

# QUEENS.

MISS  
By E. B. EMERY.  
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*American Studies*

TO THE  
SWEET AND SACRED MEMORY OF  
LAURA E. LORD,  
THIS VOLUME IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED.

## CONTENTS.

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- CHAPTER 1.—Queen Catherine.
- CHAPTER 2.—Her Knight and her Castle.
- CHAPTER 3.—Her Subjects.
- CHAPTER 4.—Queen Elizabeth. — Episode, with Rustic Chivalry.
- CHAPTER 5.—Ambitious Youth Throws down his Cloak, and is Knighted by Queen Catherine.
- CHAPTER 6.—She Loses her Knight.
- CHAPTER 7.—Revolution.—Queen Catherine Loses her Head.—Queen Anne a Spectator.—Maid of Honor, and Treason.
- CHAPTER 8.—Queen Margaret and Queen Helen McGregor.
- CHAPTER 9.—Queen Catherine's Realm.—Irish Subjects.
- CHAPTER 10.—Knight Becomes Bishop.—King Arthur Relates his own Vain-Glory and Shameful Overthrow.
- CHAPTER 11.—Woman's Suffrage Convention.—Royalty Speaks its Mind.
- CHAPTER 12.—Civil War.—The Queen Victorious.

CHAPTER 13.—King Christian; or, Priest and King.

CHAPTER 14.—Ryan House Plot.—Attack at Headquarters.—Repulse.

CHAPTER 15.—Queen Margaret is Crowned.

CHAPTER 16.—Queen Anne is Heard From.

CHAPTER 17.—Catastrophe.—Revolution.—Queen Catherine Goes into Retirement.

CHAPTER 18.—The Pursuit.

CHAPTER 19.—Shadows of Coming Events.

CHAPTER 20.—Queen Catherine Taken Prisoner.

CHAPTER 21.—Captivity and Sovereignty Prospective.

# QUEENS.

## CHAPTER I.

### QUEEN CATHERINE.

"I've crossed the Atlantic four times, but I never experienced the like of this," said the Rev. Dr. Hubbard, looking very white about the mouth, and holding his hat on with one hand and grasping the railing with the other. "This will pass for the equinoctial, I judge."

"Yes, I suppose so, though it's a little early," replied Mr. Sterne, the gentleman addressed. "Last year there were several, do you remember? I was down to St. John, on the Bay of Fundy, and for once in my life had a notion of what wind and tide meant. Just look there!"

All looked where he pointed. It was an immense, flying, whirling cloud, something in the form of a water-spout,—green, black, purple, full of lurid fire, with eyes gleaming, and forked tongues shooting out everywhere. It seemed to



touch the waves, alive with jaws and claws, and a strange spectacle it was: a living, breathing thing,—so human, infernal, devilish,—and awe-struck they gazed, all but one; he had seen so much of the world that nothing could astonish him.

“O, that’s nothing but wind,” spoke up Mr. Green, of Chicago, a consequential person in a white hat, gold-bowed glasses, green kid gloves, and embroidered pocket-handkerchief; and he looked a little disdainfully at the inexperienced men around him, though several of them were gray-headed. Mr. Green was still young, but he had been everywhere,—to Alaska and the source of the Nile, up Chimborazo and down the crater of Vesuvius, in the Maelstrom of Norway, and three days and three nights in the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky; on the top of the Pyramids and to the bottom of the Yo Semite; had dined with Brigham Young, and had been five miles straight up into the air towards the moon. To use his own language: “Five times I’ve suffered shipwreck, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.” How many stripes he had received he never told, but it is presumed that a few more in his early youth might have given him more of Pauline courage and humility. But while we have been describing him he was talking.

“Why, that isn’t a circumstance to what I saw once on board an English steamer, off the coast of Japan. There were more than a hundred of those things, as much redder and greener and blacker than that, as you can imagine; and the wind blew a perfect hurricane for thirteen days and nights, and the water put out all the fires, and was a foot deep in our state-rooms; we had to be lashed to our berths, and the vessel stood up on end three-quarters of the time; how many were washed overboard I’m sure I can’t tell.”

Mr. Sterne looked incredulous, but Deacon Summersides, in extreme horror and pity, exclaimed, “How heart-rending! Poor fellows! I hope they were prepared. But you must have been greatly terrified and dreadfully sick.”

“O, no, not a bit,” and he was obliged to shout to make himself heard above the waves. “‘The Lord keepeth them that are His, and as the mountains are round about Jerusalem so the Lord is round about his people.’ I was never so well and happy in my life; if I hadn’t been I don’t know what would have become of the rest, for they threw away their gold and their diamonds, and went down on their knees and besought the Lord to have mercy; if I prayed with one I did with fifty, and many rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God; it was well for them I had the Bible at my tongue’s end, for no-

body could read a word. That was one long Pentecostal season; it was then that I experienced full salvation and perfect love and trust; and from that day to this I have never broken a commandment or committed a sin."

"But we learn on high authority," said Dr. Wells, with a little severity and great seriousness, "that there is none that doeth good,—no, not one."

"O, that refers to the impenitent and to those professors of religion who have never been delivered from the bondage of their fears and infirmities. They don't know what it is to abide in Christ. They are not born of God, for whosoever is born of God sinneth not, and he cannot sin because he is born of God. I suppose that authority is just as good," and he spoke as if he had exhausted the subject and settled it forever.

Dr. Wells might have answered him, doubtless; but it was no time for controversy. Mr. Green alone seemed inclined to talk.

"Dr. Hubbard, those were glorious meetings we had yesterday. I have been through a great many revivals with Mr. Hammond and other noted evangelists, but I never felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as I did yesterday, while Mr. Sterne was talking."

Dr. Hubbard was a man of devout temper, but he was much more occupied, just then, with

his own sensations than with the presence of the Spirit; so, rising a little abruptly, he said, "Good-day, gentlemen," and, putting his hand on the knob of the door, was ushered somewhat unceremoniously into the saloon.

"I pity the women shut up in there," said good Deacon Summersides, who was always pitying somebody. "I think I'll go in and see to my wife." And the deacon followed Dr. Hubbard.

The next moment a tremendous wave broke on the side of the boat, and throwing a huge volume of spray, enveloped and blinded those who remained, spoiling the green kids and saturating the embroidered handkerchief.

"O, God, have mercy! We're going to the bottom!" shrieked Mr. Green. "O, my poor wife and children! Save me, save me!" And, pale as death, he dropped on his knees, and seized Dr. Wells by the arm.

"I trust there is no such danger, my friend," said that gentleman quietly, laying his hand on Mr. Green's shoulder. "Shall I assist you to go in?"

"O, no," he groaned, doubling up and heaving and holding on. "I'm too sick,—I can't move,—what shall I do? Oh! Oh-h! Ugh!"

Dr. Wells was much too polite to show the amusement he felt, or to recommend Mr. Green's own remedies; besides, he had compassion on

the man, who was really very sick and half dead with fright. So, picking up the hat and spectacles, which were sliding about the floor, he helped him to rise, and giving him his arm, which was as steady as any arm could be on such a rocking conveyance, they disappeared within.

It was the fifteenth of September. The steamer Narragansett, on the regular trip to Boston, had, but a few hours before, left one of the smaller sea-coast towns, where a large Sunday School Convention had been held. Delegates from all parts of New England were there; and many, on returning, preferred the water to the cars. The morning had been fine, and the party came on board in buoyant spirits, when suddenly the wind veered to the south-east, and blew furiously; dark, heavy clouds rolled in and down, and the billows leaped and dashed and foamed. They put out to sea, and the captain said there was no danger; but the pleasure was gone for the multitude. The ladies filled the state-rooms and crowded into the cabin; many of the gentlemen dropped on the sofas in the saloon, and a few even were stretched on the floor; and who was mightier than his neighbor? Man, perpendicular, is a glorious creature; but man, horizontal and sea-sick, isn't so glorious.

The deck, just now so populous and lively, was nearly deserted. A little knot of gentlemen

had held out and chatted to the last, but at length had disappeared, as we have seen, and only one remained.

Edward Sterne was a marked man everywhere, with his commanding form, faultless dress, and handsome, intellectual face. A very keen eye it must have been to detect the sneer on his finely cut lips. Just at this time he was particularly happy, for he had been prominent at all the meetings, and the day before had addressed the crowd with great eloquence and power.

For an instant he thought himself alone; then, to his amazement, he saw, but a few feet from him, and clinging hard to an iron rod that upheld the roof, a girl, or woman, rather, for there was nothing of the child in her attitude. She was covered from head to foot with the unpicturesque water-proof, and, absorbed in the scene before her, was evidently unconscious of his presence. He detested a strong-minded woman, but it is very certain he despised a weak one; here was one, and delicate, too, on a steamboat in a blow, and not sick, and he was prepared to admire her, whatever she might be. He wished she would turn round.

Just then a sudden lurch of the vessel loosened her hold, and she staggered forward. He sprang and caught her, and both were thrown violently against the door. She was terrified at first,

but smiled as she recognized the speaker of the day before. He asked, —

“Would you like to go in?”

But fearing she should be sick in the close room, she replied, —

“I will stay out, if possible.”

Drawing back, and bracing themselves as much as they could, and protected, in part, by a piece of canvas hanging from the roof, they watched the tumult of the heavens and the sea.

Talking was out of the question; but he could not help glancing now and then, at the slight form and face beside him, and even his penetration was baffled. There was a curious blending of resolution and timidity, of will and sensitiveness. She was not handsome, or even pretty, in the ordinary sense of the term, yet he could not call her plain. He had seen many a woman not so tall, but never one with shoulders so narrow or hands so small. Her hair was dark, and of that fine, wavy texture which indicates so surely a delicate nervous organization; and though little of it was then visible, was in richest luxuriance, being the only beauty of which she ever seemed conscious or vain. The skin was singularly thin and transparent, almost painfully so, as the blood beneath, distinctly seen, was ever going and coming as she talked; and at times she crimsoned at a word. There was, at such times, an inward fluttering,

also, not often perceptible to the eye, and this was why those who loved her, and knew the secret, were never satisfied with looking at her; they must needs feel the tremor,—just as we are not content with the sight of the Mimosa, beautiful though it is,—we must put to it the fingers or the face. The mouth was small, the teeth very small and regular, the chin firm and delicate, and the eye, which was the best feature, wondrously fine, large, lustrous, and often liquid,—not blue or black, hazel or gray, but all of these, and its expression was equally mixed,—at once soft and asking, keen and defiant. For so delicate a form and face there was too much *vision*. There were times when she looked all hair and eyes. Altogether it would have been a very serious face,—a sad one, indeed,—but for an occasional twitching at the corners of the mouth, which gave her a slight saucy, humorous expression, quite perplexing the observer. It was a face harmonized by expression rather than construction, and it was the harmony of contrasts. She might be twenty-two, or she might be thirty, or anywhere between.

After a time the wind lulled, and they talked; and though she had that kind of openness which shows there is no poverty to be disclosed, she possessed as much decided reserve. Though she

talked sensibly, she said nothing which could be called very brilliant or impressive; yet there was a radiance and an impressiveness which attracted him irresistibly. To every woman he had ever met he could have put out his finger, and said, "There is your charm." But this was something much too subtle and impalpable to be defined or analyzed. It was of the spirit, and he paid to it a silent deference. And Edward Sterne, who prided himself on the power, delicacy, and richness of his own mind, was conscious, for the first time in his life, of weakness, of grossness and poverty. It flashed across him that mind and soul are not exactly synonymous.

Mr. Sterne was fond of studying character, and considered himself an adept in the business; and here was one that seemed worth the while, to say nothing of the secret charm he felt. So he talked his best, and it was evident that her animation was unusual. They were both sorry when the pier came in view and the passengers began to be visible. And when they shook hands at parting, and he said he wished he might see her again, she devoutly wished so, too. Might he know her name and residence?

Kate Fairbanks, of Jackson.

She knew his.

Kate had yet thirty miles to travel, and it was a long distance to the station. But so full and

happy was she that she longed for the walk; her feet hardly seemed to touch the ground, and every face she met was a reflection of her own, and full of sunshine.

## CHAPTER II.

### HER KNIGHT AND HER CASTLE.

"Why, where were you all the time?" sounded from a deep chest and stalwart frame, in a gray suit, as she stepped off the cars; and in an exceedingly matter-of-course way the wearer of the gray suit appropriated her satchel, tucked her arm under his own, and marched her out of the station.

It was dusk when Kate entered the rail-car. She chose the darkest seat, and winding herself in her water-proof and veil, curled out of sight; and she was not sorry when a dropsical woman, with a dropsical bundle, squeezed into the seat and eclipsed her quite. The monotonous whirr and roar and rattle lulled her into a dream, deliciously soft and sweet, and she could not forgive the conductor for singing out "Jackson," so soon and so ruthlessly.

"Where were you all the time? I went

through every car two or three times, but couldn't find a trace of you," and he held the little arm very close, as if to make sure of it at last.

"I was extinguished by a stout woman and her luggage," she replied.

Her voice sounded oddly to herself. She had been in a new world, of which her companion had no knowledge. And how startled he would have been could it have been revealed that instant. It is well he did not know how his cordial tones grated on her ear, attuned as it was to Mr. Sterne's smooth voice and fine cadences. But Alex was her *protege*, as well as her protector; and in a moment she felt ashamed, though dreaming still.

"I've got the appointment, Katie."

"O, have you? O, Sandy, my dear Sandy, I'm so glad!" And she clapped her other hand over his arm.

She was wide awake, at last. He looked down into the deep, soft, dazzling eyes turned up to his own. Why did he not speak that moment what was in his heart and on his very lips? She might have turned to him, then, with all her heart, and no other would have had power to come between.

"But she is so far above me," he said to himself. "I feel sure that I become more and more necessary to her every day; and I will wait till



she is all ready to take me." And his dream was so sweet that he would not trust his own voice to break it.

After learning about his new office, and his election to it, she asked, —

"Any thing new?"

"Nothing special, I believe. O, yes; a letter from Wellington." And he chuckled, and almost immediately sighed.

"What says it, Alex?"

"A new brother, — splendid great fellow, — looks just like me!"

They both laughed. But Kate sighed a little, too, for she knew that a new brother meant another mouth to fill, another body to clothe, another soul to educate, and all from one purse, and that not a very long one. And there were plans.

"But Alex, you won't give up college, will you?"

"O, yes, I must. It is useless to think of it, now."

"But you could go through in two years, anywhere."

"Were it six months, or three months, I wouldn't do it. I haven't the time or the money. It would be wrong. But I mean that Beatrice shall stay at Mount Holyoke."

"Who wrote?"

"Mrs. Foster. One of her letters, you know.

I concluded that she and mother had been confabulating, and mother had been enlarging on my perfections, for she says, — 'God bless you, and make you all His own! So good a son and brother should know and love his Saviour; otherwise you will labor in vain.'"

"You say amen to that, I am sure."

"With all my heart; only," — he stopped, and then said, presently, "What does she mean by saying that otherwise I shall labor in vain?"

"She means, I suppose, that whoever builds without Christ builds upon the sand; he has no assurance that his work will last longer than he is building. You know, Sandy, that the smallest thing done, or suffered, for Christ's sake, has in it the eternal principle of good; and I believe that this goes on multiplying forever and ever. And when we get to heaven we shall find that these are the really grand deeds, while many of those which seemed great in the beginning, cannot be found. They were great in our eyes, but in God's eyes they were very little."

"You think, then, that ambition and effort are useless without the blessing of Christ?"

"Yes; worse than useless to the man himself, though God can make even the wrath of man to praise him."

"But, Katie, you know there are many great and immortal works which have been performed from the worst and weakest of motives. Do you

mean to say that the authors of these built upon the sand? ”

“ They did, so far as they are concerned. I don't consider them the real authors. These mighty works, I believe, are the reward of the saints, and in answer to their prayers, and in consequence of their holy living. Those who seem to be the originators are merely instruments God has used to do the work His children pray and strive for. That is one of the Christian's joys. In his little sphere he may seem to be doing very little, but he knows that he moves the Hand that moves the world. It will never be revealed in this life what he has originated. O, Alex, if you only knew how glorious this is you wouldn't hesitate another moment.”

And she stood in front of him, walking backwards, holding his arm with both hands, and looking into his face.

How he adored her that instant! Alex was, eminently, a man of action; but like many of us, preferred dreaming when a stern and unpleasant duty was before him, forgetting that it is only by action that the dream can be realized. It was especially true in this case. The divine purpose was the grand thing in Kate. It transfigured her in his eyes. He worshipped it, yet could not see that with her it was the *sine qua non* of life. He dreamed that she was his, yet how could it be, ever, when he lacked the one thing?

They resumed their old position; and not quite satisfied, he said, —

“ But you know how often the Bible declares that every man shall be rewarded according to his works.”

“ And so he is. But the truth is, Sandy, that he never knows, in this life, just what results belong to him. That is what makes it such an awfully solemn thing to live, and that is why it is so essential that the soul be converted.”

“ But, Katie, suppose a man does a good deed from pure and disinterested motives, but with no religious principle,—is it lost to him? ”

“ If he does it from amiability, or a kind of natural goodness, I see in it no virtue, nothing deserving of reward. And it is difficult to conceive of thorough disinterestedness in one not religious. If you read the twenty-fifth of Matthew carefully, I think you will see there that only two classes of men and of motives are recognized: one for Christ, one not for Him. There is no middle ground.”

It was seven o'clock, and more, and a glorious night. The wind had gone down with the sun, and left the air clear and bracing, and the harvest moon had risen and shivered the solemn purple which night had just folded around the distant hills; everything was wide awake and respondent.

“ Just the night for lovers and a long walk,”



thought Alex, but he was too familiar with that arm and hand to mistake their motion, so he obeyed with a will.

Kate was an orphan, and lived in the family of her uncle, her mother's brother, whose name also was Fairbanks, — her father and mother being remote cousins. It was a wide, old-fashioned, three-story house, with a flat roof and enormous chimneys, and boasting of some modern improvements, situated on a broad street faced with magnificent elms, on the ascent of a hill, with grass and shrubbery and trees beautifully kept. The gate swung noiselessly, and the trim flower-beds chilled her just a little more as they walked moderately up the yard.

"You'll come in?" she said, as he opened the door and set the valise inside.

"Not to-night," he replied, giving her Mrs. Foster's letter. "I have to close up my old business. Good night, pleasant dreams!" shaking her hand.

She had entered, then turned.

"O, Alex, what is the name of this new candidate for our affection?"

"John G. Whittier," and his merry laugh rippled through the trees and rang out into the street; and the forlorn old couple next door, just crawling out, looked over and wondered why the Lord had not remembered them and given such a son for their old age; and on the side-walk, a

sentimental maiden, sighing for a lover, looked enviously at Kate, and lingered behind the syringa; but the young man passed out, and giving her a keen glance, walked briskly the other way.

There was no light in the hall, but a door within opened, and a voice spoke decidedly, though not sharply:

"Wipe your feet, Katie."

What a pleasant room it was. Twenty feet square and ten feet high, it would have been too large but for its fullness and harmonious arrangement. A delicate buff paper reflected all the light of the fire and the solar lamp, and absorbed none; the green velvet border and the window shades were in perfect concord; the carpet, a fine three-ply, was in large scrolls of green and buff; a luxuriant ivy nearly covered one wall, while an acacia filled the bay-window; there were books and pictures in abundance; and, more inviting than all, a rich, rosewood piano, with the purest of keys, stood open, cutting off one of the angles of the spacious parlor. There were six persons: Aunt Maria and five children. Aunt Maria was a tall, exceedingly light-complexioned woman, with tough muscles and tougher nerves, and emphatically blue eyes, — not clear, like the sky, but opaque, like blue-berries; her cheeks were a little rough and of an opaque red, and she would have been handsome but for some hard

lines about the face and a mouth which said, "I do my duty, and I expect you to do yours." Kate was glad to sit down and throw her garments over the arm of the sofa.

"Sarah Maria, take your cousin's things, and carry them right up stairs. We're all in a clutter."

"O, dear, I don't want to, mother. I'm reading. Can't Ruth?"

Ruth was working out an algebraic problem, but she prepared to move.

"No, Ruth," said Kate. "I am going myself, presently."

"You haven't had any supper, I suppose," spoke Aunt Maria, in a tone which said as plain as words could say it, "You would have had some, if you had any consideration for me."

"No, Aunt, I have not."

"I've managed to keep the tea hot, but the biscuits are all cold, I suppose," continued her aunt, in a kind of inevitable voice.

"We had strawberry preserves for supper," whispered little Fanny, sidling up to Kate.

"Is that what makes you so sweet?" and she wrapped the child in her arms, and buried her face among the roses and dimples.

"What are we reading?" she asked, looking over Sarah's shoulder. "Dombey and Son! Good, is it?"

Sarah looked up, with tears in her eyes.

"I'll go in a minute, Katie, but I'm just reading about little Paul's death."

"Sit still, child; I don't need you;" but she lingered a moment to lift and admire the mass of chestnut curls which cascaded and rolled and tumbled over the head and shoulders of her young cousin.

Fanny had arrayed herself in the hat and long cloak, and was prancing around the room, admiring her long train.

"Come, Pussy," said Kate, taking her hand and leading the way.

When they came down they found Ruth in the dining-room, and everything in readiness. Immediately, the boys appeared, and soon after, Sarah, who discovered that the new arrival was more interesting and delightful even than Dombey and Son.

"You don't want 'em, do you, Katie?" was the eager question of Will, one of the trio who had been eyeing, for some time, the tempting little dish by her plate, as yet untasted.

"No, Willie; you can have them, if you want them."

"Now that's mean," whined Fanny. "I wanted half."

"Never mind, darling; I've something for you in my bag."

"And for me, too?" squealed Charley, standing on his head.

"Yes, for you, too. Don't do that, Charley, you'll burst a blood-vessel."

"And me, too?" chimed Will, lapping the spoon inside and out.

"We'll see pretty soon."

"Golly, aint it prime?" smacked Charley, seizing the plate in Will's hand, and dexterously appropriating with his tongue the last mouthful.

"There, you good-for-nothing rascal, take that, and that," cried the boy, dealing his brother several hard blows with his fist.

"Boys, I'm ashamed of you," said Kate, severely. "Here, Charley, come with me."

Aunt Maria was sitting before the fire, finishing off a stocking, and Kate dropped down in the chair opposite her. There was one luxury Uncle Fairbanks always would have in cold weather, and that was an open wood fire, and this was the first of the season. The brass fender and andirons were as bright as rotten-stone and elbow-grease could make them. The green back-log lasted several days at this season, and the wood was so arranged as to give the most light and heat and the least smoke. That fire and its mistress understood each other perfectly. Clumsy brands never tumbled down, scattering splinters and ashes all over the hearth, but every individual stick of it burned through and through, and, like the Deacon's one-horse shay, fell all at once, in one decorous heap of clean, bright coals, exactly in the middle; and

in time, these dissolved in ashes, just as clean. That fire never smoked, and it never snapped, for never a beech or a hemlock stick found its way in there,—only straight, handsome clefts of hard maple and yellow birch, all seasoned under cover.

"Who has been here?" inquired Kate, diving in her satchel for the children's presents.

"Let me see. The day you went away Miss Brewster called, and left those flowers on the table there, with her love, and said there would be a teacher's meeting to-morrow evening; and yesterday, Mrs. Andrews ran over to borrow the flatirons and a cup of vinegar, and wanted you to be sure to go in to see Bessie this week, for she is going Monday."

"Isn't she any better?"

"No, and never will be, in my opinion, till they let doctors alone. They've wasted money enough on that child's hip to buy a house. No wonder they're always borrowing. That vinegar hasn't come back yet, and it isn't at all likely it ever will, now. It's all nonsense, her making spiced pickles! But she says Bessie hasn't any appetite, and wants them. I shouldn't think she would have any appetite. Such management! If she was my child she'd be on her feet very quick. Why, that woman staid in my kitchen a whole hour! I was making cookies, and there she sat and talked and talked, with three pies in

the oven at home, and all her week's wash waiting to be ironed. After a while, Johnnie came running over, with a hole in the seat of his pants as big as my hand, and said that Georgie had fallen into the pig-sty and daubed himself from head to foot, and she must come right home. And she got up to go, and stood and stood in the door talking till Georgie got out of patience, and over he came. Such a sight you never saw,—and all over my clean steps! But it never hurried her a bit, and the first thing I knew, that dirty boy was right in my kitchen. I saw what he was after, and I gave each of them a cookie, and sent one to Bessie, and so I got rid of them. I do hate to see such folks!”

“Nobody else?” asked Kate, with a prodigious yawn.

“That's all, I believe. O, no, Cousin John dropped in, and left these big books for you to read and criticise,—just as if there wasn't anything else to be done in this house,—and wants you to go up there the first of the week. It's astonishing strange that a healthy man like him can't find better business than writing books.”

“Any letters?”

“Yes, two. There they are, under your music.”

One was from Mrs. Foster, and Kate reserved them for bed-time delectation.

A few minutes' pause, then, —

“Where's Uncle?”

“O, he had an early supper, and went off. Widow Billings is going to sell her wood-lot, — and a very foolish woman she is, too, — and he has gone to make out the papers; and after that he's going to the school-meeting; and what time he'll get home nobody knows.” And she knit very fast. “William Henry, stop drumming, and take your feet off the rungs of the chair. Sarah Maria, sit up straight; you'll be as crooked as a ram's horn. Come, Fanny, it's your bed-time; stand here, and let me undo your clothes, and be sure and shake everything out, and mind and not step on the pins.”

When all were gone she said, —

“I'm tired to death!”

“I would go to bed, then, if I were you,” ventured Kate.

“That sounds just like you! Don't you know as well as I do, that he'd leave his boots right in the middle of the floor, and turn all the papers wrong side out? — and a fine looking room I should have in the morning, — and likely as not never fasten the door.”

Kate knew it would be useless offering to sit up instead, so she said good-night, and took her lamp. There was no kiss, — Aunt Maria didn't like being “fussed over.”

When she awoke the sun was shining broadly into the room. She felt stiff and cold, but dressed

quickly, and went down. The house was sweet with the morning air, for every chamber had a door and window wide open, and she could not help contrasting the delightful order and cleanliness with the hurried, slovenly home she had that week seen.

They were at the table. Aunt Maria looked like a pink, and the children like sweet peas. Uncle said,—

“Well, daughter, I’m glad to see you. Didn’t get sick, did you?”

The table was so inviting. Aunt used a white cloth, always. If there was any dirt, she said, she wanted to see it. The eggs were cooked just enough, and the muffins were so piled on the plate that no refractory, insubordinate one could find any excuse for rolling off, and everything was so savory.

The children spoke when they were spoken to.

“Sarah Maria, did you take the clothes off the beds, the broad hem over the back of the chair?”

“Yes, ma’am.”

Aunt Maria went on.

“O, father, you’d better write up to Mrs. Flint to-day, and see if she can lay down our winter butter, it’s high time. And I do hope you’ll have that ladder mended and hung, to-day. Yesterday, the horse stepped on it and broke two of the rounds; and I wish you’d get some corned beef to boil to-morrow for Sunday, and be sure

and get a brisket piece, or one that will press nice, a streak of fat and a streak of lean,—you never do get a good piece,—and have it sent up to-night, so it can go on early in the morning. We want some eggs, too; eggs are no real estate in this house.”

“I will see to it,” he answered quietly. And Kate thought, as she looked at him, that of all the great and good men she had lately seen there was not one she honored so much as him. He was scarcely as tall as his wife, but of finer texture, both of soul and body; his head was bald on the crown, and the jet black hair and beard were fast turning white. The dark eyes were both penetrating and pleasant; the same mixed expression was on his face which we have described in Kate, and it was easy to see he had the same antagonisms of character. He looked like a student, with his thin face, careful dress, and dreamy, abstracted air; but nobody ever caught him napping. He was the poor man’s lawyer, helping everybody,—doing everybody’s business for nothing, his wife said. He was banker for a great many, but never had much money of his own,—of course not. Didn’t they go to him in all their quarrels, with whole bushels of evidence; and how unweariedly he heard it all, asking only a question or two, and when the long story was ended, with one stroke he cut the knot which

had been months and years in tying. There was a little advice, —

“Keep out of the law,— don’t meddle. Easy blows kill the devil.” And they went away thinking they had done it all themselves, and what very clever men they were.

But her reverie was interrupted:

“Katie, I’m going to commence house-cleaning, to-day.” Wasn’t it house-cleaning every day in the year in that house? “And I shall take the parlor-chamber first, and I’d like to have you make some molasses gingerbread, and see to the dinner. And remember, that piano isn’t going to be opened till two o’clock.”

Katie blushed very red, and sighed a little sigh, for didn’t her fingers itch that very minute to run over the keys? And what inspiration it would be for the morning’s work. How strange it is that so many excellent ones in the world think that nothing is work which does not promote directly the welfare of the body.

She must have looked a little sober, for her aunt said, —

“Why can’t you tell something about your visit? You’re just like a stranger in the house, and everybody can’t be going about.”

There are very few places where you would no more think of guarding your inner treasures than you would your watch, but Katie knew that Aunt

Maria’s presence was not one of them. How should she tell of the heart-warming and soul-quickenings she had received in those meetings, or of her experience on the boat?

She told of the splendid church, and distinguished speakers, and described the scene upon the water, though she did not care to have it known that she was on deck.

After prayers Sarah Maria made the beds,— no hills or hollows, capes or bays, in those beds, and every pillow shaken up to its remotest feather,— and quiet little Ruth washed the dishes. Kate went to the kitchen. She could do the work as well as her aunt, and she had a mastery of details and a knowledge of general principles her aunt had not, so she was quicker, and she was commonly allowed to do all she would.

It was eleven o’clock, and she was cutting up a squash which was much too hard for her, when her aunt appeared, with a handkerchief tied over her head, a pail of suds in one hand and a broom in the other. She broke out:

“I guess I’ve told father about that leaky gutter a dozen times, and he always said he’d attend to it and didn’t, and never told me he was going to have the house shingled, and now they’re putting up the staging, so I suppose that ladder’ll get mended, and that’s off my mind. I never saw the beat of these Fairbankses; they’re so meek and quiet like, you think they’re going



to do just as you tell 'em, and they go right off and do as they're a mind to; and do what you will, you can't out-general 'em."

She began with a little asperity, but her tone softened beautifully as she ended. Wasn't it a matter of pride and joy to her that her husband's voice was always heard in public councils, when there were a hundred men in the place with more money? And, woman like, she was secretly pleased to meet a will that could command her own.

She had declared, many times, that her will was invincible; but she made the mistake which positive minds are very apt to make, confounding strong will and self-will. Self-will, however tenacious, is weak and fettered and fruitless always; a strong will may yield the sooner; and no will is strong and free and assured of results, which is not disciplined and in subjection to a Higher.

Kate had suspended her work while her aunt spoke, absorbed more, however, by her own reflections than by anything without. But she attacked the squash again.

"Mercy, child, what ails you? You're as white as a sheet!" exclaimed her aunt, seizing her by the shoulder and putting her into a chair. "Sit down! How hot your hands are! Let me see your tongue! Now you've got cold, and you must go to bed this very minute and take a sweat, or you'll be down with a fever."

If there was one thing Aunt Maria was good for it was breaking up a fever; it was in just such sharp exigencies that her energies and zeal were most illustrious. She always said that there was no need of anybody's having a fever; and if people only had pluck and common sense they would not get sick at all, and there is some truth in it. Steaming between hot water jugs, and under a load of blankets and comforters, our friend Kate at length fell asleep from sheer exhaustion. When she awoke the sun had long turned, the superfluous clothing had been removed, and, though she felt weak, was very comfortable. She was glad to be alone, so she lay and thought about her own life, — past, present, and future. Not very eventful, certainly, as yet, but to one of her susceptibilities, very rich and full.

## CHAPTER III.

## HER SUBJECTS.

Just twenty-four years had passed since she was christened Catherine Bigelow. The first twelve years she lived in Beverly, with her mother and brother Sammy, who was four years her senior. Her father was a ship-master, and went long voyages to the old world. She knew he was intemperate, and that her mother was sadder than ever when he came home. This mother she worshipped, so still, so sweet, and so sorrowful. She was Uncle Fairbanks's sister, and Aunt Maria said she was shiftless, and would have been much better off had she worked more and read less, which was, perhaps, true.

When Kate was twelve her mother died of lingering consumption. It was the first grief, and a terrible one, but her elastic temperament ere long rebounded, and she was sent to a boarding school; not a modern fashionable one, but one

in which Wisdom is the principal thing. The intellectual standard was high, but whatever else the pupil might be or do, she was made to feel that the highest education is of the heart, and that, without it, all else is in vain.

Just before leaving school, at eighteen, her father died, and it was found that only a thousand dollars remained to her. Uncle said it should not be touched, not even the interest of it, but that she should have a home with him, and do and have the same as the others, as long as she could be contented. Her aunt said they couldn't afford it, and that they had enough of their own, and if there was any thankless business in this world it was taking care of other folks' children. But she never thought of opposing her husband when his mind was made up; and she was really kind at heart and would, very likely, have taken the child of her own accord. And though she was economical,—no waste of time, or money, or any forces,—there was no meanness in her, as everybody knew who had worked for her or with her. To her mind there was no generosity without justice, and the objects of her charity were always wisely selected.

Kate had been in her new home about a year, when Sammy came to die. He had been a wild, fast boy, wasting everything. In the months that he lived he saw the gifts he had squandered, and begged for life to redeem. But at length he



submitted, and prepared to die, and Kate helped him to make the last sad arrangements. The hour came, and he struggled very hard. O, it was horrible! But the next day the look of suffering was all gone, and his face had the beauty of childhood, — the lithe figure, the artist fingers, the soft, sunny curls, the heavy fringes over the deep, violet eyes. They laid them all down, and Kate was left alone.

Then she taught for a year in two places, but did not find the work suited to her, and so returned quite broken down; and, with the exception of some visits abroad, her life was unvarying, as we have seen. Sometimes her aunt seemed a little hard, but she knew that those literal, practical energies, that large family, the busy life, had been the best possible discipline for her overgrown ideality; that housework had been the salvation of her body and mind.

It might seem a little strange that, with her warm, loving nature, she had never thought of marriage as essential to her happiness; but she had large resources of head and heart, and, to tell the truth, those young men of her own age, whom she had met, appeared to her very much younger than herself, and her ideal was very high, and it must be confessed, not wholly practicable. Above all, she was perplexed about herself. Life was not the simple thing she had expected. She had resolved to make the most of

every gift and opportunity, and to do the smallest thing with purpose, and holy purpose, and hoped thus to go on, smoothly rounding and ripening unto perfection. She was sure she knew some such lives. But there had been a development of evil as well as of good, and a complexity of powers and sympathies that puzzled her extremely. Others, gentlemen particularly, did not see her all round. As she said of herself, —

“Sometimes I meet one who seems wholly in sympathy with me, or my complement, when something occurs that turns me round to my other side, and I find he isn’t there at all, and may be somebody else is.”

She could only wait for time and events to reveal. The experience of the day before had opened to her possibilities in her nature of which she had hardly dreamed, and she could not help wishing for a recurrence of it. Should she see him again? She was sure of it.

How she did love those children! What comforts they were, and what trials! They seemed almost like her own; for she understood their natures, wants, and troubles, far better than their mother did, and was, usually, their umpire and mediator. Aunt Maria supported an immense weight of ostensible government, which amounted to very little; while Kate, who was, nominally, without position in her uncle’s family, and who claimed nothing, was, virtually, the

ruler, the centre, and soul of the house. Having never sought this ascendancy, she was scarcely conscious of it. It was the natural, inevitable result of power of mind and character.

Sarah was just bursting into womanhood, — handsome, brilliant, and careless, — fond of novel-reading, and a great favorite with the young people. How much heart she possessed it was impossible to say; but Kate knew better than anybody else that this might be suddenly and profoundly stirred, so she watched her anxiously.

Ruth was thirteen, — small and homely, with straight tow-colored hair, and little, scrawly hands, — said nothing, but carried her point, and was selfishly inclined, for, said she, "If I don't look out for my rights, who will?" Kate had reasoned with her, and she was trying hard to be good, though what her little triumphs cost no one knew, perhaps, on earth. Will was a young despot and everybody's torment, and in a perpetual quarrel with Sarah; Charley was a good-tempered, ingenious child, and Fanny the pet. Ruth had a firm friend, a little older than herself. Nathan Strong had no sisters, and no pleasant home; so when he called every day for Ruth, on the way to school, nobody thought it meant anything, but Ruth said to Kate, "I guess people will find out one of these days that it does mean something."

Nathan was clumsy and matter-of-fact, but Uncle said, "That boy understands himself."

Kate was just dozing off again, when the door opened very softly, a little head was put in, and a little voice said, "You asleep, Katie?"

"No, darling, what is it?"

Then the whole of little Fanny appeared, with a doll almost as large as herself, which she laid with no little care and exertion on the bed.

"I've been waiting ever and ever so long for you to wake up, because Lady Matilda is going to be presented to-night, and I don't know whether to have her train looped up with pink or blue. And I want some shoo-flies, too. Which would you have?"

"I think I would have pink; you see she has black hair and eyes."

"That's what I thought," said Fanny, "but I haven't any pink."

"But I have. If you will look in the upper drawer, at the left-hand corner, you will find it." Fanny drew it out. "Now my work-basket and a shawl." And Kate sat up in bed and made pink shoo-flies for Lady Matilda.

The faintest little tap on the door, and she sang out, —

"Come in, Ruthy!" and Ruth appeared behind a gorgeous collection of maple leaves, crimson, orange, green, and the richest browns. She held them up between Kate and the window.

"Splendid!" exclaimed Kate.

"Splendiferous!" cried Fanny, clapping her hands, and jumping up and down.

"But where did you get them so early?"

"Yes, I know it's early." Ruth had something else on her mind. "O, Kate, Sarah wanted me to ask you to get Mother to let her have a party and invite some of the academy," —

Ruth stopped. There was a tremendous uproar below, and a rushing up stairs, and Sarah burst into the room, banged the door and bolted it. Kate thought a hammer had struck her temples. Immediately there was a kicking and storming without.

"Let me in, or I'll stave the door down!"

"Open the door, Sarah," said Kate.

"I can't. He'll pull my hair all out, he says he will!" the girl replied, all out of breath.

"No, he won't. Open the door," Kate repeated.

Sarah drew the bolt, and Will rushed in foaming with passion. He started a little on seeing his cousin, then turned on his sister: "Where's my arrows? Give me my arrows!"

"I haven't got your arrows," she retorted, hotly.

"Yes, you have. Where are they?"

"They're out under the hedge, by the lilac bush. Now be off!"

"That's a likely story. So, Miss Sallie!" he

sneered, "you've been walking on the sly with Fred Hamilton three times, — Jim Fuller says so. See if I don't tell Mother; and then I guess you'll catch it!"

"Tell her, if you dare, and I'll tell her how you went up the river the other night."

"Hullo, Katie, how are ye?" shouted Charley, swinging on the door. "What's the row? My, what jolly leaves!" and turning a summerset, he landed on the bed.

Fanny screamed, —

"O, Katie, make him stop! He's put his dirty shoes right on Matilda's dress." And she began to cry.

"Oh, children!" groaned Kate. But she collected herself, immediately, and said, quietly, — "I'm tired and faint, now; but after tea I'll go down, and we'll have a good time," and just at that moment her aunt appeared with a bowl of gruel, and they all scattered. They were never quite themselves with their mother.

Kate did not go down till morning. It was Saturday, and no school, and both girls appealed to her about the party; and on reflection she was sure it was best. Sarah was growing to be a woman, or should be, and childish treatment was not good for her. If possible, the underhand habits she was acquiring should be broken up, and she must learn not to be ashamed of any

right thing in her. So after dinner Kate broached the subject to her aunt, who said no, as she expected; but at length yielded, as usual, in her ungracious fashion.

"I don't care, if you will make the cake and the tarts, and stay in the room all the time, so they needn't tear the house down."

Wednesday evening of the coming week was decided upon, and Fred Hamilton was invited, and ten others, whom Nathan knew to be real gentlemen. Kate was everywhere: in the kitchen, in the parlor, in the dining-room. The tables were beautiful, and the parlors superb. Plenty more bright leaves were found, and the most brilliant red proved the best for the evening. And these were gathered in clusters, and with them they draped the windows and festooned the walls and wreathed the pictures, so that when lights were brought in at six, the effect was indescribable. Uncle said he never saw any thing so fine. Fanny jumped right up and down, and Charley turned three summersets, and walked on his head, as he always did when happiest.

They came early, — a charming group. First they had music, then games, and after supper charades, which were best of all. Sarah had decided talent for these, and Kate thought she had never seen her appear so well. Between the scenes she talked with Fred Hamilton. She

liked his fine, ingenuous face, and remarked that, for a youth of seventeen he was wonderfully mature. He was attracted by Sarah, and said she was a noble girl, and very thoughtful; and their long walks had been for the purpose of talking on serious things. This was the first intimation Kate had of Sarah's desire for a better life.

After dinner, the next day, as she was helping Ruth, Charley shouted, —

"By George! here's some tall craft." And looking out the window, her eyes fell on the very one she had longed and expected to see.

He fastened his horse and walked up the yard. A little flurried, she sent Sarah to the door, and slipped into the kitchen to recover her composure. In a moment she returned, and found both the boys at the key-hole, and Charley said, —

"You're a brick, Katie!"

She was not much surprised when Mr. Sterne invited her to ride, and it seemed the most natural thing in the world that she should go. They drove till sundown, and the long interview was all that either could have wished.

One afternoon, a week later, Kate was sitting in her room, reading, when Sarah, heated and flushed, came in, knelt down by her side, buried her face in her lap, and burst into tears. "What is it, love? Tell me," said Kate, beseechingly.

Sarah lifted her head. "Oh, I want to be a Christian, but I can't, — never, never!"

"Why not, dear?" asked Kate, fondly stroking the moist, tangled hair.

"Because I hate Will so," she cried passionately. "I hate him! You might kill me, but I couldn't love him," and she threw herself on the floor in an agony of despair.

Kate felt that a long and bitter struggle was to come, and she was right.

## CHAPTER IV.

### QUEEN ELIZABETH.—EPISODE WITH RUSTIC CHIVALRY.

But we will go back a few years, to the teaching-life of our heroine. The account begins in her own words, in a letter to her friend, Mrs. King. She taught first a district school among the New Hampshire hills; afterwards an academy far down the coast of Maine, on the very border of these United States.

JACKSON, AUGUST 23.

