

THE
RECTORY OF MORELAND:

OR,

MY DUTY.

Pupil. What shall I do to be forever known?

Tutor. Thy *duty* ever.

Pupil. This did full many who yet sleep unknown.

Tutor. O, never, never!

Think'st thou perchance that they remain unknown,
Whom thou know'st not?

By angel trumps in heaven their praise is blown,
Divine their lot.

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THE RECTORY OF MORELAND.

CHAPTER I.

"Thou sendest thousand blessings from on high,
Who dost Thy servant through deep waters lead;
The tender heart, the careful hand, the eye
That watches all my need."

WILLIAMS.

"THE PRAYERS of the congregation are desired
for a sick person." By this announcement, the
congregation of St. James's Church, in the village of
Moreland, was startled, one bright Christmas morning.
It was such a day as we would wish Christmas always to
be. The clear, cold air gave a glow of health to every
moving thing. Each tree, shrub, and spire of grass
bristled with a silvery frost-work. A few hours' rain
the previous night, upon the new-fallen snow, had ren-
dered the travelling smooth and slippery, and the peal

of the merry sleigh-bells mingled with the chime from the church tower. The church was built in a sweet, secluded spot, retired from the main street of the village. Here the fir, the pine, and the box together continually beautified the place of His sanctuary. Those who were there assembled this beautiful Christmas morning, although neighbors and friends, were (as we have said) startled by the announcement from the clergyman, "The prayers of the congregation are desired for a sick person."

At the close of the services, while the congregation were retiring, Miss Maynard waited at the vestry, where she learned from Rev. Mr. Marshall that Mrs. Evans had been attacked during the night with a violent illness, and would not probably survive the day.

"What will become of her children?"

This question rose spontaneously to the lips of the group of matrons and maidens, who waited Miss Maynard's report.

Mrs. Evans, or, as she was called in village parlance, "Widow Evans," was the widow of an Episcopal clergyman. Her husband, though not a man of brilliant talents, or particularly attractive as a preacher, was a faithful,

God-serving pastor. His life, like that of the majority of clergymen unblest with shining parts, although filled with the love of God and man, was always a life of struggling poverty. At his death, he left his widow free from debt, with the inheritance of his good name, four children, and a broken-hearted mother. The god-parents of the little ones, some by pecuniary assistance to the mother, and all by a helping hand and sympathizing tear, lightened the otherwise overwhelming burden. Mrs. Evans declined parting with any of her children, although homes were offered; she knew she had energy, industry, and ingenuity, and might she not, with her trust in the 'God of the widow,' be enabled to keep the family together? It was a serious question in her mind, whether she should continue to reside in the large town where her husband had ministered, or seek a less expensive home in a country village. A few days after her husband's death, she had received a letter from Rev. Mr. Marshall, whom we have before introduced to our readers as Rector of St. James's, Moreland. He had been a classmate of Mr. Evans, and knew his worth and wants. Having represented the case to a wealthy landholder, a warden of his parish, he had procured for Mrs. Evans,

if she chose to accept, a cottage with a few acres of land rent free, with an employment for herself which would enable her to live comfortably. To the simple, trusting heart of the widow, this was without doubt an answer to her constant prayer for guidance. Here, when our story opens, she had lived seven years; here, about five months after her removal from town, she had given birth to her youngest son, and from this sweet spot, to which she had early given the name of Spring Cottage, she had followed to the silent churchyard her mother, and two of those little ones for whose life and comfort she so willingly toiled.

CHAPTER II.

"She wanders to the spirit-land,
And we, with speechless grief oppress,
As o'er the faded form we stand,
Would gladly share her place of rest."

"WHAT! GOING out again,— before dinner too?" said Mrs. Marshall to her husband, as she saw him, after one half-hour's rest since the morning service on Christmas day, making preparations for a winter's walk.

"Yes, Ellen, I must go again to Mrs. Evans. It is her desire to receive the Holy Communion, and I fear to defer it lest it be too late. I wish you could go with me; sister Josephine will look after the children for an hour or two."

"Sister Josephine" did not look amiable at this proposition, and the wife declined, excusing herself by the length of the walk.

The Rectory was near the church, and on the other side of the village from Spring Cottage, the home of Mrs. Evans. The clergyman chose a by-path this day; he would not pass through the main street, for his soul was filled with high and holy thoughts, and he sought retirement. His mind went back to the days of his early manhood, his struggles for an education, his life-long desire to be a clergyman.

Then before his mind's eye rose his classmate, Evans, endeared to him by many associations; he had gone to his reward, and Mr. Marshall thanked God that he had permitted him to minister to the wants of his widow and children.

Then came before his memory his own solemn vows. How had he discharged them?

Many sore trials and temptations he recalled, much of bitter that was mingled with his every-day cup; but amid all his failings and falterings, he could still see through the labyrinth of his life a thread of light held and guided by a hand of love.

He sighed deeply, as he put back the long, leafless, straggling branches of the woodbine that hung over the porch at Spring Cottage. Entering noiselessly the

little parlor, and hearing no sound but the disturbed breathing of the sufferer, he passed into the inner room, and, finding the sick person conscious and waiting for him, proceeded at once to the Office for the Visitation of the Sick. "Peace be to this house, and to all that dwell in it!" Comforting were these words to the heart of the lone widow.

"Our mother the Church hath never a child,
To honor before the rest;
But she singeth the same for mighty kings,
And the veriest babe on her breast."

Mary Evans knelt by her dying mother, and her sobs mingled with the faint responses of the widow. Before the solemn Communion service, Mr. Marshall received her last wishes from the lips of Mrs. Evans, and promised to have a pastor's care for the three orphans. When all was concluded, he gently drew Mary from the room, and talked with her so kindly of her coming trial, pointing to the only source of comfort, bringing to her mind the sweet solace there is in the "communion of saints," and telling her of her mother's Christian faith in leaving her orphaned children confidently in the care of "the Father of the fatherless," that Mary felt that it

was selfish in her to disturb her mother's perfect trust by her own agonizing grief, and promised better to control at least her expressions of sorrow.

Mary Evans had reached her seventeenth year. As the eldest child, she had known many of the sorrows of her mother, and had mourned with her; consequently her character had a maturity seldom found in girls of her age. She had a warm, impulsive heart; but her judgment, disciplined by early grief, had taught her to conceal her feelings, and this outbreak of emotion by her mother's bedside was the more violent for having been the first since her parent's illness.

Mary returned to the sick-room, with a calm, sad countenance. A change had come over the departing saint, and a few hours at furthest must close her earthly pilgrimage. Her last prayer was granted, and she retained her consciousness. Having given her dying counsel and blessing to her younger children, she took Mary's hand in hers, and drawing from her own finger the ring that had been placed there in marriage, and putting it on Mary's forefinger, said, "My darling daughter, I have not much thought for the future of my children's life; I leave them with the God of the fatherless. And,"

she added, pressing the ring, "when you look at this, remember all that is required of you is to do your *duty* in that state of life into which it shall please God to call you!" Her voice faltered, but recovering a little, and pointing upward, she whispered, "Grace 'you must call for by diligent prayer.'"

A few low, short breathings, and her soul peacefully departed.

CHAPTER III.

"Who should it be? where shouldst thou look for kindness?
 When we are sick, where can we turn for succor?
 When we are wretched, where can we complain?
 And when the world looks cold and surly on us,
 Where can we go to meet a warmer eye
 With such sure confidence as to a *mother*?"

JOANNA BAILLIE.

IN SOOTHING the grief of her sister and brother, and in attending to the necessary duties of the household, Mary found a partial relief from the load of sorrow that was pressing upon her young heart. Ralph must be quieted: his grief was violent; indeed, he was quite angry that his mother should leave him. Grace, a delicate, yielding child, ceased her intense sobbing when Mary told her of God's will, and the duty of submission, and presented all the arguments that first suggest themselves, and which the elder sister was trying, without much success, to believe and feel for herself.

The children had returned to the cottage after the funeral rites, that most desolate of all times to the bereaved heart, when home seems so utterly forsaken, and everything is freshly connected with the departed. Ralph had sobbed himself to sleep on his mother's bed, while Mary and Grace were mingling their tears in silence, when Mr. Marshall entered, accompanied by Mr. Lee. Grace sprang forward, and, throwing herself into Mr. Marshall's arms, renewed the violent weeping for which her sister had before reproved her. Mary neither rose nor spoke; but Mr. Marshall, taking a seat by her side, said kindly: "My daughter, we have come to tell you our plans. Squire Lee intends to adopt his god-son Ralph as his own. The Squire's daughters are so much older than Ralph, that he will be a little pet for them; and for yourself and Grace, I intend you shall live with me at the Rectory. How do you like our plans?"

At the sound of the words "My daughter," Mary's heart, almost chilled by the greatness of her grief, warmed toward her father's friend, and she exclaimed: "My dear pastor, mother said you would care for us, but this is too much. No, it must not be; I can try to earn a living for myself, at least."

"I will go and live with you, and call you father," said little Grace, putting back her curls, and kissing the cheek against which she had rested. "Do go with me, sister Mary, for I cannot bear to leave you here alone"; and she looked around the room with a shudder, and hid her face again.

"Yes, Mary, I shall call for you in the morning," said Mr. Marshall. "Do you think you could persuade Ralph to go with Squire Lee to-night?"

None knew the deep anguish in Mary's heart! To give Ralph away,—her darling Ralph, for whom she had cared from his earliest infancy, and who under her care, from a weak and puny infant, had become a sturdy, robust boy of seven years! Who would soothe his outbursts of grief? Who would bear with his outbreaking temper, and teach him self-control? She knew Squire Lee was a noble-hearted Christian man, but it needed a woman's gentle nature to win Ralph's affections, and of Mrs. Lee she knew almost nothing.

She did not trust herself to speak to him, but passed him to Squire Lee, who had already seated himself in the sleigh. "You and Grace must come and see Ralph often," said the Squire, as he took up the reins. Mary

did not even thank him, and it troubled her afterward, in her self-examination, to find how apparently ungrateful she was that Ralph had a home. She stood hesitating after she had closed the outer door, considering in her own mind how she should best refuse the kind offer of a home for herself. Acceptance she thought quite out of the question.

She was interrupted in her meditations by Mr. Marshall, who, coming quietly toward her and taking her hand, said, in a very decided tone: "I will come for you and Grace in the morning. I expect you to try my home awhile, Mary, and if Providence should open a way in which you can better yourself, I shall feel it my duty and pleasure to assist you."

She saw the mild, decided expression of his face, and knew it was her duty to submit to him, her spiritual guide, in temporal matters also. Mr. Marshall saw that his purpose was gained, and, leading her into the room, he commended the two children to their father's God, and went to his own home.

CHAPTER IV.

"One fatal remembrance, one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes.

O this thought in the midst of enjoyment will stay,
Like a dead, leafless branch in the sunshine's bright ray."

THE RECTORY, the home of Rev. Mr. Marshall and family, was situated near the church, and overshadowed by the outstretched arms of two immense oaks, the growth of centuries. The house was originally built by a gentleman who had sought the retirement of the country for ease and quietness. At his death, it was purchased by the parish of St. James, although the church at that time was on the village green. When the new stone church was proposed, it fortunately happened that there was near the Rectory a knoll covered with a fine growth of young pines and hemlocks. This grove was purchased, and in its lovely precincts rose the hallowed walls of the church, and under the perpetual shadow of the pines were many newly made graves.

But we have wandered from the Rectory to the church; and indeed one can hardly think of the one, without beholding the shadow of the other. The house stood at a little distance from the road: its low piazza and the luxuriant shrubbery and vines about it gave it a home-like, comfortable air. Rev. Mr. Marshall was one of nature's noblemen. With genius and talents that would have adorned any profession, he had chosen the self-denying life of a country clergyman. It was for the pure love of the work that he had entered that sacred office. Had he been a worldly man, his name would have been heralded forth into all parts of the land; but he had early quelled that ambition which seeks the praise of men, to engage heart and hand in his duties.

He had made, in his early manhood, one mistake, one which is often a lifelong cause of sorrow and suffering with many of his brother clergymen. He had engaged himself in marriage before he finished his collegiate course. Attracted by her almost faultless beauty, and her quiet ways, he had wooed Ellen Maurice; but as his holy ambition aspired to higher attainments, and his intellect advanced to maturity, he awoke to the desire for a companion. He was not married. Should he break

the engagement, or should he fulfil it? The struggle was great in that young Christian heart, but his conscience would not tell him he might be free. He knew that she loved him with all the devotion of which her nature was capable, and a breach of faith on his part would make her life unhappy, and cast a stain on his name as a Christian minister. The marriage was consummated, and Ellen Maurice never knew but her husband's heart was wholly hers. And so indeed it was, so far as others were concerned, for his affections never wandered after vain hopes; but gradually he subdued that longing for union and sympathy which every true heart seeks in marriage, and gave the wealth of his affections entirely to the Church. He had now borne the yoke of matrimony ten years, and his neck had become somewhat fitted to the burden; but the gray hairs that mingled with his dark locks, the firm, compressed lip, and an air of abstraction, especially at home, told that he had been a sufferer. Even now he had frequently to brace himself to read that passage, when it occurred in the proper Lessons, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church." There was much that was lovely in Ellen. She had great maternal affection, with

respect and admiration for her husband. She was thrifty and neat in the management of her house, but in the government and instruction of her little ones there was a want that came over the heart of Mr. Marshall, day by day. The little girls were growing up; Alice, the eldest, had reached her seventh year; Minnie and Isabelle were four and five; and who was to teach them self-discipline or self-culture, of which the mother knew nothing?

