

JEANIE MORRISON.



JEANIE MORRISON:

OR, THE

DISCIPLINE OF LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE PASTOR'S FAMILY."



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"We can make our lives sublime  
And departing, leave behind us  
Footsteps, on the shores of Time;  
Footsteps, that perhaps another  
Toiling o'er life's stormy main,  
Some forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, may take heart again."

Lowrance

## Chapter First.

"There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them as we will."

IT was a stormy evening in the latter end of February. Without, the wind dashed the mingled rain and sleet against the windows, and raved among the branches of the trees which clustered around the cottage, stretching their protecting arms over its lowly roof.

Within, a cheerful fire blazed and crackled on the neatly-swept hearth, diffusing a pleasant light throughout the small, but tidy room. On one side of the fire, a lively-looking woman of some thirty years of age sat, busily engaged with her spinning-wheel.

As she proceeded with her work, she every now and then looked up inquiringly at her husband, who occupied the opposite corner, apparently absorbed with his pipe and his thoughts.

As he sat, with his chair leaned back against the wall of his cottage, with his eyes closed, smoking



in silence, he looked the very picture of good-humored content; except that a close observer might detect an occasional shade of uneasiness, or annoyance, as if the theme of his present meditations was not as agreeable as usual. For half an hour not a word was spoken, and then, the woman suddenly rising from her seat, put aside her wheel, and drawing out a chair, seated herself before the fire.

"I say, James," said she, "I do wish you would make up your mind, and decide upon something. Here it is almost the first of March, and you don't seem any more settled than you were when we first talked about it last September."

"I know it, Martha, but the truth is, I can't make up my mind to go. I don't want to leave here; I had rather stay and work hard at my trade, and live among my old neighbors, even if I make less money, than to go away among strangers, and break everything up. I'm contented here, and I must say, Martha, I wish you were too."

"But just look here, James. In the first place, if we are ever so careful, we cannot save over fifty dollars a year out of your earnings, and we can very easily use up that in improvements. And in ten years, we shall be no better off than we are

now, and almost any of our neighbors will be better off than we. Now, William Simmons offers us three hundred dollars for our place, and you can lay out one-half of it for government land, and have the rest to buy a team, and such other things as you want to start with. It seems to me that you had better get ready, and go right on with Mr. Bates to the place he told you of, and take up the land, and then clear a little piece, and put up a log-house this summer, and in the fall we will go on and do the best we can. We are both strong and able to work, and we may as well get rich as anybody."

"I don't believe that doctrine, Martha; everybody can't be rich. There is Deacon Jones and his wife, they work as hard as anybody, and after all they only get just about so far."

"But they've no calculation, and more than that, they have a large family to support, and they give away a great deal besides."

"After all, they are just as well off as anybody, for what I see; plenty well enough off, at any rate."

"That's just as anybody feels about it, James; for my part, I shall never be contented until I'm rich. I have seen quite enough of being poor while I was young, and tossed about among strangers without a home."

"But you have a home now, wife, and enough of everything to make you comfortable."

"Yes, but what if you should die, James, what should I do then? Perhaps I should have a home, but that would be all, and I should have to slave from morning to night just as I used to."

James slowly rose, knocked the ashes from his pipe, then laid it on the mantel-shelf, turned his back to the fire, folded his arms, looked steadily at his wife, and then said:

"Martha, I don't like the man; I can't tell really why, but there is something about him I am afraid of. He is a shrewd fellow—they say he seldom handles a dollar without taking the rim off. It's my opinion he means to make money out of the people that he gets together out there, and a good many of the other neighbors think so too. I am no match for him. I am afraid he will take advantage of us."

"Never fear that, James. We'll look out for him; and between us, we will see that he takes no advantage of us. We are not likely to be rash or careless in our bargains. Mrs. Bates is as nice a woman as you ever saw, and she won't let him do us any harm, I know."

"It is little she can hinder, I'm thinking, if Simon

Bates sets out to do anything. It would take a strong hand to upset one of his schemes for making money."

"Well, I don't see anything to be afraid of, after all. For my part, I think you had better go over in the morning and tell William Simmons he can have the place for three hundred dollars, if he wants it."

"He wants to take possession immediately, if he buys it."

"He can have it on the first of April. Mr. Bates will want to start as soon as that; and I shall have time to get you ready, and pick up things. We shall want to sell off the stock, and all the other things which we can't take along, you know."

"What will you do when I am gone, Martha; where can you stay?"

"Oh! I'll get a place to work out this summer; Mrs. Lee's girl is going away, and I guess she will be willing to take me."

"That will be a good place, Martha. Mrs. Lee is a good woman; but I don't want you to work out. You know I told you when we were married, that you never should work out another day, if my life and health was spared."

"Never mind, James, its only for a few months

you know; I suppose though you won't be back before September."

"No, for I ought to get some wheat in, anyway, before I come back, that is if I go. And I suppose that is the best thing I can do."

"To be sure it is, James. Only make up your mind to it, and then the worst is over."

A silence succeeded this conversation, and then, after a little while, James and Martha got up, covered up the fire, fastened the door, and retired to rest, and thus this new and important enterprise was decided upon, without asking direction of God, or invoking His blessing upon it, for beneath that roof was neither the closet nor the family altar.

## Chapter Second.

*"It is vain to rise up early and to sit up late, and to eat the bread of sorrow for He giveth his beloved sleeping."—German Translation.*

THE first of April having arrived, Mr. Bates and James Wilson set out on their western expedition in good spirits; for James having succeeded in disposing of the greater part of his property to his entire satisfaction, was inclined to feel particularly well satisfied with himself and everything about him. Truth, however, requires us to say, that on the breaking up of the home, and the sale of many things which from domestic associations had become almost sacred in their eyes, both James and Martha felt a tenderness and softening of feeling which neither of them was willing to expose to the other. The hour of parting, too, was a trying one to James and although Martha was pleasantly placed in the family of the excellent Mr. Lee, the clergyman of the parish, where she was regarded more in the light of a friend than that of a domestic, Mr. Wilson could not feel quite satisfied about her. Indeed, his wife

laughingly told him one day, that he seemed to dread the comparatively light labors which she would have to perform more than the "rough and tumble" kind of life which awaited him during the summer.

It is not our intention now to follow the adventurers to the spot which Mr. Bates called Riverside, and where a few men were collecting, to make some slight improvements during the summer, preparatory to a settlement with their families in autumn. They were such a company as only one who had well studied human nature, could have called together; men who, while they would perfectly serve his interests, would yet be pliant in his hand, and who would be easily persuaded that Mr. Bates was their best friend and benefactor. It was not without reason that James Wilson at first suspected him of having some selfish interest to serve, while he so warmly urged him to make one of the settlers at Riverside.

In one respect James Wilson exercised prudence. He purchased his land of the State, at his own charges, a little away from Riverside, instead of paying a much larger price, and taking part of Mr. Bates' original purchase, as the greater part of the new settlers were willing to do, under the impression

that in so doing they obtained peculiar advantages. This was, however, owing not so much to his own caution and foresight as to the suggestion of Mr. Lee, who was consulted on the subject by Martha.

This was a long summer to Mrs. Bates and Martha Wilson. Only twice did they receive letters from their absent husbands, until the season came when they were beginning to look for their return. At length Martha received the following letter, which had been six weeks in travelling four hundred miles.

MY DEAR MARTHA,

This is to inform you that I am pretty well, and hope you are also. I am getting along with everything here as well as can be expected; I have had some bad luck, but nothing very serious. I have got a small piece of ground cleared and fenced. I am in hopes to raise corn enough on it (if the crop does as well as it has done) to keep us this winter. The potatoes and other garden stuff look very well. I have got a log house raised and the roof on. It is twelve feet by eighteen. I shall put in a puncheon floor (as they call it out here), that is, a floor made of split logs, worked

down as smooth as convenient. This is the best I can do, until Mr. Bates gets his saw-mill a-running next spring, I shall be ready to start for home as soon as I get a little wheat in, which will be pretty soon; but I can't tell you when to look for me, for I shall have to wait for Mr. Bates. We want you and Mr. Bates' folks to be all ready to start as soon as we get rested after we get home, for we are afraid it will be pretty late before we can get back again. I guess you and Mrs. Bates will find some things here different from what you've been used to, especially Mrs. Bates; but you'll have to make out as well as you can.

I don't know but you may as well tell Mr. Benson that I'll give him a fair price for those young steers of his, if he hasn't sold them yet.

So no more at present from

Your affectionate husband,

JAMES WILSON.

*Riverside, August the 4th.*

The receipt of this letter was quickly followed by the arrival of Mr. Bates and James. All was now hurry and preparation, for the season would soon arrive when the travelling would be difficult. At length, on the 20th of October, all was in readi-

ness. Mr. Bates had several wagons, and a drove of cattle, among which was a fine young cow that belonged to Mr. Wilson.

Two yoke of oxen drew a strong canvas-covered wagon, in which James and Martha, with such of their effects as they thought indispensable to their comfort and thrift in their new home, found places. Beds and bedding, a few articles of furniture which Martha could not consent to part with, a couple of barrels of flour, a barrel of various kinds of dried fruit, their store of groceries for the approaching winter, a couple of doors, window sashes, a fine bundle of young fruit-trees, of all the varieties which could be obtained, and some hardy shrubs and rose-bushes, provided by Mrs. Lee, constituted the most important part of the load.

Many little additions to Martha's store of comforts for a time of sickness were procured at Mrs. Lee's suggestion, and more added as a gift by that good woman, which Martha would not have thought expedient to indulge herself in. Nor did Mrs. Lee forget repeatedly to caution her friend against the indulgence of the spirit of worldliness and over-anxiety to acquire wealth, which she could not fail to detect, and which she justly feared would, like an insightly weed, choke and destroy all the better

dispositions of her heart. Martha, however, only smiled at her fears, and repeated again and again, "We mean to be rich; we may as well be rich as anybody."

Mrs. Lee, however, did not confine her efforts in Martha's behalf to the short period of her sojourn beneath her friendly roof. At present, her whole heart was under the influence of Hope. But another hour would come, an hour probably of disappointment, of loneliness, of sickness of the heart, of affliction. For this hour she made preparation, and furnished Martha with a few well-selected religious books, which she begged her to read as the gift of a friend, and Martha, although not particularly fond of reading, promised to remember the request.

At length all was ready. The last adieus were said, and the neighbors stood in the doors of their dwellings to watch them, as, like a funeral procession, the long train of wagons wound slowly round the hill, and were lost to sight. The whole party reached Riverside in due time, without accident. They had many difficulties and inconveniences to struggle with, but all these were for the most part cheerfully met under the influence of the interest awakened by the thought of the new home which

they were struggling for. This at least was the case with Martha, and to a great extent with her husband.

Their farm was three miles from Riverside, and there was for some weeks after they arrived there plenty to occupy them in preparation for the winter. Martha was cheerful as a lark, rising early in the morning, and willingly turning her hand to anything within doors or without. At length winter was upon them, and all out-door employment for her must necessarily be suspended. She had to confine her energies within the narrow limits of the little cottage; and while her hands were busy with her daily tasks, her thoughts ran forward to the future, and all the minutiae of the summer's business of clearing, planting, sowing, reaping, and gathering in the harvest, were carefully planned one day only to be subjected to a more rigid process of calculating forethought on the next.

But an unexpected trial awaited her. James, who was always fond of society, had not been exposed to the best of influences during his absence from home, and he began to make frequent visits at Riverside under the pretext of obtaining employment, although from his cottage door it was but a short distance to a dense, unbroken forest, which

invited the woodman's axe, to prepare the way for the plough and the seed. Martha could not often discover that he succeeded in obtaining anything in particular to do. Leaving home at an early hour in the morning, he often remained away until late in the evening; and when he at length returned, he was not pleasant and cheerful, as had been his wont, but moody and irritable. These things were exceedingly trying to Martha, who had little to occupy her time, and who greatly desired her husband's company.

The little cottage was always kept in the most perfect order, although now there was no gossiping neighbor to step in and pass a social afternoon with her. Every garment which could possibly be needed in the summer, was put in perfect order; and her busy fingers never rested until her yarn was converted into stockings, and her homespun linen into shirts and frocks for her husband. At length she induced James to make her a loom, that she might not only weave cloth for the use of her own family, but for those around her who might desire her services.

As soon as the snow began to disappear, all was hurry and hustle at the farm. Fences were to be made, the brush collected and burned, and the soil prepared for a new crop. In all these out-door em-

ployments, Martha, a stout, athletic woman, bore her part, not only cheering on her husband by words, but by a willing participation in all his labors and lightening of his cares. She reserved to herself the whole care of the garden, which she kept in the most perfect order; and her beds of vegetables were bordered with flowers, the seeds of which she had brought from her New England home.

But the Sabbath to Martha was a weary day. There was no meeting at Riverside; and although she was not a religious woman, habit, and a regard for the good opinion of others, if nothing more, had made her a regular attendant at the house of God in the place where she had lived. Her conscience would not now permit her to engage in any of the employments of the week, and she was too well-informed not to feel that her mind should not be occupied with thoughts and plans for the future. She was not fond of reading, and the sight of the few volumes which Mrs. Lee had given her invariably made her sad. Sometimes she would stroll in the woods near her dwelling, taking a basket in her hand to gather the wild berries with which the country abounded, watching the descending sun which she hoped would be the signal for her hus-

band's return from Riverside, where he always spent his Sabbaths.

Once she made the experiment of accompanying James to Riverside, but she returned at night with a sickness of heart which she had never felt before. Until that day she had never fully apprehended the pernicious influences that surrounded her husband. The women gossiped from house to house; the dirty children fought and quarrelled in the streets; the men assembled at a miserable tavern, drank, smoked, gambled, and profaned the name of God.

Mrs. Bates was a Christian woman, and although her piety had little of the aggressive element in it, yet she would not allow the sanctity of her home to be invaded on the Sabbath. She had excited the ridicule of all her neighbors by taking the liberty of telling them, that she "would like to have them come in on other days, if they pleased, but did not want to have company about on the Sabbath." In fact, there was none at Riverside who cared to press an acquaintance which they could easily see was not desirable to her. Reserved always, even when she was surrounded by her familiar friends, she was little disposed to cultivate the society of that class of women who were her neighbors. Upon her devolved the care of her large family. In those days

every housekeeper was in the habit of manufacturing the cloth which was afterwards made into garments for the family, and she necessarily had little leisure. For Martha Wilson, indeed, she had felt a kind of liking, but she was too timid in her nature to venture to make an exception in her favor, and thus an acquaintance which had been pleasantly commenced in their former home was dropped by degrees.

Thus passed away three years, with no change except as gradually bad grew to worse. At length James Wilson neglected his business; his cattle died; his crops failed, while much of what he had already earned was lost by bad bargains. He made no secret of his constant use of intoxicating drinks. The brown jug was seldom empty; and although he was never known to be drunk, there was no time for months together when his temper was not made irritable, and his sensibilities blunted by strong drink. Martha was no longer the presiding genius of the cottage. Her influence over her husband seemed entirely gone. Instead of consulting with her, and yielding to her judgment, as he had frequently done before they left their old home, he would not often allow even a single suggestion from her. Anything like remonstrance was resented with unkind and bitter words, that sunk like iron into her



soul. In her heart, she had always blamed herself for urging him to leave their first home as she did. Once James said to her, when she was expressing her regret at a loss they had sustained:

"It's all your own fault. If we had staid where we were, we should have done well enough."

"Oh, James! James!" said the miserable woman, "let's go back now."

"No, indeed," returned he; "I'll not be tied to a woman's apron string. You made me come here, and now I'll stay, see if I don't!"

A blessing awaited this unhappy woman. One morning in the latter end of February a little daughter was sent to gladden her cheerless home. Tears, that in her darkness and despair had long been strangers to her eyes, now fell like rain as she clasped the new-found treasure to her maternal breast. Henceforth she had something for which to live; she was not alone in the world. She could not be altogether wretched. The father, too, seemed delighted to see the little nestling; and in the strength of his newly-awakened sensibilities, made many a promise of reformation and amendment, promises which perhaps he might have kept had he not been sought out by his evil advisers, who at-

tacked him in his most vulnerable part—his susceptibility to the influence of his wife.

Martha did not readily recover her health and strength. Left alone with her helpless infant day after day, and sometimes for several successive nights, she turned towards that ever-present but invisible Friend, and found a new world of thought and experience open upon her soul as she communed with Him in prayer, or studied the pages of His Holy Word. Every sentence she read had to her mind a new and wonderful meaning, and day after day found her intently occupied in this sacred study, with no other teacher than the Spirit of God, and the babe at her breast; for hath not the Saviour said: "Except ye become as little children, ye can not enter into the kingdom of God"? Now, also, she felt the value of Mrs. Lee's teachings, so long unheeded; and how she longed to see her once more. She would willingly have given all she possessed, if she could have persuaded her husband to return to their old home, even though it was home now no more. How could she ever bring up her child in that lonely spot, that moral desert. As she thought on these things, she resolved to make one more effort to persuade him. For a long time she waited a suitable opportunity to put this resolution in

practice, when he should be in an approachable mood.

One night James was playing with the baby, which he rarely did, for it was not a healthy child, and often cried, on which occasions he did not fail to become angry with it, and its mother. But on this occasion it was quiet and pleasant, and he seemed unusually fond of it.

"James," said Martha, "I wonder what Mrs. Lee would say to little Jane."

"Well, I expect she would think she was a pretty puny, sickly-looking thing, compared to her fine youngsters."

"Oh, James, let's go back there, won't you?"

"Go back there? what for, I'd like to know. What do you want to go back for?"

"For the baby's sake, James. I don't want to bring her up in this lonesome place."

"Then go to Riverside, if you want to."

"Never to Riverside, unless I'm compelled," said Martha, firmly.

"So I say," said James; "by —, I'll never go back *there*, unless they carry me in my coffin."

"Oh, don't say so, James," said his wife, "don't say so!"

"I'll *say* so, and *do* so, you'll find, madam," said

he; "so hold your tongue on that subject after this."

Poor Martha! had she not brought this upon herself! Was she not justly suffering for the sinful craving for riches which had so blighted and darkened all her earthly prospects, and transformed her once kind and affectionate husband into a profane and furious debauchee. How could she hope for mercy upon her own poor soul, when she had been the instrument of hardening her husband's heart, and sealing, as she feared, his irremediable ruin. How dare she hope for a place in Heaven, when she had been the means of taking her husband away from the means of grace, and the counsels of the good, and the restraints of a Christian community! Poor Martha! there was none to bid her take her troubled conscience *to the cross of Christ*. Often she despaired of the mercy of God, although she clung to the Bible, her only peace, her only comforter; yet whenever some ray of hope visited her, she feared to cherish, or rejoice in it.

Thus perplexity and doubt pressed upon her heart. Her health declined, and she became impressed with a belief that she was soon to die, and leave her feeble little one to the tender mercies of a drunken father. Once she ventured to tell her

husband that she did not think she should live a long time.

"Pooh!" he replied, "you can't frighten me. Mr. Bates says women are always ready to die, if anything ails them. I'll tell you, as he told his wife, 'Go to work, and you'll be well enough!'"

It was enough—the subject was mentioned no more. She made no further effort to throw off the load of anxiety that was almost crushing her. Sick, feeble, and alone—everything going to ruin around her—her misery shut up in her own heart, the present all dark and dreary—her hopes for the world to come unclear and dim; what wonder that at times her reason reeled, her mind lost its balance, and she was left to do some strange, unlooked-for thing, which would bring down a torrent of bitter reproach from her husband, and furnish a subject of gossip and mirth at Riverside for a month after. Little did that husband dream, how often in his heavy sleep an unseen hand had interposed to save his life, and that of his helpless child, from the fatal stroke of the wife and mother, bereft of reason!

### Chapter Third.

"I hear a voice you cannot hear,  
I see a hand you cannot see."

A STRANGE thing had happened. James had not been at Riverside for four days, and during that time had scarcely tasted the contents of the brown jug. What might be the import of this, Martha dared not ask, but a new life sprung up in her heart. Oh! if only James would now be restored to himself!

He must go to Riverside—he had special business there. How Martha trembled—how she prayed that he might return sober—that he might be kept in the hour of temptation; but she could only pray. She dared not speak, dared not even ask him when he would return, lest the demon within should be aroused. How she did hope he would return by dinner time. Perhaps he might. She would go and prepare a nice meal of the food that he liked best, for somehow she was almost sure he would be home to-day.

Dinner is almost ready, and the snowy cloth covers the table; and one by one various edibles, which she had spent the whole morning in preparing to tempt her husband's appetite, appear upon it. The sun has crossed the little mark on the threshold, and she knows midday is past. She looked out in the direction of Riverside. She saw nothing—nothing but the forest in its gaudy October livery. She listened, and she heard nothing but the chirrup of the cricket, and the sad note of the grasshopper—that tells of departed summer, and departing hopes. She looked up to the clear, deep, blue sky. Oh! how blue it looked—it made her sad. At length she exclaimed,

"I was a fool to think he'd come at all; it may be I shan't see him for a week!"

Little Jane, now a year and a half old, was seated on the door-stone, pulling at the long grass which grew out from beneath it. She looked up wistfully and wonderingly at the sound of her mother's voice. She stretched out her little thin arms, and murmured, "Mamma! mamma!"

Martha took the child, and holding her to her breast, burst into tears. The baby said, "No, mamma, no, no!" and tried to pull her hand from her eyes. At length a sound startled her. She

heard the gate open; she looked out, and James was almost at the door. She hastily put down the child, and brushing away her tears, prepared to set the dinner on the table.

"What! crying again, Martha!" said he. "I don't believe you get time to do much else, now-a-days. You are whining all the time, seems to me."

"Yes! I have had time to get something nice for dinner to-day, you see, James."

"Well, let's have it quick, then," said he.

Martha made all possible haste, and soon they were at table. Her heart was lighter, for it was evident to her practiced eye, that although he had been at Riverside, he had returned sober.

For awhile they ate in silence, then James looked up and said in a voice unusually kind,

"What were you crying for, Martha?"

Martha hesitated; but she knew by his look that he would have an answer, and so she replied, evasively,

"I felt sick and lonely to-day, James."

"That's always the story, Martha. If you'd try and be a little cheerful now and then, I'd come home earlier, and stay to home more. But it don't seem as it used to in old times. You're always cross, or crying now, and a man can't always stand it."

*Old times*—old times—they were not often absent from Martha's thoughts—the one point around which her mind continually revolved. The past had long alternated only with the hopeless present; to the future she dared not look. A mother's heart was still alive in her bosom, and she knew that ere long that helpless little one would be left alone, or worse than alone.

Meanwhile James had finished his dinner, seated himself on the door-stone and commenced smoking. Little Jane toddled towards him and seated herself at her morning's employment. Martha cleared away the dinner-table, and her husband at length broke the silence:

"I say, Martha, I don't much want to go to the raising this afternoon—it seems as though something was going to happen somewhere."

"I wouldn't go then, James," said his wife kindly; "stay home with Jane and I."

"Bill Jones said they could n't get the frame up unless I was there, and maybe I'll get a good job of work on the house if I go; but I'll tell you what I'll do, I won't stay to supper—I'll come right home and finish that chicken-pie."

"Do, James, for I don't want to have you go

with Bill Jones," said Martha, frightened lest she had said too much.

"There's worse folks in the world than Bill, I reckon," was his reply.

After awhile he spoke again, "I don't wonder you feel as you do, and I too. Its dreadful lonesome out here. I only wish we had n't come here, that's all; we'd been enough sight better off there than we are now. Sometimes I've tried to think I'd go back among the old neighbors again, any way. I don't like the way things are going here. That rascal Bates"—at that moment a voice called out from the road,

"Halloa, Jim! were're off—come quick! Halloa!"

James started up. "Good-bye, Mattie; I guess I'll be back by sundown—I guess."

He left the threshold—then stopped and stood irresolutely for a moment in spite of an impatient "halloa" from the road. Then he turned and walked slowly back to the door, and took his little girl in his arms and kissed her. She struggled in his arms, surprised by such caresses. He placed her on the threshold, and pausing, looked at his wife as if he wished to say something.

"What is it, James?" she asked.

"Nothing now, I believe," and he hastily joined his companions.

What would not Martha have given that night to have known what those words were which he seemed unable to utter!

"I say, Jim, what need you stop to kiss that brat when you knew we was a-waiting for you, I'd like to know?"

"Maybe he thought he'd never see her again, ha! ha! ha!" shouted the other.

"Maybe I never shall," said James.

"Why, what on earth ails you? Madam's been a-givin' you a lecture, I reckon, and you look solemn enough about it."

"Come, come, man, out with it. What new tantrum is she up to now?"

"Nothing, that I know of."

"Well, what ails you then—what makes you look so mighty sober all to once?"

"It was something that came into my head as I stood by the door there."

"What was it?"

"Well, it was, '*A time to die.*'"

For a moment these reckless men seemed struck by the solemnity of this sudden thought, but they soon rallied, and one of them said,

"I say, Jim, we all know that; there's nothing so very strange in that, is there?"

"Maybe not."

"That puts me in mind of what Nancy told me at noon, that Mrs. Bates was just alive."

"You don't say so, Bill."

"Well, I do."

Nothing more was said, and the three men walked on in silence until they reached the brow of the hill, at the foot of which were a number of men at work. One of the number looking up, espied the new comer, and called out,

"Hurra there, come on quick! We want your nelp!"

They worked on steadily until the middle of the afternoon, when Mr. Hase, the proprietor of the building, said,

"There, stop now, and we'll have something to drink."

The men left their work and followed Mr. Hase; and the bottle was circulating freely, when one of them observed James Wilson standing apart from the rest, apparently lost in thought.

"Why, Jim, what makes you hang back; why don't you walk up and take some grog?"

"Because I don't want to," he replied.

"Why, come on, Jim—what are you thinking of?" said Mr. Hase.

James neither stirred nor spoke. At length one of the men who had walked over with him, exclaimed, with a loud laugh,

"I guess he is thinking of 'A time to die.'"

The men stared at each other for a moment, but then returned to the frame. Ten minutes later, a heavy piece of timber slid from its place, and striking James Wilson, he fell with it to the ground. They rushed to the spot, raised him up, but he was gone. James Wilson had found "*A time to die.*"

Meanwhile, Martha wondering what had occasioned this change in her husband, her heart bounding at the thought of a possible permanent reformation in his habits and principles, and catching eagerly at the thought of return to their old home, felt withal a strange burden upon her spirits, which she was unable either to account for or throw off. The moments seemed leaden-winged. Her dinner things were neatly put away, and her cottage made tidy; and then she spread her ironing-table, and began to smooth the neatly-folded clothes. In vain she tried to fix her mind upon her employment. In spite of her resolutions to the contrary, she found herself

constantly walking to the open door, and gazing out in the direction in which her husband had gone. At length, half laughing at herself, and half shuddering with a vague dread of some impending calamity, she resolved that she would not look out again until she had finished her ironing. Even then it would be a long time before she could reasonably expect her husband's return. So she took up her little girl, who had fallen asleep at her play, and laid her on the bed, fully determined to adhere to her resolution, and yet not able to avoid casting a furtive glance in that direction as she passed the door.

On the brow of yonder hill some dark object arrests her eye. She springs to the door. Yes—it is a company of men, bearing something slowly down the hillside. Just before them there, at the foot of the hill, is the place where they must take either the road to Riverside or the path to the cottage! There—there—her eyes grow dizzy—yes—they take the path! they are coming, nearer—nearer—she knows it is her husband stretched out on that plank that they are bearing, dead or alive, towards his home. But she starts not—she stirs not—but stands almost motionless with her eyes riveted upon them. At length they see her—they stop, and hold

a short consultation, and now one of the number advances with a rapid step. Now she moves slowly down the path to the little gate. The man would speak, but she beckons him to be still—and he cannot disobey. His tongue refuses to perform its office. She holds open the little gate to let the sad procession pass. They look at her, and then uneasily at each other—and at her again with wondering, and yet with pitying eyes. Not one word as yet is uttered, but what need is there of words; it is enough that they lay the body of James Wilson, cold and stiff, upon his cabin floor. The heart-broken Martha approached, knelt beside it, uncovered the face, laid one hand upon the pale brow, then uttered one piercing shriek of agony. For a moment her head rested on that pulseless breast, and then recalled to herself by the cry of her frightened babe, she rose, and taking it to her bosom, sat down in silence beside the dead, never speaking, except to give such directions as those about her asked; never tasting food, never sleeping, until she saw her husband laid upon his last—last pillow—in the grave-yard at Riverside, where the body of Mrs. Bates had been deposited but a few hours before.

And now the neighbors would have detained her

at Riverside, for a few days at least, but she refused all their solicitations. Then they urged her to take some one with her as a companion of her solitude, at least for a season. This also she refused; she wished to be alone with her child, and her God. Not without anxiety they were compelled to let the resolute woman have her will, and she was taken back to her desolate hearth.

Next day Mr. Bates rode up to see her, and inquire what course she intended to pursue for the time to come. To his astonishment, she declared her intention of remaining at the cottage with her child, until the approach of warm weather should enable her to return to her old home. For herself she said she had nothing now to care for, but for her child's sake, it was her duty to make the most careful and prudent arrangements; and she foresaw that it would occupy more time than she could devote to it, if she would reach the place to which she wished to go before winter. Then the wily villain suggested that she should not remain there in her loneliness all winter, but intrust business to him, and she could go on immediately to her friends, while he would carefully and faithfully attend to everything on her behalf. This she for the present declined. He hints something about



embarrassments, and legal obstacles, and so forth. She makes no reply, for she remembers too well her husband's last words—"That rascal Bates;" what did those words imply?

The discomfited man took his leave. She stood by the window watching him until he was out of sight. Then she hastily put on her bonnet and shawl, wrapped up her child, and taking her husband's wallet in her pocket, fastened the door, and took her way with her babe in her arms, over the hill, instinctively avoiding the fatal spot where her husband received his death blow. Six miles from her home there lived an humble, pious man, who, two years before, had business with James, and was several times at the cottage. Something that he said had fallen, not only upon her ear, but on her heart; and she remembered that James had once told her that John Shephard was an honest man, one whom he would willingly trust with uncounted gold. To him she turned in this emergency.

She had not reached the house when she saw him at a little distance in the field. Thitherward she bent her weary steps. Almost before he saw her approach she stood by his side, and thus addressed him:

"John Shephard, my dead husband once told me

that you were an honest man! I want your help in my hour of trouble!"

"Anything I can do for you, Mrs. Wilson, I will be glad to do."

"Then take your team and carry me to—to the surrogate's office within the shortest possible time!"

"Well, well, you're tired; come into the house, and we will talk it over while the old woman gets you a cup of tea—you look kind a-faintish like—"

"No need of talking, John—will you go or not? I'm in a hurry—"

"Well, if you're bound to go, I'll take ye; but need you be in a hurry?"

"Yes, quick, John, I want to be on the way. I must walk, if you can't go."

"But we'll have to be out over night, you know, and I'm—hem—I'm out of money—"

"Here's plenty," said Martha, opening her wallet.

"Oh! well, then, I guess we'll get along; but we'll just step into the house and tell Becky, and you can rest a bit while I hitch up the team."

In another hour they were on the road to —, and the next evening saw Martha under her own

roof, with full power to settle all her husband's affairs.

Immediately she offered all the property for sale, but no person came forward to purchase; for Mr. Bates had caused it to be understood that he had claims upon the property which would render it comparatively valueless to any but himself, and no person dared venture to interfere.

Sometimes the neighbors would wander from Riverside, or from another neighborhood four miles south of her, but they found little inducement either to stay or to repeat the visit. It was easy to see that Martha preferred to be alone. John Shephard came over occasionally to see that she did not need anything, and Bill Jones took it upon himself to see that she had an abundant supply of fuel through the winter. Much of the time she was very ill, scarcely able to take care of herself and her child.

Mr. Bates often called, always speaking in a discouraging manner about the probability of disposing of the property to advantage, and regretting that at present it would be extremely inconvenient for him to raise the necessary means to purchase it, as he had already more property in Riverside than he desired. Still, if he could possibly arrange his

affairs, he would do what he could for her, as there were certain business transactions between himself and James Wilson, which were not generally understood; and which could easily be arranged between Martha and himself, without coming to the knowledge of any third person. Mrs. Wilson was alarmed, but she knew not what to say, and so forebore to speak until she had time to think. When she was last at Riverside, with the intention of settling the few small bills, of the existence of which she was aware, Mr. Bates had declined presenting his account, promising to do so on some future occasion.

About the first of January Mrs. Wilson had a violent attack of illness, which confined her for two weeks to her bed. Becky Shephard came over and remained with her until she was able to be up a little; but Mrs. Wilson felt that she might never live to take her little Jane where she wished her to go, so she wrote a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Lee, asking their advice, and confiding her little one to their care in case she should not live to reach them. She mentioned also the difficulties that surrounded her, and expressed her willingness to pay Mr. Lee for his time, and also defray his travelling expenses, if he would only come out and assist her. Before her

letter had been dispatched long enough for her to expect a reply, she had another visit from Mr. Bates. On this occasion he presented a paper, that he said was signed by James Wilson, which entitled him (on account of certain services that had been rendered him, the nature of which did not appear) to a large share of what remained of the property he had acquired.

Poor Martha was sick at heart! She could not deny her husband's signature; she had no means of exposing or detecting the falsehood of Mr. Bates; she dared not turn to any one around her, or confide her trouble to any, lest she should bring reproach, justly or unjustly she knew not which, upon her dead husband. She begged a short delay; and now it was Mr. Bates's turn to hurry and threaten her. Again she wrote to Mr. and Mrs. Lee; and being distracted almost by her troubles, the disease which preyed upon her, was aggravated, and made more sure and certain in its results.

Again was she confined to her bed, and again it seemed as if her dying hour was at hand. Oh! how could she—how could she die, and leave her helpless child in the hands of one who had no mercy upon the widow and the orphan!

Again she had an interview with Mr. Bates, and

it was soon told among the neighbors, that as soon as the snow was gone, Martha and her child would leave their home, on their long, and, under the circumstances, perilous journey. Everything on the premises was advertised for sale. The farm and house passed formally into the possession of Mr. Bates, on what terms no one was permitted to know.

Mrs. Wilson was provided by Mr. Bates with a one-horse wagon, and an old horse which she could drive without difficulty. The old canvas-cover was produced, and fitted to the wagon, that she might be protected from the storm. A large box of provisions was prepared, and grain for her horse, in case she should need it at any time; plenty of warm blankets and pillows to protect the little one from the cold, with some few little articles which she could not sell, constituted her outfit.

On the day previous to setting out, John Shephard and Becky, his wife, came down to see everything arranged. Under John's own eye, the seat was taken out of the wagon, and Martha's old easy chair firmly fixed in its place, while, beside it, a kind of low, warm couch, was prepared for the child. John promised to come early in the morning, and see her off.

It was a cold, frosty morning, although near the middle of April, when this desolate and almost dying woman was assisted by old John into the wagon which was to convey her forever from the spot that had been the scene of her sorrows and toils. But there was a light in her eye, and a glow at her heart, to which she had long been a stranger. Honest John Shephard mounted his horse and rode beside her for the two first days, that he might cheer and encourage her, and also watch the effect of the journey upon her health. She bore it better than he expected, but she was evidently buoyed by the strong desire she felt to take her child to Christian parents. When they parted, she showered blessings on his head, and assured him that her faith was firm; that "God would not leave her until her last work was finished. Then, she was ready to lie down and die."

## Chapter Fourth.

"A wail upon the world's wide wilderness."

WHEN will you be back, Mr. Morrison?" said the landlady of a little village tavern to a gentleman who was just about leaving the house.

"Well, in the course of ten days or thereabouts, I suppose. Why do you inquire, Mrs. Mason?"

"Why, because I didn't know but you could advise us what we had better do about that child?"

"What child, my good woman?"

"Why, the poorest, puniest little thing you ever saw! Maybe you haven't seen her, though."

"I have seen no child yet—but who does she belong to, and what advice do you want?"

"Why, hasn't John told you about it, then? He said last night, when you stopped here, that he was right glad you had come, and he didn't doubt you'd tell us just what we ought to do."

"Well, well, what is it, my good woman?"

"Maybe you didn't know that a woman died here a week ago?"

"Yes, I heard John say so; and now I remember he said something about her leaving a child."

"Why, yes; about four weeks ago, one cold, stormy night, just as we were all a-goin' to bed, we heard a noise that sounded like a horse's feet, and John went out, and sure enough, there was a horse and wagon at the door, and a woman and little girl in the wagon. The woman was very sick, and coughed like a person just gone with the consumption; and the child did not look much better. She couldn't get out of the wagon alone, and we brought her into the house, and took her things off as quick as we could. She appeared to be a decent body, so I got her a cup of tea—not but what I'd a-done it for any poor creature that was as sick as she was;—but when folks keep tavern, they must be careful what they take into the house, you know.

"Well, as I was saying, we put her to bed, and she couldn't rest until her baby was put by her side. She seemed to think a dreadful sight of the child. It was late before she went to sleep, and when she did, I was afraid she would die before morning—so I didn't take my clothes off all night. She woke up wonderful early, though, and seemed to feel bad

to find me sitting up. Then she said she must go on her journey; but when she tried to dress herself, she found she couldn't, and then she cried as if her heart would break. John went after the doctor; and when he had looked at her, and talked awhile with her, he came out of the room and told us that we might just make up our minds to keep her, for she'd never go a step further till she went to her grave, and he wondered how she had held out so long.

