

# OAKSHAW;

OR,

## THE VICTIMS OF AVARICE:

### A Tale of Intrigue.

By WILLIAM T. COGGESHALL,

AUTHOR OF "EASY WARREN AND HIS COTEMPORARIES."

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The ample propositions that hope makes  
In all designs begun on earth below,  
Fall in the promised largeness; checks and disasters  
Grow in the veins of actions highest reared;  
As knots, by the conflux of meeting sap,  
Infect the sound pine and divert his grain  
Tortive and errant from his course of growth.  
[TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.]

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CINCINNATI:  
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## PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.

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IN the fall of 1850, W. N. HALDEMAN, proprietor of the *Louisville (Ky.) Courier*, offered \$200 as a prize for the best three of any stories that should be sent him before the 15th of December following.

The committee appointed to decide on the merits of the competing Tales, consisted of T. S. BELL, J. H. HEYWOOD, BEN. CASSEDAY, W. R. HARVEY and NOBLE BUTLER. This committee reported on the 3d of January, 1851, and awarded the prizes as follows:

To "BLANCHE OF ARTOIS," by Edward Flagg, \$100.

To "THE STUDENT'S REWARD," by A. D. Madeira, \$50.

To "OAKSHAW; OR, THE VICTIMS OF AVARICE," by W. T. Coggeshall, \$50.

The Tales were published in the columns of the *Courier* in regular succession, "OAKSHAW" appearing last. It was the only one of the Prize Tales copied into any other paper, and by several influential journals was pronounced the best of the three. On the day the last chapter was published in the *Courier*, the editor called attention to it in a paragraph which contained these words: "OAKSHAW is, we believe, generally regarded as possessing more incident and interest than either of its predecessors." The Lawrenceburg (Ind.) *Independent Register*, which copied "*Oakshaw*," gave it the following notice:

"We conclude this highly interesting story in this number of our paper. We are gratified to know that the selection of it

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Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855,  
By WILLIAM T. COGGESHALL,  
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has been approved by our readers generally, many of whom have pronounced it one of the best tales they ever read. For it, we are indebted to the enterprising publisher of the Louisville Courier, in which paper it appeared originally from the manuscript of the author. In our opinion, it should have received the first premium paid by the publisher of that paper."

The success which attended "OAKSHAW" as a Prize Tale, induced its present publication in book form. It has been carefully revised by the author, and is offered to the reading public in confidence that its influence will be healthful, and for the advancement of the writer's reputation.

THE PUBLISHER.

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# OAKSHAW;

OR,

## THE VICTIMS OF AVARICE.

### CHAPTER I.

#### EMIGRATION.

In a pretty cottage, around which the rose buds were opening, near one of the liveliest of England's inland towns, a pale meek-eyed child drew its first breath.

It grew an angel-faced boy with winsome ways and a sweet temper.

It was old enough to be christened, and he to whom it looked as father, said :

"What shall we name it?"

"Clarence, after father," answered the mother; and the child was named Clarence Okell.

Clarence was ten years old when his father said :

"We will sell our cottage and emigrate to America, where we can purchase a farm.

The cottage was sold, and the family embarked at Liverpool for the "Land of Promise.

The vessel in which they took passage, was not one of large dimensions, nor of heavy burden; but there were not many passengers on board, and Mr. Okell had abundant room for his small family, and their goods and chattels.

He had been an industrious tiller of the soil, and was not stinted by poverty, yet he was not a man of wealth; and in order to carry out his purposes in the New World, it became him to husband his means, therefore he had taken a deck passage for his wife and boy; but, by the payment of a few extra shillings, they were allowed many privileges, and their situation was not one of decided discomfort.

Near that part of the ship which Clarence found his home, an Irishwoman had her "dwelling." She was on her way over the ocean with an only child—a bright little boy four or five years of age—to meet her husband, who, she said, "had something to get them a home with in *Ameriky*."

In a few days, Clarence began to take considerable notice of the lively little sprig from the land of Shamrocks, and the child became fondly attached to him. One of the sailors was the brother of the child's father, and, as Clarence gave attention to his nephew, the tar manifested regard for him.

When not on duty, the sailor would sit on the deck or in the forecabin with the two boys and "spin sea yarns" to Clarence until the youth would many times eagerly exclaim:

"I wish I could be a sailor."

When it was calm, of a starlight evening, Clarence would go upon deck, and while the rough-spoken but kind hearted sailor was on watch, he would talk to the boy of the geography of the heavens, and explain to him those nautical mysteries by which the mariner is enabled, with unerring certainty, to direct his ship over the trackless deep.

"Shall I know all about the stars when I am a man?" Clarence would sometimes inquire; and the sailor, true to his predilections, would answer:

"If you are not a land craft, you may."

Then the youth, with his imagination dwelling upon the wonders of which his mind had a glimpse, would go to her who was a mother to him, and beg that she would let him be a sailor.

She would tell him of the perils of the deep—of the hardship of the sailor's life, and paint the comfort they would enjoy in the quiet home they would have in the "New World" to which they were emigrating—and, for a time, the youth would give up his yearnings for "a life on the ocean wave," and tell the sailor that he could not be a ship-boy, because he could not leave his mother.

The ship had been becalmed several days; the vessel was in perfect order, and the sailors were at rest. Their skipper was not a hard master, and he loved to see his men enjoy themselves.

Clarence with his two friends, the sailor and his nephew, was sitting on deck watching a school of porpoises playing around the prow of the vessel—leaping from the water and displaying the brilliant colors of their scales in the clear sunlight, and shooting, as if in trials of speed, to and fro in advance of the ship's course.

The sailor told of strange fish and great monsters he had seen in the South Sea, while Clarence held his little Irish companion,

so that he could witness the gambols of the finny curiosities, then sporting to his merriment. As the fish sprung from the water, the little fellow would clap his hands and cry out with glee.

The mother saw him partly hanging over the ship's side, and she cried to the sailor:

"Ye had better look out there, or ye'll have Barney in the sea with them fishes."

"Niver a bit of danger," returned the tar; "the lad's as careful of 'em as a paddy of his last pratie, or a shipwrecked sailor of his last biscuit, and he'd dive for 'im, wouldn't ye?"

"Yes. I know how to swim and to dive," said Clarence eagerly; "and if Barney should fall, I'd be jumping for him quick."

"Yer a brave fellow," said the sailor, "it's a pity ye could'n't be a gentleman on the sea."

The mother, assured of the safety of her child, gave herself no more anxiety, and the tar continued his yarns, when, presently he jumped to his feet and exclaimed:

"By the powers, I promised the skipper to do a job for him afore this, and here I've been spinning yarns till the remembrance of it like to left me intirely. Look out for that small craft, my lad, and I'll be back afore the ship could make a knot in a stiff breeze."

And the sailor darted down the gangway towards the cabin. He had been gone but a few moments, when Clarence fell to musing upon the strange stories that had been told him, and, for a time, he forgot his charge.

The little fellow, released from especial surveillance, saw something in another part of the ship that attracted his attention and, unperceived by Clarence, ran towards the pilot house.

Presently the youth looked around—the child was gone—that he must be overboard, was Clarence's first conviction—the conversation he had had flashed on his mind—a moment he glanced wildly over the ship, and then leaped from the vessel into the water. The Irish mother coming for her son, caught a glimpse of him as he disappeared.

"Overboard! overboard!" she cried with all her power; and believing that both children were in the sea, her quick mind catching at the most imminent danger, she cried again in a second:

"The sharks will ate them."

The friendly sailor heard this cry. He knew well what it meant—in a second he was on deck, and in another second was overboard. Clarence was on the wave struggling manfully; but as the sailor reached him, he appeared to give up his exertions, and said, as if his heart was breaking.

"He is drowned—let me go with him."

But the sailor held him firmly, and cried for a boat, because he feared that what the Irish woman said had proved true in the case of her boy, Barney; and if so, he well knew, nothing but immediate rescue by the ship's boat could save him and Clarence.

There were screams and entreaties—cries of terror and haste—commands and threats on shipboard; yet, with all speed, a boat was lowered into the sea, and it was but a few minutes ere strong arms propelled it swiftly towards the struggling man and boy.

Bending over the vessel's side were many beating hearts, as eager eyes watched the boat's course. The Irish woman, though her heart was wrung with the thought of her child's fate, held her breath as she looked at the sailor buffeting the waves with one arm and sustaining Clarence with the other; and Clarence's mother stood with her hands clasped, and her eyes fixed on the ocean, as if she would gaze into its very depths, to see if there *were* ravenous jaws near that dare harm her boy.

A shout went up as the sailor threw Clarence into the boat, and then sprang safely from the water. As he did so, he cast his eyes behind him and saw a dark fin flap within a few feet of the boat.

"Poor Barney," he said, "the varmints did get him. I'd as lief they'd get me as meet his mither; but the boy did his best, and the angels couldn't blame him."

When Clarence was lifted on the ship, as his eyes met those of the disconsolate Irish mother, he exclaimed:

"I did it! I did it! I let him fall; but you must take me. I'll be your son, and if you won't let me, I'll jump into the water again."

"It's like a good child," said the weeping woman; "but ye could niver be my Barney. Och, St. Patrick! what will his father say?"

"Don't take on so," said the sailor relative. "It wasn't the boy at all as let the child over. Didn't I leave them children together? Ye ought to wish the sharks had taken a snap at me. It's not like a man to let the salt run; but blast my buttons if I can kape the pumps dry," and the sailor brushed a tear from his cheek with the corner of his jacket, striding, as he did so, towards the hatch leading to the fore-castle, when suddenly he stopped, and, changing his tone, cried:

"In the name of good grog, what's that?"

As he cried, he disappeared down the dark steps, and when

the woman had rushed across the deck, followed by the passengers and sailors, they heard a voice:

"Knock the salt drops out of your eyes and let the sunshine into your hearts."

In a moment the tar appeared, bearing in his arms the boy who was supposed to have been eaten by the sharks.

The mother and Clarence rushed to embrace him, and the mother threw her arms around both the boys and kissed them, and wept over them, while the uncle-sailor swung his tarpaulin and exclaimed:

"It's worth a month's rations of grog—it's worth all the fear about sharks, and all the salt drops. Come here my youngsters; yer as good for eyes that's got salt brine in 'em as a sight of a tar's sweetheart after a three year's cruise—come here till I git a grip at ye."

And the warm-hearted sailor threw his brawny arms around mother, son and young friend, and held them all in a firm embrace till the faces of sailors and passengers, that had been shrouded in gloom, were lit up with pleasing smiles.

The boy, Barney, when he left Clarence, had attempted to run across the deck, but made a misstep, and, just as his friend looked for him, had fallen down the hatchway. For a moment, he was stunned, and when he did cry, there was so much bustle on board that he was not heard, and all thought him lost, till the uncle, fleeing to his hammock to escape the scene on deck that had unmanned him, heard the boy's feeble moan and went to his rescue.

The little fellow was considerably bruised, but was soon toddling about the deck as lively and careless as ever.

Clarence, from this day, became a general favorite among the sailors, and many a "yarn" of danger was told him, which his act of bravery in leaping into the water called to mind.

One day, a whale was descried, and "all hands" were called on deck to see it build a fountain out of the ocean. Clarence watched the movements of the Leviathan, holding little Barney by the hand, and as the Irish mother looked at her boy, she had *then* no fear that the sharks would get him.

It was the evening of the tenth day, after the incident with Barney, when the Captain stood on deck watching the sky.

"We shall have a squall to-night," he said. "There will be billows before morning that will make our craft tremble; but we will be prepared for them."

Now the sailors were set briskly at work. Clarence watched them climb the masts to put the rigging in order, and called out

in admiration many times as his particular friend swung from rope to rope.

The sky was rapidly becoming overcast. The sun, just as he dipped his disc in the water, throwing golden hues over the crests of the waves, was hid from view by dark masses of cloud that hung low on the horizon, and large drops of rain pattered on the ship's deck. Clarence wished to stay up with the sailors and see the storm rage and the billows roll, but his mother would not permit it, and he went down to his "home" on ship-board and took Barney on his knee, and talked to him about the birds that fly over the sea, and the monsters that swim in it, with which the "yarns" of the sailors had made him familiar.

Before it was time for Clarence to swing in his hammock, the rain fell in torrents and the ship pitched fearfully.

The Captain said he had rarely seen such a storm; but the vessel was strong, and he thought that if no accident happened, she could weather it.

It was a terrible night for those who had never before been in a storm at sea; and Clarence sat watching with his mother till the day dawned.

The rain did not then fall as heavily as it had done during the night, but the wind grew fiercer, and the danger of swamping the vessel was imminent. It had, in many respects, become disabled by the tearing of its rigging and the crushing of its masts.

To the sailors of this ship, no sun rose from the sea that day; and as the storm in no manner abated, but rather increased, the stout heart of the Captain began to fail him; yet he had great confidence in the strength of his ship; but when, towards night, one of the sailors came to him and said:

"The hold is filling with water—the ship has sprung a leak," he replied:

"We must not give her up; but if the wind don't fall, she'll go under before morning."

All hands that could be spared, with what passengers were able, were called to the pumps; but notwithstanding their severest exertions, the water gained on them.

When all had become so fatigued that they could scarcely take themselves to labor as their turns came, the Captain said:

"She may keep afloat till morning; but unless a sail come in sight then, we must all go under, for the boats would be of no use in this sea."

Then the hearts of men who had braved death in many forms, were broken with fear, and those who had no thought of the influence of wicked lives till that hour, were reminded of every

deed not in keeping with instructions pious mothers had given them.

A passenger, who, in England, had been a lay preacher of the Methodist persuasion, was called upon to hold prayer. With those of the passengers and crew who could be spared from labor and watching, he knelt down in the cabin, and offered a fervent prayer to the God who "holds the sea in the hollow of his hand."

She who had been a mother to Clarence, then took him by the hand, and stole away to a part of the ship where no mortal eye saw, nor mortal ear heard them, and putting her arm fondly around the boy's neck, said:

"You have been to me as a son, and I love you as such."

"And am I not your son?" said Clarence, looking perplexed at her he had ever considered his mother.

"No, child, I am not your mother! She died when you were born, in my father's house. When she was dying, she called him to her bedside. He had been her guardian before marriage,—and as you, a tender infant, lay upon her arm, she said to him:

"You will be a father to my child till his parent shall claim him."

"He bowed his head, but his heart was too full to allow him to speak, for he loved your mother, and he knew she was dying. She died calmly as a child sinking into a healthy slumber; and when she was dead, my father, a silver-haired man, took you in his arms, thinking, as I have often heard him say, what a world of sorrow you would bear before you stood, like him, in old age, on the confines of the tomb. Father died in a few months—his cottage was sold—I was married, and, with you, moved to a distant shire. You are like your mother in sweetness of face, and sweetness of temper."

"And my father?" said Clarence, weeping, as his friend spoke of his likeness to his mother.

"He was a lieutenant in the British army. He was called away from England six months before you was born. He had a brother with him who was a colonel."

"Does he live, and will he hear that I have been drowned?"

"No, Clarence, he will not hear that you have been drowned. I would not tell you that you are an orphan; but you may be saved, and I may find a watery grave, and you should know your history while I am able to tell you."

"If the ship sinks, I will die with you. I'll have nobody to love in the world, and nobody will love me."

"No, Clarence, you will find friends so long as you are a good boy. But let me tell you of your father."

"I want to hear about him."

"Before you were a year old, the news came in the papers that he had been killed by a cannon ball, fighting bravely in the foremost ranks, against his country's foe. The battle occurred on the very day you were born—on the day that you were born, you were an orphan."

"I shall be broken hearted now. It had been better if you had let me die with you, and met my father and mother in heaven, where I would not be an orphan."

"But, Clarence, if you had been saved and we had been lost, you would have known yourself to be an orphan, and you must be cheered, and live for my sake. Your father was a man of honor, and, we believe, must have had wealth. You will some day hear from it. Give me your hand."

Clarence obeyed, and Mrs. Okell placed in it a ring.

"It came from your dying mother's finger," she said. "It was her wedding gift."

Clarence looked within it, and saw there the names of Charles and Alice Weldon. He said:

"My name is not Okell, but—"

"Clarence Weldon," interposed his adopted mother, as she pressed him against her breast, and kissed his forehead.

He returned her embrace and looked at her through tearful eyes as she continued:

"It is a noble name, Clarence. You may well be proud of it, and—*what is that?* There is the terrible cry—the ship sinks! Clarence, fly, fly, fly to your sailor friend."

"Not till my mother goes with me," said the boy.

Grasping him by the arm, she hurried him on deck. The ship was sinking—two of the boats were riding the waves, loaded too deeply with a freight of souls ever to brave the raging storm. But there was no other way of escape; they were all the boats the ship had.

Mr. Okell had been seeking his wife, and met her as she appeared on deck, almost frantic with fright. He knew that upon a hasty constructed raft, composed of loose timbers and mattresses lashed together, floated the sailor who had been the particular friend of Clarence, and it was but the work of a moment for Mr. Okell to grasp the boy and hurl him overboard, as he cried for help, so that he was heard above the roaring of the waves; then, maddened by the threatened danger, the man flew to aid the Captain, and a few others launch a raft, upon which they expected to be buoyed up until a sail might be wafted in sight; but the Captain cried:

"We shall be engulfed—the vessel pitches."

And in a moment the sea rolled where the ship had been; and those who remained on her, reckless of their own lives, that others might be saved, went down with her.

The boats were never heard from, and must have been overwhelmed by the mighty waves.

Clarence had been taken up as Mr. Okell expected he would, when he cast him into the foaming deep, but it was by mere accident, for had he not fallen within a few feet of the mate of the ship, who was swimming toward the raft, he had surely sunk before the sailor reached him.

The storm had been abating for some hours—the clouds were rapidly driven from the sky, and when the sun came up out of the sea, on the morning after the night during which the ill-fated ship went down, it shone with unclouded splendor upon three persons floating without rudder or compass, provisions or water. They felt what it is to be in an ocean of water with none to drink. A death far more terrible than drowning threatened them; but so long as there was hope they cheered each other, straining their eyes across the waste of waters to gain a glimpse of a sail. Noon came, and still they floated. A sail had been descried, but it was so distant their signal was not observed. Night approached, and nearly exhausted the sailors began to despair. Clarence had suffered so much that he required watching to be kept upon the raft. Morn came again, and all were yet safe, but the mate said:

"The boy can not live till noon if we have a broiling sun, and it is doubtful whether either of us can weather it till night."

If there is a situation more trying than that in which these men were placed, our imagination has never conceived it—on the wide ocean at the mercy of the waves, with starvation inevitable unless some ship cross their track and take them up.

How anxiously did they look out for this relief; and when a sail was seen against the horizon, with what eagerness was it watched—and when it faded from view, what glances were exchanged and how did hope die in their hearts!

That day, the sun did not shine fiercely; and when the middle of the afternoon came, all were alive, but Clarence and the mate were failing fast. The sailor was yet the stoutest. He was on the watch—he cried:

"A sail!"

The mate was roused for a moment, but sank again to lethargy when he looked over the water and could see nothing.

The sailor strained his eyes and thought he must be deceived—it was but a white cloud floating across the sea; but it grew larger—it approached—nearer and nearer it drew—it was,



indeed a sail! Then the sailor displayed a signal of distress to the best possible advantage, and in an hour the sound of a gun boomed across the waves towards him—then he cried: "We are safe!" and aroused the mate and Clarence, as the ship bore down upon them.

A boat pushed out and they were taken up. The mate could not have lived till another day, and, before midnight, Clarence would probably have gone, as he had wished, to meet his father and mother in heaven, had not relief come. A few day's care and kind nursing restored both to their wonted vigor of body. But a change, which no nursing could relieve, had come over Clarence. He felt himself alone in the world; as much so as if he knew of no other mortal, and a deep melancholy settled upon him, which wore away only in its severer aspects after many weeks.

The ship by which the sailors had been rescued, proved to be a merchantman bound for an American port. The unfortunates were kindly treated, and in ten days safely landed at one of the most important of the United States' marts of commerce.

When they entered the city Clarence's sailor-friend promised to take care of him till he had found a home; and he set out in quest of his brother, whose wife and boy had been lost. They wandered about several days before their search was successful, and when they found the brother, he had no home to give them. He was waiting day by day on the sea-side for the vessel that he expected would bring his wife. When he met his brother, and learned the fate of his family he was disconsolate—wildly disconsolate for a few hours, and then he gathered a few companions about him, and the brothers drank deeply to drown their sorrows.

Clarence was left to take care of himself. He had no companionship with the rough men whom his sailor-friend gathered around him, and he walked away from the place in which they reveled, and desponding, sat down upon a part of a ship's load of boxes, near the custom-house of the city.

A little boy came to the dock to see the big ships at anchor. When he had watched them rocking on the waves awhile, he strayed along where Clarence sat. He saw the weeping stranger, and said to him:

"What makes you cry so, boy?"

"I have lost my father and mother. I have no friends in this country—I have no money, and I am hungry," answered Clarence.

"Come and play and I'll take you home with me," said the boy.

Clarence took the hand that was offered him, and the boys played together. Child-like he soon forgot his troubles, and his new friend treated him as a cherished companion.

When they had run about the dock until they were both tired—

"Come," said Clarence's companion, "we'll go and see father."

They went into the custom-house—ran up a flight of narrow steps, and into a little, dimly lighted room where a middle aged man with golden spectacles on his nose, sat half buried amid musty books and dusty papers.

"Here is a little boy I want for a playmate, father," cried Clarence's friend. "He's got no father nor mother, and he says he'll live with us. Let him, won't you?"

"What can he do, Henry?" said the gentleman with gold spectacles, laying down his pen and looking over his glasses at Clarence.

"Oh! he can play so nice," answered the boy; and "he'll run errands for mother. She said she wanted an errand boy."

"He may go home with you," said the gentleman; and, as the boys ran out, he resumed his writing.

## CHAPTER II.

### A HOME FOUND.

THE orphan boy was conducted to a part of the city where were many handsome dwelling houses, and was presented to the mistress of one of the largest and most richly furnished. He told his story so artlessly to the mother of the youth who had found him at the sea-side, that she believed him fully, and as she soon discovered that he had no vicious habits, she was glad her son had chosen him for a playmate.

Clarence was not destined to be an errand boy. He proved a true friend to Henry Hastie, and relieved his mother of so much anxiety, that she made them constant companions.

One Saturday afternoon, when Clarence was about twelve years of age, he was permitted to take Henry and walk about the city. With some change that Madame Hastie had given them, they visited the museum to witness the feats of a magician, about whose performances wonderful stories were told, on showy placards at the corner of every street.

The exhibition continued later than Clarence had expected, and before they had proceeded halfway homeward, lights began to gleam from the shop and store windows. Clarence was anxious to hurry forward, but Henry would lag behind to look at the "sights."

Clarence was a few yards in advance of his charge when suddenly he heard Henry utter a cry of terror.

Instantly Clarence ran back to the place where he expected the boy was loitering; but he was nowhere in sight. He looked up and down the street wildly, and then glanced to the opposite side just in time to see young Hastie dragged around a corner by a woman. From a peculiar dress the hag wore, Clarence thought she must be an old looking woman, whom he had noticed watching Henry at the museum. He ran swiftly to the corner at which the boy disappeared, but neither he nor the woman was anywhere to be seen. He walked up and down the street—looked into all the alleys and all the shops—inquired of everybody he met, but could obtain neither word nor sight of the stolen boy.

It was growing late—he was obliged to give up the search, and he hastened home to tell Henry's mother of the misfortune.

He burst into the parlor where Mr. and Mrs. Hastie were sitting, in a state of great anxiety at the protracted absence of the boys, and sobbed:

"Henry's gone—he's stolen."

"How? Where?" cried Mr. Hastie, starting from his seat.

"He was looking in a window when we were coming home—a woman dragged him off—I ran after her, but couldn't find her, but I'd know her if I'd see her, answered Clarence, sobbing while he spoke, as if his heart would break.

"Be calm, my child," said Mrs. Hastie, kindly. "Some bad woman has only taken him to keep him until there is a reward offered."

She felt, as she spoke, much more alarm than her manner implied; but she was a cautious, thinking woman—very different from her husband—and, observing that Mr. Hastie was much excited, her manner was assumed to calm him and relieve something of the alarm which Clarence manifested, for she felt confident that whatever might have been the circumstances Clarence could not have been to blame for Henry's disappearance.

"I'll reward the hag," cried Mr. Hastie. "You know her, do you, boy? I'll send a servant for the police—confound it, they are all out now making search—I'll go myself," and smashing his hat upon his head in a moment Mr. Hastie was in the street and on his way to a police station.

When he had gone Mrs. Hastie took Clarence kindly by the

hand, and encouraged him to tell minutely all the particulars of their afternoon's adventure. The honest boy gave her a straight forward, truthful narration, and she was convinced that her first impression about the fate of her son was correct.

In a half an hour Mr. Hastie returned, accompanied by a short, thick-set man, who carried a short, thick club, and wore a short coat with numerous pockets.

"Here's the boy," said Mr. Hastie, pointing to Clarence.

"You'd know 'er, would yer, eh?" said the policeman, with a peculiar nasal twang."

"I think I would," answered Clarence.

"I knows where the critters stops as well as I knows the weight of my mace," said the policeman, shaking his club. "We'll root 'em—come on, boy."

Clarence followed the policeman, and was led along dark, narrow, and filthy alleys. The officer explored underground rooms—traversed damp, subterranean passages—climbed rickety stairs—searched garrets in which squalor and wretchedness were so manifest that a glimpse within them gave Clarence the heart-ache. But in none of the purlieus of vice or abodes of misery that were visited, did Clarence see any woman who bore strong resemblance to the one he thought had stolen Henry.

"Yer don't know what she is like?" said the policeman, after they had been searching unsuccessfully for several hours.

"Yes, I do," said Clarence; "but I havn't seen her."

"It won't do," said the policeman; "we'll hev to give 'em up this night."

He led the way to a police station, and said to Clarence:

"Yer know the way home, don't yer?"

"Yes, sir," answered Clarence; and away he ran in a state of mind well calculated to make him unhappy when he remembered the scenes of the night. As he passed an alley, he heard a sob. He stopped, looked in the direction whence the sound proceeded, and saw a little girl, partly covered with rags, sitting on the cold pavement, and crying piteously. He approached her, when she looked up at him, and said:

"Don't hurt me. Father beat me into the street. I had no supper."

"I wouldn't harm you for the world," said Clarence kindly.

"Come with me."

The girl held back, as if reluctant to trust him.

"I can't wait," said Clarence. "If you won't go, here's a sixpence to buy you some supper or breakfast."

"I'll go," answered the child, springing to her feet; "I know you're a kind boy."

Clarence gave her his hand, and her bare feet trod nimbly over the paving stones until they reached Mr. Hastie's house. Clarence led the beggar girl to the kitchen, and said:

"What is your name?"

"Sally," she answered.

"Well, Sally, sit here a moment, and I'll get you some supper."

Mrs. Hastie was waiting for Clarence in the parlor. He met her, and reported the ill success of his search. The servants had been scattered over the city—Mr. Hastie had been out making inquiries in every direction, but no tidings of the lost boy had been gained. An advertisement, describing him and offering a liberal reward for his recovery, had been prepared for insertion in a morning paper.

Clarence told Mrs. Hastie of the little beggar girl in the kitchen, and was directed where to find a lunch for her.

When the servants returned, a couch was made up for the girl on the kitchen floor, and she slept soundly—the only one was she—that little outcast, who had sweet sleep in that house on this night.

In the morning, when Sally was taking her breakfast, under Clarence's direction, a servant brought in a paper and was reading it.

"I wish I could take some of these victuals to mother," said Sally.

"You shall have as much as you can carry," said Clarence.

"Here it is!" cried a servant.

"What?" said Clarence.

"The advertisement."

The servant read the description of Henry.

Little Sally held up both hands without dropping her knife and fork, and cried:

"I saw that boy last night—I know where he is. Will they get the reward!"

"Who?" exclaimed Clarence, in surprise.

"The folks what's got him," said Sally.

"Who has got him?" cried Clarence. "Where did you see him?"

"I—I—a woman had him—he was at—"

"Now Sally, I have been kind to you; if you know any thing of this boy, tell me the truth—you are in his father's house."

"Father will kill me!"

"He shall not harm you. What has he to do with it?"

"A woman had that boy to our house last night."

