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# LOOKING AROUND.

A Novel.

BY  
A. S. ROE,

AUTHOR OF "A LONG LOOK AHEAD," "I'VE BEEN THINKING," "TRUE TO THE LAST,"  
"THE STAR AND THE CLOUD," "HOW COULD HE HELP IT," "LIKE AND  
UNLIKE," "TO LOVE AND TO BE LOVED," "TIME AND TIDE, ETC."

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## LOOKING AROUND.

### CHAPTER I.

It was in the early part of June, in the year 18—, on a beautiful, calm, clear night, a gentleman was walking down Maiden Lane in the city of New York, towards the East River. He seemed in no haste, although the evening was somewhat advanced; for as he passed along at a steady, measured gait, he turned his gaze towards the windows of the stores not yet closed on either side of the street, and sometimes almost paused to notice the manner in which the clerks of those establishments that were about closing for the night, fixed the long shutters to their windows, and swung round the heavy cross bars to secure them in their place. He was evidently a stranger to the city, or an occasional visitor there, who wished to notice the maneuvers of this mart of industry and wealth by night as well as day.

He was of portly size, although by no means gross in appearance, well formed, and well dressed; and the aspect of his countenance calm and dignified, and as a fair view of it could be had occasionally by the light from some window in which the lamps yet glared brightly, one who might be passing him would possibly have been struck with the brightness of his eye, and manly proportions of the whole face, and if he thought of the matter at all, would have said to himself, "a Washington countenance," and would very likely, after passing, have turned round to take a look at the personel and his bearing.

As the gentleman reached the Old Fly Market he left the side-walk and entered it. It was not a market night, the stalls were empty, and the lamps that were hung occasionally through its whole length, showed that every thing had been scraped and swept, in readiness for the morrow. As he reached the middle of the first market he suddenly stopped, and fixed his gaze intently upon one of the stalls. It was not open as most of the others, but enclosed from the street by a canvass cloth, probably an awning let down for the night, to secure it from the effects of a storm when its owner would not be there to haul it in. It served now however the purpose of a screen from the street, and had been selected by some person, homeless no doubt, as a resting place for the night. If the gentleman had not been a stranger in the city, a mere glance of the eye would probably have been all the notice he would have taken of the circumstance, as it would be no unusual sight to a citizen to behold one of the thousands, who have no permanent abiding place, taking advantage of any spot that might afford some little protection from the weather, or the public gaze to secure his rest for the night. The eye of the stranger however, unused to such scenes, was riveted for a few moments, and then he deliberately walked up to the side of the stall. The light from a lamp enabled him to notice distinctly the appearance of the person. He was a youth — a mere boy — well dressed — and with a prepossessing countenance, his complexion fair and delicate, his eye bright and his other features well formed, and when, as the gentleman came up, the boy raised his face up towards him and smiled, there was an expression of beauty not often seen in one of his sex. He was sitting upon the block of the stall, with his back leaned against the plank partition that separated the stands, a small bundle lay beside him, and his cap on the top of it.

As the youth looked up at the gentleman he smiled, and in a pleasant voice said,

"Good evening, sir."

"Good evening," said the gentleman in reply, and for the moment said nothing further, he seemed confounded

at the apparition he had so unexpectedly encountered. At length, in a mild tone of voice he asked,

"My boy, you are not intending to pass the night here!"

"I should like to, sir if you have no objections," doubtless thinking the gentleman had some right there, or was a person of authority.

"I have no right," the gentleman replied, "to interfere with your purpose, but have you no home here?"

"No sir."

"No friends in the city?"

"No sir."

"Have you no means to procure lodgings?"

"I have a little money with me, but thought I had better keep it, as I may need it for other things."

After deliberating with himself a few moments, again the gentleman said,

"I do not like, my boy, to leave you here alone all night."

"Oh, sir, I am not afraid."

"Perhaps nothing may harm you, but there are rude people around at night in such a large city as this."

"I don't think sir they would hurt me. *God will take care of me* will he not, sir, if I ask him?"

The face of the gentleman immediately flushed, he seemed much excited, and it may as well be told here, he was a minister of the gospel; and one who not only exercised the pastor's office, but he had a true pastor's heart; here was evidently a lamb of the flock, and how could he see one of the Saviour's little ones thus exposed, and pass on and leave him? He would sooner have spent the night on that stall with him.

"I cannot bear my child, to pass on and leave you here, are you not willing to accompany me? I can provide you a better place than this."

The boy looked at him as though in doubt as to the propriety of trusting himself with a perfect stranger.

"You are very kind, sir. I thank you, but I do not like to put you to any trouble."

"It will trouble me more to leave you here. I know the city perhaps better than you do, it would really be a relief

to me if you will consent, it shall cost you nothing, should the watchmen see you here they might insist upon taking you to the watchhouse and there you would be obliged to remain through the night with all sorts of company."

"Do you think so sir?"

"I do indeed."

"You are very good sir, if you really think it will be best and that I shall not trouble you, I will go with you sir."

"Come then," said the gentleman taking him by the hand.

The boy caught up his bundle and walking beside the stranger they emerged from the market and going a few rods down Water Street ascended the steps of a three story house; the gentleman rang the bell.

As soon as the door was opened the gentleman said to the servant,

"Can I see Mrs. Ketchum?"

And when the lady entered the parlor he asked,

"Have you a spare room for the night, Mrs. Ketchum?"

"I have not Mr. Ransom, the house is full, just now."

"Can you then madam make up a bed in my room? on the floor will answer."

"Oh yes sir, you want it for this boy?"

"I do madam."

"It shall be ready in a few minutes."

And very soon the servant entered and announced that the Rev' Mr. Ransom's room was in readiness.

The boy turned toward the Reverend gentleman a look of confidence at the announcement of his title which almost brought a smile over the face of the latter and he was on the point of asking "is your father a minister?" but he feared it might lead to a long conference in explanation of the peculiarity of his case and it was high time for the youth to be asleep, he was evidently tired, this was manifest in the short walk they had just taken together, and in the slight limp of one foot, the reason for which he gave was, "that his shoe had galled his foot." The gentleman had little doubt from reflecting on the matter that there was some mystery about the boy's situation,

the very fact that he was so reticent of his speech, so careful of what he said and somewhat unwilling to be noticed although modified by polite breeding assured him that all was not right, and yet the acknowledgement of his trust in God, something strange for one so young, inspired the confidence that there must be good as well as evil in the case. He surmised that the boy had walked far that day, that for some reason he was thrown upon his own resources, he was so careful of his money; he was not one that had been used to such a situation, he had not labored as a boy of his age of poor parents would have done and his whole appearance and manners indicated refinement and comfortable circumstances if not wealth in those under whose charge he had been. As much time would no doubt be required to sift out the truth, he therefore concluded to let the boy go to his rest as soon as possible and take the morning for explanations.

Mr. Ransom, for we may as well now call him by name, was a settled clergyman and pastor of the church in Woodburn, on the Hudson River. He was now in New York partly for the purpose of laying in his supply of family stores for the season, as he could procure better articles and at a cheaper rate than he could in Woodburn or its vicinity, and for the further reason that he found it profitable occasionally, to exchange the quiet routine of the country, for the bustle and variety of a large city. He liked at times to throw himself into the magnetic whirl, and catch its influence and feel the force of the mighty current of earnest life, to witness the gigantic efforts required at the centre of power, to give vigor to the whole frame work of our social system, to behold untiring industry and grasping enterprise in the very midst of their work, hanging out their trophies of victory on every side a healthful stimulus to the busy, toiling, struggling masses. He felt that it was good for him at times to be where every step was quick and every countenance animated with the eager pursuit of some supposed good, or the speedy accomplishment of some grand design. He wished to put himself in contact with the bustle of the city, as a counteracting influence against the drowsy atmosphere



with which he was surrounded in the quiet, unruffled steady movement of country life.

He had stayed his appointed time, and was about to return home; the evening had been spent in calls upon some friends or rather acquaintance, whom he did not care to leave without recognition; and yet upon whose hospitality he did not wish to throw himself during his stay, he wanted to feel at liberty and therefore selected for his stopping place, when there without the company of his wife, a private boarding house in Water Street, kept by a lady of respectability whom he had known for some years.

Having completed his toilet at an early hour the next morning the boy still asleep, he sat down to meditate upon the circumstances in which he was placed in reference to this youth, the thought of leaving him to be exposed to the same situation in which he had found him, was too painful to be indulged a moment, and yet what course should he adopt? Was it not his duty to remonstrate with him if he had unadvisedly left his home and endeavor to persuade him to return? But first he must try to learn from the boy himself the peculiarities of his situation. As the little sleeper lay in profound repose he had a fair opportunity for examining his features, they were a model for a sculptor's eye, his hair was not so light as he had imagined when he first saw him; it might be simply called brown with the slightest tinge of auburn, it was silky like a girl's, and disposed to curl, his complexion very fair, his lips finely curved, his forehead broad and high very much resembling in the whole contour of the countenance the pictures whether fanciful or real of the boy Chatterton.

As the gentleman stood over him, he remembered that the sloop in which he expected to sail for home that day, started at an early hour, he must wake him, however unpleasant to his feelings to disturb the sweet sleep he was enjoying.

Giving him a slight touch the boy awoke.

"If you will get up now I will leave you for a few minutes, dress as quickly as you can, for I wish to have some conversation with you."

After allowing him a sufficient time to dress, Mr. Ransom again entered the room, the boy was sitting by the window, he arose as Mr. Ransom entered and walking towards him put out his hand which was kindly pressed, his eyes were filled with tears and his utterance broken.

"I thank you sir very much, for your kindness."

Mr. Ransom felt assured that his surmise in regard to the youth was correct, he had doubtless in a childish freak, left his home as boys sometimes are tempted to do, possibly from reading stories of young adventurers into the wide world, little knowing the terrible meaning of that significant phrase. But he was now sensible of his error and would no doubt be easily persuaded to return.

"Sit down my son," Mr. Ransom said, "and I will take a seat by the side of you, for I want to ask you a few questions. And now did I understand you rightly the last evening that you had no home nor friends in the city."

"I have none in the city sir, nor any where else."

This reply startled Mr. Ransom, he began to fear that some disease had affected his mind, that he was in fact deranged, he would question further.

"But you must have a home somewhere!"

"I have a father's house sir, but it is no home to me."

"Is your mother living?"

He put his hand into his bosom, and drew from thence a locket miniature, and handing it to Mr. Ransom said,

"That sir is all I have left of her, she died some years ago."

Mr. Ransom saw that it represented a lady of great beauty, and with every mark of a lovely disposition; and he also noticed at once a striking resemblance between it, and the living form beside him.

"Have you a step mother?"

"I have sir, and she has driven me from my father's house."

"Have you brothers, or sisters?"

"I have two half sisters sir, younger than I am."

"Have you no relatives, on your mother's side?"

"None that I know of sir, there may be some in England, but I have never heard of them."

"Have you no Uncles or Aunts on your father's side?"

"No sir, my father was an only child."

Mr. Ransom paused a moment, and then fixing a firm look at the boy asked,

"Does your father know of your leaving home? or rather did he consent to it?"

"He told me to leave it sir."

"Did he tell you to leave it, because he thought it best for you, under the circumstances?"

"He told me to leave it, and never to darken his doors again."

"You must have done something very wrong, or a father could never have thus spoken to you."

"I suppose I did sir."

Again Mr. Ransom paused as though in doubt how to proceed, the boy was apparently candid, and yet seemed somewhat reluctant to say more than he could help.

"My object in asking you these questions my boy, is not for the purpose of gratifying my own curiosity, I want to advise you, to help you, and I cannot do that understandingly without knowing all the circumstances under which you have left your home. I want your confidence not for any benefit it will be to me, but solely for your own good."

"I believe that sir."

"Can you not then tell me what you did to provoke your father to wrath?"

"I suppose it was what I said to my mother, but sir," his voice trembled as he continued. "I could not hear my own mother's name lightly spoken of, by her who now fills her place. I would sooner die sir than hear it, if it had been a man sir, I would have struck him, if he had killed me afterwards."

"It was not to your father then that you spoke the words that caused his displeasure; perhaps what you said was told to him in a more aggravating form than you actually used."

"That may have been sir, no doubt it was told in the worst way possible; but I told him myself, sir, just what I *did* say, and I also said, 'that I thought he ought not to allow my mother's name to be scandalized, and that I could

not bear it, and would not bear it; that I would leave the house if the words were ever repeated to me again, my mother sir was an angel, and I know she is in heaven now."

Here his wrought up feelings caused him to pause, he made no ado, but his face flushed, his full lips trembled, and the big tears rolled from his dark blue eyes.

Mr. Ransom began now to see how matters stood. This boy had a high strung temperament, a warm and loving heart, his father no doubt, high tempered too, and either through fear, or the fascinating arts of his present companion was under her influence. She was no doubt, in most respects the opposite of her who had been his first love. There are many such cases, and some judgment may be formed of the man's taste and character by his latest choice. When there has been true affection in the first bond, it can never again be satisfied but with the nearest likeness to the lost loved one; so that although the same individual, may not be his companion through life's whole journey, yet the same sweet chords will thrill his soul along his varied path, which first awoke the pure sympathies of his being. Mr. Ransom therefore formed the opinion that the father was either a heartless man, who had probably never married from affection at all, or that his last choice was one that accorded with his views and feelings. After being silent a few moments, at length he said,

"You told me last evening that you were not in fear of any danger, for 'God would take care of you,' you feel then that you are so sure of being in the path of duty that you can with confidence commit yourself to his keeping?"

"I cannot say sir. I hardly know whether I am right or wrong, nor what I am to do, nor where to go. I have no friend nor protector, and when I was in the market last evening, I felt so lonely that I could not help crying to God to take care of me, and I used the words I heard my mother use, when I was standing beside her bed when she was dying. She asked God to take care of me, and then looking at me and squeezing my hand she said. 'Willie, God will take care of you.'"

"Your name then is Willie?"

"Yes sir."

"Do you feel willing to give me the rest of it, your surname?"

He hesitated a moment, and then replied,

"I did not know sir, but it would be better for me to change my name. Do you think it would be wrong sir? would it be like telling an untruth?"

"I do not insist upon your giving your name to me, but whenever you are asked, and think best to respond I should by all means give your true name, that would be right, in the other case you are conscious of a doubt as to its propriety, we should never do anything that our conscience does not entirely approve."

"My name, sir, is William Randolph Herbert. I thank you sir for advising me, I will do as you say."

Mr. Ransom was about to ask him the name of the place where his father lived, but forbore, lest the boy should suspect he was seeking to gratify his curiosity, or to take advantage of his confidence.

"And now William have you any objections to tell me what you design to do? what are your plans? how are you going to provide for yourself? you have but little money with you."

"I have thought I would try to get some situation where I could earn my board, may be I could find some place in a store, or I might get on board some vessel that was going to sea, they take boys sometimes, do they not sir?"

"Yes, boys are often taken on board of vessels, but I wish you would listen favorably to a proposal I have to make to you. It seems you are yet undecided as to what course you had better take, or what employment you wish to engage in for life. Now I am about to return to my home, and must depart soon after breakfast. I shall feel very sad to go away and leave you alone in the city, in your present condition. It is my wish that you should go with me, and spend some days at my home, until you have time to think over matters, and conclude as to the best course to pursue. You will there, too, meet with a lady not unlike the picture you have shown me, and I

think from what you have told me of your mother's character, you may find some resemblance there too, you shall come back to the city when you think best, and it shall cost you nothing."

Mr. Ransom saw, before he had concluded this address, that the boy was ready, and more than ready to accept his offer, that is, so far as his feelings were concerned, and yet when he had concluded, and awaited a reply, there was no answer for some moments.

"You are very kind sir," at length he said. "I thank you very much, may I ask you which way you travel in going to your home?"

"My home is up the North river, at Woodburn. I shall go up in a sloop, you have no objections to a sail? I am a clergyman, and of course you may know, not burdened with wealth, but yet abundantly able to afford the aid I offer you."

"Oh sir! dear sir. I will go with you joyfully, but can I be of any service to you? I am willing to do any kind of work."

"It was not for that, William, that I made the offer, and yet it may be you will find something to do. We will now go to breakfast."

"Oh sir, I have some crackers in my pocket, that is all I shall want, I thank you sir, just the same."

"Yes, but my boy, it will not be best to make your breakfast of crackers, when you can have something more substantial, your crackers will serve you for a lunch on board the sloop, you will find the salt water air quite a stimulus to your appetite."

Putting his hand in that of Mr. Ransom's, without saying any thing further, they proceeded to the breakfast table. And there Mr. Ransom had a further opportunity of noticing his attention to the little proprieties of life, and he came to the conclusion, that although his home might have had its deficiencies, yet in it, he had been accustomed to the courtesies of polite life.

The more Mr. Ransom saw of this youth, he became convinced, that he was one who could not endure severe treatment; he had strong and finely attuned feelings. Under a mother's mild and loving nurture, he would be

loving and obedient, but angry passions and a rebellious spirit would be aroused, by the stern rebuke and violent assault of a father. Fathers in general when excited by some fault or delinquency on the part of a son, and use harsh and imperious language, and utter violent threats, are not to be charged with want of affection; their severe manner is often the result of deep interest for the child they are reproving. The evil lies in a want of discrimination, they do not study with sufficient care the peculiar characteristics which distinguish their children. They would have their sons grow up in their own likeness, no doubt at the same time wishing that they may improve upon it, and become wiser and better and more distinguished than themselves. And when they behold a deficiency in the attainments of the child to their own, at a corresponding age, or a perverseness of will which they themselves never manifested, or a distaste for such pursuits which they had been eager to engage in, discouragement comes over the parent's heart, they write bitter things against the delinquent, their passions are roused, they use harsh terms and perhaps endeavor by the rod to amend deficiencies. But they consider not that each child is a living soul, an emanation from a divine Hand, and as such, is distinct from all other human beings. It may indeed bear some resemblance to its earthly parent, but in most essential particulars stands alone, alone in its peculiar attributes, alone in its yearnings, its hopes and fears, alone in its accountability to its great Creator. There is a passage in Ezekiel, which parents and more especially fathers would do well to heed, "Behold all souls are mine saith the Lord. As the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine." If this truth could be well instilled into every father's heart with what different feelings would he regard the little one sitting upon his knee, and the youth walking by his side, under God a guardian, the will of the great parent to be paramount in all things.

As a ride of some miles was required after the sloop reached her landing, e'er the end of their journey could be accomplished, it was not until the afternoon of the next day, that the carriage which had brought them from

the landing stopped at the gate of the parsonage, a lady stood at the front door with a countenance sparkling with joy, by many thought very comely, but to the eyes of one beautiful beyond all others of her sex.

As Mr. Ransom led his young charge through the front yard up to the house, his lovely wife fixed her eye steadily upon him, trying no doubt to call to mind whom among their friends or acquaintance, her husband had brought with him to their home.

"I believe, my dear you will exert your memory in vain to find out to what family of our friends this young gentleman belongs. His name is William Randolph Herbert, please welcome him to our home, for at present he has no other."

"And that," said she, "I will do with good will." And taking him by the hand, as he raised his fair face all aglow with emotion up towards her, she saluted him as she would have done a near relative. Affected by the kindness of her reception the boy for the first time gave full vent to a flood of tears. Mrs. Ransom still holding him by the hand, led him into the snug quiet parlor, now fragrant with the scent of early flowers, and in its simplicity and neatness, more charming to the pastor's heart, than any of the highly ornamented abodes he had visited in the great city.

"William," said he as Mrs. Ransom left the room, "you will remember I said that possibly you might find a similarity not only in personal appearance, but in manners and feeling, to the dear mother you have lost, was I mistaken?"

"No sir, you was right, I think I could tell her every thing I feel."

"And you can do so with the assurance that you will be dealt with, in love and kindness."

## CHAPTER II.

As William seemed very anxious to repay the kindness of his benefactor by active employment in his service, Mr. R. gave him certain labors to perform in the garden, and certain chores at the house and barn, and was much pleased to observe, how regular he was in the performance of them, and how much thought he exercised, in reference to matters not immediately committed to him, he was not careful merely to finish the work assigned, but seemed ambitious to show, that he was equal to more than was expected of him, he had, never before been accustomed to labor of any kind, so he said, and it was no doubt true; for his hands were very soft and delicate, more like those of a girl, than of boys in general.

It pleased Mr. Ransom greatly to perceive such a manifest disposition to industry, for although it was not at all probable the work he was doing would be that by which he was eventually to obtain his living, yet the habit of being usefully employed would be formed and that for a youth is a great point gained, for *industry* and *energy* are the mighty powers that ensure success.

He soon made it manifest that he was fond of horses, a natural trait in boys, and one that should be properly encouraged; he was therefore allowed every opportunity for horseback exercise, much to his gratification; his highest pleasure however was to drive in the chaise beside Mrs. Ransom either in visiting friends or on errands to the store, one condition however being attached to his riding on horseback or driving in the chaise, and that was that he must take upon him, the grooming of the horse and learn himself to saddle or harness him, this Mr. R. insisted upon, for the reason that ignorance of such matters often puts men to great inconvenience, occasions foolish blunders for which they are subject to ridicule, and often serious accidents and loss of life. A man who cannot harness his own horse is not able to tell whether every thing pertain-

ing to his gearing is as it should be, and more casualties occur from carelessness in that matter than from the gaiety or perverseness of the beast.

Having examined him as to his attainments as a scholar, his greatest deficiency appeared in writing and arithmetic, otherwise for his age he had made respectable progress. He was therefore allowed to spend several hours a day at these exercises, for as he seemed desirous to become a merchant in preference to any other calling, it was essential that in these branches, he should be more particularly perfected.

But the great question continually kept forcing itself upon his benefactor, ought he to keep from his father all knowledge of the whereabouts of his child? The opinion he had formed of the character of the parent, did indeed offer some justification for withholding this knowledge, still he very naturally feared he might have formed an erroneous opinion; general rules for making up a judgment in such a case will not always do to act upon, it might be that his father was as he had concluded a man of strong passions, yet might be possessed of ardent affection, the mother-in-law, he must think was a person of coarse manners, rude in speech, and with but little feeling at heart; but there must have been refinement somewhere, or this boy would not be likely to show so clearly the marks of the gentleman. At times he felt almost determined to venture the responsibility of writing to the father, and making a full revelation of the case; and then the dread of unpleasant consequences to the youth; and the breaking up of his present profitable course would for the time silence all other consideration.

Some six weeks had now elapsed when one day his wife said to him,

"Have you noticed any change in William of late?"

"Do you mean as to his work or studies?"

"No he seems as faithful at them as ever, and as affectionate and respectful, but I have fancied at times there was something on his mind that makes him feel sad."

"Can you wonder at that dear Emma? The wonder to me is that he has maintained such a quiet cheerful manner. Sad indeed must the poor child feel when he thinks of the past."

"You know dear husband we had come to the conclusion, that his father's treatment had entirely weaned him from all regard to his parent."

"Yes, I know we have, and I felt grieved that it should be so, a parent is a very solemn relation, and one that cannot be slighted with impunity; it is the one thing that I fear in reference to the boy, it may prove a blight upon his whole life."

"I should not be surprised if he begins to feel that he has done wrong, and is in consequence unhappy. I have ascertained some things from conversation with him, that have changed my opinion of the character of his father; I believe the child loves his father most tenderly."

"I am glad to hear that."

"I cannot remember all he has said, but I have drawn the conclusion that the boy came away as much on his father's account, as for any other cause. I think it not improbable that he saw that his being at home was a source, of trial to his parent from the dislike of the step mother it may have been that the poor man irritated by the heartlessness of his wife, and perhaps too by some thoughtless and hasty expressions of the boy and being doubtless a man of strong passions, has spoken unadvisedly at the moment, and may be in great distress, not knowing what may have befallen the child; I think dear husband you had better have a talk with William on the subject."

This advice so accorded with his own views that Mr. Ransom embraced the first opportunity of leisure so to do, and found out from the interview with him some things that threw new light upon the character of both father and son; it will not be necessary to detail them here but he came at once to the conclusion that it was his bounden duty to see the father. Having learned from William the name of the place where his home was situated, he remembered that the pastor of the congregation to which William's family belonged was an old college companion; and in fact one with whom he had been on very intimate terms of friendship, but their spheres of labor had only brought them into contact occasionally at the meetings of general assembly. He resolved therefore

to make a visit to that gentleman, that through him he might ascertain the true state of things, and with his advice decide as to his future course in the matter. At first he had some doubts as to his duty in revealing to William the object of his journey, but finally concluded that as it might be of the last importance to the child, that he should have the most perfect confidence in him as a friend, it would be better to tell him plainly his design, so on the evening previous to his departure he called him into his study.

"It is my purpose William, as you already know to leave home on the morrow, have you any idea of the object I have in view?"

"No sir, I have not been told, nor have I asked any one."

"I have thought much of your situation since the last conversation we had, and it appears to me best, that your father should no longer be kept in ignorance concerning you, he may be very unhappy."

"I am afraid he is sir," his lip trembled and the tears were gathering.

"You have no objections then to my seeing him, and telling him how you are situated?"

"Oh! no sir, but" and here he had to give way to his feelings which were intensely excited. Nothing was said for some time, not until he had regained in some measure his natural composure.

"There seems to be some objection occurring to your mind. Now my dear boy I want you to be perfectly free with me, and candidly confess the difficulty. You see I have dealt openly with you, and told you what no one else knows but Mrs. Ransom, as to my object in leaving home, and thus I shall always deal with you, and shall hope to have the same confidence reposed in me."

"Mr. Ransom," he said, looking fixedly at him, his countenance all aglow with feeling, "I *do* want you to see my father, and to tell him I ask his forgiveness for what I said that displeased him, that I am willing, if he says so to return home again, and suffer as I have done, but Oh! sir, if you *can*, do persuade him to let me try and learn some business. I do not want to be idle, I



want to learn to take care of myself, and to take care of him. I will work all my life, I do not care how hard, if I can only earn enough to enable him to feel that he is not dependent on that woman for daily bread. Oh, sir, I know I can do it."

Mr. Ransom was much affected by this appeal, and by what was said at its close, there was such earnestness in the whole manner of the boy, especially when he brought out that fact in regard to his father's situation, it had doubtless been long a burden and grief to his young mind, one that he dare not reveal to his father, and of which his father would no doubt, if possible, not be willing his child should know, and perhaps supposed, had never taken cognizance of. But children often see much further into such matters than parents are apt to imagine, and it would be well if they could bear this in mind, and remember that they have about them a little band of immortal intelligencies, observing minutely, pondering scenes and circumstances and drawing conclusions, which may indeed be erroneous, because not entrusted with the parents' secrets, but which are exerting an influence on their future life. Here was a new feature in this case unfolded to view, that Mr. Ransom had not imagined; in some way the father was dependent on his second wife, and doubtless he had been humiliated by it, and the son had noticed it; a sore spot had been made in his young heart, embittering his life, but awaking his mind to energetic daring, another instance of the double acting of Divine Providence; allowing evil for wise ends, and causing it to result in good.

His benefactor was about to correct him for using the term by which he had designated his mother-in-law, but as it seemed such a natural outflow of the indignation which had been aroused in his heart by the remembrance of scenes he had witnessed, and as his usual appellation had been respectful, he thought until he should know more of the whole case he would refrain.

As it occupied a whole day to reach New York, Mr. Ransom, of course, remained there through the night, taking the Boston mail stage which left Courtland Street at 8 o'clock the next morning; there was but one passen-

ger besides himself that started from the stage house, so they sat together on the back seat. Before the former gentleman got in, Mr. Ransom had an opportunity to notice his appearance, for he was conversing earnestly with two men who seemed to be police officers. The gentleman was more than ordinarily a fine looking man, the expression of his countenance bright and intelligent, his eye extremely penetrating, and the form of his features regular, and handsomely moulded. As he entered the coach and took his seat, his salutation was courteous and his whole aspect that of a gentleman, and Mr. Ransom felt rather pleased to have such a seat companion, for although he only anticipated a few hours' ride with him, the town of — the place of destination, being at no great distance from the city, yet the few hours might be pleasantly beguiled in converse with a person of intelligence such as he judged the gentleman to be. As the stage passed up Broadway, however, the stranger kept his head constantly in the direction of the street on the side of which he sat and very often peering through the other side, as though earnestly searching for some person or object; it was not a look of mere curiosity or amusement, for his countenance manifested deep anxiety. As the gentleman was too intent upon his object, whatever it was, to seem at all disposed for conversation, the two rode on in silence until the city and its suburbs were passed, and the more open country spread around on either side, he then settled back upon his seat, heaved a deep sigh, and leaning his head upon his hand, seemed as one under the power of extreme dejection. At the first stopping place two other passengers entered, rather rude looking men as to their exterior although their behavior was civil and becoming. After they entered, the gentleman, perhaps conscious that the silence between him and his seatmate, had been kept up quite long enough to be really civil, and as Mr. Ransom had on his entering the stage, made a passing remark, to show that he was ready to be social, and to which he only replied to by a bow of the head; the other, no doubt, concluded that it was his place to break the spell. And he did so by some remark that gave food for conversation until the end of their journey



together. The subject turned somewhat upon the mysteries of Divine Providence, which the gentleman frankly confessed were troubling his mind, and therefore, Mr. Ransom, in the best way he could, endeavored, if not to satisfy him, at least to soothe and reconcile him to what then might be incomprehensible. And he had the satisfaction of believing that his efforts had not been in vain, for when he left the stage, the gentleman gave him his hand at parting and remarked —

"I am sorry sir that our conversation had not commenced at an earlier period of our ride, but I trust I shall not forget some views you have advanced."

Mr. Ransom landed at the tavern, and getting directions to the parsonage, was soon receiving a hearty welcome from his brother minister, the Rev. Thos. G—— and an agreeable introduction to his accomplished and excellent lady. As it was near the hour for dinner, of course no revelation was made of the object of his visit, until the meal was finished, when Mr. G—— invited his friend to his study, for the purpose, he said, "of having a good long talk over scenes in our college life," and as soon as they were seated, he remarked,

"Brother Ransom, this is a treat I have not expected, you and I have spent some happy days together, little thinking then what the cares and responsibilities of life would be, which we were so eager to take upon us."

"But much happier with those cares and responsibilities than we were in those days of lightheartedness."

"Yes, yes, true, that is true, and yet one likes to take a backward view sometimes, when the placid stream bore us along so gently and the shores were so verdant and picturesque and the sunshine was so cheering, and all nature in fact clothed in beauty."

"To us brother G—— the scene you describe has not ended in disappointment, the stream has not launched us into a dark and troubled sea, where our poor barque has much ado to bear up against the raging billows."

"I tell you one thing, Brother Ransom, which I most firmly believe, that more than half the fatalities attending the voyage of life is owing to the unfortunate selection of our companions on the way; or to drop the figure, full

half if not three quarters of a man's happiness and prosperity here, depend upon what sort of a wife he has got. Now I know cases where men who bid fair for usefulness as christians and as members of society in general, become nonentities, positively lost to all goodness, by connection with a weak, vain and unscrupulous woman; and I have known a man of fine intelligence, pure minded and high minded, of refined feelings and with a large capacity for the enjoyment of life, crushed to the earth, his sensibilities blunted, his high manly spirit brought down almost to abject meanness, and every avenue to his earthly happiness closed up, by a most unfortunate connection with a low minded, avaricious woman, whose power over him is extreme, because unhappily she holds the purse."

"Have you any such case among your own people?"

"Yes, sir, just such a case, and my heart bleeds for him whenever I see him or think of him. He is now suffering under a terrible calamity, brought upon him, I am free to say, by the very cause I have alluded to."

"It is not idle curiosity, Brother G——, that prompts me to ask you the name of that individual; if I mistake not he is the very person on whose account you are indebted for this visit, for although I have often designed to call upon you, yet, as you well know, our spheres of duty make such constant demands upon our time, that it is no easy matter to whirl ourselves out of them."

Mr. G—— looked at his friend with great earnestness while he was speaking, and was silent for a moment after he had finished.

"My dear Brother Ransom, it would be in common cases, as you well know, an ungracious thing for a pastor, after illustrating a proposition by reference to a living example, and in such a case as this, where I have used strong language in describing the situation of things, to expose the name of the individual referred to, but as I know that you have full as nice ideas of pastoral propriety as myself, and will take proper care of the information, I shall certainly not fear to answer your question."

"Let me help you out of that difficulty," Mr. Ransom quickly said, "it is not necessary that I know to whom

you referred. But have you a person a member of your congregation by the name of Herbert?"

"I have, do you know him?"

"I do not, has he lost a son lately?"

"He has, and terrible is the trial he is suffering on that account. Oh, brother Ransom, can you give me any information about the child? is he alive or dead?"

"He is alive and well, at least he was yesterday morning when I left home."

"He is not at your home!"

"Yes he is there, well and happy; at least, as happy as he can well be under his peculiar circumstances."

"How did he ever find his way to you?"

"I found him, and learning some particulars from the child ventured to take him to my home."

And then in brief, Mr. Ransom related the circumstances which the reader already knows. Just then Mrs. G—— opened the door and smiling pleasantly upon them said,

"Any secrets?"

"None my dear," replied her husband, "but what you may hear,—come in by all means. What do you think? the lost lamb has been found, and he is an inmate of this dear brother's family."

"William Herbert at your home, Mr. Ransom! Oh, how rejoiced I am. But his poor father, does he know it?"

"Not yet."

"Then, dear husband, you ought to go there at once; no time should be lost in relieving his mind; he has suffered so much that I fear he will yet lose his reason."

"But first, Brother G——, may I ask you to give me a sketch of this gentleman and of the peculiarities of his situation, for although I wish to see him and to have his mind relieved, yet that I may know how to deal with this case, it is highly necessary that I know all the circumstances."

"Then Mrs. G—— will be the one to do it, as she is more able to give full information than I am. She has known him from her childhood."

And without hesitation the lady at once proceeded with the narrative.

"When I was a little girl, Randolph Herbert was a young man, and one that was thought much of by all classes of people. He was the only son of a gentleman who was supposed to be wealthy, and no doubt was so at one time, but in some way he lost a great deal of property, for at his death the estate was found to be much involved, and when settled up the son had merely the homestead left, with a moderate sized farm attached to it, and possibly a few thousands at interest. Randolph had not been trained to any business, he had been through college, but had learned no profession, perhaps he may have spent some time in a lawyers office, and I believe I remember hearing at one time that he was studying-law, but he could not have pursued the study very far he never attempted to practice it. At any rate, his time was mostly occupied in attending to his father's affairs, for the old gentleman in the latter part of his life was feeble, and seldom went abroad; and no doubt that was the reason why the son remained at home during those years when most young men are learning their life business.

At twenty-five he was remarkable for his fine looks and for his sprightly and pleasing manners. He had, and he has now, a proud bearing, but all who knew him then and know him now, lay no such charge against him. He was very high spirited, but I do not believe he felt himself above any decent person. I think he must have been thirty when his father died, and in two or three years after that event, he became acquainted with a young English lady at Boston, who having come to this country with her father, who died and left her dependent, she became a teacher of music, and when Randolph was introduced to her was supporting herself by that means; he was at once attracted by her appearance, she was very handsome, and moreover, had a most affectionate heart, and a bright mind. He became warmly attached, and gaining her consent they were married, and he brought her home. William was their only child, to whom the parents were devotedly attached, as well as to each other. The son must have been seven years old when his mother died, and the death took place at a time when the father had gotten into some pecuniary difficulties; for I remember

that but a few days after the funeral, their place was sold with all the furniture. Mr. Herbert with his little son went to board in the outskirts of our town, and very near to the house where he boarded, there lived a wealthy family originally from New Jersey, and of Dutch descent. They were called wealthy, but they lived in a very plain way; they had an only daughter, quite good looking, but of a weak mind, with a very slight education, and no qualities that were likely to attract such a man as Mr. Herbert, but probably finding himself poor and with no knowledge of any business or profession whereby he could gain a livelihood, he was on that account induced to pay court to Annie Schmidt, and he succeeded. The parents were not pleased, but as there was no help for it they seemed to acquiesce. A place was purchased for them, and a sum of money settled upon the daughter. And when married they removed to it and there they live now. But Mr. Herbert found that after all he was none the better off for having married a rich wife. The house and lands were in her name, and to be solely at her disposal, and if she had heirs they were to inherit at the death of their mother — if she died without heirs the property was to go immediately to a family of her relatives; the money settled upon her was placed in the hands of trustees, who were bound to pay the interest to her and to her alone. This in most cases would have been of no consequence at all; any wife who deserves the name would have handed it at once to her husband, but the lady was an exception, and I do believe a very rare exception. She chose to expend it for the family at her own will, perhaps at first giving her husband a pittance out of it, but by degrees even withholding that, and compelling a proud spirited man to ask her even for money to purchase the most trifling article of dress.

"Stop, my dear madam," exclaimed Mr. Ransom in a hurried manner. "I do not need to know any more of this sad story. I comprehend the whole case. A man of any spirit under such circumstances must be in a constant ferment, and his temper liable to great outbreaks. I can now understand how it was that the boy chafed beyond

endurance hurled back upon the false mother terms of reproach, and the father, irritated beyond endurance, spoke harshly and unadvisedly to his poor, suffering son."

"To us, Brother Ransom, who understood the circumstances, it was no wonder that the boy ran away, but most people in our town know nothing of the cause, nor have any of them a suspicion that Mr. Herbert is held under such bondage by his wife; to me alone, and to Mrs. G — has he confided his secret heart trials, and we know how to feel for him."

"And to make allowances for him."

"That is true. No doubt many think he leads an idle kind of a life for a man of his abilities, and he does; but how is he now to help himself? He was to blame no doubt, or his father was, that he did not learn some useful calling. He committed a great error no doubt in marrying a woman so unfitted to be his companion, and one so unlike what he had once loved, but *our errors bring our judgments*. If we could go through life without mistakes, life would be much smoother with most people than it is. But had we not better send for Herbert?"

"To come here! in preference to our going to him?"

"Oh yes," replied Mrs. G —, on many accounts, and especially for his sake, he may not wish it known that his child has been found, for if a place could be procured for him, I do think it would be better that William never saw his home again."

It was therefore concluded that Mr. G — should send a line to Mr. Herbert informing him that a gentleman was there, desirous of seeing him, and it was also thought best that Mr. Ransom should break the news to him of his son's welfare."

It was about the space of half an hour before the gentleman arrived, and Mr. G — came up with him into the study where his friend was in waiting. To the great surprise of both the gentlemen, and to Mr. G — himself, who introduced them to each other — they had been stage companions from the city that very day — Mr. Herbert was the first to speak.

"I did not anticipate this pleasure, my dear sir," em-

bracing the hand of Mr. Ransom, warmly; "some things which you dropped in conversation have done much to soothe my mind, which for some time has been in a very disturbed state. I see now, sir, that God may still be a loving father, while obliged to lay his chastening hand upon us, nor is it necessary for us always to suppose He is angry with us because we are suffering under his rod."

"And especially so if we find the chastisement working in us submission to the divine will. God mingles judgments and mercies in His dealings with us, and by both he tests our obedience. You say, my dear sir, that for some time your mind has been in a very disturbed state. I am a messenger of good tidings to you. Your little son is safe and well."

The gentleman gazed at Mr. Ransom a moment as if he scarcely comprehended what was said, and then clasping his hand exclaimed:

"Oh God, I am a sinful man! unworthy of this great mercy! Oh sir, you are indeed a messenger of good tidings; you cannot know the agony which has wrung my spirit night and day, for it was not merely the terrible suffering on account of the uncertainty of the child's fate — oh, sir, it was something worse, far more poignant than that. I was at the time almost crazed by other trials of a personal nature, and the poor boy was deeply aroused, himself; he spoke abruptly to me, and I answered him in an angry and heartless manner. Oh, how heartless and unlike a parent I acted! My dear sir, you say he is safe and well — you know then where he is?"

"He is at my own home, sir."

"At your home! Oh how merciful! how did he find his way there? God has indeed taken care of him."

"It was that same expression, uttered in all the confidence of a child in an Almighty protector, which determined me not to leave him. I felt that he was a lamb of the flock, and my heart yearned over him. He did not find his way to me, but God directed my steps to him; I found him about to rest for the night, in a place where I feared he might probably meet with rude treatment from thoughtless boys or men, and said to him, 'are you not afraid to trust yourself in such a public place through the

night.' 'No, sir,' he replied, looking at me quite earnestly, 'God will take care of me.'"

Here the father's feelings became too powerful to be restrained. He first covered his face and gave full vent to tears, sobbing under the agony of grief, and then arose and paced the room, his hands folded on his breast, exclaiming, "Oh my boy, my darling boy; my Willie! you felt that your earthly parent had deserted you — had turned you off — had cast you upon the cold wide world! but blessed be God, you were able to repose on a Father who never changes; who never slumbers nor sleeps."

It was some time before he could compose himself sufficiently to resume his seat. Mr. Ransom did not attempt to allay the storm of sorrow that was raging in the poor man's breast, for he believed it would be better for him to bear awhile the stings of remorse; there is no way sometimes but for man to suffer the bitter consequences of his deeds, and often the surer way to give true relief, is to hold up before the transgressor in vivid colors, the heinousness of his offence; that his spirit may be truly humbled, and prepared for that contrition of heart, which is a token of forgiveness and the harbinger of peace. But Mr. Ransom had not taken upon himself the part of a censor or reprover, he merely designed to give as clear a statement as possible, of the scene that transpired at the finding of his son. As soon as Mr. Herbert's feelings had become somewhat relieved, the suffering man resumed:

"Oh, sir, the way of transgressors is hard; I am a great a grievous sinner. I have departed from the Lord — I have broken my covenant with God — his frown is upon me — it dries up my spirit, it throws darkness on every avenue of my life; it has blasted my hopes, frustrated my plans, bound me in fetters galling to my spirit; I cannot break them, and I have no patience to endure them; it sometimes seems to me that hell has already begun its torments, — a foretaste of the coming wrath."

"Please stop, my dear sir, listen to me one moment; you forget what you said to me a short time since — the result of our converse this morning as we rode together — the Father loves still, even while he lays the rod upon us. I know not wherein you have transgressed, nor how

far you may have wandered from the path of duty, nor do I care to know; it is quite sufficient that your own conscience takes cognizance thereof; you have probably not gone to greater lengths in sin than David did, nor acted quite so base a part as Peter; you have not denied your master with an oath."

"No sir, but I have virtually denied him; I have despised — no I dare not say that either, I hope I have not in my heart despised the ordinances of religion; but I have forsaken the table of the Lord; broken my covenant with God and with his church. Oh sir, the way of transgressors is hard! the judgments of the Lord are heavy, very heavy, hard to be borne."

"But can you not say, 'they are true and righteous altogether?'"

"Yes sir, I know they are true and righteous, true and righteous altogether; I most truly merit every stroke he lays upon me. I know that it is my sin that has found me out, the misfortunes of my life are not what some would call mischances, or bad luck. Oh, no sir, could I believe that, I might harden my mind against them, and bid fate do its worst. But I know that I am smitten for my sins. God has undertaken against me, every path I have taken has led me in the way of His arrows; every plan, no matter how fair its prospects, has proved a failure, until I seem caught in a net, where no effort I can make, gives any hope of deliverance. I feel very sure, sir, that my temporal trials are the issues of my spiritual obliquities. Oh, sir, to feel that the heaven above you is brass, and the earth beneath you iron; because God is against you — there is the heart of the agony. It seems to me now that if I could have one glimpse of a smile from God — could feel that my backslidings would be remembered no more — and that my Father in heaven was at peace with me — the trials of my life would be light as air. Oh, sir, if the rod be necessary, I willingly bare my back to the stroke, only could I know the hand of a loving Father held it."

"And my dear sir, do you not know that?"

"I know that God is love, but the great thing is to know that He loves me; oh, I have grieved him so!"

"Still you pant for the light of his countenance?"

"I believe I do, sir, as much as any poor chased deer panteth for the water brooks."

"I can assure you, then, my dear sir, there can be no stronger token that your Heavenly Father is not to you an avenging God — you do not fear His stroke, so much you fear his frown."

"Oh, no sir, I know I do not."

"I might, my dear sir, go on and bring before you a multitude of passages from scripture, to prove that my assertion is correct, and if you were a novice in such matters, I should feel it my duty to do it now, but the Bible is before you, and I feel assured you are not unacquainted with its contents. I refer you to it, therefore, with the fullest confidence that you will find this doctrine clearly revealed, '*the spirit of repentance is the token of forgiveness.*'"

For a while Mr. Herbert made no reply, he was evidently pondering the truths which had been unfolded for his comfort, and from appearances a happy effect was being produced in allaying the turmoil of his spirit; his countenance assumed by degrees a more composed aspect, and his nervous restlessness gave way, and he sat like one whose whole being had been touched with the soothing, healing hand of humility; at length, turning toward Mr. Ransom, in a voice somewhat broken, but soft and tender, he said,

"I have much to thank you for, my dear sir, and do most heartily bless God for the instrumentality He has seen fit to use in this my extremity of suffering; you have been indeed a messenger from heaven to me and mine, and now, my dear sir, I must take measures for relieving you of the burden you have so generously taken upon you, and at least compensate you for the expense you have incurred in your deed of love. You think that Willie is ready to return home?"

"He told me to say to you, that he heartily asked your forgiveness for any impropriety in his language, and if you insisted upon it, he would return at once; but he begged me at the same time to use my influence to persuade you to permit him to remain where he is, until such time as he can be fitted for a situation in a store; his mind is inclin-



ed that way, and he seems intensely ambitious to take care of himself, and I have felt it my duty to encourage that feeling; half the battle of life is won when that spirit possesses man or boy."

"You are right there, sir. Oh that I could gratify the dear boy, and comply with his request, it would be the highest wish of my heart, but my dear sir, I must not hide from you my situation. I am in reality a poor man, although surrounded with apparent means. I cannot pay the charges which would be necessarily incurred by the plan he proposes. Two years at least must pass, before he would be old enough to be of such service as would be equal to his board."

"If that is all the difficulty, my dear sir, it is soon got over; he would remain with me, until a situation could be obtained for him."

"That would certainly meet my views, I could wish him under no better care; but the obstacle, my dear sir, is insurmountable—it is not in my power to pay for his board. If it could be done by personal sacrifice on my part, I should not hesitate a moment; but I see no way to do it."

"Well, sir, perhaps you think my interposition in behalf of your dear child, and my care for him thus far, entitle me to the privilege of asking a favor from you."

"Any thing in my power to grant."

"Then, sir, I ask in behalf of myself and my dear wife, who has become equally with myself attached to the boy, that you allow him to remain with us, free of any charge to you; his education preparatory to a mercantile life, shall be attended to, and I doubt not my influence with friends in the city, will enable him at a suitable age to procure a proper situation."

"But, my dear sir, how can I do this? knowing as I do, that gentlemen of your calling are in most cases paid only enough for a bare subsistence; it would be injustice to your own family; your generous feelings I cannot thus impose upon."

"Set your mind perfectly at rest on that point, Mr. Herbert; I am not rich, neither am I very poor. I have hitherto by prudent care in such matters, been enabled

not only to live comfortably, but to keep something in reserve for an emergency. I have never yet been straitened for the want of means to supply the necessaries and real comforts of life, and I never allow my generosity to go ahead of my ability; but aside from this, sir, your little son will not be so dependent as you may imagine; in many ways his great desire to be useful, and to prepare himself for the struggle with life, enables him to be of real service, and as I have said, I encourage that spirit in him, because I look upon it as the germ of future success; the ambition of the boy, becomes the energy and determination of the man."

"Oh, sir, can all this be so! and has my Willie been thus taken from my hands, and the little castaway been led by the hand of his Heavenly Father to the care of those much better fitted to make him happy and useful! His young heart has not trusted God in vain. Oh, sir, keep him if you say so, and may your guidance direct him into a happier path than his poor father has taken."

"But that path, my dear sir, is not, I trust, to be so dark as it has been; hereafter I hope there will be brighter hues tinging its edges. 'When He giveth peace who can make trouble then?'"

### CHAPTER III.

As the Rev. Mr. Ransom will have more or less to do, in many of the scenes in this story, the reader may very naturally desire to know something more about him personally.

When the Rev. Robert Ransom was called to settle over the parish of the Presbyterian church in Woodburn, N. Y., he was a little past thirty-three years of age, and had been by some thought rather dilatory in taking hold of his life work; he had been studying for the purpose of preaching the gospel—they said he had been a long time

doing that, much longer than young men in general; why then should there be further delay after his course of study was through, when ministers of the gospel were so much needed!" But Robert Ransom had formed the idea, that preaching the gospel in our day, and among a people already believers in its main facts, needed something more by way of qualification for the work, than a smattering knowledge of the outlines of theology, and having that idea fixed in his mind, he went steadily on, with the plans he had laid out, listening to the advice of companions and friends, but giving the same reply to all.

"I look upon the ministry as my life business, and feel that the time spent in laying the foundation, and in being suitably prepared for my work, will enable me to accomplish more in a given number of years, than I could possibly do, by being obliged to learn some of the principal duties of my calling after my settlement; if I begin weak I should probably go hobbling all the way through, my labors a drudgery to myself, and not very profitable to others."

"But," they reply, "here you are now twenty-eight or twenty-nine years of age; you have completed your course, and are licensed to preach. Sinners are dying around—the church needs your help—many societies are vacant—you can easily get a call—the best of your days are passing away."

"I agree to all you have said, as true," he answered, except the last idea. I think the best of my days for usefulness, will be those in which, as a master workman who needeth not to be ashamed, I shall be employed in carrying out plans of usefulness which have been laid before hand. If I am to be at the head of a people, I want to be able to lead them, to command their respect, not only for my station, but for my knowledge. If I am to write sermons, I want to have my mind so accustomed to analyze and unfold, and illustrate a subject, that I shall not feel my weekly duty a task, but rather a pleasure; and besides all this, I want to learn a little more than I now know about mankind and the world in general. I must get a little common sense, to carry with me into the pulpit, and among the people of my charge, if I mean to do

them any good, or prevent myself from becoming a subject of criticism, and even ridicule."

And Robert Ransom persisted in carrying out his plan, as preparatory to his final settlement. He had begun quite early to teach, and had by means thereof paid his way through; his course at college and in the seminary was protracted beyond that of his compeers, many of whom were not only through with their studies, but married and settled, and through with their labors among the first people of their charge, and on their travels to hunt up some other shepherdless flock. Teaching he found profitable in more ways than one; it enabled him to become more thoroughly and practically acquainted with the classics, and other branches of knowledge which he had pursued at college; it also assisted him in learning how to gain access to the minds of youth, and the best way of gaining their confidence and respect; and finally it enabled him to live independently, and to lay by something every year, so that by the time he had reached his thirty-third year, he owed no man any thing, and had one thousand dollars at interest. Now this he had accomplished by industry and prudence in a legitimate way, and while at the same time pursuing such a course of reading and study that few men of his own age, could make themselves more engaging in conversation on general topics, or in unfolding and elucidating the word of God. He was not possessed of genius or brilliant talents, yet his mind had a freedom and elasticity that all who came in contact with him felt and acknowledged. He had become a *power in the world*, perhaps not destined to exert an extended influence; *that* he left to God, but no matter how small, or how extended the field of labor to which he might be called; he would be felt as a master spirit equal to his position, a real pillar to the church, a true guide and a firm support to those over whom he might be placed in charge.

His personal appearance was rather commanding—of full ordinary stature, with a pleasing countenance although that had some marks of sternness, just enough to warn those who might be disposed to trifle with him, or the cause he advocated, that there might be some danger in



so doing; his manners were courteous, without any of that fawning politeness which too many ministers of the gospel manifest, as though they felt it a great privilege to be allowed to exist at all, and as if they must be very careful to offend no one, lest umbrage might be taken, and the good will of those they depended on for a support be lost, and then what should they do! Mr. Ransom loved his work, and went straight forward in the plan laid out by him for doing it, without stopping to ask whether this or that course would be agreeable, or whether his people would bear such and such a strain upon their sensibilities. He had used his common sense in mingling with mankind, and was wise enough to know, that a good doctrine may be so constantly and strenuously insisted on, as to pall upon the ears of even the best of people, and that to accomplish the end of preaching, he must get hold of the *heart*, which could not in most cases be effected by mere declamation, no matter how forcible the voice, nor how repeated the dogmatic utterance. In fact he judged his audience by himself; if his own heart deeply sympathized in the subject, and guided his thoughts and his pen, if the words he uttered stirred the depths of his own soul, he believed they would not fall upon the ears of others, like the jingle of an old song that has lost its power — a weariness or a lullaby.

Mr. Ransom was in his thirty-third year when he received his call to the church at Woodburn; he was not looking for a place, but as he had for a year past been employed almost every Sabbath in supplying vacant pulpits, while having the charge of a large school, it happened that on several occasions, he had preached at Woodburn, and on each successive occasion won more and more the confidence and interest of the people, until at length he was waited upon by a committee of the session, with the report of a unanimous call.

Having made up his mind that so far as he could himself judge, the time had come when he could with some assurance take upon him the responsibility of a pastor's duties, he of course was ready to hear the proposals.

"Mr. Ransom, perhaps as you know we are not a wealthy people," this was said by one of the committee.

"I have not thought of that matter, sir, nor can I well see what bearing the question has upon the subject before us."

"Oh, well sir, so far as this, you may think the salary small, and so it is, but sir, although we are in general a plain people, in fair moderate circumstances, yet there are some few pretty wealthy folks, and as they have taken a notion to you, we have no doubt they would subscribe quite liberally, that is one side of the salary; and no doubt you would receive some pretty handsome presents, in the course of the year, so that take it altogether, perhaps you would find as good pay for your services here, as in most places in the country."

Here it was that Mr. Ransom was enabled to bring his practical acquaintance with mankind to bear happily on his own mind; he did not allow himself to be offended by the suggestions of the gentleman. The idea he knew was a very general one, that the pulpit was sought as a means of livelihood, too much occasion was constantly given for such an opinion, he therefore, without taking special notice of the insinuation, replied,

"In reference to salary, sir, I leave that to be determined by the ability of the society, and through its regular organization. I have not been in the habit of depending on charitable donations, and do not intend placing myself in such a position if, by any possibility it can be avoided. I presume the amount raised for the support of religious ordinances, is done in the usual way either by a tax or the rent of the pews."

"For some years it has been by a tax on the pews."

"And I presume you wish your minister to have a decent support, so that his mind may not be harassed by the cares of life."

"That, I am pretty sure, is the wish of our people, but somehow or other, sir, our salary does not seem to answer that end, and we have had in general every two or three years, to go round with a paper and collect quite a sum that way, and sometimes we get up some kind of a party — a donation party, or some such thing — for you see the pastor had run up some bills at the stores, and he had no means to meet them, and that you know was bad, but

this plan don't always answer; people get dissatisfied, and many of them who are the most able decline giving anything; they say, that considering there is a parsonage, a decent house and a few acres of land, enough to keep a horse and cow the year round, with a salary of seven hundred dollars a year, and perquisites occasionally, a minister ought to live comfortably."

"But, sir," chimed in the other officer who had hitherto been silent, "I believe there is such a feeling in favor of Mr. Ransom, that several of our able men will be willing to put their names down for quite a sum, so as to make the salary all right, if that should be in the way of the reverend gentleman's acceptance."

"I would merely say, gentlemen," replied Mr. Ransom, "you are giving yourselves unnecessary trouble in reference to the raising of money; my determination to settle here as your pastor, will be influenced by other considerations entirely. I am not willing to decide upon our short acquaintance that it is my duty to accept your invitation, but I will engage to remain with you one year, and if at the end of that term, the people shall be desirous that I should be permanently settled, and I shall have a fair prospect for usefulness here, then our connection may be consummated, and as you say seven hundred dollars is the sum raised in the regular way as salary, it will be more than I shall need for the coming year, two thirds of that sum will be quite sufficient."

As no objections could be made to such a proposal, the matter was soon settled.

The next thing to be arranged was, as to his place of residence; he was unmarried, and although engaged, both he and the young lady preferred putting off the nuptials until he should be permanently located. Many families among the people were quite anxious to receive him as a member, but he preferred at once to take possession of the parsonage, and all the aid he asked, was that a suitable person should be found to take charge of household matters, and a young man to attend to such out door work as the place required.

It was somewhat of a disappointment to those of the congregation, who would have been willing to receive the

young minister under their roof, as a member of their family, for the sake of the influence they might acquire over him, and the opportunity of giving him advice, and warning him against placing too much confidence in certain individuals, and unfolding to him generally the personal characteristics of those over whom he was to be placed. But Mr. Ransom was not so young as to be caught in that trap; he wanted no information about his people that he could not obtain through his knowledge of human nature in general. He determined to go in and out among them free from all partiality or bias. His sole object being to strengthen the faith of true believers and quicken them to diligence in their path to heaven, and to win the impenitent to the Saviour; he wished for no knowledge of their peculiarities, but such as he could ascertain by intercourse with them.

All along through the year the house and its premises, by a very gradual process, kept putting on a more finished and agreeable aspect. Every thing was straightened and repaired, and without ado and at trifling cost; it must have been, for all was done without any call upon the people.

"It looks," said one of the people to Mr. Bellows, one of the leading men of the session, "as though our young minister means to make a life stay of it; he is getting things into better shape than they have ever been in my day."

"Yes, that is true, friend Ross, and to my mind things are getting into better shape among us in every way."

"But what does it mean, Mr Bellows, that he is so intimate with the Episcopalians? he and Mr. Janeway seem to be as much together as if they had been old college friends."

"Oh, I-guess there will no harm come of it; it may be as you say, that they were old college friends. I guess he will be careful."

This last sentence expressed what had been a general sentiment among the people of both denominations, to their shame, be it said. They each felt a shyness of the other. There was no open hostility, but a distrust, which separated them as christians, and even tended very mate-

rially to interfere and prevent social intercourse. They never visited each other's place of worship, preferring even to remain at home on the sabbath if their own pulpit was not supplied, rather than engaging in prayer and praise with those who merely differed as to forms of worship.

Now Mr. Ransom, in looking around at the condition of things, noticed this circumstance, and without making it a subject of remark, resolved, as he considered it an error, to use his influence in having it corrected.

According to custom it belonged to Mr. Janeway to make the first call, as he was already a resident of the place when Mr. Ransom took up his abode there; and no doubt he would have done so at an early day had he not been restrained by influences which had great power with a sensitive mind. The reverend gentleman had, during the period in which the Presbyterian parish was without a settled pastor, taken the liberty occasionally of calling upon some of the sick belonging to that denomination, none particularly, but who happened to reside near to his home. He called rather as a neighbor than as a minister, but by some of the sick he was requested to have prayer by their bedside, and that, with his christian converse at the time, tended to draw the hearts, not only of the afflicted persons themselves, but of their families towards the good man; and it was taken notice of by some of the leading members of the Presbyterian order, that it had become quite a common occurrence for families living in the vicinity of the Episcopal church, to step in there and worship on the sabbath when the weather was not so favorable for a walk or ride to a distance; and to the shame of poor human nature it must be told that this circumstance quite stirred up the minds of some more zealous for Presbyterianism than for a catholic spirit, and they did not hesitate to charge Mr. Janeway and his people, too, "with a desire to proselyte and to win unto their 'godless forms'" — the very expression they used — "them who belonged properly to another denomination." This of course was not said immediately to the reverend gentleman, but he had heard of it, and although he made no efforts to clear himself or his people from the charge, it made him — being of a modest and retiring turn of mind —

very cautious in regard to such matters, and not knowing how the new minister felt as to denominated differences, he feared to do what his heart dictated as desirable. Mr. Ransom, on the other hand, in the largeness of his views, embracing his brother minister and all his people as part of the fold of Christ, did not dare to violate the usual forms of social intercourse by calling first. Thus a distance was kept up between the two young brethren, for they were nearly of an age, for some time, and it would probably have continued for years, if Mr. Ransom had not resolved to do what was in his power to change such an unnatural state of things. It was his habit almost every afternoon to spend an hour or two in a ride on horseback, and at such times he would call on some of the people of his charge, and in that way accomplish two important ends — that of personal intercourse with individuals, and the enjoyment of healthful exercise. One day, as he was riding along a lane that led from the more public road to a spot that afforded a picturesque view of land and water scenery, and was at the same time secluded, so as to allow one disposed for meditation, to enjoy the silent hour amid the beauties of creation — he had been there many times and had never yet met any one on the road or in the vicinity — and it was a marvel to him why so charming a spot should be allowed to remain unnoticed and unvisited. To his surprise, however, he now saw at some distance ahead, a person going in the same direction with himself. He was on foot and walking leisurely. It did not take long so far to lessen the distance between the traveler and himself, ere he could recognize the individual. It was the brother minister, the Rev. Mr. Janeway. As Mr. Ransom came up the two gentlemen politely accosted each other in the usual form, although neither made any pause in his progress, with the exception that the gentleman who was riding, had brought his horse to a walk. Springing from his seat, Mr. Ransom threw the bridle over the saddle and chirruped to his beast, who at once pursued his course leisurely along the road, leaving his master at liberty, who at once offered his hand, which was most cordially grasped.

"I think, brother Janeway, that providence has brought

you and me in this narrow lane, to give us a fair chance to be introduced by Himself, since no one else takes the pains to do it for us."

"I am quite willing, I assure you, sir, thus to construe our present meeting, and hope it may be the beginning of a pleasant acquaintance."

