Every nerve seemed throbbing loud enough for us to hear its beat, so tightly was she strung up. Marie Merle looked at me hopelessly, and while Hélène's sharp, quick words rattled out so unnaturally, she leaned over me and said, "Oh, Fanny, how can we ever tell her? I am afraid *le bon Dieu* is not going to help us."

"I wish the boat would leave sooner!" exclaimed Hélène, fretfully, and walking impatiently to the window. She, who used to be so patient and reasonable! "An hour, do you say?" she continued. "Then three hours more to reach Peilz; and I am so tired! No, no, no!" she answered, in a tone of extreme irritability, when we urged her to rest on the bed. "No, I do not want to lie down. I just want to see my mother, for I am so weary!" and she leaned her head on her hands, as if, poor tired child, she wanted "to shut her leaves and be a bud again;" to go to sleep, like a poor sick babe, on her mother's breast.

We sat in silence, and I must confess that my courage was fast oozing out; I began to feel that I had undertaken a duty quite beyond my ability to perform. Suddenly, Hélène looked up fiercely, as she heard Marie Merle and me exchanging, in a low whisper, our embarrassment as to how we should approach the subject.

"Girls," she cried, in a shrill voice, "what is the matter? You look as if you had some dreadful thing to tell me." Then, seizing me tightly by either wrist, she continued, in a hoarse, thick voice, "Fanny Fauvette, you tell me; but oh, in God's name, do not tell me any sad thing about my mother—that I cannot bear!"

Le bon Dieu had helped us! Grievous as was the sorrow, she dreaded a worse one, and that was a gracious help indeed. I do not know what I said; but the words came to me, and in a little while she knew all. I hoped she would weep, but she did not; she listened earnestly and quietly, her brow knitting at times fiercely.

"By the memory of your own mother, Fanny Fauvette, *my* mother is not——" she gasped, and the veins in her forehead grew thick, like purple cords.

"Your mother, darling, is quite well; of course, she has suffered very much; but she bears this severe visitation with more strength than your father or Madame Eperveil; they are——"

"Oh, never mind them!" she interrupted me, impatiently, as if she did not care how much they suffered,—nor did she; "but my mother, my mother! Oh, Fanny Fauvette, take me at once to my mother!" and she leaned her hot cheek on my shoulder.

"Poor child!" I said; but a short, thick sob broke my words, for Marie and I were weeping enough for all three. Hélène lifted up her head and gazed wildly at us. Fearing that our sobs had given her fresh alarm, I controlled myself, and added, "In a few hours you will be with your mother, Hélène; her hopes, all her expectations of future happiness in this life, are now centered in you. Last evening we were talking of you, and she said almost these very words. At this moment she is looking for you, and counting the instants to your arrival as anxiously as you are."

"Yes, take me to her," she said, vaguely. "My mother, my mother!" she murmured, as if only half comprehending my words; and she leaned her face on my shoulder again, and threw her arms heavily around me.

All this was very hard for me to bear; so often, in hours of lonely, feverish illness, I had felt that same mother-longing,—had cried out that same sad cry of mother, *my* mother; but, alas, in vain! No living mother had been near to an-

swer. I drew the suffering girl close to my breast, and wept bitterly. Presently she broke from me impatiently, and paced up and down the room without noticing us. The servant announced dinner. I went down to Mr. Merle, and told him of her reception of the news of Octave's death, and her feverish, dangerous state. The old clergyman shook his head.

"*Mais, mais, mais*—how I wish she was at home! The boat will not leave for an hour yet." And we both looked at our watches, as if by looking at them we hoped to hurry time.

Some dinner was sent up into the bedroom, but Hélène steadily refused everything; she walked up and down the room, or stood at the window, which looked toward the quai de B., in silence. It was a long, weary hour. At last the boat bell rang, and we hurried on board. The voyage was more silent than ours of the morning. Hélène paced up and down the deck incessantly, leaning on Mr. Merle's arm, whom she had received as if she had only parted from him yesterday.

Thank God! suspense does end at last in some way. After a painful endurance of the three hours, all of us looking stealthily at Hélène,—fearing the worst, and uncertain what that worst might be,—the old towers of Peilz church rose up between us and the northeast sky, its gray turrets and peaked roof lightened with the rising moon. In a little while after, Hélène was in her mother's arms. "Now," I thought, "she will surely weep." But no such blessed relief came; she hugged her mother convulsively to her, held her off at arms' length, and looked at her with those terrible, glaring eyes; then clutched her again, and kissed her with a fierce moan, that sounded more as if it came from some wounded animal than from a gentle, beautiful human being.

"I cannot bear this," said Madame Bouvreuil at last; "the child does not know what she is doing."

Hélène did not notice her father, nor Tante Octavie; nor

did she observe her mother's anxiety, nor hear her words; she was just filled with one set, fixed idea—the possession of her mother.

"Hélène," said Madame Bouvreuil, taking her daughter by the hand, and looking her steadily in the face, with as much calmness as she could command, "come with me into my room, darling; let us bid good night to our friends; we are both tired, birdie, and need rest."

These last words were said so solemnly that they sounded in my ears like a mournful presentiment, and I looked hastily toward Madame Epervail, who was gazing at Madame Bouvreuil with a mute expression of horror, which proved to me that the words had found the same mournful echo in her heart that they had in mine. Hélène looked at her mother for a few moments, as if she was trying to catch the meaning of her words; then rose mechanically, as her mother put her arm about her slender waist, and went straight out of the room, without noticing any one. A sad night followed, and sadder days; the fever raged; and the poor girl, at last, grew insensible even to her mother's presence. The sounds of the carriages, on the street fronting the house, would set her to shrieking fiercely; she imagined they were carrying her mother from her; so I proposed she should be taken into my bedroom, which, being in the back part of the house, was free from all such exciting noises.

There she lay, unconscious of the change, noticing no one; not even the tender, heart-broken mother, who gazed at her as if her whole soul would pour out in one flood of mother-love to save her; nor the haggard, glazed-eyed Tante Octavie, who would come into the room, and look at her for a few moments, then turn away with a look and low moan, as if God's judgments were swift and keen. Night and day we watched beside her, and examined Dr. Falcon's anxious look earnestly. At last she ceased talking; she appeared tired out, and she rolled weakly to and fro, and moaned sorrowfully. Toward nightfall one day, she fell into a sort of

stupor, and I thought she was dying. Dr. Falcon held her pulse a few moments; then, resting her hand softly on the coverlid, he whispered, "If she sleeps now, she will be better."

Madame Bouvreuil, who had been watching him eagerly, tottered; and, but for his grasp, would have fallen to the ground,—she had fainted. He lifted her up in his arms and carried her out of the room, and Marie Merle accompanied him. Shortly after he returned, saying that she had revived, but that he and the professor had persuaded her to take a little rest; accordingly he had given her a calming draught, and Marie Merle was to stay with her. He then gave me the directions for the night. He was forced to leave, as he had a patient who would probably need him all night; but he would tell Fanchette where he was going, that I might send for him if I saw any change.

"If Hélène continues to sleep, I shall have much more hope," he whispered, "and the longer that sleep is the better. I will tell Dora and Fanchette to keep perfect silence in the house. I shall call in after I leave my other patient; but I do not think you will need me before, for she is sleeping quietly and heavily now." And the kind physician, after leaning over Hélène, and gazing earnestly at her, nodded encouragingly at me, and left the room.

Dora lighted the night lamp, for I was too trembling to do it; and her firm, neat hand was always better in such little arrangements than mine. Then she went down stairs, to keep the house still. If I needed anything I was to ring; but no one was to enter the apartments without a summons from me, until the doctor's return. The door closed noiselessly, and I was left alone with the poor sick girl, whose hope of earthly life hung on a chance slighter than a thread.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.