"What woman? Where is the house?" said Clarence.

"Father makes her do it! He gets the money and buys whisky—but you wouldn't hurt mother?"

"Sally, has your mother got this boy?"

"I—I don't know, sir; indeed I don't. Oh! father will make me stay in the street a whole week!" and the child sobbed as if her little heart would break.

"He shall not harm you, Sally. If you tell me the truth Mr. Hastie, the boy's father, will take care of you, and your mother shall have the reward, and your father shall not know that you told about him."

"I'll show you the house, sir, if you won't let father know."

"I'll be a friend to you always, Sally," said Clarence; then turning to the servant who had heard the conversation, he said:

"Don't tell the folks about this. I'll get Henry before they know it—I lost him, I want to find him."

The servant promised secrecy, and Clarence led Sally from the house.

He went to the police station and found the officer whom he had accompanied during the night, and, under Sally's guidance, they proceeded in quest of the missing boy. They entered a long narrow, and unclean alley, and walked several squares, when Sally refused to accompany them, but gave them as good a description as she was able of her father's house. They left her, turned a corner towards a principal street, and soon found the old wooden building to which the girl had directed them. They climbed into an upper story, Clarence thought, at the risk of their necks, and without ceremony entered the room where Sally's parents were supposed to live.

A picture of wretchedness greeted Clarence more loathsome than he had expected. Upon the floor lay a man drunk—near him, on a low stool, sat a middle aged woman who looked miserable enough for any scene; but she bore no resemblance to the woman Clarence thought had stolen Henry.

"Is that the critter?" said the policeman, pointing to the woman.

"I should think not," said Clarence. "She does not look a bit like her."

"We'll have to come a little strategy," whispered the officer.

"What do you want?" demanded the woman harshly.

"Yer see," answered the policeman, "as how there was a boy lost last night, and here's a reward of fifty dollars for any word of him. We're looking about—may be you can't give us a clue?"

"Fifty dollars," cried the woman. "What sort of a boy was he? Will the money come, *sure?*"

"Look here, old lady," said the policeman walking towards her and taking his mace from under his coat, "now trot out that boy, or I'll give you some and lug you off. Yer know what I am."

"You should not hurt her," interposed Clarence, "we promised Sally"—

"Sally!" echoed the woman; "if she's blabbed, her father'll be the death of 'er."

"No he won't, nuther," said the policeman. "Now, trot out that youngster, or you'll get some. By hokey, here's a closet," said the officer as he knocked on a low door.

In another moment it was burst open, and there sat Henry Hastie nearly smothered, and looking as if he was almost frightened to death. Clarence sprang towards him, and in a second they were in each other's arms.

"A big woman caught me," said Henry, "and dragged me over the street, and then an ugly man helped her, and they ran into a cellar, and I didn't see you and I cried; but they wouldn't let me go, and they said they'd keep me until I was put in the papers as a lost boy, and then they'd get the reward. There's the woman, but she don't look as she did. That's the man—he's a bad fellow. He drove his little girl into the street last night. I wanted him to let her stay, and offered to give him a shilling I had; but he took the money, told me to hold my tongue, and put the little thing out, and then bought whisky with the shilling."

"It's well he put that girl out," said Clarence.

"Why?" said Henry.

"I'll tell you when we get home," answered Clarence.

"What the devil's all this?" cried the man on the floor, whom the policeman had been punching with his mace.

"Get up, or I'll let you know," answered the officer. "Hoist yourself sudden, and prepare for the lock up."

The woman begged and remonstrated, but the man was hurried down stairs by the officer, and Clarence and Henry hastened home; and Clarence did give Mr. and Mrs. Hastie a surprise—a happy surprise.

Mr. Hastie paid the woman the advertised reward, and took Sally away from the abode of wretchedness in which they had found her, and had her placed at a charity school. She was not the daughter of the persons with whom she lived, but an orphan who had fallen into their *care*.

The woman had some affection for her but the man was glad

that she had been taken away. After he had been kept in jail about twenty-four hours he was discharged, and that was the last Mr. Hastie, or any of his family, ever heard of him.

From the time of this adventure, Clarence and Henry were closer friends than ever, and Mrs. Hastie loved Clarence as well as if he had been a near relative.

He was one of those boys who understand the art of making themselves general favorites, and he was beloved by all who knew him.

Perhaps an exception should be made of Mr. Hastie, for the more Clarence did to oblige him, the more exacting and fault-finding he became, although he always spoke highly of the boy.

### CHAPTER III.

#### ANOTHER EMIGRATION.

CLARENCE and Henry had, for three years, attended school together. The latter was a mischievous boy, and was every day getting into difficulty instead of getting his lesson. Clarence was studious, and made great proficiency. When Henry had neglected his lessons, he worked out his hard sums for him and parsed the difficult passages in their grammar task.

The teacher of their school was a severe, sour-visaged, lank pedagogue, who kept a "select school for gentleman's children." His scholars had no sympathy with him, and while he "spared the rod" upon some of the most troublesome, he manifested a peculiar, petulant dislike to a number of the meek and well behaved—those who always had their lessons well, and gave him no just cause of complaint.

Among these was Clarence. He had frequently been reprimanded and "kept in after school" for imagined grievances, but had never complained until his late appearance at the house of Henry's father, one evening, caused this gentleman to inquire, in rather a sharp tone:

"What detained you, Clarence?"

"I was kept in school."

"What for? Missing your lessons?"

"No, sir—for nothing."

"Nothing, eh? How's that? I'm afraid you are telling stories."

"I never told one in my life, sir."

"Ah, you didn't? You have a good opinion of yourself. We'll inquire into this."

"But, sir,"—

"Not a word. Go!" and the gentleman stamped his foot.

Clarence went to his room with a heavy heart. He could endure the schoolmaster's injustice, but to be mistrusted by him whom he considered his benefactor, was what he could not bear. He determined that on the morrow he would prove that he had been maltreated, and then he sobbed himself to sleep.

Mr. Hastie had been a custom-house officer for many years, and had amassed a fortune; yet he trembled at each breath of political wind which augured unfavorably to his continuance in his "fat place." About the period of which we write, his prospects of removal to quiet life were rather too *brilliant* for his satisfaction, and he had been ill at ease with himself and all the world for some weeks. He wanted an object to vent a little spite upon, when he met his adopted ward, and the poor boy's misfortune furnished a subject. As soon as Clarence left the room Mr. Hastie forgot all about the matter—but not so with the aggrieved boy.

He awoke on the following morning with swollen eyes and a heavy heart. He did not have an opportunity to see Mr. Hastie before he went to his office, and he was obliged to go to school without showing that he had not misrepresented his grievances. New troubles were in store for him.

He had been the last boy at the school-house the evening previous; the teacher had left him alone for an hour, and then had unlocked the door and discharged him, without taking time to observe whether any mischief had been perpetrated. When the boy, who came in the morning to sweep the school-house, opened the doors he found that some rogue had been making general destruction—a back window was broken—the teacher's rods were all destroyed—his desk had been overturned—his book of accounts with the pupils was torn to pieces and scattered about the floor, and many other things were disarranged. In fright he ran to the tutor's boarding-house and told him of the mischief that had been done. This worthy repaired to the scene of disaster and waited, without attempting to put things to rights, until the pupils had assembled.

At the hour appointed for the school to open the pedagogue called Clarence up to the platform, around which disorder reigned, and harshly said:

"Look at your work, sir. When I saw this, I did not believe

that you would dare to show yourself in my school again. What have you to say for yourself?"

"I did not do it, sir."

"You did not do it! What did you do?"

"I studied my grammar lesson when you left me; and when you unlocked the door this had not been done," said Clarence modestly.

"How dare you, sir! If you did not do it tell me who did."

"I can not, sir."

"Why can't you?"

"It would be a breach of trust."

"Then you know."

"I do, sir, but I can not tell."

"I'll make you tell;" and taking hold of Clarence, the teacher shook him violently, then snatching up a piece of a heavy ferule, he beat him most severely, and again demanded:

"Will you tell, sir?"

"Never," answered Clarence, unmoved.

The teacher was now terribly enraged, and again he beat the honest boy, until one of the largest pupils in the school stepped forward, and said:

"It shall not be. You have whipped him enough."

Seeing that this boy had others to stand by him in this movement, the craven teacher dismissed Clarence and ordered the other boys to be seated.

Clarence went to his desk, put on his hat, boldly walked out of the school-house, and bent his way to the custom-house.

Mr. Hastie had that morning received fresh word of political troubles, and he was in a perplexed mood when Clarence called on him.

"Well, sir," said the official, "what brings you?"

This was an unfavorable reception, but Clarence had formed a determination, and he was not to be daunted by frowns from an honest purpose.

"I have come to tell you, sir," he said, "that I shall not go to Mr. Crabbe's school any more."

"Ah! more pranks, eh!"

"No, sir; but he has abused me."

"I should like to know how."

"He has punished me often for offences I did not commit—he locked me in the school-house last night for an hour, without cause. This morning his desk was broken and his books torn. He accused me. I told him I did not do it; but rather than tell a lie, I was compelled to say I knew who did it; and

because I would not tell him, he whipped me until the boys interfered. I shall not go back there, sir."

Mr. Hastie heard this defence patiently, and then cried :

"You fool, you ; why didn't you tell ?"

"Because it was Henry, sir. He told me last night that he knew I had been kept in for nothing, and he broke through the back window and overturned the teacher's desk to be revenged on him."

"A pretty story, this. Well trumped up. I don't believe a bit of it. You must go back to the school, sir, or you can't stay at my house."

"Then I shall go away."

"Where will you go ?"

"I don't know, sir."

"I must be obeyed," returned Mr. Hastie, and he began to write rapidly.

Clarence went away from the custom-house, and again he was alone in the world. Alone in the world ! Yes, alone ! with crowds of people about him—multitudes of men, women, and children, passing and repassing—charitable people numerous, and many benevolent societies within an hour's walk. His was the loneliness of the heart—not that loneliness satisfied with transient companionship—not that loneliness of forest wild or dreary desert—as different from these as the passing sorrow of the light-hearted child is different from the grief of the man whom three score years and ten of sadness have bowed down.

But, now young Weldon was better able to take care of himself than he had been when Henry took him for a playmate. He was sixteen years of age, and he had made good use of the time spent at school.

When Mr. Hastie went home in the evening he inquired for Clarence ; but no one had seen him. Henry confirmed his story, and stated that he had not heard of his friend since he went away from the school. Henry was reprimanded severely for his conduct. In the grief he felt for the loss of his playmate and school assistant, it had little effect upon him. He loved him, and would have protected him when he was abused ; but Henry was not a brave boy. He was an only son, petted and spoiled.

Mr. Hastie reproached himself with his haste and harshness, and had diligent inquiries instituted for Clarence—but to no purpose. He repented his want of confidence in the boy who had always been trustworthy, too late ; and the valiant youth had gone forth into the world to do battle for himself.

Such treatment has been the making of many a man. The

history of our country teaches most emphatically that we can calculate upon the usefulness of boys left to their own resources, much more surely than upon those who know that if misfortune befall them, they have friends of wealth who will "start them" again. A majority of the great men of our country, of all pursuits and professions, have risen from obscurity.

## CHAPTER IV.

### PURPOSES DISCLOSED.

WHEN Clarence left the custom-house, he thought he would go and thank Henry's mother for her kindness to him, and bid Henry good bye ; then he feared that they might endeavor to dissuade him from his purpose. He was a stern boy—he had resolved that he would no longer be beholden to Mr. Hastie, and he was not to be bent from his intentions. But he had tender feelings, and he shrank from the pain of a personal interview with his playmate and benefactress—he resolved to write to them.

While these reflections passed through his mind, he walked rapidly along a crowded street, caring not whither it led him. He had taken nothing from Mr. Hastie's but the clothes he wore ; and his purse contained but a few pieces of coin, not enough to purchase a night's lodging.

Towards evening, he reached the suburbs of the city and looked out into the fields beyond with an aching heart. He passed a respectable looking tavern—he was weary with thinking and walking, and he bethought him that he would rest half an hour and consider how he should spend the night.

He walked through the bar-room to the reading-room, and sat down before one of the tables. An old paper that had been used as a wrapper lay before him. He opened it, when the words "Foreign Arrival," in glaring capitals, arrested his attention. As his eye ran hastily along the column, it was fastened upon his own name with the title of *Colonel* prefixed. He studied the following paragraph until nearly every word was imprinted on his memory :

FROM THE ARMY.—Information wanted of the family of Colonel Weldon, who fell, some fourteen years ago, fighting bravely at the head of his company against the ——— in ———. A large property, which he had amassed, has since been at interest. He was married near ———, but no traces of his family can now be obtained. If he has any heirs in England or America, they will address ———, Esq., ——— street London.

"Colonel Weldon!" repeated Clarence. "My father had a brother in the army, as I have been told; it must have been him. My father held the rank of Lieutenant only, when he died, as my poor adopted mother, who was drowned in the ocean, told me. Uncle must have heirs who will see this advertisement, and get the fortune; it can do me no good. I'll take a copy of it, however, for it may some day find me these relatives, and then I shall not feel that I am altogether alone in the world."

Clarence had felt for several years the importance of relying upon himself, and he had been accustomed to think and lay plans more than boys of his age generally are.

He called for paper and pens—made a copy of the advertisement—wrote a kind letter to Henry and his mother, but said nothing of his whereabouts or intentions—and paying the bill out of his scanty stock of coin, walked out in front of the hotel. He heard his name called and looking around saw a gentleman watering his horse at the tavern pump, for whom he had often carried messages while he lived with Mr. Hastie. He walked towards the gentleman's carriage when he was accosted:

"I'm sorry I am not going into the city, Clarence. I should like to carry you to Mr. Hastie's. What are you doing out here, five miles from home?"

"Not any thing, in particular, returned Clarence:" "but I am not going back to the city."

"You have some friends out here, then, with whom you will spend the night?"

"No, sir. I know nobody here. I am going farther into the country."

"You will ride with me, then," said the gentleman, and taking the boy by the arm he urged him into the carriage.

They rode silently for some time, when the gentleman said:

"How far are you going, Clarence?"

"I do not know, sir," the boy frankly replied, looking into his new friend's face, who, in surprise, cried:

"How is this?"

"I have left Mr. Hastie's, sir: and I have no place in particular to go," returned Clarence, a tear trembling in his eye as a sense of his loneliness pressed on his heart; but he hastily brushed the tell-tale drop away, and returned the gentleman's inquiring glance.

"You are an honest boy, Clarence," he said. "There's some wrong. Tell me all about it."

Clarence knew that he could confide in the gentleman, and

he plainly related the scenes of injustice through which he had passed. The gentleman gave his story entire credence, and exclaimed:

"It shall be arranged. Hastie will be sorry for this. You shall go back, Clarence—they will gladly receive you."

"Never, sir," interposed the resolute boy. "I am an orphan—I have no claims on them—I voluntarily left them—I must take care of myself, and I shall do it."

"What shall you do, let me ask?" said the gentleman, astonished at the boy's manner, and speaking to him as if he had been his equal in age.

"I have thought of many things, sir, but have yet decided on none. I shall know to-morrow."

"You are a strange boy, as I have always known, and I presume your mind can not be changed, at least till you have buffeted awhile with the world, and dear-bought experience has shown you what it is to be a lone boy."

"I have thought it all over, sir. I know I must suffer. I may starve, but I can not go back to Mr. Hastie's."

The gentleman conversed some time with Clarence in a kind manner, and gave him much wholesome advice, for which the youth was truly grateful.

While they talked, the carriage in which they were riding was whirled swiftly along, and they were borne to a handsome country mansion.

Here Clarence remained several days, and when he took his leave, though much against his will, it was with a substantial testimonial of the gentleman's regard for him. He had become endeared to all the members of the family, and each honestly wished him well when he bid them good bye.

The gentleman advised Clarence to finish his education at every sacrifice, and recommended as the best plan he could pursue, that he enter a manual labor school, which bore a high character, in the western part of the State. This advice was congenial to his purposes, and the boy resolved to accept it.

As he journeyed toward the village in which the school was located, the impression that he was pursuing a proper course deepened on his mind, and he determined to become a member of the institution at any personal sacrifice. He was naturally of an uncommonly resolute character, and he desired to have, through life, the pleasing reflection that whatever success he attained, should be the result of his own industry and calculation.

It was about dusk, on a sultry evening, when he opened a rough gate in front of a large wooden building, and proceeded



along a grass-grown path towards the residence of the President of the Faculty of the Manual Labor School. He knocked upon a heavy door that stood partly open, and he was invited to walk in. He entered a hall and turned into a small room to the right, following the direction of the voice that bade him come in. He was in the presence of a middle aged man seated at a square table, with books and papers thrown in confusion upon it.

"I wish to speak to the President of the school," said Clarence.

"I have that honor," replied the middle aged man. "Be seated."

Clarence drew a chair and seated himself. He glanced about the room a moment, then turning to the President, announced his business.

"The school is full," returned the President. "We have neither room in the school-house nor the workshop."

"I have come more than two hundred miles to get an education at this school, because I can work to pay my expenses; and unless I am positively turned out I shall stay here, let my treatment be what it may," said Clarence modestly, but firmly.

"Young men of spirit are such as we wish in our school; but I fear you would find getting an education a sorry business with such accommodations as you could get here now," replied the President.

"But say that I shall not be turned out, except for improper behavior or neglect of studies, and I will ask nothing more," said Clarence.

"The beds are full and the bed-rooms are all crowded," said the President.

"I will sleep on the floor," answered Clarence.

"There is no room at the boarding-house table. It has more attendants now, by half a dozen, than can be conveniently accommodated," interposed the President.

"I will board myself. If I can do no better, bread and water will suffice for me; only say that I may have a tutor, and I shall be content."

"We'll do the best we can for you. Where shall you stay to-night?"

"You will not deny me the privilege of this floor for a bed."

"By no means, answered the President; and Clarence, taking up a book, sat till the President retired, and then prepared himself to spend the night.

The night spent in the President's library was the first Clarence had ever passed without bed-chamber comforts, and it need hardly be said it brought him no rest. The prospect before him was one of trial, but he had taken upon himself the

yoke, and he must bear it, no matter how galling it might prove. He was one of those who can bear self-imposed burdens, let them be ever so grievous.

The President had not deceived him in any particular in regard to the school. He had never before met a youth who manifested quite so much resolution, and he could not but admire his spirit. He felt like providing him lodgings out of the school fund, for a time; but he knew something of human nature, and he reflected that perhaps it would be well enough to test the boy's self-reliance at the outset of a career of trial in a manual labor school—those truly republican institutions at which have graduated many of the men of our country, whose brilliant intellects and profound erudition are useful in social, religious, and political life.

Clarence Weldon entered upon his tasks in his new vocation with spirit, and endured bravely the hardships incident to it. He soon won the confidence of the entire faculty of the school, and was a favorite among the pupils.

The principal became so much interested in his welfare that he procured a situation for him in a book-publishing establishment partly connected with the school, and here Clarence worked and studied until he had passed through the preparatory studies of the school, and was about to graduate from the academic class, when a change of tutors took place in the department where he recited.

The new tutor was an odd looking man, and his whims and notions were in keeping with his looks. He was of low stature, square built, and inclining to corpulency. His face was full, yet it possessed an angular appearance—the expression of his countenance told of pride and resolution—his eyes were small, very black, and remarkably brilliant—his forehead was high, over which carelessly fell a profusion of dark hair. The man was imbedded in a shield of dignity, real or assumed, which rendered him by no means a pleasant companion to those who did not gain his confidence.

He was unpopular with the students, and as they became estranged, decided dislike began to manifest itself. As a special favor, Clarence had occupied a part of the room in which the former tutor was domiciled, and when the change was made, the favor was continued to him. The new tutor, Owen Crafts, and Clarence had thus been together about three months, when, as they were reviewing some lessons one evening, Crafts said to Weldon:

"So you will be examined to-morrow; then you leave my room and go immediately under the tutorship of the President?"



"That is the calculation, I believe; but you know we will not be separated. I shall be here with you every night."

"If I am here."

"You do not think of leaving?"

"Seriously."

"For what cause?"

"The situation I hold is a menial one. I can not endure it. I perform a professor's duty—hold a tutor's rank—get a tutor's pay."

"That is the case with several of the tutor's."

"It is not the case with favorites. I am willing to do a tutor's work for a tutor's pay, with a tutor's rank; but if I occupy the place of a professor, I must have his rank—his pay. I shall tell the President so to-morrow."

He arose as he spoke, and with the air of a military gentleman who carried an ancient commission, and who wore on his shoulder an epaulet that had passed through many battles, paced to and fro through the apartment.

Clarence understood his words and did not disturb his reverie. Not a word was spoken between them for half an hour when the tutor said:

"Clarence, I have a plan in which you ought to be interested. I would like to see you in the world doing something for yourself. It is time you were getting some knowledge in the world besides that of books."

"I would go into the world to-morrow and labor, if I could see my way clearly," frankly answered Clarence.

"The way is clear," returned Crafts, with a secret chuckle. "I have letters from a wealthy man who has a great scheme in his head. I am going to join him. We shall go into a new country—out West. We can use to advantage a young man like you. You may rely upon me; we will do well by you. Will you go?"

"It is a sudden move. Let me think of it. I'll talk with the Principal."

"You must make up your mind soon. I shall leave to-morrow."

Clarence had been hoping for some months for an opportunity to go forth into the world with the certainty of employment. He believed that Owen Crafts was his friend. Before he slept that night he had resolved to accompany him. On the morrow he consulted the principal of the school and the professors. They all respected and admired him, and were sorry to part with him; but as they had no reason to distrust Craft's friendship, could not endeavor to dissuade their pupil from embracing

an opportunity of making himself useful to the world and to himself.

Clarence took leave of the pleasant companions he had formed in the school, and with the tutor, journeyed towards a city some thirty miles distant. They were pedestrians. When they sat down at noon, to rest under a tree whose springing foliage afforded them shade from a May sun, Crafts said to Clarence:

"You made me a promise once. I am to know your early history."

"That promise was conditional."

"I accept the conditions."

Clarence then occupied the period of their nooning relating such portions of his history as gave his companion a full idea of what he had passed through as an orphan. When he had concluded, he reminded Crafts of the conditions of the narration, which were that he should give his history.

"It shall be our amusement for the evening," he said. "It is a strange history. I do not like to review it; but we may better understand each other when you have heard it."

The travelers spent the night at a farm house, and when they were alone together, Crafts sketched his biography.

He gave Clarence such an account of himself, and the trials and afflictions he had endured, as was calculated to make the young man think he had ever been a suffering philanthropist—a man, who, for opinion's sake, had braved all manner of persecutions.

When he had concluded, Clarence was in no mood for sleep, although the hour of midnight had almost approached.

Crafts told him if he would not sleep he had better read, and opening his portmanteau, gave him a book seductive and dangerous to young men, who, with high hopes that great social evils can be easily removed, are about to go into the business world to learn the stern realities of life.

It was a night of thought, rather than sleep, to Clarence.

On the morrow the friends continued their journey on foot. Clarence had no money, and Crafts declared that he should need funds until he met the gentleman with whom he expected to be associated in business.

Towards evening the travelers' road led along a canal.

Crafts proposed that as they were weary they should take passage. Clarence assented, and they were soon on board. The young man was much surprised when he saw Crafts rush towards the bow of the boat and cordially salute a gentleman who leaned lazily against the deck.

Presently, arm in arm, the two approached him, and Crafts said:

"This is the gentleman whom I expected to meet at——."

The new comer exchanged salutations with Clarence, when Crafts continued as if Clarence was not present:

"You then received my letters promptly?"

"Some days since," answered the gentleman, "and I immediately arranged my affairs to meet you. I have not changed my mind. The plan is a good one. I shall pursue it vigorously. I have already made some arrangements for the purchase of property. This young man is to be with us?"

"Certainly," answered Crafts. "Is it not so?" turning to Clarence.

"I have no intention now of leaving those I regard as friends, and I will be with them in all good works."

"We will count on you," returned the new friend; and at these words he turned with Crafts to go into the cabin, when the latter remarked:

"To-morrow, Clarence, you shall see our plans. We have some business affairs to talk over for an hour."

"Clarence repaired to a part of the cabin distant from that in which his friends conversed, and was soon engaged intently on the book Crafts had presented him the night previous. It was the most seductive of the works of one of the ablest French writers on socialism.

In less than half an hour after Clarence's friends withdrew from his presence, the packet reached a point where the topography of the country had required from the canal builders a series of locks.

Crafts and his particular friend, who had been closely watching Clarence, sprang from the boat as it entered the first lock, and, leaving the youth to his studies, started off for a walk.

"The boy is safe for an hour or two," said Crafts.

"You think, then, you have him in the right train?" queried his companion, who was known by the title of Griffin Lynch, Esq.

"Everything works well. He is confiding—has no suspicions," answered Crafts.

"You are skillful. I'll trust you; but tell me how you came to find him," said Lynch.

"I was obliged, you know," answered Crafts, "to manage without exciting suspicion. You understand how I fell in with a young man named Hastie, in New York—was introduced to him as a gentleman from the West Indies—found him a sporting character. I gained his confidence and conversed with him about his history—got a hint of Clarence Weldon, and ascertained what a merchant in the country had done for him—then,

under your directions, believing him to be such a youth as we had been hoping to meet—you know—set out to find him and learn what he knew of himself. Knowing the Manual Labor School at—— to be the one he would probably attend, I repaired there forthwith. I found him immediately, but was obliged to keep quiet for some time, in order to decide how to carry out my object of gaining an influence over him. I know not what I should have done, but when I had been calculating a couple of weeks, a tutor in the school, with whom he roomed, was dismissed. I made application for his place, and was accepted. I studied the boy, and I very soon understood him. I knew there was one way to gain his entire confidence. I believe I adopted it successfully. The time of my going into the school was propitious; but when I left, Clarence thought it was because I felt myself maltreated. Everything worked like a charm. I wrote you to be at—— in a given time, and here we are, *accidentally* thrown together, just at the most favorable moment.

"With what I told you in the boat, you now know all my movements. When I sketched the events of my life, it was a rare story I told him. I met a fellow in New York, once, who gave me a romantic account of his "trials and tribulations." I thought I'd try my hand at magazine writing, and I wrote out his history with such additions as I thought would be taking. I had the manuscript in my trunk, and, when I sat down with the boy, I gave him that "yarn" as my autobiography. I knew he would like it—it was just the thing to make him a friend. He thought I had been a poor, persecuted individual. The little attention I paid to study, till I left home at twenty, aided in getting up this scheme; but it aided me more when I was a tutor, though it didn't always keep me from making sorry blunders. But Clarence does not know that the President was glad to get rid of me. No wonder I was not popular with the scholars. I did not mean to be a favorite a great while. I put on more dignity than you think I am capable of; but I have been gradually dropping it before Clarence, and I shall soon be *myself*. Now, how do you propose that we shall act henceforth?"

This was said to a small, spare-faced man, about fifty years of age, at the base of whose forehead twinkled a pair of small grey eyes, that if ever eyes expressed any thing, told plainly that he was an acquisitive, sharp, bargain-driving man of the world. His countenance had revealed various emotions as Crafts made the remarks above quoted, when he looked sharply at the pseudo-tutor and said:

"You talk as if the only object I have, in falling in with this young man, might be to swindle him."

"Not a bit of it, as I am a Christian," (his favorite oath,) interrupted Crafts, wondering what might be coming next.

"If I took your denial only on that faith, I should surely not change the opinion expressed; but we will not quarrel now about that. I like your business notion—it was a great hit. It shall be a business in which my great wealth will go to build us all fortunes. You have done your work well. You had an eye to my notions, as well as the boy's, when you hit on the business *out West*. Capital! capital! I shall be the richest man in America."

"We understand each other now, I believe—our interests are together, and we will guard them. You leave me to manage Clarence. He shall join us fully."

Lynch was indulging himself in a delightful prospect for the future, when Crafts cried:

"Here comes the boat; and there stands Clarence on the look-out for us."

The passengers were immediately taken up, and Crafts, falling into conversation with Clarence on the book he had been reading, gradually led him to converse upon the projects which had previously been suggested to him.