"I see not why it should be otherwise; we are fellow laborers in the same cause, and as two are better than one in almost any work, I feel as if each had a claim to the other's help."

"I agree with you in that, sir, but had you not better stop your horse, he may wander off."

"Oh, I presume he will stop when he gets to the end of the lane, there is a spot in that vicinity I visit frequently."

"From which there is so fine a view?"

"You have been there, then?"

"Oh yes, quite often, and am on my way there now."

"I wonder then we have not met before."

"I generally take the morning for my walk, but this afternoon thought I would try the effect upon the view of a declining instead of an ascending sun. I have often noticed that a vast difference occurs in the aspect of the same locality at different periods of the day."

"Yes, it makes a great difference at times which way the shadows are cast. There is doubtless more brilliancy in the views of nature in the earlier hours, but the chastened aspect she presents at the closing of day, seems more peculiarly fitted to inspire calm and peaceful, and heavenly thoughts."

"I have changed my views somewhat," said Mr. Janeway, "as to the influence of nature over us; since I have had an opportunity to observe more closely the effect produced upon those brought up and living in the country. They seem, in general, obtuse as to any special charm she has to exhibit. For instance, I have remarked that few, if any, of all those I have had opportunity to converse with, seem to realize the quickening power of the fresh, new life of the opening spring, nor the richness of summer in its deepest verdure, nor to me stranger than all, the full golden beauty of the mellow autumn. Why, sir,

persons have told me as I have been expressing my admiration of some view, more beautiful in its variety of blended colors than painter's pencil ever delineated, "that they did think it was rather pretty, but they had never taken any special notice of the fact before."

"Nature, like the arts," replied Mr. Ransom, "must be studied before a full perception of her relative beauties can be enjoyed,—the former however, in the spirit of the old Jewish saints. To them Nature told of God. The Heavens declared His glory, the clouds were His robes, the lightning His fire, the thunder His voice, the earthquake was caused by His touch, and the whirlwind was His chariot. Oh, what a magnificent world it must have been to those who were thus filled with the consciousness of an Omnipresent and Omnipotent God. It seems to me, brother Janeway, that we have got further away from our God than the old Jews, although privileged with a relationship of the most endearing nature."

"Perhaps, brother Ransom, not farther away from Him, but not looking at Him through the same medium. Our minds are watching for the signs of God in the spiritual experience of ourselves and others, and in one sense, that is the only way now in which to us the supernatural is manifest. The old method of communication between heaven and earth, seems to have been done away with; there are no heavenly messengers coming to us unawares, no voices calling to us in the night, no ladder on which we can see the angels of God ascending and descending, no miraculous gifts even to the church; the unseen, silent mysterious working of the Almighty spirit upon the soul of man, bringing light out of darkness and order out of confusion, and peace and purity out of strife and corruption, is now our only witness, or at least the only one we are the habit of giving heed to, that God is on the throne and that we are His children."

"And add to that, brother Janeway, that we have philosophized God out of the universe, or at best but allow Him the credit of having first started the machinery, and established laws by which the mighty engine must be governed, and then left it to go on in its involutions and evolutions, accomplishing the vast and inscrutable designs

of its mighty builder, without any direction but those laws which at first He established for its guidance. Oh, my dear sir, when I think of the place which philosophy would give our God in His universe, I am ready to cry out with Mary Magdalene, 'they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid him.' They would rob us of our Heavenly Father, and leave us in the grasp of unalterable Fate."

"You spoke just now, brother Ransom, of the old Jewish saints; have you ever thought of the probable subjects that occupied the mind of Isaac as he was abroad in the fields meditating at the eventide. Sometimes we think we have a more privileged condition than the patriarchs in the clearer revelation of the New Testament and the more complete developments of the Divine will; but there must have been a reality in the connection between heaven and earth, in the interest which God and his angels take in the affairs of men, to their minds which we find it hard to grasp. How could Isaac doubt the words of his own father, when he told of the many times from Uz of the Chaldees, to Haran, and from Haran to Bersheba through all his journeyings, God had appeared to him, spoken words to him full of rich promise, not only for his posterity, but through them to the whole world. And from the field when he was meditating, could he not see the very hills, now stricken with the curse of God, that rose above the sea of Sodom. A year before his own birth that desolate region was a fruitful valley, his own father had told him of the visit of the three travelers in the heat of day, of the feast made to welcome them, of his surprise to find out that they were messengers from heaven, that they had come down to visit Sodom and were commissioned to destroy it if the report of it in heaven was found to be correct; and Abraham himself had seen the smoke of that terrible fire 'ascend up as the smoke of a great furnace.'"

"Yes, my dear sir, and it did not trouble him," replied Mr. Ransom, "how the fire was kindled, whether the soil was full of bituminous matter and kindled by a lightning flash, or whether a volcano threw forth the burning elements that had been there rumbling for ages; to Him it

was simply the hand of God. 'God rained fire and brimstone from heaven upon it, and he did it because of their wickedness.' Oh, how grand in his simplicity looms up the figure of that good old Abraham pleading for that guilty place! How modest his request! How respectfully is each petition worded! How sure he seems to be that Sodom and his nephew would be safe, for the promise was at last given him, that if there were only *ten* righteous souls in it, the judgment should be stayed. Yes, truly Isaac could not be at a loss for themes on which to meditate, although he had no Bible on which to draw. He could look back upon the journey to Moriah, upon the altar he helped to build, upon the gleaming knife raised aloft and just stayed in time by the voice from heaven. Yes, brother Janeway, I often have reflected upon the lives of those good old men, although I must say you have given me a new idea in the subject of Isaac's meditation in the evening hour. So you see my suggestion that we might be mutual helpers in the work assigned us, has already been verified."

"I am happy in the belief that we may by our mutual intercourse, my dear sir, pass many pleasant and profitable hours; but I have my doubts as to the help we shall be able to afford each other in the special work in which we are engaged; there seems to me a strange and very marked distrust and jealousy existing between the two denominations, and I very much fear any attempt on our part to break it may only make matters worse."

"I will tell you, brother Janeway, what we must do. 'We must look around.' I spent the last year at the house of a minister somewhat advanced in life; not a learned man or a man of genius, but very wise in his dealings with man. It was a common saying of his in reference to accomplishing any design where prejudices and old customs were to be encountered, 'We must look round a bit and watch our chance.' And I think the idea a good one. In all attempts to break down old prejudices great caution must be used, and time must work the salutary change; if we are known to be on friendly terms with each other, that will do something towards it, and the exercise of a large charity in our own hearts will



have a powerful, though unseen, and perhaps unconscious influence over the hearts of our people — at any rate let us look around, step cautiously and act conscientiously, and if we cannot accomplish all we would — we may do more than we now can anticipate."

And thus an intercourse was commenced between the two young ministers, that was to them individually a source of enjoyment and profit. They took no pains to conceal their intimacy from public notice. Walking together, and riding together and mutually visiting each other's study, but carefully avoiding all attempts to meddle with denominational peculiarities. There was at first more or less talk and a great deal of wondering, but the conclusion which most arrived at was, "that there would no harm come of it."

The year at length came round for which Mr. Ransom had stipulated, when the trial was to be made whether the people were satisfied to settle him as their spiritual guide, and whether he felt satisfied that this was the part of the vineyard where the master would have him work; and as he had gone on through the year in a straight forward course, pursuing what he thought the path of duty, courting no man's favor, although exercising towards all that gentle, Christ-like demeanor which is far removed from servility as from haughty indifference; he could not but feel that the voice of the people under such circumstances would be to him the voice of God. He had acted through his year of trial as he should continue to act after he should be permanently settled. He knew what work he had to perform, and his ability to perform it had been fully tested, so that both parties, if an alliance should be formed, had a fair and full understanding.

The result was that the call which had been originally made was fully confirmed, and the Rev. Robert Ransom was to be ordained pastor of the church at Woodburn, with a salary of seven hundred dollars a year exclusive of the parsonage. This building, with the land attached — about twelve acres — was a gift, in the early part of the establishment of the church, by an old sea captain. The house was a substantial stone building, of one story in height, with four good sized rooms on a floor, a wide hall

running through it, a wing on the north side used for a kitchen, and a back building appropriate for a spare room or study. The place did not present a very inviting appearance when Mr. Ransom first took possession of it. The building itself was sound and had been kept in good repair, but the fences had been neglected, and the garden had a wild appearance, the former pastor being a man of studious habits and perhaps rather indolent, had taken no care beyond the raising of a few of the more necessary vegetables, and had allowed the shrubs and plants intended for ornament to have their own way; even the raspberry hedge had been untrimmed for years, and presented an aspect of wildness equal to any thing that could be found on a swamp ditch. The land too, which spread in two pretty level fields back of the house, had very much the appearance of a common, for although there was abundance of fencing material lying along where the fences ought to be, they were useless as a protection against marauders, and of course stray cows and horses, as well as sheep and hogs, had monopolized these premises, and seemed quite at home on them. Mr. Ransom soon perceived what was needed, and therefore made the request as already stated, that a man should be procured to attend to out door labors, as well as a woman of respectable character and ability to take charge of domestic matters. He saw clearly that with proper management the land and the garden might be made to yield a suitable return for the cost of labor, and without the necessary care and labor they would be useless appendages to the establishment, and be doing a positive injury, for he could not but judge that such untidy surroundings to the mansion of a minister, must eventually injure the respect of his people as much as ungain and untidy garments, on his person. It was not long after he took possession before an entirely new aspect was witnessed.

"Was there ever such a change in any place as our young minister has made in the parsonage the few months he has been there!" said the wife of Mr. Bellows, one of the leading men in the church, to a company of ladies at a social gathering beneath her own roof; "every thing is in order, and as neat as his own personal appearance."

"And Mr. Graham says," replied a lady, "that he has only employed a carpenter for three days; all the work has been done by the man he has hired for the year, and Mr. Stowell says the people ought to make him a handsome present, for he has made the property worth more than it was by some hundred dollars."

"Well, I guess there will be presents enough; we shall all have a chance to do something, when the year is round, and he is ordained and brings his lady home, and I think we had better see to it and have a subscription made, and get enough to furnish the parlor complete. What do you think, Mrs. Bellows?"

"Why, to tell you the truth, Mrs. Graham, I have my doubts as to the matter, for the reason that Mr. Ransom seems to be peculiar about such things. Mr. Bellows says that when he first called on Mr. Ransom, as one of the committee of settlement, that there were some things said by Mr. Ransom, in the course of conversation, that gave them to understand that he would only receive as salary what should be raised through the regular society organization. But he may feel different about such a plan as you propose, only I think the arrangement had better be made very quietly; let the paper be handed only to a few of the more able people and not carried round in general."

"But in that case," replied Mrs. Graham, "it will not be a gift from the people in general; you know all will want to feel that they have done something, if it is ever so little, so that when they visit there they can have the satisfaction of feeling that they had a hand in it, and that no matter how handsome it is, they helped to furnish it and have a sort of right to enjoy it."

"True, one would feel a little more at home in it, to know that she had helped to furnish it."

But the good ladies were doomed to disappointment, which for a time had like to have disturbed the quiet of the church in general; and but for the good sense and prudent management of the trustees and elders, might have been of a serious nature; for women are not always alive to consequences, nor lovely as they in general are, more ready than the sterner sex to be thwarted in their

plans, especially if they be in their view plans of benevolence.

All the arrangements had been made for the ordination, and on the evening of that day Mr. Ransom was to be united to the fair one whom he had chosen and whom he dearly loved. It was the early spring, and every thing around the parsonage had been put in the most perfect order. The garden as neat, as nice taste and skillful hands could arrange it, and the borders filled with the choicest flowers, just opening to the genial sunshine, when a load of goods was seen to drive up from the sloop that had reached her moorings the past night, and pass on in the direction of the minister's house. It was quite bulky in appearance, but from the ease with which the horses trotted along the level highway, it could not be very weighty. A covering had been carefully spread over the articles as if to protect them from the dust or from general observation, and this in itself was enough to excite curiosity. It would be a very superfluous waste of thought in a city to give anything like a guess as to where the different vehicles were going, or with what they were freighted; every one there has enough business on hand of a personal nature to prevent any curious surmises as to their neighbors' comings and goings; but in the country there is leisure enough to do all one has to do for himself or herself, and to keep a running account of the more general affairs of others. There is nothing malicious designed by it, it merely manifests how much of a family concern the whole settlement has become, and how much interest they take in one another. "Now this loaded wagon must have come from the landing; it must be furniture, for it was not heavy in proportion to its bulk, and it must be going to the parsonage, for the team belonged to Bradford, who lived near to it, and there was no other house in the place that was not already furnished." Mrs. Graham, among others had guessed this out, and the wagon had not gone a hundred rods past her house before her bonnet and shawl were on, and she making all decent haste towards the house of her neighbor, Mrs. Bellows.

"Did you see that wagon go by," was the first excla-



mation of Mrs. Bellows after giving her friend the customary salutation, "and what does it mean?"

"It means, I fear, that our plan is defeated, and I have told my husband again and again that we should be too late; the things ought to have been got a week ago, and not left so to the last minute."

"Then you think that was a load of furniture for the parsonage?"

"I know it; it was Bradford's team, he lives, you know, close by Mr. Ransom; he brought it from the sloop that came in last night, and I could see plain enough the leg of a chair sticking out nicely, as he thought every thing was covered up. Now, Betsey, we won't lose any time; where is Mr. Bellows?"

"He has just gone to give the man some directions about plowing, but he will be back in a few minutes, for he has promised to spend this day helping me arrange my flower beds; did you ever see any thing so sweet as Mr. Ransom's garden. He will make a good husband, I know, for he seems so fond of flowers, and has taken so much pains to have such a fine assortment."

"Well, if he is not fond of them himself, I expect somebody else is, and that shows well in him. A man that is desirous to please his wife in small things, will be very likely to do it in more important matters; but as you say, his garden puts us all to shame. I never saw Graham so worked up about the garden before; why, he kept two men out of the field yesterday the whole live-long day, and himself too, working for dear life. 'Ah, ha!' I said to him, 'you are getting quite gallant, you think I suppose, that the young lady who is coming must be fond of a nice garden, or there would not have been so much care taken to prepare one for her?'"

"Well Mattie," he replied, "I must say, I never before thought a garden made such a difference in the appearance of things; you shall have a nice garden after this, I promise you." So you see, Betsey, our minister is doing good in more ways than one. But I want so to see Mr. Bellows; he is the very man to go for us, and he must do it right off. He must go and see Mr. Ransom and let him

know all about it, and that we wish to furnish his best parlor, and that it shall be done handsomely; and then you see if he has got furniture for it already, no doubt it will be rather plain, and he can take it for some other room. Now don't you think Mr. Bellows will go?"

"He will go if you ask him, no doubt, for you know you are quite a favorite of his."

"Am I? well, then it is tit for tat, for he is a favorite with all the ladies — but here he comes. Oh, Mr. Bellows, I am so glad to see you."

"Glad to see me! then I know you girls have something in the wind. What is it?"

"We want you to go right off and see Mr. Ransom about our business; he will have his house all furnished before we get a single thing done."

"What makes you think so?"

"Reason enough. Bradford has just gone past with a large load of furniture."

"Well, what of that?"

"Why, it is a good deal of a matter. No doubt it is for Mr. Ransom; and now we want you to go right off and see Mr. Ransom, and let him know what we ladies want, and if he has procured furniture for his best room, tell him he can take that for some other room. What we wish is to furnish his best room, and that we will do it handsomely. Now do go, will you not? You are intimate with him, more so than any one else, and the most suitable person to break the matter to him."

"I tell you what, Mattie," said Mr. Bellows, taking a seat, "I would do almost any thing to oblige you, or your good husband — to say nothing of my wife — but I hate most confoundedly to have anything to do about this business. I know Mr. Ransom, or I think I do, better than any of you."

"Well, then you are the very person to go to him; and besides, what objections can there be? There can be no possible difficulty, only that he may have purchased furniture already, but as we say, he can make use of that in other rooms."

"If you would give me time to speak, Mattie, I would tell you where the difficulty lies. You see, Mr. Ransom

is as odd about some things as Dick's hat band, and you know all about that."

"How you do talk, Edward Bellows! Mr. Ransom odd! I thought you esteemed him so highly."

"So I do. There is no man I know that I would put along side of him — there is no man I would do more to oblige, and there is no man in the world to whom I would go, if at any time I had any trouble and wanted the sympathy of a true friend, so soon as him — and there is no one whose advice I should value so much as his. He is as true as steel. He is a diamond, a pure diamond, and yet I tell you he is odd. Now don't look so glum and downcast. I am not saying what need hurt your feelings. I would not do that, for I know you ladies all love him almost to making some of your husbands jealous, and yet you do not any of you think as highly of him as I do. I know him — I have been intimate with him — I have talked hours and hours with him, and never yet got tired. He has treated me with the utmost politeness, and his study seems like home to me when I get into it; but after all, there seems somehow a line between him and me that I should not dare to step over. One can go so near to it but no further. How he does it, or what there is in him that keeps him as it does, within a certain enclosure where no other man can come, is more than I can say."

"And you are afraid that in going to him, and making known our wishes, you might possibly cross that line. Edward Bellows, it is all your imagination!"

"Well, Mattie, I will tell you what I will do; if Charlie will go with me, I will venture it."

"He will go."

"How do you know?"

"Do you think Charlie Graham would say no, if I told him most seriously that my heart was set upon it?"

"I suppose likely you have a way of getting round him like most other wives; but go at once and hurry him along, for I must finish the job as soon as possible. I have promised Betsey to spend the whole day as her gardener; so tell Charlie to hurry along."

And Charles Graham under some charm which his lovely wife knew how to exercise, did hurry along, for it was

less than an hour after the scene described above, that the two gentlemen were on their way to the parsonage — going not to please themselves, nor fully under the influence of their own judgment as to the propriety of their errand.

"If he was like any other minister we ever had here, Graham, I should feel different about this matter, but you know what he told us when we were fixing about his salary — there must be no raising of subscriptions — he wanted nothing in that way — what salary he received must come to him through our organized method of raising money."

"Well, Bellows, we might almost call that an organized method. Why, in the next town, one third of the salary is raised by subscription, and that of only three men."

"I know it, and everybody has to take off their hat to them; and their ministers know it, and feel bound to be very obsequious to them, and if possible do or say nothing to offend them. I never thought of the matter as I now do, or when you and I went to propose terms of settlement to Mr. Ransom, I would never have made such a fool of myself as I did."

"Nor I either; but it is such a common thing, or it has been in many places, that I presume few think at all of the effect it has on the mind of the minister. Here we are, though — you will be the spokesman."

"What splendid tulips! sweet scented, too!" This was said as they were passing through the path from the front gate, its borders lined with bunches of that rich flower intermingled with hyacinths; the air was filled with their fragrance.

"Well, gentlemen, you find me in the midst of, I was going to say, housekeeping, but more properly, house arranging. I am glad to see you, though; come in if you can find your way through my trumpery. We have placed it all in the hall, as Alice, my housekeeper, insists upon it the floors must be scrubbed before the carpets can go down, though where there is any dirt to scrub off is more than I can see; women, however, about such matters must have their own way."

"It will be well for you sir, if you have profited by what experience Alice has taught you, it may save trouble in future. Women must not only have their way in the house, but sometimes about matters out of the house, too; for instance, here are brother Graham and myself called off from our employments, at the bidding of two ladies, whom for very good reasons we do not like to disobey, on an errand to our minister, which we think might just as well have been done by ladies as by us."

"Perhaps they had so much regard to my feelings, that is, if it be a question of yes or no — as not to be willing I should be put to pain in their presence, if unfortunately the latter answer must be given."

"That or something else, at any rate, Mr. Ransom, we have a commission to you from them, and I don't know how many others, but it must be delivered to you in private."

"Pass on then into my study, gentlemen, you both know the way; in a few moments I will be at leisure."

"New paper in here, too! how very neat, Graham, is it not?" This was said as they entered the room.

"Perfectly so, and how orderly everything is arranged; this seems to me, Bellows, whenever I come into it, or think of it, as a kind of holy place — as though nothing impure could stick to any thing — no doubt it is a place of much prayer."

"Those same feelings effect me in reference to this room. I never feel like trifling here, and that makes me think of an idea that has come into my head lately; why would it not be a good plan for any of us to have a room — call it a library or what you please — but a place where every day at certain seasons of it, we could go and sit down and shut the door, and be alone and think. Let the room be to us a sort of Bethel, and resolve with ourselves that when we enter there, every passion that might be working in our breasts that was wrong, should be immediately hushed — just as if we had come into the presence of the Searcher of hearts, and must expel anger, malice, envy, jealousy, pride, covetousness, and every hurtful lust — let the room in fact, be to us a consecrated spot."

"It is a good idea. I never thought of it before, but I believe it would be good for us. I am glad you suggested it, for you know I am about making an addition to my house; I mean to have such a room, Bellows."

"And I will too — that is, I mean to coax Betsey, to let me have one of our rooms — we have more than we can really make use of. The fact is as you say, we want time for thinking — that is, for thinking, and meditating and praying, and not let the world run away with us altogether."

"Well gentlemen," said Mr. Ransom, as he entered the room, "I am at your service, now."

"Our story, sir, is a short one, and soon told. You must know, Mr. Ransom, that it has got to be very much the custom in most parishes for the people, and more especially the ladies, when a young minister is about to settle, to club together and show their kind feelings by doing something by way of relieving him of expense, by furnishing his house, or a least some portion of it — and as our ladies know that part of your house is already supplied, they have proposed among themselves to raise money enough to fit out one room designed for your best parlor, and to do it handsomely. The money is all on hand, and more can be had if needed, and the furniture would have been bought and sent here, but I advised them: that you should be consulted first, as you might possibly have some choice about a selection."

"I thank you very much, brother Bellows, for your consideration of my feelings, and I wish you both, brethren, to say to your good ladies, and through them to all the generous hearts that have devised this plan of expressing their interest in me — that I feel deeply this token of their kindness; it is worth more to me than ten times the value in money they propose to expend. I thank them most heartily, but if you are not too much in haste, I should like to say a few things to you, and let you know a little how I feel about this and other matters, and my reasons for it."

"If you can spare the time sir, I think we can."

"I rather think neither of us have much time to spare at present, but as this matter is, as I view it, a subject of

most importance both to you and me, perhaps we shall each of us feel that the time consumed will not have been wasted. When I made up my mind to make the Gospel ministry my life work, I resolved to do all in my power to prepare myself suitably for it. I did not intend to take the shortest cut to the pulpit, and throw myself upon providence to assist me when I got there to fulfill its duties. I believed that some experience at least, was necessary to enable me, or any other young man, to take the responsible position of a settled pastor, and fill it to the honor of God, and the profit of his people. I therefore determined to look well around and mark as I was able, such events in the course of my preparatory studies, as would throw light upon my own future path of duty. I wished to learn as far as possible where the rocks and quicksands lay, against which so many ministers get wrecked or injured; for this purpose, whenever I could obtain board in the family of a settled pastor, I did so; and as in general, I found such families, if not straitened for means, at least very ready to add to their receipts the profit from my board, I had seldom any difficulty in getting the accommodation. And now, gentlemen, to say nothing of the many things thus brought under my inspection, from which I hope I have learned some useful lessons, I will merely relate to you a few items that have a bearing upon our present topic.

"In several societies amongst which I was thrown, I noticed that although there was apparently abundant means to have provided for their minister a regular salary that would have met all his necessities, they seemed to prefer that the nominal salary should be only large enough to eke out a bare subsistence, and to bestow as largess in different ways the requisite balance. Some ministers, I thought, were quite willing thus to receive their allowance, and seemed to feel that it helped to encourage kind and generous dispositions in their people. I had my own thoughts on the matter, and drew different conclusions as to the effect on the pastor as well as the people. Perhaps the sensibilities of such ministers and their families may not have been as keen as most others, or from habit been blunted, for in some cases I have witnessed much

suffering from the mortification of justifiable pride in the humiliating manner that those offerings of benevolence, if you can call them so, have been prosecuted.

"Two instances have made a deep and lasting impression on my mind, and I will relate them.

"One was that of a family in which, previous to my becoming a member of it, I was somewhat intimate. The gentleman himself was not, and probably never would be a popular minister; his preliminary course had been as short as could, with any prospect of success, enable a man of superior talents, and robust health to meet the demands of his situation, and he was not a man of more than ordinary capacity, nor did he enjoy firm health. He married and was settled as a pastor. At first, as in most cases, quite an amount of interest was manifested—great attention was paid him and his lady, and his house was in part furnished by the gratuities of his people. Whether his family was as prudent in outlay as might have been, I cannot say, but as far as I could observe, there was no waste, and no disposition to extravagance. They lived barely in respectability. But I know there was a constant dearth of means to provide what seemed to be the necessities of life, and I often felt pained to notice the care that had to be taken with the outer garments in which he officiated on the Sabbath, that they might at least have a decent appearance.

"During my stay there, it had become in some way noised among the people that there was a necessity for aid, and some of the leading ladies proposed a donation party, and a donation party was of course got up, and in order to see how it worked, I remained that evening, and assisted, as far as I could, in relieving both the pastor and his wife from the trouble of waiting upon so many people. It had been a fatiguing day to both of them as well as the other members of the family, for the house had to be disarranged in its ordinary form, and one bed and bedstead had to be removed, that the room might better subserve the purpose for which it was needed. There was also more than ordinary care to be taken that everything throughout the house should be in order, for as the house was to be thrown open to the public, the public would be

apt to pry more or less into its nooks and corners. I noticed through the day that the lady looked rather sad, and in that respect the opposite of her husband. He, poor man, no doubt elated with the prospect of relief from present demands upon an empty purse, and of having that replenished too, wore quite a lively expression on his countenance, and went about with alacrity, assisting all in his power to help forward the arrangements. I had known Mrs. G——, we will for convenience call her by that name, before she was married. Her family was highly respectable, but the parents not in a situation to give her a large setting out; they did what they could, and with, as I have said, the aid afforded by the people in furnishing part of the house, it was well supplied with good and necessary furniture. Mrs. G—— however, had never known what it was to be straitened; she was lovely in appearance and in character, and might no doubt have selected from among her suitors some one who could have placed her in circumstances of independence, but Mr. G—— won her heart and gave his own in return, but that was all he had to give — in fact when he married he was still deeply in debt for his education.”

“Do you not think that is wrong, sir?”

“To what do you allude, brother Bellows?”

“Why, that a minister should marry while in debt for his education. What chance has he after he is married and settled, with the salaries they are generally allowed, to pay up arrearages. It is as much as they can do in most cases barely to live.”

“It does not seem right to *me*, but those who do so no doubt anticipate some means of accomplishing it, or they would not venture such an injustice. I look upon it as wrong for any man to run in debt, unless he has at least very probable means in reversion wherewith it may be liquidated. A man in business may indeed, for some years, be indebted for much of the capital on which he works; but if he be an honest man, those who loan him are fully aware of his circumstances and of their own risks for which, in many cases, a compensation is also paid; but debt, under any circumstances, is to my mind a burden. A man is not a free man — his manliness is injured by it,

and for a minister to have such a weight upon his mind, to have such a spectre to haunt him in his study or his pulpit — to be obliged to feel that he owes any man but that love which his fellow likewise owes to him — is a situation no sane man ought to throw himself into. But to go on with my story. Towards evening the company began to assemble, bringing along their bags, baskets and bundles. These contained various articles for use in a family, with quite a large proportion of cake and biscuit, and such other knick-knacks as were to furnish a table — for the company were to enjoy a feast together, as well as to comfort the hearts of their pastor and his family by their donation. Mrs. G—— did not anticipate this part of the arrangement — in fact she was a novice in such matters, and this was her first introduction to donation parties. It took her therefore by surprise, as she entered her eating apartment, to find all the tables gathered and stretched out to make as large a surface as possible.”

“‘Oh, Mrs. G——,’ said a sprightly young lady, ‘we have just been looking for you — where shall we find your table cloths — we shall probably want several of them.’”

“Mrs. —, was somewhat confused — first, by the pert manner of the girl, and then by the unexpected demand. She had table cloths enough to cover all the tables, but some of them had been used, and would not answer as mates to those which were clean, and she was obliged to state the difficulty.

“‘Oh, well,’ said another lady, ‘it does not matter — here Kate, you run to Mrs. L——, in the neighborhood, and ask her for her largest dinner cloth — she has plenty, I know.’”

“As Mrs. G—— found that for the time being, her place as mistress of her own house had been usurped, and not feeling quite reconciled to the fact, yet afraid to manifest any displeasure, lest the harmony of the meeting should be destroyed, gently submitted — or submitted with as good grace as possible, and stood a sad spectator of the doings. Her closets were entered, and their contents brought forth — crockery and glass ware passing through the hands of thoughtless, laughing girls, and so alarmingly jingling together, it seemed miraculous that



the most of them did not break in the encounter. In the meantime Miss Kate comes in, out of breath, and calls out,

"Mrs. L—— says her large table cloths are in the wash and the small ones in use."

"Dear me," exclaims another, "strange enough that there ain't clean table linen enough in the neighborhood to cover a few tables—how is it, Mrs. G——, are your cloths very dirty?"

"They are not *very* dirty, but are somewhat soiled."

"Do let us have them—we will turn them or cover up the spots."

"The soiled cloths were at length produced, and the table loaded and covered with a bountiful variety. But it appeared that the guests were also bountifully supplied with an appetite, and as quite a large proportion of those present was made up of the boys and girls of the age when cake and good things generally have a relish—it was surprising how few articles of any value were left after the feast was over."

"The exercises of the evening were various—a good deal of running about was accomplished, and the young people getting into one of the upper room, carried on a romp that occasionally jarred the whole house, and must have jarred harshly the feeling of its sensitive mistress, whose ideas of propriety were not at all in harmony with those who had taken possession of the premises."

"The most trying part of the ceremonies of the evening, however, was the passing of the hat."

"What was the object of that?" suddenly exclaimed both gentlemen.

"The object no doubt was a good one; it was to collect money for the use of the pastor from those who had come there and perhaps not brought along their bonus, and who might otherwise slip off after having had a good time, and without contributing anything. This method of collecting money might have done, although disgusting at best, if it had been confined to such parts of the house where none but strangers were present, but when I saw it passing round in the room where the pastor and his wife were seated, and even handed to those who were

sitting by their side, and when I saw the deep flush that mantled the cheeks of that lovely woman, and noticed the restlessness which agitated her frame—it occurred to me that if the people had wished to pain and mortify a sensitive woman, and that lady their pastor's wife, they could not have devised a more effective plan, than the programme of that evening."

"After the company had retired, as I was walking through the rooms below, to satisfy my curiosity as to the amount of damage sustained in the hurly burly, for I felt very sure that no decent furniture could have passed through such an ordeal without showing the marks, I found in a small side room, Mrs. G——, alone by herself, seated in a rocking chair, moving it rapidly, and her face covered. I was about to retire when she called to me:

"Come in, Robert." We had been acquainted from her childhood, and she was then but a few years my junior.

"I came at her request, and taking my seat near to her said, 'you must be very tired after the scenes of this day.'

"Oh," she replied, "I am almost tired of life, I am heart sick," and immediately burst into tears, sobbing with the agony that racked her feelings, exclaiming at last,

"Never did I think that when I became a minister's wife, I must be placed in the attitude of a beggar. Oh, Robert, if you go into the ministry, never marry. I entreat of you never to place a lady in the situation you have seen me placed this evening."

"Now, brethren, I leave you to guess the answer I returned to her, and let your own hearts say what would have been your reply."

"Mine would have been a pretty short and decided one," answered Mr. Graham. "*Never! never!*"

"Never what, brother Graham!" said Mr. Bellows. "Never to marry?"

"No, no, by no means—not that—but if I were a minister, I would never allow my wife to be exposed to such humiliation."

"Nor I either," said Mr. Bellows. "It is taking the very manhood out of a man thus to treat him—turning the honorable office of the pastorate into that of a begging friar—but why should it be so, Mr. Ransom?"

"That is a serious question, brother Bellows. Sure enough, why should it be so!" The pastoral office is a necessity — communities, nor families, nor individuals can do without it. What would your farms in this town be worth, if the church should be leveled to the earth, and the voice of the preacher heard no more, nor the ordinances of religion again administered? How many years would it be ere the dark pall of semi-heathenism would spread its gloom around you and your civilization. For a moment look at the condition of two or three families in your midst; for some cause unbeknown to me, they absent themselves from all religious services, and have done so for years. They were once respectable, it is said, although it is hard to believe it could have been so. What are they now? Who among you associates with them? Would you purchase a farm adjoining to either of them?"

"I would not live on it if given to me," said Mr. Bellows.

"And your whole town, without a settled ministry, would in ten years depreciate in value. Strangers of respectability would not settle among you — your children, if not besotted and robbed of all ambition and enterprise would seek other homes, where the Sabbath bell would collect a decent audience in the house of God. No, brethren, the settled pastor for a longer or shorter period, is an absolute necessity — and why should not his respectable support be so to? Why should a scanty pittance be dolled out for his bare subsistence, and on an emergency, the hat carried round begging for sixpences and shillings, while he stands meanly looking on to see how much charity his people have, or how highly they value his services. It is a degradation of the holy office — a crying shame to those religious societies which allow the nuisance.

"But, brethren, I have one more instance to bring before you, and it has a nearer bearing upon our immediate subject.

"In one of the ministerial families where I spent several months, I had the opportunity to observe the effect upon the family, and the people too, of the fact that very much of the furniture in the parsonage had been provided by the contributions of some of the more wealthy mem-

bers of the society. The salary, in this case, was a fair one for a small family, but a number of children had of course increased the demands upon it. A people with a just sense of right, would have considered that a salary suitable for a man and his wife with one or two children, might not be sufficient to provide for eight children, with the necessary outlay for clothes and schooling — the latter too, an absolute need, to which no parent, dependent as a minister is on a mere salary, can possibly be indifferent — upon the education of his children their future livelihood depends. He has no lands to distribute to his sons as farmers have; he has no trade in mercantile life by means of which he can establish them. They must go forth into the world with only such power to make a living, as their education may afford them. This case was one which an honorable people would have considered, and an addition made to the salary corresponding to the additional demand upon it. But this was not done; some few felt the wrong and endeavored to supply the deficiency by privately contributing to the necessities of the family. Some would give to the minister's lady second hand garments for the daughters, some of which at times she gladly appropriated to her own use. The minister himself, too, was often clothed in the same way. The effect was very evident; it created an obsequiousness on the part of the pastor and all his family towards those upon whose bounty they depended for so many comforts, perfectly inconsistent as I view it, with that true independence of any man's favor, or which a minister of the Gospel should feel. His commission is from above, and all men are to stand, in one grand particular, before him or to his view on a level — circumstantial differences he has nothing to do with. I noticed likewise, that the effect on the minds of those who were thus helpful in their contributions of money or other articles, was not happy; they were good people no doubt, but it requires considerable grace to be a benefactor. A sense of one's importance is too apt to show itself — a patronizing manner is apt to crop out. And it did manifest itself on several occasions that came under my observation. The children would come home at times sadly mortified because Mrs. S —



had asked one of them about the dress she had on, 'and if she wore it so in common every day,' or some school companion had asked another 'if the dress she had on was not one which the Lauries' had given her, it was exactly like one that Mary Laurie used to wear.'

"There was a donation party here, too, and being requested to join in the pleasures of the evening, I consented. Here, the lady being accustomed to such scenes, was not so affected by the fact of giving up her house for a rendezvous for the evening, as the inexperienced Mrs. G——. She seemed to enjoy the scene—it was confusion, worse confounded—the hat was not carried round, but instead thereof, each one who had anything to give would hand it directly to the pastor or his lady, who remained seated for that purpose. One individual who wished to donate to his pastor one dollar, but not having, as he found, any thing smaller than a two, handed it saying:

"Mr. P——, can you change this bill for me by giving me a one in return?"

"The minister smiled and bowed, and thanked him as he with quite a business air, handed back the requisite change. I perceived that there were no feelings on the part of either the pastor or his lady, but that all was right, and as it should be, and therefore my sympathy for them could not be waked up; but I soon found that their children, who were old enough to understand the propriety of things did not view the matter in the same light as the parents did. After the meeting had dispersed two of the daughters were seated near the fire in the principal room, one of them sixteen and the other about twelve years of age. As I came into the room the youngest asked me:

"Mr. Ransom, how much do you think pa and ma got to-night?"

"I was about to make some reply, when the elder sister quickly said,

"Julia, don't—please don't bring up this hateful business. I have felt mortified enough all the evening. I wish we could live on bread and water—I wish there were no carpets on the floors, and that we had plain wood-

en benches to sit on, and plain boards for a table to eat from—anything would be better than to be obliged to feel that you are using furniture which has been given to you by strangers, or eating food that is handed to you as charity.'

"What is the trouble, Miss Mary?' I replied.

"I think there is cause of trouble enough, and I hope, Mr. Ransom, as you say you are going to be a minister, that when you come to settle, you will buy your own furniture, if it is no better than Robinson Crusoe had, and not let the people put into it even an old brass candlestick.'

"Why not, Miss Mary?"

"If you had heard all the mortifying remarks I have this evening—how the carpets had been worn—how dingy every thing looked—that the chairs wanted a coat of paint, and even one woman said—and she knew I could hear it, too—"that if she had thought things were not to be taken care of *she* would never have opened her purse." And then poor little Charlie, happened to tell a boy, who was standing on one of the cane-bottomed chairs, to get down or he would break the chair, "what if I do?" was the answer; "My father helped buy them." Mr. Ransom, I would not marry a minister unless he was rich, or I was. Its the hatefulest thing to be dependent on a people. Talk about slavery! We are slaves of the worst kind, and yet have to bear every insult with a smiling countenance.'

"Now gentlemen, I have given you a few items of my experience, and as I am able to furnish my house in a plain, but respectable manner, from means that I have honestly earned, do you not think I shall be happier and more like a man to know when I place her whom I love at its head, that no one can have a right to dictate to her as to the way in which it is used?"

"I must heartily agree with that young lady. I wouldnt receive as a gift even an 'old candlestick.'

"And I join brother Bellows in that feeling. A minister should have a home as much his own, and as sacred from interference by others, as, other men."

"Then Mr. Graham, you have touched the very point

on which I have determined to stand. I never meant when I entered the ministry to renounce my manhood. I am willing to give up my own selfish interest. I made up my mind that to endure self-denial, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus, I must expect; and if it could be made plain to me that, to serve my master, I must go round daily with my hat in hand and beg my bread, I think I should be willing to do it; but as all the injunctions of scripture tend to an opposite direction, and we are exhorted to eat our own bread, it seems strange to me that the idea should be so universal, that a minister may have the bread of the mendicant offered to him, and he must take it thankfully."

"Now, gentlemen, you have doubtless anticipated my answer to the request of the ladies. Tell them, however, that I am glad it was in their heart thus to manifest their kind feelings, and that if ever they fail to receive the most cordial welcome to the hospitalities of the parsonage while I may occupy it, I will be willing as a punishment to let them furnish the whole of it."

"Well," said Mr. Bellows, as he and Graham were walking home, "I have received some new ideas about ministers and people, too. Mr. Ransom is right. Why should he, because he is a preacher of the gospel, and the pastor of a people, give up his rights as an honorable man, as a husband and a father? How would you and I feel to be living upon the charity of the public, and feel bound to court the favor of every man of wealth or ability in the place, and have our children growing up with an obsequious manner, and subject to the mortifying interference of strangers with their domestic arrangements?"

"It would not suit you or me very well, but ministers in general don't seem to mind it."

"Perhaps they mind it more than the people imagine. But a great many of them act so heedlessly. They get married without a cent in their pockets to begin with, and are often not half educated, and have to dig away at making sermons out of slender materials, and very soon the people have heard all they know, and get indifferent to their preaching, and they see it, and are glad to hang on to their situations under any circumstances, no matter how humiliating."

"I am glad for my part Bellows, that Mr. Ransom has come out so plainly at the outset. He means to stand on an independent platform, and we shall all like him the better for it, after this breeze has blown over, but it will make a breeze among the women."

"I never encouraged the thing, Graham, that Mattie can tell you; for in my first conversation with Mr. Ransom about his settlement, I found that he was averse to have any thing said or done about raising a larger salary for him by outside contributions. Whatever he receives must come through the regular channel."

"I have been thinking about what shall be done with the money the ladies have raised; they will want to do something with it. How would it answer to propose to them to use it in buying books as the foundation for a good library among us? We need one very much."

"Just the very thing, Graham, I am glad you thought of it. The young people want books, what few I have are constantly in use. Since Mr. Ransom has had those meetings of young people at his house, he has so stimulated them to read and inform themselves, that all they want now is access to a good library, and let us try to get as much more among the men as our ladies have raised, and we will have a fair library at once."

"And Mr. Ransom will be the very man to select the books. He knows just what works the people need. It will also manifest to him how much we all prize his efforts with our young people. If you and I, Bellows, had had such a minister when we were boys, we would know more than we do now, and be better able to train our own boys and girls. I tell you what, Bellows, there is no telling the good that man is doing among our young people; he has somehow got their confidence and love. Everything he says is gospel with them."

"It is easy to see, Graham, how that has worked. In the first place, they see he is interested for their improvement, and that you know will take hold of the heart of any young person quicker than anything else. And then they see he knows something besides theology. His mind seems filled with knowledge; they can look up to him as one who is able to teach them, and to tell them

what they need to know in order to make them wise and useful."

"Yes, and this power over their respect, gives great weight to the few words he drops to them on the subject of religion. The fact is, he is leading them along in the way, that if I do not mistake, will in a few years make a great change in the whole face of society here. I tell you, Bellows, Mr. Ransom has been wise in not taking as he calls it, 'a short cut to the pulpit.' He has been a long while in preparation, but he is a master workman, he understands his trade."

Messrs. Graham and Bellows had more difficulty than they anticipated in quieting the disappointed feelings of the ladies. It was hard work to make them comprehend the reasons which induced their minister to decline their offers. "It was an unheard-of thing! He was proud, cold blooded! He would never gain the love of the people! If the parsonage was too good to be filled up a little decently, it was too good for them to visit it. Other ministers were willing to throw themselves upon the kind feelings of their people; why should he set himself up to be singular? It was all done to touch them on account of the small salary they were to pay him. He meant by furnishing his house merely to let strangers see what people he had!" All this was said at the meeting of ladies who had subscribed to the sum raised. Messrs. Graham and Bellows, who were invited to be present, sat quietly listening to these outbreaks of disappointment, knowing that until they "had said their say," and the breeze had blown off its suppressed wrath, there would be little use in trying to stop its fury. Women, they knew, had quick feelings and strong feelings, but give them a chance to express them and let them off, and the good creatures become relieved and are ready to be made happy again. It took a great deal of talking and explanation, however, on the part of the gentlemen. By degrees the storm lulled, and when the proposition was made by them to raise as much among the gentlemen, and with the united fund to commence a public library, the idea was received most favorably by some of the leading ladies, and soon met with the views of the rest, and the meeting which threatened

no little difficulty, broke up in harmony. One thing, however, perhaps, did as much to calm the disturbed elements as any remarks from the gentlemen by way of advice and counsel, and that was, a message from Mr. Ransom, which they were requested to give to the ladies,— "That he would be very thankful for their assistance in arranging his furniture, sewing carpets, etc., and placing his establishment in a condition to receive its mistress." A smile passed over the face of every lady — all were ready, and by mutual agreement the morrow was selected for their labor of love.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Randolph Herbert parted from Mr. Ransom with his mind relieved of a terrible burden. His little Willie was safe, and in good hands; it was indeed a severe trial to him that the child on whom his heart doted, was a dependent on comparative strangers, yet even here was an alleviation in the thought that there seemed to be on the part of him who had been his deliverer a sincere regard for the boy and a desire to keep him; in fact, the request had been presented as a favor to those who were ready to adopt him. But all this could not take away the sting which the better remembrance of his hasty conduct caused his heart to suffer. It was a continual goad within — often causing him to cry out, "Oh Lord, lay not this sin to my charge — deal not with me as I deserve." The relief which he had experienced had, however, a salutary influence in softening the almost indurated condition of his feelings. This sad state had been most aptly expressed in his utterance of grief in the presence of Mr. Ransom. "The heavens over him were brass and the earth iron." The face of God was clouded, and wrath seemed wrapped about him as a thick cloud. Some light now was breaking through the darkness, and occasionally his wounded spirit could perceive rays of mercy lining its

gleam. Not long after the scenes described in a former chapter, a gentleman from a distance called upon him to make inquiry concerning a claim which Mr. Herbert held against a man in the state of Ohio.

"I wish to know," the gentleman said, "whether you hold any paper or obligation against one James Reynolds formerly of Saugerties in this State."

"I do hold a note for one thousand dollars; it has been due for more than five years; it was for money loaned him, and for which at the time he was in pressing need. He was an intimate friend, and I borrowed the funds to accommodate him. He wanted the money only for a short time. He was a clever fellow, and I firmly believed a very honest man. He was, however, not able to meet the payments, and I was obliged in consequence to mortgage my property in order to refund the money to the person from whom I borrowed it, and that, with other claims and losses, finally compelled me to sell everything I possessed."

"You are right, sir, in your belief that Mr. Reynolds was an honest man. He lamented long his inability to return you this money, but fortune was against him. Just before his death, however, a rise took place in property around us; he had purchased quite a tract on speculation. He died by a lingering disease, the consumption. Near his last days, he saw plainly that there was a prospect that his speculation would turn out well — enable him to die owing no man anything, and probably leaving a competence to his family. One debt, however, beyond all others he felt deeply anxious should be cancelled and as soon as possible after his death. He knew, he said, that the obligation had been a cause of suffering to the individual who had loaned him the money, but still that person had never used any means to harrass him, nor even written a harsh word when urging if possible that his claim should be paid. And he enjoined upon those who were to have the charge of his affairs, to hasten matters as fast as could be, and to see to it that Randolph Herbert's claim should be paid among the very first. And now, sir, let me see the note."

Mr. Herbert soon produced the document in question.

"Please cast up the interest on it, Mr. Herbert."

"I do not wish interest, sir; the principal will be all sufficient if that can be paid, it is all I shall ever ask."

"But, sir, the interest is as much your due as the principal, and it was Mr. Reynolds' express desire that thus it should be paid."

The calculation was accordingly made, and the amount summed up nearly fourteen hundred dollars. The gentleman drew forth his pocket book, laid down his money, took the note into his possession, and after a short conversation on the changes and chances of life, and of business life in particular, he took his departure.

For a while Mr. Herbert sat almost stupefied by this sudden and unexpected relief. It was more than he ever hoped again to have in his possession. It would enable him to avoid, if properly taken care of, some personal trials that had been most grievous to bear — bonds of a nature aggravating almost beyond endurance, were as by a miracle suddenly burst asunder, a weight rolled off from his oppressed heart. A sense of freedom stole over his mind, the joy of which could only be realized by one who had been long and hopelessly bound beneath a galling yoke. He was alone in a room exclusively appropriated to his own use; gladly would he have called his wife and communicated to her his good tidings, but he knew there would be no sympathy with his joy, and more than probable the information would only tend to some new trial. Oh, that his Willie were by him! how he would draw him to his heart, and how they would rejoice together over this manifestation of divine goodness! Yes, it was indeed a token of divine goodness, and now his heart begins to feel those kindly emotions toward his Heavenly Father, to which for years he had been a stranger. This was a gift of money, a gift to one who had been a wanderer — one who had almost denied his master — who had tasted the heavenly gift, but had allowed the pleasures of the world to injure his devotion to duty and the cause of truth. In the time of distress and sorrow he had not cast all his care on God, and gone manfully forward to some work of usefulness, but had ventured to relieve his present need by a device neither manly or just. He had

pledged himself to love and keep one whom he did not respect, and for whom he had no ability to provide. He had made use of God's holy ordinance of marriage for a mean and selfish end. These facts had been pressing themselves upon his notice, as every new trial had come upon him — but the last, the loss as he feared of his Willie — had broken down every barrier, laid open his conduct clearly to his own vision, and the sight had filled him with dismay. He was conscience stricken. Guilty, guilty, was his plea, but there was no tear of penitence — no going back to him from whom he had wandered — for the throne above was barred, and he had *no Father there*. "The heavens over him were brass and the earth iron." Still there was a yearning for those hopes he once enjoyed. He could say, "My heart panteth for God, for the living God."

The first gleam of light came with the tidings that his son was safe. There was a loosening of the bolts and bars of his prison house. He could see a little, and more and more daily since that hour, how a father may chasten but his wrath be turned away; and as that blessed truth unfolded to his view his heart softened and took courage — he could bear the stripes if he could only truly know they were inflicted by the hand of love.

And now this second mercy came to him as though the Heavens had opened above him, and a messenger had descended with a token in his hand that he was still acknowledged as a son. Providential dispensations cannot always be understood nor their end interpreted by near sighted, feeble man. "God sendeth his rain and his sunshine on the evil and on the good." The wicked often prospereth while the righteous are smitten, and go mourning in heaviness. And yet, to the child of God, who has learned to scrutinize the dealings of providence, and to trace the leadings of the Divine hand, there is often a clear view of the cause and the effect which others cannot perceive. He can see the reason for the judgment, and notice the mercy mingled with it, and his mouth utters no complaint; it was not a chance that happened to him — even if it were the result of his own improvidence, still, he sees back of that an overruling power, causing

his wisdom to be turned into foolishness for the punishment of his transgressions, or for the weaning his confidence in the earthly state, and fixing it more steadfastly on divine care.

The effect in the mind of Mr. Herbert, was to fill it with gratitude, and to give him a clearer perception of the ways of God with man. The great trial of his life still he must bear, but now the burden was not so grievous, and although no hope dawned upon him in reference to that great mistake — although there were to be for him no sweet communings with a kindred spirit — no enjoyment of that tender love of which he had once tasted, and he must plod along to his journey's end with a companion by his side whose low tastes and contracted views allowed no sympathy between them, yet he would not murmur against the severe infliction; he had done the wrong, and was alone to blame. God had been merciful and granted an alleviation from some of the more bitter ingredients of the cup. He saw that the trial was of a nature not to be removed but by a miraculous work of God's spirit which he had no reason to expect. It must be a thorn in his flesh in all probability during the rest of his journey, but that was no evidence he was not forgiven. Paul had to carry a thorn which he had earnestly prayed to be taken from him, but the only answer he received was that "he should have grace to bear it."

Hereafter his life must be spent in the discharge of his duty. He had work to do — it was confined to a narrow sphere — the world would know nothing of it, but it would require the exercise of all the christian graces, and to show them forth even to eyes of but two or three, might glorify his Father in heaven, and that was all the stimulus he needed.

The following letter which Mr. Ransom received, written after his mind had become settled into a quiet state, will perhaps best unfold his present views and feelings.

"MY VERY DEAR SIR:—I could wish you were by me now, that I might enjoy the satisfaction of expressing to you personally, the great benefit I have derived from the



remarks you threw out in the course of our conference together on the ways of God in His dealings with His creatures, more and more especially with His true children. A little light opened upon me at that time, and it has been growing brighter and brighter to me ever since. I have indeed departed from God—I have gone sadly astray, but I have through infinite mercy not been permitted to lose that hankering for home, which I now firmly believe to be an earnest, that such a place is yet reserved for me. The good mercy of God towards me in dealing so kindly with my dear Willie, and since then a renewed token of God's goodness towards one so unworthy, has caused me to judge that my trials are but chastisements, and that the rod is in a Father's hand. This thought buoys me up and enables me with comparative cheerfulness to bear the trials of my lot. I find that the peace of God in the heart is the infallible talisman, whose charm nullifies evil, and throws a cheer around the most gloomy path.

"It is not a very pleasant task for me, nor do I believe it will be very agreeable to you, that I now proceed to accomplish; but on some accounts, I deem it right and proper that I should unfold to you those secrets of my life which have a bearing upon our present relation to each other, and I shall do it with all the confidence of a brother. I am surrounded with obstacles that prevent my doing anything in the great work of life beyond that of standing as a beacon, to warn others away from the dangerous rocks on which I have been shipwrecked. You, as a minister of the gospel, may have occasion to use the facts I reveal, for the benefit of many; and as the friend and guardian of my dear Willie, may feel more able to comprehend what lessons would be useful to him, that he may avoid the temptation to which his father has been exposed, and the sad condition into which his father has been placed.

"In my days of boyhood, the thought never occurred to me that I was ever to do anything by way of obtaining a livelihood, and from circumstances which I now recall, I am led to the conclusion that my father too openly encouraged that idea. I feel very sure now, that it would

have been a painful thought to him, that I should feel there could possibly be need for any future exertions on my part in order to obtain a living. I do not wish to charge him with doing or feeling wrong. He had a most affectionate heart, and was devoted to my happiness; and yet I cannot but think it was a failing, and one most disastrous in its consequences. My time, when out of school, was spent in amusement. Horses were at my command, and servants to take care of them for me, and to bring them and take them away at my bidding. At college my wants were abundantly supplied without any care on my part, or any suggestion from my father that I should be careful of expenditure. Against immorality of every shade he talked much, and wrote much, and I must think his watch in that respect was attended with success, for I never indulged in dissipation of any kind, and I suppose the religious training of my youth had biased my mind against such evils, so that when I left college my character was unstained by any loose indulgence. I did not stand among the foremost in my class, but had a fair knowledge of the studies I had pursued. With no profession in prospect that was to be followed for a life business, I merely thought of acquitting myself decently. I remember well the conversation my father held with me after my return home on the subject of a profession. The ministry he could not think of, because it would involve a necessary separation from him, my mother having deceased, and my father in feeble health, to be separated from me, his only child, he would not listen to. Medicine he abhorred, and doctors he ridiculed. Lawyers too, were in bad savor with him. But he said the study of law was well enough, and he thought every gentleman needed to know more or less of it, and I went into a lawyer's office for the greater part of one year, and became somewhat fond of it, but the feeble health of my father interfered so much with that pursuit, it was abandoned. At my father's death, I was twenty-eight years of age, and a more helpless person in reference to practical business of any kind, could hardly be found. The estate of my father had been originally very large, but his easy habits had materially damaged it long before his death. His

dislike of the law too, and his aversion to the employment of men skilled in its practice for a defence against imposition, laid him open to the arts of dishonest men, by which means large losses were incurred and his love of ease, and unwillingness to be cramped for the want of ready money, threw him into the power of sharpers and money lenders, so that with loans on mortgage and accumulated interest, and the very low price of land at the time of his death, in consequence of a crisis in the money market, a very large part of the estate was swept off, and I found myself very far from being a rich man. Trained as I had been hitherto, it will not surprise you to be told that I was not a very provident manager, and that the small estate left to me, soon began to grow smaller. Attracted about this period by the beauty and lovely qualities of a lady to whom I was introduced at the city of Boston, I courted and married her. She was the mother of my dear Willie, and possessed of every quality calculated to have made a man happy; but how can a man be happy in embarrassed circumstances! Day by day, almost throughout the whole period that lovely woman lived as my wife, I was tormented with distracting care—owing money, which I could only pay by recourse to those who loaned for large premiums, and returning that often by sacrificing stock or produce at reduced value, or piling mortgages upon my place. I feel sure that I did not make an unkind husband, but it was not in the nature of man under such a state of being, to keep a smooth brow, or an unruffled temper in the presence of even those he loves most tenderly, and I have no doubt that dear woman had reason to feel that her married life, short as it was, disappointed all the hopes she had indulged of conjugal happiness.

"Soon after her death, things rushed to a crisis, and my homestead was obliged to go under the hammer. Only a pittance was left. My establishment of course was broken up, the servants dismissed, and with my little Willie I went to board.

"It was about a year, I think, after leaving the house of my father, that I became engaged to a Miss Schmidt, the daughter of a Dutch family, which had migrated from

New Jersey. They were respectable people, no doubt, in their way, but without education or refinement. But they were said to be rich, and the young lady especially was reported to have an independent property of her own, which she inherited from her grandparents, as it was said, 'over the heads' of her own parents.

"The young woman had no pretensions to beauty of person, and her mind I well know was of quite a common order, and without improvement. I saw nothing in her that reminded me of the dear one I had lost. I thought she had a mild temperament, and if not an affectionate disposition, at least, of that pliable cast that could be won by kindness. In both particulars, however, I have been disappointed; but not more so than I deserved, for to tell you the naked truth, *I courted and married her for money.*

"I hear you say, 'how could a man of education, and one who had known the power and blessedness of true love have been thus ensnared by a golden bait, and done violence to his reason and his nature! I answer it by unfolding two terrible facts in my life story.

"First, I was a poor dependent on any freak of fortune. *I had no preparation for a life work.* I had learned nothing to any account. Physically unable to earn a living by the sweat of my brow, and with no mental training that would then enable me to provide for myself and child in any professional calling, I was in the condition of the man in the parable, 'he could not dig, to beg he was ashamed.' This sad condition filled my heart with anguish, made me envy the daily laborer who, with rough garments and rough hands passed me on the way to his honest, though laborious task. In my view he was happy, and I a poor, helpless wretch. This condition so hopeless, so desperate, urged me to the fatal act.

"But the second reason I give is of more significance still. *I was a wanderer from the fold of Christ.* My faith and hope were mere twinkling stars amid the darkness which enshrouded my soul. I had been seriously impressed, when quite young; and under the advice of an incompetent pastor, as I now believe him to have been, I united with the church. My religious feelings were for

the time warmly excited, but my views of the doctrines of religion and its practical truth, bearing on the heart and life, were obscure in the extreme. I had no teacher. With my father, on the subject of religion, I never communicated, nor he with me. The grosser sins were all that he seemed anxious to have me avoid, and to those I was never addicted; but that the christian graces should be in lively exercise — that God's word should be studied as my rule in all things — that a constant watch should be kept over my heart, to keep out all evil, and to bring every thought into obedience to Christ, he never hinted at.

From the pulpit I received no help. The disjointed, rambling discourses of our minister, had no influence whatever, in unfolding the true christian life. Nor did he know any more of what I believed, nor what progress I was making as a christian, than I did of the design he meant to accomplish in the delivery of his common-place half-hour lecture, which he called a sermon. He took no pains whatever, after I was united with the church, and my name enrolled among the communicants, to ascertain my spiritual condition, nor do I believe he did that of his other young members; and as far as my knowledge extends, few amongst our members exhibited any more of the life of Christ, than did others of the congregation whose lives were merely not scandalous. Under such circumstances, with little apparent life in the church, and less in the minister, it is no marvel if what little piety I ever had, should have nearly died out — in fact, my religion was a mere name, and the only restraint upon my passions, was the moral nurture I received in early days, and the idea that, as a member of the church, any gross sin would be notorious. Every thing like hope or joy in God, or love to the word of God, or striving after likeness to Jesus Christ, was as foreign to me, as if I had never indulged the belief that my heart had become changed.

"In this state of mind, as to my religious character, I went to college. The influences there were not favorable to piety, and on my final return home, I found indeed a new minister, but there was division in the church, and my father being one of those unfavorably disposed, was

very willing to excuse himself from attendance on public worship, on the plea of ill health, and I very naturally followed his example, attending only occasionally, and very carefully avoiding communion Sabbaths. The fact was, I became so conscious of my want of spiritual life, that the very sight of the emblems of a Saviour's love, filled me with self reproach and terror.

Thus it was through all my first married life — distraction without, and a guilty conscience within, and when death came to my abode, and took my dear partner from my side, and the execution of the law followed and took my homestead from my grasp, I felt like one deserted of God and man. A dark cloud settled around me, and all I cared for, was a home to rest in, and worldly means whereby I could live decently from fear of want.

"And now you will not wonder how it was that I could have prostituted the sacred ban of marriage to the base lust of gain — that I could solemnly promise to love and cherish one whose hand I sought as a refuge from poverty. *It was a base act* — the basest of my life. But I was, in the righteous judgment of God, caught in my own net. The Holy Father whose name is love, would not permit such a violation of His own institution without rebuke. Little by little the terrible sin of the step I had taken unfolded in the disappointment of my expectation as to property, and the more terrible certainty that the heart of her I had married was only susceptible of the very lowest of all passions — she had an insatiable love of money.

"What I have suffered from this cause, I have no heart to tell you, nor could the revelation do any good. And perhaps you will say, 'of what avail has it been that I have harrowed your feelings by this sad recital?' My reason for it is this. I am myself a lost man, so far as this world is concerned — my life a waste. But, and I thank God for that one ray of joy upon my cloud of sin and sorrow, I still live in my children. That dear boy, whom God in his great mercy has taken away from scenes of confusion and trial, and placed amid the peace and beauty of a happy home, will bear my life still onward, when my weary, useless journey shall have ended. I want him

to be warned of the rocks on which his father has been wrecked, to be trained for usefulness, to be taught that beyond all worldly maxims, the holy precepts of the Bible are to be regarded as the only rules that lead to virtue and happiness. And, oh sir, if thus it might be, and my Willie should become a man, resolute in duty, strong in holy principles, a light and a comfort and a stay to them who may be cast upon his care, a man, pure and true—I shall feel that my poor life shall not have been in vain.

"I herewith send you two hundred dollars to be used at your option for my dear boy. God in his mercy has sent me some relief from the straitened situation in which I was placed when first introduced to you, and I can part with this sum without inconvenience. May God bless you and your dear wife, and reward you an hundred fold for your kindness.

