



THE

LADY KILLER.

BY

REBECCA HICKS.

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## The Lady Killer.

LITHE and slender,  
Soft and tender,  
He bewilders ladies' eyes;  
Wives are roving,  
Maids are loving,  
Mischief all about him lies.

Lovers ranting,  
Young hearts panting,  
Youth nor beauty will he spare,  
And the sweetest  
Are the meekest,  
For this Killer of the Fair.

What commotion,  
What devotion  
Wait upon him everywhere!  
Picking, choosing,  
Best refusing—  
Lucky idol of the fair!

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## PREFACE.

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THE authoress' compliments to the public. She hopes she finds the public well, and in a good humor, and that her little attempt to amuse—she dare not say instruct—not only the public, but the public's most hopeful sons and daughters, will be kindly received.

The authoress has heard the public groaning under the unmerciful infliction of the "yellow covers;" she is happy to say that her book is *not* a "yellow cover," and respectfully invites the public to an inspection of its contents.

She hopes the public will befriend her, and invite her to contribute again to its amusement. And, lastly, she begs the public to keep its really useful, and most delightful servants, the critics, away from her book. She is very much afraid of a critic, and she fears—unless the noble public will interfere in her behalf—that they (the critics) with their customary impertinence, will rudely advise her to return to her sewing and knitting. This would be a poor return for her innocent attempt to amuse the public.

With many perturbations, and serious alarms, the authoress resigns her little book to its fate—respectfully dedicating it to the sons and daughters of her high-minded, generous, and, she hopes, gallant public.

## THE LADY KILLER.

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### CHAPTER I.

WHICH IS ONLY AN AVANT COURIER—INTRODUCING MYSELF TO THE  
READER.

I MUST first speak of Underwood—sweet village of the shade!—the quiet nook where I was born. Underwood is the Rip Van Winkle of villages. It is sleeping away down in Virginia, under its deep protecting shadows—undisturbed by the steamer's plash or the locomotive's fiery breath. Sleep on—sleep on—dear village of the shade. Long may thy tempting streams flow on unlocked—and the green grass grow secure upon thy pave. Long may thy saucy urchins, with bold eye, and ruddy cheek, roll and tumble, and play at cat-ball even on thy Broadway—and rueful clerks sit idle all the day, at yawning shop-doors, looking out afar, like banditti for prey—and grave cowherds promenade at evening, through thy silent thoroughfares!

The affrighted muses have flown hither for repose. The dreamy poet lives here, and basks, and dreams his useless life away. Sleep on—Underwood. Pleasant dreams to thee, amid embracing streams, and whispering boughs. Sleep on—nor wake up to the bustle of the

day. What if thou art behind the age! Happiness is thine—for the toiling, panting, busy racers of the day have passed on, and left her, after all, with thee!

Well, in this village, around whose base a stream, like a silver thread, wound, and coiled, and doubled itself fantastically, and loitered and tarried here and there, as long as a stream with a long journey before it could possibly tarry—there were stately dwellings perched on high commanding hills—and prim dwellings standing like maiden ladies on the street—and cosy snug retreats nestling like early lovers, amid roses, and creepers, and morning-glories, tipped with dew. There were also, strange to say, gentlemen who got heated over politics, and ladies who talked scandal over tea! There was one lady with whom I had extensive and important dealings—this was Miss Franky Penn. Miss Franky dwelt in a tall thin brick house, surrounded by a low althaea hedge. She had a quaint yard with neat gravel walks and straight rows of flat drum-headed cedars, which had been tortured and clipped in their youth, and made to grow up by a pattern, and through a long life, had been kept under, and finally subdued, by Miss Franky's all powerful will. The air was prim, cold, and constrained, in this neighborhood. No burly blustering winds came lumbering, and carousing, in midnight revels here. No peals of unchecked laughter ever broke upon the still air, nor romping children in boisterous glee ever intruded here. But neat maids in long white aprons were occasionally seen, tripping along the gravel walks, and composed gentlemen, in shining suits of black, would now and then turn quietly in at the gate, and

sallow ladies, as thin as wafers, could be seen of evenings, sitting out upon the balconies.

Miss Frances Penn was my aunt, and it seems that this model female had inherited me, along with many other family curses.

I had been a little football in this world. My mother died and I fell to papa, who immediately took out to foreign parts, and tossed me over to grandma', who died, and I was thrown over to aunt Franky, who seemed likely to put a stop to my earthly career.

Nobody can imagine my awe and alarm, when, with all the odds and ends of the family, I was deposited at Miss Franky's door. She received me with that recoiling, touch-me-not air, with which she would have welcomed a torpedo box, and passed me in immediately to the nursery, where I exploded instantly, into a frantic outburst of sorrow, and cried for hours, for dear old grandma', who was sleeping in her grave.

From early childhood, aunt Franky's presence had ever chilled me, and thrown me into profound silence. I used frequently to encounter her at church, while dangling to grandma's apron strings, and my great luminous eyes were, from henceforth, fixed upon her in contemplative awe. I knelt when she knelt, and arose when the rustling of her silk gown proclaimed that she was about to rise.

It was very evident to me, that this severe female knew quite as much, if not more, about the mysteries of the morning service, than did the gowned prelate himself. Her devotion was profound. With closed eyes, and high-lifted brows, this grim devotee wagged her head like a knowing pendulum, and responded audibly. Frequently

the minister and his whole body of respondees would be kept waiting for this deliberate and solemn lady, who would be coming up slowly with a belated "we beseech thee to hear us, good Lord," which must be safely enunciated, before they could proceed on their way. She was as grand and mysterious to me, as an obelisk just arrived from Egypt. She never spoke to me, nor asked me how I was. A stately bow, and the word "Julia" parting her thin lips, was all the evidence I ever had, that she deigned to know that I was endeavoring to poise myself upon the same ball upon which she stood, and that I would probably ride around the sun with her.

But here I was deposited by fate, under her very roof, where I was expected to eat what was set before me, to speak when spoken to, to be seen and not heard, and to act out line upon line, and precept upon precept—and to do everything becoming a juvenile of the Penn family.

This was my daily routine, as laid down by the trainer of cedars, altheas, and inanimate nature generally. Eat breakfast, knit fifty rounds, resort gravely and decorously to a skipping rope, and jump three hundred times, eat dinner, knit fifty rounds, read Rollin's Ancient History, eat supper, say prayers, go to bed.

I was naturally a fidgety, restless child, and with good easy grandma', had led a roving gipsy life, in old fields and woods, running anywhere and everywhere—listening to mocking birds, and playing in brooks, loitering in the streets, peeping in at candy shops, hailing little boys on the street, and harassing an old spectacled lady from morning till night, to whom I was sent to school. Grandma', who had raised about ten children with great ease and comfort to herself, did not care

where I was or what I was about, so I did not trouble her. Miss Franky, who had never touched a child with a pair of tongs, regarded them as vile and stupid machines, made to be wound up regularly, and kept going, by all right minded and philanthropic people, at the risk of their immortal souls. Grandma's plan generally turns out rough, careless, healthy, women. Aunt Franky's plan was likely to turn out automatons, or hypocrites. Happily my constitution was built up before she took me in hand, and happily, I was too decided a character to be moulded into a given shape.

This knitting was the bane of my life. To sit all the day under the eye of an immovable spinster, and knit, and knit, eternally—while the glorious autumn light was vibrating without—and the clouds sailing in gorgeous groups upon the light blue air—and the bright leaves rustling in the bending trees—and the summer heat was waning—and my soul pining for the gush and the thrill of youth: It was more than I could bear—my eyes were filled with tears—but this soulless woman saw them not—she had no feeling for the motherless, no common womanly sympathies, for the sorrows of a child. Her face was like a map, and I have gazed on it for hours, while my knitting needles were clattering away, at the rate of forty knots an hour. There were lines answering for canals, railroads, rivers, and about her eyes it seemed that these internal improvements faded, and intersected, and crossed and recrossed; and then there were livid patches upon her face, which were new countries to me: these I bounded, sought out the principal rivers, and then went on to other places, my knitting needles playing a merry accompaniment all the while;

along these furrows tears had trickled, and sorrow had traveled, and Time's footprints lay thickly strewn.

Miss Franky went out to a stately dinner party one day, and I was left to amuse myself with my knitting, which, doubtless, this lady considered a highly exhilarating and hilarious amusement for a child. No sooner was she out of sight, than I began to be very gay indeed. I determined to explore the lot, garden and orchard. I went down into the housekeeper's room, and viewed her movements with delight; she was a good motherly soul, and gave me some sweetmeats. I then darted out upon the grounds, and began to sing—not like an ungrateful canary from a luxurious cage, but like a poor limping sparrow from a trap, who had nearly given up the ghost for his liberty. I tossed my bonnet at the heedless butterflies, and bent a sapling for my horse. I then went to work, and built me a doll's house under a scooping, antiquated cedar, which was about to die in my aunt's service. While engaged here, I saw a lady walking hurriedly to and fro, in the garden. Like a bird on the wing, I sped away to her; she did not notice me at all, but kept walking up and down, lacing her thin fingers into each other, and saying to herself:—

"She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps;  
She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps."

I was astonished at this lady with her bright eyes and ever moving lips, and as she kept on repeating the lines, "she is far from the land," &c., I asked her, very unceremoniously, who her young hero was? This abrupt interrogatory stopped her in the middle of the walk.

"My young hero," said she seriously, "shall be name-

less; suffice it to say he wore a wreath of roses on the night when first we met."

"A gentleman wore a wreath of roses!" I exclaimed, highly amused at this very strange lady.

"Yes, and methinks I see him yet, with a wreath of orange blossoms upon his curls of jet."

This highly poetical lady was very fantastically drest. She wore a faded pink dress, with a blue apron, adorned with monstrous red bows; on her dainty feet she wore a pair of old white kid slippers, and silver sprigs were shining in her magnificent hair. She resumed her walk with a stately air, bowing and smiling to imaginary people, who, it seemed, were standing on her right, and on her left, and then a shadow stole upon her low Grecian brow, and suddenly she pealed out in a voice of touching melody:—

"Oh! could those days but come again,  
With their thorns and flowers—  
I would give the hopes of years  
For those by-gone hours!"

and large, unchecked tears, stood in her mournful eyes, and I could have wept with her.

"What is the matter with you?" I asked, while she wept.

"Child, you can know nothing of the sorrows of a poor village maid, who loved, not wisely but too well; and though this heart be broken, I will love him, love him yet."

"What is your name?" I asked with child-like curiosity.

"I was formerly Amanda Fitzallen, poor thing; now I am the dark lady of Doonah."

"You are! do come to my doll's house, and tell me all about it."

She went with me to my cedar tree; and, among other questions, I asked her if she did nothing all the long fair days, but wander about Aunt's beautiful far-stretching grounds, and sit in the mellow sunshine, listening to the bounding of the pleasant summer waters, and the clear music of the birds.

She replied, that her feelings were too refined for work. I asked her if she ever knitted any—for just then, my unfinished task arose, like a spectre, before me. She admitted that knitting was not such a bore as sewing, for the knitting needles ran on so pleasantly with the current of one's thoughts. This was decidedly the most sensible sentence ever uttered by Amanda Fitzallen, or the dark lady of Doonah; and I soon had this eccentric damsel knitting away for dear life.

But all that's bright must fade. The gorgeous clouds grew gray—the golden portals of the west were closed, and the light of the glorious autumn day was gone. The housekeeper went her rounds; and, like that thrifty Williamson Tuppleton, familiar to all children, she caught her hens, and put them in pens; placed the weeping Sally under lock and key, and made me say my prayers in a giddy, and wished me in bed. There was a curfew system established here, to which all were subject, save my aunt and the amiable Mrs. Bland.

The next morning I summoned the resolution to ask my aunt to let me sit in Mrs. Bland's room, and knit. She assented with a frown, and I gladly escaped. The good lady was bustling about, but she finally settled

down into her large arm-chair, and I opened a running fire of questions.

"Mrs. Bland, what is the matter with that beautiful lady who knitted my rounds for me yesterday?" I asked.

"My dear, her head is turned. She read so many novels, and being naturally light-headed, they turned her completely."

"Poor thing, she cries very much."

"She has very good cause for crying. An idle young man first tampered with poor Sally's heart, and she believed all his fine tales: for in every handsome fellow she always saw a Mortimer, or something of the sort. His cruelty has made her what she is. She is my niece, and your aunt is kind enough to allow me to keep her here with me; but she was never the girl she ought to have been. She was very vain of her beauty, and held her head above the young mechanics about her. She was too proud to work, and too poor to live without it. Weak and silly; an easy prey for anybody; ready to listen to all the flattering tales trumped up by idle young men, and scornful of right-minded people. She ought to be a lesson to all little girls who think themselves wiser than other people. You must not listen to praises of your beauty, Miss Julia, nor heed young men's fine stories, I tell you."

"Nobody ever called me pretty," said I, "but poor dear mamma, and I love her the more for it now."

"We are all prone to love praise and flattery; but we must strive against it and overcome it, before we grow too fond of it."

"I do wish somebody would praise me, I could knit better, and behave better too," said I, solemnly.

"Fie, fie, Miss Julia. You must not want to be

praised. Only look at poor Sally, and see what a wreck she is, from praising! Her mother sickened and died, but she was too pretty to nurse her, or to take care of the children. Her father, bowed down by trouble, took to drink, but Sally never lifted her lily hand to save him from ruin. She was entirely too pretty to do anything but dress; devour bad novels; and listen to handsome men with enormous mustachios. Well, when ruin came upon my brother's family, and Sally was involved in it; these gay butterflies took their hats, made their bows, and away they flew, to flutter around some fairer flower; while poor Sally's misdirected mind wandered, and wandered, and was finally lost. Now, Julia, you are, in many respects, an unfortunate child; but you must be strong and right-hearted, and you will come out at the big end of the horn, you may depend upon it."

"But my aunt does not love me; nobody loves me, or cares whether I live or die. I wish I had a dog, or a bird, or anything that loved me."

"You must remember that it depends entirely upon yourself whether you are loved or not. You must not frown and look sulky, and then fret because people don't love you. Clear up your countenance; look pleasant and amiable, and I, for one, will love you very much."

"I have seen ladies loving the ugliest and crossdest great boys and girls, and smothering them with kisses," said I.

"Those were foolish mothers, Miss Julia, who thought their own crows so very white, you know."

"I remember" said I, "long, long ago, how my beautiful, gay mamma, used to take me with her in her morning drives, and evening walks; and ladies used to kiss

me, and call me so pretty; and young gentlemen used to take me in their arms to candy-shops, and give me toys and popping kisses. Ah! those were happy days!"

"Yes, you were an only child; and your mother was the most beautiful and pleasant lady I ever saw. She had a pleasant word for everybody; and there was always a smile on her sweet blooming face. If you are ever like her, Julia, you will be beloved and happy."

"My mother was good, but she was not happy," said I.

"How do you know that?" asked Mrs. Bland.

"Because, Mrs. Bland, I used to watch my mamma all day, and wonder what could make her cry, who was so pretty and so good."

"You are a strange child with your odd thoughts. You are more like an old woman than a child. Anybody to look at your forehead and eyes, without seeing the rest of you, would think they belonged to a lady of at least twenty."

"It is because I knit so much," said I.

"Oh, get out, young lady. You are a queer one, and as full of notions as an old grandmother," said Mrs. Bland, stirring up her pickles on the fire.

But pretty Sally was to me the most amusing and amiable of mortals. She was always rambling amid pleasant places, and wearing wreaths, and dancing to the lightest of airs. I used to watch her from my solitary window, and see her standing away under low hanging trees—now holding her sides, and laughing at imaginary jests; and then prancing off with the most amusing of airs, and betaking herself to other amusements. Sometimes she would fancy herself at a brilliant *fête*—the centre of admiring crowds—the cynosure of all eyes—

and her bows, gestures, airs, and graces, were ridiculous in the extreme. Really the Fantastic Realm must be a pleasant place. Here one is everything one wishes to be, and those wild dreams—those beautiful by-gone dreams of happier moments, are at length realized. One is the heroine of her own novel—beautiful—witty—admired. One is a queen if one wants to be a queen; and loved, if one pines to be loved.

The imagination ministers to one as a slave, and its realms are gorgeous and magnificent. I envied poor Sally because she was at least free, free as a bird upon the wing, or a butterfly swinging on its favorite flower. In vain I coaxed her to knit for me. The very knitting she had been gracious enough to praise, was become decidedly coarse and vulgar in her eyes. She had a little dog, an ugly black terrier who belonged to the kitchen, and whose real name was Smut, but the potency of this lady's imagination had transformed him into a silken spaniel, and she had christened him Carlo. She kept him tied with a blue ribbon, and a sad life of it did poor Smut lead. He would be very hungry for a rat, while his mistress was feeding him with cakes and sweetmeats. And often were his jaws boxed roundly for presuming to be like other dogs. But through all Sally's folly there came, now and then, an unmistakeable gleam of common sense. My aunt was naturally an object of ridicule with her, for while Sally stood gracefully poised in those enchanting regions governed solely by the imagination, Miss Franky stood, hard and firm, upon good mother earth. Sally was as voluble and wicked as an elf, the spinster slow of speech and easily provoked. Very many times she had undertaken to force this vola-

tile spirit into subjection, and, as the saying is, she always burnt her fingers in the attempt. One morning my aunt sallied forth with bent brows and stern features to make this eccentric damsel go to work. She weighed out some cotton, and bade her go in the cellar and spin it. No sooner did Sally perceive Miss Franky's intent than she turned off scornfully. She drew herself up with the air of an injured princess, and picking her steps daintily along the gravel walk, she said—

“Consider the lilies of the field, oh beautiful but severe Franky! they toil not, neither do they spin. Fate spins the thread of life and cuts it when she will. I can spin you a yarn. You are homespun, I am fine spun. The texture of our thoughts is as unlike as our persons. Spin yourself, if you are fond of spinning; but the fairest flowers toil not, neither do they spin, and yet the wisest of men, in all his purple and gold, was not bedecked as we are. Good morning; away Carlo, away!” and she sped off as lightly as Frank Ravel himself, up the serpentine way, along the margin of bending flower beds, up green slopes, and away to her pressing employments awaiting her in her favorite haunts. Pretty Sally was known all over the village and its vicinity. She had a native dignity about her which commanded respect; then there was malice aforethought and method in her madness. Generally she was as light and graceful, and bounding, as a summer breeze. These were her most beautiful moments. But she had moments of utter desolation, when the shadows of unforgotten sorrow enveloped her like a pall—when the suffering heart, broken, in its youth, sent forth its plaint of lingering woe—when the gem-like eyes floated in thick coming

tears, and the ever rising, ever mocking lips were still, and when reason stirred and roused itself enough to see the desolation and the ruin.