"John and I went into the bed-room, and there she was praying over her baby; and asking God to 'take care of it, and let Christian people bring it up.' When she saw us, she showed my husband some money, and told him where she was traveling to (she didn't say where she came from), and asked us to keep her a few days, and take care of her child, until she could go on. She said she had but little money, but she was able to pay us well for our trouble. John told her not to be uneasy; she should be took care on, and the child too. So, you see, she dropped into a kind of doze, and didn't take no more notice of anything for a day or two. After that she kinder revived up a little, and was able to talk some. She was in hopes to be able to go on the rest of the journey. She said she

hadn't got no relations of her own, but she wanted to get her child before she died to where she used to live, and give her to the minister's wife, where she would be well brought up among Christian people. One day she told John that the minister's name was Mr. Lee, and he lived in Laurens in Massachusetts, so if anything should happen, he would know what she wanted done with the child. One night she was taken worse, and we all see that she couldn't live till morning. She seemed dreadfully distressed-like, and kept crying, 'Oh! John, John! how can I do as you told me—how can I "be careful for nothing," when I must leave my baby among strangers!' (most likely she meant her husband, but she didn't say so). Then she tried to make Mr. Mason promise to take the child to the minister's house, but he hated to promise certain, for he was afraid perhaps he couldn't do it.

"But she begged so hard that I couldn't stand it, and I promised that, God helping me, I would do my best to put the child among the people she told about. So John wrote all the directions down on paper, so that he shouldn't make any mistake—"

"Poor woman! did that seem to comfort her?"

"Some, but I could see she didn't feel quite easy; and once I heard her say, 'Oh, Jany! Jany! if I

could only have got you there.' Then she lay still for half an hour or so, and then she motioned me to her, and said,

"What a wonderful verse that is John told me about: "Be careful for nothing; but in all things by prayer, with thanksgiving, make your requests known unto God!" I seem to begin to understand how it is now. "Be careful for *nothing*," not even for the baby there! I do believe God will take care of it." After that her mind seemed to be flighty-like; but just as she died, she looked wishfully to me, as if she wanted to say something. And I leaned over her, and heard her whisper,

"Don't let Jane go to any but Christian people."

"Did you promise her?"

"Indeed, I did! and I would travel a mile on my bare knees before I would break that promise."

"Did the woman die that night?"

"Yes, in about an hour; and now I can't rest, day nor night until I have kept my word about the child."

"That's right, Betsy! that's right!" said Mr. Morrison. "Promises are always sacred; but a promise made to a dying mother, and such a

promise as that was, is more binding than words can describe!"

"Where is the child, Mrs. Mason, let me see her?"

"Nancy, go into the kitchen and see if she is there, and bring her."

Nancy entered after a few minutes, bearing a poor, pale, sickly-looking child, of some two years of age, in her arms. She seemed very timid; but in a few minutes Mr. Morrison succeeded in enticing her to his lap, where she soon amused herself with his watch and seals, while he stroked her thin brown hair.

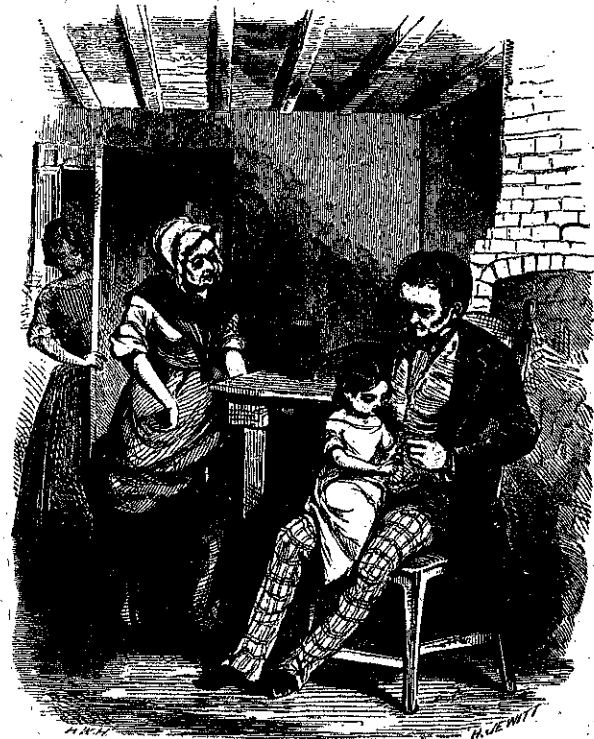
"Poor little birdie!" at last said the good man; "poor wee thing, to be left an orphan so young!"

The child looked wistfully up, and the shadow of a smile flitted over her pale, wan face.

"Poor child!" said he, drawing her more closely to his breast, where she nestled as if it had been her father's arms.

Tenderly kissing her, he placed her in Mrs. Mason's lap, and after a few moments' thought, he said,

"Well, Mrs. Mason, take good care of the child, and all that belongs to her, until I get back, and



then I will see what can be done. Meantime, if you can give me the name of the place and people where she was to be taken, I will write to the post-master of the place and ascertain whether there are any such persons residing there."

"Now, squire, that's just what I told John last night. I knew you'd think of something. I'll take good care of her that I'll warrant you."

Mr. Morrison went to the bar-room and wrote a few lines to the post-master at Laurens, and immediately mailed the letter. When he returned to the house, he had his pocket full of such rude toys as he could find in the country stores, with cakes, nuts, and candies, which he showered into the lap of the astonished and delighted child.

Mr. Morrison was by birth a Scotchman, having emigrated to this country in his boyhood, in company with an elder brother, who soon married, and in whose family he found a home for a number of years. At the proper period he was admitted to the bar, and finally went to New England; married, and had for many years been engaged in the honorable and successful practice of his profession.

He had no children of his own; but his warm and kindly heart was always ready to extend, not



sympathy only, but more substantial aid to the unprotected and destitute orphan. The only child of his deceased brother left now without the fostering care of either parent, it had been his most earnest desire to receive into his family and adopt as his own son, but to his great disappointment his mother's relatives refused to give him up. His heart at once warmed towards the little Jane, when he heard her story from Mrs. Mason, and when he saw her, the fact that she was not either a pretty or attractive child, did not lessen his interest in her.

During his absence in the intervals of business, he thought constantly of her, and felt a strong desire to take her to his own pleasant home, and adopt her for his child. Sometimes he almost regretted having written to Laurens, fearing that some person might appear who possessed a stronger title to the child than he; and on his return, which was several days earlier than he had before expected, he was almost gratified that no answer to his letter had yet arrived. Then he announced to the astonished and delighted Mrs. Mason his intention to take the child to Laurens; and if he failed to discover the friends of whom her mother spoke, or if finding them, they should be indisposed to assume the care of

her, take her to his own home and treat her in all respects as if she had been his own child.

Jane was quickly made ready for the journey; and Mr. Morrison directed the landlord to make such disposition as he could of her mother's effects, promising to write him at an early day.

It was late in the evening when he arrived at Laurens; and laying his little sleeping charge on the settee in the sitting-room of the hotel, he hastened to make such inquiries as were requisite under the circumstances. He soon learned that Mr. Lee had been dead for more than a year, and his family were scattered among their friends in circumstances of destitution and dependence. Other particulars relative to the history of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson soon satisfied him that he would have nothing to fear in carrying out his benevolent enterprise. So with a light and cheerful heart he set out on his homeward journey.

## Chapter Fifth.

"Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."

IT was evening when the stage stopped at Mr. Morrison's door. There was no light in the usual sitting-room; for Mrs. Morrison, not anticipating her husband's arrival so soon, had gone out on that afternoon to take tea with a neighbor, and had not returned. Mr. Morrison stepped lightly through the room to his own bed-room beyond, with the sleeping child in his arms, and laying her gently down, carefully took off the shawls and hood which enveloped her, and then closing the door, left her to her rest.

Going to the kitchen, he had scarcely time to inquire after his absent wife, before she entered the room. They returned to the sitting-room, and after a few inquiries relative to matters in general, Mr. Morrison said,

"Well, Mary, I have brought you a present this time worth having!"

"Have you, indeed!" said Mrs. Morrison, smiling, "what can it be?"

"Guess!"

"Oh! impossible—but let me think—a new shawl, or dress, I suppose, or more likely, a new book, or something of that sort."

"No, none of these."

"What can it be? Do let me see it, Mr. Morrison—what is it?"

"A baby!"

"A baby!—what do you mean?"

"Just look in here and see."

Mr. Morrison took up the lamp, and walked softly to the bed-room, followed by his wondering wife. Noiselessly he turned the latch, and walked to the bedside. There lay the little one, one hand under her cheek, and one little, thin, slender arm thrown over her head. Even in sleep, there was an expression of sadness around the mouth, and the large eyes, which is rarely seen except among the wretched children in the crowded streets of our large cities. For a few moments they contemplated the sleeping infant in silence, and then Mr. Morrison briefly related the few particulars of the child's past history, which John Mason and his wife had given him. Tears stole down the cheeks of the kind

hearted woman, who willingly assented to her husband's plan of adopting the desolate orphan. No hand but her own was permitted to undress her. A cot was prepared for her in her own room; and when she was lifted up and placed upon it, the eyelids partially opened, revealing the large gray eyes, and the tiny lips faintly murmured, "Mamma, mamma!"

Then a soft hand, and a voice low and sweet as a mother's, soothed the weary child to rest.

"She is certainly not beautiful, Edward," said Mrs. Morrison, when they had returned to the sitting-room.

"No, Mary, but that is only another additional reason for befriending her. There are many who would take an attractive-looking child more freely than one less favored in this respect, but you are not of that number."

"I trust not, Edward; but I hope she will prove to have a docile, tractable disposition. That is the great thing, you know."

"Yes; but if we do our duty to her, and live to see her grow up, no doubt she will well repay all our care and kindness. There is a singular charm about her countenance when she smiles; perhaps it may be because it so seldom happens, but she was

completely overjoyed the other day when I brought her a few toys. Poor thing! I suppose she never saw anything of the kind before. Her parents lived in some out-of-the-way place, two hundred miles or more west of where I went.

"It seems to me she cannot be well. She looks so thin and brown. Perhaps we had better call in Dr. Gray in the morning, and have him examine her."

"That may be a good plan, but would it not be well to watch her for a day or two before we consult the doctor? If anything is wrong about her, you may be able to detect it, and be prepared to report to him."

Mr. Morrison's character for generosity was so well known among his neighbors, that the fact of his adopting this child created little surprise, even at a time when such things were far less common than they are at present.

A few days effected quite a transformation in the appearance of the little one. The daily bath, wholesome food, and the store of new playthings, made her well and cheerful. Mrs. Morrison's tasteful fingers soon provided the neatly-fitted dress and white apron, with the shining gaiters, and such other articles of clothing, as made her appearance appro-

priate to the beautiful and tasteful apartments in which she found a home.

"Jeanie begins to improve in her appearance. Her complexion is better already, do you not think so, Mr. Morrison?"

"I do, Mary, though she will certainly not resemble her mother much."

Mrs. Morrison smiled. She had a very fair, transparent complexion, with a bright blue eye, and almost flaxen hair.

"She is to be Jeanie Morrison, is she not, husband, or do you intend she shall keep her original name?"

"Jeanie Morrison I should prefer, especially as there are no relatives in the case to be grieved by the change. But, Mary, she will have to know that she is not really our child. Others will inform her of the fact, if we do not. We want no startling denouements in time to come."

"As soon as she is old enough to understand, let her become perfectly familiar with every fact of her history which we know. I doubt not that there is something mournful enough connected with the past, though we may never know what it is. The landlord at Laurens told me that her

father was a good-natured, easy-tempered, industrious mechanic, and her mother a healthy, sprightly and enterprising woman. It is only some six years since they left Laurens, and something serious must have occurred to change all their prospects, that does not commonly fall to the lot of the thrifty, industrious pioneer."

"I wish we knew more about it, for I am persuaded there is mischief lurking somewhere."

"It is sad to see such a mournful expression on a baby's face."

"We must try to make her as happy as we can, wife, and let her feel no unnecessary restraint. God bless the child!"

"Jeanie! come here, will you?"

The child looked up, laid down her doll, and timidly approached.

"What is your name?"

"Dane Wilthon," she softly whispered.

"Jane Wilson, is it?" responded Mr. Morrison.

"Well, I am going to give you a new name. I shall call you Jeanie Morrison—my little Jeanie Morrison. Do you like that?"

The child nodded in an indifferent manner.

"Oh, but you must not do so—hold up your little head, and say, 'Yes, sir.'"

"Yes, sir," repeated the child.

"Well, I want you to call me papa, and the lady mamma. Would you like to have her for mamma?"

"Yes, sir," said Jeanie.

"Will you give papa a kiss now, and then go to your play, darling?"

The child put up her little lips to her new father's face, and returned his warm kiss with one soft and baby-like, and then stealing to Mrs. Morrison's side, and looking up sweetly into her face, said:

"Oo too mainma?"

"Yes, yes, mamma too," said Mrs. Morrison, bending her head for the little one's salute, the tears starting to her eyes.

"She has found a mother at last in the place of the dead one;" said Mr. Morrison, as he took up his hat to leave the room—

"Good-bye, Jeanie—little Jeanie."

"Dood-bye, pappu, dood-bye."

Dying mother! the faith that lent its light to cheer thy departing hours was not in vain! Thy child, the last object of thine earthly love, has found a Christian home—not indeed as thou didst

hope—but far exceeding all thou didst ask or desire.

Happy! thrice happy child! to find a home pervaded by the genial spirit of Christian love.

## Chapter Sixth.

THE incidents of early childhood are usually devoid of interest to all except those to whom the little being is connected by the ties of nature and affection. Jeanie Morrison grew up in her new home, the one object on which all the affections of her new parents were concentrated.

Her childish preferences and tastes were carefully studied, and her wishes always frankly expressed, almost invariably gratified; and she manifested, as she grew older, the same unselfish delight in ministering to the happiness of others which characterized the noble-hearted woman whom she called mother.

Not many months elapsed before the habitual gravity of her countenance gave place to an expression of sprightliness and light-hearted gaiety, which Mr. and Mrs. Morrison never dreamed of seeing her possess, though she still had her hours of dreamy, and most unchild-like abstraction, when her mind seemed to be wandering among the scenes and associations of the past. Under the judicious

physical training to which she was subjected, her health became perfect; and although never what might be called a beautiful child, no stranger could look upon her without interest and admiration.

She was not sent at all to school until she was ten years of age, but was in all things the pupil of Mrs. Morrison, who by no means aimed to make her a prodigy in any respect. She taught her to read, and after a little time the use of her needle, so that at ten years of age she was capable of taking the entire care of her own wardrobe, and fully initiated into the mysteries of darning and stitching. Mrs. Morrison, who herself was the very genius of order, required of Jeanie the most exact attention to it in the care of her wardrobe, and her toys, playthings, and books.

Jeanie would gladly have sat for a whole day at a time making pictures on her little slate, or perhaps at another time would have been delighted to have devoted herself entirely to some entertaining little volume which came in her way.

So, whenever she became interested in the outfit of her doll, she would become so absorbed in her occupation as for the time being to forget everything else.

Her chief delight, however, was in reading. She

delighted in poetry, and would repeat large portions of such things as struck her fancy while reading, committing them to memory with apparently scarcely an effort. Her mother encouraged this, and would select from her favorite authors such passages as Jeanie would be likely to admire. Among these were large portions of Pope's *Messiah*, and selections from Addison, Thomson, and Cowper. She had committed to memory large portions of the Gospels and the Psalms, and was familiar with the Prophets, particularly Isaiah. This inimitable prophecy she never tired of reading or repeating aloud; it was her favorite Sabbath evening employment, and her parents never tired of listening to her.

When at length Jeanie entered school, she found herself wanting in those habits of close and persevering application which are needful in order to the faithful and regular discharge of the duties of a school girl.

By her quickness, she was enabled to take and retain whatever place in the class she chose; and at the quarterly examinations of the school which she attended, she always sustained herself with credit. Much of her knowledge of the sciences which she was pursuing was superficial, a fact which

few knew so well as herself. While others were busily engaged in mastering the difficult points of a lesson, she was too apt to sit dreaming over her book; and her ready tact in recitation often enabled her to pass without particular notice, even when she had scarcely studied her lesson.

Jeanie, however, was not entirely to blame. Miss Adams had long enjoyed a high reputation as a teacher of Misses, and provided the recitations passed off tolerably smoothly, and the girls appeared well at the examinations, all was well. The arts by which a study or pursuit is made pleasant to one who has an aversion to it, and the processes by which a pupil's mind is interested in the undertakings in which it is engaged, and a spirit of inquiry fostered and encouraged, were not among the furnishings of Miss Adams' mind. Sometimes Jeanie, whose mind was always intensely occupied with whatever she undertook in earnest, would resolve to understand the lesson assigned her in arithmetic or algebra, but meeting with some obstacle in consequence of her want of a thorough knowledge of the first principles, would go to Miss Adams for a solution of her difficulty. The teacher would take her slate, and without one word of explanation, rapidly go over the work, and return it to her. If she ven-

tured an additional inquiry, she would be answered, "Oh, you stupid child, you will never understand anything about it."

If a difficult question was put her in the class, there were half a dozen girls who seemed to care for no other lesson but this, and who in all other respects were far inferior to her in point of intelligence, who would watch her face, and smiler and smile; and as Jeanie dreaded ridicule more than almost anything else, she would become confused, and blush, and stammer so, that the answer which might have been properly given in the first instance, was almost invariably lost.

Had Jeanie told Mr. and Mrs. Morrison of these troubles, all would have been well enough, but she lacked the courage to do so. She felt ashamed of herself, guilty, and reluctant that her parents should know that she had to bear the reproaches of the teacher, and the ridicule of some of the girls.

When Jeanie was about twelve years old, a widow lady by the name of Hyde came to reside in the town, with a daughter about fourteen. Mrs. Hyde was not in affluent circumstances, and after the death of her husband only retained sufficient property to enable her to purchase a small cottage on the opposite side of the town, about three miles

from Mr. Morrison's house. Mrs. Hyde supported herself by needle-work, and Clara did not attend school during the summer, but remained at home to assist her mother. The two girls had never met except at church, but by some strange sort of sympathy their eyes often encountered each other. Jeanie sometimes spoke to the girls about Clara, but none of them seemed to be acquainted with her, and some of them amused themselves by laughing at her "queer fancy," as they called it.

"Why, Jeanie Morrison!" exclaimed Sarah Johnson, "what a queer thing you are. She's nothing at all but a washer-woman's daughter!"

"No, indeed, she is not, Sarah!" said Jeanie; "and if she was, she would be none the worse for that."

"Oh! it will do for you to say that, Jeanie Morrison," said Kate Kilborn; "poor folks must be careful who they associate with."

"I am sure you need not be afraid she would hurt you," replied Jeanie, indignantly; "any one can see that she isn't a person to injure anybody."

"I'm sure I can't see anything so very wonderful about her," said Kate. "She looks as quiet as a kitten; nobody thinks she is very pretty, at least—"



"There! stop, Kate, it's plain you are jealous; every one thinks she is a beautiful creature," said Mary Morgan.

"Well, her beauty isn't to my taste," said Kate (who was remarkable for her rosy cheeks); "I like some color and some spirit."

"Why, girls, don't you think she is very sweet-looking?" said Jeanie; "she always makes me think of—"

"Of what, Jeanie," said one of the girls.

"Why, of—of—Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Jeanie looked hastily up as she said this, but she only encountered the cold, sarcastic eye of Kate Kilborn, and she blushed as if she had done something wrong.

"There, it's all said now, girls! Come, Jeanie, couldn't you give us a sermon from that text?" said Kate.

"For shame, Kate! it isn't fair for you to tease Jeanie so," said Mary Morgan. "It wouldn't hurt you to know the Bible a little better, and to practice it too, I think."

It was a little singular that on the very next Sabbath, which was communion-day, Clara Hyde, young as she was, came forward to make a public

profession of religion. The girls were all present, and all taken by surprise. But as the lovely girl, clad in simple white, received the seal of the covenant upon her fair, open brow, not one of the girls but recalled Jeanie's words, not one of them but said inwardly, "Jeanie Morrison was right after all!"

Jeanie herself was deeply affected. It was a sight such as she had never witnessed before; one in all the bloom of youthful loveliness thus devoting herself to the service of God. The admiration with which she had ever regarded her, deepened almost into reverence as she looked on her, and with that came a feeling that an impassable barrier was now placed between them. Never, at any time, had she ventured to hope for an intimacy with Clara, never would she have ventured to address her even, unless Clara had first spoken to her, but she had unconsciously regarded her as a friend.

But this was past. What interest would Clara ever be expected to take in her now? She did not so much regret that Clara was a Christian, as she longed to be one herself. She would gladly have been over on Clara's side, numbered, like her, among the friends of God, but, alas! for this she was unfit. She could not help weeping at the

thought of this *unfitness*, and she resolved that *when she was a little older*, she would be a *Christian*.

At tea she could not eat. Mr. and Mrs. Morrison saw that her eyes were red with weeping, and instantly suspected the cause. They, too, had been struck by the appearance of the lovely girl during the services of the day; and aware of Jeanie's fervent admiration of her, saw how deep the impression of what they had witnessed that day might be upon the susceptible heart of their beloved child. At length Jeanie said:

"How strange it is, mother, that some of the girls do not think Clara Hyde beautiful?"

"Do they not, my dear?" said Mrs. Morrison.

"Oh, no!—and they laugh at me for saying I thought she was the most beautiful person I ever saw. Mother, she always makes me think of the angels!"

"I must say, Jeanie, I think she is in some respects like the angels."

"Yes! she is, and she will be more like them before many years," said Mr. Morrison. "I don't think she can stay with us very long."

"Why not, father?"

"I heard Dr. Gray say that he did not think she could not live many years. She has inherited a frail constitution from her father, who died of consumption. Dr. Gray knew him very well, it seems, and he says Clara will not be long-lived."

"Oh! I do hope she will be careful, and not get sick," said Jeanie.

"Are you acquainted with her, my dear?" said Mr. Morrison.

"Oh, no, father! I never spoke with her!"

"Why not, Jeanie?"

"Why, she is a great deal older than I am, besides—"

"Not so very much older—only a couple of years or so;—but you said 'besides'—besides what, Jeanie?"

"Why, father, perhaps she might not wish to be acquainted with me, you know."

"Well, why not?"

"She is older, and a great deal prettier, and better too, than I am, and—and—"

Jeanie hesitated—she did not know what to say. Mr. and Mrs. Morrison smiled, and Mrs. Morrison said,

"I really think, my dear, that you need not have much to fear, if you really want to become ac-

quainted with her; that is, if I may judge from some things I have observed."

"What things, mamma?"

"I often see her smile very sweetly on you when you happen to meet each other in the vestibule on the Sabbath."

"Oh, yes! I know she always smiles, but then she smiles on everybody, at least all the little girls."

"You are a close observer, Jeanie."

"I think, mother," said Mr. Morrison, "that we'll all ride over to Mrs. Hyde's this week, some evening. I presume she will be glad to see us, and our Jeanie can have an introduction to Clara that will satisfy even her sense of propriety."

"I like the plan well, Edward, for I would be glad to make Mrs. Hyde's acquaintance."

## Chapter Seventh.

MRS. MORRISON had several reasons for wishing to bring Jeanie under Clara's influence. Notwithstanding her familiarity with her beloved child, like many mothers, she had never been able to converse freely with Jeanie on the subject of personal religion. I say, she *had not been able*; I do not mean that there was any real necessity for this reserve, except what was found in her own reluctance to do her duty—a reluctance which is so unaccountable that we should not be able to believe in its existence, did we not see daily and mournful evidence of the fact. Mrs. Morrison had taught her as a child to pray, and to read her Bible daily; and she knew Jeanie's heart was often tenderly impressed by religious truth. It was the first desire of both parents that their darling should become a child of God; and both were fully and painfully sensible of a neglect of duty towards her, and therefore they the more gladly encouraged the partiality which she had for Clara, in the hope that

her influence would atone for their own deficiencies.

But the plan for bringing the two young girls together was to be thwarted in an unexpected manner. On the following day, as Mrs. Morrison was riding out with her husband, their horse took fright and she was thrown violently from the carriage, dislocating her ankle, besides inflicting several severe contusions upon her head and breast. For several hours she was deprived of her reason, and confined in a darkened apartment. Poor Jeanie's terror was indescribable. She could not be prevailed on to think that her dear mother would be restored to her, until Mrs. Morrison herself was able to speak and comfort her. Then with devoted affection Jeanie attended on her mother day after day, striving to anticipate every wish, and alleviate every pain, denying herself anything and everything that might interfere with attendance in the sick-room.

Mr. and Mrs. Morrison were deeply affected by this proof of their beloved child's affection. They could not help feeling that God had returned their kindness to the orphan into their own bosoms, and thankfully acknowledged the Divine goodness.

It was a new thing to Jeanie to be called upon to

officiate in the sick-room, and she was of course rather awkward at first; but her warm affection for Mrs. Morrison, and patient effort to learn all that she needed to know relative to the duties of a nurse, enabled her to overcome all difficulties much more readily than she at first expected. When Mrs. Morrison was able to listen, Jeanie took great delight in reading and reciting to her, and it would be difficult to say which most enjoyed this season—mother or child.

Still, slowly passed the weeks until the invalid was able to leave her room and take her wonted place at the social board, and in the family sitting-room. Even then, Mrs. Morrison needed constant attendance, and Jeanie pleaded eloquently that she might be permitted to remain at home until her mother should have regained her usual health.

At home Jeanie was always natural and unembarrassed; but at school she was in constant dread of the ridicule of her companions, and feared to express herself on any subject in a free and natural manner. Besides, she had never been a favorite with the teacher, who sometimes appeared to take a peculiar and almost malicious pleasure in exposing her weak points; and as Jeanie was very enthusiastic, and threw herself with all her heart into

whatever interested her mind, there was frequent occasion for a remark which she often heard—

"How odd that Jeanie Morrison is!" or sometimes—

"What a queer way Jeanie Morrison has of saying and doing things."

In one sense this was true. Jeanie's opinions were formed from reading, and from intercourse with Mrs. Morrison, who always cherished an elegant though almost Quaker-like simplicity and directness in all she said. Among the girls, the question usually was,

"How will this look?" or, "What will people say?" At Mr. Morrison's, it was,

"Is this or that thing *right*?" This point satisfactorily settled, all was settled. The course of action was plain.

Truth also compels us to say that Jeanie held her opinions and views with a pertinacity that often bordered upon obstinacy, and still oftener *appeared* like it.

There had been a great change in the school since Jeanie had been confined at home. The old teacher had relinquished the charge, and in her place the committee had secured a new and much younger lady from Boston, who came highly recommended

to Laurelton, but whose sweet face, and winning and yet dignified manners, would almost have obviated the necessity of other recommendation. In the school-room, Miss Horton held her pupils at a respectful distance, which the boldest of them could not venture to pass, and yet she won their confidence, and inspired them with a warm affection for her, and a new interest in their various pursuits and studies. The girls, who often called on Jeanie, were loud in her praise, as well as that of Clara Hyde, who had been attending the school.

One evening, when Kate Kilborn, Mary Morgan and Susan Johnson were at Mrs. Morrison's, Kate said:

"Well, Jeanie, we begin to like Clara Hyde almost as well as you did last summer. She is really a very pretty girl."

"But, Kate!" said Jeanie, somewhat mischievously, "her mother is a washer-woman, you know!"

The girls all laughed—they understood the allusion; but Kate affected not to remember it, and quickly replied:

"Oh! that is all explained. Mrs. Graves told mother that Mrs. Hyde told her she had property enough to support her well but some person had

got it in his hands, and she could not get it, for she was not able to hire a lawyer—"

"Oh, mother! don't you think father will get it for her. He won't ask her for pay, I know!"

"I doubt not, my dear, that he will be willing to do all he can for Mrs. Hyde," said Mrs. Morrison.

The girls remained some time longer, but Jeanie's head was so full of the new subject, that she had but very little to say about anything else. So she was quite relieved when they left the house, and still more gratified when she saw her father enter the room. She sprung forward to meet him, and taking both of his hands in hers, she said:

"Oh! father! father! I have a great favor to ask of you, and you will grant it, will you not?"

"How can I until I know what it is?"

"I will tell you as soon as you promise—"

"Oh, that is what you want, is it? Well, I never promise to do anything until I know I can accomplish it. So, you see, you will have to tell me after all."

"But, father, I'm sure you can, for you are a lawyer—"

"Ah, indeed! professional business, is it?" said

Mr. Morrison, not a little amused. "Well, Jeanie, who has been committing assault and battery—"

"Please not to tease me now, father."

"Well, well, Jeanie, just tell me what you want, and if it is possible and proper, it shall be done."

"Well, father, Kate Kilborn says that Mrs. Hyde has some property somewhere which she cannot get possession of, because she is too poor to pay a lawyer to get it for her."

"Then, Jeanie, I am to understand that you wish to have an old man like me, who all his life has had plenty to do, run about the country in his old age to look up business."

"Oh, no, father; but it seems so hard for poor Mrs. Hyde and Clara to have to work so hard, when there is plenty of money that they justly ought to have."

"It is, indeed, my child; but you forget that we lawyers want better authority to undertake such an affair than a story of Miss Kate Kilborn's."

"But, father, Kate told us that Mrs. Hyde told Mrs. Graves, and Mrs. Graves told her mother all about it."

"Rather a round-about story after all, Jeanie; but I'll tell you, I will ask Dr. Gray about it, and

he shall tell Mrs. Hyde of my willingness to do anything I can for her."

"Thank you! thank you, dear father!" said Jeanie, kissing him. "How good you are."

"And I am glad to see my child so concerned about the interests of another. God rewards those who befriend the widow and the fatherless."

A tear came into the old man's eye, and Jeanie started and looked at him in surprise. She had never heard him speak in this way before.

"You have been a great blessing and comfort to us, Jeanie!" said Mr. Morrison.

"I hope I shall always be, then, dear father," said Jeanie. "I mean to try."

"You will succeed, then, without doubt, my child. God bless you!"

On the following Wednesday Jeanie commenced attending school. Miss Horton had not arrived when she reached the school-room, and quite a number of the village girls, with several strangers, were standing and sitting around the stove. "One of the girls called out as she entered:

"Oh, there comes Jeanie Morrison!"

The girls looked in the direction of the door, but no one moved or spoke. Jeanie felt confused, for all eyes were upon her; but she quietly laid aside

her shawl and bonnet, and approached the stove. Some of the girls moved a little to give her a place, when suddenly Clara Hyde, who sat so absorbed with her book that she had not noticed the new comer, started from her seat and said,

"Here, Jeanie, take my chair; you look cold."

"Oh, no! no! Miss Hyde, not your seat, indeed. I can stand very well, and I am not very cold."

"I am not Miss Hyde, if you please; I am Clara," said she, laughing. "And now, Jeanie, just take my seat and warm yourself, here among the girls, while I go to my desk yonder and finish my lesson." And away she went to a distant corner of the still cold school-room.

Jeanie could not help watching her, as with shawl closely folded around her, and smiling face, she sat earnestly attentive to her lesson until Miss Horton arrived, and the exercises of the morning commenced.

Jeanie found little opportunity to cultivate Clara's acquaintance during that term, although she always met her with a pleasant word and that wonderful smile. It seemed like the spontaneous gushing out of an ever-loving, and joyous yet chastened spirit. The school was large, and Miss

Horton gladly employed Clara in the instruction of a class of little ones. When not thus engaged, she was always deeply absorbed in her studies, and at recess her time was usually monopolized by the elder girls.

Jeanie would often be found standing in the outskirts of the circle around her, listening to what she said, and admiring the sallies of her ready though always harmless wit, and the sweet and peaceful expression of her countenance.

The girls obtained many new ideas from Miss Horton. On one occasion she said to the class:

"It may seem to you but a small matter, my dear girls, to omit a single recitation, but that one exercise may involve a principle upon which the whole science turns. Ignorant of that, much of what you really understand must be useless to you, for you cannot comprehend the connection of the whole.

"There is another light in which I wish you to look at this matter of preparation and recitation. I have long been convinced, that the opportunities God gives us bear a close and intimate relation to the duties which in his providence He will require of us. In other words, our Heavenly Father furnishes us with suitable opportunities to prepare for

the discharge of all the duties he will hereafter call upon us to perform. If this be true, no hour of instruction can safely be trifled with, and no lesson carelessly passed over, without laying up a store of future mortification and regret, or at least laying upon some future hour the burden of to-day's neglected duties in addition to the tasks which belong appropriately to that future time."

This was a new view of things to the girls, and invested the passing hours with an importance which they had not been accustomed to attach to them.

At recess, they discussed the matter, as girls are very apt to do.

"It does not seem to me," said Kate, "that Miss Horton's rule is appropriate to all of us. It may be to those who expect to have to earn their living by teaching; but most of us have fathers able to support us. What difference will it make to me ten years from now, whether I miss my algebra lesson to-day or not?"

"Ten years from to-day may find you teaching algebra, Kate," said Suzie. "Stranger things have happened before now, than that."

"I imagine it would trouble me some to teach anything I have learned in two years past."



"See here, Kate," said Mary Morgan, "there is Julia Richards; she went to one of the best schools in Boston for three years, and what does she know about the 'responsibilities' that Miss Horton tells us of? I don't see as she has ever to use anything she learned, unless it is the fashions. I guess she learned more of them than anything else, after all."

"I wonder what Miss Horton would say to her case," said Kate. "She never seems to feel as if she had lost any time, or to find any use for anything she knows."

"Perhaps she would find use enough for what she knows, if she would live for anything but to dress herself," said Jeanie.

"And pray, what do *you* live for, Jeanie?" said Suzie.

"Oh, I know!" said Kate, "to be an oracle for us, and to say wise things."

"To do a great deal of good, and to make people very happy," said Clara, who just then came upon the group, and heard the last two speakers.

"Oh, dear! Miss Hyde! are you there?" said Mary and Caroline in one breath; "you're most as bad as Miss Horton."

"Clara! Clara!—if you please, girls, leave Miss

Hyde, for the little ones when they stand up in a row to read and spell—but what were you saying, Caddie?"

"I said I want to be left to do as I please sometimes, now don't you, Clara?"

"Yes, when I please to do right—"

"I don't like this continual reference to other people. I want to do as I please sometimes without stopping to think whether other people will have to suffer for it or not. Let everybody look out for themselves, I say."

"I should like to know when you didn't please to do right, for my part, Miss Clara," said Sarah Johnson; "and after all you look happier than almost any one else."

"Mother says, to be good, is to be happy," said Jeanie Morrison.

"Then what makes good people have such long faces?" said Mary.

"Oh! father and mother haven't long faces, nor Clara, nor—"

"Well, Jeanie, father and mother, and Clara, are not all the people in the world, are they? You little minx, your face is long enough sometimes, goodness knows!"

"But I am not good," persisted Jeanie.

"Well, have it your own way; I have no objection, I'm sure."

"A word spoken in season, how good it is." Thus it was with that careless remark of Kate Kilborn's. "What do you live for, I should like to know?" Upon Jeanie's heart and upon Mary's, that question fell with an energy which startled them into earnest self-examination, and awakened impulses to a new and better life. Good seed was it, that brought forth in *due season* an abundant harvest.

## Chapter Eighth.

"Blessed are the hands that prepare pleasures for a child."

AS spring advanced, carpenters were seen to come and go from Mr. Morrison's house to a shop in the neighborhood, and at length it was ascertained that a wing was about to be added to one side of the old building. Nothing in particular was said to Jeanie about it, and very naturally her curiosity was considerably excited, and one day she said:

"Mamma, why is father building an addition to the house? It is large enough for us all now, I should think."

"Yes, large enough for us all now, but you know that your father expects your cousin Edward to spend his vacations here while he is in college, and to make his home with us hereafter."

"I should think he must be quite a large boy to need such a room as that; and besides, I should not suppose he would want a door opening into

your bed-room, and on the prettiest side of the house too, looking into the garden."

"I did not say that room was for Edward, Jeanie, you know."

"Oh, no! I understand now. It is for you and father, I guess; and then you will give me your old one, won't you? then I can be close to you—oh! that will be so nice, mamma!"

"We shall see, Jeanie. By-the-way, dear, your father thinks of taking you on a little journey with him next week."

"Does he, mother!—oh, where?"

"He is to meet Edward at New York, and he takes this opportunity to go into the western part of the State to transact a little business for Mrs. Hyde."

"Oh, mother! has father undertaken to help her?"

"Yes, love, and there is every prospect that he will succeed. Poor Mrs. Hyde and Clara would have been sadly wronged, had it not been for you, Jeanie, perhaps."

"Oh, mother, I am so glad!"

"What for, Jeanie? for the journey, or for Mrs. Hyde and Clara?"

"Both, but most of all, for them; for I can do

"without the journey better than they without something to live on. But you are going, too, mother, are you not?"

"No, Jeanie, I do not feel strong enough to take such a journey. You shall tell me all about it when you come back, and I shall enjoy it very much, I am sure."

"Is Edward to go with us, mother?"

"No! Jeanie. Mr. Waterman, his mother's brother, who has always had the care of him since his parents died, will bring him to New York. Your father is to do his business first, and meet them in New York about the twentieth of April."

"That is very soon, mother, but—"

"But what, Jeanie?"

"Not much of anything, mother, only I was wondering whether I should like to have Edward live here. I hope he won't bring any of his Virginia notions here."

"What kind of notions?"

"Oh, I don't know. I have heard Kate tell a great deal about her uncle who lives at the South, and how they do things there—and—"

"And you have taken up a prejudice about southern people, have you?"

"Oh, no! I hope not, only I thought perhaps I should not like them very well; but, mamma, how old a boy is Edward?"

"Only about seventeen, Jeanie," smiling.

"Seventeen? why, he must be quite a young gentleman. I am only fourteen; well, I must be careful how I behave myself in his august presence."

"Only be careful always to feel right, and act naturally, my dear, and then you will have nothing to fear. We know very little about Edward, for we have never seen him since his father's death. His mother's friends took him to live with them. I hope you will try to like each other, for your father loves him very much; and he would be grieved, if you were not kind to him."

"Oh, I'll be kind to him—I'll be a real mother to him, mamma. I'll iron his collars, and darn his stockings, and hem his pocket-handkerchiefs," said the merry girl, "mayn't I, mother?"