My dear Mrs. King:

You ask me if I enjoy the academy as well as the district school. I cannot say that I do. Children are more lovable and tractable at six than at sixteen. But I liked the people so much. You know I taught in Wellington, way down East, only twenty miles from the jumping-off place. The women were the finest I ever saw, — educated, healthy, handsome,

and happy. Very few of them kept any help; but you might see them out in cambric and cuffs at nine o'clock in the morning, — always elegant, always cheerful, always helpful.

I wish I could say as much for their husbands. But they are splendid for grafting. Just take one of those lordly, gnarled oaks to Boston, and let merciless society knock off his top-knot, and lop off his big, crotchety boughs, and dig out his thorns, scour him, scrape him, and prune him, and then bud him, and there will be as fine a growth as one would wish to see. Then he is fit to go down to Wellington and get a vine, and not before.

I have always wondered how it happened that all the handsome men and all the smart men, in Boston, came from Maine. I see now how it is.

Soon after my arrival in Wellington I was invited, for the first time in my life, to join a Shaksperian Club. The president of the society, and best reader, was Mrs. Foster, a lady of fifty-two. Such a royal woman! I call her Queen Elizabeth. She reads Shakspeare just as she does everything else, — as if it were the business of her life. She seemed always to have made the play all her own; and I have heard readings on the stage not half as expressive or impressive. She is the most thoroughly accomplished person I ever saw, in manners, mind, and heart. She knows Latin and Greek like a professor, reads French

and German with ease, and her book-shelves contain the very cream of English literature. For a long time she has been a contributor to a leading Quarterly, and to several papers, and in this way she has helped sustain the family and educate her son, who is a rising clergyman in a Western city; and a devoted, admiring son he is, too.

Two lovely daughters died in early womanhood, one just married. The younger son has a weak, or demented intellect, caused by a fall in childhood, that injured the brain. Her husband is a paralytic, and partially disabled. He seems very unlike the able, enterprising men one meets everywhere in Maine, — having one of those exquisitely sensitive organizations, which is either a great fortune or a great misfortune, according to circumstances. There is in him precisely the charm of Hawthorne's books. He should have grown up with all the appliances and helps of wealth and culture; but compelled to earn his living from his boyhood, his life seems a little blighted, while, under other conditions, it might have been a glorious blossom. This is one of the things which make the ways of Providence so inscrutable, so strange, so hard to trust.

Mrs. Foster takes care of these invalids, does all the work, making the butter of four cows, and her hands are rough and misshapen with



hard work. In frame and feature she is somewhat large, and rather plain, I thought at first; but when she spoke and smiled I was charmed. She wears, always, in the afternoon, what we seldom see now,—a very full bosom of soft, white lace, reaching nearly to the bottom of the waist. It is very becoming and beautiful. She is ever cordial and merry, the life of every company. She watches with the sick, and lays out the dead. She does every thing, and the people follow in her wake, though she never seems to be leading. Is anybody in arrears with sewing, she is the first to offer a hand; does a poor man lose his cow, she is the one to start a subscription; has the minister come to a standstill in his sermon, or got discouraged in his work, he goes straight to her for help and cheer. She is everybody's confidant and prime minister, and there is not a young person in the place who does not feel, directly, her influence. On seeing all this, I said, "It is wonderful, indeed; but she is well and strong, and work is so easy, then." You see that was a little plea for my own selfishness and indolence.

When school closed I was quite worn out, and she begged me to spend two or three weeks with her before leaving for home. She came early, one afternoon, with her old-fashioned horse and chaise, and said she wanted to take me to several of her favorite spots. So we drove right into the

open country, between the fields of ripening, glistening barley, waving corn and freshly-mown grass, to the deep woods beyond.

"I don't see how one can live in the city," she said. "I do so love the bobolink,"—as one alighted on the fence, close by, and poured out a volume of his chattering music. She chirped at him, as he eyed us closely, with his head on one side, and he warbled and trilled enough to split his throat.

"This wood," she said, "is the only place where I hear the thrush; but I fear he won't favor us to-day."

It was a lovely spot. A crazy little brook tumbled over the rocks, and played hide-and-seek in the alders; and the tiny trout and minnows scud at our approach, and hid in the deep shade of the moss-grown trees and stones; the sombre firs, the graceful hemlocks, and the straight-limbed beeches, were talking pleasant things among themselves, and we listened to their secrets. Then we looked off an eminence, the highest in the town. That line of sparkling light in the southern horizon was the sea, with two or three sails just visible. Miles and miles to the north were towering hills; and rolled out between us and them were vast spaces of undulating surface, with cloud-shadows flitting here and there over the lights and shades of the landscape.

I remarked how the ledge protruded on the

ridge under our feet, and jutted out oddly on each side of the road.

"Yes," she replied, "this is a curious formation. I wanted you to see it. I have found most beautiful crystals here, and a few that were tinted. And there are garnets in profusion. Come!"

She alighted, as she spoke, and I followed her over the fence, and we sat down on the ragged cliff. She produced a hammer and knocked off several rough corners, and the larger and coarser jewels rolled out, but the pure quality, imbedded in the stone, sparkled in the sunlight.

"Real garnets," she said; "fit for a queen. "I have a child's delight in this," she added, striking with her hammer the boulders and pebbles lying around. "Who would think that these dead, tiresome rocks were so full of life and beauty! Sometimes I think they are like many souls around us, they seem so commonplace, so begrimed with the world's dust, and right in our way; but some day death comes with his hammer and opens these souls, and who shall tell the freshness and the glory revealed?"

While I was examining the pebbles she had split, she strolled into a clump of bushes, and soon she called me to see some moss in her hand.

"I never saw any such!" I exclaimed. "It is exquisite! What is it?"

"Yes, it is rare. I have never found it else-

where." And she gave the botanical name, which I forget. She put some into a basket, and I found she was provided, also, with a trowel, knife, scissors, and a book in which to place her ferns as soon as they were gathered.

She knows all about shells, too, and has a valuable collection which a sea-captain brought to her. When she lights upon a peculiar spider, or lady-bug, she gives him a long, hard name, and a drop of ether on his nose, and he is on exhibition. She can trace all the constellations, and knows always just where to look for the planets.

On our return, at five o'clock, she took the harness off the horse and let him loose in a pasture leading out of the yard. Then she made a fire, and filled the tea-kettle at the well. After supper she read the paper to her husband, advertisements and all. Turning to me, she said, as she began,—

"Mr. Foster has the gallantry to think my interpretation better than his own."

As he cannot read a word, and could, by no possibility, hold a book or even a paper, I thought it very gracefully put. [I feel guilty to tell you this, because she is so careful to screen his infirmities; but I want you to know her, and this is one of her beautiful traits.]

She nursed me like a baby, and talked to me like a woman. One day she lay down on the lounge, and bade me sit by her, saying,—



"It is better for me to rest a while every day."

"You are not quite well, then?" I observed, and must have looked at her a little sharply, for she said,—

"You saucy little puss!"

I was in a dreadful flutter, and the blood was all in my face,—you know my dreadful blushing, always at the wrong minute. Such a hugging as she gave me, and kissed my eyes and lips.

"How I should like to have you live here, and be my daughter," she said. "But it would be dull for you, wouldn't it?"

Dull with her! But Uncle would never consent to that.

Presently, she said,—

"I will tell you, Kitty, though it is scarcely known out of the house, and I do not care to have it talked of in the village. It is a cancer, not the worst kind, and physicians say it won't kill me,—certainly not very soon; but there is pain all the time, and sometimes severe, and I have to favor my left arm."

I remembered, then, having seen her bite her lips more than once, as with a sudden twinge, and she said it was that.

She continued,—

"I think it would be easier to die than to live and suffer, but I trust I am willing to do just what my Saviour knows is best for me." And she closed her eyes. I shall never forget her face

at that moment. Were I to meet her in heaven, I don't know how it could be different.

You may think that such a woman should have a higher and larger sphere. But she says, —

"It will be time enough to talk of that when I can fill the sphere God has already given me. When I am cleaning a chicken, or spreading a poultice, I have this to think of: 'He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much.' And if I can do my work in such a way that those who come after will not need to undo it, or do it over, I feel assured it will be accepted, and that it is all that I can do."

An incident occurred that year of which Kate makes no mention in her letter, and we will give it.

Saturday was a holiday, and she was frequently invited out for the day, or over Sunday. Late one Friday afternoon, in March, she went home with two of her pupils, to whom she was much attached, who lived six miles away, in an adjoining town. They passed many substantial and handsome farm-houses, and at length drew up before a large, square, old-fashioned building, time-colored, and wholly innocent of blinds and trees. But all within was of the warmest and most generous nature possible.

Joe and Hannah Blake had no mother, but their father's sister, a widow with no child of her

own, kept the house. Aunt Hepsy was gray, crooked and wrinkled, but her heart was large and tender, and her head not a poor one. There is no hospitality like that of a country farm-house. The front room is opened, and the quaint old furniture glistens anew with rubbing and oil, and blazes in the light of the infrequent fire; ancient damask and fine crockery, precious heir-looms that seldom see the light, are none too good for the welcomed guest, the fattest turkey is killed, and endless pies are baked in the old-fashioned brick oven, and the cream is the yellowest and the sweetest.

Kate was suffering from a head-ache, induced by the day's work and the ride in the cold air, and she was carefully hoisted into the most capacious chair in the world, with an enormous feather cushion, and stuffed all up and down and inside and out. Rosy, dimpled Hannah sat on the arm, and brushed her hair for a full hour; and Aunt Hepsy knelt down and took off her shoes and stockings, and rubbed her feet till they were all a-glow, and by eight o'clock she was wholly refreshed and relieved.

In the morning she was taken all over the house. She explored the cellar, stocked with everything a farm produces, and looked out of the garret windows which illumined, dimly, untold treasures and accumulations; she visited the pig-

gery and the hennery, and looked at the baby lambs, and even stroked the fiery colts on their noses. And Farmer Blake said to his sister, —

“I never see the likes o' her, — an' a lady, too. She knows the good pints of a critter ez well ez I do, an' better; an' ez quick ez she looked ole Brindle in the face she sez, ‘That's yer best milker.’”

Three o'clock came, and she must go; so Mr. Blake said he would take her along, and would she ride behind the four-year-old? He was very gay, and she was little afraid, so the old white horse came to the door, not clipped, certainly, and Kate thought not groomed for the winter; but very likely she didn't know.

Joe had put some fresh straw in the bottom of the sleigh, out of pure love for her; Hannah kissed her on both cheeks; Aunt Hepsy put into her hand a huge parcel of doughnuts, for which she had expressed a liking, and they all tucked her up over and over again in the buffalo skins, which were much the worse for wear.

“You sure you're warm enough, now?” said Aunt Hepsy, slipping a large hot soap-stone under her feet, and a small one into her muff.

“O, yes, thank you; you are all so kind!” And Kate drew the dear, motherly old face down to her own.

Farmer Blake was a large, good-looking man, with iron-gray hair, and a little stiff in his

joints. With some difficulty he settled himself, and giving the animal a cut with the fraction of a whip he carried, said, "Git up, Jenny!" They started off like the wind. It pleased him. "This ere ole mare is well nigh onto thirty year old, an' she's jest ez spry over the road ez ever she was. Powerful warm weather for the time o' year!" and he twitched at his comforter. Kate thought it very cold.

A little farther on, he said, "You see that air yaller house over the medder, an' up the hill a piece?"

"Yes, sir; I see it."

"Wa'al, that's whar I used to go a-courting. She was a mighty hansum gal. Her cheeks were the reddest you ever see, an' her hair was a leetle mite red, too, an' she had a turn o' the eye, but folks gits used ter that. Warn't she a strap-per, though! ez big ez two o' some other folks," and he glanced significantly at Kate. "But she died arter all. Them ain't allers the toughest."

Finding she was expected to say something, she remarked that flesh was often gained at the expense of nervous strength.

"Ya'as, sartain; that's jes' so. But she was awful narvous, though, arter she gin out, when Hannah was a baby. She couldn't hev a rocking cheer anywheres round; an' a squeakin' door would drive 'er clean crazy." Then, fearing he had said something disparaging, he added,

"But she was a likely woman, though, — very likely, — an' a good mother."

"Are the children like their mother?"

"Wa'al, Joe is. 'Mazin' high in the instep, she was, — wouldn't hev nobody imposin' on 'er, no ways; an' Joe's jes like 'er 'bout that. But Hannah, she's like me, — soshyble and 'fectionit like," and here he glanced at Kate to see the effect of his words. "Why, them children thinks a sight o' you. I bleave Hannah would take out 'er eyes an' give 'em to yer, ef you wanted 'em. An' ez fur Joe, he thinks there ain't nobody on the face of the arth half so smart, or half so good, ez you be; an' he said, tother day, that ef he was only a matter o' ten year older he'd be arter ye like a streak o' lightnin'."

Kate was silent. He went on, —

"What a terrible pity 'tis that sich a nice, knowin' little woman ez you be shud hev ter arn 'er livin', masterin' them big boys an' gals." He cleared his throat. "What do you say, now, ter goin' up there an' livin' with me? I ain't ser young ez I was once, but I've got ez good a piece o' ground ez there is in this 'ere county; an' my taters goes straight ter Bosting, an' likely 'nough you've eat 'em up there; an' I've got eight hundred dollars in the Savin's Bank; and ez soon ez ever the fros' is out of the ground I'm goin' ter spruce up the old house,

an' break up the further pastur, — bless me, I, I'd do anything!" and he fired at the prospect.

Poor Kate! She said only, —

"I think, Mr. Blake, you will find some one much better suited to you than I can be."

He thought she referred to the disparity in years.

"O, lor, that don't make no kind o' odds, — age don't, when folks loves."

She was still obliged to decline.

"But I'll give ye a week to think about it, — a month, if you say so."

He could not be made to believe that a woman who earned her living really intended to refuse an offer so eligible. It did not occur to him that the wife of the farmer might possibly have to earn her living. When he helped her out of the sleigh, he said. —

"You think on't, now, an' don't say nothin' tu the childrun 'bout it, but jes' drop a letter in-ter the post office."

It was in May that Aunt Hepsy came to her boarding-place to do some spinning. One day, when they were alone together, she began, —

"I never see any body so cut up as he is. He jus' sets there round the kitchen stove, an' mopes an' mopes, an' don't do nothin', nor care for nothin'. I told him, time an' agin, that he warn't fit fur the likes o' you; them leetle hans

warn't made fur no sich work." And she turned her wheel with a long spool, and drew the soft, white roll into a fine, even thread. "Tain't coz I wouldn't love ter hev ye. An' ef you was a mind ter come, there ain't nothin' but I'd do ter make it easy fur ye. An' them two childrun ain't one bit o' trouble; they're jest the wellest an' the perfectest childrun in the world. But arter all, it ain't the place fur ye, an' I told 'im so. Talk about men's ph'losophy an' reason! Why, when their minds is sot on anything, — gals 'specially, — they hain't no reason nor sense, no ways. They're wus 'n our off ox, that allus goes one way when you want 'im ter go tother. Bimeby I got tired o' hevin' 'im right under foot all the time, so I sez, 'Joshuy,' sez I, 'ef you're so powerful lunsum why don't ye go an' see Widder Perce?' He was the maddest! Yer see Widder Perce lives at Miss Robinson's, the parson's, an' she's been arter 'im this two year. She's well enough, — I hain't nothin' agin her; but I could tell her what old Aunt Polly used ter tell us when we wus gals, 'Ef you want ter ketch that air steer don't you go nigh him!' Wa'al, he flared right up, jes' like a torpedy, an' sez he, 'She ain't a sarcumstance ter the little school-marm,' — an' that's so, — 'an' you jest shet up that clam-shell o' yourn, an' don't you never say Widder Perce ter me agin ez long ez you live.' And he marched out o' the house, an' I never see

him agin till mos' night. Ever sence that he's been in leetle better sperits, an' I'm in 'opes he's goin' ter git over it."

The tears were in Katie's eyes, and she started up.

"There, there, deary!" and Aunt Hepsy put her gently back in the chair. "Don't ye go ter taking on not the leastest mite, cos he'll stan' it, an' 'tain't no fault o' yourn. Men falls in love drefful easy, an' then falls out agin jest about ez quick, an' it don't hurt 'em a mite. Ef he was a woman, now, I shud be fur nussin' of 'im up,—an' he's a good brother ez ever was; but he ain't nothin' but a man, no how you ken fix it, an' their feelin's never kills 'em. When woman gets in love an' disappointed,—an' it don't make no kind o' diff'rence what the feller is; ef he ain't wurth a louse she loves an' aches all the wus,—an' there ain't nary body nor nary thing on the face o' the airth that'll comfort 'er. I've seen sich, many a time, an' I know 'em jest the minute I set eyes on 'em. There's Clary Davis, she's one. They don't say nothin', but they sort o' hoard up, an' hoard up, an' feed on't, an' bimeby they go crazy, or what's blessed, the Lord takes 'em.

"But men is different. Ez quick ez one gal shifts 'im off he runs right arter another an' another, till he's tried 'em all. An' wat's more, when I see one that thinks every woman is pos-

sessed ter git married, I know fur sartin he's hed the mitten agin an' agin. That's human natur, I suppose, or man natur,—woman natur ain't so. Ef Joshuy don't git over this it'll be the fust time sich a thing ever happened on this ere plannit. Why, a man might hev twenty wives, an' when the last one was gone he'd be jest ez ready fur the twenty fust ez he was fur the fust, an' readier."

Just then Kate was called out, and Aunt Hepsy's wheel buzzed and whizzed all the faster and the louder, to make up for lost time.

## CHAPTER V.

### AMBITIOUS YOUTH THROWS DOWN HIS CLOAK, AND IS KNIGHTED BY QUEEN CATHERINE.

It is the tenth of February, and the mercury is ten degrees below zero. The snow lies deep in Wellington, and now and then the deeply-frozen crust cracks far and wide with a burst like thunder or cannon, and the solitary boy running in the road (there are no sidewalks,) thinks he might touch the stars, they seem so near; and he starts at the perpetual snapping, like the report of many pistols, of the nails sprung by the frost from the clapboards; and one by one he sees the lights disappear from the houses, as the inmates seek protection in their beds from the ice-bound air and earth.

It is just fifteen minutes since the clock rang out nine on the mantel-piece of Mrs. Hart's cosey sitting-room. Mr. Hart and his clerk have shut up store and come in. Mr. Hart has taken the

only cushioned chair in the room; has put into the air-tight stove two more sticks of wood, one dry, the other green, which his wife brought in before tea; with a boot-jack he has wrenched off his boots, throwing one under the table, the other behind the stove; with well-directed aim he has hurled the boot-jack against a petted Maltese cat, which frightened animal, running, had found security in the lap of our friend Kate; and now the lord of the house tilts back his chair, throws his arms over his head, elevates a pair of very savory feet on the top of the stove, and, monarch of all he surveys, complacently regards his surroundings.

A few feet from him sits his wife, a sweet, dainty woman, in wine-colored thibet and white linen collar and cuffs. With marvellous quickness and nicety she gathers the skirt of a little cashmere frock; our heroine, close by, embroiders, with black worsted braid, the sleeves of the same scarlet frock, and turns ever and anon to look over a big book which the young man near slips towards her. He is reading the *Æneid*, but not having mastered the syntax fully, reads with some difficulty, and she gives him many a lift.

The sweet woman in wine-color and white linen is in evident trepidation; looks up several times and opens her mouth to speak, and then resumes her work with a nervous twitching. Has she



not a prodigious favor to ask! She wishes Kate would talk, and provoke and cheer him into good-nature. But Kate is perversely silent. It is quite safe to assert that this sweet woman in wine-color would far sooner have drawn every tooth in her head than to put forth such an announcement as this. But there is no escape.

"Husband!" this with a big tremble. She calls him husband, always.

"Well, what do you want now?"

"Lizzie needs a pair of boots."

"The deuce she does! I should like to know what she's done with the boots I bought for her a week or two ago?"

"She hasn't had any since last September. I've mended them again and again, but now they won't hold the stitches."

"The same old story over and over again. I'm tired of it. Let's see 'em!"

She lays down her work and trots her tired feet up over the stairs through the darkness and cold.

There is but one lamp, — kerosene is expensive, — she would never think of lighting another, neither does she want it. Her step is swift and light with the assurance of instinct, and her heart is warm with a mother's love.

By the glimmer of the stars she sees the four cherub faces, and kisses them all. She tucks in an arm here and a leg there, and kisses them all

over again. "Splendid!" cries Lizzie, in her sleep, — she thinks she is coasting. The mother finds the well-worn shoes, drops one instant on her knees, kisses the babies once more, and in a moment is by her husband's side.

There is no denying it, the shoes are past mending — worn out all over, top and bottom, heel and toe, binding and lacing.

"How in the world any body manages to wear out anything like that, I can't imagine!" exclaims the despairing father. Well, what'll they cost?"

"A dollar seventy-five. I could get them for a dollar and a half, but they wouldn't be half as good."

From the skirts of his coat he draws a well-filled pocket-book, and with a little ostentation spreads it open on the table. Bills of five, ten, and twenty are piled in order. It never occurs to him or to his wife that any of this is hers by right, — he is going to make her a present, — but we cannot be responsible for what Kate and the young man think. After some searching he finds a one dollar bill, lays its out, and strapping the pocket-book, returns it to its place; from his vest pocket comes a handful of small currency; there are half a dozen fifties; he puts one with the bill, but no twenty-five rewards his searching.

"Got a quarter, Alick?"

The young man produces his change, — not a great lot. “No, not a quarter; but here is a half, will that do?”

The only reply is a grunt. His lordship looks at Kate, who is that moment thinking of two quarters in her pocket, but she helps him not a bit. Finally he says, —

“Well, take the fifty, then, and fetch me back the quarter you have left.”

Kate suddenly feels that she ought to be more sociable. “Mr. Hart,” she lifts her eyes and then drops them, and there is such a wicked little smile in the corners of her mouth, which turns topsy-turvy the heart of the young man, “Wellington must be able to boast of exceedingly artistic boot-makers, if those boots you brought home the other day are a specimen of the work.”

“My soul and body, no! I sent to Bangor for them boots, paid eleven dollars, — beauties, aint they?” and rising, he takes them from the closet, and sitting down, holds one in each hand, sole up. “A splendid article, I call that!” he adds, immensely flattered by Kate’s appreciation of his fine taste.

“And those seemed to be uncommonly nice cigars which came at the same time,” and here the eyes drop again, and the smile grows repressed and wickeder, which almost drives to distraction the young man with the topsy-turvy heart, but he manages to control himself by looking out,

for the fifth time, the word *Quamuis*. His lordship, still more flattered, produces the cigars; “Three boxes — prime Havanas — half a dollar off — a good spec, I call that! Smoke offensive, Miss Fairbanks?” He knows it is offensive to his wife, so he does not need to ask her. “Have one, Alick?” without offering it.

The young man looks at Kate. He is fond of the weed, but has renounced it forever, since hearing her say it was unmanly to smoke, and beastly to chew.

“What is *abstulit* from?” he inquires, hungering for a word for himself.

“*Aufero, auferre, abstuli, ablatum*, — irregular, as you see.” All the days of his life he will never forget how sweetly she gave it.

Mr. Hart is fore-handed. He don’t need to keep a boarder, not he; but he has told his wife that she might have all the money boarders might pay. There is nobody to board but the teacher, and the money she gets, unless it happens, as it sometimes does, that the treasurer of the school has an extra lot of corn or potatoes that he wishes to turn in at the store. Mr. Hart is the village store-keeper. Wellington has a shoe-shop and a tin-shop. Shoes and tin ware are not found with Mr. Hart, but there is no other mortal want that his store will not meet. Here is the post-office, also, and every night everybody tells his wife and daughters just who has had a letter, and just



where and whom it is from; and not least among these topics of wonder, is the correspondence of the school-mistress.

Certain gentlemen of leisure may be found here at any hour; but in the evening men of various callings gather for social culture, and improvement in mind and manners. Then the man and the master is in his element, as, sitting on the counter he holds forth, like the ancient Athenian philosopher, to a listening crowd. This school has one advantage over the school of Plato: not only is there converse on questions of soul and of state, but there is the more ethereal intercourse and sympathy of pipe and tobacco. As they think and talk they puff; and the deeper they think, and higher they talk, the harder they puff, and squirt, with marvellous rapidity and precision, volleys of internal juices at all angles of the stove's legs and their own.

After this fashion the teacher teaches. He is speaking to the younger men, who have not yet tested matrimonial sweets.

"Yes, boys, I tell ye, git married, git married; it's economy. My soul and body, boys, I wasn't wuth two hundred dollars when I got married, and now I'm wuth, — well, I won't say; but I ain't ashamed on't. And it's healthy, too, — gitting married 's healthy; house as clean as a whistle, well-aired beds, dry sheets, tip-top victuals, regular habits, — I tell ye, it's healthy!"

"But every body ain't so lucky as you was," whines Xantippe's husband, who, in the school of which we are writing, is the pupil, and not the teacher.

"That's a fact," says the philosopher, in triumph. "The way is, to look sharp an' show your sense. As you make your bed, so you must lay on 't. Any man might have a first-rate wife if he only had the mind and the attractions," — and here he looks at his well-kept hands; "but I defy any body to beat my wife. My soul and body! she don't begin to wash till after breakfast, — Jim Hale, out o' them raisins! — and she gits all done by 'leven o'clock, — floor washed, and all; and you don't see no rag-tag an' bobtail on her line, and things is hung square, with the big things on the fust line. You can always tell the kind o' woman 'tis by the way she hangs out her close. My soul and body! what can you expect of one that strings 'em all of a skew, an' in scollops?" And here he throws a keen look at Eben Montgomery, who winces under this thrust at his domestic infelicities.

"An' then such soap! I *know* there ain't any body that 'll come up ter her in that. It'll turn out of a cup, an' stan' right up, an' 'll cut jest like jelly. An' she don't have no fuss, never; no nasty smell, and not a drop on the floor. I tell ye, boys, it's the day. She alwus makes soap the fust Wednesday in April, and so did her mother,

an' her gran'mother, and nobody ever knowed 'em to fail. I tell ye, there's luck in the day! "

It was the first day of April, and time to set up the leach. Alex did that. This particular day, Mrs. Hart said to Kate, —

"I don't know what it is, I never felt so before, but I do dread making soap this year, it does seem such hard work."

Kate thought it not so very strange, as Mrs. Hart's fourth little immortal was not yet out of arms, and the fifth was expected in August, but she could only make a suggestion. Mrs. Hart had found her full of ideas and expedients.

"Why don't you use potash? The soap might not be as good, but it would be far less work." This happy idea came out at dinner.

"My soul and body! potash costs money, I'd have you know. You seem to think I'm made of money."

"But the ashes are so good for the currant bushes; they wouldn't be wasted."

"Nonsense! I can get a ton of ashes for a song."

"But can't you get a boy to bring the pails of lye up, over the steps? "

"Fine work a boy would make, I guess, drop-pin the stuff all over the painted floor! You ought to see the liftin' an' the luggin' that I do! (Alex being absent he could safely say this.) Women folks needs exercise as much as men

folks; an' I've noticed you've got a dreadful foolish habit lately, — layin' down right in the middle o' the day." And here he looked at Kate, as if she might be responsible, which she was. "I reckon we should run ashore 'mazin' quick if I got spleeny an' run to bed every time I felt a pain or an ache, or the least grain tired. Precious fine ideas women folks has in these days! When they can eat three meals a day, right straight along, I'll risk 'em."

But stung a little by the tears on his wife's cheeks, he added, —

"Well, there, don't be such an' everlastin' baby! Maybe it'll be so as I can spare Alick to help ye."

But when the day came Mr. Hart went to the next town to see a military parade, and Alex was kept in the store all day.

Very bold and ambitious was this Alex! Dreams of college, even, floated through his brain; and, since the advent of our heroine, had taken shape. He had been through with Mrs. Foster's library twice, and through the minister's, also, which was scarce larger. Over the desk in the store he kept his Latin grammar open, and every time he went there, which was a great deal oftener than was necessary, his employer said, he caught and mastered some rule or principle. And there were discouragements not a few. He was the eldest of eleven children.

His father, a partially-reformed drunkard, earned a little by doing all manner of odd jobs, butchering, particularly; his mother was a slattern, but full and overflowing with the rich juices of a woman's nature. She cleaned tripe and calves' and hogs' heads, and was always ready to take in a little extra washing, or to nurse a sick neighbor, with or without pay. They lived in a hut about half way on the road to school, and Kate many times stopped to rest, and talk with this smart, original woman. The eldest girl was her pupil, and her best scholar. She knew that these calls gave much pleasure, and above all, she liked Alex, and would help him, if she could.

One afternoon, in early spring, she rapped with her knuckles on the rickety door which, she knew, led directly into the living-room of this numerous family. It was opened by a child, who laughed gleefully, and ran back, and a woman not far from forty, but looking much younger, appeared, with a six month's-old baby on her left arm.

"Bless my heart, if it isn't the mistress! Come right in, dear; wait till I move these tubs." And with her disengaged hand she jerked to the right and left several large tubs of tripe in the process of cleaning. "Set down; I'm dreadful glad to see ye; take off your things, I should love to have ye, and so would the children. There, git down, can't ye?" addressing

the contents of a chair, and turning out, pell-mell, two half-grown kittens, a basin of beans, a half-eaten slice of bread and molasses, and a hood; and, dusting the chair with a child's apron, she placed it for her visitor.

In one corner of the room, sixteen feet square, stood a high-post bedstead. The patch-work quilt, of colors and pieces infinite, though large, was not large enough to cover quite the trundle-bed beneath; the cook-stove was cracked and red, and had been guiltless of blacking for many a year, and everything in the room, even to the floor, showed the hardest usage. At the foot of the bed, four or five children, all apparently of the same size, were very quietly and amicably keeping store with a stock of strings, empty spools, and broken crockery.

Kate felt not only great sympathy, but admiration, also, for this woman of decided *deshabille*. It was easy to see how Alex came by his handsome black eyes, and sparkling, generous expression. Her black hair had seen no comb for twenty-four hours, and a heavy lock continually fell down, and was as often twisted up; the loose calico wrapper, innocent of a belt, even in its best days, had one sleeve in tatters, showing an arm round enough for a model, and partially disclosing a bosom white as alabaster. This woman was not wholly without education, and had, withal, a spice of romance and hero-worship,

as might be seen by the luxuriant roses and geraniums in the window, and by the names of her children, — Alexander, Ferdinand and Isabella, (twins,) Beatrice, Robert Bruce, Martin Luther, Charles Sumner and Horace Greeley, (twins,) Harriet Beecher Stowe, Abraham Lincoln, and Henry Ward Beecher.

"Such a magnificent baby!" exclaimed Kate, holding out her hands. The babe knew her, and, crowing, jumped almost into her face, and proceeded at once to chew her bonnet strings. "I'm sure if Mr. Beecher should see him he would want to adopt him; and you keep him so nice."

"Yes," returned the mother, greatly pleased at the baby's reception, "I'll turn the rest off, but I won't have a sour baby: it seems cruel, don't it?"

Despoiled of her chief ornament, the baby, she became aware of her untidy appearance, and said apologetically, "I meant to have slicked myself up before this time, but Eben's been butchering lately, and I've had an uncommon lot of tripe to clean, and Aby has got a dreadful cold, and I've had to stop and nuss him, and that has pestered me about my bakin'."

At this Kate looked behind her, and in a crib, made in the end of a long settee with rockers, among a heap of very dingy pillows and ragged shawls and pieces of quilt, she saw little Abraham

asleep; and just beyond, on the table, several pumpkin pies."

"Alick is well, I suppose?"

"Yes," replied Kate, "I presume so. I haven't seen him since breakfast; he seemed to be thriving then."

"He ought to thrive if ever anybody did," said the proud, fond mother; "he's the best boy anybody ever had; but it's a dreadful hard row he has of it. I wish he could get a better place. Why, every cent of his wages, last month, we had to eat and drink; all Eben got, that's my husband, had to go for shoes and night-gowns, and then there ain't but one night-gown apiece now. Eben says he don't see how Alick ever came to belong to us, he's so afraid of a speck of dirt; but then he came by it natural enough. Mother Montgomery, that's Eben's mother, was a terrible neat woman, but Eben says he'd rather hev me round, nasty as I be, than her, she was so all-fired cross."

This remark looks much more unfilial than it sounded.

"I want a pieth of pie!" cried the incipient President in the crib, up on his elbows.

"A piece of pie! A piece of pie!" shouted all the rest in a chorus, springing up simultaneously.

"There, there, toady, don't cry, and you shall have some," said the mother, comforting the sick

child, and wiping his eyes and nose with the apron-duster. "O, you little piggie-wiggies!" she exclaimed, catching up three or four who were pulling her by the skirts; and she gave them a squeeze which would have been most disastrous to ribs more aged and brittle.

Shaking them all off, she took a tin plate from the dresser, cut a large piece of pie, and bolstering up the sick child, put the plate in his lap with a spoon. Then she set the remainder of the pie on a large, high stool, and giving each a spoon, told them to fall to and keep still as mice.

And still as mice they were for two minutes, but Harriet Beecher, being the only feminine link in this domestic chain, was in danger of being crowded out of her rights. She was, however, equal to the occasion, and giving her next neighbor a vigorous shove, the whole circle went down like a row of bricks, tipping over the stool, spilling the pie, and breaking the plate.

"There, who did that now?" cried the mother, shaking two or three by one arm and cuffing indiscriminately. In the howling and melee that followed, young Horace, finding that he had the lion's share of the pie lodged in his neck, made for the door, and in another moment every soul of them was out of sight.

"Well, did ever! There, I hope they'll keep off just five minutes," exclaimed the mother. "They aint bad children; they're pretty behaved

as any body when there ain't nobody to see 'em, but you know just how young ones will act when you want 'em to behave."

Kate assured her that they were uncommonly bright and beautiful children. "They're smart, I can say that for 'em," returned Mrs. Montgomery, her mortification much appeased. Here her dereliction in hospitality occurred to her. "I do hope you'll excuse me, Miss Fairbanks, but won't you have some pie, now?"

"No, I thank you; it is almost time to go, and Mrs. Hart will have tea all ready."

"But her pumpkins is all gone, I heard her say so, and I tried to make 'em good."

The pies did look very inviting, and Kate had really no good excuse to give for declining. So she said, —

"A very small piece, Mrs. Montgomery."

But small pieces were no part of Mrs. Montgomery's system; and taking nearly a quarter from the large-sized plate, she placed it, with a knife, near the edge of the table.

"Now set right up," she said, taking the baby from her guest.

Our heroine wondered how she should manage the knife, but soon learned that, for warm pumpkin, it was about as serviceable as a fork. She took a mouthful, — it was enough. What could it be! How should she swallow it! But swallow it she must, though it came back the next min-

ute. And her appetite was not helped at all by seeing Mrs. Montgomery take the rest of her pies from the oven with the apron which had already served for a duster and pocket handkerchief. What could she do? She could not eat it, and she would not, for the whole world, do anything to wound her generous hostess.

It may not be known to all devoted parents that several things are learned in a boarding-school which are not put down in the catalogue. Our heroine had not been backward in this elective course, and among other branches, she had been, in early boarding-school life, very clever and brilliant at smuggling at table, as it was called. Kate thought, suddenly, of her ancient proficiency, and without considering its moral fitness, or her exalted position as village school-mistress, in her extremity welcomed it as a most lucky expedient. So doubling her handkerchief in her lap, under the table, she commenced operations by cutting up the pie, and slowly nibbling. She wished the conversation had not taken just this turn.

"You and Mis' Foster's pretty thick, ain't you?" said Mrs. Montgomery, sitting down to nurse the baby.

"Why, yes," replied Kate, laughing, "we're very good friends."

Here Mrs. Montgomery looked down at the baby, and some pie disappeared.

"I should think she might take to you. With all her sweet an' lovin' ways with most folks, especially if they're poor or miserable or anything, — and I don't know anybody but is something, — and for all her weak husband, it takes somebody pretty smart and pretty nice to march in and take the fust place in her heart. She's older than I be, ten years or more, but I used to see her when she was a gal. Squire Brown, up here, was her uncle, and she was always a regular born lady, whether she wore a brass thimble or a gold one. She was from Augusty, and her father was a judge; and I've heard tell how she went to Brunswick to college with her two brothers, — one of 'em's a governor somewhere, though I don't know where. There was fellers enough that wanted her, but she liked Foster, though he never had no gumption, always layin' round under the trees with a book. Well, his father told him he'd give him a farm, but nary a red cent to go to college with. And Mis' Foster, — that's before they were married, — wanted him to let the farm go; said she'd do anything to help him push through for the eddication. But his eyes got weak, and he got discouraged and give right up, not one mite o' her pluck."

Here she cuddled the baby, and more pie disappeared.

"Well, she's run the whole concern, an' supported 'em all. To be sure the place belonged



to him,—her folks warn't rich; judges didn't hev no salary hardly in them days; but there wouldn't hev been a penny left if she hadn't a pulled with both oars. Why, I've heard that Jerry Pepperil, good-for-nothing lazy dog, tell how he'd crep' into their barn many a time, jest before dark, jest to see her tie up them cattle; he said 'twas wuth walkin' ten mile to see them oxen foller her round the yard, and into the barn; and then, she'd put her arm over them big fellers' necks, an' bow 'em up jest the neatest an' the quickest; an' they never had a critter of no kind that wouldn't run to her the minute they saw her. Now she might ha' told her husband to take care o' them cattle, an' I'd ha' seen him to Joppy before I'd ha' done it; but then, she knew that he wouldn't half do it, and they'd be half starved before mornin'. He'd a done for a minister, I suppose; but now he's got just larnin' enough to spile him,—ain't good for nothin'."

Here she laid the sleeping babe on the bed, and more pie disappeared.

"I never see a bit of pride in 'er but jest in one thing. She alwus talks jest as if he was the main spoke, when it's as plain as the nose on your face, that she's the main spoke, an' the hub, an' the tire, an' the whole team. She makes me feel awful streaked when I get to jawin' about Eben right before her, and she says, 'You know, Mis' Montgomery, that the husband is the

head of the house, an' the woman is the weaker vessel.' Now 'taint in human natur' for a woman like her to be looking up to a man like Foster, and it kinder riled me to hev her; so I said, one day, 'You don't expect me to believe, Mis' Foster, that *you* think woman is the weaker vessel, do you?' She drew up sort o' dignified, jest as I've seen her two or three times before, an' I could see she was teched, but she must ha' swallowed it the next minute, for she said, as sweet an' 'umble as could be, 'You know where it is that we are taught to prefer others to ourselves, and who it was that sent us to minister, not to be ministered unto.' Now that sounds beautiful, and it's Scriptur, I know, and it's all well 'nough for Mis' Foster, 'cos she's got mind an' eddication, an' all that; she alwus puts everybody else first, and herself last; an' she don't never seem to hev no way, nor will, nor right, of her own; an' it's real pure love an' gospel in her; but don't you see she don't lose nothin' by it? every body runs to her for every thing, and every body does jest as she says. She don't lose nothin'. But 'taint so with women in general. If I give up any right, I lose it, good an' all. It don't come back no way an' no shape. And it's jest so with Mis' Hart, up to your place. If she wants anything for herself, or her children, which is jest the same thing, she's got to stand to it,



out an' out. She's got to say to her husband jest what I say to mine, 'I'm jest as good as you be, and I work a plaguey sight harder, an' half you git belongs to me.' "

Here she pinned up her dress, and more pie disappeared.

"I know ther ain't another such woman in the world as Mis' Foster. Alick thinks the ground ain't good enough for her to walk on, an' Eben would die for her, I believe. You see he was terrible sick, a year ago,—bad liquor, I s'pose,—an' nobody was ever any crazier. One day, he sort o' come to, and thought he was going to die, and he was scared; but he hates ministers, and wouldn't have one in the house. Mis' Foster was in an' out a good many times, and one day she put her hand on his forehead, an' he was as still as a baby. Says she, —

'My friend, are you prepared for heaven?'

'O, no,' he said, an' he began to cry.

She whispered somethin' to him, and then she knelt down there by the bed, and such a prayer you never heard! Why, the room was chock full of angels, and it hasn't been the same place ever since."

Here she wiped her eyes with the apron-duster, but Kate forgot to drop any pie.

"That was last March, and he hasn't had but two spells o' drinkin' sence. He goes up to

Mis' Foster's to do her chores, an' I know jest the minute he's been there; there ain't a mite of ugly in 'im."

The children now came in, and Kate dropped the last bit, and gathering it up in the handkerchief, slipped it into her pocket.

"Can't you stay to supper?" urged Mrs. Montgomery, as Kate rose to leave.

How guilty she felt! and it seemed an age before she could get to the door and out of it. She was sure the soft mixture was dripping from her pocket. But out she was at length, with many loving looks following her; but without stopping to return these she hurried on, and when well out of sight, upon the bridge, she drew out the singular bundle, and emptied the contents into the stream.

She felt a little ashamed of her expedient, and when she went to visit Mrs. Foster she eased her mind by telling the whole story, not repeating, of course, the conversation. How Mrs. Foster laughed and laughed again!

"Undignified though it was, don't you think it was justifiable under the circumstances?" was Kate's nervous question.

"Why, certainly, my dear! You couldn't eat it, and you couldn't leave it; nothing else seems to have been left to you."

They were under the maple tree, in the yard,

feeding the chickens, and Mrs. Foster was obliged to sit down on the grass and laugh again.

With all her tact and wisdom, she was wholly above-board in her dealings; but like most women of ready sympathies and genuine power, she possessed a keen sense of the ludicrous, and a great fund of humor,—and Kate's adventure struck her as exceedingly original and funny. She had never been in a boarding-school. Moreover, she was very fond of her young friend, and the frank confession, and the conscientious flutter, was, to her, exceedingly fresh and engaging.

"But what should you have done in my place?" Kate asked.

"Knowing what I do of Mrs. Montgomery's habits, I suppose I should have declined her hospitality; but having accepted it, I must have eaten the pie. My sense of taste isn't as delicate as yours, and I never should have had the wit or the adroitness to have accomplished the feat."

"But was it not acting a lie?"

"No; I shouldn't say that. It was concealment, certainly; but concealment is necessary, often, in our intercourse with the world. It is tacitly understood always, and every where. Those whom we most esteem and love may have great infirmities, or eccentricities, which annoy or pain us. I don't know that it is acting a lie

to appear indifferent to them, or even ignorant of them."