THE *veilleuse* threw a strange, weird light over the chamber; it was a porcelain lantern, and the little cup of oil, on which the tiny taper floated, was inside of it; from an opening, about two inches square, proceeded the faint light which touched some articles in the room with as clear and strong a beam as its little strength possessed; the other rays were very faint. Brave little taper! there it toiled quietly on in that sea of oil, doing its very best; but that best was such a little. I looked from it on the beautiful girl, swimming noiselessly on her sea, just hovering between life and death; and she had done her best also; poor child! her best and strongest, which had been of so little avail,—like this poor taper, apparently weak and powerless. I bent close down to her; she lay so quiet, and in the vague light of the *veilleuse* the pallor on her face looked so like death, that my heart stood still with apprehension; but a slight quiver of the soft, tender lips, a faint thread of warm breath which crept from the pinched nostrils, told me that life still hovered over the frail nest of the body. That beautiful mouth! even all her sorrow and disappointment could not harden it; there were no lines left around it by the misery she had suffered; no deep marks of the spasmodic sobs wrung from her in the lonely hours of illness, when death seemed too hard to bear, far away from her darling mother and all she loved. The lips were not full and red, as they had been in the first, fresh flush of her beauty; but still the exquisite expression hung around them, like a faint light, flickering and playing within an alabaster

vase; and the delicate form of the mouth, the bow-shaped upper lip and soft curve of the under one, with the rounding chin, showed even better than when those lips had been so rich and pouting in their loveliness. Then the clear, transparent eyelids, with the tearful, tender drooping, and the delicate tracery of veins in them; and the soft, velvety skin, which seemed, in the quiet sleep, almost untouched by suffering; but the nose—part Jewish part Italian in its form, as I have mentioned before—was the only feature that showed the pain of mind and body the poor girl had suffered; the nostrils looked pinched, and the bridge of the nose stood up clear and sharp. Her soft chestnut hair was turned off from her temples, showing there also a faint tracery of blue veins; one thick tress had crept out from the little cap, and lay in a rich curl on her neck. In the tossing of her delirium, during the day, she had unloosened the soft cap, and the fastenings of her night-gown, leaving part of her beautiful throat bare; when she had fallen into the stupor preceding the sleep, Dr. Falcon had said, as I attempted to close it, "Let her alone, *mon enfant*; the touch of a hand may prevent the sleep on which depends so much."

"Beautiful Hélène!" I thought; "and must such loveliness fall a sacrifice to obstinate, wicked selfishness?" A slight noise in my salon, which was adjoining the bedroom, startled me. The poor, anxious mother, I imagined, had awakened, and had insisted upon coming to wait there the issue of the sleep. I arose softly, and went to see who it was. What was my vexation to see entering the door, the hard, tall figure of Tante Octavie! Of all assistants or companions, she was certainly the last one I should have asked for. She held a shaded lamp in her hand, and was busied in shutting softly the latch of the door; but I noticed that her strong, firm hand trembled; and as she turned toward me, I saw that her chiseled face was actually pinched and livid with the anxiety she felt.

She must have noticed an expression of surprise and discontent on my face, for she tried to smile affectionately; but it was a grim attempt, and she held out her hand to me, in a strange, pleading manner, that went to my heart. I took it quickly; it was very cold. That brave, strong woman! It hurt me to see her standing there in such a position, and my first impulse was to put my arms around her,—it was like embracing Mont Blanc; then, taking the lamp from her, and setting it up on the brass top of the porcelain stove, I led her to the *canapé*, where I made her sit down. She submitted willingly to my impulsive actions of tenderness, and rested her head for a few moments on my shoulder, which seemed as small as that of a child, when compared with her. It was so touching to see this hard, cold, stern woman not only accepting, but almost asking for sympathy and kindness; and at my hands to receive it,—the little, nervous Fanny Fauvette; for whose delicate health, and toward whose little ways and peculiarities, she had shown so much impatience and even cruel harshness.

We remained silent for some time; and I began to feel awkward and startled at the liberty I had taken, in treating her as my feelings had prompted; knowing, by sad experience, how hard it was to approach such proud people, who are apt to take an outburst of love sometimes as an affectation, or even, sometimes—so warped is their nature—they receive it as an insult and humiliation. At last she lifted her head, and, with every feature twitching with painful sharpness, she asked in a hoarse whisper, which thrilled through me, "She will not die?" She addressed me as if I were a little high-priest of Providence, and knew the future. "Ah!" she continued, "it is so hard to kill women; she will not surely die!"

I raised my finger to my lips, as a caution against talking; then, speaking in a faint whisper in her ear, I answered, "She is sleeping quietly; but we must not make any noise, or we may disturb this sleep, on which her life depends."

Tante Octavie drew me down to her; I knelt on the foot-cushion beside her, and she approached her lips in the same manner to my ear, and said, "Suffer me to stay here, Mademoiselle Fanny. I cannot endure to be so far from her. I *will* be quiet; the mother has no remorse on her conscience; she can wait patiently and quietly; but mine will not let me have peace. I shall go wild if I have to stay in the other part of the house. Suffer me to stay here."

This woman, accustomed from childhood to command, to order, and receive unconditional obedience; who had treated me always with such chilling hauteur, because I had dared to have an opinion of my own, dared to be nervous and feminine, was now as submissive and imploring as a child to me! Her humiliation, her acknowledgment of her remorse, almost broke my heart; it pained and grieved me more than I could express; for although her obstinate determination to sacrifice Hélène, and her senseless, wicked indulgence of the poor, wretched Octave, had at the time made me feel bitter resentment, and wish every hard judgment possible for her punishment, the suffering she had endured after the sad result was shown,—her keen mortification and remorse, and the tender, softening effect it had produced on her character,—melted all my anger; indeed, to see her grief, and hear her self-condemning words, seemed wrong, and I hastened to show my respectful regard and sympathy for this woman, whom I had almost hated some months before.

"Certainly," I replied, almost forgetting the low, cautious tone of voice, in my desire to show her all the attention my respect exacted. "Certainly; you may stay here if you wish, dear Madame Eperveil. Stretch yourself out on this *canapé*, and make yourself comfortable."

And with affectionate constraint I made her put her feet upon the sofa, and extend herself out at full length. I placed a soft pillow under her head, and threw over her long, iron-looking limbs a large shawl. She looked at me keenly, but I did not now mind her look; her days of cold contempt and

dictatorial lecturing were over, and the tenderness and affectionate caresses of Fanny Fauvette, at which she had so often sneered, were now grateful and refreshing to her. Poor Tante Octavie! As I stood beside her, smoothing back from her high manly forehead the magnificent tresses of her blonde hair, in which the silver threads were so thickly mingled, I saw a large hot tear creep from under the sharp-cut eyelid; this was too much for me to bear,—I stooped, and kissed Tante Octavie. She put her arms around me, and held me for a few moments close to her breast; we said not a word to each other, nor did we need to; we were good, strong friends for evermore; that tear had wiped away all remains of Fanny Fauvette's resentment. Soon after I arose from beside her, and went into the bedroom, to resume my watch by the sleeping girl.

That long, long night! how it recalled a sadder night; a night of loving watchfulness, that brought no morning in this life to the watched; a night of silent, heart-breaking farewell, when the mother floated off into eternity, looking back longingly to her desolate child; no word, no moan; only a tight grasp of the hand, a yearning gaze, which receded and receded in the distance, until the poor wearied soul was released from the mortal cords of loving longing that held it fast bound to earth, and was free! But, alas! the child was left desolate and alone in life. Ah, Fanny Fauvette, memory is so keen! But swallow down thy agony, child; take thy absinthe draught as God gives it; there has been no mother since then to sit beside thee in life, and drink the bitter, leaving thee the sweet.