I have shed tears, when, upon the cool breeze of a melancholy autumn evening, I have heard her mournful tones, stealing slowly along in the twilight, pleading for sympathy, and piercing the very heart with their ringing, undying pathos. Once she stood under my window pale and stricken, with her small hands folded on her bosom, singing—

“Broke is the goblet and wasted the wine:”

and then there came up from the wreck the solemn touching voice, in these words—

“Lips of love’s melody, where are ye borne,  
Never to smile again, never to mourn!”

My aunt was pompous and austere. Stern and exacting in her ideas of duty, religion, and propriety. Not an enthusiast, far from it, but a religieuse of granite strength. Built up of strong things, and universally allowed to be a woman out of a hundred. She was rich and powerful, a massive tower in the church, and she was ever looking to the right and to the left, for that homage and show of respect which was her due. Her prejudices were stern and immovable. Nobody who had ever fallen from her good graces could ever hope to regain their lost footing. She was a cynic, looking upon the fair luxuriant earth with a scowl. Weakness she despised, love and happiness were idle notions. Nobody could she tolerate but cunning spinsters, who had tact enough to eat her dinners and submit to her dicta, and those sleek oily gentlemen of the cloth, who like fairies

creep into keyholes, and insinuate themselves into crevices, and mould themselves at a moment’s warning into any shape the occasion requires. She had satellites enough. Wealth is the happy luminary around which they ever revolve.

The Bishop was to preach at the new church, and all their reverences were by special invitation to dine with my aunt. All the housemaids were in holiday trim, Miss Bland in a great ferment, and, to use an old saying, the big pot was in the little one. Sally, also, felt the shadow of coming events. Finding public attention directed to the church, she determined to go forth and see what was in the wind. Accordingly she harnessed up Smut in a new ribbon, tied on her patch-work apron, and off she trudged. She lingered about the church, peering about curiously. She was sole witness to the meeting of the vestry in the basement, and watched the bell-ringer until he was out of sight. She then took an elevated seat upon the tongue of a cart, belonging to a friend of hers, for the purpose of witnessing, to use her own expression, “the congregation like gentle slow moving streams, emptying into the ocean of the church.” The obedient flock came, from highways and by-ways, and glittering carriages passed in review before the self-satisfied and complacent Sally. As to Smut he was in a perfect frenzy, running the full length of his leading-strings at the risk of his neck, and barking and threatening the life of everything under the sun.

From afar Sally spied that stately pillar of the church, better known as Miss Penn, advancing slowly, and with awful dignity, to church. Seeing this, Sally descended

from her cart-tongue, and muzzling Smut's mouth with her hand, crouched behind a column until the enemy should pass. Miss Franky advanced. Her foot was on the lobby floor, her lofty head bowed with becoming reverence in the consecrated doorway, when Sally maliciously popped up from her hiding-place, and flourishing her hands, cried out with a loud voice:

"Open the gates as high as the sky,  
And let the Franky Penn come by:"

after which Smut barked tremendously, and Sally bowed and salaamed to the lofty pillar, tottering to its very base, and dismantled of its dignity. The congregation's risibles were somewhat excited, and the reputation of a whole school nearly ruined by this onslaught of Sally's. The school tittered and giggled in the gallery; and though frowned down by the teachers and sober-minded people, the school, like all schools, would misbehave, and was breaking out during the service into smothered cacklings. A great fun-making, freckle-faced boy, stuffed his bandanna into his capacious mouth, and then let a tremendous blast of a laugh escape from an unguarded crevice, to the dismay of the whole congregation. This fellow, after doing much damage, and growing very purple in the face, was completely looked down by the learned Bishop himself.

Poor Sally was locked up for a week after the prank, which made her very low spirited indeed. She was continually singing out from her prison that

"She would give the hopes of years  
For those by-gone hours."

I hope my reader has discovered before this that I was

something of a poet; that a spark or two of the power divine had been vouched to me, which, by proper nourishment, say a little more sorrow; more harsh treatment; a little more of the feeling of a cast-away; and a few hard rubs against the world, would ignite, and thereby produce a true poetic flash. To prove this, I need only instance poor Sally. To my aunt's eyes she was a vexatious, lazy girl. To me she was the disjointed fragments of a once beautiful and sensitive mind.

Often, from the tangled web of her mind, a silver thread gleamed beautifully; and from the chaos there arose shapes of etherial beauty.

She was as beautiful and changeable as thought; fragile, fair, and broken. She glided over the earth, and its coarser souls knew her not. In her imagination she dwelt, wiser and better—poor thing—than they who scoffed at her; and fairer and purer than many before whom the great world bowed. The harsh, rugged, iron-hinged mind is not easily disjointed; it is only those beautiful fabrics, spun tissue-like, and exposed to rude winds, which yield to the blast, and are torn asunder. There were not many who could trace the fairy chain of Sally's thoughts, speeding, lightning-like, from idea to idea. How, at a word, they would lose themselves and rush away; and in one moment reach a place so very far that the slow plodding worm of earth who could not fly with her, would look up, and seeing her so high would shake his head and say, she was mad; and he—yes he, most wise!

How instinctively she clung to those whose imaginations towered high upon their brows! how she would curl her lip, and turn away from those huge frames built up

of earth, on whose fronts the well-known towers were not set! Yes, I was a poet; a great unwritten poet; feeling as keenly as those whose reeking hearts had been submitted to the inspection of an unpoetical world, sighing for I know not what; shaken by inward upheavings and vibrations; the throes of a mighty power claiming to be free. I claimed affinity with the heavens and the stars: solitude was my companion, and the elements my elements. But we are at the end of the first chapter. I hope the courteous reader will accompany me further.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE SEMINARY AND THE TOWN.

I DARE say Miss Franky Penn loved me in her way. I was the last memento of a beloved sister, whose ways had not been like Miss Franky's ways. My poor mother carried to her grave the same versatile, arrogant spirit which it had been Miss Franky's evident wish to subdue. But we always love those who give us trouble; and we love those most who are most unlike ourselves. My mother, impetuous and willful, had married my father, the handsome and winning Mr. Berne, after a week's acquaintance, thereby incurring the everlasting displeasure of her friends; and though the elder Franky remonstrated with my mother, and told her she had rather see her in her coffin than in the hands of the aforementioned Berne, and never knew her afterwards. Still, if there was a tender spot in that iron bosom, it was the old corner once occupied by the erring, but beloved sister. I was twelve years of age, with discretion enough, my aunt thought, and she proposed to send me off to a famous Puseyite Seminary on these conditions, viz.: never more to regard Mr. Berne as my father; never to speak of him in her presence; never to yearn after him as a natural child after a natural father; never to conjure up old memories of him, but to let him sleep with the past; never to ask where he was, or what

he was doing, as it was little likely he would be anywhere he ought to be, or that he would ever do me any good.

On all this I pondered, and pondered. I had never known my father; could remember no parental tenderness on his part; knew nothing of his whereabouts, or that he would ever turn up in this world; or be anything to me but an idea; cherished, it is true, but which had never been of any worldly benefit to me. So I sat alone in my little room, with my head bent upon my hands, and I thought, and these were my thoughts:

I am twelve years of age; my education has been sadly neglected; already I am an overgrown girl, and other girls say I am a dunce. My papa has never said he would educate me; nobody has ever offered to educate me, and I had better accept this golden opportunity. And in after years, should my unfortunate father ever make his appearance, I was quite sure my aunt would not object to the performance of those duties incumbent on a child. I accepted her offer, and was straightway sent to Union Hall, a famous seminary in those days, which turned out newly-cut—highly-finished—latest-fashioned young ladies, with the velocity and precision of a steam mill. I shall not say in what State this famous seminary reared its lofty head, for I do not wish to get myself into hot water, and therefore had better avoid those dangerous things called local habitations and names. It was a prodigious affair—moulding and polishing the female sex, from five years old to twenty-five. Worked by master hands, it went on from year to year, throwing into the broad lap of the world all sorts of characters. Now a gem, now a belle, now an old maid,

now the germs of future female seminaries; now a good wife, now a celebrated woman, and so on, until it could boast of its children, and grandchildren; and away in remote settlements, one could find ladies from this mill, who looked up to it, and spoke of it as of a mother.

The seminary had much to do to get me in order. I had to be pruned, pared, polished, and rounded. I had a stoop which must be overcome; a voice unmanageable; a will never heard of before, and ideas, such as never entered that seminary. Therefore, I was carried around, and around, over cylinders, and through gauging places, until some improvement was perceptible, after which I was dressed out in a uniform, and allowed to mingle with well-drilled young ladies, and to sit in their classes.

The happy inventor of our uniform should have taken out a patent and set up for a genius. I never learned his name. It seems that he rushed from oblivion, invented that uniform, and rushed back satisfied with that one happy conceit. Imagine a hundred and fifty young ladies, consisting of brunette, blonde, sallow, red, piebald, deep yellow, bronze, and pale complexions, all cruelly, without regard to contour, or color, encaged in a horrid gray mousseline uniform, of old-fashioned make, and intolerable hue! Nobody belonging to that seminary could ever hope, under any circumstances, to be incog. That mousseline was known from one end of the town to the other. We were as marked on the street, as penitentiary convicts. We could not turn into an ice cream saloon on variety shop, without being observed by an old maid on an invisible observatory. These interesting specimens of the fair sex, together with all ministers, missionaries, vestrymen, and charity women generally, were incorpo-

rated into a secret police, who reported with alarming faithfulness to the seminary, concerning our movements when without its walls. I have informed the reader that I was a niece of a pillar of the church, and this relationship was anything but conducive to my comfort. "That Miss Penn's niece should be guilty of such a thing!" "That an adopted daughter of Miss Penn should know no better than that!" Were apophthegms continually directed at me.

I had very much the same feeling for my teachers, which a rat has for a cat. I regarded them as my natural enemies, and they seemed to have similar feelings for me. I shrank from a black gown, and had a holy horror of all their reverences, in all costumes. We could not go to the theatre, or the opera, or smile on the Sabbath, or dance, or do any natural thing under the sun. I had looked to the seminary for relief, and I had only jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire. There was not a love scrape in the whole school, nor ever a clandestine correspondence—nothing in the world to whisper love about, or to cause the least mystery. A rumor was afloat, that a nephew of the seminary, studying for college honors, was domiciled somewhere in the house, but he was kept like a tiger encaged. One of the young ladies had met him somewhere, between the parlor and the study, but she was so bewildered by the rencontre, that she could not say whether he was tall, or short, or ugly, or handsome. Suffice it to say, there were one hundred and fifty young ladies interested in his fate, wherever he was, and at least a hundred and fifty questions asked about him every day.

The reader is my confidant; I have opened my heart

to him; but I have not yet revealed the secret of which I was most proud. I have not whispered of the secret which buoyed me up under my disgraces; the pleasant thought which soothed me under all afflictions, making the future radiant, and the present but the toilsome ascent to a very high place indeed. I was beautiful, they said, most beautiful, and this, to a lady, is a balm through life. I do not say this from vanity, but, because I am writing the truth, and I do not think so important an item should be omitted in this sagacious history. I arrived at a knowledge of this beauty of mine by various ways. I once heard my aunt say to the housekeeper:—"I am interested in her, because she is so like her mother, and so uncommonly handsome," at which I was very much elated. I heard one of the teachers say, "She is so willful, and so very pretty," at which I grew more willful still. An ugly browbeaten, maltreated girl once remarked in her wrath, that "if she was as pretty as Julia Berne, her case would have been very different." All this I added together with peculiar satisfaction, and my beauty was my consolation.

I had been at the seminary about two years, when a Mrs. Warren called upon me. She was a friend of my aunt's, she said, and also an old friend of my mother's, and from her account, had very many claims upon me, which I thought she was very dilatory in making known. However, she favored me with an invitation to an evening party, which I was excessively anxious to accept. This simple invitation to an evening party, produced a commotion in a whole dormitory—and the grave and reverend teachers held a convocation thereupon.

After an animated debate, which I overheard through

a keyhole, and in which, old Mr. Very, the French teacher, and the savage Miss Whish of the History classes, indulged in a pitched battle—they took opposite sides on that question as on all other questions, and wound up the debate with great violence, old Very, who was on my side, coming off victorious—I was dressed out in the gray mousseline and right angles—Miss Whish presiding, in a ruffian-like manner, over my toilet. With peculiar satisfaction she took a bird's-eye view of the whole affair. The gray mousseline was not only gray, but it was short-waisted, narrow-skirted, high-necked, and long-sleeved, with a choking collar, which carried on a fierce cutting and thrusting with my ears, and a little innocent pair of ear-rings, which I had worn from infancy.

"Deport yourself properly, Miss Berne, and return to your dormitory at, or before 11 o'clock," said the mouth-piece of the seminary to me. I bowed obediently, and took my way to Mrs. Warren's, accompanied by old Mr. Witcheron, the man of all work in the school, whose multifarious duties consisted in going to the Post-office, marketing, accompanying young ladies out of evenings, walking with whole droves of girls two miles every morning, and ditto in the afternoon, reading prayers when the others were disinclined, saying grace, carving, preserving his temper, and growing thinner every day. Old Witcheron was a little weary looking man, as awkward as a giant. His face was careworn, and haggard in the extreme, but from pure good nature, and from being eternal cavalier to a hundred and fifty madcap girls, he was in the habit of getting up, for their accommodation, the most forlorn smiles, and strange grimaces, and contortions, accompanied by a series of highly dangerous and spasmodic bows, which

made him pass for a small man of remarkable activity, and extraordinary desire to please.

"Do bring me some bonbons, Witch.!" cried a dozen girls from an upper balcony, as we issued forth for the party.

"And dance a polka for me!" cried another from the limb of a neighboring tree.

"Stuff your pockets, old fellow!" cried another, from an unseen corner.

"Certainly—certainly, young ladies," exclaimed my brave cavalier, bowing promiscuously to all the points of the compass; just send a dray around for the good things I shall cabbage, will you?"

I stalked along with Witcheron dangling at my side. I paid him as much attention as I would have extended to a brown reticule on my arm, and we finally reached Mrs. Warren's. The lady of the house, with difficulty, suppressed a smile when she encountered the raw school girl and her antique attendant, sitting up straight and prim in the cool unlighted parlor. She kindly advised old Witch. to warm himself in the library, and took me into her own room. Here an elegant nonchalant young man was stretched out upon a luxuriant lounge smoking a fragrant Havana. He bowed slightly when Mrs. Warren presented me, and went on with his indolent dreamy employment.

"My dear," said Mrs. Warren to me, "who dressed you for the evening?"

"The teachers," said I, trying, like Witch., to get up a smile.

"Handsome outfit," remarked the young gentleman, with his inimitable accent.

"Charming," replied I, bounding into the light atmosphere of this free-and-easy room with delight.

"My dear child," said Mrs. Warren despondingly, "is there no remedy?"

"What can I do," said I, laughing at their dismay.

The young man threw away his cigar, and, rising languidly, said, "now I am only Mr. Andrew Warren, and I know you will allow me to suggest a few alterations in this uncommonly becoming costume of the seminary. If such a thing be possible, will you for my sake, endeavor to unscrew that very tight knot of hair, which those tasty females have thought proper to perch on the top of your head, endangering the organ of veneration, and altogether assuming a very menacing attitude?"

I undid the knot of hair, laughing merrily.

"Now, little Miss Julia, you have splendid hair, and you should allow those massive curls to flow as nature intended them: mamma must call in her maids, who must shorten the sleeves, cut down the neck-piece, and hang a berth about the shoulders. Do this for me, Miss Berne, and I will engage you for the first waltz, upon my word."

"I am afraid old Witch. will tell on me," I replied.

"Let him breathe one word if he dare!" cried Andrew, highly amused; "I will go to my dressing room, and will return to find Miss Julia ready for the evening, I hope."

He was intent on patronizing me, he said, stroking his moustache, but high necks and long sleeves were abominable.

Mrs. Warren's maids found the gray mousseline unalterable in its shape; there was no hope for it, they declared, and I was accordingly dressed out in a beautiful

India muslin of Mrs. Warren's, which, with a seam here and there, was made to fit me admirably. My sleeves were very short, and my shoulders very bare, and I wore a berth. When Mr. Warren returned, he brought a camellia for my hair.

"What a beauty we have here!" he exclaimed: "Oh, Fashion! I must ever adore thee."

After many compliments, he said, as old Witch. had fallen asleep in the library, and his mamma busy receiving some early comers, we would practice a favorite waltz and mazourka. I was ashamed to confess that I could not waltz, and that I was not quite certain whether a mazourka was a curtsey cotillon or an oriental salaam.

I hesitated some minutes, while I was inwardly concentrating my plans in this dilemma.

"Well, Miss Julia, we will commence."

"And your music?" I inquired, with a very natural air.

He hummed an air, and made a few steps.

"Go on," said I, keenly watching his movements, "I really do not think your air will suit your steps."

"Oh, they were made for each other—man and wife—only they are too much in unison for that interesting relationship," and he made the circle of the room, while I watched him anxiously. His positions were all Greek to me. Again he approached me, and with an air of easy assurance, flung his arms about my waist, and taking my hand in his, was about to go off in a violent mazourka, when I fortunately spied old Witcheron standing like an amazed and petrified man at the door, and I screamed.

"Bah!" said the man of ton, releasing me.

"Miss Berne, you will get me into a scrape," cried Witch., pulling up an invisible shirt collar, and rubbing his bewildered eyes.

"She has got me already into one," said Warren, significantly.

"Miss Berne, it is half past ten—time we were going."

"Why, the evening has not commenced!" said Andrew.

"I am sorry to say it is over for Miss Berne," resumed my tormenter. Tears stood in my eyes. The idea of going away before seeing all the gay ladies and gentlemen was more than I could bear.