"We shall see; but, Jeanie, what makes you so wild to-night?"

"Oh, I have heard so much good news—I am so glad," and so she danced out of the room.

Dear reader, would you like a peep at this same Jeanie? See, then, a slight, little figure, not more

than four feet six inches high, with a very healthful looking but not remarkably fair complexion; features not very regular, but pleasant; cheeks rosy only when warmed by some impulse of the lively spirit within; jet black and curling hair; rosy lips; teeth white as ivory; large gray eyes, sometimes rather dull-looking, but, when interested or excited, bright and sparkling; a very ordinary-looking and girlish sort of forehead, which of course would not suit a phrenologist at all. In short, as you look at her while she stands in that not remarkably graceful attitude, her mind travelling, nobody knows where, you would have thought her but an ordinary sort of girl. If you had been looking on while the conversation just narrated was taking place, you would inevitably have lost your heart, and envied her foster parents the possession of such a treasure.

Jeanie had great pleasure in the neat and simple but tasteful outfit which her mother had provided for her journey. This little excursion was a great event to her, for she had never before been absent for three weeks from her home and her mother.

Mr. Morrison had earnestly protested against having any "girls' notions" packed up among his

things, so Jeanie had to have a little trunk exclusively to herself; and it was a great study to her how to arrange matters, so that everything she might possibly need at any time would be easily accessible without turning the whole upside down; for doing which (between ourselves, dear readers) Jeanie had on more than one occasion manifested a very decided talent.

At length, however, pocket-handkerchiefs, combs, brushes, &c., were put in the most convenient place. A corner was found for the well-supplied work-box, which might be needed in case of accident to Jeanie's or her father's dress. The portfolio, containing pens, ink, paper, wafers, envelopes, and everything necessary for the letters she had promised to write to mother, was duly bestowed; and the tiny silver pencil, and new memorandum book, which was to preserve her "pencillings by the way," safely deposited in the pocket of her travelling dress. All was pronounced in readiness, and bedtime had nearly arrived, when Mrs. Morrison said:

"You will have no mother with you to look after your things, dear child. You must be very careful and lose nothing, for 'anything that is worth having, is worth taking care of.' Remember to make no

person any unnecessary trouble, either by the way or in the places where you stop. Avoid complaining, and do all that you can to promote the comfort and convenience of those about you. Do not be eating cake or fruit, or anything of that kind in the coach. It is unpleasant when people are crowded together in such close quarters. Remember, too, that strangers receive their impressions about you from your dress and manners, and be very careful that you keep your pocket-handkerchief, teeth, hair, and hands as tidy as when you are at home. Such little things show the true character of the person far more than is generally supposed; but you will notice many of these things yourself. Observe what impressions you receive from the persons with whom you meet, and you can amuse yourself in your leisure moments by noting down in your little book such things as are particularly interesting to you, for my benefit when you return."

"I should like that mother, but will it be right? Will it not be too much like talking about people?"

"You do not know the names of the persons you meet, and as your descriptions are not likely to be very accurate, no person will have any cause of

complaint. Of course, you would not think of exhibiting anything of that kind to your fellow travellers."

"Oh, no, mother!"

"What books have you in your trunk, Jeanie?"

"Nothing in my trunk. I have my little Bible in my travelling-bag."

"That is well, my dear; but you will probably have considerable leisure while your father is employed, and it would be well to take that "Life of Mary Queen of Scots," which your father brought home the other day."

"Yes, mother, and my new Cowper, too; that will be just the thing. I wonder I did not think of it myself; but then I thought I should not have much time to read."

"You will probably meet with many strangers, who will treat you with respect and attention for your father's sake; but always remember, my dear, that people will form their true estimate of you from the disposition you manifest, and the qualities you possess. We cannot love that which is unlovely, however much we may endeavor to do so. It is not what you *appear* to be, but what you really are, that secures your place in the esteem of those whose esteem is worth having. But it is time

for you to go to rest. Good night, my dear child."

"Good night, dear mother."

The travellers breakfasted at an early hour on the following morning; and when pelisse and gloves and bonnet were all on, there was yet a few moments before the stage was at the door, and Jeanie said, as she held Mrs. Morrison by the hand:

"I hate to leave you, mamma; I do wish you were going too."

"Oh, do not think of me, child," said Mrs. Morrison, gaily. "I have something to do at home, which will give me quite as much pleasure as anything you will enjoy."

"What is it mother? won't you tell me?"

"There will not be time, Jeanie. I only wished you to know that I had something pleasant to occupy my time, that you might not fancy that I was pining in sadness for want of you."

"I wonder if anybody ever did that," said Jeanie trying to laugh.

"I presume not," said Mrs. Morrison, "for you are almost always just where you are wanted, Jeanie."

"That is because so few people ever want me.

"Mamma; scarcely anybody seems to care where I am."

"This is your first flight from home, and from your mother, dear," said Mrs. Morrison; "no! not the first, after all." At that moment she recalled the sickly infant which she took in her arms not much more than twelve years before. Could this be the same!—But now the crack of the stage-driver's whip was heard, and they must be away.

Speedily were the parting words spoken, and they were gone.

We cannot follow our travellers all the way they went; but one afternoon, some two weeks after they left home, they stopped at a little country tavern. Mr. Morrison ordered tea as soon as possible, and after tea he invited Jeanie to walk out with him.

She readily consented, and in a few moments they were walking silently together. Mr. Morrison appeared unusually thoughtful, and Jeanie felt upon her own spirit the weight that seemed resting upon her father's heart. Several times that day she had observed the same thing, and inquired if he was not well. He always replied that he was as well as usual; and not entering into

any further explanation, Jeanie concluded something in his business had gone contrary to his wishes.

At first, she feared that she had either done something wrong, or neglected something which she ought to have attended to; but as he was unusually kind and gentle to her, she said nothing, only walking quietly by his side. They passed the few houses in the little village, and were walking slowly round the hill, when suddenly Mr. Morrison stopped, and producing a key, opened a little gate.

Jeanie started—they were entering a graveyard; she exclaimed:

"Oh, father, please don't go in there!"

"I think there is something here you would like to see, Jeanie," said Mr. Morrison.

Jeanie took her father's hand, and again they walked on in silence. In a few moments they paused beside a grave. The tender grass was just shooting up, the leaf-buds on a rose-bush at the foot of the grave were just bursting out, and at its head was a beautiful slab of pure white marble.

"Whose grave is this, father?" said Jeanie, in a trembling voice

Mr. Morrison led her slowly round to the head, and she saw inscribed on the stone: "Martha Wilson, April 10th, 18—"

Jeanie read the inscription, and then looking suddenly up into Mr. Morrison's face, burst into tears. For a few moments she wept on, and then her father said, in a gentle tone:

"I have brought you here, my dear child, because I thought it was a place you ought to see. I may not live long, and I wished you to see the spot where the ashes of your mother rest; the time may come when you will be glad to know where this spot is."

Jeanie looked up with tearful eyes, but she could not speak. After a few moments more, Mr. Morrison said to her, "Shall we go now, Jeanie?" She assented, and they slowly retraced their steps.

"Do you at all remember your mother, Jeanie?"

"I think not, father. A sort of remembrance I have—a sorrowful, dreamy kind of impression—but I think it is rather the result of what I have heard than what I can recollect. Do you not think so?"

"Probably that is the case, Jeanie."

"Who placed that beautiful stone at the head of the grave, father?—you told me mother had no friends!"

"There was some little property left when the expenses of the funeral were all paid, and I ordered the stones, Jeanie. Do they please you?"

"Very much! the color of the marble is so pure and white, and they are so plain. I think they are beautiful."

"Jeanie, do you see that little brown house yonder?"

"Yes, sir. Who lives there?"

"Mr. and Mrs. Mason. Mrs. Mason used to live in my brother William's family. They kept the public house here twelve years ago. It was at their house your mother died, Jeanie. We must go there; they will be glad to see us." Mr. Morrison knocked at the door. It was opened by a bright, active-looking old lady.

"Mrs. Mason, how are you to-day?" said Mr. Morrison, shaking her warmly by the hand.

"Why, if that ain't Squire Morrison—why, how do you do? Just walk right in—why, who'd a-thought of seein' you to-day. How's your folks?"

"I left my wife well about two weeks ago, Mrs.



Mason. Do you know this young lady, my good woman?"

"It can't be that that's—little Jane!"

"Yes, this is little Jane, but we at home call her Jeanie—Jeanie Morrison. A good old Scotch sound that has, Mrs. Mason, don't you think so?"

"Dear me!" said the old lady, taking off her spectacles, and surveying Jeanie from head to foot, "dear me! how the child has grown! It don't seem but a little while ago sin' that night—I shall never forget it as long as I live!—never squire!"

"There, sit down, Jeanie," said Mr. Morrison, leading her to a seat.

"La me! I was took so by surprise like, I forgot what I was about. Just sit down yourself, squire, till I call my old man. He'll be proper glad to see little Jane again." As she went out, Mr. Morrison followed her to the kitchen.

"Now, Betsey," said he, "I may as well tell you, that I brought this little girl of mine here on purpose to see you. So we stopped at Jones' below here, and took tea, and afterwards went up to the grave-yard. I wanted you to see Jeanie, and her to see you; and then we shall go to the tavern and stay all night, (she would n't sleep much here, you

know.) So just don't go to getting up a supper, but go back into the front room there, you and John, and we'll have a nice talk about old times. If Jeanie asks any questions, just answer them, and maybe she will like to take a look up-stairs before we go into the room where her mother was."

"Yes, yes, squire, I see; but I wish you could a-come right up here and eat supper."

"I suppose so; but now send John in, I want to see him."

"Yes, indeed, I will, and he'll be right glad to see you again, squire."

Mr. Morrison returned to the room where he had left Jeanie, and found her sitting by the window, pale and trembling. He took her hand in his, half repenting that he had brought her to the house. After a few moments, he said,

"Are you sorry to come here, Jeanie?"

"No, father; but I wish mother was here."

"Which mother, Jeanie?"

"My mother at Laurelton."

John and Betsey entered at this moment, and the honest old man held out his hard hands to Mr. Morrison and Jeanie:

"How do ye do, squire? Is this the baby that was left here twelve years ago?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Morrison, laughing; "a fine, well-grown baby she is, is she not?"

"Indeed, she is, and a nice lady-like looking girl she's got to be. Are you hearty, Miss?"

"Oh, yes, sir," said Jeanie, smiling.

"Don't you wish you'd kept her yourself, John?" said Mr. Morrison.

"Well! I reckon!" replied John, scratching his head.

"I'm sure many's the time I've wished it," said Mrs. Mason; "not but what I thought you'd do well enough by her, squire, but I kinder took a notion to her like."

"I never thought she'd live to be as old as she is now," said John. "I said to Betsey, when you took her off, squire, 'Betsey,' says I, 'that child ain't a-going to live to be old.'"

"Oh, she's well now—well enough to live sixty years longer," said Mr. Morrison, who seemed determined to be lively.

"That's longer than she'll have you or I to keep her company by half, squire," said John. "I'm a-thinkin' you've growed older pretty considerable sin' the last time you was out to these parts. I'm sure I feel a sight older than I did then, if that's anything."

"Yes, John, you and I must be getting well on to seventy by this time. I was sixty-five last March."

"And I am sixty-seven! Dear me! how time does get along. It e'en a-most skars me sometimes. Have you heard anything from the doctor's folks lately? He had a boy livin' when you was here last."

"He is living now, and I expect to see him in New York next week. He is to make his home with me after this. He enters Yale College next fall."

"Well, now, I want to know, squire. The doctor I allers liked. He had the right kind o' stuff in him, not but what his wife was a good sort o' person enough, only I did n't quite like her ways so well as I did the doctor's."

"So Jeanie," said Mr. Morrison, "Mr. Mason here don't like Virginia notions any better than your mother says you do."

Jeanie blushed and laughed, and Mrs. Mason said to her:

"Well, child, what have you been a-doin' all this while? Goin' to school and getting a heap of edication, I'll warrant; that's just l'ke the squire."

"Not a very great heap of it, I'm afraid," said Jeanie, "at least I presume father does not think I have much."

"Jeanie has not been at school a great deal, Mrs. Mason."

"How happens that, squire? I'd a-thought you'd kept her a-going to school all the time a-most."

"Jeanie has had her mother for her teacher, and I think she has been doing very well; but the truth is, John, she don't do very much but play, and make us old people happy," and the tears started into his eyes as he spoke.

"I guess she'll get larnin' enough anyhow, squire," winking to his wife as he spoke.

"Can't you come out here and keep school for us a-summer by'm-bye? The neighbors talk some about building a new school-house up by Simon Mathews, and I haven't a doubt but they'd like well to get you for a teacher. Maybe you would n't mind teaching awhile, provided they'd give you good wages?"

"Well, Jeanie, what do you say?" said Mr. Morrison, mischievously.

"Oh, no! father, I can't teach school; you know I cannot."

"Now, squire, don't you be a spilin' that child. She's a right sensible girl, anybody can see, if you'll let her alone. She hain't got none of your stuck-up airs, nor any of your jim-cracks and fur-belowes about her. I only wish her mother knew how well off she was!"

"Perhaps she does," quietly replied Mr. Morrison. "Who can tell what the spirits of the dead are permitted to know!"

"Jeanie, dear, we must go; but would you not like to go above stairs first to the room your mother occupied?"

"Yes, father! if you will go with me."

"There, this way, squire, that little room at the head of the stairs. Dear me! I can remember all about it now just as plain as can be! How glad I've allers been that I did n't promise the woman to take her where she came from. It's allers seemed like a Providence to me that you happened to come along just as you did."

"Be sure, there was a Providence in it," said Betsey, "and I said so the very minit the squire went away with the child. But there's one thing, after all, I never could understand—"

"What was that, Betsey?" said Mr. Morrison.

"Well, it is how you came to take such a likin to that are child. Why, she was the *poorest, scrawniest thing!* Why! you can't think what a scrawny thing you was, Miss."

"I am a scrawny thing now, I guess," said Jeanie, laughing.

"Not a single bit of it!" said John, stoutly. "Not one bit; and let me tell you, Miss, if ever you want a friend, just remember John Mason! I'm rough and coarse, I know, but, but—"

"Never mind anything of that sort, John. I have always intended Jeanie should know who sheltered her in her hour of need; and if she ever forgets you and Betsey here, I'll disown her. I should n't wonder at all if you would get a letter from her when she gets home again."

"I wish we could. A right good letter she'll write anyway, I know; won't you write to us, Miss?"

"Yes, indeed, I will! but you must call me Jeanie," said she, holding out a hand to each of the old people, while tears stood in her eyes. "You will write to me, too, will you not?"

"Oh, we can't write, child."

"But I shall always want to hear from you; can not some person write for you?"

"Oh, I reckon the school ma'am will do it for us; and anyway, if you write us a letter, you'll be pretty certain of an answer back again, I reckon," said John.

"Well, it is all settled, then. Good-bye, John. Good-bye, Betsey. God bless you!"

"Good-bye, squire! good-bye," said Betsey; may we all meet at last where partings are no more."

"Amen!" ejaculated John.

"Amen!" responded Mr. Morrison, heartily.

"Amen," said an echo in Jeanie's heart; "but, shall I be there? They seem to be all Christians but me!"

Mr. Morrison and Jeanie walked quietly to their lodgings, neither of them disposed for much conversation. When they were about to retire, Mr. Morrison said:

"You can go to bed first, Jeanie. I shall have to sleep in the same room with you, I believe. These country taverns get very full, some times."

How glad Jeanie was that the tavern happened to be full that night, and how little did she imagine that her father, anticipating that she would feel lonely, had said to the landlady before he went out:

"If you have a room with two beds in it, please reserve it for my daughter and myself."

In the morning, as they were preparing to set out on their journey, Mr. Morrison called Jeanie to him, and taking a parcel from his trunk, he opened it and produced a large and beautifully-bound copy of the Bible, which he placed in her hands. She opened the sacred volume, and could not avoid uttering an exclamation of delight at the fair large type and clear white paper.

"Oh, father, who is this for?"

"I thought you would like to present it to your old friends. They would prize such a token of remembrance from you greatly."

"Oh, I should indeed love to give it to them; but, dear father, where did you find such a beautiful book?"

"In Boston, last winter."

"Did you think of this so long ago?"

"Yes, Jeanie."

"Dear father! how can I ever thank you enough?"

"You did it last winter, when you nursed your mother so carefully, Jeanie. Make haste now, and write your name and theirs on this fly-leaf, and I will send a boy up with it before we

go. See, here is my pocket-writing apparatus for you."

Jeanie took the pen and wrote in her fair beautiful hand:—

*To John and Betsey Mason,  
from their grateful  
Jeanie*

"There, that will do nicely," said Mr. Morrison; and when the package was despatched to the old brown house, our travellers set out on their way to the place where they were to meet the stage for New York.

Did Jeanie ever meet her old friends again? We shall see.

## Chapter Ninth.

"She was a creature, not too good  
For human nature's daily food ;  
The smiles that win, and love that cheers  
For praises, blame, loves, kisses, tears."

"WHAT an odd child that Jeanie of yours is uncle," said Edward Morrison one morning, when he was alone with his uncle a few days before they reached Laurelton.

"Odd, is she, Ned? why, what is the matter with her?"

"Nothing is the matter with her that I know of, only I never can guess what she is going to say, or do at any time. She is not like any young girl I ever saw before."

"I presume you are right, Edward. She is not like most girls; she is more true to nature. But you are not acquainted with her yet, and you cannot understand her."

"Perhaps not."

Mr. Morrison had observed that Jeanie seemed reluctant to speak in Edward's presence. She

seemed somewhat awkward and constrained, and hesitated to express her opinions freely on the various subjects upon which they conversed. But Jeanie's quick eye had detected in his countenance an expression which indicated to her that he too thought her peculiar, and her shyness and vexation made her unusually reserved.

It was near sunset when the stage approached Laurelton, and Jeanie could no longer restrain the expression of her enthusiastic joy at the thought of once more reaching her dear home, and the mother who never seemed so dear to her as since this separation of three short weeks.

She could scarcely keep her seat as the coach whirled rapidly around the corners and neared the beloved spot. Her eyes sparkled, and she seemed suddenly transformed into another being. Edward looked at her with amazement, which his uncle observing, remarked:

"I shall have my own Jeanie again, I see, when we get home. I really began to think I had left her in New York."

Jeanie blushed, but there was no time for words, for the coach stopped at Mr. Morrison's door, and Mrs. Morrison, her kind face wreathed with smiles, stood just inside the gate to wel-

come the party. Edward had no reason to feel the want of a cordial reception from his aunt, who, in the fullness of her delight, would wait upon every one. After the first moments of joyful reunion, Jeanie was tripping lightly to her chamber to lay aside her things, when her mother said :

"There, child, lay your bonnet in my room until after tea, or let me take the things. I hear the bell, and you must all need refreshment."

Soon they were all seated around the social board, enjoying their evening meal. Jeanie was in ecstasies with everything which she saw or tasted ; and, without being aware of it, by the lively flow of her spirits, contributed largely to the liveliness and joy of the party. Some amusing occurrence which she had witnessed in her absence, some merry jest, or some affectionate word of inquiry, was continually falling from lips which for the last week had only been opened in half-uttered and stammering sentences. As they rose from table, Edward said :

"Well, Jeanie, you are a *queer* girl!"

"Oh! why need you put me in mind of it, Edward?" replied Jeanie, half-vexed, half-laughing.

"Why, Jeanie! what do you mean?" said her father.

"Nothing, father, only every person I meet tells me the same thing, until I am really afraid to open my lips before strangers."

Mr. Morrison mused: Here then was the key to some things which he had observed during their absence from home. Several times when he had particularly wished her to appear to advantage, a sudden and ungraceful silence would come over her, accompanied by an expression of annoyance for which he could not account. It was experienced now. He saw at a glance that the simple and direct manner in which she expressed her sentiments and thoughts in conversation, beautiful as he had always thought it, had attracted a degree of attention which was unpleasant to her, and gave rise to the appearance of reserve and embarrassment, which rendered her at times so unattractive. But there was now no time for further reflection, for Mrs. Morrison held open a door and invited all to enter, and see how they liked her taste in furnishing rooms.

The whole party stepped into a beautiful room, some twelve or fourteen feet square. It had two French windows, one looking into the street, and

the other opening upon a verandah which opened towards the garden. The walls were covered with light-tinted paper, and the floor with a carpet of delicate Mosaic. In one corner was a small French bed, without curtains, but spread with a snowy coverlet. Not far from it was a small bureau and mirror. Under the front window was a low ottoman, the color of which harmonized with the carpet; and not far off, a tiny work-stand, with a low rocker beside it. On the opposite side of the room, towards the garden, was a small round table, on which were laid several beautiful volumes, and a well-filled little book-case hung against the wall above it. The table drawers were stored with writing and drawing materials; and on the table was a vase of delicate spring flowers, while two beautiful pictures adorned the walls. At the foot of the bed was a small closet where Jeanie found her whole wardrobe, conveniently arranged. A door at one side opened into a passage, off which was a little bathing-room. The passage conducted into Mr. and Mrs. Morrison's room, which had also been re-fitted and re-furnished in a beautiful manner. Jeanie was almost wild with delight, going from one room to the other, examining and admiring everything.

"Oh, mamma!" said she, at last, "now I know the meaning of that which puzzled me so much while I was gone; I know now what you had to do which was so pleasant to you."

"Do you like what I have done, Jeanie?"

"Oh, perfectly, mamma. It is all so beautiful, so perfect; and I am so very glad that your room is made so large and pleasant too, and they are so close together, so that we can either of us run in any time for one of our pleasant talks, you know."

"It has been a great pleasure to me and your father to plan and arrange all this for you, my love; and I trust we shall see you enjoy many happy hours here."

"But, dear, dear parents, you do, indeed you do too much for me," and sitting down by the window and covering her face with her hands, she burst into tears, as the remembrance of all that she had seen and heard during the past three weeks was recalled to her. Before her mind's eye was vividly pictured the old brown house, and the lonely grave on the hillside. What a contrast between them and this sweet home!—between what she might have been and what she was, what the affection of these beloved parents made her! What father, what mother



could have been more to her, than those who had cherished her forlorn and destitute childhood, and whose thoughtful affection so gladdened and beautified her happy and favored lot!

Ah, Jeanie! what hast thou now to do with tears! This atmosphere of love was not bracing thee to meet the storms and darkness of thy future lot. So at least we ignorant and short-sighted creatures think. Still, however, it is true that in the wise Providence of "Our Father," love and tenderness as well as suffering and adversity, sunshine and shower as well as tempest and storm, find their appropriate place in the mingled web of the "DISCIPLINE OF LIFE."

But amid all this love, and goodness, and beauty, had our Jeanie a peaceful and happy heart? Alas! no! and when on this evening she retired to her dear little room—herself the recipient of so many mercies—the grateful, loving spirit of the child of God was *not there*. There *was* a fount of gladness within—of love and gratitude to her earthly friends; but none to her Father in Heaven—no delight in Him—no acknowledgment of Him as *her* Lord and Master, no cheerful engagement to *do* His will and conform her life to the precepts of *His* Word.

A voice within whispered, "What could I have

done to my vineyard that I have not done?" and then another voice, low and tender, called, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock;" but she did not arise and open the door. She was not ready to follow Christ. She had *not* slaked her thirst at the stream of earthly good. She did not—she would not—believe the word of the blessed Jesus.

"He that drinketh of this water *shall thirst again*, but he that drinketh of the water that *I shall give him, shall never thirst*." Ah, Jeanie! Jeanie! how many young feet have trod that dangerous and disappointing path, and turned their back upon the way to Heaven, and the angelic guide,

"Who would have won them to the path of peace."

## Chapter Tenth.

EDWARD remained at his uncle's house through the summer, reviewing his studies, and preparing to enter the Sophomore class in college in the autumn. His uncle wished him to be thoroughly prepared, so that he might have nothing to hinder or embarrass his progress. Edward was a good scholar, and withal ambitious of distinction, so that he scarcely needed his uncle's persuasion to be diligent and thorough in all he undertook.

Jeanie was in school, enjoying the society of her companions, and being herself better liked by her young friends than heretofore. She was not, however, a better scholar. Her mind was wandering and unsettled, and she brought but a small share of her energies to bear upon her lessons. Often she took her place in her class without a moment's faithful preparation, having substituted some unprofitable but fascinating volume for the text-book with which she should have been occupied, and which only served to stimulate in an unsafe and un-

healthy manner, an imagination already too active for her welfare. The natural consequence was, that the valuable and truly excellent volumes which her mother had selected so carefully, were neglected and overlooked. At school and at home she was often abstracted and absent-minded; her thoughts filled with beautiful and gorgeous visions of the future.

There were none among the girls with whom she associated to counteract the influence of this unfortunate and dangerous state of mind. Clara Hyde was in the country, teaching in a little district school. They had never been at all intimate, and now rarely met; but Jeanie always felt and acknowledged her immeasurable superiority to those by whom she was surrounded.

Jeanie's whole appearance and demeanor was undergoing a perceptible change. Mr. and Mrs. Morrison *felt* rather than perceived this; and it was with some misgivings that they listened to the words of those who spoke with admiration of her evident improvement, her greater self-possession, and the change for the better that was taking place in her manners and deportment. They felt the loss of the sweet frankness and transparency of character which they had loved so well, and deprecated the

love of dress and ornament which they saw developing itself. She was inclined to spend more time alone, and more time in the society of the girls than she had hitherto done, and the beautiful little room was not always kept in as perfect order as Mrs. Morrison could have desired, though she was far very far from suspecting the influences that were at work in the mind of her beloved child.

The Sabbath was the great drawback upon Jeanie's downward course. She could not stifle the voice of conscience on that holy day. An interesting, but irreligious volume, if unfinished on Saturday night, rested in her drawer until Monday morning, unfinished. Sometimes, indeed, the drawer was opened, and the hand once or twice rested upon the volume, but it was not drawn forth from its place. It was not opened or read. That day she always spent with her parents, either at home or with them at the appointed hour of public worship in the house of God. That day she was the dear, loving Jeanie of old; and although at times more thoughtful and pensive than usual—for conscience would speak at such moments—still she talked with her parents, read to them, and made them happy, until they reproached themselves that they had ever cherished a thought that their beloved

child was not all they wished. As these sacred days were drawing to a close, many resolutions would Jeanie make to be more faithful and conscientious in the performance of her duties at home and at school; but these resolutions made in her own strength, melted like the snow-wreath before the rays of an April sun, and the close of the week found her as careless and self-indulgent as before.

Late in December Mr. Morrison received a letter from Edward, which contained the following paragraph:

"It will doubtless gratify you, my dear uncle, to learn that a decided change has taken place in my views and sentiments. Within the few past weeks I have begun to indulge some of the hopes of a Christian, and I trust my whole life will bear testimony to the sincerity of the profession which I am about to make. You will inquire undoubtedly what effect this change will have upon my former purposes and plans. I cannot say that I apprehend any serious change will result in this respect. I conceive it quite as possible to be a conscientious lawyer as to maintain consistency in any other business or profession, and I still adhere to my old purpose to pursue the study, and at length enter upon the practice of the law."

This event startled Jeanie. Had Edward indeed become a Christian? Edward, whose childhood and youth had been spent under influences highly unfavorable to the formation of a Christian character? Had he entered the kingdom of Heaven, while she herself remained without? Conscience whispered, "Am I safe?"

"It is a long time since I have been troubled with thoughts like these," said she to herself that night, as she laid down to sleep. The thought made her tremble. "What!" thought she, "am I congratulating myself on the fact that the Spirit of God has left me to myself? What, if it should leave me forever? What, if I should lose my soul, and for what?" She was unhappy and restless, and could not sleep. She did not desire to be miserable, either here or hereafter; but she felt not the slightest desire to become the child of God. This was "not in all her thoughts." She dreaded to meet Edward; she feared he would address her upon the subject of personal religion. She was vexed that he had unfitted himself to engage in the amusements which the girls had planned, with the consent of their parents, for the approaching holidays. How could he go to their little parties with her. How would he demear himself at her own

party at home, for her parents had promised that she also should receive her young friends at their house while Edward was at home. She felt irritated with Edward; she felt dissatisfied with her self; she was angry with God. She could not sleep. She arose from her little bed, and throwing a shawl around her, paced her little room to drive away her unpleasant thoughts. Quietly she stole to the dining-room, and drank a glass of water, and then retired to her bed again; and, as she had often done before, began to weave a beautiful web, to dream a beautiful dream, of what she would do and be in future. She had planned what she would *do* and *be* when she was eighteen, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, forty, fifty, alas! that old age should ever come! Then, like a voice from Heaven came to her heart the question, "When do you intend to be a Christian?" Ah! this had no place in all her plans and purposes; and she knew it. In that hour she would have wished, if she had dared, that there *was no God*, and *no future world*! Does the reader doubt whether such feelings ever existed in the breast of one like Jeanie Morrison? Many, many a heart, if laid bare, would show a record like this; for it is by nature true of all, "The natural mind is at enmity with God."

Edward arrived just before Christmas. Jeanie watched him for a day or two with much interest, but could discover little, if any change, in his appearance or conversation; and it was not long before she ceased to fear that he would disturb her peace of mind by any direct address on the subject of religion. He attended her to all the little parties that were made during the three weeks that he remained at home, and was as gay, and happy apparently, as any one in the little circle. He told his uncle and aunt that he liked Jeanie a great deal better than he had done in the summer, and that she began to appear like other people.

But how is Jeanie enjoying the pleasures for which she was willing to peril her soul? Is she finding that enjoyment, that delight in them, which she hoped to find? No! she finds it not! She returns late at night; and, prayerless, lays her head upon her pillow to rest. But she sleeps not while hour after hour passes by. All the conversation, the nonsense, the fashion, the flattery, the glitter, how mean and trivial they all seem. There is plenty of mirth, and music, beauty, wit, and smiles abound, but happiness, peace, is *not there*. Why? why? her heart will ask; and then she will answer to herself:

"It was because I made that unfortunate remark," or "because this or that person was not there," or "this or that person did or did not do such and such things."

To-morrow it will not be so, and yet to-morrow night brings the same restless tossing on the bed, the same disturbed, disquieted heart! But her companions are in raptures. "How delightful! how beautiful! how very pleasant! everything just as it should be." Thus they speak about the same festive gatherings, which to Jeanie's heart are like "the apples of Sodom, and the clusters of Gomorrah." Do they deceive Jeanie, or do they deceive themselves?

But Clara! where is she? Here in town attending school again, with the same pure, spiritual expression of countenance, and the same wonderful smile, betokening surely a heart at peace. Happy, happy Clara! no unrest on her brow, no disquiet in her heart. Everybody loves Clara. She appears occasionally at these little parties, and her presence is that which lightens Jeanie's heart. "Oh, to be like Clara," she says, inwardly. How Jeanie wishes she were better acquainted with her, that she might have her for a friend; but every one courts her society, and Jeanie will not crowd her

self into her notice, even to win Clara's regard. Besides, what has she to give in exchange for a friendship like hers? Jeanie has never been lower in her estimation than now. But is it humility? Does the violet chafe that it cannot vie with the tulip and the rose?

Mr. and Mrs. Morrison observe Jeanie's downcast and dejected look, and attributed it to too much dissipation and excitement, and playfully tell her, that when Edward goes back to college, she must not go out so often.

But the party at home. It is to be on the last evening but one of Edward's vacation; and all is bustle and stir about the house for the whole day previous. Everything that taste and ingenuity can suggest, or money procure, is freely provided. In all the preliminary arrangements, Edward and Jeanie are actively engaged; and while she jests with him over the details of the affair, and busies herself in the needful preparations, her spirits are enlivened and revived. The last thing is done—the fires are all kindled, and a soft and genial atmosphere pervades the house. Mr. and Mrs. Morrison are in their happiest mood, and Jeanie, simply and appropriately dressed, is greeted with a beaming smile from each, as the little party seat themselves around

the table for an early tea, while Edward jestingly declares, that "what with cracking nuts, and running up and down stairs to wait on Jeanie, and doing all sorts of other things, he was never so tired in his life; college tasks are nothing to it."

But the stars are out in the clear sky, the lamps are all lighted, and the first sleigh-load of girls are safely deposited at the door. Merry greetings are interchanged on all sides, and the girls are conducted by Jeanie into her own room to lay aside outer garments, and adjust stray ringlets before they are ushered into the parlor, where Mr. and Mrs. Morrison are awaiting them. In vain does Jeanie peep under every bonnet and hood to meet the bright eyes of Clara Hyde; and still she thinks with every fresh arrival, "She will certainly come this time." At length, when nearly all are gathered, in answer to her inquiries, one of the girls informs her that "Clara will not be here to-night; there is a meeting at the lecture-room, and she has gone there. Mary Morgan has gone with her."

Mary Morgan—Jeanie had not noticed her absence; but Clara, Clara, would she not come? While she mused, a gentleman present remarked that Miss Morgan had commissioned him to say, that "she would have been glad to have been here

to-night, but the interests of Eternity were more important; and with her present feelings she should be miserable at a social party."

After a moment's pause, Mr. Morrison took up his hat and left the house. He felt that his own place was more appropriately among the children of God. He had known that for the last few weeks there had been an unusual tenderness and solemnity among the members of the church with which his family were connected, and he himself had felt his own interest for those around him deepened and greatly increased; but he had not before been aware that any one, and least of all, any of the young people, were specially interested.

"Oh, that it were Jeanie," he mentally exclaimed, as he walked towards the lecture-room.

A gloom seemed to settle upon the spirits of all. Edward mused awhile in silence after his uncle had left the room; and so did several others. The words of the young man had fallen like ice upon Jeanie's heart. She had always liked Mary better than any of the girls, except Clara; and now Mary was leaving the ranks of the careless and gay, "pressing into the kingdom," while Jeanie Morrison—the child of many prayers—was lingering without.

But an effort must be made to entertain their young friends, and both Edward and Jeanie attempt to rouse and recall themselves. Still, in spite of everything, the evening passes heavily on—and at an early hour the rooms are cleared—the company dispersed, and all still—all but that heart which will not cease its feverish throbbings—that heart, full of disappointment and vexation, which beat in the bosom of the favored, the loved, and the amiable Jeanie Morrison.

Next morning her head ached, and her face was pale; but none guessed how weary her heart was—wearied in contending with the good Spirit of God; and yet it would not submit—would not cease the hopeless strife. She tried in vain to read, in vain to work, and still more vainly to sleep.

"Oh, mamma!" she exclaimed, "how tiresome these parties are. I hope I am done with them for this winter."

"Why, I thought you enjoyed society very much, Jeanie," said Mrs. Morrison.

"Sometimes I do," replied Jeanie, "but it did seem very dreary here last night; without Clara and Mary, we got on rather poorly. I do not think any one enjoyed it very much, did you, Edward?"

"No, Jeanie, I did not. I could not help thinking that if we are really to live forever, Mary and Clara were about more sensible business than the rest of us, though after all I can't see as there is any harm in social parties, can you, Auntie?"

"Perhaps not. What do you think about it, Jeanie?"

"It never seems to hurt Clara Hyde. As for me, I am not a Christian, you know."

"I wish you were, Jeanie," said Mrs. Morrison tenderly.

"I wish you were," said Edward.

"I wish I was," said Jeanie's heart, while her eyes filled with tears; but she did not speak. She was once more "almost persuaded," and only almost. The Spirit of God was again resisted, and again it took its leave of Jeanie's heart.

## Chapter Eleventh.

"Speak! is it well with thee?  
Hast thou bowed down  
Meekly and sweetly at the sacred cross,  
Whereon thy Saviour bled? Didst thou draw nigh  
Bringing thine idols, with this humble prayer,  
'Father! thy will be done?'"

EDWARD returned to college, and Jeanie to her school. Miss Horton embraced every opportunity to converse with her and the other girls on the subject of religion; but every effort seemed to be in vain, and nothing appeared to leave a permanent impression upon their minds. Mary Morgan made a profession of religion; and most of the girls seemed disposed to avoid her society as much as possible, although she and Clara had become very intimate.

Mr. and Mrs. Morrison had determined to send Jeanie to Boston, that she might enjoy greater facilities for the prosecution of her studies than she could have at Laurelton. But early in March she was attacked by inflammatory rheumatism, and for several weeks confined to her room; and in



consequence of her liability to a second attack, Dr. Gray advised Mrs. Morrison to keep her under her own eye for another year.

During Jeanie's confinement to her room, Clara often called to see her; and the delighted girl could almost welcome an illness which, however painful in itself, had brought with it the blessing which for three whole years she had never ceased to covet. Clara was herself strongly attached to Jeanie by an influence for which she knew not how to account; and Mr. and Mrs. Morrison, who strove by every means to make her stay with them pleasant, were more and more delighted with the lovely girl, while Clara, in her turn, not only admired and respected them for the sterling qualities of mind and heart which they possessed, but felt a glow of grateful love for their kindness to her beloved mother, who had the prospect of being placed again in possession of her rights through Mr. Morrison's instrumentality.

Clara had yielded to the urgency of the people where she had taught the previous summer, and was again preparing to resume the occupation of teaching, wisely judging that she ought not to relax her efforts for her own support, while there was a possibility of her failing to receive it from the estate of her deceased father.

Before entering upon her duties, she and her mother accepted Mrs. Morrison's invitation to pass a day with them. Jeanie and Clara passed the larger part of the afternoon in Jeanie's little room and Clara became much interested in the glimpses which Jeanie unwittingly gave of her state of mind.