While Kate was with Mrs. Foster a camp-meeting was held ten miles distant; and Alex, having one holiday in a year, chose it for this, and asked Kate if she would accompany him. She had never attended a meeting of the kind, and accepted with pleasure. They started, one bright morning, with Mr. Hart's spirited horse and open buggy, and with a basket of edibles, several shawls, and a benediction from Mrs. Foster. A delightful ride of an hour brought them to the ground, when Kate beheld the largest religious assembly she had ever seen. It was in a grove kept for the purpose, all underbrush and loose matter being removed, and a rude pulpit, or speaker's stand, erected, and seats of all degrees of fixedness and unfixedness crowded around.

Father McLanathan, a very old man, with long, yellowish white hair, was exhorting the multitude, which stood and sat and lay by thousands around. Boys and men hung like monkeys in the trees, and long limbs were dangling from every possible tree, box, and wagon. Just without the crowd, innumerable vehicles of every conceivable make and condition, from the time of Noah's ark; tents of every size, and booths for many purposes, were heterogeneously mixed, and among all these, men, women, and children, in

holiday attire, ran and lounged, ate and drank and slept, and occasionally listened to the far-off voice of the preacher. In general, the order was excellent.

Alex and Kate could not come within many rods of the speaker for the press. Neither was it necessary, for his voice rang out, with utmost distinctness, to the very borders of the grove. Father McLanathan was four score years old, and considered himself right in his prime; certainly his eye was not dim, or his natural force abated. He was an old-time preacher, literally one of the sons of thunder; and the fervor which he exhibited, even on the smallest occasions, might be compared to the apostolic fire, which he fully believed was vouchsafed to all who were called of heaven to preach the gospel. Every eye was fastened upon him, and a mighty thrill and throb swept through the throng, as in most fearfully vivid coloring he depicted the judgment day, the bliss of the redeemed, the anguish of the lost, the fires and roasting and boiling of hell, the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, and the shrieking of the damned seemed to come from the very lips of the old man, as his wrinkled skin puffed out, his eyes distended, his face turned from red to purple and black, while he threw out his arms and prostrated himself on the rude platform before him. Groans and responses could be heard every moment, in every direction. Hard, stony

faces, unused to tears, were convulsed; many dropped on their knees and were engaged in silent or half-uttered prayers or constant ejaculations; and all around women rocked themselves, moaning, or with a start, or scream, fell to the earth in a kind of fit or swoon.

Kate could see that Alex was deeply affected, and she was alarmed; but he told her that it was all a part of the programme, and that these fainting-fits, or trances, were called struggles of sanctification, and when the subject came to, she never sinned any more. Some of these persons were carried from the ground, but in several instances were quite near, when suffered to revive. Kate observed that nothing alarming ensued, but that these faces, on restoration, were particularly placid and sweet, and these individuals were made, from this moment, subjects of special congratulation and attention.

After this exhortation, or sermon, followed the prayer, which was but a continuation of it, and if possible, more intense and dramatic, or demonstrative; then the hymn, which began with slow and solemn marching strains, then increasing in volume and taking on a kind of wildness, it went on and on and on, fugueing and mounting and whirling and rolling and thundering, till it seemed as if heaven itself were stormed and taken by the uncontrollable expression of all those excited, pent-up souls. Our heroine had never

heard any thing so grand, and for a time she knew not whether she was in the body or out of the body, and would have been nothing surprised if wings had suddenly possessed her and lifted her over the heads of the crowd, and wafted her beyond the shadows of earth into the very arms of her Saviour. And when all was over, and the people began to buzz and to laugh, and her companion took her hand to lead her away, it seemed, then, that she was floating in empyreal air, and it was not till strangers accosted them, inviting them to eat, that she realized quite her surroundings.

Declining all invitations, our couple followed the brook till they came to a soft, green knoll, entirely apart from the din, and there they discussed the contents of their basket, and the forenoon's performance; and as little knots of people passed and re-passed, at some distance, Kate was a little shocked to find that very few retained any soberness of demeanor. The afternoon service was a repetition of the morning, which became wearisome, at length, and she was not sorry when Alex asked if she were ready to go.

For a long time they drove in silence, till the young man said, with a kind of apology, —

“I like to go to those places, but I don't believe it is very good for me.”

“Why not?”

“I don't know. It makes me restless and un-

happy, in some way. My life seems all wrong; I am not living as I ought to live.”

“But how ought you to live?” Kate asked, glad to see this soul-stirring.

He laughed a little bitterly, but said, earnestly, —

“Father McLanathan seems to possess the secret. He is the most useful man I ever saw, and the happiest. He has preached with all his might, just as you have seen him to-day, for sixty years, and has never received a dollar for it. But nobody would see him or his family suffer for anything.”

“I think it would be quite as much to his honor to receive pay for his services. The laborer is worthy of his hire.”

“I know it; but it does seem a higher consecration, — more like the apostles. He accomplishes more.”

“Perhaps so,” replied Kate, thoughtfully.

After a little pause she asked the question which she felt at liberty to ask of a familiar friend, —

“Are you a Christian, Alex?”

“No; I have no right to say that, though I hope to be some day. I suppose I should pray if I had anything to pray about; but my humdrum life seems quite beneath the notice of the Almighty; it would be presumption to believe that it could be any thing to Him. And I don't

dare be a Christian, because if I were I should have to be contented with my lot, and I am not; and what is more, I don't want to be."

"But if this is not the place for you, the Master would never wish you to remain in it."

"Are you sure of that?" he asked, brightening.

"I am certain of it."

"Then I will consider the matter," he said, gravely.

Pretty soon she asked, —

"What kind of business would you like? You would leave Wellington. Is that it?"

"Yes; there is no chance here for a man of any spirit or ability. I can't grow. I want to get out of prison, and knock the chains off my limbs, and breathe somewhere. There is such a load. I imagine railroading would suit me, though I never saw the cars but once."

"When I get home I will speak to Uncle about it." And just at this moment they saw Mrs. Foster leaning over the gate, and watching their approach.

Alex was very glad to finish his holiday by spending the evening with Mrs. Foster and Kate, particularly as Mrs. Foster entered most heartily into his ambitious projects.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SHE LOSES HER KNIGHT.

"Sweet Clover, shall we have that walk this afternoon?" and Alex held the hatchet over her head and threatened to sever a lock.

She was setting a piece into the elbow of Will's jacket; "Why, yes, I suppose it is time we had the brush. I'll go as soon as I can finish this."

"How long will it take?"

"Ten minutes or so."

He took a low seat just before her, and appeared to have intentions of swallowing her bodily. "Violet of violets, why don't you wear purple all the time? You're just lovely!"

She never thought of blushing for him, any more than if he had been her own child, ten years old; she only pricked the end of his nose with her needle, and said, —

"What a consistent little bunny! 'Twas

but two or three days ago you told me never to wear anything but blue, because I was just heavenly; and last summer you commanded me a dozen times always to wear white, because I was an angel."

"Precisely!" he laughed, swallowing her with his eyes. He watched her as the needle flew in and out, and wished himself a needle, or a jacket, or a lace collar, or a slipper even, that was tapping his boot to a tune that was running through her head. He tried to guess what it was by the taps. She looked more than angelic to him just then; her face spoke not only purity but triumph,—triumph over evil and pain. She smiled as she saw the old question coming, one he always asked when he found her engaged in distasteful work: "Is that for Jesus' sake, Katie?"

"Yes, I hope so; I'm sure it is," she answered softly.

"It is wholly for Him this time, isn't it?" he said with some significance.

"I think it is," she repeated more softly still.

"Then it is one of the grand deeds of life?"

She answered him with a bright smile, and her eyes filled. He touched her dress tenderly, reverentially, and added, "Then it is delightful, of course."

"Yes, it is now," she replied; "but it wasn't at first, — it was a bitter struggle."

"Tell me about it."

She told him a part; the whole he would not understand. It was nothing very new,—only the same old story of weariness, self-sacrifice, and striving for gentleness. It was Saturday afternoon. The week had been full of little duties which had fretted her nerves and made her back and head ache, while there seemed nothing in the world to show for it. Saturday afternoon was usually her own, and for this particular one she had reserved a delightful book and a new piece of music; at the dinner-table, however, this elbow of Will's appeared. When she saw the look of dismay on her aunt's face, she said, "I will do it Monday, aunt." "Monday!" was the scornful rejoinder. "Not a wink of sleep or one bit of Sunday rest shall I have till that's mended." So Kate sat down to the job. It was not fascinating employment. Will was furious when the shapeliness of his last jacket was destroyed by washing, so it came that this one was begrimed and beglazed with dirt, which disgusted her. Then the hole was large and the pieces few and small; and it was a puzzle to fit one to the other, and what she thought half an hour's work had absorbed two hours. Will was not a loveable boy, and she knew that instead of thanks for her pains, it would be a frown and perhaps some scolding because he must wear a patch to school; and though more respectful to her than to his



mother, he regarded her as one of his tormentors. But more aggravating than all, her aunt had spoken very sharply and unjustly to her several times during the forenoon, and the words and spirit had rankled in her bosom. Saturday was the sovereign baking and cleaning-up day of the week to Aunt Maria, and it was then she was most vigorous and impatient. She treated Kate as a child at such times, and gave numberless orders and directions, when Kate was far the more wise and capable of the two, and in this mending had stood over her ten minutes. But our heroine yielded, and in yielding conquered, and the victory was greater than she knew.

As she wound up her silk, she looked into Alex's face, and was about to ask "Shall Ruth go too?" when she saw that he had something on his mind, and concluded he wished her counsel on some matter, so she said only, "I'll be ready in two minutes."

Kate did not forget her promise to Alex, on her return from Wellington. Her uncle said he would bear it in mind, and she felt sure that with his influence and large business acquaintance, something would be found for Alex to do.

Scarce two months had passed when a vacant clerkship occurred in the treasurer's office on the railroad. Uncle Fairbanks was one of the directors of the road, and he thought at once of Kate's application.

There were young men enough, he said, who were willing, and more than willing; but a young man of capability, industry, and integrity was not found every day, and so he wrote to the leading men of Wellington, and the testimonials returned concerning the ability and worth of our friend Alex, were of the highest order.

So he came. His office was in Boston, but having no acquaintance but Kate, he established his home in Jackson. He proved an invaluable officer; had been promoted again and again; and at the time our story opens, three years later, had been elected to one of the most responsible positions on the road, and over men twice his age.

It was Saturday afternoon, six or seven weeks after that, that he called for Kate to go for some boughs to cover her honeysuckles. While she was out, he walked the floor and sat in nearly every chair in the room. What was the matter? he was not of the nervous kind. But he came to himself again, when she appeared in her water-proof and with a basket.

They climbed a hill, across the pond, and on the summit reached a growth of evergreen. Alex cut enough for her vines, and as she proposed seeking mosses farther on, he said, with some feeling, "No, let us sit down here," and he threw down the brush for a seat. He looked so serious that she said anxiously,—



"What is it, Alex? Does anything trouble you?"

"You know," he replied, "that I have had a fine offer from the Worcester road."

"Yes. How much better is it?"

"Fifteen hundred more."

"Are you going to accept it?"

"It will be wholly as you say."

"Don't leave it with me, dear Sandy. You know I want you to stay here, but you want the money. I could not decide. Do what you think is best." She was even annoyed at times by his reliance on her judgment in matters of which she knew almost nothing.

"You don't quite understand me, Katie," he said softly, sitting down by her side, and here his voice quivered. "You know I would not leave you for any inducement. No money could take me from you, only I want you to bid me stay. I want to be assured of your love,—not any mere brotherly affection,—I do know that, but I would have response to such love as mine;" and as he talked his tones gained heat and strength. "You cannot help knowing, Katie, that you are everything to me. You are the background of all my thoughts. I work all day, and with a will, that I may fly to you at nightfall. It is my love for you that has spurred me on, all these years; and for you, with you as my wife, I feel that I could

do anything, dare anything, suffer anything. I did not mean to deceive you, for I know you had no such thoughts, but I was scarcely conscious myself of the power you were in my life, that I was living so for you, but I cannot help knowing it now. To be parted from you would be worse than a thousand deaths!"

At first she had looked him in the face, but as the avowal came, her eyes fell, her hands dropped in her lap, and her face and neck burned with blushes. But he had stopped. She must speak. There was determined effort at self-command, and when she lifted her eyes to his, though they were wet, her face was calm.

"It is true, Alex, I was not aware of the full strength of your attachment, or of its character. I fear I have done wrong," and here her voice broke. "I did not think, did not wish to inspire any affection of that kind. I never thought of it; and, much as I love you, cannot respond to it. You will let it be the same,—you are my brother,—I have no other,—you will be my brother always!" she added pleadingly, laying her hand on his, and looking into his face. But he dropped her hand, and springing up, cried passionately, "No, Kate, you don't know what you ask! It is impossible! I love you, love you, *love* you! Brothers don't love in any such way, and I never was your brother. The first time I saw you I loved

you; and it is the same thing now, only a thousand times more and greater and deeper and higher; and now I must have you, or leave you forever."

The vehemence of his passion had given her strength, and she said firmly, "Sit down a moment, Alex, and let us be rational." He resumed his seat. She continued, "We have been very happy in the old relation. We could not be so happy, I am confident, in any other. A brother and sister may have separate and diverse tastes, opinions, interests, and aims, and the love be just as warm; but such a diversity strikes at the very vitality of the marriage relations. Differences, which in other relations do but give life, here are mortal. You see this, Alex?"

"Yes; but I have no interests, or wishes, or even thoughts which are not yours; and I know of no interests of yours which may not become mine."

"True, they might; but are they yours, will they be yours? You have told me, more than once, that you lived for me, — that I was your chief joy and resource. Now I cannot respond to that. My chief joy and resource is in heavenly love and service; such, at least, is my aim and resolve;" and, very gently, she added, "you know how it has been my one desire and prayer for these three years, that you should commence

the only true life. Yet, knowing this, you have not done it. What assurance have I from you that you ever will?"

"I know it, Kate; it is all true, and a great deal more. I am no fit companion for you, but that does not make it any easier to bear;" and he buried his face in his hands.

"Faint heart never won fair lady," and to the casual observer he may seem faint-hearted. There was no lack of courage, however; he yielded to her, partly from habit, partly from a conviction of the truth as she had spoken it; and he was satisfied that if there was any chance for him, she would give him the benefit of it; and he was confirmed in this belief as she took off his cap, and laying her hand on his head, said, with broken accents, —

"But this surprises and distresses me, Sandy. Only let me think; don't ask me anything." And fearing to trust herself with another word on the subject, she added, "Come, let us go. It will be dark before we get home, and it is going to rain."

He had more faith in her than she had in herself. He was in a measure prepared for just such an answer; but she was all unprepared for the stroke, and she staggered under it. We are positive that if he had been ten years older, if he had known better the human heart, especially woman's heart, he would have pressed his suit

just at the moment when she was swerving. She had spoken the higher sentiments of her being, and the more easily, because she had revolted a little from the idea, when first he mentioned it; but when she realized that he must be everything or nothing, her love for him she felt to be sweeping away all else. In the strife which ensued she was overpowered, almost distracted. A word from him, a tender look even, she feared would decide it. She wished it, she dreaded it, she felt it to be best that he had no arm to offer her, and was silent all the way, yet longed unutterably for what she had herself forbidden.

Having disposed of his evergreen, he stood just below her on the stoop; it was nearly dark, and beginning to sprinkle.

"Good-bye, Sandy!" she said sadly, and offered her hand in the usual way; but rejecting it, he threw both arms tightly around her and pressed his lips to hers. For one long moment he held her in crushing embrace, kissed her wildly many times, and was gone. She felt that it was forever.

Blinded by her grief and the darkness, she groped her way to her room, dreading to meet a soul. Ruth, her room-mate, was there with a light.

"Why, Katie, what is the matter?" the girl exclaimed in terror.

With strong effort she replied, as she threw off

her hat, and sat down on the bed, "I think it must be a sick head-ache coming on. Let me be quiet a little while," and she buried her face in the pillow. Ruth covered her carefully with a blanket, and withdrew softly to the next room, not willing to be beyond hearing.

Left alone, Kate endeavored to compose her crazed mind. She tried to think, she tried to pray, but her brain was all in a whirl, and her heart nearly took her breath away at every throb.

Then she said to herself, "I will go about some work,—that will do it," but she found she could not rise. She had only strength to call "Ruth!" In an instant Ruth came; then uncle and aunt, then the doctor, and for twenty-four hours life trembled and struggled for freedom. She knew not that the doctor stood over her most of the night, and whispered that it was a case of life and death; that her aunt, with little to do for her adopted child but to fan her, tormented herself with memories of many harsh words; that the minister called, and neighbors in the kitchen prepared meals which were never tasted; how terrified children stood aghast at the windows or sat in the corners or slunk into dark places to sob; or how Alex walked the floor, hour after hour, calling himself a heathen, a brute, and a murderer. She knew none of these things, only a partial and horrible conscious-

ness of pain and prostration, like unto death, lay close around and over the heart.

Alex begged that he might look at her, and towards night, on Sunday, he was admitted. He knelt down by the bed, and then and there vowed to devote himself to the Lord Jesus. She thought it was her brother's hand that awoke her, she could see nothing. "Dear little boy!" she whispered; and putting her hand on his face she drew it down and held it to her own.

She revived very soon, and absolute quiet being prescribed, there was opportunity to think. She was glad to hear that Alex had declined the new offer; also that he had taken rooms in the city. This excited no remark, as he had done it the winter previous. Once she asked to see him, and he came, but no allusion was made to the conversation of the week before.

Her thoughts and conclusions, not always clear, were something after this wise: Alex wanted her in two ways. He wanted to make love to her. She had never allowed much freedom of caress; but she sometimes brushed his hair and petted him as his mother might have done, and she permitted him to admire her and call her by every fond and extravagant name.

But he wanted her especially for adviser and friend. He had never known mother and sister in any high, true sense; and what the youth

learns, and often unconsciously from mother and sister, he had learned only from her. Her love for him was largely maternal; she would not have been in the least surprised if he had come to her with an affair of the heart, as a son or younger brother might do; indeed, she rather expected it. He went to her with a thousand questions, and she was many times amused at the real trouble and perplexity which she could settle with a word. She read his heart like a printed page. An honest, simple-hearted man is far more simple, less complex in his nature, than any woman, however honest, high-minded, and pure in heart she may be; and Kate understood Alex far better than herself.

In his hard desert life she was the one oasis; she was to him sunshine and shade, meat and drink, rest, religion, everything. She had wit and wisdom and piety enough for both; and when he was tired at night it was far easier to take her word for anything than to read, think, or pray for himself. True, he had opinions on general subjects, but they were hers usually, and to individuality of taste he made no pretensions. He would listen to her music for hours. It might be Fisher's Hornpipe or Chopin's waltzes, it was alike beautiful to him; and if he admired her flowers, it was not be-

cause the flowers were fine, but because she cultivated or arranged them.

There are very few men, able though they be, who, living with, or intimate with a woman of large capacity, will not acquire the same sort of indolence and unquestioning faith. Even her uncle had something of it. He discovered that she could do his thinking, and some of his work, as wisely and even more rapidly than himself; and certain home affairs, especially those relating to the children, which he had kept in his own hands, were now in hers. She knew there was luxury in all this, and it was greater than she knew; but it is a luxury which of itself will pall. Alex, she knew, would give her a home, and as he was bound to be a rich man, it would be in time a luxurious one; and this, to an orphan girl, without fortune, and with no great robustness, was no mean consideration. He would give her, too, an undivided heart and homage, and that always. Few women would ask more than these things; but our heroine did. She had not only a body to be preserved and cherished, and a heart to be filled with love, but she had likewise a brain most inquisitive and unresting, a round of cultivated tastes, many delightful friends, and, above all, her Saviour, and the infinite claims and resources her religion involved. Here Alex could not satisfy her.

He was but a circumstance in her life; a very large and a very important one, it is true, but the space he filled was not what she felt belonged to a husband. He was near her own age, a few months older, but he seemed ten years younger. She was aware that a young woman matures earlier than a young man, in her mental and spiritual nature; and that she was herself prematurely developed, and that he might overtake her. "But how do I know that?" she asked herself. "I have just spoilt him, loving him so, and doing so much for him. We will separate for a time, and we shall better understand ourselves and each other; and if we find that we cannot live apart, why then"— She did not love or honor him the less because she had known him in the dress of a laborer or because she had seen his humble and dishonored home; she loved and honored him the more for rising above his early disadvantages. But these things did not kindle her imagination. Alex was an indisputable reality; to idealize him was very difficult. It might have been, had he withheld anything from her, had he left anything for her to win. A little friction, even, would have been refreshing; but no, it was downright idolatry, which allowed not the least food for the imagination. He was confessedly her inferior, and how could she marry such?

Mr. Sterne, on the contrary, appealed to her ideality; there seemed to be everything worth winning. This she mistook for love, as poetic natures always do, till they have gained experience by disappointment. It was this kind of honor and love, this work of the imagination which she, in her simplicity, thought she ought to give her husband; and it was this which she could not give Alex.

She felt that Mr. Sterne understood her. He would catch her thought almost before it was her own. Instead of putting it in his pocket for a keepsake or for future use, as Alex did, he held it up to her, turned it around and on all sides, magnified and electrified it. He was better informed than herself in all points of literary and esthetic culture, and his admiration was the more flattering because indirectly bestowed. Above all, he talked much about religion.

That all this might be without the least heart, never occurred to her; heart she took for granted in a man of professed Christian culture.

Before writing a final adieu to Alex she debated with herself the propriety of confiding all to Mrs. Foster, and knowing as we do her delusion, we wish she had; but she reflected that Mr. Sterne had never lisped one word of love and may be never would. How should she confess to her friend a love which she dared not acknowledge even to herself?

So the letter to Alex was written,—prayerfully, tenderly, sweetly, and with many tears, but with the blessing of God, as she fully believed. We shall see how God blessed it.



## CHAPTER VII.

REVOLUTION.—QUEEN CATHERINE LOSES HER HEAD.

—QUEEN ANNE A SPECTATOR.—MAID OF HONOR  
AND TREASON.

Mr. Sterne had visited Jackson again, and began to think himself in love. He was thirty-four, and not a man to be rash; besides, he had been taken in once, as he said to himself. It was a college fancy. She was very queenly, and was called "The Goddess" by the students, who buzzed around her in great numbers, and whom she treated quite cavalierly. He had been the one to carry off the prize, and learned, too late, his folly and mistake. She was a creature, "splendidly dull;" not a woman, not human, not animal even, only vegetable; a magnificent flower, — a dahlia, a camelia. She received his caresses and complaints with equal indifference, and his exasperation was becoming terrible when, at the end of a year, she died. Since that time

maidens all around had budded, blossomed, and drooped, and all for him; but not one had he plucked. He never met Kate without a sense of something like self-reproach, and though he did not allow himself to cherish this, he was fascinated by the something indefinable in her which was beyond him, which attracted him irresistibly, and at the same time baffled him. He had pronounced her beautiful, very beautiful; and if he could satisfy himself of her domestic qualifications, — and with his epicurian tastes this was of the utmost importance, — if she really possessed all the culture and opportunities she seemed to have, he would offer her his heart and hand, and make her mistress of his home.

He had commenced the study of law, but having a moderate fortune had abandoned it for literary and religious pursuits, more to his tastes. He wrote much, and gave largely to Christian societies, and was prominent in many of these, and had been, for several years, superintendent of the largest Sunday School in the city. He had a name for piety and good works, and all his faculties were arranged to meet this applause. He was totally selfish and inordinately vain.

He was not aware of it. He believed himself not only very gifted, but very good and very noble. Mother and sister had lived for him, and earth and heaven smiled on him ever. Christianity was to him a theory, a logical and intel-



lectual process, not a vital force; principles, not principle; and if there was any good or useful purpose in it, that purpose was his own individual eminence and glory.

Kate might not have admired him so much had she known that on that same steamer his frail sister lay deathly sick and alone in her state-room; that she had besought him to return by rail, but that he said he preferred going by water, and should go that way. She could go by cars if she chose; and he knew so well that she was much too timid to travel alone or with strangers.

He resolved that his next visit to Jackson should be in the morning. Strange it is he should have chosen the day before Thanksgiving, the very busiest and most important in all Aunt Maria's calendar.

It was several minutes before his ring was answered, and then Kate herself appeared. Her face flushed and her eyes sparkled. She was glad to see him, he was satisfied of that. She possessed no coquetry, or arts of any kind, and he liked it. Still, he could not help wishing she had a little more manner that was self-possessed and conventional. But she would acquire that, he thought, as his wife and in the best society. A little mantling was very charming; but she blushed so hard, sometimes. He fancied, however, that his presence gave occasion for this, and he could forgive it.

She looked fresh enough and tidy enough to have been on an early walk; but a sprinkle of flour on her sleeve told him where she had been. They talked of missionary work in the city, of new publications, and then of music and concerts. He glanced at the piano. Would she play for him? She said, merely, —

“I am a very ordinary player, but will play if you wish,” and seated herself.

He understood music, and was an excellent performer himself; and he saw, at once, that she was not an ordinary player. Her execution was not perfect, but she played without notes, and with much spirit and sweetness. Music was to Kate an important means of expression; it was from and with the soul always, so she never lacked an audience, and that audience was sure to be moved and interested. Mr. Sterne was gratified. He begged her to keep on, and looking over her music called for one thing after another.

At length he rose to leave. Kate would never have thought of inviting a guest for a week without leave, but she knew that for a meal or two any friend was welcomed with largest hospitality. So she invited him to stop and dine. After a slight demur he accepted.

He told his sister, that evening, it was the best dinner he ever ate in his life, and that he never saw a family of such beautiful and well-

bred children. He saw, every day, heavier damask, and more of silver, glass, and china; but every thing was so exquisitely cooked and beautifully served. If he had a weakness, it was for mince pie; and there was certainly magic in this, and he said so. Aunt Maria told him that if he would come Christmas she would give him one much better; mince meat should be kept a month to be good. He did come Christmas, and many times between; and on one occasion was accompanied by his sister. And before the holidays were over the engagement was announced.

The proposal was made by letter, and the very faultlessness of it might have aroused the suspicions of one who knew the world; but to our heroine, who had had four lovers of the headlong and desperate sort, and who was sometimes overcome by her own sensibilities, Mr. Sterne's coolness and self-possession seemed most desirable. There was actual sublimity in it.

"Buttoned-up men are always mighty men!" Simple souls often mistake heaviness, phlegm, and vacancy of heart, for gravity, self-command, and high-bred reserve. If a man has nothing, the best thing he can do for himself is to button up, and stay buttoned up; and though there are two or three of the buttoned-up who are worth unbuttoning, impenetrable reserve is always suspicious; it covers usually not only poverty of soul, but stings innumerable.

Mr. Sterne wished to be married immediately; but Aunt Maria thought there should be two years, at least, for preparation. He satisfied her, very soon, that no necessity existed for this. His character and position were too well known to call forth any scruples or fears concerning Kate's future happiness. That it was a love-match, there could be no question, so the fifteenth of February was fixed for the nuptials.

It was a sore trial to Kate to leave the children, just as they needed her so much, and when her influence was every day being confirmed. The little ones followed her all about the house; and if she sat down a few minutes all five gathered around her. There were loving talks with Sarah and Ruth, and she was rejoiced to see the purpose in them, with a growing appreciation and love of everything beautiful and true.

Uncle said that the bride must wear white muslin and flowers,—nothing could be so pretty for the young; and everybody should come that she wanted, and all should witness the ceremony, which must be in the evening. "A wedding by day-light was no wedding."

A perfect day, and every body came, and a day it was for Aunt Maria. She said she was utterly worn out; but didn't they know she was right in her element? The bride was dressed by her cousin Sarah, and Theo Livingston, who had travelled, and been in society abroad, and was au

*fait* in all affairs of the toilet. Uncle was sad when he told her she looked just as her mother did on her wedding-night; and Ruth declared she was an angel, and that she dared not touch her, lest she vanish away.

Presents were many, but excepting a pearl necklace she wore, nothing was exhibited. Her lover begged and protested, but she was inflexible.

"It is not only in bad taste," she said, "but these gifts are the spontaneous offerings of my friends on the occasion of my marriage. Friendship is a sacred thing, and marriage is a sacred thing, and I have no right to profane either by a vulgar ostentation."

With Mr. Sterne came his sister and her friend, Miss Bolter, and Dr. Williams, who, before the evening closed, was worshipped by everybody. This party went to the hotel.

It will be seen that our heroine held some very decided notions, which free and easy people may think old-fashioned and prudish; but she was no prude. One was that, under ordinary circumstances, no lady should receive from her betrothed gifts of wearing apparel, or anything rich or expensive; only some trifle in the form of a book, or picture, or plain ring. Another was, that ear-drops were unlady-like and vulgar. She had very delicate, well-formed ears, and her lover wished her to have them pierced for a jewel; but she playfully and persistently declined. Moreover,

she thought it unbecoming a suitor, when other and suitable accommodations could be obtained, to sleep at the home of his lady, and he had never been asked to do so.

Mr. Sterne, unaccustomed to contradiction, knew not whether to be more pleased or vexed by these scruples. When he told his friend, Mrs. Williams, of them, how Miss Fairbanks had returned, though very gracefully, the magnificent furs he had sent her, also a superb edition of myson; that she would not wear ear-rings, even to please him; and that, however dark or cold it might be, he was obliged to stop at a very indifferent hotel, she replied, —

"That's good for you! It shows her delicacy and gentle breeding." And that same day she selected from her own jewels a set of loveliest pearls to adorn the bride.

As many of the village people were invited as could be entertained after the relatives and special friends. Of these were transcendental Cousin John, very courtly and very cold-blooded, and his dumpy, voluble little wife, who took the ladies' bonnets, and turned out coffee, and who knew every individual glove and stocking in the bridal outfit. There was Mrs. King, an exceedingly brilliant and fascinating woman, with far more of education than is allotted to women in general; Theo Livingston, who came the week before to assist in all preparations; and Dr.

Eveleth, Mrs. King's father, a noble, elderly clergyman, whom Kate loved very much, and who made the twain one.

Theodora Livingston and Kate were neighbors and closest friends in childhood. They had been separated many years, and by paths widely different,—opposed, even; and we wonder that Theo, with her gay life and long train of admirers, should have continued to care for one so unworldly, so little in sympathy with herself as Kate. But heartless and false though she was, she could appreciate heart and truth, and was not wholly without aspiration and resolve. Kate most innocently admired her friend, so unlike herself,—was attracted by the difference. Theo was tall and round, and graceful as a bird of paradise, a decided blonde, and possessed of an air most distinguished; her dress, manners, talk,—every thing about her,—were simple, apparently, but with evident style and significance. The marks of character were all over her, and she was noticed in every assembly, and pointed out on all occasions as a study for the physiognomist, the artist, and the philosopher. She was hardly worth the study of any one of them; she possessed neither heart nor character, neither brain nor principle.

She was flirt and coquette by birth, education, and practice. After residing abroad she found life in Beverly intolerably dull, and sighed for brilliant conquests; and was not mistaken in

thinking the wedding might furnish material. She would have had no scruples in ensnaring Mr. Sterne, but she decided, very soon, that he had no heart worth breaking: a miserably tame conquest that would be. She had heard much of Alex, and that Kate had designed him for her; but on seeing him she guessed where his heart was.

"Kate is a little fool," she said, mentally.

The railroad official she despised, but he was a man with a noble form and face, a clear head and a warm heart, any body could see; and he was worth enslaving, if only to torment and fling away.

But Dr. Williams was a bird of rare feather; such a one had never been in her net. It was patent as the day that he had no fetters, either of tobacco, of women, or of wine; a slave neither to evil nature nor evil habit. Indeed, it might be best to retain him when captured, and attach him to herself. She would take time for Alex, but work should commence at once on the doctor.

It will be seen, hereafter, what manner of man he was, what snares beset him, and what end he made; but it is sufficient here to state that he was a bachelor of kingly presence and manners, a surgeon by profession, an amateur musician, poet and painter, with aristocratic connection and untold wealth. He was simple and perfectly accessible, fond of ladies' society, and professed to

be, to the last degree, susceptible to their charms. He said, always, —

“I capitulate!”

But when they went to take him they found him adamant. Lovely, divine creatures offered all manner of alluring bait. How his eyes glistened, and how boldly he went up to it! Then, with what coolness he put it in his pocket or walked off without it! His mother said she was out of patience waiting for the woman who should captivate him; and when he declared his intention of escaping this wedding,—weddings were such a bore, now-a-days,—she instantly commanded him to go, saying she had no doubt the destined mistress would be there; and Mr. Sterne, with the peerless Theo in mind, affirming that she certainly would be, he went, prepared for a charge of some sort. Not the smallest objection had he to being courted moderately by a beautiful woman.

After the ceremony, congratulations and some fine singing from Theo; and when supper was announced, Dr. Williams, being near the piano, gave his arm to Miss Livingston. In all his travels he had never met one who looked so faultless, so supreme.

After several common-places, he asked, —

“Who is the gentleman standing opposite, talking with Dr. Eveleth? I was introduced, but missed the name.”

“That is Mr. Montgomery,” she replied.

“A friend of the bride, I infer?”

“Yes; or would like to be. She picked him out of the ditch and made a man of him, and he turned about and fell in love with her.”

“Very sensible of him, and creditable to his taste, as well as his heart; a remarkably fine face!” he added musingly, as he gave Alex a scrutinizing look.

Here some one addressed a remark to the bride, which created a lively blushing and fluttering.

“It is the most beautiful bride I ever saw,” observed the doctor; “there is so much character, so much that is spirited in her softness.”

Theo was annoyed. Her own robe of lilac silk, richly draped with point lace, and which set off her dazzling shoulders to such glorious extent, cost twenty times as much as the dress of the bride. She replied, —

“Yes; she is very beautiful. But what a pity she is so small!”

“Small!” repeated the doctor. “It did not occur to me.” Then, as if it did occur to him, he added, “Mr. Sterne is rather tall.”

After helping her to a cream, he said, —

“You are an old-time friend of the bride, I understand.”

“Yes; we were children together in Beverly.”

“Such constancy is quite remarkable; it is

seldom that the friendships of childhood are carried into manhood and womanhood."

"Yes, sir; and the more remarkable because we have been so separated; our education has been so very different," she added, loftily.

"So I perceive," he observed, a little dryly.

Not detecting his delicate irony, she thought herself flattered, and continued, pathetically,—

"Poor little Kate! she has had such a hard time. Her father died before she left school, making her a penniless orphan. He was very intemperate, and her mother died of broken heart; and ever since she has lived right here, doing drudgery and taking care of children,—no advantages of books, or society, or travel. I believe however, she did teach, for a while, in some outlandish place; but really, it is quite narrowing and dreadful."

This exaggerated statement, in the guise of pity, the doctor understood.

"She seems to have made much of her opportunities," he returned, looking at Mrs. King. "I have heard of Mrs. King, and once met her, I think, with her husband, in Paris. It was long since; I was but a lad, then."

"Did you, indeed!" she exclaimed, with delight. "Mrs. King is my uncle's widow. I used to send her Katie's letters, and she desired an introduction, and they corresponded some time before they met. Interesting, is it not?" raising her handsome eye-brows.

"Delightful!" he echoed, laughing with his eyes.

"Auntie thinks she ought to write."

"And why does she not?"

"O, Katie knows better than any one else how little qualified she is for the business. She has the talent, perhaps, but she knows nothing, absolutely nothing, of human nature and this great world."

"She is more familiar, I should say, with some other world."

"That's what Auntie says. One day, when she was raving about Kate, I remarked,—

'What a pity it is, Aunt Anne, that you cannot marry her!'

'Marry her!' she exclaimed, in holy resentment. 'I should as soon think of marrying the Virgin Mary or one of the angels in white!'

"Auntie is, really, a very sensible person, but she seems thoroughly infatuated with Kate."

"Such infatuation is, undoubtedly, very great weakness; but I tremble when I think of the possibilities of my own nature in that respect."

He said this with entire gravity, and with none of that mobility of face and feature which gave such significance and charm to his mere nothings. Theo chopped her ice with her tea-spoon. What was this man, so incorrigible, so invincible? Most deferential, courtly, even, he had yielded to her always; yet she felt that she had accom-



plished nothing. Before this time, she had expected to subjugate him; but he had understood and mastered her at every step. And she chopped and chopped.

"Your ice has melted; allow me to renew it," he said, looking into her face.

"O, no!" she replied, annoyed that her thoughts had been read and her vexation observed. But she would not be defeated by so small a thing, and she shifted her ground to more familiar.

"Have you been in Paris much, Dr. Williams?"

"I have been there but twice for ten years; previous to that, very frequently. It was home for a time."

"How you must love it, and long for it!" she exclaimed, with great animation. "I adore Paris! I am perfectly wretched anywhere else! I would talk French all the time if only any body could speak it. Indeed, I do all my reading and writing and thinking in French."

"That accounts," thought the doctor, but he laughed, and said,—

"I wish I could have the pleasure of talking with you in your favorite tongue, but you would laugh at my blunders; you would find me much better at German, or Italian, or even Dutch; but I am most felicitous in Irish," and here he addressed, in her native dialect, the pretty Irish girl

who was waiting on the table and passing at the moment. The quick repartee of the girl set the company in a roar, though no one but the doctor understood the words.

Theo's good nature was restored, and just then Dr. Eveleth approached and addressed the doctor, and soon they returned to the parlors. Here she was separated from her companion, but her eyes followed him as he went from one to another, all over the room, leaving every one better and happier. When she crossed his path again, he was talking with Mrs. King, who was making love to the flowers, many of which were from his own conservatory, and he explained the process of culture of several rare varieties he had imported. But he turned to Theo very soon.

"Is not this pleasant?" he asked, looking the very embodiment of happiness. "This is my beau ideal of a wedding."

"Ah!" she archly replied, to what she supposed to be an indirect compliment to herself. "I should have said that you attended many such; many much more fashionable and *recherche*."

But he said wickedly,—

"You do not comprehend me quite, I think. It is my beau ideal of a wedding, because everybody is having such a good time."

She could not conceal her mortification wholly, and spoke a little shortly,—



"How very fortunate, then, that I didn't succeed in my determination to have it otherwise!"

"What, for instance, may I ask?"

"Why, was ever anything so odd as to invite to one's wedding nearly a dozen boys, ten years old,—the most disagreeable age in the world?"

"It is uncommon, certainly. I fancy then, that it was her arrangement, putting all the little folks in advance of the others, during the ceremony?"

"O, yes, of course."

"And the dwarf, who had so sightly a position?"

"O, that is her dress-maker,—the doll's dress-maker,—Jenny Wren, you know!" and she laughed merrily.

Had Theo been much in the society of Kate or Mrs. King she would have known better than to think to please the doctor in this way; but the young men of her retinue, often possessed of wealth, and sometimes of ability, were without purpose and without business, and she was in the habit of amusing them by wit of this kind.

The flowers being examined, the doctor said,—

"I trust it is no impertinence, but my mother couldn't come, and she directed me to see everything, and report to her minutest particulars, and I haven't inspected the presents, yet. Are they not on exhibition?" What a deceiver he was,—he knew they were not.

"I am shocked at your presumption. Presents, indeed! To think that you should believe us capable of such indelicacy, such profanity of friendship and marriage as to parade our presents before the rude gaze of the public!" and she gave her queenly head a bewitching toss.

"You are sportive, Miss Livingston."

"Well, sir, to be quite serious, I confess there are many rich gifts, well worth exhibiting, but there is all manner of trash besides, from children and poor people and old folks, and we hadn't the courage, of course, to throw it away. If one thing is shown, everything must be, you know!" and she lifted her eyes to his face and smiled with great sweetness.

The doctor looked interested and animated, and concealed so completely his contempt and disgust that she felt sure of the conquest. He remarked, in a lively tone,—

"Nothing is more significant than the presents we receive. You provoke my curiosity."

She was not averse to showing up her friend's absurdity; and to secure the lion of the evening all to herself, for half an hour, was worth almost any venture, so she said, with an obliging air,—

"She allowed Auntie and Dr. Eveleth to see them; maybe she would not object in your case. Shall I ask her?"

It was precisely what he wished.

"I shall be most gratified," he replied, "if

you think she would not be displeased at the request." But she was gone.

Leaning over the veiled bride, she spoke in a low tone. Kate blushed, and lifting her eye, caught the doctor's eye and smile. There could be no better warrant that nothing would be less sacred for his gaze. She wondered that he should care for her presents, when he saw, doubtless, far richer ones at many more brilliant weddings; but she nodded "Yes."

Taking his arm again, Theo drew him through the dining-room, into the little sewing-room beyond. Aunt Maria would have had a fit had she seen the disorder here. Some of the gifts had come with the givers, and wrappings and twine were huddled in corners or scattered around; and pictures stood on the floor against the wall, and the table and machine were piled with books and boxes of all descriptions.

"There is an immense distinction, I assure you," said Theo. "These things on the table are supposed to be of the compulsory or inevitable kind, and are not considered so holy and imperishable; but these in the closet are the precious ones."

She opened the door, and he saw, mid jewels and ebony and silver, all manner of keepsakes, and some with unmistakable signs of the giver's crudeness or poverty.

"This is unique, indeed," he observed.

"These spoons and forks," she said, passing him the cases, "are from Dr. Eveleth and Mrs. King. Just lift them,—are they not splendid? These Italian vases are from the King children, my little cousins; that Bagster's Bible is from Nathan Strong; that set of Shakspeare from Mr. Montgomery; that work-basket is from her cousin Sarah,—isn't it lovely?—these salt-cellars from her aunt, and these bracelets from Willie and Charley,—they earned the money. Charley made that wooden chain, too, out of a straight piece of wood; that picture is from her Sunday School class, their own photographs in a group; but one of the boys wanted to make something for her, so he gave her this," and she handed the doctor a little painting in water-colors, set in a very curious frame. "The frame," she continued, "he whittled with his penknife out of a cigar box, and it is as pretty as it can be; but he must spoil it by putting in it this daub of a painting; but Kate will have it so, because the boy painted it himself."

"It is very beautiful," said the doctor, almost solemnly. "But those skeleton leaves and ferns,—how exquisite!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, Ruth did that herself. I never saw any so lovely," and she removed the glass case, that he might examine them, Ruth herself could not have asked for her work a more appreciative and admiring eye than the doctor's.

Theo replaced the treasures, and took down a tidy.

"Little Fanny embroidered this, and it is really a beautiful pattern; but the child made some false stitches and spoilt the whole. I offered to take it out and repair the mischief, but Kate said, 'Not for the universe.' You see this little fan," and she opened a casket on the table and drew out the gem, which the doctor recognized as his own gift. "Did you ever see anything so beautiful! Real French, and diamonds, too; it must have cost a small fortune. From some friend of Mr. Sterne, I suppose. Well, she says that this isn't half as beautiful as these holders," and she passed them to him from the shelf. "What animal do you call that?" and her mocking laugh rang out. "A half-blind old creature, that Kate used to read to every Sunday night, made them for her blessed child, as she dubs Kate; and, would you believe it, the old thing was actually invited to the wedding, but came yesterday with her regrets."