Your unworthy but obliged friend,  
RANDOLPH HERBERT."

## CHAPTER V.

It was two years after the scenes narrated in the two first chapters of our story, in the latter part of October, that William Herbert was preparing to go to mill with quite a large grist—in general, this matter was accomplished by throwing a couple of bags across the back of Grey, with William mounted on them—but as there were too many bags to be accommodated in this way, and as Mr. Ransom wished to use Grey himself, resource was had to a neighbor for the loan of a horse and cart or wagon. The cart being the only vehicle not in use, much to the discomfort of William, he was obliged to accept of it, and a horse very much the contrast of the fine, fat, slick Grey. The establishment was not one that William fancied, the cart being old and somewhat dilapidated, and

the horse not only aged, but bony and shaggy, with a halt in one leg. He would certainly have put off going to mill if necessity had not demanded that some part of the grist should be in the house for use, before the day was out. It may as well be said here, that a few years had made a vast difference in the amount of produce that went to mill from the little parsonage farm. As the reader already knows, it contained only twelve acres, and when Mr. Ransom took possession, it was a mere common, useless for anything but pasture, and unsightly from the bushes and wild vines that had taken possession along the lines of fences. He saw at once that the place in its present condition would be of no value to him, nor to any other inheritor. To leave it so would be to him personally an eye sore. He believed by proper culture it could be made to yield enough to pay for the cost at least, and that, with the improvement in appearance, would be a gain. As his own time could not be given to any such side work, he employed a man of sober habits, faithful to work, and as it turned out, with quite a taste for keeping things in order, and skill enough in farming to know how to do whatever needed to be done in the best manner, and in the right time, but not by any means an expert in the art of enriching land, and so rotating crops as to make ten acres produce as much as thirty would under common culture. Mr. Ransom, however, knew that the direction in that respect, would require but very little of his own time. In one half hour he could designate all the work necessary to be accomplished through the day, and all the thought required in making the most of this little estate, would be a relaxation from severer study.

The first year was pretty much taken up in clearing off rubbish, repairing fences and out buildings, and in arranging things around the dwelling house and garden, and as has already been said, an entire new aspect was put upon the premises. The house itself, presented to the road a stone front of some forty feet, one story in height with two dormer windows projecting from the roof—a double house as generally styled, with a hall through its centre and rooms on each side. Attached to the body of the house on the north side, was a wing of sufficient size to form a

comfortable kitchen; this too fronted the road. It was of wood and painted red. Two small yards ran before the buildings, and were separated from each other by a slight fence, and denominated severally the court-yard and the kitchen yard. The latter contained within its bounds the well and cistern, the wood-pile and etceteras necessary for domestic purposes. It was in rather a confused condition when Mr. Ransom commenced his experiment of keeping house as a bachelor, for it had been made a depot apparently of all the rubbish a neighborhood could have accumulated. But things were soon routed out that had no business there, and Aunt Alice's yard, as it was often called — she having become a fixture in the establishment of Mr. Ransom — rivaled in neatness and order, its close neighbor with the trim flower beds and ornamental shrubbery. The garden intervened between the dwelling house and barn, and lay along the road, so that it was in fair view, and could be either from its nice culture and thrifty aspect and floral adornments, a joy to the passer by, and a stimulus to go and do likewise, or a source for little slants and strange surmisings, and hard conclusions if allowed to take care of itself, and nurse its own rank weeds. People will judge one another in regard to many things from associates and surroundings. Mr. Ransom thought, aside from his own taste in such matters, that some part of his influence depended upon the aspect which he himself and his premises presented to his people.

But an agreeable appearance was not the only advantage obtained from the wise management of Mr. Ransom. The little farm had become very productive. Not only his horse and cow were abundantly supplied with choice food, so that they both were in the finest condition, but a great part of the provision for his family came from the same source, and the bags of grain, which Peter, the hired man, had put into the old cart, were some of them wheat and rye, for the family, and corn for the horse and pig.

"And you will be careful, Mr. Willie, to sit well in the front of the cart, for the load is a little too heavy behind. I suppose I ought to change it, but if you keep well to the front, it wont matter."

"I will, Mr. Peter, but it would not surprise me if the whole concern came down together — it is very shaky."

"You must go slow, then, and be careful of the ruts."

"I think there will not be much danger of my making great speed. I do hate to drive such a horse."

"Ay, ay, Mr. Willie, you'd much rather have bonny Grey I warrant you, but in case of a break down, I am not sure but this will be the safest beast, but you will make all the speed you can, with safety, for Aunt Alice says she must have the wheat flour at any rate — but you are not going to the mill with your good clothes on, my boy!"

"I thought to do so — they are not my best."

"That's true, and yet they're too good to go into the old dirty mill, and to be handling bags of meal with; the least you can do, is to put on your frock and overalls."

William had some private reasons for not wishing to make the proposed change, but his own judgment so decidedly agreed with the advice of Mr. Peter, that he dare not allow his feelings to have their way; he knew that meal dust was by no means wholesome for good broad-cloth. The change was soon made, and William Herbert, the gentleman's son, was transformed into a very good looking farmer's boy.

Now, in general, William would have no scruples whatever, in going into any part of the parish in his present rig, but on the road to the mill there stood a dwelling house of some pretensions, and at present there were visitors at it from the city of New York, and although the house was so far from the road, that it would have been difficult to distinguish individuals, yet on two occasions when riding out lately for amusement, he had met a lad of about his own age, and a young lady, of what age he could not guess, her long riding dress making her appear much older than she really was on horseback. They were handsomely dressed, and on beautiful horses, and rode with ease, as though accustomed to the exercise. From the peculiar cast of countenance of the young gentleman as he passed them, he judged the young lady had made some remark of a disparaging nature, and that the young man was only restrained from a fit of laughter by a strong



effort. He certainly saw a peculiar smile on the face of the young lady.

Now, what there was in or about him to excite laughter, he could not imagine. He knew that Grey was in good condition and bore himself nobly, and as to his own dress — he knew that was as good as any of his age wore in that vicinity — he could not see how it materially differed from that of the young stranger, and if it was his style of riding that was the subject for ridicule, it had been taught him by Mr. Ransom, and he knew a better rider was seldom seen. But as there is nothing about which a youth of his age is so alive as ridicule, and as he had got the impression that for some reason he was the subject of jest, and that on the part of the young lady too, of whose sex William was in general very shy, he allowed himself to be prejudiced against them both, and sincerely hoped he might not meet them, and especially in his present trim.

Mounting his cart and giving the old horse a cut — that being an absolute necessity for the beginning of any locomotion — he went on his way at first, by an indefinite sort of trot, gradually subsiding into a walk, which latter pace William was quite reconciled to endure, opposed as he was to it in general, rather than the sight of the limp and the uncouth motion it imparted to the cart. The distance to the mill was nearly two miles, and two thirds of it was passed over, when to his inexpressible chagrin, he saw the two individuals most upon his mind, just then turning from their avenue into the highway, and coming towards him. As quick as thought, at the first sight of them and before they could have noticed him, he sprang from the broad seat which had been placed so near the fore end that his feet had dangled over the outside, and threw himself on one of the bags of grain, and pulled the board on which he had been seated, from its place, and laid it beside him. The only advantage gained by this move, was a little less distinguished position. He felt that the body of the cart would be a sort of screen, at least it was not so likely to attract notice as the one he left. He had, however, in his energy to avoid one evil forgotten the injunction of Mr. Peter to "keep well in

front." He noticed, however, that the jolting of the cart was exceedingly increased, and that the bolt which confined the body to the shafts worked at every step of the horse, as if it had more to bear than it could well sustain, and that the belly girth was strained so tight that the old horse had some extra efforts to make in keeping his fore feet on the ground, he had to scratch hard as if going up hill. William knew at once the cause for all this, but there was no time to remedy matters not just then, for the two riders were coming on at a fleet pace. It was a beautiful sight if he had been in a mood to enjoy it; their horses kept step together on a free canter. Beautiful animals were both of them, and the young riders full of life and joy, were chatting and laughing merrily. William saw them looking earnestly at him; they were both smiling to be sure, but not necessarily at him. He felt very uncomfortable, and to relieve himself gave the old horse a cut. The riders were just beside him, in the act of passing. There was a slight crack as the old horse started at the application of the lash, and in the twinkling of an eye, William found himself and his bags lying together in the road, and the old cart with its fore end pointing in the direction of the North Star, or some other heavenly body. He called out whoa, quite lustily, which at once caused a cessation of speed, but no letting down of the upward tendency of the fore end. The aspect of affairs was indeed very ludicrous, and he would himself, under almost any other circumstances, have indulged a hearty laugh, but it is one thing to laugh at one's own mishaps, and a very different affair when one is laughed at. The young lady did laugh, after recovering from the start which the alarm of her horse had given her and perceived that nobody was hurt. She did laugh, and really no one in his senses could have blamed her. But William heard it, for it was a beautiful, clear, ringing laugh, just such as one might expect to hear from a lively, joyous girl of twelve years of age. It, however, rung on the ears of William like the grating of the most terrible discord. He was mortified at his mishap — vexed at himself for want of thought — troubled to know how to right matters, and altogether in a very uncomfortable state of mind.

The young gentleman on horseback at once dismounted, and handing the bridle reins to his companion, stepped up to the scene of trouble, and with a pleasant voice, although somewhat broken by his effort to restrain a laugh, said:

"Shall I not help you? Will you not need assistance?"

With a highly flushed countenance, and his eye sparkling with resentment, William answered,

"No sir, your help is not needed."

There was no acknowledgment of the act of politeness in coming to his aid, and the tone of the voice, hard and quick, the fire from his eye and the flushed face, all were of a piece. The young gentleman looked surprised — stood a moment as in doubt whether to say anything further, and then with a slight bow, in silence returned, and mounting his horse the two riders went on their way.

William soon found that he did need help. He had not sufficient strength alone, to right the upturned body with all the bags of grain, now lying close packed at the lower end. He might indeed haul them out, and thus relieve the unfortunate cart body, but how was he to lift the bags again into it, when once in its horizontal position! He might possibly have strength to sustain a bag on his shoulder when placed there, but how was he to get it there? He was certainly in a very unpromising condition to comply with the injunction, "to make all remarkable dispatch as the flour was needed."

"You want some help, my boy, I'm a thinking."

William turned, and saw a man approaching, who had, unperceived by him, just sprung over the fence from an adjoining field. Never was he more rejoiced. Yes, he wanted help, he wanted it badly, and was now quite free to acknowledge it. And when things were all righted, and the vehicle again prepared for progress, he could hardly find words sufficiently strong to satisfy his sense of obligation.

Nothing further occurred as a hindrance, and sooner than he had any reason to hope he was on his way back to the parsonage.

Mr. Ransom had returned, and was in his study about

the middle of the afternoon, when William entered it. He had the liberty of free access there at all times when the door was unlocked.

"Ah, Willie, you have got back safely, I hope?"

"Yes, sir."

"I almost feared when Peter told me what a frail concern you went with, that you might very likely have a break down."

"I had a tip up, sir. A wooden pin that secured the bolt, broke and let the cart body over, but no damage was done. A man in a field close by, came and fixed it for me. Do you think, sir, that Grey is too tired to go a couple of miles this afternoon?"

"Too tired! No, who wants him?"

"I do sir."

"Oh, take him, certainly."

"Thank you, sir."

Having obtained the desired permission, his next move was to the barn, where he spent a full half hour in rubbing, brushing and combing his favorite, until he looked his very best; saddled and bridled him, and then led him to a stand under the shed, his usual place when harnessed for an excursion. From thence he proceeded to his room and changed his dress, completely arraying himself in his newest apparel.

Being in general very careful of his clothes, it was somewhat a surprise to Mrs. Ransom, to see him pass through the hall, and in a few minutes ride past the house thus clad, and with an extra finish to his whole outfit. He was not home to supper, and as they sat down to the table, Mrs. Ransom remarked:

"I wonder where Willie has gone, this afternoon. Do you know, my dear?"

"I do not; why do you ask?"

"He made such unusual preparation. He does not, you know, in general, wear his best clothes, especially if going on horse-back; and it is not usual for him to ride off without saying something to me, in case I might have some errand in the direction he was going."

"He asked my permission to use the horse, he wanted to go about a couple of miles, he said. I made no inqui-

ries as to where he was going, as I do not like to have him imagine that I distrust his judgment, or feel it necessary to keep an eye on all his motions. He will probably of his own account, tell one or both of us on his return."

The errand on which William was bound, was the result of wholesome reflection on the scenes of the morning. When that young man left him, without making any reply to the surly answer he received, the conscience of William began to exercise her power, and very soon awoke him to sense of wrong on his part wholly inexcusable. He had allowed his suspicions to work unchecked, until they had led him to lower himself beneath the character of a gentleman. He became utterly ashamed of his rude behaviour, and resolved to lose no time in repairing his error as far as possible, by making a suitable apology, and he was on his way now, to do it.

He was but slightly known at the house to which he was going, and a perfect stranger to the young persons whose motions had worked up his bad feelings; he did not know their names. He knew that the owner of the place had lately purchased, and had removed there from New York. He knew that his name was Douglas, and he had seen him at Mr. Ransom's, and had heard that gentleman speak well of him as a christian, and a man of more than ordinary information, and that he considered him quite an addition to their society. He had heard also that Mr. Douglas had friends from New York staying there, but their names he did not know, and supposed of course the young persons with whom he had come so unpleasantly in contact, were some of these visitors.

He did not ride fast, although he was in haste to accomplish his task. It was, of course, not a very pleasant undertaking, but he meant to go through with it, and the sooner it was done and over, the better; and yet he kept Grey on a moderate pace, for he wished to keep himself cool, and his thoughts collected. He might meet with a rebuff, and have his feelings severely tried, and therefore he wished to be well prepared by thinking, not of the words he was to say, but of the obligation he was under as a gentleman to make the amende honorable, and to do it in a proper spirit. He hoped too, by riding at a slow

pace, that he might meet the persons he was in quest of; it might be a very awkward business when he got there, especially as he was unacquainted with their names.

His wish, however, was not granted; he met no one on the road. He turned up resolutely into the fine wide avenue, and then, for the first time, he saw two horses standing near the house. They were fastened, and doubtless waiting for the riders. One of them had on a lady's saddle, and as he drew near he perceived that they were the same he had met in the morning. He dismounted, and was tying his horse to a post, when two gentlemen emerged from the house, and took seats on the piazza. As soon as he had fastened his horse, he walked up the steps, and as Mr. Douglas, who was one of the gentlemen, recognized him, he at once arose, and taking his hand and leading him up to the other, said,

"Mr. Stanley, this is Master William Herbert."

The gentleman, on taking his hand, gave him, as William thought, rather a severe look. Of course he supposed the scene of the morning had been rehearsed, and this gentleman, doubtless the father of one or both of the young people, was merely manifesting a very natural displeasure.

"Mr. Douglas," said William, "is the young gentleman in, who rode out from here this morning, accompanying a young lady? They were on horseback."

"Oh, yes! Charlie, you mean."

"I have never heard his name, sir. Can I see him?"

"By all means, but you say you don't know his name, and yet sure enough, he has only been at home a few days. Charlie Douglas, come here." He gave a good loud call, and immediately William perceived the said Charlie walking with a quick step through the hall, followed by the young lady, and both appareled for riding.

"Come, Charlie, I want to introduce you to this young gentlemen."

This was rather an unpleasant turn to matters, under the circumstances. However ready William might have been to make the acquaintance, he could not but feel that with the remembrance by the young man of the rude treatment he had received a few hours ago, he, William

could hardly be acknowledged as a fair specimen of a gentleman, to say the least. It must not be so. Before he gave his hand, he must wash out the foul blot; he therefore quickly responded to what Mr. Douglas had said:

"I am by no means sure, sir, that the young gentleman will desire my acquaintance. I treated him very rudely this morning, and have come here purposely to ask his pardon."

"That was the very thing I was going to do to you the next time I met you, for my rudeness in laughing at your calamities," said young Douglas.

"Oh, but Mr. Charlie Douglas," said the young lady, "please let me confess my own transgressions. It was I who laughed, and I felt very much mortified when I saw that you were tried by it," addressing William. "I hope you will forgive it."

"I came to ask forgiveness, miss, not to grant it. Your laughter is very excusable, indeed, I could have laughed many times to-day, myself, when thinking of my ridiculous position, had it not been for the mortification I felt on account of my rudeness. May I hope that you will forget it?" turning towards young Douglas.

"Forget it!" putting out his hand, which William took, "why, there is nothing to forget on my part, if you have nothing on yours, I am very sure."

Mr. Douglas looked on with an air of amazement while the young people were thus settling their difficulties — the whole matter was a riddle to him — and then taking William's hand:

"This whole concern is somewhat of a blind business to me; but if I understand aright, my good fellow, you have imagined yourself to have done wrong, and have come forward manfully, and I must say under somewhat trying circumstances, to confess it and make reparation. Whether you have done this of your own accord, I know not, but you have acted a noble part — you have risen a hundred per cent in my estimation."

"I have done it, sir, of my own accord; but it was not for an imaginary transgression. I was in an unhappy state of mind, and forgot, sir, for the moment, my obligation to God and my fellows."

William did not say this without manifesting strong emotion. His lips quivered and his bright eye suddenly moistened; all present perceived it. The young lady, perhaps, was more particularly affected by it. She immediately stepped up and put out her hand.

"You will forgive me, will you not? It is I who have caused all this trouble."

William took her hand and tried to answer, but the unexpected turn things had taken, together with the deep excitement under which for some time he had been laboring, had quite overcome his manliness. The tears started — he wished to get away — he bowed to the company, and was about to leave them, when young Douglas caught hold of him, and as he descended the steps went down towards the gate a few steps.

"Now, come, you are not going away so. You must not mind it, there has been a mistake all around. You have done your part, and more than your part to mend it. Come, go in the garden with me a few minutes," and taking his arm they walked off together.

"Douglas," said the gentleman whom we have called Stanley, "who is that young fellow?"

"I cannot tell you much about him, only that he is under the care of the Rev. Mr. Ransom, our minister; his name is Herbert."

"His father living? Wealthy?"

"I cannot say whether his father is living or not, but I think not. He is not wealthy, however, for Mr. Ransom in speaking to me as he did on one occasion about him, remarked, that he should be glad to find a situation for him with the right kind of person, and that he believed he would do well, for he was very ambitious to do for himself."

"Did you notice what a fine eye he has?"

"Brilliant — there is a good deal of the man about him, depend upon it."

"Sis, come here," and Mr. Stanley called by this title the young girl who had taken such a part in the little scene just described; she was his daughter. She was standing at the other end of the piazza, and very likely looking at the young gentleman, who, from her position,

could be seen walking arm in arm in the garden. She came quickly at the call, and did not seem to care that the tokens of tears were manifest on her countenance.

"Now, daughter, I want you to tell us all about this business. What has happened to make this little breeze?"

"Well, papa, I will tell you all about it. You see, one day when Charles and I were riding on horseback, we met a young gentleman on a very handsome grey horse. Charles says to me, 'how proudly that horse steps!' and I turning to him said, 'how beautiful his rider sits, and how very handsome he is!'"

"Well done, Eva!" exclaimed Mr. Douglas, indulging a hearty laugh. "Charlie noticed the horse, but you was taken up with noticing the fine eyes and curly hair, and the pretty face of the young gentleman."

"Well, you see, Mr. Douglas, pa wanted me to tell all about it, and so I had to tell that, for it was the beginning of it."

"The beginning of what?" Mr. Douglas was the speaker, Mr. Stanley remaining silent, but apparently an interested listener.

"The beginning of all the trouble, you see, for when I said to Charles, 'how beautiful the young gentleman rides, and how handsome he is,' he turned towards me and smiled, and I smiled too—I know I did; and just then the grey horse and his rider were opposite to us, and I saw the young gentleman look very pleasantly as if he were going to salute us—bow, or take off his cap—but all at once his countenance grew very sober, and he chirruped to his horse and went off on a gallop. I thought then that like as not he supposed we were laughing at him. Well, in a few days after this we met him again, and as soon as he was near enough to distinguish who he was, Charles says to me,

"'There Eva! there comes your fine rider, and handsome young gentleman.'"

"Well you see that set me to laughing again. I was not laughing at the stranger, but that Charles should bring up what I said just at that time; it was foolish in me I know, but how you see could I help it. This time he never turned his eyes towards us, but kept his hand playing

with the mane of his horse; but this morning was the worst of all. Just after we got out of the avenue into the road, we saw coming towards us, a horse and cart; a very old looking horse with a very odd gait, and the cart, too, looked old, and squeaked a little, just a very little, so we could hear it. At first, we thought there was no driver, but as we drew near, we perceived some one sitting down low, and behind him bags of grain. He was dressed in a farmer's frock. Charles did not recognize who it was, but I did, and I says, 'Charles, that is the young gentleman whom we have met on the grey horse.' 'Is it?' said he. 'You must have noticed him pretty sharply to be able to know him in such a different garb.' This, I suppose, made me smile again; and just then the young man gave his horse the lash, and he jumped a little, and all at once, up went the fore end of the cart, and down went the young man backwards among the bags, and was sitting down flat in the road and hallooing whoa, whoa, to his horse. I could not help laughing, and no doubt he heard me; and I'm so sorry I don't know what to do," and exhausted with the excitement of telling over the whole scene, Eva had to let the tears come freely.

"Well, well, my darling," said Mr. Stanley, "I am glad you are so sensitive of the feelings of others. I see the whole thing now. The young man, no doubt, is very sensitive too, and very likely somewhat nettled because his team was rather exceptionable, and his tumble down over which, if no one had observed, he would no doubt have laughed heartily, happening just as it did, and perhaps hearing your laughter was a little more than he could stand, but it is all well settled now, and I must have a talk with him."

Very soon the two young men were seen coming in from the garden. Eva dried her tears as well as she could, and as they came up to her, Charles said:

"Now we are all going to have a ride together, but I must first introduce you to my friend here, Miss Eva Stanley, Mr. William Randolph Herbert." Both smiled pleasantly, and were about to go towards the gate, when William, turning to the two gentlemen, who were still on the piazza, removed his cap and bowed.



"Stop, stop," said Mr. Stanley, and immediately he advanced towards the group.

"I want to take this young gentleman by the hand." William immediately stepped forward.

"I wish to say to you that I have been highly gratified to find one so young as you are, so tenacious of the character of a gentleman. It is a term very much abused by its application to those who have no real title to it, but it is a word that has great meaning, and involves in its true signification, all that is just and honorable and of good report. You have fairly blotted out every mark that might possibly, from this little mishap, have been made against your claim as such, and I will say more — you have manifested a care for your character in that respect, that gives assurance of its resting on a firm basis. Be a true gentleman, and you can never be a bad man."

"I thank you, sir, very much for your kind opinion," said William, "and hope I shall learn to behave better next time."

Miss Eva allowed William to assist her in mounting, and the little party rode off as happy as young hearts could be.

The next morning Mr. Ransom was called from his study to see two gentlemen, who were waiting for him in the parlor. As he entered the room, Mr. Douglas arose to meet him, and introduced his friend, Mr. Stanley.

"I ought to apologize to you, Mr. Ransom, for bringing my friend here on Saturday. It being the last day of the week, you are doubtless occupied in your preparations for the Sabbath, but Mr. Stanley feels that he must return to New York the first of the week, and he is very desirous of a few minutes' conversation with you, and so I thought I would venture to come."

"No apology is necessary, my dear sir, for I must tell you, I never leave my preparation for the Sabbath to the uncertainties of a last day. I have learned that by taking things in time, much anxiety is prevented and the evils of haste avoided. I therefore commence my labors as other men do, on Monday morning, and Saturday is as much at the command of my friends as any other. So make yourselves, gentlemen, perfectly easy on that score."

"My friend here," said Mr. Douglas, "wishes to have a little talk with you about the young gentleman at present under your care. By the way, have you known anything of a little occurrence that took place yesterday, between him and my son and Mr. Stanley's daughter?"

"I have heard of it, sir. Last evening, William, as is his custom if anything has occurred with him more than usual, related to me I presume, the whole scene, and I must say I was pleased to know that he has such sensitive feelings as to his character on the score of politeness. He felt that he had transgressed the rules which should govern a true gentleman, and was unhappy until he had made atonement."

"Then," said Mr. Stanley, "if I have understood you correctly, you did not know of the affair until it had been settled."

"I knew nothing of it, sir, until after his return from the house of Mr. Douglas, in company with the young gentleman and lady, whom he brought in and introduced to Mrs. Ransom and myself; and, from the very pleasant terms on which the young people seemed to be with each other, I should never have imagined there had been any difficulty between them. Yes, sir, his acknowledgment of the error he had committed was a spontaneous act, and I am glad it was so."

"And I too, sir," responded Mr. Stanley. "I will be frank with you, Mr. Ransom, and say at once that I have formed a very high opinion of the young man. Am I hasty in my conclusion?"

"I believe I can say, sir, that so far as regards perfect truthfulness, an open, frank, manly behavior, under all circumstances, and a kind and affectionate disposition, you are correct. I would trust his integrity to any extent."

"I should judge, sir, too, from his very countenance that he has energy, not easily daunted in an undertaking."

"I think it will prove to be thus when he has an opportunity to be tested. Of one thing I am sure, he has an insatiable ambition to take care of himself; how much business talent may be developed, remains of course for

the future to unfold. In small matters he is prompt, orderly and systematic."

"I am in want, Mr. Ransom, of a young person of his age and of the qualities which I believe he possesses. Does he wish to enter on a mercantile life, or has he some other course in view?"

"The mercantile profession has been that for which he has been, I may say, industriously preparing. He has a good knowledge of arithmetic—not so rapid in his calculations as some, but very correct; he also writes a fair hand. Book-keeping he has not yet attempted."

Mr. Stanley then went into particulars, not necessary to detail here, and after all explanations had been entered into, Mr. Ransom ordered William to be called.

He was at work near the barn, husking corn. He came in just as he was, for the servant told him he was wanted immediately. Although clad in his working clothes, he manifested no feeling on that account, but saluted the gentleman with a pleasant and easy manner.

As he came up to Mr. Ransom, the latter took his hand and William stood beside him.

"You will remember, Willie, that I have endeavored to impress upon you the truth, that the path of duty was the surest way to peace of mind and permanent prosperity. I believe in the little affair in which you were concerned yesterday, you conscientiously endeavored to follow that path. In doing so you have gained the approbation of your own conscience, which is a great thing to begin with, and besides that, you have won the esteem of one person at least, who is now ready to give you a fair chance for a start in life. Mr. Stanley, here, offers to take you into his store—to provide for you, to teach you business, and prepare you for taking your stand among merchants, and winning by your own exertions an independence. What say you to it, are you ready to go?"

William was so confounded by the unexpected proposals, that for a moment he could not answer. His eye was keenly fixed on Mr. Stanley. At length turning to Mr. Ransom,

"Can you spare me, sir?"

This was spoken with so much meaning that Mr. Ransom was deeply moved.

"It will be hard parting with you, Willie, for you and I are bound together by no common tie. But the hour has come for which I have been endeavoring to prepare you, and for which you have been very ambitious to prepare yourself. You have been faithful in your obedience to me, and I have no doubt you will be faithful to Mr. Stanley, and will win his confidence as you have mine, and he can do for you much more than I ever could."

"No one can ever do for me, sir, what you have done." This was said with great difficulty, for the big tears were falling fast.

"He is right there," said Mr. Stanley. "No one can ever do for him, sir, what you have done. You have laid the foundation on which his future depends. You have been dealing with his moral nature, and your image will be mingled with all the better thoughts and feelings of his life, and I will venture now, if he would express his whole mind that he would say, 'no one can be to him what you have been and are.'"

"Yes, sir, I do think so, I know it," said William.

"And I will now leave the matter," said Mr. Stanley, rising to depart. "Master William can think of my proposition, and make his mind in the course of the day to accept or not."

William looked at Mr. Ransom, earnestly.

"My mind is made up now, sir, if you are willing."

"I am, and think it best that you should go."

"I thank you, sir, most truly," said William turning to Mr. Stanley, "for your kind offer. I will most gladly accept of it."

"Then our business is finished."

"Do you return to New York soon, Mr. Stanley?" said Mr. Ransom.

"It was my design to have left here on Monday, but a day or two will make no material difference. How soon can Master William be in readiness?"

"No doubt, sir, by Wednesday next."

"Then let that be the day."

In the arrangement with Mr. Stanley, one of the items of consequence was, that William was to live in his family, and a most happy one for the boy; but under the cir-

cumstances, Mr. Ransom perceived it would require on the part of the youth more than ordinary care to maintain his right position as a member of the household and a clerk in the store, and he thought best to have a free conversation with him on the subject.

"I have told you, William, that you are to become a member of Mr. Stanley's family, as well as a clerk in his business establishment, and you will have need to exercise care in so conducting yourself, that the freedom you may be allowed in the house, does not lead you to disregard the strict discipline so requisite in the place of business; for many things which might be proper in one place, would be very much out of character in the other. Merchants, in general, expect from their clerks, especially the younger ones, a strict and prompt obedience to their orders. There must be on your part a manifest readiness to do on the instant whatever you may be required to do, and your mind must be intent on the business before you. You must be observing of all that is going on, and in that way make yourself familiar with the details of business. Let your whole energies be in exercise, and throw yourself heart and soul into the part entrusted to you. 'Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.' Never disturb yourself about the future, nor be too anxious about what you are to do when you shall arrive at age. Your great object should be to serve faithfully your employer while under his control, and make yourself master of your business. When the time comes for you to take the responsibility of business upon yourself—if you are thoroughly competent, openings will present themselves—but I would advise you to 'look around' well, before you take the burden and care on your own shoulders. You will be more likely to succeed by commencing for yourself at thirty than at twenty-one, and at thirty-five than at thirty. Many wish to make a short cut to fortune and independence, and start for themselves very early in life. In most cases they only involve themselves and others in misfortune. It takes a long time to obtain the experience essential to success.

"Merchants not only require on the part of their clerks strict obedience, attention and wide awake energy, but

also deferential and respectful deportment in their presence; but as you have already learned the more important rules of politeness, you will only need to pay due regard to these, in order to bear yourself correctly in this matter. Deference and respect to superiors lie at the foundation of the true gentleman's character.

"There is but one item more I would mention, and it may be a matter of some moment to you. I have been pleased hitherto with your treatment of ladies, whether old or young; you have been duly attentive and respectful, while at the same time there has been a reticence connected with your attention that I highly commend. Now as you are to be situated, this peculiarity may be of great use to you. Mr. Stanley has but one child, a daughter, the one with whom you have already a slight acquaintance. Of course, it is not every young man of your age that he would take into his house and allow the privileges of an inmate there; and I have no doubt the opinion he has formed of your character as a gentleman, has had its weight in giving you the offer of so favorable a situation. Think of that, and govern yourself accordingly. The young lady may, as she grows up, prove to be very amiable and attractive, or qualities may develop of an opposite character. The part of wisdom for you, as it seems to me, would be that you should be ever ready to oblige, and attentive to every request on the part of the young lady, but not to allow your intimacy to run into familiarity. Be kind and courteous, but let there be a line marked and definite, beyond which you do not allow yourself to pass. This is my advice.

"Another item of serious importance to you, is that you do not lay too much stress on the apparent friendly feelings of your employer. Base all your calculations on his self interest, and your own ability to be useful. Merchants, in general cannot afford to be governed by their feelings; they can no doubt materially assist the young man who passes up through their hands, and many of them do; but seldom indeed unless they find from experience that his services are essential to their own interest. The only place where you can expect to gain such confidence and regard as may lead to your advancement, will

be in the store and based entirely on your efficiency. It is a common saying 'there is no friendship in trade;' perhaps this may in general be true. Your safest course will be to act upon it, so far as not to rely upon any demonstrations of friendly feelings which may be manifested either by the family, or Mr. Stanley himself; in fine, feel that you stand alone, and having a fair chance, ask, nor expect any favors beyond that."

It might perhaps have been better for William if Mr. Ransom had omitted this last item of advice. The youth was already quite disposed to throw off all dependence, and to feel himself alone in the world. He had indeed been very confidential with Mr. Ransom, and the treatment of the latter had been highly calculated to win his confidence, but his disposition, either from nature or from the circumstances in which he had been early placed, was inclined to reticence. He was conscientious and acted from principle, but not careful what opinion others formed of his acts,—the correct course, no doubt, as a general rule, and yet it may be carried to extremes, especially by one in the beginning of his career. Youth cannot be possessed of experience; it can only be acquired by months and years of earnest struggle in the battle field of life, and it would prevent many a sad disaster, if the young adventurer could have by his side a veteran of the field to tell him where the pitfalls are and when to exert his strength and when to halt.

## CHAPTER VI.

William Herbert had passed through the ordeal of a junior clerk in an establishment where several subordinates were required, especially during the more busy seasons of the year, and in three years was enabled to act quite efficiently as salesman. The business which Mr. Stanley pursued, was that of a wholesale dry goods jobber. The store was in Pearl street, between Maiden Lane

and John street, and the dwelling house was in John street, at no great distance from the store. He had been successful and had passed through that period, in the history of most merchants, when the scales seem to be evenly held for a while, between success and failure. He aimed not at doing a large business, and when he found himself getting before hand, became more and more cautious, and as his means increased, seemed less and less desirous of involving himself in liabilities that might by any possibility lead him into trouble. Of course he did not accumulate fast, but in the course of years, his ledger showed a very handsome balance on the right side of his account.

The precautions which Mr. Ransom had given proved to him of great value. He soon found that Mr. Stanley at home and Mr. Stanley in his office were as unlike as possible. At the former he was mild, cheerful and very social, and William was made to feel as free as if he had been a near relative. At the latter, the strictest discipline was maintained, promptness and strict attention, and constant labor of some kind were required. Errors were rebuked—not indeed with an angry tone—but in such a decided manner, as to be keenly felt, especially by one of a sensitive temperament; but very fortunate it was for the lone youth that he had such an ardent desire to succeed. His mind was so intent upon the one great object before him, very seldom did it happen that a rebuke was suffered. How well he pleased his employer he could only tell by the increasing responsibilities thrust upon him, for at home no allusion was ever made to business matters.

Miss Eva had now reached an age that began to tell upon her future character. The graces of her person, as well as the qualities of her mind and heart, were unfolding in beauty and loveliness. Apparently unconscious herself of any peculiar charms, her freedom from vanity and affectation, her open, almost child-like simplicity, added much to her attractions, especially to those who were privileged with such intimacy as would naturally be enjoyed by members of the same family.

The peculiar circumstances under which William and she had made their first acquaintance, brought them perhaps into a closer relation, into a more free and cordial

correspondence than would have taken place had he come to her house under an introduction from her father as one whom he had engaged as a clerk in his store. They had been the cause of trial to each other. They had both acknowledged a wrong done, and asked forgiveness; and in this act the fountain of their youthful feelings had been moved to its very depths; and thus mingling under intense excitement—for a little while flowing together in gladness—it would not be strange if the after intimacy should be of a tender and peculiar nature. William was something more to Eva than her father's clerk. There was something about him that elevated him in her view above all her companions of his sex. There was also a mystery about his family relatives that helped much to increase the charm. Mr. Ransom had not thought proper to reveal all he knew about that matter. All he said was that the parentage of the young man was highly respectable—that his father was a gentleman of refinement and intelligence; that in consequence of a second marriage, William preferred leaving home, in order to seek his own fortune.

The manner in which William treated Miss Eva, had also a tendency to win her respect and admiration. He was always ready to do her bidding, but not forward to offer his services; free to converse with her on any topic she might advance, but seldom commencing any subject of his own accord. When invited by her to be her companion at an evening party, he seemed to acquiesce rather in deference to her request, than from any special pleasure to himself. He often on rainy days waited upon her to her school, and went for her at its close if the state of the weather required it, but no one, not even the young lady herself, could have supposed from his manner at the time that it was particularly a gratification to him. His father on two occasions came to see him, and all the family were delighted with the visitor; his fine personal appearance, his easy, refined manners, and his conversational powers, won their applause, and William took a higher place than ever in their consideration.

Two years more have passed, and tidings came of his

father's death. He had of course permission to go to his home, to pay the last tokens of respect and affection,

On his return he seemed greatly dejected, and disposed to keep by himself. He had evidently passed through a severe ordeal. The color had fled from his cheek, and there was a sadness to the expression of his countenance, that attracted the notice of all; but as he avoided conversation and courted seclusion, no one felt at liberty to break the spell of silence, or to intrude upon his sorrow.

Eva, however, could not rest satisfied without an attempt at consolation. Hitherto most pleasant had been their intercourse, and her heart was by no means insensible to the gentler passions. Nothing had been said by either, that could have been construed into an expression of peculiar interest, and yet she felt as sure as she wished to be that she was more to him than all others, and she firmly believed that he also felt assured that he was dear to her, and she was willing he should think so. Those tender emotions which so quickly vibrate in sympathy within the hearts of the pure, need not always the aid of words to kindle them, or to bring to the knowledge of each other their intensity. Love, pure and true, had wound her golden chain about them, little by little, without parade or noise, and yet with them there was no clandestine dealing—nothing done by either of set purpose to win the other's heart. But they loved—they were conscious of it—and while William had never declared his passion, Eva had taken no pains to conceal her feelings. And it was not in her nature to know that one so dear to her had been stricken by the hand of sorrow, and not let him feel how truly she sympathized with him. It was of course her wish to see him alone, but difficulties for some days were in the way of that. He was in the store through the day, except at meal time and when the store was closed for the evening.

It was a beautiful moonlight evening, and William was seated alone, near the window, in their parlor. She entered the room, and coming up to him said: "Do you not feel like taking a walk on the Battery this pleasant evening?" "By all means if you wish it." But little was said by either until they reached that beautiful prome-



nade. It was not then what it has now become, and those who remember its days of beauty and respectability, cannot but regret that so lovely a location should have been allowed to be desecrated by the low and abandoned.

"It must be a terrible blow to lose a parent," was the first word she said.

After a moment's silence, he replied :

"I have lost both of mine."

"Is not your mother living?"

"No."

"Are your sisters then all alone?"

"*Their* mother is living."

"They are not your own sisters, then?"

"Not in one sense, and yet they seem very near to me."

"Are they much younger than you?"

"One is twelve and the other fourteen."

"It must be hard for them, and for you, to be thus separated."

"Yes, it was a severe trial to us when I left them three days ago; they hung on my neck, and it almost broke my heart to tear myself from them. They have lost all, as well as I have."

"But their mother is living!"

"You judge of a mother from your own experience. Had you one whose heart was callous to all love for any thing but sordid gain — who knew not one tender emotion — who could see husband and children carried to the grave without a tear, provided they did not take with them the gold she worships — you would know then, that a mother may be nothing more than a prudent manager."

"William, you say hard things. Can this be so! I sincerely pity them and you, but why have you never told me this before? Would it not be a relief for you at times to let out some of the trials of your heart; dare you not trust me as a friend? You are not happy; some burden seems always pressing upon you. I feel for you, but know not what to say that might give you relief. Why is it after so long an intimacy that you still shut up your heart within itself?"

"My trials have been of a kind almost too sacred for

the ear of friendship. I could not expose them without unveiling secrets that had better be shut out from the world forever. Often and often when we have been walking together as we are now, have I been on the point of asking you if I might look upon you as a sister, and tell you all I felt — but —"

"And did you doubt of my willingness to take that place? or my honor to keep most sacredly what in confidence you told me?"

"No, no, oh no! it was not that; but there are things which even the nearest kindred had better keep within their own breasts. A parent's trials may be of such a nature that children should never even mention them to each other. But that chapter is closed. He who has been upon my heart so long — whose heavy grief has weighed upon my spirits with increasing sadness as my years have advanced, is now at rest. The sorrow of his life has ceased — the memory of the past alone haunts me now, and every act of my life that has caused a pang to a heart already wrung with anguish, pierces me like a dagger."

"But I cannot believe, William, that you have ever been an undutiful son!"

"I have been a loving child. My heart has been bound up in that of my father. Every sigh which escaped him in my presence, troubled me; and when I have seen him walk the room with the deep marks of sorrow and despair upon his brow, I have tried to say words of cheer and comfort; and my daily prayer to God has been, that he might be sustained, and in some way, I knew not how, delivered from his trials. Yet for all this I have caused him sorrow; for part, perhaps the greater part of his distress was on my account, and if I had borne with patience what I had to endure — if I could have heard my mother's name —"

Here William paused. He could go no further without revealing what must lead to a full development.

"I do not ask you, William, to tell me what it would distress you to reveal. I only want you to feel that if at any time it would be a relief to unburden your mind, you

have a friend to hear your trouble and to sympathize most heartily in all your griefs."

He took her hand, and gently pressing it raised it to his lips. There was no sign on her part that the act was offensive. She had no desire to conceal what she felt — to have done so would have been prudery. She was in earnest, not for tokens of his love — they were not needed — but to gain his confidence, to win him to a free communion on such topics as might lead her into his secret trials, that she might, as much as possible, bear part of the burden with him. After walking a short distance in silence, he again spoke:

"I thank you. I want to tell you all — I must — I will. I know you will pity me, even if you should not approve."

And he told her all. The secrets of his past history, to the day they first were brought together, were unfolded — scenes he had never exposed to Mr. Ransom himself.

"And now, Eva," he said as he closed, "you know all my story, and will not perhaps think as well of me as you have done, but it will be a relief to my mind, to know that you at least, are not ignorant of the severe ordeal through which I have passed."

"And I am glad you have told me, William. You have suffered more than I could have imagined, and I do not think you have cause to blame yourself for one act of your life. I may not be an impartial judge. Oh, dear! how ungrateful I have been! what you have just told me makes me feel more sad on my account than yours."

"Why so, Eva? or what possible connection have you with my trials, that you need blame yourself for? You could not sympathize with sufferings you knew nothing of."

"You do not comprehend. Your story has made me contrast my own happy lot during the same years. All with me has been peace and love. Every wish gratified — no care — no fear of want — no stranger's hands administering to my necessities. My cup has been running over with mercies, and how little have I realized the kindness of my Heavenly Father! I shall feel different after this. Your sad hours will come up — I mean those that

are past. I shall think of your boyhood — alone, cheerless, worried by ill temper, neglected by the unfeeling, hungry at times even to suffering, keeping your trials in your own young heart lest your father should have an addition to his sorrows. Yes, these will come up to me when I am enjoying the rich blessings of parental love and all the comforts of my happy home; and I shall be more humble and more grateful."

"If my story should thus affect you, Eva, I do not regret that I have told it. If anything in my life can benefit you, I may feel that I have not suffered in vain."

"Yes, William, and I firmly believe the bitterness of your early days will be compensated by a future of usefulness and peace. Do you not think that those tears you shed in secret places for your father, and every effort you made to cheer and calm his distracted heart, and every prayer you offered for him, are remembered? Oh, you have a much higher claim to the blessing on an obedient child than I can ever have."

"Do not say so. I claim no merit for the past, and can only hope that I may be able in time, to atone for deficiencies in my conduct to my father, by taking his place as far as I can to my sisters. I shall throw my whole life into an effort to rescue them from their present unhappy condition."

"But surely their own mother does not treat them as she did you!"

"Not in the same way. They are well clothed and fed, but young women need more than these. They need culture. My father has devoted his later years to their improvement, and I have been astonished how much he has accomplished in spite of all the obstacles in his and their way. But that assistance they can have no more, and they feel it bitterly. Schooling they are not allowed, and for this reason, 'they can read, write and cipher,' and that their mother thinks is all they need. Their only chance for improvement now is from reading; and happily my father's books are there, and they regard with sacred reverence every thing that once was his. Oh, Eva, you cannot think what joy was mingled with my tears when, alone together with them they poured out all their hearts, and told

me of their troubles and of their fears for the future, and then they said, 'do you know, dear brother, what our father suffered. How kind, patient and loving he was, and now perhaps we shall hear his name lightly spoken of,' and they wept, and I wept with them, and if I had the power would have brought them away from a place that will only be to them a place of gloom and trial."

Eva was deeply affected. She could not restrain her tears, and these tokens of her sympathy were like a precious balm to the wounded, troubled heart of her companion. And when she again spoke, the tones of her voice were low and tender, just suited to his feelings; his heart gleamed with strange emotion—she never seemed so near to him before, and words of love were almost trembling on his lips, and yet he did not utter them. He felt at once it would be wrong. She had not asked him to walk with her, with any thought not the most distant that such a subject would be introduced; it would be an insult to her generous, noble heart. Her only purpose was to try and open that secret chamber where he kept cloistered some heart trouble—to help him as a sister might, by the sweet power of sympathy, and her whole effort was accomplished. He felt stronger to do the work of life entailed upon him. The dark cloud which had been about him lifted up, and a brighter atmosphere surrounded and sparkled on his path.

## CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Stanley had for some time been in feeble health. There seemed to be no marked symptoms of a serious disease. He had indeed a cough, but that was not thought of much consequence—"it was constitutional; he had always been subject to it at times." His strength, however was failing. He could not endure what he did a few months past. The debility was attributed to the influ-

ence of spring weather; "when that became settled and the steady warmth of summer was established, he would feel better," but the summer heat only increased the weakness. The country air was tried, first at the sea-side, and then far inland on the mountains. As the fall approached, the symptoms became more unfavorable. He could no longer attend to his business. Soon for days he did not leave his chamber, and at length he lay upon his bed, with the consciousness that his struggle for life was over, and his work done.

During all this period, William had the burden of the business resting upon him. He saw little of Eva, for his stay in the house was as short as possible—merely to eat and be gone, and his evenings were fully occupied at the store, often until late at night. Mr. Stanley had him daily at his bed-side to consult with him, and give such directions as he could, and at times talked freely about his approaching end, and about what he wished after that event should have taken place. He spoke to him as if he felt that the care of those dear to him, would devolve on William, and as if it was a great relief to his wearied mind, that one would be with them in whom he had such perfect confidence.

One day as William was about to leave him, he called him back.

"I am about arranging my affairs. I feel it high time. I shall leave you as the principal manager, but have concluded to name my friend Blanchard, as joint executor with you."

William was startled by the announcement, and for a moment did not reply, and Mr. Stanley continued.

"I could with perfect confidence entrust every thing to your honesty and prudence, but you know Mr. Blanchard is a near friend; and Mrs. Stanley, in particular, might feel a little more confidence in having such a judicious person connected with you. All you will have to do, will be to consult with him when you are at a loss as to what course to pursue. I shall expect the business to be continued as it has been, curtailed of course at first, until you get advanced enough from your own means to go on as you think best. Had I lived you would have been my part-

ner. I feel that your faithful service demanded such an act on my part, but as it is, I shall order a certain amount of capital to remain in the business for a few years."

William knew more about Mr. Blanchard than Mr. Stanley did, although the latter had been acquainted with him for many years. He knew also that Mrs. Stanley was strongly attached to Blanchard and his wife; their word would be law with her, he himself would be a mere cipher, and might be involved in difficulties and perhaps be placed in a hostile relation to the family. Mr. Stanley he knew to be honorable and true, but not shrewd in detecting evil. Without guile himself, he did not suspect it in others. Blanchard, William believed, to be in character the opposite of that; and he had his own reasons for believing that he had a strange prejudice against himself. Under these circumstances to be placed in such a relation as joint executor with Mr. Blanchard, would be of no avail for any good to himself, or others. He therefore replied:

"I thank you most sincerely, Mr. Stanley, for all the interest you have hitherto manifested for my welfare, and for the confidence in me expressed by your present proposal; but sir, you know Mrs. Stanley would naturally consult with Mr. Blanchard. I might not think as they did, I could not well set my opinion in opposition; my name as executor would, I am convinced, give me no power, and it may be, sir, that both Mrs. Stanley and Mr. Blanchard might object to it. Have you mentioned to them your design?"

"I have not, but if you wish, I will do so."

"And to assure you, sir, that I am ready in every way to meet your wishes, if you find it is their desire that thus it should be, or if they do not object, I shall be willing that your design be carried into execution."

What occurred after this, William knew not, but he thought the conduct of Mrs. Stanley towards him, was greatly changed. He was not often allowed to be in Mr. Stanley's room without either she or Mr. Blanchard were present. It might have been accidental, but he believed not; neither was he allowed to watch with him as he had been, and when he offered, the excuse was, "that Mr. Stanley was so low now, that she could not leave him," or that

"Mr. Blanchard was such an experienced nurse in sickness, it would be better that he should be with him, and he, William, must be very tired." The latter reason he would have argued against and put down, if he thought it had been offered in sincerity."

The hour of trial at length came, and the house which for so many years had been the abode of comfort and happiness, was turned into a house of mourning.

William saw nothing of Eva in the hours which preceded the funeral, for the family of Mr. Blanchard was there, and William, conscious that he was no favorite with any of them, and finding his services were not called for, kept out of the way as much as possible. And when the funeral solemnities were over, still several members of that family remained, and Mrs. Stanley, overcome by the sad loss she had met with — for she truly loved her husband — remained in seclusion; whether confined to her bed, William did not know. He never saw her again.

It was the third day after the funeral, that William entered the house about the middle of the afternoon. He had brought a cartman with him, the cart was standing at the door, and the man at his request followed him into the house, and up into his room, where two trunks lay ready locked and strapped. One contained his wearing apparel, and the other was well filled with books, which in the course of years he had purchased. Immediately they are taken up, one at a time, and placed upon the cart. As the last one was brought out, William said:

"You remember the direction?"

"No. — Dey street."

"Right. Please say to them I will be there this evening."

"I will."

William now stood a moment upon the stoop. He looked towards the open door — stepped in as if to close it, and was in the act of doing so, when he saw Eva descending the stairs, and approaching him. He advanced to meet her, their hands were clasped in silence, and she led him into the parlor, and then closed the door.

"What does this mean, William? Jane tells me you have taken away your trunks, and are going to leave us! Can this be true?"

He was too much overcome at once to make any reply. He had gone through a scene of intense excitement that day. Mr. Blanchard had been at the store and assumed direction. That of course William had anticipated, for without making inquiry, he felt well assured that Mr. Blanchard had been left sole manager of all Mr. Stanley's affairs, and as a collateral, he also expected that his own connection with the business would be of short duration, but he did not anticipate a rude dismissal, nor insulting language, and his proud spirit had been deeply wounded. He had not allowed himself to use any expressions that Mr. Blanchard could make a handle of to his injury, but had maintained the character of a gentleman throughout the trying scene. The kind manner in which Eva met him, brought back at once all the past, and for a few moments, as has been said, there was no reply; at length by a powerful effort he was enabled to say:

"I think it will be best."

Eva saw his emotion. She had no idea what peculiar cause had excited him, nor could she imagine that his leaving the house for some other abode, would by any means suspend the relation of friendship in which they had now for so long stood to each other.

"I am sorry you feel it best to do so just at this time."

He handed her his card with the number and street of his new place of residence, and said as she took it,

"I shall be there for the present, and when I leave there will advise you of my address, so that whenever I can be of any service to yourself or your mother, you may know where I may be found. Any thing I can ever do for either shall be done to the very extent of my ability; your kindness will never be forgotten."

"But, William—" she had taken the hand he had extended as he was about to go, and was intending to remonstrate against this sudden step; her feelings, however became too much excited to allow her utterance. She fixed her eye steadily upon him—her whole heart and all they had been to each other—the past and the present, seemed to him concentrated in that look. He could not endure it. Suddenly he exclaimed:

"Eva, may God bless you," and then broke away from her and departed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

"Hallo, Captain! don't haul off yet."

"What's the matter now?" was answered by a short man in pea jacket and tarpaulin hat, with a pleasant, though weather beaten countenance, who was standing at the stern of a sloop in Albany basin, and pulling away upon a line fastened to the spile at the end of the pier. Two other hands were engaged in like manner, and under their united strain the Polly was beginning slowly to move from her station. The young man, who was a mulatto, had no doubt been running for some distance, for he seemed quite out of breath, and having aroused the attention of the captain by his exclamation, stood for some moments without seemingly being able to reply to the captain's question. The order "vast hauling," was in the mean time given, and the mulatto boy jumped on board.

"It's you, Jim, is it?" said the captain. "What's to pay now?"

"Mr. Roland wants to go up, captain. He's coming as fast as possible, but the shoemaker disappointed him about his boots, and he's just gone to buy a pair. He'll be down in fifteen minutes or, may be half an hour, and he sends his compliments to Captain Joe, and says he'll be 'specially obliged if you will wait, for he wants to go very urgently."

Quite a number of passengers were on board the Polly, and being on deck, as passengers usually are when about to start, many of them could not fail to hear what was just then going on; and one of them, a gentleman with somewhat more pretensions as to dress than the rest, stepped up, and with a consequential air, thus addressed the captain;

"Of course, captain, you do not mean to comply with any such request. You was to have sailed at one o'clock,



it is now past two; a whole hour we have been waiting here for one thing or another. I think it a piece of impertinence for any man to request the boat to be detained just for his convenience, with the wind fair too, and a good breeze."

Captain Joseph Bluff, was a very civil man naturally, and very much disposed to accommodate all round, but he knew his own business best, or thought he did; at least he generally acted as his own judgment dictated, without spending much breath in giving reasons for his conduct. His only reply to the gentleman was,

"Make fast the stern line, boys."

The order was readily obeyed, and the sloop Polly lay still again, only a few feet in advance of her former position. The gentleman being somewhat acquainted with the ways of the world from having been many years engaged in business in the city, was able to come to a correct conclusion, as to the propriety of saying anything further to Captain Joe. He therefore walked from the upper deck, and mingled with the passengers who were gathered around the cabin gangway, addressing himself to a gentleman, who was seated with a little girl on his knee, upon one of the trunks, of which several stood in that vicinity.

"A pretty piece of business this, Mr. Sandford, that you and I, and all the rest of us here, should be kept waiting for some country booby or other; no doubt a crony of the captain's. These country folks ought to have some lessons given them as to the necessity of promptness and the value of time."

"I fear it will be hard teaching them. They know nothing about change hours, or bank hours, or even market hours. A half hour with us sometimes, is of great consequence. I have in my day suffered more between half past two and three o'clock, than I ever mean to suffer again if I can help it. It seems to me now, Blanchard, a delightful thought that I am going where a man will have no such terrible master over him as 'Bills payable.' Come, sit down man, and keep cool. It will be a matter of little moment whether we get off an hour earlier or later. I have bid good-bye to the city, squared all off there and

mean to make the best of what I have left, and not worry myself about trifles. It is the best way, depend upon it."

"Yes, perhaps it is, if a man can only make up his mind to do so, but I hate imposition, whether in the city or country. I have had some specimens already of their independent ways, but I have been up to them; I let them know that when I want a thing done, its got to be done, in true time too. You know I told you I have been building? at least putting an addition to my house."

"Yes."

"Well, I called upon one or two of the best builders in that region, and told them what I wanted, and showed them the plan I had drawn out for me by an architect, and asked them what they would do it for, and how long it would take to finish it. What are you smiling at, Sandford?"

"I was thinking what answer they gave you."

"What do you think it was?"

"I can guess pretty nearly, I think. They very likely looked some time at the plan you handed them, said after a while, 'that it would add to the looks of the house' — 'that they would like to undertake the job,' 'that they had as lief work for you as for anybody,' and 'whatever they did about it should be done in workmanlike manner,' and 'that they would charge fair wages and their board,' and 'that they thought the thing might possibly be put in shape in a month or so — just according to the number of hands you are mind to put on.'"

"Well, you've come pretty near the mark, only they seemed to put the matter a little more in the shape of a favor to be done for me, than a thing of any consequence to them. It was a little too much so for me, so I said nothing further to them, and just made a contract with a boss in the city, at a stipulated price and to be done within a stipulated time, and no more trouble about it — board nor nothing. And I should advise you, if you like the looks of things at my place, to engage the same fellow, unless you have engaged a builder already. You mean to put up a new house, I suppose."

"Not I. Not just yet, at any rate; we shall patch up

the old one, and make her answer. You see, Blanchard, I am leaving the city for good. I design living in the country, which as I understand matters is altogether a different thing from living in the city."

"You want a good house, though!"

"Oh, yes. I want a comfortable, tight house, and I think I have got one. It is plain I know — fine furniture will not show to much advantage in it — and so I have made a clean sweep of everything, except beds and plainest carpets, etc. All the trumpery that cost me a deal of money and was designed chiefly for other people to look at, I've cleared out — sold off. I have had enough of slaving myself, wearing out soul and body to keep up appearances, and conform to city fashions. My constitution won't stand it. I am ten years older than I ought to be."

"It is wearing, I know. I have got tired of it myself, that's a fact. I am retiring, you know; left business and mean to rest and enjoy myself the remainder of my life, but I don't see why fine furniture and a fine house cannot be as well enjoyed in the country as in the city, if a man can afford it."

"True, if he can afford it. You probably can live as expensively as you did in the city, and leave your children enough to go on living so when you are gone. It is otherwise with me. I leave the city with a small income and mean to live within it. I expect to give up show and style, and in lieu thereof, to have freedom from distracting care, time to think, to read, to enjoy the society of my wife and children, and the beautiful world which God has given us to live in. None of these have I been able really and truly to have much satisfaction from, so far; it is as you know, utterly impossible for a man absorbed in business, with all the crooks and turns and changes in money affairs, to have anything like a calm, settled state of mind — utterly out of the question."

How long the two gentlemen might have kept on in the track to which their conversation had diverged there is no telling, had they not been interrupted by the stir of the men with the little captain at their head, now in good earnest, heaving away some at the long line at the head of the pier, and others hoisting the jib. The mainsails

had been flapping in the wind with its peak down for more than an hour. The gentleman for whom the delay of the last half hour had been made, had no doubt come on board, but so unostentatiously that no one probably, except the captain and the hands who knew him were aware of the fact. The mulatto boy, however, was observed by our Mr. Blanchard, and again addressing the gentleman with whom he had been holding the conversation above recorded.

"Sandford, is the captain going at last, without that fellow he has kept us waiting for. The negro, I see is on board. Perhaps he was the gentleman after all to whom we are indebted for this delay."

"I see there a man pulling in the slack as the hands are hoisting the jib, who don't look like a boatswain; you see he has gloves on his hands, and his dress is not exactly a sailor's rig."

"Ay, ay, I see. I suppose he has some interest in the concern. That accounts for his importance. Rather a stern looking chap. What raven black hair he has! a fine form, too."

"And a remarkably bright eye. I caught a glimpse of his face just now — look —"

This was said as the person about whom they had been speaking, having surrendered the rope into the hands of the boatmen, that they might give a last pull and make all taut, turned his face toward the two gentlemen, casting a mere glance that way, while he walked past them, and mounting the after deck, approached the captain, who was standing by his tiller. The latter touched his hat before he took the proffered hand of his passenger.

"I feel under great obligation to you, captain. I hope the delay has not put you to inconvenience."

"Not at all, not at all, Mr. Roland; the wind is fair to be sure and a good breeze, but do our best, we shall not be able to get beyond the edge of the highlands to-night. The south wind is heaping up for us some squally weather off in the north-west. We shall probably have a fluster before sundown, and then a stiff nor'-easter right in our teeth or a dead calm; a half hour sooner or later won't make much difference — take care of the boom, sir."

The gentleman stooped in time to avoid the sweep of the heavy sail as it took the wind and flew across the deck, and spread its broad white form without a wrinkle, full to the breeze. Some little stir was perceived among the group of passengers who still maintained their position around the cabin-door, and the captain with a slight chuckle pointed his companion that way. It seemed that Mr. Blanchard had his curiosity somewhat excited in reference to this gentleman, who had been the cause of some disturbance to his equanimity, and could not very well keep his eye from that direction. There was something in the countenance and the bearing of the young man — for he was not probably over thirty — that in spite of his plain dress, indicated his position as above a medium rank, and Mr. Blanchard, like most men who, from a low position originally, have accumulated money enough to enable them to imitate those they think their betters in externals, was sensitive in that particular point. His own consciousness assured him that between this stranger and himself there was a "vast gulf fixed." Money could not bridge it over, nor give to himself that unmistakable air which had been acquired from early childhood. He might indeed pretend to ridicule the idea that one man was not as good as another, if he had as much money at his command and ability to make the most of it; and yet he felt the contrast — the could not help it; and although he loved money and prided himself upon what he had accumulated, yet he would have felt himself flattered to be acknowledged by that person as an acquaintance, even although he should know that his own purse was much the best filled.

These feelings being in operation, Mr. Blanchard, as has been said, kept his eye that way, as though under fascination, and the spell was not broken until he felt his hat and other appurtenances belonging to the upper region suddenly torn from their proper place. Being nearer the centre of motion, the boom had accomplished the feat before he had time to think of stooping, and left exposed to the air and the free gaze of his companions, a white shining pate as guiltless of hair as an apple. Instead of plunging for his hat and its accompaniment, he clapped both hands to

his head, which caused increased attention that way, many asking with more or less interest, "if he was much hurt."

He made no reply, but walked with his hands still spread over his cranium in the direction of the missing articles. One of the hands on board had luckily grabbed them on their way after the boom towards the blue waters, and as he handed them to their owner, the hairy scalp was so quickly replaced upon its shaven pedestal, that sufficient care was wanting in properly adjusting it. The consequence was, the crown of his head appeared just over the frontal bump, and the foretop with its curls was overlooking the collar behind. An irrepressible shout of laughter greeted this singular transformation, very much to the consternation and dismay of the sufferer. He felt that something was wrong, but not knowing exactly where the difficulty lay, clapped his hat over the scene of disorder, and looking very much like a man with his face in the wrong place, rushed down into the cabin.