Not many days elapsed before Jeanie, to her great joy, received an affectionate note from Clara, which was brought her by a young girl who lived in the neighborhood of Clara's school, but walked into town every day to attend the academy. Jeanie was delighted with this token of Clara's regard, and quickly replied to it, acceding eagerly to her request to write to her occasionally by the same messenger. The consequence was a lively correspondence between them, in the course of which Jeanie revealed to Clara all the dissatisfaction and disappointment which she had found in the enjoyment of the pleasures by which she was surrounded, and the unrest and disquiet which attended every hour. That the reader may get a correct impression in regard to this state of mind, we subjoin the following letter in answer to some inquiries which were contained in one of Clara's notes:

"MY DEAR CLARA,

"You ask me to try to describe to you as well as I can what is the present state of my mind. It will be a difficult, an almost impossible task; but at your request I will attempt it, not so much in the hope that you will be able to assist me, as to gratify you, and comply with your wish. In short, dear Clara, you shall have a look into the chaos; would that you might assist me to bring 'order out of confusion.' You ask me to tell you frankly and without reserve why I am dissatisfied with myself. In the first place, I know that my personal appearance is anything but prepossessing; and added to this, I am under the necessity of constantly appearing either 'brusque and peculiar,' or affected and unnatural. You will tell me that I can have little hesitation in deciding this matter; and pardon me for saying that you, with your graceful and winning manners, which please all, can scarcely realize how very uncomfortable I am. It is not very pleasant, Clara, to have strangers open their eyes, and stare in astonishment at everything I say, even when I am unconscious of saying or doing anything that is not perfectly common-place.

"Not very long ago I went into company with mamma, determined not to say or do anything that

might attract attention, and I never ventured to speak without thinking at least twice; and although I was under continual constraint, and of course did not enjoy myself very much, I was congratulating myself on my success, when I overheard a remark like this: One lady said to another, 'Do you observe how very stiff and affected that Jeanie Morrison is getting to be?' Both ladies laughed, and I doubt not you will laugh when you see what a very sensible thing I did. I ran into the house (we had all been walking in the grounds), got my bonnet, and took French leave. Of course this helped the matter—and I was just sensible enough to cry half the night with vexation.

"I am dissatisfied with myself intellectually. You know what my opportunities for acquiring information have been; and I have indeed a large store of isolated facts in my mind, and considerable general information. What I know I do not know perfectly and thoroughly—I do not understand the connections and relations of things. I have not that which Miss Horton calls order or system in my mind. I do not feel certain of anything; and, least of all, that I ever shall know anything as I ought to know it. Oh, those wasted opportunities!—those lost hours—those weeks and

months, when I read anything and everything which came in my way, instead of endeavoring to learn thoroughly the lessons which were given me! For a year or two I have indulged myself so much in light reading, that everything else almost is disagreeable; and although, as a matter of duty, I am now trying to read history, it is what I would spare myself if I sought only my own pleasure.

"Dear Clara, I am trying to do better—to redeem the lost hours. Do you know that this summer, and last winter, when I was able, I set myself about reviewing my studies, and striving to make myself familiar with those first principles which I neglected to acquire in their proper place and time. I have gone, by Miss Horton's permission, into the little girls' recitations—in arithmetic, for example, although all the girls ridicule me; but I can bear it better now than I used to, for I want to know what I am about. I have spent hour after hour over fractions and decimal fractions, and interest, when no one knew it; and thus slowly I am obeying an impulse within which bids me educate myself. Thus passes all my leisure—doing the work of past years, sadly and sorrowfully now, and bearing the sting of self-reproach.

"Thus, you see, that neglected opportunities and

misspent hours stare me in the face by day and haunt my pillow by night, and of the quiet and peace which you enjoy, dear Clara, I know nothing.

"I have found little real happiness in anything. Everything seems hollow and empty. Until last winter, I had thought I should find what I wanted in society or social amusement, but I never found it. There is a craving in my heart for something which I do not believe can be found; and I must live on, an immortal creature, with this insatiate desire after a happiness which I shall never know. I look upon dear mamma, with her sweet, peaceful face—peaceful always—and I cannot believe that she ever felt this which I try to describe. I trust that she may never suspect that I feel it.

"I look at you, Clara, and I see no trace of this kind of disquiet on your calm brow. I am glad that you are happy; but happy I can never hope to be, for I know of nothing which can take the sting from remorse and self-reproach.

"I know what you will say, Clara. You will tell me to be a Christian, and then everything will be as it should be. But I have no *wish* to be a Christian. Once I had such a wish, but I do not feel it now. I find no pleasure in religious duties, and I

feel that I am one of those for whom it would be good if they had 'never been born.' "

To this letter Jeanie quickly received the following reply :

"MY DEAR JEANIE,

"I have not time to do justice to your letter, but I must say a few words to you. My dear girl, how I do pity you. But will you allow me to say that I think you labor under one mistake? At least, I don't think I know anybody that I like better than I do you, when you are contented to be Jeanie Morrison. Do not try so hard not to say strange things, and do not care if silly or idle people are inclined to ridicule you; only try to do what is right.

"With regard to your education, I think you are a better scholar than you think yourself. Everybody says Miss Adams always discouraged you; and I have no doubt but the efforts you are making will soon set you right, and clear up the bogs in your brain. I never knew you to be dull in anything but arithmetic, and all you ever needed there was a little, very little help, and some encouragement. Every one says you write the best compositions, are the best reader, understand geography, botany.

and numerous other things, better than any other scholar. You could always learn everything, if you *felt inclined to try*. Only persevere in the effort you have begun, and all will be well; only do not overwork or be discouraged.

"What will you think of my love for you, my dear friend, if I tell you I am glad you are dissatisfied with the joys and pleasures of this world. Your letter, dear Jeanie, is only the experience of that wisest of men, in other language, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." God knows for what purpose he has permitted you to learn it so early; but I feel that it is for your best and highest good. Be thankful that you have not, like many others, had a life-long chase after these things, which never did satisfy the human heart, and never will satisfy yours. But there is an object which can satisfy it. There *is* (I will not be contradicted, Jeanie), there *is* a principle which can invest life with a charm, so that we shall gladly and cheerfully act our parts in the great drama. There *is* that upon which the sick and weary heart can repose itself and which can light up the darkest hour the future may bring. You must not dispute me, Jeanie. I know this to be true; and if I have any peace, it comes from such a source. Yours is not a very

humble spirit, Jeanie, and you may have many sad lessons to learn before you are made a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus; but I feel that I shall yet see you at His feet. This, dear child, this is my most earnest and constant prayer for you.

CLARA.

## Chapter Twelfth.

"For the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword—and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

SEVERAL times in the course of the summer Jeanie was attacked with rheumatism, not so seriously as to occasion alarm, but enough to excite anxiety in the breast of her mother. She seldom went out in the evening, but about the middle of August she accompanied her parents to the usual Thursday evening lecture. During the early part of the exercises, the aged pastor read a portion of Scripture, in which the following passage occurred:

"But I say unto you, that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account in the day of judgment."

This truth penetrated Jeanie's heart. She was filled with terror and alarm. Upon it every thought and feeling were concentrated during the remainder of the evening. She heard nothing of the lecture—the sword of the Spirit had entered her soul, and

turn whither she would, she could not escape. She sought her room in great distress of mind. From herself, and her past life, she turned with loathing.

In contrast with herself, she saw the character of God—so glorious in its holiness;—and between them, that law, so good, so pure, so beautiful—the law which she had never tried or desired to keep in its spirit and purity. There was a Holy Spirit grieved—a neglected Bible, and a long train of Sabbaths misimproved, of duties and opportunities neglected; but in the whole range of her mental vision, there was no Christ, no Saviour. She had often read, admired, and in an historical sense believed, the story of Jesus of Nazareth; but of the nature of His mission, of what He undertakes to do for the penitent sinner, and the various offices in which He offers to save the lost, the guilty, she had no conception. As she looked backward upon the past, all was painful; the present was cheerless and hopeless, and the future enveloped in rayless gloom.

Edward, who had just graduated, was now at home. He saw her dejection, and sought by every possible means to cheer her. Her parents took her to Boston, where they passed several weeks in visiting friends, and made various little

excursions in different directions on her account. For their sakes, she endeavored to be more cheerful, for the sake of those she loved and who loved her so well, and she succeeded to some extent in relieving their anxiety on her account, while her countenance wore an expression of subdued pensiveness, totally unlike her old gaiety and playfulness. Her friends attributed the change in her appearance to her health, which was not as firm as usual; but Dr. Gray said he could see nothing which indicated the presence of disease, and Jeanie always declared that she was well. Gradually she appeared more and more cheerful, for she ceased to contend with God. She began to look upon Him with admiration and reverence, and almost love. She rose early, and devoted her mornings to the study of the Holy Scriptures; and while reading the sublime descriptions of the character and attributes of God, which she had been familiar with from her very childhood, her heart glowed with the spirit of enthusiastic and reverent worship. She forgot herself and all her own relations as an individual in the wonderful revelations which were made to her heart and mind. She had found something at last to fill her soul—something which would bear to be meditated upon again and again; and

she bent the knee in humble and devout thanks giving, that although a lost and undone creature, she had still been permitted to enjoy such views of God and His glory.

Thus, for several weeks, Jeanie passed cheerfully over her daily routine of duty, striving "to do all things faithfully as unto the Lord," and resolved to submit her own will at all times to the will of God. She could no longer withhold the homage of her heart from such a Being; she resolved that her whole future life should be devoted to Him, and wondered why this service had not been her one great business through all the years of the past.

But, says one, this is an unnatural state of mind. Where is the tempter now? where the onset of the remaining corruptions of the natural heart? The answer is, These are *restrained* by the *blessed Spirit of God*. First, Jeanie's eyes were turned upon her own emptiness, and poverty, and ill-desert, and then upon the fulness of the glory of God as revealed in the Bible. Now was she to learn how Christ could pay the sinner's mighty debt, and make peace for the troubled, penitent heart. She was to learn how the demands of the broken law could be satisfied, the sinner justified, and God glorified.

She turns to the New Testament, and with aston-

ishment finds the story of Bethlehem and Calvary invested with a new and wonderful life. She ponders that most remarkable of all productions—the sermon on the mount;—she lingers, with indescribable emotions, over the whole scene of the Redeemer's life, and death, and resurrection, until in reverent love and adoration she longs to kiss the hem of His garment.

But what caused all this wonderful expense and outlay? Why must the pure, the spotless Lamb of God be thus sacrificed and made a spectacle to men and angels, covered with ignominy, and crowned with thorns? There, there, in sight of the cross, Jeanie saw what sin is; and she mourned—she longed for solitude, and wet her pillow with tears, while she mourned over the sin in her own heart, and in the world around her. Often amid the darkness of the night she rose from her bed, not to deprecate the wrath of God, but to mourn over sin.

There came a change. Mingled with her penitence, there was a bitter lamentation, that by her own neglect she had lost the hope of obtaining the favor of God. An indescribable and unutterable longing for forgiveness, and the smile of Jesus, took possession of her heart.

Poor, hopeless, despised outcast, she would gladly be, she thought, if only she might eat of the crumbs that fell from the Master's table! Piteous was that cry for mercy, pure mercy, which ascended to the "throne of the Heavenly Grace."

With what compassion did she look upon her young companions, who were trifling with Eternal Love. Scarcely could she restrain herself from going among them, and entreating them without delay to secure the favor of God. How she wondered at Edward, that he did not make continual effort to win his young friends to Christ. How she wondered at her parents, and at all Christians, that they were not actively engaged in endeavoring to persuade sinners to secure a part of the wonderful provision that had been made for the ruined and the lost. And Clara, why had not she said more, and tried to convince her of her danger, and her want! Ah! had not her pure and blameless life ever been a perpetual rebuke to her, and had not many a word of loving and affectionate entreaty fallen upon her ear! Alas! Jeanie was "without excuse," "guilty before God."

It was Saturday afternoon, a mild day in September, and Jeanie put on her bonnet and shawl for a walk. She took a path which led her quickly

into the country, and then, scarcely noticing the direction she was taking, walked slowly on, absorbed with her own thoughts. At length she hears the sound of approaching wheels, and looking up, beholds Clara just beside her in a wagon, accompanied by a boy, who was taking her to her mother's house to spend the Sabbath. She sprang eagerly towards her, caught her by the hand, and said:

"You must call at our house, Clara; I want to see you!"

"So do I want to see you, Jeanie; but it is late, and I dare not stay. This boy here must get back to his father's before sunset, and I am more than three miles from home yet, you know."

"Oh, Clara! I cannot let you go on—I must see you to-night. Why can you not stop and spend the night with me for once?"

"It would not be right, Jeanie; mother is expecting me, and she will be uneasy, if I do not come."

"Do call a few minutes, Clara!"

"Why, Jeanie, are you sick?—how pale you are!"

"No, I am not sick; but I am not very well, either."



"Willie, you may drive slowly into town, and I will walk with this young lady."

"Jeanie, dear, what did you wish to say to me?"

"Oh! Clara! I can hardly tell you now—I am so miserable—I am such a sinner!"

"Thank God! that I hear you say so—my prayers are heard!"

"What shall I do, Clara?—how shall I have God for my friend? I cannot be a sinner any longer, even if I cannot be a child of God."

"You can be a child of God, Jeanie. Your Father in Heaven is ready to receive you, and make you his own dear child."

"Tell me truly, Clara," said Jeanie earnestly, "whether there is any hope for me. These many weeks I have been without the shadow of a hope that God would ever own me for his child; but now it does seem as if there was a way, if I but knew it, Clara. Cannot you tell me how to come to God?"

"God is able to save, and willing to do it. He will save to the uttermost, yes, Jeanie, to the uttermost, all who come to Him through Christ."

"But what is it to come through Christ?"

"It is to ask our Father to forgive us for Christ his Son's sake, who died for us. Do you understand me, Jeanie?"

"I think I do; but, Clara, I have such terrible thoughts. My whole soul is harrowed up by the recollection of past sins, by my neglect of God, and hard thoughts of Him, and my trifling with salvation. Oh! if it be not too late, all my life shall be devoted to Him; but that word, 'too late,' is continually sounding in my ears!"

"That, Jeanie, is the work of your soul's enemy. He is not willing you should be a child of God; and he would frighten you from Christ and His throne of grace."

"But, Clara, do you really think Christ would permit him thus to torture and terrify me, if he had pity on me? Why does He permit Satan thus to drive me almost to despair?"

"You do not believe Christ's own word, Jeanie. He has promised to save you, if you will come to Him, and trust Him. Leave all else, dear Jeanie; forget all else, and flee to Christ. Satan cannot reach or harm you there!"

"Oh, Jesus! Friend of sinners! help me to come to thee!"

"I must leave you now, Jeanie," said Clara, as

they approached the spot where the boy was awaiting her.

"Oh, Clara! do not, do not go!—I cannot spare you!"

"Yes, you can spare me, dear Jeanie. I am not able to help you, and you must not depend upon me. You must just go to Jesus, and give your self up to him, just as you are. Ask Him to take you and do with you whatever He will."

"Do, do, Clara, pray for me!"

"Yes, yes; but do not lean on me—look only to Jesus."

## Chapter Thirteenth.

WHEN Sabbath morning came, Mr. and Mrs. Morrison were unwilling Jeanie should attempt to attend church. During the previous night they had heard her voice in prayer; and, unknown to her, had risen from their bed and poured out their hearts to God in supplication for their beloved child. Now the mystery of the previous month's was fully solved. Why had they not understood and appreciated it before? Neither of them could converse with her in relation to the matter; but Mr. Morrison took an opportunity in the course of the morning to call on Mr. Parsons, the minister, and request him to make Jeanie a visit early in the subsequent week.

When all were gone to church, Jeanie shut herself in her own room and applied herself to the diligent study of the Word of God. But though Jeanie could close her door, and shut out all intruders from her little room, she found there was

one malignant spirit whom she could not shut out—one who, with his terrible suggestions, his specious insinuations, filled her heart with gloom and terror. Jeanie tried to flee to God, and to His blessed word of promise, but she could find no relief. A cold, impassable barrier seemed reared between her and God, which her prayers could not penetrate. Then she recalled what Clara had said to her about fleeing to Christ; and she tried to do it. Earnestly did she supplicate the Divine aid and direction; and she did not plead in vain. Her enemy was put to flight, and peace and tranquillity entered her soul.

But she was very weary, and laid down upon her bed until her parents' return. Nor did she feel able to rise at the hour for afternoon service, but fell asleep. Mrs. Morrison remained at home and waited for her to awake. But she slept on until past the usual tea-time, and even then felt no disposition to eat, or to rise from her bed. She seemed languid and exhausted, and little inclined to converse, although she inquired eagerly after Clara, and expressed a strong desire to see her.

Jeanie retired to rest at an early hour. As she was just falling asleep, she seemed to see suspended just above her a radiant cross, and above it an an-

gel, bearing in his hand a glittering crown, which seemed presented to her. As she started up to grasp it, it vanished. As she slept, she again dreamed that she saw that crown, and as she reached for it, the angel who held it said, with a smile, "For him that overcometh." She saw her blessed Saviour, and heard the songs of the redeemed around the throne—and she waked in the morning with the feeling that she was soon to pass away from the scenes of earth, and enter upon the joys of Heaven. As she attempted to rise and dress, she found herself unable, and she sunk back on her pillow in a state half-sleeping, half-waking, with a dreamy unconsciousness of everything. In this condition her mother found her; and as she tried to rouse her, was answered only by a languid look, and then the eyes closed heavily again, and the lips murmured some beautiful passage from the Word of God, and again she sunk into a stupor from which she could not easily be aroused. Mrs. Morrison called her husband, who hastily summoned Dr. Gray.

The doctor listened to the particulars of the attack, and then speedily ordered cold applications to be made to her head. He said she was threatened with an attack of brain fever, which had its origin

in the unusual excitement of her mind. For some hours she lay as if in sleep, and then suddenly starting up, she made an effort to rise. Mrs. Morrison came to her and begged her to lie down again.

"Oh, mamma," said Jeanie, "I am so glad to see you; but I am going to leave you, mamma—I am going to die."

"No, my dear child, you are not going to die; but you must lie still now, and not talk much."

At this moment the doctor approached with something which he wished her to take.

"I'll take it, if you wish it, Dr. Gray; but it will be of no use, I'm going home."

"Not just now, Jeanie; we can't spare you yet. But tell me how you feel?"

"Oh! I am so happy!—so full of peace!—I shall see the Saviour!—"

"Very well! very well!" interrupted the doctor. "I'm glad to hear you talk about such things; but I want to have you tell me where you feel sick?"

"Not anywhere, doctor, only I feel tired. Mother, do you remember what Hannah sings in the kitchen so much?"

"Then will I tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Saviour I have found;  
I'll point to His redeeming blood,  
And cry, behold the Lamb of God!"

"How sweet that is. I want—"

"You must keep still, Jeanie. You must not talk any more until you are rested."

"Dr. Gray, if you should tell that little bird out there to stop singing, he wouldn't mind you, would he?"

"I suppose not, Jeanie; but you are a sensible girl, and not a bird, and I expect you to do as I say when you are sick."

"I will try, doctor, I will try; but if you only knew how hard it is—my mind is so full of beautiful, heavenly thoughts; perhaps I shall not have long to speak my Saviour's praises."

"This beats me, Mr. Morrison; I can't help the child until her mind is calmed down a little. Good morning, Mr. Parsons; you are just who we want. I'll tell you all about it while Mrs. Morrison puts down the blinds in Jeanie's room."

Dr. Gray went on to tell the good old minister what he had learned of Jeanie's condition.

"Sweet girl!" said the good minister. "I'll go in and speak to her, Dr. Gray; and I think we can get her quiet."

As Mr. Parsons entered the room, he said : "God bless you, my dear child !"

"He has blessed me, Mr. Parsons ; He has washed me from my sins, and clothed me, and had mercy on me !"

"Let Him have the praise, Jeanie. Shall we thank Him for His mercy to you ?"

"Oh, yes ! 'Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.'"

Mr. Parsons knelt by the bedside, and in a few words of fervent thanksgiving, gave utterance to the grateful emotions of Jeanie's heart ; and besought for her a speedy and entire restoration to health and strength.

When he rose from prayer, he said :

"Now, my dear child, we shall see whether you are really willing to submit your will to the will of Christ. It would be pleasant for you to speak of what God has done for you, and very pleasant for us to hear ; but you need the utmost quiet now, and it is your duty to put a constraint upon your feelings, until a time comes when you are in a condition to indulge yourself in conversation without risk. Will you now promise me to try to seek repose ?"

Jeanie bowed, and pressing her hand kindly, Mr.

Parsons withdrew to the sitting-room, leaving her to the care of her mother.

"Do you imagine, doctor, that anything serious is to be apprehended in Jeanie's case ?"

"Not if we can keep her quiet a few days ; she has no disease except what originates in excitement of mind. Mrs. Morrison here, told me that she told her last night she had been miserable for a whole year ; turning from one thing to another to find peace, but all in vain."

"How strange that no one knew it, not even Mrs. Morrison !"

"It really does seem as if Jeanie should have been spared all this waste of feeling, Mr. Parsons. The way of life is not so very difficult."

"How do we know that God *intended* she should be spared it, doctor ? He may have intended to teach her lessons, which she could learn in no other way. 'It is not all of life to live,' you know."

Jeanie was very anxious to see Clara, but Dr. Gray strictly prohibited all company and conversation, and she endeavored cheerfully to submit to his decision.

But her mind was filled with the beautiful and glorious imagery by which the blessedness of heav-

en is communicated to our minds in the word of God, and even when she slept they were continually present to her thoughts. Sometimes while she appeared to be sleeping quietly, she would suddenly start up and murmur some passage from the Psalms of David. Once Mr. Parsons heard her repeat,

"Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler ; the snare is broken and we are escaped." It was a text from which he had preached a few weeks previous ; and he well remembered the sad and subdued expression of poor Jeanie's face as he caught a look at her during the sermon. He could scarcely refrain from tears, and he said to Mrs. Morrison,

"To think that this lamb of the flock should have suffered so much, and none of us have known it ! But take my word, Mrs. Morrison, I am an old man, and may not live to see it, but God has great purposes to serve through her. All this preparation has not been expended for nothing."

At length Dr. Gray permitted Clara to visit Jeanie, and joyful indeed was their meeting. In addition to Jeanie's deep and long-cherished regard for Clara, was the thought of how much she had been indebted to her counsels and her prayers, and

Clara rejoiced over her as "over one alive from the dead."

"Oh, Clara !" said Jeanie, "how little did I know when I told you life was poor, and barren of any real enjoyment, without anything to fill and satisfy the soul. How little I believed you when you told me there was something that could fill it. How blind I was, but I see now, Clara ; I need ask no more if eternity was already begun. Oh, Clara, *'God is love.'*"

"How I do wish all the girls felt as you do Jeanie."

"Oh, Clara, how I do long to see them all ! It does seem to me that I could convince them of their mistake in seeking their own pleasure, instead of obeying God, and doing his will. You must be very faithful to them, Clara, when I am gone."

"You must not talk in that way, Jeanie. Dr. Gray says there is no reason why you may not be as well as ever in a few weeks."

"I do not wish to live, Clara ; and do you not remember what Jesus said, 'If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go to the Father' ?"

"I do not think, Jeanie, that it requires a great deal of grace to prefer heaven to earth."

Clara sighed, and a sad expression passed over her

usually sweet, peaceful countenance. After a few moments, during which Jeanie regarded her attentively, she continued,

"If it is the will of God, Jeanie, you must be ready to go out from this sick room, and live for his glory, even to old age. Eternity will be long enough even then, and how else can you prove that you are really the child of God. The cross *first*, and *then* the crown, Jeanie."

Jeanie knew not what to think; she had never heard Clara speak in this way before. What did Clara know about the cross? Had she really some secret trouble that no one knew? That could not be. She was always so joyous and cheerful. Ah!

"If every one's internal care  
Was written on his brow,  
How many would our *pity* share  
Who move our *envy* now."

Clara rose to go.

"You will read me one chapter before you go, Clara, will you not?"

"Yes, dear Jeanie, where shall I read?" taking up the Bible.

"Read that beautiful passage in Isaiah, 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad

for them, and the desert shall blossom as the rose.'"

Clara read, and when she had finished she said, "There are a great many precious thoughts suggested by this chapter, Jeanie. If life were far more full of trials than it is, Jeanie, we ought to meet them cheerfully if it please God to prepare such abundant refreshment for us in the way to heaven."

"What do you mean, Clara? What do you know about trials?"

"I cannot tell you now, dear; some other time, perhaps. Dr. Gray would not like to have me stay much longer. Good-bye, Jeanie dear."

"Good-bye, Clara; come again soon."

## Chapter Fourteenth.

"WE shall have fine times now, if Jeanie Morrison has got to be a Christian," said Kate Kilborn, who was surrounded by a party of girls.

"What do you mean, Kate?" said Susie Johnson.

"Why, I mean she will be talking to us all the time, and spoiling all our pleasure."

"Mary Morgan does n't," said Caddie Lee; "she never said anything to me, I'm sure."

"Jeanie Morrison is n't that sort of a girl exactly, let me tell you. For my part, I mean to keep away from her."

"I guess she won't hurt you, Kate; there's Clara now, for instance, nobody doubts but she is a Christian, and she is n't talking to us all the time, is she, Kate?"

"I had quite as lief she *would* talk. Clara has a curious way of dropping a quiet word now and then, that seems to go through and through a per-

son; and more than that, she *acts* all she does n't say."

"Mother says she should n't be surprised if Clara did n't live a year," said Susie, thoughtfully.

"Why not!" exclaimed two or three of the girls in one breath.

"Why, did n't you know she had been bleeding at the lungs, lately. That's why she left off her school; and Dr. Gray says she must never try to teach again."

"She'll be sure to go to heaven when she dies; I wish I was as sure of it," said Caddie.

"I think you better turn Christian then," said Kate, mockingly. "For my part, I like this world very well at present, and I mean to have the good of it, before I think much about heaven. I'll just tell Jeanie Morrison so, if she meddles with me."

"Kate! Kate! what do you talk so for, you won't say any such thing to Jeanie. You don't mean any such thing either."

"You'll see if I don't mean it and say it too, if I get a chance. I'm not a-going to have her preaching to me you'll find. I don't care for her feelings. I've as good a right to feel as she has."

The girls looked at each other, but said nothing for a few moments. At length one of them said:



"I wonder what has brought about such a sudden change in Jeanie?"

"I should n't wonder if she meant to catch Ned Morrison, one of these days. He is a Christian, you know."

"I would n't give much for Ned Morrison's religion," said Kate, laughing. "I don't think he's got enough to hurt him much. But one thing you may be certain of, he'll never marry Jeanie Morrison." The girls all laughed, and Susie said:

"Maybe Kate only says what she wishes may be true. Maybe Kate means to catch him herself."

"She may as well give that up now, if he has got any religion about him. He'll never care anything about you, Kate."

"Just as he pleases," said Kate carelessly; but she looked as if she thought, "Just as I please."

Perhaps the conversation with Clara recorded in the last chapter, did more to restore the proper balance to Jeanie's mind, than anything else. She did not now indulge herself in ecstasies, but began seriously to inquire what she could do to honor Christ and win her young companions to the way of life. As soon as she was able to leave her room, most of the girls called upon her. They were sur-

prised to see her so cheerful and apparently happy. They told her they were sorry she had been confined so long to the house, and hoped she would soon be able to be out among her friends again.

"I have been very happy here," said Jeanie; "far happier than I ever thought any person could be in the world. Oh, girls! I only wish you were as happy as I."

They were taken by surprise, and only Susie had presence of mind enough to reply in behalf of all:

"I wish we were, Jeanie."

When they were on their way home they said to each other:

"There is really a very great change in Jeanie Morrison."

Kate did not call. After several weeks Jeanie became satisfied that Kate purposely avoided her, so she called one afternoon to see her. But she had a cool reception. Kate was reserved, and said little, making it very uncomfortable for Jeanie to stay. She could not but know why it was so; and anxious to preserve friendliness with all the girls, and with a heart throbbing in intense desire for her spiritual welfare, she could not keep the tears from

starting into her eyes. Kate observed it, and said haughtily :

"We may just as well understand one another, Jeanie Morrison, first as last. If you've got any religion, you may keep it for your own benefit. I don't want any of your whining over me; you may be just as good and sanctimonious as you please, but just let me alone."

"Oh, Kate! why will you talk so?"

"I don't want any of your preaching, Jeanie, and what is more I won't have it. It will take you a long time to be Clara Hyde, if you try ever so hard. So I advise you to mind your own business, and let us mind ours."

"I do not understand you, Kate; what about Clara? I am sure I never thought of being like her."

"I do not care what you think, or thought, only just let me alone. I am capable of thinking and deciding for myself, and I do not choose to talk over these things with you."

This was what Jeanie had never anticipated. She had felt as if she could easily persuade her young friends that they ought to love the Saviour, and really thought she should see them acknowledging the claims of God upon their hearts and uniting with her in trying to love and glorify their

Father in Heaven. Jeanie had forgotten the lesson that she might have learned from her own past experience; that the strongest motives, the most earnest appeals, and clearest views of duty, are not sufficient to change the will, and subdue the heart, without the grace of God.

Dr. Gray advised Mrs. Morrison not to allow Jeanie to return to school, as her constitution had not yet recovered its wonted tone; and as the cold weather advanced\* she was liable to occasional rheumatic attacks, although he assured her that he saw no reason why, with proper care, she might not again enjoy sound and vigorous health.

We omitted to mention in the proper place, that Mr. Morrison having succeeded in securing the estate belonging to Mrs. Hyde, in the town where her husband died, the property had been sold and provided a small income for her; a small, indeed, but sufficient income, for the supply of her ordinary wants. After this, a favorable opportunity occurring, she was induced to exchange the cottage and garden where she resided, for a small dwelling not very far from Mr. Morrison's. Thus Clara and Jeanie were brought into closer companionship than ever, and scarce a day passed, a part of which they did not spend together. Mary Morgan, though

attending school, was much with them, and many delightful interviews did these young girls enjoy. One evening in every week was devoted to special prayer for their young companions; none of whom as yet gave evidence of a desire to join them in the path to Heaven.

As the weeks rolled on Jeanie found she had something to do beside rejoicing in the mercy and love of God. It was with a strange and sad surprise that she found herself overtaken by some of her former faults. For some days, she dared scarcely hope again in the mercy of God; and was even tempted to avoid the throne of grace. She had not learned her entire dependence upon the influences of the Holy Spirit; and she was unable to see why her heavenly Father had left the work of renewing grace so imperfect in her heart. The affections previously stimulated in an unnatural manner, were now sometimes languid and dull, and when she judged her heart, and life, and thoughts as she daily did, by the standard of the Word of God, she was humbled and astonished. Watching carefully to avoid falling into one sin, she was suddenly betrayed into another, until she despaired of ever attaining that conformity to the law of God which she felt she ought to attain.

Thus, while Jeanie prayed for grace and strength to do right, she unconsciously depended too much upon her own efforts, and leaned too much upon her own strength. In short, while she fully and entirely accepted Christ as the only ground of hope for peace with God, she had not learned to draw her supplies of daily grace and peace from Him and His finished work. Thus, her very sensibility of conscience, and dread of offending God, tended to disturb and break her peace.

She was ready to deny herself, not only anything which she thought wrong, but to sacrifice all her little innocent tastes and gratifications, under a mistaken construction of that precept which requires us to "deny ourselves, and take up the cross and follow Christ." Well was it for her that she was under the eye of a judicious Christian mother; and far better would it have been if there had not remained between them still a portion of that old reserve on the subjects most closely allied to their spiritual interests. But even Clara knew little of the depth and severity of Jeanie's trials with her own heart; for she could not bring herself to disclose them freely to her best friend.

Once or twice during the winter Clara had an attack of bleeding at the lungs, and gradually her

countenance assumed a more ethereal appearance, while her spirituality and heavenly-mindedness was evident to the most indifferent observer. As yet Jeanie knew nothing of the trial which was at hand. She had never contemplated the prospect of Clara's early death; but with the hopefulness which was a prominent characteristic of her disposition, she thought all the fears which were expressed for her, only the result of a look upon the dark side of the picture. Clara herself never, or very rarely, complained. She did not suffer pain, nor did she easily bring herself to speak to Jeanie on the subject; but in the frequent conversations which they held about the blessedness of Heaven, and the joyful realities which await the Christian in the hour of death, any other person would have seen the foreshadowing of her own anticipations and hopes.

"Oh, Jeanie!" said Clara, on one of these occasions, "if God permits us to take such delight in each other's society here, where we are yet so imperfect, what will be the blessedness of Heavenly communion! I can scarcely trust myself to think of Christ—to think of looking on Him who was crucified for me, and to whom I owe everything—and then the companionship of angels, and the meeting with Moses and Daniel, and patient Job,

and Isaiah—your chosen bard, Jeanie—and multitudes more—"

"Of whom the earth was not worthy.' But you must not forget Mary, the mother of our Lord, nor the beloved John. Oh, Clara! how much like a dream this seems. I cannot make it seem like a positive reality."

"There is a good reason for that, Jeanie. You are in a world of realities, and have as yet had little opportunity to make yourself familiar with those scenes which are revealed only to the eye of faith. Besides, dear Jeanie, you have many objects of affection here, upon which your heart reposes and on which it rests, even though, as I believe, your chief 'treasure is in Heaven.'" Jeanie made no reply, but her eyes filled with tears. There was something strange and peculiar in Clara's tone and manner, and she could not speak. Clara continued:

"I could not help thinking, Jeanie, when you were so glad to see me to-night when I came in, how sweet it will be for us to meet in Heaven. It may be I shall be permitted to watch for your coming, dear Jeanie, and present you before Christ our blessed Saviour."

"Clara! Clara! why do you speak in this

way?—why do you talk of awaiting me in Heaven?"

"Because, dear child, my work here is almost done."

"You are not going to die, Clara!"

"Jesus only knows how soon, Jeanie. I have not expected this many months, but I now know that my time is short; but there is all of Heaven and an eternity to live and love in, left to me."

"Clara, I cannot believe you are going to die—I cannot part with you; I cannot live without you! The thought is agony!"

"Do you remember, Jeanie, what you told me last fall when you were sick one day? I told you I could not spare you, and you replied, 'If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I say, I go to the Father.' So now say I to you, Jeanie. You must be willing to let me go first, if it is the will of God."

"Why, Clara, I have never thought of living without you! What should I do if you were taken from me?"

"You should not lean so on *any* human arm, my dear, dear Jeanie," said Clara, kissing her friend tenderly as she spoke, while Jeanie clung to her as if she dreaded an immediate separation. "I

have thought of late, Jeanie, that you were too much inclined to look to me, and too little to your blessed Saviour. You must promise me to try to lean on Him—to repose fully and entirely on His faithful love, dear girl. That is *all* you need. He can help—He is sufficient at all times."

Jeanie said,

"Why, Clara, are you so confident—you cannot live?"

"Do you know that I have been bleeding at the lungs a good deal this winter, Jeanie?"

"Yes; but how many people live a great many years after that happens, Clara. I think you can have help. If you could go to some warmer climate, Clara, your lungs might get well."

"Dr. Gray says no, Jeanie. The weakness of my lungs is inherited, with my frail constitution, from my father. It seems there is no hope of long life for me, Jeanie."

"Does Henry know this, Clara?"

"What does he say?"

"I have broken that tie to earth, Jeanie; and it has helped greatly to wean me from this world."

"You don't mean that you have broken your engagement, do you?" said Jeanie, quickly.

"Yes, Jeanie," said Clara, her eyes filling with tears.

"How could you do it, Clara?"

"You know what Paul said, Jeanie: 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,'" smiling sadly as she spoke.

"Have you done right?—are you sure, Clara? Poor Henry! how I pity him."

"He does not need your pity, Jeanie. My dear girl, never give your heart to one who does not love the Saviour."

"Clara, it does not seem to me that you have done right to break off your engagement with Henry. You may live many years; even if you do not, who knows what good you might do him."

Clara shook her head. For a little while she struggled to recover her self-control, and then with a quivering lip, she said:

"Do not let us talk of this now, dear Jeanie; but I wish you always to remember this one thing which I now tell you: God never calls us to endure any trial which He will not by His grace enable us to bear, and still find in our hearts that 'peace which passeth all understanding.'"

"Oh, Clara! how little I know of that calm and

settled peace of which you speak! I am so miserably imperfect—so unlike what I ought to be!"

"You must look at Christ more, Jeanie, and less at yourself. 'We' are accepted in the Beloved,' you know, and not for what we are."

That evening, when Clara was gone, Jeanie told her mother what she had said in reference to her engagement with Henry Williams; and inquired eagerly if she thought her views relative to the state of her health were well founded. Mrs. Morrison assured Jeanie that there was no hope that Clara could live long, although possibly her life might be protracted for a number of months by careful attention, and suitable precautions to avoid unnecessary exposure.

In regard to Clara's engagement, Mrs. Morrison communicated some information which filled Jeanie with indignation and surprise. Mrs. Hyde had informed her of the facts in the case; and by the reader's permission, we will give them in our own language.

Henry and Clara had been attached to each other from childhood; and when just before Mrs. Hyde's removal to Laurelton, Clara's attention was more particularly turned to the subject of religion, she, knowing him as she did, felt that upon her decision

of the question of her personal interest in the subject many other questions of importance would depend. She knew that among other and better qualities Henry cherished a great desire to accumulate wealth, in order to secure for himself that position of influence in society which it so often confers. There was also an innate love of show and extravagant display, which, young as she was, she could not fail to regret. He was nearly ten years her senior, and had always treated her with an appearance of warm affection, which she had returned with the unquestioning confidence of her nature; and for which she was deeply grateful. She knew that if she became a Christian, he would feel that she could not be a fit companion for him. Still, however, she felt that, let the consequences to her in this life be what they might, it was her duty to seek for herself the pardon of her sins, and an interest in the Saviour's love. She did so; and enjoyed in heart a consciousness of the favor of God, and a sense of adoption into the family of Christ, which would, she felt, richly compensate her for the sacrifice of any earthly good.