"Very well, sir," said Andrew, "while you are getting your hat and cloak, &c., I will just take Miss Berne through the rooms. I could not resign you but for the hope of seeing you again soon," he said in a low tone to me. I brushed away my tears, and remained very grateful, while he looked very tender.

He took me into Mrs. Warren's elegant rooms, but old Witcheron strode after me like one possessed. He followed me—this monster of regularity—and hung on to me like a demon. He yelled out to know what I had done with my gray mousseline, and also inquired with a loud voice if I was distracted, thereby making well-bred people stare and appear shocked. He sat up such a lamentation over me, threatening me with all the horrors of the Seminary, calling everybody to witness that all this was none of his doings, and so pertinaciously beset me on all sides, that I yielded, and he bore me off in triumph to Union Hall. The hall clock struck eleven,

as Witch., now worked up into a frenzy, shoved me into the door, and started around to his office.

I entered the parlor with flushed cheeks, expecting a reprimand. But the room was silent, the fire was waning in the grate, and the teachers had retired. A young gentleman sat alone by the fire, with a daguerreotype in his hand, which he was turning to the lamp and regarding intently. I walked in, threw off my shawl, and sat me down to await an opportunity to report myself to the matron. He looked up, and his eyes were very lustrous. He placed the picture-case on the table, and began to walk up and down the room, humming an air. Once or twice I felt the intense glow of his eye upon me, but I did not look towards him. He said nothing at all, and I relapsed into one of my old reveries, forgetting the place and the hour, the handsome young gentleman, and the Seminary, with its Medean laws and precise teachers.

I thought of Mr. Warren; his manners, at once so provoking and so irresistible; his careless ease and vibrating tones; his charming "good nights" and lambent eyes. I had heard of this gentleman before. His fascinating ways were notorious. I had lived too long with ladies of dark eyes and gloomy countenances, not to have heard dismal stories, on dismal evenings, of this gay young heart-breaker, who infested retired villages and polite assemblies, seeking whom he might devour, and playing sad havoc among the fair.

I had heard of confident, undaunted young ladies, boasting of their strength and power, betting high upon their success, and seeking him out for the express purpose of proving triumphantly to the world, that he was

not invulnerable, and of their falling easy victims to his marvelous fascinations, and dying of broken hearts, repenting bitterly of their folly. I had heard of married ladies, as beautiful as Houris, forgetting their lords and masters for his enchanting smiles. I had heard careful mothers warning their daughters against his besetting wiles, and had seen them gathering up their nurslings about their skirts, at his approach, as a careful hen gathering up her brood at the coming of a notorious hawk. He was a dangerous fellow, Andrew Warren! Why, the very name set hearts to beating and eyes to expanding, and mammas to looking fierce, and daughters to looking curious. Well, I had seen him, and found him gentle and kind, and easy to please, and as unlike a bandit as any other gentleman. And, without being either murdered or in love, I found it pleasant to think about the dear harmless fellow, as the coals glowed in the bars, and this handsome voluntary sentinel of mine tramped backwards and forwards across the room. But Miss Whish, with her soap curls, is, as usual, wide awake, and orders me to No. 27, which is our dormitory, wondering what on earth I am doing in the parlor with the Seminary's nephew!

I obeyed the dangerous Miss Whish, telling her the circumstances which forced me to don Mrs. Warren's India muslin, and endeavoring to conciliate her. She only said "Very well, young lady," and pointed to the door. I went to number 27, and although it was against the rules for the young ladies to speak after going to bed, yet the occasion would not admit of silence. A dozen nightcaps popped up from as many pillows, the fair owners exclaiming—

"You saw Andrew Warren?"

"Great Gracious!"

"Do be quiet," said I, fearing an arrival of Miss Whish.

"And what did he say to you?"

"Nothing, girls, nothing."

"Short sleeves! low neck! *Ave sanctissima! Ora pro nobis!*" cried a great alarmed girl, diving down into her bed and crossing herself.

"Amen!" moaned the whole dormitory.

"Where's the gray mousseline?"

"Make your will, and say your prayers!"

The hubbub continued until all questions were answered: as to the gray mousseline, I had bundled it up and brought it back with me.

The sun arose from his dewy couch, and his broad beams were stretched afar. The pale silent flowers dashed away their tears, and nodded gayly to the stirring breeze. Bells were ringing, and voices heard, and everybody was up but me. I made a hasty toilet and rushed to prayers. They were about pronouncing the *benedicto*, and I had already my cross-mark. The teachers frowned; lessons were tough; and I grew careless and dilatory.

I loved the majesty of the silent night, and the contemplative stars. I was stumped in the multiplication table, and called a great dunce. My aunt, hearing exaggerated accounts of my low spirits, and carelessness, wrote immediately, and prescribed "Barnes' Notes," and "Fox's Book of Martyrs." The Rev. clergy, with wonderful zeal, took me in hand. They explained obscure passages of Scripture in a most bewildering manner to me, and advised a round of saintly duties of a most trying

kind. I had heaps of little books for my private reading, entitled "Manna in the Wilderness," "Dew-drops for the Morn," "Crumbs from the Table," "Food for the Famished," but I remained the same.

They gave me up as a reprobate. I could no more be made to understand the mysteries of religion than a gate-post. I had a natural religion of my own, which certainly did not consist in grumness and learning. The glorious free air thrilled me; the solemn heavens lifted me up. The spirit within me looked afar into the coming time, and claimed affinity with the untold future; and reveled in its strength and its immortality. I bowed down and I worshiped; and my God was the same God in whose high temples they officiated. I prayed; not when the bell rang; but when the spirit turned voluntarily to its God. I was an orphan. I had known sorrow, and was acquainted with grief. These lofty functionaries could not teach me how to pray; for I had been taught by a greater than they. My heart swelled, and the moment of inspiration came, at the beck of a master hand. But it came not at 11 o'clock; nor at three; nor at candle-light. Sometimes it came at night-fall, when none were near to hear me; when the stars were lighting up, one by one, and the 'stilly night was coming. And again it came at morning, bursting forth impetuously, like the song of the lark, or the quick rush of a young bird on the wing. And often I heard the call of the Master Spirit at midnight, coming up solemn and lone; when men lay bound by the brother of death, and the heavy breathing of the sleepers was in my ear; and I thought of the valley of the shadow of death, and of the spirit land; and of my mother; and of the long,

long sleep, when we must all lie down together. These were my hours of prayer. I had no need of the pomp and circumstance of the long drawn aisles, and dim religious light; nor of ponderous volumes of sound, rising slowly, like the heavy smoke from a cannon's mouth; and wreathing along fretted vaults, and high lifted domes. I needed only the troubled heart, and the yearning, and the call from on high; and then I prayed. Once, there came upon me in the fragrance of a summer's eve, the breath of unforgotten flowers; and instantly there floated up, from the dim realms of the past, a green familiar spot, which brought back my childhood, and the mother, about whose knees I played. And the phantom panorama moved slowly on, turning to memory the old places she had loved so well; and the bright rosy face of the youthful mother, going gayly on to death.

I sat in the summer's eve, with tears in my eyes, and a prayer on my lips, which was heard in heaven, though 'twas uttered not on earth. And thus was I taught, by an Unseen Power, to pray!

## CHAPTER III.

THE INIMITABLE MR. WARREN.

MRS. WARREN having dexterously established her claims as a friend of the Penn family, I was allowed to visit her twice a month.

I very often met at her house a Miss Emilie Roselle, who was, in many respects, a remarkable young lady. She was of French extraction, and a more finished coquette never breathed. She was very handsome, but poor; dressed by an uncle, merely for the market; and expected to make a brilliant matrimonial speculation.

Miss Roselle always sported the most elegant clothing; was deep in the mysteries of the toilette, and always appeared redolent with beauty and fascination. She had her eye upon Mr. Warren, and I determined to enter the field against her. I studied her as profoundly as I would a French exercise. I noticed that her beauties were thrust forward, and her defects gracefully concealed. She had a pretty foot, which was always peeping out; and a bad mouth, which was tutored into a becoming position. Her side face was perfect when her features were at rest; but the slightest smile broke the charm. Her forehead was petite, but smooth; and on the whole, Miss Emilie was a very striking lady, indeed. One advantage she had over me, she was a splendid dancer,

and I determined to take dancing lessons, at the risk of my life.

One day I presented a petition to the whole body of teachers, requesting permission to spend the day at Mrs. Warren's. They consented, and I was quickly on the way to that Elysian abode. I asked at the door to see Mr. Warren, on business. He kept me waiting nearly an hour, and then came in with a languid air, saying:

"Naughty Miss Julia; what on earth do you want with a man at 9 o'clock A. M.?"

"You know your promise; I claim it now."

"What promise, lovely innocent? They used to call me a promising youth; but that day is passed."

"Ah!" said I, pouting. "You promised to take me to M. Brusset's Dancing Academy; and now, you are about to retract."

"No, no. Is that all! Well, let's go; but stay. Had we not better send for M. Brusset to come here, and give you private lessons, in the redowa, mazourka, and schottische?"

He sent his servant to M. Brusset to say, that his niece, Miss Tinsley, of whom he spoke to him, had come down from the country, and wanted a lesson immediately.

Accordingly it was arranged that I was to take lessons twice a month; that my aunt was to have a bill sent in for lessons in wax flowers and fancy work, generally; and that all this was to remain a profound secret.

When Monsieur Brusset came, I acted the country girl to the life. I bade cousin Andrew go out; for I could not take my lessons before him.

"No, no; I must stay. Aunt Tinsley gave me my orders;" said Andrew.

"You only wish to laugh at me."

"No; I wish to see your pretty feet."

"My feet are not pretty, Cousin Andrew."

"I beg your pardon, Cousin Prudence, but they are perfect."

When he called me Cousin Prudence, with his Quaker air, I laughed. I should have been named anything but Prudence.

"Oh! Cousin Andrew, go out," I cried, as M. Brusset in vain went through his inimitable positions.

"Prudence, attend to your lesson," he replied, sternly.

"See here, Mademoiselle! dis foot a leetle so, charmant!"

"Attend to your arms, Miss Tinsley, avoid angles," cried Andrew, with mock dignity, from his fauteuil.

"Monsieur will teach de arm, and me, dis little wicked foot—eh bien."

M. Brusset was now fairly off, careering about the room in a frantic manner, with the fair poetess after him, intent upon his wonderful evolutions, when a tall green chariot drove up to the door.

"My aunt!" I cried, almost fainting.

"Franky Penn. Amen!" responded Andrew, bolting the door, in case of emergency.

Presently I heard my aunt's slow, nasal tones in the hall, informing a servant that she had called at the Seminary to see Miss Berne, and was told that she was here.

"I have not seen Miss Julia," said the servant, "she may be in Mrs. Warren's room."

As soon as Andrew caught these words, he seized me, and bore me, with the rapidity of lightning, through a suite of back doors, into his mother's morning room.

"Gracious! Andrew, how you frighten me!" cried the lady.

He pushed me into a chair, pulled off my gloves, threw a bit of sewing in my lap, told his mamma Miss Franky was about to invade her, and darted out at a side door, just as the servant said, "this way, madam," and the erect, correct, direct Miss Franky entered. A stately greeting took place on all sides, and my aunt began to eye me keenly. Mrs. Warren, fearing for my self-possession, began, in her amiable, pleasant way—

"You are looking so remarkably well, Miss Franky. Your charming Underwood air acts delightfully upon complexions. You are just arrived?"

"This morning," said my aunt.

"You are at dear Mr. Brady's; what a delightful old gentleman he is!"

"I think him a Christian," replied the spinster, sitting as straight as a poker, in her luxuriously inclined chair.

"Ah, deeply pious. His impromptu prayers are most touching," said the fair widow, with upraised eyes.

"Julia, get your hat," said my aunt, brusquely, turning to me.

"Now, dear Miss Franky, pray give me your company to-day, just for old acquaintance sake; allow me to insist."

"I have an engagement," replied Miss Penn.

"Always engaged! Can I never find you without an engagement?"

"No, I think not," replied Miss F., with an air not to be misunderstood. But Miss Warren only professed her profound regrets, and continued her smooth running compliments to the last, determined not to see anything she did not wish to see.

The lady from Underwood marched out, followed by the run-away from the Seminary. I was never in the habit of exchanging ideas with my taciturn aunt. We were totally uncongenial, and the very air of the green chariot disposed to silence and solemn ruminations. The old thing hobnobbed along the street, and though neither witty nor amusing, it caused much wit and amusement on all sides. A little chap, with satchel in hand, cried out "Good morning, Father Noah," to aunt's little black charioteer, whose real name was Sampson. An omnibus man in the rear hallooed out to know what we were in such a confounded hurry about, and then dashed past us with great rapidity. A negro lad, grinning from ear to ear, returned Sampson's bow, for Sampson was touching his beaver to everybody, and then asked him "how he left Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their families."

All this time my aunt sat in the back seat boiling with rage. She would have died by that green chariot. She thought it the finest and most stylish carriage of the day. It had been a highly honored inhabitant of Underwood these thirty years, and was yet as good as new. It was a pet of Sampson's. He had laid out a good deal of his strength, together with spirits of turpentine and rotten-stone, rubbing it up for this very trip. And instead of blinding all eyes with its glitter and varnish, behold, this was its reception! Sampson was disheart-

ened. He occupied a conspicuous position; indeed, I may say, the most conspicuous position in the city, was occupied by aunt's little, old, prim, crestfallen charioteer. Before he had threaded the two principal thoroughfares in the city, he tucked his head under the curtain and assured his mistress, that he began to feel mighty bad indeed.

The antediluvian mistress, driver, and equipage, at length reached Mr. Brady's in safety. In the plain, but comfortable parlor, we found the ubiquitous Mr. Warren, paying an unceremonious morning visit. With a subdued and sanctimonious air, the envied dancer of the inimitable mazourka saluted the stately pillar of the church. My aunt's freezing air began to congeal this pleasant circle, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Brady, and Mr. Warren, and immediately the expert dandy commenced his game.

"We were speaking of Mrs. Brady's Fair, Miss Penn."

"Mrs. Brady's Fair?" asked my aunt.

"Yes," said the old lady, sewing away at her block work, "we are to hold a fair to carpet the church, and Mr. Warren is kind enough to throw out many valuable hints, besides offering his services."

"My services are nothing, but I can engage Miss Emilie Roselle, who makes the most charming little fancy pieces. She manufactures the most exquisite little French affairs, such as aprons, head-dresses, sacques, and many other little fabrics, with pretty names. She begs to enter her name as a subscriber and assistant in any way."

My aunt began to incline her ear to this pleasant rigmarole. She opened her reticule, put on her specs,

and began to dive about into Mrs. Brady's great scrap basket, and to look kindly at Andrew.

"And here is Miss Julia," said he, "she makes famous wax flowers." I blushed; oh! how I blushed. I had never made a wax flower in my life, and I feared this elegant gentleman was about getting me into a scrape with his consummate ease and assurance.

"By the way, I had a bill handed me by a French looking fellow, just as I came up the steps. A bill of \$10, for those very wax flowers; where are the specimens?"

Andrew gave me no time to reply. He answered quickly, "They are at mamma's; I am surprised that she did not exhibit them; she is keeping them until Miss Julia returns to Underwood. I began to breathe after this speech, for I remembered Mrs. Warren's vase of wax flowers.

"Well, what have I got to do this morning?" inquired good, easy Mr. Brady, throwing aside his newspaper, and jumping on his great feet.

"Well, my dear," replied his helpmate, "you must get us some more gilt paper, some large cards, some chenille, and silver tassels. Mrs. Jones wants more sealing-wax for her baskets, and Mrs. Jennings two sheets of perforated paper. I want a paper of black pins, and two negro babies, about so high, and some yellow and blue paper for my large fortune-teller, and then—"

"Stop, Mary, stop—by the time I run all these errands I shall have to sue the ladies for a very sound pair of legs, not to mention the best half of my ideas, and nearly all the breath in my body."

Mr. Brady was a short, fat, comic man, with the big-

gest feet and hands, and stiff grizzly hair. He and his good-natured wife were cat's-paws for everybody. They took the burden of everything, and worked and toiled for the church carpets with perfect good-will, regarding it more as a kind of carnival than anything else. My aunt was now in all the bustle of a fair. She who had eked out twenty years without one particle of excitement, began to live a little, and really began to question her conscience about this gay, dissipated life she was leading in the city. Andrew was everywhere my aunt was—holding skeins of silk, picking up balls, cutting cards, melting glue, and doing all the strong work—launching forth apropos anecdotes, ever on the full tide, and winning golden opinions from everybody. He was everywhere he was wanting, and nowhere he was not wanting. Deaf when he should not hear, and blind when he should not see. His rare fascinations were being introduced into an unknown region, and here, as everywhere, he was eminently successful.

My aunt's frigidity was overcome; this glorious fellow with his eternal sunshine, thawed even her, and she invited him into her green chariot for a drive.

I was not looking out for miracles that morning, and was altogether taken by surprise when Miss Penn and Mr. Warren called to take me around to see a paper mill and a charity school.

I was placed in the green chariot in a kind of trance, and the superb Mr. Warren, with his dainty moustache and rippling hair, was my *vis-à-vis*.

"What a comfortable carriage we have here, my dear Miss Penn; worth a dozen modern vehicles with their

patent springs and complicated arrangements," remarked our gallant Adonis.

"So I think," returned the fair owner, "it goes easier and requires less repairing than any carriage I ever saw."

"Give me old gold and old carriages forever!" exclaimed our hero, going the shade of an inch too far, in his laudable zeal.

"My carriage is not old," said my aunt, stiffly.

"Not old, I know, but it was not made yesterday, I dare say, and I should say, it was made by a gentleman perfected by years of experience in his admirable trade."

"Whoever made it knew what he was about," replied my aunt, regarding its gloomy hangings with much tenderness.

"And the purchaser knew what she was about," said Andrew.

"I guess I did," chuckled the spinster.