"Faisant pour toi deux parts, dans cette vie amère,
Toujours a bu l'absinthe, et t'a laissée le miel."

Bury thy thin face in thy hands, rock with noiseless but keen agony to and fro. Is it not hard to bear, child? Very hard! The sufferings of deep, true love, are as bitter in their pain as keen remorse.

Many times I would look up and see Tante Octavie resting against the door casing, and looking earnestly at me; then I would remember that her remorse needed soothing; for while the sorrow of love is too silent and deep for human consolation, remorse is so biting, so active,—like a fierce blister on the skin, it must be nursed and tended gently and carefully. So I would arise and go in to the suffering woman, and persuade her to lie down again, while I soothed her with soft caresses, and assured her of the well-doing of her niece. And well-doing it was, for the girl was sleeping all through the night; a calm, gentle sleep; a deep slumber of tired nature; the crisis was over, I felt sure.

The brilliant mountain sunrise shot little crimson rays into the room, through the crevices of the shutters, flecking fantastically the white window curtains. The taper still burned patiently on,—a fit type of useful, quiet little things in this life; trembling and wavering had been its light, but honestly it had toiled on. Let thy light die out now little taper, thy work is over; we need thee no more, for God's blessed sun has arisen.

Hélène still slept; and Tante Octavie, worn out with keen, fierce anxiety, had, toward daybreak—when entirely assured of her niece being out of danger—fallen into a heavy slumber, under the magnetizing influence of my hands, smoothing down the thick bands of her hair over her forehead. Outside the house, the busy swallows chirped, fluttering around the old convent tower and the eaves overhanging my windows. I knew that the long branches of the acacia, with its tender young leaves, were waving graciously to and fro, and the lake rippling and glittering under the first rays of the morning sun. I felt the sweet warm breath of spring steal in encouragingly through the breaks and divisions of the shutters; life, warm, loving life, flowed its precious current around me; there was the calm, regular breathing of the sick girl, so sweet to listen to, and from the adjoining room,

even through the nearly closed door, came the sound of Tante Octavie's slumber.

A few minutes after, a low bustle was heard down stairs, and then the doctor came up. He took his seat by Hélène's bedside, without saying anything to me, but pressing my hand and patting me on the head. Tante Octavie crept into the arm chair on the other side, and drew me to the little cushion at her feet, making me put my head on her knees, while her large white hands rested on my temples and cheeks with a loving ease, as if they had always practiced such gracious works of tenderness; and there we sat, awaiting the girl's awaking. The mother stole in, and stood at the foot of the bed, where the eyes of her daughter might first rest on her, and Marie Merle stood beside her.

At last it came, this blessed return to life and those who loved her so tenderly. She opened her eyes languidly, gazed around as if bewildered; then, seeing her mother's half smiling, half weeping look, she stretched out her arms feebly, and burst into tears. Mother and daughter lay in each other's arms, while we all stole quietly out of the room. Yes, all, even the skillful doctor.

"They can do without any of us," said he, wiping his eyes stealthily; "nature, mother-love shall do all, with God's help."

And we turned quietly away from that bedroom, each one drawing a long breath, as if we felt that the avenging angel no longer hovered above the roof. God's swift, sharp judgments were now lovingly averted, and sweet mercy, rather than stern justice, reigned over us.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CUP TAKEN AWAY.

THOUGH the agony of suspense was over, and the dread of immediate danger passed, still we did not feel secure. Any one who has ever watched during a dangerous illness, knows so well the keen anxiety that comes after the first burst of joy, when the crisis is passed. The breath of life seems so weak and faint, and the feeling is that which one might have when looking at an unconscious child passing over a swift, deep current, on a broken, swaying plank; or, the carrying of a lighted taper in a long, dark corridor, through which a stormy night wind is surging to and fro. But these anxious days passed, thank God! and then other days came—days of convalescence; then came the sweet June weather, just bordering enough on its blossomy forerunner, May, to retain its fragrance, and none of its capriciousness. On one of these delicious days, Dora's strong arms carried our darling out on to my gallery, and laid her in a brilliant-colored Mexican hammock, which swayed quietly to and fro in the sweet morning breeze.

Everything around us seemed pulsating with life. The little vegetable-garden beneath us looked very promising, with its neat rows of all manner of green things, which seemed to grow visibly. A small vineyard covered one slope in the distance, not too far, however, to send us fragrant promises of the winy, autumn fruit. The acacia waved its long, graceful blossoms through the air, and threw down a snowy shower of the flower petals on the bridge walk; while the

bright sun crept in between its tender foliage and the thick branches of the Marron d'Inde, and lay in breaks on the gravel-walk, and broken column, and old stone wall, and did its best to beam very warm rays on Madame Bouvreuil's pet orange-tree, which stood in a pretty stone vase, of the graceful Etruscan form, at the foot of the walk. The swallows,

"Those busy masons of the eaves,"

wheeled around the old convent tower, then darted off to the orchard on the border of the lake, where stood a fruit-tree, the topmost branch of which was formed like a cross, or at least so it appeared to me in the distance that my balcony was from it. When I first came to Peilz I had noticed it; I had often looked at it with gloomy forebodings, regarding it as a stern admonisher of future visitations of grief. Sometimes my sorrowful fancy read it one way, sometimes another. Often it waved before me in the golden violet sunset of summer, saying

"Thou canst not flee from thy cross."

Then it swayed to and fro in the autumn winds, a red, flaming branch, murmuring

"Thy cross, thy new cross, is nearly ripe: be ready."

And, again, when I would feel more hoping and joyful, it seemed to whisper, consolingly, as its red and yellow leaves fluttered down to the ground in a November wind,

"See, I am fading with autumn; with me will fade thy last cross."

And once, I remember, while I stood looking at it, thinking this, a pretty little bird settled on it, knocking off its ruddy leaves; then he chirped a clear, bright song, and soared off up into mid air. Those gloomy days were gone, I trusted, forever; but my "*banner branch*," as Marie playfully called it, stood bravely up in the broad sunrays, covered

with little budding leaves and some pink blossoms, a bright, beautiful cross, telling me now of hope and faith, and giving me a promise of gracious God-help, no matter what the burden might be. Two or three little boats stood on the blue mirror of our lake, on which lay the broad masses of sunlight, and they looked like

“Painted ships upon a painted ocean.”

The mountains of the opposite Savoy shore towered up, the snows still lay in unmelting firmness on some of the peaks, and the ravines looked like long white snakes, creeping and winding down to the lake. Hélène lay in a silence that seemed refreshing; for the little sighs she drew once in awhile were accompanied by a gentle, happy smile, as if they were luxurious sighs, indicative of sweet content. Her mother sat, in my American rocking-chair, close beside her; and Marie Merle and I leaned on the balcony bench, and talked of all manner of pleasant things quietly together.

“Where are you all?” cried a familiar voice from the salon; “the bird has flown, and the whole aviary with her.”

“Not far, Tante Octavie,” answered Marie, springing up to meet her. “We are here, on Fanny Fauvette’s gallery.”

“You there, too, mocking-bird?” said Tante Octavie, stepping out of the window door on to the gallery. “Come here, girl,” she said, “and kiss me. Marie Merle, I believe I have not kissed you since you were a droll little serious-eyed baby.”

Marie put her arms around Tante Octavie, without saying a word; but the hearty hug and half-dozen kisses she gave her showed how deeply touched she felt by the old lady’s unwonted tenderness. I felt as if I wanted to do the same; but since the night we had watched Hélène together, I had not dared to venture on caressing the old dame; I was afraid she would think I wished to presume on her burst of confidence and tenderness, wrung from her by the powerful emotion she was then experiencing. I did not want to stop

a good beginning of friendship between us. She shook hands with us all, and kissed Hélène, affectionately.

“Take this rocking-chair of Fanny’s, will you not, Octavie?” asked Madame Bouvreuil.