During the last year, Mr. Marshall's father had died, and his orphaned sister had come to his home. He had but little knowledge of her character, for she was but a child when he left his father's house. She was now a bright, wayward, petted, saucy girl of nineteen, with much personal beauty, and a full consciousness of her charms. There was much unsubdued wilfulness in her pouting lip, and it often required sternness on the part of her brother to keep Josephine in her proper place. She had now been several months in the family, and Mr. Marshall thought he could perceive visible signs of improvement. Indeed, she had become less overbearing and selfish, after a severe reprimand from her brother for a slighting remark she had made on "Sister Ellen's

ways." He requested her presence in the study, and there, in a manly and Christian manner, begged her to remember, that, so long as she was an inmate of his family, she must treat his wife with the respect which was her due. Josephine was fairly frightened by his cold, stern manner, and repented that she had roused him.

Mr. Marshall entered his house, after leaving the home of the orphan children, just as the candles were lighted, and the cloth spread for the evening meal. As he crossed the threshold, the noisy tones of the children in high dispute reached his ear, the voice of the mother endeavoring in vain to quell the disturbance, and over all, the angry tones of his sister Josephine, as she said, "Well, I am thankful, here comes your father; now we shall have a little quiet." The words acted like a charm; all was hushed in an instant.

Mr. Marshall drew a deep sigh, and was tempted to flee to his refuge, the study. But a nobler feeling prevailed, and he entered the room where the family were assembled. The little girls were shy at first, feeling that they had done wrong; but in a moment they were about their father, rubbing his cold hands, and pressing their warm, glowing cheeks to his lips. The traces

of tears were on Alice's face, and Minnie's brow had not lost its shadow, but their father made no reference to the cause.

"Ellen, my wife, what do you think of an addition of two to our family? I have asked Mary and Grace Evans to come to us for a while." Mrs. Marshall looked up wonderingly, while the children could not at once take in what their father meant.

"What do you think of the plan, Ellen?"

"Why, Herbert," replied Mrs. Marshall in an indifferent tone, "if you can afford it, I ought to make no objections. Mary is a good sort of a girl, and will, I dare say, help about the children, and take care of her sister. I have heard Grace is a nervous little thing."

Mr. Marshall looked disappointed.

"How old is Mary?" said Josephine, who was longing to express her wonder at her brother's imprudence, but did not venture.

"She is in her seventeenth year," said Mr. Marshall.

"Goodness! she looks fifty, I'm sure, with her demure face and stiff airs! She will be but stupid company, I fear."

"I wish some of her elders had more of her dignity

and sobriety," replied Mr. Marshall, quietly. "Children, how do you like the plan?" he added, turning to his little ones, who had clambered to his knee, and were playing with his hair.

"Will I have to give Grace my doll, papa?" said Alice.

"I doubt if she will want your doll," said he, gravely. "God has taken from her both her dear father and mother. She is very sad and lonely, and would have come with me to-night, only I persuaded her to wait for her sister. Will you not love her, my little daughters, and try to make her happy here? She has a very tender little heart, and I want you to be careful how you bruise it. Josephine, you may be a help to Mary in many things, and in some matters she can teach you."

"They are very destitute, are they not?" said Mrs. Marshall, in an anxious tone. "I heard Mrs. Lee say she wondered what supported them while their mother was living."

"Ellen, you might have told Mrs. Lee that it was industry and trust in God that supported them. But I hope no allusions of the most remote kind may ever be made in my family to their poverty."

This remark was made with that stern, decided voice and manner that expressed most fully the expectation of obedience. Mrs. Marshall and Josephine both felt that it was intended for them; for, among other weaknesses, Mrs. Marshall displayed a disposition to "court the rich," which was foreign to the nature of her husband.

CHAPTER V.

"There's a cool, collected look,
 As if her pulses beat by book,
 A measured tone, a cold reply,
 A management of voice and eye,
 A calm, possessed, authentic air,
 That leaves a doubt of softness there."

WILLIS.

THE RESIDENCE of James Lee, Esq., or Squire Lee, as he was invariably called, was a large, old-fashioned mansion, modernized here and there by the addition of wings, bay-windows, piazzas, hexagon rooms, etc., which improvements were the result of Mrs. Lee's endeavors; for the Squire, good-natured soul, never interfered in any of her plans of this sort. The entrance gates were on the main street of the village, although the house stood retired from the road in the midst of an extensive lawn, adorned with trees and shrubbery, and watered by a rapid brook. The interior of the house

was furnished with taste, and with here and there a slight display of ostentation.

Mrs. Lee was, as every one said, a fine-looking woman. Stately in her bearing and proportions, she moved like a queen. Her features were pointed and small, too small for beauty, and each and every one of them bore the stamp of selfish worldliness. She was not particularly intellectual, and yet sufficiently so to pass in society. She prided herself on her family, her fortune, and her daughters. Her eldest daughter, Virginia, like herself, satisfied her; but Jeanette gave her some trouble, by not coming as readily into her worldly maxims as her elder sister.

Mrs. Lee and her daughters, sitting at their sewing and embroidery, waited the return of Squire Lee with Ralph. The matter under discussion between the ladies must have been an exciting one, judging from the very slight flush, and the little hasty movement with which Mrs. Lee laid by her sewing, and went to the window, saying, as she raised the heavy curtain, and looked out into the entrance avenue, "Yes, this is the strangest notion I ever knew your father to take up; and I must say, Mr. Marshall's influence has had more weight with him than my wishes."

"Why, mamma," said Virginia, in a tone of authority and self-confidence ill becoming a girl of twenty, — "why should you wonder at this? It is but another proof of the deep interest papa has ever taken in everything belonging to Widow Evans. I remember, although I was but a child, when the widow first came into town; such running to the railroad station, to convey her goods to the cottage, and such interest in hearing from them! And then came the baby, this Ralph, and Mr. Marshall persuading papa to stand godfather to the boy; and then followed a violent intimacy between Mary and my loving sister Jeannie; for I believe Jeannie thinks Mary more of a saint than any of her own family."

The latter part of this speech brought the color into Jeanette's face, who had been deeply interested in the conversation, although apparently engaged with her embroidery. "Jeanette is but a child," said Mrs. Lee, making an effort to keep back something she had intended to say, "and I am sure will learn to choose the friends of her life more judiciously than she has those of her childhood."

The blood mounted higher into Jeanette's forehead, and among the sunny braids of her hair. She could re-

strain herself no longer, but, rushing into a full defence of her dear friend Mary, imprudently declared that Mary Evans had done more for her than all the rest of her friends; and finally ended by leaving the room, in obedience to the commands of her mother, for her impertinence.

"Jeanette is growing up very impulsive," said Mrs. Lee. "I sometimes think boarding-school discipline might benefit her."

"Perhaps," said Virginia, in that same cold tone of sarcasm that had before so moved her mother, "it would be well to put her under the care of our reverend rector. I hear he intends taking Mary and Grace Evans into his family, probably for instruction."

"Mr. Marshall intend burdening himself with the support of those two girls! Virginia, where could you have picked up such an idea?"

"From no less a personage than himself. I heard him in the library yesterday, telling papa his whole plan; and what a paragon of perfection he thought Mary Evans, — so pious, so devout, so lady-like, and so what all I cannot tell! On the whole, mamma, it would be hardly wise to break up this intimacy between Jeanette and this wonderful creature; she might have a leavening effect on the whole family."

"But poor Mrs. Marshall!" said Mrs. Lee; "what will she do, inefficient as she already is, and unfitted for the management of a family? I do think Mr. Marshall strangely inconsiderate to impose this additional burden upon his poor wife."

"O mamma, you need not waste pity upon her. She is just one of those individuals that have the credit of bearing everything, when in reality they bear nothing. All her responsibilities are thrown upon somebody else; and this pink of perfection that is about to be transplanted to the Rectory garden will probably be the queen of flowers there, and eventually rule the affairs of the parish."

"O nonsense, Virginia! She is but a girl of seventeen, has been in no society, and had no advantages —"

"But you forget, mamma," said Virginia, impatiently interrupting her mother, with that same ironical tone, "she is Widow Evans's daughter, than whom I have often heard papa say he knew no woman better calculated to bring up daughters. But I hear the sleigh-bells," she added lightly, as she observed how very deep the crimson dyed her mother's neck and face, — "now we are to be introduced to my brother Ralph."

Master Ralph was soon in the room where the ladies were sitting.

"Here, mother, here is a boy for you, and a brother for you, Virginia," said Squire Lee, in his good-natured, hearty tone, — "and a fine, manly lad he is too. But where is Jeanette, that she does not come to welcome her brother?"

"I have sent her to her room for impertinence," said Mrs. Lee, coldly.

A shadow passed over the brow of her husband, but Virginia, who was willing to please her father when it required not too much trouble, had drawn Ralph to her side, and given him her watch-chain and seals to play with. The boy took no notice of the trinkets, but his gaze was intently fixed on an engraving hanging on the wall near him.

"Do you like pictures?" said Virginia, in the kindest tones she could assume.

"I like angels," said the boy, unhesitatingly, "because my mamma said they were by us all the time, and helped us to be good. Do they help you to be good?" he said, looking up into Virginia's cold, handsome face with his keen black eye.

Virginia condescended no reply to the child; and Squire Lee, perceiving that the remark had not been a

fortunate one, took the boy on his knee, and endeavored to divert his thoughts. But his eye still rested on the picture.

"Are those all angels?" he said at length, addressing his adopted father.

"No, my son, that is a picture of the Blessed Virgin and her Child. But those little figures, looking up near the lower part of the picture, are angels."

"Perhaps it would be well to enlighten him as to whom the Blessed Virgin was," said Virginia, in her own tones.

"He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," said Ralph, reverentially, as if replying to himself.

"Well taught, I perceive!" said Virginia, with a sneer, and a look towards her mother.

Mr. Lee rose and rang the bell. Giving Ralph into the hands of the servant, who answered the summons, he resumed his seat. He was, as has been said, a good-natured, easy man, but withal a man of firm principle; and although slow to move, and reluctant to command, he could do it if occasion demanded. He poked the fire, arranged and rearranged his cravat, paced the room for-

ward and backward many times, and then, abruptly turning round in front of Mrs. Lee and Virginia, he said: "I have adopted this boy. I consider him my son, wherever he is. I shall provide for him as my son. I should like to keep him in my own family: it would be both pleasanter and less expensive than to put him into any boarding-school I should wish my boy to attend; but I cannot keep him here, unless he is treated as a son of mine should be."

The Squire knew his wife's weak point. She was a fashionable woman, but a strict economist, and any plan involving extra expense was sure to frighten her. She came down at once (when her husband had finished his speech) from the icy niche in which she had sheltered herself, and said, condescendingly: "Why, certainly, Mr. Lee, if you really mean to adopt the boy as our own, I must try to be a mother to him. Would you like to have him occupy the room off our dressing-room?"

The matter of a sleeping apartment was soon arranged, and before many hours the tired boy was safely ensconced therein.

CHAPTER VI.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God." — KEBLE.

"The rarer action
Is in virtue, not in vengeance."

THE DAYS and weeks of the winter glided more rapidly than Mary had supposed possible, when she stood by the open grave of her mother. To her at that moment, although so young, life seemed a long and weary road, and the end thereof the only thing to be desired. But *duty* had ever been, since she could remember, something she *must do*, and therefore she went about her daily toils at first with a sad, absent air; but perseverance in self-government, gratitude to Mr. Marshall and his wife for their kindness in giving her a home, and, above all, an abiding sense of the nearness of the

Heavenly Comforter, brought back cheerful looks and tones.

Her trials and vexations were many. Nearly the entire care of the children was given up to her by Mrs. Marshall; and although the father's conscience often told him this ought not so to be, he could not but feel happy in observing the marked change in their manners, the result of Mary's firm, mild influence.

She instructed them two hours each day, while she and Josephine had their daily recitations with Mr. Marshall. She had much to bear from the imperious temper of Josephine, and this was a new trial to her.

Mary was naturally proud-spirited, and, although humbled and subdued by Divine grace, the hints Josephine occasionally gave about her dependent situation would sometimes excite her indignation, and extort a haughty reply. Then would follow days of bitter repentance, and she would try to win the affection of Josephine by unexpected acts of kindness. This course of conduct was not understood by her companion. How could it be by one who knew nothing of self-discipline? It was indeed often looked upon by her as cringing meanness.

It happened that Josephine one morning repeated

in Mary's hearing something Virginia Lee had said about "her father's adopting Ralph out of a low family," to which Mrs. Marshall replied, inconsiderately, "Well, Josephine, it was very kind of Squire Lee, and Ralph will be better off than his sisters, for they cannot always expect to live without doing anything for their own support."