I need not repeat these little conversations; for nothing could exceed the admirable tact displayed by the gentleman in his siege of the fair spinster of Underwood. I saw he was making a desperate effort to ingratiate himself, but for what? Why was the idol of all polite assemblies forsaking the gay world to devote himself exclusively to an old maid fifty years behind the age? Was it for my sake—oh! was it for me? Had my beauty conquered where the fairest and brightest had failed! Was I to bear the palm of victory before all the sex? The paper mill and its wonderful doings looked like a vision to me. Andrew explained it all to my amazed aunt. So ably did he expound and elaborate,

from the rags to the pulp, and from the pulp to the rule, that one would have thought this Lothario was, after all, a paper maker.

The armory (to which we also drove) and its regulations was a mere plaything in his hands. Soldiers, and cannon, and muskets, and blunderbusses, and all sorts of glittering weapons, with glittering names, were at his fingers' ends. The charity school, from its small beginnings to its present flourishing condition, a mere fancy sketch, winding up into a climax. What a Lord Brougham of a man had we here! knowing all kinds of trades and professions better than those very trades and professions themselves. I felt annihilated, my aunt bewildered, and we returned to the carriage.

He reconducted us with much grace, handed us in, complimented Sampson on the fine condition of his horses, and immediately attached aunt's driver to him for life. They returned to Mrs. Brady's, dropping me at the Seminary. I found two vases of wax flowers on the mantel in my room, with a note in which Mrs. Warren sent her compliments, and Miss Julia's beautiful flowers, as she understood she wanted them for the Castle Street Fair. Was I in a dream? Were all things working together for my good, as the gentlemen in black gowns had so often told me they would some day? Well, Andrew was evidently my master-spirit, and I was lost in admiration at his wickedness and skill. So graceful, bland, and easy, and yet deep and unfathomable. With his inimitable address and wonderful tact, doing everything and carrying the world in a sling. His countenance, only one remove from the angelic; his person, superb. Never had mortal so irresistible a

smile, such flexibility of feature, such heart-thrilling intonation, such happiness of manner. Gifts were showered upon him like the generous dew from Heaven. He had every power at his command. Beauty, eloquence, grace, and a thousand combinations of these rare powers ever variable and captivating.

In the school the girls had taken the trouble to inform me that my aunt was immensely rich and stingy, that the teachers bowed and scraped to her, and gave everybody a cross mark for laughing at Sampson and the green chariot. The world was opening unto me. I had been groping in the dark, but verily the light was appearing. I had not exactly discovered how the earth turned upon its axis, but I was understanding very many of its turnings and twistings, as illustrated in the Seminary. Everybody knows that a seminary is to the world what a globe is to the earth. As soon as a number of young ladies, or young gentlemen, are thrown together in a seminary or college, these particles of the social system begin immediately to revolve into a perfect circle, and perform the simple rule of the Omnipotent, as instinctively as does the rain-drop or the nebula in the depths of space.

There was a little world in the Seminary, obeying the same laws which governs the great world without its walls.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE HEART AND ITS AFFAIRS.

I WAS engaged night and day upon a problem—that problem was my aunt's heart. How was it touched, how moved, how regulated?

Had people only to attack its weak points, to gain favor! If so, I was ousted forever. I wanted her to love me—really, I felt that she, or somebody else ought to love me. Was I to live all my life, without that precious condiment so essential to happiness? I was now turning sixteen, and no human being had ever offered to draw me to them by kindness. The world held me at arm's length. There was no bosom on which I might lean and weep—there was no kind voice falling on my ear, at morning or at night. I was pining to be loved. Like the unsupported vine, my heart was reaching out its tendrils and searching for a resting-place. Would the same providence which guides the tendril in its choice, guide my poor friendless heart?

From my aunt's cold manner I recoiled. She never encouraged me to love her. She bore my rare caressings, which were few and far between, like a stone, and there was no way for me to secure a corner in so frigid a heart. It seemed that flattery was the only means one could use to modify her, and I was a poor flatterer. I could not, for the life of me, say the green chariot was

gorgeous and regal, when I knew it was rusty, and out of joint. I could not be debonnair, and cordial, and facetious, to a spectre, and yet I fancied people misunderstood my aunt. I fancied that she had better sense than she pretended to have, and not altogether so gullible as certain persons supposed. Sometimes there was an unmistakable sneer on her face, when people would be bowing and cringing to her, and saying pleasant things, and rivaling each other in attentions to her; and once or twice I had surprised her, by looking up when her eye was kindly bent upon me. But never in her life had she called me "my dear," or kissed me, or sat me on her knee, or shown the least sign of affection for me. Flattery—flattery—was her meat, and her drink. People must be her boot-licks or she could not tolerate them. Mr. and Mrs. Brady were favorites with her, because they were really most excellent and pleasant people—saying pleasant things to everybody, and agreeing to all sorts of theories, with a smile. It gave them little concern, whether people were high church or low church—whether Dr. Pusey kicked up jack, or the Pope was set up again. They ate good dinners, and continued in perfect good humor, from year's end to year's end, going down the hill of life, the most pleasant, hearty, genial old couple that ever wore the matrimonial yoke.

My aunt detested Mrs. Warren, she could not tolerate a single air or grace belonging to that super-refined widow.

This lady was rather young, and pretty, too gay for a lady of her age, and entirely too plump and well preserved, for my aunt.

She did not like me, because I was a poet, perhaps, or because I lived with her. Some persons never like those who live in the house with them. My aunt had a microscopic eye for faults in other people, and was always thoroughly disgusted with those unfortunate creatures exposed to her scrutiny from day to day.

Finding I could not, by direct reasoning, or by any sleight-of-hand movement, arrive at any conclusion as regarded the safest route to the strongly fortified heart of this remarkable aunt of mine, I determined to turn about and do what I knew was right. When one gets in a quandary on any subject, it is a good plan to leave the mooted point altogether to time, and to keep on in the right path at all risks. Therefore, being baffled at one point, I meditated a vigorous attack upon my old standard enemies, Philosophy, Chemistry, and Belles Letters. These I battled against, determined to conquer or to die. And I attacked that tough subject, my well thumbed arithmetic, in my zeal. There was a barrier therein, which in my wildest dreams, I had never hoped to clear; this was the barrier between vulgar fractions, and a more genteel family of the same name, called decimal fractions.

It seemed that the best portion of my days was about to be spent among the vulgar family of fractions, before I could ever make their acquaintance. Their ways were so strange, they were subject to such unexpected gyrations, and were of such unsettled denominations, that I wonder at their being taught in this seminary at all. I determined to keep my eyes open, to be brisk and active, and to strive against that old habit of relapsing into

profound reveries, brought on, as I firmly believed, by those interminable knitting tasks of old.

One afternoon after school, I had permission to go to my dressmaker's, and in wending my way thither, I encountered Mr. Andrew Warren. He turned with me, and after many pleasant things, said—

"Miss Julia, your papa is on his way from Europe."

"My papa! Oh, somebody is coming to love me! My papa—I can just remember him as a tall, consumptive looking, short-sighted man."

"Yes, he is coming. His health has been re-established. He has been in Madeira and Italy. He looks forward with great pleasure, to seeing you. But what has become of auntie? How are you getting on with her?"

"Do tell me about my papa. Is he coming, really coming? Shall I see him very soon? and to whom did he write?"

"He wrote to my mother," said Andrew, looking down, "he speaks of fitting up the old place at Underwood. I suppose if you prefer living with him you can, but I would not leave my good aunt if I were you."

"Indeed will I," said I quickly.

"Not so fast, if you please, Miss Julia; look on this picture and on that. Miss Franky is very rich, your papa in moderate circumstances. Miss Franky is easily managed, has a bronchial affection, and may leave you her heiress—your papa may marry again, and leave you penniless."

"And is it reduced to a mere question of dollars and odd cents?" said I indignantly, "whether I shall live with my own father, and minister to him, and comfort

him? I tell you, Mr. Warren, I am made of flesh and blood, and am not altogether a calculating machine."

"Oh, no! Better say you are a very pretty composition of flesh and blood, and inclined to freedom, and matrimonial speculations, rather than playing dummy to a rich spinster, whose life may be insured by the church, for aught I know."

"Why," said I, looking up with surprise upon the ever smooth brow, now strangely knit, "I really thought you were cultivating suavity and fascination in the balmy, genial atmosphere of your luminary, Miss Penn; how is it that I find you all arithmetic and right angles this morning?"

"There is something in the atmosphere hereabouts, I suspect," said he, drawing his palm across his brow. "But seriously, do you know what it is to be poor, Julia? It is to be cast out from all pleasant places; to look haggard and weary; to be hungry and cold; to be unrefined; to have no carpets, no sofas, no baths, no hats, no last new novel, no smiles; to clutch at a piece of pork like a dog: to have no time to laugh and be gay: to grow like an animal: to have no servants, no drives, no twilight walks, no *fêtes*, no *déjeûners*, no suites of lustred rooms, no opera, no merry Christmases, and happy New-Years, no Santa Claus coming down the chimney to troops of juveniles; no lovers, no fashions, no shopping, no life. This is to be poor. Have you ever thought of it, Julia?" The man was growing eloquent and impressive. His eye was earnest and his voice touching.

"You draw a dark picture," said I. "Poverty is not pleasant, after all. But about the wax flowers?"

"Oh! adroit; was it not? My dear girl, you have only to resign yourself to me, and I will see you safe into any given port. I say, allow me to act for you on these momentous questions; and if I succeed, will you promise me to—to—but I am decidedly rash. I mean, will you promise to compliment the green chariot? I believe that was the favor I intended to solicit this morning."

I mused a few minutes on Mr. Warren's strange, nervous way of propounding so simple a question.

"But we have passed Mrs. Askins'," said I.

"The dressmaker's? Yes. Do tell her to make your dresses longer in the waist, and the skirts wider. Upon my word, some kind friend ought to hire you out to a French modiste, that you might learn to dress yourself."

"Could you not give me lessons?"

"My dear girl, am I to teach you everything? Am I to teach you dancing, wax work, head dressing, tact, wisdom, and dressmaking too?"

"Upon my word you give yourself great credit."

"But I long to see you well dressed. It is becoming a kind of frantic hope with me, that some day, I may see you well dressed, your hair arranged to suit the contour of your head; your dress to suit your figure; your beauties in relieve; your defects—"

"My defects!"

"Yes, your defects, gracefully draped and slurred over."

"Thank you."

"I assure you a dozen amateurs have called you ugly. My best friend told me you had an indifferent ear, and rather too pointed a nose. I alone could ever ferret out

your beauties, so completely ambushed are they. You have a magnificent brow, and a peculiar expression, an earnest beautiful expression, which touches the heart in a moment; but you are unconscious of all this. Then, again, you have a power, very rare—a power of flashing the eye, and then quenching it. Of graduating the light of your splendid orbs, which, I believe is perfectly natural. Sometimes a playful lightning peeps out from the deep sweeping fringe, which we all know is as harmless as lightning in a clear summer's sky. Then, again, a quick flash comes, and is over until it lightens up again, which portends a storm. Then, Julia, I have seen you once, and only once, when your eyes were vibrating, and swimming in a pulsating light; these are your tremulous moments, when your heart is moved and you are almost in tears. But nobody suspects all this; nobody would believe it, if I were to tell them. Now, for my sake, endeavor to show what you are. Do not make me a laughing-stock among young men of taste, for devoting myself to a girl so awkward and badly dressed. My advice to you is, to hold up your head, turn out your superb shoulders, and cultivate short sleeves, and bracelets; avoid that hard ill-favored knot, in which you manage to compress and pack away your magnificent hair. Coil it loosely, and broad. Let a tress escape now and then, that people may see, by accident, its wonderful length and beauty. See, here is a hand and arm worthy of Venus; and half your acquaintances would put you down for bad arms, and worse hands. If Emilie had this hand and arm, they would have been embalmed in poetry, long ago; bards would

have gone mad on the subject, and the literary world would have been in commotion."

"Very well," said I, laughing; "thus endeth the first lesson."

"Now do go in at Mrs. Askew's, and tell her, from me, if she makes you another dress in that old style, I will sue her for libel, upon my word as a lawyer."

"That is wonderful security, the word of a lawyer."

"Well, upon the word of Mr. Andrew Warren."

"Better and better."

"Why you are brilliant!"

"The atmosphere, you know."

"Upon my word, you are improving already!"

Never was mortal woman so anxious about a dress, as was your humble servant, dear reader, the *soi disant* poet, about a blue tarleton, at Mrs. Askew's. I was in a dozen times a day, to inspect its development. Andrew declared he was delighted to see me awake on the all important matter of dress. The teachers had given me permission to be a night seller at the Castle Street Fair, as it was my aunt's request, and, as a great favor to Miss Penn's niece, they unanimously resolved, that I should wear the blue tarleton. The holydays were approaching, and young ladies could emerge from their gray habiliments, as gaudy as butterflies, if they chose. I began to brighten up at the prospect of a temporary escape from those enemies of mine, philosophy, chemistry, and belles lettres; I tossed arithmetic to the winds, voting fractions decidedly vulgar, and began to think seriously of getting up a rivalry with Miss Roselle, in the autocracy of fashion.

There was a marked difference in the protean manners

of Mr. Andrew Warren, when with me, and when in the company of Miss Emilie Roselle. With poor ignorant me, he was all ease and gaiety, assuming the air of mentor and patron, pitying my infirmities, and kindly endeavoring to draw me out. Sometimes he was caustic, and tart, but this was only from the force of habit. With Emilie, he was the most intolerable dandy I ever saw; putting on airs, and ridiculing his neighbors; at one moment making extravagant demonstrations of regard, and the next as frigid as an icicle. Emilie had a face as smooth and unruffled as a frozen lake. Nobody could read her, she was ever placid, beautiful, and lady-like. Andrew himself was baffled, and could not tell, for the life of him, what impression his fine person and splendid address had produced upon the fair coquette. This frail link bound the dandy to her; this uncertainty, slender thread as it was, held the butterfly of fashion, and he lingered, and fluttered about her yet, that he might read the secret of a heart so deep and motionless.

This young girl, poor and unprotected, had, by perseverance, and natural strength of character, attained a position in society not unenviable. She was prudent, pleasant, amiable, polished, an attentive listener, a delicate flatterer, always appropriately and expensively drest, and always a distinguished belle. Her tact was invincible. She could achieve anything. She glided on quietly, making conquests of the most invulnerable men, and her victims were victims for life. Her strange power over them lasted through all vicissitudes. Her discarded lovers seldom married, or courted the society of other ladies. Men might lay the secrets of their heart of hearts before her, and they would never be betrayed.

They might propose a hundred times to her, and her best friend would never know it. She had no confidants, no dear five hundred friends. She had no perceptible faults, and fascinations rare, and irresistible. Her uncle exhibited her everywhere. No slave was ever more pertinaciously paraded up and down a market place, than was this poor girl. Her delicacy may have been often wounded, and her fine feelings tortured, by this blundering but well meaning man, but no retort, urged by the sting of the moment; no polished raillery ever fell from her lips. People pitied her, and a cordon of honorable men were ever ready to lay down their lives for her. Mrs. Warren was excessively fond of this fair, delicate, gentle girl; she was always sending for her, and Mr. Bolton, with his rough-and-ready way, was ever uproariously delighted, to place her in Mrs. Warren's hands.

'Twas the evening of the Fair, and the *début* of the blue tarleton. I was so intent upon appearing well on this occasion, that I engaged the services of half a dozen young ladies, of acknowledged taste, and of the first classes, to adorn me, and see that I was *comme il faut*. There was such a variety of opinion, and such contention among these young ladies over my toilette, that I came off considerably worsted. They pulled and tugged, and debated over me for nearly an hour; many high words passed among them on the subject of ribbons, and bows. Two of the leading young ladies became so heated and fierce in the contest, that they did not speak to each other for six months afterwards. In the course of time the struggle was over, and the toilette completed.

I entered the Castle Street Hall at half-past six, looking like the victim of some unhappy plot, and unlike

anything ever seen in the city before. I felt uncomfortable, my hair was horribly drest, the blue tarleton too long, and altogether I was the most awful looking figure in the room. Emilie was already at her post, as fair and elegant as taste and good sense could make her. Andrew was lounging near her, when I entered. With an awkward stride, I made for my aunt's table. I saw him strike his forehead and mutter something, as I took my stand behind my two vases of wax flowers. There was a scarcely perceptible curl on Emilie's lip, and her eye glowed intensely as the young man looked ominously towards aunt and myself, who, the sole representatives from Underwood, stood silently at our posts. He would not come near us. He played with Mrs. Brady's fortune-tellers, and looked uncomfortable. People began to throng the room, and Emilie's table was surrounded by the elite of the city. I could hear her musical, elegant laugh, and, now and then, catch a few of her pleasant tones. A group of exquisites seemed devoted to her. A tall magnificent looking lord of creation was ever at her side, and caught all her most pleasant words, and most bewitching tones. He turned around to greet Mrs. Warren, who was circling about like a queen of the realm, and I recognized the seminary's nephew, the superbly handsome Mr. Barron; but Mrs. Warren and suite came up to forlorn Aunt Franky and I.

"My dear friends, you are doing nothing," she said.

"I fear we will not clear expenses," replied my aunt dryly.

"Never mind," said the widow gayly. "Mr. Bolton, see here, what a gorgeous smoking cap!"

"A fool's cap, Madam. I am one of those Solomons

who always put on their thinking caps when they smoke."

"Indeed! well, here are slippers, and cigar cases, and any number of empty purses."

"I have one of those same empty purses already, Madam."

"Why, what a creature you are! Do tell me, is your wit for sale, Mr. Bolton? it was surely rubbed up for the occasion?"

"I have often found wit a more current coin at your fairs than money; and if wit will do for the fair, it will do for Mrs. Warren, who is the fair!"

"Mr. Bolton! you will cause some violent deaths if you keep on at this rate: you shock me, indeed you do."

"Do I? then you are not accustomed to compliments."

Andrew was slowly coming up. He sauntered leisurely towards our table, and seemed intent on observing me wait upon a rival exquisite, who, strange to say, had found us. Finding that Andrew's lambent eyes were scanning me, and that the ill-shaped man was closely scrutinizing my features, I brightened up, and began to be very arch and pleasant indeed. I said some good things, some very good things, and this ill-shaped man, who was a member of the dilettanti, and a connoisseur, was delighted with me.