## CHAPTER V.

### NEW CHARACTERS.

It was a sultry evening for May. Young Weldon sat at the window of a country hotel, looking towards the West. It was at that hour between sunset and gloaming, when our American skies are most beautiful. Towards the North lay a bank of clouds, fringed in fanciful shapes with crimson hues, while across them at intervals ran chain-lightning of vivid brightness. When the sapphire and gold, the crimson and jasper, had all faded, the clouds were sombre and the stars began faintly to glimmer. Clarence was still at the window. He had forgotten the world as he mused upon the beauties of the heavens, while, at the same time, earth-born fragrance rising from peach and plum trees that were blossoming in the garden beneath, administered to his enjoyment.

There were meditations widely different from those of the honest youth in that hostlery.

Crafts and Lynch were closeted in another room, and their conversation evinced war rather than peace; but no open rupture could occur; because each felt that it was his interest to be friendly with the other.

Mr. Griffin Lynch had been giving Mr. Owen Crafts some directions in relation to a journey he was to take, when the latter gentleman inquired.

"And who are these young folks of whom I am to have charge?"

"Ah! I remember," said Lynch, "I never have told you any thing about my family. They are my son and daughter. Emma was a little girl when we were first acquainted—Tudor was born since. You will find Emma an interesting young lady. Tudor is rather a singular boy, and you'll have to let him do about as he pleases."

"What about the housekeeper?" said Crafts.

"She's a pleasant lady—perhaps a little whimsical, but I think you can manage her," answered Lynch: when Crafts regarded him a moment and then said, speaking familiarly.

"Now, Griffin, for another little matter of business."

"Well, Owen, what is it?"

"Just have the goodness to draw me a check on your bankers for a hundred dollars, for the extra labor I performed in taking it on foot with our charge from the school to the place where we met."

"Who told you to go a-foot?"

"Nobody. But it was policy."

"The deuce take a bit of a hundred dollars you get from me for that job."

"Do you know what I'll do?"

"I don't care."

"Perhaps you will, however, before you have done with me. There'll be an explosion," said Crafts, taking a pistol from his side pocket.

Lynch knew that his words had a double meaning. He considered a moment, and then blandly remarked:

"Well, well, Crafts, it is not for *us* to quarrel about a hundred dollars."

"As you choose," said Crafts, coolly."

Lynch drew the check and Crafts took his leave. When the door closed behind him.

"Hang the rascal," said Lynch. "Faith, I wish he were hanged! He is the pest of my life. He has had too many

hundreds now; but there is no help for it. He'll die some day! Yes, yes, he'll *die* some day!"

Clarence had not left the window when Crafts, without ceremony, entered his room.

"It is all arranged," he said: "I leave in the stage to-night."

"And do we stay here till you return? Why does not Mr. Lynch go for his family himself?" inquired Clarence.

"One at a time, if you please," returned Crafts. "First, then, Mr. Lynch does not go for his family, because I can do that business as well as he can; and, secondly, because he has heard of a piece of property which he wishes to purchase on a navigable stream, within two miles of a growing city. It is just the place we want. I have all confidence in him, and I know he will do all he can to make the journey pleasant for you. If he went for his family now, some one might get the farm."

"I have no fear but that it will be pleasant for me; because I shall seek my own pleasures, and if I do not find any, I shall surely not blame any company I may have," said Clarence; when Crafts, who had all the time been standing with his hat in his hand, cried:

"Well, good bye. We shall meet at ——."

And he was gone. He had scarcely time to get out of hearing before Clarence had another visitor. This was Lynch. He came to tell the young man to prepare for travel on the morrow.

"The business is urgent," said he. "We shall take the western stage at nine o'clock in the morning."

"I will be ready," returned Clarence, and their conference was ended.

Clarence had so given his confidence to Crafts, that he was led by the deceiver in whatever direction he chose. The youth had been made to believe, by fair promises and carefully arranged and cautiously expressed plans, that he could be useful in the schemes which Lynch wished to carry out, and he was anxious to be employed. He was self-sacrificing and devoid of all the ambition for wealth which most men manifest, and so long as he believed his labors tended towards some object calculated, even remotely, to do *something* for the furtherance of reform, which might lift up men from the sloughs in which they suffer all the penalties of violated nature, he was contented. He had not yet seen enough of the world—he had not read and reflected enough to be able to define any plan which he would have pursued had he possessed means to put his benevolent schemes into action; but he was sick at heart with what he had seen of misery and degradation in the world—he felt that society, in the organization given it during gradual changes from igno-

rance and despotism to civilization and partial liberalism, was responsible in itself for most of the evils by which it was distracted, and he consecrated himself in keeping with the honest nature that had been given him, to such a course of life as he believed would render all men blessed. When thus his determinations were formed, he knew nothing, comparatively, of what society was, nor had he an idea of the extent of the evils by which men are enthralled. He was confiding—did not look upon other men as dissemblers, and he was just such a person as could be easily led by cunning, designing men, who might use him to advance their ends, while he was happy in the belief that his labors were benefiting mankind.

Lynch had *his* private schemes and Crafts rejoiced in *his*.

Crafts had a *peculiar* power over Lynch, and he determined to use it for purposes it would not be proper to mention at this period of our history.

\* \* \* \* \*

At the close of the week on which Crafts left Lynch and Clarence, he approached the city in which the family of the former resided—these were two motherless children in charge of a woman who, in her life, had been an avowed friend to the mother, but who, notwithstanding her professions, had never been a friend to the children; not because she did not wish to be, but because she did not know how to be. She knew no other way to govern than by force. The young lady's gentle nature bent before the will of her stern governess; but the boy rebelled. He was a rude, ungovernable boy, of quick natural parts; but they had never been much cultivated, and he possessed none at all of the polish and grace, the kind manner and sweetness of temper which made his sister universally beloved. Emma Lynch was as beautiful as she was amiable. Tudor had an exterior almost as repulsive as his manners. The children were unlike in all respects, yet they loved each other devotedly. Emma was always kind to him, and Tudor was ugly to everybody but his sister.

The housekeeper was an inquisitive little body, and well nigh as ambitious as she was inquisitive. She was not on the sunny side of thirty, but would not have been judged over twenty-eight years of age. She was a spruce, neat body, and her glass flattered her not very bad-looking; she knew no reason why she might not some day be favorably married. For a year or two she had thrown out many sly hints to Mr. Lynch that he ought to have a mother for his children; but he was proof to her arts, and always told her he had no reason to be dissatisfied with her management.

I have said she was inquisitive. This propensity was clearly manifested in her adventures through Mr. Lynch's private apartments during his absence. Her adventures in the library, or office of her master, were highly satisfactory.

It was Saturday evening. With a taper in her hand, the housekeeper sat at a small desk in the library. Before her was a drawer packed full of papers—a key which she possessed fitted the lock of this drawer—the contents were open to her. She had seen enough to excite her curiosity to its highest pitch, when her quick ear caught the sound of a footfall. She had only time to close the drawer, and rise to arrange the books on the shelves behind her, when Tudor Lynch burst into the room.

"Old lady," said the boy most provokingly, "you are in here too much, I'm thinking. I'll have to report you. When father was at home, he didn't allow folks hardly to see the inside of this room, if he wasn't here."

"Shut up, or I'll lock you up," cried the housekeeper. "You ugly fellow; havn't I to keep the dust off the books and papers while your father's away?"

"You'll keep the dust off the *papers*, I don't doubt!"

"Shut up, I say, or——Goodness gracious, but who told you to come here?"

"I told myself; but maybe there's a gentleman down stairs to see you;" and thus replying, away the urchin scampered.

His manner had been such that the housekeeper half suspected Mr. Lynch had returned, and Tudor had told him of her whereabouts. She went down to take a look into the parlor in a state of great trepidation; but when she had taken a sly peep, she walked boldly into the room and confronted Mr. Lynch's representative, Mr. Owen Crafts.

The gentleman presented his letters, and the housekeeper called Emma to give her the intelligence which Mr. Crafts brought, that it was her father's pleasure that they should immediately prepare to join him under Mr. Crafts' guardianship, at a western city. Crafts gazed at Emma in astonishment and admiration. He had not expected such a vision of loveliness, and his gaze was so intently fixed upon her beaming countenance that he did not properly sustain his part in the conversation.

"You look at sister as if you'd eat her. You are an ugly fellow," cried Tudor, who had, unperceived, made one of the company.

Crafts looked at the boy with nearly as much astonishment as he had at Emma, when the boy cried again, pointing at him significantly:

"Keep that ugly eye off of me, will you?"

Here is a contrast, surely, reflected Owen; but the boy must be conciliated.

"Ah? Tudor," said he, "you need not be afraid of me. I am going to take you to your father."

"I ain't afraid of you; but you look ugly;—and, if you please, I had as lief stay here as go to my father."

"He gave a good account of you," said Crafts, "and told me I would find you a pleasant boy."

"No he didn't, now. You ain't smart enough to fool me!" answered the untoward boy, as he scampered out of the room.

Crafts now turned his conversation to Emma, and spent an agreeable evening in her company. He was charmed with her intelligence, and fascinated by her beauty. As he wended his way to his hotel, when the visit was ended—

"As I'm a Christian," he soliloquized, "there's a prize. Oh, ho! old Lynch, I'll be up to you yet. Lucky that I was sent here. Lucky I had business this way, and *he* had business the other way. I'll make a profitable job of it."

Mr. Crafts had hardly reached the street before the housekeeper stole again to the library. She locked the door after her, and sat down to peruse the papers that had excited her curiosity.

It was far in the night when she left the library, and tripped on tip-toe to her room. She shut the door and locked it, looked about her, drew a long breath, clapped her hands, jumped up and down with glee, and in a nervous whisper, ejaculated:

"Goodness gracious! ain't I a made woman? won't I be somebody? I'll show the folks—he'll have to take my hints now! What a time I shall have! Goodness gracious! I only wonder if all the folks are dead! They must be; but it's no matter. I'm wise enough. Goodness gracious! now I shall be somebody!"

The housekeeper's sleep was disturbed that night by many a golden vision; but on the morrow she was emphatically a "busybody" in the preparations for their journey West.

## CHAPTER VI.

## AN UNEXPECTED FRIEND.

CALM were the waters of that beautiful inland sea, connecting, by the messengers of commerce, the business relations of a number of the growing States of the Valley of the West, with the avenues of European trade reaching to and across the Atlantic, when a first-class steamer, bearing Clarence Weldon and his patron, Griffin Lynch, Esq., sped proudly from the land-marks, behind which were clustered all the memories of life, pleasant and unpleasant, that the honest youth treasured.

It was the second night of their voyage. The passengers were mostly in their berths, and excepting the regular splash of the paddle-wheels, and the harsh growling from the escape-pipe, as the pent up giant that gave motive power to the vessel struggled with heavy breaths to burst its bonds and force itself from creaking cranks and revolving rods, all was still upon the boat, and "expressive silence" brooded over the lake.

Ever watchful for those scenes in nature which hold communion with the inner man, Clarence leaned over one side of the steamer and contemplated the heaven of stars mirrored in the blue water.

The sky was without a cloud—there was no moon, but the planet-lamps which mark the high-ways of thought that science has constructed through the fields of immensity, shone with undimmed splendor, and beyond the currents made by the steamer in its passage, were pictured deep in the bosom of the lake in every direction, excepting where a faint reflection, that hung after the vessel threw a shade in the water and led the meditative youth to musing upon such scenes as fling shadows over the heart of man and drape his thoughts in gloom.

The boy had sadly mused several hours, when a female passenger with whom he had formed slight acquaintance, came near and addressed him.

He answered her with an allusion to the subject of his thoughts, and she replied.

"It is fit only for older people, men and women of experience, to have such reflections. They are not suited to hopeful youth."

"My life has been a sad one, and I have reason for mournful reflections."

The woman was attracted to the boy, and begged him to give her a sketch of his history. He told her how he had been a homeless boy in New York, and had been driven to a manual labor school.

"I would know your name?" said the woman.

"I am known as Clarence Weldon," answered he.

"Clarence Weldon!" she repeated; "you came from England. I think I have heard the name. Is your father living?"

"He died, I have been told, before I was born," said Clarence.

"And your mother?" continued the woman.

"I never knew her," answered Clarence.

"Who is that man, said the woman, pointing to Lynch.

"He is my friend, I am traveling with him. His name is Griffin Lynch, returned Clarence.

"Do you live in the West?" said the woman.

"We are going to live there," answered Clarence. "We are on our way to—, where we expect to meet a man named Crafts."

"Crafts!" repeated the woman, starting.

"Yes; Owen Crafts," said Clarence. "Do you know him?"

"I have heard of him!" then turning away from Clarence she repeated, "Owen Crafts—know him? yes, too well! too well! I will trace this!"

She inquired all about Clarence's early history. He told her frankly his own experience, and what he knew of his family. When she asked him if he had not some relatives in England, he took from his pocket the copy of the advertisement which he had seen in the hotel, near New York—and handed it to her saying:

"I have only that information of any relative. Colonel Weldon was my uncle."

The woman read and re-read the advertisement, and quite forcibly exclaimed:

"How did you come by this?"

Clarence answered her, astonished at her manner. She then said to him:

"You will do as I bid you. We may meet again. Do not part with this till you have seen me."

"I know not why you should thus interest yourself in this advertisement; but as it is my intention to keep it until I can find my relatives, I readily grant your request."

"I will some day give you a reason for my conduct," she answered.



"By what name shall I call you?" said Clarence.

"You may write it on the back of the advertisement," she said—"Mrs. Prior."

Clarence did as she requested, when she continued:

"I shall travel with you a few days when you leave the steamboat. I am going towards——."

"We shall be happy of your company," returned Clarence.

## CHAPTER VII.

### A FAMILY JOURNEY.

Two days after the steamboat had landed its passengers, Griffin Lynch, Esq., announced to Clarence that he had attained the end of his journey till the arrival of Crafts and those who were expected to accompany him. The resting place was a quiet town, which has since become a city of considerable importance in the history of the State of Ohio.

Madame Prior had not yet parted from her young friend, but as she intended to accompany Mr. Lynch along a part of the route towards the property he expected to purchase, they had not many days to spend together. Clarence treated her with the confidence of a brother, and she counseled him as an elder sister. When they separated, on the morning of Mr. Lynch's departure, she said to him, kissing his pale forehead:

"We shall meet again, dear boy, when I shall be able to reward you by my friendship in a substantial manner. The confidence you have given me may aid us both."

"Your advice and society have been to me instructive and pleasant," answered Clarence with much feeling. "I hope to meet you again when our friendship can be closer."

"God grant it," she returned.

"Good morning," cried Mr. Lynch.

Clarence answered the salutation, watching his patron as he slowly entered a stage coach.

"All ready?" cried the driver, drawing up his reins and cracking his whip.

In a moment, Clarence's friends were whirled away from the hotel. Until the coach passed an angle of the road he watched, with evident emotion, a white handkerchief that fluttered from one of the windows; then he entered the hotel and sat down with a heavy heart. He expected to wait four or five days

before he should be joined by Crafts; but this event did not occur as Weldon anticipated.

The delay was not occasioned by any lack of industry in the preparations for the journey on the part of Mr. Lynch's family. The housekeeper was all impatience, and she bustled about in the most lively manner. Emma rendered all the assistance in her power in the preparing and packing, and Crafts superintended the shipping with as much assiduity as if the property had all been his own.

The fourth day the keys of their house were surrendered to the landlord, and Mr. Crafts conducted the housekeeper, Emma, and Tudor to the hotel from which they were to start on their journey. The mode of conveyance was a canal-packet, which, at that day, was the most general and comfortable mode of travel on a route along which passengers are now carried by railway a greater distance in one hour than they were then in twenty-four hours.

On the fifth day, to the great discomfiture of the housekeeper, their boat became one of a large number "lying to" at a small village, awaiting repairs on the canal that had been rendered necessary by the giving way of an aqueduct the night previous. It would be made passable in four or five days, they were told, and Mr. Crafts was in favor of waiting for the completion of the repairs.

"Oh, Lord, let's do it," said Tudor. "There's good fishing here, and Turk and I would chase birds like Ned."

The Turk here referred to was a surly terrier dog that had taken quite a notion to annoy Mr. Crafts by snapping at his pantaloons, so that the gentleman was by no means inclined to be guilty of any act that would give the animal and his master decided pleasure.

"We can't stop," said the housekeeper. "Mr. Lynch will be alarmed about Tudor and Emma. We'd better take stage and hurry on."

"I don't believe Mr. Lynch's particular about seeing *me*!" retorted Tudor; when Emma, looking at her brother pleasantly, said:

"You promised me that you would be a good boy, Tudor. I think it would be better to proceed on our journey as fast as it is possible."

Tudor offered no more remarks, and Mr. Crafts was decided. Engaging a man to remove their baggage, Mr. Crafts made other arrangements promptly, and in a few hours all were proceeding towards their destination in a special stage-coach.

On the afternoon of the second day of their stage-progress,

Turk had been giving Mr. Crafts a great deal of trouble. He had threatened to throw the animal out upon the road, and Tudor had declared that if he offered to hurt the dog, it should be "the death of him," blustering the while in genuine boy-braggadocia style. At length he jumped upon one of the coach seats, and cried:

"I ain't a going to ride any more with a man so ugly that the dogs can't keep from biting him."

Crafts was sufficiently provoked at this sally to have struck the rude boy; but as his face flushed, he caught Emma's mild eye, and he suppressed his anger, but dare not trust himself with a reply to young Lynch. Emma said, speaking softly:

"You have forgotten your promise, Tudor."

The boy did not heed her. As he stood on the seat he had noticed something that arrested his attention, and in an instant after Emma spoke, as the coach was thrown to one side, he exclaimed:

"Go it, go it—here's fun alive."

Mr. Crafts sprang to the coach door and saw that they were in great peril. They were passing down a long hill; the tongue of the coach had been snapped in two as the vehicle crossed a gully—the horses having become frightened and unmanageable, were dashing down the declivity at a break-neck pace. The driver was pitched from his seat—the horses were out of the track—the coach was again thrown to one side—the door at which Mr. Crafts held burst open, and he plunged headlong to the ground. Tudor pitched after him, and the dog followed. Fortunately for the boy, he fell across Crafts, and received no more serious injury than a few scratches and slight bruises.

He looked about for his dog, and saw that he was unharmed; then as he gazed upon Crafts on the ground, unable to help himself, he cried:

"Didn't I know it—this is real fun!"

But as he spoke, looking down the road, he saw the coach hurled from the track against a stone wall, while the horses relieved from it, ran in various directions. Screaming, "Oh! Emma!" Tudor hastened towards the scene of disaster as rapidly as his bruises would permit.

Some men, at work in a field hard by, saw the accident and reached the coach before him. The housekeeper had been frightened into hysterics; Emma had swooned, but both had escaped without serious injury.

When Emma had recovered and the housekeeper had been quieted, Tudor said to the men that came to their assistance:

"There's a fellow up the hill there would like some help, I'm thinking."

One of the men hastened back and found Mr. Crafts in a dangerous situation. His head had been severely cut, and he had received other serious injuries. He halloed for help, and leaving Tudor with the ladies, the farmers went to the assistance of him who supported Crafts. Meantime a boy who was with the farmers, had been dispatched to the village a couple of miles distant for a conveyance. The driver had not been seriously hurt, and went after his horses, when he saw that there were persons enough about to take care of the injured.

Emma and the housekeeper walked back to the place where Crafts lay. As she looked upon him while he groaned with severe pain, Emma felt deep commiseration—the housekeeper ventured many remarks of intended condolence—Tudor looked upon him with some degree of pity, and even Turk regarded him as if there was somewhat of sorrow in his eye.

It was nearly an hour before he was conveyed to the village, during all of which time he suffered excruciating pain. When he had been comfortably placed at the principal hotel, Tudor was despatched for a surgeon. He skipped swiftly along the rough pavement of the village and stopped, as directed by the landlord, at a small wooden building, the front of which was ornamented with a piece of painted sheet-iron, on which was rudely sketched a mortar and a pestle. Tudor examined this *sign* hastily as he rapped on the door. His summons was not heeded, and he made bold to enter. A skeleton dangling upon wires in one corner of the room rather struck him aback as he opened the door, but a moment's thought gave him courage to confront the hideous *subject*, and he closed the door behind him and looked about for the doctor. His eye fell upon an individual approaching him from another apartment. He was a portly man with rubicund nose, and

"A moony breadth of Virgin face  
By thought unviolated."

"Well, boy?" he said dryly, taking a huge pinch of snuff as he confronted Tudor.

"There's a stranger up at the hotel hurt, sir," said Tudor.

"How? you rogue," interrupted the doctor.

"He was thrown out of a carriage and monstrously scared as well as somewhat bruised."

"Bones broken?"

"I don't know, sir. You'd best haste to see."

"I'll do it, boy. Run on and tell the folks I'll be up in five



minutes, all prepared," said the surgeon, taking another pinch of snuff.

Tudor wheeled towards the door—his hand was upon the knob—a thought struck him :

"Sir," he cried.

"Well," said the doctor.

"He's an ugly fellow, that man that's hurt. I don't think he's in much danger ; and if you have any bones to set, you'll oblige me by giving an extra jerk every now and then."

"What? you young savage!" cried the doctor.

"Nothing, sir," answered Tudor boldly; "only I just thought I'd tell you that you needn't be very careful of him, for fear of hurting anybody's feelings. He's got no friends."

"Ah, ha! you *are* a rogue; get out, you toad, you. You look like a mischief—I see it in your face."

The doctor, with another replenishment of the tobacco reservoir that stood out prominently from his sallow countenance, somewhat like a volcano from a plain, with summit aglow, began to put up his instruments of "torture" or "science," and Tudor made a sudden exit. He was soon looking about for the curiosities of the town, without paying the slightest heed to the doctor's command, that he should herald his approach. The surgeon was received, however, with as much attention as if he had been announced. When he had examined Crafts' injuries, he pronounced him in much danger, and learnedly declared that if he ever recovered it would be two weeks before he could leave his bed.

"Oh, my!" said the housekeeper at this announcement, "what shall we do? How unfortunate! Mr. Lynch will be so disappointed in not seeing Emma and Tudor sooner."

"Now, old lady," interposed Tudor, "don't you worry yourself about Mr. Lynch. He can come here if he wants to see us; and I rather think Turk and I can spend a couple of weeks about this town to our amusement. You and Emma will have enough to do to take care of the sick fellow."

"Tudor," said Emma, "you should speak more respectfully;" then turning to the housekeeper she continued: "Mr. Crafts will be able, probably, to converse with us to-morrow, and we will ask him if father should be written to."

On the morrow, Crafts was much better. Emma watched with him during the night, and rejoiced as morn approached to find that he knew her. He did not speak for some time, but he watched all her movements with evident tenderness.

She gave him his medicine as the surgeon directed, and pre-

sented him a cooling drink; when he had tasted of it, as she reached to get the cup, he murmured:

"I am too deeply indebted."

"The obligation is removed," she answered, "by the pleasure I enjoy in seeing you so much better."

Did he misinterpret her words, or had she given him encouragement to reflect as he did?

"There is hope—there *is* hope!"

When the housekeeper came to relieve Emma from watching, Crafts was consulted upon the propriety of informing Mr. Lynch of the catastrophe.

"It had better not be done till you see how I am to-morrow," he answered.

The next morning he was much worse. A raging fever had seized him, and he was impressed with the conviction that he should die. When the housekeeper wished to know if they should not write to Mr. Lynch, he replied:

"No, no; it is no matter. I don't know where a letter would reach him; but the young man with him, whom I told you about, write to him, Clarence Weldon. He is at——. He must come—must come *soon*."

When the housekeeper hastened to find Tudor to get him to indite the letter, Crafts continued murmuring, as if to himself:

"Yes he must come—before I die I *must* talk to him—no matter about Lynch—no matter—but if he shouldn't come, then it dies with me; but—but to die now—now, when all was fair—I will *not* die—I *will* live!"

Emma approached his bedside to soothe him, and passing his hand over his brow, he said:

"I am distracted—my mind wanders—I know not what I say. You'll not leave me?"

"No, I shall not leave you now," replied Emma. "I shall watch with you till Tudor has written the letter you spoke of, and despatched it according to your direction."

"Tell him to put haste—haste in it," said Crafts nervously, and when Emma had gone to do his bidding he murmured again:

"Die! no not now—not *now*—for her sake I *will* live!"

Clarence Weldon returned one evening from a ramble in the woods, when the following letter was handed him:

"Sir: I am instructed by a gentleman, (courtesy induces me to give him that title,) at present not in a condition to attend to his own work, to write to you and request you to come immediately to see him. He says, 'put in haste.' You will exercise haste in coming, or you'll not be likely to find him in a talking condition. On our way to this town,

day before yesterday, we had what I at first thought fun, but it proved no joke to Mr. Owen Crafts. In short, the stage was upset—Mr. Crafts was thrown out—I fell on top of him—and he was severely injured. He thinks he can't live—he wants to see you before he quits living. I don't understand his directions, but he says if father is not with you, leave a note for him and depart thitherward instant.

Yours—a stranger, who hopes you'll be a more pleasant acquaintance than Mr. Crafts, and not quite so much of an enemy to my darling dog, Turk.  
TUDOR LYNCH."

Clarence thought this indeed a "strange epistle," but he had heard something of Tudor Lynch, and he gave it confidence. His preparations for the journey were speedily completed. It was made with all haste, and without adventure of interest. On a pleasant morning he reached the town into which Crafts had been carried after the accident. He was received at the hotel by an ill-shapen, ill-looking boy, who introduced himself as Tudor Lynch. Clarence received him cordially, and by his kind manner immediately won his favor.

"I had a sort of an idea that you were a different chap from this Owen Crafts, as he calls himself," said Tudor, as soon as Clarence saluted him.

"Show me to Mr. Crafts, won't you?" said Clarence. "Is he past danger yet?"

"I guess you'll think he is when you see him. I believe he's shamming. It is my opinion he was more scared than hurt."

"You should not be uncharitable," suggested Clarence.

"I don't think I am. He is too ugly a fellow for dame Charity to have any acquaintance with," returned the boy, grinning at what he conceived his wit.

"But show me to him," urged Clarence.

"Well, we'll have to hunt him up," said Tudor. "The last I knew of him he went out in the garden to walk with Emma. Follow me."

Clarence hastened after the boy, and was soon led into a handsome garden with delightfully shaded walks. Tudor took the main path and proceeded along it, followed by his dog, at a rate with which Clarence could not easily keep pace.

Crafts had been able to leave his bed two days previous to the arrival of Clarence; but he appeared in no haste to resume his journey, and paid no heed to the housekeeper's oft-repeated exclamations that Mr. Lynch would be impatient to see Tudor and Emma.

The careful attention and kind nursing given him by Emma, had a wonderful hygienic effect upon him. He expressed much anxiety to walk out in the garden, and Emma had consented to

accompany him. They followed the walks for a short time, when Mr. Crafts complained of fatigue, and led the way to an arbor, near one of the paths at the foot of the garden. He reclined upon a bench, and requested Emma to gather him a bunch of roses. She gratified his request as if she had been a nurse upon whom he could call as upon a servant, and unsuspecting, handed him the flowers, when, instead of taking the bouquet, he grasped her hand and said with a tone and manner which could not be mistaken:

"Sit down, Emma; I wish to talk to you."

"You are a stranger to me, Mr. Crafts," she answered. "I have shown you attention because you were ill. You are too much of a gentleman to misinterpret or take advantage of my situation."

"You do me wrong, Emma. It is your kindness that has won my heart. I have seen much of the world—known much of woman kind, but never till I met you have I found one who enchained my admiration. Believe me, I offer you the devotion of a heart that has never had upon it another claim. You have watched over me so anxiously—you have waited upon me so tenderly—you have spoken words of encouragement—I could not be mistaken—if I am too bold, you can not blame me!"

"Mr. Crafts," said Emma in astonishment, "I am young in the wiles of the world—a kind heart may have softened too much of common formality, but you have deceived yourself."

"No, dearest; say not so! You have allowed me to call you Emma from the first of our acquaintance—let me hope that what I have now to regret in your replies to my suit is the result of maiden coyness; but tell me that when we have found a home in the West, you will receive me as a suitor, if nothing more."

"As a friend, Mr. Crafts, I can look upon you; but as a suitor, never! I may as well be frank with you and speak plainly. I have treated you only as I would any person who came to our family recommended by my father—I have been kind to you as I would to any invalid, and nothing more. I would return to the hotel."