The holders were of black broadcloth, and meant to be octagonal, and got up, evidently, with much pains-taking; and the figures in colors, designed for a bird, looked about as much like a fish. The doctor laid them tenderly down, as if it were, indeed, sacrilege to be gazing at them.

"But this is the crown-all," was Theo's exclamation. "The richest and most perfect and

altogether lovely!" and she unrolled a long strip of white muslin or cambric, with a double row of hem-stitching. "This, you must know, is from the divine Mrs. Foster, who is much too good to live."

Her companion, feeling guilty almost to remain, even with the permission of the owner, among offerings so hallowed by private sentiment, and shocked and wounded by a ridicule most cruel to absent parties, scarcely looked at it, and remarked, indifferently, —

"I have no doubt it is most elegant; I am not a judge of those things."

"Yes," she ran on, not heeding his evident discomfort, "the material is the finest of imported linen lawn, and the work is quite wonderful, considering it was done with spectacles; and I told Kate it would be splendid with some Valenciennes on the edge, and I offered to give it and sew it on; but she was half angry with me for proposing such a thing. 'You audacious creature, how dare you mention it!' was her cry of horror."

"But who is Mrs. Foster, and where does she live?" inquired the doctor, interested again.

"O, she is nobody! Some old person or other Kate has picked up, out of pity, I suppose; and where she lives, I can't tell; on missionary ground, I should say, by the fashion of her dress; you can see for yourself," and taking

from the shelf a blue velvet case, she opened it and passed it to him. "It is a daguerreotype, and Kate wanted it years ago, it seems, but Mr. Foster was not willing to let it go till he had one he liked better. It came yesterday, with the ruffling; and do you think, that two hours afterwards I found Kate in her room, kissing and crying over that picture?"

He was adjusting the face to the light. Suddenly the face shone out.

"Oh! how beautiful. What a noble face! It is wonderful! Wonderful!" and he put it reverently to his lips. Theo felt uncomfortable, but he did not notice her. After another long gaze, he said, "Do you think your friend, Mrs. Sterne, it is now, would allow me to copy this for her? I would paint it on ivory, or throw it up on canvas, life size."

"Nothing would please her more, I am sure," she replied, with some heartiness.

"This is all very interesting," he said, when they had looked over the whole; "but we owe somewhat more to the company, and you will favor us with more music, I trust." And helping her to re-arrange, a little, the scattered keepsakes, and thanking her for the entertainment, they returned to the festive rooms.

He then sought the bride, to thank her, and she introduced her young cousins and her Sunday School class. He was in his element. Taking

Fanny on his knee, in two minutes he held every child, and more than one older person, as by a spell. But very soon Mr. Sterne called upon him for music, and taking his seat at the instrument, he played and sung with the same ease, mastery and effect, that he had shown in everything else.

The party then broke up, and taking Margaret Sterne on his arm, Dr. Williams made his adieux, beginning and ending by kissing little Fanny, who had discovered that he carried candy in his pockets, as well as honey on his lips, and she stuck to him like a burr. Theo feared that she had lost ground,—she could tell nothing; but when he bade her good-night he shook her hand so cordially, and spoke with such evident emotion of the pleasure he had received, that her assurance returned.

"I have seen so much of it," she mused afterwards, "now I must see him again. Kate will send for me, of course, to visit her very soon,—she knows nothing of society," but future plans were dismissed till hours of leisure should appear.

Many leave-takings, then a journey to Philadelphia and Washington, and the opening spring found our bride established in her new home, and a month later this letter is written to Mrs. Foster.

## CHAPTER VIII.

QUEEN MARGARET AND QUEEN HELEN MCGREGOR.

BOSTON, APRIL 2.

My dear, dear Mrs. Foster:

What a holy, happy thing is marriage! No where but in Paradise could it have been instituted; and if the relation is so rich and sweet at the commencement, what must its ripeness be? I realize a little how terrible it must be to be widowed, as Mrs. King is. She is a famous talker, and I have sometimes wondered that she so seldom spoke of her husband, whom she mourns still, but I understand, now, the sacredness of that memory.

I could send you rhapsodies, but I will try to write a sensible letter, of which I shall not be ashamed a twelve-month hence. It is dreadful to think of you preserving those wretched epistles. Wouldn't you like to be introduced to some new friends I have made? friends of

sister Margaret, who is very choice in her selection, and very magnetic. But first, I must tell you of this sister of mine, though it would be quite beyond my powers to draw a portrait that would do her justice.

She is near my age, very tall and willowy, and very fair. She is of purest Grecian type, while Edward is Roman; there is an indescribable grace and softness of contour; and then her dress! You might meet her, and talk with her, and be charmed, as you most surely would be. You would say, "It is her classical head, her gentle manners, her graceful speech, or her spirituality," and you would be right; all these are combined. And you might not remark her costume, or remember in the least what it was, yet in time you would learn that this was one of the most remarkable faculties about her.

It is perfectly natural and simple; her hair which, in a strong light, has a glimmer of gold, and a gloss of auburn, is neither long nor heavy, but it seems abundant; it is fastened by a comb in a large knot,—no net or rats or pins, or it is gathered up and falls in loose curls. Black she often wears, and it enhances her purity; brilliant colors, as red, orange, green,—never. Nor do I see decided blue or purple or brown, rather the blending and modifications of these in violet, lavender, pearl-shades, and the infinite gradations of smoke and wood

colors. These are sometimes enlivened by a bit of blue or crimson at the throat, but nothing more. She is free, however, in the use of fine laces, and these belong to her just as the fringe belongs to the orchis or gentian; and her entire raiment is a part of her. Dress, with her, is manifestation only; and though she possesses no rare degree of strength, either of body or mind, there seems to be extraordinary repose.

Every garment is loose as well as simple. Tight lacing, she says, is not only sin and abomination, but the worst possible taste. My bridal preparations included a velvet basque, which was pronounced very stylish and elegant; but when she saw it, she said playfully, "I suppose you won't expect me to walk with you when you wear that." She afterwards explained, "It seems to me that a close-fitting habit is 'nt altogether modest. Except on horseback, a lady is never equipped for the street without some drapery from the shoulders;" and I have despised the garment ever since. She wears never a sacque or short garment of any description; and when she sails or floats along the street, with her long white circular and dove-colored plumes, she is a swan, and I am a gosling paddling by her side, hardly important enough to be her foil. She is far more unconscious of the gaze of the crowd than I can be.

This sister of mine has a noiseless step, and

a soft, sweet voice. She plays the guitar, and sings in a tender, plaintive way, that brings tears to my eyes. She seems never to think of herself; and this gentle, saintly being assures me that she loves me, and I don't know but she will spoil me with her devotion.

Harriet Bolter is as incongruous and explosive as Margaret is comely and melodious. She was born in Marblehead, and she is just like one of the Marblehead streets,—full of jerks and quirks, and chopped off unawares; ancient, too, with here and there something in the very extreme and absurdity of the fashion. She wears always cotton gloves, and her attire is, in general, common, and with no pretension to style, excepting her bonnets, which are often very expensive and of the softest and most ethereal fabrics; her complexion is singularly dark and muddy, her features large and heavy, and she is continually blossoming out at the top in lilac, sky blue, and pea green. Her mental groundwork is exceedingly dull and matter-of-fact, bespeckled all over with dots of the most romantic and fantastic description, her devotion to Margaret being wondrously tender. She has large means, but an easy life would disgust her. First she went to California, and all by herself established a seminary for young ladies, which is flourishing still; now she has a kinder-garten school, and is a partner in a large millinery store. She



keeps house, also, and takes boarders. I fancy, however, that the board is only nominal, as her boarders are all sewing-girls. Her charities are as noble as they are silent.

She is an old maid from principle, one would say, as there seems to be no end of love passages in her life; and every time I have seen her she has congratulated herself in this way: "If there is one thing in this world that I am thankful for, it is that I am not in love with Doctor Williams." Her likes and dislikes all appear to be of the most emphatic description, for to-day she said, "If there is one person in this world that I love, admire, and adore, that person is Dr. Wells; and if there is one person in this world that I don't love, admire, and adore, that person is Mrs. Wells. It would be such a satisfaction if he would only see that she is but a feeble reflection of himself, and then tolerate her or love her; but it is beyond my endurance, when he thinks that all his good is somehow through her."

Dr. Wells is our minister. A still, powerful man, preaching every Sunday with profound feeling and solemnity to a crowded congregation. He is in middle life, of medium height and slender build, with gray hair, constant gray eyes, and decided gravity of manner. The man and his sermons are in perfect keeping. His face is full of strong, fine lines, and the wrinkles of

his coat and the creases of his boots are of precisely the same thoughtful, luminous, and convincing character; and then he is so immaculate from top to toe and all through and through. In his presence you feel ashamed of all your little sins and shams, and fancy him a trifle severe; but when you recognize him, you are greeted with a mildness so gracious and a courtesy so exquisite, as to make you wonder whether or no you are surely living in this rude, bleak, bitter world. On near acquaintance, you discover a trace of early timidity. When he was ordained, years ago, one of the older ministers, an eccentric man, said to him, "My young friend, I have a word of advice for you: I recommend to you to cultivate grace and brass." As to the grace, there can be no question, and unconsciousness is its salient characteristic; it illumines his face and shines out in every word and act, and so charged with it is the whole atmosphere about him, that he actually believes the grace to be all in other people.

He is said to be very much in love with his wife, a short, soft, roly-poly woman, with languishing, oriental eyes, which are continually dropping and dissolving as she talks, to Miss Bolter's unspeakable annoyance. She is profoundly impressed with her position and duties as minister's wife; and Margaret says she fays in

everywhere, and has consummate sweetness and tact; but I find her patronage slightly oppressive. Her affection and sympathy are something quite fearful. She has the most remarkable faculty for projecting herself into your innermost being. As she says, "I am intensely dramatic; I live in and for others completely; their joys and sorrows are my own; that is one of my idiosyncrasies. My husband says I have the most sensitive nature he ever saw, and that my self-sacrificing ways are a perpetual reproach to him." These little affectations, however, do not disturb Margaret, who declares that Mrs. Wells is truly good, and that in the sick-room, where she often is, they disappear, and nothing can be so acceptable and grateful as her presence. Dr. and Mrs. Wells have lost four children, their all; one, a beautiful boy six years old, died suddenly of diphtheria.

Dr. Williams comes every day; not a strictly handsome man, like my husband; nor, a perfect man like Dr. Wells, but no one would have him any different. He is brimful of the milk of human kindness; it is bubbling up perpetually. Edward says he is a perfect gush, spilling over all the time; but there is no lack of self-control.

He announces himself as thirty-one; he is as tall as Edward, and considerably heavier, but his tread in the house is as light as a woman's.

He is broad-shouldered, deep-chested; has eyes that in color and clearness suggest the sky always; light brown curly hair and side-whiskers,—he says he isn't allowed to cover the mouth and chin; but the most remarkable feature is the forehead, which is exceedingly broad, white, and hilly, indicating genius; great vitality appears in the depth of the temples. He has, in a large measure, what every physician should have, health and electricity. The throat is his specialty, and he has invented some valuable instruments. There is, of course, no end of ministers in his practice, many of whom he charges only a nominal fee, and sometimes nothing at all. He is very wealthy, or his mother is, which is the same thing.

He has a fashion of inviting all manner of uncomfortable, cross-grained, out-of-the-way people to dine with him, as if they were doing him a favor; he is acquainted with all the miserable and forlorn; his carriage is often piled up and overflowing with children; he says, it is well for him he is not slender, they squeeze him so. When he walks down street, little folks cling to his hands, and swing on his fingers, and caper before him, and skip at his side; and, the other day, I saw him sitting in a toyshop, with a dozen pinched, eager little faces crowded around; and he told them to choose what they wanted. And it is he who brings all the wildest and rag-

gedest boys into the Sunday School. I wish you could hear him talk to them,—they are wild with enthusiasm and delight.

I have looked several times to see what it is in him that bewitches children so. I don't know whether it is his smile, or his wit, or his voice, or all together. His mouth is rather large for beauty, but the teeth are very fine, and his smile has all the sweetness of a woman and the roguishness of a boy. The wit he takes from his mother, who has Irish blood; and when you come to see me I can promise you no better entertainment than their good-natured sparring. He says he knows nothing of music, but he is passionately fond of the Oratorio, has an organ built in his house, and plays the bugle and flute. His voice has the properties of all these instruments; it is mellow, sonorous, and elastic; it never stuns, and does not seem so very powerful; but it is tremendous,—there is no end to it.

You wonder that, with a nature so loving and social, he has never married. It must be because no one can come between him and his mother. She insists that she is waiting for him to choose a wife; but he declares that when he looks at any one in particular, she objects. It is not surprising, they seem like lovers.

She is Scotch, and has as many names as a Spanish princess, but she subscribes herself Helen

McGregor. Arthur's name is Arthur Bruce, but at home she calls him Joseph, or Jo. Joseph was the name of her husband, and of a little one she lost. She is but sixteen years older than Arthur, and is superbly, regally handsome, with a contour and carriage of a Juno, such as we almost never see in American ladies. She rides any horse, drives a span, and thinks five miles a short walk. Arthur says he remembers when her hair was red, but it is rich auburn now, and she wears a lace turban, because he dislikes a widow's cap.

She has a great deal of presence, which is heightened, perhaps, by her plain, heavy mourning; she is not in general society, and her manners are less free than ours. It is said that no one can beat her at chess, and that she is very keen in argument. Both Mrs. Williams and Arthur have a droll way of laughing with the eyes, and not with the mouth; and it is rather provoking, because it is when they have the advantage over you in some way. Mrs. Williams delights in teasing me, calls me Robin, which is Scotch, she says, and I am not supposed to know what it means. Then she says and does everything she can to make me blush and flutter and be ridiculous, but she is as loving and loveable as she can be.

Her husband was a clergyman, and a native

of Vermont. He was settled first in a country parish; then in Cincinnati, where he died very suddenly. She went home immediately after, to educate Arthur, not expecting to return. They were in Paris, where he was studying his profession, when the great Rebellion broke out, and she couldn't hold him. He said he was an American, and must go home. With prayers and tears she besought him not to enlist. She would go anywhere, live anywhere, if he would not leave her. It was very hard, for he wanted to fight, but he was her darling, her all; and at length he promised, but he went as surgeon, and she with him into the hospital as nurse. It is said that her marriage was displeasing to her friends, for Mr. Williams was only a theological student, and tutor to some young cousins; but she was motherless, and the only daughter, and ruled her father and every body else, till she found somebody to rule her. An incident is related of her, which is characteristic. Her husband, though rich toward Heaven, was poor in this world's goods. Once, in Cincinnati, some ladies, more zealous than wise, went to her with a subscription paper. On learning their errand, she said, "If it is money that you wish, you must go to Mr. Williams."

"But we understood that the property belonged to you."

She rose up like a wrathful queen. "And what business has a married woman to hae siller of her ain,—can ye tell me that?"

They went out.

Domestic care is a burden to her, and co-operative housekeeping, she says, is her hobby. Though never imperious, she is strong, and Arthur obeys her almost as a child would. It is the more beautiful, because I am positive that under all his effervescence there is a mighty will and extraordinary depth of passion. Any one that she loves, she commands in the same way. This morning, she said to me, "Sometimes robins fly, and sometimes they flutter, but they nestle always, or they ought to if they don't," and she laid my head fondly in her bosom. She goes way down town to market, and Arthur says she has suddenly discovered it to be a very long walk, and that she is exhausted when she reaches our house; and several times she has sent for me on the most absurd pretexts. Whether she really sends them, or Arthur fabricates them on the way, I have no idea. When I came, Margaret said, "Don't flatter yourself, my dear, that you are going to have any secrets from them." And it is so. They are not curious; it is because you blossom out spontaneously, involuntarily, when with them. I was alarmed till I found how perfectly safe it is, and now nothing can be sweeter, more heavenly under heaven,

than to feel that there is no occasion to veil or to repress, to be other than soul-real and soul-great.

The doctor has much to say about "the higher Christian life," which he has experienced and which is, no doubt, the secret of his joyousness and beautiful life.

Some one remarked that he had had the poet's struggle with life, and had come off conqueror; but no mere poet's struggle ever resulted in victory like his; it is the harmony of Christ Jesus. He insists that when a total surrender is made of the soul to God, it is made once and forever; it may be repeated constantly, and surely is, but there can be no more struggle; and this glorious frame he believes is the duty and privilege of every disciple of Christ to possess.

One day he said, "I often feel as if I had no body." I could not help smiling, and thinking it must be large imagination or large faith which could dissolve so entirely material so positive; but I said, "I know pretty well what you mean, but don't you find it a little dangerous?"

"Certainly," he replied; "spiritual luxuries are of all others most intoxicating and dangerous. I have known seasons of exaltation following great depths of humiliation and melting of heart; when I seemed beyond the need of prayer even, beyond every earthly condition;" then he added, a little sadly, "this cannot be long, of

course. The soul gravitates earthward just as truly as the body does, and at such a height we must learn to slide gently down, looking up every moment, or we shall pitch headlong to the ground, as many have done. There are times, after such elevation, when ordinary earthly conditions are almost insupportable. But the presence of Christ is to me usually an atmosphere in which I live, and which I breathe every moment."

"Do you think yourself removed from liability to mistake?" I asked. He laughed. "If I said that, it would be a proof that I had made one great mistake."

Can you believe it? Alex Montgomery,—our Alex,—has become a minister, and is preaching almost every day in the city churches, and crowds go to hear him, and scores, I might almost say hundreds, of people, are convicted and converted.

## CHAPTER IX.

### QUEEN CATHERINE'S REALM. — IRISH SUBJECTS.

BOSTON, MAY 17.

My dear Mrs. King:

I believe I have told you of everything but my housekeeping; and I have reserved the account till I could make a fair trial. We have discussed my theories so much that I am sure you are curious to know how they operate, as you hint in your letter.

One day, when I first came, I was expounding them to Edward, and he said, "It is all very excellent, and I doubt not practicable in the country, where people live on the ground floor and have elbow room, and where society is less artificial, and it is a reproach not to work. But it is a very different matter in a four-story house in the city, and in a community where many a woman thinks domestic labor beneath her. We will see," he continued, laughing, "how long it

will be before you are under the dominion of the Emerald Isle."

I have two Irish girls, and my husband told me to get a third, if I wished; but another, I think, would finish me. You know I have never learned to treat any person as a servant or inferior, and it is painful to have near me those of another race and religion, whose interests are widely separated from my own. Edward said I should soon get over this, but Margaret says she does not.

I have seen very few Irish girls who did not pollute the kitchen, if not the whole house; and likewise flavor the food, if it was not wholly indigestible. On coming here, I found in the kitchen a lady of sanguine and generous habits, rubicund complexion, and manners somewhat magisterial. Edward said she was a splendid cook, and I thought so myself, till I learned she never washed her hands, and discovered her fine comb on the moulding-board. When I ascertained that she considered my presence in the kitchen incompatible with her own, I told her she might seek another home. Such fury!

There was a pretty chamber-girl, too, but she was unfortunate in her organization, being a kleptomaniac. When my wedding handkerchief suddenly fell out of her pocket, she confessed at once her sin and sorrow, and was so penitent that I concluded to give her another trial, es-

True!



pecially as she said she would get some holy water from the priest to help her. She showed it to me afterwards, in a richly cut vial, and on being pressed, she owned she stole from Margaret the vial to put it in.

Two more cooks were tried. One wasn't quite satisfied with her privileges, and must have her supper at six o'clock, in order to meet her social obligations every evening; the other couldn't make bread, so I said, "Enough!" Margaret keeps the drawing-room and guest rooms in supreme order and elegance; I have a stout chambermaid who is an excellent laundress, and my cook is just learning the trade. She is a girl of seventeen, whom Dr. Williams picked up on one of his professional visits, and I am trying to teach her, not only to be a thorough and admirable cook, but a thorough and admirable woman. Nora is of Protestant parentage, and quite respectable, good-natured and bright, but incredibly heedless, and with the dullest moral sense I ever saw. She tells a falsehood as easily as the truth, and confesses to stealing. She says she will be cleanly, faithful, and truthful, to please me, and I can see that she makes the endeavor, but any higher motive is at present above her comprehension. At first she was very impudent, but has become ashamed of it; declares that nobody ever treated her with any justice or respect before. She reads and writes indiffer-

ently, and I teach her spelling and the simple rules of arithmetic, and hear her read in the Bible every day. Edward laughs at my plan as visionary and useless: says she will be off as soon as she knows anything. If she does go, it will help her to be a better servant to somebody else. It requires infinite patience and grace, but I shall feel well rewarded if she can be made to learn any right principle.

Just now, of course, much of the cooking falls upon me, but she is better help every day, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that I am mistress in my own house. While my breakfast cakes are browning off, I have a fashion of flying to the piano, or catching up a book or a paper, which is inspiration for hours to come. This was a sore trial to Aunt Maria, for I used to forget; but now I know just the minute, and I always find that my cakes have a richer shade and an extra flavor for having forgotten them entirely for ninety seconds.

What makes a pie good? What makes anything good? What, but philosophy, poetry, and religion! Pray, what keeps this mighty republic on its feet, and perpetuates politics and the pulpit, if not this same woman's work?

Somebody said once, "Let who will make the laws, let me make the songs!" If he had had any wit he would have said, "Let who will

make the laws, let me make the puddings!" O woman, what a power is thine!

I must not forget to tell you of other new friends, Mrs. and Prof. Patch. They live forty miles inland, but Mrs. Patch dines with us usually when she comes to town, which is once a week certainly, and sometimes oftener. A woman's convention is to be held in a fortnight, and she has notified us that she is coming tomorrow for a visit of six weeks.

You know, I suppose, that she is one of the leaders of this mighty reform, and have doubtless read her powerful and popular speeches. They must exert a tremendous influence. She is not handsome, and not very young, but she is certainly one of the most bewitching women I ever met! Her hair is worn short and parted on the side, and she wears a shirt with studs and sleeve-buttons, and men's boots, and carries a cane. In cast of feature and grasp of thought, she is a Webster; in acuteness, a Jefferson; in impassioned fervor, a Patrick Henry; in classic grace an Everett; in transparency of style, an Irving; in purity of diction, a Phillips; in gait, an Abraham Lincoln. The stateswoman is stamped all over her, and if she isn't the next President she will certainly be the next but one!

She has a husband and five children, but is elevated above all consideration as to what they

shall eat or drink, or wherewithal be clothed. Her husband is a college professor. He is a kind of Silurian deposit, and has, of course, little sympathy with the accumulations of succeeding ages; but such solidity is refreshing in these days of humbug.

## CHAPTER X.

KNIGHT BECOMES BISHOP.—KING ARTHUR RELATES HIS OWN VAIN-GLORY AND SHAMEFUL OVERTHROW.

“Mrs. Sterne, will you allow mamma to look at Mrs. Foster’s face?” was Dr. Williams’s request, when he called upon the bride with his mother. Mrs. Williams was as much impressed and attracted by it as he had been, and soon after he proposed copying it. Kate was, of course, delighted, but she was nearly beside herself with joy, when, several months later, the doctor brought to her a portrait, painted in oil, and nearly life size. “Why, doctor,” she exclaimed, “it is far more like her than the daguerreotype is; you must have seen her!”

But she was assured that the portrait contained nothing that was not in the daguerreotype, only what was but dimly represented or suggested in the small picture he had evolved

and illumined in the large. She could hardly be made to believe that the doctor had not known and loved Mrs. Foster. So her Down-East friend became the presiding genius over her sitting-room; and no stranger entered the room without asking who it might be, and admiring, even to Kate’s satisfaction.

Jackson friends came frequently, all but Alex. Uncle dropped in every week; the boys had spent a day with her twice, and little Fanny a week. Her aunt declared she could not leave, but sent something nice always; and the older girls hoped they might be invited for a long visit.

In June, Kate went to her old home for a few days. Uncle and the boys met her at the station, and Sarah almost carried her into the house, and put her into the great arm-chair in the parlor, and then took off the dainty little hat and mounted it on her own curls.

Ruth leaned over her, and chatted and told the news; how Nathan’s mother was dead, and his grown-up brother in New York, whom he had almost never seen, had sent for him to go there and live; and how Nathan had written a pitiful letter in which uncle had inclosed a note, asking if he might not stay in Jackson, and pursue his studies; but not a word had come, though it had been a week, and poor Ruth was in great trouble.

Little Fan sat on her lap, and Charley walked on his head twice around the room. Will alone looked glum, sitting astride the window sill, snapping lilac leaves with his pretty, red lips. Nathan came in, and didn't act himself at all, but fidgeted with his cap and the buttons of his jacket, and looked at the pictures and the wall, and kept swallowing. But the letter came that very day, telling him to have his own way, and all were happy again, and Nathan actually cried.

Kate offered to help her aunt, but was not permitted. "If you will just sit still, and keep those children out of mischief, I'll thank you." She had missed Kate more than she cared to own. Not only had she discovered that Kate relieved her of a large slice of the actual work, but there was something insensible and indefinable about her, which was more important still. She missed the delicate perception, the forethought, the helpfulness, which silently accomplished or avoided a hundred things which now annoyed and burdened her; the children were far more unmanageable, even though she talked and scolded from morning till night, and went to bed utterly worn out; and what was distressingly mortifying, she discovered that they had very little respect either for her judgment or her authority. They reserved all their questions for Kate's decision; Kate's opinion and prefer-

ences were quoted fifty times a day, and set down as final always; and what was equally vexatious, her husband was never satisfied with any new arrangement till he had been in Boston and conferred with his niece. All this was very humiliating to Aunt Maria, and it might have embittered her, but she had no reflections of Kate but those which were pleasant. She loved the child, and never so much as now. She wanted her all the time, as much as the others did; and so she was softened very much as she would have been had Kate been taken from her by death; and the children wondered a little, as she grew less exacting and more silent, and more comfortable altogether.

It had been the plan of our bride to ask each of the girls to spend a year with her and go to school. When she mentioned it to her husband, he said, "I have no objection to Sarah,—she is stylish and good company; and the little one you can have all the time, if you choose; she's a vain little monkey, but she amuses me,"—the truth is, Fanny admired him and devoted herself to him;—"but the tow-headed one I don't want; and as for that Strong boy, I won't have him in the house."

Ruth's nature was not a suspicious one, but she had one of those keen minds that scent a sham afar off. She was as truly polite to her cousin's lover as any of the others,—she would

be this for Kate's sake; yet he felt that she measured him and found him wanting. Ruth had never breathed her suspicion to any but Nathan. His perceptions were not as quick as hers, but his judgment was not dazzled or overpowered by any display. He was true and upright, and abhorred deceit in any form; and Mr. Sterne was not long in learning that Nathan took no pains to please him, and it was a tormenting reflection, and he was angry with himself for being disturbed by it, that all his splendid gifts and attractions and professions were quietly despised by a mere boy, who professed no piety, and made no claim to arts or graces of any kind. More than once he had spoken to him in a way almost insulting, and Nathan's eye flashed, but beyond that his equanimity was undisturbed.

Sarah was developing rare nobleness of character, as well as beauty of person. She had become as fond of history as she had been of fiction; but Kate felt that she would not learn openness, that her Christian affections would not soften and roundly expand till she could be removed from some of the injudicious restraints of her mother, and especially the tyranny of Will. Any life must be dwarfed and fettered that is subjected to a constant petty persecution. So the beginning of the school year in September found her a student in the city.

The month of August Kate and Margaret passed at the seaside, where they met Dr. Eveleth and Mrs. King, who returned with them, and remained two weeks.

One day, during their visit, when Dr. Williams was calling, Dr. Eveleth asked, "Have you heard Mr. Montgomery, the new revivalist, who is making so much commotion?"

"Yes, sir," replied the doctor, "I have heard him many times, and I hope to hear him many times more."

"He is preaching in Cambridge, is he not?"

"Yes, sir, and I thought of going this evening. Shall I have the pleasure of taking Mrs. King and yourself, and as many more as will do me the honor?"

The invitation was accepted for themselves and for Kate. Margaret was too delicate, and Edward had an engagement. Kate longed unspeakably to see and hear Alex. Not once had she met him since her wedding night; yet she dreaded it almost as much, and knew not whether to be more glad or sorry that her responsibility, as hostess, required her attendance.

Accordingly, just before seven, the doctor appeared in his mother's favorite team,—a pair of spirited greys and a double carriage, with the top turned back. He was ushered into the parlor, where all were sitting, and, making an oriental bow, he said, "Mamma presents her

compliments, and regrets exceedingly her inability to attend on this occasion, and begs that Mrs. Sterne, with her guests and family, will dine with her to-morrow."

Mrs. King looked doubtfully at Kate, as it was but three days before they had dined with Mrs. Williams; but Dr. Eveleth responded with as low a bow as his portliness would permit. "Certainly, certainly; we will go with the greatest pleasure, and say to your mother that we are very much obliged to her. Is that right, little daughter?" he added, taking Kate by the chin, and bestowing a fatherly kiss.

The moon was at the full, and the drive so delightful that they lingered a little, and when the church was reached they found it filled to overflowing. Only Dr. Eveleth's position and credit secured them any seat. Three lads being ejected from a pew, our party were shown directly in front of the pulpit, and quite near. Kate would gladly have crept into a quiet corner, screened from observation, but she must give her guests the precedence, and so found herself possessed of about six inches of cushion between Mrs. King and Dr. Williams.

There was Alex in the pulpit! She saw him, but he did not see her, though he was always looking for her, and wondering why she never came. She was as pale as death. The doctor asked her if she were faint, and if she wished to

go out, and she shook her head. He fanned her and ordered the windows to be lowered, and then seemed to take no further notice of her condition, which was much to her relief. The services commenced very soon. First a hymn, which was more like the camp-meeting music than anything she ever heard,—such an outpouring, outgushing of burdened and overflowing hearts; then a prayer from one of the city pastors, which was the trickle of the brook after Niagara; then another hymn, fuller and sweeter yet, in which she could distinguish the rich bass of Alex; and then the preacher arose. He stood perfectly motionless for a whole minute and seemed to look into every eye and every heart. Yes, it was her Alex, her dear boy! She felt like taking him in her arms, grown and towering though he was. There was the same modesty and childlikeness and unconsciousness; they had never seemed so grand, so beautiful before; with a certain plaintiveness about the mouth, which she had only rarely seen, and there was the same fearlessness and manliness,—only he had grown so; there was such strength, such purpose, such sovereignty of mind and soul! In that moment of silence his heart spoke, and there was not a heart in the house that did not swell in response. Kate could not trust herself to look, but she felt the heaving by her side. The first tones, though not loud,



were distinctly audible to most of the audience; but her whole frame was pulsating at such a rate, her head ringing so with a hundred bells, that she heard nothing for some time; then she distinguished a familiar quotation, which he had taken from her: "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

"Oftener He takes these sheared ones and throws them out into the frost and the hail and the blast, and they all run for very life, for shelter,—some sort, any sort,—and thousands there are that find it. But many do not. Some of these die, and some are crazed, but a few there are that weather it, and they get a fleece worth having; they develope bone and blood and muscle; and mountain and valley, meadow and slope are all for them. Don't they know the green pastures and the still waters? don't they find the broadest streams, and the richest forests, the loveliest flowers, and the sweetest birds? What to them is season or weather or atmosphere? What, but the change of key in the one great harmony? And how they sniff the north-west wind, and leap the precipice and ride the torrent! and the Great Shepherd is everywhere.

But those that were sheltered never get beyond the yard. They are ever bleating, 'What a cold and hard and weary world! but how tell of the sweep from the height beyond, or the glow of the sunset there?

"To love is divine necessity, but to be loved is not divine necessity. To love is also human necessity, but to be loved, except by God, is not human necessity; and just so far as we make it such, just so far are we weak and in bondage, and our power to love diminished. Consecrated love is an ocean of happiness; all earthly springs may give to it,—all earthly springs may fail, but there is no perceptible increase or decrease; it is still immeasurable, unfathomable, inexhaustible, and it may water and refresh the whole earth, but it is through the skies.

"Consecrated will, what is that? It is one with the divine will, and knows no other; it is totally flexible, it is totally inflexible; it yields always, it yields never.

"This is the Christian's privilege and joy unspeakable. It is to taste infinity and drink in immortality; it is to touch the Hand that creates, to look into the all-seeing Eye, to feel in every nerve and pulse and artery, the ceaseless throbbing, throbbing of the great Heart of hearts, within, around, above, and throughout the universe. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, that is, the natural eye, but he that is spiritual discerneth all things."

For a time he addressed the people, then the church. "Jesus Christ calls you His bride, His beloved, looking forth as the morning; fair

as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Jesus, He is King, and He would make her queen, and what is this queen, this royal bride? Behold her as He hath endowed her! how noble and erect her form; how round and firm her muscle; how supple and graceful her limbs; how warm and pure her blood; how bold and strong her step; how resolute her brain, and how tender is her heart! And she is clothed in angels' raiment, and there are the costliest jewels and the richest perfumes and the sweetest flowers, and all nations flee unto her, and all men love her and seek her glory and her protection!

"But look at her once more! Again and again He has drawn her out of the mire. She is lame and diseased and weary and worn; her raiment is torn and stained and bedraggled; her jewels are lost and her flowers are crushed and her perfume is stale, and she has even borrowed the world's tinsel, and in her folly and her misery she is vain even of this! Who is dazzled? Who is enamored? Who kisses her hand and bows down to her feet? Alas, the world sneers at her pretension, and laughs at her prerogative, and defies her authority, and mocks at her calamity! But weak though she is, vile and false though she is, He calls her His beloved, still; He entreats her to turn unto Him, and He will love her and save her! His hands are laden

with gifts, His heart o'erflowing with love. Will you not hear Him; *will* you not hear Him, His bride, His beloved?

"And you who have never seen Him, never known Him, never loved Him, will not you come unto Him? Yes, He invites you, even you, to come just as you are,—all your sins, all your corruption and temptation, all your pains and your weariness, all your bewilderment, all your sorrow, yes, and your joys too, and your loves,—bring them all. He invites, yea, He entreats, He commands, will you not come—to-day—to-night, this hour, this moment? Hark! do you not hear His voice? 'Come unto me, come unto me! Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out. Come all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Do you not hear Him? Oh, how tenderly He pleads, how tenderly! You are poor and hungry, and thirsty and cold and naked. He is rich and abounding and loving; you have nothing, He has everything; will you, *will* you not come?"

Nothing could exceed the simplicity and the tenderness of his words and manner, and a strange solemnity filled the house; and, as he proceeded, increasing in fervor and might, there was the hush of death, save here and there a sob or a sigh. Then came the closing prayer, which was the same appeal turned to Heaven, beseech-

ing the gift of the Spirit, and pouring out eternal thanks for mercy already given.

Kate was completely stilled, but she felt great throbs on each side of her, and when the doctor lifted his head, she saw he had been weeping. After the close of the service Dr. Eveleth met a friend, whom he had not for a long time seen, and the conference lasted till the house was quite cleared. Dr. Williams asked Kate if she would like to speak to Alex, but she said, "Not to-night." He would have brought Alex to her, but it would have been no easy matter to have approached him, and she saw that she had not been recognized. The young people especially crowded around him as he left the pulpit and walked slowly down the aisle shaking hands with all, and speaking words of comfort or exhortation or warning. As he drew near the door she saw a tall figure move towards him, and though the face was closely veiled, she knew it must be a young and fair woman. As the preacher looked at her and offered his hand, though the lights were nearly turned off, Kate could not fail to recognize Theo. Where did she come from? How came she there without attendance? were questions that puzzled her. When the group moved out of the door, Theo stood next to Alex, talking with him.

On the drive home, after many expressions of interest in the meeting, from Dr. Eveleth, Mrs.

King, and the doctor, Dr. Eveleth turned to Kate. "Mr. Montgomery is an old acquaintance of yours, is he not, Katie? Do you know any particulars of his conversion?"

"I think, sir," she replied, "it was somewhat unexpected to his friends, though he has long felt a drawing towards the ministry."

Evidently he did not remark, as the others did, her wish to evade the question, for he said, "Was it not some sudden grief or trouble which led to it? I am told he was in a very responsible and lucrative situation, and I judged from his discourse that he had known some severe discipline or suffering."

Dr. Williams came to her relief. "I met him the other day, and invited him home with me, and we had some conversation. He told me that camp-meetings were always full of charm and delight to him; and that a very old man, a Methodist minister, whom he greatly respected and loved, had made him promise in his boyhood that he would grow up and preach Christ. He could never get away from it, he said. Then I have heard, from another source, that his father is rather intemperate, and unequal to the support of a very large family, and this son, the eldest, has very nobly assumed the burden."

"Ah, well, that is discipline, to be sure! I'm sorry for him, and very glad, too."

"Father," spoke up Mrs. King, "there is one question I should like to have you answer."

"Well, my dear, let us have it."

"It is just this. You know, and I know, many Christian ministers,—men of education and culture, earnest men, godly men, with blameless lives, who work in season and out of season, who labor and pray in faith and in love all their days, and perhaps give their health and their life to the service, who never know any such results as this young man sees. Even when most successful, they realize no such ingathering as seems to await him everywhere; yet he, and others like him, will go into your field, and that of many like you, and do, in a week, what older and wiser and perhaps holier men cannot do in half a century. Now, why is it?"

"That is a pretty tough question, Anne; I have considered it not a little, and have examined my own heart with much earnest prayer, fearing that some hindrance might be there. I don't know wholly; God has many ways of working. Sometimes He works through evil men, false prophets, and the work may be a very true and deep one. Some of these revival preachers, most of them, indeed, have personal magnetism. It is a wonderful power with the mass. Mr. Montgomery has much of it; we all felt it the moment he arose and stood before us. Some-

times the magnetism is chiefly animal, and a tremendous appeal is made to the passions, and sympathy stirs up a tumult; but such excitement soon passes away, and we find that very little has been accomplished; men fall back into their old ways, and scarce a trace can be seen of the wonderful revival. Sometimes our Saviour permits a stranger to reap what a faithful pastor has long been sowing and watering. The stranger has the credit in the eyes of the world, because he has gathered in the harvest; but, in the sight of Heaven, his labor and faith may be far less than that of those who planted and cultivated through the heat and burden of the day. Again, there are instances of rare and holy consecration, like this young man, which challenges and impels a blessing from Heaven; he believes in God's promises, he expects a blessing, and it comes. It is meant as a rebuke to us who are slow of heart and often discouraged."

After a little more discussion of this point Dr. Williams said, "Dr. Eveleth, will you allow me to ask one question?"

"Certainly, my son."

"You remember that he spoke of the all-sufficiency of Christ's love, as if no mere human or earthly love could add or subtract. Constituted, as we are, with hearts that crave and bestow earthly affection, do you think we can live utterly without it and be wise and healthful of

soul; and, though it were well, is such a state of mind and heart attainable?"

"I should say," was the reply, "that such a devotion to Christ was attainable and good. Are we not commanded by Him, to love Him so much that our earthly love is hate in comparison. We are enjoined to love Him with all the heart."

"Yes, but is not that command like some others in the Scriptures? We are bidden to do what is in our natures impossible. For instance, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect;' which means simply that we are to strive for perfection, and never stop short of it."

"The two commands, I think, are not exactly parallel in their requirements," returned Dr. Eveleth. "It seems to me, that though we cannot be perfect here, we may love the Lord with all the heart. We suppose the apostles did; they forsook all for Him; very many have since, and there are some now I trust. Very few of us, however, are called upon to turn from those we love. But why do you ask; don't you believe in it?"

"Certainly I do,—theoretically."

"But don't you practically?"

"I did once," replied the doctor, laughing a little; "and maybe I do now, only I shouldn't dare say it in a certain quarter."

"Why not?"

"O, I'm afraid I should see some scalloped oysters."

"That's a chapter of your religious experience, is it?" said Dr. Eveleth, who delighted in drawing him out. "Let us have it by all means."

"Well, sir, I was a very delicate boy, and had a great deal more sentiment than boys usually have. My religious sensibilities, particularly, were very large and tender, and not altogether healthy. Mamma was very wise in not checking this growth; she believes that time and love and experience are often the best tutors, but she bore all things in her heart. When I was seventeen or eighteen,—I was nearly as large as I am now, and quite as much of a baby,—we were in Edinburgh then,—a dark-eyed lassie in the town had made sad inroads on my susceptible heart, and very suddenly jilted me for a low-born laddie, and I was almost killed. When I felt that I had given her up wholly, and had resigned myself perfectly to the Lord's will, I was inexpressibly happy; my ecstasy carried me beyond all earthly interests and desires. One evening we had scalloped oysters for dinner,—Mamma knew it was my favorite dish,—but I declined them, and took only toast and water. She asked the reason, and I told her that earthly gratification only fettered the spirit, and that I was too much elevated to feel the need of such. 'But, my love, she

said, 'you are going to study all the evening; you must have something to support you.' 'I have meat to eat that you know not of,' I replied, seriously. She said no more, but when our prayer-time come,—that is when I tell her everything—I confided to her my blissful experience, and told her that Jesus was so near that I wanted nothing; that earth could neither give nor take away. 'Are you willing to do without your mother?' she asked. But I had considered that even, and I answered without a quiver, such was my exaltation of soul, 'Yes, Mamma, I think I could; Christ is to me all, and in all.' She only caressed me and said, 'That is a great deal to say, Josey. I don't think I have reached that point myself yet, but it makes me very happy to see you so happy.'

"I went to bed first in those days, and she came always and kissed me, and tucked me up, and often sat by me till I fell asleep. Well, that night I thought of several last things to say to her, and I waited and wondered why she delayed so. At length, her light went out, and then I suspected she was experimenting,—testing me a little. I knew, of course, she was too broad and sensible to be hurt at what I had said. It was a great deprivation, but I resolved to be above it, and to rest wholly in the arms of the Lord; but sleep I could not. I thought of fifty things of utmost importance to say to her: the

clothes were too heavy; the blankets rubbed my face; my head was hot, and my feet were cold, and I turned and tossed and tumbled, and was horribly nervous, as the women say, and at last I began to sob, though I nearly suffocated myself lest she should hear me in the next room. Before I heard her step I felt her kissing the tears off my face. I told her the fifty things, and she made the bed all over, and rubbed me all over, and tucked me all up, and then she said, 'Are you all right, now? Will you go to sleep?' 'O, yes,' I answered, 'I'm all right, and if you'll sit there just a minute, I'll be right off.' 'No, you won't,' she said, 'you must have something to eat first!' And down stairs she went, and brought up a plate full of scalloped oysters, and I ate every one of them, and then turned over, and knew no more till morning. Once in a while, now, she says she feels she is growing old, and asks me if I am not ready to exchange her for heavenly graces, but I haven't seen the time since, that I was quite prepared."