To most men of Mr. Blanchard's years, such a mishap would have been merely a fit cause for a hearty laugh, and he would have joined in readily with those around. He was of the ripe age of fifty, and if deficient at that period of life in the necessary covering for his head, he might with perfect propriety put on a substitute. But Mr. Blanchard was a widower — a rich widower, he was called — and there was among the list of passengers on board, a pair of very soft and expressive eyes, which, it may as well be said at once, had made a powerful impression on his heart. Those eyes had witnessed this development of his cranial peculiarities, and their owner had joined in the shout of laughter, and the tender sensibilities of Mr. Blanchard were sadly disturbed.

But the vessel has now got under full way, and with the stiff breeze then blowing, and the tide in her favor was making rapid progress. The spires and parallel streets of the great city were passing in quick succession. Soon the pretty dwellings scattered along the outskirts are attracting admiration, and as all objects recognized as belonging to New York, are lost in the fields, and fences, and common country residences, the passengers remit their united gaze, and begin to scatter about the vessel and amuse

themselves according to their different tastes. They had now fairly commenced their voyage, and all knew enough of sloop navigation, to feel that there would be time for trying a variety of positions, and doing a variety of odds and ends, before there would be any propriety in asking the captain, "how soon he thought they would get to the landing."

It was a beautiful afternoon in the month of June, rather warm, indeed, for the season. Our passengers, however, suffered no inconvenience from that source. The elasticity of the pure air now they were once out on the broad river, and the wind that "followed fast," nullified at least, while they were on deck, the scorching sunbeams, and caused a continued expression from one and another of thankfulness "that they were out of the city." More especially did manifestations of delight, not only at the delicious change from the stifling atmosphere of the city, but in the glorious visions of nature that now lay spread out on every point of view, escape the lips of a young and beautiful specimen among the females. She seemed to be quite carried away from all sense of conventionalities, and with her bonnet hanging by its strings in her hand, her light, very light, brown hair dangling ad libitum upon her neck and shoulders, she seemed like some young animal just loosed from a long confinement, snuffing the air with delight, and ready for a spring in any direction. The sunbeam did not appear in the least to affect the full, bright play of her very dark, blue eyes. She heeded them no more than if she had no fair skin to tarnish, and had been a German peasant girl, accustomed to exposure in all weather. At times she stood and gazed up at the expanded sail, and then at the blue water as it tumbled along the vessel's side, and then at the vast panorama of water and land that opened at the stern as their progress into mid channel exposed more clearly the beautiful bay with its circling landscape and its small opening to seaward at the narrows. Her admiration was not that of the mere "hoyden," who, deprived of nature's beauties by confinement to the dull round of some city boarding school, looked, and laughed, and giggled, and romped about — glad to be at freedom. There was no smile on her beautiful counte-

nance, there was no restlessness in her motions; she seemed in no haste to withdraw her eye from any one of the varied scenes that for the time attracted her notice. She evidently was thinking, while her eye was gazing, and more than once held up her hands, bonnet and all, as some view, more captivating than the rest, unfolded its beauties to her. At length, a middle aged lady, peeping her head around above the cabin hatch, as she stood upon its upper step, espied her seated upon a henceop near the stern, conversing with the little captain, who was also seated on the end of his tiller. At once the elder lady ascended the deck, and as she approached the other, said:

"Do, Eva, for goodness sake, put on your bonnet; you'll scorch to death."

"I will, Aunt Lizzy, to please you; but really, I had forgotten that it was not in its place. Is not this lovely?"

"Its dreadful hot," and the lady fanned herself more rapidly as she said this, and scowled, as though the water and the deck on which she stood, and all about her, were distasteful.

"But such a delicious breeze as we are having, Aunt Lizzy, makes one forget all about the heat. We are not in the city now, where every puff of air seems to come from a furnace, or from some burning desert."

"Its dreadful hot here, too, and not a speck of shade or any thing to keep the sun off; that's the worst of the country, and you'll find it just as I have told you. It's dreadful hot in the summer, and it's dreadful cold in the winter, and what with toads, and mosquitoes, and dust, and mud, and the horrible snakes — well, you'll all see — if you ain't all sick to death before summer is over — do come down in the cabin, Eva, out of the broiling sun; you'll be burnt as black as a Mohawk."

"No danger now, Aunt Lizzy, with this great scoop on my head."

"Yes, the water will burn you just as bad as the sun, and more than all, we are going to have a gust, I know we are, the wind is south."

"Oh, Aunt Lizzy! what sign can you perceive of a gust, the sky is clear, I am sure."

"Yes, yes — but I can see — look up in the northwest, it's gathering there — this south wind always brings them. I don't like south winds — not in summer; you can't cheat me about gusts, I can feel them in the very ends of my fingers."

The captain had been listening attentively to the old lady, and from the pleasant twinkle of his eye and a peculiar nod of his head occasionally as he caught the eye of the younger one, showed that he was not a little amused. He now gave a hearty "ha, ha," saying at the same time,

"I guess your fingers tell right this time, madam."

Miss Eva joined in the laugh, but not so the old lady; her countenance assumed a more serious aspect if possible, and taking a step closer to the captain, she spoke in a very earnest tone.

"Then you think we are going to have a thunder gust, captain? What shall we do! you'll put in somewhere, won't you?"

"Oh, never fear, madam, we'll take all the care we can, but you know its hard fending off thunder and lightning, — they go pretty much where they're sent."

"Oh dear, I knew it would be so, and to think of being in a boat, with a mast, too, to draw the lightning!"

"Yes, but auntie, you know it will not be so high an object as St. John's steeple. You have always been wishing we lived any where but so near that steeple. I know we have got a careful captain, and don't mean to give myself any concern about the storms."

"No, I'll warrant you wont; you never did, not even to shut down a window till the rain, and hail, and dust was pouring in on everything."

"We shall not have any dust, Aunt Lizzie; that will be an evil out of the way. You know you have always said the dust was more frightful to you at such times than any thing else, and then we can have a clear view of the storm when it comes."

"I don't want to see it; but do come down, Eva, and sit with me in the cabin, I'm dreadfully nervous."

With a pleasant smile on her face, the young lady made

a slight obeisance to the captain, and tripped it after her friend, though not perhaps with a very good will.

As we shall not have much to do with all the passengers, we shall only introduce to the reader such of them as will be actors in the scenes we are about to relate.

Mr. Blanchard was one of the multitude, who in the city of New York, had managed by the time he reached his fiftieth year, to accumulate what was thought in those days — some forty years since — a handsome fortune. He was worth, probably, a little over eighty thousand dollars — at least this was the report. He was a native of the city, but of a low origin. His father had been a laboring man — a porter in a large retail grocery, and had succeeded in procuring a situation for his son in a wholesale establishment in the same line, as a clerk. Young Blanchard was then fourteen, an active boy of fair capacity, and so well did he please his employers, that he was by degrees advanced from that of an errand boy to that of junior clerk, book keeper, salesman, and finally was taken into the concern as a partner. He had ever been a close applicant to business; his mind was fully satisfied with being engrossed in its details, and as the concern was prosperous and the business a regular affair — that of supplying country stores with rum, sugar, molasses, etc., — it was not necessary that its managers should be men of large capacity, or cultivated intellect. They knew enough of geography to be able to realize the whereabouts their customers lived, but as their sales were principally made along the river towns of the Hudson, as far west in New Jersey as Morristown, and to a few of the villages in Connecticut, it would require but a limited knowledge of the terrestrial globe, to be able in imagination to locate their customers. And as to spelling and grammar, there was little occasion for a critical knowledge of either. The few common-place remarks which they had to make at the end of the bill of goods, such as, "we hope the articles will prove satisfactory," or, "we shall be glad to receive further orders from you," were not easily put out of joint in construction, and the words not difficult for plain spellers. It is quite an error to suppose any great amount of knowledge or talent is required in order to be a successful trader in some of those



branches of business in the great city which have turned out quite wealthy men. Many fine establishments at the present day, both in the city and out of it, have owners who must feel strangely amid their surroundings, and above all, very peculiar in their own library, if they have such an appendage to their dwellings.

We are straying however, from our friend, Mr. Rufus Blanchard. The business was indeed prosperous, but all Mr. Blanchard's money was not made in regular trade. He had on his own account dabbled occasionally in stocks, in which he had been successful; he had also made a very fortunate investment in vacant lots just at a time when a sudden rage for speculation in fast property had broken out, and more by that chance than either his regular business or his stock ventures, was he enabled to realize that he had become a man of some consideration — a monied man. To be sure much of the importance attached to him, may be attributed to the fact that public rumor proclaimed him to be worth just about double what he did possess, and as he never took any pains to contradict that veracious oracle, when he had the opportunity, he therefore passed on change and elsewhere, as a very lucky fellow, received all that homage which wealth insures, and was not sorry to know that any envied him on account of his prosperity. In fact, without running to the excesses which many indulged in, he was heartily in love with the world, and although a professor of religion, the injunction "to love not the world nor the things of the world," — "if riches increase set not your heart on them," — "possessing as though we possessed not," — he did not seem to feel had any reference to *him*. He had made his money, and as he sometimes said, "God had prospered him," and of course he had a right to enjoy his gifts — all which cannot be denied or gainsayed. But the thought never came into his mind, that his abundance had calls — deep and loud, from many a sufferer, and that he was entrusted with it for this very purpose. The talent entrusted to him was not that of superior intellect, or such gifts as would have enabled him to grapple with the minds of men in warning, convincing and leading them from the paths of sin and sorrow, to those of truth and holiness.

But he was entrusted with material substance beyond what his necessities required, and he knew that the Master whom he professed to love, "went about doing good," and that his disciples were enjoined to do likewise — even to deny themselves, if that were necessary — at any rate, "to remember the poor." Not that Mr. Blanchard never gave for that purpose, when called upon, but it was given for the same reason, and in the same spirit that he paid his taxes — he could not very well help it — and keep up a very fair name. He had little sympathy with the poor — rather blamed than pitied them.

His religion had not so remodeled his heart, as to make him truly in love with its holy principles. He held on to it as a safeguard, or it may be from habit, or from deference to the opinion of others. It was not a source of much comfort to him; he rather feared than loved God.

That he was not truly happy is not at all strange; he had no sweet communions with his Saviour — the Bible was not much of a companion for him — he never went to it for counsel, nor had his spirit enraptured with its divine teachings and promises. The holy joy which breaks forth in the Psalms and escapes from the heart of the Apostles, touch no chord in his. How then can he be happy! And yet he was a professor, in good and regular standing. Aside from this fact, it would have been utterly impossible, even for those most intimate with him, to have discovered wherein he differed from those who followed the devices and desires of their own heart, and made no secret of it. When he was reviled, he gave as good as he received. When he suffered from any cause from a fellow man in his pocket or his person, he left no means untried, either by law or any other way, except giving hard blows, (he was not a fighting man,) to make his aggressor suffer in return. As to leaving matters to "Him who judgeth righteously," he never once thought of the thing. "The meekness and gentleness" of the Divine Master might as well never been urged as a pattern to copy, for all that such a motive affected him. To sum the whole up, he lived as far from God as a friend, as far from Christ as his pattern and atoning sacrifice, and from the Holy Spirit as the communicator of heavenly as-

pirations and sanctifying grace, as though the triune manifestations of Almighty love and care had no part in his creed, and yet he sat regularly at the communion table, said grace over his meals, and numbered himself with those who had been born again.

Mr. Sandford had been in business in the city of New York for nearly fifteen years. He had accumulated a small property, and would no doubt, if he had continued in trade, succeeded in time to an independence; but unhappily he had engaged in business at a period during which there was a very unsettled state of things in the commercial world. Every few years some derangement took place in monetary affairs; more than once he was on the eve of bankruptcy. He held on his way, however, but being of a nervous temperament and very susceptible to the terrors which such an event inspires, he resolved that as soon as he could gather up enough to sustain his family in decency, he would retire into the country, purchase a farm, and leave the arena of the great struggle. He had reasoned the matter with himself fully, as he thought, and the course of his reasoning was in this wise — "What is the great struggle for? in most cases for a living. Well, that to be sure is a necessity, but is it necessary for me to live in the city? Rents are higher, the state of living daily becoming more sumptuous and expensive, and the course of trade more uncertain, extended and hazardous. But perhaps by continuing here, I may after many years of toil, anxiety, distraction and great effort, accumulate, as some few do, sufficient to enable me to retire from business and live on my income. I shall in all human probability then be far advanced in life, my energies paralyzed, my capacity for rest and enjoyment destroyed. In the meantime, the flower of my life, the years in which I shall be most capable of appreciating the blessings of life and of home pleasures, will be eaten out by the canker of care. Farmers can be independent on a small sum. Their land yields them all they need — abundance crowns their table — they have no care; their style of living is plain to be sure, but that is more than compensated by the beauties of nature and the freshness and purity of their surroundings. I have a

growing family; if my boy should be brought up in the city he must mingle with other boys. Vice is contagious; the temptations to youth here, are increasing rapidly, and can I hope that he will escape them? How many young men within my knowledge are running the course that leads to infamy and an early grave. Absorbed in business how can a father watch as he ought the plants entrusted to his care!"

This sample will suffice to give in some measure, an idea of the workings of his mind; but beside this, another inducement added its weight to his conclusions. He had married a wife some years his junior; she was but seventeen and he thirty-two when they united their destinies. He was devotedly fond of her and she as devotedly fond of him. It was a union of love, for she knew he had no wealth to offer her. The duties of business separated them from each other through the day, and often, in the business seasons, through the evening, and at times of difficulty, the anxiety for the morrow, sadly marred the pleasure of the evenings intercourse. She was too, in the hey day of life, of a romantic turn, not caring much for show, but by the power of idealism, throwing around her whole existence that peculiar charm which robes even plain or rude things in a pleasing dress. Her husband was not to her the plain Mr. Sandford, the wholesale grocer in Front street; she never thought of him as such. He was the type of nobleness, and purity, and wisdom, and strength, and manliness. She loved to see him in the nicest trim, and with her own hands arranged his hair to suit her fancy, disheveling the straightly brushed locks, and giving them as much as possible a graceful curling carelessness of look, and would insist upon the nicest plaitings for his bosoms, and an easy, jaunty tie for his cravat; for she knew, or thought she did, that nothing could be too good to set off the excellence of the manly form and soul they adorned. And he let her have her way, for he dearly loved her — not for any ideal picture which his mind had formed out of her real self; it was enough for him to see her as she was and to please her. He knew that she was fond of nature, for he had accompanied her to the country, and heard her exclamations of delight at witnessing its varied

scenes. The snug homestead nestling beneath the trees — the mowers reaping the luxuriant meadows — the tall grain waving to the gentle wind — the babbling brook, plashing back the sunbeams from its broken waters and curling amid the rocks that obstructed its way — the golden edges of the clouds at sunset and the amber beams of the coming day, all had attracted her notice and filled her with delight. So when his own conclusions had been made, and he revealed his thoughts about a change of life, she embraced the notion with a childlike joy; and at once the whole scene was before her. The beauty and freshness of the country — their snug and quiet home — the broad shadows of the trees, the lovely garden — the green leaves — the cool, sparkling brook — the pleasant walks with him whom she loved beside her along the shaded paths within the echoing woods — the lowing kine — the ride at early dawn — the sweet voices of the birds, — with no daily partings — no brow of care — no restless nights — no haste to be away at business hours — nor long watchings for the well known footsteps through the lonely evening. "Oh, how delicious it would be! how like true living!"

And at once his mind is settled and his affairs arranged for a final move. He found, however, that the amount he would realize, would not quite come up to the balance in his favor which his books displayed. He would have enough however, to purchase a farm of desirable size and still have some thousands at interest. The farm would, of course, provide all the necessities of life, and the surplus would enable him to procure such extras as might tend to make their surroundings more agreeable to the taste of his wife. His stock of goods was disposed of to those who took his stand of business, and most of his surplus fund was in notes at various and extended dates, well endorsed as he believed, and he and his little family bade good-bye to the city, and were now, at the commencement of our story, just about to enter upon the new state of existence they had marked out for themselves.

They were now seated together in the fore part of the vessel, and within the grateful shadow which the outspread sail afforded. Two little children were amusing them-

selves near to them sitting on the deck — a boy and girl — their only children. A tidily dressed young woman was near at hand, who occasionally said something to the little ones, and was ready to assist them in their play or occasionally to take them up and show them a passing sloop, or some object on the distant shore.

"How happy they seem to be!" said Mrs. Sandford, laying her hand upon her husband's arm, and looking into his face, "and you too, Edward, your brow seems smoother already. You feel a great relief do you not?"

"I do, indeed, Caroline. I feel as if in a new world; it never seemed so bright to me before. I feel now as if I could enjoy what God has given me. You seem nearer and dearer to me, and these little darlings, and this beautiful creation around us, the water and the land and the bright sky and the pure free air. The only thing which troubles me now, is the fear that you may not like our change; you will miss so many things that were sources of comfort to you in the city."

"Do not for a moment, I beg of you, allow a shade of fear on my account. I am very happy I assure you — very, very happy."

"I am almost sorry I did not take you up to see the place before I purchased. I fear you will be disappointed, the house is so plain and things are in such disorder, and then the state of society may not be agreeable."

"Will it not be as bad for you, as for me?"

"Oh, well, I shall have you and the children."

"And I shall have you and the children, too, and do you not think it will be happiness enough for me to hear once again your free, hearty laugh, and to know that the burden of care you have labored under is removed; and to see you seated under the shadow of the big trees you have talked so much about, reading at your leisure some choice book, and perhaps taking my sewing, seat myself beside you and listen to that voice which is so pleasant to me. What care I for a fine house or fine furniture? I know we have elements of happiness independent of such incidentals."

Mr. Sandford could not reply. His heart was too deeply touched, not only by the lovely scene his wife had

painted to his imagination, but by the exhibition of that pure woman's love which led her to draw the picture. Their conversation was broken in upon just then, by the appearance of Mr. Blanchard, who came up with rather a serious face, remarking:

"I fear we are going to have an ugly time of it; the weather looks rather threatening."

"Ah, indeed!" said Mr. Sandford. "Where? what sign of it?"

"Those clouds gathering in the northwest. What a heavy bank of clouds is rising! and this south wind don't seem to keep them back."

Mr. Sandford directed his eye to the object of Mr. Blanchard's alarm, observing:

"Oh, well, we are only passengers you know: if it rains we can go below, we shall not have to trouble ourselves with the management of the sails. Our captain, I judge, understands his business, — "a fine little fellow he seems to me."

"Perhaps he does, but these captains want watching; they are very venturesome; they'll carry sail to the last minute."

"Jenny, Jenny," said Mrs. Sandford, addressing the woman, "Carlos is troubling that gentleman; you had better bring him here."

The gentleman alluded to, was the passenger who had delayed the boat and increased the displeasure of Mr. Blanchard. He had taken a seat on a coil of rope not far from where Mr. and Mrs. Sandford were sitting, and was engaged in reading. The child had walked up to him and seemed quite disposed to make friends; and the gentleman, apparently pleased with the confidence of the little one, had laid down his book and was amusing him with the exhibition of a handsome knife which he had in his hand for the purpose of cutting some leaves in a number of the London Quarterly, the book with which he was then engaged. As the boy did not appear at all disposed to comply with the solicitations of Jenny, Mr. Sandford at once went to her assistance.

"Come, my boy, give the gentleman his knife. He is a young traveler, sir," addressing the gentleman, "and not versed in the proprieties."

"Let him have it, sir, by all means. I have been quite gratified with his confidence; children, it is said, can distinguish those who like their company."

"Have you any of your own, sir?"

"Oh no, sir; I have not that happiness. I am as yet without the pale of such enjoyments, and very seldom see little folks at all, but I often think I should like such a little one about me, if for nothing else, to notice the exhibition of human nature in its guileless state."

"Not always a very pleasant exhibition," said Mr. Sandford, smiling.

"That would depend, I presume, sir, upon the example it should have had. Children, beyond the instinct they have in common with all young animals, will exhibit just such feelings as they perceive their elders manifest; is it not so, do you think, sir?"

"Doubtless much of the character they exhibit is acquired from contact with the world in which they live, but after all, there is an innate propensity to evil, which shows itself, in spite of all the influences to good with which they may have been surrounded."

The eye of the young man which was very dark and penetrating, for a moment rested on Mr. Sandford, and a slight flush was manifest on his bronzed cheek, as he replied:

"An innate propensity to evil! born with it, do you think, sir?"

Mr. Sandford clearly perceived that the idea was repulsive to the gentleman, and not wishing to get into an argument on original sin, and moreover, for some reason rather pleased with the peculiar manner and appearance of the young man, he chose to avoid a direct answer, by saying:

"No doubt much, if not most of the bad dispositions and departures from the right path is owing to unfortunate management and improper example."

"The countenance of the young man brightened up as he replied:

"Have you seen the last number of the London Quarterly?"

"I take that work, sir, but have been too busy to look at it since it was out."

"I am just reading an able article in it, on the instincts and training of animals, and I find the writer classes children among them, although he makes this distinction — 'the inferior animals act from instinct alone, man from imitation; but that some of the higher grades of animals approach quite nearly to man in manifesting a degree of imitative power.'"

"Doubtless man has his types in the lower orders of creation, both in physical structure and in his mental organization, and yet between the two an infinite chasm exists, never to be passed over."

The young man seemed to be revolving the subject in his mind, as though not quite prepared to reply, and Mr. Sandford took the opportunity to change the subject by addressing his little boy:

"Come, my boy, now give the gentleman his knife; we have intruded long enough and kept him from his book."

"By no means, sir. I ought rather to apologize for thus isolating myself with a book; it would be more appropriate in a larger vessel."

Obedient to his father's word, the little fellow held it up, but looked so wistfully, first at the gentleman and then up at his father, that the former requested he might be permitted to retain it, and added:

"Captain Joe tells me that you are about to settle in our vicinity, and although they say a knife is not a proper friendship's offering, yet I think this young gentleman will remember me by it, and I shall be happy if it prove the means by which he and I shall form a better acquaintance. Please let him keep it, sir."

Mr. Sandford could not well under the circumstances force the little fellow to give up his prey, but in a low tone replied:

"Perhaps he will tire of it in a short time and be willing to relinquish it. It is almost too valuable a plaything."

It was indeed a beautiful specimen of its kind, the handle being of solid silver, very tastefully embellished with carved scenes.

Mr. Sandford was about to ask the gentleman some questions as to the whereabouts of his residence, when his

name was called, and turning saw his wife beckoning him, and both she and the young lady whom we have called Eva, looking towards the eastern shore, the latter pointing with her finger to some locality there.

"My dear, do look yonder; Eva says that is 'Sleepy Hollow,' the scene of Irving's beautiful story."

"Oh, yes, I have just been looking at it; that young gentleman has pointed it out to me, and I was coming to give you the information. Who told you of it, Eva?"

"I asked the captain to let me know when we should be opposite Sing Sing, and I knew 'Sleepy Hollow' was in that vicinity, but I cannot distinguish that particular spot. The captain does not know anything about 'Sleepy Hollow,' but he says that village is Sing Sing."

Mr. Sandford then directed them to the locality as it had been designated to him.

"What is it you're looking at?" said Mr. Blanchard, coming up in a familiar way, and addressing the young lady.

Miss Eva colored slightly, as she replied,

"We are looking for the spot where Mr. Irving laid the scene of his legend of 'Sleepy Hollow.'"

"'Sleepy Hollow!' it must be a dull kind of a place. What does he say about it?"

As the young lady could not very easily have given a satisfactory answer without entering into the details of the story, she preferred to make no reply, and commenced playing with Carlos, admiring the beautiful plaything which he was forcing upon her attention. Mr. Blanchard therefore stepped up to Mr. Sandford, and putting his hand in a familiar way upon that gentleman's shoulder.

"I say, Sandford, what is there about that place you are all looking at?"

"Have you not read the 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow,' by our countryman, Washington Irving?"

"Me — no. I never read anything but the newspapers, but what is there about it so curious?"

Mrs. Sandford looked at Eva and smiled; that young lady, however, did not smile in return; her countenance had rather a serious expression.

"It would be difficult to describe to you, sir," said Mr.



Sandford, "what charm there is about it, if you have not read the work, but depend upon it, 'Sleepy Hollow' will be as famous in future in our country, as 'Loch Lomond' is in Scotland. It is wonderful what power such writers have to invest the localities where they lay their scenes, with deep interest."

The last idea was addressed to his wife, but Mr. Blanchard interrupted her by saying:

"I'll tell you what it is, Sandford, you're all looking over yonder to see something that don't seem to me much to look at, while on 'tother side of the river is a sight that I can't keep my eyes off."

"What is it?" and Mr. Sandford turned as he spoke.

"There! a pretty serious business as I take it, and here are we in the middle of Tappan Bay, and a tremendous gust just upon us. Isn't it black!"

It was indeed rather a threatening object. The mass of vapor that was rolling up, gathering together its mountain heaps, as though charged with mighty stores of destruction, had already obscured the sun, and its dark shadow reflected from the broad expanse of water, gave a sombre aspect to the whole scenery in that direction.

"We shall have an awful time of it, mind my words. I wish I was safe on land; a plague take these boats."

"It will likely be a flurry and soon over. I have often noticed that when the clouds are so very dark and threatening, they soon dissipate as the wind gets under them, and scatter wildly over the heavens without affecting us much below; they are a grand sight, though!"

"There! the wind is shifting — they are hauling in the mainsail — it ought to be lowered at once. Come, Sandford, go with me and let's speak to the captain."

"Oh, by no means. He knows his own business best, and may not like any interference."

"Like it or not like it, I shall speak to him; he has no business to be carrying sail when a squall is likely to capsize us at any minute, and women and children on board, too."

As he said this, Mr. Blanchard looked at the ladies, but whatever may have been their feelings, neither of them showed any signs of being in the least alarmed.

Mr. Sandford, however, seeing that the storm was rapidly approaching, intimated to the ladies that it might be better for them to go into the cabin, as they would be in the way when the squall came; they immediately descended, while he followed, leading his boy by the hand. Mr. Blanchard had, in the mean time, ascended the after deck to make known his opinion to the captain.

"It seems to me, captain, we are going to have a terrible squall; had you not better lower sail?"

"Not quite yet, sir."

"But they come very sudden, sometimes; and remember, you have got women and children on board, sir."

"They don't seem to be much alarmed."

"They don't know the danger."

"But I do, sir — haul that jib a little tauter," calling aloud to the men at the fore sheet. "You see that boat ahead there, sir," again addressing the gentleman by his side. "She has just lowered her sail, and they lie there at the mercy of the wind. I presume they have no oars, if they had, they never could reach the shore before the storm comes. It's a small boat, and unless we take them up, I fear there'll be mischief. Stand by the halyards, now, with a single turn," again addressing his men.

"Captain," said the young gentleman who had left his position at the bow, and had come in haste to the quarter deck, "there is a small boat with two ladies and a man, they must be in great danger; cannot we take them up?"

"I am doing my best for it, Mr. Roland, they are in a bad situation. I mean to hold on as long as possible, the wind freshens, though — five minutes is all I ask. Will you run to the main hatch, and uncoil line enough as far as you think you can throw, and be ready the moment we are within reach? I dare not let a man leave the halyards."

The young man sprang nimbly forward, and in a moment more he stood with the coil in his hand and ready to perform his part.

The storm had burst on the opposite shore. A cloud of dust obscured the whole horizon in that direction. A stiff breeze as yet was only felt on board the sloop, but as her sails were hauled close to the wind, she felt it much

more than was comfortable to Mr. Blanchard, or than he thought was by any means safe, for her lee gunwale was near the water.

"Captain, captain!" he called out as he held fast to the upper rail of the main deck. "This is too bad! you are risking the lives of all your passengers." A vivid flash of lightning, followed almost immediately by a tremendous peal of thunder, prevented any further remonstrance on the part of the terrified gentleman. He shut his eyes, resting himself on the deck, and held on with both hands.

"Had you not better go below?"

"Not I, sir. Not for a thousand dollars would I be in that cabin. You are not doing your duty, sir?"

The captain made no reply; his mind was intently occupied with care for his own vessel and for the safety of those so exposed to imminent danger.

The small boat was now near at hand. The persons on board of her could be distinctly seen looking fixedly towards the sloop, and one of the ladies was waving a handkerchief to attract their notice. Young Roland at once took off his hat and waved it in token that they were seen. The storm was also near. It had struck the waters of the bay, and a long stretch of white foam could be seen sweeping on wildly towards them. Presently there was a rushing sound, and the loud voice of the captain rang out:

"Let all go — down with mainsail and jib."

The roaring wind, the rattling block and the flapping sails, created for the moment a scene of confusion that was by no means very comforting. The captain himself could hardly discern whether the object he had in view was attained. He knew the boat was within reach, and that the rope had been thrown, but whether the man on board of her caught it, or whether the boat had been swamped by the waves, he knew not. His whole attention for some moments was absorbed in the maneuvers of his men and his own duty at the tiller. His doubt however, were soon dispelled by seeing the three passengers of the little boat, assisted by young Roland, clambering on board. It was however, only by a desperate spring that the young man caught the shrouds, for the boat filled as he was aiding the

last lady to ascend the side of the sloop; all were saved however. The ladies at once descended to the cabin, while the young man grasped the hand of him whom he supposed to be his deliverer.

"May God bless you for your timely aid; you have saved my sisters and myself"

"You must thank the captain," said young Roland, "he held on sail as long as he dared."

"You are not the captain, then?"

"Oh, no, only a passenger. Yonder he is at the tiller."

The young man, not heeding wind or rain, at once mounted the deck, and offered his hand.

"Can't take your hand now, sir — glad you are safe on board."

"Our lives, captain, have been saved by your kindness,"

"Perhaps so, we cannot say, however. Walk into the cabin until the squall is over."

"Can I not be of some use, here?"

"Well, if you please, you can help in hauling in the main sheet."

Young Roland was already there aiding two of the hands in gathering in the folds of the sail which had been lowered by the run and lumbered the leeward side of the deck. The stranger sprang at the captain's suggestion and laid hold with a right good will. The storm meanwhile raged with great violence, but as it was steady in its force and the sails were down with the exception of enough of the jib to give efficiency to her helm, there was no apparent danger. The gale lasted only about twenty minutes, but as it ceased the electrical discharges began. The clouds seemed to be suspended over the bay; flash after flash gleamed across the dark water, and crashing thunder followed quick, reverberating from the surrounding mountains. It would have been grand if unaccompanied to those in the vessel with manifest danger. How much this was appreciated by the most on board it would have been difficult to say; no one expressed apprehension but our passenger, whom we left at the outburst of the storm clinging to the upper railing of the quarter deck. He had fairly squatted down, lying partly on one side, his feet drawn up, his hat slouched over his eyes, and was no

doubt expecting every moment when he should be obliged to clamber on the side of a miserable wreck, "all in consequence of the fool-hardihood of an ignorant captain." The lulling of the gale, however, and the terrific peals of thunder evidently aroused him to a new sense of danger. The mast was high and the electric cloud, as he thought, very low. He could not ask the captain to have the former lowered, and therefore said nothing to that gentleman; he came, however, to the conclusion that the cabin would be rather a safer place than the deck, and had risen very cautiously, making his way to the cabin hatch, when a blinding flash of lightning, followed instantly by a crash that sound like the breaking up of the earth's foundation, impelled him to a descent below that was something of the quickest; in fact he knew nothing, as he afterward said, until he found himself opening the door of the after cabin. Seeing ladies there, however, he immediately stepped back, and finally threw himself on the seat that ran beneath the births.

"You are not afraid are you?" said an old lady — to Aunt Lizzie as she has been called — who was sitting by her side wringing her hands and rocking herself back and forth, with a countenance deadly pale.

Nothing makes a man feel more foolish than having exhibited unnecessary haste in avoiding danger when his efforts to do so are entirely uncalled for. Mr. Blanchard was old enough to have known that the danger to him was past, when he saw the glare of lightning; conscious of the weakness he had shown, he was therefore not a little nettled on turning around, to see Mr. Sandford with a smile on his countenance, sitting quite composedly, holding his boy on his knee. Hearing at the same time the remark of the old lady, and supposing of course that it was addressed to him, looked rather stern, and replied:

"Me, madam?"

"Oh la! no, sir. Men, I believe, are never frightened at thunder, it is only women and children, they say; but it's no use to be scared. The lightning is in God's hands, and it strikes just where he bids it; some people I've seen, jump and start and run, first here and then there, but I always tell 'em there's no use in it; it will catch 'em if it's

sent after them. We are all in his hands, and that's a blessed thought."

Mr. Blanchard, no doubt, heard the remarks of the old lady, but as he found he had been mistaken in supposing she had referred to himself in her first remarks, he did not feel called upon to take any notice of what she said, so he took a seat by Mr. Sandford.

"Rather a bluster we have had, sir," said the gentleman.

"A terrible storm, sir! these captains are not to be trusted, they are fool hardy; it's a great wonder we have not all been swamped — one minute more and she would have capsized."

"He seems a fine fellow, though, that captain, and since we have been carried safely through, we must give him credit for it. It appears he held on sail for the purpose of rescuing a little party in a small boat; it would have been terrible for them to have been left to the mercy of such a tempest — they must have perished."

"Yes, that's all well enough, but they had no business to be out sailing at such a time."

"It seems they are a brother and two sisters, who had crossed the river and were returning, and did not notice the approaching gust until they had got too far from the other side to think of going back. They had to take down their sail for fear of the wind, and had no oars on board; that was careless, to be sure, but they would have done them but little good, as there was but one man with them."

Just then the ladies' cabin-door was opened, and the gentlemen rose to offer them seats, and soon a very lively conversation was begun and kept up for some time, in which Mr. Blanchard tried his best to take a part. He felt quite sure that the ladies at least had not witnessed the scenes on deck, or that of his descent into the cabin, and he was evidently trying to make himself agreeable. The two ladies who had so suddenly made an addition to the party, were quite young — the eldest not apparently over seventeen, and the younger probably fourteen. They might both be called handsome, but the appearance of the elder was decidedly captivating, and in using this term to express her beauty, it relieves us from the necessity of be-

ing particular in delineating her features; for all know that the charm of mere expression of countenance, depends not upon any stereotyped cast. It attracts our admiration perhaps, at the first glance — its power over us increases as we gaze — sometimes we are almost ready to judge that it is the finely arched lips, or its ruby color, and then again we give the credit to the dimpled cheek, with its radiant skin, or the soft eyes so richly shaded. They each, no doubt, help to give power to the rest, nor do we care to which the greater charm may be attributed. She was tall for her age, of graceful form, her hair quite dark, and rather carelessly dressed, or more properly, arranged without much design. There was a luxuriance of it, and that it should not be in the way, seemed the aim of its owner, rather than to make the most of it as an ornament; it formed, however, a rich background to her finely moulded face. Mr. Blanchard was evidently much taken with this new vision, and really deserved a rebuke if any one could have administered it with propriety, for the persistency of his stare — even while talking to others his eye would be directed that way. But Mr. Blanchard's gaze can do no harm, it is a very innocent token of his sensibility to personal charms. Mr. Blanchard's heart is turned in another direction.

There was, however, an exception to be made of Miss Eva to the remark above, "that there was a lively flow of conversation," for some cause her manner had changed. She had been conspicuous for animation during the whole scene of the storm, trying to cheer up the elderly lady whom we have styled Aunt Lizzy, and it was not until some little conversation had been held between herself and the two young strangers, and they as was natural had made some revelation of themselves and their companion, and now Miss Eva seems to be in an uneasy frame of mind. She enters not heartily into any thing that is said; her fine, fresh color too has departed — her eye turns as it were, involuntarily towards the cabin-door. At length voices are heard near the companion way — two young men stand side by side there a few moments — they are in earnest converse, and their voices are distinctly heard in the cabin. One of them is the young man

whom we have called Roland, and the other is the one who had been rescued from peril in the small boat.

"I do believe, sister Julia," said the elder of the two young ladies, and the one of whom we have given some particulars, "that brother William has met some old acquaintance; he seems so absorbed as hardly to think of us."

"He knows," replied Mrs. Sandford, "that you are safe in the cabin — but here he comes."

"I should think, Master Willie, you had almost forgotten us."

"Oh, no, my good sister, I never do that, but — as he was saying this he suddenly paused; his eye in passing around the cabin, had fixed in an instant upon Miss Eva. A moment he hesitated, and then stepped towards her; she arose, their hands were clasped, but not a word spoken, and there was for a few seconds perfect silence in the little cabin. All seemed surprised. At length the gentleman said, still retaining her hand:

"Will you allow me to introduce you to my sisters? you have often heard me speak of them — Miss Eva Stanley."

"And often and often have we heard your name. Oh, how glad I am to see you," said the elder sister, sealing her words with a kiss, while the younger earnestly offered the same kind salutation.

Either the warmth of the greeting, or some other cause has however, had a powerful effect on Miss Eva; her face is highly flushed and she seems much agitated. The tears have started, and breaking from the circle, she hastens to the after cabin, followed at once by Mrs. Sandford. The young gentleman, too, gave tokens that his own feelings were in a disturbed state, for his face was highly flushed, and his mind confused. A diversion, however, was immediately granted to his thoughts, whatever they may have been; it was caused by a remark from Mr. Sandford.

"Our storm seems to be about over, sir."

The young man turned towards the speaker as if to ascertain whether the address was intended for him, and as he did so his eye fell upon the glum countenance of Mr.

Blanchard, who had taken a seat near Mr. Sandford. A moment it fixed a stern and piercing gaze before which the eye of Blanchard quailed and turned away, and the young man then instantly, with a sudden change of aspect replied to Mr. Sandford:

"So it seems, sir. It was quite violent for a few moments — indeed, I never felt so much in danger in the wildest storm on the ocean, as when in that small boat."

"And I think," said the captain, who was just then descending the stairs, "you were likely in more real danger."

"And I know not, sir," said the young man at the same time taking the captain's hand, "how to express my thanks sufficiently for the prompt manner in which you came to our relief; it was a venture on your part many would have hesitated to make."

"Oh, sir, I don't need any thanks. I saw you had ladies aboard, and a man will venture a good deal before he will see them harmed." As he said this, his eye glanced towards the two young ladies, at the same time making a slight obeisance.

"And I can assure you, sir," said the elder of the two, "the ladies do not lightly prize your noble efforts, we feel deeply indebted to you."

The captain bowed again, and then turned and fixed a quizzical look at Mr. Blanchard, who was in quite an unpleasant state of mind for some cause unknown to most of those about him. The captain seemed about to speak to him, but as if upon reflection having changed his mind, turned to the young man he had first addressed.

"I suppose the rain will cease in a few moments, as the sky is quite clear in the west; perhaps you would wish to be put ashore?"

"It would certainly be a great favor to us, but I hardly dare ask it, captain. Our boat I suppose has gone to the bottom?"

"Not so bad as that. I kept my eye on her, and have sent a couple of hands for her. They are towing her up, she is full of water though at present; that, however, we can soon bail out when we get her along side, but she will not answer very well for ladies. Our boat will be much

more comfortable, and we will see you safe ashore; we have run somewhat above Sing Sing, but I presume our ladies and gentlemen here will not object to our laying to for such a purpose."

"By no means, captain," replied Mr. Sandford, "that is, so far as I am concerned, and no doubt we all feel ready to accommodate."

One or two men in plain farmer's dress who were seated in one corner of the cabin, answered quite promptly:

"By all means, Captain Joe, it's all right."

Mr. Blanchard said nothing. He was not in a humor to be very accommodating, but as the eye of the captain met his, he made a slight inclination of his head, as much as to say, "do as you please, sir." He would no doubt have been willing to have had the sloop lay to any number of hours, rather than have the young gentleman a passenger to the end of the voyage.

"In a few moments, then, if you will bring up your ladies, we will be ready for you," said the captain, and sprang up the companion-way with a bound.

The boat was soon in readiness. As soon as he had handed them to their seats in the boat, the captain turned to the little group that had assembled to witness their departure.

"Would any of you ladies like a sail with us, there is plenty of room."

"Oh, do, do come," exclaimed those in the boat. Do, Miss Stanley."

Eva hesitated, and looked inquiringly at Mrs. Sandford.

"Go, by all means, if you feel like it. I should like it myself."

"Well, madam," said the captain, "why not? plenty of room."

"What do you say, papa?" turning to her husband.

"Go, certainly, if you wish."

Mrs. Sandford and Miss Eva — the latter apparently somewhat in doubt — but as though yielding to the solicitations of the rest, gave their hands to the captain and were soon in their seats.

"They will come back faster than they go," said Mr. Sandford to Mr. Blanchard, who had just then come on



deck, and who, not caring to manifest any interest in the departure of the young man and his sisters, had remained in the cabin until he supposed they were on their way, "that boat they are towing, impedes their progress considerably."

"This is a bad concern, all around," was his answer.

"How so, my dear sir! it seems to me a very pretty episode in our voyage, and they all seem so happy."

"It will delay us all of an hour."

"What is an hour to you or me, Blanchard — what difference will it make whether we get to our landing one hour sooner or later — there is nobody waiting for us."

"That's not the thing, it's the imposition — but where is Eva?"

"Off, too, don't you see her yonder?"

"Gone, too! what's that for?"

"Oh, just for the fun of it — a little variety — you know ladies like that. I felt just boy enough to have gone too, but dared not leave the young ones."

"We shall not get to the landing until noon to-morrow, and perhaps not before night."

"We may as well take it easy, then. We have prospect of a beautiful evening, a clear sky, and a full moon; it will be lovely among the highlands to-night. What a beautiful world we live in, Blanchard, all nature seems to be rejoicing and telling of the glory of God."

Mr. Sandford might have gone on talking to his heart's content in this strain, for any interruption he would have met from his companion. The thoughts of Mr. Blanchard were too busily occupied with other topics, and besides, he had no sympathy with such feelings. Rivers to him were merely suitable for navigation — an easier and cheaper highway than the land. Green fields were valuable for mowing or grazing, and trees were useful for fruit or for fuel. As for mountains by moonlight! he could not possibly comprehend what beauty there could be about such rugged, rocky, unprofitable lumps of matter!

Just then, young Mr. Roland emerged from the fore-castle, and seeing the two gentlemen near at hand, stepped towards them.

"I was wondering," said Mr. Sandford, "what had become of you."

"Herbert and I assisted in furling the sails until we got somewhat sprinkled, and then betook ourselves into the fore-castle to have the advantage of the cook's fire, and to talk over old times."

"Then you were acquainted with the young gentleman?"

"We were quite intimate for a time, when we were boys; we have played together, and fought together, in fact, I ought to have said we have fought together and played together, for our acquaintance commenced by a fight, but it was our first and last disagreement. We have not seen each other for many years, however, until we so strangely met to day."

"He is a fine looking fellow; there is something very attractive in his countenance, do you not think so, Mr. Blanchard? you saw him, you know, in the cabin." This was said by Mr. Sandford.

"I didn't see anything very remarkable about him," was the reply. "He seems to have a good share of pride."

"He has some title to indulge a little pride, sir," replied Roland. "He has had to make his own way in the world, and has got a good foothold now; he will be a rich man if his life is spared."

"Does he belong in this part of the country?" said Mr. Sandford, addressing himself to Roland.

"I think he was born in the eastern part of the state, but when I first knew him, he was under the care of the Rev. Mr. Ransom of our town."

"Indeed! then you reside in Woodburn?"

"I do, sir."

"Carry on farming?" joined in Mr. Blanchard, who had puzzled himself very much to know what position in society the young man belonged.

"I do a little in that way, sir."

"Speaking of Mr. Ransom," said Mr. Sandford, "I was much pleased with an interview I had with him when I was in Woodburn looking for a place; in fact, I don't know but I must say, the high opinion I formed of him, decided me in purchasing there. Is he thought much of in the place?"

"He is esteemed very highly, sir, and I must say I be-

lieve he deserves to be; at any rate, a man who should speak against him in Woodburn would get his head into a hornet's nest at once."

"It is a great thing to have the right kind of a minister, especially in the country; they have generally more influence in many ways in forming the character, and giving a tone to society, than they can possibly have in the city; that is, if they are what they ought to be."

"There is a great difference in them, however," replied Mr. Roland. "Some we had have never did much to affect the state of society for good or evil. Mr. Ransom, though, I must confess, has had a mighty influence in our place; he seems to be a man of good, common sense. One thing is singular about him; although a very temperate man himself, and one who long before the temperance movement set an example, as I have been told, to his brother clergy, yet will have nothing to do personally with the movement."

"That is singular! does he not approve of it?"

"I have never been intimate with him, and therefore have no means of knowing his peculiar reasons; but from what I have seen myself of the manner in which the thing is managed, I am not at all surprised that a man of the good sense I take him to have, should have some scruples about the propriety and efficacy of their measures."

"I don't approve of all their measures, myself, but have you no temperance society in your place?"

"Oh yes, sir, but the people manage the affair. He says, as I am told, that it properly belongs to them; that his business is to preach the gospel — that temperance as well as other virtues which the Bible inculcates, it is part of his duty to enforce by precept and example, and that it is his aim to leave none of them without due attention."

"Do you not have temperance lecturers come among you?"

"Oh, yes, sir, but the church is never opened to them. Mr. Ransom seems in that respect to have adopted the views of the Episcopal church. He says, 'a building consecrated to the worship of God, is too sacred a place to be used for the purpose of having all kind of loose and vul-

gar anecdotes related, and especially by men who pretend to be reformed drunkards, retailing with unblushing cheeks accounts of their former drunken scrapes; and I must say I respect him for the stand he has taken in that particular. I should say, from what I have heard from the lips of those lecturers myself, that it would be a profanation."

"I have had, I must say, such thoughts myself, when I have been listening to some of those persons. The pulpit did not seem to me just the right place for them, nor a church a proper place for exhibitions. But do the people give in to him? Does it not make some disturbance among them? You know there is a great amount of feeling waked up on this subject; not only individuals but ministers are denounced if they do not fall in and help along the cause."

"He has a strong hold of his people I imagine, sir; they seem to think he is about right. I have heard of no disturbance. There is a rumor that he has had a call though, from the city, and there seems to be a good deal of apprehension by some that he will accept; the salary offered is three or four times as much as he gets here."

"Then I fear he will accept. Somehow our ministers manage to reconcile it to their conscience, to leave their people, even if things are ever so satisfactory. The plea is 'a larger sphere of usefulness.' You attend his church, I presume."

The young man colored somewhat and manifested some confusion, as he replied:

"I attend there occasionally. I go there when I go anywhere — but here comes the boat."

"Ah, indeed, so it is."

Mr. Blanchard now came up. He had not remained to take part in the conversation; his mind was in a restless state, and not in a mood for entering into the concern of either ministers, parishes, or the public in general. He was, however, much concerned for some one in that little boat, and as it neared the sloop, watched apparently each sweep of the oars with deep interest.

"They have had a fine time I imagine, they all seem lively and happy." This remark was addressed to Mr.

Blanchard, as the young gentleman had withdrawn a little one side from those who were more particularly concerned in her arrival, but the boat was near enough to enable those on board to catch its meaning.

"Yes, indeed," exclaimed Mrs. Sandford, "we have had a delightful time, both of us, only Eva seems down-hearted on the return trip."

Eva colored a little, as she at that moment gave her hand to Mr. Blanchard, who was eagerly holding out his for that purpose.

"So you run away without asking," was the salutation she received as she sprang, with his assistance, to the deck.

She looked at him a moment as though desirous of ascertaining whether the remark was made in jest or earnest. She probably comprehended its meaning as intended, for she made no reply whatever.

"Yes, papa," said Mrs. Sandford, "we have had a most delightful trip of it, and we both feel truly grateful to our captain here, for his kind invitation, and for all the pains he has taken to make it pleasant."

"I hope, madam, the trip has given you a good appetite for supper, which I guess is now ready for us."

## CHAPTER IX.

We left our passengers, in the last chapter, about to take their places at the supper table, but as suppers on board sloops are no great affairs, we will pass and take a look at things on deck, about the hour of nine o'clock. The breeze had been quite favorable, and with one or two short tacks after entering the highlands, they were enabled to make fair headway; it was now evidently dying away. The sails were not filled, and scarcely a ripple could be heard at the bow of the boat. But the scenery

around there was of a character which one who had any taste for the beautiful and even the grand, would not wish to hurry through. They had passed the famous promontories of Dunderberg and Anthony's Nose. Mountains arose before them and behind them and on every side, in varied outlines — some conical, wooded to the summit — some rising boldly from the water, presenting a huge surface of broken rock, spotted with low scrubby trees — some from behind a level plateau a little further from the river, and looking down no doubt on cultivated farms and a few handsome dwellings, too much elevated above the river, however, to be distinctly seen from thence. The moon's full face was just peeping over a ridge of mountains in the east, and as her fairy beams fell upon the opposite shore and rugged mountain side, all manner of fantastic edifices, and deep caverns and outlandish forms of men or beasts at once lay pictured to view. Occasionally a white gleam would come back from the landscape and mark the position of some secluded mansion on the patches of mist that were gathering on lower spots within and beneath the mountains — a white mantle in the fairy moonbeams. The whippowills were wide awake too, and their ringing notes, in answer to each other, were the only sounds to break the silence, except that of some small cascade tumbling along from its hidden recess into the river.

Most of the passengers had crept into their berths, and among them Mr. Blanchard; he was discouraged when the wind died out, and went below bestowing himself just as he was, partly on two chairs, and partly on his pillow and mattress, which he had hauled to the edge of the berth. He complained of the heat — he feared the bugs too, which he said were always on board of sloops, although the Polly was never known to carry any such passengers — but he wished to be on the safe side.

Mr. Sandford and young Roland had taken a seat together near the bow of the vessel, and were much engaged in conversation on topics of deep interest, especially to the latter, but we cannot attend to them just now; our business is more particularly with two lady passengers who, wrapped in their shawls and seated amid-ship had

been enjoying the beauties of the strange scenery around them. They are now engaged in conversation, and although the tone of their voice is low, yet the subject seems to be of much interest to them both, for the elder lady has taken the hand of the younger, and is holding it on her lap, and while the rather sad countenance of the latter betrays perhaps more feeling than she could wish to express, even before a friend with whom she was quite intimate. As the conversation is of some consequence in the unfolding of our story, there can be no harm in our listening to it.

"Why is it, dear Eva, that you have never happened to mention the name of Mr. Herbert to me before?"

"Why should I, Mrs. Sandford?"

"Only because I perceived that both he and you manifested a good deal of feeling when you first recognized each other. You certainly was deeply affected, and he evidently had his mind intent on you all the time on our excursion to the shore."

"Why was it that he scarcely addressed me all the way?"

"There may have been a reason for that; perhaps if you two had been alone, he would not have been so silent."

"My feelings were no doubt excited, Mrs. Sandford, for a sight of him brought at once to my mind some of the happiest days of my life — my own dear home and my loving parents."

"Why, was he ever a member of your father's family?"

"Oh yes, for some years, he was a clerk in my father's store and lived with us. I was but a little girl when he first came, and he a boy of perhaps fifteen. I had no brothers nor sisters, and of course you know, it was very natural for two thus associating every day to become intimate, and my parents never making any objections to his waiting upon me, etc., why of course we were as much together as a brother and sister might have been."

"Do you know anything of his family; did they live in the city?"

"Oh, no, they lived in the country."

"Did his parents never visit him?"

"His father did once or twice. He was a very fine looking man, and appeared to think a great deal of — Will — of his son. He had a step-mother, a very peculiar woman, and that was the reason why he never visited his home; and it was only during the last year that he was with us, that I ever heard him speak of his sisters."

"That is strange! He seems now to be very fond of them."

"They are not full sisters, his own mother died when he was quite young. Yes, he does seem very fond of them, and they of him."

"Did he live with you until the death of your father?"

"Yes, and I have no doubt if my father had lived, he would have been taken as a partner; for I have often heard my father express his great confidence in him. I heard him once say that if he should die, there was no one he would so soon entrust the settlement of all his business with, as to Mr. Herbert, and I know mother was quite surprised to find when father's will was read, that William was not one of the executors."

"How did it happen that Mr. Blanchard should have had every thing entrusted to his care, and you put under his guardianship?"

"I suppose it was on account of the great intimacy between Aunt Blanchard — as I always called her — and my mother and father; you know, she when a child had been adopted by them. I was not born until they had been married twenty years. Mr. Blanchard married her, and the families were always very intimate."

"I suppose young Herbert left then, at your father's death?"

"Yes, soon after, and in a strange manner. He very soon procured another situation, for he understood business thoroughly. He remained but a few days at our house, although we expected him to make it his home. My mother was anxious that he should do so, as we were alone, and he had been there so long, and had even taken charge of many things in the family, purchasing supplies etc., just as if he had been a son and a brother. But all at once he made up his mind to leave us. I did not know the cause nor did my mother; we only surmised that

some difficulty had arisen between him and Mr. Blanchard, but he made no explanations. All he said, was, 'that if ever he could be of any assistance to my mother in any way, he would be ready to render it to the utmost of his power.' I have always thought he might have given to my mother some reason for his strange conduct."

"Perhaps he could not do so without implicating Mr. Blanchard, and it is possible something may have been said to him by that gentleman, by which his feelings were wounded; he seems to me to have fine sensibilities."

"He is very sensitive, I know. He has a spirit of independence that borders on pride. He could very easily be aroused if that were touched, but then, what had *we* done! He had been treated with great familiarity and kindness."

"Did he never call at your house after he left?"

"He called during my mother's illness — she died soon after my father. I did not see him, for I did not know that he had called — it has been a strange thing altogether. I feel very sure he thought a great deal of my father and my mother, too."

"And of you, too, dear Eva, and I feel very sure he does now."

"Why then should he never have called upon me after my mother's death? He knew I was alone in the world — he knew with what confidence I had always treated him, reposing on his care, and taking his advice about all matters, and consulting with him just as a sister with a brother."

It was with difficulty the closing sentence came from the trembling lips of the young lady. The thoughts which had come from the past, brought with them scenes that had taken hold of the deep fountains of her heart. She could not quite brace herself against them. Pride would have forbidden that a tear should fall at the remembrance of what William Herbert had once been to her, but she was sitting beside one whose heart was as sensitive as her own, a few years her elder, but still fresh with all a woman's sympathies, and who could understand how the heart might be interested and inwardly bleed, while propriety

would demand an unruffled exterior. Mrs. Sandford pressed the hand of her young friend.

"Dear Eva, don't be troubled. I feel assured there will yet be an explanation. That young man's very countenance expresses honor and truthfulness; he is not one to trifle with friendship, or be indifferent to its sacred demands. You will be thrown together now, no doubt, for his sisters are to reside in Woodburn. They are, it appears, under the care of the minister of the parish. You will have an opportunity for frequent interviews."

"I shall never seek an interview, Mrs. Sandford."

"But you would grant one, if asked for."

"Circumstances must decide whether I should or not."

Just then Mr. Sandford came up to them, having left the young gentleman with whom he had been engaged in conversation.

"I have a proposition to make to you, which you are at liberty to accept or not, just as you please."

"I can have no possible objections to hear it, then, since the conditions are so reasonable, only I hope it is not that we leave this lovely scene for the confinement of the cabin, in that case I fear I should be tempted to take advantage of the privilege you have annexed."

"Not exactly that, but if you accede to the plan proposed, it may be advisable to retire soon, for you may be obliged to make an early start."

"Do, papa, let me hear it. I cannot conceive what it can be; there will certainly be no need, from present appearances, for very early rising, without it be to witness the breaking of day among these mountains. That indeed may be worth a little sacrifice."

"You will probably have an opportunity to witness it. The tide will turn about twelve o'clock, which, with a light breeze, even very light, will enable us to make a little headway. About ten miles from where we now lay, is a private landing; it belongs to this young gentleman, with whom I have been conversing, and whose house is just above it. From thence to our farm is only three miles, or rather he says two and a half, whereas, from the proper landing of the sloop, will be all of eight miles. Now, his proposition is, that I and my family land with



him, and he will send us immediately on our way. He has horses which he says it will be a favor for him to have used."

"But our trunks and some furniture! Why, dear husband, think what a load! you and I and the two children, the nurse and Betty!"

"The trunks and furniture can go on with the sloop — I can send for them."

"Well, I am sure I can have no objections; it is certainly very kind in him."

"Then it is a bargain — shall I tell him so?"

"Yes, and present my acknowledgements for his generous offer. Only two and a half miles! then, dear husband, he will be quite a neighbor of ours."

"Yes, and I think a pleasant one, too."

## CHAPTER X.

"Well, this has been a day marked with peculiar events for us all. Little did we think when we started on our sail of pleasure, this morning, that the aspect of the sky could change so suddenly. We were in great danger, greater than I have ever thought myself to be on the ocean."

"But now, William, I want to talk with you about Miss Stanley. We are alone, and I can talk freely. She is very beautiful! do you not think so?"

"I cannot say but she is."

"You know she is, and that you think so, too, and that you —"

"Please stop, dear sister; do not let us bring up this subject again. You have known some of my feelings in days past, but you have never known the agony I have suffered. Thank God, I have risen above it at last."

"Willie, Willie, dear William!" and she clasped with both hands the arm on which she was leaning. "Do not deceive yourself, or try to; you cannot deceive me, how

ever, I know you too well. You love Eva Stanley, and there is no use in trying to hide your feelings from me."

"I have no wish to conceal any thing from you, Mary, but I tell you truly, that whatever feeling I have had for her, I have crushed out."

The lively girl who was hanging on his arm looked him full in the face, and then broke out into a hearty laugh.

"Crushed it out! Oh Willie, do not tell me that. I have never been in love, you know, but I can give a good guess what the feeling is; it cannot be crushed out. It may be smothered a little — its strong yearnings may be stifled somewhat by earnest engagements, when busy among your hides in Rio, and jabbering away with Spanish Gauchas, you no doubt forget all about Eva, and Mary, and Julia, and every one else that you love, or loves you; but when you are alone, and your mind has time to rest a little, I *know* — you need not tell *me* — swift as thought can fly, it skims the ocean and is here among us, and then all those pleasant times you used to enjoy at Eva's home, and the pleasant walks you took with her by your side, and her arm entwined with yours, and her face turned up to yours in all the confidence of a sister, and her musical voice, and her merry laugh, and her grace of motion and of form, and her beauty and her guileless ways — all come before you, and you sit and think and nourish the dear vision, and you are helpless — now is not that so?"

"Oh, Mary, you are a most inveterate talker; it would completely exhaust me to go through such a long speech."

"It does not tire me in the least, dear. I can just as well as not, go straight through another one, only I wish to hear something from you. I want you for once, dear William, to let out the budget that you have so long kept to yourself, and especially now as you are so soon to leave us — to come back nobody knows when — can't you trust me?" and again her countenance beaming with sisterly interest, was turned full upon him.

"Well, Mary, if I must talk, let us take a seat on this rock; the fact is, I am not so strong as I once was, or I am getting old and lazy."

"It is age, my dear; only to think how time steals along — already you have seen twenty-four summers and

twenty-three winters — it is a long time to live, dear, but come, sit down; what are you looking at?"

"The beauties of nature. Can there be anything more lovely than the river from this spot — those heaps of mountains — those green fields — that long stretch of bare wall fringed with cedars — that glassy bay lying as smooth as if its waters had not been disturbed for a month."

"They looked disturbed and angry enough to-day. Water is pretty, but it is very deceitful; the least thing stirs it up, and the least change in clouds alters its face; it is wonderful, though, how very smiling it is now, and how complacently it receives the slanting sunbeams, and reflects the rugged hills and the boats at anchor on its bosom, but the sun is going down, and the dew will soon be on the grass; every moment now is precious, so come, take your seat, and like a good boy, for once, do the right thing, and make me your confidant."

"I always have" — taking his seat beside her — "have I not?"

"Oh, well, in a certain way. You have told me about many things, but what I wish to know now, is, how you feel about Eva since you have seen more of the world. That you should have been captivated when so much in her society, and before you had an opportunity to mingle with other ladies and before your mind had become somewhat matured, was very natural — the question is — how do you feel, now?"

"I have told you — I have crushed it out."

"It looked like it, when you met her to-day. I think the crushing operation must have been going on then, for you turned as red as a purple rose, and then as pale as if life was going from you."

"I was enraged at meeting that Blanchard, knowing that poor guileless girl was subject to his control. I will tell you what I have lately heard. For a while it was said that both he and his wife tried their best to form a union between Eva and their son George, but she had too much sense to be pleased with such a mere dandy, but now that his wife is dead, it is believed he is trying to court her himself."

"I cannot believe it. People, at least some, are always

showing out their suspicious natures by surmising evil of others. Why, his wife was her own aunt, was she not?"

"By no means. She was the daughter of a lady who married for her second husband Albert Stanley, the brother of Robert Stanley, Eva's father. Albert Stanley and his wife dying, this lady was adopted by Robert Stanley, as he had no children. Eva was not born until her father and mother had been married fifteen or twenty years."

"That accounts for her being made such a pet of as you have said she was."

"Robert Stanley and his wife were much attached to this young lady. Her name was Maynard. Blanchard married her, and the two families were always very intimate, and no doubt the reason why Robert Stanley appointed Blanchard guardian of his daughter was, that he believed Blanchard's wife would be a true mother to Eva."