Mary, irritated by the tone and manner, as well as by the words, had replied keenly and bitterly. Mrs. Marshall had retorted. Anger and remorse struggled in Mary's bosom for mastery, when the bell rang which summoned the girls to the study for their recitations. Mary's lessons were imperfect, and she felt a sense of suffocation while repeating the little she could remember. Her face was very pale, except a round crimson spot on each cheek. Several times she was on the point of bursting into tears as she met the glance of her pastor's eye, from which she, for the first time in her life, turned away. Josephine, on the contrary, was more light-hearted than usual, and there was a bravado in her manner, that concealed any remnant of feeling that might be in her bosom.

As they were leaving the room, Mr. Marshall re-

called Mary, to repeat something he had said about the lesson. She looked out of the window, and listened with an air of indifference quite new to her teacher. He closed the study door, and taking Mary by the hand, he said, very gravely, "Mary, my daughter, will you not tell me what has happened to disturb you?"

Kindness melted her at once, and she could not speak for weeping.

"Mary," continued Mr. Marshall, and his countenance flushed for a moment, "has anything occurred in my family to cause you this distress?"

"O no, no!" she said hastily, checking her sobs, "the anguish comes from *within*."

Mr. Marshall was more and more puzzled. After waiting a long time, he said: "Mary, I feel that I have a right, as your spiritual pastor as well as your adopted father, to know anything that causes you so much suffering."

"Oh!" said she, bitterly, "it is envy, hatred, and malice. I have felt hatred towards Virginia Lee, and —" She stopped; — if she said Josephine, she must say Mrs. Marshall; for she felt that the deepest sting was planted by her want of feeling. "No," she added, "it is all my

ungoverned temper and foolish pride, that cannot bear dependence for myself nor for those I love."

"*Hatred, malice, and pride, Mary?*" said Mr. Marshall. "Do you remember that you are called next Sunday to the Holy Communion?"

"I must not go," said Mary, quickly.

"But, my daughter, you will need more than ever to go. Get your hat, and walk with me into the church-yard."

She obeyed mechanically. They went out into the sunshine. It was one of those warm days that sometimes smile upon the world in the bleak month of March. The snow-wreaths were gone, except here and there under the cold, gray walls. The birds were singing their earliest songs, and everything in nature sang. Mr. Marshall and Mary passed quickly through the church-yard gate, and instinctively took the path leading to the grave of Mrs. Evans. A long while they stood by the mound in silence.

Mary's tears were flowing fast, but there was no violence in her grief.

"Mary," said Mr. Marshall, "do you bear envy, hatred, or malice now?"

"O no!" she replied as she leaned over the headstone, "it is all gone now,—all but sorrow, deep sorrow for my own sinfulness."

"Then welcome to the Lord's table, my daughter, and find in the pledges of Christ's love strength for time to come."

They returned to the house; Mary to resume her duties, and by unusual kindness to do away the impression her burst of passion had produced; and, on further self-examination, to acknowledge both to Mrs. Marshall and Josephine that she had done wrong.

Mr. Marshall returned to his study with an undefined feeling of uneasiness; and when afterward he gathered further particulars from his wife, and knew how deep was Mary's desire for a situation where she might earn her living, he felt that it would be best for her to make an effort for her own support, should a suitable opportunity offer. He respected the feeling that actuated her, and resolved to look about, to see what could be done to assist her. In the mean time, while Mary was under mental and spiritual guidance, Ralph was subject to little or no discipline. From being an object of distrust, he had become the pet of the whole family, not excepting

Virginia, who managed to make him useful in a variety of ways. Mrs. Lee was already proud of him, he was so pretty and interesting, and she took to herself the whole merit of his introduction into the family. There was only one circumstance now attendant on his being there that troubled her, and that was the firm determination of Squire Lee (put up to it, Virginia said, by the Rector) that Ralph should see his sisters every week. This duty the Squire accomplished himself, by taking Ralph to the Rectory every Saturday, accompanied generally by Jeanette. These were very happy moments to Mary. Having learned from many sources that Mrs. Lee looked upon hers as a "low family," Mary would not intrude herself on that lady. Grace was almost wild with delight when Ralph could be her companion with Alice in their games, and the unsuspecting child often wondered why Mary would not let her sometimes go to see Ralph, when Squire Lee urged her, or Josephine offered to take her in her visits to Virginia.

CHAPTER VII.

"The fringed curtains of thine eye advance, and say
What seest thou yonder?"

"What are spirits? light indeed and gay,
They are like winter flowers, nor last a day;
Comes a rude, icy wind, they feel and fade away."

CRABBE.

A NEW INHABITANT had been added to the family at "the Mansion House," as Squire Lee's home was called by the villagers, in the person of a distant relative of Mrs. Lee,—a young, gay fellow, who had been "honorably discharged" from one of our colleges, for being one of a score of young men engaged in some kind of disturbance. Arthur Grey was not a young man of vicious principles, or bad habits generally, and had only been caught in this school-boy folly by his exuberant love of fun. He was a favorite with Mrs. Lee, having spent most of his boyhood in her family; consequently, when

he found himself in disgrace, he applied at once to be received into her household, till the term of his suspension should expire. His parents resided in the far South, and he most earnestly begged his "cousin," as he always called Mrs. Lee, if possible, to keep from them the news of his suspension. He was a young man of fine address and handsome expectations, and Mrs. Lee had no objection to him as an inmate of her family. He was not a young man of idle habits, and being ashamed of the conduct that had occasioned his dismissal, and determined if possible to regain the good-will of his instructors, he had resolved to study diligently during his absence from college, that he might be prepared to enter a higher class. Accordingly, as soon as he was domesticated at the Mansion House, he mentioned to Squire Lee, in a frank, manly way, his resolution to devote himself to study. The Squire, who highly approved of the measure, recommended him to go at once to the Rector of the parish, and study with him. And without further counsel, they took their way to the Rectory. Rev. Mr. Marshall was much pleased with the appearance and conversation of the young man; there was something very attractive in his large-hearted views, and his generous way of ex-

pressing them, and he undertook at once the pleasant task of assisting him in his studies. Mr. Grey was to come every day to the Rectory for recitations. The announcement of this plan was made the same day at the Mansion House, and so much delighted were the gentlemen with the success of their application, that they failed to observe the look of disappointment that passed between Mrs. Lee and Virginia. The expressive countenance of Jeanette, on the contrary, lighted up with animation, and she gave utterance to a long-cherished wish that she too could study with kind Mr. Marshall, instead of going to tedious Mr. Howe, who worried her with long lectures on manners, and would not allow her to move except in straight lines and at right angles. It was a new thought to her father that Jeanette might be a scholar of Mr. Marshall, and he was strongly inclined to look favorably upon it; but Mrs. Lee, who congratulated herself upon having broken up the intimacy between Jeanette and Mary, assured her husband that Jeanette was improving at Mr. Howe's, and hinted that she needed instruction in manners perhaps more than anything else. So the thought was abandoned; and poor Jeanette's pleasant visions of reunions with Mary, such as she enjoyed

when they were children together at the district school, and of nice talks with Mr. Marshall and the children, instead of the formal calls she now made with her mother and Virginia,—all these faded, and she must return again to Mr. Howe, with his stiff, cold, formal mode of instruction.

Matters were going on thus, when the outbreak mentioned in the previous chapter took place between Josephine, Mrs. Marshall, and Mary. That was almost forgotten; a better state of feeling was apparent, more kindness on the one side and confidence on the other. But the sensitive heart of Mary was again deeply wounded at the Easter meeting of the Ladies' Sewing-Society. Mary had been unusually gay and light-hearted in the social gathering of the younger members, which was allowed after candles were brought in.

Arthur Grey and Jeanette were both there, and, being warm friends of Mary, were delighted to see her throw off some of the gravity which they said ill became a girl of seventeen. Mary was surprised at herself; carried out of her usual train of thought, she had become animated and excited by new subjects and objects. Even Josephine declared, "Mary could be quite interesting if she chose."

Jeanette put her arm about her friend's waist as they went up stairs for their shawls, and said lovingly, "Mary, dear, is n't Cousin Arthur very pleasant?"

Mary replied by a warm kiss, and whispered something in Jeanette's ear that brought the brilliant color to her cheeks; but the ladies flocked around, and she said nothing. Mrs. Lee rather rudely separated Jeanette from Mary, and, bowing coldly to the latter, bade her daughter, "Hasten, for papa is waiting." Mary looked about for her bonnet. She did not care much for Mrs. Lee's coldness, it was not new to her; but as she stooped to prepare her feet for the walk, she heard Miss Harrington and Miss Maynard, two maiden ladies, inquiring in a half-whisper whether she was always to continue at the Rectory a burden on Mr. Marshall, and wonder if she had no relatives in the world to help her,—for their part, they would rather go out to service than live so; she must know that Mr. Marshall could hardly make both ends meet on his salary of six hundred, even when he had only his own family. All this Mary heard; she tried to speak, but the violence of her heart-beating prevented. She hastily threw on her shawl, and was down stairs and out at the door as soon as possible. She

heard the happy voices, the merry laugh of one and another of the young people who were going to their homes and their parents, and a deep momentary pang of rebellion shot through her heart. But it was gone when she reached the murmuring brook, where in childhood she had often played, wading up and down its course with dear Jeanette. She seated herself on the mossy granite bowlder, well known as a way-mark to every attendant at that district school. She reviewed her past life, her many griefs and sorrows; but in every cloud, young as she was, she could see "the silver lining," and recognize a Father's loving hand.

When she reached home, she met Mr. Marshall coming out at the gate in search of her. He appeared agitated, and said, in a tone of suppressed emotion: "My daughter, where were you? I have felt anxious about you. You ought not to have been left to come alone."

"I am sorry, sir, you were anxious," she replied. "I was not afraid, and have been looking at the brook by moonlight."

Josephine had heard, and reported to her brother, the conversation between Miss Maynard and Miss Harrington.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Be useful where thou livest.

Find out men's wants and will,
And meet them there. All worldly joys go less,
To the one joy of doing kindnesses."

HERBERT.

A FEW DAYS after the events related in our last chapter, Mr. Marshall said to Mary: "I expect to exchange next Sunday with Rev. Mr. Field, of G—, and I wish to leave two or three sick persons in your care; for I must go on Friday, and shall not return till Monday." Josephine, who was drawing at the study-table, looked up with a mischievous glance in her sparkling eye; but she met the look that awed her, and she refrained from saying, as she intended, that she thought sister Ellen should be the one to visit the sick of the parish.

"Here is a parcel I wish you to carry to Mrs. Wat-

kins," said Mr. Marshall, still addressing Mary, "Captain Watkins's widow. She lives just over the bridge on the other side of the brook; and here is a book I promised to send Mrs. Maynard." Mary winced a little, for she remembered Miss Maynard's words in the dressing-room, at the last Sewing-Society. "Perhaps, Mary, if you get time, you might read parts of this book to the old lady, for her daughter's engagements as dress-maker give her but little time at home. Then here is one dollar, the sum given every Saturday night to the McGinnis family, and here are some little things for the children. I believe these are all the calls that are absolutely necessary; but if you find time, look in on the colored family that have lately come into our parish. They live just by the North School-house.

"Is not Mrs. Morey quite sick, brother?" said Josephine, not looking up from her drawing.

"Yes," said Mr. Marshall, coloring slightly, "and I wish, Josephine, you would go and see her yourself."

Josephine raised her eyebrows incredulously, and then muttered, "It is new business to me."

"I know it, my sister. Sorrow and suffering are new to you, but they must come to all; and would it not be well,

if, while you have life and health and earthly comforts, you were to look sometimes upon those who are deprived of all these?"

Mary wondered afterward, when on her round of visits, why Mr. Marshall had not asked her to see Mrs. Morey; and she was much affected by his delicate thoughtfulness, when she learned that Mrs. Morey occupied Spring Cottage, from which Mary had so lately gone out an orphan.

Mary made every effort during Friday to make the visits planned for her; but she was so continually called hither and thither by Mrs. Marshall, who had taken the time of her husband's absence to commence that annual disturbance of comforts, house-cleaning, that the sun went down before Mary was released. When that time came, she was weary and her head ached, but she knew she had only one day more for the visits, and that would probably be occupied as this had been; therefore she resolved to do what she could that night.

She found Mrs. Watkins, to whose house she first directed her steps, still confined to the bed, and lamenting deeply the loss of her spectacles, which she had let fall as she was opening a letter.

"O Miss Mary, bless your heart, how glad I am to see you! Indeed, I think I am gladder to see you now, than I would be if the minister himself had come in. Little Jim has just brought me a letter, and while I was opening it, down fell my specs on the floor, and there they are, all smashed." Here she began to sob. "I wouldn't care so much about it, only they are the last my poor William brought me before he went that dreadful voyage. But you'll read the letter for me," she said, wiping her eyes, "and may be you'll take my glasses over to Dow's and get 'em mended."

Mary quietly took the letter and read it aloud.

New York.

DEER SISTER:

I can't rite much now, but only have time to say times is very hard, and i can't send you enything now. if your boys was only one on 'em girls, i would take him into my shop. i hav jist got rid of one of my girls, who behaved verry bad. i hav five now besides my foreman, and i want one more to make up my number. i wish I could get a likely country las, for these city girls is so suspitious. i was sorry to here you was sick, but did

not get yur letter til ten days after it was writ, because you did not derect it rite.

To MRS. SARAH WATKINS,

Millener and dressmaker,

Number 90 Blank Street, New York.

Yur luving sister, S. W.