They laughed heartily at the doctor's experience, related with all dramatic effect, and Dr. Eveleth remarked,—

"It is a great pity there are not a few more such mothers and women of sense."

"I don't mean, of course," continued the doctor, "that Mr. Montgomery's experience is no deeper than mine was. I don't question, in the



least, his purity of motive, aim, or purpose, or his faith, or his earnestness. It is beautiful, and it is grand, and it inspires me, only I think his imagination is a little lively just now. He doesn't appear to me to be a full man; he talks like a desperately hungry man. I should be very sorry to have any of you betray me, but I have designs on that young man."

"What are you going to do?" asked Mrs. King.

"O, I'm going to woo him and make love to him, and then I shall have his secret; and if he is freed from all earthiness he will show me how to get rid of mine."

Kate was prevented from attending the dinner-party next day, but her company went; and she was not surprised to hear, on their return, that Alex was there, though a trifle reserved in his deportment.

Several weeks afterwards the doctor said to her,—

"I am cultivating this Prince Alexander most assiduously, and it is about the hardest work I ever did. He says you brought him up, and I must say that he does little credit to your training."

Kate laughed at the air of extreme exhaustion he assumed.

"Why, what is the trouble?" she inquired.

"O, he's so egregiously proud; he is so appre-

hensive that somebody is going to do him a favor, when it is entirely for my own personal advancement and pleasure. But I'll win him and conquer him, if it takes me ten years, and I have to abandon my profession and make a business of it."

Kate understood this in Alex perfectly. Like very many whose position is a little doubtful, and particularly poor and proud people, he was perpetually in fear of being patronized, and neither his own common sense nor her philosophy had ever done much in uprooting this weakness.

"His religion will do it in time," she said to herself; "and if anybody can show him how, it is Arthur Williams."

She was rejoiced and immensely relieved by this adoption of Alex by Arthur. She thought of Alex constantly; of his sorrow, his new-found joy, of his helplessness and need of her; and the burden was the heavier because she could not write to him or talk much of him. It was actually wearing upon her. Some writer says, that earthly comfort and happiness, as well as suffering, are sometimes needed to temper the soul; and the doctor was so brave and warm that she rested for Alex, at once. She could give him away so joyfully.

After thanking him, she said,—

"Alex has had medicine all his life, and not much of anything else, and most heroically has he

taken it; but I know that nothing would be so good for him, now, as some wine and some sugar, and I am sure he will find that in you."

"Thanks!" returned the doctor, looking much gratified.

"Do tell me," she continued, with much enthusiasm, "how it is that you have so much of everything to give. Have you found the secret of happiness?"

"I think I have," was the reply.

"What is it?"

"It is a continual striving to apprehend that for which, also, I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. An apprehension of the divine idea and purpose commanding us, calls for our highest energies, our perfect obedience to God, and reliance upon Him. The effort leads, in time, to actual co-working with God, and a constant in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit. There is no power or happiness for man outside of this."

## CHAPTER XI.

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE CONVENTION. — ROYALTY  
SPEAKS ITS MIND.

Kate had not been in her new home many months before she learned its secrets. When the novelty and intoxication had worn off, and her husband had resumed his wonted manner and habits, she saw his true disposition; and the first intimation was this: she felt herself misinterpreted.

True, he gave liberally, and worked continually for others, but it was all for his own comfort or aggrandizement; and he cared for others only so far as they could further his interests. He had never been actuated by any but a selfish motive, and could not conceive of higher purpose in his wife or sister, or anybody else.

He was a very correct and highly moral man.

It was his boast that he had not only no small vices, like smoking, and uncleanness of any

kind, but that no one observed the entire decalogue as strictly as himself. Yet his whole life was one long, uninterrupted violation of the first commandment. Self was his god. It was not the worst kind of tyranny; not that of malice or ungoverned passion, but of selfishness and cold blood; yet it seemed to Kate the most insupportable. Had he been violent or abusive she might have felt that something would, in time, soften him, and she would have felt justified in opposing him. But this seemed very, very hopeless, and she must not despise even what was contemptible in the one she had vowed to honor and love.

Whatever Kate might have failed to be or to do, her ideal of a man and a Christian was a very high one, and her own aims most exalted; and though she was sometimes blinded by her affections, her preceptions, in general, were surprisingly quick. Not to see the truth was impossible; and the hour when she was forced to accept it was one of crushing bitterness. She thought she should die; she wished, only, that she could.

For a day or two she kept her room, and avoided every one. And it was well for her that her husband was called away on business. But he wrote letters so good and so frequent that she reproached herself severely for the injustice she had done him in thought; and her replies were the warmest and tenderest, to atone for the wrong. It was all her fancy, she said to herself; but the

first hour of his return destroyed the new hope, and convinced her that her fear and her sorrow was not unfounded, and the conflict began. It was terrible. She must learn to bear and forbear; to cherish the good she saw, and put out of sight the evil; to perfect her own walk and conversation, and so win him to loftier purposes; to feel no bitterness, and never to show the recoil she often felt; very near to Heaven she knew she must live.

It was then that she cried for Alex. Not that she repented her refusal to be his wife,—that was inevitable; and she never thought of it, but she hungered for his unbounded love and devotion, for his boyish reliance upon her, as well as for his strong and tender protection. She realized, all at once, the terrible vacancy that was made in her heart by losing him. In the first week of her marriage, feeling that she had no right to have secrets, of this kind, from her husband, she had told him of Alex, and of all their intercourse and affection. Most bitterly did she repent it. She had not only disclosed her vulnerable and tender point, which he did not hesitate to probe, and which he seemed to delight in laying bare, but she had made Alex an enemy; and she dreaded every hour lest they meet, for she knew that her husband would not scruple to insult her old lover covertly, if not openly. Whatever she had known, in days gone by, of suf-

fering and struggle, it paled, and was gone, in the real life upon which she had entered; and whatever her religion had been, it now became the great resource and consolation of the long, weary hours of loneliness and anguish. She felt that all life, heretofore, had been a kind of dream, and her piety nothing but romance and sentimentalism. She regarded Margaret with amazement. Not only was there no bitterness, but it was a perpetual stream of unselfish devotion and inherent sweetness. She might die, but no sneer or rebuff or baseness of any one could embitter or sully that angelic soul. To Kate it was altogether Christ-like.

But it was no higher virtue than the wife's struggle. With Margaret had grown up the belief in the superiority of man; and especially she believed her brother to be her superior, every way, as he was intellectually. It was natural, she thought, that he should despise one so weak as herself; and, moreover, she was one of those women who must live upon and for some other person. She would cling to a smooth trunk if she could, but if there were none, she would cling to a thorn-bush, for cling she must.

Kate was less sensitive than Margaret, in some respects; in others more so. Her nature was far deeper, broader, and more powerful; she possessed more mind, more education, more courage, and hers was true independence. Her sense of

justice was infinitely more keen, and she knew she was, in no sense, inferior to her husband; and her whole soul instinctively revolted against his lordliness, and rebelled against his injustice, and submission like Margaret's was impossible.

She saw that Margaret shrank from his step and voice more and more, as she became weaker; and she observed, also, that she never asked a favor of her brother which could be done by her minister or her doctor; and it seemed to Kate that the latter must understand the case, for he usually asked if they had not some commission for him.

With a pang that tore her heart, she learned that Margaret, released, in a measure, by her brother's marriage, from the fearful tension of a lifetime, gradually failed in strength, and at the close of the summer could no longer walk down town, and often kept her room for days together.

The other secret was Margaret's; and this, too, she revealed in her feebleness. When the doctor's name was mentioned her cheek mantled, and her eyes glistened, and she seemed to live on his visits. And when he sat down by her and took her hand, he must have known, from the very tremulousness of her whole frame, that he was beloved. How can he resist her! thought Kate. And that, too, when he knows that his love might give to her years of health and happiness. But these things are not decreed on earth. He was tender, very

tender, but it was the tenderness of a father, of an older brother.

It was the twenty-third of October; and long evenings and jolly fires and social tea-parties were all the fashion. Mrs. Patch had been favoring our friends with a month's visit; and that afternoon the Professor came, with four of the children, and Mrs. Williams and Arthur, Dr. and Mrs. Wells, and Miss Bolter, were bidden to spend the evening. The day before, the doctor and Mrs. Patch had attended the Woman's Suffrage convention in Tremont Temple, and after tea the doctor stood with his back to the fire, and most graphically and humorously described the proceedings, and set forth Mrs. Patch's oration, which was surpassingly eloquent, and the great feature of the occasion. Then he said,—

“Suppose we have a woman's convention here this evening. I should like to take the sense of this meeting, and I propose that each one present express an honest opinion or conviction on this subject which so nearly concerns us all. And what does my imperial mother say?” And he dropped on one knee before her and kissed her hand.

“She says that when women rule the country she shall leave it.”

It was so spirited and crisp everybody laughed.

“Is that all, Mamma?”

“That is all, now. We will hear from the others first.”

Dr. Wells spoke with a kind of deliberation. He was very elegant as well as noble and august, and never said anything in his life that was not sensible and modest. These were his words:

“I don't know that I object to woman's voting, unless it follows that she must be voted for. I can but believe that this reform, as it is called, is, in its bolder aspects, a disease,—the growth of luxury and idleness and abnormal conditions. That which would attack and overthrow the divine institution of marriage, the family, and the church, is no reform, and must, eventually, come to naught. I am glad if new avenues of employment can be opened to woman, and I shall rejoice when she can be better educated, and better paid for her work. Still, I must believe that home is woman's kingdom. And now that her services are so much in demand in all our households, there is no reason why every good woman should not have a good home. Woman, as a physician, may not be amiss; but I would never be on a council to settle one as a minister,” and he looked at his wife and smiled, and they all smiled at the idea of her plump figure in the pulpit.

“Shall we hear from Mrs. Wells?” asked the doctor, making a very low bow.

That lady dissolved several times, till Miss

Bolter was on the point of flying out of her chair and shaking her, and then said,—

“I don’t care to vote myself; it would be so very disagreeable, going to the ballot-box, with so many men staring at me. But it is one of my idiosyncrasies, that I can sacrifice my preferences for the good of others, so that when my country needs me, I am ready for any service, however opposed it may be to my private taste and comfort.”

Saying this, she dissolved again, and Dr. Wells looked at her with undisguised admiration.

Mrs. Patch’s husband came next. He was a skeleton of six feet three, with very black hair and eyes, and long finger-nails, and the asthma. He looked like an enormous spider. He grinned with the uncomfortable consciousness of pins in his shirt instead of buttons, and of several large holes in his stockings, which were odd ones,—one white, the other blue; besides, poor man, he had had no dinner for a week. He piped out:

“I am of the opinion that we had better bestow the gift of suffrage on the weaker sex; by endowing her with something of responsibility, it would tend to correct that frivolity of character and speech which, at the present time, seems so essentially and peculiarly her portion. Woman has never shown herself to be the equal of man in any”—

“If she has never shown herself equal to man, it is because she has never had the chance,” snapped out his better-half, in a vinegar tone; and it was plain in one instance, at least, that woman was match for man. She looked at him. He withered. She turned her radiant face to the company:

“O, my friends, my brothers and sisters, especially my sisters, my fellow-laborers, what a glorious work is ours! Let us gird up our loins, and with banners aloft, rush on to the battle, for the sake of the right and the truth, for our liberty and our lives! Woman, who, from the foundation of the world, has been crushed under the heel of the oppressor, the victim of his avarice, the creature of his lust; woman, who, from age to age has poured out her heart’s blood for that vile monster, man; woman, the pure, the heroic, the divine, with the palm of victory in her hand, the crown of triumph on her brow, the shout of exultation on her lips, is soaring to her glorious destiny. She has seized her birth-right; liberty is in her right hand, honor and usefulness and happiness in her left; tyranny and anguish are under her feet. Look at her record! Look at her history! and tell me if freedom is not hers. Freedom to work or not to work; freedom to take a husband or to leave him; freedom to have and freedom to give; freedom to make



laws and freedom to break them; freedom to tread under foot that reptile, man!"

She paused to take breath, and to pinch her husband who was nodding,—that showed his appreciation of her; and Dr. Williams was uncivil enough to say,—

"Miss Margaret, haven't you something to say to us?"

Margaret looked up as from a dream. The doctor sat down and very near her. She had never spoken either her love or her trial, but he knew them both, and would lose nothing. Her tone was sweet and earnest.

"I don't know about woman's work being as good as man's. I'm inclined to think it is not; and I have no desire to vote, unless by so doing I could help to relieve the families of intemperate, wicked men, or make the life-struggle easier for many a single woman; but I have no patience with these women in high life, who having everything the world can give, enter a protest against what they call 'exceptional discontent.' It is not exceptional discontent; the cry is very loud and very deep, and it comes from many a bleeding heart all over the land. There is a vast amount of social and domestic tyranny which will be laid open and expelled by this searching for the truth, even though the means may not be always sound."

She spoke as if the iron had entered her own

soul. When Margaret Sterne had no patience, it was time for woman to lift up her voice.

After a space of a minute or two, the doctor, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, said, "Miss Bolter, we are impatient to hear your sentiments."

That lady was all ready; indeed, she was brim full and running over with the matter all the time, as the doctor very well knew. Miss Bolter had two little infirmities. She was tall, and ill-made, and seemed to have little control over her limbs; and never moved without a cracking of some joint. Also, she was possessed of the notion that every marriageable man, at least, was in love with her; and as she was much too high-toned to encourage attachments she could never hope to reciprocate, her manner in their presence was a combination of skittishness and defiance; and as she was persuaded that Dr. Williams was foremost among her admirers, she was to him correspondingly invincible. She talked just as she worked, with all her might, and with little order or connection.

"It is an everlasting sin and shame that women should be so cheated out of their rights. There's no justice at all, and never has been, in my opinion; and if you don't believe it, just come down to my house and talk with my girls, who have worked for their living day in and day out, all their lives, and precious small living it

would be, too, if they had to depend on a man's idea of justice. And just look at the girls of this generation,— what a feeble, miserable, nervous, shaky race they are, too! It's all because our mothers and grandmothers had to work so beyond their strength. We're all run out, and what *our* children are going to be it is frightful to contemplate. There's no reason in the world why a woman should sweep and wash and iron and bake and nurse any more than a man should; and there's no reason in the world why she shouldn't be educated, and write and plead and preach as much as he."

"But," said the doctor gravely, "how about the minister with eight children, out West, that wanted you so bad? Suppose you had married him, and I'm not sure but you ought, how would you have arranged it? Would he have taken care of the children and the house, while you wrote his sermons?"

"If I couldn't write better sermons than he did, I'd put my hands in the suds and there keep 'em. He had been in the mines, and he was a vastly better cook than he was preacher, you may believe. If there is one thing in this world that I am thankful for, it is that I am not dependent on any man, or in love with any, either;" and with this final bolt at the doctor, an extra jerk, and a double crack of her elbows, she subsided.

"Now, Mrs. Sterne."

Kate's voice was pleasant and her enunciation clear. It seemed as if she were following her own train of thought, without reference to any person present, or to anything remarked before.

"The common argument, it appears to me, amounts to nothing: that he is better paid, because his work is better. Woman's work may be less in quantity and force, but it is better in quality; it is more significant and telling; and were it inferior, the difference could not be so great, for man often receives more than double woman's wages for the same labor. The only argument of any force, to my mind, is that he is supposed to have a family, while she is not. But if society is to be revolutionized, and women are to have professions and trades, and there are to be two heads to the family, then these matters of remuneration will in time adjust themselves. I would give woman the vote; not to lessen her burden, for it cannot; it will increase it. Her subjection and limitation and suffering were instituted at the creation and inaugurated at the curse, and there is no escape. But suffrage should be hers, for the same reason that education is,— it is a part of education,— to enlarge and exalt and exercise her powers. Education augments her suffering: 'He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow,' but she has a right to the freedom and opulence which suffering gives. Were there no life beyond, and were her happiness only sought, I would say, 'Do not edu-

cate so much; let her learn industry and prudence; teach her order, amiability, and gentleness; give her the Bible, no more. I never hear of the birth of a child without a prayer, and if it is a girl, there is a sigh too." *amen!*

She had spoken so rapidly, with such intensity, almost bitterness, that she knew not every eye was fixed upon her. She was looking at Margaret, who seemed more languid than ever, but as she raised her eye she caught the doctor's. He turned it instantly, he did not mean so to betray himself, for in that glance she read volumes. First, that he knew her secret; then an unutterable pity for her, and honor for her in her struggle; then a fierceness and a fire that told her the power of the man. For the first time in her life, she saw a depth of feeling, a passion, a capacity for joy and suffering, greater than her own; and still more a command, a mastery over it all, such as she had hardly conceived.

For the space of a minute it was the stillness of death. For once in her life her cheeks did not flame, her heart did not throb,—she was white and motionless as marble; she dared not breathe or stir lest the agony of her heart be audible. The silence was intolerable to Edward. He broke it.

"I have never yet seen that woman was the equal of man, either in being or working"—  
"Only in suffering," was the doctor's interjec-

tion; but Edward continued, "To any person of common sense it is evident that home is the place for her; that her husband is her head; that he and his children should be her care, and if she is what she should be, she will find in this her happiness."

"You think, then, with Napoleon," said the doctor, "that she is the finest woman who can get the best dinner and rear the most children?"

"Why, no, not that exactly."

"You mean, then, that she should do all this in an unexceptional manner; and in order to do it thus, she must be on a very high plane, intellectually and morally."

"Yes, that's my idea."

"Miss Sarah, what do you think of this business?"

Sarah blushed, and said modestly, "I don't know much about it, but I am sure that the right woman can do a great deal in her home," and she looked fondly at Kate; the doctor's eye followed hers. "I don't see, though, how she is going to be on such a high plane, intellectually and morally, if she has no aim and no work but to please her husband. And men ought not to complain because women spend so much time and money in dress, when they give their attentions and affections to those who *look* the best."

"Excellent!" was Dr. Wells's observation,

and she blushed more and more at the little applause that followed.

"Now, mamma!"

"You know what I would say, Arthur." Her quiet, earnest tones filled the room completely, her presence absorbing every other presence; it was always so when she was aroused. Arthur, too, had the same power in his most serious moments. Kate wondered wherein it lay. The contrast between Mrs. Williams and Margaret, as they sat side by side, was very striking; each perfect in her way, and yet the type so different. No one would have called Mrs. Williams graceful, because she was so much more than graceful. Her left hand and arm rested on the table beside her; it was not a very small hand; it was not a jewelled hand, but it was remarkably smooth and white and well-formed, reflective yet unaffected and unconscious, and in its every attitude, motion, and expression, thoroughly human, real. Its mate held in her lap a coarse garment from the Mission School, which she said she was making from pure sense of duty,—she knew she was not quick with her needle.

Notwithstanding this slowness in handiwork generally, she impressed every one with an idea of abundance, of resource, in body and soul; and this was especially noticable in her talk, which was redundant. She was one of those warm-

blooded women who, in the fullness of their sympathies, forget themselves without losing their poise, and there was contentment without complacency. Her theories were most wise and even rigid, and so was her practice in all matters of business and in what was strictly conventional; yet she possessed a breadth of good-nature, of charity and magnanimity which, as in Arthur, amounted almost to weakness. Under an exterior which impressed the stranger as stately and even a little stiff, there was a glow, an exuberance, a prodigality of nature, truly royal. She had in her the stuff of which martyrs and heroes are made, and Kate thought it almost a pity that so much of earthly good had been bestowed upon her. Mrs. Browning says, "We can't be rich in both worlds,—God Himself wasn't;" but to just two or three He gives heaven and earth both, and prosperity may be a higher test than adversity.

Arthur was not his mother's only worshipper. Margaret was shy in revealing her attachments; they must be drawn out; Sarah adored and raved about her, girl-fashion; Edward had many times told her his plans, and she had given him faithful counsel, such as he would never have received from any other, and he felt for her respect, akin to fear, which was the highest sentiment of which his selfish nature was then capable. Kate lost no love from shyness.

She could never be indifferent to any person whom she saw often, and all her feeling held something of passion and romance; and like many who have more spirit than body, she was impressed usually by a full physique and imposing figure, and attracted by those in whom body and soul were more evenly balanced; and though Mrs. Williams, in a motherly way, advised her to cultivate the animal a little more, Kate was attractive to both herself and Arthur through the very absence of the sensuous and material. She had never betrayed, by word or look, any knowledge or suspicion of Kate's sorrow; yet the latter somehow felt that her new friend understood her and her position, as no other did. She little knew how that heart had been ready to burst with compassion for her, ever since the day following the wedding, when Arthur told her what a lovely sensitive-plant Edward Sterne had taken to himself; she little dreamed how her grief was anticipated for her; how every line of suffering and sigh of conflict was noted, or what prayer had gone up in her behalf. She knew only that there was a magnificent presence radiant with health and hope and love; that there were unnumbered kind attentions and many a loving embrace. She accepted this new love as she had never done any other, chastened in spirit, and silently,—a precious gift of Heaven; but she rested in it even more than she knew. How true

it is that when we are sorely disappointed in some happiness we have sought, it springs up in some unexpected quarter. At first she tormented herself with the fear that she had unconsciously revealed her trouble, but she soon comforted herself by reflecting that Mrs. Williams had known her husband long and well. It was not till she was older that she realized how persons, like Mrs. Williams and Dr. Wells, with keen perceptions and tender sympathies, united to a profound and comprehensive knowledge of human nature, often take in, at a glance and with a few points, the whole status. So it was with sharpened ears and a great bound of the heart that Kate heard her begin:

“You know, Arthur, what I would say. It is true, there is distressing need of reform, but it needs to be in woman, even more than for her; and first of all, she wants health. It will be no mark of progress, when one woman in every twenty studies medicine, for genuine reform deals with prevention rather than cure, and first causes must be looked into; we must know the philosophy of our unsound minds and bodies. Nothing proves so much the weakness and imperfection of our present educational system as the destroying effect it has on our physical natures. Individuals are in fault in many instances, men and women both; and it is certain, as Miss Bolter says, that the majority of wives

and mothers are overworked, and this brings feebleness and untold suffering to themselves and their innocent offspring. Four-fifths, at least, of medical practice and medicine are for women and children, and for a proportion of this the wife and mother is directly responsible. A more simple and wholesome plan of cooking, and less of weak ambition to outshine her neighbor in house, dress, and equipage, would relieve her of one-half her present toil and drudgery, and promote the health of every member of her family. These things force upon her disorders and irregularities of all sorts, and her constitution breaks under it. Natural, healthful work never hurt woman yet; it is the night-watching and care and anxiety that destroy her. Hygiene is pre-eminently woman's cause, and she cannot hope for reform, of any great depth, till she knows more about the laws of health and is willing to obey them."

She paused an instant, but no one speaking, she proceeded. "Notwithstanding our culpability, our invalidism, certainly in this part of this country, is too general and too uniform in its character to be accounted for wholly in this way; indeed, some of our most conscientious seekers after truth are the greatest sufferers. There must be a violation of some great general law, which as yet is imperfectly understood."

"Have you any idea of what this law is?" asked Dr. Wells.

"I have just a glimmer as to the nature of it," she replied; "only a philosopher and a prophet could define and make manifest, but I venture this suggestion. We all know how civilization and knowledge have advanced within fifty, and even thirty years; it is unprecedented. The world now is brought to our own door, and the claims upon us are without end; and there is a mighty exercise of the nervous system, the brain particularly; women feel the draft more, because they are weaker, more sensitive. A great change has been wrought in us; just what the change is, we don't precisely know. We know still less how to meet it; and so sudden and so powerful has been the leap, that medicine, with all its boasted advance, is not able to bridge the chasm,—never will be sufficient. We must have for our guide and help here something nearer to nature, more an instinct, more a science, and less an art, than medicine. Hygiene is scarcely more than an instinct now,—is not out of its infancy; though the people suffer, that science, so essential to them, is too crude and chaotic to reach them. There must be first many experiments and failures and mistakes. It is not till truth is reduced to general principles, and then imparted in fragments, that it really benefits the masses. I have seen persons renowned the world over for temporal and spiritual wisdom, who, for want of light on this subject, have



nearly ruined the body; and every day we meet those who, in their extremity, have taken up guesses in the newspapers or rambling theories of some popular medical lecturer or writer, who, from the very coarseness of his nature, is unqualified to prescribe for the delicate organizations of New England; and quack doctors and patent medicine dealers are often the richest men in the land. This is all vain, except that it shows our vanity and ignorance; and, as I said before, it may be inevitable just now, but we are gradually coming to the light."

She paused again, and no orator ever had an audience more attentive and charmed. When she saw it, she was slightly embarrassed, but as every one looked expectant, she presently continued,—

"This subject of reform is so important, so vast, and so complicated, and our wisdom so little, that I know not where to begin or to end. One thing we are sure of: that all true and lasting reform is from God, and primarily through the church; and it follows, of course, that the nearer to Heaven our agencies are, the more radical, the more rapid and complete the reform will be. The ballot-box, the school even, indispensable as it is, is purely a temporal and human expedient. In no sense is it a divine institution. The relation of ruler, citizen, of teacher and pupil even, is but a secondary relation. The

man is a son before he is anything else. If he is bigoted, selfish, intemperate, inhuman; if he is an oppressor, a thief, a base politician, a corruptor and pest of society, his mother, next to himself, is responsible for it; then his sister, his wife, his daughter. If a mother or sister is bent on spoiling a child, the father, the brother, the teacher, the neighbor, is powerless to prevent it. Women have always made men, and always will; but the work commences in the cradle, is carried on in the family, and there usually the die is cast, for life here and hereafter. If we would have better rulers, ministers, teachers, employers; if we would drive poverty and ignorance and crime from our midst, we must have more and better Christian homes, and wiser and better women to make them." She paused again.

"But how shall women make themselves and their homes better?" was Kate's question.

"There is but one way," was the reply. "It is by a higher personal recognition of the claims of God and their fellow-beings upon them. When a woman is possessed of an earnest purpose and thorough consecration, and is ready to do with her might what her hands find to do of needful work, then the right work comes to her, and she falls into her true place, and realizes then her powers and uses, and achievement must and will come. It is inevitable. Sometimes,

however, a Christian mother fails for want of worldly wisdom. She sees no difference between one child and another, between the son and the daughter. Often the daughter will grow up to self-sacrifice without special training,—it is implanted in her; but it must be drilled into the son. He must be taught to live for others, forced to practice self-denial and effort. Ordinarily, in a truly Christian home, the girl will take in high aims and lofty principles as she does the air, but this negative training is rarely enough for the boy. His perceptions are duller and coarser, his sensibilities fewer, his moral sentiments are by nature on a lower plane, and great and noble truths must be made so clear and prominent that he is compelled to listen and believe. I have seen, lately, several articles about boys being snubbed, and having such a hard time the first sixteen years. This is nature's provision; it is one of the wise adjustments of Providence. The son has commonly the first place in the mother's heart; he is all-important to her as well as to himself; and the rest of the family, the school, the college, the whole world, indeed, conspire to persecute him, to knock the conceit and selfishness from under him. But for this, masculine strength would never be disciplined and made available."

"Women, in general, care little who is president or governor or representative; not many want

to vote. What they want is better husbands, brothers, sons, for themselves and all womankind. Women have the making and perfecting of these primary relations; all other relations are subsequent and consequent. Is there, then, any question as to where and what our work is?"

"Do I understand it to be your conviction," asked Dr. Wells, "that woman is not to enter the political world as such?"

"Yes, sir, that is my conviction. Woman should have always a knowledge and interest in that world; but her interest may be as profound, and her influence in it far more potent and certain, if she herself is apart from it. Public and political life will never give her masculine characteristics, only a perversion of feminine characteristics. What are now her peculiar virtues would become vices in the public strife; her very intensity, her versatility, her quietness, patience, gentleness,—would give her a capability of prejudice, of intrigue, secrecy, and persistency, of which, I believe, men have now little idea; her self-sacrifice would be devoted to ignoble ends far more frequently than it is now, and there is no power on earth which can match self-sacrifice."

"But your theory supposes that all women are married and have families. We know how large a proportion of our most cultivated women are

unmarried who have not these resources and obligations. They must have work."

"True, sir, that is the lamentable fact. Marriage, I believe, is the normal condition, and I have no doubt but a vast amount of the present agitation, perplexity and discontent on the subject of woman's rights has arisen from the great excess of the unmarried. In a model society, most women will marry; the small fraction who do not will suffice for the female teachers, clerks, and seamstresses. When woman is willing to moderate her desires and simplify her tastes, and do the work assigned to her by Heaven, she will marry; and many of her difficulties which now seem almost insurmountable, will cease to be."

"You speak of the reform as being all on the part of women. You do not mean, surely, that man does not need it as much; that he is better than woman?"

"By no means. Woman is better than man, but she already claims the reform as her own. I am only suggesting the readiest and most natural means of securing it. You have heard that the best way to improve our condition is to improve ourselves."

"Will you not give us your views on female education, as bearing on this subject?"

"I wish I were prepared to do it, sir; but not being a native of this country, and having

no daughters to educate, I cannot say that my ideas are fully matured. I am happy, however, to refer you to Katie's friend, Mrs. King, who has recently been here. I think I never saw so complete a woman, one with so strong and ready a command over such broad and vigorous mental and physical powers, such generous heart-culture, all devoted to the most exalted and practical Christian purpose. I am proud to have met her. But I crave the pardon of this company for speaking so much."

"I know, my dear madam," said Dr. Wells, "that I may thank you for the others as well as for myself. If we have little to say, it is because your thoughts are so unanswerable and exhaustive. We have something to think of, all of us."

She bowed slightly, and then many eyes were turned upon Arthur. He laughed, and said, —

"It is cruel to expect me to offer my childish thoughts at this time; and you know pretty well my mind." And he leaned forward a little, and took in all the company at a glance. "I would give woman the ballot, if she wants it; and by it, she may secure certain rights to herself; but I am not prepared to aver that it would purify politics, or lessen poverty and crime. Some one has defined corruption to be merely the fuller and freer action of the natural forces in human life. I would allow woman everything she asks which

can develop and advance her, surely and truly. But it is my firm conviction that office in state will not do this. I believe she has always had more influence in the world than man has, and she is superior to him. And I am satisfied that there is in her not only a vast amount of undeveloped and unused talent, but a wealth of positive intellectual and spiritual attainment which, if it could be reached, would make the world far wiser and better than it is now. We have seen something of this within a few years, through the increased activity of her pen. It is undeniable, as mother says, we want better homes and better women to make them; but we want, also, noble books and noble women to write them. Books from the heart, that shall speak to the heart, as only a woman's book can; books that are strong and ripe,—ripe, intellectually and spiritually. In too much of our literature the good which is portrayed for our admiration and imitation, is only a kind of natural good,—something very unlike virtue. Now I don't know of any great good which is not derived, directly or indirectly, from Jesus Christ. I don't believe in any other as a power of reforming the world and expelling evil. And I am persuaded that some of our authors are responsible for much of the superficial culture and weak morality which they decry. The world is full of half-truths. Men plod, and dig, and delve, for these; and when they are unearthed, we find

they have no heat,—they are bodies without souls. What we want is whole-truths, which shall vitalize and energize wherever they enter or touch. In this heart-vitality woman is rich; so, I say, give her all the freedom, all the education, all the discipline, she will have; and she is having it, just as fast as she can utilize it. Nothing is gained by forcing education or the ballot upon her. When she wants these things she will take them. Woman, as a physician, is indispensable in this age; and, if best, she will go into the pulpit." And he added, "I think, also, that woman should be free to propose, particularly when a man is bashful. I should like an offer or two myself." And he crossed his hands demurely on his knee and dropped his eyes. All looked compassionately at him, and Dr. Wells said, "Poor fellow!"

Considerable merriment followed, but no effort of either gentleman could dispel the gloom which had settled like a pall over the group; and Kate went to her couch that night with such an aching heart as she had never known.

## CHAPTER XII.

### CIVIL WAR. — THE QUEEN VICTORIOUS.

"Edward, are you going down into the city twice to-day?"

"I expect to," was the cool reply. Why did he not inquire why she wished to know.

A little diffidently she said,—

"I do believe I never was so tired in my life; and I thought I wouldn't get any dinner if you would dine down town just once."

"I hate to. What's the use of having a house if one can't eat in it?"

Though hurt by this reply, she was not surprised, and she said,—

"Then you won't expect any elaborate preparations. I will cook you a steak or a chop, as you please, and there is an apple-pie, left yesterday."

"I should think I had told you times enough that a pie that had stood over night wasn't fit to eat; besides I prefer mince."

"But there are none baked."

"You can bake one, I suppose; people have done such things. I might invite Mr. Montgomery in. You wouldn't think it any hardship to do it for him."

Kate was ready to burst into tears all through this colloquy, but when the last cut came she was angry. What right had he to say it? But she bit her lips in silence, and the gloomy meal was soon finished, for not a mouthful could she swallow.

It was expected that the Patches would leave on the day following the tea-party, described in the last chapter; but it proved so sombre that, on breaking up, Dr. Williams said,—

"I invite this company to take tea at my house one week from to-night; and I propose that every one bring some witticism, or witticisms,—his own, her own, or anybody's else, and we will atone for this solemnity."

On hearing this, Mrs. Patch changed her mind at once. It was of all things what she wished. She had never been in the doctor's house — his ogre of a mother was always in the way; but now she would go in spite of her. So she decided to remain another week,—the children, too, needed a little change; and she sent to Andover for her eldest son, who was a student in Phillips Academy, to come on Friday night, and bring his chum with him.

The doctor told Margaret that after they got

home that night, his royal mother gave him a whipping for inviting that odious woman into her house. Edward asked Kate if there was no decent pretext for getting her out of town; but she knew there was none, though she went so far as to tell her visitor that she could not allow the children to blow soap-bubbles over the stairs in the front hall, or draw caricatures on the drawing-room paper.

It was rather hard for Kate. The youngest child had epileptic fits, sometimes two or three in a day, usually at the table; all the children were excessively noisy, and very quarrelsome, and disturbed Margaret, who was forced to shut herself in her room and lock the door, taking the key out, for they contrived to turn it in the lock. It was necessary for Mrs. Patch to have four rooms, one for her parlor, one for her study, a third for her sleeping-room, and a fourth in the attic for her husband and children; in each of her own she wanted a fire. The professor complained to Kate of the unparalleled inertia of his intestinal forces, and wanted a special diet; what with his indigestion and his asthma, and a kicking child on each side of him, he couldn't sleep nights, so he perambulated the house with a fluid lamp or read the Encyclopedia under the library curtains.

Friday evening brought the lads in over-flowing spirits. They had many sportive and amusing

impulses,—such as vaulting out of the front windows over the iron-peaked fence on to the sidewalk below, to the profane indignation of the passers by; or they fired a pistol off the balcony, to the infinite terror of all the cats and children in the neighborhood. On Sunday evening, in some unaccountable manner, Harry Patch shot off his own thumb, on the right hand. His mother went into hysterics and filled the house with her shrieks, and called for Dr. Williams. He took no notice of it, farther than to send her husband to her, then cleaned and dressed the ugly wound.

He asked Kate to lie down in the next room, saying he would call her if needful; and he sat by the sick bed all night, keeping the bandages wet, and soothing the child, whose distress knew no bounds when he saw the extent of his injury.

“The pain,” he said, “I don't mind that; it is the loss, and all through my own willfulness, for my teachers have warned me enough.”

It was a sight to move a harder heart than the doctor's. That bright, active boy, moaning and sobbing as he lay. At length he put his well arm around the doctor's neck, and asked him if he would kneel down and pray right there, that he might be a better boy and a good Christian. It was all very low and tender; but Kate heard every word, and when she looked in soon after, he was quietly sleeping with his head on the doctor's arm.



What most annoyed and disgusted Kate was Mrs. Patch's avowed affection for the doctor. She raved about him by day, and dreamed about him by night; she declared she adored him; she fondled and kissed the small painting of him that hung in the parlor, and told Margaret she would give all she possessed for it. She was a bold woman, but she was not a fool, and she knew better than to allow him to witness the demonstrations. In a sense, his manner was free, but it was not a freedom on which the most venturesome might presume. Downright republican though he was, the blood of princes and aristocrats flowed in his veins, and was sometimes manifest when he little suspected it. Kate thought it just this which gave the peculiar vigor and hue to his republicanism; it is the union of the aristocrat and the democrat which produces the most distinguished chivalry.

He was so transparent and communicative that strangers believed, after ten minutes' talk, they knew all about him; but it was a profound mistake. Dr. Wells, who was a heart friend, said that he was the most truly reserved, the most thoroughly poised and isolated person he ever saw; and his most intimate friends were continually surprised by some new phase of his character, some new susceptibility or some unexpected development in head or heart.

Unconventional he was, most surely; yet like

his mother, punctilious in the extreme on some points. Like her, he was shocked by the common disrespect to age. His own hat came off invariably to the hoary head, whether it was the judge in his chariot, or the old ragamuffin who shoveled coal into his cellar. Many a decrepit man and woman on the icy sidewalk saw the strong hand offered to help; and he had even been seen to present his arm and umbrella, in broad daylight, to old Aunt Nabby, who always sat in the corner of the parish pew. True, Dr. Wells said he wished every member of his church was as devout and consistent a Christian as she,—but she was a hunchback and a mulatto.

He was most honorable in friendship, and even more if possible, was marriage honorable and sacred. The man who could, even by look, be untrue to his wife, found no favor in his eyes; how, then, would he regard woman, whose purity he held so high, when she manifested an abhorrent free-love?

The troublesome guests were hardly gone when there came one of those days which will come in the best regulated families. Margaret was on the bed all the time; Nora, the young cook, had been promised a week's visit to her mother, which she would postpone no longer; and, the evening before, Delia, the chamber-maid, had been seized with a sudden ague, and Kate had been over her most of the night. She was grievously fatigued and worn by all the extra work of weeks past and

the night's exhaustion, and resolved to secure some rest during the forenoon; hence the dialogue at the breakfast table.

Not much rest to be had, one would think, with breakfast to clear away, house to put in order, two invalids to nurse, and dinner to prepare, to say nothing of possible calls; but our heroine had great despatch, and she had learned how to rest; she knew the value of thirty minutes', or ten minutes', or even one minute's, entire sundering of the nervous connection.

She had had, with her finely strung and excitable nervous system, so much of care and work, so much of physical weakness, that she knew it was economy for the house-keeper, in the midst of her endless and trifling details,— necessity even, when the body was strained to the utmost, — to break off in the middle of the forenoon or afternoon, and retire by herself to her room, there to lie down and banish every anxiety and plan, every thought of work and pain, every earthly desire and interest. She had learned this abstraction,— it was not a constitutional habit;— though aided, doubtless, by the force of the will, though she said she could never have acquired it but for her perfect trust in the Saviour; yet it had cost her weeks and months of persistent effort, and stern discipline, and that, too, when her aunt, who was ever robust, thought it sheer folly and idleness. She went to sleep in just the

same way, and this was one important secret of her recovery to health, her physical endurance and mental vigor, her uniform temper and certain influence.

Sarah had time only to remove the dishes from the table. Kate went first to Delia, who, like many other strong persons, was very good-natured in health and very impatient and cross in sickness. When all else was attended to, our young housekeeper sought her sister Margaret, who did not like to be disturbed at an early hour.

The feeble form appeared too weary to rise, but she said she might feel better to move, so Kate freshened the air, brought water, and very tenderly washed her face and hands, and brushed her hair. She seldom asked now what she would have for breakfast, for the reply was, almost invariably,—

“ Whatever is most convenient for you, dear. I don't care for anything,” and she racked her brain the whole day to think of something new, that would tempt the daintiest appetite and most delicate stomach in the world.

This morning she feared she must return to the dropped egg and toast, which she knew would be hardly tasted; but looking out the window, she spied the oyster cart. Oysters, roasted in the shell,—delicate and rich, too! She had never thought of them before, and she procured some. Having cooked a few, she had the sat-

isfaction of seeing her drooped lily revive at once, and was rewarded by such looks and words of love, as Margaret had for none but her.

She said,—

“When the fire burns clear I will dress, and go into the sitting-room.” She did not know of Delia’s illness.

Kate looked at the fire. The grate was nearly full, but the coals looked dead; she thrust in the poker, and the whole mass fell through the bars, and scattered a shower of white ashes over her clean print.

“Edward might have attended to this,” she thought aloud. She had never made a coal fire,—but Edward was a mile away, as she supposed. She could not help thinking of her uncle, so considerate and helpful in such emergencies, however pressing his own business might be; and Edward, she knew, had only some society meeting of no special importance. But she had resolved to cherish no bitterness, so she rolled up her sleeves again, tied up her head, and took the empty hod down the two flights.

She filled it with hard coal, charcoal, and shavings, and began her climb; it seemed no hardship then. She had reached nearly the first landing when she met her husband, elegantly booted, gloved, and brushed. He broke out,—

“O, Kate, the Emersons are in town, just

back from Europe, and I have invited them to dine with us; and on the way I ordered ducks and chickens with all the fixings; and I want you to make an English plum-pudding, and don’t be so awful stingy with your brandy, and be sure and get up a splendid dinner.” And as she stood still and stiff as a post, he added testily, “and do for Heaven’s sake scrub your arms and hands,—they’re covered with smut. And they’ll be here soon, for I told them to come early.”

“O, Edward, some other day!” But he was gone.

She sank down where she was on the stairs.

“O, how could he, how could he!” and the bitter tears rained down over her sooty fingers; but she thought of Margaret, and lifted again the burden. It was but a few pounds before,—now it was a ton. He had seen her, his wife, with it, and had not offered a hand, and it seemed the badge of her servitude. Her first impulse was to hurl it to the foot of the stairs, and then to run away,—anything; but she went on, with a dragging step and a hopeless expression that was pitiful to see.

Soon the fire snapped briskly, and she was cleaned; but Margaret came in before the room was quite in order, and lay on the sofa. Kate kept her back turned to her sister, lest she betray her feelings, but a sweet voice said,—

"Katie, darling!"

She looked at Margaret, and dropped into the open arms, and in a moment the story was told.

The only answer was the caressing and smoothing of the head, and the words,—

"I thought, dearest, it would be different when you came; you are so strong and so clever."

There was unrestrained weeping for a few moments, then Kate saw its effect on the invalid, and sought her own room and bed. There she shut off all sorrow; for her, then, there was no earth, no pain, only God and Heaven; and when she went out the door, ten minutes later, she was as serene as a Sabbath morning.