"Was she not?"

"She was a woman of no sensibility, a very common place sort of person — never loved any one very much — her children excepted. I think it likely she was never unkind to Eva, but what little love she was able to give was bestowed, from what I hear, upon her own flesh and blood."

"It must have been a great change for that dear girl from such a home and such attention and love as she once had. But you do not suppose for a moment, that Eva could be induced to throw herself away upon such a person as Blanchard, — old enough to be her father!"

"I cannot tell, he is a very strange man. He can be very complaisant and insinuating when he has an end to gain — and that he has a very important end in view in trying to get her, I know — and to my cost, I know he can be very rough and tyrannical when it pleases him to be so."

"You have never told me the particulars of his treatment at the time you left, and I did not wish to ask you."

"His treatment was shameful, and I have no doubt he has since been much ashamed of it. He knew that I was dependent upon my salary — that I also knew all about the business, and had for some time carried it on almost without the aid of Mr. Stanley — and he also knew that

with a very little aid afforded me by not withdrawing the whole of Mr. Stanley's funds, I might have gone on with the business. It would have been no damage to Mr. Stanley's estate, and Mr. Stanley expressed to me his wish that thus it should be; and I supposed that some arrangement had been made in the will to that effect, but it proved otherwise, no doubt through Blanchard's influence, for he was quite insulting in his remarks when I made the proposition, and went on to say that — but no matter, I do not wish to say any more."

"Dear William, my dearest brother, tell me all. I wish to know every pang that has pierced your heart."

"I dislike to recall the scene, much less can I bear to speak of it, but you shall have it. After expressing in rather strong language his surprise that I should have the temerity to make the request, he added, 'I think further, that your hanging around the family of Mrs. Stanley since the death of Mr. Stanley, is, to say the least, very strange. Delicacy ought to have shown you its impropriety, especially, as Mrs. Stanley herself is now confined to her bed. It must on many accounts, be very unpleasant to the family.'"

"What did you reply?"

"My dear sister, what could I say? My heart was full, and I feared if I attempted to speak, my feelings would get the upper hand, and I did not care to let him see how much his injustice had caused me to suffer. I merely made out my account of salary due me at that date; he at once paid it, and I left the premises."

Mary Herbert was looking full in the face of her brother. She was much excited. She well knew how keenly sensitive he was — how pure and noble was every thought — that *he* should have been treated thus — that he should have suffered silently under such barbarous treatment, at a time too, when he had no worldly protector, and was left to feel that all his past faithful services was to go for nothing! Her emotion could not be restrained, and leaning on his shoulder, she gave full vent to her tears. For some time they sat in silence, the brother thinking of the past, only with gratitude for that kind Providence which had, in the hour of his extremity, opened a way for him,

in which his energies might be exerted. Wonderfully had he been dealt with! He is now in a condition of comparative independence. He is a partner in a lucrative business, and although for some years yet, must suffer a separation from those he loves, for the active and responsible duties of his station in a foreign land, yet what is that, when from it comes his present independence, and a future home in which he hopes to cluster these jewels of his heart.

"Dear, dear William, oh that I could have suffered for you!"

"The suffering is all past now, dear. Let us think of it, only to stir our hearts with gratitude, and to inspire them with hope and trust."

"But that man — contemptible, cruel man! I wonder when you met him on board that sloop to-day, you did not say or do something to let him know how much you despise him."

"I presume he has a just idea of the opinion I have of him, and I rather think my presence under the circumstances, was punishment enough. The manner in which Eva met me — the deep emotion she manifested — must have been torture indeed, if there is any truth in the report I mentioned."

"And the feeling she manifested on seeing you!"

"Oh, no, dear Mary, do not deceive yourself; that emotion had nothing to do with *me*, except as the sight of me brought back the scenes of the past."

"And you, dear William, are connected with that past, rely upon what I say."

"I feel that this has been an unfortunate day for me."

"Willie, you must not say so. It seems more to me like a day of peculiar providences — our deliverance from danger, and your meeting with Eva — take it all together, it has been a star day, one from which some very important, and perhaps strange results may follow."

"Mary, your romantic mind, I see, tinges the incidents of life with a halo that may be very agreeable to you, and perhaps may do you no material harm, but I cannot see in them what you see. Now that meeting with Eva, makes me rather sad than otherwise. It has recalled so many

happy scenes now past forever, and with the happy ones, some, that I have tried entirely to forget; it has been like a fresh injury to a wound nearly healed."

"Say, rather, dear William, that it has been the renewal of feelings in the minds of two beings most intensely interested in each other, but which outward circumstances had for a long time kept apart, but a single glance of the eye, a single clasp of the hand, has taught them that the will is powerless against the heart."

"You are very sanguine, Mary, and I have no doubt you are in earnest in what you say. You love me, I know, and you of course think that one who has seen so much of me as Eva has, must certainly love me too; and perhaps I have been vain enough in days past to indulge such a hope, but keep in mind, that in all my intercourse with her, I was very careful to say or do nothing that should give her the least intimation how I felt towards her — that is, as a lover. I was of course ready to meet her requests with pleasure, but never forward in my attentions."

"And do you not know that such a course was much more likely to win such a heart, than if you had been very obsequious — ready to spring the moment her thimble or her scissors happened to fall on the floor — watching every look, and trying to say agreeable things, like George Blanchard, as you have described him to me, with his hands delicately cased in gloves, and his chin fastened as in a vice between two stiff collars, and his feet dressed like a dancing master, afraid of doing *this*, and afraid of saying *that*, lest it might not be altogether proper or pleasing. Women, nor girls, like your 'nice' young men; they want to see character, independence of thought and action. They want something to look up to, to lean upon, and not a butterfly fluttering around them and showing its gaudy wings — but here comes Julia."

"Oh, you good-for-nothings, you have put me all out of breath hunting for you."

"What's the trouble now, sis," as he arose from his seat and took the hand of the panting girl.

"The matter is, that we have been 'come for.'"

"Come for?"

"Yes, the young man with whose family we are to

board, says that he expects to be busy to-morrow, and he thought it might possibly make no difference to us if he came this evening. It will be moonlight, he says, and it is only two hours' drive. What a fine looking young man he is, Bub; quite a gentleman in manners, too — is he a farmer?"

"Yes, Julia, he is a farmer, and they tell me he is a hard worker, too. He is a noble-hearted, manly fellow. Mr. Ransom gave me quite a history of him. I cannot tell it now, but he takes you two girls to board, because he has lost a large sum of money, for *him*, through means of a brother. The brother has failed, and more than two thousand dollars of the responsibilities he has taken upon himself. He kept up a good heart, however, and has taken the whole family home. He says so long as the old homestead stands, and he has hands to work, it shall be a refuge for all those who sat together with him on the same knee, and were born under the same roof. You will have plenty of company, therefore, but the house is large enough to hold a small colony."

This was said while they were walking towards their place of residence. Each sister clung to an arm. They were about to separate; the parting was to have taken place in the morning, and the elder sister, Mary, was expressing regrets that they should have been sent for so many hours before the time. She was interrupted by the brother.

"A few hours, Mary, more or less, can make no material difference, and I wish there may be no such scene as marked our first separation. We love one another, and enjoy each other's society, but we cannot always be together. Let us be thankful that I have work to do. Let there be no tears then, but with a smile and a kiss, let us say good-bye. We shall have in our hearts the consciousness of mutual affection, and the hope of meeting again in a few years. In the meantime, letters can be passing with every ship that is bound for Rio, or from Rio to New York or Boston."

"William, you are strangely platonic, this evening. I do not know what to think of you; if I did not know to the contrary, I should conclude your heart has become callous."

"I have felt the necessity for hardening it."

"Against us!" and his younger sister looked him full in the face.

"No, dear sister, not against you or any other friends, but against circumstances."

"And by-and-bye your indifference to circumstances will lead to a hardening process against friends, until it may be you will, to use your own expressive language, be able to 'crush them out of your heart altogether'."

"Do, dear, me! I never heard such riddles as you, Mary and William are reading me. I do not understand a word you say, nor what either of you can find to smile at. For my part, I feel more like crying, and I shall cry, I know I shall. What a ridiculous idea! Here you, William, are to be gone from us, there is no telling how many years, over the ocean, too, ever so far; and we two girls left all alone—no relations, but those who never have a thought for us; and we among perfect strangers, and yet with a shake of the hand, a smile and a kiss—a very gentle one I suppose—we are to part!"

"And he has not told us either, Julia, which was to be first, the smile or the kiss."

Without noticing the remark of the elder sister, the brother asked:

"What sort of a conveyance has the young gentleman?"

"Oh, a very nice one indeed; a neat wagon with two seats, and a splendid pair of horses; no top, however."

"If I knew that I could conveniently get on board the steamboat to-morrow evening, I should be tempted to go up there with you, and trouble you another day with my company."

"Oh, do, do, dear William," exclaimed both sisters at once, "we shall be so happy! We shall then have one good, whole, quiet day with you; this has been so confused and broken up."

It was not far they had to walk, and the young man who was standing on the steps of the house, as they drew near, advanced to meet them.

Herbert relinquished the arms of his sisters, and gave his hand to the young man, at the same time introducing his sisters to their future host.

The young man made his obeisance with an ease of manner that took the ladies by surprise—at least, the elder of the two, who had not seen him. His appearance was as unexpected as his deportment. There was nothing of the rough farmer about him. He was of good size, well formed, a good countenance, with a thoughtful cast, but when lighted with a smile, almost brilliant—his dress, that which any gentleman might with propriety wear in the country: nothing new or fashionable, or stiff, well fitted to his person and adapted to the profession he followed—not too fine to fear contact with whatever he wished to handle, nor so coarse as to be unsightly.

"I have three questions to put to you, Mr. Bradford, the answers to which may vary my plans a little for the next twenty-four hours. The first is:

"Is there any way by which from your house, I can get on board the steamboat from Albany to-morrow evening?"

"There is a landing, sir, not far from my house; it belongs to Mr Roland, but is generally used by all in our vicinity. By holding up a light, the steamboat sends out a boat."

"Can you accommodate me with lodgings to-night, without inconvenience?"

"Not only, sir, without inconvenience, but with a great deal of pleasure."

"Have you a seat for me in your wagon?"

"The seat I occupy is designed for two."

"Then that matter is settled. Now girls, for your baggage."

With joyful haste the sisters gathered their lighter articles, while the two young men lifted out the trunks. It required but a few moments to arrange all matters, settle tavern bills, etc., and they were off.



## CHAPTER XI.

Roland's landing was a very unpretending place indeed, and from the middle of the river could not be distinguished from the rocks and bushes which lined the eastern shore. On nearing it, however, you perceive that a slight attempt at a dock has been made, by fastening a piece of heavy timber to a shelving rock that projects a few feet into the water. This piece of timber is no doubt fastened by clamps drilled into the rock, and with the plank before it, form an abutment convenient for a small boat to haul up to, or even for a sloop, if necessary. Planks are laid lengthwise from this piece of timber, to which they are fastened, and afford pleasant and sure footing for those who may have landed. To one at but a few rods from it, it seems a landing at the foot of an inaccessible steep, but to those on the dock a road is visible, and by following it, one finds an easy, though winding way, through a valley, or more properly a ravine, and very soon a level spot is spread out, and through clumps of noble trees and a lawn well kept and of a rich green — if in the summer months — you come very soon to a red brick mansion. The mansion has nothing particularly noticeable, in the way of architecture. It is large and well proportioned, with a wing on one side, a broad piazza fronting the river, a back building attached to the rear, and out houses extending beyond that, and a very large collection of barns and stables. No one could doubt, from the first glance, that it must be a very large estate, whose products could fill the premises appropriated for them.

This homestead, with the domain attached, was known throughout that region, and in fact by most persons who traveled along that beautiful river, as "the Roland place." A large number of acres of arable land, as well as a much larger number of acres of mountain woods, were attached to it. The dwelling could not be seen except from certain

positions on the river; a ridge of land, or more properly of rock, thickly studded with cedars, concealed the dwelling from any who might be looking for one, while immediately opposite upon the river, but views could be had by those who knew its locality, from two or three different openings above and below.

The house had been built before the Revolution, and its owner having taken a decided stand in favor of royalty, the estate was confiscated and sold. Thomas Roland, the grandfather of the present occupant, became the purchaser. He had held a major's commission in our army, and had particularly distinguished himself at the battle of White Plains.

The present inheritor was, as yet, quite a young man — not much over twenty-five. He had been through college, but had taken no profession; his father dying soon after he graduated, so much being thrown upon his hands, his mind was diverted from any calling but that of managing his farm, and attending to his houses and lots in the city.

A few years before his father's death, his mother had deceased, and an aunt of his, the only sister of his father, had been placed at the head of the house, and with her daughter, a young lady of eighteen, and young Roland, constituted now the total of the family proper, quite a number of domestics, however, must be added, as the house was large, and the same style of living was kept up by the present proprietor, as formerly.

The father of Donald Roland, the present owner, was by no means a popular man among his neighbors; he was in general overbearing, where he had any power to be so, although there were exceptional cases, where, if his fancy pleased — and it seemed to be an impulse of fancy rather than from kindness of heart — he would be quite liberal. He was a member of the church, a Presbyterian of the strictest sort of Calvinist; a great stickler for orthodoxy, and to all appearance possessing but little claim besides, to the character of a christian. Probably this peculiarity may have had an influence in molding the views of his son and only child; for when Donald came to years of discretion, and especially after the death of

his father, he manifested an indifference to religion, very seldom attended religious service, and whenever questioned on the subject, gave such answers as led to the belief that he had very little faith in what is called revelation. (With this exception, he was one whom all loved. He was of a most kind and obliging disposition; liberal in all his dealings, and without any hauteur of manner, so natural to one who had large possessions, and many dependents. Not indolent, nor without a certain care over his business matters, and yet so unsuspicious and ready to credit the assertions of those with whom he dealt, that some did not hesitate to say, "if Donald Roland did not yet become a poor man, it would be more from good luck, than careful management."

The very reverse of Donald in such matters, was the lady, at the head of his establishment. She was a prudent, managing woman, careful to be sure that nothing was wasted in the house, and so far doing for the interest of her nephew; but beneath all her manifestations of care for him, lay a substratum of pure, self-seeking for herself and those belonging to her.

She had three children — the daughter already alluded to, and two sons who, having been inmates with Donald for some years, and those at the period of youth, may be said to have been brought up with him. One of these sons was a farmer. He took for a certain rental, to be paid in kind, one of the portions of the estate which had been formerly the most productive for the same number of acres. The other son did business in the city of New York, and was reputed to be making money. He was a lively, sociable, jovial sort of person — one who would be very likely to inspire confidence in his integrity, if not in his capacity for business. There were several old servants about the establishment, who seemed as much fixtures, as the stone barns themselves. They were not now in the main very serviceable, but Donald Roland would no more have thought of parting with them than he would of pulling down the old substantial house and putting up a new and fashionable one; in fact, he looked upon the whole concern, in doors and out, as fixtures to be used by him as long as he should need them, and then to go, he

knew not to whom, nor does he give a single thought about the matter. He is young, just beginning life, with every thing ready made to his hand, and enough for all reasonable expenses.

Young Roland, although surrounded with many advantages for the enjoyment of life, was not, after all, happy. The beautiful scenery which surrounded him he had always been accustomed to see. Born and brought up in the midst of it — it had nothing new to present. His independent circumstances, for the same reason inspired no gratitude — he had never known any other condition. The fact of his being master of his own actions, and his large income, made no change in his habits. He had no taste for dissipation of any kind, nor was he fond of society. All that called upon him were cordially received, and made welcome by a generous hospitality. He had, however, a very strong attachment to his home, and to his home as he had always known it. Some, with his means, would have been very likely to have modernized the old building, or have made additions; but to Donald the structure, with all its surroundings, were sacred. Repairs were of course occasionally required; they must however be homogenous with the old architecture; if new fences were needed, they must be an exact pattern of those which had gone to decay. New paint might be laid upon the bricks, but it must be red and not even penciled with white, as some advised, to give it a more lively appearance. The old, curiously wrought ornaments that surmounted the front door, and the heavy mouldings that projected from the eaves of the roof, must have the same coat of cream color they had shown for a hundred years.

Within the house, likewise, he was resolute in keeping the old fashioned furniture, much to the chagrin of his aunt, the present mistress of his mansion; in all other matters she might do as she pleased, and he never interfered, but no modern chairs, or settees, or tables, or looking glasses, were allowed to usurp the places of those his progenitors had used. The long mantle glass with its frame of glass, he had always seen, and the solid sideboard with its silver trays and tankards, and those leath-

ern bottom, high back chairs — were to him as old friends, and he would not part with them.

Two rooms in the house were, however, more particularly attractive to him. They were in the second story, on the south side of the great hall; they opened into each other — one occupied as his sleeping apartment, and the other as a library or sitting-room. In these two rooms he may be said to have lived, they were, in fact, his home of homes. In his library were two large glass cases; one containing the books which had been gathered by his father and grandfather, and to which no additions were allowed; the other contained those which he himself was collecting, and was already well stored, with room enough however, for all that would be needed for some years to come, that is, if he purchased only what he wished to read.

On some accounts the life which young Roland led, might be one of comfort and ease — not much indeed that was exciting, but free from care, perfect leisure, intellectual entertainment in abundance, so far as it could be derived from books, and every luxury that his taste demanded. No one to disturb his quiet when ensconced in his easy chair, in his little sanctum, where he had collected some rare and costly pictures and works of art, and for exercise, a fine stud of horses at his command. He was an excellent horseman, and he took delight in mounting, at times, some of the more spirited of his beasts; he could soon tame them to his will. His favorite, however, was a splendid hunter, imported from England; a horse perfect in all his points, docile as a dog and fleet as a deer — fearless of either sight or sound; with the bridle lying on his neck, his master could fire his double barrelled gun from his back and scarcely an ear would be moved. Perhaps Trim had as large a share of his master's regard as all the rest of the world together.

But in saying this, the reader must not assume that Donald Roland was by any means a misanthrope. He had a kind heart, and one that could be most intensely aroused. Strong passions, too, were lying beneath an apparently unmovable superstratum, the fires might burst

forth at any moment, but the calm still surface gave no token of their existence.

But one subject of annoyance has as yet crossed his path. It was not a very serious matter after all, and yet as it was an every day affair, and one that met him in his own home, and from which he could not very well rid himself — it was something more than a vexation. His aunt as has been said, was a designing woman, and was endowed with a good share of tact, or management. She had procured good berths for her two sons, but the chief aim of her life, was, if possible, to get a berth for Cornelia, her promising daughter, not but the young lady might have had offers enough if she had been allowed to mingle in general society, for she had a very pretty face, even handsome, and a genteel form; she had some education, too, and a few accomplishments; a few of the simple tunes she could play on the piano, and some few she could in her way, accompany with her voice. It was what few of the farmers' daughters in general could do in that day, and it pleased such as were no great amateurs — and there is no doubt if Miss Cornelia had given them an opportunity, more than one of the young farmers might have been quite ready to make her suitable offers — but Miss Cornelia had been taught to look for higher things. "It would be such a snug concern and all in the family so," that she should be installed mistress of Roland place, and for a while every thing seemed to work favorably for such a result until it came to be considered a settled matter by those in the vicinity who felt interested in such affairs, that Cornelia Peabody was to marry her cousin Donald, or he was to marry her, and the estate kept in the family.

Donald had indeed given no special occasion for such conclusions on the part of the young lady herself. He had indeed been kind, and in a certain way attentive to her; sometimes she wished to walk through the woods, and Donald would accompany her, or she wished to ride on horseback and he did what he could to teach her — although that was no easy task — she was too timid ever to make a decent rider. She was at times, too, "very desirous for improvement," such spells however, did not last

long, but he was rather glad to find that she had a desire for knowledge, and of course placed books in her hand, and occasionally entered into conversation concerning the subject she had been reading; in general, however, all she could say about it, was "It was very interesting."

As there were in general few visitors, and the two young persons were often thrown together, it was but civil, and very natural too, that a young man should under such circumstances, make himself agreeable; and Donald certainly did so. He had been perfectly unsuspecting that his attentions could possibly have been misunderstood by a lady of common discernment, but when within the few last weeks on occasion of saying good-bye to her, as he was about to be absent a few days, he saw the tears dropping from her eyelids and the handkerchief applied to her face to hide the deep emotion that was stirring up her heart, a new light broke upon his vision all at once. He must change his conduct, and lose no time in letting her and all others interested in the case know, that it would be quite agreeable to him that there should be no tears, or heart-aches on his account, and he has been pondering the matter in his mind, while on board the sloop on his way home, and has come to the conclusion that his cousin must be even more weak-minded than he had supposed, but in some way or other a stop must be put to all such expectations. He had no feeling whatever towards her, but that of good will — nor ever could have. They had no sympathy in common. She was not in the least degree a realization of his ideal love — and even that imaginary idol was but faintly pictured to him yet — in fact, he had not loved, he had not even allowed himself the luxury of a day dream on that subject; his mind is not in a happy state for such an expression.

On one important point, there was a cloud on the mind of young Roland. As has been said, he was sceptical in regard to Divine revelation. It was not an unbelief originating in a desire to disbelieve because the precepts of the Bible would not allow him to follow his own sinful inclinations; he never found fault with the purity or strictness of its precepts, and one not on the most intimate relations with him might, from the correctness of his life,

have very naturally drawn the conclusion that it was regulated by Scripture, or he had formed good habits from religious training. It may not be too much to say, that he did really wish to believe; the cloud that was upon him spoiled all his sources of enjoyment. Neither the beauties nor wonders of creation, nor the abundance of which he was possessed, was a source of pleasure. Life to him was an enigma, and a great mistake.

What had produced this darkness, it would be needless to inquire; perhaps he himself could not have told the reason for his doubts, but they were none the less real, and they cast their sombre shadow on even his most cheerful and pleasurable moments.

Perhaps this sketch has been particular enough, to give the reader a little insight to the individual by way of introduction; it only remains to give a slight description of his personal appearance. He came of a portly race; both his father and grandfather were distinguished for fine features and manly proportions, and gained flesh as they advanced toward the later period of life, retaining to the last a fresh and cheerful countenance. There was nothing in Donald's countenance so marked, as to distinguish him among a crowd. He was good looking, his features well set; his hair raven black, and his eye sparkling and bright. His aspect in general sober and thoughtful, but when pleasurable excited, a most winning smile would illumine his features. His voice full and deep toned, and a set of teeth of the most perfect form, and apparently indestructible. He was of full stature, well proportioned, graceful in movement, and with all that ease of manner which distinguishes those who have been trained to it from their earliest days.

It will be remembered that Mr. and Mrs. Sandford had accepted the invitation given them by the young gentleman with whom they had become accidentally acquainted on board the sloop, to stop at his landing, as it would be so much nearer their place of future residence. It was just at the breaking of day that the sloop neared the little wharf, and the party intending to stop there were mustering on deck, ready to step on shore the moment the vessel should reach the dock.

"How I do hate to part with you," said Eva, as she embraced Mrs. Sandford in saying good-bye.

"Why cannot you go with us, dear? I know Mr. Sandford will be able, in a few days, to take you to Mr. Blanchard's, and we should have such nice times in getting things fixed."

"I should like it above all things, but it would be putting Mr. Sandford to too much trouble."

"What is that about giving me trouble?" said Mr. Sandford, as he came up to them.

"Will it, pa, be too much trouble for you in a few days, after things get a little fixed, to drive Eva home to Mr. Blanchard's? I want her to land here with us."

"Trouble! no. It will give me the greatest pleasure."

"But you have no horse yet, and may not be able to get one."

"I will be responsible for that, miss," said Roland. "The gentleman shall have as many at his command as he may require for any such service; and allow me most cordially to extend the invitation I have given to this lady and gentleman, so as to include yourself; you will confer a favor by accepting it."

"Well, if you all say so, I am willing. I thank you very much, sir," turning to young Roland.

He bowed to her, and was about to say something further, but was interrupted by Mr. Blanchard, who came up just then, with a scowl on his forehead, and apparently in no very good humor.

"What does all this mean, Sandford? we are not going to land here!"

"Some of us are, sir. This young gentleman, Mr. Roland, who owns this landing, has invited Mrs. Sandford and family to stop here, as it is but a short ride to our place, and we are going to throw ourselves upon his kind offer to have us conveyed to our home."

"And we are going, Mr. Blanchard, to take Eva with us."

"What is that for?"

"Oh, just for the fun of it; it will be so pleasant for us, and she would like it too. We will see her safe home to you again."

"Oh, that will be giving a great deal of useless trouble. No, no, I do not think it best."

"But I do," said Eva, looking at Mr. Blanchard with a pleasant smile on her countenance.

Mr. Blanchard was about to let out his feelings which had become almost uncontrollable; for many reasons he was quite out of sorts. He was angry at the captain for stopping the progress of his vessel to land passengers at this out of the way place, but for prudential motives, he kept in the worst of them; yet some reply he must make to Eva's short answer, and to do so he had to follow her to another part of the vessel, for she had tripped across the deck to where her old nurse was standing, and was telling her of her purpose, and of what she wished done about putting their rooms in readiness against her return.

"Eva," said Mr. Blanchard on coming up, "I am surprised at the answer you made just now, and before so many people."

"Not more so, I presume, sir, than I was by your attempt to restrain my wishes."

"Who else is there to do it, if I do not?"

"No one I hope, but my own judgment."

"A pretty restraint that would be."

"As much as I feel willing to submit to at present."

"I do not think it proper you should go with those people, and I shall not consent to it."

Aunt Lizzy now whispered in her ear.

"Do, darling, for the goodness sake, don't speak so, you will be making trouble."

Eva, however, had been thinking very hard most of the night. She had, as never before, examined things in reference to her situation for some time past, and the conclusion she had come to was, that she had passed from a state of childhood, and ought not to be treated as such. She was now past eighteen, and could see no propriety in being called to account for every turn she wished to make. She had submitted to it during the life of Mrs. Blanchard, but the watch which had been held over her of late, had become offensive, as had the peculiar treatment of Mr. Blanchard. His obsequious attentions for a few months past, were more disagreeable than all the indifference with



which Mrs. Blanchard had treated her. She now determined to have the matter well understood — at least, between Mr. Blanchard and herself. She had passed over his abrupt refusal with a determined reply indeed, but with a pleasant manner, but since he has made such serious work of it, she put on a serious air likewise. She did not think a reply to his last remark necessary, so requesting Aunt Lizzy to bring her shawl and reticule from the cabin, she at once resumed her place by the side of Mrs. Sandford.

The determined manner of Eva completely disconcerted her guardian. He could do nothing further by way of enforcing authority, without exposing himself to ridicule or insult, for he felt assured all would take her part. His resentment then turned upon the captain. He could do nothing now, but once ashore he believed he knew what string to pull that would make this "fellow" smart for it.

It did indeed take more time to get alongside and all on shore, than one could have supposed, for they lost the current of the wind, and it was found necessary at length to use the great sweeps. All this took time, and the sun was throwing his rays on the summit of the western mountains as the little party stepped upon the deck.

Now all this may seem hardly worth the trouble of narrating, but great events are sometimes hinged on trifling circumstances, and some very important consequences to several of those who have just landed on that little dock, will be seen to follow this movement, and even to shape their destiny for life, and of some too, who did not land.

It was no little surprise to the company that followed young Roland up the winding path when they reached the plateau above, on which stood the noble mansion with its beautiful lawn and majestic shades.

"What a beauty spot!" exclaimed Mrs. Sandford, each of the company assenting in terms of unqualified delight.

"What a pity the house cannot be seen from the river."

"It can, my dear," said Mr. Sandford, "from several points, but not immediately opposite. I suspect the place is somewhat like its owner — a good deal of substantial worth without much desire for notoriety."

This remark could not have been heard by the gentleman himself, as he walked somewhat in advance, leading in his hand the little boy of Mr. Sandford, who had become quite intimate with him, since the present of the knife.

As they ascended the steps, and stood upon the extended and roomy piazza, Mrs. Sandford could not help saying to her host:

"Oh, I could live on this porch! I should not care for anything more of a house."

"Perhaps in cold weather, madam, you would like walls to it."

"That, indeed! but I am only thinking of summer, now."

But the hall was wider than the porch, and the large parlor into which they were immediately led, with its heavy wooden cornice, and its deep embrasures and cushioned seat under each window, and the deeply moulded panneling that covered the walls, and the old fashioned, rich furniture, was a still further source of admiration.

In a few moments a lady entered, accompanied by the master of the house, whom the latter introduced as his aunt, Mrs. Peabody.

"And now, aunt, if you will please to order breakfast as soon as it can be had, I know it will be agreeable to us all — I am sure it will to me."

"Oh, but my dear sir," said Mrs. Sandford, "that was not in the agreement!"

"It was not so written down, I know, but it was so understood by me, I assure you, madam; country hospitality, you must know, always includes 'breaking bread together,' and I promise myself the pleasure, if it should be agreeable to you, of returning the compliment perhaps quite as often as you may wish."

"Well, sir, on these conditions, I for one am certainly willing to accede to your proposals; but believe me we had no idea of putting you to such trouble."

While the anticipated meal was in preparation, Mr. and Mrs. Sandford, and Eva, seated themselves upon the piazza, admiring not only the immediate premises, but the fine view in the openings to the river, and the mountains

behind threw up their massive heads as far as they could see.

"It seems to me, dear husband, that such surroundings as this young man has, must tend to purify and ennoble the mind."

"One would naturally think so, but all do not admire nature as you do."

"But," said Eva, "do you not think that a person may be affected by the scenes of nature unconsciously? Now, there is something about this gentleman that seem to me in keeping with his 'surroundings,' as Mrs. Sandford calls them. His ease of manner, his unpretending politeness, his freedom from all that stiffness, both in dress and behavior, which so often we see in the city; may not all this have been acquired by living amid the graces of nature?"

"And yet," said Mr. Sandford, "are not farmers in general, Miss Stanley, thought to be clownish?"

"There are, no doubt, many persons of rude manners to be found in the country, but I have noticed, even among those who work hard on their own land, a certain ease of manner, and quiet, unpretending politeness, that has been quite as pleasing to me, as the more formal and conventional manners of the city. No, I do not believe, that in general, country people are clownish."

Young Roland now came up to them; he had been giving some directions to his coachman.

"You perceive," said Mrs. Sandford, "that we are admirers of nature. We cannot get our fill of the luxuries around us."

"I hope, madam, since you are as you say, 'about to become an inhabitant of the country,' that your enjoyment of its beauties may not be marred by circumstances. I presume our pleasure from such sources, depends much more upon other things, than the aspect of nature herself, even to those who may be her lovers."

"No doubt that is true. 'It is content of heart gives nature power to please.'"

He immediately replied:

"To some, 'a dreary wild at best, in spite of its gorgeous array.'"

Mrs. Sandford looked at the gentleman as he quoted this line, and was struck with the peculiar expression of sadness that, for the moment, settled upon his countenance, and with woman's quickness drew the conclusion that there was some canker at the bud; a slight sigh, too, escaped his lips. At once a deep interest was aroused in her heart. She wished to gain his confidence, to probe the wound, and help remove the cause of suffering, whatever it might be. The shadow, however, passed quickly away, for he turned to Mr. Sandford, and with a smile, said:

"Men, I believe, have so much to do with the realities of life — either in subduing nature to their use, or what is harder still, contending against the elements of selfishness, of which the world is full, or baffling unpropitious fates — that they have not much feeling left for the poetry of nature."

"You think it is all prose with them?" said Mr. Sandford.

"Pretty much so, sir."

"Well, I cannot say but I can sympathize a little in the poetical view which you think the ladies take of nature, but I have seen the time when I would have given more to know where the means were to come from to meet my engagements at bank, than for the most fascinating view the combined beauties of nature could present. *Now* I can enjoy whatever comes along. I have banished care, that is, corroding care, and my mind is at rest."

"That is saying a great deal, sir. I should like to get your recipe; perhaps as we are to be neighbors, you may take the trouble at some time to give it me."

"I can give it to you Mr. Roland," said Mrs. Sandford, laying her arm on her husband's shoulder, "he has a good wife."

"I should think, madam, that may be an important article in the recipe, and yet under some circumstances, I could imagine that fact might only be a source of great unrest — but there is our bell," and offering his arm to Mrs. Sandford, preceded the little company into the breakfast room. Miss Cornelia had not yet seen her cousin Donald; she was in the room, however, when the company entered."

"Good-morning, cousin," said Roland, giving her his hand, as they had not seen each other for the last fortnight, at the same time introducing her to the new circle. The young lady was quite reserved, both at the time and during the meal, whether from perceiving that she had fallen into company that was a little more intelligent than usual, or for some other reason Donald could not define. She was, he knew, by no means bashful, and was in general quite talkative. He noticed, however, that she kept her eye fixed on Miss Stanley, so far as she could do it, with any kind of decency. The meal, with the exception that the mistress of the table and her daughter were rather silent, was a very social one indeed, and when it was finished, and as they were passing through the hall, Mrs. Sandford remarked:

"I can now understand why it is, that you gentlemen and ladies, who have your home in the country, have adopted the idea that a visit is of no account, unless you can as you have said, 'break bread together.' I feel as if we were more intimately acquainted than we should have been by any number of mere calls."

"That remark reminds me, madam, of an Eastern usage in reference to guests, and that is, 'that any person who has partaken of your salt, must, in person and character be sacred to you.'"

"And what an admirable custom it is, why cannot we adopt it?"

"I believe in general, madam, the effect of a social meal is to awaken kind feelings for the time, but the evil is, that we are such perverse creatures, and under such baneful influences, that charity as well as other kindred virtues, cannot abide with us. It may linger a few moments, like the bubble on the broken stream, and then is gone."

"Oh, but you must not think quite so bad of humanity as that; you and I are too young to allow of such dark views. Now, believe me, I was on the point of promising in my own case to carry out the beautiful idea suggested by that eastern custom you spoke of; only to think how soon one would be absolutely shut out from not only slander, but ungenerous thoughts!"

They had now reached the piazza again — that is, the

two who were holding the conversation recorded above. Eva had entered the parlor, and Mr. Sandford, with his little son, were on the way to the garden. Mrs. Sandford was becoming much interested in her host, and he in like manner manifested a disposition to converse with her in preference to others — and that was, by no means to be wondered at. They were apparently about the same age. She was still in the bloom of life, with all its freshness and buoyancy — her beauty uninjured as yet by the cares of life — her mind elastic and well cultivated — her temperament joyous and ready at all times to enter with spirit into the duties or pleasures of the passing hour. Young Roland had not been used to just such society as that of Mrs. Sandford. That in which he had occasionally mingled was rather of a plain stamp, in which his mind could take no interest, from the fact that there was nothing congenial to it. He was not only now ready to do the honors of a host, but to embrace every opportunity for familiar conversation. As they stepped upon the piazza, Mrs. Sandford remarked:

"I suppose there are people in the world, who would value those majestic trees merely as so much cord wood."

"Doubtless, madam, but they would not have allowed them to attain their present size, before they had laid the ax to their roots; they are rather too large now to be handled with profit. After all, perhaps such people are as wise as any; they look upon the world as a utilitarian concern altogether, and take some pleasure in making the most of it. Their aspirations are for gain, and their hearts are satisfied with the results."

"But what a wretched existence must that be."

"Perhaps not more so, than that of one who, gifted with an intense imagination, throws the halo of poetry around all he sees in the natural world, and finds at length the brightness vanish and dark mists spreading the gloom of reality over his fairy pictures, and groans out, 'all is vanity and vexation of spirit.'"

"You describe one, who, although of poetical sympathies, has not had a mind properly balanced. He has not viewed God in his handiwork; the glory of the earth and the heavens have not been to him an emanation of

Divine wisdom and love. Our beautiful world without God, must be sooner or later, to such as you remarked this morning, 'a dreary wild at best.' As Mrs. Sandford said this, she fixed her bright, blue eye full upon her companion; his quailed before it, and that peculiar shade of sadness marked his countenance; he made no reply, and feeling now well assured that from some cause she could not fathom, the present subject was painful to him, determined to follow it no further. After a few moments' silence, he said:

"I suppose according to agreement, I ought now to be making preparations to see you to your new home, but I have still a request to make in reference to that matter. I understand from Mr. Sandford, that your servants have gone on with the sloop, and of course will not be here until some time in the course of the day; I propose, therefore, that we take a ride to your place, and I, with my man and Mr. Sandford, do what we can, under your direction of course, in putting things in order; then yourself and family return with me and spend the night. You can scarcely be comfortable by one day's preparation, and you see, we have abundance of room, and provender enough."

"Oh, you are very kind. I suppose I ought to say something about the trouble we should be giving you, but I believe I already understand you well enough to know that you would not have given the invitation, without taking that into account, so I will say nothing on my own account against the preparation. To me it would be very pleasant, but — smiling archly as she said it, 'you know I have a husband.'"

"And I have no doubt his highest pleasure is to meet your wishes."

"Ah, ha! you must not be too sure that his judgment and my wishes may coincide. He is fifteen years my senior, and more than that, wiser than I, and withal not quite so much influenced by feeling."

"In spite of these possible obstacles, I will venture a good guess that if you authorize me to express your consent, I shall not find them insurmountable."

"I do," she playfully replied, "and more than that, will

be bold enough to say, I wish you success, so you see what kind of a visitor you have got on hand."

"I hope by the time she loses that title, I may be permitted to give her a far better one."

"Thank you, I think I shall not have reason to be ashamed of it."

"I hope so, but dare not make a guess as to that."

Roland immediately after giving directions for the carriage to be in readiness, walked into the garden to seek Mr. Sandford, and very soon the two gentlemen returned to the house. Eva had now joined Mrs. Sandford, and as the two gentlemen neared them, Mr. Sandford looked at his wife, and gave her a meaning smile. She at once answered to it:

"You know, dear, I am very easily persuaded."

"Yes, true, when your own mind is in favor of the thing, but I must leave the whole matter to Miss Stanley and yourself; I feel, I must say, very much like a passenger at present, or a boy in a holiday."

"I advise you, then, sir," said Roland, "to make the most of it. I rather think when you come to get things in full operation, you will find farming not much of a holiday."

"You think not! Well, I know it will be new business, but my dear sir, there will be no notes to pay — no devising of ways and means — no asking favors of bank directors — no fear of tightness in the money market, or of Western notes — any thing will be better than such burdens."

"True, but after all, farming has its peculiarities; a man must have a good stock of patience to begin with."

"I can help him to that, Mr. Roland."

"I have no doubt, madam, that you will do all you can that way, but if you are willing to receive the advice of a friend, I would suggest that you do not be too liberal; you may find it quite convenient to have a small store on hand for yourself."

"Oh, dear me! I hope you do not mean to bring up any bugbears to frighten folks. Why, I have in my mind the most beautiful vision of green fields, and pure air and sweet scents, and delicious shades and calm domestic

quiet — of sitting with my husband beneath the shadows of our own vines, talking and reading, while the birds are making sweet music for us."

"It is a pretty scene, Mrs. Sandford, and I think I should like to make one of the party under those vines you speak of, but perhaps a third person would spoil the charm."

"By no means, I assure you. You might point out beauties which we did not see."

"I fear not, madam; I rather think you would find me too much like the man who would make cord wood of those trees."

"Then I should forever renounce all pretensions to analyze character."

"And I, too," said Mr. Sandford.

Roland was about to reply, when the conversation was interrupted by a messenger, who came to inform him that that a gentleman on horseback, was at the gate near the barn, and would be glad to see him.

"There is something about that young man," said Mr. Sandford, after Roland had got out of hearing, "that I admire very much; what say you, Miss Eva?"

"Oh, I do not feel quite at liberty to give an opinion of young gentlemen. You know I am under guardian and teachers."

"I hope you will not be long under the one you now have. Well, I dare give my opinion, even in presence of my husband; I think him one of the most agreeable gentlemen I have met with for a great while, but, dear husband, depend upon it, there is some cause of sorrow at his heart. Do you not notice how his features settle into melancholy shadow, when not in conversation, and even sometimes then. How I should like to know what it is, but here he comes, and another gentleman with him," and turning to Eva, "why, my dear, it is Mr. Herbert!"

Mrs. Sandford saw, however, that Eva had discovered that fact already, for she was very pale and seemed much agitated. As young Roland led the gentleman up to the little group, his face assumed a brighter aspect than they had before seen it wear.

"You see, my friends, that our little episode of the storm on our voyage, is like to turn out much to our ad-

vantage; it has made us acquainted with some new neighbors."

"What," replied Mrs. Sandford, as she gave her hand to Herbert, "are you and your sisters to be in this vicinity?"

"Not more than two miles from here — that is, as regards my sisters — my stay here will be only a few hours."

"And but a stone's throw from your house, Mrs. Sandford," said Roland.

"How very glad I am; who knows what that storm was sent for! If you had not been taken up by us and if I had not taken that sail, or rather row with you, I should not have known anything about you, and now I feel as if you and your sisters are old acquaintances; how very pleasant it will be."

"I assure you, madam, it is highly pleasing to me, as my sisters will be alone — that is, away from those with whom they have been on terms of intimacy. I feel it will be a great thing for them if they can have the privilege of your society. They are known only to the family of Mr. Ransom."

"And I shall esteem it a great privilege, I can assure you to have theirs, for do you not know, I have fallen in love with that elder one, and now Eva, if we could have you with us, what a happy little company we should make. But I thought, Mr. Herbert, you were to have returned to the city last evening."

"That had been my intention, madam, but as I learned there was a private landing in this vicinity, from which I could get on board the steamboat, I concluded to spend one day longer and see my sisters settled."

"Then you go down this evening?"

"That is, if Mr. Roland, who I understand owns the landing, will not object to my using it," at the same time turning with a smile to that gentleman.

"I am too happy, Herbert, if it can be of any service to you, and will order the light there in time to arrest the notice of the boat."

"You are very kind, I thank you. Mr. Bradford spoke of taking a light with us."

"Not the least occasion for it. I have one expressly for the purpose, and as I see my carriage is coming to con-



vey our friends here, we will go to the barn and attend to that business. Please excuse us ladies, for a few moments."

"Certainly, and shall we be getting ready?"

"If you please."

When the two young men entered the stables, Roland remarked:

"To tell you the truth, Herbert, I do not wish to part with either of these horses, although I have scarcely any use for them; they are both ladies' horses,—one of them, perhaps, the most perfect creature for that purpose, that can be found within a hundred miles circuit, as docile as a lamb, and with the agility of a deer—no timidity, and very fond of being caressed. Is your sister accustomed to a horse?"

"Quite so; she is perfectly fearless, and a good rider."

"I know it will be very difficult for you to procure any thing around here suitable for a lady to ride, and no doubt Bradford knew that when he directed you here. I tell you what I will do; I cannot think of selling the horse—the fact is, my horses are my pets—you see I have nothing else to love."

"Then all stories I hear, are not true?"

"What stories?" and he looked at his visitor with much meaning.

"Oh, pardon me, it was rather presuming in me to have taken such a liberty. Please excuse me, Roland, I was off my guard—thrown off by your playful remark, in reference to your horses."

"I assure you, my dear fellow, I take no offence at it, but you have doubtless heard something that is of consequence to me to know, and as you and I are old friends, if you have heard, in any way, my name connected seriously with that of any lady, I ask you, as a particular favor, to reveal it to me. Who told you is of no consequence; I do not by any means wish to know, but there are reasons in my case which I could easily explain if I had time, why, I wish to know the substance of the report you have heard."

"It was simply this, Roland; that it was a general rumor that you were engaged to be married."

"And to whom?"

"Well, I paid some little attention to the matter—I had a little curiosity to know who the lady was—it was to a cousin."

Young Roland took his hand.

"I thank you most cordially for your frankness; what you have said is of more importance to me than you can well imagine. I have had some suspicion that there might be such a rumor, I shall now be on my guard. In general, we young men have no objections to such reports—but only when they happen to have truth on their side. If it should be in your way to contradict such report, it will oblige me to have you do so, and you may give your authority."

"I will certainly."

"And now, Herbert, as I said, I do not wish to sell this horse, but having no present use for him, it will give me pleasure to know that somebody has enjoyment from him, and as your sister is used to riding, and as you say is fearless, I will gladly loan him as long as she may need his services. Whom can you get to take care of him for her?"

"Mr. Bradford said if I could procure a horse, he would himself see to that."

"That will do; Bradford is a fine fellow—fond of horses, and knows how to take care of them; then if you are willing to accept my proposition, the horse is at your service."

"I hardly know how to answer you, except by thanking you most heartily for your generous offer. I am quite willing to pay a liberal price for the horse, but as you feel unable to release your claim from your pet, I must either take him on your own terms, or relinquish the hope of gratifying my sister. I will at once, when I reach New York, send up proper equipments."

"By no means. I have them all—made on purpose—a perfect fit and but little used; in fact, I should prefer them to be used in preference to new ones; they might not be exactly suited, and would make him restive, and as your sister may feel better pleased to think she was using

her own horse and accoutrements, you need not let her know they are not her own."

"She ought to know, however, the obligation she is under."

"By no means necessary, and indeed, upon further reflection, I should prefer that she did not know the precise terms of our bargain, nor any one else beside ourselves, only that under no circumstances must he be sold; that when she had no further use for him, he is to be returned to me, and I to settle with you on your return."

The hostler was now summoned to equip Tommy, and the beautiful creature pawed and neighed and seemed delighted at the prospect of a frolic in the open air. He was a pure white with here and there a spot a little shaded with brown, thin mane, a little curled, and light tail, — his neck finely arched, with a bright eye, and a countenance denoting sprightliness and docility.

"I do not wonder that you should be unwilling to lose your claim to this animal," said Herbert, "I feel as if I could love him myself. I hardly know how to express my obligations for your generous kindness."

"The truth is, Herbert, I am so much alone, and few persons around here to associate with, I feel anxious to do what I can to encourage any who come into our neighborhood, and make their stay as pleasant as possible. I am anticipating much pleasure in the acquaintance I have made in the family of Mr. Sandford, and that reminds me that they may be waiting for me. Do you return immediately? if so, I will accompany you, as I shall ride on horseback. I will just put this bridle over the pommel, and the horse will follow us."

"Shall I not lead him?"

"By no means, he will follow and come at a call just like a dog. Come Tom," and giving a slight whistle, the horse immediately walked after the two gentlemen.

"Oh, what a beauty!" exclaimed Mrs. Sandford, "who is to ride that?"

"Mr. Herbert must answer that question, but I have no doubt, Mrs. Sandford, if you wish, he will have no objections to your backing him."

"You have my hearty consent, I assure you madam."

"Papa, what do you say?"

"I have nothing to say at all; you would not have me disappoint two gentlemen whom I perceive are to be mounted, and you in the bargain."

"What a dear, good soul you are, but just to think what a miserable, selfish being I am! Eva, dear, Eva, where are you?" The young lady hearing her name called, immediately came from the adjoining room whither she had retired on seeing the gentlemen approach the house.

"Eva, dear, would you not enjoy a ride on horseback? Here is that beautiful creature all in readiness; come, do, I know both gentlemen will be delighted."

"Are you not going to your home?"

"Oh, yes, but it seems that Mr. Herbert and Mr. Roland are on horseback, and this lady's horse, I presume the former has been purchasing for his sister, and they are going our way; you will enjoy it, I know you will."

"Have I been invited?"

"They invited me merely because I happened to be present, but you may well suppose they would much prefer your company."

"If there is room for me in the carriage, I should choose to go in that if you are willing."

This conversation was carried on at too great a distance to be heard by either gentlemen. As Mrs. Sandford felt sure that Eva's choice was to go in the carriage, she was at once in readiness to mount, and the little party was soon on its way.

Mrs. Sandford had not as yet seen the place which was to be her future home. It had been described to her as correctly as could well be done by words, and yet when Mr. Roland turned his horse up to the gate, and the little cavalcade stopped, she could not help exclaiming:

"What a dear, good husband I have got! he has selected the very place of all others I could have chosen."

"I thought, since I have had the pleasure of ascertaining a little how your taste runs, Mrs. Sandford, that you would be much pleased, and sometimes I almost wonder that those who erected the buildings on my place had not selected this location; it is much more airy and picturesque."

"But does your land extend so far?"

"That stone fence, madam, is the southern boundary of my land, and the northern boundary of yours."

"And those beautiful woods are yours! I must get leave to have the privilege of a ramble there. What splendid oaks and chestnuts!"

"I give you a *carte blanche*, madam, not only to those but to the whole domain, to ramble by foot or horseback, only asking in return the favor that you will sometimes make a call upon its lonely owner."

"Not always to be lonely, I feel sure of that; but depend upon it, there will be a path worn between our two houses, if my influence has any power."

The carriage now drove up, and as its inmates alighted, William Herbert stepped up, and had the pleasure of assisting Eva. He held for a moment the hand which she had given him, and as they stepped a few paces on one side to allow the others whom Mr. Sandford was assisting to debouch, she said to him in a low voice,

"Can you allow me a private interview in some portion of this day?"

If she was ever beautiful it was at that moment—a deep flush of rich blood gave life and luster to her countenance. Her eye sparkled, and her lips trembled as she replied,

"Certainly, at any time most convenient to yourself."

The ready consent took Herbert by surprise, and the more so as his request seemed, from unmistakable signs, to have deeply affected her. He replied,

"If I am here in the course of an hour, will you be ready to accompany me in a short walk?"

"Certainly."

More perplexed than before at this prompt reply,—not so much by the word of assent itself as by the manner and the tone of voice—he mounted his horse, and leading the one Mrs. Sandford had ridden, departed for the home of his sisters.

In much less than an hour he was back, and found Eva, as she had promised, in readiness for their walk.

A short distance from Mr. Sandford's house a lane ran off from the main road into the fine woods already alluded

to, and in a few moments they were entirely hidden from observation. The surface of ground was in spots broken by rocks through whose crevices in some unaccountable way trees obtruded, and some of them of large size. Where their roots obtained sustenance to support their bulk, was equally unaccountable, but it must have been far down beneath the incumbent masses. The rocks, however, in spots, afforded pleasant seats, and he soon selected one for that purpose.

"This is a pleasure I have long desired," he said, as he was placing a shawl upon the rock for the accommodation of the lady.

"I believe I can honestly say the same thing, but I have supposed it would not have been according to the rules of propriety that I should have been forward in seeking it. I have never, I believe, refused an interview or shunned your presence."

"No, Miss Eva."

"I wish you to understand, William, that I have given this opportunity to one with whom I have been on terms of intimacy from childhood, and not to a gentleman who feels it necessary to use terms of common place politeness. If I am not Eva, and you William, our conference must end at once."

"Pardon me, then. I did not know, for how could I, not having seen you for more than three years, that I should be allowed the old privilege, and that my old standing could be resumed."

"It must be on that foundation, if any, for of late you have not offered me the most distant chance to know in what relation we stood to each other."

"You know why that has been."

"How could I know! I know indeed, that my home, where William Herbert was always welcomed with a sister's joy, was broken up; that I was cast among comparative strangers. Friends, to be sure they were called, but in reality strangers to me—strangers to my heart—with no sympathies in common—with selfish ends continually manifesting themselves through all their show of attention. Oh, how grateful it would have been to my poor, lone heart, to have been able at times to let out its

feelings to one who had once known almost every thought that passed it, or every emotion that thrilled it."

"Oh, Eva, hear me. You almost distract me; how could I see you? Would you have had me renounce all my manliness, and venture into a family where I might have been insulted?"

"Insulted! By whom?"

"By Mr. Blanchard. He drove me by insult from the position I held in your father's store—and I may say also from your home after your father's death; and would he not have indulged the same treatment, had I presumed to enter his house?"

"I know, William, you have a proud, sensitive spirit; it would not take much to arouse it and wound it, but had the case been reversed, Eva Stanley would have braved insult—would have borne it rather than have allowed William Herbert to feel that she had forgotten the past."

"You know, too, Eva, that for these three years past, I have been in a foreign land."

"Not so far off, but that letters could find their way to friends at home."

"Did you never receive one from me?"

"Never."

"On the eve of my departure I wrote you a long letter, explaining the reasons why I had not called, and saying in it all I could say to assure you of my friendship, and of my readiness to aid you in any way I could, if you would only let me know that you needed aid."

"Aid was not what I wanted, William, although I thank you for the offer. I can take care for myself—but that letter I never received; how did you send it?"

"Through the post-office."

"You have been in the city some time, William, and our meeting has been purely accidental. You have neither sought for me, and I know not that you have ever inquired for me. In a few days, as I understand, you are again to sail for a foreign country."

"Oh, Eva, I wish you would let me tell you all my heart—all I have suffered—but when you acquiesced in my wish for a private interview, you did it in a way that assured me you did not anticipate any thing beyond a

mere explanation by me of the cause why I have absented myself from you, and I will not take advantage of your kindness by urging a request that may be painful to you."

"I suppose I ought not to understand what that request means, but I tell you plainly, William, no such revelation would now change our relation to each other. I am not a poor, weak girl, or such a poor, weak girl as many may suppose. What I have said in reference to our former intimacy, we both understand is the reason, and the only reason why this interview has been allowed; and for that same reason I have let you know that I once felt you to be a very near friend. I have suffered much in being obliged to conclude that the band was broken and the past forgotten. Tell me frankly, William, is it not so? Have you not tried to put my image out of your remembrance, and all feeling you once had for me, away from your heart?"

William Herbert was confounded. He knew that she spoke the truth; he had endeavored, as he told his sister, to crush all interest in her out of his heart. He had not that confidence in her love for him, that enabled him to trust to its strength against all the influences which would be brought to bear upon him. He knew that when he parted from her she was but a girl, of strong feelings and an impulsive nature. He was deeply interested in her, and felt quite sure that she thought a great deal of him, but three years had raised her into womanhood, and how could he know that it had not changed all the course of her feelings, especially towards him. That his interviews on board the sloop had revived the scenes of the past, and the feeling of the past, he was conscious, although he had tried to make himself believe to the contrary. The present interview he had asked, without clearly defining to himself what end he had in view; most probably he meant to probe her heart, and find out if he could, how much Eva, the young lady, retained of Eva, the young girl; and possibly make a declaration of his attachment. Her ready assent to his request—the business manner she assumed—the frank avowal of her former friendship, and made by her the basis of her consent to a conference

— all tended to debar him from proceeding a step beyond the past. But the question she had now put to him must be answered, and his only safe way is to tell the simple truth.

"You have asked me a question, Eva, which I can answer only in one way. You are right; I have endeavored to forget the past, I have tried to put you out of my mind — but —"

"That is enough, William," she quickly replied, "not one word more, if you please; we understand each other now, and as I presume that was your object in wishing this interview, let what has been said, suffice. When do you sail?"

"Probably in a week."

"You have been successful, I hope — and — are your prospects good?"

"I have indeed a fair prospect of independence."

"I shall hope to enjoy the society of your sisters, while I am up here, at least. I am so glad, for your sake, that they have been left to you. Oh, what a blessing it must be to have somebody to love; in whom you can confide under all circumstances — whose heart has become one of your own, no change to fear — I mean change of affection, no possible reverse to weaken its power — nothing but death to dissolve the band, but even death unable to tear it from the heart. Shall we go?" and saying so she arose from her seat.

"Oh, Eva, I cannot part thus. Will you not allow me to make an explanation?"

"It could do no good — it could not alter facts — we had better go."

He offered her his arm, which she readily took, and their conversation turned at once upon subjects of light interest upon which she talked freely and pleasantly, and they soon reached the house of Mr. Sandford.

"I suppose," said William, "I must say good-bye to you now."

"Shall I not see you again?" and she gave him that peculiar look, which he remembered once before encountering, and which filled him with self reproach.

He took her hand, and without reply, went on his way

## CHAPTER XII.

As the little party emerged from the carriage, and Mr. Sandford came up to his wife, who was standing by the side of young Roland, earnestly surveying the house and its surroundings, she turned towards him a look of intense delight.

"You are a dear, good husband."

"What's the matter, now?" said he, smiling.

"Just the very place you knew would please me."

"Glad if you like it; 'rather plain,' I feared you would say."

"Oh, but the *trees*, dear husband! What sweet shades, and what a charming view in every direction. Don't you think it beautiful?" turning to Mr. Roland.

"The prospect, do you mean, Mrs. Sandford, or the house?" (The house was a plain, but good sized, and substantial building.)

"I am not thinking about the house."

"Perhaps, madam, that may have, in the end, a good deal to do with your enjoyment of the view from it. The latter is indeed, very fair."

"Very fair! I almost fear you are so accustomed to fine scenery, that you have become obtuse to its charms."

Mr. Roland, somewhat diverted by the enthusiasm of his companion, smiled as he replied:

"I have learned that the circumstances within doors have a modifying effect upon the view from its windows. A smoky chimney, or a leaky roof, or even a poor cup of coffee, will sometimes make a material difference with the aspect of woods and mountains, and rivers, too."

"Oh, you miserable men! dependent on physical comforts — spiritual enjoyments but a secondary consideration! Oh, how I pity you!"

"Come, Caroline," said Mr. Sandford, "if you are pleas-



ed with the outside of things, suppose we step in and look round there a little; you may not be so well satisfied."

But Caroline was in a frame of mind to be satisfied with every thing, and the satisfaction she manifested at the size of the rooms, and the disposition her husband had made of the various articles of furniture, was indeed a real pleasure to him; and then that large willow tree in the rear of the house! "How cool and refreshing seemed its extended shade, and how green and inviting the velvety grass beneath it!"

"What are you doing with those chairs, Caroline?"

Mrs. Sandford had given a hasty survey—had been into the kitchen and up stairs among the bedrooms—all pleased her, and coming into the parlor, where her husband was busy wheeling the sofa to another side of the room he thought more appropriate for it, she caught up two of the chairs, and was conveying them off, when he made this exclamation.

"I am going to realize some of my day-dreams. Come dear husband, and take a seat beside me."

"Is not this all our hearts can desire?" she said, as Mr. Sandford took the seat she had prepared for him.

"It is very pleasant, certainly, and the more so to me, as it seems to satisfy you."

"I should be very unreasonable not to be satisfied, when I know you have done your best to please, even if it did not meet my expectations, but it is far, far better than I ever fancied."

"Why does not Eva come out? Where does she keep herself?"

"I fear Eva, dear husband, is not happy. I wonder how matters stand between her and young Herbert. You know they have had a walk together. I fear it has not been satisfactory to her, or to him either, for I saw when they parted, he looked very, very sad, and she, I know, has been weeping since."

"Do you think they are fond of each other?"

"I think they have been, but there is some misunderstanding that disturbs them both now, and it is very unfortunate, for he is going away to be gone for years, and she has got to be subject to the influence and designs of that Blanchard."

"I should think from the manner in which she treated his veto yesterday, his influence has no power over her."

"Yes, but my dear husband, he is, I think, a very artful man, and a continual dropping will wear away a stone, you know; there, she will be under his own roof, comparatively alone. He can make himself agreeable when he wishes. My only hope is, that Eva has sense enough to see through him, and heart enough to spurn all his advances; but still it is a dangerous situation for a young girl to be placed in. But here comes Mr. Roland."

"Well, madam," said Roland, as he entered the yard, "I see you are trying the experiment of sitting under your own vine."

"Yes, we are, and here you see is a seat for you."

"For me! well, I must say it is a very pleasant shade, and rather grateful, just now—it is going to be a warm day. I suppose, Mr. Sandford, you do not yet take upon you the responsibility of matters here, not until you have had your holiday."

"Well, no sir, not until I learn a little what is needed and what directions to give. I leave every thing at present to the care of Mr. Bradford."

"Bradford is a fine fellow. You will think much of him, Mrs. Sandford, when you come to know him. I think he takes the poetical view of things."

"Indeed! and a laboring man, too?"

"Yes, madam, one of our most industrious, hard working men. His romantic ideas, however, I believe, do not run in the vein of sitting under the shadow of vines, or living upon wide piazzas."

"Only in summer, I said," replied Mrs. Sandford, with a hearty laugh, "but I fear you have too good a memory."

"It is a good memory, I suppose, that keeps hold of the sayings and doings of those we feel respect for."

"If it does not treasure them up as witnesses against them."

"Mr. Bradford is poetical in his friendship. He is the youngest brother of quite a large family. His two sisters have married, and two of his brothers, and he has two unmarried brothers. They all had their share of the property which their father left, equally divided. For his por-

tion, he chose the farm and homestead, and as none of them cared to remain in the country, they were very willing he should take it. He was not brought up to work any more than the rest. Their father owned quite an estate, and the boys, most of them, preferred going into business, and the old gentleman sold off one farm after another, to supply each of them with capital, as they became of age. Lucius had remained at home, being the youngest, and superintended matters, as the old gentleman became unable to do so. They had been well brought up, that is, they were affectionate to each other, and were distinguished always as a harmonious family. When the old gentleman was about to make his will, he called them all together, and made known to them what he designed to leave to each, and had them all express their wishes in reference to the old place — whether any of them particularly desired it and were willing to take it as a portion. The older ones preferred money to real estate, and thought as they were all either settled in business, or clerks in the city, and should probably never wish to live there, that it had better be sold. Lucius had not yet been asked. When his turn came, he said, "that if he could have his choice, he should prefer to keep the homestead and farm attached; its value might be assessed, and if it was worth more than his share, a mortgage might be placed upon it. He did not wish more than the rest had. The brothers and sisters, however, seemed united in the feeling, that as he had remained at home, and would continue to remain, the whole ought to go to him. The value of the estate was probably eight thousand dollars, which was about the sum which the others would each receive for their share.