"Not, Miss Lynch," said Crafts, "till you have heard me farther. You *must* understand me."

"I think I do," answered the girl sternly; "but I'll hear you a moment."

"I am a stranger to you, as you have said; but I am not a stranger to your father. We have long, intimately known each other—I am in his confidence, or he would not have put his

family under my charge—we are to be in business together—it is for his interest that our bonds should be closer than they now are—he will encourage my suit!”

“My father will never urge me to receive the addresses of a man whom I reject,” returned Emma, with a decision of tone which caused Crafts to feel that his efforts were unavailing, and at the opposition he met, his anger being aroused—the prospect of that upon which he had set his heart as the crowning stroke of policy to his plans becoming dim—he forgot his usual craft, and throwing one arm around Emma’s waist, he whispered angrily:

“Your father *shall* encourage my suit?”

Disengaging herself instantly, Emma cried: “You are a deceiver—a villain, sir! You would frighten me, to allow a man whom I despise to be my lover. You will never address me again, sir, or I shall report you to my father;” and with these words Emma was about to step from the arbor, when Crafts caught her by the arm and fiercely whispered:

“If you dare! and I crush him and disgrace the family!”

At this terrible threat Emma staggered and Crafts caught her in his arms and was about to imprint an unholy kiss upon her lips, when Clarence Weldon, loitering in the garden and looking at the handsome trees and flowers, expecting every moment to be summoned to meet Crafts and be able to congratulate him on his speedy recovery, heard Tudor cry:

“Go at him, Turk—go at him, I say.”

This command was followed by a piercing scream, and flying along the path in the direction of the sounds, Clarence soon reached the foot of the garden, and in a summer-house to his right, saw Crafts fighting the dog with a heavy stick, while Tudor was supporting his sister and crying at the top of his voice:

“Let him have it, Turk. Don’t give him up.”

“Call off the dog,” said Clarence, as he rushed to assist the lady. She had swooned, but was recovering. Clarence gazed upon her as the blood returned to her blanched cheeks as he had never before gazed at female loveliness. At Clarence’s command, Tudor turned towards Crafts, and bestowing on the dog a kick, said:

“Let him alone, Turk,” and then looking at Crafts with ineffable contempt, he cried: “Now, get out, you ugly wretch.”

Crafts felt like felling the boy to the ground with his cane, but fear of the dog restrained him, and turning to Clarence he said:

“I’ll see you in the house as soon as you are disengaged.”

Emma was able to sit upon the bench of the summer-house,

when Tudor observing that she was confused in the presence of Clarence, said:

“This is the gentleman that ugly Crafts got me to write for.”

Clarence offered her his arm and supported her to the hotel; then seeking Tudor, he inquired:

“What did that scene I witnessed in the garden mean?”

“Mean!” said Tudor; “nothing; only when I got down there I saw that ugly fellow with his arm around Emma’s waist, while she was trying to get away from him, and I put Turk on him quick, I tell you.”

Clarence now looked for Crafts. He was soon found. After some general conversation on the accident and his health, Crafts said:

“You will go alone with this family to meet Mr. Lynch.”

“For what reason?” said Clarence.

“I have received letters to day which call me to New York immediately. I will join you at —— in about a month.”

On the morrow, when Crafts was missing, Tudor inquired what had become of him, and Clarence answered:

“He departed for New York in the stage, last night.”

“He knew what was best for him; but I’m blamed sorry Turk couldn’t have another snap at his legs,” returned Tudor.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A NEW HOME.

It is not necessary to the thread of our story to follow the adventures of the characters of the last chapter minutely during the time employed in joining Mr. Lynch, nor need we recount this gentleman’s exploits. Suffice it that he purchased to advantage the property about which Crafts had spoken to Clarence, and in one month the family was settled in one of the pleasantest and most romantic farm-houses, or perhaps, rather, as it was near a young city, the most beautiful and attractive country residence in, at that time, the most rapidly growing State of the northwest.

Mr. Lynch had put building operations in progress at the city, and astonished the people by the extent of his plans. He would have the finest store in the State, and the arrangements for business, of which he had spoken to a few of the leading citizens, caused him to be regarded as a man of immense wealth.

and great enterprise. His scheme was a great one, and he labored like a hero to perfect it and put it into complete operation. We shall see how he succeeded.

Clarence had heard nothing from Crafts since he had departed for New York; but Mr. Lynch had letters frequently, and he knew that the gentleman was not idle. Besides doing a considerable business towards furthering his own interests, he had done something for Mr. Lynch by purchasing and sending to him various important matters required for his buildings, which could not be obtained at the West, to a good advantage.

In the bustle of his business, Lynch forgot the troubles of his previous life, if he had ever had any—and we presume it had not been entirely without sorrow and vexation—and he was happy in the prospect of wealth and honor before him. Autumn was approaching. By the next spring, his buildings would be completed. Then he should draw around him a company of business men—establish agencies over the entire West, at New Orleans and New York—have correspondents in all the principal marts of Europe, and do a most profitable business.

Thus easily are air-castles erected, but many times much more easily are they made to totter and fall, “the baseless fabric of a vision.”

Clarence was to be one of the working-men in this grand scheme, and such representations had been made to him that, in his ignorance of business, it met the approbation of his honest purposes, and he was eager to enter upon it. He manifested great interest in Mr. Lynch's building plans, but was of no practical service in carrying them out, and as he would not be unemployed, it was arranged that, until the grand commercial scheme went into operation, he should occupy himself as tutor of Emma and Tudor.

While Mr. Lynch was thus satisfactorily arranging his business affairs, trouble was brewing in a quarter he least expected.

He had been annoyed by the attentions of his housekeeper very much lately, but had treated her conduct as the impulse of vanity, and had not allowed it to fret him very seriously, yet he did occasionally wonder if there might not be something wrong. He sat one evening in his library arranging some business papers, after an anxious day's labor at the city, when a rap on the door startled him. It was a gentle rap, yet it rather alarmed him. Perhaps he had a foreboding. He stepped to the door and opened it.

“Good evening,” said the housekeeper.

Mr. Lynch did not return the salutation nor invite her to walk in, but she did not mind his coldness and entered the

library, shutting the door behind her. He did not invite the lady to sit down, but she was at home and by no means bashful, so she seated herself in an arm chair near one of the desks.

“What is your will?” at length broke out the gentleman, tying up and putting away the papers he had been examining.

“I've come on important business, Mr. Lynch; but it's a little delicate,” answered the housekeeper, twirling her pink cap strings.

“You need not be delicate with me. You have known me a long time,” said the gentleman, in a tone which he intended should give the lady confidence.

“I've been thinking—I've been thinking—”

“Well, what *have* you been thinking—speak it out.”

“Its too delicate—it's too peculiar—and—I—”

“This is tampering with my confidence. If you *have* any thing to tell me, speak it at once, or seek me some other time when I have leisure.”

“Now's the time, Mr. Lynch; my birth day's coming next month, and I've been thinking Mr. Lynch, that if you would get a mother for your children, I'd—”

“Not leave me, Nancy, when you have taken care of them so long?”

“Yes, Mr. Lynch, I have taken care of them so long, and I believe I can flatter myself I have taken good care of them; but I know that you ought to have some body nearer to you than a housekeeper, and so they had, too.”

“You are wild, Nancy. For the very reason that you take so good care of my children and my household, I do not stand in need of a wife in my old age—that's what you mean? You want to see me married.”

“Yes, sir, that's it; but you're not so *very* old; and, Mr. Lynch, faithful servants deserve rewards, as the Scriptures teach.”

“If you must leave me, Nancy, you shall be rewarded—well rewarded.”

“Oh! Mr. Lynch, if I dare say it, but you *will* not understand me!” cried the housekeeper, hysterically.

But Mr. Lynch did understand. He was fighting off a conclusion, and he had exercised forbearance as long as his temper would allow him—now he stormed. He was exceedingly rude, talking as he did, to a lady.

“You are a fool—a born fool, Nancy—but of your head—preposterous—outrageous!” and the gentleman stamped back and forward through the room.

Nancy's delicacy departed from her instantly at this attack. Rising to her feet, she cried:

"I ain't a fool, and I'll show you I'll know who's master here! Goodness, gracious! *Some folks know some things!*" and she started towards the library door.

Mr. Lynch reached it before her and locked it:

"Now, what do you know?" he said fiercely.

His manner frightened her, but she had gone too far to retreat. The excitement of her situation sustained her, and she said:

"There are papers in that desk you wouldn't like to have every body know everything about!"

"How do you know?" cried Lynch.

"I read them."

"When?"

"Before I came out here, while you was away."

"What drawer? Show me," said Lynch.

The housekeeper pointed to the one she had unlocked, when Lynch, breaking into a forced laugh, said:

"Is that all you know?"

"That's enough," retorted the housekeeper.

"If it is, what do you mean to do?"

"I mean that you shall make me your wife in less than two weeks, or I'll—"

"Go and do it! Do your best! Go! Never let me see you again!" and with these words Lynch opened the door and was about to thrust the housekeeper out of the room. She looked at him and sneeringly said:

"May be you'd better see if them things are all there!"

Lynch rushed to the drawer, burst it open, scattered the papers about, and found that the most important document was missing. He seemed to be possessed of a fury. He bit his lips till the blood started—tore his hair, and beat his breast. Then, had Nancy been able, she would have fled from the room with fright. But Lynch had re-locked the door, and the key was in his pocket. When his fit of impotent rage was over, he was as pale as the driven snow—but he was mild. He said, calmly:

"Nancy, have you that paper?"

"I know where it is, sir."

"What shall I do for you to surrender it to me?"

Now it was Nancy's time to triumph. She knew her advantage, and it made her bold.

"I've set my heart on being mistress of this house," she said, "and nothing else will do."

"I am an old man, Nancy, and full of business."

"You're a nice man, however; and, goodness gracious, I ain't over young myself."

"But what will you do with Tudor?"

"Let him do as he pleases—as he does now," replied the lately courageous Nancy.

"*Must* it be, Nancy?" said Mr. Lynch.

"Nothing else will do. Give me a writing, and you shall have the paper."

Mr. Lynch martyred himself to save his reputation—the document was restored to him; and, as she appointed, on her thirty-fifth birth-day the housekeeper became Mistress Lynch.

Tudor knew nothing of the marriage till it was consummated, and when Emma said to him:

"Now, Tudor, you must treat Nancy as your mother." He wanted to know how she was changed. Emma could only answer:

"Father has made her his wife, and we must respect her."

"It won't do," answered the boy; "she musn't try to put on airs over me," and whistling for his dog, he was off towards the woods, where most of his time was now spent.

Mistress Lynch began forthwith to comport herself as she conceived it was the duty of the wife of a man of the reputed wealth of Mr. Lynch. In her equipage she astonished the plain people of her vicinity; but in her dress, by attempting to render herself a youthful looking personage, she furnished most pleasant matter for ridicule among the young ladies who met her on her rides to church.

She had a rage for pink. Her complexion was of that caste that it was rendered disagreeably sallow in contrast with pink, and with pink trimming on her bonnet, and many times a pink ribbon about her neck, unrelieved by lace, and with pink cuffs, while she wore a yellow silk dress; as she rode to the city, she excited the wonder of the country people and the ridicule of the denizens of the town, among whom she visited, or with whom she had business. Emma ventured to suggest occasionally that certain styles of dress or trimmings were not becoming, but Madame Lynch had a passion for show, and she indulged it in spite of ridicule.

Mr. Lynch, who was a man of fine taste in dress, was most provokingly annoyed by the fanciful whims of his lady, but his remonstrances were unheeded.

He had returned from the city one afternoon rather earlier than was his custom, and was sitting at his front door, beneath one of the spreading trees that ornamented the lawn, when Madame presented herself in a new pink gown, at the top of

the fashion, with most excruciatingly fanciful trimmings. He was offended at the sight, yet he said pleasantly :

"Where away, this afternoon?"

"To the city, sir," she answered haughtily, whirling upon her heel and marching in a stately manner through the hall.

In a few moments the coachman drove the carriage to the door. Mr. Lynch was not in a mood for the sight, and he cried :

"Put up the horses and carriage, John; they do not go to the city this day. Lock the coach-house door and bring me the key.

John obeyed his master's commands promptly, and when Madame came from her dressing-room, as rosy, save her hands and face, as a fresh blown pink, the carriage was missing. She looked towards Mr. Lynch and cried :

"Goodness gracious! are not my commands to be obeyed?"

At the moment, catching sight of the coachman across the lawn, she summoned him by a violent gesture.

"Where is that coach I ordered?"

"In the coach-house, Madame," answered John.

"Bring it out immediately, or I'll discharge you," said the lady, working herself into a rage.

"Mr. Lynch ordered it up, and he's got the key, Madame!" returned John.

Mrs. Lynch was now truly in a rage.

"I'll not be frustrated—that I won't. I'll not dress myself for nothing. I'll go on foot—that I will," and with these words Madame proceeded towards the road leading to the city. She had not reached the outer gate when Tudor ran across the lawn, followed by Turk, and noticing her, he cried :

"Hallo! there goes pinky in high dudgeon—she'll not find it pleasant a-foot-back, and she'll be glad to turn about before she's tramped it many miles."

Tudor judged correctly. It was not an hour before Madame returned. She merely called at a neighbor's, concluding to postpone her visit to the city till another day.

Mr. Lynch kept the coach-house key a number of days, and it was not till Emma expressed a wish to visit the city that the coachman had any drives to make. During this time many scenes occurred between Madame and Mr. Lynch, but we leave them to the lively imagination.

## CHAPTER IX.

### UNEXPECTED VISITORS.

WHILE there was war in one portion of Mr. Lynch's household, there was peace and happiness in another.

Clarence, Tudor, and Emma spent their time profitably during the hours devoted to study, and those appropriated to pleasure seldom passed without bringing the object sought.

Near their house were several inviting groves, and it was the wont of Clarence and Emma, while Tudor and Turk chased birds and squirrels, to spend the pleasant afternoons in these "sylvan retreats," conversing or reading. With the works of the best of Britain's poets and essayists, Mr. Lynch's library was abundantly supplied, and the young people drank together from the "well of English undefiled" with profit and instruction.

One of their favorite retreats was upon a gently rising hill, about a quarter of a mile distant from their home. From its summit, they had a charming view of the surrounding country. After gazing upon the fields and forests at either hand, the eye would rest for a moment on the Lynch property, lying as it did, on the bank of a swift and flowing river, and being crossed near the mansion by a creek, which, at high water, debouched into the river with a velocity that carried its turbid current well nigh to the opposite bank—then stretching across the streams, the view extended over the young city in the distance, and followed the river till it was lost in a chain of hills running northward. The landscape was variegated with field, forest, farm-house, town, brook, and river, and while fleeting clouds threw passing shadows over it, on a summer afternoon, Clarence delighted to contemplate with Emma its pleasing prospects.

It was approaching the evening of a September day—when wandering from the hill-top before spoken of, Clarence and Emma strayed to a grove of ancient oak trees, nearly a mile back of the river. It was a spot renowned in the history of the red men who were once monarchs of all the mighty forests of the West.

It was pleasant to walk through this grove. The trees were venerable, and the white man had not disturbed the order in which the red men left them, when giving up the associations which clustered around the place where their fathers slept, that they might have unbroken forests in which to draw their bows



and smoke their calumets, they went to the "Far West." It appeared a favorite resort for the bird and the squirrel, and was ever vocal with the music of twittering songsters or chippering nut-crackers.

Here Clarence had often walked at early morn, when the squirrel left his foot-prints on the dew-sprinkled leaves, and the forest birds bathed their plumage in the drops that trickled from the foliage among which their nests were hidden. Many times his footsteps had startled the timid rabbit as it stole out of its burrow to crop the herbage while it was sweet, in the freshness of early dawn.

It was Emma's first visit to the grove, and she spoke in raptures of its beauty as Clarence led her along the avenues.

"I have been thinking, Clarence," she said, "for a number of weeks, that our mansion and its grounds should have an appropriate name. Father has nearly completed the improvements for this year, and now is the time to christen the place. It is your birth-day. We'll do you the favor to let you name it. I'll not take a refusal, Clarence."

"But I am a poor hand at such a task, Emma. I have little tact in the selection of titles."

"He who does his best does well. If you can not select, make a title."

"Would you have some high-sounding classical name? a Roman or a Grecian title?"

"I should prefer something characteristic, but will agree to accept whatever you propose."

"That is too great a license, Emma."

"Take it as a favor, then, and be encouraged."

"Well, shall I give you an Indian name?"

"Just what I should be pleased with."

"But I do not know the Indian romance of the place. If we had the aboriginal name of the creek, it would answer; but again we are at fault. How would you like a Saxon name?"

"Better than any other. You know I boast that mother's ancestors were pure Saxons."

"And you like this grove?"

"Indeed I do; and while this pleasant autumn weather lasts, shall visit it often."

"Then you know in pure Saxon *shaw* means a grove. This is near enough to the mansion to be considered a part of its grounds—how would you like Oakshaw for a name?"

"Pshaw, Clarence, our neighbor S-H-A-W, of whom father purchased, might think we called it after him; but as it will not harm him to flatter his vanity, and the title is expressive Saxon,

it shall be the one. Oakshaw! As I sound it, I like it better. I am glad you were called on, Clarence. Had you premeditated this?"

"Did I know, ten minutes since, that I was to be so highly honored?"

"Sure enough, Clarence. I am uncharitable. I will ascribe the happy thought to the inspiration of the associations, and give you all due credit for not choosing to 'follow in the footsteps of illustrious predecessors,' and tack upon our pleasant home, in this new country, some title, borrowed from a foreign language, that can have application only to a country where primeval forests are a thing unknown to the memory of the 'oldest inhabitant.' But I am tired walking, Clarence—let us rest beneath one of these venerable oaks."

"Here is an inviting spot," said Clarence, leading the girl a short distance from the path they had been following.

When they were seated upon a moss-grown log, at the foot of one of the wide-spreading oaks, Emma remarked:

"It would seem, Clarence, as if this grove must have been an encampment some day for those wild men about whom we read in the early history of this State."

"Your conjectures are partly correct," answered Clarence. "Beneath the mound which you can perceive, just where the trees become more dense, sleeps many an Indian warrior, whose wild name was once a terror throughout this valley."

"Are there any of these Indians ever to be seen about our town or cities at this day?" inquired Emma.

"Frequently," said her companion; but yesterday I understand that twenty or thirty were at the city, who had come from the Far West for no purpose but to visit this, to them, hallowed spot."

"You were in town yesterday afternoon, did you see any of them?"

"No," returned Clarence; they were gone before I left home; but when I returned, thinking of the stories told of the red men about their regard for this Indian Mecca, I thought I would come through the grove. I was tired walking, and I sat down to rest, when near the mound which I pointed to you, I observed a woman who, I knew from her dress, must be an Indian. I approached her. She waited my coming, and begged, in broken English, that I would give her a piece of money. I handed her all the change I had in my pocket, and asked her why she was not with her people. She pointed to the mound and then to the sky, and turning from me I soon lost sight of her in the bushes."

"I wish I could see her," said Emma. I have a great curiosity to look upon one of these daughters of the forest."

"What is that?" cried Clarence.

"Where?" inquired Emma.

"I thought," answered Clarence, "that, as you spoke, I saw this very Indian about whom I have spoken pass behind a tree near the spot where I talked with her last evening."

As he made this reply, Clarence stepped a few feet from where he had been sitting, and then, turning to Emma, said:

"I was not mistaken. There she stands—come here and you can see her."

Emma obeyed his summons, and when she had seen the Indian woman, said:

"I wish we could talk to her."

"I will beckon to her," said Clarence. He made a gesture, the Indian caught sight of it and bounded towards him as she observed him to be the individual that had given her alms on the night previous.

When she came near him, Clarence motioned her to a seat on the log, but she sat down on the grass beside it.

"Tell us," said Clarence, "why you did not go with your people?"

"My father a great chief," answered the woman; "here his council fires burned—yonder his wigwam," pointing to a cluster of trees near the mound; "there hung the scalps of his enemies—here he danced the war dance—made offerings to the Great Spirit, and when the sun burned red in the western sky, sang the war song—white man come—chief take silver—smoke calumet of peace and say, 'Warriors, me go towards the setting sun!' then chief fall sick—medicine man no cure him—the Great Spirit take him—warriors put him under the ground," pointing to the mound. "White man come again—warriors burn wigwams—take squaws beyond the big waters. Warrior come to my wigwam—I plant his corn—he chief—Great Spirit give papooses—Great Spirit take chief—Great Spirit take papooses—my wigwam silent. I come where great chief show me to dress his robes and cook his game. I die here—Great Spirit find me yonder," and again the Indian pointed to the mound.

Emma was deeply touched with her story, which we can only give with a shadow of the pathos it had, as the Indian told it in her broken sentences, that can not be faithfully written.

"Go home with us," said Emma, "we will give you food and shelter."

"The woods my wigwam, till the Great Spirit wants me," answered the Indian, looking up to the sky.

"Then," said Clarence, "if you want any thing, come to us at the house, where the creek and the river unite, and it shall be given to you."

"Great Spirit love white man kind to Indian," and with these words the woman of the forest bounded to her feet and plunged into the thickest bushes beyond the grove.

It was growing late in the afternoon, and the young people now hastened towards home. They had not proceeded many steps before Tudor met them and cried:

"Did you see that critter with the gewgaws on, and the red face? Whew! but Turk gave her a chase. She dodged him, though. I wanted to find you, and I called him off before he got her again. It's an Ingin, I expect."

"Yes, Tudor," said Emma, "it is a poor Indian woman who has lost all her friends. You must not trouble her. You will promise me that if you meet her again you will be kind to her."

"Of course I will; but here comes Mr. Lynch, and I'm off," cried the boy. "Here, Turk, here."

Clarence and Emma had crossed from the grove to a point of the woods near the road leading to the city, and as they approached it, they saw Mr. Lynch riding on horseback slowly towards them, on his return from business in town.

When he had come up, they related to him their adventure with the Indian woman, and were about to continue along the path homeward, when Clarence, pointing toward the house, said:

"We shall meet our neighbor, Shaw."

"Let us wait and tell him what an honor he has received," said Emma.

As the farmer approached the little party, he said:

"Good day, good folks. A pleasant time to walk."

"Quite so," returned Mr. Lynch. "I have a little surprise for you, Squire." Mr. Shaw had been a magistrate.

"Ah! you have. I could not guess what it may be."

"A slight honor has been conferred on you, Mr. Shaw," said Emma.

"You will be so good as to tell what it may be, Miss."

"Nothing, only Mr. Weldon was given the privilege to name our place, and he called it *Oakshaw*."

"An insult!" returned the Squire, testily. "An insult! That dare-devil brother of yours, Miss, has had the impudence to call me Old Tough. Mr. Weldon got the name from that, I 'spose. *Oak-shaw*! I understand. Yes, yes; I thought my



neighbors were gentle folks. I see how easily it is to be mistaken."

Clarence could not refrain from a smile at the Squire's singular conclusions, and Mr. Lynch was obliged to turn his head aside to hide an expression of face which might have affronted the Squire still more had he seen it; but Emma looked grave, and while the Squire ran on in his coarse invectives, she cried:

"I pray you, Mr. Shaw, have patience a moment—pray, let me explain."

"I'll hear no explanations—have patience at such an insult! Mr. Lynch, I'll see you to-morrow. We'll have a settlement."

With these words the affronted Squire started along the path towards his farm at a rapid pace. Mr. Lynch cried after him:

"Hold, hold Squire—you're mad, man." But the Squire did not, or would not hear.

"I am sorry we joked at all with Mr. Shaw, said Emma.

"Never mind," replied Clarence; "your father will see him to-morrow, and his wounded honor will be readily healed."

"I'll give my assurance for that," chimed in Mr. Lynch, adding, "Where are you bound now, my daughter?"

"We shall go from here directly to the mansion of OAKSHAW; and I'll wager a kiss, father, we'll be at home first, though you have a fleet horse," answered Emma, as she started with Clarence.

Mr. Lynch regarded them with pleasure. A smile of satisfaction threw a pleasant expression over his careworn countenance; and he soliloquized:

"Working well—admirably! It is a capital scheme! He is a young man of excellent parts. Emma's a fine girl—a *fine* girl—it must be—yes, it *must* be—then I am saved, and Mr. Owen Crafts, you'll take care of yourself! Madame Lynch—Nancy, the housekeeper—oh God! why could it not have been before? But perhaps—perhaps, it is all for the best!"

There is no telling how long Mr. Lynch might thus have conversed with *himself*, had not this revery been interrupted by the sound of approaching wheels. He thought that his lady must be out enjoying herself; but, as the vehicle came nearer, he knew that the rumbling was not heavy enough for the carriage, and, wheeling his horse, a vision greeted him he least expected. Near him was a buggy containing two persons, one of whom was bowing to him with all possible politeness.

"The devil—Crafts!" cried Mr. Lynch, as the bowing gentleman drew up his horse along side of him.

Mr. Crafts hardly knew whether Mr. Lynch intended to liken him to his Satanic Majesty, or whether the use of the dark

gentleman's name was employed merely as an exclamation of surprise; but being charitable, Mr. Crafts chose the latter explanation, and said:

"A little sudden my presence, that's a fact, Lynch; but I got along faster than I anticipated. Allow me to introduce my friend, Mr. Bent," said Crafts, turning to the person who rode with him. Mr. Lynch bowed and said:

"I am happy to meet you, sir."

The gentleman nodded his head complacently, and remarked: "Youah most abbedient, sah. I am honahed with youah acquaintance."

Mr. Lynch's nose curled slightly at this salutation, but the gentleman did not see the kink, and had no reason to be dissatisfied with his reception.

"Drive to the house," said Mr. Lynch.

In a few minutes, the travelers were all in front of the Lynch mansion.

Clarence and Emma stood in the front door as they approached to meet Mr. Lynch; but when the latter recognised Crafts, she disappeared. Clarence received Crafts respectfully, but could not conceal his disgust for his affected companion.

The visitors had just alighted from their vehicle, when Tudor Lynch, who had been throwing sticks in the water for Turk to swim after, coming up from the river, caught a sight of Mr. Crafts.

"Here, Turk," he cried "flap your ears and frisk your tail—our old friend's come back. You must have a nip at him to-morrow."

The dog looked and jumped upon his master as if he understood all that had been said to him.

"Down, down, Turk," cried Tudor, "silence—there's another chap—a queer looking bird—may be there's fun in him. I'll get a look at him and hear him chatter."

Tudor ran to the house, and looking around the corner, heard Crafts' friend make a few remarks to Clarence about the "*grawwuds*," and when Mr. Lynch had conducted the new comers into the parlor, the boy ran up to Clarence and exclaimed:

"This is a great country for *rare* birds, squaws, and dogs—nondescripts the next. But ain't he a critter? How his hat tipped over his twisted hair—then, what a striped vest—brown coat, too short—yellow pantaloons, tight as the skin—white gloves, and how he did flourish that bamboo stick! I'll introduce Turk to him to-morrow if I catch him outside of the yard."

Clarence could not but feel as much contempt for the fop as

Tudor manifested, but he was afraid the boy would make mischief, and he said:

"You must be civil to the gentleman, if he is odd."

"Odd, Mr. Weldon," repeated the boy; "yes, I'll be civil for your sake; so shall Turk. I'll *only* let him bark at the oddity!"

Madame Lynch formed quite a different opinion of Mr. Crafts' friend from that expressed by Tudor. He was "so polite, and spoke so handsomely" she could not help admiring him.

The "gentleman" did not see Emma until at dinner the following day. He was excruciatingly polite and attentive to her, and when he and Crafts were alone after dinner, exclaimed:

"Dem foin girl, Crafts, dem foin. I'll haue tah mawk love tah her."

"With my leave," said Crafts.

"Most assuahdly," returned the fop.

"None of your canting and fopping to me," said Crafts. "Talk to me like a man, and let me say that I don't think the style of your conversation is at all agreeable to the family. You had better change it."

"How will it do *now*?" inquired the fop, throwing off his affectation.

"Never mind how—change it," returned Crafts with an air of command.

About the middle of the afternoon, Bent walked towards the river, while Crafts held a confidential meeting with Mr. Lynch upon a matter of grave importance.