Soon after this change in her sentiments became known, she received a visit from Henry. Not without some degree of apprehension, although

without one wish that she had decided otherwise than she had done, she entered her mother's little parlor, where Henry awaited her. She dreaded a torrent of bitter reproach, and was endeavoring to fortify her mind against it; but to her surprise, she was greeted with an unwonted degree of cordiality. After a little conversation, he said to her:

"So, Clara, you think you have become a Christian!"

"Yes, Henry, I think so; that is, I begin to hope I am."

She could say no more. After a few seconds' pause, he replied:

"Well, Clara! although I am not a Christian myself, still I am glad that you are. I always thought religion was a good thing; and if I ever have a wife, I hope she will be a Christian, that is, a real Christian, I mean."

"I was afraid you would not be pleased, Mr. Williams; but I felt that my soul's interests were not to be trifled with, let who would object."

"You were mistaken, Clara, if you thought it would lessen at all my regard for you; on the contrary, I shall love you better for it. I wish I was a Christian myself"

"Oh, Henry! why not?" exclaimed Clara.

"Because, Clara, I am not ready now. I am young, and just beginning to succeed in business, and need to devote to it my most earnest and careful attention. To accomplish what I wish—to secure the means for future respectability, happiness, and a place which I wish to see my family occupy, I must concentrate all my energies on one point. Still, Clara, I am glad that you have acted as you have in this matter; and when you are eighteen, and your mother gives you to me, and this struggle is over, I will give my attention seriously to these things."

Clara sighed. She was gratified that he was not offended and irritated with her; but she felt that he was far from being in a safe or desirable state of mind.

Mrs. Hyde removed to Laurelton not long after this, and the intercourse between Henry and Clara was kept up by occasional visits, as well as by correspondence. For the first two years, these visits and the correspondence were at regular intervals; but afterwards there was a change, and Clara never knew when to expect either a letter or a visit. His business was prosperous; and as the time which had been fixed for their union approached, Clara

began to feel that there was a change in Henry. His last visit at Laurelton was paid early in the summer, and although Clara was still tenderly attached to him, she could not but feel the total want of sympathy between them on all important subjects. While she had grown more refined and gentle in heart and manners, Henry had imbibed the principles and spirit of a man of the world. His success in business had been too great to have left him time for the cultivation of those warm and unselfish affections of the heart, which appear so beautiful in man as well as in the softer sex. When he left Laurelton, there was a weight upon Mrs. Hyde's heart which it had never felt before; and Clara—she never told what revelations were there made to her in relation to the future by the monitor which God has placed within the human heart. She said little to her mother about Henry, or their future prospects; but from that time the watchful eyes that were continually regarding her, saw a change for the worse in her health. Clara persisted, however, in her gentle way in being allowed to teach, and Mrs. Hyde knew that the employment would serve to divert her mind from painful thought, and she consented, hoping always for the best, yet fearing, as well she might, the worst, and bitterly



reproaching herself that she had permitted the engagement to be made between Henry Williams and her beloved child.

At length rumors began to reach Laurelton of his gallantry and attention to other ladies. At first Clara refused to give credit to these rumors, but at length the conviction of their truth forced itself upon her mind. A gentleman in whom both she and her mother had implicit confidence called in October and confirmed the truth of all and more than they had heard.

Clara listened in silence, and then retired from the room to spread her troubles before her Heavenly Father, and pray for His direction. Earnestly she prayed for light upon her path, for some token of what course she ought to pursue. Days and weeks passed, and yet there was no answer; but even in those hours of suspense, Clara was not left to that anguish of mind which so many suffer under similar circumstances, for it is written:

"Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is *stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.*"  
Oh! blessed, thrice blessed state of one who *trusts* in God.

Clara, who felt that her Heavenly Father would in some way show her the path in which she ought

to go, was expecting either a letter or a visit from Henry.

But God had other methods of answering prayer. Clara was seriously and repeatedly attacked with bleeding at the lungs. Her own heart told her what the end would be, and recognized in this event the token of God's will concerning her which she had long asked. But she said little to her mother until she had enjoyed an interview with her physician.

Doctor Gray, a Christian, and her father's early friend, told her that there was no doubt in his mind that her lungs were seriously diseased, and that from time to time she would be liable to attacks of the same kind; and that although her life *might* be protracted for years, still there was a strong probability that she would be liable to a sudden and possibly not distant attack, which at the best would leave her in a weak condition.

After this she had a conversation with her mother, which resulted in the writing of one more letter to Henry.

She told him frankly her own views in relation to her health, and the opinion of the physician; and while still assuring him of her own affectionate regard for him, she offered to release him from his

engagement, and with many earnest prayers for the best of blessings to rest upon him, she concluded by asking that she might see or hear from him at an early day. Several weeks elapsed, and yet no answer was returned. Poor Clara found it somewhat hard to be patient, as weeks and days passed; and she knew not what was before her. She could not think that Henry would be willing to relinquish all the old ties between them without one last interview; and at times she even ventured to hope that Henry would refuse to accept the release which she had offered, and that the bond which had united them from early years should not be severed until it felt the touch of death. But she was destined to a painful disappointment. After long delay a letter was put into her hands. It contained a brief apology for the long delay which Henry said was occasioned by the pressure of business. He regretted the failure of her health; but as circumstances were, said he did not know how to do otherwise than accept her proposal to cancel all engagements between them. He requested her to return his letters without delay, and promised also to return those she had written him. He hoped her physician might prove to be mistaken in regard to her prospects, and assured

her of his best wishes for her health and happiness.

This heartless letter was a sharp trial to Clara. She had not been aware how confidently she had calculated on the reviving of Henry's old affection for her. Certainly, she had never anticipated so careless a dissolution of all the old ties which were woven into the web of the past. But in her trouble she had an unfailing resource. She recognized a Father's hand in the trial; and in the sweet spirit of a loving, submissive child, resigned herself to His will. Not indeed without suffering, not indeed without occasional heart-aches, did she labor to untwine the

"Thousand cords,  
Woven with every fibre of her heart;"

but the peace which she felt from day to day, the patience and fortitude of soul which was bestowed on her from above, by far exceeded all that she had ever imagined or enjoyed. There were moments when, like Paul, she could "rejoice in tribulation," and no hour in which she was not enabled by the grace of God to kiss the hand that had inflicted the blow.

In regard to Henry, her feelings were all concentrated in one thought, one wish for him—that the

interests of his soul might be secured; and she prayed her Father in Heaven incessantly that He would receive him into the number of His children, and blot out all his offences from the Book of Remembrance. She had never indulged herself in the utterance of one indignant or reproachful word.

"Oh! mother, mother!" said Jeanie, "how much of such trouble there is in the world!"

"May you be spared it, my dear child," tenderly replied Mrs. Morrison; "and yet, Jeanie—"

"What, mother?"

"In our dear Clara's case, trouble seems to have been abundantly blessed to her spiritual welfare and growth in grace. So it should be in all cases; and I suppose, my child, it is our privilege to have all these things sanctified to the promotion of our highest good."

"But, mother, I cannot see that Clara was at all to blame, was she?"

"No, Jeanie, I think not; but young girls are often very much to blame. They allow themselves to become attached to those who have no real regard for them, and whose attentions are prompted only by the impulse of the passing moment."

"It seems to me that I can hardly forgive Henry—there was no excuse for his treatment of Clara."

"Clara can find an excuse, Jeanie. She told her mother that she felt that she could not blame Henry. She had proposed the cancelling of all obligations between them, and Henry had but availed himself of the offer herself had made. As to the manner in which the matter had been treated, it was certainly possible that he had taken the wisest course. However gratifying to herself an interview might have been, he probably thought a meeting would have been no advantage to either; it would only have made the matter more difficult."

"But he might have written a less heartless letter."

"So I think, my love; but Clara can see wisdom even in this. That letter she says, 'settles finally the question. Had it been affectionate and tender, I should not have been able to see so clearly my present duty. Now I have nothing to do, but relinquish all expectation, and all hope.'"

"Clara is altogether too good for him, mother. I wonder that she ever liked him."

"Contact with the world hardens the heart. Hen-

ry has grown more ambitious and worldly-minded, while Clara has continually grown refined and self-sacrificing. Little happiness would either of them have found in this union, I fear. I do not wonder you love Clara, Jeanie. I think her the most lovely young Christian I ever knew."

"Oh, mother, how can I ever part with her; it does not seem as if I could live if she was gone."

"You must pray for grace, Jeanie; not only for this, but other trials through which it may be your lot to pass. You may have many severe trials yet in store for you, and I should greatly rejoice to see the same humble submissive spirit in you, that Clara is such a bright example of. Remember, that our Heavenly Father does all things well."

## Chapter Fifteenth.

"But if across thy memory  
One dark regret hath swept,  
And if one tear shall yet be given  
For all that I have wept;  
Remember, that this heart of mine  
Is better far at rest,  
Than with its throbbing pulses stilled,  
Upon a human breast."

ABOUT the middle of February, Clara was exposed to the measles. She was attacked after the ordinary interval, and to the surprise of her friends appeared to be doing remarkably well, and when they were just beginning to encourage themselves that she would recover without difficulty, she was suddenly attacked with bleeding at the lungs. She survived the first attack, but her strength was almost gone, and her system entirely prostrated. As soon as she recovered sufficiently to speak, she asked for Jeanie, who was immediately sent for. The attack had occurred during the night, and Jeanie had just risen, when she received the summons to the death-bed of her beloved Clara. The poor girl was almost overpowered

by this intelligence, for she had been congratulating herself that Clara would recover from this illness, and perhaps enjoy better health than she had hitherto done. She hastened to Mrs. Hyde's, making a strenuous effort to preserve her self-control.

She entered the house, and Mrs. Hyde, with a tearful face, conducted her to the room where Clara had been placed. Trembling, she approached the bedside. Clara looked up as she drew near, and endeavored to extend her hand. Jeanie eagerly clasped it in both hers, and pressed it to her lips. She did not speak—she did not weep—but it seemed as if her heart would burst. Clara observed her emotion, and the tears started into her dark, lustrous eyes. She drew Jeanie toward her, and impressing an affectionate kiss upon her lips, whispered—

"Oh, Jeanie, you would be willing to spare me, if you only knew what a friend Jesus would be to you."

Jeanie grew faint, and left the room. Clara followed her with her eyes, and when the door closed, she shut her own eyes and folded her hands as if in prayer. Jeanie, meanwhile, hastened to Clara's room, shut and locked the door. She turned, and her eyes fell upon the spot where she had so often knelt in prayer with Clara; and her tears flowed

without restraint; she sobbed as if her heart would break. She threw herself upon the carpet, and burying her head in her lap, gave herself up to hopeless sorrow. Long time she sat there, when she was aroused by a low tap at the door. She opened it, and Mrs. Hyde was there.

"Clara wants you, Jeanie," she said.

Jeanie went out, bathed her face in water, and then, breathing an inward prayer for strength and grace, entered the room, where a number of persons were assembled. Clara was raised up, supported by pillows, and with sparkling eye and rapid utterance, conversing with some of those about her. She smiled as Jeanie entered the room, that same sweet smile that long before won Jeanie's heart, and motioned her to come near. Jeanie stood beside her, and took up her pale, almost transparent hand, which lay upon the coverlet. It was cold—was Clara dying?

"Poor, dear Jeanie!" said the dying girl, "don't mourn for me, Jeanie, I am willing to die. I would love to stay for your sake and dear mother's, but I am willing to go. Jeanie, you have loved me too much; trust in Jesus, and love him more. Let Him fill your heart, and let not your heart grow fast to the world."

Jeanie sunk upon her knees sobbing, "Oh, Clara! my heart is broken." She buried her face in the bed-clothes, and kissed the cold hand she held; but she could not restore the warmth, her prayers could not retain the spirit that had plumed its wing for heaven. At length a movement around the bed recalled her to herself. She raised her head: a change had passed over the countenance, she saw the falling eyelid, and heard the hastened and painful breathing which indicated that the last moment was at hand. Suddenly, the dying girl opened her eyes and murmured, "Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions; *many! many!*" Again a bright smile wreathed her lips, giving a beauty to her face almost unearthly, and she distinctly articulated, "Jesus, Jesus," and with this word on her lips, her spirit passed, none doubted, into the presence of the Lord she loved.

Jeanie had never before been in the presence of death. For a moment her mind was filled with awe, and then, forgetful of all beside, in contemplation of Clara's unspeakable joy. In imagination she followed her happy spirit in its wondrous way, its mysterious journey to the heavenly world. Almost instinctively, she recalled the many sweet

things which Clara had said during the winter about death and heaven, and she felt in her heart an unspeakable longing to be with her; to see the Saviour's face, to join those songs which she doubted not the glorified spirit had already begun, to the praise of Him who died upon the cross. In that unspeakable longing, forgetting the presence of others, she cried out,

"Oh, Clara! Clara! why might I not have gone home with you?"

The cold clay answered not—"there was no voice, nor any that replied," but presently there was a warm and kindly hand laid gently on her bowed head. It was the good old pastor who stood beside her.

"He mourns the dead who lives as they desire," said he. "Try now, Jeanie, to do as Clara would have wished. Let God's will be done without murmuring. Try, Jeanie, to say, 'The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

Jeanie looked up through her tears, and replied:

"'Blessed be the name of the Lord!' I will try to submit, but my heart is almost broken; I feel so *desolate*."

Jeanie walked home with the good pastor, whose

words of wisdom and love sweetly cheered her mourning heart.

He spoke of the peculiar tenderness of the tie which bound her to Clara in a way that made Jeanie feel that he did not look upon her affection for her as a mere ebullition of girlish fancy; and he seemed to appreciate Clara's character to an extent that gratified and surprised Jeanie. When she reached home, she was comparatively calm; but the tenderness with which her parents received her made her heart ache again. In the evening they all gathered close around the fire and talked about Clara—of her loveliness of character and disposition, her uncomplaining sweetness and patience under trials—and of the blessed home where she had gone.

"Dear girl!" said Mr. Morrison, "we ought to rejoice that she has at last got away from this world of 'sorrow and pain.'"

"I have been thinking," said Mrs. Morrison, "that now she has reached her peaceful home, she might say of her life as one did of the storm that bore him on his way:

"He blessed the tempest, for the speed it gave."

"How light she must count all her trials now—

how little to be regretted. They were the favoring gales that bore her spirit heavenward."

Jeanie could not speak. She was thinking how often Clara had said:

"We shall not be altogether parted, Jeanie. It may be that God will permit the one who is called first to cheer and comfort the loneliness of the other."

It was a dreary day when Clara was buried. During the sermon, the sublime and cheerful words of the pastor raised Jeanie's heart above all mere considerations of personal loss to a lively sympathy with her, who was now "absent from the body and present with the Lord;" and he skilfully led the bereaved ones to cherish a desire to "fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life." "Remember," said he, "my friends, the struggle comes before the victory; the cross first, and then the crown. In some way the child of God must and will be severely tried to bring his graces out, to humble him for remaining imperfection—to consume the dross. It is a good thing to long for Heaven; but it is possible to long for Heaven too much, to be weary of our trials and toils. We may always be sure it is too much, if it causes us to neglect the work which God has given us to do."

Jeanie's heart glowed with enthusiasm, and in a moment she found herself thinking what she would say to Clara. Alas! there was now no Clara to be the recipient of every thought and emotion, and to inspire and stimulate her resolutions to live to the glory of God. And now the beautiful vision that had once been pictured to her ardent imagination again presented itself; but this time she saw the *cross* more distinctly and perfectly, the *crown* was more distant. It had not vanished, but receded as if to invite her to press forward in the heavenly way.

But when she stood by the opened grave, and took a last, longing look of that face so familiar, so beautiful, and seeming still irradiated by that love which the ever warm heart had hitherto always shed upon it—her strength again gave way. She turned to the open grave, and longed to lay herself within it—she dreaded the lonely, desolate future—her heart ached with its anguish. With what different feelings had she stood beside her mother's grave! How could she live on and perform life's duties, and always miss Clara's sweet counsel and gentle sympathy? What desolation was there in the sound of the clods as they fell upon the coffin! Then she remembered Clara's words to her.

“You have loved me too well, Jeanie; let Jesus fill your heart.” She tried to turn to Christ and ask Him to comfort her; but, alas! when she would comfort herself against sorrow, her heart was faint in her. She felt as if a part of herself was laid in that grave, and in her weakness she shrunk from contending with her great sorrow and with life. How different were her feelings now from what they were a few months before, when she

“Could not believe,  
That she ever should grieve,  
That she ever should suffer again.”

Do you ask, my dear young Christian friend, why this was? Simply, because Jeanie was *not leaning on Christ*, although she knew it not. This faith which makes affliction light is not the growth of an hour, nor the product of the best resolutions. It is the silent and slow work of the Spirit of God upon the heart, subduing the will—moulding the temper—and making *Christ* supreme in the affections—and making it sweeter *to do* and *to bear* His will than to enjoy the sweetest comforts, or the best beloved friends. Jeanie is in the furnace now, and it may be that He, who of old walked in the midst of the fire, may see fit that it be heated ever



seven times hotter than is His wont. Yet fear not, for in the end the gold shall be the purer; the dross shall all be consumed before the Master shall finish his work.

When Edward heard of Clara's death, he wrote a long, affectionate letter to Jeanie. At the close of it was this sentence:

"Do not be hopeless, Jeanie. There are, I admit, few like Clara, but in time some other one will come to fill her place. It is not surprising that you should regard her with a deep and warm affection; but you are now at that time of life when other ties—the strongest and most enduring that the human heart can know—are often formed. I do not doubt that you will soon find the mournful void which you now feel in your heart filled, though not indeed by another Clara. Like you, I think the world has few like her; and even while she was here with us, she evidently belonged to another and a higher sphere."

Shortly after Edward returned home for a short vacation, bringing with him Charles Munson, who had been his class-mate in college, and who was now with him pursuing his legal studies in New Haven. Edward was unusually attentive to Jeanie, leading her to speak freely of Clara, and en-

deavouring in every possible manner to moderate the intensity of her grief. Jeanie found a new interest in Edward's society, which she did not stop to analyze, although she felt deeply grateful to him for the manner in which he always spoke of and referred to Clara. He was unusually thoughtful and gentle. To gratify him, and to do what she could to render the visit pleasant to his friend, Jeanie went out more than she otherwise would have done; and the deep interest which he manifested in her did not fail to attract the attention of those who in every community love to investigate the affairs of others.

Edward never talked nonsense. He had read many of Jeanie's favorite authors; and although he never either admired or liked with the enthusiasm which was a part of Jeanie's very nature, still it was pleasant to hear his criticisms, and compare opinions and impressions with him. There was no other young man in her circle who was a professing Christian; and although his piety lacked the devotion and spirituality of Clara's, and the warmth and child-like simplicity of Mr. and Mrs. Morrison's, yet Jeanie never thought of doubting it in the least, only she wished he had (as she thought he ought to have) more freedom and readiness in

conversing upon the subject of religion. She did not dare lay open her feelings and trials of mind to his scrutiny, for he had more than once cautioned her not to allow herself to attract attention or notoriety by a Puritan-like strictness, as he called it, which robbed religion of its sweetest charm in the eyes of those who looked upon it as it was reflected in the characters of professing Christians. On one occasion he said to her:

"Clara did not feel it necessary to shun society, or avoid intercourse with her young friends simply because they made no profession of religion. Nothing seemed to hurt her, you know, and she never seemed to do or say anything wrong."

"Yes, I know that, Edward; but you and I have not that deep, all-pervading piety that she had. We may be in danger and receive injury, or do it where one like her would be safe."

"That may be true, Jeanie; but there is an extreme into which I think there is danger that you will fall, and you will convince our young friends that religion does not make you happy."

"It does not make me happy as it did Clara, Edward," said Jeanie, mournfully. "That is why, or rather that is *one* of the reasons why, I so often fear that I am not a Christian." I dare not be as

happy as she was; so light-hearted even in the midst of her sorrow—always cheerful. For me, I feel religion mostly as a check and restraint, not indeed a painful one, for I really wish to do what is right, I think. But I see so much of imperfection, so many mixed motives, and so much to humble me before God, that I can do little else but mourn over my own deficiencies and pray for forgiveness, and try more faithfully to keep the path of duty. Oh! how I do need Clara to help me and to teach me."

"Jeanie, I do not know what to say to you, but I do think you are laboring under some great mistake; I do not believe it is right to be always looking on the dark side. We are in the world, and we must adapt ourselves to circumstances. If I should watch myself as you do, and mourn over every trifling or unintentional wrong, what time should I find for the acquisition of my profession, or the accomplishment of many other things upon which I have set my heart?"

"What are you laughing at, Jeanie?"

"I was thinking, Edward, that for a lawyer, you had made out a not very logical argument."

"Well, you are right there, Jeanie. The truth is, many of these things are not at all clear to me."

"They were clear to Clara, and she used to make them all clear to me ; and when I take my Bible now, and sit down to see what it teaches me, I think I know all I ought to do, and all I ought to feel ; but when I take these convictions into the world, they appear simply ridiculous ; and I see few, very few, who seem to think as I do."

"I do not think it is safe to cherish opinions which will not bear the air, neither do I believe that something has been communicated to you, which has been concealed from the whole church."

"Perhaps you are right, Edward ; but I do not quite think so. Clara used to caution me against looking at others, or taking my standard from them. Follow Christ, she used to say, study your Bible for yourself, and there learn what is your duty to God and man. Try to do, and feel always just as Christ would have done in your place. Oh, Edward ! if I was like Clara, so single-hearted."

"There may be those, Jeanie, who would like you better as you are."

At this moment they were interrupted by the entrance of Charles Munson and Mary Morgan ; and the conversation on this point was not afterwards resumed.

The young men prolonged their visit for nearly

three weeks ; and in the course of that time, Charles Munson made a discovery of qualities in Mary which he had never before found in any other young girl. The consequence was, a correspondence was agreed on between them and the secret confided to Jeanie and Edward.

## Chapter Sixteenth.

"Griefs seldom come alone, they love a train."

ARRANGEMENTS had been made for Jeanie to spend a year in Boston, but as the time approached, she felt more and more reluctant to go; for she could not fail to see that her mother was not in her usual health. One day, after Edward had returned, she said to her mother:

"I cannot feel right, dear mother, about this going to Boston. I think you have not been well for a long time, and I feel unwilling to leave home. I am aware that it may be very desirable I should go, on my own account, for I do not consider myself a very accomplished young lady, but I should be all the time uneasy about you."

"But, my dear Jeanie, you are past sixteen, and if ever you enjoy advantages superior to those you have already had, it is full time that you were pursuing them."

"Perhaps it may be, mother; but if you are not well, it seems to me that my place is here with you, and that all the advantages in the world should not induce me to leave it."

"My dear Jeanie, I confess that I lack the energy to send you away from me now."

"Then, dear mother, it is plain enough that I ought not to go. But what is the matter? There is no danger, is there?"

"I do not really know, Jeanie, but I am inclined to think I shall not be with you very long. I am, in any case, at an age when I cannot with propriety look forward to long life, and there is reason to fear that causes are at work within me, which will terminate my life more speedily than would be anticipated under other circumstances. Doctor Gray wishes me to have additional counsel."

"Why, dear mother, why have I not known this? It surely cannot be. I think you are only feeble."

"You should have known it, my child, had I been certain of it myself. Doctor Gray, it seems, has suspected it for a long time, but did not tell me what he feared, until a few weeks ago. Now, it seems to be necessary for me to take a journey to Boston for counsel, and if you had wished it, it was

your father's plan that we should leave you there, at Mr. Brown's school."

"But that, dear mother, must not be now; I shall not leave you while you are unwell. Will you need to take your journey soon?"

"Probably in the course of two weeks. We should go now as soon as possible."

They went, and Mrs. Morrison received the best advice that could be given. The report which the physician consulted made, was unfavorable; her case was of a nature which demanded a surgical operation, and this, always, even under the most favorable conditions, difficult, was rendered more so by her advanced age, her impaired constitution, and the progress which the disease had made, even while its presence was yet unsuspected.

Again was poor Jeanie almost paralyzed by the prospect of a fearful and unlooked-for trial. She could not share in the hope that her dear mother's life would be greatly prolonged; her own heart argued more truly, that a few months of suffering would terminate the life of one who had ever been a mother—if possible, more than a mother to her. Now she remembered what Mrs. Morrison had said to her while she was mourning so sadly for Clara: "Dear child, you may be called to meet severer

trials than this," and how unthinkingly she had answered, "It seems as if that can hardly be, mother." Now her conscience smote her for that answer; but indeed she had never thought that her mother would die before her.

Oh! could it be that the hand which had guided her youthful feet all along the path of life, was now to be withdrawn? Could it be that God would again leave her motherless? And to lose such a mother! These were Jeanie's *first* thoughts, but afterwards came the effort to submit to the will of God, to trust Him for all things future. Then came the earnest effort to relieve her dear mother of all anxiety and care, and to do everything possible to alleviate her pain, and promote her happiness, and, if possible, prolong a life which she now felt was doubly dear to her.

Mr. Morrison, too, was much depressed in spirits. He loved his wife tenderly, and the thought of parting with her was most painful, even though he had now reached the period which is assigned to man on earth. But he was a Christian, and he strove to cherish a spirit of submission to the will of Heaven, and to realize that at most it would be but a short separation, until by the grace of God he should rejoin her to part—never.

Mrs. Morrison was perfectly calm and composed. "I wish to die a natural death," she said. "Had there been a reasonable hope of a favorable operation, I should have felt it my duty to submit to it. Life is sweet, but the grave has no terrors for me; the sting of death is gone."

"But, dear mother, how can we give you up," said the weeping Jeanie. "It does not seem as if we can part with you. Oh, mother, I am so tempted to doubt the goodness of God, when I think of parting with you."

"Never indulge in such thoughts, Jeanie; a firm and unwavering confidence in our Heavenly Father's goodness, is to the soul what the balance-wheel is to the watch."

"No indeed, mother, I do not cherish such thoughts; but they will suggest themselves at times."

"You shall find all needful help, my child. You are now old enough to think on many subjects for yourself, and to assume many of the responsibilities of life. I thank God, too, that you have the hopes and comforts of a Christian; but, dear Jeanie, let us not give ourselves up to mourning. I may be spared to you and your father a long time; still I may not. A few weeks even, may make a seri-

ous change in my circumstances, and it is wise to look steadily at all the possibilities, and to be prepared for all. For myself, I have long accustomed myself to the thought of death, and I thank God that come when it will, I am ready. It is a great thing not to feel any alarms and anxieties on one's own account in view of the dying hour; and it is a great mercy, too, that by the grace of God I am permitted to anticipate a happy meeting with all my dear ones, in my father's house."

As the summer advanced, Mrs. Morrison's disease appeared to be at a stand, and its more immediately alarming symptoms were so far mitigated that Mr. Morrison and Jeanie began to hope that her valuable life might be prolonged for years to come. She was able to sit in her arm chair often for several hours at a time. But she never allowed Mr. Morrison or Jeanie to speak hopefully about her recovery. She knew that the messenger only lingered, and that he might come at an unexpected hour. Jeanie improved the time to the best possible advantage, both for her own improvement and the comfort of her mother, and the welfare of the family; and perhaps at no previous time was her progress in everything she needed to learn more rapid than now.

About the first of September Mrs. Morrison grew worse, and was again confined to her room. Her disease rapidly advanced, and Mr. Morrison and Jeanie began to fear that the dreaded hour of separation from one they so dearly loved was at hand. Again, however, there came a temporary respite, and comparative freedom from suffering, although pain and disease had prostrated her strength so that she was unable to do anything for herself, but required unceasing care. Now did Jeanie amply repay to the beloved guardians of her childhood, all that care and affection which they had lavished upon her. She was untiring in the performance of every duty, and unwearied in her endeavors to make the sick room a pleasant place to the beloved object of her solicitude. Everything which could be done to vary the monotony of those wearisome days and nights, was done; and nothing which Jeanie could do herself was permitted to be done by any other person. Mrs. Morrison's heart overflowed with grateful emotions, and her love seemed to Jeanie an abundant reward for all the efforts she made in her behalf.

## Chapter Seventeenth.

IN the circle of Jeanie's friends at Laurelton, was a young man named James Herbert. His family was one of the first in town, and he himself had always sustained a high character for integrity and uprightness. His personal appearance was unusually attractive; his manners were frank, cordial and unassuming; and his whole appearance was fitted to make a favorable impression; while his circumstances and position in society were sufficient to set all the managing mothers on the alert, when it was found that he had taken possession of the ancestral mansion, which it had for two generations been the pride of the family to improve and adorn.

Although a ready supporter of the institutions of religion, and a constant and regular attendant upon public worship, he was not a professor of religion; and it was whispered in society that he was inclined to scepticism.

Young Herbert was more thoughtful and sober

minded than most of the young men at Laurelton, and at the social gatherings which Jeanie attended, they had often passed a quiet hour in conversation of a more rational kind than was common at such places. Aside from this he had never paid Jeanie any special attention, and she had never supposed herself to be an object of his particular regard.

When the beautiful homestead was put under a process of refitting, painting, and furnishing, neither Jeanie, nor any one of those gossips who make it their special business to preside over the matrimonial interests of the communities where they reside, ever thought of her as its future mistress.

We can imagine, then, how great was her surprise when she received a long and affectionate letter from Mr. Herbert, in which he disclosed a long, cherished and tender attachment for her, and entreated her to look with favor upon him. He said he had watched her from her childhood, and had never indulged himself in any dream of a future home of which she was not to be the presiding spirit and mistress; and although he had never explicitly declared his affection for her, he doubted not that she had long since suspected it, and he trusted would be prepared to return it. This, in-

deed, was his most earnest wish; might he not be permitted to say, his confident hope?

Jeanie was astonished and grieved. Such a state of things she had never for a moment suspected; and it was not in her disposition to feel a gratification that she had inspired an honest and manly attachment which she could not return. Accordingly, she immediately wrote to Mr. Herbert, expressing freely her high esteem and hearty friendship for him, and deeply regretting that he had bestowed his affections on one who, under existing circumstances, was incapable of returning them.

This answer surprised James Herbert not a little. He had, perhaps, as little vanity in his composition as most young men, but his circumstances, his character, his position in society, were such, that he had involuntarily cherished the feeling that he need not ask any young lady to bestow her affections upon him in vain. From Jeanie he had never for a moment thought of receiving a refusal, least of all one so positive and decided. What could it mean? Was any other person more favored than himself? He ran his eye quickly over the circle of their mutual acquaintance, and mentally answered, No! He thought, indeed, of Edward, but he had always supposed that the relation



between them of that brotherly and sisterly character, would, at least on Jeanie's part, preclude the possibility of any warmer or closer tie.

He read again Jeanie's letter. There was no hint in it that she entertained any unwillingness to enter into such a relation; and where could she find a home which, from its proximity to the place where she had so long resided—its own beauty and desirableness, and the society of her old neighbors and friends—would present more inducements than the one which he had offered her. Jeanie had not hinted at any dislike of him personally; indeed, she had expressed the most entire friendship and cordiality, and he knew he might depend on what she had said.

There was, however, one thing in which they differed. Jeanie was, as he believed, a Christian, and somewhat peculiar and decided in her views of character and duty. He knew it sometimes happened that professors of religion hesitated to enter into matrimonial engagements with those who made no profession of religion, and it was not impossible that Jeanie's objections lay in that direction. In some cases he could see the propriety of such a course, but in the present instance he failed entirely to discover it. He was the more inclined to the

opinion, that this was the ground of her objection the more he pondered the matter. He placed himself side by side with Edward, the only young man in their circle who was a professing Christian. In all the advantages which result from social position, he was at least his equal; his character was just as much above reproach. In what was Edward his superior, unless it was in that one little matter of a profession of religion? That looked to him a very, *very* little matter; and he almost felt that if there was enough of narrowness of spirit in Jeanie to found a preference for another on *such* a point, that the effort to give her up would be robbed of half its bitterness.

There was, however, still a possibility that Jeanie had acted under the influence of Mr. Morrison. Might he not have set his heart upon a union between Jeanie and Edward? There was no impossibility in this, and Herbert resolved upon an interview with him before he should again see Jeanie, and that he would frankly lay the whole matter before him, and endeavor to gain his approbation of his suit. Mr. Morrison had always treated him with marked kindness, and he could not think he would exert himself to thwart his views in this matter. Having thus arranged his plan of opera-

tions, nothing remained but to bring the whole matter to a speedy issue.

Accordingly, on the following evening he called and requested an interview with Mr. Morrison. The family were together in Mrs. Morrison's room with Edward, who had arrived an hour or two before on a visit. James Herbert briefly related the story of what had passed between himself and Jeanie, entreating him to interpose no obstacles in his way, and frankly acknowledging his warm affection for Jeanie.

Mr. Morrison listened in surprise, and as frankly told him that the whole matter was entirely new to him; that so far from influencing her decision, she had not even communicated the fact of his proposal to him.

He told him, moreover, that although he could not bear the thought of Jeanie's leaving him, particularly under the present mournful circumstances of the family, he should lay no constraint upon Jeanie, and do nothing in the least degree to influence her inclinations, but leave her entirely to abide by her own discretion and sense of duty.

Mr. Herbert could not fail to feel and suitably to express his gratitude to Mr. Morrison for the

course which he had declared himself willing to pursue, so at variance, as it was, with all the dictates of a mere selfish affection.

Mr. Morrison, however, assured him that he should consider himself unworthy of Jeanie's confidence and affection if he should attempt to influence her feelings and conduct in a matter upon which her future comfort and happiness would so materially depend.

Mr. Morrison entered his wife's room, and informed Jeanie that a friend wished to see her in the parlor. She arose and left the room without the slightest idea whom she was about to meet. What was her surprise to see James Herbert! For a moment she stood in the door-way irresolute; but he arose and led her to a seat in a cordial and friendly manner, saying, as he did so:

"You are sorry to see me to-night, Jeanie?"

After a moment of hesitation, she answered frankly but kindly:

"Yes, Mr. Herbert, I am."

"And did you imagine, Jeanie, that I could relinquish all the hopes and dreams of a whole life-time without one effort to change your decision?"

"I did hope, Mr. Herbert, that a subject neces-

sarily painful to both of us, might never be renewed."

"Jeanie, I have not come here to-night to find fault with you, but I could but hope that a little more thought on a subject which you admit was altogether new to you, might induce you to change your views in relation to the matter which is before us. Certainly between us two, who, at the very least, have many feelings and sympathies in common, a little friendly conversation on a subject that so deeply interests me, may be permitted, may it not?"

Jeanie dared not trust her voice to reply. There was something so heartfelt in the tone and manner of the speaker that it affected her painfully, and she simply bowed assent.

After a little hesitation, Mr. Herbert said:

"I cannot suppose, dear Jeanie, that you refused my offer and affection without some good and sufficient reasons, or at least such as appeared so at the time, and I felt that probably you would not be unwilling in a confidential manner to state those reasons to me. It is at least possible that they may be overruled."

Jeanie shook her head.

"You think not, Jeanie; still you cannot be

sure. There is nothing which man can reasonably do that I would not do for your sake."

"I do not doubt it, Mr. Herbert," said Jeanie.

"May I then ask, Jeanie, whether you feel a personal dislike to me that renders my society unpleasant to you?"

"Not in the least, Mr. Herbert. You have my most cordial esteem and friendship; and I have always found pleasure in your society."

Jeanie saw with pain the flush of gratification which passed over the young man's face; but she determined to be honest with him, let it cost her what it might.

"I know of nothing, Jeanie, in my circumstances or social position, which should cause your rejection of me. You need have no wish ungratified in my home, Jeanie."

"I know it, Mr. Herbert. I know it well."

"Jeanie, what separates us, then? Why can you not love me?"

"I have never tried, Mr. Herbert," said Jeanie, trying to smile, though a tear glistened in her eye.

"Why will you not try now, Jeanie? I believe there is a voice in your heart pleading my cause at this very moment. Is it not so, Jeanie?"

"Yes, Mr. Herbert, there is, and it is as eloquent

as all past recollections, and present gratitude, and pleasant associations, can make it. I cannot bear to disappoint you, and give you pain; yet I cannot act contrary to the plain course of duty."

"Are not your views of duty only too decided and strong, Jeanie? What duty forbids your returning and cherishing my love?"

"Everything forbids it, Mr. Herbert. What should I be, if I were capable of leaving the roof which has so long sheltered me, now, when the shadow of a great affliction is upon it. Not even you would respect me, James Herbert, if I should now, for your sake, or my own, or any one's sake, forsake the guardians of my helpless childhood in the hour of their sorrow and trouble."

"I could not ask it now, perhaps, Jeanie. But this will not always last. Why exclude me from ultimate hope? We are both young, Jeanie, and I will submit cheerfully to any needful delay, only allow me a hope when these obstacles are removed out of the way."

"There are other obstacles, Mr. Herbert, which cannot be removed."

"What are they, Jeanie; do not, I beg of you, deem me impertinent, if I urge you to let me see them."

"Do not urge me, James; I do not wish to give you pain."

"I cannot be satisfied unless I know them, Jeanie; and if they prove to be what I now suppose, the fact will do more than anything else to reconcile me to my fate."

"Well then, Mr. Herbert, my one great, and insurmountable objection is—you are not a Christian!"

"Indeed! Miss Morrison," said he with a scornful curl of the lip; "indeed, you think highly of yourself. No wonder, you say, *insurmountable*. I am not good enough for you, it seems."

"Oh, James, I did not say so," said Jeanie, stung by this reproach. "You know I did not say it, or mean it. I said you were not a Christian."

"What does that imply, Jeanie, but that you, being a Christian, are so much better than I, that our union would be unsuitable."

"Anything but that, James. In a more candid moment you yourself would not charge me with so mean a feeling?"

"Forgive me, Jeanie; but why then do you say I am not a Christian? How do you know I am not one as good as yourself, or even your cousin

Edward, though I make no pretension to the name, not choosing perhaps, to 'sound a trumpet before me.' "

"Do you consider yourself one, Mr. Herbert; surely I may ask the question?"