"I was quite intimate with him, for we are of the same age. One day, in conversing with him on the situation of his brothers and sisters, he remarked:

"'They seem to be all doing well, and I believe are making money,' but, said he, 'they are all living in the city, and living as yet in hired houses, which, you know, cannot seem much like home. They will live in one perhaps a year, and then hire another and move to that; they are all young yet, and I know must feel a longing at times to come up and see the old place where we were all born

and brought up; and supposing it had been sold! there would not have been one spot on earth towards which their affections could center — which they could look to as home.'"

"What a beautiful idea!" exclaimed Mrs. Sandford. "Sure enough, there would have been no rallying place for their hearts — that is, as brothers and sisters — and he meant to make them feel that it was to be truly such."

"That was one of his objects, madam, but perhaps not the main one; he has used every means to make them feel that it is as free to them as ever, and sometimes he gets them all together under the old roof, and then seems perfectly happy. He keeps things snug, and in the same condition as when their parents were living, and will not allow a tree or shrub to be cut down or removed; every thing in the house must remain just as it was. And yet beyond this, he had an ulterior end in view which borders a little more on the romantic, considering that he is the youngest of the family, than what I have already told you. Said he to me, 'my brothers, I know, seem to be doing well, but business in the city is precarious; times change there very suddenly. They may some of them get into difficulties — may fail and be broken up, what are they then to do? No father's home to go to! — living in the city expensive! Now I mean to make this a refuge for them. There shall be one bright spot they can turn their eyes to — one shelter where they can run to when storms overtake them — one table that shall be spread for as many of them as can get round it.'"

"Oh, the noble fellow!" said Mrs. Sandford, her bright eyes glistening with the starting tear.

"And has his liberality ever been tested?" said Mr. Sandford.

"It has, indeed, sir. Two years after the death of their father the elder brother failed. Lucius heard of it, and off he started. He found him and his wife in great trouble. He did all he could to help them, but his supply of money was not large. He could not reinstate things, for the failure was for a large amount, but he paid off some private bills — such as the family had incurred — and then brought the whole concern home with him, the wife and

the wife's sister, who was then dependent upon his brother, and three children, and a servant to wait upon them, as the wife was in feeble health, and when he got them here, he seemed to me, perfectly happy. His whole effort was to make them feel at home, and that the whole thing was a pleasure excursion, and as much for his comfort as theirs. And I truly believe, if he could not have brought them back with him, and thus have relieved his brother of the care and expense necessarily connected with the then state of affairs, he would have been very sad indeed."

"And are they there, still?" asked Mrs. Sandford.

"Oh, no, madam; they remained there nearly a year. His brother's affairs were compromised, and he was able to go on again; but the real aid he afforded in the time of their need, the weight of care, and the burden of expense of which he relieved his brother, was a great matter; great in many ways, for it enabled the brother to turn his whole attention to the settling up of his affairs, and to offer his furniture to his creditors, and to let the house he had hired. The creditors would not take his furniture, and no doubt settled with him more readily, because they saw that he was not living at their expense; but it has opened a place for him in that brother's heart, and in that of his wife, too, that I can imagine of more value, than all the mere material interests that have been affected."

"And he has opened a place in my heart, too," said Mrs. Sandford, "I shall feel proud to know him."

"I have heard," said Mr. Sandford, "that he has lately lost money by some of his friends."

"He has so, sir. Some months since, the husband of one of his sisters, died. He had not been prosperous in business; he was by no means a thrifty man, and not even honest. A few months before he died, Lucius received a letter from his sister, asking him to come immediately to the city, for they were in trouble. He went, of course at once, and found that his brother-in-law was in danger of having a criminal prosecution commenced against him, for some underhand way in which he had attained money, amounting to two thousand dollars. Lucius borrowed

the money on his own responsibility, paid the obligation, brought his sister and her two children home with him, and got the husband off to some foreign country, to try and make a living where he was not known, and there he died. But I must ask of you, as a particular favor, not to let a word escape your lips in reference to this matter, for in fact, the sister does not know that her husband was in danger of prosecution as a felon, and no one but her brothers know the whole truth about the matter. It has cost him more than two thousand dollars to accomplish the whole thing. He told me, for he has always made me his confidant, and I have told you for the reason that, as you are to be neighbors, and will no doubt be at times brought into somewhat intimate relations with him, you may know something of his character; and I believe you can appreciate his motives for keeping the matter secret."

"We thank you," said Mr. Sandford, "for the confidence reposed in us; it shall not be abused, depend upon that."

"There must be something more than a poetical turn of mind," Mrs. Sandford interposed, "that has led to such poetical results. He must be a christian."

Mr. Roland made no reply.

"I mean," she continued, "a christian not merely in name. He has manifested the true spirit of our Master, do you not think so?"

"He is very fond of his friends, and like every true man who values friendship, is ready to make sacrifices for it in the hour of need — but suppose we take a walk into your garden. I have taken the liberty, Mr. Sandford, of setting my man to work there, in cutting up the weeds, as I perceive there will be no occasion for his services in the house. Mr. Bradford has done something about planting it with vegetables, but of course has not had time to keep things in proper trim."

"Oh, thank you, thank you, you are very kind. The fact is, my wife enticed me here, in order to realize some of her beautiful visions, and between her flights of fancy, and your entertaining history of that young man, I have forgotten most every thing else."

"Now just hear him, Mr. Roland! is not that a pretty

way to reward us for doing what we could to make his holiday pleasant?"

Mrs. Sandford now left the gentlemen for the purpose of seeking for Eva. She found her seated in one of the upper rooms, rocking herself in a large arm chair, and looking pale and agitated. Mrs. Sandford took her hand as she placed a seat beside her.

"Dear Eva, I fear you are not happy."

"It is most unfortunate for me that I did not go on in the boat. I am sorry that I landed." She spoke in broken tones, and the big tears were coursing down her lovely face.

"Can you not, dear Eva, confide in me enough to let me know the cause of your trouble. My husband and myself are ready to do anything for your comfort. Can you not trust us as friends?"

"Oh, yes, but friends can do nothing in my case. I am most\*unfortunate, and it seems my destiny to make others unhappy, too."

"Not your destiny, dear. You may be unfortunate, as all of us are at times, in doing or saying what may grieve our friends, but do tell me, has your trouble arisen out of your interview with Mr. Herbert, this morning?"

"It has. I have been much to blame — I see and feel it now — my pride has made us both wretched."

And then Eva, in a straight forward way, related all that had transpired between her and William Herbert that morning.

Mrs. Sandford was silent a few moments, reflecting on the difficulties of the case. Here were two young hearts, bound to each other by a strong affection, but an unfortunate circumstance had aroused their natural pride, and placed an obstacle, almost insurmountable, in the way of their union. William had been shut out from further advances, and Eva could not consistently open the door again.

At length Mrs. Sandford said:

"I think, dear Eva, that much of the difficulty which so often arises between hearts that truly love, springs from a wrong idea of true delicacy. It seems to me, situated as you and Mr. Herbert have been — with such an opportu-

nity for knowing each others peculiarities — some forbearance was required, and a good deal of confidence. You believe he loves you still, and you are free to confess that you love him?"

"If I thought he did not love me, dear Mrs. Sandford, I should not suffer as I now do. I feel assured he loves me. I believed it at the time when I refused to listen to any explanation. And now he is about to go on a long voyage, to be absent for years, probably, for a few years make great changes — we shall never meet again, and he will carry away with him the idea that I have a cold, proud, calculating heart, ready to inflict bitter suffering on an old friend, in order to gratify." —

But she could say no more; her proud spirit had to yield — she gave way to a full burst of tears.

"Eva, dear Eva, this must not be; you and Mr. Herbert must not part thus. Let me see him."

"Oh, no, no, no! death would be better than such humiliation."

"Give him then some chance of explanation."

"I do not need any explanation; the look he gave me when we parted, was explanation enough."

"Are you willing, then, under such circumstances, to let him depart, without one token of your interest in him? Think what it would be to him when far off in a strange land, to have the consciousness that he was loved by one on whom his own affections were placed."

"What would you do, Mrs. Sandford, after a gentleman acknowledged to you 'that he had tried to put you out of his thoughts! to expel you from his heart!'"

"But he did not say, nor do you believe, that he had succeeded in any such endeavor. He had reasons which he thought demanded such an effort on his part, and I must say, dear Eva, I do not view his conduct as you have done. You would not have had him renounce his manhood, and throw himself in the way of insult, where he could neither resent it, nor very well hear it, without feeling abased in the very presence perhaps, of the one before whom of all others, he would wish to act the man. Depend upon it, Herbert has a spirit you might well be proud to submit to."

"I know it; I believe him to be the noblest and best of men."

This conversation was here interrupted by a knock at the room door. Mrs. Sandford opened the door, and seeing her husband, stepped into the entry and closed the door after her.

"Blanchard has come for Eva."

"Why has he come so soon?"

"That question he must answer himself."

"But you know we were to take her home in a few days. I do not believe she will go with him."

"Then she had better tell him so; he seems in quite a different mood to day — as pleasant as possible. It is very likely he will do as she says."

"I do not believe it, dear husband, and you will see if it is not as I say; but let him wait a few moments, Eva cannot go down just yet."

"Let her come as soon as she can, then."

"What do you say, dear Eva," said Mrs. Sandford, as she again entered the room, "Mr. Blanchard has come for you — do you think you had better go?"

Eva was taken by surprise. She could not for a moment make any reply. She inwardly hoped that in some way an opportunity might be afforded for another interview with William Herbert. She was also astonished that Mr. Blanchard should have hastened so unnecessarily to take her to his home, but as he had taken the trouble to come, it might be best on many accounts, that she should go; she therefore replied:

"I feel as though it would be best, although the idea of going, certainly is not very agreeable; but perhaps the sooner I get away from this place the better for me and others. Yes, Mrs. Sandford, I think on the whole I had better go."

Eva at once made efforts to erase all traces of the emotion she had yielded to, and was soon ready to accompany Mrs. Sandford to the parlor below. Mr. Blanchard met her in quite a joyous mood. He had arrayed himself in much more than usual style, and seemed particularly amiable.

"Well, miss," he said, as he stepped with quite a youth-

ful air up to meet her, "you see how necessary you are to my — to our happiness. Aunt Jemima would start me off as soon as I had reached the house, (this was not true,) she said it would not seem like home till you got there."

Eva made no reply to all this, further than to say, "that she was ready whenever he would be so."

"But, Mrs. Sandford," said Eva, turning to that lady, "I must see that kind gentleman, Mr. Roland, to acknowledge, at least, his hospitality."

"By all means," said Mrs. Sandford, "I will let him know that you are going."

In a few moments Mr. Roland entered, and at once stepped up to Miss Eva.

"I am sorry to learn, Miss Stanley, that you think of leaving us so soon. I had hoped to enjoy one good, long, pleasant evening on our piazza, which Mrs. Sandford admires so much," and he turned smiling towards that lady. "The Misses Herbert, too, with their brother, are to be with us — as you no doubt know he takes the boat to-night from our landing."

"Oh, I do wish you could stay," exclaimed Mrs. Sandford, "it will be such a delightful gathering; Mr. Blanchard, must Eva go?"

Mr. Blanchard did not reply. He either did not hear the question, or was too much excited just then, to say any thing, for Mr. Sandford had at that moment come into the room, and handed a neatly folded note to Eva. Her first question to Mr. Sandford, was:

"Is he here?"

"In the north parlor."

Eva at once left the room, and Mr. Sandford took a seat by his guest, that he might do something to divert him, for he appeared beside himself. Mrs. Sandford had left when Eva did — she must say something, for she well knew that she was about to see Mr. Herbert; and Mr. Roland walked out under the willow, to regale himself with the fresh breeze.

"What does all this mean, Sandford?"

"All what! what do you refer to?"

"Refer to! why — why — what made Eva turn so red when you handed her that note! who was it from?"



"I did not see the signature."

"But who is it she has gone to see? I have a good mind to call her back."

"I think you had better not attempt it; if you will take my advice, you will let young girls manage their own love matters."

"Love matters! love matters! I shall stop it at once, stop it at once; how dare any one! it must, it must be stopped — it *shall* be stopped!" and in a violent mood, he at once arose and was going into the hall.

"Blanchard, Blanchard, what ails you? where are you going?"

"To find Eva, to be sure! she must go home with me at once."

"Stop, stop, Blanchard, I beg of you, don't make a fool of yourself; you must not leave this room with any such intent." Remember she is a young lady; you would not wish to insult her."

"Insult her! It's me that's insulted — me, her lawful guardian — it is me, sir, and I will not allow any one to usurp my rights."

"Blanchard, come, come back. I cannot allow any such doings in my house. You shall not disturb her, so take a seat now and be easy."

But Mr. Blanchard had too far lost the equipoise of his mind just then, to listen to reason; and it was only by bracing himself against the door, that Mr. Sandford could prevent him from putting his threat into execution. This added fuel to his rage, and with almost the look of a demon, he broke forth on Mr. Sandford.

"And it was for this, sir, you enticed her to land here! It was a trick, all a trick; I knew it at the time, and I'll have you all prosecuted for conspiracy. I am her lawful guardian, and" —

"Blanchard, I tell you at once what I shall do, if you do not stop your abuse, and take a seat and behave decently. Esquire Roland, that young gentleman you saw here a few moments ago, is a Justice of the Peace; he is in my house, and I shall have you taken up as a disturber of the peace. And now I tell you plainly, Miss Stanley is a young lady old enough, and with sense enough, to

judge for herself, and she has too many friends to allow of any insult to her, with impunity. You had better take your seat now, and try to calm yourself."

"And allow my niece, who has been placed by her own father under my care, to be shut up in a room with some young scapegrace, and perhaps about to run away with him!"

"If she were your daughter instead of your niece, as you call her, what could you do? You forget that this is a free country. Girls have liberty as well as men, but as you are neither her father nor her uncle, and can only have power over her, by exerting influence in a mild and reasonable way, you are doing the very thing to make her run away, or to place herself beyond your control. You know, Blanchard, that by the terms of her father's will, she can at any time choose another guardian."

"How do you know that?"

"I understand that to be the reading of the will."

"Did Eva tell you so?"

Blanchard had by this time walked away from the door and had been moving to and fro across the room. On asking this last question, he resumed his seat. Mr. Sandford noticed that he turned suddenly pale, and seemed much agitated.

"Eva did not herself tell me so; but I am very certain that she thus understands it. Is it not so?"

As Blanchard did not reply, Mr. Sandford continued.

"Now, Blanchard, I am not as old as you, and you have seen more of the world than I have;" Blanchard colored a little, and straightened himself up, "but I can tell you, if you wish to retain any influence over that young lady, you must change your course towards her entirely. She is not of a temper quietly to submit to any compulsion. She has never been used to it, and however submissive she may have been under your care, while passing from the girl into the woman, depend upon it, any rigor exercised, or any meddling with her rights as a lady, will cause her to throw off all control you could possibly have over her."

Blanchard began to cool down. He knew that much depended upon his being able to retain a hold on Eva.

and should she, as Mr. Sandford had intimated, throw off his control, and choose another manager, he would be in trouble of no ordinary kind! In fact, the rage he manifested, when Mr. Sandford suggested the idea that Eva was closeted with a lover, was caused as much by fear, as by jealousy—for it may as well be said at once, Mr. Blanchard was earnestly endeavoring to gain her hand, and for reasons of the last importance to him. She had refused his son most decidedly, that he knew—and was not sorry for it—but his self-complacency led him to believe that such a result would not attend his own experiment. He knew that his personal appearance was commanding. He was called a handsome man. Age had not, he believed, made any mark upon him that a young lady would notice. Then his standing as a man of property, reputed to be wealthy, *that* was an additional item, which he counted much upon, for although Eva had “some property,”—Mr. Blanchard always spoke of it that way—“some property,”—“*some little property*,” he sometimes said; yet he believed women in general loved money, or loved show, and his wealth would be an inducement, which his son, of course, had not to offer. The only thing which Mr. Blanchard had feared, was the interference or opposition of his two daughters—one of them a year older than Eva, and the other a year younger. They might not fancy a mother put over them of their own age, and his great desire of late had been, that they might be profitably married, and he had great hopes that the elder one, at least, was in a fair way to that end. They were both of them in New York, at present, not caring to spend the summer in the country. They were boarding at a relative's, and Mr. Blanchard was quite happy in the prospect of having a quiet time with Eva. She preferred the country, and as her old nurse accompanied her, felt no reluctance in going to Mr. Blanchard's country seat, even without her usual companions, his daughters; in fact, was not sorry to be relieved of their presence. She got along peaceably with them, but it had been by the exercise of forbearance on her part; their tastes were dissimilar, and the company they selected not such as Eva enjoyed. Mr. Blanchard had therefore been

calculating much upon the advance he could make in gaining the object of his desire—upon pleasant rides in his carriage, with Eva by his side, and pleasant tete-a-tetes on rainy days, or warm summer evenings—it was to be a very good time indeed, as Mr. Blanchard had pictured it, and the reader will now be able to comprehend the cause for Mr. Blanchard's excitement under present circumstances, and make allowances for poor, human nature, when sorely tried, and also to appreciate the answer which Mr. Blanchard made to the reasoning of his companion.

“I only wish to control her for her own good.”

“That may be, but women at her age are very apt to feel that they are the best judges of what is for their good; you must know that they are more led by their hearts than their heads.”

“Therefore the more necessary that they should be under proper care. Now, in this case, it seems to me highly improper that she, a young girl without experience, and without any acquaintance with men—by the way, who is the gentleman? you must know—it must be some acquaintance she has made here.”

“I suppose I can give a good guess, although, as I told you, I did not see the signature to the note. It is an old friend, the gentleman we took on board the sloop in that storm.”

“Not young Herbert!”

“I presume it is he, and you can understand now, Mr. Blanchard, what an unfortunate thing it would have been for you to have interrupted their interview. Any slight or disrespect shown to that young man, would have so offended her, that I do not believe she would ever have been induced again to enter your house. You must act with caution in dealing with women—you must feel as if you were handling glass ware.”

“How came he here? I thought he landed some miles down the river.” Mr. Blanchard spoke now in not only a mild manner, but his voice was quite husky; he was under greater excitement than he had been yet, but he had to restrain his feelings; he saw clearly that he must move with caution.

"His sisters are at board in this neighborhood, and they all came up here last evening. He leaves to-night for New York, and in a few weeks for South America, and of course it is very natural that Miss Eva should wish to see one who was, as you know, once so intimate with her family."

Eva's voice was now heard in the hall, as though calling to some one who had just left.

"Give my love to your sisters. I shall hope to see them this evening."

And then she came with haste into the room, her countenance somewhat more calm than when she had left it.

"I am sorry, uncle, to have detained you so,"—Mr. Blanchard perhaps unconsciously knit his brow; he had of late objections to that title—"I believe I shall conclude to give my friends here the trouble to carry or send me home in a few days, as they seem so ready to do so, and perhaps I can be of some assistance to Mrs. Sandford, in getting ready for country housekeeping. I believe I know more about the country now, than she does."

Mr. Blanchard began to realize that Eva, as Mr. Sandford had said, felt herself equal to the task of being her own advisor or guardian, for she did not attempt to hide the fact that she had made up her mind to stay. He was sorely disappointed. He had calculated on having such a pleasant ride home—such a fine opportunity for complaisance and attention.

"But what will Aunt Jemima say! she feels dreadfully lonesome."

"Oh, well, you know she has her kittens and little Jowler, she must amuse herself with them; I don't think she will suffer."

"Well, well, if it must be so, it must, but when shall I come for you?"

"Oh, uncle, you need not do that by any means; we have so many gentlemen around here that seem to have not much else to do but wait upon ladies," smiling toward Mr. Sandford, "that I have no doubt the moment I say the word, they will be ready to take me."

Another hard blow upon Mr. Blanchard's suffering heart; he choked it down however, made the best he

could of the matter, was very formal in his bows to the company, and was soon on his way, no doubt indulging some thoughts about the past, present and future, not all of them very agreeable.

### CHAPTER XIII.

The letter which Mr. Sandford handed to Miss Eva Stanley, and which caused such disturbance in the mind of Mr. Blanchard, was entirely of a business nature. It was a request from William Herbert, that she would allow of an interview between them, as he wished to communicate with her on some matters that had reference solely to her own personal interests, and with which he himself had no concern. Mrs. Sandford, as we have seen, accompanied her from the room where the company had been assembled, and led the trembling girl into an adjoining one, that she might read the letter, and that she, Mrs. Sandford, might say a few words to her before the interview with Mr. Herbert. She saw that Eva turned pale while reading its contents, and felt deeply anxious to know what it contained. As Eva laid it on her lap, Mrs. Sandford asked:

"May I see it?"

"Oh, yes, there is nothing in it that I care for," and handed it.

"What does it mean, dear Eva?"

"I cannot imagine, nor do I care. Business! and personal concern! I care for neither."

"But you will see him?"

"Oh, yes, I suppose I must."

"You wish to see him, do you not?"

"I cannot say what I wish. My mind is in a whirl—every thing is dark about me—life is getting to be a burden."

"You should not say so. You must not feel so, you have many things agreeable in your lot."

"You do not know, dear Mrs. Sandford, or you would not say so. Thrown upon the cares of a family, not one member of which has any true sympathy for me, because we have no views or feelings in common; and the only human being besides yourself to whom I might have looked for it, the only one who really knows me, and whom I once thought—loved me. Yes, I will say it to you, I thought he loved me. I am to be separated from, and with his own confession ringing in my ears—'he had tried to put me out of his mind.'"

"Do—don't, dear Eva, you will get your feelings all worked up again. You will wish to feel composed when you meet Mr. Herbert; but promise me, dear Eva, if there is any opening for an explanation, you will not put an obstacle in his way again."

She made no reply, but rising and taking the letter in her hand, proceeded at once to the room where William Herbert was waiting to receive her.

On entering the room he rose quickly and gave his hand which she readily took. Neither spoke. He led her to a seat, and placed himself near her. She saw he was deadly pale, and when he spoke there was an evident tremor in his voice, and the tones very low.

"I have taken the liberty to request this interview, not for any personal reason of my own," he said, "as my note informed you, and yet in some sense it is a personal matter of my own, too. I cannot, without an effort to prevent it, see the daughter of those from whom for so many years I received such tokens of kindness, and from whose father I learned those principles of business that have enabled me to gain a livelihood, and perhaps an independence, in danger."

"In danger! From what source?"

And Eva looked at him earnestly, and almost with a countenance tinged with displeasure.

"From one who is entrusted with power over you and your property."

"I understand you, but I could not have imagined that William Herbert had so far lost confidence in Eva Stanley, that he could for a moment give credence to the idle

stories that I hear are circulating: I must have fallen in your estimation, William, much lower than I supposed."

"I suppose I know to what you allude, but I can assure you, my apprehensions are not founded on any such idea. You do me injustice by the mere suspicion that my fears were excited by that cause."

"Pardon me, then, I believe you. I am sorry I did not wait and learn fully to what you referred."

"That Mr. Blanchard should desire to make sure in some way of your good will, and even endeavor to obtain your hand, I can very readily believe; but unless I could be assured that Eva Stanley had lost all respect for herself and those from whom she is descended, not for an instant could the thought dwell in my mind that her consent could ever be obtained. My fears are entirely confined to the power which Mr. Blanchard has over your property. He is, you know, a guardian, and under no bond for the fulfillment of that trust; it has been left to his honor."

"One would think that would be bond enough, to say nothing of the hard-heartedness that would take advantage of a lone and friendless one as I am. Surely the obligations he is under to my father, who, as I have often heard, assisted him materially in his earlier days, must have weight enough to keep him from injuring me; and besides, what object could my small property be to him, a rich man."

"How small do you suppose your property is?"

"I have never thought about it any way. My allowance is six hundred a year. Mr. Blanchard always spoke of it in that way, 'small property,' it may probably be twelve or fifteen thousand dollars."

"Yes, and five times that amount and more too; that is, your father left that amount of property. There must have been all of ninety thousand dollars received by Mr. Blanchard, from your father's estate."

"Are you sure, William?"

"Sure as my senses can make me. Every dollar of his money was under my inspection. Your father kept nothing from me."

"I know he reposed the utmost confidence in you."

"I have evidence that I can rely upon, that your property is in danger. Mr. Blanchard is, in some way, closely linked with a man in the city of New York, who is known to be a reckless speculator. He may be an honest man, but he is a very unsafe person to be trusted with funds. He has met with great losses, and is likely to lose a vast deal more, if the present times continue. Mr. Blanchard knows something of this, but probably is not aware to what extent he has already suffered. His own property is small. I know he is reported rich, but he was not rich when your father died. Forty thousand dollars would more than cover all he was worth; the large amount, therefore, which he is operating upon, must come from other sources. Do you know that he has sold many of your lots in the upper part of the city?"

"I do not know that he has sold them. He did once say to me, that he thought it would be better to sell them as they were unproductive, and might better be sold and the amount invested in some way that would yield an income, but I made no reply, for, in fact, I cared little about such things."

"Money is a blessing, if properly used — it is power — it is a talent with which you are entrusted. You ought now, that you are near the age when you can in some measure act for yourself, acquaint yourself with your affairs. It would be a sad thing for you to be left destitute; you have never known want, nor what it was not to have every wish gratified — that is, so long as I knew you. Your father earned his money honestly and honorably, and I cannot bear to think you are in danger of losing it all, and perhaps becoming dependent upon others."

"What can I do, William? I have no more idea myself, than a child."

"Choose another guardian."

"But whom should I choose; you, I suppose, could not take it?"

"I could not, although I thank you for the confidence that suggestion intimates. I shall be away, and even if I were here, I might not be able to assist you. It may be in a change of guardianship the Chancellor will demand large securities — I am yet comparatively poor. I can, how-

ever, recommend to you a gentleman of sterling integrity, and of large means — a friend of mine — in fact, the one with whom I am engaged in business."

"But a perfect stranger to me!"

"He is not exactly a stranger, for he knows about you and your affairs, and it is chiefly through him I have obtained the information which has alarmed me. He knows Mr. Blanchard thoroughly — is in some measure intimate with him. He is a kind-hearted, benevolent, whole-soul man, and to tell you further, he has urged me to impress upon you the necessity of taking some steps for removing your property from the grasp of Blanchard."

Eva did not at once reply. She was deeply absorbed in thought, trying to reconcile the statement now made to her, with the circumstances under which it was made. This meeting with William was accidental. Why had he not taken pains to see her, or to communicate with her while in New York! If so interested in her affairs, why should he have left the matter to the uncertainty of an accidental meeting? She could not comprehend it.

"I am uncertain what I ought to do. Mr. Blanchard is my only friend, or at least the only one that has stood in that relation to me. If I take the course you advise, I must break loose from his care entirely, and then I am alone indeed, and shall be thrown upon entire strangers." She paused, for her feelings were becoming highly excited.

William saw the color suffusing her face, and a tear steal from the drooping lids and fall upon her cheek.

"I feel deeply," he said, "the trial to which I see you will be subjected, and most gladly would I relieve you of every burden. I truly believe the advice I have given is that which you ought to take. You have allowed me to feel that the relation we ever held towards each other, was not displeasing to you, and therefore I venture as William Herbert of former years, to address you as Eva Stanley of old, and ask you most earnestly to confide in me as you did then; for your own sake, forget all that has given you displeasure since then, and believe me" —

She put out her hand, which he took in silence.

"Thank you, thank you. Now tell me what to do; I will follow your advice to the very letter."



In a quiet, business like manner, he then in few words recommended a course which he thought the only feasible one for her to pursue. That course need not be related here, and then rising to depart,

"I shall not probably see you again?"

"Will you not be at Mr. Roland's this evening?"

"I expect to be there, but are you not going back with Mr. Blanchard? I see his carriage is here."

"I thought I should when he first came, but I am now under your control, and as I believe William Herbert and Eva Stanley would in days gone by, if about to be separated for years, have wished to embrace the opportunity to the last moment, of saying the last words, I therefore have concluded not to return with Mr. Blanchard."

"And you are going to remain for my sake!"

"Do you not think it best?"

"Eva, dear Eva."

She did not rebuke him for the warmth of his address, nor did she attempt to withdraw the hand which he still held. She did not speak, and in a few moments he continued:

"You will allow me then to feel that an explanation of my apparent neglect is unnecessary."

"We are William Herbert and Eva Stanley, as once we were."

William was about to say something—it must have been something that took hold of his heart, for his countenance manifested deep feeling. He almost pronounced her name as beginning an address—he hesitated—gently pressed her hand, and bade "good morning."

It may surprise the reader as it confused Miss Stanley, why Mr. Herbert should not have taken some pains while she was in the city, to have communicated to her the information which he had now brought, and should have left such an important matter to a chance meeting. The reasons are plain; he only learned the particulars a few days before he left New York. He was then busily engaged making arrangements to remove his sisters from their former home, where they had been living after the decease of their mother, who had now been dead about a year, to Woodburn, in order that they might be near Doc-

tor Ransom, to whom their father had on his death-bed entrusted them, provided he could be induced to take the supervision. This was not known until William, on his return from abroad, found among his father's papers which the sisters had cloistered with great care, a sealed letter addressed to himself and enclosing one to the reverend gentleman; and as the girls were desirous of leaving a place, now on many accounts disagreeable to them, he at once proceeded to carry out his father's request. Doctor Ransom was willing to take the supervision, but he could not take them into his own family, but as we have seen, board was obtained at the house of young Bradford, and William in accomplishing all this, had necessarily to go back and forth several times, both to the residence of his sisters and to Woodburn, and as there were no railroads in these days, journeys occupied days instead of hours. He had stopped at Sing Sing for a day and night, for the purpose of gratifying his curiosity in viewing those spots made classical by Irving's beautiful legend, and had sailed across the bay to see the spot where Andre had been hung.

It was his firm purpose after leaving his sisters, to endeavor in some way to see Eva, or communicate with her on his return to New York. Their unexpected meeting, and the information he received from his sisters that she was to spend the summer at Blanchard's, broke up that plan. He therefore resolved on his return to New York to get his friend Mr. Tremain to write to her, enclosing one from himself; his own letter he feared would not reach her. When he again so unexpectedly met her at the house of Mr. Roland, he resolved to ask a meeting. It was granted, but it ended so abruptly, that he could not bring himself to the point. It was only when he accidentally learned that Blanchard's carriage had driven up to the door of Mr. Sandford, that fearing she was about to go away, he hastily resolved to seek another interview, the result of which the reader knows.

It was not such a lively time on Mr. Roland's piazza that evening as Mrs. Sandford had anticipated; the hour for separation was so near, and so many of the little company were affected by it, as to throw a damper on the rest.

Most of the conversation was carried on in almost whispered tones, and yet there seemed to be a happy mingling of sympathies, especially with the three young ladies and Mrs. Sandford. Mary and Julia Herbert had taken seats, one on each side of her, and were each holding a hand. They had only seen her for the first time the day previous, but her pleasant manner had won their confidence, and when they found that their place of residence was so near to hers, and that daily intercourse could be readily enjoyed, it greatly increased the pleasure of the acquaintance; it would grow into friendship so they thought, that is, if their society should be as agreeable to her as hers was to them. They felt alone; their guardian brother was to be away — Mr. Ransom they loved because William loved him. Mrs. Ransom they had not seen yet. They hoped they should find her as lovely as William had described her to be, but Mrs. Sandford was a present joy, her loveable countenance beaming gladness and sensibility, her warm heart ready to embrace all who needed her sympathy, these were palpable and met their present need. Nor was Mrs. Sandford's interest in them, merely the outgushing of benevolence towards the two orphans. She had heard a little about them from Eva, and that, with their own open, candid countenance, behavior, and perhaps we may add, their fine personal appearance, all combined, made her anxious to draw them close to her heart. And they three sat together, and there was a fast flow of words, and sometimes even a tear would be started, as they were more particularly dwelling upon the charm of their dear brother Willie. Mrs. Sandford, too, knew how to manifest sympathy in a way that relieved, while it encouraged the heart. There was always a bright side to her view of life, and under the electric influence of her voice, as she sits and talks to the two girls, their hearts yearn towards her. Their confidence yields to her open and truthful interest in them, and they begin to feel that even their brother's absence will not leave them entirely alone.

Eva is conversing with Mr. Bradford, while William Herbert and young Roland are walking arm in arm in the broad walk running in front of the piazza. The subject

of conversation need not now be revealed, but the name of Blanchard could have been distinctly heard by those seated near them, if they had not all been so absorbed in subjects of more pleasing interest. At times, at the further end of their promenade they would stop, and while Herbert, who was the chief speaker, would be addressing his companion with much earnestness, the latter listened with intense interest, while his countenance manifested a troubled expression. At the close of one of their pauses in their walk, Roland took the hand of Herbert, as though thanking him for what he had revealed; and then arm in arm, they walked up to the rest of the company.

It was drawing near to ten o'clock, when the servant who had been some little time watching from the landing came up, and announced that the steamboat was in sight, about two miles off. As soon as the intelligence was received, Eva arose and retired within the house, while Bradford and Roland, with an instinct of delicacy, walked towards the gate.

"I suppose we had better say good-bye here," said William, as the girls arose, each clasping one of his hands.

"Do you think so!" they replied, looking earnestly up into his face, which was lightened with a smile.

"Oh, William," said Mary, "how can you put on such a cheerful countenance at such a dreadful moment!"

"Dear sister, do not let us make the worst of life's trials. Let us thank our Heavenly Father for the many pleasant scenes we have enjoyed together for the past few weeks, and for the many comforts of the present moment. I feel very sure that I leave you among those who will yet prove dear friends to you. And he looked with meaning at Mrs. Sandford as he spoke.

"That is just what I have been telling them," she replied. "I for one, love them already, and I assure you Mr. Herbert it shall not be my fault if the trust you repose in us is not verified."

"I thank you most heartily, madam, and now dear girls, one good kiss. Come, Julia, the youngest first."

Julia had not only seized his hand, but was leaning with her head upon his arm, clasping it tightly and giving full vent to her overwrought feelings. As he said this, she threw her arms about his neck.

"Dear, dear, brother, I will be a good girl. I *will* mind all you have told me, I *will* put down my selfishness, I *will* curb my pride, I *will* read the Bible every day, and try to do just what it says."

The young man was much affected with this simple outpouring of her heart,—the expression of readiness to comply with his request made with reference to her best good. It was a testimony to his faithful interests as a brother. She believed it would comfort him more than ought else she could say. He pressed her in a warm embrace, and as her trembling lips met his, he only said:

"God bless you and keep you, dear Julia."

As the elder sister yielded the parting embrace, she whispered in his ear before she gave the long, warm kiss. What she said could only be guessed from his reply.

"I will see her."

Immediately he entered the house, and the sisters walked up to Mrs. Sandford, who had retired a little from the circle during the parting scene. They saw the tears on her cheek, and touched by this mark of feeling for them, threw themselves upon her neck as if she had been a friend they had always known.

Eva was walking the room as William entered; she paused and extended her hand as he came up—neither spoke. A moment they stood looking each other in the face, each countenance manifesting sad, yet tender emotions. Should he embrace her? He had never taken such a liberty. The temptation was a strong one, but he remembered they were to each other only as William Herbert and Eva Stanley of former days; and yet that earnest, confiding, tender look that was fixed upon him! He might never behold it again! Would she resent it as a liberty unwarranted by their present or past relation! He raised her hand, and for a moment pressed it to his lips, and then was about to turn away, when he saw the deep emotion glowing from every feature of her lovely face.

"I cannot part so. You will not deny me a warmer token!"

And she did not.

## CHAPTER XIV.

The country residence of Mr. Blanchard was a very retired spot. A mountain ran up behind it, and shut off all view of the river, and a woods intervened between it and the highway, so that it was still life there all the time except when the thunder clouds settled over them—there was noise enough then. It was just such a place where deeds of violence might be enacted, and days pass before any tidings might reach the public ear. There was nothing particularly attractive in the view from it, without one delighted in mountain scenery or woods, and even then, they were both too near to appear to advantage. Mountains present indeed, a charm, when just far enough removed to put on their fairy covering of blue, and when the vapors that rest upon their summits or creep along their sides appear like smoke wreaths, and their graceful curves throw a fine drapery around the huge blue monster; but when the scrub trees and the jagged rocks are plainly visible, and the clouds are nothing but a fog or drizzle, the beauty and romance are lost. The building, however, was large and well finished, and all its appearances in good order. There was also a fine carriage path through the woods, not a straight avenue, but winding gracefully, and of sufficient width for vehicles to pass each other with ease, and at the gate which led to the highway, was a small tenement or porter's lodge. It was a neat building, and was occupied by the gardener; and as he had no children the building was of sufficient size for his accommodation. The establishment had once been the property of a gentleman from the West Indies, a Spaniard by birth, but educated in this country, and married to an English lady to whom he became introduced at Porto Rico. His wife died very suddenly, and was buried with great privacy on his own grounds; and almost immedi-

ately he left the place and went abroad. Strange stories were soon circulated in reference to the death of his wife, but as the people in the immediate vicinity were mostly of the laboring class, and had enough business of their own to attend to, and as the servants had been hired from the city and returned there when the establishment was broken up, no efforts were made to search into the truth of the rumors which were started. But most people in the vicinity believed that a foul deed had been committed there, and in general shunned the place. Mr. Blanchard had purchased it cheap, and probably never heard that an ill name was attached to it, for he was not one who would willingly encounter ghosts, or even run any risk of such adventures, for with all his bluster and commanding presence, he was at heart a coward.

As to the situation of the house, it suited him as well as any place in the country. He had no taste for its beauties; fine scenery would be lost upon him, as much as rich music upon the ear that could not distinguish discord from harmony. He had purchased because he wanted a "country seat." It was but a few miles from a landing where he could have access to the steamboats, and it had a name by which it was distinguished from the more common residences of farmers. *Woodbend* was something a little out of the common course; there was not much meaning to it, nor very significant of its position, but there was certainly woods about it, and a road through them, bending in its course; whether it took its name from those two items, is not now known, nor of much consequence.

The family of Mr. Blanchard had spent one season here, and with the exception of Eva, not one of them fancied it; so that they made excuses for not wishing to go into the country the present season. The younger daughter was taking music lessons and did not wish to leave the city on that account; and the eldest was taking lessons of another description, from a gentleman; and as her father was very willing she should profit by them, he readily acquiesced in the arrangement already alluded to. Eva, however, rather courted retirement. She had taken all the lessons she desired from teachers, and being fond of

improvement through books, felt it desirable rather than otherwise, to be where interruptions need not be feared. She had also a passion for the country. Its stillness — its freshness — its variety — had charms for her. A walk through the lonely woods, with the leaves rustling to her tread, and the wild bird's song, and the echo of the lowing cattle in the distant field, were more engaging to her than the noise and throng and gaiety of the city. But another inducement had been added of late, to make a few months' residence in the country desirable — the company of the Sandford's. She had for some months been on terms of intimacy with them, and when she learned their determinations to leave the city, and that they had selected a place but a few miles' remove from Mr. Blanchard's, she felt quite willing to yield to his invitation.

Mr. Blanchard had put his own interpretation upon the motives of Eva, and was for a time happy in the thought that a rare opportunity would be afforded him in the prosecution of his suit. Some abatements have been made, as we have already seen, to these bright anticipations, and although he is not yet hopeless, he has some fears which did not trouble him when he started in the sloop *Polly*, for *Woodburn*.

We have not yet introduced to the reader, Aunt Jemima, the lady at the head of Mr. Blanchard's establishment. She was a second cousin of that gentleman, and somewhat his junior in years. At the death of his wife he had looked round for some person to fill the place in his house thus left vacant, his daughters having no taste for domestic duties. Aunt Jemima Richards was a widow, who had been left without property, and was then living with a brother-in-law, who, with his wife, were willing to receive her, as an act of kindness, but who by no means courted the privilege. She was not of a congenial disposition with her sister, a mild, amiable, artless and good woman. Mrs. Jemima's views were of the lofty kind. She had a great idea of her personal standing in society. She had never lived in style, nor, from family or any other attachment, could lay claim to consideration; and yet, to see her, with a queenly air, dressed as far as

she could be in the extreme of fashion — whatever that might happen to be — one who did not know might have mistaken her for the relict of a millionaire. She was, however, quite an efficient housekeeper in a certain way, being a great stickler for fashionable custom, and keeping a strict surveillance over servants — looking upon them all as so many outside barbarians, who would lie, steal, and waste to any extent, and who could only be kept in their place by hauteur of manner and cold disdain. She had been in youth handsome, and retained a good share of beauty even to the period of life at which she had arrived when Mr. Blanchard made proposals for her advancement to the station of housekeeper.

It was rather a shock to her nerves when the offer was made. Mr. Blanchard was a widower! Would it be proper? Would it not also affect her position in society? Housekeepers in general were not thought much of. But upon her brother-in-law hinting that in all probability "she would in time be mistress of the establishment in good right, and at any rate she would have plenty of money at command to do as she pleased with," after a great deal of talking, and guessing, and halting, she finally concluded to take the position.

Aunt Jemima was no fool, although the wisdom she had was not exerted for any end that did not center in self. She could tell a very plausible story, and had a tact of winning the confidence of those she wished to gain to her views. Mr. Blanchard's daughters were not strong minded it must be said, nor was he himself gifted in that way; and Aunt Jemima knew just how to manage them, so that it did not take long to enable her to wield almost unbounded influence over them and him. It was by her means that the country seat had been purchased, and when she found the girls did not like the country, it was through her persuasions they had been left to board in the city. But she had other reasons besides the ostensible ones, in accomplishing that feat. She wanted to have Mr. Blanchard all alone to herself, for it may as well be told at once, she had designs upon the good man. He was not aware of them, for he had other and far different designs in his own mind, as we have already seen.

Mrs. Jemima still thought herself handsome; in fact, when she surveyed herself in the glass, the color on her cheeks seemed as fresh as ever; and as she did not use glasses, which would have aided her vision materially, she could not of course distinctly perceive those marks which time in his stealthy tramp makes upon the polished brow of youth; all seemed to her as smooth and fair, and fresh as ever, and if she could have the object of her desire all alone by herself, with no rivals but such as country lasses might afford — of whom she had no fear — it would be almost a certainty that her design would be accomplished. But the first baulk to her plans originated in the unexpected consent of Eva to accompany them. She had supposed of course that a young lady like Eva, would prefer to remain with her cousins, as they were called, and in as wise a way as possible she hinted to Mr. Blanchard that it would not be best to urge — that is the word she used — to *urge* Eva to go; "she feared she would be very lonely." But the young lady did not need urging, and seemed rather pleased that she could go; and what was more strange still to Mrs. Jemima, Mr. Blanchard manifested greater pleasure than she could have anticipated, when the matter was fully arranged. This circumstance aroused the sensitive feelings of the lady and set her to thinking — thinking backward — and she began to get some light upon matters by this process. She remembered now that a great change had been made by Mr. Blanchard in his conduct towards that young lady for some months past; little attentions that he had paid her, — a manifest desire to do what was agreeable to her, after consulting her, when Mrs. Jemima thought that she or his daughters had a prior claim to that honor — a readiness to wait upon her when she wished to go to the Sandford's, or to go for her if she were spending an evening there, instead of sending his son George.

Things began to grow husky to the eyes of the lady. She did not like the view. The most convincing proof, however, she had of the wrong way things were going, was in Mr. Blanchard's sending her, Mrs. Jemima, up in company with his son and the servants to the country, to get things in readiness, and his waiting to accompany



Miss Eva himself. There was also quite a stir in her mind the morning Mr. Blanchard had arrived from New York in the good sloop Polly. He had come indeed, without Eva, and that for the moment was a cause of joy; but when she found that Mr. Blanchard was in a disturbed state of mind, caused by the fact that she was rejoicing in, and that he had immediately ordered the carriage to be in readiness, and that he himself was going on the important errand of bringing the young lady home, she was, to say the least, confounded. He was a careful man, she knew, about some things, and it might be well for him as her guardian, to be watchful; yet this seemed like exercising unnecessary vigilance; but she prudently restrained her feelings, so far as it was possible for woman's nature to do so. She however gave vent to a sly cut as he was about to depart.

"Tell Miss Eva," she said, "that she must come by all means, it's so dreadfully lonesome here without *her*." There was a sarcastic or sardonic smile about her lips as she said it, and quite a ruddy hue to her cheeks, as she was fidgety and kept fanning herself, although it was quite early in the day. Mr. Blanchard did not notice these symptoms, and took the cut in good part, and faithfully delivered his message as we have seen; but Mrs. Jemima was out of sorts all day, and did not recover full command of her better feelings until Mr. Blanchard returned and nobody with him. He made as fair a story as he could invent as to the cause of his unsuccessful errand, but the sharp eye of Mrs. Jemima clearly perceived the chagrin which he tried to conceal. "There was a wheel within a wheel," somewhere about the affair, and she meant to keep an eye on the movement of both parties.

Mr. Blanchard left the house of Mr. Sandford in a very uncomfortable state of mind, although he put on the best face that the nature of things would admit; he had time however, to meditate upon the aspect of affairs. If he had not been utterly blinded by the ardor of his feelings, he might have learned that his suit for Eva Stanley was hopeless; he did not see it in that light, and had a firm belief if she were once under his roof, and subject to no influence but what he could bring to bear upon her, his

purpose would yet be accomplished. And while he was busily employed in ardent thoughts on this important matter, among other things which might be made use of, it occurred to him that Aunt Jemima would be a wonderful aid; he had unbounded faith in her power to accomplish any end she set her heart upon. What if he could get her to exert her influence with Eva! in a covert way to use the power which one of the age and experience of his cousin must have over the mild and unsophisticated girl, who already had learned, as he blindly supposed, to yield to her advice as completely as did his own children. It was a new thought, and he caught at it eagerly, and the longer it stayed with him, the brighter and more important it appeared, until he made up his mind that he would take cousin Jemima into his confidence. Only one impediment presented itself, and that was an apparent disturbance of an internal nature, that had of late manifested itself on the part of that lady. He had noticed something like a distance of manner; she had not received him as cordially as was her custom, and he had heard her in rather sharper tones than usual, rebuking the chambermaid, and he noticed that she seemed quite flurried as she stood in the door witnessing his departure in the carriage. Something ailed her. She must be pacified, and suddenly a happy thought occurred to him. He had purchased a breast pin, which he had designed giving to Eva, when they should be alone riding in his carriage. It would be more confidential and effective, than if presented where she could at once exhibit it to others; *that* opportunity for the present was lost. What a charm it would possess if presented to cousin Jemima! He knew she valued such things highly; it would make a smooth path for him to her good will, and no doubt quicken her zeal to serve him. He felt really glad now, that things had thus happened; it would be all for the best, as most events were, he found from past experience, and before the good man had reached Woodbend, he became quite composed in mind, though silent and thoughtful. The gift, however, was not presented that evening, for on reaching home he received a letter that informed him of the need for his presence in New York, and he must go

down that evening, and some two or three weeks elapsed before his return.

When Mr. Blanchard came back, he looked as though he had been through a fit of sickness. Business had troubled him; stocks had fallen terribly, and were still going down, and there were reasons now why a union with Miss Eva would not only be most desirable, but almost an absolute necessity. He was in a desperate condition, and different measures must be resorted to. Mrs. Jemima seemed alarmed at first at his altered appearance, but he said, "it was nothing; the weather had been very warm in New York, and he had a great deal of running about to do." He was very careful to speak in the blandest tone, for he was now firmly resolved to try the experiment of engaging the powerful aid of Aunt Jemima in the great work he had before him. Eva had not reached home, but was expected in a day or two. It would be better to have all preliminary arrangements settled before her return. So that very evening, after sitting for some time beside the table at which the lady was also seated, he, busy with the paper, and she with her knitting, just as she had put up her work and was about retiring for the night, laying down his paper,—

"Cousin"—Mr. Blanchard always gave her that title when the children were not present, as they called her by the more dignified title of aunt—"I have a trifling present for you. I thought you might fancy it," and saying so, he opened a small box, and handed it as gracefully as he could towards her.

"A present for *me*! Oh, how very kind!" And as she took out the box, pulled out her handkerchief at the same time. She appeared deeply affected, blushed very much, smiled graciously, just a passing smile—it was only a flush—and then a most serious cast settled on her face, and the tears started, or at least the handkerchief was there to catch them.

"Oh, I never thought you cared enough for me to"—but the deeply affected lady could say no more, not then.

"Oh yes, why do you say so? I am sure, cousin, I have ever manifested an interest in you; put it on.

The lady had not as yet touched the precious article;

she no doubt was waiting for the gentleman to take it out and fasten it on the proper place. Mr. Blanchard, however, to his credit be it said, had not practised gallantry of that sort; so, finding that if the breast pin was to be exhibited she must perform the delicate operation herself, after some fumbling and blushing there at length it shone. It was a showy article, though not very costly; it sparkled brightly, however, in the light of the lamps, and as Mrs. Jemima walked to the glass, and Mr. Blanchard held the light that she might take a fair survey, their eyes met—we mean in the glass—and the lady gave such an expressive glance of tenderness, that Mr. Blanchard felt a warm flush creeping over him, and his eye dropped and he set down the lamp.

"What shall I say to you for this beautiful, costly present. I never had a gift I valued so highly before," and turning toward him offered her hand, which of course he readily took. Whether she expected he would salute her, or whether she designed offering the compliment to him, it would have been difficult for a looker on to determine. She was certainly highly excited, and the gentleman somewhat nervous. He, however, must say something in response to her outburst of gratitude.

"Oh, it's a mere trifle, cousin, a mere trifle; you have been very faithful to my interests—a mere trifle—and perhaps before long I may have a favor to ask of you beyond what I have ever had occasion to ask hitherto. I hope you may have a pleasant night and pleasant dreams."

"I don't think I shall sleep to-night," and as if by mutual consent, the hands dropped loose, and the scene for the night had closed.

If Mr. Blanchard had not been absorbed with the one idea that had taken possession of him, he might have been somewhat startled at the peculiar emotion manifested by the lady; but it all passed with him for gratitude, and he was quite elated with the effect produced. He felt very sure now that he would have a coadjutor who would be all powerful.

Mrs. Jemima Richards was right when she said, "she could not sleep that night," at least partly right, for it was a long, long time before she could allow herself even to

shut her eyes; that scene, so unexpected, so thrilling, was not to be slept upon until it had been pondered and sifted in every imaginable way. But of what was it to be the precursor?—"some favor beyond what he had occasion to ask hitherto!"—he wishes to smooth his way to my heart. Well, I shan't trifle with him; he is diffident, I know. He thinks it a terrible thing, no doubt, to say the word—to say he loves me, and to ask for my regard. We are neither of us young, and there need be no foolish making believe, and saying no when I mean yes. I will not try his feelings. If he asks me, I shall say yes at once—that I love him, and have loved him a long while. But what will the children say! Well, let them say. Euphemia will no doubt have Peabody, and if the other don't like it she can live with her sister, and George will not care so long as he can spend his salary as he pleases; and he and I have always been good friends. But one thing I shall do—this place shall be sold. I am not going to be cooped up here in the woods. I shall not say any thing about that for a while—not until the wedding is over—and that need not be delayed. We know one another well enough, and I do not care to have much fuss made about that—a private wedding is just as well—and when the knot is tied let them grumble who may."

Now, with so many important matters running in one's head, and with the eyes open too, and the moon shining brightly, it could not be surprising if sleep kept one side. It did come at last, however, for Mrs. Jemima awoke from a very troubled dream—in fact, it was nothing more nor less than a contest with Mr. Blanchard, in which he charged her with duplicity and forwardness, and with trying to cajole him into a marriage. The effect of the dream was to cause the lady to start upright in her bed, and when she found herself awake, to feel for the pin—she had taken it to bed with her. It was there fastened to her night-dress. A sweet token that all was well—the dream was a trying one to be sure, but as they are always to be interpreted by contraries, she was upon the whole glad of it. She did not, however, care to be subject to another such disturbance, not *that* night, and as the birds were beginning their music, it would not have

been worth while to make any further ventures into dream-land.

"Good morning, cousin," said Mr. Blanchard, as he entered the breakfast room, and took his seat at the table. "Had a pleasant night?"

The lady colored a good deal; she seemed somewhat confused, cast her eyes down, and putting on a girlish, unaidenly manner, replied in tones as soft as she could possibly modulate them, as though the scenes of the night and of the last evening were of a very delicate nature, and only to be referred to in the most confidential way between them.

"Pretty much as I expected," and then raising her eye, gave one expressive look—only one, and that but for a moment, and the lids drooped again. As she handed the cup to the gentleman there was another stealthy glance of the eye; it was full of meaning, but Mr. Blanchard did not notice it, or it did not affect him as intended. He was very fond of his coffee and his buttered toast, and was at once absorbed in the matter of attending to his physical necessities. While thus earnestly engaged, without even looking at the lady, he remarked:

"This is going to be a fine day. What do you say to a ride?"

"Are you going?" still the same low, confidential tone. She asked this question for the reason that Mr. Blanchard seldom rode with the ladies. He had not been in the habit of accompanying any of the family, and preferred his sulky when disposed to go abroad. The proposal was made by him on the same principle that the pin was given. He wished to heap up all the obligations possible.

"Well, I had not thought of it. I seldom ride in the carriage, you know—perhaps you would like to take Aunt Lizzie with you." Now Aunt Lizzie was the attendant of Eva, and no great favorite of Mrs. Jemima. She was of herself a respectable person, and Mrs. Jemima had often rode with her in company with Eva; but the idea that as matters now stood between Mrs. Jemima and the head of the house, according to the views of the former, she should be lowering herself to take as a companion on a ride for pleasure, one who held the station of an

inferior in the family; it was horrible, and not to be thought of for a moment.

"Thank you." Mr. Blanchard looked up, for there was something peculiar going on, the voice was broken and the handkerchief hid the rest.

"Now don't — what's the matter?"

"Nothing."

"I had thought of going with you, but perhaps you would prefer going alone."

"There is not much pleasure in riding alone."

"Well, if you prefer me to Aunt Lizzie, I am your chap — anything to accommodate."

"I certainly should."

"Then that's settled. I will tell Joe to have the carriage ready."

There was a little something about this, not quite satisfactory to the lady, but she knew Mr. Blanchard had some odd ways and queer notions, and had never been particular in matters of gallantry. She was to ride with him! all alone with him! The coachman would be outside, secluded from the possibility of seeing or hearing what was going on within. Perhaps! It might possibly be! the favor he had to ask of her might be promulgated! Well, she would be prepared; he said, "that he designed proposing to accompany me — oh, dear!" and the lady sighed a very heavy sigh; what caused it the reader must guess, for it is beyond our comprehension.

"It is not at all improbable that Mr. Blanchard had some such design as Mrs. Jemima suspected, and that a confidential communication was to be made; but whatever he had contemplated in that way was not carried out; in fact, the ride may have been a very agreeable one, but not at all demonstrative. There was but little conversation carried on; the lady was silent, because she did not care to say anything that might divert the mind of her companion from the great point. She was in a state of quiet expectancy, merely moving her hand occasionally — the hand next to Mr. Blanchard, shifting it from her lap to the cushion, and from the cushion back to her lap — it was ungloved and ready for any emergency, and to tell the truth, it was a fair specimen of a fine lady's

hand, and had one or two rings on it. Mrs. Jemima had taken good care of her hands, they had never been engaged in a work that could spoil their symmetry or delicate texture.

Mr. Blanchard was silent too, for the reason that he was thinking very hard, and trying to bring himself to the effort of a disclosure; the more he thought, however, the less resolute he became, and we cannot wonder that so it was. In the first place, there was the natural shyness which he possessed in common with other men about revealing heart affections; then there was a very natural fear that cousin Jemima, as well as the world at large, might think he was a little out of the way in seeking to gain the hand of one so distantly removed by age, and over whom he had been entrusted with parental guardianship. But stronger than all was the idea of humiliation. To be obliged to ask the aid of another in such a delicate matter, was even to Mr. Blanchard, callous as he was to the finer feelings — repulsive. Twist it in every way he could, it would not present a pleasant aspect. The zeal which had inspired him the day before, had relaxed, and left him without support when the time for action arrived. Although the ride, as has been said, was not demonstrative of enjoyment, yet as they drew near to Woodbend, on their return, Mrs. Jemima felt assured that nothing of consequence was likely to occur, she ventured to say:

"How agreeable is the face of nature!"

They were then just entering the winding road through the woods.

"You like the woods, then?"

"Yes, there is a charm even about them; do you not think so?"

"Yes, yes, they're well enough; a little shady in dark days."

"Oh, well, to me they seem a screen, to shut our dear home in from the cold, gaping, curious world."

Mr. Blanchard had never thought of that. It was a new idea to him. He had wished sometimes, that there were a few openings that would bring them a little more to the notice of the passing world — being screened off and shut in, was not altogether so satisfactory; he was

glad, however, that things were so agreeable to cousin Jemima, so he replied :

"Glad if you like it."

"Oh, you know

'It is not that nature has shed o'er the scene,  
Her purest of purple and brightest of green.  
'Tis not the soft magic of streamlet or hill,  
Oh, no, it is something more exquisite still !'

and then Aunt Jemima paused.

"Is that the whole of it ?"

"Oh, no."

"Go on, then, let's hear the rest — it goes quite glib — I rather like it."

"Oh, not now — some other time. Have you never read it ?"

"Not I, at least, not that I know of."

"I think it exquisite."

"Well, here we are. I hope they've got dinner ready, for I am hungry."

Mr. Blanchard was glad the carriage ride was over, and glad upon the whole that he had not committed himself; he was still free, with his own secrets within his own breast, and the present relief he felt, made him doubtful as to the propriety of the measure after all; but he was somewhat changeable in his feelings, and before evening came, he forgot all about his misgivings, and resolved to bring the matter forward at the first favorable opportunity: and by that he meant when circumstances should assure him that Mrs. Jemima was in a pleasant mood; and he thought moreover, that it must be done before the effect produced by the breast pin should die away. "Strike while the iron is hot," he knew was a very safe maxim, and he felt pretty sure that the iron was in a pretty fair state at present, for cousin Jemima was unusually attentive, and seemed to like to keep round him, and even to anticipate little wants — such as bringing his glass of biters before dinner, and his box of cigars after the cloth was removed — trifling matters of themselves, no doubt, but showing, as straws in a whirlwind, the direction of the current.

That evening happened to be one of those witching periods which often mark the summer months, the air balmy and filled with fragrance, the moon brightly shining, and the whippowil whistling with unwonted energy. It was a night for lovers, young or old, and Mrs. Jemima must have been affected by it in some way or other, for she seemed restless. A while she would sit by the parlor window, leaning her head upon her hand, while the elbow rested on the hard sill; possibly it was not so easy a position as it seemed, for she arose soon, and walked out as far as the garden gate, and Mr. Blanchard, who was sitting on the stoop, with a cigar in his mouth, must have thought she was bound for a walk there; but she merely paused when she reached the gate and looked up steadily at the moon. Mr. Blanchard, no doubt thinking there must be something going on up there, more than usual, brought his chair from its leaning position down on its four legs, and stooped forward a little to get a peep — the roof of his piazza obstructing his vision — of the queen of heaven; there was no sign of an eclipse, nor anything unusual that he could discover, so he leaned back again, and went on with his cigar — it was almost through. Cousin Jemima, finding that she was not likely to have any company where she was, returned to the stoop, and having plucked a sprig of sweet briar as she ascended the steps, handed it to Mr. Blanchard, and then walked to the end of the stoop, and clasped her arms around the pillar. That position not affording any very satisfactory result, she quietly withdrew her arms, and walked with a slow and measured step towards the hall-door, and as she was about to enter, asked in that soft, confidential tone, which she had assumed ever since the last evening:

"Shall I order the lights ?"

Mr. Blanchard just then threw away the stump of his cigar, and set his chair square down.

"Lights? not for me. I don't care about them, cousin, I want to have a little talk with you — a little confidential talk — no, I don't care about light."

The lady did not reply, but led the way into the withdrawing room, opposite the one usually occupied, and took a seat on a settee near a window. Mr. Blanchard



wishing of course to be near enough, so that conversation could be heard without using the louder tones, ensconced himself beside her; probably not seeing very distinctly, or confused by the excitement under which he was just then laboring, did not allow as much as he ought to have done for bulk. He had placed himself so very near, that if she had not quickly have withdrawn a pretty hand, that lay gracefully stretched out in readiness for circumstances, it would certainly have been in a very unpleasant predicament. It was unfortunate for Mr. Blanchard, as the result showed, that he had not been a little more careful, for that hand in its sudden change of position, without the least design on its part, came somehow or other in such close contact with that of the gentleman, that it would not have been manly in him to have retired. There they were — the position was harmless enough under the circumstances, although to do Mr. Blanchard justice, he would gladly have had both hands to himself. The lady held a handkerchief in the other hand, which she kept in motion; it was a sort of relief to the agitation of her mind.

"Cousin," said Mr. Blanchard, "I have been for some time wishing to have a free talk with you on a very delicate subject." There was quite a twitch to the delicate hand that held his. "Perhaps you can anticipate what the nature of that subject is. I have made up my mind to change my situation."

In the softest tone, and scarcely above a whisper, Mrs. Jemima replied:

"Have you told the children?"