Mary sat, for a few moments after reading the letter, in deep thought. She had been taught from her earliest childhood to watch the leadings of Providence, and it seemed to her (so earnest was her longing for an opening by which she might earn her daily bread) that here was a direct call to her. Her heart fluttered as she thought of the many times her dear mother had said, as she trimmed and retrimmed her bonnet with the same ribbon, "Well, Mary, you will be a milliner yet."

As soon as she could speak, she said eagerly, "Do you think, Mrs. Watkins, I would suit your sister in her shop? I don't know much about the business, but I could learn."

"*You*, Miss Mary!" said the astonished Mrs. Watkins. "Why, Mr. Marshall would n't part with you! Besides, you are a minister's daughter!"

"If I am a clergyman's daughter," said Mary, "I have my living to get, and have no wish to depend on kind Mr. Marshall."

"There," said the widow, raising her hands, and bringing them down forcibly, "there! that's jist what I told Miss Maynard, t' other day, when she came in here, she said to *read* to me, and begun by talkin' agin Mr. Marshall, because he was so taken up, she said, with you and little Gracie. I told her you arnt your livin' every day of your life in Mrs. Marshall's family; and she said you was a 'proud, stuck-up piece,' and I ended the matter by telling her she better go home and read to her poor old blind mother."

Mary closed the call as soon as she could, but not before Mrs. Watkins had altered her mind, and thought she was just the girl for her sister's shop, — only she had better cut off those long curls before she went to the city. Besides, she gave her the letter to take to Mr. Marshall, that he might judge for himself. Mary passed the house of Mrs. Maynard, for she feared to trust herself to meet the daughter, and she knew the evening would probably find her at home. She went on to the dwelling of the colored family, where she made herself very useful by

soothing the crying baby, and teaching a tall, bony girl of fourteen to make gruel for her sick mother. Mary returned home with a lighter heart than she had known for some time. She apologized to Mrs. Marshall for not telling her she was going out; who replied by saying, "I am glad you are doing something to make yourself useful, but beg you will not go gadding about the streets evenings while Mr. Marshall is away, for you know he would not approve of it."

The next day proved stormy; house-cleaning could not be continued, except those parts of it that could be accomplished with closed doors and windows. In the afternoon Mary told Mrs. Marshall she would like to take the money to the McGinnis family, and call on Mrs. Maynard. Mrs. Marshall wondered she should wish to be dragging round in the mud such unpleasant weather. "But if you are really going," she added, "you may take those books on the study-table, for Mr. Grey, and leave them at Squire Lee's; they were to have been sent yesterday, and I forgot them, in my hurry."

Squire Lee's was quite out of Mary's way, and it was very repugnant to her feelings to go even to the door; but she had heard the request, and there was no alterna-

tive. The rain came, as April rain is expected to come, in intermittent showers. It looked somewhat brighter as Mary closed the gate, and she thought she could even see a sunbeam gilding the cross on the church-tower. She stepped quickly, but as she came in sight of the Mansion House, a heavy black cloud came surging over head, and when she reached the long avenue leading to the house, the rain poured in torrents.

Arthur Grey sat by the window, engaged in reading aloud to the ladies; looking from his book, he exclaimed, "Here, cousin, is company coming to interrupt our reading. A lady, too!"

"Who can it be?" said Virginia, rising from her embroidery-frame and going to the window. "Mary Evans! in all this pouring rain! What can have sent her here to-day? Some *particular attraction*, I dare say," she added, with a glance toward Arthur.

"Do you think so, Cousin Virginia?" said Arthur, returning the glance. "Then the least I can do is to go and meet her."

"What a piece of effrontery," said Mrs. Lee, as Arthur closed the door and went into the hall to meet Mary, "to come here, when she knows how carefully I

have avoided inviting her! I am glad your father is not at home!"

"Mr. Marshall is out of town," replied Virginia, in her most sneering tone, "and it is *such* a day, she could not but know she would find us *all* at home."

"You wrong Mary," said Jeanette; "you are cruel. She is above such meanness." She rose indignantly and left the room. Arthur had already opened the hall door, and was urging Mary to come in.

"No, thank you," she said, hurriedly handing him the books. "Indeed I cannot, dear Nettie; you must not urge me," as Jeanette took her by the arm, as if to insist upon her stay. "I ran up for Mrs. Marshall, with these books; she forgot to send them yesterday."

"But look, how it pours," said Arthur. "You *cannot* go."

"O yes, I can," said she, laughingly shaking her wet curls, "just as I came."

Nettie clung to Mary, and laid her head lovingly on her neck. Looking up into her face with those soft, dove-like eyes, in which tears were standing, she whispered, "O Mary, if we could only have one of those good talks we used to have when we were at school

together, it would really do me good!" and the tears began to fall.

"Dearest Nettie," said Mary, soothingly stroking her golden locks, "I want to see you very much, but really cannot stay now. Perhaps your mother will let you come over next week with Ralph; I have something I wish to tell you."

"And me too," said Arthur, stooping towards them as they stood in that loving embrace.

Mary drew back a little, but, smiling, said, "O, of course, you will be over if Nettie comes; but now you really must let me go." And kissing Jeanette affectionately, she shook hands with Arthur, ran down the steps, and was almost in the street before Arthur made his appearance in the library, where the ladies were waiting. Jeanette did not return to her mother and sister, but ran up stairs to her own room, to have "a good cry," and spend much time in removing all traces of tears, lest they should be inquired of.

Mary went along as fast as her dripping garments would permit. When she reached Mrs. Maynard's door, the shower had ceased, and she paused in the porch to collect her thoughts for an interview with the daughter,

if she found her within. Much to her relief, the old lady was without any companion, except a young Irish girl put in charge of fires, etc. Moreover, there was blazing on the hearth a bright open fire. Mary was speedily divested of her outer garments, and drying her feet, talking at the same time with the poor old blind woman, who occupied a large arm-chair in a distant part of the room. Her Bible and Prayer-book were open before her, and she was making far better use of them than many that have eyes to see. She passed whole hours with her hand resting on those precious volumes, and her heart giving utterance to the holy words she had learned from them long ago. Mary took out the book Mr. Marshall had given her for the old lady, and spent an hour or two very pleasantly in reading aloud. The book was Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," and Mary found in a volume that delighted the aged Christian, much that soothed and comforted her own heart. But she had yet another call to make, and it was growing late.

Having taken leave of the old lady, who called down blessings on her youthful head, she was going out, when Miss Maynard entered, accompanied by Miss Harrington. They both greeted Mary most affectionately, inquired

with much interest after the family, especially the "dear good man," and ended by urging Mary to stay to tea. But she was firm and unbending to all their entreaties, and went away leaving the impression on their minds that they had not misjudged her when they called her "a proud piece." She reached home thoroughly fatigued, but happy in the consciousness of having fulfilled all her promises to Mr. Marshall.

CHAPTER IX.

"Not that the present has no joys to show,
For life is full of joys, for those whose mind
Balanced and tempered happily; they know
How the sweet drop, though well concealed, to find,
Hidden by sorrow's hard and bitter rind."

REV. J. H. CLINCH.

MR. MARSHALL did not return to his home till late the following Monday. Mary's thoughts in the mean time were dwelling on the probabilities of her pastor's acquiescence in her proposed plan. When he came from the cars, he looked worn and fatigued; and impatient as Mary was for his advice, she felt it would be wrong to disturb him with her affairs that night. But his quick eye detected the uneasiness she was trying to conceal, and when she came with Josephine and the little girls, at an earlier hour than usual, for the customary "good-night kiss," Mr. Marshall looked up into her truthful face and said, "Mary, you have not given in

your report from the sick I left in your care";—and taking a candle in his hand, he led the way to the study.

"You need not mention the books I forgot," whispered Mrs. Marshall. Mary looked her wonder, and followed to the study.

"Come, Mary, my daughter," said the kind, encouraging voice of her pastor, as he placed a little rocking-chair beside his large study-chair, "sit here; I see you have something to say to me."

"Yes, sir, I have," replied Mary, in her straightforward, truthful manner, at the same time giving Mrs. Watkins's letter into Mr. Marshall's hand. "Will you please to read this, and tell me what you think of—think of—this situation for me?"

Mr. Marshall's face grew pale for a moment, and a slightly stern look passed over his brow, but it went as rapidly as it came. He quietly read the letter, then re-read it, turned it over to see the superscription, then read it again, folded it leisurely, and put it carefully into a little drawer by his side.

"I am afraid, Mary," he said at length, speaking very slowly, "very much afraid, this will be undertaking too much for one brought up as you have been,—I mean so

retired and home-loving. You cannot expect to find a *home* with Mrs. Watkins?" This was said in a tone of sadness, that brought the tears to Mary's eyes.

"No, my dear, dear father," she said, (this was the first time she had ever called him by that endearing title,) placing both her hands over her face, and weeping bitterly, "I do not seek a *home*,—I do not wish for any home but *this*; but I have a longing desire to help myself. And you will let me try," she added, placing her hand on his arm, and looking up imploringly into his face. Mary trembled, for she feared this silence would certainly end in a decided negative.

At length he said, very gravely, "This subject requires thought, consideration, and prayer. I cannot make up my mind suddenly in so important a matter. Have you spoken to any one about it?"

"Only to Mrs. Watkins, when I read the letter. I could not help telling her my wish that I might fill the vacancy in her sister's shop. May I tell Jeanette that I am thinking of it; she is coming over to-morrow with Mr. Grey." Mary blushed, and hesitated, for she thought by association of the books, and feared he might ask her when she saw Jeanette, and then she must tell of her

wet walk to the Mansion House caused by Mrs. Marshall's forgetfulness.

But Mr. Marshall had found Mary always so open and truthful, that he did not stop to question, but said, "Perhaps it would be well for you to talk over this matter with Jeanette. She loves you very much, and will look at it in a different light." He took the letter from the drawer, and again read it carefully. "These people, Mary, are very different from the society with which you have been accustomed to associate. You will feel great want of companionship."

"I shall depend on my letters for companionship," she replied quickly.

Mr. Marshall sighed, for he saw by this remark how little she knew of the life she contemplated; but he disliked to disturb her bright hopes, and therefore dismissed her for the night, with the customary blessing of peace. Mary knew, after she had retired to her room, how deeply her pastor felt for her; for through the long hours of the night he paced the study floor, and it was not till the gray of morning appeared in the east that he left his study for his chamber.

CHAPTER X.

"Coming events cast their shadows before."

CAMPBELL.

"The fair encounter of two most rare affections."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE LONG conference between Jeanette and Mary was broken by the merry voice of Arthur Grey in the hall at the Rectory, calling, "Come, Nettie dear, we shall be late at dinner, if you don't cut short some of those last words."

When Mary told Jeanette of her plan of "getting a living," she was strongly opposed to it. She could not think of her leaving Moreland; it would be so very lonely, and what should she do? It was Mary's influence that first led her to do what was *right*, instead of what pleased herself, and she feared she should forget it all, and become the same wilful, selfish girl Mary had known at school. But her friend led her to hope for better assistance than she could render, and said, gravely

and tenderly, "Dear Nettie, if you would only come into the full communion of the Church by confirmation, as you have so often been urged to do, how it would help you in your daily life! Will you not, darling?"

"Mary, I would — it is not that I am waiting to grow better, but mamma thinks I should wait till Virginia is ready to come forward with me. I hope she may be when the Bishop comes."

They said no more on that subject. Jeanette was convinced by Mary that it was her *duty* to do something for her own support; and Nettie's last conclusion was, that there was something quite inspiring in "getting one's own living," but she could not refrain from wishing that it was anything but slavish "millinery and dressmaking."

In the mean time, while the matter was under consideration, it was observed by the family at the Rectory that now, when Arthur came to recite, Jeanette was generally his companion. Mr. Marshall was pleased with this arrangement, and thought it was brought about by the establishment of a class in Botany, which Jeanette had her mother's permission to join. Mary, considering the matter, supposed that Mrs. Lee had found reason to change her opinion about the intimacy between Jeanette

and herself, and was confirmed in her supposition by the fact that that lady had condescendingly conversed with her on two several occasions. Mrs. Marshall was gratified by any appearance of intimacy between her own family and one so *genteel* as Squire Lee's. But Josephine jumped at once to the conclusion, that there must be something to bring Nettie always with Arthur, besides Botany or Mrs. Lee. Of course, in her eyes, Arthur and Jeanette were lovers. Josephine, in the end, was not far from the truth. Circumstances had thrown these young people together; their tastes and employments were similar; they saw but little congenial society. Parents place their children in such circumstances, and then wonder at the folly of young people.

Mrs. Lee watched the progress of the affair with a pleased eye, and already congratulated herself upon having made the match. She would have preferred her eldest daughter should have been Mr. Grey's choice, and wondered that a man of taste should choose the simple child Jeanette, before the beautiful and brilliant Virginia; but she consoled herself with the thought that it was "all in the family." Virginia turned the whole matter into ridicule, and professed the most utter contempt for every-

thing of the kind. Indeed, she often told Josephine, whom she made her confidant, that "*she* would n't marry the best man that ever walked."