"Certainly! but why do you ask, Jeanie? Wherein do I differ from your Christian people? Am I less ready to do kindnesses, to show favors; less honest and honorable in business; less forward to promote any scheme of benevolence, to forward any movement for the public good; or to sustain the institutions of education and religion? In what respect do I fail of being as good as my neighbors, these Christians about me? I go to church as regularly as they, I read my Bible, and what is this great difference between me and them, that must separate me from you? Jeanie, wherein do you impeach me?"

"Nowhere, Mr. Herbert, nowhere; no one stands higher in the general esteem; no one, perhaps, in mine, than yourself; but tell me, whether in your own heart you cherish an humble, penitent sense of sin, and an entire dependence on the blood of Christ for acceptance with God?"

"Well, suppose I do not? What will this have to do with the other matter? Will it make me any

the less an affectionate husband, or alter my general character as a member of society?"

"No, it might not; but it does affect your relations to God, and to your fellow-beings. I would not dare to trust myself under your influence."

"Jeanie! never by word or deed will I interfere with your sense of duty, or your principles, or your wishes. I solemnly pledge myself to this!"

"I do not think you would intend to interfere, but you would do it—you could not avoid it, and I should be continually tempted to make compromises between my duty and my regard for you and your feelings. I, who am now so weak, and who need so much encouragement to enable me to do right, how could I dare place myself in such a situation?"

"Jeanie! I would be a Christian to please you, if I thought I could."

"You cannot do it from such motives, Mr. Herbert, but God requires the love of your heart, and the submission of your will to His, and the service of your life. Do, Mr. Herbert, become indeed a Christian."

He rose impatiently at this appeal, and for a few moments paced the room. Then he came and stood

before Jeanie, and drawing himself up to his full height, said haughtily :

"Am I answered, Miss Morrison?"

"Yes, Mr. Herbert!"

"Finally?"

"Finally!"

"Then I wish you good-night."

"Do not go in anger, Mr. Herbert. Let us be friends. The time may come when I shall need a friend!" Did she speak prophetically? Why did the old brown house of John Mason rise before her mind's eye, and the lonely grave on the hill, with the pure white stone at its head? Why did she feel the kind pressure of that old man's hand, who said: "If ever you want a friend, call on old John Mason"?

She started, for James Herbert extended his hand, and as he held hers in an almost convulsive clasp, he said:

"Jeanie Morrison! you have inflicted a grief which no other one could inflict. I would have given you a warm and honest affection, and a happy home. May you never repent the decision of this hour!"

"Mr. Herbert," said Jeanie, her tears falling fast, "Mr. Herbert, it is often hard to do right, still



I cannot regret the course I have pursued, cannot feel that I have done wrong. Only tell me you forgive me the pain I have reluctantly caused you ; and that you believe in my esteem."

"Jeanie Morrison, it is for an idle superstition that you reject my affection. Nine-tenths of professing Christians would never hesitate in a case like this. You are either deceiving me, or deceiving yourself, time and circumstances will show which ; and I do not envy you the happiness which you will feel when you remember that for the gratification of a mere whim, you have darkened all my future life !"

Without giving her time to reply, he abruptly left the room and the house.

Jeanie hastened to her room, and closed the door. Mr. Herbert's last words rang in her ears : "Nine-tenths of professing Christians would have done this without scruple ; and you are either deceiving me, or deceiving yourself."

For an instant the image of another arose before her mind's eye, and she looked closely at the motives which had influenced her decision, and rejoiced that all she had said to James Herbert was the truth. She was glad that she had allowed him to know of her high appreciation of his character,

her esteem; she cared not if in some future hour, the conviction that had he been indeed a Christian she might have loved him, might willingly and joyfully have shared his home, should force itself upon his mind. Then Jeanie sought the throne of grace, and prayed that whatever she might be called to suffer, she might calmly and cheerfully keep the path of duty; that her convictions of right might be strengthened; that she might be enabled steadily to resist *all* temptation, and bring every thought, and affection, and desire into conformity to the divine will. Then she prayed for James Herbert, that his eyes might be opened, that he might see his own heart, and his feet be turned to the way of peace, and that through the influences of the Blessed Spirit, he might be brought to love the Saviour, and devote his life to the service of God.

Then again appeared before her in her onward path the *cross* and the *crown*, both glowing with heavenly radiance, and in her ear, or in her heart, a voice seemed to say:

"Hold fast that which thou hast, and let none take thy *crown*. To him that overcometh I will give a crown of life."

Oh! thou mercy seat—thou throne of grace; around what spot of earth do such hallowed, such

precious memories cluster? Green spot in the desert! well of living waters springing up into everlasting life; many—many a weary pilgrim has refreshed himself at thy foot, and gathered there new strength for the journey of life!

All was still in Mrs. Morrison's room. Jeanie would not enter to disturb her, for she knew that everything was already prepared for the night. Quietly she opened the doors that she might be aware of the slightest movement there, and then with a peaceful heart sought her pillow and sunk quietly and sweetly to rest—aye, sleep. Sleep while thou mayest, the hour may come when thou shalt seek rest and find it not! when no hand shall be stretched out to shield thee from the storm that shall be permitted to beat mercilessly against thy quivering, lonely bark! Mercilessly! did I say? aye, mercilessly, so far as human aid, and the onset of temptation, and the cloud hiding for a season the smile of God's love, are concerned. But doubt not; there is one who rides upon the whirlwind and the storm. His eye is upon thy little vessel, tossed by the waves and ready to perish. At the *right moment* He will appear for thy help, and thou shalt outride the storm, and be wafted serenely, safely gloriously into the haven of eternal peace.



## Chapter Eighteenth.

WHEN Mr. Morrison re-entered the room of Mrs. Morrison, she inquired who it was that wanted Jeanie. He replied,

"James Herbert."

"James Herbert!" repeated Edward in a tone of surprise.

"Yes," was Mr. Morrison's reply.

Half an hour elapsed and Jeanie did not return.

"Was Jeanie going out with Mr. Herbert, Mr. Morrison?" Mrs. Morrison inquired.

"Not that I know of," was the reply.

"It seems to me the fellow had a long story to tell," said Edward, somewhat impatiently. (What! Edward Morrison call James Herbert a *fellow*?)

Another half hour passed. Mr. Morrison arose and paced the little room uneasily; and now a low murmur of voices was distinctly heard from the parlor. It must be some subject of unusual interest that is the topic of conversation. Still

Jeanie comes not; and Mr. Morrison confides the secret of this interview to his wife and Edward. Unbounded astonishment was expressed on all sides, and Mrs. Morrison sighed as Edward said uneasily:

"You say, uncle, that he told you that Jeanie had refused him unconditionally?"

"Yes, I understood him to say that was the case, Edward."

"I almost wonder, uncle, that you told him, as you say you did, that you should place no obstacles in Jeanie's way."

"Why should I do it, Edward? To be sure, it is hard to think of parting with her to another home; but her mother and I shall not be with her always, and where are more pleasant prospects offered her than in a union with James Herbert? He is not a professor of religion, it is true, but he is the very soul of uprightness and integrity, and for aught I know, he is just at the very gate of the kingdom, or it may be that he has already entered in. Still, I know not why; I feel a secret repugnance to the thought of this."

"So do I, uncle; and if he does not make all fast before he goes away, which I should think he intends to do by the length of time he takes. I will

see that an effectual barrier to his pretensions is set up."

"You, Edward, you?"

"Yes, uncle, I. Did it never enter into your mind that I might fancy our little Jeanie myself? I mean to have her for my own wife (Mr. Herbert permitting), and settle down here in partnership with you uncle, if you have no objection."

"I do wish that might be so, my dear boy," said Mr. Morrison. "Have you ever spoken to Jeanie about this?"

"Never, sir. I hate long engagements, and I must read another six months before I am admitted to the bar, you know; then after that, I wish to go South for a short time, before I settle down into business."

"Well, Ned," said Mr. Morrison heartily, "I give you all my good wishes. I have sometimes dreamed such a dream; that is, your aunt there, and I have, but I would not say anything, for I wished your inclinations in all things to be free. But it would be sweet for us to keep our family circle unbroken until we old ones are called to a better world. I think, however, Jeanie should know what you wish and intend. She may have other views."

"I think not, unless this Herbert means to coerce her into consenting to his plans. In that case I must endeavor to find some flaw in his title, must I not, uncle? Good night, auntie; I may as well go. I conclude we shall not see Jeanie to-night, and I am disturbing you. I have a mind just to show the gentleman the door before I retire. I feel a sort of indignation. I wonder if Jeanie would not like to have me come like a true 'knight errant' to the rescue? Ah! is not that the street door? It is, I am sure."

"Yes! and Jeanie has gone to her own room. I hear her moving about there now," said Mrs. Morrison.

"I would like just to see her face, but I will wait until morning. Good night, uncle; good night, auntie."

If Jeanie slept at an early hour, Edward did not, neither did Mr. or Mrs. Morrison. Edward was, as he said, almost indignant at the thought that any other person should set up a claim to Jeanie. He had, without being aware of it, indulged a kind of feeling that he had a right to Jeanie if he chose to assert it, and when he candidly looked at the matter he could see that young Herbert was no contemptible rival. On the other hand, he was

vexed and annoyed that he had been betrayed into an avowal of his interest in Jeanie, and his future plans.

Mr. and Mrs. Morrison conversed until late about Jeanie and her future prospects. To both, the thought that their beloved child must be relinquished in a certain sense to the care of another, was extremely painful. And yet they felt that there was no good reason why this should not be the case. In regard to Herbert, there was the one objection, that he was not professedly pious; but there was no other which could with any show of reason be made in any case.

With regard to Edward, and the avowal he had made of a preference for Jeanie, they thought with mingled feelings. He was a favorite with his uncle and aunt; and to their minds, the thought of leaving him and Jeanie happily settled in their old home, among old and tried friends, opened a very flattering and pleasant prospect. Edward's mother had been a fashionable lady, and withal a worldly-minded and ambitious woman, and never a favorite in the family of her brother-in-law. In spite of Edward's fine qualities, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that he had inherited a portion of her worldly-mindedness and ambition. And would he make

Jeanie happy, even if she loved him? Mr. and Mrs. Morrison had often felt that their beloved child was not fully appreciated by Edward; and they saw with pain that he often looked with vexation on the very traits of character which commanded their warmest and most fervent admiration. They could not conceal from themselves the fact that Edward was accustomed to look at many things from the worldly point of view, giving far less prominence to the delicate considerations of right and wrong than Jeanie had always been accustomed to do. They doubted not that Edward would have popular talents, and command a high rank in his professional career, securing all the comforts of life, and all respectability for his family; but should their carefully-nurtured, beloved child be destined to the miserable lot of being the neglected, unappreciated wife of a worldly-minded man, how could they rest peacefully even in their graves.

And how would Jeanie feel in regard to the rival claimants for her hand? All was dark and perplexed, and they could only commend the beloved child of their affection to the care of their Father in Heaven. Thus they found peace; and thrice happy are all parents who can thus find it, when

their hearts are beating with anxious solicitude on account of the children God has committed to their care.

Morning came, and with its first light came thoughts of their Jeanie to the hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Morrison. But early as was the hour, they already heard the low music of Jeanie's song of praise as she moved about in her room; and shortly after she came with light feet and placid countenance—the index of a peaceful heart—to Mrs. Morrison's bedside. Occupied with the various duties of a nurse, there was no opportunity for conversation, and Mrs. Morrison silently raised her heart in thanksgiving to God, that whatever might be in the uncertain future, she could rest in the joyful assurance that Jeanie had learned to "commit her way unto the Lord," and to trust in Him.

At breakfast Jeanie was somewhat embarrassed by the steady and scrutinizing gaze which Edward fixed upon her. At length he said :

"Had you a pleasant visit last night, Jeanie?"

Jeanie looked suddenly up, and blushed while she stammered out :

"Somewhat so."

"One would suppose it must have been from the length of time it occupied."

"Jeanie has not taken much time for her friends of late," said Mr. Morrison. "The poor girl has been confined too much since her mother has been sick. Can you not take her out to-day, Edward?"

"Oh, no, indeed!" she said; "I am not suffering at all. I get plenty of exercise every day, you know, and I have no inducement to leave mother unnecessarily."

"Perhaps Herbert may offer you something in the shape of inducement," said Edward, with a slight tinge of sarcasm in his tone.

"No, Edward, no," said Jeanie.

Perhaps her manner and the expression of her countenance gave more of meaning to this remark than she supposed, for Mr. Morrison, accustomed to her sincerity, at once saw that the question of her connection with Mr. Herbert was settled in a manner which removed a load from his mind. In another moment, however, he thought, "How do I know, after all, that Edward will make her happier than Herbert?" He sighed as he thought—that this dear girl might be passing her brightest, happiest hours now—and then again the Christian commended her in his heart to his God and her God, with the firm conviction that all things were in His

hands, thankful that, however the present life might be clouded and shaded, the end should be peace; and that not only all the great events of life, but all the minor details, were arranged by the Infinite Wisdom, whose plans nothing could thwart, and whose will was superior to all dictation or interference.

Edward, too, seemed relieved from doubt, for he began a lively conversation; and when they rose from the table, he said, gaily:

"Well, Jeanie, the horses will be round about eleven o'clock, and I shall be happy to have your company for an hour or more?"

Jeanie was about to decline going out, but her father, laying his hand upon her head, said, "Do not decline, my child, there is no reason why you should. I will stay with your mother, and Hannah is always ready if anything needs to be done, you know."

Jeanie knew by her father's manner that he particularly wished her to go, and she turned to Edward with a smile, which her delighted father thought irresistible, and said:

"Well, then, I will go—it seems I am of little consequence here."

"Of so much consequence that we mean to keep you as long as we can, dear," said the old man,

kindly. "So you must have a little recreation occasionally, even if you do not think it necessary."

"That's right, uncle, keep her until I come, too," said Edward, heartily.

Jeanie looked up in surprise. Edward laughed.

"So you did n't really know that I am to make one of the family in a year or so, did you, Coz? Well, understand, then, that I am coming back to live with you and uncle here, that is, if—"

"No ifs, Ned, no ifs. The fact is, Jeanie, this boy, who seems unusually gay for some reason this morning, is going to take his seat in my office by-and-bye, and be my successor in business, while I devote myself exclusively to your dear mother and to you, provided Heaven pleases to let mother remain with us so long."

"Well, what would my chum say, if he knew that I was gossiping here, with these important despatches to Miss Mary Morgan, still undelivered, in my overcoat pocket. I must be gone forthwith, Jeanie, but I will not fail to return by the appointed time."

Edward was unusually gracious during their ride that morning; but it was with a painful sensation, almost allied to guilt, that Jeanie for a moment

caught the eye of James Herbert, as he stood with folded arms, under the portico of his own house, watching in an abstracted manner the workmen who were engaged upon the building.

"Herbert will have a pleasant home for some body there, before long, Jeanie," said Edward.

"Yes, it is a beautiful spot, and continually becoming more and more so."

"Does it tempt you, Jeanie?"

"No, Edward, not at all."

"I am glad of that, though Herbert is really a fine fellow, and I wish him well."

Jeanie did not reply, and Edward, after vigorously applying the whip to his horses and driving for a few moments at a rapid rate, said somewhat hesitatingly :

"Jeanie! I hate long engagements, don't you?"

"Well, I don't know—why?"

"They never appear to turn out well. There is that case of Clara and Henry Williams. That is enough to satisfy any person on the subject, I think. For my part, I do not want to be engaged, until I am ready to be married—should you?"

"I have never thought on the subject, Edward."

"But you ought to think. Young ladies who are

old enough to receive proposals from gentlemen, *should* think."

And Jeanie *did* think after this conversation, and wondered why Edward conversed in so peculiar a manner that morning. But she did not have to wonder long.

In the afternoon, Jeanie and her mother were alone together, and Mrs. Morrison said to her :

"Had you an unpleasant interview with young Herbert last evening, Jeanie?"

Jeanie then related to her mother the incidents with which the reader is already acquainted.

"You really had a trial, my dear," said Mrs. Morrison, when Jeanie had concluded; "how does all this look to you to-day?"

"As it did last night, mother, only, if possible, my impressions of duty are clearer and more definite even, than they were."

"But do you feel no regrets?"

"For Herbert's sake, mother, I am sorry. It will be hard for me to know that he is feeling as he says he shall."

"I think, Jeanie, you need give yourself no unnecessary pain in relation to that. For myself, I am inclined, from all the observations I have had, to be of Rosamond's opinion, that 'men have

died, and worms have eaten them, but not for love!"

Jeanie laughed, and Mrs. Morrison continued:

"I do not mean, dear Jeanie, to discredit Mr. Herbert's statement. Undoubtedly he felt and meant what he said; and he will suffer for a time. But I am inclined to think that very few in his circumstances would persevere in cherishing a hopeless affection; and it would not surprise me if he were to be happily married to some other person before long. So, my child, do not distress yourself needlessly."

"I hope it may be so, mother. I am sure I should be glad if such a thing should occur."

"I think you would, Jeanie; but how is it that the young man made no more impression on your mind?"

"He is not a Christian, mother; and last night I felt more than ever that his influence over me would not be good."

"You esteem him, then?"

"Very highly—every one does, mother;—and he deserves it, I should think."

"Did no other motive influence you beside the fact that he was not a Christian?"

"I think there was no other, at least that was my

leading motive. I have never thought myself old enough to make the subject of marrying one of present interest to me; and I know of no inducement that could be offered that would make me willing to leave you and father now."

They were both silent for a few minutes, and then Mrs. Morrison said:

"Jeanie, dear, I am about to do a selfish thing and one that under other circumstances might appear most injudicious. But you have always given me your confidence freely; and as I feel that I shall not now be long with you, I wish to ask you a question which you may be unwilling to answer."

"You cannot do that, dear mother. Any question you can ask, I shall be willing to answer; that is, if I can."

"Jeanie, suppose your cousin Edward should come here and go into business in his uncle's office, and make this house his home—and ask you, Jeanie, to share it with him, that your father might live with those he loves best until God takes him home—how would you feel?"

"Dear mother, I have not thought of such a thing never—never until to-day."

"Why, to-day, dear?"

"Edward said some very peculiar things, and I did not know how to understand him."

"What were they, Jeanie?"

Jeanie repeated the conversation between them, and Mrs. Morrison said:

"Your father thinks Edward does wrong in hesitating to commit himself on the subject; but it is a whim of his, I suppose. He told us both last night definitely what his plans were. I was not at all certain how you would feel in relation to the matter; and perhaps I felt too much curiosity to know how my dear ones will be situated when I am taken from them—too little faith in my Heavenly Father's goodness. But your happiness, my love, is very dear to me."

"Do not feel anxious about me, dear mother; but, oh! I cannot bear to think that you must leave us. It is a continual pain to me, mother. I never seemed to need you so much as I do now. If prayers would keep you, you would not go, I am sure."

"God knows best, Jeanie. I, too, would gladly stay until you are settled in life; but we must not dictate, my love, neither you nor I. We must *trust* our Heavenly Father. My child, I shall be with

you but a little, a very little longer; but Christ will be with you always."

"Is there anything new?" Jeanie tremblingly asked.

"Yes, love. Dr. Gray was here while you were out to-day, and he says that the end is at hand. Dear Jeanie, do not mourn for me as you did when Clara died. Let me go in peace—will you not?"

"I can only try, mother—I can only try!"



## Chapter Nineteenth.

"Why plant the cypress near  
The pillow of the just?  
Why dew with murmuring tear  
Their peaceful, slumbering dust?  
Rear there the rose's pride,  
Bid the young myrtle bloom;  
'Tis emblem of their joys, who bide  
The shadows of the tomb."

MRS. MORRISON'S health continued fluctuating with little material change until about the first of January, when she became suddenly worse. For four days and nights her sufferings were extreme, and beyond the power of medicine to relieve. Mr. Morrison and Jeanie, who knew well what was impending, almost wished at times that death would interpose to terminate the anguish which they could do nothing to alleviate or to cure, and which could only be relieved by the approach of that resistless One, who would remove from them the object of their most warm and tender affection. At the end of the fourth day Mrs. Morrison's extreme pain began to subside, and exhausted nature sunk into brief repose. Mr. Morrison and Jeanie improved

this interval to seek for themselves the strength they needed in order to meet the parting hour which they knew could not be far distant, while Hannah, almost overwhelmed with grief, watched the slumbers of her whom she had faithfully and devotedly served for more than thirty years.

When Mrs. Morrison awoke, all were immediately at her bedside. So long had she been in anticipation of this hour that all her arrangements were perfectly made, and she had not now to waste her parting breath in settling mere worldly affairs. Her books, her linen, her plate, were to belong exclusively to Jeanie, with any articles of furniture about the house she might desire, in case she should ever need to seek another home.

Many things were also given to Hannah, though Mrs. Morrison expressed a wish if it was possible that Hannah, Mr. Morrison, and Jeanie, might remain together while they lived. She then requested all to withdraw but Jeanie, whom she thus addressed:

"My dear child, I had one wish yet unaccomplished. I wished to see Edward once more. I had some things to say to him and to ask of him which had perhaps better not be said. God knows; but forgive me, my dear child, if anything I may

have said to you in time past in relation to him, may have seemed to put a constraint upon you, in the matter of marriage. It was natural that your father and I should have desired a union with your cousin Edward, particularly when he told us that was his own wish and ultimate intention. But do not allow this wish to influence your future arrangements. This is your father's wish as well as mine. I have all confidence in you, my child, and I wish, as you are under no engagement to your cousin, that you will feel free to seek for happiness in your own way, always, as I know will be the case, endeavoring to know and do the will of God.

"And now Jeanie, my child, you must promise me not to weep and mourn immoderately on my account. After what you have witnessed within the last few days, I think you cannot desire me to stay, for I only *go home*, love, and you will all follow me. Your dear father soon—yes soon, Jeanie, and you after you have done what God would have you do for his glory on earth. I need not ask you to be kind and thoughtful to your father the few days that he shall yet remain with you. God bless you, my own dear Jeanie, and abundantly reward your considerate and self-denying affection for me. And

now love, let me see your father a few moments, for my time is short."

Jeanie summoned her father, and then bathed in tears retired to her own room, that dear little room which her beloved mother had so stored with everything which could promote her happiness or gratify her taste. It was a luxury to weep. She did not feel as she did when Clara died. There was none of that agony—that anguish in her heart. It was not burying a part of herself, but it was resigning the mother, the ever-loving guide of all her past years, the wise counsellor, the constant and unwearied friend, yet resigning her not so much to the cold grave, as permitting her to depart to be with her God, and with Christ her Saviour; just as a captive, famished and forced to toil, would part with a parent summoned to a land of plenty and of rest,—aye, to his Father's house, "where was bread enough and to spare;" and where, after a brief interval, all the scattered ones should be gathered one by one, never to part.

Hannah comes to the door and tells Jeanie that Edward is here and would like to see her. A short time and all were summoned to the death-bed of Mrs. Morrison. The dying woman lies panting for breath, and exhausted with the effort she has made

She recognizes Edward, and motions him to her side. His hand clasped in both of hers, her eye wanders around the room until it rests on Jeanie ; there it lingers with an expression of unutterable love and tenderness. Edward follows her eye until it rests upon the drooping form of Jeanie, who is weeping upon her father's shoulder. It seemed as if she would have spoken if she had been able, but she was not ; Jeanie went to her and raised her in her arms. Then Mr. Morrison advanced and said :

"Mary, is it easy to die?"

"Oh, yes! easy and pleasant to go," was the reply ; "no alarms—no fears—Christ is with me"—After a short pause she whispered,

"Jeanie, love! remember—"

"Remember what, dear mother?"

"Weeping may tarry for the night—but joy cometh—in the morning.—It is morning for me now—the morning of an—eternal day."

Again she relapsed into silence, and the feeble respiration at long intervals, admonished them that her end was near. In a few moments, without a struggle or a sigh, she was gone, and Jeanie knew that she was again motherless.

Truly it might have been said of the departed, that the sun of her earthly existence set,

—"as sets the morning star,  
Which goes not down behind the darken'd west,  
Nor hides obscured among the tempests of the sky,  
But melts away into the light of Heaven."

On the third day Mrs. Morrison's body was committed to the grave. The funeral exercises were held in the church in which she had been a constant and devout worshipper for more than thirty years.

The text from which the funeral sermon was preached was this beautiful passage : "The path of the just is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The sermon was full of rich instruction, and adapted to cheer and comfort the mourning family as well as the church bereaved of one of its brightest ornaments.

Edward remained home for a week after his aunt's death. Never before had he been so affectionate and tender in his attentions to Jeanie. Never before had she felt so cordial and warm an esteem for him. And more than once she recalled her interview with her mother, and the feelings which she had experienced in regard to the relation which they might hold to each other when Edward should have returned to Laurelton and settled down in his professional business. Hitherto, there had al

ways been something in her heart that said, "No," whenever the thought of such a possibility had occurred to her mind. But now it was very pleasant to have Edward at home; grief had softened his heart, and their sympathy in sorrow had developed other kindly sympathies, and she dreaded to have him go. He parted with her with much tenderness, and drew from her a promise to correspond with him frequently, and told her he would return after some three months, when he and his friend Munson should have been admitted to practice. Then he would stay longer, on the occasion of his friend's marriage, which was to occur previous to his departure for the south, where he wished to pass some weeks among his old friends.

## Chapter Twentieth.

But where was James Herbert?

About a week after his last interview with Jeanie, he left Laurelton and went to Boston. After an absence of some two weeks he returned, bringing with him Mr. and Mrs. Fisher. Mrs. Fisher was his eldest sister, and her husband was a resident at Boston engaged in the East India trade. Mr. Herbert proposed to his brother-in-law to settle down in the old homestead at Laurelton, while he would make a voyage to the East Indies in the merchantman of which Mr. Fisher was part owner. This was a favorable opportunity for all concerned, for the firm were at that time under the necessity of sending out one of their number, or some other person in whom they could place confidence. Mr. Fisher had been selected as the suitable person, but he did not wish to leave his family, and a residence in Laurelton for a few years presented inducement sufficient for Mr. Fisher to accept of his brother-in-law's proposal gladly;

and before Mrs. Morrison's death, Mr. Herbert had sailed from Boston, to be absent three years.

The winter passed sadly to Mr. Morrison and Jeanie. It was not grief for the loss of his wife alone that made him sad, nor was it loneliness; he was anxious about the connection between Edward and Jeanie. It was true that while Edward was at home on the occasion of the death of his aunt, he had treated her with all tenderness, and every appearance of thoughtful affection; yet his letters indicated nothing more than a friendliness of feeling which it would be unnatural not to feel. He observed that Jeanie waited with much interest for Edward's letters, and their contents he imagined made her sad. She went out very little, and seemed to have lost the desire for much society; but to her father she was gentle and attentive as ever, reading to him, singing to him, anticipating all his wants, and striving by every method her ingenuity could devise to dissipate the mournful thoughts of which she was far from supposing herself the occasion.

Mary Morgan was to be married early in May, and she had urged Jeanie to be her bridesmaid. Jeanie, however, declined, and her recent affliction seemed to Mary so good a reason for her doing so,

that she failed to suspect the true motives which actuated her. One day she said to her:

"I do wish, Jeanie, that you and Edward could have been married at the same time that we are."

"Why do you say so, Mary?" asked Jeanie.

"Oh, a few months time will make so little difference, and it would be so pleasant; don't you think so?"

"If I did, that would not help the matter much, Mary," said Jeanie smiling.

"Don't tell me so, Jeanie. Do you think I do not understand it? Edward would be glad to have it so, and take you south with him; but you think your father would be lonely without you, and so, as you always do, you sacrifice your own gratification and pleasure for the good of others."

"You are altogether wrong, Mary. Edward and I are not engaged, and more than that, he has never spoken to me on the subject."

"You astonish me, Jeanie! Surely you are not in earnest?"

"I am perfectly so, Mary. Nothing of the kind to which you allude has ever passed between us."

"Then will you explain this, Jeanie. I am sure I do not understand it." As she spoke, she took from her portfolio a letter which she placed in

Jeanie's hand, pointing out a passage which she wished her to read. The letter was from Charles Munson, and the passage which Jeanie read was as follows:

"Edward says that he has always intended to make Jeanie Morrison his wife, but he does not think it would under all circumstances be advisable for their union to take place previous to his journey south. Mr. Morrison would miss Jeanie very much, and probably Jeanie would be unwilling to leave him for such a length of time."

Jeanie read no further, and Mary said:

"What does it mean, Jeanie?"

"I am sure I cannot tell you," said Jeanie; "unless I am to be married whether I will or no."

"Nonsense, Jeanie, you don't mean that you would not marry Edward Morrison, do you?"

"That is a question which I should prefer answering Edward himself, Mary."

Jeanie took her leave of Mary and walked home. What could be the meaning of this? Why should Edward confide such a matter to others, and still be so extremely guarded in all his conversation with her. Did he really think that as a matter of course she would marry him at any moment when he chose to make the suggestion? This thought

aroused her womanly indignation. In another month he would be home to attend Mary's wedding. How should she meet him? Could she receive and treat him with the old cordiality, from which he might infer that she loved him? from which it would seem that he had already inferred it, for he seemed to express no doubt or anxiety about the success of any overtures which he might be disposed to make.

But did Edward really like her? Yes, he liked her in a certain way, she did not doubt. But she *did* doubt whether he cherished that warm affection for her which she considered necessary to mutual happiness in a close and intimate relation which was to last as long as life lasts.

And then, in regard to herself—how did she feel toward him? She could not tell; she did not know how far her feelings toward him were influenced by what she knew to be the most earnest wish of her beloved parents, and what she had for a few moments past supposed to be Edward's wish. She was satisfied as she was—no, not exactly as she was; she did not like the thought that Edward should claim a proprietorship in her without so much as saying, by your leave, Jeanie.

Certainly, the young man needed to be taught a

lesson; he must learn that young ladies are not to be married without their consent is asked to such a measure. Edward must learn that in its proper season; and until that time she would not trouble herself in relation to the matter. But she did trouble herself about it, and what was worse, she did not feel that sweet security in committing all to God, that she had done. She found herself day after day inventing reasons why Edward had not spoken directly to her on the subject, and she found no difficulty in accounting for it. Had he not told her himself explicitly, that he hated long engagements, and that he never wished to be engaged until he was ready to be married; and when he had last been home it was no time to think of such things. True, he had written to her several times without mention of anything of the kind; but Edward hated all appearance of sentimentalism, and for that reason, if no other, would he not be likely to avoid the subject in correspondence? Thus she pondered day after day, and often found herself looking forward with unusual interest to Edward's visit, for she felt that whatever reason on the subject might have existed in time past, there were now no reason why he should not fully and explicitly express himself in relation to the subject.

At length Edward arrived, accompanied by Charles Munson. His cordial greeting put all anxiety for the time to flight. He and Jeanie attended the wedding of their young friends. After the ceremony, Edward, with Jeanie on his arm, approached the newly-married pair to offer their congratulations, and young Munson said, with an emphasis which brought the blood to Jeanie's cheeks:

"I hope, Morrison, Mary and I will have the pleasure of returning your and Jeanie's good wishes on a similar occasion before many months."

"I hope so too," said Edward, gaily; "don't you, Jeanie?"

"That depends upon circumstances," replied Jeanie, in much confusion; and glad to escape from the scrutinizing look which Munson fixed upon her, she retired to another part of the room.

Edward was much occupied in society for a number of days; and Jeanie being somewhat indisposed, did not attend any of the parties that were made on Mary's account, so she saw little of him comparatively. His conduct puzzled her. She did not at all understand him; and often she resolved that she would never again think of him in connection with herself. But Mr. Morrison had

recovered in a measure his wonted cheerfulness since Edward's return, and he seemed so happy to have his nephew at home with him, and so almost childishly fond of him, that she often felt that it would be unkind to disappoint the plans he seemed to cherish so fondly.

After all, if Edward did care for her, as he had said to others that he did, what reason was there why she should not be his wife? He was a Christian, at least a professor of religion. Alas! Jeanie had forgotten that God has said: "Woe unto those that take counsel, but not of me." She was taking counsel of her own heart and her own reason, unconsciously wandering from her God, and sowing the seed of bitter repentance in days to come. Strange! strange! that even the real child of God needs so often to be taught the lesson of trust in God—implicit, confiding, *unquestioning* trust! Strange, that we need so much of discipline to enable us keep the plain but lowly path of reliance upon, and patient waiting for God.

## Chapter Twenty-First.

"Ah! so frail are we,  
So like the brief ephemeron, that wheels  
Its momentary round, we scarce can weep  
Our own bereavements, ere we haste to share  
The clay with those we mourn."

EDWARD returned one day from the post-office in a state of unusual excitement. His uncle, his mother's only brother, was lying at the point of death, and wished, if possible, to see him before he died. He decided, of course, to set out at once; and Jeanie instantly busied herself in such preparations as were necessary, that he might leave in the stage which went out at ten o'clock the same night. Early in the evening Mr. Morrison took leave of his nephew; and pleading unusual indisposition, retired to his room, leaving Edward and Jeanie together.

"It seems to me, Jeanie, that uncle has changed very much since aunt died, do you not think so?"

"I do; and I often fear that he will not continue with us long," said Jeanie. "I seem to be always dreading something now."



"We cannot expect him to continue much longer. He is past seventy, and life seems almost undesirable under his circumstances; but poor uncle Waterman was not yet fifty, I think—just in his prime. Addie must be a young lady by this time—let me think—yes, she is eighteen; just about your age, Jeanie. I should n't wonder if she was a fine looking girl."

"Your aunt is still living, Edward?"

"Yes; and there are three children younger than Adelaide."

It was eight o'clock. Both were silent; and Jeanie, well knowing that Mr. Morrison had purposely left Edward with her alone, did not dare to speak, lest she should in some way betray to Edward her consciousness of the fact. She was aware that he was regarding her attentively; and although she could not guess the nature of his thoughts, the fact gave an additional constraint to her manners.

At last Edward rose, and said:

"Well, Jeanie, I am only keeping you up; and as I want to see Nothrup and some others before I go, I may as well be off."

"Do not hurry on my account, Edward."

"I shall have little time to spare, the stage will

be in about half-past nine. You must take good care of uncle, Jeanie," said he, as he took her hand at parting.

"I will do all I can," said Jeanie. She would have added: "You can do more than I, Edward;" but she could not. She wished to ask when he would return, or whether they should hear from him, but the words would not pass her lips.

Edward's hand was on the latch—in another moment he would be gone. He pauses, and turns to speak:

"There are some things I meant to say to you, Jeanie, before I left, but there is no time. I will write—yes, I will write you soon, *very soon*. Good night, Jeanie."

Jeanie went to her room once more to pass a troubled night. What could he mean? What was there to say that he could not—for which there was not time? What would he write? Formally, but with a wandering mind, Jeanie commended herself to the care of her Heavenly Father, and went to sleep with little of the sweet peacefulness which she had felt when, after the painful interview, she last parted with James Herbert.

She woke little refreshed in the morning; but she strove to be cheerful, that she might not need

lessly distress her father, who was again dependent upon her for society. Oh, how she wished for his sake that Edward might have remained.

After breakfast, Mr. Morrison asked Jeanie if she would ride out with him. Assenting, they were soon upon their way. Scarcely had they left the town before Mr. Morrison began to speak of Edward. At length he said :

"Jeanie, did Edward say anything to you of what he wished to do upon his return?"

"Nothing definite, father. He will go into business, will he not?"

"I suppose so. Did he not speak to you on the subject which we have sometimes conversed about, Jeanie—I mean in relation to yourself, my child?"

"He said nothing about me, father, at all; or, at the most, very little, if anything."

"Do I understand you, Jeanie? Do you mean to say that Edward made no allusion to any future connection with you?"

"I do not know that he did, father; but just as he was leaving he made a remark to this effect, that there were some things which he had intended to say, but had not time—and that he would write."

"Not time, indeed!" said Mr. Morrison, indig-

nantly. "What does the boy mean! There is always time enough for those who will. I really do not know what to make of the boy."

Jeanie made no reply—she did not know what to say. At length Mr. Morrison added :

"After all, Jeanie, he is a fine fellow—and he will stand high in his profession; I have no doubt. But I do not like the way he manages in regard to you. If he should do anything to disturb your peace, I should find it hard to forgive him. I am glad you do not seem to be calculating on him at all; that is, you don't seem to feel bad about it. I am glad you bear it so well."

"Well, father, then I hope *you* will not feel bad about it," said Jeanie.

"After all, the letter will soon come, Jeanie; and then all will be told. But what ails the young men now-a-days to want to write such things? I could not have been hired to do it when I was young."

Three weeks wore away, and then the letter came. Edward arrived the very day his uncle was buried. He wrote that his aunt, and Addie, and all of them were in the utmost affliction. His uncle had lived up to his income, his estate was encumbered with debts, and there was little prospect that much would remain when all was settled, for

the support of Mrs. Waterman and her children. He must necessarily remain a few weeks longer, for his aunt could not consent to his leaving them at present. He himself was anxious to assist the family in arranging their affairs, and he would write again before long, to let them know what progress was made, and when they might expect him home. The letter was written jointly to Mr. Morrison and Jeanie, evidently in haste.

"You see, Jeanie," said Mr. Morrison, "the boy has a kind heart after all. I have no doubt it takes full half his time to keep Mrs. Waterman and Addie there, as he calls her, from being crazy. I don't much like some of those southern women, ladies I suppose I ought to call them; but the same sort are to be found everywhere, north as well as south, I suppose."

Jeanie looked up in surprise at her father. This censorious manner of speaking was so little like him, and reminded her of what Edward had said just before leaving Laurelton. It really did seem to her that her father had changed very much, for the last few months.