Below she found the dinner,—enough for half a dozen courses of the most elaborate sort; and for an instant her heart rebelled against the injustice and unkindness. She said aloud,—

"What shall I do? It is not for me to say that Margaret has been wrong; but have I any right to submit? My God, help me now!" and she dropped on her knees, right there in the pantry. In a moment she rose, serene as before.

These grand people,—who were they? She had never seen them. Edward had met them abroad; but she knew that Mr. Emerson had been United States senator, a cabinet officer, and a foreign minister. She knew nothing of such entertainments as they had been accustomed to, but she would do her best.

The ducks were dressed very simply and nicely, and two vegetables; then a custard made, and sweet grapes beautifully arranged. Then she looked once more at her patients; and, after a few attentions to them, dressed herself.

She was happily disappointed in her guests. Mrs. Emerson was a delicate woman, a very true lady, with her own hair and teeth, and in a black alpaca suit. The senator was a genuine man, full of human nature, sensible, hearty, and a trifle brusque in his style, and they both despised bombast and snobbery. Dr. Williams chanced to be talking with Margaret when they came, and being an old acquaintance, needed no urging to remain.

Edward looked black when he saw the table. He knew, when the invitation was given, that he was most unreasonable and unkind, and he had never tested Kate so severely. He had some idea of her spirit,—that she was capable of defiance; that her submission was never that of cowardice, but of principle, of true humility and love; and he felt that his venture was rather serious and somewhat doubtful. How would she meet him? He was prepared for reproaches, tears perhaps, avoidance possibly; but that she would actually withstand his authority he could not believe,—no one had ever done it.

But she had done it, and there she was, just as usual,—no tears, no reproaches, only a little sadness when the mouth was at rest, but she talked

the most of the time. He was amazed, confounded; his self-complacency and self-possession forsook him at the most critical moment; his carving, of which he was so vain, was wretched. He spilled the gravy and dropped the jelly, and his wits were gone; he had nothing to say, and his wife was obliged to entertain his company.

He had never seen her look so pretty or talk so well, and the Emersons were charmed, and this enraged him. But a few hours before he had told them that his wife was the most lovely and accomplished woman in the city, and now he was angry because they had found her to be what he had represented. It was almost a relief to her when she learned they were dyspeptic; and she was quite happy when they declared themselves disgusted with the public table, and spoke of the pleasure it was to sit down to a home table, so simple and so delicious; and they complimented Edward on the healthfulness and elegance of his taste. The doctor's eye twinkled. They might not have said as much to their host, had they known that his wife was his cook; he would not have them know for the world.

Sarah had not returned, and, at the end of the first course, Kate was obliged to remove the plates,—he never thought of that,—he was in dismay, for the truth came out. It was necessary for her to say she had no servant that day. When she was again seated, the senator spoke:

“You don't mean to say, Mrs. Sterne, that you cooked this dinner yourself?”

“I must confess, sir, that I did,” she answered, with a little of the old smile in the corners of her mouth, which affected Mr. Emerson a little as it had done Alex.

“Upon my word!” He turned to Edward. “Why, in the name of common-sense, didn't you tell us, my dear fellow, that your wife hadn't any help? We shouldn't have come, of course; but then I wouldn't have missed it for anything. Mrs. Sterne, haven't you a sister, or cousin, or something? There's our Tom, thirty years old the first day of last month, and he's been all over the world after a wife, and can't find one. If you've got a sister that isn't promised, I speak for her now.”

The merry-making that followed,—for the doctor was always ready for a joke, and told him of Sarah and her perfections, but that he couldn't have her,—every word was a help to Kate, but only made the nettles more stinging for Edward.

Their guests remained two hours longer. Fortunately for Kate, music was called for, and “The Moonlight Sonata,” and when the long minor adagio was finished she had spoken all her wail.

On going to the dining-room, after they had left, she found everything in order, and the table spread for supper. Edward had slipped qui-

etly out, and sent for a woman who sometimes assisted her.

It was about this time that she received from Aunt Hepsy two pairs of very fine yarn stockings, and the following characteristic letter:

Reedvill November the Thurd.

Deer miss stern

ime glad to hear thet you hev gott a good Man joshuy hees marrid to Liny jinkins he found to the catle sho she ant no taller then you be but her paws is Orfull big and spread Out jes like hasty poodin wun day he got to Telling about them hans of yourn and she was as mad as a hornit i hope the stockins will Fit ye i mashured by hanners when she was ait years old your Frend till deth do us seperrate us Both Hepzibah Higgins.

miss Hart that you borded with is ded and she named her last baby for you.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### KING CHRISTIAN; OR, PRIEST AND KING.

It is Friday afternoon of one of the shortest days of the year, and the pastor sits in his study. It is unusual for him to be there at this hour; but he is bent on finishing his Sunday morning sermon before rising from his seat. The idea has been in his mind for months, and all the time growing; and he had spent three forenoons upon it this week; and so absorbed is he that he knows not how to leave it, even for his meals. At the dinner table he said to his wife,—

“Lucy, dear, you might take this afternoon to make those calls, as I am to be here.”

“But you wouldn’t wish to be disturbed, in case there were callers,” she replied.

“No,— but I don’t think any body will come for me to-day; and for once I should excuse myself from ordinary visitors.”

It is just four o’clock, and he is wrapt and borne



away in the conclusion; it seems to him irresistible, for the very powers of Heaven are around and within him; and he is gloriously rich and happy. He has forgotten that he is open to interruption, till he hears a rap on the door. "Who is it, Martha?"

"It's the woe-begone boy that wants a book you promised him."

He knows; it is John Treat, one of his lambs, and one of his weak ones, too, and he will not deny him; so, with a little sigh, though with no symptom of impatience, he leaves and goes down. As he gives the lad the book, he observes the hungry look on his face, and says kindly, "Is there any new trouble, John? can I do anything for you?"

The heavy features lighten up, and he answers awkwardly, "Yes, please,—if you please, sir, if you would let me see you some time,—any time."

It is evident that he would stop now, and that he came chiefly for the purpose; but that sermon must be finished, so the pastor says, "I am very busy just now, John; but if you will come to-morrow, at this hour, we will talk it over;" and with a warm pressure of the hand he attends him to the door. The boy trips down the steps with three quarters of the load off his mind.

But the pastor is not so well satisfied. The youth of eighteen is not clear-headed; doubts and questions are continually recurring, which he must

first explain to him, and then explain away, and apparently with no lasting effect; but John is one of his converts, and very warm-hearted and conscientious, and this is the Master's work, and he has refused for the time the cup of cold water. It seems to him now that it was for the sake of his own self-indulgence, and he enters his study with great loss of enthusiasm.

As the twilight is approaching he lights the student lamp, adjusts it to the page, closes the shutters, and sits down to take up the thread just dropped. It is not so easy; the boy's wistful face is ever coming between him and the paper, and as he turns back and reads and re-reads, in order to catch the lost inspiration, the force of the work is all gone; there is no meaning in it; he can do nothing. "O God, how tired I am!" he exclaims, throwing himself back in despair. His mind is finely disciplined, and he knows when he is exhausted; so wisely putting his work into the desk, he says he will rest, as he lowers his head and raises his feet. But he finds he cannot rest; there comes over him that oppressiveness of locality which sensitive natures suffer at times; he looks all over the room; the very walls are written over and over with the life of the past; they are alive with his own conflicts; his pleadings there for himself and his people; they tell him of triumphs and wonderful answers to prayer; of so many sermons wrought out there, so many souls seeking

Heaven there; it is in that very chair the bereaved mother sits pouring her anguish into her pastor's ear and wailing for the ruined boy who has ended a career of crime in a foreign land. How his heart bleeds for her, but what comfort can he give her? And right by this table stands a timid, tearful girl, who cannot be persuaded to sit down, and, a few words at a time, he draws from her the silent conviction of years, and her want of a Savior; and by that very sofa he kneels down by her side and commends her to God. When he finishes the prayer her head is bowed, and he prays again; she is immovable still, and he prays again and again. After a long time, when she seems all unconscious of human presence, she lifts her face, and it is full of light and joy, and she covers his hands with the tears of her gladness. Dear child! she is in Heaven now.

Then it was this very volume he was studying when the news came of that stupendous railway horror, when four of his own people without an instant's warning were crushed into eternity; but more and nearer than all, he was sitting just here when his own little Christian sprang from his seat into his father's arms, and there strangled and stiffened. He can almost touch with his hand the little boots and the rocking-horse by the book-case. That was eight years ago,—how tall he would be now! what a blessing, what a comfort! "Thy will be done," he has said many times, he says it now,

over and over with great drops on his brow; but the pain is terrible. So every thing in the room talks to him; there is not book even that has not a tale to tell, that is not eloquent with hope or with fear, with joy or with sorrow. They are talking all at once; the walls draw near and weigh him down; the book-shelves, the furniture is all human. He is half distracted, yet half paralyzed; wants his wife, then recollects she is away. But suddenly he springs up and says aloud, "I'll run in and see Arthur;" and in two minutes he is in the street.

Strange power this Arthur must possess, thus to rouse the sinking! There is reason in this case. The doctor's house is open at all times to his pastor, who declares it is a trip to the mountains and a foreign tour to promenade those capacious rooms and be welcomed by those spacious hearts there. He can talk or not, as he chooses; he may stroll in the garden or conservatory, and help himself as he pleases; he may lounge in the inner parlor, or be refreshed and stimulated in the library, for Dr. Williams can command much in the way of reading and art which men in general cannot; and let him go where he will, and though Mrs. Williams and Arthur be at the other end of the town, he is sure to find there some special preparation in anticipation of his coming. Moreover, when the doctor hears of any man of note, any person of interest in town or out, whom he suspects his minister would like to see, that per-

son becomes his guest; and Dr. Wells has the benefit of the meeting without the care and expense of entertainment. There are many in his congregation who show him reverence and love and assistance too, but after a hundred such delicate and endearing attentions, he finds that Arthur's life is woven very closely within his own, and there has grown up a fondness which his wife pronounces decidedly lover-like and romantic. So he is very much in hopes, as he walks briskly on, that the doctor will be in his office, and by himself.

He is disappointed; the office is without an occupant, but he goes into the house and finds him in his mother's parlor, before the great open wood fire, and there he meets his own Lucy and our friend Kate. He is taken possession of at once, and informed that he is to stay; they were just on the point of sending for him, and as he cannot help himself, he makes the best of it. He is not given to talking of himself, and when worn is inclined to be silent, but with so many loving eyes and smiles upon him, and Arthur's magnetic fingers gliding over his temples and through his hair, he relaxes completely, and before he knows it he has told of his sermon, of John Treat, of the prickings of his conscience, of his weakness and weariness in the study, and of his want of Arthur; and as he looks up he finds his head tight in Arthur's arms, and Arthur's lips upon his brow.

After tea the ladies talk among themselves, and Arthur piles up pyramids of live coals with the tongs as he often does when revolving some subject. Dr. Wells watches him for a time with an amused expression, and at length he says,—

“Well, Arthur, what is it?” The ladies stop talking and turn about.

Arthur glances up, then puts on the last coal very carefully,—the pyramid is a foot high,—and surveying his work with great complacency, breaks out,—

“Yes, I was just thinking what a bright thing the wicked old heathen said, how well he understood us all,—“*Video meliora proboque; deteriora sequor.*” It is wonderful how we all believe so much better than we do, and how one's professed creed has so little to do with the life. I've been so disappointed and disgusted in my life with some men who profess great attainments, that I begin at once to suspect one who has a reputation for piety. After all, they may be very useful. I recall one now I knew some years ago. I knew he did a great deal of good, and his public example and reputation were irreproachable; but his wife and children never had a minute's comfort till he was under ground. I can't say that he was any better or any worse than other men. We can't shine all around; if the light were within, we might, but we have none but reflected light; and whether one be horned, gibbous or full, if you take the trouble

to go round the other side, you'll be very likely to find it shady. A man is of necessity very imperfect; I suppose Heaven allows it; but women are perfect, and when I see a tender woman living with a hard, selfish man, serving him well and without bitterness and holding her own, though she do no more, I say she is a Christian, and a glorious one."

This bolt he discharges with tremendous vehemence, and with a blow of the tongs he demolishes the pyramid and pounds fiercely every coal of it, as if it were Edward Sterne himself. Kate trembles in her chair, and is so thankful nobody is looking at her. She thinks he has Margaret in mind, while the others think it is Kate. It is not Arthur's habit to make general observations with special significance, and his mother looks at him under her lashes to make sure she has heard him aright; and she is scourging her brains to think of some way to turn the conversation without doing it so abruptly as to be suspicious, when Mrs. Wells, with her accustomed tact, says mischievously, "But, doctor, when is a *man* a Christian?"

"O," he replies, imitating her tone and turning towards her, "when I see a man that is clean and kind, I put him down for a Christian. You see," and here he rises and walks back and forth, with his hands in his pockets, "you see that men in general are of two classes: the good natured, demo-

cratic man, who deals with men and has soiled wristbands," and here he eyes his own cuffs, creased with the day's activity and specked with ashes, "and the clean man who deals with principles and finds fault with his dinner. But seriously," he continues in another voice, "I've been considering for the last dozen years what constitutes a Christian, and with very different opinions as to it at different times; and within a few days I have received a letter in which was this modest little request, which I must respond to, I suppose; it is this, 'Be so kind as to write me quite fully what you consider proof of possessing grace, and what is it to grow in grace?' I put the question to you, Dr. Wells," and here he stops and stands before his minister.

That gentleman considers a moment and then says, "It is not a question to be answered without time and thought. The query as to what constitutes absolute evidence of acceptance with God seems to me unanswerable by any one formula. Minds, hearts, experiences differ so widely, the modes of the spirit are so various, the fruits of the Spirit are so combined, so blended, so interdependent, and in the symmetrical Christian so consolidated, that it is almost impossible to decide what is a test of discipleship, even in general. I think of it much as I do of the stellar universe, in which ten thousand orbits are intersecting each other at as many angles of diversity, yet each one

true and no one clashing with another. Perhaps, too, the evidences of grace in souls are like the coursing of the planets in another quality, their outgoing from self. Every globe in the sidereal creation revolves around something outside of itself; itself is the servitor, it does obeisance, it is the least among ten thousand; so I imagine Christian souls are surest of being like Christ when they have least to do with the axis of self. Go out into eternal space,—revolve around something else than self, obey, serve, do fealty to the great silent laws of God's love, so shalt thou know that thou art Christ's and Christ is thine; such seems to be the voice from on high. Every test of character turns at last on this freeness from self as an object of concentration. But," he adds, looking closely at Arthur, "you have been thinking about it, what is your conclusion?"

Arthur is standing by the light of the fire, with his arm resting on the mantel, but it is the fire from within which makes his face so beautiful as he speaks. "I suppose I should have said once that delight in prayer and love for the service was undoubted testimony, but I have learned that in minds of a certain ardent and creative mould there is unlimited space for delusion in this respect, and I have seen so much deep and holy living and lofty attainment without much conscious beatitude, that my old belief is greatly modified. Patience and cheerfulness are frequent evidence of the divine

presence, but these depend largely on temperament, circumstances and education. You may have these graces in perfection and no religion at all, mere philosophy. Faith may be largely indebted to a gifted imagination, and joy, benevolence and meekness may be equally adventitious. Humility is perhaps a higher test, unselfishness also, but have not these the basest counterfeits? Our humility is often nothing but pride, and what passes for unselfishness many times is only a weak will, a sluggish heart and brain, or shrewd policy even; and there is a kind of wholesale self-sacrifice, very genuine and very common too, which brings contempt on the individual, and does infinite mischief to all concerned. A woman who is a slave to her family is an example of this. I don't know but I have seen as much evil growing out of short-sighted unselfishness as from selfishness."

"What then do you believe is a test, sure and unfailing and of universal application?" is Dr. Wells's inquiry.

"I can think of but one, and that is charity, gentleness; that charity which suffereth long and is kind, that vaunteth not itself, seeketh not her own, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth in the truth, never faileth; most of us are poor enough in this."

For several minutes all sit thinking, when he continues, "It looks to me as if perfect sub-

mission to the divine will should be a test; but if it were so, most of the church on earth would be shut out of the Kingdom. I am satisfied, however, that there would be far more of total submission, but for a sad mistake which many good people make. It is true that we ought always to submit to the will of God, but we need to watch and pray constantly to learn what that will is. There are many trials and crosses, which He permits only, and they are the result, it may be of our own folly and ignorance, or they are in some way within our control, and it is for us in all reliance on the Holy Spirit to remove them. So that, instead of praying God to give us resignation, we need to pray for knowledge and faith, pluck and persistency. This mistake I doubt not is a source of immeasurable disquietude and dejection and of rebellion also, among truly conscientious and earnest Christians. They cannot submit, they say. God does not ask them to. He would not have them; their entire character and growth depends on their resistance,—not to His will, but to their distresses and infirmities."

"You talk like a man of experience, doctor," says Mrs. Wells; "you don't mean to make us believe that you ever knew any trials; it is wholly incredible."

He laughs. "You wouldn't believe me, I suppose, if I told you that I never knew a comfortable

day till I was twenty-five, and that I did not walk till my twelfth year, and even at that age was so small that mamma carried me in her arms about the house?"

They all open their eyes, and actually look at Mrs. Williams for confirmation or denial of this prodigious story.

"Yes," she returns with an amused smile, "it is a fact, and he used to sit in his little chair and read big books on anatomy. That determined the profession no doubt. His father suffered a long time from a bronchial affection, and that decided the specialty."

"But what cured you and made you so robust?" asks Mrs. Wells, gazing with wonder and admiration at his superb physique.

"Good food for mind and body, fresh air and bathing and the friction of my mother's hand," and presently he resumes his more serious tone. "The truth is, my friends, that all the good in the world is through somebody's discipline. What we call earthly happiness is usually the result of others' discipline, but celestial peace and joy and success can come only from our own."

Just at this moment he is called out, and on his return shortly, Mrs. Wells opens again: "Do give us some more of your ideas, doctor; we're all waiting."

"Well," he responds, taking his stand by the mantel, "this is one of my notions, that every man,



every Christian certainly, should control his time and his work, and never be controlled by it; he should be master of circumstances."

"I hope you don't intend that shot for me," says Dr. Wells, laughing. "But honestly, I don't see how your notion can be carried out, plausible and practicable as it looks. I am not sure but it is impossible in some cases; a feeble or slow intellect cannot compass the idea; then there are some truly conscientious persons who are constitutionally indolent; they must be driven by circumstances, by necessity; and there are still others, wide-awake, energetic workers, who never feel that they accomplish anything unless their work is close behind them with the lash. There can be no question they would do more if they held the rein in the hand instead of in the mouth; but, through some inability, they cannot learn. Such a one may accomplish much; so does the horse, and there is precisely the same difference between him and Dr. Williams, that there is between the horse and the driver. I agree with you, however, my qualification notwithstanding," he adds; "but go on, I interrupted you."

"I accept your apology, sir, but allow me to say here I need encouragement and drawing out rather than contradiction. A little delicate assistance from you would greatly aid me in overcoming my timidity and self-distrust; but to proceed," and here he resumes his serious manner, "akin to this,

is the theory of work, which I believe to be the spontaneous and necessary expression of the inner life. All my outer life, sadly imperfect though it is, is simply manifestation, overflow, never anything else, and it is irrepressible. This is wondrous harmony, liberty and repose. If we would water and refresh the thirsty earth, we must overflow ever; for this reason I would have the fountain rich and pure and sweet. There are always large forces in reserve, undisturbed depths and resources of which the world knows nothing; labor and effort, I do not know now, and to weary or to spend is impossible.

This, I hold, is the true idea of work, of freedom, of power; it is the divine idea; it is the way God works; it is the way Christ worked when on earth; it is the way man would have worked had he never fallen, and it is the work of the redeemed. Labor is a part of the curse; work is not, and it seems to me that when the Saviour comes to take away our sin, that He will, with our determined co-operation, remove as far as possible the effects and consequences of sin, such as unsoundness of body and mind, suffering of every kind, and among other things, will substitute work for labor; still it will be none the less true that 'all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' This is exceeding joy and must be of Christ. 'He that believeth on Me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water.'

For several minutes there is silence, when Dr. Wells begins. "I understand you, Arthur; it is the true idea of work, the divine idea; and as you say, were there no sin we should all work without weariness of spirit, and because we couldn't help it, and we expect to do so in Heaven; and I can see also, how this abundance and spontaneity, this freedom and rest, seems to you the work of the Holy Spirit; it is so in your case; it is something more than theory and poetry to you; it is most real, practical and vital; but then altogether, I should say it was as much a question of natural endowment, of education perhaps, as of grace. I am persuaded that every disciple may and should overflow with love, with holy purpose, and in a sense with truth, and that is what is meant by living water, I suppose; but that every one can overflow with words or ideas or wise deeds, is simply impossible. There are hundreds and thousands of godly people who have no conception of any such overflowing as you know. So far from overflowing, the fountain is never full, and it is quite likely there is no fountain, nothing in reserve; they are forced to give as fast as they receive, and sometimes faster, and instead of saying, as you do, 'The more I give the more I have,' it is painfully obvious that the more they give the less they have, and the giving is not only all effort, but the receiving is effort likewise."

He pauses an instant, then proceeds, "Unquestionably the primary source of all misery and weakness is *sin*; when the soul turns from sin towards the cross of Christ, and there is a total surrender of the heart, then redemption begins. In one sense, redemption is completed; the proclamation has gone forth, the price has been paid and the contract concluded, the soul is enfranchised, but it is not yet free. It has been all its life in bondage, in darkness and ignorance, and there must be years of hard work, severe discipline, arduous culture, before it learns the use of its heaven-born faculties. Sometimes the education is very rapid, the process violent, and the soul has years of redemption, a redemption as complete as it can be upon earth. But in many instances this education is prevented by hereditary defects, or by circumstances, and the completeness is greatly retarded, and it may be reserved wholly for another world. Take John Treat, for example. You know that there is no finer mind in the city than was given by nature to his father; for years it has been enervated and dissipated by the use of tobacco. His daughters are clear in mind, but feeble in body, and hysterical; the only son is clouded and feeble in mind. But I believe that boy to be one of the chosen favorites of Heaven. I never meet him without a feeling of reverence. Confused as he is in his ideas I cannot talk with him without receiving a coles-

tial impulse; it is to me a direct revelation from God, and I believe he will have one of the highest seats in that blest abode; but he will never experience on earth any such melody and power as you describe; he may never know here any such conscious union with the Saviour, and his work and his study is all toil, always has been, and always will be, in the flesh. And there are many in the church who I believe trust wholly the Lord Jesus, but who do not realize His constant presence with them. I am not sure but they do their very best, and I love and honor them. They come to me with trials and perplexities which in Arthur Williams would be sins. God has given them a desire to love and serve Him, but He has not given them health, wealth, education, position and domestic felicity, or the genius by which to achieve these things. They tell me that their vision is dim, their sensibility feeble, their work small. Their vision is not dim, it is only circumscribed; their sensibility is not passion, but it is sufficient for their energies and functions; and they are not conscious of doing much because God works in them in spite of their weakness. I find in this class every variety of twist in the brain, every form of prejudice and jealousy in the heart; but some of them are most effective workers in our Lord's vineyard. 'Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things

of this world to confound the wise, yea, and things which are not to bring to naught things that are.'

"But by far the larger proportion of my church and of every church, are but partially surrendered; they balance between the church and the world, and they do not know now, and probably never will know, that abundant entrance of which you speak. Some of them will be saved, yet so as by fire; and much of their work, for some of them are most indefatigable even in Christian activities, will be burned up as wood, hay and stubble."

"I wish I could preach this theory of yours; I wish I could say, 'Come to Christ and you shall be now and forever relieved from all disease of body and mind, and labor will no longer be your portion, only work, and that delightful; Heaven and redemption are here and now, and you have but to turn towards them. I think I used to preach more in that way, but I have seen more of God's dealings with His own children. I can say, however, 'Come, and ye shall find rest unto your souls,' and 'My grace is sufficient for you,' and I cannot be grateful enough for that."

While he is talking the listeners seem not to breathe, so intent are they, and after he has finished, Kate involuntarily draws a long breath which brings them all to, much to their amusement and her own confusion. Nothing could be more charming than the blush and the perturbation with which she favors them and which they

are so cruel as to enjoy, but Mrs. Williams kindly relieves her by putting a question: "May I ask, Dr. Wells, where you find the material for your sermons?"

"I find it everywhere; everybody gives me something, and though I am often exceedingly slow in making my resources available, yet I learn that nothing comes amiss. I find it in my walks and my talks, in my own experience and in my books, and especially the Bible; but the direction is given always by the knowledge I have of the wants of my people."

"How do you get this knowledge?"

"In a thousand ways. Sometimes I seek it; more frequently it comes unsought. Some hearts I know very closely, many in a general way, many in particular ways, and you know that from a few particulars we may often learn much. I should say that acquaintance with the inner life of individual souls was of all things most fruitful of material and impulse. I learn also that what is most needed is always to be found best in the direct line of my work. I never gain anything by going off the track of present duty."

"Do you always feel equal to your duty?"

"O no, never in myself. I am sometimes conscious of power in the pulpit, but when a soul is before me inquiring the way to a better life, I feel how impotent, how utterly helpless I am; I dare not speak without promptings from above."

"It appears to me that your preaching has changed very much within ten years. It is more practical, more impressive every year."

"I am glad to hear you say so. Every day of my life adds to my conviction that the great thing to be cultivated in myself, in my people and in every Christian, is the missionary spirit. There is usually a flush of it at conversion, but it needs to be cultivated constantly and assiduously to be made powerful and effective. In the multiplicity of our cares and interests too many of us forget that the business of the Christian is to advance the kingdom of Christ."

"How can we do this best?" is Kate's inquiry.

"There are many ways, and it is difficult to say which is the best way, because God has a different plan for each of us, but we shall each learn the best way for ourselves by cultivating a genuine and cordial interest in everybody. Yesterday, while glancing over 'Madam Swetchin's Life,' I saw this, that when the heart fails of its one natural object of affection it takes the whole world to fill that heart. At first, it struck me as profoundly true, I have seen so many cases where the failure of the one led to the other; but the two kinds of love have no such parallel or comparison; in the truly devout heart there can be no substitution. The love of humanity, of the race, is an essential, an engrossing, an obligatory love. We

are never equal to it; it surrounds and underlies and overtops all other love, even self-love; and any individual love which has not this for its basis is weak and precarious, holding often a prodigious alloy of selfishness, and in the end full of delusion and loaded with disappointment. Warmly and devotedly as I love some individuals, I have never seen the person, and cannot conceive the one who could fill the heart. I cannot imagine any love or union or affinity which in might, or power to absorb or to move, can be compared to this love, this enthusiasm, this passion for humanity, which our Lord and Saviour died to redeem."

He speaks so eloquently and with such light and grandeur on his face, that every eye kindles, and his wife looks as if she could fall down and worship him. "But how shall we know and feel this passion?" Kate asks eagerly.

"It is by unceasing prayer, and perfect teachableness, then by following implicitly the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

"When we have learned that we shall make no mistakes, I suppose," Arthur observes after a long silence.

"Not so, necessarily. God teaches us in infinite ways, and sometimes best by mistakes. I learn usually by actual experiment, often resulting in mistakes. I am perpetually tapping some profound philosophy of Scripture, and become a

fool in order to be wise. What we learn in this way is not easy to forget."

"But," asks Mrs. Williams, "do you always find it easy and delightful to be helping others, some perhaps who have no claim on you, and with whom you have very little in common?"

"I never saw the person who had no claim on me, and with whom I had little in common. The prime interests of time and of eternity we have all in common, and any one has a claim on what God gives me. I wish I could say it was always easy to love and help others, but it becomes more and more so every year. It is often said that a kind word costs nothing,—there was never a greater fallacy. If it is really of much value, nothing costs so much; it is the very essence and embodiment, the soul and marrow of my spiritual life and culture. I have many times resolved that I would be a perfect gentleman, but I find that to be a perfect gentleman or a perfect lady, one must be a perfect Christian; one must be pervaded through and through with that charity of which Arthur has just spoken, that even *thinketh* no evil."

"And do we learn this in the same way, by prayer?"

"Yes, we learn everything by prayer. God helps us frequently to think well of others, by revealing to us ourselves. The more of evil I see in myself, the more I discover in others to love,

admire and emulate. Then we come to look upon evil as a principle, inherent and universal, and in a sense apart from individuals, and requiring conditions only, to take possession of us. Whatever the shock or recoil may be, I seldom hear of crime or vice, without an instinctive and subtle sympathy with the criminal, which tells me of the possibilities of my own nature without grace. The absence of evil, however, or negative goodness, we regard similarly, but positive goodness or virtue we do not think of as any such universal principle. That is personal and individual always, and comes only from individual effort and self-denial. We talk of the piety of the church, the integrity of the nation, but what are these apart from individual conquest? Moreover, in avoiding one error or vice, it is extremely difficult not to fall into the opposite one. Considerations like these are of great service in teaching us charity, and how to be like Christ."

"But there is great danger which in these days besets the man or the woman whose purpose it is to advance and elevate the human race,—we are so likely to overlook the fact that *sin* is the primary source of evil and suffering, and so labor in vain. We plan so much more for the relief of the suffering than for the curing of the sin. Suffering is bad, but not necessarily a curse, while it may prove the greatest blessing. Jesus said, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' and afterwards

healed the palsy. It is here that the Unitarians are weak and unphilosophical, if not unchristian; they would do first and only the second part of the divine mission. They have done much in showing us how we had neglected this in view of the more important, and they had power as long as they had any basis of sin and its forgiveness, but having cast that away, their system—if anything so loose and unsettled can be called a system—has no force or vitality. Man a sinner, Christ a Saviour, man a sufferer, Christ a Healer. They alone are true and lasting reformers who by their lips and their lives preach the gospel in all its *breadth* and *fullness*."

At this moment Mr. Sterne is announced, and the conversation becomes general, and before long the little party breaks up, but not without impressions which are forever and forever.



## CHAPTER XIV.

RYAN HOUSE.—PLOT.—ATTACK AT HEAD QUARTERS.—REPULSE.

“My precious little sugar-plum, my most beloved angel, you are the very one I was thinking of, and wishing for this minute,” was Theo’s greeting as she took Kate in her arms, and removed her wrapping.

“Well, what is it; can I do anything for you? How tired you look, Theo! but I must say that your languor is becoming.”

“What a prodigious flatterer you are! but I forgive, seeing its you,” and she kissed Kate’s cold hands. “I confess I am dull to-day; I couldn’t sleep last night for thinking,” and her eyes moistened.

Kate’s arms were tight around her.

“Thinking, darling; what were you thinking?” Nothing was so hard for Theo as to play the

hypocrite to Kate; and with a real quiver on her lip and not without some sincerity she broke out:

“I am utterly weary of this kind of life—this weary, wasted life! I hate all these shallow, wicked people! I detest this silly, smoking, tippling crew that haunt me from morning till night! I abhor myself most of all! I want something,—I don’t know what,—I don’t care, if it will only take me out of this!” and here she broke into tears,—real tears,—tears of shame, of repentance, we will hope, but at any rate, tears of grief, of chagrin, of discontent and misery.

A truer and warmer friend, a more sympathizing confidant, or a more wise and loving counselor, she could hardly have found than Kate,—the better, perhaps, because she was so ignorant of Theo’s true character and designs. She comforted and carressed, entreated and warned, and was ready to do anything to advance the true interests of her friend. Theo had never felt so guilty, so wretched; she had been wishing for Kate as a help of a very different kind, and now that she had come, she was herself betrayed into a weakness which would destroy all her profound scheming, and for a time there was genuine conflict in her bosom. The preaching of Alex had done something; the presence of Kate in her purity and love, still more; her disappointment had stirred her little depths. It might have been her salvation had she listened to her conscience, which had never

spoken so before, but old habits and love of power and admiration conquered, and when she was once more quiet she was herself again.

"Can't you make some calls with me, to-morrow, Katie? You know I hate to go alone to see your style of people."

"I don't know, perhaps so," replied Kate. "What time do you want to go?"

"O, before dinner, of course! say between twelve and one."

"But you know, Theo, I can't leave at that hour, particularly since Margaret is so feeble, and I don't like to leave her long at any time. Where do you wish to go?"

"O, I want to call on the Appletons, and the Stors, and Miss Dana, and the Ruperts and possibly Mrs. Williams."

"I know it is vulgar," said Kate, "but we could take some of these after dinner just as well. Mrs. Appleton has a young babe, and Miss Dana is an invalid; and it would make no difference to them, I know, they are so sensible, and Mrs. Williams is suited in any case. The Stors and the Ruperts we might reserve for another time, when I can leave earlier."

"Well, dear, just as you say," responded Theo, sweetly. "But what time shall I call; at half-past four?"

"O, dear!" exclaimed Kate, with a sigh; "how dreadful 'tis living in the city. Down to why

Wellington we went out to make calls at half-past one, and got home to supper at five. It is almost dark at half past four; we might go to Mrs. Williams an hour before that, and then make the more ceremonious visits afterwards."

"Anything for your company!" said Theo, just as sweetly, and so it was decreed.

The year had drawn near its close, and Theo was far from completing the conquests she inaugurated at the wedding; and Dr. Williams, who seemed the most impressible and plastic, was in fact the least so. She saw that Alex had nothing for her; he was pre-occupied hand and heart; but she attended his meetings constantly, expressed the most profound anxiety for her own soul, and the most cordial interest in his work of love, and assured him that she was longing to aid him. He was very much crowded with correspondence, and was very glad to put some of it into her hands; and in this way she became important to him. We cannot affirm that she was capable of true affection, or of truly deserving it; but the very difficulty of her conquest inflamed her ambition. She had made Kate several short visits, and for a time felt confident of success; but was exasperated to discover that the doctor's attention to her, were only such gallantries as he showed to every woman who crossed his path. One day she saw him stop his horse at full gallop, dismount and pick up a crutch for a lame girl; and he had as

elegant a bow, and as sweet a smile, and genial a word for Miss Genevieve Sturdivant, a maiden of forty, who kept a boarding-house, as for her; and he was as ready to lay the shawl over that crooked figure as over her own superb shoulders. Indeed, he was even more gentle in wrapping up the hollow chest. Miss Genevieve carried any amount of snap and sugar in her little dried-up body, and the doctor said,—

“She is just like preserved ginger, and the longer she keeps the better she is!” And Theo nearly bit off her tongue with rage and jealousy when Kate told her that he made the little consumptive an annual present of ten tons of coal and half a dozen bottles of port wine; and that besides writing poetry, she would show her gratitude and devotion by sewing up all the rips in his gloves, and embroidering in the most exquisite manner, an elaborate “W” on a corner of every one of his pocket-handkerchiefs.

The very first of the winter Kate received a note from Theo, written at the Ryan House, in which she stated that she had taken rooms for the season, and begged her friend to wait upon her at once. Kate could not go often, so she said,—

“You must come to me!” a bidding Theo was not long in obeying. But it was impossible to say at what hour the doctor would call, and frequently he went at once to Margaret’s room, without stopping in the parlor. Suddenly Theo

conceived a violent affection for Margaret, and begged that she might sit with her. Margaret was grateful, but too feeble to talk, or even to receive lively demonstrations; she lay, most of the time, on the sofa, with her eyes closed, and could hear no loud music or talking or noise of any kind; and Theo was soon disgusted with so tame a person, particularly as the doctor talked softly with the invalid, and addressed only common-places to her.

It was an eventful day when Mrs. Williams, wishing to gratify Kate, said to her,—

“You know, dear, that I don’t make formal visits, but if Miss Livingston will waive ceremony, I should be glad to have her call with you to see me.”

They went together twice, and the calls were so delightful that Theo ventured by herself several times; but she found Mrs. Williams a very different person, as she reported to Kate.

“I don’t know just what the difference is; she is kind and hospitable, and always asks me to stop and dine, and I did once; but if she had been a mountain I could not feel smaller or meaner; or chillier if she were an iceberg.”

The winter was passing, and baffled on all points, she resolved on some bold stroke. She thought of feigning illness; but that would be useless, for the other party had a body-guard; the doctor had ways of his own. He wished to

devote himself chiefly to his specialty, but he desired some general practice. Two families, his pastor's and Mr. Sterne's, were assured of his attention if called, but he did not wish to be a slave to his profession, and it was impossible to answer personally half the calls he received. So he employed two newly-fledged M. D.s, who were very promising, and whom he wished to help, and when he was sent for, it was understood that one of these would be deputed. If it proved a very serious or uncommon case, or one requiring surgery, he took it into his own hands, wholly or in part. People might fret and fume, and refuse to be treated by proxy, but it was the only way by which his services could be secured by families, and it was submitted to. Theo knew that if she sent for him professionally, one of his subordinates would appear; and only throat patients and out of town patients went to his office.

Scheming had been the business of her life, but never before had she been so thwarted; and she bent all her energies to this one task, regardless of the many claims and attractions of hotel and fashionable life, and of the half score of adorers who were fainting for her smiles. The most of one long winter's night she sat reflecting, devising, plotting, rejecting and re-plotting,—her mental operations were not rapid,—and just as the clock struck five, she exclaimed, as she jerked her watch chain with such force as to break it,—

“I'll do it, and I defy anybody to defeat me!” and she was so fortunate as to receive a call from Kate that very afternoon, as we have seen.

According to agreement, soon after three, the next day, Theo appeared in her carriage; and so beautifully and bewitchingly dressed that Kate declared herself ashamed to accompany her. There was fascination in the very button of her glove, and the air of her hat was totally irresistible.

“Theo,” she exclaimed, “it is wicked of you to be so dazzling; I'm wholly bewildered and beside myself!” and she whirled about the room, to make good her words.

Mrs. Williams, too, was evidently charmed. She had never been so genial, so soft, so free and so cordial. Several times they had risen to leave, but she insisted that she could not be left alone; and nothing but the remembrance of the invalid at home, enabled our heroine to resist Mrs. Williams's captivating authority.

At length they had started, and Mrs. Williams said,—

“Robin, you have a very naughty habit of flying up and down stairs; I forbid it henceforth,” and taking her within her arm, walked slowly down the long flight. Theo tripped lightly before them. She had reached the last step but one, when turning round to speak, she slipped and fell, all in a heap, at the bottom of the stairs.

They sprang and lifted her up; she was very pale, and apparently unconscious. Mrs. Williams raised her in her arms, and laid her on a sofa, in the drawing-room just at hand, and Kate brought water.

"Are you hurt? tell me, darling. Speak! don't you know me, Theo?"

Theo slowly opened her eyes, smiled a little and then moaned.

"Where are you hurt? tell me,— we will try to relieve you," said Mrs. Williams, kindly, as she leaned over to loosen the cloak.

"It is my foot. Oh!" and she seemed to faint again.

Sure enough, one foot and ankle was fearfully swollen, and the boot seemed ready to burst the buttons. With a little time and difficulty it was removed, for Theo moaned, and almost shrieked at any touch.

"See if the doctor is in!" was Mrs. Williams's order to the servant.

He was in the office and instantly came. He peeled off the stocking quickly, and with much less pain, apparently, than had attended Kate's inexperienced efforts. She gave a little scream when she saw the foot, swollen entirely out of shape, and shockingly discolored; it scarcely looked like a foot. The doctor examined it carefully, and said gayly,—

"O, we'll help her very soon!"

"Couldn't she be moved down to our house?" Kate asked. "The carriage is at the door."

"O, yes; I don't think it would hurt her at all," he replied.

"Indeed, Arthur, I would never permit it," said his mother, in a tone almost of reproof at his want of hospitality.

"Very well, she had better have a room, then."

Mrs. Williams left to give directions, and presently the girl said,—

"The blue room is all ready."

"Do you think you could walk up stairs, Miss Livingston?" was the doctor's cool inquiry.

Kate looked at him in amazement. She could hardly believe her ears. Theo merely moaned, and said it was impossible.

"Quite right," he said, turning to his servant, standing near. "James, take her up very carefully, and go slowly."

The doctor was nearly a head taller, and much stouter than the man; it would have seemed natural that he should have done it; but clearly he had no such intention. Gathering up the raiments left behind, he followed on with Kate.

Theo was laid on the couch, and a pillow supported the foot; she had fainted again. Without waiting for her to open her eyes, the doctor said, calling a servant girl,—

"Jenny, take a piece of flannel, double, about

so square," measuring off ten inches with his hands, "wet it in vinegar, but do not wring it quite dry; then on one side spread a good coating of mustard,—and be quick!"

"Mustard, Arthur! Who ever heard of mustard for a sprain!" exclaimed his mother.

"I think, nevertheless, it will prove efficacious in this instance. It will do no harm, certainly." He went to the window, till the girl returned. "Now, Jenny, you may put it on; have the middle of the poultice in the sole of the foot, and look out for wrinkles; and bind this over it," he added, handing her a towel.

Mrs. Williams looked petrified with astonishment. She had never known him to shrink from any service, however disagreeable or painful. In the army, no wound was too putrid, no sore too disgusting, for his personal and minute attention; and now, that he should recoil from the foot of a lovely woman, apparently in great suffering, was beyond her comprehension and belief. But he was in his right mind,—never more so. How often had she admired that decisive, commanding air and tone which he exhibited just then.

The remedy was applied with no little difficulty, for the patient resisted with many groans and cries, and expressions of distress; but at length it was accomplished, and the doctor withdrew, and Kate, finding that nothing was required of her, took leave. Below was the doctor, who

was awaiting her, and who entreated permission to accompany her home.

The next day she called to see Theo, and found her lying in the same place, and quite comfortable, though she looked very much disturbed in mind. Mrs. Williams, sitting there, met her as usual; but Kate felt at once the very atmosphere Theo had described; and when Mrs. Williams was called out for a moment, there was something in her carriage which spoke severe displeasure.

"Aren't we majestic?" said Theo, sitting up, as Mrs. Williams disappeared. Kate knew not what to think, and so said nothing. "She's got ginger, and no mistake!" Theo ran on. "High blood, you call it! And the doctor isn't all velvet, I can tell you! You ought to see him, if you want to know what John Bull means when he talks about *blood*!"

"What has he said?" asked Kate, turning a trifle pale.

"Said! he hasn't *said* anything! Gracious, no! It is in his eye, and his step, and his coat, and his very boots. It flashes out all over him, and if you don't want to be extinguished I advise you to keep out of their lightning. Good Lord, if they'd *talk* their fire-works 'twould be easy enough! I could talk back. But it's all sweet and soft as pussy-cat,—will I have this, and will I have that? And no end of attention,



and precisely the thing I want, just as if they knew my very thoughts. It's horrible! I'd sooner die than live here!"