“No, Lolah dear,” she replied; “I am in a very good company beside this little lady;” and she sat down on a chair which stood beside the low bench of the window, on which I had seated myself, and she rested her hand familiarly on my shoulder.

Now, if Tante Octavie had been any one else I liked as well, I would have leaned my head on her knee, which stood in tempting proximity to me; I felt a strong desire to do so, but I thought “Affliction has caught her, and caged her, and trimmed her nails, it is true, but she is only half tamed, may be. I will take good care not to provoke the old lioness nature in her.”

It does not do to go beyond, or even be equal in tenderness to such people; it is better to wait always for them to take the lead in sentimental matters; and yet, day by day, I felt more and more drawn to Tante Octavie; and, as Tante Cecile said, when I talked to her about it, it seemed as if she did also to me. It was hard work, real self-denial, for me to keep my hands off of the hard, stern old woman. I wanted to smooth her beautiful hair, to take her large hands in mine, and rest my cheek on their fair, broad palms; I wanted to wait on her, and serve her, and grew daily to watch for her coming, and detain her from going, when formerly, the bare sound of her voice was enough to stop all pleasure for me. It is very strange, how irresistible such cold, reserved natures prove, when they once let themselves loose and soar up to love! Yes; I actually grew sentimental about Tante Octavie, and used to find myself wishing sometimes that she might be right sick, that I could have the exquisite pleasure of nursing her night and day.

“She is a grand old woman!” I would say to Marie Merle and Tante Cecile, when I would burst out in my enthusiastic

raptures over my new passion. "She has strong defects of character, I admit; and I know I used to call her 'she dragon,' and all manner of hard names; but I shall never do so any more; and it hurts me to think I ever did so, for I really and truly love her. How true is the saying, 'the greater the trouble, the greater the lion,' for see how grand her sorrow has made her!"

Yes, this gaunt old Norsewoman was fast taking the mother-place in my heart, and answering all its mother-want and mother-longing.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A LETTER.

WHO has not watched anxiously for the post hour? When one is far from dear friends, with oceans and mountains between, the arrival of that messenger, of grief

"Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some—
To him indifferent, whether grief or joy,"

is a subject of great interest. Many times since my arrival in Peilz, had I felt this anxiety; with indefinable apprehensions, I had often waited for the arrival of the good man Scharff, our

"herald of the noisy world;"

and then how sick at heart I would feel, when Dora would hand me the *Journal des Débats*, unaccompanied by any letter! A thousand fears would spring up, of sorrow and may be death; then I would count over the days since the date of the last letters, and reread them, with eyes full of tears of loving longing, recalling the faces and forms of those who wrote them, and their words of tenderness, and precious hours of the past, spent with them so heedlessly; and then think, with desolate forebodings, of the distance between us, the wide, impassable gulf of unavoidable separation yawning in the midst; and the bridge which spanned it seemed, in the gray light of disappointment, to be the one leading to another life. But when *le brave homme* Scharff did bring a letter for me, how happy the sight of the little oblong envelope made me! The direction was regarded with the same

loving look that would have been given in times past to the dear countenance of the one who wrote it; the handwriting grew into an individual presence,—a true heart-greeting; the little cover would be impatiently torn open, and I would rush rapidly through the contents, fairly choking with my haste; then, after finishing it, go through it a second time, and a third; and then go off quite alone in the woods, where neither friend, maid, nor dog could hear me, or see my emotion, and read the dear letter out aloud,—trying to imitate the voice of the darling writer, and live over in memory the sweet hours of the past belonging to her.

One morning Dora handed me the *Journal des Débats*, and from its paper band fell three letters in my lap.

"Fanny Fauvette," said Marie, "you are the only one among us that receives letters. Once in awhile Henzler writes to me, and may be my cousin Minna, from Breslau; but that happens only once in a year; and yet, you unconscionable creature! if a month passes without bringing you at least two or three, you are dissatisfied. Now you have three, cormorant, at one swallow; pray, do not let me hear a murmur from you, if Scharff's tin box is empty, so far as you are concerned, for two months to come."

I laughed, and handed her the *Journal*, which I saw contained one of Berlioz's excellent *feuilletons*, and begged her to let that silence her sauciness. We were all collected in my room as usual, and Hélène sat in the rocking-chair, looking very fresh, and calm, and pretty, tricotting away industriously, as though she had never been ill; a sweet, gentle languor in her voice and movements, was all that told of the sorrowful past; nothing but the dark-hued folds of her mother's mourning garb were present, to remind us of the sad visit death had paid to that house. I hastily looked at the address of the three letters, before opening them, to see who they were from, and as I did so, I gave a short exclamation, which was checked half uttered.

"What is the matter?" asked Marie, dropping her *Jour-*

nal; and Hélène looked at me with a gaze of sympathizing inquiry.

"No unpleasant or disagreeable news, I trust, *mon enfant*?" said Madame Bouvreuil, tenderly.

"Oh no," I answered, laughing awkwardly at my *bêtise*; and after I noticed they had ceased looking at me, I slipped one of the letters, unopened, into my pocket. I read the other two, and read the *Journal*, and then resumed my embroidery; and while Marie continued her reading aloud of the last unfinished work of her favorite Emile Souvestre, *La Dernière Etape*, I

"Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,
——buds, and leaves, and sprigs,
And curling tendrils, gracefully disposed;
A wreath that cannot fade, of flowers that blow
With most success, when all besides decay."

But I did not touch the letter in my pocket. Strange, to be sure! As it was not directed to me, however, I had no right to open it. I being the only one, as Marie said, who received letters, Dora, without regarding the directions, had slipped them into the band of the *Journal*, and handed them all to me.

We reached the last chapter penned by the dying author, where the last words seemed written as a consoling farewell to his friends, who were so unconscious of their approaching great loss. Marie read, with touching emphasis, these words of Monsieur Raymond to poor young Armand,—

"Va je te benis: que Dieu te console!"

and closed the book, leaving the peaceful, fit conclusion, written by his son-in-law, to be finished on the following day.

We all talked over the curious management of the little thread of a romance, running like a mottled purple and silver filament through the book; and the mournful reconcilia-

tion of the husband and wife; talking of them as if they were real, living beings, and speculating upon their future prospects of happiness, which Madame Bouvreuil said were much more to be relied on than many brilliant commencements of marriage. I did not dilate on the subject, as I might have done, had not the unopened letter laid restlessly in my pocket. Marie noticed that I was preoccupied; then all checked the remarks rising to their lips, fearing, doubtless, that I had received some perplexing information of which I was not ready to speak, much as I might wish their sympathy. Marie tied on her hat, lingeringly; and as she kissed me good-by, urged me to go home with her, describing a delicious afternoon of music and lounging,—affectionately desiring to charm off the supposed annoyance. Professor Bouvreuil's voice was heard down stairs, talking to the house dog, old Turque; and Madame Bouvreuil folded up her sewing to go down, and prepare some savory sauce, or nice pudding, for the dinner. After Marie left, I dispatched Dora off with Beau, to take a walk in the beautiful noonday sun, around the old fosse; and at last Hélène and I were alone. Then I got up from my seat, walked behind Hélène's chair, and, taking the unopened letter from my pocket, dropped it in her lap, kissed her lovely, soft cheek, and slipped quietly out of the room.

Yes, the mysterious letter was for her, and had a variety of mail hieroglyphics on it, making it look like one of Champollion's or Layard's Egyptian and Nineveh pictures; and it came from Egypt, too, for I had caught sight of Alexandria amid the other mail stamps; and it was, as I had supposed, really from Kinnaird,—dear, good, true-loving Kinnaird! Of course I read the letter; and of course it was, like all real love letters, delicious. He had heard of Octave's death, and, forgetting his resentment, and the unkind treatment he had received, hastened to offer his consolation; knowing, for his own frank, loving nature told him, how acceptable and sweet such sympathy would be.