Mr. Parley Bent was an impressible individual, whom Crafts had taken as a companion. He was a fellow of shallow education, but insinuating pretensions, and had passed a checkered life. When about twenty years of age, he fell in with a villain who induced him to rob his father, and flee from home. The villain took care of him till the money was spent, and then told him to take care of himself. He became a bar-keeper on a steamboat, then losing that situation, established a barber shop and did a good business, till he fell in with Crafts. Mr. Crafts took him under his protection, because he sometimes had need of a good looking man, who was not scrupulous. He despised the fellow's affectations, but rarely interfered with his whims, unless he attempted to use his distorted pronunciation in talking to him.

While Bent strolled on the bank of the river, Tudor was watching him, and as the gentleman started to return to the house, the boy whistled for Turk, and went to meet him. The dog was a sagacious animal, and either sympathized with his

master in his feelings toward Mr. Parley Bent, or he had a natural antipathy to such counterfeit men, for no sooner did the fop draw near, than he attacked him furiously. The gentleman flourished his bamboo most vigorously, and cried lustily:

"Get out—get out—take him off—take him off," with a decidedly good English accent; but he did not prevent Turk from making rents in his brown coat, or his yellow pantaloons, and he cried again:

"Boy, boy! take this dog off—*get out*—GET OUT!"

"I thought you could talk English," cried Tudor, coming up; "that's all I wanted to know. Come, come away, Turk—come away, I say."

The dog obeyed, and followed his master to the river, while Parley Bent hastened to his room to exchange his torn garments for a suit more becoming a gentleman who desired to be a favorite with the ladies.

When he had made his toilet, he ordered Crafts' horse and carriage, drove to the city, and was not seen at the Lynch mansion for two days. When he did return, in some respects he was a changed man—his pronunciation was improved, but his manners had not *suffered* much alteration for the better. His bearing was naturally offensive—something like a cross between disagreeable diffidence, and unwarrantable officiousness.

## CHAPTER X.

### MR. CRAFTS AND HIS PLANS.

WE have said that Lynch and Crafts were closeted for an important conference.

When they were seated in the library, after a few general observations—

"Well," said Lynch, "what have you been about, Crafts?"

"Attending to business," returned the gentleman addressed, "as I'm a Christian."

"I presume so," said Lynch, emphasizing the "so" peculiarly; "but you say the goods I ordered are coming on."

"Yes; and the correspondences put in the right train. We shall do a great business."

"If we don't, I'll miss my guess. The buildings progress finely. I have made great improvements in the place—added

a story to the house—set out shade trees—graded the lawn—built on the library wing, in which we sit, and erected handsome outhouses.”

“And made some *other* changes, I perceive,” said Crafts.

“To what do you refer?” inquired Lynch.

“The establishment has a mistress I have learned.”

“Spare me on that, Crafts. It was a forced measure. I do not like to think of the subject.”

“It is the very subject I want to talk about,” said Crafts, with a leer.

“My marriage, Crafts! how can that interest you?” exclaimed Lynch, somewhat astonished.

“It don’t; but there *is* a marriage which does!”

“Have you been getting married during your absence? I’m glad of it. Let me congratulate you.”

“Hold!” cried Crafts; “not so fast. As I am a Christian, you are wild. I am not married—only *likely* to be, and soon—with your consent!”

The italicized words were spoken with peculiar accent.

“You speak in riddles,” cried Lynch. “I do not understand you.”

“I’ll speak plainly, then.”

“If you please.”

“Emma Lynch is a fine girl—a handsome and accomplished girl. She would make me just such a wife as I want! I ask her hand of her father!”

“Have you addressed her,” said Lynch, struggling to keep down his emotion, “and if so, how did she receive your addresses?”

“Not very favorably,” answered Crafts, calmly; not in a flattering manner for an ardent lover—but I am none such. You and I will do business together—our interests are intimately connected in more than one way; perhaps it would be better for both if our relations were closer, and this marriage is the bond that would unite us. I am resolved upon it.”

“And if you *are*, Owen Crafts,” cried Mr. Lynch, no longer able to suppress his anger, “resolved a thousand times, it shall not be—never!”

“Be careful, Griffin Lynch—think of the power I hold in my hands—think what my word can do,” said Crafts, with admirable coolness.

“My daughter abhors you, detests you—her conduct in your presence shows it. I am an old man—the grave will soon receive me—a great grief would kill me—let it come!”

“Reflect cautiously before you decide. I have contemplated

this matter for more than *one* year, and *my* mind is made up,” interposed Crafts.

“And *my* mind is made up,” answered Lynch. “I will go down to my grave dishonored—I will see my schemes *all* blasted—I will see all my property taken from me—I will lie in jail, before my daughter shall marry you, unless she gives her free consent!”

“May I sue for it with your aid?” interrupted Crafts. “But say no, and, so sure as there is a God in heaven, to-morrow will I take the steps to bring all the woes upon you, you have enumerated. I have you in my power, and I will be as merciless as the Inquisitors. Think, Griffin Lynch, think!”

Griffin Lynch did think! He paced backward and forward through the library, and wished that the current of his life blood might cease to flow—that God would take his breath from him instantly—most vivid pictures of degradation and ignominious death were presented to his mind—he tried to shut them out, but in vain; and when he was racked almost to a paroxysm of agony, he cried:

“Owen Crafts, I give you leave to seek my daughter in marriage. I will speak to her.”

“Is that all?” said Crafts contemptuously.

“All now! Leave me, if you have any mercy,” answered Lynch.

Crafts knew his power, and withdrew.

Mr. Lynch paced the floor for nearly an hour, in severe mental anguish. He reviewed a dark life—there was in it one deed, the remembrance of which harrowed his soul almost to frenzy—he saw an old man, honored in his country’s history, writhing on his death-bed. It was a picture which haunted him often—the engagements of business alone shut it out completely.

When the spell had somewhat left him—when the dreadful visions his mind had conjured grew somewhat dim, he rang for a servant. The summons being answered, he requested that Emma be sent for immediately.

The young lady, who had been listening to Clarence while he read an exciting romance of early times in England, hastened to the library. She found her father in such a state of excitement as she had never before witnessed. He appeared not to notice her coming. She approached him and said:

“You sent for me, father.”

“Sit down, daughter,” he answered. “When I compose myself, I will talk to you.”

Emma did as she was bidden, and waited nearly half an hour, still her father paced the floor—once he spoke and said:

"I had it all planned—then I could have died in peace—it had died with me—but it's gone—gone!"

"Have you forgotten that I am here, father," said Emma.

"Yes, I *had* forgotten."

"Shall I go back, father?"

"Go back! No, daughter; I'm calm now. Emma, if a bad man had a secret in his possession by which he could destroy your father—make him a beggar—disgrace him—and that man declared he would reveal that secret to the world if your father did not give him his daughter in marriage, could you consent?"

"No man has such a secret against my father!"

"But, Emma, that is not the question. Can you answer me?" said Mr. Lynch, stopping in his walk in front of her, and looking upon her with a countenance on which misery was most manifestly written.

"Indeed, father, it is a terrible question! I must think of it! May I consult Clarence?" said Emma.

"Yes, you *may* consult him. Think of it, Emma, for it *must* be answered!"

"May I ask who the bad man is, father?"

"You will shudder when I tell you. I know you abhor him. Can you not suspect? Spare me!"

"Is it, father, is it Owen Crafts?" cried the girl wildly.

"Even so," answered the father.

"Then let him have his purposes. Spare me, father, and we will die together!"

"Not so young, daughter—not so young! I am old; but you must not die!"

Emma threw herself at her father's feet and clung to him, looking up into his face.

"Nay, nay, Emma, look not at me so," he continued, "my heart will break, my head will burst." Go, leave me—see Clarence."

Emma departed with a measured step. She spent that night as the ant is said to spend its entire life—without sleep; and Clarence saw her not till the following afternoon. Then she sent for him and told him that she wished to walk out with him and beg his counsel on an event which concerned her deeply.

What a trial was that for the young girl? She never knew her own heart till she retired under her father's command on that dreadful night.

How few young ladies of our fashionable societies, at this day, could take the course Emma did? How few young men, who have a "free pass" in genteel society, are worthy the confidence she gave Clarence?

Young Weldon had sat down with Emma beneath one of the handsome trees of the lawn, in a spot whence they could look upon the river as its current shot swiftly past.

"As flows that water smoothly, the current of our lives flow on," said Clarence; "and as the drops, forgotten as soon as past, are there carried to the great ocean, so we hasten to the sea of death; and when we are gone, there will be nothing to show that we had been here, unless a few hearts cherish our memory for acts of kindness or of love which we may have rendered them, trifling at the hour, forgotten for the time, but cherished when the silent tear drops upon our graves."

"But, Clarence, it might not be so with you. The world invites you to go forth into it; and, with your impulses and principles, I feel that you would do something to make you useful and long remembered in a much wider circle than that in which you now teach," said Emma.

"And with the prospect of usefulness before me, in aid of your father," returned Clarence, "I would not exchange the every day pleasures of this quiet home for the hurrahs of a crowd, were I able to win them." As he spoke, the young man looked at Emma with an expression which, to her heart, was the *open sesame* of deep affection. The color deepened on her cheek, and she could not return his glance. Her heart sank as thoughts of the task before her pressed upon her; but she must either return to her father without the support of Clarence's counsel, or change the tone of their conversation, and she said:

"You have been gloomy this afternoon, Clarence. Why did you liken our life to the current of the river?"

"It was but a passing thought as I looked upon the flowing water. It is gone now; but you wished my counsel. If you think I am in the mood, give me your confidence."

"The mood befits the subject," said Emma, with a tremor in her voice that did not escape the young man's notice; but I dread to broach it to you, though our confidence has been that of a brother and sister."

"I will not urge you," said Clarence; "but as I know that it must be something that gives you much trouble, I am impatient to know if I can aid you."

"It is of a struggle between duty and—and—happiness will perhaps better express it," said Emma.

"The course with me would be plain, then," answered Clarence. "You know I consider duty paramount to all other considerations."

"But you do not think that duty which many men would consider such; and I know not now what is duty," said Emma,

her agitation at each reply becoming more evident, while she studied her expressions to avoid revealing it.

"Our prominent duties," said Clarence, "are duty to our Father in Heaven, to ourselves, to our parents, and to the world; yet all, as I view life, are comprised in the first. Now, Emma, be composed and tell me how and why you are here conjuring riddles on duty?"

"I am not treating you as I should, Clarence."

"Hold! that is not the way to begin," Weldon interposed. "You know I am not a friend to apologies, when they take the place of good deeds."

"But, Clarence, I invited you here to ask your counsel, and I am ashamed to tell you what I wish it for."

"Honest confession is what is needed. Try again," he said in a tone to assure her; and she continued, suddenly opening the subject as if she feared to trust herself to generalities longer:

"A man, Clarence, whom I can never love, who addressed me, and whom I spurned, has asked my hand in marriage of father."

Here Emma stopped and buried her face in her hands.

"Well, and he was denied!" said Clarence, thinking aloud, while a current of emotions flowed through his heart, bringing quicker agitation than had ever before disturbed the even tenor of his life.

"No Clarence, he was not denied, nor was he accepted; but he has some wonderful power over father. I know not how, but he threatens to destroy him—my hand, my happiness is the price of ransom from destruction. What *shall* I do?" cried Emma.

"Who is that man?" said Clarence.

"I am forbidden to tell you, Clarence; but will you not counsel me?"

"It is noble, Emma, to save a father! If my father were dishonored by his own acts, I could not give my life to save him from the results of his own crime; but if destruction impended, of which I did not know the cause, to purchase him safety and comfort I could freely sacrifice my happiness. This is all I can say, Emma."

The maiden could ask no more, but with a heaving bosom, and eyes wet with weeping, she said:

"I will go alone to the house, and I will answer father."

Emma believed then, if she had never done so before, that the love Clarence bore her, was more than the love of a brother, and when he replied, she knew that he himself made a

sacrifice of his feelings to duty, for her sake, and for her father's sake; and, trusting that heaven would reward her for her parental devotion, she resolved that the sacrifice her father asked should be freely made, if in the summer of her life it brought the hoar frosts of winter, and blasted every flower of joy.

When she left him, Clarence did not lose sight of her till she entered the house, then, as he saw the door close behind her, he sighed:

"Thank God that my fervent prayer, 'Lead me not into temptation,' has been answered. Thank God, that when weakness well nigh overcame me, I was a man. But who am I, and what am I, to think of uniting with mine, the destiny of one who, until this day, has known no grief, no sorrow, excepting the loss of a mother, who, like my mother, went to God before her child knew her to love her? Perhaps it is for the best; but I would know who this man is. It can not be Owen Crafts! He and Mr. Lynch are friends. It must be that counterfeit man whom Crafts brought with him. Oh, God! what a sacrifice Emma *will* make to become his wife—*his* wife! But can Mr. Lynch have been guilty of any great crime? I will not believe it. This man must have some terrible secret, however, or Mr. Lynch would not fear him; but if a crime, it has long since been repented of, and now the man atones it. I will not express my feelings, but I will aid him now in his schemes with more fervor than I could otherwise have done. I shall pity him."

While Clarence thus mused, Emma had sought her father.

"You have decided my daughter," said Mr. Lynch.

"My father shall never say his daughter lacks in devotion," she answered, "I freely give my hand to Owen Crafts!"

"*Freely!* girl," Lynch repeated; "*freely*—yes, I understand. Heaven will reward *you*, though *I* am damned!"

"Do not talk so, father. I am sure you have repented," said Emma.

"What, girl? Repented what? but, yes, I *have* repented—now I rush into other sins to hide that! but God sees!" and as Mr. Lynch spoke, he tore to pieces a bundle of papers that lay on a desk before him, and hurled the fragments furiously about the room.

"Do not look and act so wildly, father," said Emma.

"No! no! I am calm now, daughter. When shall this marriage be?"

"I have only to ask, father, that you will postpone it as long as you possibly can."

"I will, daughter. It shall be postponed a *long* time! Go,

now, daughter, Owen Crafts will be here in a few moments for an answer."

As the father uttered these words, he felt that Owen Crafts should never marry his daughter, let what would come—disgrace, ignominy, and death; but it was only a fleeting resolve. When Owen Crafts came, with his cunning face and determined manner, and vowed what he could do, the father gave up his daughter, but not till he had said:

"Crafts, you shall not address her—you shall be to her as a stranger, till one month before the marriage; and it shall not take place until our business has been started."

"And when will that be?" asked the other, sharply.

"Not till the next summer, at least," answered Lynch.

"Well, said Crafts, after thinking a moment, and with the air of one who was conferring a great favor, "I'll grant you this, in consideration of an extra hundred dollars, for pocket money."

"It is extortion," cried Lynch, "but I will suffer it."

"I think you *will*," returned Crafts. "Now put down the agreement in writing."

"Is not my word enough?" cried Lynch, really enraged.

"Perhaps it is, but *I'll have it in writing*," returned Crafts, in a most determined manner; and Lynch was obliged to sign a bond, that when their business opened in the city, Emma Lynch should be given to Owen Crafts in marriage.

The bond had no direct force to Crafts, but he required it only because he thought he might, perhaps, employ it some day for purposes widely different from those for which it was drawn.

After Crafts had all matters arranged to his satisfaction, he walked out upon the lawn to indulge in self-congratulations upon the adroit manner in which he managed business. As he strayed toward the river, he soliloquised:

"Ah! ha! Lynch, headed that time—boy and girl in love—it would have been a nice plan—then *I would* have been in for it—but didn't it come hard?"

The cry of "Help! help!" came up from the river just at the moment Mr. Crafts had thus far proceeded in his soliloquy.

"Halloo! what the devil's that?" he cried, hastening forward.

As he entered a clump of bushes on the bank of the stream, he saw Tudor Lynch struggling in the water, and he thought that without aid he must be drowned, but he turned back from the bank, and stepping out of sight among the bushes, and said to himself:

"Let him sink—one nuisance abated—I'll shoot the dog,

and that will be another. When he's been there so long that there's no hope of life in him, I'll rush and get him, and make the old man and daughter think I periled *my* life to save *his*! They know I hate him, and have no reason to—that'll be another link!"

While the drowning boy struggled bravely, and called loudly for aid, Owen Crafts, in full hearing, stood still; but when the cries ceased, and looking over the bank, he could not see the boy, then he plunged toward the river, as if his errand was to save his own precious life; but when he came near where he had witnessed the youth's struggles, he was much chagrined to see Tudor standing on shore, dripping in his wet garments, while his faithful dog was shaking himself beside him.

Tudor had climbed a tree overhanging the water—the limb on which he sat to gather fruit had broken—he was precipitated into the river, and so stunned by the fall, that, for a moment, he was unable to help himself, as he could have done but for the shock, and he would probably have drowned, had not Turk heard his cries, and, coming to his assistance, partly dragged him from the water by his garments.

Crafts thought the boy did not know he had been upon the bank within hearing. It could not be said that he did; but when Tudor saw him, he cried, as if by instinct:

"Get out! Wouldn't you liked to have hauled me from the river defunct, and made the folks believe you tried to save my life? Don't you come here, or I'll let Turk know you. Never mind, your day's coming!"

As Crafts "beat a retreat," in a mood fit for almost any wicked deed, Tudor patted Turk on the back, and pulled his ears, saying:

"Well done, old fellow. This would be fun, if it wasn't for *Madame* Nancy Lynch, *Esquire*—she don't know the difference between a fellow's breaking his neck and spoiling his clothes by accident, or doing it on purpose, and I'll come under her wrath; but it must be met, and we'll meet it boldly, Turk."

When Tudor entered the presence of *Madame* Lynch, he was treated as he had expected. She was one of those would-be-pious women who think that injurious accidents must be treated with as much severity as if their evils were the result of serious delinquencies. She argued that Tudor had no business to climb a tree, nor be so careless as to go upon the limbs that would break, and she ordered him to be locked up in the library, and went herself and closed the shutters of the back window and fastened them on the outside. But the boy had not been a prisoner more than ten minutes before he heard some

one unlock the door. He stepped to one side of it, was not observed in the dim light, and as his father came in, he slipped out—then running around the house, he gave a shout to let his mistress know that he was at large, and whistling for Turk, ran down to the river bank to pick up the fruit he had thrown from the tree before he met the untoward accident which gave him new insight into Mr. Craft's character.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SOMETHING OF TUDOR LYNCH.

TUDOR LYNCH, though a reckless, care-for-nothing sort of a lad, was a great favorite with most of the people in "the region round about" Oakshaw. But he was the particular enemy of a few crusty farmers, who would not allow him to pick up fruit in their orchards, and who were in the practice of throwing stones at Turk when he chased birds across their fields. Tudor had a notion that if he wanted an apple or a peach, he had a perfect right to step into any man's orchard and pick it from the ground, where it might otherwise have gone to decay; and whenever his palate was in order for fruit, he had no hesitation in exercising his imagined right.

An orchard, belonging to the gentleman who had formerly owned his father's property, was on the route towards his favorite woods for rambling with Turk, and he rarely passed it without levying a contribution upon it. He was quietly picking up apples one afternoon beneath a tree that bore excellent fruit, when a fierce dog came bounding from the farm-house as if he had been sent to devour him. Tudor whistled for Turk and cried:

"Give that fellow a shaking, old boy."

And while his dog did shake the farmer's handsomely, he filled his hat with the choicest fruit, deliberately walked to the orchard fence, clambered over it, then called away his defender and proceeded homeward. When he entered the front gate to the lawn, he saw farmer Shaw striding towards the house, from a side-gate.

"This is no place for us, Turk, *just now*," he soliloquized, turning his course toward the creek, where he remained till premonitions that supper was about ready urged him to bend his steps homeward again.

Mr. Shaw had entered complaint to Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Lynch had deputized Emma to lecture Tudor.

Notwithstanding his premonitions, the boy did not get home in time for supper, and Madame Lynch, as a punishment,

ordered that plain bread and milk be set before him. It was a dish for which he had no fancy, and when Madame's back was turned, he said to the kitchen girl:

"Monstrous, Sally, monstrous—that woman has no heart."

"What are you talkin' about, Master Tudor?"

"Now, look at me, Sally. I have been out in the woods all day, and here I am, obliged to eat bread without butter, and drink milk without a drop of tea or coffee in it."

"But supper's over, Master Tudor."

"That's not my fault, I'll declare. Now, Sally, just you keep your knowledge to yourself, and you *are* a knowing girl, and I'll help myself to something eatable out of the cupboard. Madame Nancy will be outwitted, I'll have a good supper, and when you want somebody to run an errand, call on me."

"I reckon I doesn't tell tales, Mister Tudor."

"That's a nice girl, Sally. I'll remember you. John, the coachman, is a fine fellow."

"Now, Tudor."

"Never mind, I'm doing well, Sally."

While Tudor was taking his supper with the relish which a keen appetite gives, he received a visit from Emma. Seeing him at the cupboard, she said:

"Tudor, I thought your mother ordered you to take bread and milk."

"Madame Nancy Lynch, you mean," returned he. "Now, Emma, bread and milk, after I have been chasing about the fields all day, ain't staunch enough, so I thought I'd keep a little of this bread and meat from moulding. But what did daddy Shaw say, Emma?"

"He complained bitterly to father that you robbed his orchard and made Turk nearly kill his dog."

"Robbed his orchard! Didn't I just pick half a dozen apples from the ground—I never threw a stone at one of his trees; and when he wanted to make his dog bite me, hadn't I a right to turn the tables on him?"

"He ought not to refuse you fruit that is spoiling on the ground; but the apples belong to him, Tudor, and if he does not wish you to have them, you had better not go into his orchard. But he says if you will go to the house and ask for it, you shall have fruit whenever you want it. Father is very angry with you. Now, for my sake, ask Mr. Shaw's folks for fruit when you wish it again."

"I'll do it, Emma. I'll ask them, but I know it's all sham; however, I'm going over that way to-morrow, and I'll give 'em a chance to show their liberality."



On the morrow, Tudor was to meet some boys from the city, whose acquaintance he had accidentally formed, and early in the day he left home for the place of rendezvous. He passed Mr. Shaw's orchard with longing eyes, but honestly trudged his way to the farm-house, and after fighting with the dog a short time, gained access to the front porch. Meeting Madame Shaw, he politely asked her if he might pick up a few apples in the orchard. Stepping into the house, Madame returned in a moment and handed Tudor two apples. He thanked her with a rueful countenance, and wended his way back to the road, giving the orchard stolen glances, and saying to himself:

"Didn't I know it! Two apples! *two* apples—hard as bullets!" pressing one with his thumb. "It won't do. I wish Turk was here, I'd make him whip that Shaw dog for fun; but for fear of a scrape, I was fool enough to send him off in the fields. There, take that," hurling one of the bullet-apples at the farmer's dog, that had been following him, and sending him yelping to the house, then throwing the other at a fence, he exclaimed:

"I'll bet there's a dent in that board—but this won't do—it never will answer. I'm going to have some *good* apples out of old Shaw's orchard."

In five minuets, Tudor was beneath a favorite tree employing his time to an excellent advantage. He had crammed his pockets and spread his handkerchief out on the ground to fill that for the boys he expected to meet, when the farmer's dog, cheered on by his mistress, bounded into the orchard and ran barking toward him. He piled the fruit into his handkerchief till the dog was within a few feet of him, then hastily gathering it up, beat a retreat, whistling for Turk and keeping the cur that assailed him at bay by pelting him with apples, from his pockets. Turk was too far distant to hear his master's summons, and the farmer's dog chased Tudor until he had crossed the orchard, and jumped into an enclosure opposite the place where he had entered. Here a foe met him, he had not anticipated.

Farmer Shaw had one of those animals of which Scripture speaks as belonging to Bashan. To keep him from depredating on grain fields and pastures, he had been penned in this enclosure. It was a large and furious animal.

When Tudor sprang into the enclosure, its large round eye was rolled toward him; catching sight of the flaming red handkerchief in his hand, the creature uttered a sonorous bellow and began to paw the ground and "throw up dirt" vigorously.

Tudor saw his danger and started on a keen run for the opposite side of the field, where he observed a log upon which he could spring, and thence leap the high fence easily.

The infuriated animal was some distance from him, and though he could not run swiftly, he thought he could reach the goal before it overtook him, if it was inclined to give him a chase.

His conclusions were hastily drawn. He made rapid progress, but had not gone twenty yards before the animal came bellowing after him, and gaining upon him every moment. His danger was imminent. If the animal reached him he would be gored or tramped to death. As he ran, he hallooed most lustily: "Turk! Turk!"

No Turk came. He was not half way to the fence—the animal would be upon him before he could reach it—every nerve was strained, but he could make no swifter speed.

He thought of home, of Emma, and of Clarence—all his little acts of petulance—all his tricks upon the servants and upon his step-mother—all his disobediences glowed on his memory, in the hot excitement of the moment, as the lines traced in chemical ink appear on the blank sheet when fire is radiated upon it—he thought of Farmer Shaw and his orchard, and began to feel that if he were gored or trampled, his punishment might be just.

At the bottom of the lot was a small stream which had a marshy margin. It was nearer than the fence. The thought struck him to rush for it. He turned, when he saw that the animal would overtake him before he could run more than half a dozen rods. It was the impulse of desperation. The boy whirled suddenly about facing his approaching foe, and stood stock still—on came the powerful animal, with his nose snuffing the ground—the boy sees plainly the glare of his eye-balls and can look into his dilated nostrils—still undaunted he stands—it would appear as if no power, but one that could lift him from the earth, might save the brave lad—he can almost strike the sharp horns of the infuriate beast—with a movement of electric rapidity he springs to one side—past where he had been dashes the animal, almost thrown to the ground in missing the aim it had intended for destruction—Tudor is unharmed.

Now the boy makes for the marsh. The animal recovers, and in the height of his fury, rushes after him—his tread almost makes the earth tremble, but the brave and skillful boy has calculated well—he sets foot on the margin of the marsh—the sod bears him—he speeds over it—his terrible pursuer reaches the deceitful spot, and sinking belly-deep, flounders in the mire, just as Turk, the faithful dog, with a loud yelp, seizes him by his nostrils, from which the steam of passion puffs briskly. Tudor has gained the fence and sprung upon it—looking back he sees the animal shake his massive head and



hurl Turk forcibly to the ground—the dog recovers and is rushing again to the attack when Tudor cries:

"Get out, my good fellow. It ain't Shaw's *dog* you have to battle with."

When Turk and his master were safely plodding their way towards the woods in which Tudor had promised to meet his playmates, the boy called the dog to him and examined his head to see if he had any wounds, talking to him the while as if he were, indeed, a rational creature:

"It was a tight place, old fellow—rather tight, but I came the stratagem over the critter. Why didn't you come sooner, you rogue? If I knew you heard me yell, I'd give you a cuff or two."

The dog looked up into his master's face and wagged his tail as if he understood him, and Tudor knew it would be unfair to strike him.

Turk had heard his master's loud calls, but was unable to come to the rescue sooner, on account of his inability to get readily over the high fence of the enclosure.

When Tudor found his playmates they had a merry time together over the fruit he brought them, while he related his adventure. This finished, they chose sides and were soon industriously playing foot-ball. After the winning of several games on each side, one of the lads exclaimed:

"This is dry business. I move we take a rest."

"'Greed! 'Greed?" said half a dozen voices.

"Dry, did somebody say?" cried a wag of a boy; "I reckon it is, and we must have something to wet our whistles."

"I know what'll do," cried another. "Farmer Shaw's got a nice lot of melons, back of his corn-field. We must have one. I move we draw cuts to see who goes for it."

"It's plaguey near the house, boys, that melon-patch is. We'd best be careful," suggested Tudor.

"You can't be afraid of any thing, Tudor," answered the boy who made the proposition. "After having whipped Shaw's dog and beat his Thunderer at a fair fight. Shall we have the cuts?"

"Yes, yes," answered voices enough to carry the point, and Tudor dared offer no objections, hoping that he should not be the *lucky* fellow; but, most unfortunately, such was his fate, and the boys cried:

"You're in for it, Tude. Go it now, swift."

"I never stole a melon in my life."

"But you have lots of other things."

"Only fruit."

"That's what we mean. Now, don't be a chicken. You wouldn't be mean enough to back out—you're a brave boy,"

said the prime mover of the proposed forage, and Tudor was compelled to take up his march toward the melon-patch.

Several of his companions accompanied him a part of the way and awaited his return with the melon. It was not fifteen minutes before he "hove in sight" with a large and handsome one.