"But I don't understand; I don't see what it all means," said Kate anxiously.

"Of course you don't, pretty; you're not as wise in the ways of the world as yonder empress,—not as wise even as poor me; but ignorance is bliss, you know, when 'tis folly to be wise."

Kate was puzzled, but said no more; she saw there was something painful, and she did not care to investigate; and Mrs. Williams returning that instant, Theo relapsed into her former attitude.

On the day following, when the doctor called, she asked,—

"Will Theo be lame long? When will she walk?"

"O, no, she will not be lame at all; she might walk now, if she felt disposed."

"You must be a kind of witch to cure so bad a sprain in this time."

"Nothing magical in the least, I assure you. It was not a sprain."

"Not a sprain! Pray what was it then?"

"The limb was poisoned, I think."

"Poisoned!" she exclaimed, dropping her scissors. "Poisoned! Why how is that possible?"

"Nothing is easier; there are many ways. I

haven't sought her confidence, and she would be much more inclined to offer it to you."

It was evident that he had no desire to continue the subject, and she was a little disposed to ask further information. Though not insensible to Theo's tortuous courses, she overlooked them, and believed her honest in the main. Considerable allowance was made for her false education. The truth flashed through her mind, but she did not entertain it for an instant; she only said to herself,—

"Poor Theo! If you but knew how to be happy!"

She did not again see Theo, for she that very day returned to the hotel; and very soon Kate received a note written from her home, where she said she could much sooner recover the use of her foot. In less than a month came a long letter,—something new. She was in Lowell, visiting a cousin. Mr. Montgomery was preaching there, and to him she felt she owed the salvation of her soul, and she poured out a heart full, as Kate thought, of love to God and the church, with many regrets for her past life, and resolutions for the future; and the tenderest expressions towards Kate, for her love and faithfulness. It seemed to be full of joy and peace.

Mrs. Williams had always spoken gently of Theo; still Kate feared there might linger some

unpleasant memories, some misapprehension, so she showed her the letter.

"It is a beautiful letter," Mrs. Williams said.

"I am glad she is happier."

Certainly, there was no expression of doubt.

## CHAPTER XV.

### QUEEN MARGARET IS CROWNED.

Day by day, as the winter sped, Margaret failed in strength, till on the first day of spring, she went to the table for the last time. The doctor had asked other and older physicians to see her, but the opinion was the same always; they could see no positive, organic disease. It was an insensible wasting; and having no constitution, or wish, upon which to rally, there was nothing to be done but to keep her comfortable to the end. Indeed, it seemed almost painless from the beginning; she suffered little except from exhaustion.

She had talked with her pastor and a few others about the approaching change, and had made the last arrangements, sending many kind messages and tokens to friends far and near; but to Kate, her devoted and beloved nurse, she had said directly not a word. Her delicate instincts

told her that Kate had not given her up, and she knew that the wrenching would be with terrible pain; and though both were thinking of it constantly, and each wishing the first word spoken, they only silently understood each other.

It was evening twilight in the middle of March. For a week Margaret had been extremely feeble; her life hung on a thread, and the doctor, who called many times a day, felt that each leave-taking would be the last. Kate was sitting alone by the bed, watching her as she half slept and turned uneasily from side to side; suddenly she spoke:

“Katie, I think Edward is different; and he has such noble qualities that I feel assured that by and by, months hence, he will be to you all a husband should be. I am satisfied, too, that you are right and I was wrong, and I do hope you will forgive me,” and she fondled the little hand that clasped her own. “If I had not been so weak always, it would not be so hard for you now. I don’t believe any man would be harsh and unkind if some woman did not make a god of him; and when I see a mother who does little or nothing to check the domineering temper and selfish spirit of son or daughter, I think what a portion of misery and bitterness she is preparing for some future wife, or husband, or child. I don’t know but there are as many tyrants among women as men; only men are not so much at home, and are less dependent on their affections and so suffer

less. I thought all the time I was trying to please my Heavenly Master, but I fear I was only trying to please Edward, and win his love. I know how hard it must be for a strong man like him to live with a woman so weak as I am.”

She seemed so exhausted that Kate gave her some of the wine-whey, and begged her not to talk; but she said presently,—

“Little sister, I am almost home; are you not glad?”

“I am glad for you, love, but it is so hard for me. How can I bear it?”

“It is better that it should be so, though I would like a little to live now. You have been such a help to me; such a power in my life; I was not made to live alone; I am good for very little, without a stronger arm to lean upon; and I used to long so for rest and Home; but now with my hand in yours, I think I might do a little more for Jesus; but He knows what is best for me, and He doeth all things well. And I would love to be here to greet the new life that is coming, but I shall greet you all in Heaven, I trust.”

She was silent for a moment, then she said,—

“Won’t you sing ‘Rock of Ages’?”

Kate began with a quivering voice, which grew firm as Margaret’s joined her own; at the close of the line “Simply to thy cross I cling,” she stopped, and Kate finished the four verses; then she leaned over her,—she seemed not to breathe,

there was no pulse; and she thought the precious soul had departed. She hastily struck a light, and to her unspeakable relief the doctor that moment came in. For a time he believed it was over; but after sitting by her a while, he said,—

“She is sleeping only; but she may never wake on earth.”

Soon she breathed naturally, and slept like a child; and when she awoke, far in the night, said she felt well; and for days was so bright that Kate had some kindlings of hope. And the restlessness was wholly gone; there was no weariness even,—it was perfect peace.

One day, when she had been talking of her heavenly home, Dr. Williams asked,—

“What is it that makes Heaven so sweet to you? What is Heaven?”

She smiled with ineffable sweetness.

“Heaven,” she said, “is the presence of Christ. I know well that I shall meet my loved ones there; and there will be no pain, no sorrow, no parting, and I used to anticipate all this; but now I think only of my Saviour, and of holiness; but that means everything.”

She leaned back in her chair, and closed her eyes, and he thought he saw a halo about her head.

The last week she appeared to be constantly going and returning. She said to Kate one day,—

“This morning I was over the river; I saw

Jesus, though I was not as near as I shall be. It was, oh! so bright, so glorious, and I was free; then some one came and spoke to me and called me back to earth. Pray that I may have patience to wait.”

On Good Friday they thought her dying many times, but she said,—

“I should so love to go on Resurrection Day! I think He will come for me then.”

All Saturday and Saturday night she lay half-conscious, balancing between earth and Heaven; but as the first glimmer of dawn appeared she asked to have the bed moved to the window, on the south-east.

The evening had been stormy, but near midnight the sky cleared, and Orion went down unbedimmed in the west, and all the lamps of heaven were hung out. A towering mass of clouds lay on the eastern horizon, and could not be seen to stir, and out of these Venus, the queen of the morning, rose in splendor and triumph. The height of her glory was but just reached when it began to wane. Soft purple mists, scattered all over the southern sky, deepened and spread and marshalled themselves in gorgeous procession of crimson and gold, spanning the whole heavens, from east to west, till at length the heavy clouds far down, alive and dripping with fire, parted, and the king of the morning came forth, and all was light.

Margaret had been watching all this, and when the rays fell on her face she turned it up to Heaven, and unconscious of any human presence, she said,—

“This is the glorious Resurrection Day! Jesus, I am ready!”

The doctor had been there all night, and Dr. Wells had just come in. His eye filled, and his lip quivered, as he saw the death pallor, and took the icy hand; but he said,—

“My child,” here his voice broke, “what shall I say to my church?”

“O, tell them to be faithful, to be more earnest; to be less worldly, to love Him more, and serve Him better. Oh! if they could see as I do now.”

She felt her life ebbing away, and her farewells were not spoken. She closed her other hand over his and looked into his face,—

“My dear, kind pastor, I love you so! May God bless you, and reward you for all your labors, and give you stars for your crown,—innumerable,—rejoicing,—”

The voice was husky; she seemed to be losing herself, and she called,—

“Katie! quick!”

Kate moistened her lips with the wine, and bent close down to catch the words that were whispered. What they were she never told.

Margaret looked up again.

“Edward, my brother, my only brother!” and she held out her hands to him, “the Master would have you different. Live for Him! Go out of yourself, live for others; do right because it is right, love the truth for the truth’s sake; and all things shall be added unto you! Forgive me, and forget how weak I have been,—I am so very weak,”—her voice faltered. “Thine everlasting arms — uphold me.”

The face settled into peace, and they believed her gone; but she spoke again,—the tone was firm and clear,—

“Doctor! Arthur!” she had never called him that before. He leaned over her, and pressed his lips to her forehead, with the chill of death upon it. She held up her arms, and for an instant he clasped her to his heart; then her head dropped on his shoulder, and he laid her gently down.

The eyes were wide open, but they saw nothing on earth; the voice was not of earth, it was heavenly rapture.

“At Thy right hand,—pleasures forever more,—cleansed from all sin,—O, death, where is thy sting? In the twinkling of an eye,—we shall all be changed,—there they are! O, let me go! Let me go! Don’t hold me!” and raising herself, she waved them from the bed. “Jesus, my Savior!” She lay back, with her eyes closed, her hands clasped on her breast, and said, with holy sweetness, “Face to face,—Thy likeness,—*satisfied!*”

As she spoke the last word, her face broke into a smile,—it was the smile of the infant, it was the smile of the angel, it was the smile of the redeemed. It was innocence,—it was love,—it was triumph; and they stood around her rapt, and forgot to weep.

Slowly the gates of Heaven closed over her, and the smile faded, but a celestial radiance shone from the features. Hundreds stood and gazed at the heavenly vision, and they laid her down with the earnest of the resurrection on her face, and the Easter sermon was preached by the lips of the dead.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### QUEEN ANNE IS HEARD FROM.

The intimacy between Mrs. Williams and Kate grew and strengthened every day, as each saw every day something more to know and to love. Mrs. Williams was much alone, and Kate knew that in that little dressing-room, on the southwest corner, open arms were ready to welcome her at any hour, and it was not long before she was on a very familiar footing. Occasionally the doctor came in for five minutes, pretending headache or backache, just to be coddled, he said, by his mother, but ended by nearly smothering her with kisses. Save this, she seldom saw him at home, unless she stayed over a meal, when they sat a full hour at the table. There was a standing invitation for Kate and her family to dine or tea with them every week, and they preferred tea, usually, because then they were less likely to meet other guests.



These visits were a delightful treat to Kate, for the doctor's conversation was not only entertaining, but often most instructive and stimulating, and she was frightened to discover how dull was her own home life. Edward could talk with as much ease and elegance as the doctor, but he seldom thought it worth while to do so, with only his wife and sister to listen; and at the table helped himself, or was helped by Kate, to the best, and paid little attention to anything beyond his own plate. Kate had tried every little grace and artifice to draw him out, but at length gave up in despair. If, however, he had visitors, or went abroad, he was so good-humored, so brilliant and so wise, that she was proud of him, and readily forgave him all his dullness at home.

The doctor was full of theories, which he had a weakness for expounding, as he said, but he liked best to have them elicited by some inquiring mind. These theories were not speculation, or hasty generalization, but were based on reason and common sense, and built up slowly by hard study, wide observation, and whole-souled experiment. They were conviction commonly,—*following* practice, not going before; and though enriched and embellished by his large fancy, were not warped by it.

In these days of physical degeneracy, when we do meet robust individuals we are very apt to inquire as Kate did, how it comes, whether by

accident or design, have these favored mortals any wisdom for us? She had remarked that Mrs. Williams and Arthur rarely took white bread or rich pastry, and she wondered that, being Scotch, and Arthur a physician, oat meal was not a favorite and more frequent dish. One day she asked him if he did not think it good.

"It is excellent," he replied, "I cannot do without it, but except fine flour, which is one of the refinements of sin, it is no better than anything and everything else. If I lived in Scotland I should want far more of it than I do here."

"Why so?" she asked.

"For several reasons. This climate is very different, one of the severest in the world, not only because of the long hard winters, and great extremes of temperature, but because of the raw atmosphere of our protracted spring, the fearfully sudden changes, and piercing east winds. I must be fortified against all this, not only externally, by flannel next the skin, but internally, by the strongest, richest food. Nature indicates almost without fail what our staple should be,—it is that which is indigenous, and best cultivated on the soil. Our oat meal is not good,—I have to send to Scotland for it; but our Indian corn and apples are the best in the world. Indian meal has more fat than oat meal, and is therefore better fuel; it is a misfortune when one cannot bear it. Buckwheat cakes and coffee are an ex-

cellent preparation for a forenoon's work in a cold day. A man with breadth over the eyes, and who works in his study much, should take coffee or tea in the morning; coffee is better, generally, because it contains fat, and is not astringent like tea. These prevent the waste of the nervous tissues."

"But you know, how among intellectual people the number increases who cannot take either."

"Yes, but there is something wrong. If a man cannot take these stimulants, it is often an indication that he needs them. He is almost never sound; his nerves are weakened, and instead of being gently stimulated and strengthened he is excited by them. You will observe that while every race, however remote or barbarous, has its narcotic and intoxicating drink, it is chiefly nations of great nerve and brain power that consume these stimulants. I noticed the other day, that a foreign chemist dated the intellectual declination of Spain and Italy from the introduction of cocoa as a common beverage into those countries, having too much of mere vulgar nutrition."

"Moreover, the Yankee needs much greater variety than any body else. If I lived on ten acres of land, a hundred miles from any body, and knew nothing of the world outside, what I could raise on those acres, would sustain me abundantly. Had I never heard of China I should want no

tea; had I no interest in France, sardines would have nothing for me; if I never thought of the East and West Indies, there would be no need of tropical fruits. The Yankee knows everything, and does everything, and goes everywhere, and he actually *needs* not only the brain productions of every land he visits, but the products of the soil also. A great general, or a powerful metaphysician, might accomplish wonderful things on the narrowest, coarsest diet; but a man of liberal ideas and delicate perceptions, who aims to influence the many by his pen or voice, you will not find to *thrive* on any such fare. There are exceptions, possibly, but this is the rule. I have an uncle, in Keene, who brought up a family on vegetable diet and water. The boys were splendid looking,—straight limbs, fine complexions, and open faces, and they could perform as good a day's work in the garden as any man; but when two of them were sent to college, and a third to a great city, they broke right down and died,—no nervous strength at all. He sees his mistake now. In the army the farmers' boys had the least endurance."

"It is almost impossible to make my patients understand what simplicity of diet is. I tell one to live more simply, and the next time I see him he is reduced on rye bread, mutton, and cold water. The best pie in the world is made of apples, with some sugar and water,—though I prefer mo-

lasses, and a little cinnamon, with a thin, delicate crust; but to this must be added lemon or rose-water, and flour and butter and syrup, and no one knows what, to say nothing of the abominations of the paste. Our grandmothers made a pickle of cucumbers and vinegar, which was appetizing, and an occasional mango could be forgiven; but now the housewife must have, every day, a compound no animal would touch, half a dozen spices and as many pungent, aromatic herbs, chopped and mixed most unmercifully. It ruins her digestion and her temper, makes a brute of her husband, and fools of her children. It is no wonder such a woman has no time or disposition to improve her mind. Whoever would think clearly and forcibly, love his Lord with all the heart, and his neighbor as himself, must eschew rich pastry and all manner of much-compounded, highly-seasoned food."

It was the report of some such conversation as this which drew from Mrs. King the following letter. We have seen that our heroine is very rich in her friends. Mrs. Foster lives far from the centre of life and work, she has heavy burdens and small means; but with Mrs. King it is far otherwise. She was the wife of a lawyer and member of Congress in New York State; she has travelled extensively on both sides of the water, and is admired and courted everywhere; though not very wealthy, she knows no lack; her father

is a prominent clergyman living right on the highway of travel, between two great towns; her widowed brother, residing at home, is editor of a newspaper in the neighboring city; she meets society of all kinds, and much of the most distinguished; there are books without limit, and her judgment and taste is sought and highly prized by literary men. Not only does nature minister to her, but her knowledge and appreciation of art multiplies and enriches her resources. Moreover, she has what is rare among her sex,—a sound mind in a sound body, and she is a person of so much culture, experience and success in every department, that we will give her letter entire.

My dear Katie:

Marion will never cease talking of her visit to Boston. She enjoyed every moment of it, and I thank you most heartily for taking so much pains to please my little girl, and for saying such kind things of her. I love still to call her my little girl, though she is larger and taller than her mother. She is beautiful and blameless to me, but I cannot expect others to see with mother's eyes. You ask about her education. I have not done all I would, but I resolved long ago that she should not suffer from ignorance and incapacity as I had done. Her personal development, her beautiful hair and teeth, I attribute to her physical training,

—not gymnastics, but woman's work in house and garden. As with piano playing, so with domestic work, there must be a training of the wits as well as of the muscles, and it should begin so early and so gradually as to be natural, and not seem like labor.

As soon as she was large enough she learned to take care of her own room, and soon she found it quite as easy to keep it in order, as in disorder; and before long she could take care of her brother's room also. She was out of school several times for six months. I cannot allow my children to be forced as they must be, to continue with credit in the public schools. True, she fell behind her class each time, but I do not see now that she is not as well-informed as most girls of eighteen. Certain it is, that she has unbounding enthusiasm and intense love for knowledge; is interested in everything and everybody she meets, and as you say, is simple and spontaneous. Life is wholly a sweetness and a blessing, and it seems to be the one desire of her heart to give to others the love and the joy she feels.

I mean she shall go away to school for a year or two, after she is twenty. There is a lover who is very much in earnest, but he must wait. I know not how to spare either her society or her assistance. She likes to have me leave her that she may have entire control, and father calls her

his rosebud, and is so proud in showing her off to his guests.

For years I did have a very hard time, for we were all invalids; but now the work does itself, somehow. It must be because we are all in such excellent health, and because of Marion's marvellous organizing faculty.

Under the circumstances I do not feel it to be wrong to give considerable time to the lighter accomplishments. These afford almost universal pleasure, and more than anything else, fill up the angles and smooth the roughnesses of real life. Some excellent neighbors think such recreation sinful. It would be, done for our own sakes; but done for Jesus' sake, it is multiplying ourselves, in geometrical progression, for the heavenly service. But I have yet to learn what the light accomplishments are. Social life, music, horticulture, drawing, dress even,—each contains the profoundest science and the highest art, with laws and principles stretching far into the infinite, and to know anything of which requires the devotion of a lifetime. I sit down in helplessness and despair, when I consider how intermixed and interdependent all wisdom is: to know anything, one must know everything. I tell father it is a mystery how he ever learned theology without knowing all that anybody knows of music, chemistry, mathematics, political economy, architecture, manufactures. The only way,

I suppose, is to begin at the center and work outwards. The reason why most of us know so little and do so little, is because we are always nibbling at the circumference. Astronomy is a wondrous study, and to know anything of it one would think we would need an eternity, with all our powers in perfection, and so it will be; but I apprehend that in another and higher existence we shall suddenly grasp what will cover much ground.

Truth as we now have it, is a vast, dissected map, cut into minutest pieces and shaken together. We are ever at work putting these in their places, and something is accomplished every day, but it is very slow and laborious even to the greatest mind and most diligent worker. But one day we shall see, at a glance, how all these isolated towns and villages, these separate states, are one great continent stretching from sea to sea, and these boundaries, which seemed so marked, we find to be all arbitrary and artificial, and growing out of our earthly weakness and imperfection. That lofty mountain which so overshadowed us, we see to belong to one vast range stretching from north to south; that rapid and powerful stream, of which we knew neither the beginning nor the end, we see to be one of a thousand tributaries of a mighty rolling river, which cuts the whole length. There is but one Ruler and one Government, and though the races and

peoples be many, it is all of one heart and one soul.

Cooking, you will admit, is a science and an art,—or should be,—though not, you say, of a celestial kind. I am not so sure of that. Indeed, I know we shall all be better off when it has its true position in the eyes of women. I find that like all else, it bounds and is bounded by everything else. I am beyond my depths at every step. A biscuit is almost as mysterious and wonderful as a letter or a poem; it involves as much physics, metaphysics, and ethics, and I believe I am quite as conscientious about it.

I am deeply interested in all that Dr. Williams says; often it tallies strangely with my own experience. I have had an experiment the last ten years, and as far as my own house is concerned, am satisfied with the value of it. Would you like to hear it?

You know I was married very young, and the nine years of my wedded life were very happy; still, as I now look upon it, it seems a life of great self-indulgence. My husband died in London, and when I landed in New York, with my three children, my servant, and all that remained on earth of my husband, there was my father to take me to his heart and his home, and here I have been ever since. Mother had been in heaven three years, and sister Mary, always a frail girl, was overcome by care and work, and I found

her prostrated and tortured by neuralgia. Father, you know, is very large and fleshy. He was at his work, but considered himself a confirmed dyspeptic, and alarmed us all with frightful symptoms of apoplexy, and again was threatened with paralysis. Brother Eugene had never recovered from over-exertion in college; the death of his wife had depressed him still more, and he appeared far gone in consumption, with hemorrhage of the lungs and chills and fever. My children were very delicate,—seemed scrofulous, and children's diseases went very hard with them. Charlotte, my stout Welsh woman, took the rheumatism on the passage over, and it settled in her knee, and though not very serious, disabled her somewhat. In every one but her there seemed to be a general breaking down of the nervous and digestive systems; in summer, dysentery went the rounds, in winter influenza, and bilious attacks at all times. I had considered myself exceedingly delicate and nervous for a long time, and never thought of getting through the day without lying down often; but there was no time to think of my own ills, and before I knew it, I was perfectly well. It was the hard engrossing work I needed.

Now all are well, a sick day is unknown, and the blues are unheard of; a cold to amount to anything would be a wonder.

Father is seventy-two; preaches twice every Sunday, and declares himself as vigorous as ever

in his life; it is certain, he accomplishes much. Mary is the wife of a missionary in China, and a great worker. Eugene is to marry very soon and live in the city. We call ourselves very robust, but we were long in learning how to live.

There are, of course, many things to be considered: exercise, bathing, sleep, and method in all these. We do not forget that "one hour's sleep before midnight is worth two after it." *Minds* that work need long and unbroken sleep,—eight hours is economy; but not the least important is the diet. I learn that for us to enjoy high and uniform health, I must so cook, or order my cooking, as to secure the maximum of *nervous* power. Here are six very busy brains, and I find that we consume in *bulk* about one-third less than families usually of that size. I get the best cut in the ox, the first quality of everything, and fruit, foreign and domestic, in freest abundance,—it costs no more in the end,—but the secret lies in concentration and in variety.

By concentrated food I do not mean highly-seasoned or much compounded, but it is on the principle that one cup of strong tea or coffee is better than two that are weak. Fine flour, for this reason, is much discarded for bread; we use Graham, rye and Indian, oatmeal and buckwheat.

Variety is consistent with simplicity; it is not many things at once, but constant change from day to day, and month to month.



Brain alone is omnivorous. The rude diet sometimes recommended, and often adopted, would be excellent were we peasants or savages, or if we could be made into animals; but we have got the brains and they must be fed, or they will drive us to the grave or mad-house, or make us invalids for life. We need fifty times the nervous strength our grandfathers did, and the simple farm produce on which they throve will not sustain even the farmer in these days of newspapers and railroads.

There is a man who writes a sermon every week, and perhaps two or three, besides doing ten thousand other things, each of which makes a draft on his heart and brain. His food furnishes him with just so much of the nervous fluid,—and if it is white bread, ill-cooked meat, or slops of any kind, it is precious little. His brain wants all this and ten times as much more, and nothing is left for his digestion or his voice; and so he fights on and worries on, his life a living death. Now the care of this greedy but delicate organ, the brain, should never be entrusted to an ignorant, superstitious foreigner, but to an educated, practical, religious woman, who will learn to adapt her supplies to the age, constitution, and occupation of those she serves.

There has been a great hue and cry concerning the amount of saleratus consumed by housekeepers, and many have been frightened to the other

extreme. It is true, an excess of alkali destroys the coats of the stomach, but it is scarcely less injurious than many unnatural acids engendered by the gastric juice. A combination of powerful acids taken at one meal,—such as the ascetic acid of vinegar and the citric of the lemon or currant, is both unnatural and unpleasant in its effects; a conjunction of others is even most dangerous. Many a child has died from eating plums or cherries and then drinking freely of milk.

The farmer's wife who poisons her family with pearlash in her flour bread, has her rye and Indian bread both solid and sour for want of pearlash. Half the brown bread and the Graham bread that is made is sour; it is because of the sugar or molasses which is used. These sweets, molasses especially, require soda or saleratus for bread or cake. For a loaf in which I put half a cup of molasses, an even teaspoonful is none too much.

It is a matter of no little importance and difficulty to obtain unadulterated materials. If it were nothing worse than sand in our sugar, and meal in our mustard, we might not fear; but under the name of tea, coffee, pepper, and other necessities, most villainous compounds are sold and consumed by tons. Pure cream of tartar and spices are much more likely to be obtained of a reliable druggist than of any grocer; the difference in the cost is amply compensated by the superior strength of the article. But if sour milk

can be obtained, I use little cream of tartar or alum; these chemicals give an exquisite lightness and whiteness, but they dissipate the nutritive properties. As a rule, the less artificial any ingredient is, the more wholesome and savory it is.

Many more details might be given, but they are doubtless familiar to you, and all this may seem very trivial to some; but it is not so. These bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and we have no right to defile or weaken them. The home is the expression of the mind and heart of its *mistress*; and I am persuaded that more wisdom and love and grace are needed to make a comfortable and happy Christian home, than to write books or sermons or do any famous thing; and if a woman is a failure in her home, if the sphere seems to be too narrow for her, it is never because she is too much educated, but because she is not educated enough. We are strong and educated only so far as we can utilize our powers, and embody our ideas. When by her practical science and philosophy she can preserve her family in health,—and in many instances, this is by no means impracticable; when, by her music, her flowers, her conversation and friendships she can make home the most delightful place on earth; when, by her Christian grace and sympathy she makes it the gate of heaven; when she has done all this, and can do more, God will open to her the door, and no anxiety need she have.

I have a very profound and old-fashioned faith in love, marriage and the family as the basis of all that is good, beautiful, and truly great on earth. The fact that many men are tyrants and many women fools, does not alter the principle; does it not prove rather the need of a higher observance?

I observe that if a woman has but meagre, moderate development, she is more useful and happy married; but if she is highly educated, the chances are she is better off unmarried. It seems as if it ought not so to be, and I cannot account for it, unless it is because fine women are so much more complete, less feeble and faulty than men, even the best. It is painful that so many women of mind and heart hesitate to assume the relation and responsibilities of married life, but there is reason for it. There are very few men who will not accept from woman any amount of service or sacrifice, even to her health and her life. Don't start, my dear! it is true. <sup>yes</sup> The guilt is not the less because she is so willing and he is so thoughtless. Many a man in position, and more than once a so-called great man,—has asked me concerning some preference of his, or my opinion of certain ladies. Oftener he preferred jewels *with* a wife than jewels *in* a wife. I learned usually that he wouldn't have her too much educated, or independent in her tastes and opinions; she must be sweet, unselfish, and devoted,—in short, though

he might not admit it even to himself, she must be ready to sacrifice herself, soul and body, for him. Society he could find elsewhere, and it was of less moment to him that the mother of his children should be a strong and disciplined woman. This is a relic of barbarism; and is it surprising that a gifted, high-minded woman should shrink from such alliance?

There is nothing on earth so near heaven as such a woman; there is no righteous self-renunciation of which she is not capable; and we find her everywhere, doing with her might what her hands find to do. In all probability she is superior to any person of the other sex that she knows; there is scarce one she could marry without diminution of her self-respect. But when all women are better educated, and have learned to subordinate and consecrate their gifts and their learning to home life, then men will be nobler; this ignominious self-sacrifice will cease to be, or to be expected; more of the higher class of women will marry, and we shall no longer tremble under divorces and women's rights, and marriage will become what God designed it should be,—a partnership, and a most important means in Christianizing and renewing the world and peopling heaven.

## CHAPTER XVII.

CATASTROPHE.—REVOLUTION.—QUEEN CATHERINE  
GOES INTO RETIREMENT.

Six months had elapsed since Margaret's death, when this notice appeared in an evening paper.

FATAL ACCIDENT.—This morning, between nine and ten, a portion of the unfinished building on Summer street fell, killing Mr. Edward Sterne, who was passing at the moment, and severely injuring three of the workmen; one, it is feared, fatally. Mr. Sterne was struck on the head, and killed instantly, for life was extinct when taken up. The face was not marred, and was fine, even in a violent death.

Mr. Sterne was a man of distinguished talent, and the soul of public enterprise; his voice, heard often in affairs of state and church, was ever on the side of the right; no man in the Commonwealth possessed higher integrity or a surer influence; and he was fast winning for himself a

high position among our most prominent and honored citizens. But he was best known for his literary attainments, and in benevolent and religious circles, where his loss will be deeply felt. He was thirty-six years old, and leaves a wife and one child."

Several days later a weekly paper contained the following:

**SAD ANNOUNCEMENT.**—Our city was plunged into grief last Friday morning by the terrible news that Edward Lowell Sterne was dead. He was killed instantly, by the falling of a stone from the unfinished block on Summer street. He was cut off in the prime of his vigor and usefulness and happiness. But few, we will venture to say, were so well prepared for the great and solemn change. The loss to us is irreparable, but what is our loss is his gain.

The obsequies were held on Monday forenoon at half-past ten o'clock, at the Lenox church, of which he was an honored member. A vast concourse of people gathered within the walls and around the doors, and hundreds were unable to gain admittance. The services were conducted by Rev. Dr. Wells, pastor of the church; he was deeply affected, and his remarks, though to the point, were very brief; but his prayer, in which he alluded to recent afflictions in the family of Mr. Sterne, was touching in the extreme. He was assisted by the Rev. Drs. Hubbard, Arnold, Mur-

dock, Rivers, Webber, and Manners, all of whom were personal friends of the deceased; and each of whom bore testimony in an eloquent address, to the talents and virtues of the departed friend. In the language of Dr. Hubbard,—

"He was a dutiful and affectionate son, a tender brother, a devoted husband, a heroic man, a firm and loving friend, an honorable and honored citizen, an humble, ardent, and consistent follower of Jesus. He had not an enemy in the world, and no one knew him but to love him."

At the close of these addresses the members of the Sunday School, numbering over one thousand, passed in procession before the pulpit, and took a last look at the beloved features of their Superintendent; each one laying upon the casket, which was a very rich one, a sprig of evergreen. After this ceremony a hymn, composed expressly for the occasion, was sung by five hundred of the children. The crowd and pressure was immense, but the order was most respectful throughout. The funeral cortege was very long and imposing, and many mourning friends and distinguished citizens attended the remains to their last resting place in Mount Auburn.

Edward L. Sterne was born September 29, 1833, in Newton.

On his father's side he descended from Gov. Bradford; through his mother he was a lineal

descendant of President Edwards, and few, therefore, could boast of a connection so large and so illustrious.

He was graduated at the age of twenty at Harvard College, where he took the first honors of his class. Since then he has been rising every year; he was a contributor to many papers; he possessed rare personal attractions and talents; to uniform and untiring zeal in the service of his Master he added wonderful executive ability, and by his own exertions and influence, assembled, and has sustained for years, the largest Sunday School in the city. He was a valued and active member of the Young Men's Christian Association; for two years he was a member of the State Legislature, and was on the direct road to the gubernatorial chair.

The day before his death he followed to the grave his only child, an infant daughter of great promise. His widow is a niece of Hon. Robert Fairbanks, of Jackson. By her many choice accomplishments, and rare attainments, she has endeared herself to a large circle of friends, who are now called to sympathize with her in this crushing double affliction.

Special meetings of the A. B. C. F. M., of which he was a corporate member; of the Y. M. C. A., and of several other societies, were called, and resolutions were passed, testifying to

the appreciation and loss of each, copies of which were forwarded to his widow. Their length forbids their publication in these columns.

His was a noble career! A good and a great man has gone to his reward; but we can only say in conclusion,—he was a true son of Massachusetts, and, "In the midst of life we are in death."

Six weeks after, Kate writes thus to Mrs. Foster.

BOSTON, NOVEMBER 20.

My dear, dear Friend:

I thank you a thousand times for your precious letters; they brought a world of comfort. I wish I could answer them as they deserve, but I cannot. I ought not, perhaps, to write at all; but I must speak, or my heart will burst. I feel stunned and bewildered yet, but it is possible that utterance will clear my brain, and help to unburden my heart. I will try to tell you about it.

Baby came eight weeks ago. For a time I could not believe that I was really the possessor of such a treasure; that an immortal soul was given to me for my own to be trained up for God; and I knew not which was the greater, the joy of the gift, or the sacredness of the trust. So many glorious air-castles, and wise resolutions, I indulged in! She was a fair, perfect child, just like the dear sister in Heaven, and we called her

Margaret. Dr. Williams said she had expression enough for one six months old, and that he should have a better opinion of her if she would cry now and then, and did not know so much; but I thought her amiability and precocity most charming.

I noticed that he carried her to the light every day, and after it looked very sober, though he spoke cheerfully to me always, and said that he never saw so lovely a child; and when this had been repeated many times, I was not much surprised, on the fourteenth day, when he said,—

“Wouldn't you like to have the baby baptized pretty soon?”

I answered,—

“Yes, now!” though how, I never knew; and in about an hour Dr. Wells came. It was not that she would be any better off,—I believe nothing of the kind; but I knew it would be a satisfaction to myself, and would aid me in giving her up. Dr. Wells said but little to me,—he knew I could not bear it then; but his prayer was so sweet, so earnest; it was the right word,—just enough, not too much. Then I took the little Margaret, and would not let her go one instant, and watched her every moment. I thought the doctor must be mistaken, she was so bright, and seemed to understand every word I said to her; and I hoped a great deal. She slept into the night, and about eleven she awoke and turned

her eyes full upon me, flung out her tiny arms, just as Margaret did in those last moments, gave a little gasp, and I knew I was a mother no more.

I can never, never tell the pang of disappointment and desolation that pierced and tore me then. The whole earth seemed bare and stony and giving way beneath me; the yearning drew me limb from limb. I tried to reach the Hand above me, to call to Margaret, whose face was close over me, to say the words, ‘I have given my child to God; His will be done!’ But the weight of a mountain was upon me. Then it grew dark, and I knew no more till noon the next day. They told me afterwards that I was delirious.

Another day, and they brought to my bed the coffin,—such a little one,—it was so pure and soft within, fit for an angel's couch. Dear Mrs. Wells sat close by me, her eyes full of tears, and at the foot of the bed stood Mrs. Williams, with her face turned towards me. How calm and grand it was! Edward looked so sober and sad; it was such a disappointment to him, though he had wanted a son, to bear his name. The doctor took the dear little dead baby and held it close to his face, and I saw two or three great tears fall on the little cheek, and he said softly,—

“Dear Margaret!” And I knew that it seemed to him as it did to all of us, like parting again with our sainted sister. Then he laid the tiny



white-robed angel in the pearly bed, and arranged a few flowers over the whole. Then the prayer,—I don't remember much of it,—only—“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” But it soothed me greatly, and I felt then I could say with all my heart, “Thy will, O God, be done.”

It was not fear, it was not grief wholly; I don't know what it was, but I could not sleep that night. At length I asked nurse to speak to Edward, and he came and did not leave me. He was restless, too, and several times he groaned, “O, Margaret!” and towards morning he said,—

“Katie, will you forgive me? You have opened my eyes. Till you came I did not know my sin and my selfishness.”

But I answered, “My dear husband, I have nothing to forgive; the sin and the selfishness is all my own.”

I could not bear to have him leave me; and after breakfast, I asked him if he could not sit with me. He replied, that he had only an errand down town, which was imperative, and then he would not go out again. When he was all ready, he leaned over me and kissed me several times very tenderly, and said,—

“Poor little mother!” He was very sad, but I had never seen him so handsome or so noble.

It was almost noon,—it seemed an age,—and then there was a tumult below, shuffling of feet,

and opening and shutting of doors, and two or three came into the room, but I could learn nothing, and then nurse dropped down on the floor and cried, “Oh, my God!” Then Dr. Wells came, and told me as gently as he could, though I know how it hurt him to do it.

He expected me to faint, perhaps, but I did not; I felt cored,—dry as a husk. I remember giving very distinctly some directions about the arrangements; I felt so strong, and told Mrs. Williams, who was with me all the time, that she was very kind, but I did not need her,—I could take care of myself and others too.

When they told me that my Edward was laid in the coffin, and was ready to be carried to the church, I said I must see him. Mrs. Williams thought it very hazardous, but the doctor said,—

“It will harm her more to be denied, and if she sees him she may be able to weep.” How I thanked him for that in my heart! Then they wrapped me up, and he carried me down.

How beautiful, how peaceful he looked! He was with his sister and his child. I pressed my hands and my lips upon the cold face, and called him by every endearing name. And what a tide of memories rushed over me! I thought of all our love, and recalled every tender word and act of his, and every hard and bitter reflection of my own,—for I had been wicked enough for this. All at once the house started from its foundations

—I can hear the harsh grating and creaking even now,—and it whirled round and round, and my husband seemed drifting away. I seized him by the hand to save myself and him, and he rose right up out of the coffin and leaned over me and kissed me, just as he did that morning, and said,—

“Katie, Katie, forgive me!” and I saw close beside him Margaret and our baby. Suddenly a blaze of light! it was the very Lord of glory, and everything else vanished. I knew my Saviour. There was form and feature, but no outline, no substance do I retain,—only attitude, expression, impression. I have it perfectly this moment. I can never forget it. It was a body, for there were the prints of the nails in His hands, but it was not matter, it was spiritual body. O, such majesty, such purity! He did not speak to me, only looked; but how shall I tell the love, the pity, the tenderness of that look!

An instant, and all was the blackest darkness; and when I found myself again, I was in my own room, and in my own bed. The windows were darkened, and they moved with muffled tread, and talked in low and softened voice, and my treasures lay far away in the cold, wet ground.

So I am again where I was before I ever saw him, yet not the same. I am far richer; for one has said,—

“’Tis better to have loved and lost,  
Than never to have loved at all.”

You would like to know my plans. Since this letter was begun, a week ago, they have been determined. There was no will, so I have only the widow's portion; all the rest falls to some remote cousins who do not need it. It doesn't seem quite just, but it must be right. Margaret, thinking we had property enough, gave hers to the American Board. I have sufficient to make me comfortable, if not luxurious, but not enough to keep this establishment, which, indeed, would not be well in any case. It is painful to think of strangers coming here, but the associations are so powerful, and sometimes sad, that it is no place for me. My uncle's family in Jackson, urge my return to them, but friends here have entered a protest, and the doctor says nothing could be worse.

I have decided, then, to board with the Misses Sturdivant, who are most kind and obliging, and offer me their best rooms. Uncle and Sarah have informed me that I am to do nothing about the breaking up and getting settled, which must be before winter. If I am lonely, I can have one of my cousins. You will be glad to hear that my Irish Nora refuses to leave me. She is invaluable, and both Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Wells offer to take her, and either would treat her with much consideration, but she says she shall stay with me, whether I pay her or not.

Mrs. King is with me still, but cannot remain

much longer. If you could come now for that long-promised visit, I should never cease to thank you. I never needed you so much. Will you not come to your sorrowful child?

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE PURSUIT.

It was December, and one of those nights of discomfort and drizzle peculiar to the New England coast. There had been rain, and then snow. It was raw, misty, sloppy. Driving rain or high wind or sharp frost would have been welcome. It was both freezing and thawing, as if there were no mind or force for either; yet nothing could be more penetrating and biting than the aguish mist that squeezed itself up the nostrils, and down the throat to the unwilling lungs; and there was a deadness of fingers and toes that no power of brain could dispel. Everything leaked and dripped and dropped, that could leak, or drip, or drop, and no one was abroad who could find any excuse for staying at home.

It was eight o'clock when a car stopped on the way up Washington street, and Dr. Williams, stepping off, turned into a square on the left.

"Never have I seen the streets so deserted!" he said to himself, as he looked up and down, and before him. But he did not look behind.

The car started, stopped again, and a woman slipped out on the opposite side. She crossed to the sidewalk, turned down the street a few steps, then ran swiftly across the street, and entered the square just as the doctor was ushered into a house on the south side. She then paced the enclosure several times,—she knew he would not stay long,—and when he came out, she was concealed by a small tree or shrub. He walked rapidly up the street, she following. The moon was at the first quarter, but the fog prevented recognition, even within a small space. He turned toward Tremont street and made another call. Behind a granite shaft or pillar she crept, and watched and shivered for fifteen minutes more, then out again. She slid behind an open door, while he made yet another. Would he never be through?

There was still another, and then he set his face towards his own house. Like lightning she turned and flew back and around the square, and met him face to face, just as he reached his door. He could not escape her,—she walked directly up to him.

"Miss Livingston! Is it possible?" he exclaimed. "You are not walking such a night as this!"

"O no," she replied; "I am just from the

Highlands, and I stepped off the car, to speak to you about my eye, which is very painful."

"Come in, will you?" and he turned the key, and showed her into his office. Giving her a seat over the register, he removed his wrappings, and prepared to examine her eye. He made no inquiries, as she expected, concerning her movements and plans.

"How long has it troubled you?" was his question.

"About a week. It was a cinder, I think, in the beginning."

After looking at the eye with the aid of an instrument, he said,—

"I see nothing there that should not be there, but it is a little inflamed, owing, I think, to nervous debility. A tonic would be good for you. I will give you a lotion, and if that does not relieve it, I will find something that will."

So saying, he went to a case, turned a liquid into a small vial, rolled it in white paper, and set it on the table. Much as he wished her gone, he would not hint the fact by passing it to her. She did not move, and nothing remained but for him to sit down.

"The eye is a very delicate organ," he began, for want of something to say.

"Pshaw!" she exclaimed, with flashing face. "What's the eye to me! You know well enough that it isn't my eye that is sick, nor my foot

either; it is my heart, my heart!" and leaning over she clasped both hands tightly over her heart.

"Then," he replied gently, "you should not come to me for relief. It is only flesh that I can heal; there is another and a higher Physician for the soul."

"Don't preach to me! What does a woman in love care about her soul or her body either? I don't want your religion," and she lifted her streaming face to his. "It is your love, your love, that I want!"

He drew back a little,—repelled, yet pitying her, as he had pitied very few; he said calmly, decidedly,—

"I have no love for you, but such as I give to all my fellow beings. Of that you have large measures."

"I scorn your charity, Arthur Williams!" she cried, springing up. "I should scorn you, did I not love you,—love you better than my own soul. Why don't you love me? Why don't you tell me you are not free to love me? I know who it is! It is that pious, puling baby,—to think that *she* should stand in *my* way! But you shall never marry her,—never! You are glad he is dead, though you dared not touch him. Deny it, if you can!" and as she finished with almost a shriek, she laid her hand heavily on his shoulder.