Weeks passed, and another letter arrived from Edward. He was immersed in business and unable to say anything definite about his return

although, as he expressed himself,—“it must necessarily be soon.” It was impossible to describe the condition of his uncle's affairs. Little provision for the family would remain, but Mrs. Waterman and some of the children would find a home with her relatives. There was no allusion to Jeanie in this letter.

Thus, for the most part, in that most trying of all circumstances, suspense, Jeanie passed the summer. There were times, when as of old, she was enabled to draw very near to God, and place herself beneath the shadow of the Almighty wings; but she often felt restless, anxious, and self-condemned. Never, however, did she falter in her duty to, or her affection for her father, who talked almost constantly of Edward. Sometimes she would persuade herself that were it not for her father, she would never allow any thought of him to disturb her peace; and then she shrunk from the thought of a life without a single tie. What if her dear father were taken away, where should she find a home? and how should she ever leave the dear home in which so many happy years had been spent? No mother, no Clara, to go forth into the world by her side. Then she recalled Clara's last words:

"Jeanie, you would not mourn so for me, if you knew what Jesus could be to you."

Jeanie endeavored to draw near to Christ; she asked him to draw near to her, and to help her in all the troubles through which she might be called to pass. She asked for daily and hourly grace to lean on Jesus, and trust in Him. As she searched her heart, she felt that Edward had a larger place in her affections than he ought to occupy, until circumstances were far different from what they were at present. She was humbled and mortified at the thought; perhaps, dear reader, you think she was not to blame for this, but *she* felt that she was, that she had neglected to keep a careful watch, and her ever vigilant enemy had entered her heart in a careless hour. She could see distinctly, that her way back to the point whence she departed from the narrow path would need to be wet with tears of bitter repentance. She felt how weak she was, how unable to struggle, and she looked about for some one to be a friend, a helper in her hour of need. Again, something Clara had once said was recalled to her memory. Was Clara present in spirit? assisting her as she had said she would love to do, strengthening her to keep the path of life? Ah! Jesus, the Almighty Friend, He was always

near, He was ready to help and to save. She tried to cast herself on Him, but alas! how weak she was. There was not that steady confidence in God, that peaceful assurance of his all-sufficiency, that alone can give peace to the troubled soul. But her hour of self-communion was not in vain, and she went out from her room at tea-time to meet her father with a more just sense of her duties, and a more entire feeling of her dependence than she had before felt for many weeks.

"I shall be looking for Edward very soon, Jeanie; indeed, I should not be surprised to see him at any time."

"He did not say he would write, again before he started, in his last letter, did he father?"

"No, Jeanie; and I should not wonder if he was here before the close of this week. I want to see him very much; it is quite time he was here, for the sake of business too. Have you heard from him lately, Jeanie, dear?"

"No, father; he has not written to me since he first arrived, then you recollect he wrote to us both."

"Jeanie, I do not know what to think of Edward in this matter. It has given me a great deal of solicitude of late, and I have many anxious

thoughts about you, my child. Not that I have set my heart so strongly upon your marrying your cousin, love; but I am old and feeble, and will soon go home to your dear mother, and to the presence of Christ, and who will then care for you, child? who will love you, Jeanie? This troubles me. If I were not looking every day for Edward, I would write to him, and have this matter settled now. He cannot trifle with you in this way."

"Oh, no, dear father, do not, I entreat of you, mention this thing to Edward. How do I know that he ever cared for me? He never told me so, indeed he never did."

"But I told you so, and Edward told me; do not fear that I shall compromise your delicacy, dearest. I will speak only on my own account. He shall speak out. You need not marry him unless you choose, of course; but in case you do not choose, I have a duty to do. I must secure a suitable provision for your future comfort, for Edward is my legal heir. I shall not leave you destitute and unfriended, Jeanie."

"Dear father, do not speak of such things. I cannot—indeed I cannot bear it. I cannot believe that God will take my last friend from me. Why should he?"

"He has not told us *why*, Jeanie. He does many things that are unaccountable to us, but oh! it is blessed to know, yes, daughter Jeanie (laying his hand on her head as he spoke), *to know*, that He doeth all things well. That faith has saved me from shipwreck many a time. Never have I felt more severely, more sadly tried since my boyhood, than during the last few months; but this faith has kept my old heart from breaking, Jeanie. Try, my dear, to lay hold upon it; it is, indeed, an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast."

Jeanie wept. Did her father really know what had been passing in her mind during the afternoon? Oh! how much *she* needed that same, firm trust in God!

"God will supply all you need, Jeanie; only trust in Him." This was what her own dear mother had said. Oh! for that trust. Jeanie labored to obtain it. She reasoned with herself on the folly of trusting to anything else, or fearing anything, when God's promises were so unspeakably large and full; but she made *one great mistake*. She did not go directly to Christ; and, in child-like simplicity, ask it as His free gift.

Alas! how many fail here! Jeanie had not yet learned that "Jesus Christ is all," but she will learn

it soon. The "Great Teacher" himself hath taken her under His own tuition, and it may be that He will see fit to exercise her with severe lessons; for "in conversion, the object of God is twofold, both to Bless us and to make us blessings to others."

## Chapter Twenty-Second.

"The call at midnight came,  
He started up to hear:  
A mortal arrow pierced his frame,  
He fell, but felt no fear.  
His spirit, with a bound,  
Left its encumbering clay;  
His tent, at sunrise, on the ground  
A darkened ruin lay."

JEANIE awoke on the following morning with a firm determination to make a vigorous effort to recover her self-control; and with many aspirations for divine grace to help her in keeping her resolution, to set herself more steadily to the work which God had given her to do in her own heart. She did not leave her own room until the hour for breakfast; for the faithful Hannah still presided over all the domestic arrangements of the family with her old fidelity, rendering all assistance or dictation from Jeanie unnecessary. Mr. Morrison, too, since the death of his wife, had been in the habit of spending the morning in his own room in retirement, and the little family were first re-united for the day at the breakfast-table.

At the sound of the breakfast-bell, Jeanie repaired to the dining-room. Mr. Morrison was not there. She waited a few moments, wondering at her father's delay; for punctuality was a cardinal virtue in Mr. Morrison's house.

"Perhaps you had better ring again, Hannah," said Jeanie; "it may be that father is so much engaged in reading, that he did not hear the bell."

Hannah rang the bell again, but there was no answer.

"It must be that he is either sick or that he has not waked. I will go and see." Jeanie started, followed by Hannah. They reached the door of his room. Jeanie tapped, but no one replied. "He must be asleep," said Jeanie, with quivering lips. Tremblingly she opened the door. She looked in. Mr. Morrison was indeed asleep. Jeanie's heart beat lightly again, for he lay as if in perfect repose. She called, "Father!" but he did not wake—he did not stir. She steps lightly to the bedside, and laid her hand upon his. *It was icy cold.* With a shriek of agony, she fell senseless on the floor.

Soon—ah! shall we say too soon!—Jeanie awoke to consciousness—to a full sense of her desolation! Many were around her. The good Mrs. Hyde,

Dr. and Mrs. Gray, and the good old minister, who had so helped her to bear her two great troubles. He had tried to cheer and support her when she wept over the dead Clara. He had soothed and comforted her at the death-bed of her more than mother; but now for a long time he could not speak the words of comfort. He could only say, "God help you, my child!" when Jeanie piteously stretched out her arms towards him, as she recognized him among those who passed and repassed around her.

Jeanie did not weep; but the bleached face, and quivering lips, and trembling hands, revealed the intensity of the anguish which wrung her heart. She rose to go to her own room, away from the crowd; but her feeble limbs refused to sustain her, and she sank senseless again to the floor. Dr. Gray took her in his arms, as he would have done an infant, and bore her to her own little room, and laid her upon the bed—and he and Mrs. Hyde devoted themselves to her restoration. After a little, the good Hannah came in with a bowl of tea and some biscuit, which, amid all the excitement, she had the presence of mind to prepare, and approached the bedside.

"Dear Miss Jeanie, it breaks my heart to see you take on so. If you would only drink just a

little of this, you would feel better, would n't she, Dr. Gray?"

"Oh, Hannah! Hannah! I have lost my only friend now—God has taken all!"

"No, no! Miss Jeanie—this is a dreadful stroke, but you have not lost all. I will stand by you to your dying day—and there is young Master Edward—"

"Has Edward come?" said Jeanie, starting up at the word.

"Not yet, Jeanie," said the doctor, "but we hope he will soon be here."

"Oh, if Edward were only here!" said the poor girl.

"Jeanie, dear," said Mr. Parsons, "this is a great trouble; but we must look up. It is all peaceful and bright, there where your dear father is—and it is *all right here*, however trying it may be to us."

"I know it, Mr. Parsons, I *know* it is right; but if I cannot *feel* it, my heart will break! Dear, dear father!—oh! I must—I must see him!—let me go to the room—let me go, doctor!"

"Wait a few moments, Jeanie; and while you wait, just swallow a little of this which Hannah has brought you." Jeanie took it, scarcely knowing what she was doing.

Suddenly she saw the old minister looking on her with the utmost tenderness and Christian sympathy.

"Oh, Mr. Parsons! pray for me!" she exclaimed. "Ask God to help me! I have wandered from my God, and he has left me justly to bear my misery alone!"

"Return unto me, and I will return unto thee," these are his gracious words, Jeanie; and 'like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.'

"Oh! that Edward might come!" was Jeanie's frequent exclamation. "Oh! that Edward was only here!" was the exclamation of many others in their deep sympathy for the lonely orphan. Anxiously was the stage watched that day, and the day following, but he came not. Little did Jeanie dream what detained him so long. At her request, the funeral was delayed for the longest possible time, in the vain hope that he might arrive.

We cannot linger over these mournful details. Jeanie recovered her composure; but peace she found only in her closet, when humbling herself before her God for all her wanderings, and imploring help and strength to bear her trials, and commit her way to Him.



Doctor Gray wrote to Edward informing him of his uncle's death, and urging his speedy return. Meanwhile, many friendly doors opened to Jeanie; among them Doctor Gray's, Mrs. Hyde's and Mr. Parsons'. But Jeanie felt that for the present, she would rather remain where she now was; and Hannah insisted that "poor Miss Jeanie" should be allowed to "have her own way." A nephew of her own promised to stay with them. Day by day Jeanie looked for Edward, although it would be a month before she could reasonably expect him, if he had not started before the arrival of the Doctor's letter. Heavily wore away the hours. Jeanie sought to find a refuge from her troubles in God. When she bent herself at the throne of Grace she found rest; while her whole soul was absorbed in earnest prayer, while, as she afterwards described her feelings, "she held on to the promises, she found rest." But when she turned for an hour away, and her thoughts dwelt among the reminiscences of the past, or pressed forward to penetrate the dim and misty future, she found herself launched upon a troubled sea, which threatened to swallow her in its fearful abyss. Doctor Gray called nearly every day, with a faithful and fatherly kindness; but he got no glimpse of the real condition of her mind.

Her friends all sympathized deeply and sincerely with her affliction; but they saw no further into those hidden causes of sorrow, which were at work within. They could see that in the loss of those beloved guardians of her childhood, she had cause for a great sorrow; but further, or deeper, they saw not.

It is possible that Doctor Gray had some misgivings with regard to Jeanie's connection with Edward. He always called after the arrival of the southern mail, which was late in the evening, and told Jeanie there was no good reason for expecting Edward's return until a month had passed. The month wore slowly away, and at length was gone. Edward must certainly be on the road, for there had been time enough for a letter to arrive at Laurelton, and no one doubted that he would write immediately, if he did not set out on his return without delay. Jeanie's nervousness and excitement increased with every passing day, but she sought by every means to control it, or at least conceal it from those around her.

At length, one evening, Doctor Gray called, and placed in her hand a letter which he had received enclosed in one directed to himself. She received it calmly, and did not proceed to open it in the

presence of the doctor, as it was evidently his intention she should.

"Did Edward write when he should return, doctor?"

"Yes; he said he should not be able to start before the first of October, and he would arrive, he hoped, as soon as the middle of the month."

"Did he tell you what had detained him so long, doctor?"

"Yes; they have had a wedding in the family; his cousin Adelaide was married about four weeks since, I think. She will come to the north to live."

"Indeed!"

"So Edward writes; but you will find all particulars in your letter, doubtless; read it, Jeanie."

"Not now, doctor, not now," said Jeanie, quickly. "Who did Adelaide marry, doctor?"

"Can you not imagine, Jeanie?"

"How should I?" said Jeanie, carelessly.

"Jeanie, were *you* engaged to Edward Morrison?"

"Never, Sir!"

"Did he ever ask you to be his wife?"

"No, Sir."

"Jeanie, I take the liberty of an old friend, and a liberty not dictated by curiosity."

"You are entirely excusable, doctor."

The doctor was puzzled. He did not like Jeanie's appearance. She was *too* indifferent altogether, for all to be natural. Still, he did not feel at liberty to press the matter; having no reasonable excuse for staying longer, he left the house. Instead of going home, he went round to the kitchen, and said to Hannah:

"I fancy Miss Jeanie is not very well to-night, but she does not own it. Do not seem to watch her, Hannah, or let her know that I have spoken to you; but I shall be at Jackson's for an hour (just round the corner, you know); if you want me, just call for me."

"Yes; I'll go up stairs now," said Hannah.

"Say nothing about me, Hannah."

"Not a word, doctor."

The doctor waited until past eleven o'clock, at Jackson's, and then feeling quite relieved, returned home.

When Hannah entered the parlor she found Jeanie sitting at the table, with her head resting on her hand. She was very pale, and a letter lay unopened on the table.

"Did you get a letter from Master Edward, Miss Jeanie, to-night?"

"Yes, Hannah."

"When will he be here?"

"In about two weeks."

"Are you sick, Miss Jeanie? How pale you look!"

"Do I? I believe I am not sick, Hannah."

Hannah hesitated a moment, and then said:

"Would you object, Miss Jeanie, if I just sleep on the sofa there, to-night? I'd kind o' like to do it, I'm thinking."

"If you wish, Hannah, do so," said Jeanie, taking the lamp to retire to her own room.

When Jeanie was alone, she opened with trembling hands the letter from Edward. It was brief—announcing his marriage to his cousin, and his speedy return. "I need not say, Jeanie, that my house will always be your home. I hope you will like Adelaide, and she will be pleased with you. I was not expecting such an event when I went south, but I trust none of us will have cause to regret it. Adelaide will be a great acquisition to the society at Laurenton, and she is really an elegant and accomplished woman. But I will not praise her, to you Jeanie, who are so shortly to see her."

You must try to be cheerful, Jeanie; call all your philosophy to your aid, and reconcile yourself as much as possible to uncle's death. It is undoubtedly a gain to him, and it does not become us to repine at the will of Heaven."

Jeanie read and read again this brief letter, and then sat down and leaned her head upon her little table. Her whole life seemed at once spread out before her, and all the past invested with present, living reality. Again she was a lonely orphan. There was no person on whom she had a claim—no home to which she had a right; no heart, she almost felt that beat, in sympathy with hers. Here, at the very threshold of womanhood, when others of her young companions were enjoying the society, and counsel, and protection of their parents, she was all alone—without brother or sister, or any one on whom she had a right to depend for anything that she might need, whether it was society, or affection, or the supply of her most trifling wants. With a pang she thought of James Herbert, the wanderer on the sea, and of the pleasant home of which she might have been the mistress. A glow of shame covered her face when she thought of her relations to Edward, and the effort she had made to bring her affections to rest on him. She blamed herself

bitterly for her folly in allowing his image to occupy her thoughts, and she mourned before God for her wandering in heart from Him. At last she became aware that some one was speaking her name. She looked up, and Hannah was beside her.

"Dear Miss Jeanie, won't you go to bed? you are sick, I fear."

"No, Hannah, I am not sick. I was thinking—and, Hannah, it is full time to think."

"Oh, leave that until to-morrow, my dear young lady; it seems to me that the dead can hardly rest in their graves while you looked so wretched-like. I wish I could comfort you."

"Don't be uneasy—don't mind me, Hannah. I will soon go to bed."

Hannah went to the door, and as she closed it, Jeanie said:

"I will set open the door again in a few moments, Hannah" (observing how reluctantly the good woman closed the door).

Left alone, she bent down before God, and with full sense of her desolation pressing upon her heart, commended herself to the care of her Father in Heaven. There was no glow of warm, gushing emotion, but a deep, overpowering sense that there was none beside for her to lean on now, and a kind

of assurance in her inmost soul that her God would not forsake her in this hour. When she laid down, she did not soon sleep; but with her mind quickened to unusual energy, took a careful survey of the present, and asking earnestly the direction of her Heavenly Father, sought for some light upon her future path. Long time she groped in darkness. One plan was suggested to her mind only to be rejected and replaced by another, to be rejected in its turn. Well she knows how necessary it is that her plans be matured before she permits any of her friends to know her circumstances. Is there no way—is there nothing but that which she cannot bear—to be dependent on the bounty of Edward Morrison? It cannot, it cannot be! Who shall tell what an agonizing cry goes up from that smitten heart. A cry for direction, for light upon the path of life—the pilgrim's path. That cry was heard: "If ever you want a friend, think of John Mason!" Oh! there is a gleam amid the surrounding darkness. It leads, it points the way which Jeanie shall take, and she blesses God, and doubts no longer. An irresistible longing once more to kneel on that grave where her dear mother rests, comes over her—to see that good old couple, now bending under the weight of more than sev-

enty years. Yes! thither over hill and valley at length she discerns her path; and she will go, for who has a right to hinder her? She struggles no longer. She makes no definite plan for the morrow; but with a heart full of thanksgiving, she sinks to repose. And when all is still, the faithful old Hannah steals softly to her bedside; and, while the moonbeams cast their light upon the pillow, she sees a smile, a peaceful smile, upon Jeanie's pale face. And then she too sleeps, her old, affectionate heart relieved of a heavy burden.

### Chapter Twenty-Third.

"Oh I fear not in a world like this,  
And thou shalt know ere long,  
Know how sublime a thing it is  
To suffer, and be strong."

WHO that has once borne a heavy grief, has not learned to dread the *awakening* after sleep, before time has written the record of sorrow so deep upon the heart, that it is entirely familiar both to our sleeping and waking thoughts. It was scarcely dawn when Jeanie awoke from her short slumber, and waking, found a strange oppression upon her soul. Quickly, however, came the sad recollection, that her honored, beloved father was gone; and, quick as thought, another idea, that of Edward's speedy return. Alas! this did not linger long. In one mighty wave that threatened to overwhelm her, swept over her soul the remembrance of the dead Clara, the dear, dear mother, the affectionate father—and Edward too—and home—all, all lost to her—and she desolate and alone! She

covered her face in agony. A soft whisper from afar seemed to steal into her heart: "I am *not* alone, for the Father is with me."

"Dear Jesus!" thought Jeanie, "didst thou also know loneliness and sorrow in this world! and art thou not with *me*, to sympathize, to sustain, and to guide me?" She rose and dressed herself silently, that she might not disturb Hannah, who, however, was already awake. Then closing her door, she looked earnestly to her Heavenly Father, for strength and help. She gave thanks that she had yet a God to go to; that she was not like multitudes, who have no help in time of trouble; and she prayed, oh! how earnestly, that she might not now lose the path of duty, and be left to trust in her own wisdom, but that all obstacles might be removed, and her way made plain before her. Then, again, the cross and the crown appeared before her mind's eye, and she felt as if she would press that cross to her heart, and press onward until she should obtain the crown. A glow of enthusiasm filled all her soul, and she felt that she could almost welcome distress and affliction, if it brought with it such blessed consciousness that she belonged to the number of the children of God.

She opened her Bible, and read: "Trust in the

Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct thy paths." She turned over the leaves, and read that sublime Psalm, "God is a refuge for us, a very present help in time of trouble." Again she turned the leaves, and read: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and there is none on earth I desire beside Thee." Wherever she looked, the Word of God seemed glowing with the assurances of *security* to those who put their trust in God. In the New Testament she read: "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. . . . I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Strong in her God, she knelt again, and renewed her covenant to be His, in life or death, in sorrow or joy. She asked—she asked *nothing*—but to know, and to be enabled to do, the will of God. Blessed fragrance distilling from the bruised flower! Who but the Almighty could thus, by the instrumentality of affliction, subdue and humble the proud heart, and fill the heart that once hated and rebelled, with filial confidence and love.

But how is she to put the plan she has devised into execution? From where can the means to

travel be obtained? Now, she remembers that her dear father, the day before he died, had reminded her that it was quarter-day, for during the last four years he had been in the habit of placing in her hands a regular allowance to cover the expenses of her wardrobe, &c. He had, according to custom, placed a little roll in her hands on that day, which she had put in one corner of her writing desk without examining, and the troubles of the last few weeks had caused it to escape her recollection, as her purse was not yet empty. She went to get it, and upon unrolling it found fifty dollars. This was more than she had ever received at any one time; and she had on hand some thirty dollars, the savings of the past year, which she had reserved for a purpose far different from that to which she now intended to apply it. Thus, in the providence of God, were all her present wants met. In respect to clothing, she would not now buy anything; she could very well do without until — until — she should see her path more clearly; for, dear reader, Jeanie was not favored at this time with anything more than sufficient to show *present duty*. She saw sufficient to lead her steps in the new path, but when she should once have reached the old

brown house, she saw nothing more, she had no further plan.

After breakfast she communicated the contents of the letter to Hannah; avoiding, as a matter of course, all allusion to herself. Hannah was confounded, for she had always shared in the feelings of Mr. and Mrs. Morrison, that Edward would marry Jeanie, and all would remain as they had been.

"Of course, Hannah," said Jeanie, "you will stay here until Edward and his wife come on, but I wish to take a journey if I can find suitable company; and I will not wait until they arrive, for the season is growing late."

We pass over all Hannah's remonstrances and questions, and womanly doubts and fears. The conversation between them was interrupted by the entrance of Dr. Gray.

"Just who I want to see most of anybody," said Jeanie as she sprang to meet him with something of her old animation in her countenance.

"Well, well, indeed!" said the doctor good humoredly as he gave her a hearty shake of the hand. "How do you find yourself this morning, Miss Jeanie?"

"Well, doctor; but sit down, for I want to speak with you."

"What is it, Jeanie? What do you want with an old man like me?"

"Doctor, do you think me a very unreasonable girl?"

"Well, now, Jeanie, no. Why do you ask?"

"Because, doctor, I want—because I *must* have your sanction to what will appear to some persons a very unreasonable thing."

"What can it be, Jeanie?"

"You remember old John Mason. Six years ago my father took me, as you may perhaps recollect, to visit him and his wife. Since that time I have corresponded with them at their special request. I want to go and see them once more, and I want to go now. There is no reason why I should not, and I feel that the visit will be a great gratification to me."

"How long do you propose to stay, Jeanie?"

"I have scarcely thought of that. I have no plans."

"Well, Jeanie, I, for one, would like to have you go, that is, for a short visit; but it is a long way."

"About two hundred miles by stage, I have heard my father say."

"Too far for a young lady to go alone, Jeanie."

"Not necessarily, dear doctor; do not discourage me."

"Well, well; we'll see, we'll see. Of course you will wait until Edward returns?"

"I think not, doctor. There is no reason why I should not take advantage of this fine weather, and go immediately. Hannah will remain here, and the new Mrs. Morrison will feel more at her ease if I am gone. I may as well say, doctor, to you (extending her hands), I may as well say, that I do not wish to be here while the changes are going on that will go on. I could not bear it."

"Jeanie, what do you mean? This house is yours, and all that your dear father possessed on earth. Edward has here no claim—no right."

"You are mistaken, Doctor. Edward has a claim, he asserts a right, and he offers me a home *with him*, as long as I live. My dear father told me only the evening before he died, that Edward was his legal heir."

"You cannot convince me that your father did not make provision for you, Jeanie. Your mother would have insisted upon it if she had not known it was not already done."

"Nevertheless, doctor, you will find it all as I



say. Father had his plans. He *did* meditate making a provision for me, independent of Edward, but he delayed it too late. But we need not speak of this, doctor; I have sufficient for the present, and the future will take care of itself, or rather God will take care of it. I feel that he will. Only consent to this wish of mine, doctor, and afterwards we will consult about other things."

"You shall go, Jeanie, if you wish to. I will try to find company for you; when will you be ready?"

"By the first of next week, doctor."

"So soon, Jeanie?"

"The sooner the better; please excuse me a moment." She ran to her room and brought out her little purse.

"See, doctor, I have plenty of means; this dear father gave me the day before he died, and these are my savings."

"Humph! eighty dollars."

"Oh, there is plenty."

"Yes, for the present, and we shall see that the future is all right. But I am in haste now. Good morning."

Jeanie was not long in deciding what to do in relation to other things. The few articles of fur-

niture in her dear little room were her own. Those she would remove to Mrs. Hyde's, and ask permission to place them in her little chamber. Some of her books she must have with her; others she would put carefully in a box with some of those which belonged to her dear, dear mother, those which she had given her. The linen, and the plate, after a short struggle, she decided to leave where they were. If ever she needed them, probably Edward would be willing that she should have them; but now she felt that that time would never come. When she sent her little store of furniture to Mrs. Hyde's, on Friday, she ventured, with Hannah's approbation, to add to it the arm chair in which her dear mother had passed so many days of suffering, and which, after her death, her beloved father had constantly used. She truly felt that no one would prize it as she did; and it was, from old associations, almost sacred in her eyes.

From among her father's travelling trunks she selected the largest, in which she packed her clothing, and such books as she felt she must have with her. Going to the garden, she gathered an abundance of the ripened seeds of those flowers which she and her mother had loved to cultivate. With

a garden trowel, she removed from their hiding places a quantity of her favorite bulbs, with which the garden was well stocked, and from under her mother's window she procured a few roots of a white running rose, which her dear mother had especially loved. Why should she not add to the little store? She would rob no one, so from among the flowering shrubs she selected half a dozen or more young rose-bushes, taking care to leave plenty of the kinds which she took with her. They would please old John and his wife. In her dear mother's bedroom there was an antique vase of Bohemian ware that she would put in her trunk, beside the delicate one which her mother had given her long ago, in childhood. The shrubs she buried in the shade until Monday morning, and all else was ready before tea on Saturday night.

But there was one spot from which she must part, one little spot, where, not far apart, lay the ashes of those who had made life a blessing to her young heart, but whose love and tenderness could no more bless for her the days to come. She put on her bonnet, and throwing her shawl about her, took the path to the grave-yard. Clara's grave stood first, as she entered the sacred enclosure. She stood beside it. She re-called Clara, the beloved,

the lovely. She remembered how she, too, had been the child of affliction, and how patiently she had borne all. She blessed God for the sweet lesson of Clara's life and death; she was glad that the dear girl was safely housed from the tempests and storms of this mortal life; thanking God that Clara could suffer no more. Then she thought of Heaven, and of what her dear mother had said: "We shall all be there at last, Jeanie, all there together," and she felt that it would be so. How many of her dear ones awaited her in Heaven. Did they know how she was struggling on, wearily and solitary, in the path of life? Jesus knew it, and He would help her; she would keep close to Him and never—never wander from His ways again. She thanked God that *there*, at His right hand, was a place of rest. She stood by the graves of her parents. The tears fell now like rain, upon the red earth which was heaped above her father's breast, and on the soft green turf and bright-eyed pansies which covered the dust of her mother. An indescribable longing once more to see them, only *once more* to hear the sweet music of their kind voices, once more to feel on her head the pressure of her father's hand, once more to catch that loving look of her dear mother's soft eyes. Oh! earth, earth!

how poor wert thou in that hour; what hadst thou to offer in compensation for that unspeakable loss, the loss of parental love? Then, holy words of cheer, with which that departed mother had sought to fortify her heart for an hour of future bereavement, were recalled to her recollection. She remembered, too, her father's charge, to trust *always* in the goodness of God, and her heart was strengthened. Oh! how thankful was she that they had so sweetly finished their course; that they lived not, until the last cup of sorrow had been presented to her lips—that they could not suffer for her. It was all right, and if the time should come when her heart failed her, she could look to Christ, and as the dying Clara prayed her, “ask *Him* to fill her heart.” And now she must go. It was a gorgeous sunset. Jeanie thought she had never seen one like it, and as she gazed upon the glowing west, she could only think, “if this is earth, how glorious will Heaven be, where there is no sorrow, nor sighing, nor death.”

Jeanie was taking leave of all she had loved that night, she knew not when she would see them again. As she passed James Herbert's house, she could not but think how differently she might have been

situated had she listened to his urgent solicitations to become his wife.

Yes, indeed, thought Jeanie, a happy home in all things but one. She could but search her heart anew, and then once more she felt that she had done that which was right. Could she help contrasting Herbert with Edward for one moment? Would Herbert have taken just that course? No, it could not be. But she would not blame Edward; she knew not what circumstances might have arisen to affect his movements. She would not judge him hardly. For herself,

“She could not believe  
That she ever should grieve,  
That she ever should sorrow again.”

Certainly not as she had done. Her eyes were open now. She would cling to her Lord, and walking closely with Him find her peace in obedience to His will. Thus passed the Sabbath, and thus the morning previous to her departure. But when she went out under the shade of the old elms which her dear father had loved so well, her strength came near giving way. To her eyes, there was no such place as that dear home on the wide earth. Oh! it was hard to tear away from it.

"How the cords,  
Woven with every fibre of her heart,  
Complained, like delicate harp-strings, at a breath."

But she struggled bravely. Soon she had to part with the good Hannah.

"Miss Jeanie, can you not tell me how long you will be away? Master Edward will wish to know."

"Not now, Hannah; but you will hear from me. I shall write in a week or so."

"You know, Miss Jeanie, what I promised Mrs. Morrison before she died, that I would live with you as long as I lived. If you have a house of your own, Miss Jeanie, I am to go with you."

"Yes, good Hannah, if I ever have a house of my own, I shall not try to do without you. But you must do as well for the new Mrs. Morrison as you have done for me, if you stay until I have a home of my own."

"I'd a great sight rather it had a been you than her, Miss Jeanie, and poor Mr. Morrison and his wife, too, I'm thinking, would a e'n amost broke their hearts to think of your bein' used so."

"What do you mean, Hannah?"

"Oh, Miss Jeanie, you don't say nothing, but don't I see, it's just a breaking your heart, and it

kills me to see you takin' it all so patient like? You can't impose upon my old eyes."

"Well, well, Hannah, say nothing of that kind. Edward had a right to do as he thought best, you know, and we had no right to dictate to him. I am very glad he has married his cousin Adelaide, Hannah, for I think he has loved her a long time, and no doubt she loves him far better than I should have done."

"She loves him better than he deserves, I reckon," muttered Hannah, who usually took the liberty of expressing her mind pretty freely.

To Jeanie's surprise and delight, she found that she was to have Doctor Gray for a fellow-traveller. He found, he said, he could leave home for a couple of days, and he would accompany her part of the way. Nor would he permit Jeanie to thank him, for he sturdily said:

"If he had n't chosen to do it, he should n't have done it."

Jeanie was very cheerful. How many good people there are in the world, thought she, as she looked at the doctor's pleasant face. He was her dear father's trusted friend.

Twenty-four hours did the good man travel with her, and he too, as well as Hannah, had guessed

her secret. He made her promise to write to him very soon, and to look upon him as a father until some other one should supply his place in her confidence. To this she gladly assented, and promised to form no plan which he should not be apprized of at an early day. Then they parted, the good doctor placing her under the care of an acquaintance with whom he had met, and who was going within ten miles of the place toward which she was travelling.

It was late in the evening when the stage approached the place. Could she fail to remember what she had learned from Mrs. Morrison of her own mother's arrival at the same place, sick and broken-hearted, and with herself, a poor, feeble infant by her side? Would the old couple be glad to see her? She did not doubt this. But what should she do next? Of this, she would not think now. How sweet it seemed to trust in God, and how she wondered that she could have forgotten Him and wandered from Him so in days past. At length the coach stops at the public house, and the passengers dismounted. Jeanie requested to be driven to John Mason's house. Again they set out, and with a palpitating heart Jeanie sits alone in the darkness, waiting to reach the spot. "What would

her dear parents say if they knew what she was now doing?" she asked. And it was not long before she heard the response within, "They would approve it." And now the coach stops again, and with trembling limbs, and beating heart, Jeanie walks towards the door. It is opened, and old Mrs. Mason, tottering with age, and bearing a light in her hand, opens the door, and looks out into the darkness. The old dog barks furiously, and the old dame cries out:

"Who's there?"

Jeanie cannot speak for a moment, but she walks forward and takes the old lady by the hand.

"Who be you, and what do you want this time o' night?" said a voice from within.

By this time Jeanie could compose herself sufficiently to speak, and she said:

"It is me! Jeanie Morrison, Mrs. Mason."

The old lady uttered a cry of joy, which quickly brought John to the door.

"Oh, John! this is Miss Jinny herself come to see us."

"What! Jinny Morrison?"

"Yes, Jeanie, Mr. Mason. Are you glad to see me? I told you in the last letter I would come some time."

"Glad! why, I am that! How did you come? Aint the squire with ye?"

"No, Mrs. Mason; I came alone in the coach."

"Well, you must be tired, and hungry too. Sally, put the tea-kettle by, and make a cup of tea right quick."

"Seems to me your looking kinder pale like," said John; "like enough you haint been well, though."

"I have been pretty well, sir; how are you and Mrs. Mason?"

"Oh, tol'ble, tol'ble, for old folks; we have a time with the rheumatis once in awhile. How's the squire now—has the rheumatis once in awhile, don't he?"

"No, Mr. Mason, he's never sick now—" Jeanie burst into tears.

"He aint goné, Miss Jinny, is he?" asked the old woman, softly, approaching Jeanie as she spoke.

Jeanie struggled a moment, and then said:

"Yes, my good friends, he's gone home." Again she wept, and they wept with her, and John said:

"Well, he's got the start of us, old woman; but I reckon we'll be jogging arter, before long!"

"That we shall, Joan! Oh, he was one of the blessedest men I ever set eyes on."

"How did he go off, Jinny?"

"God called him in his sleep, Mr. Mason. I went to his room in the morning, and he lay as if asleep—and asleep he was, indeed, 'asleep in Jesus.'"

"It's my 'pinion," said John, "that there aint many that's any more ready than he was."

"I warrant ye, Jinny, his lamp was all trimmed and burnin', was n't it?"

"Oh! yes, yes! he was ready; some day I will tell you all about it."

Jeanie was glad of the dish of tea, and the bread and butter which Sally set before her, and then asked permission to lie down. The strength which had borne her up for the last week seemed about to desert her, and she sorely needed rest.

Next morning she rose somewhat refreshed and rested, and after breakfast said to the old people:

"I am going to stay with you one week, Mr. and Mrs. Mason, and then I will tell you what I wish to do. Will you keep me so long, Mr. Mason?"

"Jist as long as we live, Jinny, and welcome."

"Thank you, thank you, my good friends I am very glad of the opportunity to see you."

During the day she communicated all to them about Mr. Morrison's family and circumstances, which she thought they would like to know, including Edward's marriage and establishment in Laurelton. "So, my good friends, I thought I would just come and see you awhile, and see if I could do anything to make you happy."

"You're a good creetur, Jinny, to think of us old folks; and I've always said it, too."

"That he has, Jinny. It would make you laugh, I dare say, to know how he does take on about you to old Judge McConnell, when he comes up here. The judge used to know your father, you know."

"No, I did not, Mrs. Mason. Does Judge McConnell live here?"

"No; he lives over in t'other village. The old man allers shows him all the letters we git from you, and I reckon he'd be powerful glad to see you, too."

Again did Jeanie make a pilgrimage to that peaceful graveyard, and again she wept, not so much for the loss of the mother she had never known, as for her whose hand had trained her, and for him who stood beside her when she once before visited that consecrated spot.

This little hamlet seemed a lonely place to Jeanie,

nie, though she loved the old couple, and would gladly have done anything to make them happy. But life itself seemed dreary and lonely to her now. She longed for a friend once more; for one to whom she might, as of old, confide all her heart. Oh! could she live on—so lonely! Again she tried to trust in God; but mind and body were weary, while she thought faith alone was weak. Why, oh! why had she been called to pass through these deep waters, when so many passed life securely, and endured not a tithe of the sorrows that pressed upon her. Thus, unconsciously, she was distrusting again the goodness of her God; and her enemy knew well how to take advantage of the opportunity to enter her unguarded heart.

## Chapter Twenty-Fourth.

"I long to lay my painful head,  
And aching heart beneath the soil;  
To slumber on that dreamless bed,  
From all my toil.

For misery stole me at my birth,  
And cast me helpless on the wild;  
I perish! Oh! my mother earth,  
Take home thy child!"

"WHEN the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" How strange it appears that Christians seem willing to trust their *eternal interests* in the hands of a Being to whom they hesitate to confide those which are merely present and temporal. The truth is, there is far less of that real confidence in God in the minds of even professing Christians than we are in the habit of supposing. Of Heaven and its real blessedness, few have any just conception; and even the most sublime and elevated idea of the most favored minds fall infinitely below the real truth. If we were more really familiar with the joys of Heaven, we should feel more safe and comfortable, to say the very least, in respect to our earthly circumstances.

Certainly, He who is to make provision for the wants of an immortal spirit in its progress through the eternal ages, may be trusted with the care of our preparatory state. He, to whose love we owe the "heavenly inheritance," will not fail to secure all necessary things to meet the exigencies of the present hour.

Jeanie was again overwhelmed with perplexity and doubt. She had come to the house of John Mason with a feeling that there she was to find a home. But the strength that had borne her up, the excitement of mind that she had supposed originated simply in the effort to do her duty, had now passed away, and she began to doubt in relation to the past; to feel dissatisfied with the present, and to fear and tremble for the future. She had, without being exactly aware of it, congratulated herself on her own strength of mind in bearing up under such an accumulation of trials; and her gracious Father in Heaven would show her that the strength came not from her own heart, but from above; so she was for a season permitted to lean on her own strength, and see how really weak and dependent she yet was.

Wave after wave, billow after billow, rolled once  
over the heart of the poor desolate girl.