"No, I have not, nor do I intend to, until my plans are accomplished, and then I have no doubt, with you to aid me, and smooth the way, all can be made right enough."

Mrs. Jemima put up her handkerchief to her eyes, and in broken accents replied:

"I had never thought, when I lost my dear husband, that I could ever give my heart to another; but if I can make you happy" — there was a pause here for a moment. Mr. Blanchard was too astounded to speak; his tongue literally cleaved to the roof of his mouth, everything looked double to him, and seemed to be moving; but be-

fore he could clearly comprehend the peculiar meaning of her reply, the lady continued, and as she spoke, laid her head upon his shoulder. "I cannot trifle with you. I know what you would say, and that it is hard for you to say it. Your wish is complied with — my heart is yours, and has long been yours; if I can only make you happy is all I ask."

Yes, if she could only do that! Mr. Blanchard would have thanked her, or any other of the human family, for a more utterly confounded and utterly wretched man, he did not think was there in existence.

He sat motionless and speechless, trying to gather up his thoughts sufficiently to decide what to do. He had heard of people getting into tight places — he had himself been in such difficulties — but there was nothing he had ever heard or conceived possible, that could be likened to his present situation. If there could only be a cry of fire, or even considerable of an earthquake, a whirlwind, a flash of lightning — anything that was not death itself, would be a relief. Something, however, did occur very opportune for his present dilemma, for a noise was heard in the kitchen at the extreme end of the house, and presently there was a rushing of servants through the hall, accompanied with exclamations of terror. Of course it would not do for Mrs. Jemima to be seen under present circumstances, nor was Mr. Blanchard in any humor to suffer martyrdom in the cause of gallantry — he had suffered enough. So, as soon then, as the sound of approaching footsteps was heard, he sprang forward without saying "with your leave," and was at the door as two maid servants rushed up.

"What's the matter! What's the matter! What's all the noise for?"

"Oh, it's matter enough, sir! There's a man in the kitchen."

"A man in the kitchen! What sort of a man? What does he want?"

"We don't know, sir, but he talks very strange."

"What did you let him in for?"

"He came in of his own accord, sir, and stood in the door and looked round the kitchen, and says he, 'Are you

all alive here! it's a dying world — people are dying all around,' and then he began to say, 'Hark, from the tombs a doleful sound!' We did not want to hear no more, so we run away. He's surely crazy, Mr. Blanchard, and he looks like a strong man."

Mr. Blanchard had no experience that could give him faith to encounter persons who were without reason, and so he very earnestly asked:

"Where is Joe?"

"He is off to the tavern, sir."

"This was unpleasant, for there being no other man besides the master himself, it necessarily devolved upon him to stand between danger and the females looking to him for protection, and he must meet it at once. Just at that moment a man was seen approaching from the further end of the hall, having emerged from the kitchen. He walked slowly, striking his cane on the floor as he advanced, and talking to himself. It was certainly a case of mania, and Mr. Blanchard was at his wits' end to know how to manage it. He had a gun in the house, but it was not loaded, and then he had some humane doubts as to the propriety of thus dealing with the matter; in fact, as the stranger came near the light which one of the girls held in her hand, his countenance was by no means terrifying. He had, in fact, quite a respectable and even venerable appearance. His foretop was bald and showed a firmly arched crown; the features of his face seemed somewhat marred by exposure to the weather, but they were well formed, and gave assurance that in youth or under more favorable circumstances, he must have passed for good looking.

"The girls," said he; "seem afraid of me; la, I would not hurt anybody. People die fast enough without any one's taking pains to get them out the way. They say you are a rich man — I don't know but you are — your riches can't save you from being put under the clods of the valley. We are a dying race — can you tell me how we are to help ourselves? I am a poor man, and you are a rich man, or people say you are. Now, if your riches can't save you from getting into the sexton's hands, what good are they going to do you? Shan't I write you an

epitaph? I am handy at that; give me pen, ink and paper and I will write you quite a showy one, extolling your virtues, if you are distinguished for any, and sheering over your faults, and all I ask is a glass of cider, and a night's lodging in the barn."

During the whole of this scene, Mrs. Jemima, who had waked from her delirious dream by the sudden jumping up of Mr. Blanchard, arose quickly and followed him, determined to share every danger with the man to whom she had just given her heart, although a little chagrined that he did not manifest more reasonable excitement on receiving the gift. Fearful lest he should venture his precious person into the kitchen, or elsewhere, within the grasp of some dangerous outlaw, she clutched fast to one arm and kept whispering, "be careful, dear," "do be prudent, for my sake," "remember your life is doubly precious, now." Mr. Blanchard did not think so; it had never before seemed to him so little worth; he did not know but it was completely spoiled — that is, all that remained of it — and he did not like being held so tightly, especially as there were other persons present. Whether the girls had noticed the interest Mrs. Jemima took in the gentleman, is doubtful; they were at first really frightened, and when the foundation for fear was removed, they began to be much amused. The stranger, however, noticed that the lady was anxious and troubled.

"You needn't be at all afraid, madam. I don't mean to hurt your husband, or anybody else; he's big enough to master such as I am. Lord, what poor creatures we are; we are all afraid of dying, and yet we have got to. That pretty face of yours has got to be shrivelled all up. Did you ever see a skull? if you have not I can show you one. Here, girls, hold that candle." So he commenced hauling round a bag that was slung upon his back, apparently with the design of producing the article; there was, however, a general exclamation of alarm — Mrs. Jemima running off into the parlor and the girls towards the kitchen, where they had the satisfaction of seeing the head of the coachman peeping into the hall, and endeavoring to ascertain what caused such unusual disturbance.

"Oh, Joe, do come! Here is a crazy man, and Mr. Blanchard wants you to put him out."

With that Master Joe steps forward, and when near enough to be recognized by the stranger, the latter puts out his hand.

"Well, here I am. I am alive, and that is more than many poor devils can say. You ain't dead yet, I see. Can't you give me a cup of sanctum and a place on the mow? I've come all the way from Mellbourne; they are dying there like rotten sheep — two funerals in one day. I don't see but we shall all die — we have got to, there is no help for it. That man there is rich, no doubt; his riches won't save him, the worms will have him yet. Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward." This was said while walking back in company with the coachman, who knew him well, and to whom Mr. Blanchard was quite ready to commit him. He heard, however, the quotation from scripture, and thought within himself — the man may be crazy, but he has uttered a terrible truth. "Man is born to trouble, and there is no telling where or when he may get into it."

Mr. Blanchard, not caring to venture into the presence of Mrs. Jemima, betook himself to the piazza, and there tried to arrange his thoughts. He was in a dilemma of the worst kind. His grand plan for gaining what he thought would be a valuable assistant, had failed, and his eyes were opened to the fact that while he had designs upon the heart of another, his own was ready to be grasped in a way not at all to his mind. But what was he to do? If matters were left as in their present condition, it would be taken for granted that the bargain was made; to that he would never consent. She must be undeceived. But how to do it! What would she say! What would she do! How could they live together after this! Again and again he cursed his stupidity in not being more awake to demonstrations on her part. Something must be done, however. Matters could not be worse — that is, so far as he could see. Suddenly springing from his chair he was about to seek the object of his solicitude, when he perceived her standing in the doorway, close by where he had been sitting. Somewhat startled, for he almost feared

he had been talking aloud to himself instead of thinking, so very exciting were the interests he had been pondering, he exclaimed:

"Oh, it is you, is it!"

"Yes, dear, did you want me?"

"Yes, I do want you. I want to say a word or two."

So Mrs. Jemima avoiding the sitting-room, where lights had been placed, passed quietly into the one where the scene so full of joy to her, had so recently transpired, and placed herself in the identical spot she had previously occupied. Mr. Blanchard, to avoid all collision the second time, took the precaution to place himself upon a chair at sufficient distance to prevent any danger of having his shoulder made a pillow for any body's head; his hands he thrust into his pockets.

"Cousin Jemima, I wish to have an explanation of matters between us. I fear you did not understand me."

"Oh, yes, dear, I understand perfectly — I know what you meant. I knew it was a trial to you to express all your feelings — it was not necessary — we have both been through with such scenes before; we are neither of us children. I am satisfied if you are; all I want is to make you happy. I felt a little anxious, to be sure, about the children, but you relieved my mind on that point."

Mr. Blanchard trembled all over; he saw clearly that the case was a desperate one. To tell a woman to her face who had thus exposed her feelings, that he did not care for her — that his only design was to engage her interest on his behalf, in favor of another, was putting a little more on human nature — at least, on woman's nature, than it would stand. How could he do it! There would no doubt be an outcry; there might be fainting, or other disagreeable events. Servants must be called, perhaps the doctor sent for, and the whole town be made aware of the ridiculous concern. So he sat in silence more confounded than ever — a very miserable man, and with no prospect ahead, of any relief. Mrs. Jemima, however, had more to say.

"I suppose I might have put you off as young girls are apt to do, while they wished to say yes, at the same time; but it did not seem to me to be dignified. You

need not disturb your mind about explanations. I know men in general are loth to expose their feelings, even to one they love, and I know that to you it must be very trying, for you never talk much, but your kind attentions have been too marked for me to mistake their true meaning."

Mr. Blanchard no doubt heard all these words, although spoken in a low, confidential tone; but whether he understood them is doubtful, for he was in such a collapsed state that his mind went wildering about like a small boat in a gale of wind without a rudder. He perspired freely, breathed thick — wanted to say something, but had not the courage to do so; at length driven to desperation, his voice found utterance. He spoke in quite a quick and hard tone.

"Jemima!"

"What, dear!" and the lady arose and stood by him, and placing her hand upon his head, began to smooth down his side locks.

"Do, for goodness sake" jerking his head quickly away. "Don't, I don't like anybody meddling with my hair," and starting from his seat, he walked out on the piazza, drew forth a cigar, and lighting it, commenced walking up and down with more rapid steps than he was accustomed to take.

Mrs. Jemima thinking this one of his odd streaks, though a little nettled at first, hushed down all bad feelings by consoling herself with the idea that when he was once buckled to her, or she to him, she could soon cure all such eccentricities.

## CHAPTER XV.

The village of Woodburn was in quite a commotion, in consequence of the rumor that had become pretty generally spread through the place, and which had been hinted in a previous chapter, that the Rev. Doctor Ransom

had received a call from the city. The Presbyterian parish was more particularly concerned, but the reverend gentleman had by his wise and prudent management, his conciliatory manners, and his enlarged and liberal views in regard to denominational differences, so won the good will of all classes, that the whole circle of religious societies in the vicinity were aroused by the intelligence; and it was a common topic of interest in many families that never attended his ministrations — except on extra occasions — and *that* not because they did not relish his preaching, but for the reason that he had always enjoined upon all with whom he had come in contact, that it was the bounden duty of christians to be in their own places of worship, and by their presence and aid do all in their power to further the cause of Christ in the peculiar circle with which they had connected themselves. That the church should be broken up into so many different sects, he indeed lamented; but since it seemed impossible for all minds to comprehend alike the teachings of the word of God, as to matters of minor importance, it need be no hindrance to the exercise of brotherly love, nor to the building up of the walls of Zion, if each in that part of the wall allotted to them worked faithfully and with an earnest zeal. The structure would be completed in time, and perhaps more beautiful from its variety.

No sooner had the tidings reached the ears of Rev. Mr. Janeway, than he resolved at once to ascertain the truth, by a personal call. To him the news was not only a surprise, but a source of alarm. He had enjoyed such unalloyed pleasure from the intimacy which now for some years had been maintained with this fellow watchman, and he received so much benefit, too, both in his own spiritual growth and through that, in the spiritual growth of his especial charge, that he could not think of losing such a friend and helper, without at least a manifestation of his sincere regret.

As he was about leaving his home for the purpose of making the call, a gig drove up to his door, and two gentlemen alighted. One of them at once he recognized as an old classmate in Columbia College, and he stepped

from his door and walked to his gate to meet and welcome him.

"My good friend Anderson, how very glad I am to see you."

"Ah, Janeway, my good fellow, how are you? *Well*, I know from your looks. You ministers up here are having pretty nice times—good living and all that."

"We have no reason to find fault with the living; it is plain, but wholesome and plenty of it."

"My friend, Mr. Julius Highfly, from New York, Rev. Mr. Janeway."

"Please walk in, gentlemen, and I will have your horse attended to."

"Oh, no, my dear fellow, we can't stop but a few minute, but Highfly and myself, having come up on a little business for our church, I thought I could not leave the place, without calling to say how do you do. We will go in though, and sit a few minutes."

As the gentlemen were about taking seats, Mr. Janeway remarked:

"I understood you just now, as saying you were up here on church business. Has it anything to do with the rumor that is spread about here, of a call to the city having been given to Mr. Ransom?"

"Is there such a rumor?"

"I have heard it this morning, and was about going to call on brother Ransom, to ascertain the truth of the matter."

"I believe we can save you that trouble; don't you think so, Highfly?"

"We can, most assuredly, reverend sir, having been appointed a committee—Mr. Anderson and myself—to deliver the call of the Presbyterian church in—Street, to the Rev. Doctor Ransom, of Woodburn. We have this morning put said call into his hands; so, reverend sir, you see that rumors are not always to be despised; sometimes they tell the truth."

"In this case I should think Madam Rumor had anticipated the truth a little. She has been reporting the matter for some days, when, as you now say, Mr. Highfly, you have only this morning absolutely placed the document

into the hands of Mr. Ransom. Do you think, gentlemen, that he will accept?"

"No doubt of it, not the least doubt of it in the world," said Mr. Highfly. "Why should he hesitate?"

"Oh, I cannot say. Perhaps he has given you reason for such assurance; there may be a cause for willingness on his part to listen favorably to such a proposition; but I should have doubted it, if you were not so positive."

"Positive!" said Mr. Highfly. "Why, my good sir, only think of the proposition itself. One of the most respectable congregations in the city, and a salary of twenty-five hundred dollars a year, and the perquisites, in the way of presents and marriage fees, quite considerable; and more than that, sir, a larger sphere, a greater stimulus to mental exertion. He can have but a small congregation here, and not much to encourage mental effort. I presume the number of respectable hearers in such a place as this, must be very inconsiderable."

Mr. Janeway might have enlightened the gentleman on some of these points, but he knew it would be difficult to make one so ignorant of the peculiarities of the country as he appeared to be, comprehend the true state of things, he therefore merely replied:

"If Doctor Ransom should feel it his duty to leave us, here, I shall certainly regret it, not only for my own sake, but also for the whole town. I think he would be a great loss."

"That remark of yours, my dear sir," said Mr. Anderson, "speaks well for you and the doctor also. It is not always that our two sects get on so well together; but I am glad to hear you speak so well of him. I think he is the very man for us, and I think, my good sir, we shall get him."

"How came you, if it is a proper question, to know about Doctor Ransom? Has he preached for you?"

"Not exactly, but some of us heard him preach a sermon before the Synod, and it struck us as something out of the usual track,—something more than common—so the session of our church invited him to supply our pulpit for the next Sabbath. He declined, however, for some reason or other, I forget now what it was, but we meant



to keep track of him, and therefore on two different Sabbaths, within the last six weeks, we have sent up two committees of three each of our leading men, to hear him, you see, in his own home, when he would not be expecting company, and would, of course, have no chance to make extra preparations."

"Friend Anderson, allow me to interrupt you. You have altogether mistaken the character of Doctor Ransom if you suppose he could, under any circumstances, make, as you say, extra preparations."

"Not under any circumstances?"

"I am very confident that my assertion is correct. I do not believe it would be possible for Doctor Ransom to put a single sentence or word in any sermon he was writing, with reference to its pleasing this or that man, or this or that audience, any further than this. If he knew for a certainty, that persons who differed from him or his denomination on minor points — Episcopalians, or Methodists, or Baptists, or even Roman Catholics would be in attendance at the house of worship where he officiates, he would avoid any expressions that might wound their sensibilities — this I know he is conscientious about. But as to making an effort, he can never be induced to aim at it. I speak now, in reference to the remark of yours, that, 'if he expected company, he would wish to make extra preparations.'"

"Oh, well, friend Janeway, you know we all, on certain occasions, like to appear to the best advantage, — 'to put our best foot forward,' — it is natural you know."

Mr. Janeway did not reply to this remark; he had said what he thought all sufficient to vindicate the character of his friend from a charge not very honorable, either to his visitor, or the gentleman whom it implicated; but there was a question which suggested itself to him, and which he felt might as well be put now as ever, and therefore, after a few moments he asked:

"How is it, friend Anderson, that you have ascertained that there was any special reason why a call should be given to Doctor Ransom? There certainly is no dissatisfaction with him on the part of his people, or I think I

should have heard of it; and from my intimacy with him, I feel very sure he is not dissatisfied with his people."

"That is the very reason," replied Mr. Highfly, "that we have selected Mr. Ransom. You see, my dear sir, we want to get the best, the very best man that can be found, and don't you see, my good sir, that the surest sign that one can have that a minister is the right man for us, is that he is popular with his own people; and the more they don't like to part with him, the more we want to get him; don't you see, sir?"

"I believe I understand you, Mr. Highfly, and yet, I should think in looking around for one to fill a vacant pulpit, it would be the most natural course, and the most proper one too, that those ministers should be applied to, who may not have a charge on hand, or to some one who, for peculiar reasons, may wish to change his relations as a minister."

"Ah, well, my dear sir," replied Mr. Highfly, tapping his snuff box, preparatory to handing it round, — an admirable way in old times of smoothing over difficulties, "You know there is in general — I say in general, because there may be exceptions — there are always exceptions to a general rule, but in general, and where you come to examine into the case, you will find that the reason folks are out of a situation, is the very reason you don't want them; don't you see, my good sir?"

"But there are many young men who have completed their preparatory studies, and have never yet had the charge of a people."

"That is true, sir. There are a good many such, and we have had quite a number on trial, but you see, my dear sir, in looking round such a city as ours, you will find a large number of churches scattered here and there, of different denominations to be sure, and yet separated by such slight marks of difference, that really one would be puzzled in making a choice, as to which he should attend; that is, in which he would hear the truths preached which he thought of most consequence. There is, for instance, the Presbyterian like our own, the Dutch Reformed, and the Scotch Reformed. Now, these different churches are, some of them, so contiguous to each other, that it is as

easy for many of the congregations to attend one, as the other. Now, you see, my dear sir, how *that* works. To keep your people together and build up *your* church, you must have a popular minister, and you must have a handsome church, and you must have fine music. There is a good deal of tact and management to keep things as they should be; we have to look round every which way, in a city like ours, and keep our eyes wide open."

The reverend gentleman had known something of the city in former days, having been born and brought up there, and occasionally now, each year, spending several days there. He was well aware that in business, competition exerted a mighty influence, and for the benefit of all. He believed also, that it had influence over many in social life, and that, sometimes for good, and sometimes for evil; but that it should have insinuated itself into the church of Christ, and have gained such power, as to be able openly to boast itself as one of the principal aids in building up the holy cause, was a new light to him, and not a very pleasant one, and being somewhat startled by the revelation, he was so absorbed in thought, that he made no answer when the gentleman came to a pause, and the latter after a few moments' silence, commenced again.

"You know, reverend sir, a city congregation wants preaching of a peculiar cast; they want the truth to be sure, but it must come to them in the best dress; the taste of the people becomes acute and refined, and to put a man in the pulpit of mere common abilities — why, you see they can't stand it. They must have the best men that can be got, and they are willing to pay for them."

Mr. Anderson had been for some time a listener, and while his companion was talking, he kept his eye on the reverend gentleman, as though curious to mark how the sentiments advanced, were received; and as the last idea came out, he could not but notice the quiet smile playing round the handsome mouth of his friend Janeway.

"I tell you what it is, Highfly, it ain't best for us to say too much about our having the best men. We have some men of talent no doubt, and we have some as much the other way. My friend Janeway, you see, knows the city

and its ways pretty well; but tell us plainly, Janeway, what you think. You know what we city folks want, and you know Doctor Ransom. Is he not the very man we ought to have?"

"I can give you my opinion, friend Anderson, but it may not coincide with yours. As to Doctor Ransom, I believe him to be a true gospel minister. He has a large store of general knowledge; he is an industrious student. He has a more than ordinary share of common sense, and has studied mankind as well as his Bible, and can see through a false guise and detect erroneous views, as quickly as any one I ever knew; but he has a large heart, and will not condemn a man, or a sect, because he may see some things he does not approve. If you expect in him a preacher who will be strenuous in holding up his own denomination, or denouncing others, you will be disappointed. If you expect a preacher who will give you what is styled a fine discourse, you will be disappointed there, too. If you expect a man who will enter heartily into the measures now pursued, for the moral reformation of mankind, you will be disappointed. His only hope of redeeming man from the power of sin, is in the spirit of God through the preaching of the gospel. Jesus Christ will be held up first and last, as the power of God unto salvation, the only Redeemer, the healer of the nations. His blood the only sacrifice, his spirit the only purifier. He has studied the human heart, his own as well as others, and he knows how deceitful it is, and how much more ready we are to engage in outward acts, and to be diligent in working, than in purifying ourselves from sin, and bringing every act and thought into obedience to the will of Christ. So much for my opinion of him. Now as to being the man you want, you can now as well answer that question as I can; but my opinion is, that there is nothing peculiar in the character or intelligence of a congregation in the city, that requires such a different style or superior abilities, than is needed or fully appreciated here; in fact, I do not believe there are more persons in the largest congregations in the city, as able to analyze a discourse from the pulpit, and to judge understandingly of its merits,

than Doctor Ransom has among his audience on every Sabbath day.

When the reverend gentleman paused, the two visitors looked at each other in silence, Mr. Anderson merely nodding his head and winking, as much as to say—he has got the right of it. Mr. Highfly, not exactly falling in with the views and feelings of his companion, made no response. There were some things which had been said relating to the peculiarities of the gentleman, whose character as a preacher had been thus unfolded, that rather startled him. Mr. Highfly was strong for an “active christianity,” by that, meaning strenuous efforts among its out-works. He had more faith in the machinery of religion, than his friend Anderson. He was for breaking down the strongholds of sin and error, by making battle on their more prominent manifestation; he was for driving intemperance out of the land, and licentiousness, and all such demonstrative evils, *vi et armis*. He would have the terrible heresy of Rome held up in all its abomination, and the preacher, like a public crier, denouncing it by name, and condemning all its followers to worse flames than those of purgatory. Mr. Highfly was strong against intemperance, and in his zeal to put down that evil, would unite heart and hand with a reformed drunkard, whose conversion to cold water had not yet stood the test of a month, and would hold him up as a model, and urge him to tell in public his experience, and seemed to feel that this external reformation covered over all other delinquencies, and even obviated the necessity of a change of heart—at least, that important item was left out of sight. In fine, Mr. Highfly was one of your, “go-ahead, knock-down, clear-the-road, effervescing christians, who are ever ready to denounce evil and evil doers, and even their fellow christians, who, according to their view, do not “come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” And Anderson knew this, and was not a little pleased to learn that the minister they had selected, would not be likely to fall in with such views.”

“And now,” said Mr. Janeway, who, having replied to their queries, found they had not for the moment any thing further to say, “I have answered your inquiry re-

specting Doctor Ransom; may I have the liberty of putting a question to you, gentlemen?”

“By all means,” said Anderson.

“Certainly, certainly, by all means,” said Mr. Highfly, “We will answer you, sir, with a great deal of pleasure.”

“Then, gentlemen, I must say I cannot comprehend how it has happened that you should have been induced to place a call in the hands of my brother Ransom? You say he was invited to preach for you, but under the circumstances declined, which I think was a fair hint that he did not wish to be considered a candidate for your favor. And you, likewise, have acknowledged that you had no reason to believe there was any dissatisfaction, on his part with his people, nor on the part of the people with him. Here was a pastor and people satisfied with each other, and if you had inquired, you would have ascertained that the relation was one that could not be broken without inflicting a severe trial upon a respectable christian society. Now, upon what grounds as christians and gentlemen, have you under all these circumstances, made this call?”

For a few moments there was no reply; at length Mr. Highfly responded. He had some preliminary “hems” to go through with by way of clearing obstructions, and he had two or three pinches of snuff to dispose of, besides keeping one between his thumb and forefinger, in readiness for an emergency.

“Your question, my dear sir, I must say, is rather hard to answer satisfactorily, that is, considering the way you have stated the case; you have placed us on trial as christians and gentlemen. Really, my dear sir, you see Mr. Anderson and myself are merely acting for others—mere agents.”

“Oh, sir, you must not misunderstand me. I had no design to bring any charge against you two gentlemen, for the mere fact of your having acted for the society you represent; but you must, of course, know the reasons which influenced your people to make an offer to a settled pastor, who in no way gave you cause to suppose he was ready for any such proposal.”

“What reason, my good sir, would we need, besides the fact that we wanted a pastor, and believed the rever-

end gentleman in question was such an one as would suit us."

"You don't understand, Highfly," interrupted his companion; "the reason you give is merely the bare, naked fact. We wanted a minister, and we thought after looking round, that the one we have selected, would suit us; but back of this stands the question, 'is it honorable to take leading measures in breaking up a relation—a happy one, between pastor and people—is it doing to others as we would wish them to do to us?'"

"Oh, but my good sir, that is no principle to be guided by in such matters. We might very justly on the same principle say to this people here, if they should make objections to our taking their minister, 'you are selfish; you, a small people in a small church, and exerting an influence over a narrow sphere, want to detain a man in your cramped condition, in an out of the way place, when we are ready to give him an opportunity to exert a large influence.' Do you not see?"

"But, Mr. Highfly," said Mr. Janeway, "that is not the question which I wished to have answered. In order to make myself understood, I will state a case in point. You are without a clerk; you want one. You want a young man of honest principles, and industrious, and intelligent. Your friend Anderson, has a young man whom he esteems highly, and with whom he is perfectly satisfied; you know this, and have reason to believe that the young man is perfectly satisfied too, and has no thought of leaving his employer; but you want him because you believe he has the qualifications you require. You say nothing to Mr. Anderson, but on meeting this young man in the street, you take him by the button, 'now, here my good fellow, I want to say a word to you. How much does Anderson give you?'"

"Seven hundred dollars a year."

"I want a young man, and I think you are the one I want. Come into my employ, and I will give you twelve hundred."

"Now what would friend Anderson think of such management?"

Anderson looked at Highfly, and Highfly at him—one

with a quizzical smile at the corner of his mouth, and the other with a serious scowl upon his brow, and taking snuff rapidly. Mr. Janeway saw the dilemma in which he had placed them, especially the sanguine Mr. Highfly. He was conscious of having stated a strong case, and might have gone on with some comments that would have shown how it met the point at issue, but he felt willing to let the matter rest, so far as he was concerned, and leave the conclusions to their own consideration. And Mr. Highfly very soon made manifest by what method of reasoning he at least was able to get round, or own the case so pointedly put.

"My dear sir, I confess in the matter of hiring a clerk in the way you have stated it, friend Anderson would have just cause of complaint; but that would be a subject which merely concerned two individuals. In choosing a minister, a large number of persons are interested, and the question is not whether some are pleased, and others displeased, but we are to look at the results. In the church, the question to be answered is this; 'what will accomplish the greatest amount of good to the largest number of persons?' Individual feelings must be overlooked. In looking round over the church and the world, to see how we can best accomplish good, we cannot stop to consider what this man will say, or that man will say. How this plan may affect the feelings or the interest of certain persons, or societies, or that plan may excite the prejudices of a certain class, and raise in their minds bitterness and hostility. The church is militant, and in a state of war, you know. The question is, not who or how many may be injured, but how the victory shall be obtained! Dwellings must be burned, fields must be trampled over, forests must be cut down and the most beautiful grounds ravaged and dug up into fortifications. It may be very hard upon individual families, and even upon whole villages, but the army nor the general can stop to think of that. Their duty is to conquer the enemy by all the means in their power."

As Mr. Janeway had studied the philosophy of christianity in a different school from that of Mr. Highfly, he concluded they would not be likely to come any nearer in

their views by continuing the argument, he preferred to drop it, and leave what he had said to be considered by them at their leisure. Mr. Anderson, however, seemed rather anxious that his friend Janeway should not be left to conclude that he endorsed in full the views of his fellow committee man. So, rising from his chair as he intimated, "that it was time for them to be on their way," he slapped Mr. Highfly on the shoulder.

"I tell you what, my good fellow, I believe the less we say about this matter, the better. All we can really say on the subject is this; *we have done as other folks do* — right or wrong, we can't help it now. Next time we must do better if we can. There are a good many things in the church as well as in the world, that want mending; and perhaps if the former was more careful of its doings, the latter might be more influenced by it. And now, friend Janeway," — taking the hand of that gentleman — "I shall hope to see more of you in New York. When your friend, the Doctor, gets snugly settled there, you will, no doubt, have an additional attraction to the city."

"I certainly shall."

After the gentlemen had departed, Mr. Janeway hesitated as to the propriety of his making the intended call. If the Doctor had so lately received the invitation to the city, he might wish to be undisturbed by visitors, as of course the subject would demand most serious thought. If he needed advice no doubt he would ask it. Upon reflection he concluded to defer his visit.

It does not need, in a country town or village, no matter how scattered may be the dwellings, that there should be a bulletin office, where the latest news is posted. Tidings fly with wonderful rapidity, and the very day on which the call had been presented, before evening it was known very generally that the Rev. Doctor Ransom had received an invitation from a highly respectable congregation in the city of New York, one of the wealthiest in the city, at the highest salary, too, that was then paid by their denomination. There had, indeed, been a rumor to that effect for some time floating about; it had originated, no doubt, from what had leaked from those who had been sent on to criticise the Sabbath services of the reverend

gentleman. They had spent the Sabbath at the tavern, a very quiet and respectable place of entertainment; they designed, no doubt, to keep their business secret, but the last committee was not so careful. Being perfectly satisfied that he was the man for them, they no doubt made up their minds that a call would be given, and did not feel the necessity for keeping the matter so private. The gentlemen who had come on likewise to tender the invitation, staid at the same place, and had conversed freely on the subject with the tavern keeper, a person of respectability, and a great friend of Doctor Ransom; and from him the news was sent forth. From Doctor Ransom himself, not a word had been heard, and to no one but his wife did he communicate the intelligence.

As Mr. Bellows was known to be on very intimate terms with their minister, and one most likely to be informed of the fact, if it was a fact; there was that evening at his house quite a gathering, not only of the members of the session, but many others who felt concerned to know whether the current report was founded on certainty.

Mr. Bellows was indeed the most likely person to know the truth, for he was more than others, a confidant of the Doctor. He was not a man of superior education; he could not well converse on philosophy or science, or general literature, but he was a keen observer of human nature, well informed about current events, and of reliable judgment. His piety was ardent and steady. It did not seem to be an attachment, but an inherent quality of the man, not obtrusive in demonstration. There was no sudden flashing of light that might blind and bewilder and astonish, but a clear, steady emanation, pleasant to behold even by those who did not care to come within its influence. One always knew where to find Mr. Bellows. His zeal for the cause of Christ seemed never to have its cold spells. He never complained of coldness — not to his fellow man. He knew where warmth and light and spiritual energy were to be obtained, and he went to the fountain head; and his minister knew all this, and had a just appreciation of his character. And he also valued this member of his session for his ability in conducting



religious exercises. He knew when he called on brother Bellows to pray, there would be real prayer offered — not the mere performance of a task — a set of common phrases and unmeaning repetitions. There would be a point to it; there would be real petitions presented in appropriate language, adapted to the necessities of the case, and regulated by the Saviour's instruction in reference to prayer. He was a peacemaker too, hushing up the strife of words; no ill-favored report could ever be traced to brother Bellows, nor could it get through him. And his minister could trust in his discretion, and open his mind on any subject that concerned others without the fear that it would be repeated. It is not strange then, that he should have the confidence of the church, as well as that of his pastor, and that on such an occasion as the present, his house should be the gathering place for those who were deeply concerned about the truth or falsehood of this rumor.

"Well, friend Bellows," said Mr. Graham, "what do you think about this report? Is it true, and will the Doctor leave us?"

"You must ask Betsey; she seems to know all about it, she has been crying all the afternoon." Mr. Graham had come in the first of any, and Mrs. Bellows was just then talking with her husband, and trying to persuade him that it was his duty to go at once to Doctor Ransom, and tell him that he must not leave them.

"Then she and Mattie feel pretty much alike. Mattie sent for me the middle of the afternoon, while I was in the field with the men, and when I came in the first thing she did, was to burst out crying. I was frightened out of my wits; I did not know but something dreadful had happened."

"And don't you call it dreadful!" said Mrs. Bellows. "I do believe you men don't care whether he goes or not."

"You hear her now, Graham!"

"Well, Bellows, it is a bad business, anyhow. After Mattie told me the news, my heart sank all down; I had no spirit to go to work or do anything. I do think it a most unrighteous thing for any set of men, because they

have plenty of money, to come and make offers to our minister right over our heads, and never even say 'by your leave.'"

"It is a common practice, you know."

"Is it a right practice? Is it christian?"

Mr. Bellows did not answer for the reason that two other gentlemen just then came in, and Mrs. Graham with them; they had met at the street door. The ladies, however, were so much affected by the sight of each other, that they at once retired to another room to mingle their tears and pour out their distress in sympathy together.

Mr. Bellows received his guests with his usual pleasant manner, and to the question all put to him as to the truth of the report, his reply was:

"You all know as much about it, gentlemen, as I do, although I must say this: about the middle of this afternoon, as I was coming from my east lot, I met young Roland."

"What, Donald?"

"Yes; he stopped me and asked if I had heard the news?"

"What news?" I asked.

"Why, that Doctor Ransom had received a call to the city?"

"I have heard such a report," I replied, "but know not how true it is."

"I fear it is true," he replied.

"Did Donald Roland say that!" interposed one of the guests; "he is the last man I should have thought cared whether a minister went or came, or whether there were any ministers at all."

"We may be wrong in our judgment of Donald, brother Creighton. He has, to be sure, given more reason than I wish he had, to make people think he did not regard religion or religious institutions, but I will give you what he said, and you can judge for yourself."

"Said he, 'I fear the report is true. I have just seen the Rev. Mr. Janeway, and he has told me that the gentlemen who came on to present the call, were at his house this morning, one of them an old friend of his. They acknowledged having presented the call, and seemed very

sanguine that it would be accepted? Donald then looked at me very earnestly, and said,

"Mr. Bellows, cannot this be prevented? Doctor Ransom will be a loss to our whole place; if an addition to his salary is wanted I will subscribe a hundred dollars a year, and if that is not enough, will double it."

"Did Donald Roland say that?"

"He certainly did, brother Creighton. I never saw him so earnest about any thing before."

"Well, well, well, that is something I should never have looked for; but what you say makes me think of another thing. I was coming home from mill a short time since, and I met the Doctor and him riding together; they were on horseback, and I noticed that they were very earnestly engaged in conversation, and after I passed them, I happened to look back and they were walking their horses, and the Doctor put out his hand and laid it on Donald's shoulder—in that friendly way he has, you know, when talking to young people—and putting what you have just told us, brother Bellows, with that, it may be the Doctor has put a word into his heart that has touched him. What a mercy it would be, for there is not naturally a better disposed person in our town. But you know it has been generally thought he did not care any thing about religion—was in fact skeptical."

"What you say about Donald Roland, Mr. Bellows, is strange, I know; but not more so than what I heard with my own ears from the mouth of Ezekiel Briar, not two hours ago," said another.

"Old Zeke Briar!" echoed several voices.

"Yes, brethren, and it made me think of Nathaniel's remark to Phillip, 'Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?' I was on my way home from the store, and as I was passing along a potato field near his house, I saw Zeke sitting on the fence; and when I bowed to him he beckoned me to stop, and so I stopped my horse, and up he comes to me."

"Squire," says he, 'what have you been doing to your minister, to make him want to leave?'

"I don't know that he does want to leave," said I.

"Why, Joe Sanders, the tavern-keeper, told me him-

self, this very morning, he knew it for certain, a call to New York has been put into his hands; and I think it ain't likely folks would take the trouble to come all the way from there to do such a thing as that, if he hadn't let them know in some way that he was ready for it."

"This, you see, set me to thinking. It put the whole case in a new light. Thinks I, if that should be the case, there would be no use in trying to head them off, for I had made up my mind that the best thing for us to do, would be to raise his salary right off; but if the thing had gone so far as that the Doctor had encouraged them that he would accept a call if they gave him one, he wasn't the man that would be very likely to disappoint folks. 'Well,' I said, 'I don't know but he may leave us; it will be a sorry day for us all if he does go.'"

"But you mustn't let him go," said he.

"How can we help it?" said I.

"Help it! Why you must all go to him and tell him he oughtn't. Tell him he mustn't. Tell him you'll raise his salary."

"Will you help along, Zeke?" said I.

"Yes, I will. I know I've been kind of off ox, and maybe folks think I don't care much how things go; but I do, for all that. Help! yes, I'll help. I'll give Twenty-five dollars a year, may be more."

"Will you promise to go to church, Zeke?" said I.

"Go to church! Well, I don't know. You don't want me there. You'd all think I'd come to make a muss, or do something or other. But I tell you you'll miss it, if you let that man go. He's a good man—the best christian you've got in the place—that ain't saying much, though."

"Well, Zeke," said I, 'if you will promise me to go to church and attend regular as other folks, I think something may be done. The Doctor will think more of saving one sinner than of all the money we can raise. Now promise me, Zeke,' said I.

"Well," said he, 'if you can get him to stay, I will.' Now, brother, what do you think of that?"

"I think, brother Jones, you said the truth when you told Zeke that Doctor Ransom would think more of sav-

ing one sinner that of any amount of money we could give him as salary. Both of these cases show that our minister has a strong hold of those out of the church, as well as of the church itself."

"Brother Bellows," said Mr. Sampson, a member of the church, but a man who was supposed to be a little too fond of money—at least, a firm believer in its universal power—"it is my opinion, that the best thing we can do, is to go to work at once and see how large a sum of money we can raise. Ministers, as well as other folks, have to look out for number one."

"I don't believe," interposed Mr. Graham, "such a measure as that will do any good."

"Why not?" replied Mr. Sampson.

"Because I don't think it will affect the decision of the case one iota."

"Don't you believe *that*, brother Graham. Where do you know of a case of a minister's accepting a call when the salary to be paid was less, or even no more, than that which he had been receiving? I know that they put it on the ground of being more useful in one place than another, but I ask you now, can you tell me of an instance where, when a man leaves one parish for another, of his own accord, he does not get a larger salary?"

"I am not acquainted very generally with the state of things in that respect, nor should I like to judge of ministers' motives. They must answer for themselves. No doubt there is some occasion for the idea your question suggests; but I can never believe that any such motive can have influence with Doctor Ransom."

Just then the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a gentleman with a brisk, stirring air about him, a robust, hale looking man, with a bronzed complexion, dark eyes, heavy eyebrows, dark hair well sprinkled with grey. He was almost out of breath when he came in, for he had walked fast, and his countenance wore a troubled look. All rose as he entered, and gave him a cordial shake of the hand, with a "How do you do?" "Glad to see you, Mr. Barnes." Mr. Barnes, however, did not speak, but he grasped each hand offered him in such a hearty manner, that all felt assured his heart was with them. No

man had a stronger hold of the interest of every one in that room than Mr. Barnes, and it must be admitted that no one felt so deeply concerned in the subject which had been under consideration. After saluting all around, and taking his seat, he remained a moment in silence, when Mr. Graham addressed him.

"I suppose, brother Barnes, you have heard the news!"

"True? is it true?" This was spoken in a rapid manner. He had a very quick utterance in general, often in his haste clipping his words.

"Too true, we believe."

"What's to be done?"

"That is a serious question, rather difficult to answer, at least for me."

"I think it is for all of us," said Mr. Creighton.

"I think, Mr. Barnes," said Mr. Sampson, who, knowing that Mr. Barnes had been once an ardent lover of money, thought no doubt that he had strong faith in its power, and would side with him in his opinion—"that the best thing we can do is to raise a good fat sum as an addition to our minister's salary; that will keep him if any thing."

"Don't believe it."

"Why not?"

"Has he asked for money?"

"Not that I know of—but"—

"Poh, poh, poh, poh."

"You don't think, then, it would do any good."

"No good at all, none at all. If money 'll keep him I'd share with him—give him half my income. Money wouldn't do me any good, if, if if—" Mr. Barnes no doubt was intending to say, "if he goes away," but he could not say the word. When greatly excited, he would stop at a word and stammer. The little conjunction had stopped his progress, and his manifestation of deep feeling affected all present. They knew his heart was bound up in his pastor, and well it might be. He was, at the time Doctor Ransom settled at Woodburn, an active, driving, money-making, worldly-minded man. Besides a large farm which he cultivated in the very best manner, he had a store which, by careful management, he had

made very profitable. His goods were the best of their kind, his prices moderate, and his known integrity and polite attention to customers had drawn to it not only the principal trade in Woodburn, but that of many who lived on the outskirts of towns adjacent. But he was an ardent lover of money, his whole soul seemed to be absorbed in the single idea of gain. Doctor Ransom had always done some trading with him, although the more important articles for family use he purchased in New York; and Mr. Barnes was always peculiarly attentive to his reverend customer, not only as he respected him as a man and his minister, but also for the reason that the Doctor was a cash customer. Mr. Barnes had been seized with severe sickness; he had to leave the care of his farm and store to others—to lie helpless on his bed. Friends were alarmed, physicians were doubtful—"he might possibly recover, but the symptoms were bad." His minister, under such circumstances, could not stay away from his bedside, although no particular request had been made for his presence; but he knew how unprepared the sick man was. He knew it from having held at times long conversations with him on his religious views. Mr. Barnes seemed glad to see him, and listened with apparent interest to the solemn address of his minister, heard the tidings through him of his own dangerous condition, and that the scales were on a poise between life and death—at length he spoke.

"Yes, yes, Doctor. I know it, I know it, the world seems to grow worse and worse. People wont pay, wont pay their debts. Can't collect any money—harder getting it than ever."

Doctor Ransom ceased speaking. He saw clearly that the poor man was wedded to his idol. The prospect of sudden dissolution could not break the charm. His time had not come to die, however. Again he is around as active as ever, apparently with the same eager pursuit of wealth; his seat in the house of God filled as always before, and the truths of the Bible so earnestly and forcibly delivered, falling upon his ear with no more effect than a shower of rain upon the flinty rock.

There came a time, at length, when a word spoken by

his pastor in apparently an incidental way, at a casual interview, arrested his attention. He tried to throw it off but it would not go; he became restless, and for trifling causes allowed his temper to be excited, forgot details of his business, often in his house sat silent and by himself, and then at times would walk the room brooding over some apparently forbidding subject, but not disposed to allow either his wife or children to share his confidence.

Doctor Ransom had called at his store and made a small purchase, and Mr. Barnes, as was his custom, had waited upon the reverend gentleman. After receiving his pay, and as the Doctor bade him good morning and was about to depart, Mr. Barnes stepped from behind his counter and followed him to the door.

"Doctor, are you in a hurry?"

"Not particularly so, Mr. Barnes."

"Can you step into the house, a minute?"

"Certainly, sir." The house and store were close together.

So, entering the street door of the house, he was led by his host into a parlor. It was the best parlor, and where no one of the family would be very likely to intrude. As soon as his minister was seated, Mr. Barnes began.

"Doctor, there's something out of the way—something the matter with me."

"Ah, sir! What is it, Mr. Barnes?—not well?"

"Well enough, yes. I'm well enough—but I can't sleep."

"Your nervous system, perhaps, my dear sir, has not recovered from the shock of your last sickness."

"No, no, no. My nerves are well enough—strong as ever. It ain't that, but there's a kind of heavy weight hanging to me, and I've tried and tried and tried, but I can't get rid of it—it feels as heavy as a peddler's pack, only it's on my mind."

"Any thing about your business, that troubles you?"

"Oh, no, no, no. It ain't that, business goes on well enough."

"So far as you can describe the difficulty, Mr. Barnes, or feel free to unfold it to me, I should be glad to hear it. It seems to be some burden on your mind that is discon-

nected with worldly interests. Has it any thing to do with the great subject you and I have dwelt upon at times?"

"I'm afraid it has."

"To me, sir, should it turn out that a concern for your eternal interests has been started in your mind, it would be cause rather for rejoicing. My fear for you has been that, in your eagerness to gain as much as possible of this world, you would become callous to all that concerns your spiritual good."

"What shall I do, Doctor? I am a very wretched man. I am a very guilty, wicked person. I have never done a good thing all my life. Did you ever know such a case?"

"You have the name, Mr. Barnes, of having been a truly honest man in all your dealings with your fellows. You have been a good member of society. I have never heard a complaint against you in that respect. I have feared, however, that you did not love your Saviour as much as you have loved your money."

"Oh, sir! my dear Doctor, there you've hit it. Money has been my God. Day and night, month after month, year after year, I have worshipped it—given my whole heart to it—Sundays and all days, there my heart has been. Ain't it a wonder I haven't been struck dead, long before now? Only to think of it! Here I am, sixty years of age, my hair gray, my forehead wrinkled with care and labor, and striving to get this world. God's sun shining around me, His rain watering my fields, His hand guarding me by day and night, and my heart all the time a-saying, 'I desire not to know Thee—go away, go away—I want not the knowledge of thy ways.' Oh, sir, it is a dreadful case; and the more I think of it, the worse it seems."

"It is sad to think that our life has been wasted in a chase after that which, after all, is a deceitful meteor; but God, in his great compassion, has prepared a way and unfolded the means by which our folly and error may be amended. Penitence for the past and a new life for the future."

"Doctor, I've been thinking I'd give away all my property."

"For what purpose, Mr. Barnes?"

"May be I should feel easier."

"Had you gained it unjustly, I should urge you to do so, for it would ever be as a mill stone about your neck; but you have labored diligently to acquire it, and have practiced no dishonesty that I ever heard. God alone has been defrauded. He does not ask for your property, but your heart; until you can give that up to Him, nothing else you possess will be accepted at your hands. You have loved the world with all your heart, and you know from your own experience what that implies. 'Day and night,' you have said, 'for months and years,' the world has engrossed your desires. In just such measure hereafter must you be engrossed with the love and service of God. Your property, which God has given you, must no longer be accounted as your own, you must hold it as God's agent. It is not to be squandered by extravagance, nor for the gratification of mere worldly appetite and taste, nor thrown heedlessly into the hands of others to use for benevolent objects. You are responsible for it, and must one day, as a recipient of God's bounty, give an account of it. Now, my dear sir, do you understand me?"

"Think I do."

"You have hitherto, my friend, lived for the world."

"Yes, yes—that I have."

"Are you ready to say now, that henceforth you will live for your Saviour,—give him your heart and service?"

A moment there was no response. The large shaggy brows were drawn together, the broad forehead knit with wrinkles, the heavy mouth closely shut, and the dark eyes twinkling rapidly. A mighty struggle which had been going on for weeks, reached its climax. He had a clear mind,—he had comprehended all his minister had said, the truth blazed before him, he knew it was the way, the only way.

"I'll try to."

The Doctor arose and took his hand.

"My dear friend, may God help you," and then was about to depart, but Mr. Barnes still held his hand.

"You will pray for me."



"That I have done daily for many years. Now I will not only pray for you, but give thanks to God for the wonders of his grace."

"Wonderful! Wonderful! I don't know myself; something seems to have happened to me. I seem in a strange world, all looks new."

"And somewhat brighter, does it not?"

"Yes, yes, brighter! Oh, sir, I feel as if I could cry aloud for joy."

The Doctor paused. He was taken by surprise. He knew well that when Mr. Barnes said, 'I'll try to,' a great end had been accomplished. He was not a man to say things rashly. He was not a man easily turned from his purpose. *He would try* — and having a strong faith that a good work was begun, he believed it would be carried through; but he anticipated a longer struggle, and not that light and peace should have come so soon.

"Are you ready to bow down with me now, my dear sir, and unite with me in giving thanks to God for his redeeming mercy?"

"Glad, glad to do it."

And brighter and brighter from that hour, was the path of this renewed man, and the light of his new life shone clearly through all the parish, a wonder to all, and the cause of renewed strength to many a weak christian. No wonder then, if the prospect of losing one on whom he had leaned for instruction as a child upon a father, and to whom his heart was knit by the most endearing tie, should have stirred its depths. The evident emotion manifested by Mr. Barnes had effectually silenced the company; the shadow of a deep grief had fallen upon them. Mr. Bellows was the first to break the silence.

"Brethren, I believe we all feel alike in reference to the trial in prospect, although we may differ as to our views of a remedy. My own belief is that no amount of money we could raise as salary would be of any avail, for if that object should have influence, we should be beaten in the competition. I am credibly informed that the congregation that has given him the call, authorized the committee to assure the Doctor that they were prepared to do much more than pay the salary named — that a very

handsome purse would be made up for him at the start, and that he might rely upon large presents every year. No, brethren, we must wait patiently and leave the matter to the Doctor's own sense of duty. He will be influenced by that and nothing else; and I have no doubt if he were here with us to-night, he would ask for our earnest prayers that he might see clearly what that was. I therefore propose that we spend our time, while here together, in that way, and if brother Barnes will lead us" —

"Can't, can't do it." In general he never refused when called upon, but all present well understood the cause for declining, and Mr. Bellows himself commenced the exercise. There was no formality in the petitions offered that evening, every individual felt that personal as well as public interests of the most important character were at stake.

The Sabbath came, and there was a large attendance. Whether the subject of the discourses was one of deeper interest than usual, or the people more easily excited, there was certainly an unusual solemnity and manifestation of deep feeling. Many seemed to have made up their minds that they were to lose their pastor, and were listening to him, as perhaps for the last time, under that endearing relation in which they had been so long bound together. And when the morning service closed there was no saluting of one another as is common in the country, as they emerged from the sanctuary. Each heart seemed to bear a silent sorrow, and in little groups they walked towards their homes, not caring to speak of that which lay most burdensome upon them, and no desire to talk of aught besides; they seemed like mourners returning from the newly covered grave.

At the close of the afternoon service, and while all were standing in readiness to receive the benediction, the Doctor made a request that the members of his Session should meet him at the lecture room to-morrow (Monday) evening.

There was a sudden movement as though a rush of wind had swayed the long branches of the weeping elms that hung before the windows, and the faces of women and men turned involuntarily one towards another, some with a silent nod, some with deep meaning flashing from

the eye and not a few of the women, those lovers of the Saviour and of all his ministers, that most resemble the dear master, with the tear already started. It was an appointment, all knew, for a special object, as it was not the regular time for their meeting — it must of course have reference to their new situation, and no doubt was designed as the first act in the drama.

The Doctor did not in general leave his pulpit until the congregation had nearly all left the house, and this day he lingered there longer than usual; he evidently, for some cause, did not wish to be subjected to inquiries or to make communications. A few, however, of the people remained within the vestibule until he came out. Among them was Mrs. Graham. She could not go to her home until she had passed a word with her dear pastor. Mrs. Graham was quite young when the Doctor was settled. Although married, she was but eighteen years of age. She had therefore placed herself among the young people, and had joined one of the classes which the Doctor had taken much pains to instruct in Biblical literature. She had been one of his best scholars, and having a warm heart, as well as a bright mind, had become devotedly attached to her minister and teacher; and perhaps there was no one among his people who had taken a stronger hold upon his own heart. As he entered the vestibule she came up to him, and as he took her hand, she looked up into his face, her bright eye suffused with the tears she had no power to control.

"You *will not* leave us!" The voice was low, scarce above a whisper, but the evident emotion that almost choked her utterance deeply affected the strong man, and for a little space he hesitated to reply; then cordially pressing her hand—

"My dear child, we must learn to lean on a surer support than an arm of flesh. We can do without one another, but we cannot do without the Lord Jesus Christ."

Unable to restrain her feelings she at once gave vent to a passionate burst of tears; two or three other ladies who were present, but did not hear what was said, taking for granted that Mrs. Graham's fears had been verified, gathered about her and mingled their tears with hers;

the pastor, much moved, and unwilling to trust himself to say more, stepped from the vestibule and left the church.

The session room, as it was called, was a small building attached to the church, which had been erected at the suggestion of the Doctor, in which meetings might be held occasionally, and which might be warmed and lighted more readily than the larger building. It had folding doors by which it could be divided into a larger and smaller room, or both thrown into one as occasion might require; the latter was generally used when the elders and deacons, with the pastor, assembled.

Nothing had been learned by any of the officers as to the prospect before them, but from incidental circumstances, known to a few, it was feared their pastor had concluded to leave. They came together, therefore, in no very cheerful mood. The hour of seven had just struck as the Doctor entered, and after a kind salutation to each individual, he took the chair before a small table—his usual seat. His countenance had lost its hale appearance, it was pale and his eye languid, and there was a look of uneasiness as though a heavy burden of care pressed upon his mind. The past few days had done more to prostrate his physical powers than all his years of ministerial labor; and each of his session felt assured that a mighty conflict had been sustained within his breast, and that whatever conclusion had been made, had been arrived at through intense thought and earnest prayer, and would not be easily reversed.

After the opening prayer, the Doctor resumed his seat, and almost immediately addressed them.

"It is probably known to you, brethren, that a call has been presented to me by a congregation in the city of New York, to become their pastor. And it is but justice to myself to say, that it has been done without the least connivance on my part, nor the least encouragement that I was ready to listen to any such proposal. I therefore feel more solicitude about the matter, because so far as I am concerned, it is a providential act entirely, and involves of course, great consideration on my part, and deep study of the matter in all its bearings. Should I consult my personal feelings alone, a moment's thought would be suffi-

cient; but as I view my calling as a minister of Jesus Christ, personal preferences must be laid aside and the will of the Master implicitly obeyed.

It is customary with many of my ministerial brethren, when situated as I now am, to lay the case before a council or Presbytery, and leave the decision to their judgment; but I do not intend to ask counsel of any besides Him whose servant I am, and seeking by earnest prayer for His direction, judge for myself after weighing well all considerations, what my line of duty may be. And one very important item upon which to base my judgment, must be derived, brethren, from the information I may receive from you; and I appeal now to your knowledge and your judgment — your personal feelings towards me I feel assured are of the most friendly nature. We are mutual friends, as well as official brethren. But I ask you to lay all natural feelings aside. To do our duty as christians to the part of Zion to which we belong, and to the church at large, must be our chief business. You are, from your peculiar situation, familiar with the state of feeling among the people — both the church itself and those who are merely members of the congregation. I have been with you ten years, my manner of life and my ministerial character must in that time have had their influence for good or evil. I have lived and preached as my conscience has directed me, and my course for the future will not be materially changed. I wish you to tell me, therefore, with all plainness, and to the very best of your knowledge, how the people are affected towards my ministry. I charge you to keep nothing back out of delicate regard to my feelings; let me know the truth and the whole truth, as God shall be your judge."

There was an evident lighting up of the countenance on the part of the Session, and instinctively all turned their eyes towards Mr. Bellows, as the one to rise and respond. He did not wait long.

"My brethren," said Mr. Bellows, "seem to feel that I must reply to the request of our pastor, and I readily do so; but reverend sir, I shall only answer so far as my own knowledge of the feelings of our people gives me authority to speak, and I wish my brethren clearly to understand

that I do not answer for them, nor will I take such a responsibility. I speak not for them, but for myself.

"So far as the feelings of the members of the church are concerned, I can only say, that my intercourse with them has been very general and intimate, and I do not hesitate to affirm my belief that not a single member but feels perfectly satisfied with the ministration of our pastor, and more than that — they are not only satisfied, but will be filled with deep sorrow, if the bond which unites us shall be broken. As to those who worship with us who are not members of the church, I must say, I have been much surprised at the feeling manifested on their part, since the rumor has been circulated that there was a prospect of our pastor's leaving us. Persons whom I supposed perfectly indifferent whether we had a minister or not, have manifested much anxiety; and without giving names, I will say, that the wealthiest person in our town, and one whom many of us have feared was not only indifferent, but positively an enemy to the preaching of the gospel, has offered to me to bind himself and his property to the amount of two hundred dollars a year, if by that means salary enough could be raised to prevent what he said would be a calamity to the whole town.

"My firm belief is, sir, that no man living, has the same chance to do good among us as yourself; please excuse my plain speaking."

When Mr. Bellows had concluded, the members in turn arose and gave their testimony, all going to confirm in the most decided manner the plain statement Mr. Bellows had made, interspersing their remarks with accounts of what had been said to them by individuals both in the church and out of it. At the conclusion the Doctor arose. He was evidently deeply moved. His fine manly face was suffused with an unusual glow, and as he commenced, the tremor that marked his utterance affected those about him with the most intense interest. Some heads were bowed down; and others, with strong emotion manifest in their rigid features, fixed their eyes earnestly upon him.

"Brethren, I bless God for the evidence which your testimony gives me that my labors here have not been in vain in the Lord. And your assurance of the love of

this people towards me as their pastor is the more gratifying, for the reason that I have courted no man's favor. I have without fear warned and exhorted and reproved, not from the pulpit only, but personally in private. I have kept my hands free from bribes, — no gifts have I allowed myself to receive, although many have been tendered, because I wished to stand, as a minister of Christ, on fair vantage ground, independent of their worldly goods, that I might offer to them the riches of salvation through Jesus Christ.

And now, brethren, taking your word as my warrant in favor of my usefulness among this people, and having weighed according to my best judgment the whole matter of this call, I have come to the conclusion that it is not my duty to do violence to your feelings and my own, too. I will not leave you."

It would be in vain to attempt a description of the scene that followed; all rose by a simultaneous impulse, they crowded around him, each by turns grasping his hand. Not a word was spoken. Tears — yes, tears — not often seen gathered in the eyes of men of their years and sturdy character, told what their tongues could not utter, nor could that pastor, with all his self-command, keep back those tokens that his heart was deeply stirred.

Mr. Barnes was present — he was one of the deacons. He had not said much, for his heart was too full to allow many words. After the scene above described, and order was again restored, he was the first to rise.

"Brethren," — he did not address himself to the moderator, — "we are now safe, our pastor won't leave us, but we have something to do; he has sacrificed his worldly interests for us, we must do something for him. I move his salary be increased five hundred dollars. You all know the money can be raised as easy as nothing."

The Doctor immediately arose.

"Brethren, this proceeding is not quite in order. I overlook its impropriety for the fact that we are all somewhat under the influence of feeling. But allow me to say on this subject, while I feel very grateful for the spirit manifested towards me, yet I cannot by any means consent to the plan proposed. How would it appear, brethren, when

it becomes noised abroad. It would look like this — "your pastor has received a call to another church with a large salary attached to it — his own people, in order to keep him, at once increased his pay, and he concluded not to leave them." What inference would the world draw? Either that you had not done what was right you should have done, — which would not be true; or that I was influenced by mercenary motives — which would also be untrue; and we should both stand in a false light as a christian pastor and people, and what is infinitely of more consequence, the cause of our beloved master would be injured.

But, brethren, to put your minds at rest on this matter, I assure you that I am comfortably provided with all the necessities of life. You know my style of living, and how my table is spread from day to day. We have enough and to spare. Economy I consider a christian virtue, and have therefore, as the head of this people, always felt it my duty in that to set no example which might by possibility do an injury to sound morals. My expenses have indeed increased since I first came among you, and so have my receipts. The few acres of land attached to my home have become a material source of income, and that without encroaching on my time or labor. I expect, brethren, now to live and die among you, and I have no fear that if at any time I shall need more at your hands it will be forthcoming; let all our efforts be more decided in building up our Zion here and elsewhere. That should be our aim, and by all the means in our power let us endeavor to win every unconverted soul among us to the fold of Christ."

The members of the session for the most part were somewhat taken by surprise at the motion made by their brother member, for although all were heartily in favor of it, yet they knew there was a manifest impropriety in bringing forward such a subject in the presence of their pastor; but all knew how ardent and impulsive were the feelings of brother Barnes, and that being a junior member, although an elder among them, he was not well versed in etiquette. They, however, resolved that something should be done in a proper way and time, the result of which must be left for another place.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE reverend Doctor having sent off his letter which contained his declinature to the call, couched in such terms as to leave no opening for anything further to be said to him on that subject, felt his mind greatly relieved; a burden had been rolled off, and his path of duty seemed perfectly plain.

There were some things, however, that still demanded his attention. He had declined a call to labor in a larger field, "was there any thing to be done in that he now occupied, that he had neglected?" As he was looking round over his parish and reflecting upon its condition, light broke upon his mind, and he clearly perceived that on one point at least he had been deficient; he had not counted sufficiently on his power over those who were out of the church, and who had manifested such indifference to religion as not to attend religious services on the Sabbath, or to do so very irregularly. Some, he knew, had acquired a habit of staying at home on the Sabbath, and being somewhat advanced in years, would not be likely to break through it. Various causes had operated to produce such cases. With some it had been an offence taken at a former pastor, or at some members of the church; others had been detained a long time from the sanctuary by chronic difficulties, until they formed an idea that they could not be confined during an hour and a half in one position. The number of such persons was not large, but their influence was baneful, and if possible must be nullified. If they would not come to hear the gospel, the gospel must be carried to them. He had not, indeed, neglected them, and had conversed with them in private, but he had strong faith in the public preaching of the word. He therefore resolved to hold meetings near their places of residence; perhaps they would come out, or might even be induced to have meetings appointed at their own houses.