Arthur Grey had now been in Squire Lee's family four months, and had made rapid progress in his studies during the early part of his stay; but for the last few weeks Mr. Marshall had observed a falling off in his preparation for his lessons. Botany seemed to be the only study that occupied much of his time. He might be seen with Jeanette upon his arm, in the bright spring mornings, as soon as the sun was up, climbing the wood-crowned hills that surrounded the village of Moreland, or wandering up the course of the brook in search of the earliest spring flowers. It was a joyous time when he could find a tuft of the trailing arbutus, or the bright-eyed anemone, with which he loved to deck Jeanette's golden locks. These were sunny hours to those two young hearts, — hours without a cloud, — hours that come but seldom in this world of change, on whose brightest and purest joys is ever written, "These also must pass away."

Jeanette was just seventeen; — fragile and delicate as one of those early spring blossoms, with that childlike

loveliness, and those clinging ways, that attach by their very dependence. Arthur was in his twentieth year. Tall and well built, his fine manly proportions were fitted for the support of so tender a plant as Jeanette. He was a fine *belles-lettres* scholar, without being particularly intellectual; but he possessed those warm and generous feelings, and noble impulses, best calculated to win and hold a gentle, loving heart.

Nothing was said of the *future* in those long, bright spring days, and scarce a thought was given beyond the present, or, if given, was withdrawn immediately to the joyous *now*. Jeanette seemed to have forgotten that there had ever been a time when Arthur was not by her side; and from Arthur's memory all traces of college walls, and college days, had apparently passed away.

Let them dream on.

CHAPTER XI.

"Can thy keen inspection trace
Aught of humanity's sweet melting grace."

BURNS.

"Disgust concealed
Is oftentimes proof of wisdom, when the fault
Is obstinate, and cure beyond our reach."

COWPER.

SEVERAL WEEKS went by, after the conversation between Mr. Marshall and Mary about Mrs. Watkins and her shop, before Mary received any information respecting her prospect of a situation in that quarter. She was beginning to feel that she must give up that hope, when one afternoon Mr. Marshall said to her, "Mary, would you like to walk with me to see Mrs. Watkins?"

They went on silently till they came to the brook, when Mr. Marshall turned down through the stile, and across the meadow. They followed the course of the brook through the fields, till they came to a glen, shut

in on either side by precipitous granite bluffs, covered to their very summit with a dense growth of hemlock. The stream here descended more rapidly. A few large rocks obstructed its course, and now, swollen by the spring rains, the waters came tumbling and sparkling through the glen, forming in their course many a tiny waterfall.

Mr. Marshall and Mary, seated on a mossy rock under an overhanging crag, watched for some time in silence the foaming current.

"Mary," said Mr. Marshall at length with a sigh, "I have considered deeply, very deeply, this scheme of yours, and we are now on our way to meet Mrs. Watkins from the city, who is visiting her sister. I have made inquiries about the business, and I find she has an extensive establishment in New York, and is getting very rich. I own, my dear child, I should prefer some other employment for you. I did hope your voice might have aided you in getting your living, music is so much called for in these days. But it would require probably a year's instruction before you would be a competent teacher, and your tuition must be paid. I have thought of a school, but you are young, and besides could only teach the rudiments, and be very poorly paid, and have

nothing better in prospect. If, after we have seen Mrs. Watkins, you conclude to try your success with her, I shall give my consent, and let you go with her to New York next week."

"Next week! So soon?" exclaimed Mary, starting and turning pale.

"Not unless you wish it, Mary. I thought perhaps you would not feel quite so much like a stranger, if you went back with her when she goes."

"O yes!" said Mary, recovering herself, "I would rather go with her. I spoke hastily, because it seemed so soon to leave you all";—and the tears came as she spoke.

"I shall make a stipulation with Mrs. Watkins, that you shall be permitted to write home at least every fortnight, and as much oftener as you can find time. I shall write to some clergyman in New York, probably Dr. —, to call upon you, that you may feel at home in church. And now, my daughter, I want you to promise to write to me, fully and freely, about yourself, as to your father."

Mary pressed his hand in token of assent, for she could not trust herself to speak. Mr. Marshall saw her agitation, and, taking her arm in his, he resumed the

walk, talking in a pleasant, cheerful strain, telling her of the future, when she would come back to Moreland and have a shop of her own, and not only earn her living, but help others. Mary, cheered by his sympathy and animated by his hopes, regained her composure before they reached the further opening of the glen, and came into the lane leading to the house of Mrs. Watkins.

They found both the city and country dame at home. Mrs. Polly Watkins welcomed them with expressions of delight, and Mrs. Sarah with stately dignity, acquired, she said, "by a life-long experience in our best society." The city dame was a tall, slab-like figure, dressed in bright orange and scarlet, with an abundance of flounces and furbelows. Her whole expression, air, and manner gave evidence of perfect self-satisfaction. Mr. Marshall without ceremony made a plain statement of his wishes for Mary. He inquired her terms, and found that ten months' work would be required of Mary, if she paid nothing. He asked about the number of hours required for work. Mrs. Watkins replied, stiffly, that she was too well known, to fear that any young thing would be hurt with work under her care. Arrangements were made as satisfactory as could be expected. In spite of our

Rector's native dignity and imposing appearance, all his suggestions were met with a patronizing air, as if she was conferring upon him some everlasting obligation. It was concluded that the station omnibus should call at the Rectory for Mary on the next Tuesday, the day Mrs. Watkins had fixed for her own departure. Mary experienced a feeling of relief when the interview was ended, and she was again in the open air; yet there was a sense of disappointment mingled with the relief, for she felt she could never have one feeling in common with that cold, stiff figure. Mr. Marshall thoroughly disliked the woman, and an undefined feeling of anxiety came over him, when he thought of trusting Mary to her care.

"I declare, Polly! anybody would have thought by your palavering over that girl, that there was no other to be had for the place. I s'pose you don't know I've had over thirty after it, and I choose this one because she belongs way out here, and has no relations to come and see her."

"Well, Sally, I'm glad you like her," said Mrs. Polly, subdued by the harsh tones of her sister; "she is a nice, capable girl, and comes of a good family. But I told the young thing she'd better cut off that heap of curls, or

comb up her hair like a woman, before she went to the city."

"Cut off her curls, you fool!" said the refined Mrs. Sarah, jumping to her feet, and upsetting the light-stand, candle and all; "cut off her curls! Why, that's all the girl's got to recommend her. You don't think she'll be such a simpleton?"

"Well, I don't know,—she thinks a good deal of what I say," whined the discomforted Polly.

"Well, I wish, another time, you'd mind your own business, and not be interfering in this way; as sure as the girl cuts off her curls, I wont take her."

The next morning by sunrise "Little Jim" was at the Rectory gate, with a note for Miss Mary Evans.

DEER GURL,

Don't cut off your curls. sister says she likes 'em you'll like her better after you get akwainted with her, she's better than she looks.

Yur frend

POLLY WATKINS.

Mary felt strongly tempted to apply the shears at once to her hair; she did try to comb it back, and turn it up,

but all in vain; the long dark tresses would curl, and would not be confined by any art. The news soon spread through the family, that Mary was really going, and Josephine began to realize how great would be her loss; for although there was little congeniality between them, Mary, by gentleness and kindness, was winning from Josephine her growing esteem. Mrs. Marshall wondered that her husband should feel so grieved about Mary's departure, when she was going to do so well; for her part, she thought "Grace would do better without Mary." Mr. Marshall, indignant at her want of feeling for one so young and friendless going out into the great world alone, replied, "Ellen, for my sake do not tell the child you are glad she is going"; and retired to the study, where he held a long conference with Mary, advising, counselling, and warning, as far as he was able to see the future, and ended with saying, "Mary, the dying words of your mother will be more to you in every emergency than anything I can say, — 'Do your *duty* in that state of life into which it shall please God to call you.'"

The Sunday before Mary left Moreland, she took Grace and Ralph for a walk into the churchyard. It was a bright afternoon in May; the grass was just be-

ginning to spring from the sods on their mother's grave. A few newly-set shrubs were putting forth tender shoots, the birds were building in the overshadowing pines, and the place was dearer than ever to Mary. The three knelt in that hallowed spot, one of each of the little hands clasped in their elder sister's, while she prayed that they might continue "Christ's faithful soldiers and servants, unto their life's end."

"But, sister Mary," said Ralph, as they turned from the grave, "why do you go away? You say, to earn something for yourself and Grace. When I am a big man, I will build you a house, and then we can all stay in it. I wish I was a big man now."

"I wish," said little Grace, as the tears she had been trying to check burst forth, "I wish mamma had n't died; we were so happy at the Cottage, and mamma was never cross to me, and Mrs. Marshall is. I shall have no friend when you are gone."

"O hush, darling!" said Mary, "you grieve me. Have you forgotten kind dear Mr. Marshall, and Alice and Ralph, and Jeanette and Arthur?"

"But," said Grace, looking up through her tears, "don't it ever seem *unkind* to you, sister Mary, that God

should take away first papa, then Edgar and Willie, and last of all dear, dear mamma, and leave us three so very desolate?"

"Not unkind, — O, no, Gracie, dearest! I can sometimes feel almost glad for dear papa, he was such a sufferer, and for our two little brothers, so early called; it seems pleasant to die so young. But dear mamma, — O, it does seem strange! but we must not murmur, but try to say, though it is very hard, "Thy will be done."

"To the still wrestlings of the lonely heart
He doth impart
The virtue of his midnight agony."

How often her kind pastor had repeated these lines to her when she was in sorrow! And now they came with fresh force, and stilled the throbbing of that suffering heart.

CHAPTER XII.

"Alas! the dame was harsh and stern;
She led her weary days and nights;
She nothing knew of childhood's ways,
And how should she their nature learn?
She had no children of her own,
And in her lonesome she had grown
E'en like the rock."

TUESDAY MORNING came, and Mary, with a very pale face, had taken leave of the family at the Rectory, and was on her way to the far-off city. She held in her hand a parting note from Jeanette, accompanied by a bracelet of exquisite workmanship, braided with a curl of Mary's dark hair, interwoven with one of Jeanette's golden locks. The note contained the assurance that Mrs. Lee had given her consent to a correspondence between Mary and her daughter.

Miles on miles, villages on villages, were passed

with the customary railroad rapidity, and that tall, unbending figure sat immovable, just before Mary. She was more decidedly brilliant in her colors than at their previous meeting, having added to her red and yellow plaid dress a scarlet mantilla edged with black, with a hat and ribbons of the same hue.

"Do you know anybody in New York?" she said, in a harsh, husky voice. Mary started, for she had given herself up to reverie, supposing she would not be called upon to speak.

"Not one person," she replied, at length, with a sigh.

"Well, that's good," said Mrs. Sarah, giving a twitch to her mantilla; "there's nothing plagues me so much as to have my girls' relations runnin' in all the time,— I generally put a stop to it. I don't like this plan of the parson's about writin' home so often; this constant hearin' from their folks is sure to make girls homesick, and good for nothin'. If I had my way they should n't hear at all."

Mary colored deeply when she heard her reverend father spoken of as "the parson," and at first proudly determined not to reply; but her desire to be on comfortable terms with her mistress prevailed, and

she said, modestly, "I am afraid I should be very homesick if I did not hear from home often."

"O, no danger; you'll find enough to do to keep off the blues; there's nothin' like plenty of work to drive away thought. But I don't see as you have anything to be homesick for; they say the parson took you out of charity to keep you out of the poor-house, and I dare say he is very glad to give you a chance to get your livin'."

There was a rising in Mary's throat that almost suffocated her; she bit her lip severely to keep down the angry word she longed to speak, and the bitter tears she longed to shed. The *ten* months already began to look interminable. A journey by railroad in these days is a bitter sarcasm on the quiet old stage-coach, and early in the evening they were landed safely at Mrs. Watkins's shop, hundreds of miles from Moreland. The shop was situated in one of the most public thoroughfares in New York. Its large windows, and long counters on either side, were covered with a gorgeous display of ribbons, laces, feathers, flowers, and all the paraphernalia of fashionable millinery and dress-making. Besides everything pertaining to the business, there had been no

expense spared to make the room attractive to customers. Stands of rare exotics exhaled their delightful perfume from each window, and cages of beautiful birds were suspended in various parts of the apartment. Long mirrors reflected all these objects; and chairs of the finest French upholstery stood ready to be occupied. But what first attracted Mary's eye was a marble fountain, in whose ever-changing waters lived beautiful gold and silver fishes.

At the farther end of the shop, raised from the main floor, and enclosed by an iron railing, was an area nearly filled with a desk and an iron safe. Behind this platform were two doors, the one on the right leading to the fitting-room (so called), a small, pleasant apartment, furnished like the shop, with everything comfortable, and even elegant, for the use of the ladies who came there to be measured and fitted for their dresses. The other door opened into a long, narrow, semicircular room, evidently an afterthought of the builder, for it was wholly lighted from the ceiling. This was the sewing-room, where Mary spent many a weary day,—"stitch, stitch, stitch." This room contained nothing that was not absolutely necessary. The floor was bare, the seats were

of the most ordinary kind, and the walls were decorated with patterns of sacques, capes, collars, &c., &c. A single coarse table occupied the centre of the room. This was always covered with a promiscuous heap of half-made garments. Mary's heart grew sick as she followed Mrs. Watkins into this room, and looked at the five luckless girls, from the age of seventeen to that of twenty-seven, engaged in sewing with energy, evidently invigorated by the sudden entrance of the owner of the establishment.