"My darling," he wrote, "no one can blame you for reading a letter from me. I must write to tell you how deeply I sorrow with you; how I yearn to be beside you, and give you that comfort which no one in the world, I am sure, Hélène, can so well give as I. I judge you by myself; and that is why I say this, my own pet birdie. See! how the old, tender words rise up, for my heart is full of them, Hélène.

"Poor Madame Epervail! how keenly she must feel this blow; more than any of the rest of the family, even your mother, darling; for Madame Epervail loved Octave so blindly, that it made her not only forgetful of others, but unjust. For you, and for her, I feel the most sympathy; your mother has you still left to comfort her; but dear Madame Epervail, now Octave is gone, has no one. Good-by, Hélène darling; remember, any time in the future you have only to write me one word to let me know you wish for me, and I will come to you instantly. And if this life passes without that summons, my own one, in eternity we shall meet; for when I die, beloved, if it is half a century from now, my heart and my thoughts, my whole being, will be as much yours, and only yours, as when we parted that sad day in the Hauteville woods. Your own Kinnaird Graham."

And this was the lover we had dared to call cold, and commonplace! "Hélène," I said, "let me show this letter to Tante Octavie."

The girl looked up at me, startled but pleased; her look was assent; so at sunset I put on my hat and capuchin, and walked, with Dora and Beau, up to the grounds of Institution Epervail. I found Tante Octavie out in the garden, in close conclave with Henri. "Here this thing," and "There that;" and "You had better look to this bed," etc. etc.; both talking together, with that fluency and familiarity so peculiar to the French superior and inferior; during which conversation neither forgets his or her proper place. Beau sprang off, directly he saw Tante Octavie, and ran to her, jumping around her as caressingly as he used to scold her;

he remembered her late meat-offerings, and kind words, the little egotist! and had forgotten his old enmities.

"Tu es sage," said the old lady, receiving his charming little attentions graciously. "Comme tu es gentil, beaucoup trop joli."

"Yes," I thought, "you are both alike, dog and woman, in one thing: irresistibly charming, when you deign to let us love you. I believe in my heart, your growling ungraciousness only makes your softer moods, by contrast and from variety, more attractive."

"Well, Darmstadter," she said, laying her hand on the sturdy shoulder of my laughing, happy Dora, "descendant of a great Saxon warrior, how are you to-day?—and where is the little mistress?"

Then, seeing me, she advanced toward me, and, making me take her arm, led me all through the garden, showing me all the spring improvements, with Henri's assistance, who was only too happy, the sly rogue, to be near my blushing Dora. After that, we walked together down to the border of the lake, and watched the brilliant sunset, and the fine rowing of the students, over twenty boats being on the water; a real boat fleet, whose beautiful sails and streamers, with various devices, and the graceful shapes of the boats, made the sight a very picturesque one. After that, we went to the house, and had the sofa wheeled into the deep balcony window, and her maid Victorine brought in

"the bubbling and loud-hissing urn,"

from which I made for the old lady her tea; and while we sat over

"the cups that cheer but not inebriate,"

we watched the deepening of the twilight, and the brightening of the stars; and then, when the light meal was removed, I drew a foot-cushion to the old lady's feet, and while her large, fair hands smoothed down my hair on my temples, and

rested in quiet caresses on my cheeks, she talked with me about America, and my girlhood, and my mother; for Tante Octavie and I were growing closer and closer knit together daily,—Naomi and her Ruth!

While we were talking, we heard Mr. Merle's voice, and he, with Marie and Tante Cecile, entered the room. So soon as I heard them, I hastily drew the letter from my pocket, and, putting it in her hands, I said, "Madame Eperveil, there is a letter Hélène received to-day, and wishes you to read."

The next day Tante Octavie returned the letter to Hélène, in the presence of all of us, when she came in to pay us a gracious morning visit, saying, as she did so, "My child, when you write to Mr. Graham, give my kindest regards to him; and tell him, when he is through his Egyptian wanderings, he must come back to his old friends and home in Peilz."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE NEW HEAD MASTER.

"BROTHER," said Madame Eperveil, one Sunday, after a dinner we had all been taking with her, "old Mr. Serin leaves us at last. When the school closes, the end of June, he will bid us all adieu, and go to his son in Germany. He has, however, provided me with a very excellent person in his place."

The professor bowed approvingly, and we all tried to look unconscious, notwithstanding the memory of the past stood up vividly before us.

"This new head master comes very highly recommended to me," continued the brave old lady; and the Messieurs Serin speak highly of him."

"Is he a married man, Madame Eperveil?" asked Mr. Merle, wishing to put on a show of facetiousness; "that is a subject that will interest the young ladies of Peilz."

"No, not married, but betrothed, and will be married in the autumn," answered Madame Eperveil, smiling. "The head master of a school, if young, as this gentleman is, must have some nice wife to keep his eyes and thoughts busy after his work is done, in order to guard him from going *daft* about pretty young girls, which would play the mischief with his usefulness to me. His intended wife is said to be quite charming; and, from what I hear of her, she will be a very pleasant member of our little social circle."

"You have not told us his name yet, Tante Octavie," said Marie.

"Nor shall I," said the old lady, hesitating a little; "I think I will try to raise your curiosity; it will be something for you to speculate about."

Then she changed the conversation, and we all hastened to talk of other things; for though we had tried to be unconscious, and even affect playfulness, as well as poor Tante Octavie, we all felt not only awkwardly, but a little melancholy.

But though silent to them on the subject, she was not to her little Fanny Fauvette. One sweet June evening, as I was making tea for the old lady, and she was making love to Beau with sponge-cake, and he swearing eternal fidelity to her, with wagging tail and cunning, winking eyes started clear out of his head with selfish eagerness for the *bon-bon*; yes, on that evening she told me all her plans, and I saw that the old lady was very happy. I longed to throw my arms around the dear old iron image and ask her to let me tie on her shoes for evermore; but I refrained, for I was afraid of provoking those old claws of contradiction and tyranny; and yet, I was growing to love the brave old dame so dearly, that I should have bowed, with all the cowardice of human love, beneath those claws, as I did often to my naughty little egotistical Beau's caprices.

Weeks rolled around, taking from us the sweet blossomy June; and the fragrant grape-flower fell off, leaving the little green balls of the *grappes* to ripen in the warm July sun. On account of the mourning of the family, there was no *soirée* that season. The first day of July had always been the day of dismissal, and the one on which the grades of scholarship were awarded. This year it had been deferred until the tenth, and on that day the new head master was to be presented to the school, previous to their dismissal, by Mr. Serin, when he took leave of his old pupils. On the ninth, Mr. Wilkins (as we had heard was his name) was to arrive, and Madame Eperveil invited us to take tea with her on that afternoon, and help her receive him. Madame

Bouvrenil, Hélène, and I started early, so as to enjoy the sunset from the boat-house shed belonging to the institution, which was on the lake shore; and Marie and Tante Cecile were to meet us there. While we were sitting, quietly talking, Marie came up, saying: "Eh bien! the head master has come; he is an ugly little man, with red hair and straw-colored whiskers."

"Who told you so?" asked Tante Octavie, coming, unexpectedly, around the corner of the boat-house.

"Mon Dieu, Tante Octavie!" cried Marie, starting; "how you frighten one!"

"Who told you that Mr. Wilkins was an ugly little man, with red hair and straw-colored *favoris*?" persisted Tante Octavie.

"Our maid Emilie, who saw him arrive," answered Marie, laughing, and coloring.

"Emilie is a prying, gossiping maid; and you are a very undignified young lady to accept information from such a source."

She looked very gracious and smiling, although her words sounded harsh.