"A captain you are, Tude," cried one of the boys, when they saw him, and as they met him he threw the stolen fruit upon ground. The lad who had been most instrumental in getting the melon, said:

"Your knife, Tudor, and we'll see whether it's the right stripe inside."

Tudor felt in one pocket, then in another, but no knife was there.

"Confoundation," he cried. "I've lost it. Mr. Weldon gave it to me not a week ago—it had my name on. If Shaw finds it, I reckon there'll be times at our house. I cut off the melon with it, and it must be there. I'll go back."

Off he started at a swift pace. Several boys ran after him and caught him, and one said:

"It's about dinner-time, and Shaw's at home now. He'll get a sight of you. Wait till he goes out to work again, and we'll go with you."

Tudor consented, and the boys proposed to make a feast on the melon.

Tudor had not left Mr. Shaw's melon-patch more than five minutes before that gentleman entered it to pick out a melon for his men, after dinner. For several days he had been watching a fine one, and he thought it must be about ripe.

"Oh, ho!" he cried, as he neared the vines, there's been thievish boys here. What do I see? a knife! It's got a name on it—Tudor Lynch!—just like the little rascal. I'll catch him. I heard one of the men say he saw some boys up the creek. I know he's with them—I'll be after him.

Seated in the shade of a tree, the boys were enjoying their prize when Farmer Shaw approached them. He was within ten feet of the circle before he was noticed. Springing among them, he caught Tudor Lynch by his coat collar and cried:

"You're the lad. Now you'll pay for old grudges. I'll give you a rare strapping. You need'nt deny it. I found your knife."

"I ain't going to deny it; but you'd just better not put a strap on me," said Tudor resolutely.

"I had, eh!" said the farmer. "We'll see! we'll see!" and with these words he dragged the boy towards the house.

Turk flew at the farmer, but he was armed with a stout stick and fought him off. Tudor saw that the dog could do him

no good, and he ordered him to be quiet, then looking up at the farmer, he said :

"You needn't drag me, I'll go to your house."

"I'll take your word," returned the farmer, and he immediately released his hold of the boy and strided off rapidly. Tudor followed him on a trot.

Part of his compatriots had trudged homeward as fast as they well could, and part loitered to see what had become of him. One of these cried, as Tudor fell behind the farmer a few paces :

"Now scud, Tude, we'll help you."

"I won't do it," answered Tudor. "I gave the farmer my word—I'll follow him to the house."

"Hang the boy, I couldn't hurt him if I wanted to," said the farmer to himself, when he heard this remark. "I wish he would run. He might go."

When they reached the farm-house, Tudor was conducted upon a high porch and put in charge of the farmer's wife, the woman who had given him the bullet-apples. The farmer said harshly :

"Now, sir, you'll take it. I'll pay you for all your thieving. I have got a strap on the back porch. I'll bring it here and thrash you where the boys can see me."

The farmer hastened back through the house, and Tudor looked about him to see what were the chances of escape. He had fulfilled all his promises. Madame Shaw had hold of his arm, but in a moment he twisted himself from her grasp, jumped over the porch and ran across the garden toward the orchard. The farmer's dog gave chase, but the boys who were on the watch stoned him back, and cried :

"Go it! Go it, Tude!"

He reached the orchard fence before he heard any thing of the farmer, when his stentorian voice rang upon his ears :

"Stop, you young scamp—it will be twice as hard for you."

But the threat nerved the boy, and he sped on with wonderful speed for a short fellow. He passed all his favorite apple trees without daring to stop—he reached the fence dividing the orchard from the road—he sprang over it nimbly, thinking the farmer could not be more than half a dozen rods behind him, yet he ventured to glance back.

What was his surprise when he saw the farmer standing on his porch laughing most heartily! Tudor, in a moment, saw that he had been duped. He felt that the farmer had given him a chance to run to get rid of him.

"That's what I get, confound it, for being a coward. Now, don't I feel slick! I'd rather been thrashed half a dozen times. When Clarence hears this, won't he laugh at me!"

But that knife! I hate that! Farmer Shaw's got the start of me!"

Thus complaining of himself, Tudor hastened home without giving the boys, who had loitered to learn his fate, an opportunity to congratulate him on his escape.

Next morning he was at play with Turk on the lawn, when Emma appeared at the front door of the mansion and called him. He ran to meet her. She said to him mildly :

"You left your knife at Mr. Shaw's yesterday. He sent it over this morning, with his compliments."

Emma smiled as she spoke of the *compliments*, and Tudor knew that she had been made acquainted with his mortifying adventure.

"Don't mention it, Emma," he said. "That's my first melon-stealing scrape, and it will be the last. Shaw's ahead of me. I'll sign a quit claim on his orchard, and Turk and his dog shall be introduced peaceably, and I'll make them good friends hereafter."

In the afternoon, as Tudor was endeavoring to induce a nibble from an unlucky fish, at a favorite angling place on the creek, some one suddenly slapped him on the back. He whirled about, and Farmer Shaw stood near him, laughing heartily.

"Ah, ha! my young rogue," said he.

"A truce," cried Tudor. "I told Emma I'd sign a quit claim to your fruit, and your dog and Turk shall be friends."

"It's a bargain," returned the farmer; "but, my good fellow, we'll be friends too," slapping Tudor fondly on the shoulder. "I misunderstood you, and you didn't know me. Whenever you want apples or peaches, go to the orchard and help yourself; but keep away from that fellow who came near *spearing* you, and don't molest the melon-patch again without my leave."

"Enjoy it, farmer. It's all right," said Tudor. "I was a blamed fool, but you'll never give me another run."

"And I'll never say a word about it again. I consider that we are even."

"I'm obliged to you. One good turn deserves another."

"Any luck, boy?"

"Not a nibble."

"Good day. Come over and get some of those nice peaches on the tree near the house."

"With all my heart."

The farmer was out of hearing, but Tudor gave up fishing, and went and picked up a few of the "nice peaches," and from that day the mischievous boy and the rough farmer were the best of friends.

## CHAPTER XII.

## A COUNTER PLOT.

It is an up-hill business to rise in this world, either socially or politically, when a man depends upon nothing but honest exertion, let it be supported by ever so brilliant talent; and while ascending, if one important mis-step be made, and the aspirant, loosing his foothold, slips back, as with the chamois hunter on the Alpine height, destruction is inevitable.

Generally, men move to prosperity with the slow, measured step of the funeral *cortege* to the spot where fall the shadows of the cypress and the yew; but, to adversity they hasten as the processions go, helter skelter, when the hearse has been relieved of its burden.

When a man once becomes involved in crime, while he labors to conceal that crime, no matter how fervently he may repent in secret, in a majority of cases, his private history seems to declare that the Spirits of Evil have all combined to make him one of them.

We have seen the supple gymnast, whose life had been spent in exercises of the ring, till his muscles were susceptible of all manner of turnings and twistings, and accustomed to every known feat of agility, trip upon an object not half an inch from the earth, and fall full length to the ground.

Men of the most cautiously guarded passions and impulses, have been led into trivial errors; and thence plunged with headlong step, when the rein was once broken, to the depths of ignomy and crime.

Amid his schemes of philanthropy and benevolence, evils were thickening every day around the head of Griffin Lynch. He busied himself more earnestly in the furtherance of his building plans, but inclement weather began to set in, and he grew feebler every day. His family saw that his hair whitened, that his eye lost its lustre, and that his step was uncertain.

He was haunted with visions which brought deep grief—he had fears that weakened him—annoyances that kept him ever in unpleasant moods, and anxieties that rendered him childish whenever his children were the subject of his reflections.

Crafts was not so frequent a visitor at the Lynch mansion, as he had been, and when he did come, his visits were brief. He did not fancy Tudor Lynch much, and had no power of magnetism over Turk, and he felt that Griffin Lynch was not always pleased with his company. His fop-friend, his "man Friday," frequently visited the Lynch family when Crafts could spare

him. He paid his especial regards to Madame Lynch, in her pink finery, and when he escaped Tudor, he never had reason to be dissatisfied with his visits. He was really as fervent an admirer of good wine as he was of his own person.

When Crafts thought that Griffin Lynch was not anxious to see him often, he thought aright. Mr. Lynch could take pleasure in the close confidence of Clarence and Emma, when visions of Crafts did not intrude themselves. The young persons were as much as ever in the society of each other; but though the father saw it not, there were thoughts in the heart of each which chilled the free confidence that once existed between them.

Clarence knew that Emma had acquiesced in her father's wishes about marriage, and he saw the fop Bent's visits to the mansion with thoughts of the most unpleasant character; yet, while he wondered that the gentleman did not oftener address Emma, he threw out no hints and indulged no remarks. Crafts knew the intimacy of Clarence and Emma, and understood the feelings existing between them, but he had such faith in the young man that he was satisfied his peculiar advantages would never be dishonorably embraced.

It was a pleasant morning in the latter part of October, when Mr. Lynch called his coachman, John, and ordered him to harness up his light carriage and drive him a few miles.

The robin had gone to its home in the south, the squirrel had begun to draw from his winter store, the fruit trees and flower-beds were barren and desolate, and the sere leaves, eddied by the wind, fell into his carriage, as Mr. Lynch was driven away from his house.

"Shall I drive to the city, sir?" said the coachman.

"No! away from the city, anywhere," answered Mr. Lynch.

They rode in silence for several miles, when at length, as they entered a bleak woods, Mr. Lynch remarked:

"The landscape is as desolate as the heart of a man bowed down by grief."

"It is very drear, sir," answered John.

"You have not always been a coachman, John?"

"No, sir. I was always fond of horses; but I *have* seen better days."

"Are your parents living?"

"No, sir; they have been dead a number of years. They left me a large property—I became dissipated and spent it. I was reduced to beggary. I had neglected the opportunities of my youth—I knew of nothing I could do but the labor of a coachman. I applied to you, when I had about despaired, and you accepted me. I have had a pleasant home."

"I am glad you are pleased with it, John. I have observed you for some time. I shall do business in the city next spring, and I will give you a better situation."

"Thank you, sir; I shall be deeply indebted. Will Mr. Clarence be with you?"

"He will, John. You are a friend to Clarence?"

"He's a fine young man; but I don't like the young man who often rides out with Madame Lynch, nor ———, but I'm too bold, sir."

"Not at all, John. I like to hear you speak your mind. You would say that Crafts is not a man to be loved."

"He is not, sir. I think him a designing man."

"You are right, John. He designs to ruin me; but I mean to get the start of him. Would you like to aid me, John?"

"If I could do it properly, sir, I would be glad to aid you."

"I believe I can trust you, John. You may turn about and drive towards home, and I will explain to you how you can aid me."

They were then about three miles from home. John did as he had been ordered, and Mr. Lynch continued:

"Many years ago, Owen Crafts was guilty of a crime into which he partly dragged me. He has, by foul means, got papers into his possession which throws the guilt entirely on me, or enough to acquit him. He employs his power for extortion, and not for extortion of money only, but he aims to destroy my daughter. He declares that Emma shall be his wife. This is what has determined me. He must be got out of my way, peaceably or forcibly. You must aid me, John—and when he is gone, five thousand dollars shall be your reward!"

John looked at Mr. Lynch in astonishment. Five thousand dollars was a tempting bribe to a poor man! He was about to reply when a shrill whoop broke upon the air.

"What is that John?" cried Mr. Lynch; "there, there," pointing to one side of the road.

John looked as directed, and answered:

"It is an Indian woman, sir, who has friends buried at the Council Ground, near your house. She is supposed to be crazy."

"She could not have heard what I said, John! Her cry was near the carriage!"

"I think not, sir. She shuns people. She probably whooped when she saw us."

This calmed Mr. Lynch's fears of having been overheard, and looking sharply at John, he said:

"I have made known to you important secrets which were known only by Owen Crafts. You will not betray me—and

you will aid me; but you need not answer me to-day—let it be when you drive me to the city to-morrow. I have chosen you, John, because we can hold our conferences without suspicion, and because I know you are intelligent and trustworthy."

"At all events, I shall not betray you, sir. I would not harm Mr. Crafts, but I will think if there is not some way to get him out of the country," answered John, unwilling to commit a crime, but as unwilling to give up the prospect of a handsome fortune.

Mr. Lynch instructed John to drive rapidly, and without accident they were soon carried home.

John dwelt on the prospect of a fortune during the day, and conjured ten thousand ways of earning the money, but none were satisfactory to his conscience, and compatible with the safety of Mr. Lynch. Towards evening, when he had locked up the stables, he walked to the creek crossing Mr. Lynch's lands, and sat down on the bank. A hand was laid upon his shoulder. He jumped to his feet and turned around instantly, when the Indian woman stood before him with her finger on her lip. John thought this was a strange signal for a savage, and was not less surprised when the woman seated herself and motioned to him to follow her example.

"What the devil do you want?" he said, somewhat fearful that she had heard and understood what Mr. Lynch had told him in the carriage.

The woman arose to her feet walked towards him, and in a wild whisper said:

"You kill bad man? No? Squaw do it! He abuse squaw!"

John trembled at these words as if the squaw were about to murder him. There was a net falling around which he feared would one day be woven into a cord that might suspend him in mid-air.

"You scare—never fear—Squaw never tell—when Squaw kill him!" said the Indian woman, drawing from her bosom a handsome dagger, and unsheathing it.

John shuddered at the sight of the weapon, and the woman hid it beneath her blanket, saying:

"Speak me. When Squaw kill him?"

"Dare you? can you do it?" said John, nervously.

Then John began to come to his speech. The Indian woman sat down on the grass, and he sat down beside her. They held a long conference, and when John went home he saw clearly how Owen Crafts was to be prevented from harming Mr. Lynch, and how he would make five thousand dollars!

He might have rubbed his hands with glee at the prospect;

at all events, he went to bed that night with a light heart, lighter than men who contemplate murder generally have.

Was John a bad man? or did avarice overrule all the good principles that had previously kept him from crime? It may be that Mr. Lynch understood character better than Crafts.

On the morrow, when John drove Mr. Lynch to the city, he assured him that he had fully considered the matter, and was prepared, for five thousand dollars, to put Owen Crafts where he could not trouble him.

John said not a word of his conference with the Indian woman. There were secrets revealed in it, about which it would not answer for Mr. Lynch to know till his plans had been further developed.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### HEART REVELATIONS.

BANKS of pearl, golden-tipped and purple-barred, hung low on the sky as the god of day, resigning to the queen of night his empire in this hemisphere, bestowed a rich blessing upon his courtiers, the clouds, ere he assumed the sceptre and dispensed the beams of his favor over other lands, enshrouded in darkness.

Emma and Clarence had been taking a horse-back ride, and were on the high hills, distant from the river nearly three miles. They watched the "golden sun-set" with many apprehensions of pleasure, and when the grey twilight began to settle over the valleys, they turned to ride homeward. To the surprise of both, Tudor Lynch, accompanied by his dog and fowling piece, suddenly emerged from the woods on the side of the road, and cried:

"Look here, Emma, you said I couldn't shoot. Now see me pop that robin red-breast on that tree at the other side of the road. It's dusky, but I can fetch him."

"No, no, Tudor, don't shoot the little bird. I'll confess that you are a marksman," cried Emma.

"It won't do," answered Tudor.

"But you must not shoot," exclaimed Clarence. "It will alarm my horse and I may have trouble. He's a wild creature."

"Poh!" returned Tudor, that's a sham."

Before Weldon had time to gather his bridle rein tightly, bang went Tudor's gun—the affrighted red-breast flew off into the depths of the forest, and the horse Clarence rode started suddenly forward, broke into a gallop, and with a speed his rider could not control, dashed down the hill.

"He will be thrown," cried Emma, giving her horse whip and rein:

"Confound it, that's a bad job. I might have known *he* wouldn't have fooled me. Didn't hit the bird, at that! Goodness gracious, as my mother Nancy would say, here's a muss; but Mr. Weldon knows how to ride, and he'll fetch up the critter," soliloquized the reckless boy, as he ran rapidly down the road.

Emma had passed out of his sight, and even Turk had outstripped him. He confounded his luck a few times, and quickened his speed to the utmost of his power.

Meanwhile, the wild horse bore Weldon towards home at a break-neck-pace. The young man would not have been frightened had the animal kept the road, but he started and leaped to one side or the other at least every twenty rods, making it exceedingly difficult for the rider to retain his seat.

Clarence knew that about midway to the river, a ledge of rocks frowned over the road, at a point where it turned a sharp corner. He felt that if this spot were passed, he could manage his runaway steed. He had prepared himself for any start the animal might make—he was within a few rods of the rocks—the horse dashed up to the first point—he kept the track—the dangerous pass was more than half way safely gained, when, as if a cannon ball had swept off his strong legs, the running horse stopped stock still, and Weldon, unprepared for such a shock, was hurled violently to the ground.

The muscles of the steed quivered a moment in the tension given them, as he fell back on his haunches, then with increased fright he wheeled and, with the speed of a courser, he galloped back over the road along which he had borne the burden he had been so suddenly relieved of. He met and passed Emma like a flitting shadow. She gave her horse the whip freely, fearing the worst, and with beating heart looked anxiously for the spot at which Clarence had been unhorsed. She suspected that it had been at the ledge of rocks.

As Weldon's horse dashed near Tudor, he flourished his gun to stop him, and when he found the attempt useless, cried:

"Confound your trappings. I wish you were going the other way, and I was astride of you."

When Emma reached the rocks, she saw Clarence stretched upon the ground, and springing from the saddle, without stopping to secure her horse, she flew to assist him. She knelt by his side, and in plaintive tones said to the Indian woman who supported his head, and bathed his brow with cool water from a cup she held in her hand:

"How *did* it happen?"

"Me on hill—saw horse run—run myself—throw up blanket—horse stop—white man fall," replied the Indian.

"Is he much hurt?" said Emma.

"Not much, very," answered the Indian.

"No, no!" exclaimed Emma, "he knows me—he is only shocked, stunned," and as she uttered these words, with a gesture and in tones of gladness, her eyes filled with tears, and the joy pearls fell over Clarence's face and sparkled in his hair. He looked at the weeping girl, and tenderly murmured:

"Emma!" It was all he said, but he thought much.

"You must get home. It will soon be dark. Can you ride my horse?" said Emma.

"I fear not," replied Weldon. "Where is Tudor?"

"He must be coming," said Emma.

"Secure your horse," said Weldon, "and when he comes let him ride to the mansion for the carriage."

In a few minutes Tudor came in sight, and Emma went to meet him.

"Is he killed *dead*!" cried Tudor.

"Tudor!" said Emma reproachfully.

"Pshaw!" interposed the boy; "didn't I see him partly sitting up and know he was talking to you! And there is that yellow critter with the gewgaws. She wouldn't let him die."

"You should be thankful that she happened to be here," said Emma.

"Well, of course I *am*; but there's no sense in having a long face on when a fellow's thankful. I'm confounded glad 'taint no worse; it's bad enough pickle for me now, but I'm not going to look and talk as demure as a quaker, if it is."

"You must take my horse and go home as fast as you can and send John with the carriage," said Emma.

"What?" cried Tudor, "get astride of that saddle with horns, and expect to get home to-night with that *old nag* of yours! You've great faith, Emma, but I'll put the animal through."

In a few minutes Tudor was giving Emma's "old nag" the whip freely. As he rode, he said to himself:

"I ought to have congratulated Clarence that my old gun did not make that colt break his neck, but I had no time for apologies. I'll talk to him to-morrow, when he will be able to hear congratulations. I'll miss my guess, from the looks of things, or he and Emma will indulge *congratulations*! She looked mighty *doubtful* when she talked about galloping this critter home."

We need not describe the bustle at the Lynch mansion when Tudor rode up on Emma's horse and gave an account of the

accident in his peculiar way. John had the carriage at the front door in a few minutes. Mr. Lynch sprang into it, and evening, with "spectral figures," had scarcely drawn

"Her star-spread curtain round the head of earth."

before Mr. Weldon lay in a very comfortable condition on a lounge in one of the back parlors. Mr. Lynch was with him for half an hour, and then a gentleman, who had called on business, drew the merchant to his library, and Emma and Clarence were alone.

"I am not much hurt, Emma," said Clarence. "I am only a little bruised and jammed with the shock. I wish I could sit up."

"I think you had better remain quiet," returned Emma.

"But I should rest if I were up."

"I will assist you, then," answered Emma.

Weldon was soon bolstered, with his feet towards the fire, in a large rocking chair. Emma sat near him, with a book.

"You do not read," said Clarence.

"No; I have too much to think of."

"Emma, I am glad I was hurt to-day. I have much to think of that cheers and yet it pains me."

Emma cast her eyes into her book and made no reply. Clarence continued:

"We have been, Emma, as brother and sister, but we must guard ourselves, or I fear we will not long be such."

Emma cast a look at Clarence in surprise, but when their glances met she understood him, and she gazed into the fire.

"I will be plain, Emma. We can confide in each other. How I felt hopes blasted at their birth to-day, as your tears fell upon me, when I lay at the road-side; and then, as sad thoughts chased the cheerful ones away, how deeply I felt that our relations are most unfortunate."

"Unfortunate! Clarence," said Emma, as if she did not comprehend him.

"Yes unfortunate—most unfortunate. I have learned to-day, Emma, that you have feelings for me much different from those you entertain towards Tudor, or would towards any brother. That I love you—yes, love you, Emma, you must have observed—you must have felt long since—our hopes are vain! Are not our relations, then, unfortunate?"

"I know not what to say, Clarence—I have nothing to conceal—you have read my heart. I read yours long ago, and prayed that you would read it to me; yet I dreaded the time when you should do so. But is there no hope—never?"

"You have given your promise, Emma."

"It was to save my father—from what? I know not."

"It is given—it is binding! What am I? Given a place in this family as your teacher, I would be the basest of men to betray confidence and lead you to disobey your father's commands, especially as you have given him your promise to obey him."

"It was your advice."

"And I would not take back that advice. I shall live in this world as if I were its sole occupant; but I would not take back that advice."

"How can you speak so calmly, Clarence? If father were here, I could tell him I shall die before he can give me to purchase rest for himself from the wicked man who threatens him."

"And that man is?"

"I dare not tell you, Clarence; but do you not know?—you must know!"

"Give me your hand, Emma." The fair hand was promptly laid within that of her lover-friend. "We must be, Emma, *only* as brother and sister. We must not think of what has been said; but if we can, and it will console us, we *may* hope."

Emma leaned forward—Clarence stooped and kissed her on the forehead—it was the first kiss!

"Hark! your father comes," said Clarence.

Emma brushed the tears from her eyes and cheeks. Clarence threw himself back in his chair, and Mr. Lynch entered the room, saying:

"Ah, up, eh! Must be better. Mr. Crafts has been with me in the library; will you see him?"

"Certainly," answered Clarence.

A servant was called to conduct Mr. Crafts to the parlor. Emma cast a speaking glance at Clarence and retired.

Mr. Crafts met her in the hall with a look of triumph and passion, such as often sat on his countenance when he thought of his plans and his power over Lynch. Emma bowed, but did not cast her eyes towards him, and had no knowledge of his dark reflections.

Clarence received Crafts cordially, and a common place conversation ensued on the adventure of the afternoon, Crafts, the while, watching Weldon intently, as if he meant to read in his countenance whether he knew aught of the schemes plotting around Lynch.

On the following morning Clarence was able to walk out on the porch. Tudor saw him, and running up with mock humility, took off his hat and made a low bow.

"I gave that gun a good pounding for frightening your horse. It won't do so again."

"It was a naughty gun," said Clarence, smiling.

"Indeed it was," replied Tudor. But how is your health this morning?"

"Much improved over what it was half an hour after you hit that robin."

"Don't mention it, don't! but mind, it was dark—dusky, at least."

"Has Emma praised your marksmanship?"

"I say, don't mention it! Here the girl comes. I'm off."

Clarence pointed towards Tudor as he ran across the lawn, and Emma approached smiling. Weldon took her hand, and pressing it warmly, said:

"I feel that I shall be able to ride out again in a day or two. I should like to see that Indian woman."

"It is a little strange that she stays about here, and we meet her so often."

"There is no accounting for the appearances or disappearances of these people."

"I have my suspicions."

"Of what, Emma?"

"That she's no Indian."

"For what cause?"

"I have come to take you to breakfast now; I'll explain another time."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CHRISTMAS TIME.

THOSE days most memorable as holidays to the farmer and country-towns' people were fast approaching. Young persons were looking forward to the pleasure of story-telling, nut-cracking, and cider-drinking, before a blazing fire on a chilly night; and elderly folks were thinking that, at the family Christmas-dinner, they should meet the friends from whom they had been separated for a year, and with whom, perhaps, they should not spend another merry time on earth.

Madame Lynch determined that she would have a Christmas party—such a party as would establish her consequence with the people among whom her lot was cast. Mr. Lynch remonstrated, but she was inexorable, and preparations for the holiday demonstrations were commenced.

All things were in readiness on Christmas eve; and for the time and place, the company was large and brilliant. The party



had about it more city "pomp and circumstance" than any one that had yet been held in the vicinity, and Madame Lynch felt herself making a wonderful impression. Her personal appearance was a model for those elderly persons, who, by attempts to render themselves youthful looking, simply succeed in presenting a figure laughably unique. Emma was chagrined deeply at Madame's extravagance and impropriety, and Mr. Lynch's good taste was so offended, that, in his mortification, he feigned illness, and, moody and disconsolate, retired from the company. But Mr. Crafts' friend, Bent, was where he ever most ardently wished to be—where the ladies showed him attention, and there was plenty of excellent wine. He was the particular admirer and gallant of Madame Lynch, and in his parti-colored clothes, with his body at an angle of about thirty degrees, he shuffled among the company to his own evident satisfaction, but to the manifest disgust of all the sensible ones assembled.

He was one of those unfortunate persons who would be attentive, but have not the knack of being easy, and whose politeness appears only officious interference in other people's affairs. In his endeavors to wait upon the ladies, he was ever treading on some one's dress, running against some gentleman, or spilling somebody's wine upon himself or nearest neighbor. While thus manœvering, he ran against Tudor Lynch, who exclaimed:

"Look out, Mr. Frenchman!"

"Ah! my dear boy, excuse me—accidental," said Bent.

"Oh, ho!" cried Tudor, "you have come to your senses again. You talk English now as well as you did when Turk was after you."

Though impolite, several of the ladies could not restrain a smile, which, the exquisite seeing, made him look as foolish as he was, and in his discomfiture, endeavoring to beat a retreat, he afforded Tudor much amusement, who, as the fop wheeled away, said to Clarence, who stood near by:

"That fellow's as crooked under a weight of nonsense as a timothy stalk with a heavy head."

Clarence, to divert the boy from his sport-making, took him by the hand and was leading him to another part of the room, when he mischievously cried:

"When you take a glass of wine with me, then I'll go with you, Mr. Clarence."

"But you know I never take spirits of any kind," returned Clarence, gently.

"This is Christmas," said Tudor, as he endeavored to pull Clarence towards the table on which wine had been placed.

"You would not think it right to strike your sister because it is a holiday, would you!" said Clarence, knowing how to touch the boy's feelings.

"Why, Mr. Weldon?" said Tudor, not appearing to comprehend.

"Because," answered Clarence, it would be as much a departure from principle for me to take wine as for you to strike Emma, and no occasion could justify it."

"I'll give you up, if you will me," cried Tudor, and wringing his hand from Clarence, he hastened across the room where his sister was sitting in conversation with Owen Crafts, and whispered in her ear, loud enough for her suitor to hear distinctly:

"You might find better company, I think."

Clarence, who was watching him, knew by the wicked expression on Crafts' face, and Emma's blushes, that Tudor had again been in mischief, and he followed him in time to catch him at one of the doors.

"Where now?" said Clarence, as he put his hand on the boy's head.

"It's mighty lonesome here without Turk, and I've got a pocket full of cakes and candies to give him in his kennel," answered Tudor, and the next moment the boy was heard running through the hall.

Mr. Crafts took much pleasure in Mr. Lynch's annoyance at his wife's foolish pride and vanity, and he sought opportunities to make himself agreeable to Emma; but by some means, she managed on every occasion to be engaged for a promenade with Clarence or one of the other young men of the company.

Clarence was one of the party, but not one among the company. He had no tact for the light chit-chat of beaux and belles, and he found few ladies, besides Emma, with whom any thing but frivolous gossip was an agreeable theme for conversation. He was only one of the party because it was held in the house of his friend—the house which was his home.