Turn whither she would, she found no rest, no repose of soul. If she tried to pray, she could only utter broken, disconnected sentences, half formed petitions for a help which she did not expect or hope to receive. Doubts whether she had ever known the love of God not only entered her heart, but seemed to take possession there, banishing peace and hope. Never had she seen such revelations of the sinfulness of her own heart, and she could not think that God would leave her thus, desolate and alone, if he had ever loved her. Then came hard and forbidding views of the character of God, which she would not cherish, and yet which she could not altogether banish from her mind. The Sabbath came, and she went with John Mason to the place of worship. The place looked rough and uninviting, and the preacher was a plain, austere looking man, from whom one would expect to hear of the terrors of Sinai, and not of Calvary or Christ. His text was: "How many are my transgressions and my sins;" and the sermon was an attempt to show the vast number of ways in which we sin against God, in thought, word and deed. As Jeanie listened, she was appalled. Her own conscience told her all was just as he said; there were in her own heart at times, all those rebellious

and wandering thoughts; all that reluctance to perform duty; all that unwillingness to take up the cross, and to leave Christ to arrange the details of her future life according to his infinite wisdom, which he described and characterized as so many acts of rebellion against the rightful sovereign of the universe. How, then, could a sinner hope to stand before a holy God? Even the most watchful, daily and hourly offend; what then shall they do who never watch? who never set themselves in earnest to keep the law of God? He closed his sermon by the following words:

"No time for mirth or trifling here,  
For worldly hope or worldly fear,  
Or vain, vexatious care,  
If now the Judge is at the door,  
And all mankind must stand before  
The inexorable bar."

No word of Christ or his cross was repeated to cheer the broken-hearted but penitent one; and poor Jeanie's mind, in its present condition, was little fitted to supply the want, for which the stranger preacher failed to provide. Oh! how her poor heart bled. How in her weakness she shrunk from life; how she longed for rest—for death. Then starting, she remembered that this was also

sin—rebellion against God, and in her agony she prayed that God would have mercy on her and send her some relief; it mattered little to her what, only that the burden on her poor heart might be lifted; that for an hour she might again find peace, and recover strength for the conflict of life. There seemed now to be but one place for her, and telling Sally in what direction she was going, she went up to the old grave-yard, and sat down beside her mother's grave. Then she recalled all she knew of her own and her dear mother's history. How full of strange and unknown trouble must *her* life have been; and sweet Clara, and Mrs. Hyde, and so many others of whom she knew, how had they all suffered; and she, too, must suffer on. Oh! that she could hope that her end, like theirs, would be peace; but she could not—she could not be a child of God and yet have such a mountain upon her soul. Had there been one to whom she could turn, she felt that she could have borne all; but there was not one. Why did God thus permit her to be crushed by a weight of affliction, just although it was? It must be that thus God would punish not only her past departures from duty, but her presumption in supposing that, sinner as she was, she had any right to hope for peace or comfort on earth, or even a

home in Heaven at last. What wonder that with this, came hard thoughts of God, and she cried out in bitterness of spirit: "My punishment is greater than I can bear!" Conscience then said: Bear it you must; there is no alternative, no hope. You are in the power of one who is *Almighty*, from whom you cannot escape; and when her heart assented to this partial view of God, and of herself, and in bitterness she wished she had never been born, doubtless there was rejoicing through the ranks of those malignant spirits who delight in human woe, and who, if they cannot hinder the Christian's final salvation, do all they can to obstruct the path, and strew the way of life with thorns. Oh! Jeanie, Jeanie, didst thou need to learn again the "first principles of the oracles of God!" Oh! the forbearance of thy Saviour and ours, that he condescends to teach us again and again those salutary lessons of our constant dependence upon Him, not only for ultimate salvation, but for *present grace*.

It was almost sunset when she returned to the house. Old John met her at the door.

"I was beginnin' to get oneasy about you, and just thinkin' maybe, I'd better go arter ye. It's a

mighty lonesome place up yonder for such a young thing as you, Miss Jinny."

"Its lonely everywhere for me now, Mr. Mason."

"The Lord's laid his hand heavy on ye, child; 't aint many on us old folks as has seen sich troubles as you have; but hold on to Christ, Miss Jinny."

"*Hold on to Christ!*" how like an electric spark those words thrilled her soul. Ah! there—there was her trouble. Jeanie had lost her hold on the Saviour.

"Oh! Mr. Mason," said Jeanie, "I feel distressed when I think what a great sinner I am."

"Christ is a great Saviour, Miss Jinny," said old John, meekly; "'t aint no sort o' use for us ever to think o' payin' up our debt; we must let Christ do it."

Jeanie's heart warmed as the old man spoke to her.

"I did n't like it this mornin' in meetin', when the minister told us all about what sinners we are, and never said a single mite about Christ, Him that's undertaken to save us."

"But all he said was *true*, Mr. Mason," said Jeanie.

"Yes, and a sight he did n't say. To my notion,

if all the folks in a town is a starvin', and the Governor sends a man to bring us something to eat, 't aint of no account at all to us how hungry we be if he don't show us where we can git help."

Ah! this was the gospel. This what Jeanie wanted; some one to lead her back to her Saviour, to show her her dependence upon Him, to renew her trust in Him.

"But, Mr. Mason, I have had many doubts of late whether Christ is *my* Saviour."

"Are they good, honest doubts, Miss Jinny? I used to be troubled a mighty sight with them sort o' things, but all at once the Lord put it into my heart to pray, 'Deliver me from evil;' and now 't aint often they come a-nigh me. You see, Miss Jinny, the devil can't stand prayer; and I'd advise you to try your doubts the same way. 'T won't do any harm, any way."

"Sometimes, Mr. Mason, my heart is so cold and dead that I cannot pray, and I cannot love."

"I'm a poor, onlarnt man, Miss Jinny; but I know there's times when its mighty cloudy, and the sun aint seen, maybe, for a day or two. But I reckon it shines, arter all; so it is with Christians. God loves them all the same, whether they feel it or not, I reckon."

Thus assisted, Jeanie's thoughts took a more cheerful turn. She saw where she had failed, and how she had leaned on her own strength and wisdom; and when at bedtime she retired to the little room where so many years before her mother had struggled in darkness and doubt, and where she had been enabled to rejoice in confident hope of the fulfilment of the promise of God, she too found grace to put her trust in Him. Again, as she read the Word of God, it seemed full of rich and blessed meaning. Sweet and ample were the promises, and full of consolation to her mourning heart. Earnestly she prayed for divine forgiveness, and for help to resist temptation. Next morning, while old Mrs. Mason sat by the fire smoking her pipe, she said to her:

"Miss Jinny, my old man told me what you and him were talking of last night, and I thought I'd tell you what your mother said the very night she died. She seemed as if she had been wonderful tried about leavin' her baby—poor thing; but she come out clear after all. She said: 'Now I begin to understand what John meant (that was your father, I suppose), now I begin to understand what John meant when he said, "Be careful for nothing; but in all things, by prayer and supplication, with

thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Now I can see how I can leave my baby.' That text has done me a sight of good since then, Miss Jinny; and maybe it'll do you good too."

And it did do Jeanie good. From that time she treasured it as one of the choicest of those blessed words which the Holy Ghost has recorded for the encouragement of our faith.

And now it was time for Jeanie to decide on something for the future. Mrs. Mason in her day had been an uncommonly good housekeeper, but in her childless old age she was dependent upon Sally, a pauper girl, for all the comforts of the house. Sally, though full of the very best intentions, had little skill in housewifery, and still less of that womanly tact by means of which everything is done to the best possible advantage for the comfort of the family. Mrs. Mason mourned daily over the spoiled dishes which appeared on the table, and the untidy rooms which Sally could not learn how to arrange. It seemed to Jeanie, that if she were to spend a few months there, Sally would improve under her instructions, and the place would be more pleasant to Mr. and Mrs. Mason. But she must have something more to occupy her time. Perhaps

she could get a few scholars, and Mr. Mason, she was sure, would let her have an unoccupied room at the back side of the house for a school-room. So she unfolded her plan to the old people, who were in raptures at the thought of having Jeanie with them for a whole winter. Jeanie then wrote to Dr. Gray, telling him that she had concluded to spend the winter with her old friends.

And now the little bed-room was given up to her exclusively—that little room where her dear mother died, and where she slept, all unconscious of her loss, seventeen years before. Her books were unpacked, and everything put in order. Sally, too, had a share of her assistance, and she was rewarded for all her pains by the increased comfort and neatness of the table. She took Mrs. Mason's caps in hand, too, and the good old lady once more rejoiced in muslin of a snowy whiteness. Old John's coat was duly brushed, and his hair combed by no hands but her own. The cobwebs were forced to leave the walls, and the corners relieved of the dust and insects which had collected in such out-of-the-way places. At Jeanie's suggestion, John purchased some neat white muslin for the windows; and Jeanie herself cushioned the old arm chairs of the aged pair with a dark green chintz. The hearth was kept

bright and clean, and the oak floor duly secured and polished by the same Sally who, but a little time before, had seemed insensible to the presence of dust. And now Jeanie insisted that the Bible, which they had received through the thoughtful kindness of her dear father, should be brought out for daily use. It was laid on the oaken stand in the corner of the room, beside which stood the old Bohemian vase, filled with wild flowers, so long as the frost spared them, and after that with bright bunches of berries from the forest, twigs of evergreen and gay colored leaves.

Jeanie's little school-room, too, was nicely but simply fitted up, and soon filled to overflowing with pupils, some of them young men of Jeanie's own age. Here she patiently worked through the day, and then returned to the old people, assisted Sally to prepare their tea, tidied up the room, and swept the hearth after old John had replenished it with a huge pile of logs. Then she sought her little chamber for an hour, and afterwards returned with a book, in reading of which, and in conversation, the evening hours passed rapidly away. Did Jeanie find herself happy here? Yes, truly! and for the reason that she made others happy. The children loved her, and their parents loved her for their children's

sakes, and for the sorrows she had borne; for her history was well known among them.

True, there came dark and heavy hours when the past would rise up before her, and her heart yearned for those that the grave had taken to its long slumbers; but for the most part she had learned the lesson of cheerful submission to the Divine will, and an unfaltering trust in the Divine wisdom and goodness; and if she was not always gay and light-hearted, she possessed in her inmost soul a deep and abiding peace which nothing could take from her. Thus, in the good Providence of God, she was taken from the lap of refinement, and from intercourse with the cultivated and the loved, to learn those Christian virtues and graces, and to take those higher lessons in the school of Christ, which so few care to learn; lessons which, however they may unfit the soul for the scenes of worldly pleasure and gaiety, will be found of exceeding great value when Jeanie shall be

"Joined forever with the shining band  
Gathered to heaven's own wreath from every land,  
In perfect rest."

## Chapter Twenty-Fifth.

"There is a day of sunny rest,  
For every dark and troubled night,  
And grief may bide an evening guest,  
But joy shall come with morning light."

BRYANT.

DEAR reader, some three years have passed since we saw Jeanie, and she is still a tenant of the old brown house. Not that she begins to look upon that little obscure hamlet as her future home, not that she has lost her interest in Laurelton or all that it contains, or feels no longing once more to tread the soft turf beneath those venerable elms, where her childhood was spent. But she is not able now to get away. From spring to autumn, and again from autumn to spring, she thinks she will go, at least for a few weeks, but she cannot find the opportunity. She continues her little school, receiving a sufficient income for the supply of her own wants, and to make her a fountain from whence streams of gladness flow on all sides. Jeanie has become the light of the eyes to old

John and his wife, who are fast becoming children again. Mrs. Mason has for some months been confined to her bed by a stroke of paralysis, and she almost thinks she could not live without Jeanie's attention and care. Old John, too, is evidently in dotage, but, next to Christ and his salvation, Miss Jinny is the theme of his garrulous tongue from morning till night. And many an eager listener did he find among old and young. "Our Jinny's school," as the old gentleman loved to call it, was doing great things for the neighboring children. Jeanie received pupils without distinction of age or sex, and zealously labored for the good of all.

The white roses have climbed to the roof of the rustic porch, and in their season scatter the snowy petals far and wide. Not one of Jeanie's little pets, which once diffused their fragrance and shed their beauty in the garden at Laurelton, has died, and many others have been added to Jeanie's stock from the garden of Judge MacConnell, and from other gardens where Jeanie sometimes passes a pleasant hour, ever a welcome guest. This summer old John's garden is a perfect wonder of beauty, and fragrance, and bloom, and the old gentleman never tires of conducting his neighbors through it, expatiating on its beauties, and always conclud-

ing his remarks with the observation that "Miss Jinny is the wonderfulest creature for flowers that ever he did see. Everything seemed to like to grow for her, and no wonder."

Jeanie herself is somewhat changed. For the past two years she has suffered occasional attacks of rheumatism, not severe or particularly alarming, but sufficient to enfeeble her somewhat. She has kept up a constant correspondence with Dr Gray, and with Mrs. Morrison, for Edward wrote often to her, and insisted upon his wife's doing the same, and Adelaide learned at an early day that Edward's will, was law in the house. That, however, which was at first undertaken somewhat reluctantly, was continued for her own gratification; for Mrs. Morrison, though a gay, fashionable woman, soon felt herself strangely attracted toward Jeanie, and the interest soon became a mutual one. Old Mr. and Mrs. Mason always went to rest at an early hour, and then Jeanie retired to her own room, not to weep over the past, or to dream dreams about the future; but to read and to think. Books were the one luxury which she could not deny herself, and she was far from feeling under obligation to restrain those impulses. But she chose judiciously and carefully whatever she read, and, unlike the

Jeanie of earlier times, made all she read her own, and consecrated all to the service of God. Without a corroding care, without a restless solicitude for what should be on the morrow, and with a cheerful trust in God, and a consciousness that He approved of her, and regarded her with a father's love, she was at rest. She had been under an influence

"Which sheds over Memory only repose,  
And takes from it only regret"

Thus with a warm and loving heart, and a mind active and worthily employed, with a will which had ceased to rebel at the will of God, she had peace, pure, abundant, overflowing peace, and her life there in that secluded hamlet was like that of a cool and quiet stream, half concealed from view, but shedding greenness and beauty along its lowly way.

It is evening. A wanderer from a distant land stands under that lowly vine-covered porch. At the door he pauses and uncovers his head, as a voice from within falls upon his ear, and thrills his heart with memories of other days. That voice is Jeanie's, and she is reading to the old people that inimitable psalm, the twenty-third. He stands almost breathless, until the reading ceases, and then

as he is about to enter, he is prevented by the voice of prayer, and the old man pours forth his petitions and supplications at the throne of grace. He asks as if he knew that he should not be denied; he gives thanks as one who knows that he has cause for thankfulness; he prays that if it be the will of God, their "blessing and the joy of their hearts" may not be taken from them until they shall be called home, and renders thanks for the treasure God has given them in their old age.

James Herbert, for it was he who stands in the open door, thinks he has never heard prayer like that before.

We shall not attempt to describe the meeting or the interview that followed. Suffice it to say that Herbert had come prepared to urge Jeanie to return to Laurelton and become his wife. All the arguments which he could urge were urged, and it seemed almost impossible that Jeanie could now resist the eloquence which offered to her acceptance a home, and the warmest affections of a constant heart.

"James Herbert, I know you will think me a strange being, but while my heart is deeply touched by your constant and true-hearted affection, still I cannot respond to it in the manner which you de-



sire. The same reasons which made me feel under obligation years ago to decline it, are still in operation. Many a time since then have I reviewed those reasons under various circumstances, and I never have I felt that I was then wrong, and I feel that the union you desire is neither best for you nor me."

"Jeanie, have you then thought often of that decision?"

"Yes, Mr. Herbert, I have thought often of that interview, and that decision. I thought of it in one hour of anguish and sorrow, such as you have never known. When I was destitute, and lonely, and friendless, then I thought of you and of the home you offered me, with grateful affection; still, with the feeling that I had done right."

"Still, Jeanie, I tell you as I told you then. I think you are under a delusion; none, or scarcely none think as you do on that subject, and it seems hard that you should sacrifice the happiness of a lifetime to a scruple of that kind. Our reason was given us to use, Jeanie."

"Ah, James, I have been severely punished for listening simply to reason. I honestly and really believe that our Heavenly Father will guide and direct all those who seek to glorify Him and obey

His will; and that they shall not mistake the path of duty. Once I ventured to choose for myself, and disregard the remonstrances of conscience, and bitterly I repented my folly; and now you must leave me a peaceful conscience, Mr. Herbert, and not seduce me from what I believe to be my duty."

"Listen to me, Jeanie, while I tell you a tale which I heard at Laurelton. A young lady who refused to marry a man who loved her because he was not a Christian, bestowed her affection on one who called himself a Christian. In the sequel, this exemplary Christian marries another, and settles down comfortably in the pleasant home that (if there is such a thing as right in the universe) of right belonged to the deserted one, who, a lonely exile in a retired spot, spends her young life in caring for an aged pair, and earns her daily bread by daily toil."

"Oh, no! not so, Mr. Herbert. Say rather that the young girl learned to love him in a degree for the sake of those who had always wished to see her his wife."

"You have unbounded charity, Jeanie, far more than I; but you cannot persuade me that Edward Morrison and his family are not now living in the place which should have been your own, nor that

I do not see you here in this out-of-the-way place laboring for your daily bread."

"Edward is my father's legal heir. My dear father told me so, and designed to make some provision for me independent of him; but, Mr. Herbert, I do not know a personal want. I am not dependent, at least I do not feel dependent, for my income is sufficient to meet all my necessities."

"And what, Jeanie, will you do when this time is past—a change will come sooner or later—what then?"

"I know not!—God knows. But Edward's house is open to me. Mrs. Morrison continually urges me to make my home with them. I shall yet hope to go."

"Jeanie, did I *read wrong* when I read not many days ago the reasons why Edward did not marry you? 'Adelaide,' he said, 'was a magnificent woman, far more suitable for his wife than Jeanie.' He admitted that he had intended to marry you; that he had told Mr. and Mrs. Morrison of his wish; and he excused himself for not doing it from the fact that they were dead, and would not feel the disappointment. Jeanie, can you forgive him this wrong? can you overlook it?"

"Yes, Mr. Herbert, if it may be called a wrong

I can forgive it, as I hope to be forgiven; but I think it would have been a far greater wrong, if he had married without loving me."

"Jeanie, Jeanie, you are a strange girl; there must be something in this religion of yours—something that does not belong to the maxims and principles of this world."

"It is, Mr. Herbert; and for yourself, you must try it. There is in it a sure remedy for all the sorrows and trials of this life."

"Then the old alchemists were not altogether wrong, Jeanie. There is really that philosopher's stone which turns everything to gold."

"Just so, Mr. Herbert; and I stand here to-night the proof of it. You have known me—the unsatisfied, the restless, the disappointed, the suffering, and the anxious; but look on me now, and see if you do not *know* that I am at rest—at peace. It may be that, in the eyes of the world, in your eyes, James, I have around me few of the elements of happiness; but I am happy—I have nothing more to desire, except entire conformity to the law of God."

"Jeanie, if you are deluded, God knows I would give all I possess to share your delusion—to imagine at least that I am certain of something—if no thing more!"

"Look up to those heavens, James Herbert, and own that there is a God! *Be certain* that an Almighty One does exist, not only the Creator of the universe around, but your Creator and your Lord. James! if you will take this little Bible of mine, and if for no other reason, for my sake you will read it seriously, you *will* know that this God is good, and that He will make His creatures happy if they will follow His directions and submit to His will. James Herbert! when will my ceaseless prayers in your behalf be heard and answered?"

"You pray for me, Jeanie?"

"Yes, James, always, except in those miserable hours when I could only utter broken petitions on my own account; in short, when I had myself no faith in my Father's goodness."

"I thank you, Jeanie. It may be that those prayers will be the means of saving me yet. Little do you dream how often the remembrance of you has come between me and—danger."

"Oh, James! go home to Laurelton and give your most earnest, most deliberate attention to these subjects. I think I shall see you a Christian yet—in a happy home."

"Will you share that home, Jeanie?"

Jeanie shook her head.

"Herbert, you must forget me. For the present my post is here. Do not seek to make me dissatisfied or uneasy. You must no longer think of me, or delay forming those connections which you are so well calculated to enjoy yourself, and make a blessing to others."

"Jeanie Morrison! if I am ever anything but a wreck—if life ever becomes anything worth having, or others are made happy through me—it will be to you and to those prayers of yours that it will be owing."

"It will be owing to the grace of God, Mr. Herbert. He will not 'give His glory to another.' May it ever be far from me to seek to rob Him of His rightful praise."

## Chapter Twenty-Six.

FOUR years have passed since last we saw the inside of the old brown house; and as we enter we shall see that Time has made changes within its lowly walls. The old couple have been called to their long home. They were lovely and loving in life, and in their death not separated long. The leaves of the white roses are falling like snow-flakes on every side, and the air is laden with the perfume of flowers. Within, things are but little changed. The white muslin curtains still wave in the pleasant evening breeze. The oak floor is still polished and spotless, as of old. Yonder, in the accustomed corner, is the old oaken stand, covered with its snowy napkin; and there, too, the Bible, the beautiful Bible, which has for twelve years been a treasured thing beneath that roof, is laid. Beside it stands that quaint old vase, filled with the sweetest, choicest flowers. But where is Jeanie? Yonder, half reclining on the settee. Her complexion

is sallow; her eyes bear the traces of suffering; her form is shrunken and bowed, and for four months she has not been able to stand upright, or unassisted walk across the room. She, whose light foot was always ready to wait on helpless age, has now a long time been dependent on the care and kindness of strangers! Strangers, I should not say; for our old acquaintance, Sally, had not spent six years under Jeanie's loving tuition in vain, and never mother was more carefully tended by child than is Jeanie in her suffering and helplessness by the once ignorant and unpromising pauper-girl.

A travelling carriage stops at the door, and a gray-headed, venerable man, with a bland, good-humored countenance, assists a bustling, important personage, of some fifty years, to alight.

It is our old friend Hannah, and the good Dr. Gray. Time has certainly dealt lightly with our friends; for, save a little more of silver with our heads, they seem no older than when they parted with Jeanie almost seven years ago at Laurelton. How little they thought that parting would be for so long.

They have come for Jeanie. We will leave the reader to imagine all the questions and answers, all the eager inquiries about the loved ones in that

dear old town from which Jeanie has been so long absent. How her heart beats with joy at the thought of meeting them all, and meeting them too, without the burden of neglected duty upon her soul. She is not needed now, at the "old brown house," and though she returns empty handed to the home of her childhood, she does not fear that she shall be a burden to those she loves. The pride which cannot bear dependence, when dependence is the will of God, is not more beautiful or more like the Christian temper, than the same dark passion, when it lifts the scornful head and demands the homage of all around.

Sally and her husband are delighted to see the guests, and not a little pleased that dear Miss Jeanie's friends are such very fine people, and come in such elegant style to take her to her old home; but they do not want to spare her. All they have they would freely and gladly share with her through life. The neighbors, too, are not willing that Miss Jeanie should be taken from them, but Dr. Gray and Hannah tell them they have had her long enough, and she must go home now; and the doctor adds significantly, that it "will be some time before she slips away for a short visit again. They shall keep an eye on her now."

They are six days making the journey, for they must travel slowly on account of the invalid, Jeanie. Dr. Gray asserts confidently that there is a remedy for the shrunken limbs; and that when once recovered with proper care, Jeanie's old enemy will scarcely trouble her at all. He scolds some too, about overwork and all that, but he very well knows that he has from Jeanie's childhood, expected an affliction of this kind, although he never told her so.

They mount the hill, and are now in sight of Laurelton. How Jeanie remembers well the time, twelve years before, when she returned with her dear father to her home. What a lifetime had she passed since then; how full of deep experience; sometimes dark and mournful, and how often trying, but how merciful, all merciful does it seem now. They pass the burial ground, and Jeanie's eye rests fondly on it. There lies her loved ones, not only those she left sleeping so sweetly when last she was there, but others that were dear to her Mrs. Gray, Mrs. Hyde, and Mr. Parsons, the good old pastor. Jeanie thinks she shall soon join that company of dear ones, where, though they sleep peacefully,

"None have saluted—none have replied

Jeanie is mistaken; the Master has not called her yet. The instrument is but fitted to the Master's use, and our Jeanie is to be a messenger of grace and love in her unobtrusive way to many, many hearts in your beautiful town, before she is summoned hence. Not in vain, to many a sinning, sorrowing soul; not in vain to the church of God; not in vain to many a lovely home, have been these years of the DISCIPLINE OF LIFE, these years of tuition in the school of Christ.

Edward looks much older than when she saw him last, but his strong, hearty grasp of the hand, so different from the light pressure of olden time makes Jeanie's heart glad. He assists the good doctor to bear her carefully within the house, and seems to feel that she is sadly changed since last he saw her.

Adelaide receives her with all the warm overflowing affection of a sister. Jeanie, composed and still, but with a heart full of gushing emotions, looks round on each well-remembered spot, and feels *at home*.

And now, when she is a little rested, she asks for the children, those little ones of whom she has heard so much from the mother, but whom she has never seen. That bold boy is Edward, and his

gentle, bashful sister, Addie, but the wee thing in its mother's arms is called *Jeanie*.

Jeanie cannot see many friends to-night, at least, so Dr. Gray says; but there is one who will not be refused. One year ago a bride was brought home to James Herbert's house. Jeanie has heard much of her sweetness, her gentleness, and of the happiness of her husband, now with his young wife numbered among the children of God.

Jeanie was taken to her old room to sleep that night, and there unchanged, as if she had been absent but for a night, was each familiar thing. Hannah had, with Mr. and Mrs. Morrison's approbation, carefully replaced the furniture, unpacked the books, and restored everything to its wonted order before she and the doctor set out to bring Jeanie again to Laurelton. But as for Hannah, this arrangement was only temporary; she had a plan in her heart that she would unfold in its proper place. Its time was not yet come.

Many memories clustered around Jeanie's heart that night; memories sweet, and tender, and grateful, but not sad. The language of her heart is: "Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life."

And now, as the weeks pass away, Jeanie's

health gradually improved, and Hannah makes known first to Edward, and then to Jeanie, her long-cherished plans.

She has an orphan nephew and niece, for whom she wishes to provide a home. She wants to appropriate the savings of her past life to the purchase of Mrs. Hyde's cottage, where she may live with them and Jeanie. She reminds them that she promised the first Mrs. Morrison that she would live with Jeanie.

This plan is thought about and talked about for a week or two, and then Edward said one day :

"Jeanie, there was a time, when if I asked you a question, I was sure to know precisely your mind when you gave me your answer. Can I be equally sure of it now?"

"Certainly," was Jeanie's reply.

"Then tell me, Jeanie, how this plan of Hannah's strikes your mind."

"For the most part pleasantly, Edward."

"Both Adelaide and myself wish you to feel perfectly and in all respects at home here, Jeanie; and we will do all we can to make you happy. But you are young Jeanie, and if your health should be restored, as there is room to hope and expect it may be, you may be happier on the whole to have

a home of your own, over which Hannah shall preside, if so I wish you frankly to tell me."

"I can see, Edward, how it may be best that I should gratify Hannah; she is old, and feels unable to work much, and it is not strange that she wishes to provide a home and suitable care and training for her young relations. She is not willing to part with me, nor can I ask it of her. Perhaps this will be the best course on the whole."

"Then, Jeanie, you must all spend this year with us, and after that we will consent to part with you, if you think it best."

So the matter rested. Hannah, especially, seemed satisfied to her heart's content and spared no pains in fitting a young girl whom Mrs. Morrison had taken into the family, to succeed to her place as house-keeper when she should leave the house.

Meantime, a most pleasant and delightful union sprang into existence between the families of James Herbert and Edward Morrison. Jeanie was the common bond of union between them, and she scarcely knew which she most admired and loved; the high-bred and elegant Mrs. Morrison, who was constantly becoming more and more attractive as her heart opened itself to the influences of the spirit

of God, or the winning and artless gracefulness and Christian simplicity of Mrs. Herbert.

"You do not know what I owe to Jeanie, Mr. Morrison," said Mr. Herbert one day. "If you wish to do me the greatest favor imaginable, you will permit me to share this enterprise with you."

Edward did not refuse, and the two friends planned and worked in concert, for the benefit of one who did not suspect the existence of any scheme relative to herself, or her future comfort.

A few rods from the old place where Edward Morrison lived, on a bit of ground which had belonged to Mr. Morrison, a small but convenient and beautiful cottage was built. Nothing that could promote comfort, or gratify the taste, or please the eye, was wanting. In the grounds all the most beautiful shrubs and plants that could be procured were tastefully arranged, and the little garden stocked with the choicest fruit. All the furniture and decorations within, were in harmony with the chaste and simple elegance of the exterior. To this spot, when all was finished, was Jeanie invited and duly installed its rightful mistress. Tears of grateful pleasure swam in her eyes as she received from Edward a paper properly executed,

securing to her a yearly income for life, amply sufficient for the supply of all her wants.

"Do not thank me, Jeanie, it is but simple justice; it is no more than my uncle would have done had he lived to carry out his plans. This cottage is yours, to be used and disposed of as you may wish. The pleasure of preparing it for you has been equally shared by Herbert and myself, and we wish you to accept it as an expression of our sincerest regard. The in-door arrangements were all planned and executed by the ladies. In all that we have done, we have acted by their suggestion."

Hannah and her young relations were in their element. The tea-table was spread, for the two families must be Jeanie's guests that day. And now appeared on the table the beautiful linen, and the rich old-fashioned plate, to the sight of which Jeanie was accustomed in her childhood, and as she looked around, she saw that everything valuable or desirable in her old home, had with thoughtful kindness been transferred to the new one. Jeanie wondered how those considerate friends could adapt everything to her tastes, and do everything just as she would have chosen to do it herself. And now Jeanie is at home. She has a tolerable degree of health, she has books, and friends, and flowers, and



leisure to enjoy them all. But it is not her outward blessings that can promote her future happiness; another with an unsanctified heart would find a thousand causes of vexation and annoyance in the most favored earthly lot. Jeanie is still undergoing the "Discipline of Life," and the trial of prosperity is not less than that of adversity, however it may seem to the eye of the mere looker on.

Jeanie is not perfect now. She does not claim to be. The cross is yet with her. She has not reached the crown. She has gained many victories over self and unbelief, and the sin that yet discovers itself to her watchful eye; but the struggle is not over. She has learned too much of herself to

———"count the victory won,  
Or lay her armor down."

But her conflicts are light now, compared with what they once were, for the reason that she has not only learned her own weakness, but the strength of Him on whom alone in child-like confidence her heart relies.

## Chapter Twenty-Seventh.

"Then, in Life's goblet, freely press  
The leaves, which give it bitterness!  
Nor prize the colored waters less;  
For in thy darkness and distress,  
New light and strength they give."

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."

So thought Jeanie Morrison, as on her thirty-fifth birthday she cast her glance backward and recalled all the cherished memories of early days, and the reminiscences of later years. She had reached a point in her life's history when she could look back calmly and dispassionately, and trace the influence upon her own character and heart of the varied and changeable "Discipline of Life." Already, from that moral elevation upon which she stood in this hour of thought, the trials and sorrows which she had once thought hard to bear, were lost in a shadowy veil like that which, in our bright summer days, sometimes settles around the horizon, softening the harsh outline of the dark forest and rugged rock, and enveloping all the landscape in a dreamy haze.

She smiled as she remembered the disquiet and

unrest which had once filled her heart, and contrasted it with the peaceful serenity of the present hour, but there was sorrow in the smile. She could not fail to remember that *sin* was the occasion of that restlessness and anxiety. All her troubles had arisen from the want of a spirit of *submission to the will and trust in the love of God*; and although she felt that for the sake of Christ she was freely and fully forgiven, still she could not reflect upon those scenes of conflict and doubt without regret, mingled with thanksgiving to her Father in Heaven, whose love and wisdom had never appeared so perfect as she now saw it to be, illustrated by the experience of her past life. And now should all this experience die with her and be lost to the world? How she longed to put into the hearts of her young friends that wisdom which she had been taught, that they might pass out upon the stage of action better furnished for the struggle of life than she had been. For this end, life—long life seemed desirable to her; if her Father above would make her a means of good to those around her, she would gladly live on until “three score years and ten” had set their seal upon her brow.

And Jeanie, though conscious of much remaining

imperfection, *did not doubt* but that she should be permitted to accomplish much; for in the simplicity of Christian principle, she could fully adopt the sublime petition of that servant of God in olden time, who prayed:

“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be *acceptable* in thy sight, oh Lord!” To live under the influence of this sentiment, dear reader, *remember*, is *not* to live in vain.

The door softly opens, and two young girls enter. The one with the long, dark ringlets, so like her mother, is Addie, now almost fourteen years old. The other, with the meek, dove-like eyes, and the pure brow, is Jeanie Herbert. Beautiful creatures! They are like sisters in their love for each other; sharing the same pursuits, enjoying the same pleasures; almost thinking the same thought, and alike in an overflowing affection for dear Aunt Jeanie, who, in return, loves them almost with a mother's love.

“Now, dearest Auntie, we must really shut you up somewhere; we want the parlor all to ourselves awhile.”

“Why, saucy ones, will you turn me out of my own house? What new scheme have you on hand now?”

“Oh! but we could n't tell you now, that would spoil it all, you know,” said Jeanie.

"Ah, indeed! Well, then, I must submit, I suppose; where shall I bestow myself?"

"Here, in your little room. We will let you out presently."

"That's right, girls, take her captive; call me and I'll help you, if you want me."

Aunt Jeanie looked up, and in the doorway stood Master Edward, a tall, well-grown lad, in manner and figure the very counterpart of what his father was when Jeanie first saw him.

"Now, Auntie, dear, please not to listen, will you?" said Addie, as she closed the door.

Aunt Jeanie did not try to listen; but the volume which she tried to read was not sufficiently interesting to make her insensible to the ceaseless patter of light feet, and the low murmur of conversation, broken now and then by peals of merry laughter.

There is a tap at her door, and the young Master Edward, cap in hand, gravely offers his escort to Aunt Jeanie.

How the parlor swarms with little ones, all in holiday dress, adorned with beautiful flowers. Everything wears a festal look. Garlands of roses of all imaginable hues festoon the walls. Vases of flowers stand everywhere where vases can be made to stand. Wreaths of violets and carnations loop

up the white window curtains; and little Ella, the youngling of the flock, totters to Aunt Jeanie with a cluster of moss rose-buds, which she must place among her dark curls.

Of course, Auntie is suitably surprised and delighted by all the little hands have done for her gratification; and now the children come to present their birthday gifts, the work of their own hands.

One brings a needle-book, and another a cushion manufactured from gay colored satin and morocco. Book-marks with beautiful mottoes and devices, the work of tiny fingers. Drawings of insects and flowers, and a little story "about a good Auntie," quaintly conceived by Master Edward, which set the whole party to laughing heartily. Everything must now be discussed and its whole history explained in "committee of the whole," and Auntie and all the children become so engrossed and occupied that they are surprised by the arrival of the parents and—*tea-time*.

And now, Hannah, who has also grown older, is permitted to enjoy her triumphs with her young relatives, who have grown altogether out of our recognition; she makes substantial displays of her taste and skill which elicit the warmest admiration from all the party, especially from the younger portion.

After tea, Edward, or Mr. Morrison as we should call him now, says:

"I really do not see that you grow old, Jeanie. I am sure you look younger than either Adelaide or Mrs. Herbert, to say nothing of us bronzed-faced gentlemen."

"She must have some secret of renewing her youth, unknown to the rest of us," said Herbert; "really, Jeanie, you should impart it for the benefit of your friends."

Jeanie laughed. She was entirely unconscious of any new appliances to bring about so desirable a result.

"Mamma," asked little Mary Herbert, "Mamma, Aunt Jeanie is 'nt an old maid, is she?"

"What is an old maid, Mary?" said Mrs. Herbert, quietly.

"Oh, I don't know; but Annie Connor said this morning, that Aunt Jeanie was nothing but an old maid."

"I'd like to hear Annie Connor say that," said Walter Morrison, indignantly.

"Oh! she said a great deal beside that, Walter," said Mary.

"What *did* she say Mary, dear?" said Aunt Jeanie, smiling.

Poor little Mary looked up at her mother as if she did not quite know whether she ought to say any more, but a glance at Aunt Jeanie's pleasant face re-assured her.

"She says that Aunt Jeanie is not *our* Auntie at all, and that we have no right to call her so."

"I think Annie Connor is mistaken. I think you have a very good right to call me so," said Aunt Jeanie.

"I am sure I shall always call you Auntie as long as I live," said little Clara, winding her white arms around Aunt Jeanie's neck, and kissing her cheek as she spoke.

"But what is an old maid, father?" said Walter, who seemed determined to have an explanation.

"An old maid, my son, as the term is commonly used, means what Aunt Jeanie is *not*."

An outbreak of laughter followed this not remarkably lucid explanation, and in the midst of it the children scattered themselves about the garden and verandah, leaving the elder members of the party together.

"It strikes me, Jeanie," said Edward, "that you have a heavy charge on your hands. There is much talk now-a-days about parental responsibilities, but we don't hear half enough about such re-

sponsibilities as yours. Any of those youngsters out there feel *your* influence more than *ours*. It is well for us *all* that we can trust you, Jeanie, that so much power is so well bestowed. I am inclined to be of Master Edward's opinion, that '*we couldn't any of us do without Aunt Jeanie.*'"

"The sense of responsibility is far from being oppressive, Edward. In your confidence and their affection I find my highest pleasure. May I only do them good and my earthly happiness will be secure."

The conversation now took a cheerful turn until the hour came for the little party to separate. The children crowd around Auntie, renewing their good wishes; and while the parents at a little distance look on with almost tearful eyes, James Herbert in a low tone, unheard by any of the animated group, repeats: "Childrer shall rise up and call her blessed."