"But come," she continued, putting her arm kindly around Marie's waist, "let us all go up to tea, and I will introduce you, mocking-bird, to this red-headed Mr. Wilkins, and his betrothed bride, who has been kind enough to accept my invitation, and come to pay me a visit."

They all stared at this piece of information, but not a word was said in reply, as we followed Tante Octavie up to the grounds of the institution. Tante Octavie stopped here and stopped there, and made us admire one flower-bed and then another; and then insisted upon looking at the vineyard; and she made Hélène walk on one side of her and me on the other; she was in no hurry to go into the house, wishing to give, as she said, the young lady time to rest, and prepare herself for meeting so many strangers.

The last red rays of the sun were dancing on the lake,

and tipping the edges of some slight clouds floating over the blue sky, when we entered the cheerful salon. A gentleman stood in the deep window, and, as he advanced to meet us, Marie Merle screamed out with surprise, while Hélène leaned on her aunt's arm, trembling violently.

"Voilà, mocking-bird!" said Tante Octavie; "this is the Mr. Wilkins with red hair; and here," she said, putting Hélène's hand in his, "this is his betrothed, whom I promised to present to you. I am very sure both Mr. and Mrs. Graham will be highly valued in our social circle."

Yes, it was Kinnaird Graham; and Tante Octavie had written to him, asking his forgiveness for her injustice, and begging him to accept the head mastership, during Hélène's dangerous illness. Her letter he received weeks after he had written to Hélène. We were all very happy. After tea we walked up and down the balcony, and Kinnaird talked to the Professor and Mr. Serin about his Egyptian travels, while Hélène and Madame Bouvrenil listened with a gentle, quiet contentment, that told how exquisitely happy they felt. Mr. Merle grew playful, and, coming up to Tante Octavie, he said: "It is very unjust, Madame Eperveil, for you to be so partial. You find a handsome husband for Hélène, and neglect all the other young spinsters; now, your favorite Fanny Fauvette, for instance, I should have supposed you would have preferred her for the head master's wife."

I answered back some merry sauciness, and then he walked, with Tante Cecile and Marie, up the balcony, to look at the moon rising over the Vaudois mountains.

"Fanny Fauvette," said Madame Eperveil, half musingly. I turned, and looked at her. She was sitting on the sofa in the deep window arch, and I fancied, as the moonlight stole in through the leaves of the woodbine, and played over her face and rich, fair hair, that she looked a little wan and worn. The dear old lady! she had endured fierce suffering and fierce struggles womanfully, and had come out of the moral combat gloriously victorious. "The greater the trouble, the

greater the lion!" This fine saying came to my memory as I looked at her, and saw its verification in her. My whole being pulsated to bow down before her, and say, "Let me be thy handmaiden, mother!" "Fanny Fauvette," she repeated, and, putting her arm about me, she drew me down close to her. I knelt on the foot-cushion at her feet, and looked up at her; we were quite alone in the window embrasure. "No, child," she continued, looking earnestly down into my face, which she held between her large, white hands. "No, child; I should feel very sad and lonely if you were to marry. See, I am so naturally selfish, that I cannot help, because I love you so fondly, striving to monopolize you. I would keep you all for myself;" and she tried to smile playfully, but her mouth quivered, and broke the smile.

"Never fear, Tante Octavie," I answered, in a voice that trembled with the deep love I felt, "I shall never marry."

"And will you be my child?" asked the gaunt, strong old woman, trembling with emotion.

"I will, so help me God!" I replied, solemnly; and in the same instant I lay in Tante Octavie's arms, and was clasped tight to her breast, feeling, at last, at home, and no longer alone in life.

She kissed me fervently again and again, and a large, round tear, a second tear, rolled down her cheek, hallowing the contract; and this is how I came to be Tante Octavie's daughter.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MARIE'S COMPENSATION.

HÉLÈNE and Kinnaird Graham were married a few weeks after, in order that they might have time to make a quiet bridal tour to the lake of the Four Cantons, before the close of the vacation. At the wedding, Madame Eperveil insisted upon the family's laying aside their mourning. Marie Merle and I were bridesmaids, and the amiable, blushing young Gardner, and Serin, Jr., were groomsmen. It was a quiet, happy wedding; the ceremony was performed early in the day; and Tante Octavie gave a dinner, under the trees, to all the dependants of the Institution; while the friends of the family called in the afternoon and evening, to pay their respects and congratulations to the newly wedded pair. The day after the wedding, they left, with Professor and Madame Bouvrenil, to make their little wedding journey.

In the autumn, after Kinnaird had taken his place as head master, Tante Octavie invited Marie and me to accompany her on a visit to Paris. We spent six weeks in that charming city, visiting all the places made familiar to us by books. We had all visited Paris before; but Marie and I agreed never so pleasantly. Tante Octavie, so filled with information, with exact and available knowledge of the events and characters of history, was an admirable *cicerone* for two such women as Marie and me. We showed our appreciation of her qualities so enthusiastically, that the old lady became enchanted with her new vocation, and made a resolution of visiting Paris with us every spring, until we should know all the

points of interest—buildings, galleries, and environs—fully; and that resolution, I am happy to say, the dear old lady has had health and strength to perform.

Marie's visit to Paris, in the autumn I speak of, had a great influence on her future life as an artist. That visit laid the foundation of a fame which is now European. At her first performance before the great artist-critics of Paris, their approval of, and enthusiastic admiration for her execution and genius, were unanimous. Henzler happened to be in Paris, with his company, at the time, and he invited her to his hall, to play with them some compositions of Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin and others, which she had wished so often to execute with an orchestra. We went several times, and Marie played without embarrassment, for there was no audience, save, once in awhile, a chance friend or two who might drop in. One morning we were there, and Marie played various things, among them the "Concert Stück" of Weber, and a symphony of R. Schumann, of whose music Henzler was an ardent admirer. As it was the first time I had heard this symphony, it sounded confused to my ears. The wild, bold thoughts of such an artist-poet as Schumann are difficult to comprehend at first sight and hearing; they must be studied closely; and even then, if the mind and capability of appreciation are not happily corresponding in grandeur, the great poetic thoughts may remain unknown.

Some gentlemen entered, after they had finished this symphony, and Henzler seemed occupied in conversation on some business, at the other end of the room. Marie remained at the piano, to look over some manuscripts Henzler had given her; some new compositions of his, that he wished her to examine, and give him some suggestions and criticisms upon. Tante Octavie had left us, to attend to some business matters. I amused myself by listening to Marie, and turning over the music and books of Henzler's fine musical and critical library, admiring the arrangement of them; each great composer being arranged according to

date, and every critical work or romance on his works, or suggested by his life, being placed in the same case with his music. These cases were beautifully designed, in black walnut; bearing artistic and appropriate carvings, with the bust of each composer surmounting each case. These cases were placed on each side of the hall, running from the amphitheatrically-arranged orchestra, which occupied the east end of the room. The Beethoven case was on a line with the piano, and I stood turning over the book of sonates, hunting for the one in Ut dièze mineur, *Sonate quasi Fantasia*, Opus 27, dedicated to *Mademoiselle La Comtesse Giuletta di Guicciardi*. I had just that moment been reading Beethoven's love letters—if the three fragments of burning, broken sentences can be called letters—written to this lady, and I wanted to look again at the musical rendering of this love tragedy. These passages in the letters were in my memory, as my eyes ran over the notes of the sonate.

"My angel, my all, *myself*! If our hearts were still near together, that would be indeed my life. Great as is thy love for me, mine for thee is still greater. I can only live entirely with thee, or not at all. How I long for thee, with tears, my life!"