Mr. Bolton came blustering up, cracking his funny jokes. Mrs. Warren sailed about us like a swan on pleasant waters. My aunt still played the spectre, and we were decidedly on the mend. Mr. Warren turned abruptly away, and all the brightness vanished. Seeing that none of my efforts could attract the only person for whom they were made, I relapsed into one of my old moods, and became absent, silent, and careless.

"Julia!" said Andrew suddenly to me, "you were very bright a minute ago; what is the matter now?"

I said nothing at all. I had a way of brusquely remaining silent under all provocations.

"Mr. Barron has been complimenting you, and you know how the ladies prize a word from him."

I still said nothing.

"Our club agreed unanimously, at a call meeting just now, in a corner of the post-office, that you only needed style and finish to make you a diamond of the first water."

"I am obliged to your club," said I.

"You are raw and crude, I admit," said Andrew intentionally.

"Not sour, at least," I returned.

"No, child, but very far from my ideal."

"And pray, how can your ideal concern me?" I asked with a stare.

"That was well done, upon my word; I should not like to encounter you at eighteen; but my ideal—"

"Must be a remarkable one."

"No, my ideal is a diamond extremely polished. Her natural amiability is turned into the most delicate politeness; her brilliancy into myriads of playful corruscations; her shrewd mother wit into prudence, uncommon self-possession, and judgment. Her penetration serves only to defend herself—never to attack a vulnerable point. Wit she avoids; it scatters admirers; but she can use it as a single shot upon a fellow she wishes to kill off immediately. This lady—"

"Is Miss Roselle," said I.

"No! no! a thousand times no!"

"But tell me something about this Miss Roselle: she is very mysterious: pray who is she?"

At this question, Mr. Warren grew very pale, and turning to me with a ferocious air, asked me why I asked him about Emilie?

"Merely from curiosity," said I, calmly.

"And pray, why are you so curious?"

"Because she is mysterious; she is loved by you; she may be unhappy; and she may need sympathy."

"Emilie unhappy! she need sympathy! Miss Julia, show me a melting rock, or a diamond in a state of fusion, and then you may say that young lady needs sympathy."

"You love her, though."

"I did adore her once, but there are so many pretty girls on the tapis now, that a man of any gallantry must love more than one."

But while talking to me, and endeavoring to teach good humor to the lofty Penn, Andrew's hazel eyes were floating lazily towards the fair Emilie. Beautiful, and never offending the most fastidious taste, this sylph-like creature had evidently great power over him. She held him in invisible leading-strings, and many inexplicable freaks of this gentleman could be traced to her. Here was a mystery to be cleared. Emilie evidently gave herself no trouble about him. But sometimes, from afar, she could make him wince, and grow unsteady by the most common-place remark, or a clear pointed laugh, serving to underscore something applicable in some mysterious way to him.

"Do look at Barron, Julia; Emilie is playing her first cards upon him. See how innocent and naïve she looks, and his eye, how intense. The dove is cooing to the

eagle, and that bold fearless bird may listen to the charmer. If handsome women only knew their power! I have seen that girl, who is not half so pretty as my lovely innocent here, make the stoutest hearts quake, merely by the quick falling of a lid, or a scarcely perceptible sigh, or a tremulous side glance, at the right moment. I have seen men, as proud as Lucifer, dying by inches, of love for her."

While Andrew was talking, the ill-shaped man approached Mr. Bolton's exquisite niece, and bent himself nearly double over her.

"You never like to get into scrapes?" asked the ill-shaped man.

"None of us like to get entangled," she said blandly, and Andrew felt this.

"Really, I am in a labyrinth, and cannot get out," he said, bending lower. And Emilie turned away with her peculiar laugh, while Andrew shrugged his shoulders, and the lordly Barron looked around towards our table, and strode majestically away.

"Upon my word, Ned Barron's a noble-looking fellow."

"Magnificent!" I exclaimed, following his regal form, as he gracefully threaded his way through the crowd.

Weeks passed on, and my papa did not arrive. He wrote that he was detained north on business. Emilie and Andrew remained a profound mystery, and that excessively *debonnaire* lady, Mrs. Warren, decidedly more abstruse than either. Mr. Andrew Warren was, apparently, the most open-hearted, frank, good-natured man in the world; but his best friends did not know him. He never boasted, never openly attempted a conquest,

never devoted himself exclusively to any of the belles, and yet report gave him credit for at least a dozen love scrapes on hand, all of which were being invisibly managed by this masterly manœuvrer.

One pleasant moonlight evening, we were sitting by a low window, in which the south wind blew fragrantly, and Mr. Warren, who had a mellow, thrilling voice, commenced singing a lover's farewell, which reminded me of poor Sally, at Underwood.

"I have heard that air sung mournfully," said I, "I have heard it as daylight was dying, coming up from a lonely pathway, sad and dreary, and desolating all hearts as it swept along."

"And I have heard it sung," said Andrew, "by the most beautiful woman in the world; a creature as fair as Heaven, and as pure, with a voice whose every tone reached the heart. That song—oh, that song—at shut of day floating on the still air! And the farewell, the hopeless farewell—how it shivers the nerves—that sad, bleak, never-to-be-forgotten farewell."

"I have wept like a child over that song."

"But who sang this song so pathetically?"

"A poor creature in my native village—a beautiful wreck of a once lovely woman. Her heart is broken and her reason gone, but she is ever singing the melodies of other days, and thrills every heart with her touching, appealing, heart-broken tones."

"Who is this poor creature?"

"Sally Bland—poor Sally Bland."

"Sally Bland!"

"Yes, you have heard of her?"

"No, but the name sounded familiar. Well, poor

Sally—what of her? Is her reason quite gone?" said Andrew with a sigh.

"I hope not. I think if the cruel lover who deserted her would return and bind up the poor broken heart, and be kind again, that this beautiful, loving, simple Sally would more than reward his tenderness."

"What a task for him who crushed the flower to nurse it back to life! by unforgotten tenderness to recall reason to a benighted mind! to restore the missing links in fond memory's chain! Such a heart is worth more than fine gold; it should not be lost, this trusting, faithful woman's heart. I would cherish it for its very weakness; I would shield this poor sufferer, and watch over her, and foster reason, and recall the light of other days, and years should find me at my post. A heart broken for me! A trusting woman mad for me! Why, Julia, my life should be hers! her tears, her songs, her sadness, her whims, her beauty's wreck, the wild fire of her eye, the fierce passion of her tongue—all—all—would rivet me to her."

"His eloquent lips quivered, and the sweep of his hair and the flash of his eye were god-like.

I was silent. The place and the hour proclaimed silence, and the low tones nestled in my ears, and filled my heart.

Miss Roselle entered the room, fair and tranquil, and pulled a chair near the window. I sat enveloped in the deepening twilight, and my thoughts shaped themselves fantastically.

"I must apologize for this interruption, but really you two had chatted long enough," said the lady, pleasantly.

"Was our conversation long to you?" inquired Andrew, drawing very near to her.

"You will not hang any masterly conclusions upon the simple word 'yes,' I hope—I implore," said Emilie, rather sarcastically.

"No—upon my word—and you thought we were talking too long?"

"Mr. Warren—yes—I thought as we were both visitors at your mother's house, you should be more equal in your attentions."

"Thank you," said the dispirited cavalier, turning to me, and pressing my hand.

I was always uneasy whenever Miss Roselle was near me. If she entered the room, there was a vague feeling of discontent for which I could not account. Her manners were called good—but they were too easy, too assumed, too imperturbable. The lady seemed so fixed in her propriety—so convinced of her beauty, ton, grace, equipments, and success. Miss Roselle was never original, never brilliant, and her very air completely checked all originality or brilliancy in any one else. If I ever ventured a single remark in this lady's presence, I always repented it. She never failed to impress me with her superiority, and to make me mute and invisible.

Well, this handsome lady killer had his hands full—a hoyden school girl, and a cautious captivating woman of the world, both with hearts to be broke, as a horse-jockey would say. As to Emilie, nothing could be gained out of her; her heart might be broken into a thousand atoms, and nobody would ever suspect it. I rather think she was undertaking to break Mr. Warren's heart. I, alas! was an easy victim, almost too easy for a man

of his ambition; ready to bestow my exuberant affections upon anybody but my aunt, and the diabolical fraternity of teachers.

There was a plot on foot, and I will take the good-natured reader into my confidence, and explain it to him as far as I was able to unravel it. Mr. Bolton and niece were evidently anxious to secure the renowned destroyer of the peace of the fair sex unto themselves. Mrs. Warren and her admired son were intent upon securing me unto themselves—provided I was Miss Franky's sole heiress. But as that thing was very doubtful, owing to the profound and impenetrable secrecy of Franky herself, they resolved, clever diplomates as they were, to play the agreeable on all sides. Miss Emilie had large expectations from her rich uncle, *therefore* she was a charming girl. I had larger expectations from my aunt, therefore, according to Andrew, I had all the material to make a great and glorious woman. Mrs. Warren, and her son, were the most extravagant people in the world. They had spent an enormous estate in furniture, servants, equipages, dress, and self-indulgences of every kind. The mother, supremely selfish and sybaritic, lived sumptuously, and fattened and grew more selfish every day; while her son, growing more painfully exquisite, more slavish to old extravagances, found his over refined wants increasing, while his depleted purse threatened daily to collapse. Therefore, the renowned and ruthless lady killer was cautiously approaching the great gulf of matrimony. It was privately arranged between mother and son, that either Miss Roselle or myself were, after all, to be the greatest victims on his list, inasmuch as one of us had to marry him some day. All these impor-

tant plans for the future, only resolved themselves for the present into continued and increasing suavity and agreeableness to Miss Roselle and her burly uncle, and desperate devotion to the fair Franky, not to mention many little cajoleries lavished delightfully on poor grateful me. But a tougher subject no mortal need covet, than was the still, tall, speechless Miss Penn; morose, savage, sensible, shrewd, cruel, caustic, close-fisted, crabbed, penetrating, and cold as steel, short of speech, and yet dropping her words, few and far between, like bits of molten lead, from which her bland enemies recoiled in alarm. This lady made them feel her claws, and was dangerous to molest. All their dainty airs and honeyed words were pearls thrown before the most ungracious of swine; and, after toiling patiently for whole months, and being bored nearly to death, sitting up late on long, grim, ghostly evenings, and smiling over ghastly dinner parties gotten up solely in compliment to this ogress, the interesting mother and son found themselves at the starting point, never having cleared one inch towards Miss Franky's confidence or fortune.

In vain the gallant Andrew tried to make a tool of me; in vain would he tell me how kind and sweet my aunt was, when I sat within sight of her vinegar aspect. In vain would he appeal to my gratitude, picturing vividly what a debt of love I owed her, and how I ought to hang about her neck, like a child upon a mother's. He had as well have asked me to hang about the neck of a boa constrictor. Meanwhile, matters progressed slowly. Mrs. Brady, good soul, confirmed all Andrew's hopes, by making me, of her own accord, Miss Franky's beloved niece and heiress elect; telling of the love Miss Franky bore

me, that I was the apple of her eye, and sole occupant of her heart; drawing a fine picture from the abundance of her own good heart, and appealing to Mr. Brady, who, without the least hesitation, drew out his *couleur de rose*, and colored up a fancy sketch of his own, to quiet the apprehensions of this delightful young man. Mr. Brady had a habit of making out everything as everybody wanted it. These good people never contradicted or blighted hopes, or nipped anything in the bud; everything prospered and flourished in their genial happy atmosphere. To be on the safe side, this handsome Mr. Warren determined to make love to both fortunes. He slapped old Bolton's broad shoulders, and whispered to Emilie. He praised the green chariot, and taught me the *schottische*.

## CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH THE AUTHORESS TURNS OVER A NEW LEAF.

THERE was quite a commotion in Felicity Hall, as the Seminary was facetiously called by its inmates, caused by the sickness of old Mr. Very, the French teacher, and the consequent promotion of Mr. Edward Barron, the Seminary's nephew, to that office, *pro tem*.

Nobody need chide the prudent guardians of the Seminary for keeping this young gentleman a profound secret. Nobody need blame them for thrusting him into a remote and unknown prison, to study for college honors. It was announced from the throne that Mr. Barron was to hear the French classes: and the French classes nearly fainted. Old uniforms were cunningly rubbed up, and anathematized without mercy. Heads were brushed and curled; collars and cuffs were adjusted, and brooches in demand; and, from the display of artillery, one would say, the French classes were bent on conquest.

The important hour arrived, and the doomed student entered the recitation room, unconscious of the belligerent state of the enemy. I looked at him well, as he brushed by me, for I had dreamed of this mysterious student, and wondered who he was like, and why he was kept like a prisoner of war, in a hostile castle. He was

tall and massive; erect and elastic; dignified and awe-inspiring; very grave, but with an eye of royal splendor.

Mr. Barron was only twenty-one; remarkably diffident for that age; and was excessively annoyed by the firing of the battery of dangerous eyes, drawn up in front of him. With downcast lids, and a nervous quiver on his cheek, he took up Racine, and requested the head young lady to commence. She commenced stuttering, and stammering, reading badly, and translating worse. Poor old Very would have struck his bald pate, and cried out "*mon dieu*" a hundred times under such an infliction; but Mr. Barron said nothing, merely turning to the next, and the next, and so on. I was, as usual, nearly foot in the class, and my time for reading was fast approaching; I became dreadfully nervous, and in my consternation my book fell from my trembling hands. Mr. Barron stooped to pick it up, and so did I. Our unacquainted heads bumped, and we were covered with confusion.

"I beg your pardon, Miss."

"And I yours, sir."

With crimson faces we desisted from further polite contest over the prostrate book. Neither daring to dive after it again, for fear the other would be seized with a similar impulse, and another concussion of green heads might cause more fatal results. This painful incident produced much smothered laughter along the whole line of young ladies, and Mr. Barron, after looking very grave, laughed also.

This mutual bumping, from a pair of very hard heads, of course, produced an impression, not to mention a head-ache.

It seemed to single me out from the other hundred

and forty-nine young ladies, and Mr. Barron ever had a smile, and a pleasant word for me. Now I forgot Andrew, and thought only of the handsome student; and he grew more and more beautiful every day. I had never seen him dance a mazourka, or lay his plans to entrap a lady's heart. Yet he was filling my imagination, and absorbing my thoughts. I would have walked miles, simply to cross his path, and hear him say

"A pleasant morning, Miss Berne."

But this man's thoughts were lofty, and severe. He was a servant of the Most High, and destined for the ministry. His magnificent eye looked up; his head was ever erect, and no low pleasures detained him from higher duties. Lofty and sincere, he was as a fair column, lifted up. With an intellectual power worthy to crown his magnificent proportions, he scorned all littleness; and to love this man, was to love honor, and truth, and moral strength, and intellectual might, and heaven. I was not myself when he was near me; I was neither a beauty nor a self-inflated poet; but a poor stupid, wandering child, gazing and lost in admiration.

Sometimes, at the sound of his steps in the hall, I would grow as fixed as a statue. The simplest question from him, would throw me off my balance, and make me a very simpleton. But, while his piety was deep, his learning profound, his acquirements immense, he could not love; I was quite sure of that. He had no fascinating wiles, like the inimitable Andrew; he could not coo in a lady's ear at twilight, and melt her heart with his delicious tenderness. Then why was I following after this man like a slave, and gasping and straining my ear to catch his distant footsteps, and starting at the

sound of his vibrating voice? Really I was forgetting my dignity as a beauty and a woman, for a gentleman, who might be betrothed to a princess, if one might judge from his appearance; and who evidently scorned all gallantry and love.

After being with Barron, Andrew's delightful manners were most soothing. I felt like one just dismounted from a pair of stilts, and lolling on the green grass, toying with nature in her gayest mood. Andrew's greetings were always joyous, and kind. "Ah, Miss Julia, you have forgotten me of late," he would say; or, "Glorious weather we have now; one's pulse thrills, and the heart warms, except ladies' hearts, and they grow colder every day."

"Ah, Mr. Warren, if *you* say so, what must others say?"

"I? I am no favorite with the ladies, upon my word. They maltreat me dreadfully; even Miss Julia."

"You are no favorite with the ladies! How can you say so?"

"No, I am not, indeed. I was a favorite with the dear creatures, years ago; but my reign is over. I begin to think seriously of matrimony. Do you ever think of matrimony, Miss Julia?"

"Sometimes, in the abstract. I mean I compare the married with the unmarried, and single blessedness seems to be the happier lot of the two."

"Do you think your aunt and the old maids at the Seminary, happier than Mr. and Mrs. Brady?"

"No. But those old people are naturally so joyous and light-hearted, they would be happy in a great desert, married or single. And the old maids at the

Seminary, had they married, they would not only have been miserable themselves, but I can fancy their husbands the most miserable and woe-begone of men. But the bachelors about town. Dear me, what merry fellows they are! I envy those bachelors."

"It is all false glare, got up for effect: they are a most unhappy set, believe me."

"And your flirtations! How you revel in them. How slyly you approach your victim, and how surely you aim!"

"Do I? I am glad to hear it. Have any of my darts taken effect? eh, Miss Julia?"

"Cool, upon my word; but I know you had your eye upon me, and I steeled my heart against you. I did, indeed."

"Cruel Julia."

"Cruel! Yes, methinks I was very cruel, not to permit so notorious a butcher to slaughter my unoffending heart."

"My dear girl, yours was the only heart I cared for. To minister to you alone; to cherish such a heart, would be bliss indeed."

"How many times have you said that?"

"Many; but never really felt it before."

"Now, shall I tell you the truth?"

"Yes, do coax her from the bottom of the well, will you? I have not seen her, or heard of her since I was a boy."

"A long time; but you will nevertheless recognize so old an acquaintance?"

"Yes;" said he, smiling.

"Well, the truth is, you love Emilie."

"I love Emilie! I love Mr. Bolton's niece! I love an icicle, and think to wed it! That is not truth, Julia; it is a spurious article you have drawn up from the well. Do try again;" said he, with a very bad grace, and most affected tone.

"Yes," said I, musing, and making a circle with the tip of my boot, "the celebrated Mr. Warren, the unconquerable, is overcome at last."

"Well, since you insist upon it; how do you know all this?"

"Because, having very recently become acquainted with love, I—"

"How! when! Miss Julia is so mysterious to-day."