"Here, Hetty," said Mrs. Watkins to a short, dumpy, red-haired girl,—she might be eighteen, she might be twenty-eight, her face being inexpressive and covered with freckles,—“here, help this girl up stairs with her trunk, and then show her the way into the eating-room, for I'm half starved, as you may suppose. It's hungry business riding from six in the morning till five at night without a mouthful.”

Hetty did as she was bid, and helped Mary with her trunk, first through a narrow alley between the shop and the next building, and up an outside flight of stairs, then up another flight of inside stairs into the attic. This was a large, unfinished room, over the whole tenement. It was lighted and ventilated by a small, semicircular

window in each end. Three bedsteads, a few rickety chairs, a single light-stand, several trunks, and some old rubbish under the eaves, completed the furniture of this apartment.

"Which of these beds am I to occupy?" said Mary, giving one glance round the room, and trying not to breathe the sigh that lay like a load on her heart.

"Well, I s'pose it's this," said Hetty, putting down one side of the trunk near the largest of the beds. "I and Nell sleeps in that ere bed, and Hat and Fan sleeps in that, and the Methodist sleeps here, and I s'pose you'll have to take up with her, 'cause we don't want to hear none of her pious talk."

"What's her name?" said Mary, with more animation than she had yet shown; for she began to think if she could only see one God-serving person she should be thankful.

"Her name is Ann Moore, and we all hate her; she's that tall, long-faced, wall-eyed woman, next the door as you came up. But I declare, if you aint a crying! You better get up and come down and get so'thin' to eat; it'll do you a sight more good than to sit there snivellin'."

Mary, faint with hunger, and weary, had sunk on her

trunk, and, leaning on her hands, had given way to her grief.

"Well, I never!" said Hetty, raising her hands. "I say, if you wont come, I must go, or boss will give me a fine scoldin', and likely a box, which is her fashion."

Mary wiped her eyes and followed her interesting companion. Hungry as she was, she would much rather have gone at once to bed than meet again that disagreeable Mrs. Watkins. Her eyes were so blinded by the moisture that would come into them, that she nearly fell the whole length of the stairs, and was only saved by Hetty's stout arm. When they came to the end of the first flight, she observed a door she had not noticed when she went up. By this they entered the rooms on the second floor, which were three in number, — two good-sized bed-rooms on the front, and a long, narrow room on the back, which served as dining-room, kitchen, wash-room, and pantry, all in one. One of the front rooms was occupied by Mrs. Watkins and Miss Turner, "the foreman," as she was always called; the other was kept as a spare chamber for any chance guests who might favor Mrs. Watkins with their company. The kitchen was, as has been said, a long, narrow room, and had

that delightful view from its windows usually presented by the rear of city houses, the sheds and back yards of the neighboring tenements. At one end of the room was a permanent table, covered with an oilcloth. It was arranged for a meal, as it always was, the dishes being invariably washed and put back in their places after every repast. Mrs. Watkins was already seated at this table, and beckoned Mary to a seat by her side. A cup of tea, a plate of dry toast, and a small piece of stale butter, made up the bill of fare.

"Hetty," said Mrs. Watkins, in an unusually pleased voice, "have n't you anything of the meat kind in the house? I tell you we're dreadful hungry." The obedient Hetty went to the cupboard and brought out a plate on which remained the bone of a ham. Mrs. Watkins took the gristly bone in her fingers, and, having shaved off all the bits she could, passed the bone to Mary, with the original remark, "The nearer the bone, the sweeter the meat."

"I suppose you don't drink strong tea?" she said to Mary, as she dashed the water into her cup. Mary ate in silence; every mouthful was forced down; there was a sickness at her heart that would have prevented

her relishing the best viands. She did venture to ask her mistress if she might be permitted to go back to the sleeping-room for the night, as her head ached severely. Mrs. Watkins, being in a pleasant mood, having found everything had gone on well in her absence, gave her consent more willingly than Mary expected. "I suppose," she added, "Hetty told you, you were to sleep with Ann; the girls don't like her, but I guess she'll suit you,—she's kind o' pious like."

Mary was glad to reach the attic once more. Here she should have at least a few hours to herself. She resolved she would not spend the time of leisure she had now (which she felt a presentiment would not come again for a long while) in weeping. She seated herself on her trunk, and read and reread Jeanette's precious letter. Taking from her carpet-bag her Bible and Prayer-Book, and from her pocket her "Little Kempis," she read the daily lessons; and having finished her communings with herself, she kneeled and committed all her cares into the hands of One who cared for her.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Let them see
That as more pure your faith,
Yourselves are gentler, purer."

SOUTHEY.

"If there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place, and say to the poor, Stand thou here, or sit here under my footstool; are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?" — ST. JAMES.

OVERCOME AS Mary was with fatigue of mind and body, she slept soundly. She was awakened, after some hours, by a low wailing near her bedside, while from the farther corner of the room came sounds of convulsed laughter and whisperings. She raised her head slightly, and saw, by the moonlight that came streaming in at the little window, the figure of a woman kneeling, apparently rapt in intense devotion. Her petitions were

audible, as she remembered one after another of the godless family in which she dwelt. Mary was impressed; she wondered how the girls dared to laugh and make a mock of such a sight. When Miss Moore had finished her prayers, which were in no wise shortened by the laughter and whispers, she came at once to bed, and soon sank into deep slumber. Mary listened for some time to the different notes of the slumberers, and then sank into sleep as profound as theirs. A bell next morning, at dawn of day, aroused the occupants of the attic. There was a simultaneous movement to dress, and Mary followed the example of the others. It was too early for her to see to read, and she had no means of lighting a lamp: she hesitated while Hetty and Nelly were calling her to come down with them. She declined, however, and, going quietly behind the bed into a retired corner, she kneeled, and offered her silent devotions to her Heavenly Father. She expected the girls would ridicule her, but they did not. Before she had ended her prayers, she was disturbed by the same sound that had awakened her in the night. It annoyed her so much, that she shortened her own petitions, resolving that in future she would take a time either before or after Miss Moore, for so solemn a duty.

Two weeks went by, and Mary sat down to write her first letter home.

New York, May, 18—.

MY DEAR FATHER:—

I have followed your oft-expressed wish, and call you "father," not only because it is your wish, but also because it affords me much pleasure. You asked me to write freely, and I will try to do so. You will smile when I tell you how *very, very* homesick I have been. I have thought often of something you once said to me: "The comfort of life depends more on the sympathy and kindness of our companions, than on any other outward circumstance." Mrs. Watkins's shop is very splendid; she has most beautiful birds and flowers in it; Miss Turner, the "foreman," as Mrs. Watkins calls her, has the care of them. The affairs of the shop are conducted in the most systematic manner, otherwise there would be great confusion. I have already arrived at the conclusion, that our mistress is an uncommonly *smart* woman. We all rise with the dawn, and each has her work assigned her. One sweeps the shop, another makes the fire and assists in getting breakfast, another puts to rights the chamber in which six of us sleep, a fourth

arranges the work-room, another prepares, as far as possible, for the dinner, that no time may be lost after we get to work; the last girl does all that is left undone by the others: this station I occupy for the present. After housework and breakfast are over,—and they are despatched with railroad speed,—we all go to the work-room, except one who assists in waiting, and in running of errands in the shop. The girls say Mrs. Watkins always brings the one she thinks the *best looking* into the shop. The five that go to the work-room remain there, with the exception of fifteen minutes allowed for dinner, and the same for tea, till ten, and sometimes eleven o'clock at night. I have not become interested in my fellow-workwomen. Miss Ann Moore, who is much older than I am, I like, because she seems to have religious principle, though she makes too much parade of her piety to suit my *taste*. The girls call her the Methodist; she is not a Methodist, however, but belongs to some other denomination. I thought I offended her very much by refusing to accompany her to her meeting. I thanked her, but said I never went away from my own church. She seemed hurt at first, but afterwards said, 'I don't like the Episcopalians, but I do like consist-

ency." Since then, she has treated me with much more kindness than before. She is much concerned because I use a Prayer-Book, *Mass-Book* she calls it; but since I told her nothing was so dear to me in the world as my Bible and Prayer-Book, she has ceased to speak of it. She is disturbed, and I own it causes me great pain, to mark the way in which Mrs. Watkins and the girls pass Sunday. Their own sewing and mending are done on that day, and after church at night they spend their time walking the streets. Miss Turner goes away to her friends on Sundays, and Mrs. Watkins never goes to any house of worship.

I try to persuade Nellie to go to church with me, but she is afraid the girls will laugh at her; she is not very bright, and is the *butt* of all the family, constantly exposing herself to ridicule by her ludicrous mistakes.

But I know, dear father, that you are wishing to hear particularly of my own church-going. I found, on inquiry, that ——— Church, where Rev. Dr. ——— officiates, was quite near; I took a seat in a side slip about half-way to the chancel. The people came flocking in; I tried to compose my thoughts, but my heart would return to our own quiet Moreland church, and

my dear pastor's voice. I was recalled by the commencement of the service. The clergyman was reading the Exhortation, and I was feeling thankful and homelike, hearing the old familiar words; when a gentleman and two ladies came to the pew. I moved towards the door, giving the ladies the upper seat, but they did not enter till I left the pew, and the young man closed the door, leaving me in the aisle. I cannot tell you how *dark* everything looked to me for an instant. I found myself going out of church, and was only arrested as I came near the porch, by a kind old gentleman who beckoned me into his seat. I felt my face grow very red. I kneeled, and tried to join in the Confession; but mortification, and I fear a little anger, disturbed my devotions. Indeed, through the whole service, the affront I had received was uppermost in my mind. I am ashamed of myself now, that I should have *felt* so much, and I resolved on my way home to tell no one but you of it. I spent the intermission in trying to become reconciled to things as they were. I confess, my dear father, I felt a pang of discontent with my situation. The "Little Kempis" came to me like your own encouraging voice, while I read, "All things are to be borne patiently, as the loss

of property, vexations of enemies, sickness, *incivilities*, severity of speech, want of consolation, the affection of friends; by these a man is proved, and is as if purged in the fire. Come unto me, all ye who labor."

I had half resolved not to go to church in the afternoon; but in this, self was not allowed to conquer, and I took my seat again with the kind old gentleman and his lady. My soul was cheered by the words I had heard from my infancy. The music was so different from our simple country singing, that I could not join with the choir till the hymn, when they sung that dear hymn of good Bishop Ken, "Glory to thee, my God, this night," and in the familiar tune. I joined with all my heart. After church, the old lady kindly complimented me on my singing, but added, that the choir were not pleased to have members of the congregation sing! I could not pass the evening as I wished. I remembered your caution about going out evenings, and stayed in the work-room. The girls were all there, with two or three young men, whose appearance and conversation were not at all agreeable to me. Mrs. Watkins is not willing we should have an extra light, or I should have gone to the attic. You will begin to think this long letter dull and gloomy.

I have written all about myself, for of what else should I write to you? I have kept the bright side till the last. The past week, a parcel came into the shop, wrapped in a Church newspaper. In looking over it, I saw a notice of the "Free Church of St. Joseph." I thought you would be willing I should go there. I inquired of Miss Moore as to its locality, and found she passed it on her way to meeting. I cannot express to you how delighted I was with all I saw and heard. The Rev. Dr. Z—— is the rector. If you are willing, I have no wish to look further for a place of worship.

I shall hope for a long letter from you very soon, if I have not wearied you with the details of this. Give my love to Mrs. Marshall, Josephine, and the dear children. Please tell Grace and Alice, sister Mary has only seen one thing in all this large city she cares much to have them see, and that is the beautiful marble fountain in our shop, in which gold and silver fishes live and thrive. I enclose a note to Jeanette; will you please give it to her? Mrs. Watkins wanted I should write my letters home on Sundays; but it did not seem to me quite right, and I told her I thought you would not be pleased.

With much love, your affectionate daughter,

The enclosed note to Jeanette ran thus:—

DEAREST NETTIE:—

Many thanks for your kind, comforting note and beautiful gift. It was a very lovely thought of yours, twining a lock of your hair with mine. You cannot imagine how grateful I am to your mother for her permission to you to write to me. Do improve it. Remember me to friends in Moreland, who all seem nearer and dearer than ever.

I feel as if I could willingly embrace poor old blind Kate, if I could see her.

Write soon, and tell all the news to your loving

MARY.

CHAPTER XIV.

"And shouldst thou ask my judgment of that which hath most profit in the world,

For answer take thou this: The prudent penning of a letter."

TUPPER.

THE WEEK after Mary's letter was sent to Moreland, she was appointed to sweep and arrange the shop. That week commenced joyously for Mary, as she watched the little fishes darting about in their cool basin, the birds as each called to his mate, and, more than all, as she inhaled the breath of the fresh morning air, when she opened the large windows, and assisted Miss Turner in watering her plants. The exercise and enjoyment exhilarated her, and she was heard for the first time singing about the shop.

Miss Turner, who had a kind heart, but was not given to conversation, turned to her in surprise and said, "Why, Mary, who would have thought you could have sung like that! Here is something," she added, as she

looked over the letters the penny post had just brought in, "that I hope will not make you cry." With this she gave Mary a letter with the Moreland stamp.

"O Miss Turner," said Mary eagerly, "where shall I go? I do wish I had some little place where I could be alone for a few minutes."

"Go to the fitting-room," said she kindly, "I will finish your work here."