So wrote the great, solitary Beethoven, when completely over the threshold of young manhood, to the only woman he ever loved passionately. Then, after these love letters—which had burst from him like broken sobs of a feeling too deep for word-utterance—he celebrated his farewell to that love, in this great sonate; for the Comtesse Giuletta Guicciardi never became his wife; she married a Comte Galenberg. In 1828, seventeen years after this love-dream had passed away, Beethoven—then fifty years of age, and very, very deaf and poor—sent a pupil of his to ask permission of the nobleman who was the director of the Théâtre Impériale, at Vienna, to have his *Fidelio* performed. This nobleman was Comte Galenberg. The messenger returned; and after giving a report of this errand—which was a use-

less one, as the permission was refused—Beethoven asked him, in writing, if he had seen the comtesse during the visit, and added, "She loved me once, more than ever she loved her husband. She married the comte, then sought me, weeping; but I repulsed her, for I despised her."

Poor Giuletta Guicciardi! This aristocratic girl, brought up in an artificial atmosphere which caused her to have numberless imaginary wants, and which surrounded and bound her by chains of social custom and prejudices stronger than fairy adamant—which is always the strongest thing, known or unknown—met Beethoven, when he was about thirty and she eighteen, and loved him. Silly child! what had she to do with love, or with a poor plebeian artist? But she dreamed her delicious love dream, and no one knows what she may have suffered when she wedded a Comte Galenberg; nor what agony she must have felt when she sought her artist lover, to explain her painful position to him, and received from him a repulse that showed his bitter contempt. Nothing is known of her future; whether the love of her youth kept her pure in her court-life; whether the memory of that cruel contempt seared and withered up all yearnings for love and tenderness in her poor, sorrowing heart. We may all hope so, at least, for the honor of womanhood.

But all the world knows the future of the obscure lover. He remained poor; he grew deaf; he led a gloomy, solitary life; and died a lonely, old man; but acknowledged, by all Europe, as the greatest instrumental composer the world has ever known; and commemorative of this heart episode in his life, are left three passionate love letters, and this sonate, called the Moonlight Sonate, because Rellstab compared it to a bark visiting the savage sites of the lake of the Four Cantons in Suisse, by moonlight.

Berlioz, in his *Voyage Musicale*, p. 362, gives a fine description of this sonate, and of Liszt's manner of playing it. In the opening passage of this description, he says: "There

is a work of Beethoven, known by the name of the 'Sonate in Ut dièze mineur,' the adagio of which is one of those poetical conceptions that human language does not know how to express. The means of action are very simple: the left hand stretches out full chords, of a character solemnly sad, and the duration of which permits the vibrations of the piano to extend themselves gradually over each one of them. Above, the inferior fingers of the right hand play, in arpeggio, a design of obstinate harmony, the form of which scarcely varies, from the first measure to the last; while from the other fingers is heard a sort of lamentation, the *efflorescence melodique*,—the melodic blossoming of this somber harmony."

No one living can play this sonate equal to Liszt. "Liszt," says Berlioz, "hurries and slackens the measure, troubling thus, by passionate accents, the calm of this sadness, making the thunder rumble in this cloudless heaven, darkened only by the departure of the sun."

De Lanz, in his admirable analysis of this sonate, says of this passage: "The melodic design of the adagio is confided to the Sol dièze,—the octave of the Sol dièze of the harmony; a group of a dotted crotchet, (Sol dièze,) followed by a double crotchet, leads to what Berlioz so fitly calls the '*efflorescence melodique*;' a song, penetrating as a perfume proceeding by minims,—large notes, whose heads hang like flower chalices, heavy with the pure fresh dew poured into them by the dreamy gray vested hours of a balmy quiet night. One feels that this ineffable opening ought to be independent of *arpeggios*, that it ought to float freely over the whole as a horn soars over a subdued, discreet accompaniment. Now, there is only the little finger of the right hand to articulate this plaint, and this poor finger is sorry enough to carry the burden, which is the more difficult, because the other fingers of the hand are bent over the arpeggios—a circumstance which takes away from the little finger much of the independence it ought to possess. It happens

then, at the moment when the dotted note should vibrate, as it ought, to phrase the melody, the thumb points from its side, as if by pure fraternal love for the little finger, to the Sol of the *arpège*, and doubles in the *medium* the entrance of this principal idea, thus, as you may well believe, injuring the effect of the song.

"A means of escaping this difficulty would be to divide the three Sols dièze, and the *entrées* of the same nature, between the third and little fingers, as often as possible; but this cannot always be done; and, moreover, this means presents the danger of spreading discord in this household of Sois. Stop raising the hand, spread it out like a fan on the key-board of the piano, and let the little finger fall as high as it can. Liszt made me observe this difficulty, in 1828. Youth is always right, so, of course, I objected to his suggestion, not being able to believe that the *soi-disant* excellent masters of the piano would allow me to do what took, in my eyes, the proportions of a gross musical sin. I thought I could cheat him by neglecting, apparently, to adopt it. Liszt said nothing; but at the approaching commencement of the phrase where the octave of the accompaniment sounded, he seized my thumb as one would the foot of a May-bug, and grasping it as in a vice, the Sol dièze sounded out free and clear on his 'Erard,' like the silvery-voiced, sad note of a horn. 'There,' said Liszt, quietly and resolutely, 'that is the way you ought to hold your thumb.'"

While I was reading over this sonate, and also Berlioz and De Lanz's descriptions and analyses of the various passages, Henzler came up to me. "B. is here," he said, "and also quite a little knot of critics. One by one they have heard Marie, without her knowing it, and by their praises of her peculiar poetical expression, have roused B.'s curiosity; so he has come this morning to judge for himself. Make her play a solo, as if for you alone. She is unconscious of her audience. I told her just now, when I excused myself to

her, that they were some persons who had called to see me on business."

I was pleased with Henzler's delicate forethought, for I knew well enough if Marie played with the consciousness of B.'s presence, she would be so nervous she would not do herself justice. This sonate, in Ut dièze mineur, she played remarkably well; she used the Liszt fingering; and her Chopin-like expression, her own poetic conception of the composition, made her execution of this sonate—which Berlioz says he does not believe six living pianists can play properly—almost faultless, to my ears; therefore, I immediately selected this as the solo for her to play before the celebrated critic. I stepped up to the piano, carrying Schindler's Biography, and the volume of sonates in my hands. I made her read to me from the German, the passages from the love letters I have quoted, commencing with, "Mein engel, mein alles, mein leben!" Then we dwelt tenderly on this episode in the life of the Dante-like musician. "Play the sonate for me," I said, placing the music on the stand before her.

Her large brown eyes were already dilating with feeling, showing that the whole stream of her thoughts flowed in the golden channel of poesy, which is requisite for the proper expression of this sonate. She commenced without any hesitation. A curtain of Tyrian dye and golden web seemed to rise, as she opened the adagio, slowly enough to show its brilliant light and solemn hues. Then was seen the tomb of buried hopes, the grave of love; but as the chord of Mi major sounded, one heard the rustling of flowers, and felt the fragrance of their sweet breath. Though bitter tears might be shed over the tomb, though the heart might be almost crushed with the weary weight of a lonely life, the grand solemn chords of the base spoke of courageous self-reliance, of the strength and fortitude of a truly great heart. The treble told its lamentations in passionate accents; but no human consolation can be accepted, and the deep, slow base repeats this to the treble; not even human sympathy;

the grief must be borne in silence and alone. It is a sadness without limit, without remedy; the abyss of separation can never be bridged,—a raging torrent rolls between. The soul clambers with patient firmness up the painful ascent, without one consoling friend, and seeks the solitude of its sorrow, finding a proud content in its own self-support, its own heroic courage.

Liszt has named the second *morceau* of this sonate "a flower between two abysses." One day De Lanz played this passage before Liszt, in a light manner, as if it was only a small difficulty. "That is easy, is it not?" said Liszt, coolly. De Lanz, with all the courage of eighteen, replied pertly, "Yes." "How!" cried Liszt, "I say no! It is a passage over which an artist can spend his life."