"I only said, having recently become acquainted with love, I was quite prepared to know him when I saw him."

"Pray, how do you know him? What qualities has the genuine to distinguish him from the counterfeit?"

"Love's guises are innumerable."

"And you can detect him through them all?"

"Yes, provided I know the character of the person with whom he is playing his pranks."

"Well, you know me. How does my love appear?"

"Your love conceals himself. When you appear to love, you do not love. When you seem cold and indifferent, you are loving."

"Very good. I am very cold and indifferent to Miss Whisk of the Seminary—pray tell me, fair magician, do I hopelessly love Miss Whisk?"

"Ha! ha! no—you love Emilie."

"Yes, you have proved that admirably, upon my word."

"But you do love Emilie, Mr. Warren, you do."

"The deuce take Emilie."

"Oh yes—there is the genuine tender passion. I sometimes say the deuce take somebody else—but—"

"Julia! who is this somebody else? You love! Child, whom do you know beside myself?"

"Nobody worth knowing."

"And I am he! Julia, I am he! am I? say, am I?"

"Very vain? yes, I think you are."

"Dear me! what kind of strange love is this? Do tell me, is it a symptom of the tender passion, to get in the sulks?"

"Let us talk about something else."

"No—no—no. Tell me, who is this wonderful somebody you talk about loving?"

"I would not tell you if I died for it," said I rising.

"You will not? Then I intend to think it is myself. You cannot convince me to the contrary, until you show me the man. I intend to consider myself engaged to you upon the spot."

"Well, really, sir?"

"Yes, really, Miss; what you have said amounts to that. I intend to consider myself engaged to you, and to marry you, Miss Julia, if possible."

"Why, Mr. Warren!"

"And what is more, I believe you wish me to think so. I believe you fully intended I should put that construction upon your words."

"How kind and generous you are!"

"No kinder than yourself, or more generous. And allow me to thank you, most beautiful, for your con-

descension this day. I am henceforth a happy, happy man, and shall report myself as such to head-quarters."

"You can report what you please, sir."

"Thank you. Having obtained your permission, I shall go to Aunt Franky and say, Dear aunt, receive me as your nephew, for I am the affianced of your charming Julia. And then I shall go to Mr. Bolton and say, My dear sir, I am sorry to say I have no more use for your amiable niece. You had better lose no time in taking her to another market."

"For shame! Mr. Warren."

"Never mind; then I shall take Ned Barron by the hand—by the way, you don't know Ned?"

I was silent.

"I shall go to him and say, My dear fellow, congratulate me. I am the luckiest dog alive. What do you think, Ned? I am about to be married to that lovely creature, Julia Berne!"

"Don't say that, Mr. Warren. I warn you—don't you say that."

"Mystery again? I declare I am dying to tell Ned Barron."

"You had better let Ned Barron alone, as you call him."

"Why, child?"

"Does he not live at the Seminary? He might tell his aunts."

"How stupid I am. You are afraid that fierce rival of yours, Miss Whisk, may hear of it, and tear your eyes out from jealousy. I forgot you had made that grand discovery about Miss Whisk. What a necromancer you are!"

The reader may think this a strange conversation, but it was nothing uncommon for Mr. Andrew Warren. He was a strange man—taking devious and unfrequented routes to reach the female heart.

He persisted in considering himself engaged to me. He overwhelmed me with tender attentions, and every action of his served to proclaim to the world at large that he was the happy man. Even this did not shake Emilie's propriety. She looked on Andrew's frantic attentions to me with a well-bred stare—as much as to say, What tom-foolery will the fellow commit next?

Mr. Barron, always so grave, was more stern than ever. His eyes never met mine, as of yore, and kindled with kindness at each glance. He was at times ferocious, and if I faltered or stammered in my reading I had a harsh word and a freezing look. No meekness or submission on my part seemed to quell this lion-hearted French teacher. He was becoming a man of iron with a heart of steel. Once, in his anxiety to leave the class after the lessons were over—for he never lingered a minute among the fair French classes—he left his pocket handkerchief on the back of his chair. I lingered near the spot. I waited until the rooms were vacant, and then I seized the handkerchief and thrust it quickly in my pocket. I had stolen a treasure in this plain white silk handkerchief with its narrow cherry border. Like all bachelors' and students' pocket handkerchiefs, it was not hemmed; and the pleasant duty devolved upon me, I thought, to hem it for him. I stole away after school and hid myself, and sat down to the delightful task.

With rapture I hemmed it in my neatest style, and

with blue silk, stitched his initials in a corner, which I surrounded with a modest wreath of embroidered forget-me-nots. I pressed it to my lips, and, scattering some delicate perfume over it, stowed it away in a gorgeous valentine envelope, which I prized very highly.

The next day, after our lessons were over, I determined to hand it to him.

Accordingly, I asked him to correct an exercise which I had written.

We were in the lecture room alone. He stood with pencil in hand, running over the exercise with his sweeping eye, dashing out long sentences, and hastily inserting words with the rapidity of lightning. He was in a great hurry. He bustled through the exercise, handed it to me corrected, and I had not the courage to give him his pocket handkerchief.

I stood like a simpleton, and the lordly man looking down upon me.

"Can I do anything else for you, miss?" he said quietly.

"No sir, thank you," and he was off in a twinkling.

I despaired of ever summoning the courage to give him the fine bedoved and becupided envelope, so I tore it off and determined to make another effort on the morrow. Again I lingered in the recitation room after the classes were dismissed.

"Have you another exercise, Miss Berne?" he asked sternly.

"No sir, your pocket handkerchief," I stammered out.

"Thank you, you are very kind; and this is your work? Really you are very thoughtful, and I am under obligations to you. Thank you, Miss Julia, a thousand times,"

said he looking-away from me, keeping his eye fixed steadily upon the black-board, and then he strode off. After this, I determined never to venture a remark, or salutation, or any kindness to this man again. He came daily, and went daily, and I never beset his path, or raised my eyes to his, or treated him with any more consideration than I was wont to treat old Mr. Very, who, by the way, seemed likely never to leave his bed again.

Mr. Barron behaved himself like a model French teacher during old Very's illness. Witcheron himself, in his happiest moments, could not have been more indifferent to a class of rosy budding French scholars, than was this exemplary Mr. Barron. The high dignitaries of the school were delighted with his performance, and, to the manifest disgust of his pupils, Mr. Very recovered. After this admirable heart trial, Mr. Barron was allowed to go at large on his parole. He had proved what metal he was made of, and he was henceforth free to go where he listed within those charmed walls.

The winter holydays were approaching, and the stern rules of the Seminary were somewhat relaxed. We were often invited into the parlor after tea, and it was evidently the wish of all parties to part in peace.

Miss Whisk too relaxed her cruel vigilance, and people were allowed to feel happy even in her presence. I fancied that Mr. Barron's manners to me were less stern and repulsive, but I determined to receive none of his tardy advances. And to one or two of his remarks concerning the weather and the vacation, I returned most chilling replies. I had the pleasure to see that he was very much astonished at this sudden crispness on the part of a lady formerly so cordial and so devoted, if the gentle-

man might judge from the manner I waylaid him in the recitation room, &c.

But there is no accounting for ladies' whims or for gentlemen's either, as I have lived to learn.

Everybody knows that Miss Whisk was the mouthpiece of the Seminary, the Right Rev. Mr. Manly the visible head, Old Witch. the football, Mr. Very the laughingstock, while Mr. Edward Barron filled the ornamental department, to the great admiration of Miss Whisk and her underlings. Miss Whisk, the mouthpiece, scorned poor old Witcheron, the football, who would have been remarkably civil to that cruel lady, had she countenanced his efforts in the least. She preferred appropriating Barron solely to herself. He submitted with a very good grace to her encroachments upon his patience and politeness. He conversed with her every evening after tea, until dismissed, never venturing a single random remark to the hundred and fifty, over whom this lady was suspended like the sword of Damocles.

Accordingly Miss Whisk's soap curls appeared every morning arranged in attitudes from the menacing to the tender. They were looking in her eyes and shading her brow like the tendrils of a vine, and laying on her cheek, and were likely by hook or by crook to insinuate themselves into the affections of somebody. Miss Whisk was overheard one day remarking to her mirror in confidence, as she stood complacently teaching those soap curls the right twist, that she intended to take that young man through before he could say Jack Robinson. I trembled for the fate of the Seminary's nephew; I knew the relentless Whisk in all her moods and tenses.

I knew if she said she would do a thing she would do it, though it rained pitchforks and weeding-hoes, to use her own highly poetical expression; and, therefore, I began to regard Mr. Barron as a doomed man—a brilliant light destined to be extinguished by the indomitable and pugnacious Whisk. The fiat had gone forth; he was to be suddenly entrapped by the mouthpiece of the Seminary, and all this was to be done before that exemplary man could say Jack Robinson. No wonder I regarded him as a Hindoo widow, about to be burnt for no earthly crime. I thought somebody, in mercy, ought to tell that young man that if he did not mind, he would be Whisked up before he could say Jack Robinson.

I was sitting as still as a mouse behind them, one evening, in the parlor (I never opened my lips where Miss Whisk was, she being as a straight-jacket upon me), and she was bridleing back and talking as only Miss Whisk could talk. She was relating an episode in her early life, of a lovely girl, who was beloved by a nice young music master. All this lady's experiences were made up of handsome, heart-breaking French masters, notorious first class teachers, and killing mathematicians.

But about this lovely victim of an Adonis of a music master. He flirted with her, so said Whisk, deliberately winning her affections, and then running off to another academy. This was the skeleton plot of Miss Whisk's academical romance. I need not fill out, how he courted her over music bars, and whispered in the pauses, and *de capos*. How no crotchet impeded his course; and finally, how he sneaked off with two valuable family rings

belonging to that deluded girl, and with which her family ought never to have trusted her, said the thrifty Whisk.

Suffice it to say, that this conduct on the part of the music master enraged Barron. He said that any teacher who would stoop to such a thing, was unworthy to teach the pure, fair daughters of our happy land. That no honorable man would dare to love a girl entrusted to him by her parents. For his part, he would sooner cut his throat, than whisper of love to the most beautiful and gifted young lady in the house. And that was why he objected to foreign teachers, generally; their habits and principles were unsuited to the delicate home flowers placed under their care. And he said a great many other beautiful things, in his grand, earnest way, which sank deep, very deep into my heart.

I had now a clue to his frigidity, implacable sternness, and utter impenetrability. The man was encased in principles, as unyielding as a network of iron. He would sooner cut his own throat, than breathe of love to me. The seductive pages of Corinne, read by lips all melody and freshness—the showers of light from beautiful eyes—the delicate attentions and attacks of all kinds, from French pupils bent on conquest, were all so much ammunition lost. The rock of Gibraltar would have trembled as soon as he. This towering lord of creation descended from his pedestal, and walked among us, but no pretty compliments, no sidelong glances, ever fell from him. I had never dreamed of a man like this. His god-like personal was no more grand, or noble, than his mind. The inner and the outer man were in beautiful harmony. On both were the unmistakable impress

of the master hand, and one felt exalted in their contemplation.

The hours flew merrily on, and the long wished for vacation was at hand. My aunt was detained in town by a slight indisposition, brought on by unusual exposure in damp weather. I accordingly put up at Mrs. Brady's, until we should return to dear, dull, old Underwood.

Mr. Barron came twice to Mrs. Brady's, and the old couple declared he came to see me; but as he scarcely spoke to me during either call, I concluded that these kind old people were laboring under a good-natured hallucination.

## CHAPTER VI.

MR. BARRON, MISS FENN, AND MR. WARREN.

MRS. WARREN'S evenings were taking place every week, and I was always in attendance, and literally surrounded by Andrew. Mr. Barron was frequently at these reunions, but he always stood aloof, saying little to me or to anybody else. Though eminently handsome, and of distinguished bearing and address, this young gentleman had, evidently, no ambition to shine in the saloons of fashion, or to dispute with Mr. Warren, his power over the hearts of the fair. I was at Mrs. Warren's last brilliant *soirée* for the season. Andrew's flatteries had exhilarated me, and I was the gayest of the gay. The music was irresistible, as so was Mr. Warren. We waltzed to the floating strains, and many beautiful forms were whirling gayly around. The waltz was over, and as I withdrew my arm from Mr. Warren's shoulder, I saw Barron, in an alcove, bending over Emilie. I shivered; my gay light heart sank like lead. But there he stood, talking earnestly with Emilie, apparently unconscious of my existence; and she was looking so fair and angelic. Her eyes were liquid and serene, and her dress chaste, exquisitely neat, and fairy-like. Her head was slightly inclined, and her pure profile turned to the magnificent eye of my idol. I held my breath, and braced myself up, that no mortal, not even

my cunning partner, should guess the intensity of my feelings. Dignity, grandeur, and loftiness of purpose, were essential to my ideal. Andrew was eloquent, delightful, and piquant, but he wanted the majesty and repose of the other. There was a want of earnestness and truth in the manners of this far-famed conqueror. His cleverness was more apparent than his sincerity. People would sometimes doubt his charming professions, and his fine eyes would waver in their expression. But Barron was truth in every look and tone. There was a stamp upon him, which no man could doubt.

Andrew begged Miss Roselle to waltz.

"I believe I will not waltz this evening," she said.

"Not waltz! Why you are the queen of waltzers," said Andrew.

"Am I? Then I abdicate in favor of Miss Berne; she is so passionately fond of that particular dance."

She had better not have made her last remark. It showed the cloven foot. Mr. Barron turned from her, and my beating heart told me he was approaching me.

"Do you not join the waltz?"

"No, sir," I replied at the risk of strangulation.

"Shall I draw this chair for you? Pray allow me."

"Thank you—I will sit here—thank you."

I was so painfully diffident in his society, that I fell to pinching my fan immoderately, until he plead for it with such a serio-comic air, that the ice was broken immediately.

"Pray how is your aunt this evening?" he inquired.

"I do not think she is so well. She is threatened with pneumonia, and her physician says she must be very careful, or she may have a violent attack.

"I am very sorry—is she in bed, Miss Julia?"

"Yes, sir, she has kept her bed these three days."

"Indeed!—then why are you not with her, Miss Julia?" This unexpected question rather startled me. I did not reply for some minutes.

"You must not think me rude—but it really seems to me, that you ought to have remained with her this evening."

"Perhaps I have very many reasons for not incommoding my aunt with my attentions, particularly when she is sick."

He was silent, and his brow was slightly bent, as though in thought.

"I assure you," said I, "I had much rather be at my aunt's bedside ministering to her wants, than——"

"In Mr. Warren's arms?" he asked.

"You mean waltzing?"

"Yes—I believe one is in a gentleman's arms, in that strange dance."

"Why Mr. Barron—you are so very old-fashioned!"

"Am I? But if you prefer being with your aunt, why are you not with her?"

"Shall I tell you?"

"If you please—for I can see no reason why a cherished niece should not be near her when she is sick."

"Well, my aunt is very rich, and I am dependent on her, as all the world knows. I would not have her think I was nursing her for her money, for the world."

"But you would not have her think you ungrateful?"

"No—but gratitude and sycophancy are so much alike."

"I think you are wrong. I tell you candidly, you are on the worst extreme."

"I had rather be called ungrateful, than sycophantic."

"Very well—but you need not be called either—shall I tell you what to do?"

"If you please."

"Leave this gay company immediately. I will go with you. Go to your aunt's bedside, and beg her to forgive you for your seeming neglect."

"But my aunt is so—so very morose."

"Never mind—your place is there. The rock has gushed forth living waters—and she is at heart your mother. Go—nurse her, Miss Julia—lavish your womanly tenderness on her, and smooth her weary pillow now. This is your place, my beloved—pupil."

I hesitated, and my eyes were on his glowing, noble countenance.

"Remember, God has given her an ungainly person, and her isolated life has not been calculated to foster that grace and tenderness so peculiar to her sex. But there are deep hearts, and true, with no nimble tongue to proclaim their depth, and truth, to every ear. Will you go with me? Get your shawl, and come. I will await you at the door."

I glided quietly out, threw on my shawl, and ran quickly to him.

He had a kind glance for me; and his royal eye kindled when I placed my hand in his, and said, "Let us go."

We went to Mr. Brady's, and were informed that my aunt was suffering very much. I confessed to Mr. Bar-

ron that I was ashamed to go into my aunt's room, decked out for a ball. He thought I was right, and bade me take off my jewels, and borrow an apron and cape from Mrs. Brady. He did not know me, if he thought I would venture before him in Mrs. Brady's old-fashioned black cape, and quaint narrow apron. I went to my room, smoothed my hair, put on a plain chintz wrapper, and returned to him in the parlor. He was sitting by the fire in thought. He turned as I entered, and then he took my hand, and, looking at me with a smile, which I would have bought at any price, he said—

"Ah, you are a good girl, my beloved pupil, you deserve——"

"I am already rewarded," said I, and then our diffidence overcame us, as usual, at the most interesting point of our conversation, and he released my hand abruptly. After some minutes he arose, and said; "Now go, Miss Julia, to the bedside of your aunt. I will come again to-morrow. Good night."

"Good night," I returned, feeling a better, and happier being, from that hour. I sat a moment looking at the fire, but I saw him stop at the door to look at me, ere he closed it, and I fancied how it must have pleased him to see me following his advice without a murmur, and yielding up to his better judgment so implicitly.

I tripped lightly into the dim quiet room. My aunt was lying with her eyes half closed, moaning heavily. Her faithful servant woman sat near the bed nodding; for this old sentinel never left her post. I drew near the invalid, and, taking her hand, pressed it to my lips.

"Julia, is it you?"

"Yes, it is I; can I do anything for you?"

"No, child, no—I thought there was a party this evening."

"There is a party at Mrs. Warren's, but I followed the advice of my best friend, and came away to you."

"You did not follow your own inclination, then; you had better go back; go back, mother-like, to your silly fancies."

"Dear aunt, let me stay. Forgive me for my seeming neglect; I had rather be here with you."

"No; there is nothing attractive about me; I am old, and ugly."

"But you have been very kind to me. You are all the friend I have in the world. I am grateful, truly grateful, for the benefits you have heaped upon me; but I have held back, while others flattered you. I could not cringe, and fawn, dear aunt, and would not say what I really feel, because——"

"You need not go any further, child, I can guess the rest; my will is made, and nothing you can do can change it."