Mary longed to hug that short, plain-looking person, but she refrained, and merely saying, "O thank you, thank you," she ran to the fitting-room, where she devoured, amid tears, and smiles, and warm heart-beatings, her first letter from home.

Dear, lovely Moreland! How precious it was to her now, though she had so longed to get away! She began the letter again.

Moreland, May, 18—.

MY DEAREST DAUGHTER:—

Your very nice letter was welcomed by the Rectory in general, but particularly by your father, who is most happy to claim as a daughter one who is so nearly all he could wish. Always write to me about yourself; there is no subject upon which you can write so accept-

ably. While I have your confidence, by the blessing of God, I can direct you in the right way. Parts of your letter I read to the assembled family, including Jeanette, Arthur, and Ralph, while other portions, being confidential, of course are sacred. Your judgment was correct, about writing mere letters of friendship on Sunday. It certainly is not a work of necessity. There is no danger, in our time, of keeping Sunday too strictly for hallowed purposes; the tendencies of the age are in a contrary direction. I am not at all surprised at your indignant feelings, caused by the treatment you received in the house of God. I think no lady or gentleman would have been guilty of such a breach of courtesy, and certainly no follower of Christ. I was more angry than you, when I read your simple account; an insult offered to one of my children affects me more than one offered to myself. But if we can bring ourselves to feel sorry for those who have thus far unchristianized themselves, and pray God "to give them repentance and better minds," we fulfil the "royal law of love."

I am most happy that you go to St. Joseph's Church. I have written to Rev. Dr. Z—— to have a pastor's care of you. He is a most excellent man, if report speaks

correctly, — a man of vast benevolence and earnest piety. I trust his acquaintance may be a source of pleasure and profit to you. I think my daughter will meet with many trials. How gladly would I make any possible sacrifice to spare you! But while you have a sure refuge in the Rock which is the Christian's shadow in this weary land, you need fear nothing.

I am grieved that the most of Mrs. Watkins's family are persons with whom you can have so little sympathy. You remember I feared this want of companionship for you. But, my dear Mary, every person, however small or weak, exerts an influence, and yours I am confident cannot be otherwise than favorable.

I am a poor hand to tell news; I leave that for Jeannette, as she intends writing to you very soon. We are daily expecting Mrs. Marshall's brother from California, report says with plenty of money; he will probably be a member of our family for the present.

Grace and Alice send love and kisses to you; and though they would like to see the gold-fishes, they would a "good deal rather see dear sister Mary." Grace is a good child; I have no fault to find with her; she is obedient and docile, and a great help to Alice in her

task of self-government. I cannot be too thankful that I was led to receive her into my family. Were I to say we miss you, it would be but a doubtful compliment. Your place in my family can never be filled by any but yourself, and I think it will be a matter of general rejoicing at the Rectory when the ten months are expired. Were I not very much straitened in my pecuniary resources, your stay should be shortened to six months.

Your Sunday scholars inquire affectionately for you; and Ralph's great black eyes drank in eagerly some portions of your letter. He is a pet with the Squire's family, and I am only afraid his impetuous nature will not receive those checks that are so serviceable in early youth. I shall look for your letters regularly; do not let me be disappointed, my dear daughter.

"The Lord bless you, and keep you, and cause his face to shine upon you, and give you peace," is the prayer of your

AFFECTIONATE FATHER.

Mary was aroused from the reverie into which she had fallen, after reading this letter for the fifth time, by the harsh tones of Mrs. Watkins's voice, who, in a

most excited and angry manner, was calling for her. She hastily put the letter into a safe hiding-place, and went out to meet the enraged woman. Mrs. Watkins was very obstreperous. She had, by the same mail that brought Mary's letter, received notice of the failure of a certain house with which she had large dealings. She did not strike Mary, for Miss Turner was by; but she took her very roughly by the arm, and pushed her into the work-room. The girls were assembled, and Mary then became aware that she had spent the time allotted to breakfast, in poring over her letter. Unfortunate child! this day, begun so joyously, ended in bitter tears. Everything went wrong, and upon her poor defenceless head Mrs. Watkins vented her displeasure. Those cold gray eyes, whose expression chilled you, were constantly fixed upon Mary with their most freezing glance. Her work went wrong, and she was kept up an hour after the others had retired, taking out a seam she had industriously stitched on the wrong side. Mrs. Watkins remained with her, still glaring at Mary, and finally, when the tears coursed down her cheeks and almost blinded her, her mistress angrily snatched the work out of her hand, boxed her ears, and sent her to bed in

the dark. The days were very weary during that week, for Mrs. Watkins carried out her venom by forbidding Mary to go into the shop. At length Saturday came, and she was cheered a little by thoughts of a coming day of rest. In the afternoon, Hetty came in from the shop, and said, in a loud, coarse tone, "Come, Miss Mope, here's somebody to see you; he's a parson, I'll be bound. I hope he'll make you confess your stupidity. He's in the fitting-room, if you want to see him; I knew the girls would n't want him here." Mary's face crimsoned, and her heart beat quickly; she was much relieved to find the mistress of the shop gone out. Rev. Dr. Z——, for it was he, welcomed Mary very kindly; his pleasant, comforting words lifted a heavy load from her heart, and from that time she ceased to be so entirely friendless in that large city. Before many weeks, she had a place in the Sunday school and in the church choir.

CHAPTER XV.

"It is not wise complaining,
 If either on forbidden ground,
 Or where it was not to be found,
 We sought without obtaining."
 "Love, from the country of its birth,
 Brings thoughts in sorrow, or in mirth,
 That sanctify the earth,
 Like angels earthward tempest-driven
 And waiting to return to Heaven."

AS THE WEEKS went by, Mary's wonder grew that she received no letter from Jeanette. Mr. Marshall had written again and again. Even little Grace had sent her sister her first attempt in chirography and epistolary composition; but neither of them said much about Jeanette. Spring had lengthened into the warm, long summer days of June.

Mary was again appointed to sweep the shop. A large box of waste paper met her eye, and as she pushed it back into its place, it turned over, and from among

the rubbish dropped a letter. It was directed to Mary, in a fair Italian hand, which she knew at once as Jeanette's. A flush of anger passed over Mary's pale face, as she realized how very near she had come to losing it entirely; but she was so glad to get it at all, that she forgot her indignation in the joy that it was not wholly lost. She kissed it over and over again, and then hid it, resolving to keep it till she had leisure to read it all without interruption. The opportunity came that very day; for Mrs. Watkins having been called out of town, and business not being pressing, Miss Turner gave the girls a half-holiday. The mail brought Mary another letter from her father. How she feasted in that comfortless attic on those two precious missives from her best friends!

If we would know what has passed in Moreland, all the merry month of May, let us read Jeanette's letter.

Moreland, May, 18—

DEAREST MARY:—

Forgive me that I have let two weeks pass since I received your note, without writing you; you will not wonder when I tell you why. I wish you were here now; you were always wiser than I. I cannot bear

that all the sweet sensibility, and loving sympathy, with which your heart always answers mine, should be wasted where you are. Our dear pastor misses you sadly. I was at the Rectory yesterday, and he looked so very grave, I had almost said stern, and said so few words to me, that I asked Josephine if anything troubled him; and she told me a little bit of family gossip, which opened my eyes to many things that are passed. *You* were always the one, Josephine says, that kept all messages and requests for Mr. Marshall, when he was gone from home. Mrs. Marshall is careless and forgetful. Night before last, Susan Dexter sent for Mr. Marshall, to come down to the Glen and see her poor miserable husband, who was very sick and in great distress of mind. Mr. Marshall was gone away when the message came, and when he reached home, late at night, Mrs. Marshall *did not forget* the errand, but thought it just as well to wait till morning. As they sat down to breakfast, she told her husband of the message. Josephine said she never saw him look so "awful." His face was pale as death; he said not a word, but, rising from his untasted meal, left the house. He returned in about two hours, and did not leave the study for that day and night, and tasted

nothing. They heard, in the course of the day, that Jack Dexter died in the night, calling in great distress for his clergyman. Is n't it dreadful?

But this is not what I intended to write when I commenced; perhaps I ought not to have written it; but I felt so much for our dear pastor, I could not but tell you, and beg you, if possible, to hasten your return.

Do you know Arthur is going back to college in a few weeks, and, Mary, I may tell you, I did not know how dear he was to me till now. He has asked my father's consent to our engagement; but papa thinks we are too young; I think mamma's persuasions may induce him to let us correspond. Virginia thinks me very foolish, and laughs at me continually; but, dear Mary, you will not think me foolish, when I tell you I never thought I could feel for any one as I do for Arthur. He seems like a part of myself; I am unhappy when he is away till he returns; my inmost thoughts are all his. All this spring seems like a sweet dream. I do not know how long we might have gone on as we were, for we never spoke of *love*, till this summons from college came to part us; and yet we were daily growing into each other's life. It seems to me no engagement could make us more truly

one in heart. Arthur leaves us in about three weeks, and it will be many months before we meet again. If I only had you here, Mary, I could bear the separation better, for I could talk with you of him, and there is no one else to whom I could speak in this way.

The whole village is astir now with the coming of Mrs. Marshall's brother, Mr. Anthony Maurice. He makes his home at the Rectory. He is a strange being; there is something fascinating in his soft hazel eye, and yet, when he looks at me, I am reminded always of the fabulous story of the snake and the bird. Now I think of it, Mrs. L. M. Child says it is not fabulous. Mr. Maurice is much admired in the village, is very liberal in his gifts to the church, and has, I think, helped the family at the Rectory in a pecuniary way. He is immensely rich, so says gossip. Perhaps it is uncharitable for me to say it, but his liberality does not seem to proceed from a desire to do good, but from "fancy's freaks." Arthur does not like him, though he has not said so to any one but me. Mr. Maurice has a fine tenor voice, and will lead our singing at church. Josephine does her best in your place in the choir. She is much improved of late, — "softened," Arthur says.

How you will long, in the hot days of summer, to go forth into the cool, green fields of Moreland! When will you come again? I am going forward to confirmation, dear Mary, alone, on Trinity Sunday. I shall hear your gentle voice whisper, "Courage," to my fainting heart. Dear, kind Mr. Marshall! How much more sympathy he has for every troubled soul, than one would suppose by his manner! When I spoke to him about coming forward, he seemed to know all my thoughts, my doubts, my difficulties, at once; and led me so gently and kindly to look at every doubt, and solved by his kind persuasions every difficulty, that now I feel as reluctant to go back, or wait longer, as I once did to go forward. I have only one wish ungratified, that Arthur was going with me.

I have written you a long letter, do give me one in return, and that speedily. Remember,

"A letter timely writ, is a rivet in the chain of affection."

Yours lovingly,

JEANETTE.

CHAPTER XVI.

"The silence of a daughter who should have written of her welfare
Racketh a father's bosom with sharp-cutting fears."

TUPPER.

THE BUSY season was now over at Mrs. Watkins's shop; but to Mary there came little leisure. The girls, one after another, went away, their seasons of service being ended, till Mary, Nellie, and Ann were the sole occupants of the garret.

Mary's face grew every day paler and thinner, and, as business diminished, Mrs. Watkins cut off the rations, till now the girls sometimes suffered from hunger. The long, sultry days of July came upon Mary like the rays of the noonday sun upon a plant nurtured in the shade: she wilted and drooped. Her energies, too, gave way, and weeks went and came, and she could not rouse herself sufficiently to write to those she loved. Rising at the earliest dawn, from a couch where she had slept a short and troubled sleep, and working till ten at night

without intermission, when Sunday came, much as her soul longed for the services of her beloved church, she could only lie upon her bed and rest. Nellie and Ann could better endure the close air and confinement of their life. Nellie, who had become a constant attendant at church with Mary, would now go without her, and return to sit by her side, read to her from the books she loved best, or repeat to her what she could of the sermon.

It was at this time that reports of the frightful ravages of cholera in a neighboring street startled the usually unmoved Mrs. Watkins. But it was only for herself she was frightened, and she determined on immediate flight. She wished Miss Turner to take care of the shop and the girls, in her absence. But to this proposition Miss Turner turned an absolutely deaf ear. Finally, it was concluded that Mrs. Watkins should retain the house, renting the shop only, as an auction-room, for a few weeks. By this arrangement, she could come back when she chose, and not be losing altogether during her absence. Miss Turner and Ann were to go to their friends. Nelly begged hard to accompany Mrs. Watkins to Moreland, as she had no friends, and Mary pleaded most earnestly for her with tears; but Mrs.

Watkins was very angry, wondered "if they supposed she had a bank to go to, that she could pay Nelly's board! She must go to service somewhere,—she could find places enough." Mary held the orphan Nelly to her heart that night, and prayed for guidance. They both thought of Rev. Dr. Z——, and, obtaining permission to walk out together, while Nelly was looking for a place, they went at once to his house. He heard their tale of sorrow, and took the homeless stranger in, and she became an inmate of his family. Mary parted from her with the promise of something from Moreland;—but they never met again. The sweeping scourge found Nelly, even in her shelter in the household of the good; but (as Mary afterward learned with much comfort) not before she had been "made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."