Madame Lynch made several attempts, out of intended politeness, to engage him in her train; but he looked at her favored courtier, and had no difficulty in excusing himself.

It is to be regretted that most fashionable parties, like this one under the management of Madame Lynch, are, in our day, of no account except to the young lady and gentleman who may be "fortune hunting," or for whom an hour's "flirting," with "vain speculations" on the latest style of gloves, the bonnets or hats—the last concert in French, or the Italian opera, or the most recent "work of fiction," have decided attractions.

There were no such topics at Madame Lynch's party

amusements of this character not then having many patrons west of New York city; but there were others equally spiritless to the mind that would be stimulated by thought.

While Madame Lynch was moving among her company with as much pride and consequence as ever a young officer reviewed his troops in new uniform, a message came to her that called her mind away from pomp and splendor to poverty and squalor—by no means a pleasant change. The Indian woman had begged alms at the door, and Madame was called out to be consulted upon what should be given.

"Let her sit by the kitchen fire," said she, "and give her any thing she will eat."

But Tudor, ever curious, had heard the message to Madame, and listened to her reply, and he said to himself:

"She would make a capital contrast to Mr. Crafts' fop. I'll have her in the parlor."

Away he hastened, and when the Indian woman had become cheerful, as she sat by the kitchen fire, he said to her:

"Come with me, and I'll show you a sight you never saw in the woods."

The woman arose and followed him. He led the way to the parlor, and opening the door ushered the child of the forest into the gay assemblage. As if startled by the novel sight, and blinded by the flashing lights, the Indian woman stood on the threshold, as it were, bewildered. The company looked in astonishment on the strange guest, but not a word of encouragement or rebuff was spoken till Owen Crafts, standing near the door, cried in a harsh voice:

"Begone! this is no place for savages," making a significant gesture.

The door closed forcibly, and the Indian woman was gone. In a few minutes she was tracking through the snow, across the fields, towards the woods, where she had declared the bones of those she loved, were mouldering. There was a terrible expression on her countenance, and her hand was frequently cast against her breast, where she kept the dagger concealed which she had shown to John, the coachman. She felt that she had been insulted, and her manner declared that she vowed revenge.

"Clarence, who stood near Crafts, said, as the Indian woman disappeared:

"You have been unkind."

"Pshaw!" returned Crafts, "savages have no feelings; and what business had she here!"

"She was not to blame," remonstrated Clarence; "it was a trick of Tudor's."

"Like the young devil," answered Crafts spitefully. "They should go together," and, not in a mood for further discourse, Mr. Crafts departed to a distant part of the room, leaving Clarence in wonder at what, to him, was then the strange conduct of the gentleman. He did not yet know Owen Crafts—he had yet seen but one phase of his character.

But Mr. Owen Crafts was to find out that *savages*, as he called the Indian woman, *have feelings*.

The Christmas party broke up, and Madame Lynch retired to her room, disrobed herself of her pink attractions, and went to rest in a high degree of satisfaction at the impression she had made upon the assembly by her splendid party arrangements, her costly dress, and attentive and *polite* manners.

Mr. Owen Crafts remained at the house of Mr. Lynch until the afternoon of the day following the party. A light snow had recently fallen, and being somewhat of a sportsman, Mr. Crafts took a gun and went out to see if he could not find a quail or a rabbit to try his skill as a marksman upon. He entered the woods near the Indian Council Ground, and walked some distance without finding any game. After rambling a considerable length of time, with no better success than the frightening of a rabbit, which found its burrow before he got a shot at it, Mr. Crafts fell into a reverie. He occasionally passed his hand across his face—once and awhile, as he walked along, he stamped upon the ground a little harder than was necessary to knock the snow from his boots—then he stopped a second—then he began to murmur to himself. As he walked thus and talked, stealthily fell another step after his, the person bending forward to catch every syllable uttered by the sportsman. On he traveled, talking less cautiously, his gun slung across his shoulder, heedless of forest game, intent only on the prospect his words presented before his mind; and after him followed the person, intent only on hearing every word of the soliloquy, and far behind them, much amused at the novel chase, followed Tudor Lynch, with Turk at his side, watching him to keep him from making a noise. He had come out to chase rabbits, but had given up that sport to chase Mr. Crafts and his pursuer.

Now Mr. Crafts stopped, took his gun from his shoulder, and setting the butt into the snow, leaned on the barrel. An expression of satisfaction played over his countenance.

"Owen Crafts," he said, "you have done well—but for certain recollections you would be a man of peace, a man of wealth—but no one knows but Griffin Lynch—he can't last long—he *shan't!*"

A hand grasped firm hold of Mr. Crafts' arm. He sprang

forward several steps, turned about in the utmost alarm, and the Indian woman confronted him.

"Witch!" he cried, "you have crossed my track once too often!"

Furiously, with the butt of his gun, he aimed a blow at her head. With a quick movement she partly broke its force by throwing up her arm, but stunned by the shock, she reeled and fell to the ground. With the fury of a demon, Crafts sprang toward her, and grasping her throat with his muscular hand, he would have strangled her, had not, at the instant, a deep, half-stifled growl startled him, and looking up, he saw Turk bounding toward him. It was but the work of an instant to draw his gun and fire upon the dog; but his hand was tremulous, he was in too great haste, and Turk was only slightly wounded. He was a powerful dog, and infuriated with the smart of his shot-wounds, he sprang upon Crafts with a power which, strong man as he was, he could not withstand. He struck at the dog with his gun, but so carelessly that the weapon flew from his hand, and in an instant the dog fastened his teeth upon the garments about Mr. Crafts' neck, and he was borne to the ground.

Another actor now came upon the field of battle.

"Get out, Turk! get out!" he cried. "That's too mean a fellow for you to bite. He struck a woman!"

Tudor Lynch forced his dog away from Crafts and allowed him to regain his feet. He was in a rage sufficient to have led him to the murder of Tudor, but he feared him, supported as he was by Turk, and with many violent curses upon his head, he slunk away.

"Go along!" cried Tudor; get out, you shirk! Strike a woman with a gun, will you? If you wasn't so mean, I'd make Turk eat you; but don't you never come to our house again. I'll set Turk on you every time I see you, and I'll tell every body how you struck a woman!"

Then picking up the gun which Crafts had left, Tudor looked to see what had become of the Indian woman. She was nowhere to be seen. She had not been seriously hurt, and while Crafts struggled with the dog, she had fled into the forest.

As the boy, looking after Crafts, then caught a glimpse of him disappearing in a hasty walk among the bushes, he cried at the top of his lungs:

"Owen Crafts, a mighty good name—Crafts—if you ain't up to all sorts of craft I don't know who is. Owen—that's it—if you don't owe any body any thing every body owes you; but it ain't good will they're in debt to you for, Turk knows." Then starting toward home, he continued: "I wonder what that

Indian woman sneaked after him for—she had a cause—may be he was telling on himself. If it was, it'll come out—she'll tell Clarence. I don't believe father knows the fellow, or he wouldn't have him about here. He looks to me as if there was an imp in him as big as you, Turk; but its not a match for you, is it, old fellow?"

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE CATASTROPHE.

A FEW evenings after the Christmas party, Clarence and Emma were engaged at a game of draughts, before a blazing fire, when Tudor, who had been deeply interested in a story-book that related wonderful feats of horses and cunning tricks by dogs, suddenly cried:

"Here's a waste of firewood. Its plaguety hot, I think; its been warm all day—the snow has been melting, and I believe its going to rain. What is the use of having so big a fire?"

Clarence and Emma were too closely intent on their game to heed him, and he waited for some minutes for a reply, when he interrupted them by crying:

"Emma, look here, and Mr. Clarence. Do you know what that female in the skins and blanket said to our folks in the kitchen on Christmas night?"

"No matter, Tudor. You should not interrupt us now," replied Emma.

"But it is matter," returned the boy, "and you will think so, if it comes true."

"Pray, what is it, Tudor?" said Clarence, knowing the boy would not be still until he had explained himself.

"Nothing, only the days' of Noah are coming back!" replied Tudor.

"But what did the Indian woman say?" said Emma, somewhat petulantly, for the game was going in her favor and she did not wish to lose her advantage.

"Ah! you want to know now, do you, since Mr. Clarence took an interest in it? Well, I'll tell you. She says her people—whoever they may be—know by the beaver-dams, and other signs, that there will be a great flood on all the western waters this year."

"What if there will?" said Clarence.

"Perhaps you don't know that if there is a big flood, this

little fabric of a house may get a wetting. Here's the creek on one side and the river on the other."

"But, Tudor," interrupted Clarence, "Mr. Shaw says the highest water that has ever been known here has not come within many feet of the house; and it is a firm house, and if the water did come up to the second story, there would be no great danger."

"It wouldn't be very comfortable. I like baths in warm weather, but I wouldn't fancy one in January, in my chamber."

"It is only a whim, Tudor," said Emma. "The Indian woman can't know whether there's to be a flood or not. I thought you were not superstitious."

"Well, I ain't. I don't see any sense in her story any how; but its got mighty warm here, and made me think of a thaw, and I noticed that you and Clarence were very much engaged, and I just thought that I would wake you up a moment. Now you can proceed."

"You naughty boy," said Emma, chidingly, "I'll remember you."

"Really, I hope you'll have no cause to forget me *soon*—but I am reading now, don't disturb me!"

The mischievous boy was quiet for half an hour, and the game of draughts was concluded, Emma coming off victor.

Whether Indians can foretell storms or floods from the movements of the animals that range the forests in which they hunt, it is not our purpose here to discuss, but certain it is, that a few days after Tudor Lynch announced the Indian woman's prediction, there were unmistakable signs of a freshet.

The chill air of December was softened by southern winds, and the first week of January brought weather which caused the snow to melt from the hills, and run through the valleys into the creeks and rivers. Heavy rains sat in, and the streams were swollen bank-full. The river flowing past Lynch mansion, began to spread over the fields along its shores, and the creek that crossed Mr. Lynch's lands, grew from a quiet stream to a torrent, and rising over its banks, carried drift-wood upon the lawn and into his gardens. Cottages and cabins along its banks were submerged, and small farm-houses were half-filled with sand and water.

Many families were driven in haste from their homes, and several of them found refuge with the Lynch family. It was thought that this house was secure from the highest flood that could come, unless the windows of heaven should be again opened for forty days and forty nights.

Clarence and Tudor, with Mr. Lynch's working men, did

good service in saving property from destruction, and in conveying houseless women and children to Oakshaw. It was the refuge of eight or ten men, and about twice as many women and children.

The water had not come within fifteen or twenty feet of the house and every body thought it must soon be at a stand, but still it continued to rain, and still the flood increased.

The women began to express alarm even in this firm and substantial house, but Mr. Lynch said:

"There can be no danger. If the floors of the second story should be covered, there can be no danger. Such a flood could not shake the house, standing, as it does, on a solid foundation."

The next day the rain slackened, but still the river rose. The greater portion of the Oakshaw farm was covered—the eye stretched over a sea almost, looking from the mansion—still its inmates felt themselves in comparative security.

The tenth morning of the flood, when the waters had not yet been stayed, Clarence and Emma sat at an upper window. He looked over the waste, and said:

"I must not sit here idly while property is being destroyed about me, and perhaps lives are being lost."

He took leave of Emma, and, against her remonstrances, went off to join a party of men who were going in batteaux and canoes to assist persons towards the city, whose houses might be overflowed.

Emma waited for his return with much anxiety; but night came on, and nothing had been heard from him. She called Tudor and instructed him to make inquiries among the men who had come to the mansion during the afternoon. The boy was diligent, but his mission was unsuccessful. Emma now became alarmed, and sent a request to some of the men that they would take a boat and push towards the city and seek the missing man. The water had risen so rapidly that boats could be rowed into the hall of the house, and all the floors of the first story were covered several feet deep. The oldest settlers had never seen the water so high. The city below was almost submerged—boats were moored at the second story of houses far back from the natural current of the river, and a majority of the citizens had been required to take refuge in the dwellings, churches, and other public buildings, situated upon the side of a hill, over which the young city, in its rapid growth, was spreading. Great was the destruction of property. Public meetings had been held for the relief of sufferers, and the authorities had appropriated large sums of money to purchase clothing and food for those who had been driven from squalid cabins on the banks of the river.

The men despatched in quest of Clarence returned in less than an hour. Emma was on the lookout for them and met them as they entered the mansion.

"Have you found him? Did you hear from him?" she eagerly inquired.

"Sorry to say we did not," answered one of the men.

"Why are you here again so soon?"

"The current is so strong, and the drift wood so thick, we dare not think of going to the city with the hope of getting back before the water subsides. Don't be alarmed, Miss. He is probably at the city and can't get back for the very reason that we couldn't, if we had gone down there."

This was poor comfort for Emma. She returned to her room fearful that she had seen Clarence Weldon for the last time.

Every hour the flood was increasing, the alarm for the safety of Clarence became general among the people assembled at Oakshaw, until the waters encroached so rapidly upon their place of safety that fears began to be expressed that the dwelling could not withstand the flood; then the anxiety for the young man was forgotten by all, except Emma and Tudor, in the thought of self-safety. Madame Lynch went well nigh into hysterics, and flew from one part of the house to another in a state of most annoying, nervous excitement. Mr. Lynch gave no heed to her complaints or foolish plans for escape, but seemed calmly to await his fate, whatever it might be. Emma had forgotten that Owen Crafts lived, and was disconsolate at what she conceived must have been the fate of Clarence—death by drowning. Tudor was with her, endeavoring, in his rude but kind-hearted way, to comfort her.

Toward midnight, Tudor had gone to inquire about the state of the water and learn what were the opinions of the men in relation to the security of the house, when the door of Emma's room was opened and the Indian woman entered.

She had, unperceived, approached the back part of the house, found her way to the second floor and gained Emma's room.

The young girl was astonished thus to meet the woman of the forest, and, for several minutes, did not speak, when the woman said:

"Young man!" pointing as she spoke down towards the river.

"Where?" cried Emma, rushing toward the Indian with her hands clasped.

"You go to him?" said the Indian.

"Does he live?" cried Emma.

"He no can come; but you go to him?" answered the woman.

"I will," said Emma, and upon an impulse which sober reflection would not have suffered to actuate her, she threw a heavy cloak around her shoulders and followed the Indian.

When Tudor returned, she was not in her room. He looked for her anxiously through the house and then ran in quest of his father, crying:

"Emma's gone! Emma's gone! She must be drowned!"

The alarm spread, and all the people of the house sought her, but she was no where to be found. Mr. Lynch looked out upon the water and felt that beneath its waves his daughter had buried herself, and he would have cast himself into the flood had he not been restrained. He stared about him like a man endeavoring to keep sight of a phantom that flits before him—walked back and forth from Emma's room to his own several times, then threw himself into a chair, and with his eyes fixed on vacancy, the expression of his face was as if thought had fled from its throne. Tudor and Madame Lynch endeavored, with all the means in their power, to arouse him, but he did not reward their efforts even so much as with a look of recognition.

The day began to dawn, and still Griffin Lynch sat in a stupor. Tudor rushed into his room and cried:

"Father! father! we shall all be drowned—the drift wood, lodged against the corner of the house, is tearing it away, and John, the coachman, has taken some of the women off in a boat. Come, father, come."

The father heard not, and the boy ran away in fright for aid, when Madame Lynch, with a number of her most admired dresses upon her arm, and a box of jewelry in her hand, sought Mr. Lynch and exclaimed:

"Griffin, Griffin, we are all lost. Come Griffin, come."

She saw that he did not hear her, and she sprang toward the door with the instinct of self-preservation. At that moment the building trembled. Griffin Lynch started to his feet—he looked like a madman—his features were distorted and his eye-balls appeared to roll outward from their sockets.

"Ha! ha!" he cried, "you would fly—you would leave me! No, no! you have shared my *fortune*, you *shall* share my *fate*! Come back!"

He clutched the trembling woman as he yelled out these words and dragged her back into the library.

Again the building trembled!

"Ha! ha! let it come now! We die together! Here's the fate of ambition. Oh! I am mad—I know it—I *know* it—my brain whirls—why don't the building fall? It's fixed—Owen Crafts lives—John, the coachman, lives—vengeance—avarice—

avarice—I'm a victim—Madame Lynch, Nancy, my house-keeper, she's another—she has the secret. My children—but Weldon lives—he is not here!"

Screaming out these broken sentences, Griffin Lynch held his wife, and as some terrible recollection seemed to rock his mind, he shook her forcibly. She struggled with all her power to release herself, but her struggles caused him to tighten his grasp, and again he yelled:

"My God; the fires of remorse consume me! water! water! Peace with God! Retribution! Restitution!"

"Let me go, Griffin, cried Madame Lynch; but again he shook her violently, and the jewels she held in her hand fell to the floor.

"Vanity, avarice," he exclaimed, as he saw the glittering gems on the carpet. "Ha! ha! I had not torture enough! you must harass me—steal my secrets—now you'll pay for it! You shall die—yes, die—jewels can't purchase life nor happiness—they are a curse—see them glitter before you die!"

He threw the woman from him with force, and clenched his fists and swung them in front of her. She thought that it was his intention to murder her. She was too weak from fright to flee, but she cried, with all possible energy:

"Help, help! I shall be killed!"

Tudor and Farmer Shaw rushed to her assistance. Griffin Lynch had thrown her on the floor, and stood with his foot upon her breast, grinding his teeth and tearing his hair. The boy and man were both appalled. Lynch turned toward them and stared fiercely. He clenched his hands together, compressed his teeth tightly, and muttered:

"I am rich. I have thousands, and I am mad! Goaded to crime by avarice, after years of torture, my brain whirls—what is wealth? the heaviest of curses, unless it belongs to an honest man! No, not so. If a man has wealth he has everything—everything?—yes, all but peace of mind—but he can buy honor! and I am rich—I have tried to expiate error—crime—by deeds of mercy without repentance—what a fool I was! mad all the time. Ha! ha! now I have it—I'll buy honor in the strife to get above my neighbor! I'll drown conscience—that is it! now I am no longer mad! What is that I see! An old man dying slowly—it will make me rich—let him die. Owen Crafts; let him die! we'll be gone!"

Griffin Lynch was evidently a maniac. A boat was ready to convey him from the house,—the man would have led him to it, but he dare not touch him, and he turned to flee, when Tudor caught him.

"You shall not go," he exclaimed.

"Come with me," cried the man; "they'll all be lost. Again the building shakes."

"Trembles! it does," screamed Lynch, catching the word. "Trembles! yes, it shakes again. I dare the devils now! hear the water! Its over—hell yawns!"

The madman fell to the floor—the building shook to its foundation—instinctively the farmer and Tudor rushed from the library.

"Which way will it fall?" cried Tudor.

"Over the kitchen, I think," said the man.

"Can we not make an effort to save father and mother?"

"My wife and children are at the hall door. Come on, boy; you're mad."

"I must go back. I hear cries and groans for help."

"You shall not," said the man, and he grasped the boy and bore him forward.

"Haste," he exclaimed, "we may reach the hall and push off the boat."

"You must let me go. I can't move another step," cried Tudor.

The boy sank to the floor. The man could not drag him, and he gave him up. Instantly he fled back toward the library. On rushed the farmer. He bounded, in a few seconds, into the hall leading to a balcony on which the people had assembled. He screamed:

"Load the boat—push off—there's not a moment to spare."

"Away! begone!" said a voice behind him, half in the accents of despair and half in a tone of command.

The farmer glanced back and saw that Griffin Lynch, dragging his wife, with Tudor clinging to him, had made his way into the hall.

"Off!" shrieked the madman; "tear away this boy. The devils are not ready for him. It is Griffin and Nancy Lynch they want, and Owen Crafts. Tear him off. Away! begone!"

He threw the lad from him; the farmer could not resist the impulse to assist him—he clutched Tudor and in a second appeared on the balcony. He had not calculated well—the current had torn away part of the pillars that had supported it. There came another shock. An appalling shriek went up from the women and children; but, above all, rose a scream of terror from Madame Lynch. Tudor saw that his father had again thrown her to the floor and stood over her with his hands raised to heaven as if imploring destruction, and heard him cry:

"Oh God! this agony! the torments of hell on earth! Come on death! welcome! welcome!"

The boy would have rushed from the balcony toward his



father, but one of the men grasped him and hurled him into the flood. As he plunged into the water, several yards from the house, he saw his dog, Turk, leap after him, and thought he could see the people spring into the boat. Then a large wave struck him, and he was carried far into the stream.

Before that wave rolled, there was a crash—a demoniac yell of mad joy broke over the water—cries of terror and screams for aid rent the air. It all fell confused, and with a fearful shock, upon the ears of the half-drowning boy—a terrible conviction shot through his brain—for several minutes he was unconscious. When consciousness returned, he found himself grasping a log which was floating in an eddy that bore it toward the shore, and he heard a voice near him say:

"Its over—they're all gone."

He glanced about him and he perceived that the farmer who had thrown him into the water was with him. He looked toward Oakshaw, and he knew that the mansion had fallen, and that Griffin Lynch and Nancy had been drowned. Floating timbers and broken ripples showed only where the aristocratic tenements of Oakshaw property had been.

Tudor, believing himself friendless in the world, would have given up in despair and fallen another victim to the flood, but the strong arm of the farmer sustained him, and they floated on toward the fields over which the water had not spread—then a counter current struck them, and again they were borne far from the land, where the downward current shot with arrowy speed. The farmer had little hopes that they would be rescued, but he clung firmly to the log that bore them, determined to sustain the boy as long as he had strength to keep himself above water.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### RETRIBUTION.

WHEN the Indian woman led Emma from her room it had ceased to rain, and the clouds were breaking away. Occasionally the light of a full round moon fell upon the ripples of the rising waves, but Emma saw, as she stood ready to follow the Indian into a canoe, nothing but a waste of waters.

The young girl drew her cloak around her, and the two women floated down the broad stream. The Indian managed their frail bark with skill, and Emma, thinking only that she would soon meet Clarence, had no fear of the element that

surged and eddied about her, although she was little accustomed to excursions on the water. She endeavored to engage the Indian in conversation by asking her questions about Clarence, but the only reply she could obtain was "ugh," and her suspense became most painful.

In an hour after leaving the Lynch mansion, they were floating between the houses along one of the lower streets of the city; then the Indian rowed toward the hill, a few rods from the foot of which the flood was stayed, and fastening the canoe at the corner of a house, she assisted Emma to land, and conducted her to a dwelling about two squares distant, she rapped loudly at the door, and when it was opened, suddenly darted away.

A young man answered the summons.

"I seek Clarence Weldon," said Emma; "is he here?"

"There is a young man, very sick, in the house, a stranger—walk in," returned the person at the door.

Emma entered the house and was conducted to a room in the second story.

Emma sank down at Clarence's bedside, overcome by her emotions.

When the Indian woman deserted Emma, she hurried along the street on which they had landed, a few squares, then turned and followed one leading back from the water. She stopped before a large building, the front of which was covered with signs, as if it contained numerous stores and offices.

Looking around in every direction to see if she were watched, she walked toward the centre of the building and entered a spacious hall. She ran rapidly up a flight of wide stairs, and after making several halts to listen, for the purpose of ascertaining if her steps were followed, she took hold of the handle of a door, to a small room, applied a key to the lock, and entered. A taper was burning upon a table at the opposite side of the room. By it, she lighted a lamp that stood on the same table, made it burn brightly, and as its flame shone on the countenance of a man asleep upon a bed at one side of the room, she gazed at him a moment, then drew back the table some distance from the bed—cocked a pair of pistols which lay loaded upon it—drew the dagger, John the coachman had seen, from its place of concealment, and with it gleaming in her hand, approached the slumbering man.

She stooped down till her face almost met his, and cried in a hoarse whisper:

"Retribution, Owen Crafts! Retribution!"

Her voice had no Indian accent in that cry.

The man started from his slumber and exclaimed:



"Is *she* here? God, what a dream!"

Rubbing his eyes and endeavoring to look about him as the bright light flashed in his face.

"She *is* here!" cried the woman in Indian dress. "Owen Crafts, your last hour has come!"

Fully awakened to realities, Crafts arose in his bed and stared at the woman, crying:

"Witch, in the name of God, how did you get here?"

"By means of a key purloined from the door when you went out, not a week ago, and left it in the lock. But, Owen Crafts, look at me. I am not here as the Indian whom you struck in the forest!" answered the woman, tearing from her head the coarse hair and feathers which gave her the appearance of a savage. "*Now look at me!*"

Crafts did look, and as he looked, a tremor shook every muscle in his frame. He sprang from his bed, but instantly two (as he well knew) heavily loaded pistols were presented at his breast—the hand that held them was steady.

"One step, Owen Crafts, and I fire!" said the woman.

He stood still, not daring to advance, and the woman continued:

"I wrote you years ago that retribution *would* come. You see before you the woman whom, under a mock marriage, you ruined at her father's house, and then decoyed to that metropolis of crime, London, where you cast her off, taunted her with her shame, and fled—not till she knew, however, that you had been guilty of a crime—that blood was on your hands!"

Crafts writhed and took a step as if he would plunge toward her, but she was watching his movements and cried:

"Another step, and you fall."

He sank back upon the bed, frightened with the danger of his situation, and the images which the appearance of the woman and her charges called to his mind.

"You have been a great villain, Owen Crafts," she continued. "You have led a long career of deceit; but the end has come. By artifice and theft you obtained papers, which threw a man entirely in your power, who, until you became his business confidant, had been honest, in the eyes of the law at least. You have tortured that man for many years by means of the power you had over him. You have extorted money from him—made him take you as a business partner—and that is not all. You have seen him wasting to the grave with satisfaction, while you gloated on the ruin of his daughter, you, who was once to me, by all just law, a rightful husband. Owen Crafts, the papers that you have employed for these villainous purposes I *must* have. Where are they?"

"What would you do with them?" said Crafts.

"Put them into the hands of those who could gain their rights by them," answered the woman.

"Whose rights?" cried Crafts.

"You know well, Owen Crafts. *Well* do you know, and I'll convince you that I know too. Your life is in my power. I will not take it now—give me the papers, and you shall escape."

"What of Griffin Lynch?" exclaimed Crafts.

"I care not for him," answered the woman. "I left his house a few hours ago, threatened by a flood that will probably overwhelm it and drown him and all his family. Will you give me the papers?"

Crafts threw his right hand to his brow—the words of the woman gave him hope of complete triumph in his wicked schemes. He cried:

"All the family?" Did you say *all* would be drowned?"

"All but one."

"Which one?"

"Emma, the beautiful daughter; but I can not parley; Owen Crafts, will you give me the papers, or shall I fire?"

If all were dead but Emma, what a triumph Mr. Crafts might have! The thought gave him courage. He felt powerful enough to defy boldly such weapons as pistols in the hands of a weak woman; but he was not ready to exhibit this power, and he said mildly:

"Tell me where this girl is, and I will answer all you wish about the papers."

The woman knew the wicked man's object in this inquiry, but she answered him promptly:

"I brought her in a canoe to this city. She is safe. Now, Owen Crafts, for the last time, I demand the papers."

A devilish smile hung about Crafts' lips, and he exclaimed savagely:

"By all the devils in hell, they never leave me till I am a corpse."

Reaching a chair at the head of his bed, he cried again furiously:

"I'll be no chicken-hearted craven, trembling at a woman."

"Shoot; it will give the alarm, and you will be taken up as a madwoman."

The words had hardly been spoken before he gasped, and staggering fell across the bed, while a stream of blood gushed from his side.

The woman, perceiving his object when he grasped the chair,

had eluded the blow, and dropping her pistols, as Crafts bent forward, stabbed him mortally.

"It is the vengeance of God," she exclaimed, as he fell. "For years I have followed you to enjoy this hour, Owen Crafts. When I was torn from my home, my mother died broken-hearted, my father followed her in a few weeks, and then I swore solemnly that he who murdered them should die by my hand. I came to America—I tracked you into the wilds of the forest, where I was a prisoner among the Indians for many months; I escaped, and, suffering great hardships, reached the States. I sought you in New York, but not finding you, traveled West again, and on the boat in which I crossed the lake, was thrown, by Providence, into the company of the man whose avarice you excited to the commission of crime. Clarence Weldon was with him. I became his friend. I had another incentive for seeking you. I have followed you in various disguises—I have had many opportunities for vengeance, but the hour had not come till I could destroy all your schemes and restore the rights of the basely wronged. Owen Crafts, you are a dying man! Do you know it? You can not live to see another sunrise."