"I am glad of that; now I am free to act as I will. Do you forgive me? I shall not feel any peace until I am forgiven."

"There is nothing to forgive, child. I did not expect you to prefer a sick room to the gay world. I am only surprised that you thought of me at all."

"But we will not talk of this; I can see you expected nothing good from me; now try and sleep, while I relieve aunt Peggy here, and keep watch in her place."

She turned her face to the wall, and a solitary tear trickled down a well-worn furrow, worn by sorrow, long ago. I tucked myself in a large arm-chair, and while

the invalid lay sleeping, and fantastic shadows were dancing and sprawling upon the wall, I launched out into a reverie. The time, and the solitude, were propitious, and I luxuriated in thought.

I thought that people appeared so different from what they really were. Mrs. Warren, apparently all warmth, and sincerity, had no more heart than a rock. Andrew, so blithe, and graceful, with his low modulations, and tender eyes, had proved himself to be remorseless and cruel. And, after all, perhaps my quaint old aunt, with her wrinkled visage, slow tongue, and repulsive manners, had some love and kindness carefully concealed somewhere. Poor old grim Aunt Franky! She seemed to have been made up of all the odds and ends left on nature's hands, after finishing off a variety of characters. What a life she must have led of her long sixty-five years! What a girlhood was hers—with a young girl's busy fancies, and yearning tendernesses, and a face as hard, and knotted, and gnarled, as an oaken stump. How her trusting tendernesses and woman's weaknesses (in the beautiful so worshiped) must have been thrown scowlingly back upon her, as she stretched them out, poor thing, upon one favored object, and then upon another; until her goodness turned to gall, and soured, and fermented, like S. P. Townsend's Sarsaparilla. And then her sister—the petted belle, in whose rare beauty, and triumphs, she exulted as if they had been her own; on whom she looked with strange wonder and delight, keeping her secrets for her, and the long list of her beaux, and seeing her suitors coming from afar, while she had none; and then to be left by this last and best beloved, on whom she had lavished so much, left without

a parting word, or a half-spoken regret, for an Adonis of a week's acquaintance! I could not blame her for being so niggardly of her tenderness to me. I could not blame her for not opening her bosom to be rent again. These, and better thoughts, came over me in the stillness of the sick room; while the invalid lay struck by her God, and murmured not; and the deep lines, which had been deepening ever since my childhood, sunk deeper yet.

Andrew sent his servant, who with honeyed words and compliments, caught fresh from his model master, distributed daily, pasteboard and bouquets.

Mrs. Warren sent jellies, ices, blanc-mange, and compliments. But Mr. Barron came himself, with consolation and encouragement on his lips, and kindness beaming from his glorious eye. He came once to see Mr. Brady, and after a consultation with that gentleman, he sent in to know if he could see my aunt.

"Who is it?" she inquired of the servant.

"Mr. Barron, madam, sends his compliments and begs to be admitted to see you this morning."

"Tell him to come, I shall be glad to see him; tell him to come."

He came, with gentle step and rather diffident grace, and took his seat very near her. I sat shrunk up in a corner, and a golden sunbeam came in the dim room and rested on the head of him I—adored. My aunt began to talk of death, but his firm lip quivered not, and he upheld the weak woman in her faith. It was a glorious thing to him, the bound from time into eternity. He read to her, and bade her heart be strong. He was as a staff to her as she descended into the dark valley.

I had never seen anything like this before. I knew not what Religion and Faith were, but I knew it now. After much conversation with her he said—

"But I have been requested to say something to you which I am afraid may offend you."

"Nothing you can say can offend me," said my aunt, quickly.

"Presuming upon that I shall speak out boldly. Mr. Berne," here my aunt winced, "your brother-in-law, is very sick at Gainesport. He has been there three months—has written repeatedly to his friends here, who have not noticed his communications. This morning Mr. Brady received a letter saying he was still sick in Gainesport, without a dollar in the world." My aunt said nothing. I left the room weeping. I got all my pocket money and gave it to Mr. Brady, to send to my papa. I believe my aunt sent him a hundred dollars, but it was sent anonymously.

Mr. Warren called at eleven o'clock, on his way to a *dejeuner*, to say that he had received a letter that morning from my papa, who, he was extremely sorry to say, was quite sick in Gainesport. But he hoped he would come up in the next boat; indeed, he was quite certain he would come, as both he and his mamma had written him to come immediately to their house.

"We were informed of his sickness," said I, calmly.

"By whom, Miss Julia?"

"Mr. Brady had a letter, I believe, sir."

"But Mr. Brady did not tell you?"

"No, Mr. Barron told my aunt."

"Mr. Barron told your aunt! and pray, what on the

face of the earth has Mr. Barron to do with your aunt?"

"He is my aunt's spiritual adviser."

"And newsman, I presume."

"How can you be so ungentlemanly?"

"I can be anything I choose."

"No, you cannot, Mr. Warren."

"What is it I cannot be? pray tell me, to refresh me this morning."

"No, I will not; but there is one *rôle*, evidently not for you."

"Always mysterious, and always piquing a man within an inch of his life!"

"And Miss Emilie—how is she?"

"Emilie! ah she is now, I dare say, before her dressing table, finishing off the most charming demi-toilette that ever provoked a man aspiring to be indifferent. But how is aunty, our dear aunty, this morning?"

"She is convalescing slowly, her physician thinks—"

"Indeed! why I heard she was getting worse; I heard she was about to die, and sent that ill-conditioned fellow, Barron, after you, the evening you were at our house."

"Ned Barron ill-conditioned!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, a scamp—a kidnapper, if you like."

"Surely the world has turned around since I left it."

"Yes, it has revolved upon its axis very many times. But what shall we do with papa? Let me beg you to deport yourself like a dutiful niece, Julia. Do not, for my sake, go moping about your aunt's bed, and talking of your papa. Be quiet, the storm will blow over. I will take care of him when he comes. Mamma has had the neatest little suite of rooms fitted up for him, and

he shall have every comfort, upon my word, if you will only patronize aunty, and say nothing about him."

I was silent, and he went on.

"Now, my pet, how charming this would be. Let me manage papa, and you sit, night and day, by aunty. We nurse them both until they recover, and then a denouement will take place—all parties become reconciled, and after that, the marriage."

"What marriage?"

"I declare, Julia, you are enough to vex Job."

"I have anything but a job, this morning."

"I really do not know, sometimes, what to do with you, Julia. The most astonishing developments are taking place in you, under my very eyes. Not many months ago, there arose in our firmament a phenomenon, which the knowing ones thought might be fashioned, by a skillful hand, into a star of strange brilliancy, and of the first magnitude. Well, I took you in hand, as you know, lecturing you on all occasions, explaining and expounding to you until I was hoarse, making love to you that you might learn how these things were done, and giving you the advantage of my experience, and taste, until you reached forth, with an air, and took the reins completely out of my hands! Yes, the phenomenon which I so skillfully nursed, waxed into a brilliant light, and grew grand and glorious, and with a superb sweep made for its proper place, which was first in the broadest galaxy of our firmament. And now, I stand amazed at my own work, and like the sculptor, would fain warm it with my love; but it really seems you grow colder every day, that I am imperceptibly, but surely, getting further and further from the point; and that I might as well woo a bright particular star, and think, forsooth, to wed it."

I smiled, and consulted my watch.

"Have you an engagement?" he asked.

"No, but you have one, I think."

"Thank you, you are very obliging! Good morning; what shall I say to Emilie?"

"And what shall I say to Mr. Barron?"

"Ah! by the way," said he, returning and taking my hand, "just say to him that Miss Roselle cannot see him before 5 o'clock, as she had a previous engagement."

He had triumphed now. I turned as pale as a sheet, the room began to whirl and grow dark, and the gentleman was kind enough to say I fainted in his arms, but I lost only five minutes by the watch, for which I could not account.

My aunt continuing sick, Mrs. Bland and suite were brought up from Underwood, and took lodgings at Mr. Brady's. I inquired of the home folks about poor Sally. Mrs. Bland said she had left orders for her to be locked up a day or two after her departure, and then to be allowed to run at large. She said she had to keep her under lock and key, more than a week after I left Underwood, for Sally had serious ideas of coming to the city herself.

My astonishment can easily be imagined, on seeing (in a couple of days after Mrs. Bland's arrival), the refined, but excessively nimble Mr. Warren rushing down the street like one possessed, while Sally, with dishevelled hair, and Smut, in a furious bark, were making after him with might and main. Sally with upraised hands and floating hair, screaming out at the top of her voice:—

"Man! monster of Athens! ere we part,  
Give, oh! give me back my heart!"

and Smut, carrying out the idea of his mistress to the extent of his canine capacity, by making it the aim of his life to tear his coat tails, short as they were, and indeed to do any damage in his power, to this fleet monster of Athens.

Fortunately for Mr. Warren's reputation, this terrific and unprecedented trial of speed came off about 9 o'clock A. M., in an unfrequented street leading up to Mrs. Askew's, the dressmaker. I saw him from Mrs. Askew's window, rush palpitating into the firm of "A. Head & Co.," and slam the door of "A. Head & Co." into Sally's face and Smut's tail, and all the while undergoing a furious pantomime, undertaken solely to modify the intent and dangerous Sally, from which he seemed to be getting rid of Smut, and assuring the dark lady of Doonah, to the best of his startled abilities, that he was not the man, upon his word he was not. This was, under all the circumstances, the richest scene I ever witnessed. But I cannot describe it; I had rather act it. Act how the baffled Sally shook her fist at that thin partition, "A. Head & Co's." glass door; act how Smut tore and battered away upon it, in his unsatisfied wrath, and how the lady killer stood, bland and safe behind it, smiling, and still denying all knowledge of that horrid monster of Athens, who had run off with the lady's heart, thereby provoking renewed demonstrations of unabated hostility on the part of both mistress and dog.

I shook the cobwebs from my brain on this occasion, for I was breaking out into paroxysms of laughter all the way home. To think of the dainty touch-me-not Mr. Warren, shut up in Abel Head's cheap pickled herring and mackerel store, remaining a strange fish in

pickle, until the street was clear of Sally and her terrific ally, Smut. Mrs. Bland encountered him in the Hall, the next day, as he was bowing his adieux with a party of ladies, and her great eyes were, thereupon, glued to him apparently for life. She rushed, gasping, into the parlor, nearly walking through the back of a rocking-chair, and, though wounded by the unexpected rencontre with the rocking-chair, she persisted in declaring that the ghost of her own mother couldn't have frightened her more, for he was the very identical, unmistakable man, who had served poor Sally so. "And not a day older," cried the good lady, "nor his hair on his lip one inch longer than when he turned upon his heel in my brother's porch, and left that gal crazy in the house. While Sally has suffered ages upon ages, to judge from her altered looks. The ways of Providence will ever be unscrutable to me after this," wound up our housekeeper, proceeding to rub her side, and to attend to the punch and hard dig given her by the arm of the rocking-chair for attempting to walk through its back.

I dare say Mr. Warren discovered that there was not so much romance in mending up broken hearts, as he had once imagined. The reader remembers how he talked to me on the subject, and how beautifully he expressed himself on that occasion. These were his words:—

"What a task for him who crushed the flower to nurse it back to life! to restore the missing links in fond memory's chain! Her tears, her songs, her sadness, her whims, her beauty's wreck, the wild fire of her eye, the

fierce passion of her tongue, all! all would rivet me to her."

I wanted very much to ask him what he thought now of her whims, the wild fire of her eye, and fierce passion of her tongue: at all events they did not seem to rivet him to her, for never did mortal man, or race-horse, throw feet so fast to the ground, as did Mr. Warren, with Sally and Smut in the rear.

He kept this adventure a profound secret; not even Abel Head & Co. could ever learn the name of the flying dandy who took refuge in their shop. Of course, I did not allude to his rapid traveling, or even venture to say that he had beat the telegraph that morning, though I purposely let a word or two escape me on the subject of deranged persons generally. But he never looked or acted like a man who had been chased, alive, by his offended mistress.

## CHAPTER VII.

AFTER WHICH THE INDULGENT READER MAY CLOSE THE BOOK AND GO TO SLEEP.

THE warm days in February were come, in which old winter relaxes his severity, and lets the world see how very pleasant he can be when he chooses. Gay ladies were flaunting the streets; children and nurses, little boys and old men were out in the pleasant sunshine. My aunt's bed was rolled up to the window, and her wan face looked grateful for the gently tempered air and the soft sunbeams. We had tidings, too, from papa, who was convalescing, and expected very soon to see us. Andrew seemed determined to devote these pleasant days to me. He was in once or twice a day, and nothing could exceed his genial, pleasant manner, when the sun shone and the streets were thronged. The mornings I devoted to my aunt; the afternoons were spent with Andrew. We were walking gayly out of town one afternoon, and it seemed that his heart was softened by the gentle, balmy weather, and he began to excuse his notorious heartlessness towards the ladies. He said circumstances had forced him to this dreadful extreme. But I must use his own words, first premising that his countenance was radiant in the mellow light, his eye tender and pleading, and his voice to correspond. I

was hanging on his arm inhaling the delicious air, and he went on to say—

“You must go back to my childhood to account for my failings. I was my mother's only child, and she a gay, charming widow. From my babyhood I have been caressed and adored by these affectionate creatures; and they assured me on all sides that I was destined to be a most captivating fellow, and that they were then watching my growth and developments with palpitating hearts. Under their eyes, and basking in their smiles, I grew up as you see me—with the form of a man, but with the heart of a woman. I loved everybody who was the least loveable. I was raised on love, fed on love, and altogether, they said, was a love of a fellow. I have made love to ladies of double my age; old maids figure on my list, as do also widows; and I once came very near dying of a hopeless passion for a coquettish married lady.

“My first attack was brought on in this way: I returned from the preparatory school to wait on a friendly Soph., who was about to be married. At this fatal wedding I happened to see a lovely girl sitting in a neglected corner, and I rushed chivalrously to her rescue. Her eyes lighted up, and she became so delightful, and *exigent*, that I could not tear myself away from her the whole evening. Well, she fell in love with me, and persists in loving me to this day. I saved her from neglect, and these ladies are always so powerfully grateful and so terribly constant! Dear me! how I have suffered from unexpected and ambushed ladies possessed of fond memories and unforgetting hearts, and all that. I could relate dozens of scrapes, my dear girl, in which it really

seemed to me that Fate was standing at my back, pushing me violently into them, regardless of my better judgment and repentant heart."

"Poor fellow!" said I, completely harrowed by the conduct of *Fate*.

"You may well say 'poor fellow,' for I have had more cause to complain of the constancy and unyielding pertinacity of the sex than any man living. Is it not hard, now, that after having been loved scores of times, and often trying to shake off really beautiful creatures, whom neglect only seemed to make more deluded, I should now be shaken off myself, and find my prayers unheeded, while my very soul is dissolving in the intensity of my love?"

"She loves you," I said, quietly.

"Who loves me?"

"Emilie."

"Very well; you may play at cross-questions as long as you find it amusing, but you know, now, do you not, that it is not Emilie whom I love?"

"Yes, I know all about that, I declare; but have you heard from papa to-day?"

"Yes, we had a message by telegraph. He is coming to-morrow to our house. I am to receive him as soon as he touches the land, and will report his condition and appearance immediately to you."

When we returned I learned that Mr. Barron had left his card, at which Andrew declared he met that fellow everywhere.

"I gave Emilie up to him, Julia—I gave her up freely—and now he comes thrusting his bits of pasteboard at you!"

My aunt had been inquiring impatiently for me, the servant said, and I went in to her.

"Where have you been, Julia?" she asked, in a fretful tone.

"I have been walking, but did not think it was so late."

"Only walking—have you only been walking?"

"Yes, my dear aunt. You do not feel so well, I am afraid?"

"No, child; I weaken every day, and this pain in my side has never yielded to blister, or medicine, or treatment of any kind."

She gave me her hand to rub, and then she talked to me of my mother. How beautiful and gay she appeared, but how miserably deceived she was in the man of her choice. How, finding her home unpleasant, and her husband indifferent, she plunged into dissipation, and was borne off by death, while her heart clung closer and closer to the world, and its pleasures.

"But will you let me go to see papa, when he comes?" I ventured to ask.

"Julia, you have perjured yourself! You promised never to pronounce that name in my presence; to forget the man who broke your mother's heart, and throw you away!"

"But I must do something for him; I must minister to him. My father shall not be sick and penniless as long as I have willing hands to work."

"And what can you do for the penniless?"

"I can nurse him, and give him all my pocket money, and the little watch and chain you gave me, and this ring."

"And you will leave me, for him?"

"No—I would not forsake you for anybody under the sun. But when you are asleep, and do not want me, I can go to him and see that he is comfortable, and doing well; and then come back to you."

"No, you cannot. Go, but do not come back! Go, if you prefer it; but the consequences be upon your own head!"

I wept like a child; I begged her to relent, and called my God to witness my devotion to her, but she turned a deaf ear to my entreaties. She waved her attenuated hand to me, and I left her in tears. I stole away into the quiet parlor, and, shutting the door, I folded my hands together, and prayed. I prayed for a knowledge of the right, and strength to do it; and I poured my sorrows into the listening ear of the God of mercy and forgiveness. My aunt would not admit me to her room; but when she slept, old Peggy turned the bolt, and beckoned me in. I crept up to her, and kissed her forehead, and forgave her in my heart, for her jealousy and severity. Then I left her, and returned to the lonely old parlor. I sat by the solitary lamp, and the tears rose often to my eyes, but I placed my trust on High.

Mr. Barron came in late, and asked me what was the matter. I told him I had more trouble than I could bear. He asked to share it with me, and I frankly told him all. I assured him that I never expected my aunt to forgive me. She never forgave people; but that, I must see papa.

"I do not know how to advise you," he said thoughtfully.

"Just suppose your father were sick, and without money, or friends, would you not go to him?"

"Yes, through everything."

"And leave your aunt, who had been more than father or mother to you?"

"I would endeavor to compromise."

"Ah! so did I; but I cannot."

"Nevertheless, I would try again. I would never give up, when I knew I was right."