He rose, withdrawing himself from her grasp,

and spoke as quietly as if talking of the weather. "You are under my roof, and I should be sorry to use severe measures; but I cannot permit such language."

He had hardly concluded when she threw her arms tightly around him, pinning down his arms as with a vice. She breathed heavily as an engine; he felt that she was mad. With tremendous power he freed himself, put her in a chair, and turned to ring the bell. Quicker than lightning she darted before him and seized him round the waist. There was a flash,—a report,—a fearful crashing of glass; but not less swift was he. In an instant she was flung down, with her face to the floor, and the weapon wrenched from her grasp; and holding her with his right arm, with his maimed left one he threw it into a drawer, and turned the key. His mother and two or three servants rushed in.

"O God, my child, my child!" she screamed, as she saw the streaming blood.

"Duncan, hold her fast! Mother, don't be alarmed! Sit down!" and he put her tenderly in a chair.

She obeyed like a child; there was something terrible about him then.

"James, call a policeman and a carriage!" he said, as he turned to assist Duncan, who was nearly overpowered by the furious woman.

She quieted the moment Dr. Williams touched

her. Giving her a seat, he released his hold, keeping only his eye upon her. But she was totally subdued, and wept, and when the officer came, made no resistance.

"She is insane," said the doctor in explanation to him. "Take her to her rooms at the Ryan, and see that she is guarded;" and he saw her into the carriage.

Dismissing the servants, he turned to his mother,—

"Now, Mamma dear, we will see about it; it is nothing bad, I know," he said, as he caught sight of her pale face.

The coat off, the sleeve was found soaked in blood; and blood was dripping from a chair, and was in little pools all over the room. It was but a flesh-wound in the arm, above the elbow; the ball grazed the bone, without shattering it in the least, but there was a hole right through the limb and it bled profusely. The ball struck the book case behind him, breaking in fragments a large pane of glass. It was found on the floor of the case, and in the pistol were three other balls.

"You came near losing your baby then, Mamma," said Arthur, as they dressed the wound; "but the Lord was thinking of you."

Being in the left arm no help was needed from without. Strong as he was, some prostration followed the loss of blood and the nervous shock; and the next day there was a little fever, and he

enjoyed a holiday in his mother's room; and for a week the sleeve was sewed up after the coat was put on. But silence covered the deed.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## SHADOWS OF COMING EVENTS.

Mrs. Foster did not come to Kate at once, for about that time her husband was stricken again with paralysis, and soon after died. But in February she left her feeble-minded son with a neighbor, and spent six weeks with our heroine, who gained surprisingly under her hourly care and tenderness.

In July Mrs. Williams and Arthur accompanied Kate to Wellington; and after a few days visit, the pair returned to Mount Desert, for a few weeks. On the passage down, soon after they left the pier, as all were sitting on deck, and Kate, a little apart, was looking dreamily at the waves, she heard suddenly a familiar and beloved voice; and looking up, she saw Alex greeting her companions. She met him so seldom now that she had always a blush for him, which half pleased him and half displeased him. Beautiful though

it was, he would have been glad to meet the familiarity of old, when her face never flushed at his coming. Sitting down beside her, they talked of indifferent subjects, each carefully avoiding painful topics, till at length he said,—

“ Shall we promenade a little?”

As she assented, he tucked her arm under his in the dear old way, and sought the forward deck, where they were quite alone.

“ Will you be my sister, Katie?” he asked, his eye watering.

“ With all my heart, Alex!” she answered. “ You know I was always that,” and she laid her hand on his, which was at once warmly clasped and held.

She looked into his face, so like, and yet so unlike, the one of old. It was as radiant, though a shade of sadness rested on it; it was as true and simple, but finer and sweeter; thinner, but mellowed and stronger in all that constitutes high strength. She looked it all over and around and through. He appeared to enjoy her affectionate scrutiny and smiled, and soon they began to talk.

First a little lightly of people and things in general, then of his own family, his work and his purposes. He was worn, he said, and was going home for rest. Besides preaching almost every day, he had been pursuing the theological studies of the first year, and this, in addition to his domestic trouble, had exhausted him every way.

Home was very different now: his father was dead, Isabella well married, Beatrice teaching, Ferdinand had bought a small farm and had taken his mother and the little ones, and they were all thriving and happy. It was pleasure to find all this; he would never have believed that his mother could have made such a splendid woman, she was handsome always, that he knew, and she had a noble heart; it was her hard life and bitter trial that made her nest so uncomfortable; and best of all she was a Christian; and every time he saw her there was new growth and sympathy between them, and it was wholly a joy and comfort to be going to her.

They talked of Mrs. Foster; of all her beauty and influence, her reformations and possible arrangements. Her son at the West entreated her to come to him and his family; but Wellington people protested, and drawn two ways she knew not what to do. Kate wished her to go to Chicago. It would be as easy, perhaps easier, to see her; she would be a blessing and an ornament anywhere, and she needed change,—an increase of comfort might prolong her life many years.

Then, little by little, and with trembling, they touched upon their own sorrows. Alex was a widower. The world of gossip and fashion were not surprised when it was announced that the favorite preacher had married the beautiful Miss Livingston, who had been his secretary, and had followed

him so from place to place, hanging on his words. But a thrill of wonder and of horror fluttered through this gay world when, a fortnight later, it was whispered, then blazoned abroad, that she was dead. All the circumstances were discussed, or rather conjectured, for nothing was positively known. It was sudden, mysterious, but such deaths are not uncommon; they make a nine days' marvel, and then are happily forgotten by the multitude.

The bridal couple were boarding at the Highlands, where Alex was preparing for his summer's work. It was May, early in the month. One day at noon, Theo said to him,—

“I think I will go to Beverly this afternoon; I need some thinner clothing. Will you come for me to-morrow?”

So she went, and that night, after all had retired, she was taken suddenly and violently ill, and before another sun arose was a stiffened corpse. The family physician standing over her in her dying agonies, said,—

“There is every indication of poison,—of arsenic.”

A shriek from the mother,—

“I've killed her, I've killed her! I taught her to use it for her complexion,” and the frantic woman was borne from the room. In Theo's reticule was found some of the poison, which her maid confessed to purchasing the day before;

and the family, knowing nothing of the facts, supposed she had by mistake swallowed an overdose.

So Alex himself believed. That was bitter enough, but he was not to know all.

After acquainting Kate with all he had to tell, he drew from his breast-pocket a sealed letter directed to her in Theo's delicate calligraphy.

"I found this," said Alex, "among her letters, in her desk, only a week ago. I knew you were to come on this boat, so I have reserved it." Then he added, as he rose and paced the deck, "I cannot tell you what a horrible suspicion flashed across my mind when I found the letter; but I cannot believe she meant to take her life."

When they separated he said,—

"If there is no objection, I should like to read the letter."

"I will see," she said. "Certainly, if it is best."

It was several hours before she could take the time for the sad business; but at length she shut herself up in her state-room, and with trembling fingers broke the seal. Theo had carefully dropped and molded the wax, and then stamped it with her own little monogram. With blinding eyes she read and read again, the first sentences, before she could control herself enough to take their meaning. It was thus:

My dear and loving Katie,—

I have never been true to anybody. I have been

false to you even, at times, but if ever I have known a true and pure love it has been for you, and to you shall my last word be. I cannot live; it is intolerable. I know not what comes after, but it cannot be worse than this. I thought Alex might save me if he married me; but it is too late, and he must not know that he is deceived. He thinks me a Christian, and good,—it is torment to live and have him think so; and I cannot tell him how vile I am; what love, and hate, and murder is in my heart. I cannot be better or happier here, so I go elsewhere. You know I do not believe, as you do, in eternal punishment.

Alex took me for his wife, but he loves me no more than I love him. He married me because he thinks it is not good for man to be alone; because I amuse and divert him, sometimes help him; because I will talk of you in extravagant praises, and most of all because he thinks I love him, and it is somehow due to me. His heart is yours, and yours forever. He doesn't know it,—he thinks it is the Holy Spirit; but it is his love for you that gives such fervor to his prayers. It is divine love and inspiration, but it is fed on earth. He is none the less noble for that. His love for you is a pure and a holy flame.

I dare not live lest I kill him,—the one I do love. You know who he is, and you will love him, too, though never so wildly as this. I should kill him, and I might kill you, too, if he

married you, as he certainly will; and so I fly from the temptation. Better kill myself than kill you! I meant to see his heart's blood, but my hand trembled, and the ball went another way; and if I had not been so craven, another and a better aim I would have found. He was reticent about his lame arm. Ask him now,—he will tell you.

My mother brought me here. My father was a good man, and a Christian, but he died so long ago. Had my mother taught me to love my home, and her; had she shown me what it is to live and to die, I might have been like Alex or Arthur, or like you, which is better than all. But she taught me to live for dress, for admiration, for power with the other sex; and now I am a wreck, a ruin. Heaven may forgive her,—I cannot. Had I been loved by one noble man as you are by two,—oh! how I have striven for it,—it might have saved me. But now it is too late,—too late.

I will not die with my husband. I honor him too much. She who saw my first breath shall see my last; she who began the ruin shall see the end of it. She told me how to use arsenic for my skin,—to look round and soft and lovely. She shall see what ugliness it can make as well.

The drug is just here on my desk. I have swallowed it. I am ready for the bed and the coffin. I have around my neck and wrists the ruche you embroidered for me. I have time to

say farewell forever, and seal this last letter to my best friend, my beloved, faithful sister, and if I were worthy, I would bless you evermore.

Farewell, beloved!

YOUR DYING THEO.

She read this through once,—twice,—thrice; till it seemed as if the poison were within and the chill of death upon herself. She sat for an hour,—she knew not how long, when Mrs. Williams found her with the letter in her lap. Not till the boat touched the shore did she go on deck, and then did not talk with Alex.

A week later he called, and she told him it would not be pleasant for him to read it; she thought Theo's mind a little deranged,—but she was obliged to confess to him the suicide; he was determined to know. It was hard enough, but it would have been harder if Alex had loved Theo with all his heart. His was sorrow, but it was a sorrow that time and love were surely healing.

He wished to pursue his theological course at some institution; and as his future work was to be at the West, he had thought of Chicago; and when he learned that Mrs. Foster had been persuaded to remove her home to that city, he decided at once. He left in September, but Kate remained till the falling of the leaves, when Mrs. Foster was ready for departure. Lewis Foster came to Boston to meet his mother and brother,

and Kate saw him for the first time. He was just what she expected from his letters and from such a mother's education. He looked like his mother as much as a man could, talked like her, walked like her, ate and drank like her, preached and prayed like her; and Dr. Williams declared he didn't know one from the other.

Whatever we may think of certain expressions in Theo's letter, it is plain that Kate attached no importance to them; if she gave them any attention, it was merely as vagaries of a disordered brain.

But Mrs. Foster has had her thoughts, and she has a few more on receiving this letter, written more than a year after parting with Kate, on the way to her new home in the West.

BOSTON, NOVEMBER 30.

My dearly loved friend:

I thank you most heartily for all the good things you say of my book. There is no one whose approval I could value more, for I know that you can see the faults, and the excellencies, too, if there are any.

I wrote the book because I couldn't help it; but you wonder at the suddenness and secrecy of it. Well, I have dreamed of it long, and then all at once the time came and I wrote it; and it is natural to write for children because I have lived with them, and love them so much. Then I

did not tell you how dismal and lonely I was, on my return from Wellington. I couldn't settle myself to anything. I went often to Jackson, and visited all my particular friends, and every one, Mrs. Williams, especially, seemed devoted to me,—but there was no rest. One day I opened my desk to write Mrs. King, accepting her kind invitation to spend the winter with her, when in glancing at my Bible that instant, my eye fell on this passage:

“Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?”

I felt rebuked and ashamed, and resolved at once to conquer myself; and I said,—

“I will stay at home and write that story for the children.”

Ruth was with me, and I read to her as I wrote. She would drop a courtesy with her finger in her mouth, and say it would be fearfully embarrassing for her to see her youthful speeches in print, and she hoped I wouldn't tell where I found them. The book was far more acceptable to the public than I would have believed. I told Dr. Wells that he was “Judge Palmer,” and he said that the character was finely drawn, and he was grateful for my generous estimate; but that I was profoundly mistaken if I supposed he possessed any such beauty or nobility of soul,—you remember I told you that his graces were all unconscious.

Then there have been all sorts of messages, let-

ters and attentions, especially from the little folks; and some of them are exceedingly droll, and all very sweet.

Ruth has just gone home. Sarah is coming for a visit. It is long since I have told you anything of these children of mine. Sarah is a splendid girl, and she would make such a noble wife and mother, that I would like to see her well married, but she gives no one any encouragement. Sometimes I think she must have loved Fred Hamilton, who died a year ago, though no word of love ever passed between them. He was an Episcopalian, and when he was dying he asked his mother to give him his prayer-book; he wrote in it, "Sarah, from Fred," and desired it to be sent to her. It was his last word and act,—he never spoke again.

Ruth's mind is of the highest order, and she studies as few girls ever did. She is seventeen now, and says she has no beauty to give Nathan, and she must make the most of what gifts she has; but Nathan thinks she has beauty, and so do I. He is now at Yale, and hopes to be a minister. Before leaving Jackson he came to an understanding with Ruth's parents. Aunt Maria said that an engagement was not to be thought of,—they were nothing but children; but uncle said that it was a very serious thing, and no one had a right to interfere; and they were such wise, good little people, there could be no trouble.

Nathan is only eighteen, but he appears much

older; and you would think from his letters to Ruth, which she shows to me always, that he was her father. I asked her one day, if he never played the lover. She answered with a little gleam in her eye, that she guessed he could. I know these quiet fellows are sometimes the most vehement within.

The younger ones are outgrowing their childishness. Will has an imperious nature, which rather belies a beautiful face. I hope he has no heart-aches laid up for some woman by and by.

Charlie studies drawing, and is bound to be an architect; and Fanny is exceedingly domestic and keeps house with a score of dolls.

One day last week I was spending the afternoon with Mrs. Williams, when a storm gathered and I was obliged to stay all night. In the evening, as we talked, I told the doctor that I had never had his opinion of my book. He replied,

"I think it is the most powerful, the sweetest and the wisest book the world ever produced, the Bible excepted."

"Nonsense!" said I. "I want your honest opinion."

"Upon my honor, that is my honest, unbiased, positive, undoubted, unequivocal opinion," and that was all I could get out of him. "You will make writing a profession, of course?" he remarked afterwards.

I reminded them of the impromptu convention



at our house, and asked him if he remembered his own words; that we needed not only better homes and better women to make them, but noble books and noble women to write them? As I couldn't do the one, I had tried the other.

"But you must do both," said Mrs. Williams. I do believe she thinks there is nothing on the face of the earth I couldn't do if I chose. I asked her if she thought I ought to go to housekeeping.

"I think it would be a great deal better for you," she replied; "in the spring," she added. "A boarding-house isn't the place for you."

So I picture a little home somewhere, just out of town, with Sarah for my sister and companion. And in one corner of it a snug little library, and a table just high enough for me to sit and write, and books and manuscript lying around. Isn't it charming? Then the evil I should subdue, and the glorious reforms I should inaugurate with my pen, and what comes a little nearer, the individual hearts I should touch and draw nearer to me and inspire and comfort! You've no idea how all this intoxicates me; I can't think of anything else.

But I haven't told you all about my visit. As the clock struck ten, Arthur took a low seat by his mother's side; and she drew his head to her shoulder, with "Weel, my laddie!" Sometimes they use an accent I do not understand, but from his face then, which was uncommonly or exceed-

ingly beautiful, I thought he must have told her everything in his heart; and I could comprehend how it was that he had been kept so pure. I felt like an intruder, and drew back; but soon she called me, and took me within her other arm, which brought me nearer his face than ever I was before, and he took my hand in his,—such a nice hand as he has! It is cordial always, and sometimes tender; but firm, ample, cosmopolitan,—I do so dislike small or soft hands in a man. Then she kissed us both, and said,—

"My children, shall we repeat the nineteenth Psalm?"

I am ashamed to say I could not remember it all,—they know the Bible all by heart. After that, we kneeled down, and they offered a short prayer; she began, he finished.

She asked me if I would sleep with her. While taking down my hair I observed that the door of Arthur's room, across the hall, was open also; so I closed ours, upon which she gave me a shaking and said,—

"Do you mean to shut my bairn out there in the cold? What if he should dee in the night!" Arthur says that many a time he has awaked in the night to find her standing over him. You know I like to read a verse the very last thing. Well, I noticed on Mrs. Williams's Bible an oval enamel-case, about six inches long; and thinking

it to be some family portrait, of which she has many, I asked,—

“May I look at it?”

“Certainly you may,” she replied.

I opened it, expecting to see some noble face of two hundred years ago. Conceive my astonishment! It was such as I might hope to be if I ever get to Heaven,—I cannot tell you the beauty of it,—the spirituality,—no one on earth ever looked so.

“Do you know who it is?” said Mrs. Williams, holding me tight, and turning my face up to hers.

“But where did you get it?” I managed to enunciate.

“Jo painted it for my birthday, last month.”

“But how could he? I never sat to him for my picture.”

“Are you sure of that?” she said, laughing with her eyes. But seeing my discomfiture, she kissed my face all over and said,—

“That was not necessary, love; he painted from memory even better. He was very sly; I had never a suspicion of it, till the fifteenth of last month, when I found it, as you see it, on my plate at the breakfast table.”

“I have a much higher opinion of his imagination than of his memory,” I remarked.

“We won’t quarrel about that,” she answered,

turning down the gas and putting me into bed. “Very excellent people differ on non-essential points.” Then she added, as she settled me in her arms, “All I will say is, much as I like the representation, I much prefer the reality. Now be quiet, and go to sleep!”

I was never in such a flutter in my life. But she talked till two o’clock. Arthur declared next morning over his coffee, that he heard every word we said; but I know he didn’t.

“Where did you get this sugar, Mamma? I can’t get enough of it,” and he put in the sixth spoonful. “This sugar,” he went on, “is like the Yankee woman,—a combination of sweetness and grit,—grit especially; and the mischief is, the first taste is all sweet, and you must get the article fair and square in your mouth before you know the imposition. That’s how it is we fellows get so awfully victimized,” and he heaved a tremendous sigh.

Then he began again with such an arch look,—“What a gossiping there was last night, to be sure! If people did but know it, this mother of mine is an incredible gossip, and talks about her neighbors; but there is only one person, besides myself, that she has any great respect for, and she is very much afraid that person is not inclined to reciprocate comprehensively and indiscerptibly.”

She laughed and told me not to mind his nonsense; but I can’t imagine what he meant, because

she knows I admire and love her totally. She likes teasing and joking, however, as much as he.

You know how sensitive I am about my great eyes. One evening, when sitting with her, the servant came in to light up, and she said, with a mischievous look,—

“James, you needn’t light but one burner, and turn that down, for here are two, now, and I can’t bear such a blaze.” And when he had gone out, she turned to me,—“Kitty, what a stroke of economy it would be if some poor man could get you. He wouldn’t need any gas in his house, and you can see just as well in the dark, I suppose.”

Just think,—cat’s eyes! Another time, she told me she expected that with such a head of hair I should be pulling the house down over their heads some day.

## CHAPTER XX.

### QUEEN CATHERINE TAKEN PRISONER.

With the book well off her hands our heroine was drawn out, not into visiting, but into benevolent enterprises and private charities.

Dr. Williams was full of these things, and knowing her capabilities gave her plenty to do. She had more leisure, also, than many ladies, and before she was aware of it, found herself prominent both in planning and execution. One society which interested her especially, was few in workers, though many names were on the list. Dr. Williams was president. The vice-president, a lady, died suddenly, and Kate was instantly and unanimously elected to fill her place. At first she shrank from it, fearing the publicity, if not timid as to her ability; and she thought, too, it should be given to Miss Bolter. But the doctor, with all respect for that lady’s zeal and valuable service as a subordinate, quietly passed her by.

Mrs. Patch was determined to secure it, but she found herself headed off by the doctor always, however deeply laid her intrigues might be; and she withdrew from the contest with a secret resolve to humble Kate. There seemed no escape, and at length our heroine accepted the trust. The meetings were held in private parlors ordinarily, and on special occasions the doctor presided.

Kate had been two years a widow. It was September. The Willing Hands had found their asylum too small for their growing needs, and were looking for better quarters. They thought of buying, and even building, but more funds were needed, and the interest of the public was at a low ebb. Their president was in New York, and Kate received from him a telegram, bidding her and Miss Bolter meet him there to inspect a similar charitable institution, and particularly to examine the building. They went, and on their return made out their plans.

One day near Christmas, as Kate and the doctor sat with their heads together completing this business, Miss Bolter walked in unobserved. On seeing her, the doctor rose and confusedly took his leave. It was unmistakable. Miss Bolter sat down opposite our frightened heroine.

"Well," she exclaimed, when she was able to speak; "this is what we are all working for, is it?" Then clasping her hands so tightly that

every knuckle in them cracked, she jerked out in a sharp, unnatural key. "If there is one thing in this world that I am thankful for, it is that I am not in love with Dr. Williams." She never said it again,—and bursting into a flood of tears, she dashed from the room, and fled to her own house. For a time jealousy tore her furiously, but she was a heroic soul; and with glorious determination she put her foot on the passion and conquered it. She loved Kate even as she had loved Margaret, and she said to herself,—

"She deserves him, and I will do all I can to make her beautiful in his eyes;" and she was as good as her word.

New Year had come; a general meeting of the Willing Hands was announced to be held in a small hall, and to invite attention and excite interest, the president had inserted a notice in several of the daily papers. Half past seven in the evening was the appointed hour. It lacked six minutes of this time when Kate walked in and took her seat on the stage with Miss Bolter and several other ladies, officers of the association. The hall was nearly filled with ladies, many of them strangers. Mrs. Patch, a member though not a worker, sat on the front seat. It lacked but two minutes of the hour; Kate watched the door while she chatted, expecting every instant to see the doctor's princely form, and noble, assuring face. The half hour struck, but no president;

they waited five minutes,—ten,—twenty,—he came not; the audience became impatient. Mrs. Patch arose and said that they had come to hear the report of the new plans; but the president was absent, and if the secretary would pass them to her, she would present them to the society. The secretary replied that the papers were in the hands of the vice-president; of which fact, Mrs. Patch needed no information. Everybody looked at Kate. She had no notion of making Mrs. Patch her deputy; she said,—

“Dr. Williams expected fully to be present, and we will wait ten minutes longer.”

Eight o'clock struck, and to her dismay, he did not appear. She turned to Miss Bolter and asked her to present the report, but that lady declined absolutely. Three hundred pairs of eyes were on her as she threw back her heavy black veil, revealing a face pure and sweet as a lily, and a soft hum of admiration breathed through the assembly as she rose.

For an instant every object swam around her, and she trembled like an aspen leaf. Mrs. Patch observed it, and made a motion that some more courageous person be chosen to do the business. This outrage emboldened her, and she plunged right into the matter, and in two minutes had forgotten everything but the work in hand; gave the plans in detail, and they were principally her own, and then most eloquently appealed to those

present for sympathy and aid. A fine-looking, richly-dressed lady came forward, and with tears in her eyes laid her purse on the desk. Then another and another, till almost every one in the room had put her name on the paper. After the adjournment, she ran over the sum; it was forty-three hundred dollars.

Four or five ladies walked home with her. Leaving them at the door, greatly excited, she flew up the stairs.

“Bravo!” was the hearty greeting at the door of her room as she almost ran into the arms of Dr. Williams. He turned up the gas, which blazed into her radiant face, and in his face she saw with a flash what was coming; she looked almost pleadingly at him, but he said,—

“I know it will shock you, but I must speak,” and he poured out his love.

She was shocked. Here was this man,—he had never looked so the man, the god before,—offering her his love, no new and sudden passion either, he said; and that love she had always believed to belong to Margaret, and her love was buried. It seemed but yesterday that her husband was laid in the ground. She sat down, and said not a word. He appeared to understand and did not press his suit, only stood by her in a kind of humble, tender way, with his hand on the back of her chair.

At length she spoke.

"You didn't come to the meeting?"

"Yes, I was there, but saw I was not needed. I couldn't have done it half as well."

"When did you come in?"

"It was five minutes past eight; I had a patient with a broken arm."

"And you were there all the time?" she said, almost reproachfully.

"Yes," he replied, looking down at her, with pride and unutterable fondness.

She blushed and took courage.

"I thank you, doctor. What you offer me is a great gift,—not one to be rejected lightly; come to-morrow evening and then I can talk a little better."

He took her hand, kissed it, and was gone; but he didn't look like a rejected lover.

The next evening he appeared and they talked it frankly over. She spoke of Margaret.

"I loved her dearly," he said; "I had never had a sister, and I saw no reason why she should not be one. Mother told me it would be just so, but I couldn't believe it; and I did not perceive the truth till the last year of her life. It seems so cruel now; I reproach myself continually, for I fear it was bitterness in her life."

"Self-reproach is injustice to yourself," said Kate; "because your love and attentions, whatever their character, were a source of unspeakable happiness and strength to her."

Then she told him of her own high regard for him, but that her heart had been given once and forever, and she could never love him as a wife should. And she besought him never to speak of it again or to show her any special attention, and not to let it make any difference in their friendship, though she knew so well how impossible this was; and wouldn't it be as well not to tell his mother at present? And as she said this a big lump in her throat choked her.

With the utmost deference to her scruple and shrinking, he said that all should be as it had been, and silently withdrew. But he didn't look like a rejected lover even then. He was an older man than Alex.

It was three weeks after this, and the doctor broke his promise every day, by looking unutterable things at her,—when one morning he called and asked her if she would go and stay with his mother, who was suffering from a wrenched knee, while he was gone to New York. That night, about nine, one of the servants came in, and, not aware of Arthur's absence, reported a horrible accident on the New York express. "Thirty or forty killed."

"Which express?" hurriedly asked Mrs. Williams, seizing the man by the shoulder, while there was a fierceness in her face and a huskiness in her voice that terrified Kate.



"Five o'clock," was the answer. Mrs. Williams let him go, and sank down helpless. Just then Dr. Wells entered, hoping he had come before flying reports had reached her.

"I have been to the telegraph office; it is not very definite, but a train goes in ten minutes, and I am going myself to see."

"I am going with you," said Mrs. Williams with a kind of wild determination, and she turned to her wardrobe.

"Indeed, it is impossible," returned Dr. Wells. "And how do you know but he is even now on his way home? We might pass him on the road."

At length she was quieted, and Kate followed Dr. Wells to the door.

"Do you know anything?" she asked with a strange quiver.

"I have heard the worst,—that he is a victim,—but I hope the best," and looking into her blanched face, he read the story.

He was gone, and she crept into the arched window under the damask; all life seemed to be gone out of her. With all her bereavement and anguish she had known in times past, there was never any such desolation as this,—never a blank like this,—no earth,—no heaven,—no anything. But she thought of his agonized mother and hurried back.

They drew close together, and said nothing. It was an age, then Mrs. Williams spoke,—

"Go to the window, Katie, and see if he isn't coming."

It was a relief to move; she looked down and up the long, wide street with its double row of lights, which she remembered counting, afterwards. Snow falling on the pavement, on the roofs, on the window-pane,—softly and stealthily falling everywhere; a few scattered pedestrians and now and then a carriage. These things she took in mechanically,—but no Arthur. Then she wondered what was the history of these passers-by,—were they men like Arthur, men to be loved and honored, men to be missed? Were they blessings to the world, or were they curses? And instinctively her heart rose to Heaven for them.

After a time she went back to the old place, and the two silently waited and waited, till Mrs. Williams said,—

"Look now, Katie!"

This was done again and again till Kate said,—

"Wouldn't you rather have me stand here all the time?"

"No, child, I want you," answered Mrs. Williams in a strange, sharp voice.

"Oh, she will certainly be crazy!" groaned Kate to herself, as with a kind of shudder she found herself locked again in that tight embrace. But the tone softened, as she laid her face on Katie's.

"You never knew, darling, how he loved you?"

She answered nothing, and Mrs. Williams said,—

"You would have loved him, Katie?"

Would have,—past and potential,—that settled it. It might have been,—it never could or would be,—she broke out,—

"Oh, yes!" and they clasped each other, as if each had no other.

"You will never leave me, Katie!"

"No."

"Say mother now."

"Mother, dear, dear mother."

After a time,—

"Can't you sing, Katie?"

She sung very sweetly, "Jesus, lover of my soul," and several other hymns, and feeling better, went to the window of her own accord. It was far in the night. The snow had ceased falling, and the stars were coming out. It was all so peaceful; so was her heart. So she thought for an instant, then the wild grief arose,—there was no time, no place.

"Oh, what will become of me? What will become of her? I cannot bear it! O, God, help me!" Then, suddenly, she felt herself flooded and stilled with a wondrous peace,—the revulsion of feeling made her faint and she turned,—there

was a lofty figure which seemed to touch the ceiling,—a smile that filled and illumined the dimly-lighted room,—open arms,—a cry from his mother,—the doors and windows and everything between whirled and whisked around them, and Kate dropped like one dead to the floor.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### CAPTIVITY AND SOVEREIGNTY PROSPECTIVE.

A month later, Kate was surprised by a visit from Alex. She was overjoyed to see him, and to find him so bright and happy,—like his old self. Indeed, there was a freedom or freeness about him she had never seen before; he seemed at length to have caught Arthur's secret of liberty and repose. And his congratulations for her were of the warmest and most unselfish nature.

"Nothing on earth can be more perfect," he said. "You were made for Arthur and he for you."

"But when did you come, and what did you come for, and where are you going, and what are you about, and how is Mrs. Foster? Now tell me everything!" and she took her old place beside him.

"Mrs. Foster is a distinguished member of society, and shines brighter than ever; she sent

me here a week ago. I stopped in Jackson several days,—left the dear old place this morning,—dined with Dr. Williams, and here I am. Seems to me you've got a new way of putting up your hair,—that's Arthur's fancy, I suppose."

"No, it isn't! I'm my own mistress, sir, in this house! What do you mean, young man? Jackson is entirely off your track,—what did you go there for, first thing?"

"O, I had important business with your uncle, and it was very pleasant reviving old associations."

Thinking the business related to money matters she made no further inquiries about it.

"You are preaching again, Alex?"

"Yes, and a great joy it is, too. I have preached but a few times since, however. Last year I adhered to my resolution, and did not enter the pulpit once; but studied and wrote most diligently and intensely. I needed that sort of discipline; my faculties were relaxed and dissipated by the kind of life I had lived. I feel singularly nerved and invigorated by the close study, and it will continue several months longer. This is only a little vacation."

"Then you will be Reverend, and will have a parish, and a wife."

He laughed.

"I have had many calls, and one in the city;

but I am going to be a missionary, and establish a church or churches out in the wilds."

"But you won't go alone, Alex?"

"What a tease you are, Kate! Who do you suppose would go into the woods with me? And everybody knows that you wouldn't have me."

"Nonsense, Alex! You've got all over your old folly, you know you have,—and you've got somebody, I know by your looks," and she took him by the hair. "Tell me this minute; who is it?"

"Guess," he said, his face laughing all over.

"It's somebody in Jackson, I know. Who can it be? It isn't Sarah, is it? Tell me this instant, or I'll pull! It is, I know it is!" and she clapped her hands and danced for joy. "Now, naughty boy, tell me all about it, every word!"

"Well," he began, as she sat down, "you know I hadn't seen much of Sarah after she grew so fine; but just before going West, I went to Jackson and spent Sunday. She had a mission school at the lower village, and asked me to go down and address the children, and I did. Everything pleased me, though I hadn't such a thought then; but every letter of yours referred to her in some way, and last summer, when I was rustivating and getting up Sunday schools, I found an excuse for writing to her. She confesses now that she always thought me rather killing; anyway she was not averse to writing, and now it is all settled."

"And you are to be married next summer?"

"Yes, in July. We are going to be missionaries in earnest, and till we build up a church which is self-supporting, Arthur is going to take care of us."

"Well done, Alex! That's the best thing I ever heard of you. Arthur going to take care of you,—who would have thought you would ever come to that, proud boy!"

"Well, of course I shouldn't let him, if he were not to be your husband," he said with mock pride. "You know I take anything from you."

Then he continued seriously, and with much warmth of feeling, as he walked the floor in the old way:

"I should expect such a man to prosper, with such a system of giving. I didn't know of it till lately, and it is only indirectly that I learn it. Mrs. Williams told me once that the day he was born, a thank-offering was set apart for the education and support of a missionary, and that he was called Arthur's missionary; and long before he could write, he used to dictate letters to him. Now he supports two others with their families. He corresponds with them, and has visited them in their fields abroad, and every year or two, some of his missionary children, as he calls them, come to be educated; and he not only pays their expenses, but he knows them, and is a father to them. Besides this, he has two or three prepar-

ing at the theological seminaries. In his will he has made permanent provision, but during his life he prefers this method to establishing a fund, as it attaches the young men to him personally. This, he told me," and Alex paced hard, so full was he of love and admiration for his friend.

"Now I know," Kate exclaimed, clasping her hands tight, "how it is that our Monthly Concert is so delightful,—the best meeting we have, and why there is so much missionary enthusiasm in our church. Arthur always conducts the meeting now, and so many come,—a great many from other churches."

After some conversation, she said,—

"But you'll preach for us Sunday? Dr. Wells will wish it, of course."

"I don't know about preaching. Yes, I met him just now, and he asked me. But my style isn't like his, you know."

"It is none the worse for that; there are varieties of excellence. I want to hear you."

"I hope it is better than it used to be," he said with soberness. "I don't make as much stir, perhaps, but the preaching is more chastened, and restful and free. With all the joy I knew in those days, there was not much of peace. I don't know what it was,—I was hungry,—I was sick, and Arthur cured me. He didn't give me any medicine; he never told me I was sick; but he cured me by loving me and making me

love him. Don't you think God often answers our prayers, and supplies our needs by human means?"

"I am sure of it, Sandy."

"It was enough that he should care for me for my own sake, but it was better that it should be for yours also. He wanted to help me, but that was not all. He saw that though I was off your hands, I was not off your heart, and that the burden was killing you. He told me that himself. I would talk of you from morning till night, and from night till morning. It is wonderful how people will talk of you by the hour,—Mrs. Foster, and all your uncle's family; and Mrs. Williams and Arthur and the Kings,—and poor Theo, too,—how much she loved you! Well, as I was saying, he would listen forever, though he never asked a question. I don't know but I told him many things I ought not,—such as I had learned in familiar intercourse,—but I couldn't help it; he understood you so much better than I did. Every remark he made of you seemed wholly incidental, but it revealed you to me as nothing else ever did; and I think it was in this way that God reconciled me to the disappointment. You never knew how near it came to killing me. Oh! it was terrible to give you up, but it would have been such a mistake for you to have taken me. I thought all the time that Arthur was in love with Margaret; he said beautiful things of her, and

Mrs. Williams believed it would be in the end; but Theo persisted that it was no such thing. Did you suppose that he was fond of Theo?

"Why no, I never saw any special partiality."

"I don't understand,—there is some mistake," he said, looking disturbed.

"How suddenly you and Theo were married!" was Kate's observation.

"Yes," he replied, glad to relieve his mind by talking of it with his old confidante. "Theo was very generous. I had no thought of marriage, and this she knew, she said, and so felt free to speak of it first. She loved me better than life, she affirmed, and devoted she certainly was; and you know what a helpless mortal I am without a woman, and so I was especially grateful to her for waiving the merely conventional; and when she told me that she had refused Arthur Williams out of love for me, I should have been a monster to have slighted that love. I told her I could not give her all that I felt she should have in such a relation, but she declared she was willing to wait."

"Refused Arthur Williams! Did she say he wanted to marry her?"

"Yes, so she said; and I was bold enough to speak to him about his love for her, and he was almost angry; but he said only,—

'Theo was mistaken,—never more so,—for I never loved but one woman.' That was last win-

ter, when he was in Chicago. He didn't say who it was, but I knew. Theo insisted that it would be. We were talking of you one day after we were married, and of your going to Wellington; and I remarked that you would stay if you went. 'She won't stay a great while,' she said, 'see if she does. 'Madame,'—she always called Mrs. Williams Madame,—I wonder why she disliked her so much,— 'Madame has set her mind and heart on Kate for Arthur, and he will obey, of course.' I have sometimes thought that Theo was not wholly sane," he added sadly. "Did you ever think so?"

When Alex returned to Mrs. Foster he was the bearer of a letter. Here it is.

BOSTON, FEBRUARY 26.

My precious Mother:

It is so sweet to have two mothers. It would be impossible to say which I love best, because I love so with all my heart, and in such different ways. Arthur allows me two weeks to get ready. I haven't the ghost of an excuse for postponing the day. He has stored up every word of mine expressive of weariness of boarding, and longing for a home of my own. One day, several months ago, I spoke with unusual impatience,—

"I'm tired to death of this way of living!" and half in jest, half in earnest, I asked, "Won't you let me have that little tenement of yours?" I



knew he had one vacant somewhere over the Roxbury line.

"Certainly," he replied, "I should be delighted. There is a young blacksmith to be married this winter, who wants it badly, but I'd rather let it to you, of course."

"What's the rent?"

"Three hundred; though I always discount ten dollars to cleanly people, and twenty if there are no children. It is a good deal out of repair; perhaps you and Ruth will drive up to-morrow and suggest any improvements that seem desirable."

So he called for us the next day. It was a two-storied frame house, rather old, but substantial and in a good neighborhood. On the first floor lived a large family of noisy children; an aged couple were in the L, up stairs, but the empty rooms, though sadly defaced, were pleasant and cosy. It had been so long since I had indulged in any planning of the home kind, that I was quite free with my suggestions, which the doctor noted down in his memorandum book with the utmost gravity. At length I observed,—

"The ceiling is rather low."

"So it is," he said, touching it with his hand. "I'll raise the roof," and he put that down. There was water everywhere, but no gas.

"That is bad," I remarked.

"Dreadful! I'll have it brought right in," and he put that down. Just as gravely he asked,

"Wouldn't it be convenient to have the horse-cars pass the door,—they're just over on the next street?" and he noted that. Then he wished to drive down town and select some paper for the little parlor.

The pattern I fancied was too expensive, I thought, but he said, "Not at all," and ordered it.

Yesterday he notified me that my house was ready, entirely to my mind, roof, gas, horse-cars, and all; and he thought I had better move at once.

I shall never hear the last of that.

Mrs. Williams tells me that I am to have supreme authority, and I think that with my little notions it will be a trade to learn, for they spend more in a week than I do in a year. But she is good-natured enough to believe that I am going to slip right into the business. One would suppose that with half a score of trained servants from her father's home, she need not be burdened; but the house is very large and Arthur is fond of company. He has so much to do that she relieves him of all care of the marketing and the servants. Nothing is done on the premises without her knowledge and control, and the order and munificence are unsurpassed. I am inclined to think she is right when she declares that the amount of care and work has in general very little to do with the feeling of burden which women have; that any one with a good share of brains may, and

should know how to keep house well, and that ill-conducted households are inexcusable, and bad cooking like lying and stealing in a family; but that some are born house-keepers, just as others are born poets and musicians, and that to every one who has not this peculiar creative faculty, house-keeping is a burden.

She thinks American dwellings rather sham; so when they settled here they built for themselves on a large lot, which you remember is near a park. The house, though not showy, is of massive stone, behind and all around; and most of the furniture is from abroad. Mrs. Williams was accustomed in early life to a late dinner, and so was Arthur abroad, but he is a practical hygienist, as well as a thorough Yankee, and he says that the time to dine is when the sun shines right down straight; so their hour is one, and his office hours commence directly after. Early dinner is necessitated by early breakfast, which is at seven in the winter, earlier in the summer. Arthur says it is sin to study or work before breakfast, and that he must have the forenoon till eleven o'clock for study, and nothing less than a child dying of croup, I think, could disturb him then.

The wedding will be early in May. Uncle and aunt wish me to go from there, and Mrs. Wells urges upon me her parlors and an entertainment; but for so simple an affair as it will be, these

rooms are sufficient. There will be no bridal trip; but late in the summer we may go with our mother to Scotland, and afterwards travel.

My dress is to be white muslin, for Arthur wishes me to look as I did the first time he saw me; though he says my wings have grown enormously since then. This morning I sat with his mother a while, and when I started to go, the wind was blowing violently.

"What, out now!" she exclaimed. "No, indeed! If this wind takes you, you'll go right up," and I was compelled to wait till Arthur came in. This means nothing, I know, still I cannot help thinking they think too well of me. It amazes me to learn how I have been discussed in this home from the very day of my coming to Boston; my personal appearance, tastes, habits, ideas, characteristics, and capabilities; and it terrifies me to discover how they remember many words and acts which I have forgotten, and perhaps repented of. Still, it is very sweet, for it is all so appreciative and kind, and makes me feel that I belong to them.

Arthur says that his mother's affection for me is too romantic to last; and he pretends to be very jealous of both. I don't believe he knows what the feeling is; he might echo the philosophical remark of his mother: "I never saw anybody that it was worth while to be envious or jealous of."

He tells me also that his love is stronger than mine. It is greater, as much as he is greater than I; but it cannot be any more entire. My love seems less, because less demonstrative, more quiet, and I trust there is no bondage in it. I have never yet had a warm friend that was not a means of discipline as well as a comfort; and the discipline is very apt to be in proportion to the comfort, and I don't know why Arthur should be an exception.

His ideal of woman and of marriage is so exalted that it seems as if he must be disappointed. But I shall do my very best. This glamour upon his vision may wear off, but he must never say, even to himself, what so many do say audibly and visibly,—“I am disappointed in marriage; I am weary of my wife.”

If a wife knows that her husband is weary of her, and she knows, too, that he is a man of mind and heart, she may rest assured that the fault lies at her own door. Most men grow all their lives; half the women retrograde after twenty-five. I do not wish Arthur to feel that his courtship is to be over in three months, or in twelve months, or in twelve years. He is great, and I know that I shall find in him something new, and something noble every day, which will win me, and which I must win; and he must find in me something new and something good every day, which will win him, and which he must win. This is true friend-

ship, the basis and condition of all true and eternal love and union; with this, we can never weary of each other, and marriage can never become stale, or lose in the least its romance or its grandeur; thus only can it know its consummation. Though unlike, we are one in aim and purpose, which is to set “perfect music unto noble words,” to help each other “to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,” and to serve Him with all the heart as long as life is ours.

Good night! May Heaven keep thee ever!

YOUR OWN KATIE.