"Yes," groaned the accomplished deceiver;—"it is over with me—my life ebbs fast. I *have* been a wicked man; but I repent—forgive—forgive me all the wrongs I have been guilty of. Come near me—let me see you look upon me, before I die!"

Without fear of him, the woman approached and bent over him as he gasped for breath, and the blood trickled down from his death-wound.

"Nearer! nearer! I can not see you," he groaned.

The woman bent lower, when, with a sudden movement, he clutched her by the throat. She could utter no cry, but she sprang back with powerful energy—the grasp of the dying man was firm, and his body was lifted up a moment from the bed. The woman grew black in her face as the fingers of the great villain, were buried in her neck—violent convulsive struggles shook her frame—the weight of Crafts body forced her down upon the bed again as he drew his last breath; and the spirits of the deceived and the deceiver, winged their flight together to that "bourne" where neither avarice nor deception is known.

## CHAPTER XVII:

## THE DENOUEMENT.

EARLY on the morning of the catastrophe at the Lynch mansion John, the coachman, who had gained a place of safety with the persons whom he took from the house, hastened to the city to seek out Owen Crafts and relate to him the awful occurrences which, at that time, he believed had destroyed the entire Lynch family.

He knew where Crafts lodged, and thither he hurried. The Indian woman had not locked the door when she entered, and after knocking some time without receiving an answer, he tried the latch, it gave away, and the murdered were exposed to view.

Crafts' body was still lying across the bed, that of the Indian had partly fallen upon his, and his hands were not yet loosened from her throat.

The coachman rushed into the street and gave the alarm. He was followed back to the room in which the murders had been committed, by a crowd of persons, and the bodies were immediately taken in charge by the authorities.

The particulars of the catastrophe at the Lynch mansion spread with the rapidity of the flames which consume the withered herbage of the western prairie, and connected with the accounts of the murders, many of them much exaggerated, created an intense excitement in all circles.

The coachman knew that Clarence Weldon had visited the city on the previous morning, and, determined to ascertain whether he was among those who had found rest from care and sorrow in the angry waters, he hastened through the city making inquiries. He learned that the young man had been diligently engaged removing property from houses into which the water was rising, when, as he stood beneath a window, out of which a parcel of furniture was being lowered, the rope that sustained it, gave way, and it fell upon him, stunning and throwing him into the water. He was rescued with difficulty, and in a condition from which it was feared he could never recover, was conveyed to a house back in the city.

To this house, John wended his way with all speed, and to his great joy, found Emma Lynch watching by the bedside of Clarence Weldon—who, though he had been seriously injured, under judicious medical treatment and careful nursing, had so far recovered as to be considered out of danger.

In a few moment's conversation, John ascertained that Clarence and Emma were both ignorant of the destruction of Oak-

shaw mansion and its master and mistress, as well as the murders in the city. It was a painful task to break to Emma the news that her father and brother were drowned soon after she left them, and inform Clarence that so many of those of the Lynch family whom he considered his friends, had met untimely deaths; but John knew well that sooner or later the sad intelligence must come to them, and he felt it his duty to be the messenger.

With all the delicacy the nature of the circumstances would permit, he informed Emma of the sad occurrences which rendered her an orphan. She bore the bereaving recital with firmness until her mind caught at the idea that the stupor which made her father careless of his fate was caused by her secret departure, leaving upon his mind the impression that she had drowned herself to escape an union with Owen Crafts.

The conviction that, to some extent, she was responsible for her father's death, was one bearing such an overwhelming grief, that, as it fastened upon her mind, if by some supernatural power, her brain had been paralyzed, and every muscle stricken with rigidity, she could not have presented a more statuesque appearance. Clarence was alarmed, and John cried for help. Several females hastened to the room, and perfectly unconscious, Emma was borne to an apartment where she could be waited upon as her condition required.

Clarence was deeply affected, and John sat down at his bedside to give him consolation. He took his hand, when the wounded man said:

"You are very kind, John."

"John me no more," said the coachman; "I have been *in cognito* long enough. In all our intercourse, have you never thought we had met before?"

"Yes," answered Clarence, "I have often been reminded by you of a friend who was dear to me in my youth, but I thought it could not be."

"It is so, Clarence. I am indeed the Henry Hastie to whom you were a friend," cried the late coachman, as Clarence raised himself in his bed, and fervently pressed the hands that were offered.

"How can it be, Henry? How *can* it be?" exclaimed the astonished Clarence.

"I will tell you at length, some day, but can only explain to you now, that the next year after you left us, father lost his office, and, becoming dissipated, soon died. Mother followed him to the grave the next year. I plunged into pleasures, and in a few years ran through the property that was left me. The friends

I had known when I was wealthy, abandoned me when I was poor. I came to the West broken down by dissipation. I had neglected the opportunities of my youth, and was unfit for business. I hung about taverns till I learned that Mr. Lynch wanted a coachman. I determined to make an effort to reform, applied for the place and obtained it. I knew you as soon as I met you, but was satisfied that you did not recognize me, and I was determined that you should not know me until I had retrieved my character. In a few months I ascertained that there was a mystery hanging about your connection with Griffin Lynch and Owen Crafts.

"How, Henry?" interposed Clarence.

"Be calm, and I will explain all. You were unsuspecting, but I had reason to be suspicious. You have a paper in your pocket which gives some notice of property having been left by Colonel Weldon, in England."

"He was my uncle, Henry; how do you know all this?" interrupted Clarence.

"I learned all I know about it from the Indian woman. She was no squaw, but she was the woman whom you met on the lake, and the wife of Owen Crafts!"

"The wife of Owen Crafts!" exclaimed Clarence.

"It is too true," returned Henry. She followed him from England. But it was not your uncle who left the property advertised, it was your father."

"You would not deceive me, Henry," said Clarence, feebly: "but my father was only a lieutenant."

"He was promoted after your mother heard from him. His conduct on the field of battle was such as to challenge the admiration of the whole army, and the Commander-in-Chief at once gave him the rank of a colonel. A city was sacked, and the spoils were immense. Your father's share, added to what property he previously possessed, made him one of the wealthiest men connected with the army. His prospects for wide renown and high promotion were fairer than those of any of his equals in rank. In the very next battle a cannon ball struck him, and he was no more. The brother whom you thought must have been the colonel, for whose heirs the advertisement was made, had at this time been dead several months. He had never been a man of family. Among your father's papers his will was found, and also that of his deceased brother. Their entire property was left to your mother, Alice Weldon, and her heirs. A lawyer of London, through whom your father transacted business, was named as the person whom he wished to be his executor, in connection with the captain of the company from which

he had been promoted. This officer, as soon as it was possible, had the property collected and forwarded to England; but when the lawyer received it, no tidings could be obtained of your mother. It was ascertained that she had given birth to a son, but where he was, or whether dead or alive, the lawyer could not learn. The money was put at interest, and thus accumulating, remained for a number of years, when the captain to whom the property had been entrusted, retired from the army and returned to London. The advertisement, which subsequently met your eye, was then inserted in several newspapers, but it brought no advantage to those who expected advantage from it. The money had been deposited by the lawyer *in his own name!*

"To all these facts, a clerk in his office was cognizant, and being of a wicked, avaricious nature, he saw a way that he could make a fortune, and put the lawyer in possession of immense wealth. He so represented the matter to the lawyer, and seduced by the prospect of being a lord in fortune, he consented, gave the clerk a thousand pounds to poison the captain, and taking the money from the bankers, fled to America. That lawyer, under a different name, was GRIFFIN LYNCH—his clerk was OWEN CRAFTS!"

During this recital by Henry, Clarence had partly risen in his bed, and when Hastie ceased speaking, he exclaimed, with his hand upon his brow, as if for support to his aching brain:

"Are you mad, Henry? Is not all this the detail of some horrid dream?"

"You must compose yourself," returned Henry calmly, and in a low tone of voice, as he took hold of the bewildered Clarence, and pushed him gently back upon his pillow.

"It is all too true, Clarence. I have a packet of papers, given me by Mr. Lynch yesterday, to be shown to you in case he lost his life in the flood, and other papers of the same character were obtained from Owen Crafts this morning."

"Where is Crafts now?" ejaculated Clarence.

"He and the person whom you know as the Indian woman, were found dead in his room together, this morning. She stabbed him, and in his death struggles, it is supposed, he caught and strangled her," answered Henry.

"Oh, God! in what connections have I been," exclaimed Clarence. "Tudor judged Crafts truly, always."

"He was a noble boy, notwithstanding his rudeness," returned Henry, "and he showed it in the last hour of his life. I begged him to go away with me when I left the mansion, but he declared that Emma was lost, and he would die with his father,

if the house was carried away while he was in it. He drove his dog into the canoe, and get one of the men to hold him, saying that there would be a load with his father and mother, and their things, when I returned, without Turk; but the dog broke loose and swam back to the house, and must have perished with his master; for I can hear nothing of them."

"Emma was not lost, Henry," said Clarence, "but it had been better, perhaps, if we had all died together. What will become of her when she learns all?"

"It need never be told her," answered Henry.

"How shall it be kept from her? Does not everybody know it? Who told you all?" exclaimed Clarence.

"I learned it, returned Henry, "from those who are dead—from Mr. Lynch, from the Indian woman, and, as I have said, from the papers found with Owen Crafts, which have been seen by no eyes but mine. When you are stronger, Clarence, all can be arranged. You and I alone, of the living, know that the property to which Emma Lynch will fall heir, belongs by right to you."

"I will never have a penny of it," cried Clarence. "I would give it all, and an hundred times as much, were it mine, rather than that she should know what you have told me of her father. But, Henry, can you tell me how Owen Crafts found me and knew that I was the son of Colonel Charles Weldon?"

"As I learned from the Indian woman," answered Hastie, Crafts followed Lynch to America, and by threats of exposure extorted money from him. I met the man in my course of profligacy in New York. By accident I spoke of you as a playmate—he caught at the mention of your name, and inquired your history. I gave it to him, and after the night in which it was related, I never met him again till I saw him at Mr. Lynch's house, last fall. I knew him, but he did not recognize me. His conduct was singular, and I watched him. How I fell into Mr. Lynch's confidence and was enabled to learn all I know of Crafts, shall be told you when you get up from your bed. In order that I might aid you, I gave Mr. Lynch reason to think that he could bribe me into crime. I believe it was a case in which "the end justified the means."

"Heaven will reward you, Henry, is all I can say now," returned Clarence, and then, before Hastie had time to reply, he continued: "But where is that friend of Crafts who I thought was to marry Emma?"

"Do you mean the fop, Parley Bent?"

"The same."

"Who ever told you that he was to marry Emma? Owen Crafts was betrothed to her."

"Owen Crafts!" cried Clarence. "I see it all now. Have I not been a dupe—a blind dupe. If there ever were circumstances the result of special providences, we have them in what I have learned this day. I can hear no more, only what has become of that creature whom I supposed was to be Emma's husband?"

"He packed up his affairs, I was told," said Henry, "as soon as he heard of Crafts' murder this morning, and fled, no one knows whither."

"And we are alone left, besides Emma, of all those who but yesterday," said Clarence, "were happy together at what seemed to me a peaceful home. How strange have been the events of my life! When upon the wide sea, without hope of again seeing land—when I had rather died than lived, I learned that I was not what I seemed to be, but an orphan and an out-cast—when I was upon the lake, I met a woman who made me believe there was a peculiar mystery hanging about my life, and now, by the destruction of a family by drowning, that mystery is unraveled, and I learn that those whom I considered my best friends have been, as people generally would view it, my greatest enemies. Surely there is romance in my history. The ocean the lake and the river have had much to do with the development of its mystery. It is too painful to look back upon. I am too weak for a retrospect. I would shut much of it from my memory—forever. I would be alone—leave me for an hour, Henry. I have much to think of—let me dwell upon it."

Hastie was about to retire, when Clarence said feebly:

"First tell me how Emma is."

Henry hastened to make inquiries, and returned with the cheering news that she had recovered from the shock her mind had received, sufficiently to converse, and would, probably, be able to see him by the next day, at farthest.

Clarence was then left to commune with the distracting thoughts Henry's information had awakened. When his attendants came to inquire about him, they found him delirious, with a burning fever.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### SURPRISES.

WHEN Hastie retired from Clarence's bedside he reflected on the events of his life and the singular train of circumstances that had thrown him into his present relation to Weldon.

The first hour of their acquaintance at the custom-house of his native city came vividly to mind, and then a review of their school-boy life passed before him, and the regret he had felt at his father's harshness to Clarence became fresh again, and he reflected:

"How important may be those 'little, unremembered acts of kindness and of love' which Sterne calls the 'small sweet courtesies of life.' Well did Clarence know their power, and when a boy, he endeared all to him by his winning grace, and since I have known him as a man, he has taught me that acts of attention and regard, in which there is no parade, among friends, perhaps not unexpected, but unacknowledged, are the diamond dust of society, and go to make up that wealth of affection which, to the tender heart in a congenial circle, is of more value than all the coins and all the jewels of the richest king's exchequer."

As Hastie thus mused, he walked rapidly along a principal street of the city. Some one called:

"John, John."

He turned about and saw Farmer Shaw hastening towards him. They shook hands cordially as they met, and Hastie said:

"I am delighted, but surprised to see you. I left you in the house, and supposed you were drowned."

"My wife and two children and myself, fortunately, were saved, though I ran great risk."

"And Mr. and Mrs. Lynch?"

"Both drowned. He was crazed by fear, or all might have been saved."

"Tudor and his companion, Turk?"

"The boy is not drowned, but his dog I have not seen,"

"Tudor not drowned!"

"We were saved together."

"Tell me how."

"I can not give you full particulars now, but we were gathered, all but Mr. and Mrs. Lynch, on the back porch ready to get into the boat. Tudor was going to rush to his father. I

caught him and threw him into the water—there came a crash at the instant—I found myself in the flood—I know not how I got there. There was a log near me—I got upon it and grasped Tudor as he was sinking, I suppose, never to rise again. We are all that were saved. We floated down the river, and were taken up by a boat at the head of the city. I was seeking you to go and see Tudor. The shock and the chill in the water have nearly killed him. He raves about being deprived of all his friends."

"But he is not," interposed Hastie.

"Not what?"

"Not deprived of his friends. It is now my turn to surprise you. Emma Lynch and Clarence Weldon are both at a house in the city, but very sick."

"The deuce! There's something very strange about all this—explain."

"As we walk," answered Hastie.

"What is that?" cried the Squire, pointing down the street.

"Tudor's dog, as sure as fate," said Hastie. He knows us."

In a few moments Turk jumped upon Hastie, barking for joy, and Hastie patted him and said:

"You shall see your master, my fine fellow. It will do his heart good to see you." Then turning to the Squire, he said:

"Come on, Squire, and I will give you the explanations you desire."

He related to the Squire what the reader already knows of Emma's adventure with the Indian woman and the murders in the city, and then told him to call him John, the coachman, no more, but Henry Hastie.

The Squire suspected that there were still mysteries unexplained, but Hastie would take no hint to make further revelations. When they arrived at the house where Tudor was lying, they found him in a more dangerous state than he was when the Squire left him. Hastie immediately despatched a messenger for a physician.

Tudor did not recognize either Hastie or the Squire, but when Turk was admitted to the room, stretched out his hand, and the dog, with a low whine, put his fore feet upon the couch and laid his head near his master.

A tear started in the Squire's eye as he witnessed this token of affection in the dumb brute, and Hastie turned his head to one side and put his handkerchief up to his face.

When the physician arrived, he pronounced the boy in a critical situation, and expressed his doubt whether he could ever recover.

Tudor moaned and sometimes muttered;—Hastie bent over him and heard him say:

"Father mad—Emma drowned—Clarence gone. *All* drowned—I *will* die."

Hastie spoke to him softly. He turned his eyes, but there was no expression in them which told of recognition, and Hastie thought what a task was now before him, in acquainting Emma with the fact that her brother had not been drowned, but was now dying.

He determined that so long as the boy lived, he would not make known his condition until Emma and Clarence had, in some degree, regained their wonted strength.

For five days Tudor was tenderly nursed and carefully watched, but he had not grown stronger—every day his cheek became paler, and his eye lost its lustre. The physician said he must die.

When this announcement was made to him, Hastie knew it was his duty to let Emma see her brother immediately. Weldon was able to walk about his room, but Emma had yet only gained strength sufficient to sustain her for a few hours, when Clarence came into her room and watched with her, as she was bolstered up in an easy chair.

We need not follow the scene minutely, and will briefly relate that Hastie told Weldon of Tudor's rescue and illness, and Clarence informed Emma that her brother had not been drowned, but was then in the city, though very sick.

She expressed a determination to see him immediately. A carriage was procured, and Clarence accompanied her to the dwelling in which the boy was dying.

Emma was supported by Clarence at her brother's bedside, and while the tears rained upon his face, she kissed him and endeavored to gain a glance of recognition. She had been with him nearly an hour, when the hectic flush on his cheek deepened—he lifted his hand to his brow and passed it over his eyes—a gleam of intelligence shone in them. His sister leaned toward him, and he whispered:

"Emma—I know you—Emma, and Clarence, and John. I have been very sick. I am better now, but I shall not see you long—I am going to die."

"Oh! say not so, Tudor—live for my sake. I shall be alone in the world."

"You should not weep, Emma. Clarence will love you. I shall go to mother, who prayed for me, as you have told me, when I was very young. I have sometimes been a very bad boy, but I know I shall meet mother. I know I am going to her—you will meet us—and father may—good—bye."

The hand which Emma held grew cold—the brow of her only relative in America, became pallid—she knew that the light of his life was calmly going out, and she fell back into Weldon's arms.

"This is hard!" was the dying exclamation of Tudor Lynch, as his fading eye rested upon that of his sister, dropful, while she was supported near him, eager to interpret every sigh.

The last words of many eminent men have been recorded, but we remember none more expressive than this simple sentence by this humble youth. To the writer, they have indeed pregnant meaning. "*This is hard!*" were the last words of a cherished brother, who, in his twenty-first year, was stricken down in endurance of hardship, on his way to the golden-sanded shores, against which the waves of the mighty Pacific beat.

When the friends of Tudor Lynch stood by the couch on which he died, taking for remembrance a last look of his placid features, the faithful, intelligent dog that had been his constant companion since he was three years of age, appeared to know well that his master would never again cheer him with his voice or his look, and he sprang partly upon the foot of the couch and uttered a whine so piteous, so mournful, that it made every heart ache that heard it.

Efforts were made to drive the dog from the chamber of death, but he barked fiercely at every one who attempted to disturb him, and he lay near the corpse till it was borne from the house, and then he followed it to its final resting place, and when the grave was filled, he laid down upon it, and no force or persuasion could move him from it. Farmer Shaw tried every art in his power to induce Turk to take him as a master in place of the deceased, but the faithful dog refused all nourishment, resisted all enticements, and the third night, when

—"the crimson moon went up and on  
Into the azure of the sky,"

the true servant paid the last debt of devotion, and the next morning Farmer Shaw and Hastie found him, and had him buried beneath the sod which grew over his master's remains.

Emma, though very feeble, had attended Tudor's funeral. In the evening Clarence watched with her. They were alone. She gave him her hand, and said:

"This is a desolate world, Clarence. I sometimes wish I could go and meet those who before me, taste the joys of the land where sorrow and suffering never come."

"I might say to you as you said to Tudor, when he told you he must die. You are not without friends."

"You are more than a friend to me."

"In the midst of our sorrows, with the remembrance of all the terrible occurrences of the past week, dare I address you as I would have done long since, had it not been for the interference of one whose awful death has proven him what you and Tudor always declared him to be."

"There is no obstacle, Clarence."

"You will live then for my sake?"

"Our farm on the river may yet be a peaceful home."

"It has sad associations."

"And many pleasant ones; and the painful recollections are such as may teach us lessons that will be useful to us," returned Emma, with a look of beaming affection, and Clarence felt that it was not improper, and he bent over her and for the first time their lips met. Then he said:

"I know of no one who has more reason than I have to be really thankful. My life has been one of vicissitudes, yet it has been one of much pleasure, and there has ever been over and around me a guardian hand which sometimes I think must be that of my sainted mother—an orphan, and friendless, I have ever had true friends; and when I was in fear that she who was dearer to me than all the world besides, could never be mine, I alone possessed her affections and our love watched, and now, when we are both bereaved, she gives herself to me, and, excepting the remembrance of sorrow, there is yet a life of peace and pleasure before us."



## CHAPTER XIX.

## CONCLUSION.

SPRING came and building preparations were commenced at Oakshaw. Clarence and Emma Weldon occupied a house in the city until a mansion had been re-built on the site of the ill-fated homestead.

One evening, a few months subsequent to the marriage of Emma and Clarence, Henry Hastie, after threading the streets of the city for half an hour stopped in front of a handsome brick mansion and rang the door bell. When his summons was answered, he asked if Miss Morton was at home, and was invited into the parlor. He took a seat in the very room where he had met Clarence on the morning after the catastrophe.

In a few moments the lady for whom he had inquired presented herself, and a lively conversation ensued. It was evident from the manner of the *tele-a-tete*, that the parties were well acquainted, and to have seen and heard them, a suspicious person would have thought there was an interest between them somewhat stronger than that growing out of mere passing acquaintance.

"This place is suggestive of a most unpleasant duty," said Hastie.

"You refer to the morning when you met Mr. Weldon and Miss Lynch, after the destruction of Oakshaw?" answered the lady.

"The same," said Hastie. "To break the sad news to them was the severest trial of my life; but there have since been trials suggested to me, though not painful, equally as formidable."

"And pray how can that be?" inquired the lady, playfully.

"From the perplexity of the matter," said Hastie.

"Perplexity!" repeated the lady.

"Yes. I am in doubts, and you know the poet says—

"—— Our doubts are traitors,  
And make us lose the good we might attain,  
By fearing to attempt.

"I would be gallant, but I know not how to be when gallantry is required. When I was in the habit of visiting this house, to inquire about Mr. Weldon's and Miss Lynch's health, I frequently met a person in the sick room, who watched over the invalids, and ministered to their wants as kindly and faithfully

as if they were brother and sister to her. The kindness of that heart won the love of mine. I would offer it, with the devotion of one who hopes that he has not misinterpreted diffidence and shrinking modesty for disfavor or repugnance."

Saying these words, Hastie approached the lady, who rose from her seat to meet him, and said:

"You will excuse me. You would address the daughter of the gentleman in whose house you find yourself. She gave the attentions of which you speak mainly—you have shown her marked attention. I will give her your messages."

"And are you not Mr. Morton's daughter? Who have I addressed?"

"An orphan and an outcast!"

"An orphan and an outcast!" repeated Hastie, "I loved neither place nor station—then let me be explicit. To you I renew the offer."

"Mr. Hastie, did you know who I am, you would spurn me. I can not allow you to deceive yourself."

"Pray explain, then, and relieve my suspense. I will take nothing but a distinct refusal of my suit."

"If I mistake not, you are the son of a man of wealth, who lived in an eastern city."

"But I am poor now, and, like you, an orphan."

"Hear me, Mr. Hastie, and be not surprised if I know much of your early history."

"Its errors were only those incident to youth, unrestrained, left in the possession of wealth."

"It is not of that I would speak. I see you do not suspect. I will speak plainly."

"Pray do; I am amazed at your manner."

"You remember when you were a boy, nine or ten years of age, that one evening a woman caught you in the street, and dragged you to her filthy garret, and there kept you until you were found by Clarence Weldon with an officer. You will recollect the kindness of Mr. Weldon to a little beggar girl was the cause of your early rescue from the abode of misery?"

"It is all, all fresh in my mind—but mysterious. How know you these facts?"

"Your father took that girl and had her placed in a charity school."

"He did; but what has this to do with my proposal?"

"Much, very much, Mr. Hastie. You see that little beggar girl—that charity scholar, before you!"

"Impossible!"

"Not so. I was an inmate of that charity school but a few

months, when I accidentally met a gentleman who had, within a few weeks, lost an only daughter. He said I resembled her very much. He became attached to me, asked me if I would go home with him, and I went. He adopted me as his child. I took the name of his deceased daughter, Clara Morton. In a few years he moved to the West. He accumulated property—my adopted mother died—my father soon followed her—his estate was willed to me. I have since been the inmate of his brother's house."

"Strange—wonderful!" ejaculated Hastie; "but I have no retractions to make—I have loved you for yourself—say that you will be mine."

"All has not been told you, Mr. Hastie. Under no other circumstances would I reveal what I must now tell you, but I know, let what may come, you will keep my secret."

"I am encouraged by your trust."

"I hardly know how to continue. The task I have is more painful than that you spoke of, in regard to the Oakshaw tragedy. I tremble always when I think of the circumstances I would relate, and sometimes I wish it had been my lot to die of cold or hunger, when I was a beggar girl."

The young lady was much agitated as she spoke these words. During the conversation she had been standing. Hastie now led her to a seat, and supported her, while, anxious to know what further mystery hung about her, he endeavored to calm her, and encourage her to confide in him. She at length continued:

"It is terrible, dreadful, that I was not left in the world ignorant of whom or what my parents were."

"Let them have been ever so humble or wicked, it would not now change you in my estimation," said Hastie.

"But have you no suspicions, Mr. Hastie—you do not know how terrible the recollection of them is."

"I pray you, no longer keep me in this suspense, but at once unburden your mind."

"I must do it—I can not hint—I can not make you suspect. I must speak plainly, if it break my heart. My parents, Mr. Hastie—my father and mother—were—were found dead in the Exchange buildings!"

"What!" cried Hastie, starting from the sofa on which he had been sitting, "Owen Crafts and the Indian woman! Gracious heavens! were they your parents?"

"Now spurn me as unworthy of you," said the lady. "Curse yourself for having been deceived. My God, what an hour of agony!"

Bending forward she would have fallen to the floor, had not Hastie caught her in his arms. As he held her, unconscious, for five minutes, a gush of affection, deeper than he had ever before felt, made his heart beat wildly, and he fervently kissed the pallid lips, and whispered:

"Be assured, dearest, nothing shall separate us. You shall be to me as if I had never known the terrible facts you have revealed. Hear me renew my vows—say that they are accepted—give me one look of encouragement."

The lady lifted her eyelids, and their glance met that of her lover. He said:

"Perhaps it had been better that you had never told me."

"There are those living who know all," answered the maiden, feebly. "Had I accepted your offers, and we had been married, and then you had learned all, could you have ever forgiven my deception? What would our home have been? It was because I loved you over much that I revealed all."

And how did you learn these facts? When father took you as a charge, you did not know your parents, but supposed them dead?"

"I had so been told. It was not a week before the catastrophe at Oakshaw that I learned all. The Indian woman, as she was called, sought me and revealed herself, and convinced me that I was her daughter. She told me that I was born at sea, while she was crossing the ocean to find my father, who had deserted her in London. She said that, to his knowledge, he had not seen her since; but she knew him, and one day they would again be united. She left me when I was a year old, in charge of the people from whom your father took me. She knew when I was taken to the charity school. She had kept close watch of my career. I can say no more. Merciful heavens! what a blow it was to me when I learned the manner of her death! showing me, as it did, that the man who was found with her was my father!"

"I love you the more fervently," exclaimed Henry, "for the honor of your course; but all you have told me we will keep our own secret, only you must allow me to tell my friend Weldon that the little beggar girl whom he found in the street, on the night I was stolen, is to be mistress of my household."

The maiden bowed consent and Hastie sealed his promises with a lover's endorsement.

Mrs. Hastie was a beautiful and accomplished woman, and though she was sometimes melancholy, Hastie never regretted that he made the beggar girl his wife.

"The web of our life is of mingled yarn,  
Good and ill together."

\* \* \* \* \*

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Clarence and Emma Weldon lived many years most happily at Oakshaw, and Emma never knew that the property she left her children had not rightfully descended to her from her father.

Farmer Shaw never repaired the injuries done to his farmhouse by the fatal flood. He lived at Oakshaw, and superintended the farming operations for two years, when he was "gathered with his fathers" in the graveyard of the little church which his ancestors had helped to build in the wilderness, about one mile distant from where now stands an edifice, in which people worship, that cost more money and labor than all the churches, at that day, in the broad State of Ohio.

THE END.

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