"But it is so different to act, and to talk. I think as you do, but still I am at a loss what to do."

"Why, go to your aunt again, and again, and again, and remonstrate."

"Exactly; but the door is closed against me."

"I would beg to be admitted."

"But in the mean time papa will come, and his own daughter will not be there to welcome him."

He took my hand, and said kindly:

"My beloved pupil, you would be a dutiful daughter, and a grateful niece; my advice to you is to meet your papa, and welcome him affectionately, as your own good heart will dictate; and then return to your aunt, and never give up until she sees you again. Surely she cannot resist *your* tenderness, and *your* entreaties. I am sure she will forgive you; at all events, this seems to me to be the proper course for you."

"Thank you, thank you a thousand times; my own heart always sanctions your counsel; and I shall act as you advise."

Well, this strong-minded man was actually overcome by these simple thanks. His eyes were humid, and his great heart was moved.

Whenever I tried to attract his attention, I never could; but when I forgot all my airs and graces, taught me by Andrew, and was earnest and sincere, this man was always overcome—completely overcome.

The next morning, I determined to go to Mrs. Warren's, and be ready to receive papa when he arrived. Before I could get off, Mr. Warren called, and said the boat had arrived.

"And papa is come?"

"Yes, but I came to say that you had better not see him yet. Do not say a word about him to your aunt. He does not wish you to exasperate her by going to him. Think of this, Julia, your papa is improving every day, and your poor aunt is declining; perhaps if you leave her in this way, it may shorten her days. You know she is a woman of strong feelings, and her anger, at such a step on your part, might really retard her recovery, if it did no worse."

I listened in profound silence.

"Now, Julia, I leave you: go to you aunt, and I will attend to papa. Follow my advice, my dearest girl, and you will never regret it."

I sat perfectly still, and saw him make his inimitable bow, and depart.

In a few minutes, Mr. Barron was announced. He asked me if my aunt still refused me admittance to her room. I told him I had begged in vain to see her, and began to cry, for my heart was full. He walked the room like a troubled spirit. He came to me—bent over me—and then resumed his walking, while I sat weeping.

"Julia, will you go with me to your aunt's room?" he

asked, raising my head, and gently smoothing back my curls, "I want to take you in to her, if you will go."

"Well, we will go together," said I, wiping my eyes.

"Now?"

"Yes, now."

He called a servant, and asked if he could see my aunt, and a message was brought him, that she would be happy to see him, and was very glad he had called. He took me by the hand, and led me directly to her bed, saying:

"My dear madam, I bring this true-hearted girl back to you. Surely I need not plead for *her*, you know her better than I do; you *must* know the truth and sincerity of her heart."

My aunt stretched forth her trembling hand to me, and said:

"Mr. Barron, I know her, sir. I know her, thank God; and I am not deceived this time. Julia, I open my heart to you, child—you have stood the test."

This was the happiest moment of my life!

After this happy reconciliation, he led me back to the parlor, and said he wanted to talk with me. He had not said half to me he wanted to say; indeed, he confessed that he never had talked to me enough in his life. I was smiling and happy, and he delighted at his success with my aunt.

Mr. Brady called Mr. Barron in the hall; and in half an hour, Mrs. Brady came to me, and took me in her arms, and told me my papa was dead. He did not arrive in the boat. He had never sent any message by telegraph, had never written to Mr. Warren, but died in the hospital at Gainesport, never having left it since he

was deposited there. All Andrew's glowing accounts were only intended to quiet me for the time. He knew my poor papa was dying, and yet he told me he was getting well. These were sad, sad thoughts. My poor father had died in a hospital—had gone off without a tear, or the pressure of a hand, into an unknown land. But no pen can trace my feelings at this event. It seemed that I was growing old with grief.

My aunt was getting worse, her days were numbered, and, with a heart purified by affliction, I sat by her and watched her fading away. Here was a traveler girding herself for a far journey; here was a spirit loosening its earthly ties for flight; here was a childless, morose, unloved woman growing brighter every day. The shut heart was opening, and its treasures yielding up. Her eye would often rest upon me, as though I were the tie binding her strongest to earth. Her erring sister's child would be left, when she was gone, to battle alone in the world she deemed so harsh.

"Julia, poor child!" she said, "the lesson of my life has been, 'Trust not to appearances.' Good hearts do not proclaim their own goodness; charity vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up. I cannot talk, child—I never could. No gift of speech ever won good will for me. I must go, and you will be left, but remember this as long as you live—'Trust not to appearances.'"

The day and the hour came—as appointed ages ago—and found the solitary woman ready and waiting for the summons.

She died as she had lived—firm and unshaken in her belief, and undaunted before the messenger from the Silent Land. Peace be to her!

My aunt left many directions with her executor, Mr. Brady. She requested that no pomp or display should attend her interment. She did not want Mr. and Mrs. Warren, the oily chief of the Seminary, and very many other persons, unknown to these pages, to attend her funeral. Nobody was to wear black for her except Mrs. Bland, her servant Peggy, and myself. Her house at Underwood was to be shut up, as she had left it, for twenty years; after which it was to be reopened and fitted up as a house of refuge for ugly women, not gifted with flippancy of speech or any other worldly attraction.

For further directions, she had appended to her will a sixth page. To her woman, Peggy, she left \$5000; the interest of which, at Peggy's discretion, was to be distributed annually among the superannuated negroes on her estates. And this faithful Peggy—whom my aunt had loved most tenderly through her long life—she bequeathed, at Peggy's request, to me. This touched me to the heart. The faithful slave and bosom friend she left to me! God reward thee, my aunt!

Another request of my aunt's was, that her will should be kept a profound secret for a year and a day. The executor and legatees only should know its contents before the expiration of that time. I was my aunt's heiress. To me she gave two-thirds of her estate, and everything she had prized on earth—her old servants, her mementoes, family portraits, jewelry, my mother's miniature—which she always wore—and many other relics, which served to prove how strong a hold I had on her affections. The remaining third of this immense estate was divided between Mrs. Brady, Mrs. Bland, poor Sally, and Peggy—my aunt having, years ago,

apportioned and set apart, in certain hands, the large sums she intended for charitable purposes.

My poor aunt, mysterious in life and in death, left many puzzling directions, the wisdom of some of which time gradually unfolded. She was, from my childhood, a mystery to me; and even now I find myself wishing for a clue to the workings of that stern silent heart—its yearnings and aspirations, its hopes and disappointments, its teachings and sorrows, and its stoical strength under every trial.

Perhaps the person who loved me best on earth, was that ungainly, unattractive aunt. Never again would I trust to appearances.

The summer-hearted Andrew had soft and pretty condolences for me in my afflictions. He wiped his humid eye, and looked askance at my very plain, almost coarse mourning. He dwelt eloquently upon the many virtues of the deceased, and was literally dying to know about the will—for nothing could be done on his part, until that mysterious will was proven.

Mr. Brady came in during Mr. Warren's call, and said he had engaged the cheapest lodgings he could find up town for me.

"Lodgings for you! Miss Julia—pray where are you going to think of lodging?" asked Mr. Warren, quickly.

"I shall lodge on Bond Street—in Mrs. Dean's boarding-house, is it, Mr. Brady?"

"Yes, and you have only to pay a hundred dollars per annum—which is the best part of it," said Mr. Brady intentionally.

Suddenly the light dawned upon Mr. Warren. Surely I was left out in the will! He sat a few moments—

playing the agreeable to the last—and then, saying he would see me again, bowed himself out.

I had determined to test the love of this young gentleman, and—of another. I had the honor of being loved for my aunt's money—the idea was appalling. I had heard that gentlemen were given to such tricks. I suspected Andrew, simply from his ardent devotion to my aunt. I did not, in my heart, accuse Barron, but I must not trust to appearances—and he could, at least, stand the trial.

Therefore, during the year and day, I affected poverty. I denied myself all the pleasures my new wealth could afford me, and lived exactly like a young lady of uncommonly moderate means. I had the satisfaction of seeing myself dropped like a hot iron, by my most ardent friends. Mrs. Warren cooled gradually, but very perceptibly; Miss Roselle neither saw, or recognized me, and my whilom admirer, the ill shaped man, stared at me as though he saw a monstrous and appalling cannibal. Mr. Warren would generally bustle up to me, when forced to do so, inquire kindly after my health, and then turn off, saying he would see me again. He was more afraid of me than of his own tailor. He dodged me, and eluded me in every way he could, but always spoke tenderly and politely to me when retreat was impossible. The man had a good heart, and talents of no mean order. He had ambition, too—inordinate ambition—unfortunately it was misdirected, and he escaped being a great man—yes, poor Andrew—whom I sincerely pitied—had a good kind heart, which he trampled on, and neglected, that he might break ladies' hearts, and obtain wealth. He had been very kind to me—and even now could not

turn from me without a kind word, and his eternal promise to see me again. I am convinced that he had to struggle a little, perhaps a very little, before he could get his own consent to forget me.

But he could not alter the will—and he determined to increase his attentions to my lovely rival, Miss Roselle. Report gave him credit for being in earnest with Emilie. People said he loved her very much in his way, and she loved him very much in her way.

I will do him the justice to say, that he resigned all pretensions to my hand with inimitable grace, and with much show of good feeling. Perhaps this was the greatest favor he ever did me. This thing of resigning a lady's hand, after an ardent courtship, is a very delicate business indeed—requiring all a man's tact, and self-possession, and great power over the expression, and tones of voice. It must be done naturally too, and with much tenderness. Mr. Warren performed admirably, and the difficult parts were well sustained.

They were married, Andrew and Emilie, in a magnificent church, surrounded by troops of friends, and were feted and caressed by all the town. Mrs. Bland found poor Sally standing in the rear of the church during the ceremony, and very adroitly contrived to convince her that it was a funeral, instead of a bridal. Poor Sally was led off weeping bitterly at so untoward an event, and immediately went home and tied a black ribbon around Smut's neck, in honor of the unexpected death of the monster of Athens.

After Mr. Warren's marriage, it was whispered that Mr. Bolton presented him with a formidable account, against Miss Roselle, now Mrs. Warren, instead of the

expected marriage portion. It seems that Miss Emilie was a Creole of much beauty, and more ambition—that she prevailed upon Mr. Bolton, while in New Orleans, to take her with him to Virginia, and to introduce her into society as his niece, as she had set her heart upon getting into one of the first families of our aristocratic State. Mr. Bolton was, furthermore, to pay all expenses, which she promised to refund him, together with many other debts due him from her mother, which already figured on Mr. Bolton's list as bad debts. Her game being now successfully played, and Mr. Bolton himself having an eye to matrimony and its expenses, he presented the account in full during the honeymoon.

Mr. Bolton was the accepted lover of Miss Whisk, of the Seminary—indeed was to be married in a few days, and he wanted his money immediately.—The reader knows Miss Whisk—how persevering and indefatigable she was in matrimonial speculations, as in soap curls; and I know if he has any compassion in his breast, he will bestow it upon my unfortunate hero, Mr. Warren, who is now in her hands.

Mr. Bolton, finding the newly married couple very keen in the article of filthy lucre, and that he was not likely to collect the debt, without a world of trouble, gave it to Whisk, the morning after her marriage. She set a pack of lawyers upon poor Andrew, and nearly worried him to death about that debt. It finally caused a separation between that gentleman and his beautiful wife. I had as well say here, that they dissolved partnership by mutual consent, after a trial of two years.

Then Mrs. Emilie Warren petitioned the legislature about her claims, and, after amusing the public, and

filling the journals with their matrimonial jars, the affair was adjusted. The legislature voted them no longer man and wife—making the priest's work a mere nothing in the eyes of the law; and unanimously voted Mrs. Warren back into Miss Emilie Roselle, by which name she is known to this day.

The year and the day had not expired before Mr. Barron found me in my secluded lodgings. I heard him inquiring of the landlady if Miss Berne was there, and my heart began to beat. He came in, and taking both my hands, looked at me earnestly, and long.

"You are so changed—so sadly changed," said he.

"Have I not had enough to change me?" I asked, looking up into his manly face.

"But, my beloved pupil," he said kindly, "I came to beg you not to yield to your feelings in this way. Have you no comforts under your afflictions? Can you not rally, and think all is for the best? Does the first blast of sorrow sweep away all buoyancy and hope? My dear girl, I thought you were made of stronger metal."

"Listen to me," said I, drawing away my pale hands from his warm clasp: "I have to bear the whole burden myself. I have no brother, no sister, and, I sometimes think, no friend. I have not even a home; and, day after day, I sit here at this little window, in which a sickly sunbeam peeps once a day, and think I fain would go where all I loved are gone. Remember, I am but seventeen, and sorrow, like this, is new to me. Do not blame me if I succumb. I have striven against it in my solitude, but I shall have to yield at last."

"My poor Julia, I cannot bear to see you so unlike

yourself. Tell me frankly, do you not pine for the living more than the dead?"

"I do not understand you."

"Forgive me, I would not wound you for the world; but, Julia, has not the cruelty of him you loved, cost you more than the afflictions sent by God?"

"The person whom I love has never been cruel."

"Has not Mr. Warren—"

"I never loved Mr. Warren."

"You never loved Mr. Warren!"

"Shall I tell you the truth?"

"If you please, for I cannot get it elsewhere."

"Well, Mr. Warren knew my views upon that subject six months ago. I refer you to Mr. Brady, and, if you like, to Mr. Warren himself."

Mr. Barron began to walk the floor, as usual, when perturbed. He halted several times to look at me as he walked on. I sat sewing at the window, calm and self-possessed.

"You never loved Mr. Warren, Julia!" he said three times to me in his frantic promenade.

"No, sir, I never loved Mr. Warren."

"Then I have to unravel a whole year—with your permission."

"Very well, rip up old 1850, and let me know the result."

"No; I had rather begin in December, '49—that was the year you hemmed the pocket handkerchief for me; was it not?"

"Oh, Mr. Barron, what a memory you have!" I exclaimed, sewing away furiously.

"It was all brought on by those famous forget-me-nots you twined around my name."

"You jest, surely."

"I like to jest in this way with you. But I hope you were not jesting when you said you never loved Mr. Warren!"

"No, indeed."

"Not jesting! Bless me, Julia, I must return to my delightful task of unraveling that dear old '49."

I was silent, and Mr. Barron's jutting brow was bent in thought. He was busy with the pranks of dear old '49. I thought I would leave him to his pleasant thoughts, as he seemed to have nothing further to say to me.

"Really, you must not go out," said he, grasping my arm.

"I will return——"

"No; I must have you there—just there where you were sitting. I must have you there, Julia, to—to—look at."

"To look at! I thought you had looked at me long enough."

"Never in my life did I ever dare—I say dare—to look at even the tip of your little finger long enough."

"Mr. Barron!"

"And as to your eyes—oh dear me!—those eyes, with their jealous drooping lids, have cost me more than any pair of eyes under the sun. They have taken my thoughts to themselves for whole days at a time; they have delayed my promotion; broken in upon my studies; and made me the most miserable of men. I have often

wished that those eyes would look kindly or not look at all."

Of course, I had nothing to say to this rigmarole. I hope the reader does not expect me to speak, while being clutched by an iron hand, and forcibly detained to listen to this fierce flow of compliments.

"Come, and sit down, Julia; I have something to say to you—something important to say to you."

"I had rather not hear it," said I, blushing very much.

"You had rather not hear what, Julia?" said he, smiling.

"That something you had to say to me," I replied, completely overwhelmed with confusion.

"But, my dear girl, you must hear it."

"Ah! do not tell me now, Mr. Barron. Have mercy on me. I will give you credit for having said it, if you choose."

"You will? Then I claim an answer."

"Oh, worse and worse!" I cried, in dismay.

"Yes, my coy, but beloved, pupil. I must have an answer to that important something which I was just now so fully prepared to say," said he, seating me back at the window, and taking a very determined attitude indeed.

"I am afraid to answer you—indeed I am."

"Why, Miss Julia?"

"Because—I do not know exactly—upon my word—I do not know what you intended to say."

"I intended to say——"

"No—I don't think you did."

"But I *did* intend to say that——"

"Oh, Mr. Barron, if you will stop I will——"

"You will do what?"

"I will be very happy indeed."

"But the question is, whether you will consent to make *me* very happy indeed."

I felt confounded. I knew this was the great something he had intended to say. For the life of me, I could not reply. My seclusion and rapid decline in upper tendom, had made me diffident to a painful degree, and Mr. Barron himself, to use a Virginianism, seemed so frustrated, that a dead halt took place just here in our animated conversation, and we were awfully silent. I would have given a large sum to have cleared the window, and run for dear life to Mrs. Brady's. In the mean time, our watches ticked gayly on, telling us that time could not halt with us.

At this interesting crisis, I verily believe I swallowed my own heart, for I swallowed a very large something which kept coming up in my throat.

At last, the clock on the mantel struck three; Mr. Barron declared he did not think it was so late, to which I quickly assented; and then—if the ladies will believe me—he arose to go, and majestically took his departure; leaving me with that word "Yes," of which we have all heard so much, on the tip of my tongue and undelivered.

I came very near whispering to him, and consenting to do all in my power to make him happy, but the demon diffidence held me back. Mr. Barron silently pressed my hand and withdrew—no doubt for my sole benefit; I having relapsed into a brown study, and become wholly incorrigible.

The next time I saw Mr. Barron, the world had turned

around again, and my luxurious drawing-room was thronged. The dowager Mrs. Warren, and Mr. Andrew Warren and lady, had left their cards for me, and the fashionables' splendid carriages were whirling about my gates. The secret of the will was out—the period of mourning had expired—therefore, I was, again, the beauty and the belle. But, thanks to my aunt, I had seen the other side of the picture; the great ends of life were opened unto me; and I could not fold my hands and swim down the swiftly-rushing stream without a thought. The deep fountain had been unsealed, and I could not plunge in the giddy whirl and be happy. Thanks to my aunt, and to him I loved, and to the God who touched the eyes of the blind and they saw.

And now, the great aim of my life shall be, to minister to the happiness of him who gently turned me when I went astray—in whose true heart I had securely reigned since dear old '49; to use the talents given me from on high; to cultivate the heart, and to heed the still small voice; that, through the perfection of these, I may be enabled to comprehend the mysteries He shall unfold in His own Great Time.

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