While Marie played it, B. approached the piano, and I felt bewildered as I looked at the great critic; but the expression of his face; the absorbed look; the surprise, lost in gratification, which I read in it, made me so happy that I almost sobbed with pleasure. He leaned softly forward, and watched her closely as she commenced the second part of the trio, where she used Liszt's fingering. The march of the base has to be bound in the manner of two violoncellos. She took, according to Liszt, the first chord, Re natural, La bémol, with the little finger and first of the left hand; the second chord, Re bémol and sol, with the third finger and thumb; the third chord, Ut and Sol bémol, with the little finger and first; the fourth chord, Si natural and Fa, with the third finger and thumb, thus binding exquisitely this collection of chords.

The finale was like the burning waves of lava flowing from Vesuvius; the flame darts up from the summit of this glorious mountain sonate; the thunderous explosion sounds; then there is a halt; and then pours from the volcanic breast of the poet, all the solitary moan over the bitter absinthe draught contained in his dark goblet of life.

After she had finished the last measure of the sonate, her

hands rested on the keys of the piano, and she sat in sweet but solemn dreaminess, looking apparently at the music, but, in reality, far off into a vague and misty future, she dreaded to call her own. She was recalled to a consciousness of our presence, by a burst of applause from the crowd of musicians and artists who had assembled behind B. Henzler immediately stepped up and presented B. to her. Her look of surprise, her air of reverence and maiden modesty, was so beautiful that B. was evidently touched with it. The few words of hearty praise he gave her, made Marie almost sob with emotion. She sat down on the chair, trembling from head to foot.

"My dear young friend," said B., taking her little frail hand kindly in both of his, "you are an artist and a poet; you not only execute well, but you show your poetic, creative powers, in the exquisite expression you give to the music."

This was the commencement of future triumphs; the Swiss pastor's daughter henceforth owned the musical world for her home, and became a compeer of those great women, Wieck and Pleyel, whose fame she had looked out on, as one looks up at a brilliant star, without dreaming of ever possessing such a glory.

And this was Marie's compensation. God had denied her wife and mother duty and love, but he gave her the great world of the Infinite to soar in,—the command of the sublime tone-tongue, and the fame of a true artist-poet.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HANGING ENDS.

I HAVE not much more to say, even of Tante Octavie and her little daughter.

"Born to me in my old age," she says of me, with a mixture of solemnity and playfulness that is very touching in the dear old lady.

I went to live with Tante Octavie soon after our sweet troth-plight—Dora, Beau, and I, the whole little trio. Dora I had to yield up to Henri a few months after, but she is only the distance of the left avenue from me, where the pretty cottage of the gardener stands. I can see its peaked roof from my window now. A nice, tidy little cousin of Victorine took her place with me, whom Beau, for a long while, ruled tyrannically, running off whenever he could to Dora's cottage, and frightening the poor child half out of her wits, making her think he was lost or killed. Tante Octavie gave me a comfortable suite of rooms in her fine large house, saying: "Child, thy Naomi will not be too selfish. See, thou canst be alone whenever it pleases thy independent little ladyship so to be."

But I do not choose to be alone; I choose to wait on and live evermore with my mistress-mother. Some years have rolled around. Hélène and Graham have taken the entire charge of the college, and it is now seeing its brightest days. Tante Octavie gives advice at times, but has resigned gracefully the control to these younger and capable hands. She is beginning to look a little bent, dear old lady! There she stands, as I write, talking to Henri about that flower-bed

beneath my window. Brave old woman! Her fine high brow is covered with silver threads,

"Those blossoms of the grave;"

and, as I look at them, and repeat this line from the old ballad, my heart grows very full at the thought of her passing away from us.

Tante Octavie's age is very golden; she is gentle and gracious; all the old harshness and tyranny of her nature lie buried in poor Octave's grave! She gives and receives tender caresses; and loves well, at nightfall, to rest on that couch in the deep window, and let me, her daughter, smooth the silver locks from off her broad, high temples, and rest our loving cheeks together; while, in looking at the setting sun and rising moon, we dwell charitably and lovingly on our higher hopes and faith. The womanly author of "John Halifax" says, "to love" is the verb we are most prone to conjugate in youth; but that we discover, after awhile, that it is by no means the sole verb in the grammar of life. But many of us, like Tante Octavie, do not learn to conjugate that blessed verb until late in life. We go through all the inflections of "to do" and "to be" conscientiously and painfully; and sometimes it is not until God teaches us the stern conjugation of "to suffer," that we learn the sweet knowledge of this truest and best "word."

I have never finished my novel, and fancy I never shall. I have only arrived half way in it, at the second marriage of my heroine with her lover-husband, Philibert of Savoy. Two large volumes of MSS., bound in superb style, look down on me from a conspicuous place in Tante Octavie's library. She values them, and I am content with that fame; I wish for no other. I have no longer the sorrowful need that pressed in on me when I commenced it. At the sad, struggling period of my life, when I first came to Peilz, I was suffering from the bitterest kind of spiritual poverty—

a lonely heart; that need has gone by, and I am now "passing rich" in that heart-wealth, home love.

I hold with that wise, solemn, good man, Southey, that literature is not properly the business of a woman's life; and where she is so blessed as to have her true duties of home-life to occupy her, she has not only no time, but no need for the constant attention it requires. Only sorrow and solitude, or necessity, should make a woman depend upon her intellect for resource and occupation. Her true sphere is home-life, and in the exercise and development of that part of her nature which relates to her heart rather than to her intellect; and, when needy circumstances or marvelously brilliant genius drive her out of this life, it is a sad thing, no matter what golden meed of fame she may reap. A great and good woman, whose fame, and genius, and excellence seem equal, has made this solemn confession:

"Oh, my God!
Thou hast knowledge, only Thou;
How dreary 'tis for woman to sit still,
On winter nights, by solitary fires,
And hear the nations praising them far off."

Thanks to Tante Octavie and "our sweet family," my winter nights are not, and never will be solitary. And still greater thanks to God that he did not visit me with the need, or bestow on me those "gracious gifts of genius" which might have prompted or tempted me to seek my compensation in other pursuits than the sweet, quiet ones of home. Not wife nor mother love, it is true, is mine; but friend and daughter love has been poured out on my heart "in perfect purple fullness;" and, in the autumn of my years, to know that I am loved, and needed by those I love, will give me greater happiness than the knowledge

"Of nations praising me far off."

Professor and Madame Bouvreuil are also happy, quiet,

and contented; "begirt with growing infancy," I whisper to myself, as I see their pretty grandchildren playing around them. Mr. Merle and gentle Tante Cecile rejoice, with modest and grateful pride over our dear Marie's wondrous fame, and luckily do not notice the calm solemnity that creeps apace, year by year, over her, as the laurel leaves bud around her beautiful Sappho brow.

And now, I am through. I have no tragedy to relate; no horrid event to chronicle, except, if I do not close my recital soon, I may have to write poor dear old Beau's epitaph. Yes, Beau is old, and, like Methuselah, he has out-lived even the age, not of men, but of very venerable dogs. There he lies, on his scarlet cushion—Tante Octavie's last birthday present to him; poor fellow! looking down at the old lady sagely, as if he could tell her, if he chose, something about those flowers. And then he gazes with a solemn air over at the old Savoy Alps, behind which the sun is slowly sinking, and he snuffs faintly the soft, spring west wind. He is very old, and silver hairs are plentifully sprinkled in those long ears once so famous for their "raven silken inches;" but, like Tante Octavie's, his old age is golden and amiable. He wags his tail, and puts out his paw for a caress. Yes, dog, I will stop, and come to you; so, reader, Beau and I bid you good-by.

THE END.