There were also persons living on the outskirts of the parish, some of them too poor to own the means of coming to the house of God in a decent vehicle, and the distance was too far to be traveled on foot, by those who felt no interest in religion. And the gospel must be carried to them, and the service must be regular, and not merely occasional—as it had been. On the whole, after looking over the field with this new sense of responsibility, he found it large enough, and the work important enough, to fill all his time and thought, and to demand even the active co-operation of those members of his session who, under his care, had been educated to conduct meetings with ability and profit.

It was not many days after he had sent off the letter before mentioned, and while he was busily occupied in his study preparing a programme for immediate additional labor, when he was notified that some strangers were in the sitting-room, and wished to see him. On entering the room he found three gentlemen waiting his presence, two of them immediately arose and grasped his hand with much cordiality.

"Brethren," said the Doctor, "I am most happy to see you under my roof."

"And I am very happy to see you, brother Ransom, looking so hale and surrounded with so many beauties. You must be a great lover of flowers, the very air is scented with them," said one of the gentlemen.

"Allow me, brother Ransom, to introduce you to my friend, Mr. Tremain, from our city," said the other gentleman.

"I believe," said Mr. Tremain, as he gave his hand to the Doctor, "we are not quite strangers, sir, although we have not met before."

"This is the Mr. Tremain, then, who has so befriended that dear youth, William Herbert?"

"William Herbert, sir, has been his own best friend, or perhaps you have, sir; for he ascribes all there is right and efficient in him, to your kind care and judicious counsel. We business men cannot afford to take young men out of friendship, or to give them a share of our business, because we feel kindly disposed; they must rise by their



own efficiency, we must feel confident they can serve us to a purpose, and then we give them a chance to help themselves at the same time. Will is a fine fellow, though, — a noble fellow, — he will make his way if his life is spared."

"Your report of him, sir, is very gratifying to me, and I heartily agree with you as to the principle upon which you act in reference to young men. It is not kindness to any young man beginning life, to stretch out the helping hand too liberally; by doing so, we are likely to get him into a situation which he is not qualified to fill. And I believe, brethren," turning to his two clerical guests, "if we followed more strictly the rule which this gentleman says governs business men in selecting clerks or advancing those they employ, in the matter of encouraging young men to enter the ministry, or in giving them license to preach, it would be better for many of them and for the church too."

"That is the very point, Doctor Ransom," said Mr. Tremain, "that I have been arguing with these reverend gentlemen on our way up from the city. I insist upon it, if a young man has the root of the matter in him, if he has a strong desire to preach the gospel, and has that stability of character and energy of will necessary to make an efficient gospel minister, he will accomplish his purpose — he will work his way into it in spite of difficulties, and such a man will be worth to the church and the world, more than a dozen of your milk and water folks, that are helped and boosted and coaxed along. See how it is now. We have been more than a year looking around for a minister. We have had young men by the dozens, trying their best in our pulpit, and many of them exciting the ridicule or the pity of our people."

"But, Mr. Tremain," replied quickly one of the reverend gentlemen, "you must keep in mind that our city congregations labor under a disadvantage, — they have become accustomed to fine preaching, they have itching ears, the gospel must be preached to them in a more finished style; there are other fields where these young men can labor and be useful, and seeing the great want of laborers, we must try to obtain as many as possible; all cannot be men of superior talent."

"True, sir," replied Mr. Tremain, "but it seems to me there is a certain amount of talent that is absolutely necessary, and characteristics of a peculiar kind. There should be at the foundation ardent piety — not merely the manifestation of piety sufficient to save a man — there should be good common sense, there should be strong resolution and a mind capable of enlargement. These, it seems to me, are essential requisites, and with these a man may not be a brilliant speaker; but with the glorious truth she has to deal in, he will be able to command the reverence and respect, at least the attention of his audience. There must be an innate quality that will enable a man to command circumstances and make them bend to his will, or to take advantage of them to further his end. For instance, take the case of this young man whose name has brought up this subject. He came to me a stranger; he had lost a fine place, not through any fault of his, though. I wanted a young man, and had been wanting one for some time. He had been brought up to another line of business. I had not conversed with him a quarter of an hour before I felt sure he was the one I had been looking for, and could not find. I perceived he had self-reliance, he had energy and determination, he would not be daunted at trifles, he thought quick and justly, and would give his whole heart and soul to the work before him. As I said, he had been trained to another line of business, but in three weeks from the time he came to me, he sailed for a foreign port, to be among people of a strange language, — strange to him — and to take charge of large interests, with great responsibilities resting on his proper management. And I have not been disappointed in him. The talent for business was in him, any one could see that, and his whole mind was bent upon it. He was determined to make a man of himself, and he has done it. The great deficiency I find in ministers, — you will pardon my freedom, gentlemen, — is that their hearts do not seem to be in their work."

Mr. Tremain was well known to the reverend gentleman who had accompanied him, and therefore the remark did not surprise them, even if it was not very palatable. He was an active, keen business man, and yet a true friend to the church and all benevolent operations. He was not

large in person, rather below the medium height, but his mind was ready and well stored with general knowledge, his eye was a true symbol of his character, bright, penetrating, clear and full; he spoke with a fluency and generally at once to the point. His known energy and ability had induced the congregation which had given the call to Dr. Ransom, and to which he belonged, to appoint him, in connection with two of the more influential members of the Presbytery, pastors in the city, to call upon the reverend gentleman and exert their influence to persuade him to reconsider the decision he had made; and for this object they were now at his house. Mr. Tremain would not in all probability have accepted the appointment, if it had not been that he wished to see the Doctor on some private business, for he had no faith in any efforts that could be made to that end. He had learned so much of his character through William Herbert, that he believed the subject had been thoroughly weighed in his own mind, and his decision would be final.

Having, as soon as propriety would permit, introduced the object of their mission, and unfolded their views and wishes in quite a long statement of the peculiar condition of the — Street church, and the difficulty of procuring a minister of the right stamp, the Doctor replied,

"I believe, gentlemen, I have considered most of the arguments you have advanced, but they have not convinced me that it was my duty to accept the call. There is much work to be done here, and I think from all I can learn that no one under present circumstances, can do the work so well; here I have influence, and if faithful, may hope, with God's blessing, to accomplish some good — in a new situation the result of my labors would be doubtful. I have also a serious objection to the manner in which your churches in the city are organized,— you have no poor among you."

"Oh, but brother Ransom!" exclaimed the two clergymen almost in the same breath, "that should not be an objection, the rich need preaching to as well as the poor, and the poor have free churches, where they can attend without any cost."

"I know that, my dear sirs, I am well aware how that

matter is arranged, but it does not, to my mind, remove the objection. There must be something wrong, either in the views and feelings of the church itself, or, as I said, in the organization of your religious societies. When a building is erected for the worship of Almighty God, and solemnly consecrated to Him, it becomes a place where no such invidious distinctions can be proper,— the whole tenor of the gospel is against it, the practice of our Master and his Apostles is against it, and for my own part I had rather preach in a market-place or a public square, where the poor and the outcasts could come without shame, than in the most splendid edifice where none but those who could command a certain amount of money, might enter."

"But, my good sir," said Mr. Tremain, "how is the difficulty to be avoided? Our buildings cost a large sum, oftentimes considerable portion of the money has to be borrowed on mortgage, of course, then, there is interest to pay, then the minister's salary, and the cost for music, and the pay of the sexton, and a thousand items of expense too numerous to mention. All these require a large income which must be met by the rental of pews; of course the rents are so high no really poor person can afford to hire one. We have a few free seats, to be sure, which are generally occupied by transient visitors. It is not just the thing, many of us are aware of it, but how to remedy the evil, there is the trouble."

"It is not for me to say how the evil might be met. Perhaps when you who are in the midst of it, and who realize its inconsistency, shall have thought of it in connection with some passages in the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testament, a remedy will no doubt suggest itself. Our Saviour has identified himself with the poor of this world, and his disciples must beware lest, in shutting the doors of their churches against the latter, they should find they had excluded the master too."

The two ministers had designed, after having used such arguments as presented themselves to their minds, to propose that the subject should be laid before the Presbytery and that the Doctor should abide by its decision; but after hearing his remarks, they concluded to say nothing

further about it. He was not one, they plainly perceived, who would take any important step, without being satisfied in his own mind that it was best — and more than that, they had serious doubts, whether after all, he was the right man, either for that particular church or for their Presbytery. There was a decision of character manifest, which, in connection with rather obsolete views of things, might make him a troublesome member at times, and his ignorance, as they thought, of the peculiarities of city life, might get him into difficulty with his people — just as if a few conventional forms so changed the nature and responsibilities of man, that the simpler truths of the gospel must be modified to suit his taste.

After the departure of the reverend gentlemen, Mr. Tremain lost no time in unfolding the errand of a personal nature, which had brought him to Woodburn.

"And now, Doctor Ransom, as this church business is all settled, I must ask your attention to a little secular business. You are no doubt acquainted with Miss Stanley, the daughter of the deceased Mr. Stanley with whom Herbert served his apprenticeship."

"I may be said to be pretty well acquainted with her, through the medium of our young friend, but of course you and I know how to make allowance for the glorification views of a lover. I have, however, from what personal intercourse I have enjoyed, formed, I must say, a most favorable opinion of the young lady."

"I have never seen her, but must do so forthwith. And as I have a proposition to make to her, of a rather serious nature, I wish to have an introduction from a source that will place me on terms that will command her respect."

"Of course, my dear sir, you and I have no personal interest in the business for which I have more especially come here; but we both, I believe, have a sincere regard for young Herbert, and are willing to do what we can to relieve his mind, which is at present much disturbed by the situation in which Miss Stanley is placed. And in order that you may understand matters, I will tell you the cause of his uneasiness. She is, in the first place, as William tells me, a most conscientious person, without guile, unsuspicious, confiding and intensely averse to dis-

cussion or family difficulties of any sort. She will put up with almost any amount of imposition, before she will take a stand for her own rights, if thereby hard feelings would be created. Her father has, by his will, placed her under the guardianship of Mr. Blanchard, with unlimited control as to the management of her property. Mr. Stanley looked upon Blanchard and his wife as very near and dear friends; and had unbounded confidence in Blanchard as a shrewd manager, and an honest man. Under this impression, his daughter and her interests were confided to him. Mr. Stanley had also equal confidence in William Herbert, and proposed to him on his dying bed, that his name should be placed in the will, as joint executor with Blanchard. For reasons, which to Herbert appeared forcible, he declined — a thousand pities that he did so. Blanchard I know well, he is not the man Stanley took him to be; he has already, I have reason to know, used a large amount of this young lady's property in speculations in stocks. He is a reckless speculator, and he is — but no matter — he will be found out one of these days. To my certain knowledge, he is at this present time, about to raise a very large sum on fast property belonging to her in New York. The ostensible reason for his doing this is, to improve some vacant lots, in the upper part of the city, belonging to Miss Stanley, by building on them. But, sir, I know that a man who operates largely for Blanchard in New York, in buying and selling stocks, is expecting to receive this money, and when it once gets into his hand, I do not believe that either Blanchard or Miss Stanley will ever see a dollar of it. Now William Herbert knows all this, and his mind is in a very disturbed state; he fears Miss Stanley will in a short time be utterly stripped of her property."

"Well, Mr. Tremain, I suppose if the truth could be known, William would not regret it."

"I know, sir, he has some foolish notions about such matters; he has almost, I believe, taken a vow never to marry a lady that has a cent she can call her own."

"I hope he has not done that; but I am not surprised, knowing as I do some things in his past history, that he should prefer that the wife of his bosom, should look to

him, not only for a husband's love, but as a dependent on his providing care."

"He has romantic notions about that, I know; but then I know he loves Miss Stanley, and the idea that she should be stripped of her property and brought into a state of dependence on such a man as Blanchard, is wormwood and gall to him; it almost crazes him to think of it."

"Cannot the young lady choose another guardian?"

"She can, sir, and promised Herbert when he left her up here, that she would do so, if a suitable person could be found; and sir, I have consented to act in that capacity for her. But the trouble is here, sir. I fear, before the forms could be gone through with, Blanchard would make such a disposition of things that there would be little left to protect. He is an artful man about some things, though a fool otherwise. But, sir, since I left New York, in thinking over the whole matter, I have come to the conclusion that the best thing possible to be done, is that they should be married."

"Married!"

"Yes, sir, married. That is a ceremony soon performed, and when once buckled together, all the power of Blanchard over her and her property, ceases on that instant. By the will of her father, if, at any time after eighteen, she should marry, she and her husband are to be seized in full right of her property, as though she was of age."

"But, my dear sir, they are not engaged, even."

"That may be so, but Will is dead in love with her, although he will not acknowledge that he has any hope she would ever consent if he were to ask her; yet, from some things that have dropped from him in the course of conversation, I should not be surprised if she loves him full as much as he does her. But, sir, perhaps you and I can do much towards bringing this thing about. You have unbounded influence over him. He looks upon you, sir, as even more than a father."

"I have always, Mr. Tremain, regarded this relation as one with which third persons should never intermeddle."

"I agree with you perfectly, sir, on that point; that is, so far, that the parties themselves shall have no outside influence in the matter of their regard, one for another."

The action of their hearts must be a free, spontaneous emotion, and in this case, we should have nothing to do with that. But Herbert will be up here in the boat to-night; it was my request that he should come, for I might need his aid in satisfying Miss Stanley's scruples about breaking with Blanchard, she having been so long under his power. When it came to the pinch, she might demur, and want to put the matter off; but, sir, something must be done, and that, too, without a moment's delay. The money Blanchard has bargained for, is all ready; the papers are all drawn, and everything ready to close the matter up this very day, and it would have been done, but for my interference. The man who loans the money, is one of my most intimate friends. He tells me all his transactions. I advised him not to let the money go out of his hands, until he had Miss Stanley's name to the mortgage deed, and he has taken my advice, and in all probability Blanchard will come up in the same boat to-night, to get this accomplished. We must be beforehand with him, if we can. We must see her before ten o'clock to-night, and I shall use all my influence to prevent her signing those deeds; and then, sir, we must, if possible, get her to come back with us to your house. Herbert will be here unexpectedly to her, and he must do what he can to get her consent to be his wife, and then we can settle matters, sir, in short order."

The Doctor listened with profound attention while Mr. Tremain was in his business style, thus arranging for the sudden union of parties who were to seal their life's destiny by a decision of only a few hours time. He was not used to such hasty proceedings; it was his habit to look well around and examine carefully before he took any important step himself, or advised others to do so. But more especially in this case was he unwilling to decide hastily. William Herbert he loved with almost parental affection. His influence over him, he had reason to believe, was greater than that of any other friend. To exert it under such circumstances, and for such an end, was at once repugnant to all his sense of propriety. It was, therefore, some time before he made any reply to the suggestion and reasoning of the gentleman; so Mr. Tremain again remarked:

"You see, my dear sir, if any thing is done, we have no time to lose."

"That is very true, sir. I feel for the young lady, and can appreciate the necessity for prompt and strenuous measures. It may be, the step you propose is the best possible, but I have my doubts whether the parties themselves will consent to it. To use my power over a young man who looks to me for guidance, and who from peculiar circumstances, regards my advice almost with reverence in a most serious matter; but sir, this I will do. I will accompany you to Mr. Blanchard's, and endeavor to persuade Miss Stanley to return with us. I will also, if William comes, have a free conversation with him, and ascertain his views and feelings; further than this I cannot promise at present."

"Good, good, sir. Now let us hurry off as fast as possible."

## CHAPTER XVII.

We left Mr. Blanchard under very unpleasant circumstances. He had blundered into a difficulty, and knew not well how to get over it. Very soon after his second interview with Mrs. Jemima, he retired to his room for the night. He wanted to be alone and think over matters, and see what course he must take; and he could not but hope that the lady upon reflection, would herself perceive that he had not really made any proposals to her, and that his conduct at the close of their interview, manifested anything but pleasure at the tokens of her regard. But Mrs. Jemima's conduct the next morning, and through the day, whenever she had an opportunity to be alone with him, showed clearly how she understood matters. She would address him in low, confidential tones, and with all the tenderness her voice was capable of. He was distant, reserved, and kept himself out of her way as much as

possible. Fortunately for him, but very unfortunately for Miss Stanley, she returned about the middle of the day. Her presence afforded a foil against the obnoxious attentions of Mrs. Jemima. It was a great relief to him, to have one with whom he could converse without being obliged to listen to confidential remarks, and soft and tender tones. Eva had come home sooner than he expected. His spirits rose, and he was quite amiable and talkative that is, when Mrs. Jemima was not present; but if Mr. Jemima was not personally present most of the time, she was there in spirit, and her body not far off. Her suspicions began to be aroused to an intense degree. The marked change in Mr. Blanchard, as soon as Miss Eva arrived, his very particular attention to her, and the lively manner in which he conversed, whenever her (Mrs. Jemima's) presence was withdrawn, all tended to kindle a fire within. She was nervous, restless, going in and out apparently on very urgent business, but keeping most of the time within hearing and seeing distance.

But the severity of trial was yet to come. Mr. Blanchard had been thinking hard all day, and had at last made up his mind what to do. He dare not risk another interview. He would write a short note, and as he was designing to go to New York that evening, he would hand it to her as he left, or he would leave it with Eva to give it to her. It was not an easy matter for Mr. Blanchard to write such an article, and it required several sheets on paper to be wasted before any thing in right shape could be accomplished. The following, however, he finally settled upon as the best he could do, it certainly was explicit.

"COUSIN: — You have misunderstood my intention. I did not ask you to marry me. I merely wished to let you know that I intended to get married; and that I wanted your assistance in making matters smooth. I hope you will take it all in good part, and let it pass as a mistake. I shall be back soon as possible.

Yours truly, &c."

On leaving, he handed the letter, directed and sealed, to Eva, saying —



"There is a little misunderstanding between Aunt Jemima and me, and this note will explain things to her. Will you please hand it to her after I am gone?"

"Oh, certainly," replied the innocent, guileless young lady, "with pleasure."

And very soon after Mr. Blanchard had left, with a pleasant smile upon her countenance, she placed the document into the hand of the lady.

"Who is this from?"

"I suppose, of course, from Mr. Blanchard — he asked me to hand it to you."

"Asked *you*!"

Eva did not reply, for she saw that the countenance of Mrs. Jemima was distorted by that almost demoniac scowl which, at times, marred her visage; and was about to go into her own room, when Mrs. Jemima caught her arm.

"Don't go — come in here with me — I want to talk with you?"

The clasp about her arm was so severe, and the tones of the voice so stern, that Eva was somewhat alarmed, although she endeavored to conceal her feelings, and yielded at once to the request. As Eva took a seat, the infuriated woman turned the lock of the door and put the key in her pocket. She then went near the lamp in order to read more particularly the letter which had so worked up her wrath. Eva was one of those gentle natures, that not only shrink from contention as the sensitive plant shrinks from the touch, but a stunning effect is produced upon the mind, that prevents a proper possession of the faculty of thought and speech. She sat, therefore, mute, and for a few minutes scarcely exercising her thinking powers. An undefined dread of the person within whose power she had so suddenly been placed, she had long indulged. She knew her to possess an ungovernable temper. It had never as yet been brought to bear upon her, and she had been careful to avoid all difficulty with her; in fact, she had very little to do with Mrs. Jemima or Mrs. Jemima with her. She had her own rooms, and her old nurse to wait upon her. She took her meals with the family, or if indisposed, they were carried to her room; and of late Mr. Blanchard had been very particular in see-

ing that every attention was paid to her when at the table, or that the very nicest of every thing on the table or in the house was provided and sent up to her when, for any cause, she did not come down. This, no doubt, was noticed, and had its influence; but hitherto, however Mrs. Jemima may have felt, she had treated the young lady with all respect. And yet this dread which Eva felt, had some foundation besides the mere fact that the lady had a very violent temper. There were rumors of a very unpleasant nature that had only of late reached the ears of Eva, and perhaps no one in the family besides herself had heard them. They had come to her through Aunt Betsey — or Lizzie as she was more generally called, — her nurse, who had, just before she left New York, met with an old acquaintance who had lived in the family of Mrs. Jemima, and was there when Mr. Richards died; and she affirmed it as her belief that "it was no natural sickness which carried off Mr. Richards, and that the doctor said his disease was a very strange one; and it was her firm belief he either poisoned himself or it was administered by somebody else. She also believed a certain person was not a bit too good to do it. She is a very devil when she gets a spite against man or woman."

Now Aunt Betsey, whether wisely or not, had communicated this gossip to Eva but to no other person, and Eva had strictly charged her never to open her lips to any human being on the subject, and likewise said it was no doubt a foolish suspicion on the part of the person who had told her. And yet Eva was somewhat affected by what she had heard, and the more so, as she had of late at several different times when in company with Mrs. Jemima and Mr. Blanchard, on turning her eye unexpected by that lady in the direction she was sitting, been not a little startled at perceiving the peculiar expression on that lady's countenance, and as their eyes met, Eva instinctively turned away; there was something in the look that sent a chill to her heart. And now all these circumstances are working in her mind, and yet so perfectly unconscious was she of having done ought to cause the displeasure of the lady, that she could not quite make herself believe there was reason for any fear. What she dreaded most was witness-

ing some outbreak of passion, and being perhaps compelled to hear the outpouring of her wrath upon some member of the family. While Eva was thinking, Mrs. Jemima was reading; it took longer to do this than the length of the epistle seemed to require,—perhaps the writing was not very legible, or she read it over more than once, that she might be sure of its contents. Having, however, at length finished the task, she crumpled the letter up in her hand in a passionate manner, and approaching Eva held out the clenched hand very near to her:

"And *you* know all about this."

Eva trembled, but her self-possession was returning—she answered in as calm a manner as possible,

"I know nothing whatever about it."

"You do—you know you do—don't lie to *me*."

This violent and vulgar address brought the rich blood to Eva's face; she fixed her mild blue eyes fixedly on the angry woman.

"You forget, Mrs. Richards, whom you are addressing. I am not used to such language, and shall not remain here to listen to it—open the door and allow me to depart."

"I shall not do it, you have got to hear me."

Eva started and hastened towards the window, designing to call for help, but the infuriated wretch caught her, and with main force compelled her to take a seat; Eva indeed did not resist, she felt too indignant to struggle against the violence offered her.

"Now you shall hear me—yes you shall. You want to marry Blanchard and he wants to marry you, and all you both are afraid of is the children, and he wants me to be a go-between, and make it all smooth for you both. I shan't do it—I shan't do it—and more than that, I warn you. Mind that I warn you. Think of marrying Blanchard at your peril! See what will come of it. Mind, I warn you—do you hear!

Eva heard and she saw too, for as though under a fascination she kept her eye fixed on the countenance of her persecutor, and never before had she witnessed in a human being such marks of deadly passion. The cheek was pale, the eye glassy and distended, the brow contracted, the lips pale and trembling, and the whole visage an

image of terror. To reason with a person in that condition, or to deny the accusation, Eva knew would be useless; she therefore merely stood upon her own rights.

"And who gave you authority, Mrs. Richards, to interfere with me in any way. I am not amenable to you or any one else."

"Yes, you are—yes, you are. Mr. Blanchard shall never marry you, much as you want to have him; and let me tell you more, all the family know what you are after. Why did you come up here, when you knew the children were not coming? You knew you would be alone with him, and that is what you wanted; but take care, take care. I warn you."

How much of truth there was in what the angry woman was saying, Eva did not know. She had been somewhat alarmed of late by the peculiar manner of Mr. Blanchard towards her, it might be indeed that the family had some suspicions too, such as Mrs. Jemima hinted at. There was something for her to think of. She saw at once how her conduct might be misconstrued. As she was too busily occupied with these thoughts to make any reply, Mrs. Jemima stood over her in silence, apparently ready, at any moment, to commit any act of violence, when the sound of a carriage was heard entering the yard. It was, no doubt, Joe returning. He had been to the landing to carry Mr. Blanchard. Whether she feared the coachman might obtrude upon them with some message from Mr. Blanchard, or satisfied with the warning she had given, she commenced walking the room, then suddenly taking the key from her pocket, unlocked the door and departed.

Eva sat a few moments pondering over the scene she had passed through, and then, in a very disturbed state of mind, retired for the night. Under present circumstances, however, it was no easy matter to resign herself to sleep. Her nerves had been violently shocked, and as she lay upon her pillow, the heavy throb of her temples caused her to change from side to side in restless agitation. At length she forgot the commotion of her frame, by fixing her mind intently on the circumstances in which she was placed. The story which her nurse had told her, came with great force to her mind. The behavior of that wo-

man had confirmed her worst suspicions. She believed her capable of any evil act under the influence of her violent feelings, and a terrible fear took possession of her mind. How long she laid in this state of tumultuous thought, she could not tell, but she supposed it to have been some hours, when her attention was arrested by hearing footsteps approaching her room. Her light was not extinguished. She arose and sat up in her bed. The latch of her door was turned, and the door gently opened. She was not in the habit of fastening it. There stood the woman who had so filled her mind with terror. She was clad in her night-dress, her face deadly pale, her eyes distended, but the angry scowl had disappeared. In one hand she held a small lamp, and in the other a tumbler half filled with a colored mixture. Eva said not a word, and for a moment the tall white figure was stationary, then it approached the bed.

"I was afraid you could not sleep. I am sorry I said what I did, you must not mind it. My feelings were worked up by that letter. I am very sorry, and I have brought you a little something to calm your nerves, so that you may rest. I was very foolish, but you must not think of it any more. Here, take this, dear, and then lay down and try to sleep. Is Aunt Betsey asleep?"

Aunt Betsey, as she called her, lay in the adjoining room, and the door between the rooms was partly open. As the glass was handed towards Eva, the hand that held it shook visibly, and the tones of the voice were broken and low, manifesting an agitated spirit.

Eva took no notice of what had been said further than to reply to the last question.

"I presume she is, I have not been in her room."

"Well then, take this, and forget what has happened, and try to sleep. I am afraid you will be sick."

"What is it?" said Eva, taking the glass.

"Only a little lavender and water, and a few drops of laudanum — not more than ten. Take it all, it won't hurt you."

"I don't think I need it. Laudanum never agrees with me."

Eva had raised it near enough to her lips to perceive

so strong a flavor of the article she disliked, as to make it offensive. She therefore said,

"Please put the tumbler on the table, and if I feel the need of anything I can get it," and she handed it back to the woman. As Mrs. Richards took it, her fingers touched those of Eva — they were cold as death.

"You don't forgive me, then. You won't take it because I have brought it to you."

The voice began to assume a harder tone.

"I don't need it."

"You are afraid of it."

"Why should I be afraid of it?"

"And Eva fixed her eye on the visitor; that of the latter quailed before her earnest gaze, and for the first time since entering, the color mantled her cheek. She replied in a sharp tone.

"How do I know!" and in a hurried manner she left the room, carrying the draught, whatever it was, with her, her manner evidently the reverse of what it was at her entrance; and Eva could hear the passionate slam at the door as Mrs. Richards entered her own room.

Eva now arose, and bolted her own door, and then took a seat and began to reflect on the state of things. Her mind was not slow to act when once aroused. She could not stay in that house — she did not in very distinct terms place before her mind all the reasons, but leave her present abode she *must*, and she believed that could only be done by a clandestine departure, for no doubt remained in her mind that even violent measures would be used to prevent her going away under present circumstances.

Mrs. Richards had parted from her under the consciousness that she, Eva, suspected her of an evil design — what she had done, Eva knew; what she was capable of doing she could not tell, but her suspicions were too powerful to allow her to venture an attempt at resistance to the will of such a woman, or to remain subject to her designs. Joe, the coachman, she knew was completely under her influence, — an eye servant at best; the gardener, who lived in the porter's lodge, had a bad name, and was known to have a violent temper. Blanchard wished to get

rid of him, but feared to offend him by turning him away; and the women in the house were as subservient to Mrs. Richards as if they had been slaves. As has been said, too, the house was in a very lonely, secluded spot, surrounded by mountains and woods, and no neighbors within a mile at least.

The only plan that appeared feasible to Eva was to leave the premises at once, and on foot endeavor to reach the house of Mrs. Sandford. The distance was six miles; it was night, and the road for the greater part of the way ran through dense woods, and but a few dwellings scattered at considerable intervals, but she feared not the darkness nor the loneliness of the way, and at that hour of the night there was no likelihood that stragglers would be met, — from which cause alone she need have any fear. Her only doubt was in reference to her old nurse, — should she inform her of the course she was about to adopt? The old lady was asleep, to wake her and make explanations would consume time and most likely she would insist on accompanying her. That would be impossible, the old lady could not accomplish the journey, and the disturbance made in arousing her and preparing her for going would excite the suspicions of Mrs. Jemima, whose room was next adjoining that of the nurse. She decided to leave her in ignorance, and as soon as she found a place of safety herself, the old lady could be sent for.

Moving in the most cautious manner, she arrayed herself for the journey and then extinguished the light. After having unbolted and opened her door, she proceeded with the greatest care along the corridor to the stairs. She had to pass the room in which Mrs. Jemima slept, a light was burning there, it could be seen reflected through the key-hole on the opposite wall; when near to it she paused and listened. The woman was still up, and was walking about the room apparently busy about something. For a moment she was tempted to return, but concluded to venture on. Step by step in the most noiseless manner she began to descend the stairs; one of the steps creaked under her tread. Again she paused and listened, all was still; in a moment more she heard a door open — it was the door of the lighted room. Almost choked by her beating heart, she was only kept from falling

by a tight hold of the balustrade. The noise had been heard, and no doubt the inmate of the room was listening for its repetition; the light from the room was sufficient to make Eva perfectly visible should any one look over the upper railing. Again the door is closed, and at the instant she descended the stairs and reached the hall. The front door was the only one she knew by which she could escape, for the rear one opened into the back yard and garden, around which was a high fence, and what was worse, a furious dog was kept there and at night unchained.

As she put her hand forth to feel for the key, to her dismay it had been withdrawn; for what reason she did not know; but her mind, now thoroughly filled with dread, at once put the worst construction upon it. She thought quickly of the windows from the front parlor, but their fastenings were complicated, and one of these in particular went with a spring that made considerable noise; however, as no other way of egress seemed feasible, she resolved to venture removing the bolts of the shutters. After having raised the window, she with main force attempted to restrain the spring as she pressed the hasp, but her feeble strength had little effect; its rebound echoed through the room and the hall, and could doubtless be heard by any one awake in the house. She waited not, however, to ascertain its effect, but springing through the window on the piazza, made all the speed she was capable of across the carriage path into the grove, and from that to the path through the woods; this, she knew, led, after several windings, into the highway, or at least into an open road, and the one she designed to take, as being less likely to have travelers upon it.

She had not gone far when she turned herself towards the dwelling, and she could plainly perceive, through the openings in the wood, that lights were passing through different parts of the house — the noise had alarmed them, and they were doubtless searching for her. Like a criminal fleeing from justice, she took the alarm and hurried on, occasionally pausing for a moment to listen if any sound of approaching footsteps could be heard.

A mile was soon passed, and the path she was upon would soon enter the more public road, when near the junction she stopped, for she thought she heard the rum-

bling of a carriage. She was right,—the tramp of horses and even the sound of voices reached her through the still night air. It would not answer for her to remain so near the road, and yet she wished to know whether it was the carriage belonging to the family; she therefore stepped aside into the thicker part of the woods, and drew nearer to the highway.

On and on came the lumbering noise, and the quick tramp of the horses told of rapid speed; it was near at hand, she could see its dark shadow as it flitted past. She recognized the voices of the two men who were seated on the high cushion in front—they were the coachman and the gardener. Whether any persons were inside, she could not tell. As soon as its sound had died away, she entered the road and traveled on. What would have been the result if she had been seen she did not know, probably compelled by violence to be carried back to an abode not only now hateful to her, but a place of terror.

The woods still skirted the highway on one side, and she kept close to them as she could, as a refuge in case the carriage should return that way, although she thought its more probable course would be to return by the more public road into which the one it was then on would in a few miles further debouch. Although the lofty trees of the forest made the way more dark and gloomy, yet she dreaded the light more than the darkness. The refuge of the woods, however, was at length lost, and for some distance the road was skirted by stone fences. She kept near to the one on the side of which she was walking, in the hope if the carriage did return that way, she might hear it in time to escape from notice by climbing over into the adjacent fields.

Suddenly she thought she again heard the distant rumble; she paused and laid her hand upon the fence, but the sound ceased, and again she proceeded. A slight hill was before her, and she made as much haste as her weary limbs would allow, in the hope that on reaching the summit she might have a sight of some dwelling, as she began to fear her strength would not hold out to enable her to accomplish the object of her wish, in reaching the home of her friends.

She had nearly reached the top when a noise as of

horses' feet again fell upon her ear. She paused—yes, she had heard aright, and again her hand was on the stone wall. She attempted to raise herself up; it was out of her power to surmount the obstacle, and to her utter dismay, but a few rods ahead she saw the dreaded object rising to the top of the hill and approaching her. She was petrified with terror; she did not even have presence of mind enough to stoop so as to afford no chance for any part of her person to be seen above the line of fence. The moon had set, but it was light enough for persons accustomed for some time to its dimness, to distinguish objects. When opposite to her, the carriage halted; the two men whispered to each other a moment, and then one of them sprang from the seat and approached her. She stood perfectly still, too much alarmed to be capable of motion.

"Is this Miss Stanley?" It was the gardener's voice.

She made no reply.

"Joe, step here. Can you leave the horses?"

The coachman sprang down, and coming close to her—

"Miss Stanley, is this you? We've been looking for you this two hours; Mrs. Jemima is most frightened to death. Come, please, get in, you must be very tired."

The voice of the man, its tones being kindly, somewhat relieved the poor frightened girl, and she began to exercise her reasoning powers. They would, no doubt, use force should she resist the request; to prevent such humiliation she concluded the better way would be to yield and go of her own accord; so, without answering, she walked as well as she could to the carriage. It was with great difficulty, however, that she was able to reach it. Her limbs trembled violently, and when once upon the cushions, settled down as helpless as an infant. The carriage went on with great speed, and very soon was at the door of the dreaded mansion. Mrs. Jemima was there, and so was her old nurse, and the servants of the house. Without answering any questions, or taking notice of any one but the old friend of her childhood, whose arm she took, glad even to have that support, she proceeded at once to her own room, followed by Mrs. Jemima and the servants. As they entered the room she said in a mild voice,

"I shall not need your help, girls."



They were about to return when their mistress, in a stern manner, called out,

"Don't you stir a step, either of you, until I bid you. Mrs. Betsey, you can take the small spare bedroom for the night. I and the girls will take care of Miss Stanley."

"Why is that necessary, Mrs. Richards?" said Eva.

"I think it necessary,—that is enough. Jane, bring a mattress and pillow and lay down here. You heard my request, did you not?" turning to the nurse and looking at her with her fierce countenance. The old woman, with the tears streaming down her face, cast one piteous glance at her dear Eva, and then left the room.

Mrs. Richards, having locked the door and put the key in her pocket, ordered one of the girls to go to rest on the mattress, while the other sat up for the next two hours, when they could change places; but to be sure that one of them should keep wide awake, and to call her if any difficulty occurred. She then retired into the room which had been occupied by the nurse.

Eva, conscious of her present helpless condition, threw herself, as she was, upon her bed, and wearied with excitement, and the labor of her journey, soon forgot her mortification and trials in profound sleep.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

In the afternoon of the second day after the scenes described in the last chapter, Mrs. Jemima was up in Eva's room, using her best endeavors to get the poor girl to taste some of the food she had prepared for her.

"I insist upon it, now, that you eat some of this broiled chicken and drink this cup of tea. You must do it, you cannot live without eating."

"I have eaten all I want."

"What have you eaten! nothing but crackers! You cannot live upon them and cold water. You will bring some terrible sickness on to you."

Eva did not reply.

"Come, now, I have coaxed you long enough; eat this you must, do you hear me!"

Eva still was silent. She sat in her rocking-chair, looking very pale and sad.

"Mary," said Mrs. Richards, "go right down and call Joe up here, and tell Jane to come too. I will see whether she can't be forced to eat."

"Mrs. Richards," said Eva, starting from her seat and with a stern countenance looking her tormentor full in the eye, "offer such an insult to me, as to bring that man servant into my room, and you shall bitterly repent of your injustice. You have me in your power now, but I have friends who are able to protect me. You have already abused your trust, in your shameful treatment the past two days, and I warn you not to add this further violence to my feelings. Mary," turning to the young woman, "bring that man up here at your peril."

What the enraged woman would have done at this bold resistance to her authority, it would be impossible to say, for just then the servant woman came up from below, and entering the room, said:

"There are two gentlemen below, wishing to see Miss Stanley."

"Didn't you tell them she was sick?"

"Well, Mrs. Richards, I didn't just say she was sick, but I said I would see if she could come down."

"You would see! Go right down and tell them she is sick, and not able to see any one."

"That would be telling an untruth, Mrs. Richards," said Eva, who had thrown her shawl about her. "I will relieve Jane from doing that by going down myself."

"Going down yourself!"

"Yes, madam, and if any violence is used to hinder me, I shall call aloud for help."

Mrs. Richards began to feel that she had carried this matter as far as prudence would permit. She saw *that* in Eva's eye, that caused her to pause in her reckless course. She, no doubt, had hoped that the scene through which the young lady had passed would have deranged her nervous system, and afforded a good pretext for the stringent measures she had adopted. In this she had utterly failed.

Eva had retained her self-possession. She had not eaten of the food sent up to her for reasons perfectly satisfactory to herself, but she had by a strong will kept her mind calm and steady, and those about her felt conscious that she was entirely self-possessed, and in the use of her reason. All that Mrs. Richards had to say, was,

"Go down then, and tell as many lies as you please."

Without making any reply to this rude speech, she at once descended to the parlor.

Both gentlemen rose as she entered.

"Oh, Doctor Ransom!" she exclaimed, "how glad I am to see you!"

"Allow me," said the Doctor, "to introduce to you Mr. Tremain, a gentleman from New York city, who wishes to see you on some special business."

"And my first business, Miss Stanley, is to endeavor to persuade you to accompany us to the house of this reverend gentleman; but you seem to be unwell! are you able to endure the ride?"

"Perfectly so, sir. But have you a conveyance that can accommodate my old nurse as well as myself? I shall not in all probability again return to this house, and the old lady will be very much in the way here."

"We have a carriage and pair of horses, and can not only accommodate the lady you speak of, but your trunks also, if you wish to take them."

The conversation was now interrupted by the sudden entrance of Mrs. Jemima. She had not been far off, and had overheard enough to know what was going on.

Without making any obeisance to the gentlemen, she addressed herself to Eva.

"You know that your uncle is expected home to-night, or to-morrow night. He will think very strange that you should leave his house and take your nurse and baggage with you; and he will be very much displeased,—*that* you may know—for he is your guardian, and you have no right to leave his house without permission; and mind, I forbid it, and if you go, it is at your own peril and those who enticed you away."

"My good madam, we will free you from all responsibility to Mr. Blanchard, or any body else. Tell Mr. Blanchard that Miss Stanley has gone with the advice and under

the protection of Mr. Tremain of New York, and tell him moreover, that she shall have the best of care; and now Miss Stanley, the sooner you can be in readiness, the better."

The decisive manner of the gentleman was rather a damper to Mrs. Jemima's temper. She had designed, when she entered the room, to have a great deal to say, but she began to think it would be of little avail. So, as soon as Eva left the room she followed, and it was not long before Aunt Betsey, assisted by one of the girls, was coming through the hall with one of the trunks.

"The way seems wonderfully prepared for us," said Mr. Tremain. "I think," said Doctor Ransom, "there must have been some difficulty—Miss Stanley's appearance would indicate that she is far from being well. I never saw greater alteration in any person in so short a time."

Mrs. Jemima again enters.

"Now, gentlemen, I think it is a great risk for you to take Miss Stanley away in her present condition; here have I and my servants been obliged to watch her night and day for two days past, for fear of her getting out and losing herself, may be, in the woods and dying there, and nobody know any thing about it."

"But what makes you think, madam, there is any danger of such a calamity as that?"

"Reason enough. It was but two nights ago, she slipped from her room in the dead of the night and went out through one of the lower windows. I heard a noise, and when I found she was gone, sent our carriage and two men in pursuit, and they found her on the way to the meeting-house."

"What reason did she give for going?"

"I never asked her the reason, but I watched her close ever since; and I tell you now she ain't well, and she will do some mischief to herself if she ain't watched, and Mr. Blanchard will be very angry when he hears how she has been carried off, and he isn't a man to be put upon in such a way."

"We will settle all that, madam, with Mr. Blanchard. And here is my card—you may forget my name—please hand him that, and tell him that gentleman will be responsible for all damages."

Eva now appeared ready appareled for the journey, and very soon the little party was on its way, leaving the gloomy abode of Woodbend at a rapid pace.

The carriage, at Eva's request, was driven to the home of her friends, the Sandfords. She did not indeed feel well, and she wished once more to feel herself in the arms of that lovely woman, who had manifested such deep interest for her welfare.

It was just at the edge of evening when the carriage stopped, and as Eva entered the house, leaning on the arm of Mr. Tremain, Mrs. Sandford met them; and the poor excited girl, exhausted by the terrible strain upon her physical and mental powers, threw herself into the arms of her friend, helpless as an infant. She was assisted to a sofa, and in a few moments gave vent to a passionate flood of tears.

Leaving her to the care of her friend, Mrs. Sandford, the gentlemen, at the invitation of Mr. Sandford, adjourned to another room, and were for some time in earnest consultation as to what steps had best be taken. At length Mrs. Sandford entered, her countenance manifesting deep emotion.

"Our dear Eva has been treated most shamefully—cruelly."

"I thought so," replied Mr. Tremain,— "by whom? Blanchard?"

"No, by that hateful woman, his cousin, or house-keeper, or whatever she is," and Mrs. Sandford in few words repeated the scene of trial the poor young thing had passed through, and adding, "this is not all; she says 'she never can be an inmate with Mr. Blanchard again,'—and calls upon all who care any thing for her, to rescue her from his power. Oh!" said Mrs. Sandford, "how I do wish William Herbert had not gone. Once Eva in her agony exclaimed, 'Oh, William, William, why did you leave me?'"

The three gentlemen looked significantly at each other, Mr. Tremain merely saying, "let it work."

"Mrs. Sandford," said Mr. Tremain, "can you keep a secret?"

"Sometimes," she said smiling, "when I make a promise to that effect."

"Well, you look as if one might trust you. William Herbert will be here this evening."

She raised both her hands. "I thought he had sailed!"

"No, he will not sail until the day after to-morrow. Don't you think it would be a happy thing all around, if our two young friends could be married?"

"Married!"

"Yes, madam, married. That will, at once, free her from all annoyance. She will be under the protection of a husband, and all trouble of procuring a new guardian prevented. Something must be done, and that without any delay, or she will become a dependent on the care of Blanchard. Can you not prepare her mind in some way for such a step, without letting her know that Herbert expects to be here? I think that had better be a surprise."

"I don't know. She is very peculiar. Why, they are not even engaged!"

"Are you not very sure they love one another?"

"I think they do. I think there is an ardent attachment on her part, and if I am any judge about such matters, on his, too; but a woman, you know, does not like to be hurried into matrimony. I fear Eva would never consent under such circumstances. Only to think of it! Married one day, and the next her husband on the ocean!"

"But such things have been, to my certain knowledge, and will likely be again. Sometimes we must submit to circumstances, and make the best of them. But in this case, it will not be married one day and off the next, but married at nine o'clock in the morning and off at ten. What do you think of that, madam?"

"I think it would be dreadful! It would be cruel! Oh dear! I never could have the heart to propose such a thing. Eva would doubt my friendship."

"Well, my dear madam, your good husband knows, for I have told him just how things are situated. There is great danger that before a new guardianship could be arranged, every dollar of that girl's property would be wheedled away. Blanchard has now unlimited power,—a wonder to me a parent could ever have placed a child in such a situation—but, by the same will, as soon as she marries after she is eighteen, she and her husband become possessed in fee of all her property,—another strange

clause without her father anticipated her marrying Herbert, in whom, I believe, he had great confidence. But so it is. If she marries William Herbert to-morrow morning, she is a free woman; her property free from the grasp of a — shall I say it? Yes, I will, for I believe it — of a rogue! If she does not, it is my candid opinion she will be in a short time penniless."

"I think," said Mr. Sandford, "that Mr. Tremain is right, and all her friends can do to accomplish the thing, they ought to do."

"And I too," said Doctor Ransom, "cannot but come to the same conclusion. I have been looking around at this matter in all its bearings, and although under common circumstances I should most decidedly object to such proceedings, yet, as the young lady is situated, there seems an evident propriety in the measure, if she can be brought to assent to it."

Mrs. Sandford returned to her friend, who was now enjoying the luxury of a good meal. Free from guile herself, she was not the most suitable person in the world to accomplish the task assigned her. Again and again she essayed to bring up the subject, but her tongue refused to bring out the idea.

As young Herbert was to meet Mr. Tremain at the house of Doctor Ransom, the two gentlemen, about the hour in which he was expected, returned to the parsonage.

It was about half past eight when a gig stopped before the door, and Mr. Tremain, who was on the watch, being intensely anxious for the appearance of Herbert, ran out to the gate.

"Ah! my dear fellow, how are you?"

"Mr. Tremain! glad to see you, sir. Mr. Roland, Mr. Tremain."

Herbert had sprung from the gig and given his hand to his employer, when seeing Roland about to depart,—

"But you are not going! you will come in surely and see the Doctor."

"Do you think it best?"

"By all means, and it may be, since I have taxed your politeness so far, that I may need your services a little further;" and then turning to Mr. Tremain, "is Miss Stanley here?"

"No, but she is not a great way off—she is at the Sandfords—come in, Mr. Roland, come in, sir; why, if I had such a delightful neighbor as the Doctor, I should want to be running in every evening,—he's a trump, sir."

"You are right there, I believe, sir," said Roland as he alighted.

The meeting between Doctor Ransom and William was marked with much cordiality; although on the part of the former, there was a seriousness of manner mingled with tenderness.

"My dear boy, I am rejoiced to see you again, and I cannot but hope a kind Providence has brought you just at this time for an important purpose."

Not comprehending the allusion, William looked intently at Mr. Tremain. "Any difficulty?"

"Nothing particular, only I want to have a little private talk with you."

"Go into the study, then, gentlemen."

William immediately led his friend into that sacred place, while the Doctor at once engaged young Roland in conversation on some topic of interest. It seemed a short time that they were absent, when Mr. Tremain re-entered.

"Doctor, I believe you are the only person who can do any thing with that young man; you have instilled into him certain principles, and you alone can get him to deviate from them. The young fool! would you believe it, gentlemen, is romantic enough even to wish—yes, I believe in my heart he wishes it—that that orphan girl might be stripped of all her property, just that he might have the pleasure of taking care of her; he loves her dearly, but he wants to have her dependent on himself alone, the foolish fellow!"

And Mr. Tremain walked up and down the room evidently greatly excited.

"I honor him for his noble feelings," said young Roland.

"Yes, yes, that is all very well for you young men, who know nothing about the world; but how does Herbert know where he will land himself? Business is precarious, ten thousand chances are flying about the world to prevent the accumulation of property, or to strip it away when it is gathered; three years from now, he may be

pretty well off, or he may not have a cent — and here is a property, earned by long years of hard labor, about to be squandered merely for the sake of sticking to a principle — hang such principles.”

And again the excited gentleman resumed his tramp about the room.

The Doctor had been seated during this scene, with his eyes bent down, and with a very serious cast of countenance; he saw the difficulties in the way, and had seen them all along, but he was looking round, and deeply agitating the question, “how they were to be met.” After Mr. Tremain had closed his last address, the reverend gentleman raised his head, and in a calm, subdued manner, thus delivered his views:

“There are some principles, gentlemen, derived from the express teachings of the word of God, which can never be allowed to bend to circumstances,— they are immutable and cannot be compromised; there are others which we may lay down for the regulation of our own conduct, right in themselves, and perhaps founded on our own past experience, or on what we have witnessed of their operation, or their neglect in others; these should always be maintained firmly, but not with such tenacity that they may not be made to yield, when a rigid adherence may cause disaster to ourselves and others. William cannot be blamed for having formed some ideas of the married relation that have made a very strong impression on his mind, and if you all know, as I do, the discipline he has passed through in his early life, you would not wonder that he shrinks from violating the rule he has laid down for his own course in this respect; but I think he is not so wedded to his principles in this matter, but that a fair exposition of the case will lead him to see what duty requires, and to yield to it.”

Mr. Tremain had stopped when the Doctor began to speak, and listened attentively; the moment the reverend gentleman had closed, he came up to him.

“Will you not, then, my dear sir, go at once and try what you can do to set things right; for I am well convinced the fellow’s principles on this subject are neither founded on scripture, nor reason, nor even common sense.

The Doctor smiled at the earnestness of the gentleman,

and immediately rose to depart; but ere he reached the door, he turned again.

“I tell you what I think, gentlemen; that a few minutes’ interview between these young folks under the present circumstances, will do more to settle matters than all our persuasions. Providence has, it seems to me, been preparing their minds for the result.”

“I only hope he will carry it through, then,” said Mr. Tremain, and again he is walking to and fro, and every little while looking at his watch. At length, as though his patience was exhausted, he exclaimed,

“I am afraid the good Doctor will be as long in eradicating those principles, as he calls them, as he has been in hammering them into that foolish fellow. It is well enough for a man to have principles, but he needs a good stock of common sense in carrying them out.”

“The Doctor himself seems to have a good share of the latter article.”

“Yes, yes, he has,— a very sensible man. I wish they would hurry a little,— there — I believe they are coming. You are going with Herbert, are you not? Be alive, there, my good fellow, and drop in a good word to help along. Don’t say any thing about noble feelings, and all that — all that is well enough in its place. Ah, Will, how are you! How do you feel, my good fellow? This was said as William entered the room, preceded by his old friend. Mr. Tremain took his hand. He saw that the young man looked sad, and seemed much excited. He placed one hand kindly on his shoulder.

“My dear boy, keep up a good heart. Things will be brighter one of these days.”

William did not speak, his feelings were too strongly excited. Young Roland arose.

“Are you ready, Herbert?”

William bowed assent, and they left the house in company.

“I wonder,” said Eva, as she was reclining on the sofa, to her good friend who had been sitting beside her, and beguiling the time by her pleasant converse, “why it is that Mr. Tremain has said nothing to me about the business for which he said he wished to see me.”

“You appeared so unwell, dear Eva, when he left you



here, that no doubt he thought you would be better prepared in the morning, after a good night's rest, to attend to it.

"Perhaps I shall. I feel much better already. Oh what a precious thing it is to have a friend!" taking the hand of Mrs. Sandford.

"You have a good many, dear Eva."

"Yes, I believe I have more than I deserve. Do you know I am very selfish."

"Not peculiarly so, I should judge; to me you seem the opposite of that."

"What I mean is, I have thought too much of my own consequence, and have not thought enough of others. I have for that reason dealt hardly with William. I have not thought enough of the circumstances in which he was placed,—poor and dependent on his own efforts, too noble minded to crouch or endure insult, and yet I have charged him with trying to forget me, when now I see that he could not have done otherwise."

"But, dear Eva, your mind may be at rest about that; you surely feel satisfied now, that he loves you, and you cannot deny that you love him."

"I do not wish to deny it."

"You feel, dear Eva, do you not, as if you were engaged to each other?"

"Oh, no, by no means."

"Would you after all that has passed, feel yourself at liberty to accept an offer from any other gentleman?"

"By that you mean, could I love another? I have never asked myself the question. The thought has never crossed my mind. Can a woman ever love but once?"

"I cannot say, dear. I think she never can. The idol which her mind worships, and to which her heart has yielded, is not likely to be embodied in two individuals."

"It sounds so strangely to me to hear people speak as they do about offers, and sometimes blame young girls for not accepting such a favorable offer, just as if a woman could help it and could force herself to love."

"The reason is that, in general, young girls are so dependent, their only chance for a station in life is by their connection with one who can place them in an establish-

ment of their own. You are differently situated, dear Eva. You are independent, and I hope may always be so. What a pity it is that William Herbert did not allow your father to place his name in the will as joint executor!"

"Yes, it seems so now."

The conversation was here interrupted by the stopping of a carriage at the door. Mr. Sandford, who was in the next room, was heard walking rapidly through the hall. Eva arose quickly and sat up.

"Did you hear that voice!" she said. "How it sounds like William's!"

"How is she?" was now heard distinctly. Eva clasped the hand of Mrs. Sandford with both of hers. "Stay by me, dear. I have no command of myself. Can it be William!"

"It may be."

At that moment the door opened. Eva arose as William entered. She stepped towards him—their hands were clasped. She looked up into his face and saw his anxious, tender look, and then gently leaned her head upon his breast and wept,—his arm was entwined around her.

"My dear, dear Eva—mine now forever—is it not so?"

"Yes, yes, forever."

"No cause for weeping, now, dear Eva. You are mine and nothing but death shall tear you from me." And saying this, he led her gently to the sofa, and sat beside her, still folding her in his warm embrace.

Mrs. Sandford was about to retire, but Eva requested her not to go, and William added his entreaty.

"You have witnessed our betrothal. We have nothing to say that cannot be said in your presence."

"Eva, dear Eva, there are reasons why this union of our hearts should be at once consummated by a union of our hands. As your husband, I shall be your guardian. Your independence is in imminent danger. I do not propose this, I tell you frankly of my own will; but our best friends advise it, and my own judgment overpowers my sense of delicacy."

"When I last saw you, William, I told you I would do whatever you thought best. Your will, hereafter, must be mine."

Mrs. Sandford's warm, loving heart, was wrought up to the highest pitch; she was weeping in sympathy with the sweet girl, and when she heard the last sentence, she folded her arm about her neck and kissing her, said,

"Dear Eva, you have a true woman's heart; may God reward you in the richest of earthly blessings,—a true husband's love."

William was much affected. He had a strong will, and tears could be restrained when those around him were weeping; but the scenes were new, the feelings aroused were never experienced, never imagined by him before, and his whole nature yielded to the hallowed influence of the moment, and now the drops stole silently along his manly cheeks.

But the hours were passing; if rest could be had it would be required for the morrow. The few arrangements were soon agreed upon, and at eight o'clock in the morning, the ceremony was to take place, that was to bind these loving hearts in God's holy covenant of marriage.

Young Roland, who had been apprised of all that was desired to be accomplished, and had entered heartily into the plan, was dispatched to the parsonage to notify the friends there of the happy issue, and to inform them of the hour at which the ceremony was to take place.

It was something of a trial to William, to tear himself from his dear Eva, but he knew that she required rest, and his sisters must be visited before he could himself sleep that night. Their surprise and joy, at seeing him, was for a moment damped by the tidings he had to communicate; but it was only a momentary shock. They knew they should not lose a brother but would gain a sister, and with joy they embraced him as they parted for the night, their minds all alive with gladness at the prospect of the morrow.

As William had formed quite an attachment to young Bradford, he and Roland were invited as his groomsmen, and his two sisters were chosen by Eva, as her maids at the ceremony.

There was early rising on that morning, for every adornment must be gathered up that the occasion demanded, and all seemed determined that it should not be a slipshod wedding. Eva had happily a dress of suitable

color, which she had never worn before, and which she determined never to wear again until the return of her husband, when, if God so willed it, she would meet him with each jewel, ribbon and flower that decked her as a bride.

Roland, too, was up early, for he was to accompany William and Mr. Tremain to the city with his carriage and four horses. He had business of importance to be settled there, intimately connected with that in which they were concerned. He had also to provide some luxuries from his wine vault, which he brought forth without stint. Donald was determined to do all in his power to impart gladness to the hearts of the guests. A great change had come over him of late, he was no longer the recluse of former days. How it has come about must be revealed in another place.

"I told you," said Mrs. Sandford, as the guests were chatting together, just before the ceremony, "that our gathering on board that sloop, and especially the episode of the storm would likely have a bearing on our future lives, and I think our present gathering proves that I am something of a prophet."

"I frankly acknowledge" said Roland, "that I have felt its influence, and look back upon it as a new era in my life."

"And that 'breaking of bread' at your hospitable board, it has given me a new relish for breakfasts ever since."

"And that Eastern custom," said Roland "has that been strictly observed?" and he looked at Mrs. Sandford for a reply.

"No sir. She *will* talk about some of her guests."

"Only good though — now papa you know that — but here comes our good minister."

The bridal scene was soon arranged, and the solemn vows registered on earth and in heaven; and Eva Stanley stood by the side of William Herbert, his lawful bride,—their hearts long united, and now their union sanctified by the seal of God.

As the friends came up to congratulate the happy pair, happy indeed that there was an end to all doubt, no power of man could now interfere with their union or sepa-

rate their interests, — but still that happiness clouded with the thought that years must intervene before the full fruition of their hopes could be realised. Mr. Tremain took the hand of the bride.

"I congratulate you most heartily my dear young friend, that you have chosen such a prudent guardian. I would trust him, myself, with all I have in the world. And seeing you have shown yourself such a true woman, and have borne yourself so nobly through this whole scene, I have concluded to tell you that I shall make arrangements that will shorten the period of his absence. In a year from now I shall hope to see you together at my house, and give you a jolly wedding party. Now may I have a kiss."

Eva had stood it out nobly, as Mr. Tremain said. No one present could have told from her appearance that she anticipated in two short hours a separation from him to whom she was plighting her faith, but this sudden turn in the wheel of destiny, the lopping off as it were of two long years of hope deferred, aroused every warm emotion; her countenance glowed with happiness, her eye sparkled. She threw her arms around the kind-hearted friend, and wept for joy.

Partings are hard, when friends who truly love have to separate, make the best you can of them. And they all did try to do that — all but Mrs. Sandford. She couldn't try. Her heart was so sensitive, she was so alive to their feelings, that the more they tried to restrain their feelings the worse she felt, until her husband came up to her and said,

"Do, dear Carrie, you had better go to bed and cry it out."

But they have not gone yet, and another carriage is just added to that which is before the gate, with its four blooded horses ready for a start. And the exclamation passes round,

"Blanchard's carriage!"

And sure enough, it was so, and the gentleman himself immediately alighted, and another after him.

"What can that mean?" said Roland to Mr. Sandford.

"It means mischief — but he is too late."

Blanchard walked up with rather a proud and haughty

gait, and stood upon the stoop. Mr. Tremain was the first to encounter him.

"I demand of you, sir, to deliver up to me my ward, whom, I understand, you took away from my house yesterday, in a clandestine manner."

"All true, except clandestine — there was nothing clandestine about it. But say, Blanchard, suppose I don't choose to deliver her up, and suppose she shouldn't choose to go with you."

"Then, sir, I have the sheriff of the county with me, who will see that my rights, as guardian, are respected. Let me see her, sir."

"Blanchard, come in, come in here — *here*," pointing to a room opposite the one to which the gentleman was going. "Don't put your head in there, it might be taken off."

"Now, Blanchard," said Mr. Tremain, "I have a secret to tell you. Do you know we have had a wedding here this morning?"

"A wedding! no, how should I know!"

"Well, it is a matter you are interested in, any how — so I'll read an advertisement to you that I have written to put in the New York morning papers —

#### MARRIED.

At the village of Woodburn on the morning of the 26th June 18 — by the Rev. Doctor Ransom, Mr. William Randolph Herbert, of the firm of Tremain & Co., to Miss Evaline Stanley, daughter of the late Robert Stanley, Esq., all of this city."

Blanchard arose, he was deadly pale, his knees trembled, and his whole frame was in agitation.

"And for this purpose you stole away that poor, foolish, crazy girl."

"I advise you, Blanchard, not to repeat the epithet you have applied to that young lady. And if you will take my advice, given to you in good faith — you do or say nothing that will prejudice you in the minds of those two young people. You are now helpless as regards her, and you well know, that by the will of her father, her husband becomes seized of all her property; and bear in mind, he is personally acquainted with the exact condition of that property, when it came into your hands. *Take*

*care then, walk softly — my warning is given in good faith."*

Blanchard made no attempt to reply, he was not so stupid as to think the words he had listened to were mere bravado, nor so blind as not to see the gulf on whose precipice he was standing. Without a word more, he left the room, ascended the carriage, followed by his companion, and was driven off towards his home, in all probability a bankrupt in name and property.

"Now, boys, for the city," said Mr. Tremain, as he came into the room where the parting scene was to take place, "the horses are prancing, they are in such haste to be on the way, and so am I, here away from my darling wife for two whole days, how do you think I stand it? — coming up to the lovely bride and addressing her."

"Your noble, generous heart sustains you."

"And may God sustain you, my dear girl; and remember, after this, I am *Father* Tremain — that boy has got a father and a good one, too. Well, good bye, Doctor, I wish you had come at our call, and I am glad you haven't, for if all I hear is true, you are doing more good here, than you could ever hope to do among us, miserable sinners in New York. *Come boys, come,*" this was said just as he had taken Eva in his arms and given a paternal kiss. And then out he hastened, as no doubt he was unwilling to witness the last embrace of William and Eva. And we will leave too.

The Author has a word to say to the reader, who has had the patience to go through the present work. You have, perhaps, become somewhat interested in a few of the characters, who may have acted an important part in the development of the story, but of whom it has been hinted, that more was yet to be said. As there are scenes of deep interest, connected with their history, which could not be brought out without increasing the present work to a forbidding bulk, he has concluded to carry out the story in another volume; and Providence permitting, you shall not wait long for its completion.