* * * * *

"Get everything ready to night, Mary, for I can't wait a minute for you in the mornin',—the cars go at six," said Mrs. Watkins, as she locked the last door leading from the house into the shop. "O, stop! here is a letter for you; they might have saved themselves the trouble, if they had waited awhile";—and she tossed Mary a letter

in the well-known hand of her beloved parent. It was very short, and smote Mary's heart with a pang of remorse. She felt that no weakness should have prevented her writing a line to him.

Moreland, July 25, 18—,
Feast of St. James the Apostle.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—

I am assured by your silence, which has now continued nearly four weeks, that something is wrong with you; but it grieves me that anything should hinder you from writing me. Are you ill? Ought I not to be informed at once? Are you in trouble? Who is your nearest and dearest friend? Mary, the services in church to-day were mournful to me, because I have no tidings of my much-loved daughter.

Are you doing your *duty*? If I do not hear this week, I shall go to New York myself on Monday morning.

Your ever affectionate

FATHER.

"To Moreland can it be?" said Mary to herself, as she looked from the swift-flying car, far off in the direction of her home.

"You'll faint away," said Mrs. Watkins when they had gone about half the journey; "there aint the least bit of color in your cheeks or lips. Oh! I recollect," she added, "you haint eat a mouthful to-day," — and she took a cracker from her carpet-bag, and gave it to Mary.

"Moreland station," shouted the conductor. Mary did not stir, till Mrs. Watkins, with a violent pull, brought her back to life; and a man lifted her in his arms from the platform. It was dusk, but the moon was rising, and Mary preferred to walk to her home, and send for her trunk in the morning; she thought the walk would do her good. So, with her small carpet-bag on her arm, she took the roundabout road that led to the church, without going through the village. Her heart beat quickly as she stepped along that well-known path. Every stone was dear: it seemed to her she would willingly lie down in some of those nooks, so precious to her childhood's memory, and sleep away her life. She could hear the distant hum of merry voices from the village street; the boys were on the green playing, — probably Ralph was there, her darling brother. It appeared like an age since she had seen him.

She hurried on. Whom should she see first? Her

limbs, weakened by confinement and hard fare, trembled. The church, with its holy walls, first met her eye, as she ascended a slight rising ground, and came near her home. There was a light in the study at the Rectory, and she could see a tall shadow flitting by the window. A horse and carriage stood at the gate: a pang of disappointment came over her, — she should meet strangers. She listened; there were voices in the garden. As she quietly entered the hall, she saw that the study door stood open; but before her resolve to go immediately there could be carried out, she was folded to the heart of her father.

But she spoke not: nature had been taxed too far, and she was carried lifeless to the study sofa. It was a very long time before Mary gave the first sign of returning consciousness; so long, that Mr. Marshall had called in Dr. Arnold, who pronounced it something more than an ordinary fainting-fit. When she did open her eyes, it was to gaze in a bewildered manner into the grave face of her father, who had never left her side. Mrs. Marshall was also there, and Josephine.

"Am I here, *here* with you?" she said, in an unnatural voice.

Mr. Marshall took her cold hand in his, as he said,

"Yes, my daughter, you are here, thank God! but you must not exert yourself," as he saw her attempt to rise, "or speak," he added, as he put his finger on her lips. "Dr. Arnold has ordered perfect quiet." And he gave her a composing draught. "Take this, and to-morrow you may be able to talk."

Mary instinctively obeyed: but was it a dream, or reality, that Josephine stooped and kissed her pale forehead.

CHAPTER XVII.

"O, what may man within him hide,
Though angel on the outward side!"

"Talents angel bright,
If wanting worth, are shining instruments
In false ambition's hand to finish faults
Illustrious, and give infamy renown."

YOUNG.

A NATURALLY GOOD constitution was in Mary's favor, and after a week's confinement to her chamber she was able to take her place with the family at the table. During her stay in her room she had explained to Mr. Marshall's satisfaction her sudden return, and asked his forgiveness for her apparent neglect in not writing.

From his sister's lips, Anthony Maurice first learned Mary's history, from the day she came as a little child to Spring Cottage. It was dressed in colors of Ellen's own fancy, retained enough of truth to satisfy her conscience.

From Mrs. Marshall he gathered that Mary was a homeless, friendless girl, a *protégée* of her husband's, a girl of uncommon pride, and without any deep principle. Anthony Maurice was quite certain with regard to the pride when he was introduced to Mary, and she merely bowed coldly, without extending her hand to meet his. From that moment he determined to make himself agreeable to Mary Evans. To this end he treated her with great respect, was particularly deferential in his address, calling her always "Miss Evans," or "Miss Mary," while Josephine was "Josey," and Mrs. Marshall was "Nellie."

Mr. Marshall was determined to do all that was in his power to restore the bloom to Mary's cheek, therefore he strictly forbade her having any care of the children or house; and though Mary's desire for the comfort of others led her always to lend a helping hand, yet she had much leisure for walking, riding, and reading, but particularly music.

When Maurice discovered Mary's genius for music, and learned that it had received no scientific culture, he earnestly devoted himself to her instruction. Mr. Marshall was pleased that Mary had an opportunity of improving her musical powers, and Josephine and she

spent many hours with Maurice in the cultivation of this attractive science.

The shyness with which Mary had first met Maurice wore away by constant association. Gradually, conversation and poetry would occupy a portion of the time allotted to music-lessons, and by and by Maurice would meet the young ladies in their walks, or invite them to show him some of the pleasant drives about Moreland. Jeanette made one of the party but seldom, for her time this month was spent in writing long letters to Arthur, and in visiting her relations in Canada. These were delightful days to Mary; she, simple-hearted girl, never dreaming of danger to herself or Josephine.

It was something new to Mary, this *romance* of life; hers had been heretofore stern reality. She would sit by Maurice while he repeated long passages from his favorite authors, and forget the man in the borrowed beauty of his poetry. It was not so with Josephine; her eye would glisten, and her cheek flush, but the tribute of her heart was given to him who opened these beauties to her, and not to the thoughts he repeated. Mary would leave him, and go about other duties with her soul filled with high and noble thoughts, and Mr. Maurice would

be remembered only as a pleasant companion; while Josephine went to her room to meditate on what she had heard, and to gather from those thoughts something addressed to herself. Anthony Maurice stood somewhat in awe before the pure innocence of Mary's heart, and he dared not repeat to her, as he did to Josephine, tender sentiments from Moore and Byron.

Mr. Marshall's mind and thoughts were at this time unusually occupied in considering a call he had received to the parish of St. Peter's Church, in the large town of S——. Moreland was very dear to him; the people were the first flock under his pastoral care. The matter required deliberation, and for weeks he gave himself wholly to the consideration of the subject. Thus the young people were left quite to themselves. Mrs. Marshall had no fear of her brother's influence, and was only glad that Mary and Josephine could amuse him. "It must be dull," she would say, "coming as he does from the most stirring life, and she hoped the girls would try to make it pleasant for him, for how nice it would be if he would only build in Moreland, as he had often talked of doing." Mrs. Lee, too, with all her pride and stateliness, stooped to welcome Mary at the Mansion-House,

for she was always accompanied by Mr. Maurice; and Mr. Maurice had a *fortune*, and she had a *daughter*. Ralph learned to look favorably upon Mr. Maurice for a time; for had he not warmly defended Mary when Virginia spoke scornfully of her, and had he not said he thought her "quite^l fascinating by her simplicity and *naïveté*," — different, as he expressed it, "from women in general, whose hearts were eaten out with fashion and folly"?

A picnic was proposed to vary the monotony of country life; and young and old joined in the preparations. Where should they go? Many were the beautiful spots about Moreland for these social gatherings; but the voice of the young people was unanimous for "Lily Lake." This lake was a sheet of crystal water, two miles long and scarce half a mile wide. Over its smooth surface, sparkling and glittering in the sunbeams, were scattered lilies of many varieties, among which the pond lily

"to the light

Her chalice reared of silver bright,"

looking out fairest and loveliest. One side of the lake was shut in by high, steep banks, receding from the shore, leaving a wide carriage-path, and a space of sev-

eral acres, shaded by scattered pines, while the banks were covered with a thick growth of the same tree. The carriage-road wound around the borders of the lake for half a mile or more, when it suddenly terminated in a footpath, sufficiently wide for two to walk together, and so overshadowed and secluded as to have been named "Lovers' Retreat." The footpath, indeed, was well known to all the young lovers in Moreland, and even frequented by the old, who had romance enough left to care for secluded walks.

As in all country places in New England, beaux were a rarer article than belles. Mr. Maurice, as his share, therefore, wished to take to the picnic Josephine, Virginia, and Mary. Mrs. Lee wondered that Mary should wish to go, and Virginia suggested that she might ride with the Rector and his lady. But Maurice put an end to all suggestions by saying, "If Mary does not go with me, I'll not go." For once, Mrs. Lee expressed herself at fault in discovering the motive; but as it happened, Mrs. Marshall could not go, and Mary took her place by the side of Mr. Marshall in the family chaise, much to the annoyance of Anthony Maurice, who was always unable to conceal his vexation if he failed to have his own way

in the most trifling matter. The day was fine, and Nature did her utmost to help the young to enjoyment; but one uncomfortable spirit can mar the pleasure of a crowd. Mr. Maurice, having been thwarted in his first purpose, enjoyed nothing himself, and did what he could to prevent the enjoyment of the day by others. He was in one of his *moods*, as the young men chose to call it. The elder part of the company engaged in social chitchat, but the young people, although there was mirth and laughter among them, and running up and down the slippery banks, and sailing on the water, all felt how one string out of tune will make discord of the sweetest music. Mr. Maurice, after a while, withdrew himself from the rest of the company, and wandered moodily along the banks of the lake. When the tables were arranged, and everything prepared for their repast, it was proposed to send for Mr. Maurice, who was nowhere to be seen. One after another was suggested, as the fittest person to go after him, but all declined. At length some one mentioned Mary as the youngest; she made no objections, but tripped gayly off towards the end of the carriage-way. She knew the secluded path well, and had often walked there with Jeanette: she went along hastily nearly to its

termination, and was about turning back, thinking Mr. Maurice must have taken some other way, when she was startled by his low, musical voice.

"Is it you, Mary?" he said; "come here," — and he beckoned to a seat by his side, on a mossy bank retired from the immediate pathway.

"No, I thank you," she said cheerfully; "I cannot stay; I was requested to call you to join us in taking our refreshments, which are waiting for you; will you come?"

"O Mary," he replied with a deep sigh, as he rose to meet her, "I wish I was as good, and as happy, as you."

"Not good," she said gravely, as he came towards her and took her arm in his. "Why should you not be happy?" She looked up into his face with so clear and kind a look, that for an instant he did wish that his heart would cast as pure a shadow on his brow.

"Mary," he said sadly, "I have no mother. O, if she had lived, what might I not have been! And what am I? A bold, bad man; so bad, that those you read of are angels in comparison." Mary tried to withdraw her arm from his. "Nay, Mary, do not scorn me because I own I am vile; I would be better. I sometimes long

for goodness and purity, as a man dying of thirst longs and reaches forth in vain for water."

"Not in vain," said Mary slowly and sadly, for her sympathies were touched.

"I have no mother," he said again, with a deeper sigh. "I remember the day she died; I was about seven years of age. She laid her thin, white hand on my head, and called down blessings; but they never came. I grew up a wilful, wicked boy, and I am what you see me, a wilful, wicked man. O my mother!" He placed his hands before his face to hide his emotion.

"But you have a sister," said Mary feebly, for her feelings were beginning to be painful.

Mr. Maurice looked into Mary's face with that look which had caused Jeanette's dislike of the man, and which had often startled Mary.

"A sister!" he said scornfully; "Mary, I wish you were my sister."

"Well," said Mary, with assumed badinage and gayety, as they were approaching the end of the path, and were coming into the carriage-road, "if I were your sister, I should tell you to smooth your brow, and look kind and pleasant, and make yourself a little more agreeable."

She attempted to withdraw her arm from his and go to the company, who, wearied with waiting, had assembled round the table, and were helping themselves to the viands.

Mrs. Lee whispered something to Virginia about "such boldness." Virginia repeated what Mrs. Marshall had said, and volunteered her most scornful look, as Mary approached the table, with Mr. Maurice by her side, looking more at his ease than he had done during the day. The remainder of the evening passed delightfully. Anthony Maurice, restored to good humor, did everything he could (and his resources were numerous) for the entertainment of the company. After singing several solos, which he accomplished with power and pathos, Virginia proposed maliciously that Mary should favor the company with a song. Mary had never sung before so large an assembly, except in church; and there she did not so much remember that the congregation were present, as that God was there. But now there were many gazing at her, and some with looks she could not understand, as Mr. Maurice laid his hand on hers and begged her to sing.

Mr. Marshall saw her confusion, and heard the tone of voice in which Virginia made her request, and coming

quietly towards her, he said, gently, "Mary, you can sing my favorite, 'Hath sorrow thy young days shaded,' — and striking into the air with his fine, manly voice, Mary succeeded in singing the song through in a sweet, low tone.

"That's for me," said Mr. Maurice, in a whisper, sitting on the other side from Mr. Marshall; "I'll weep with thee, tear for tear."

Mary was a little annoyed, but she did not manifest it. Mr. Maurice left her soon, in search of Josephine, with whom he had a sentimental walk, and concluded the afternoon by a conversation with Virginia, made up of quick repartee and cutting sarcasm.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Dread life of conflict! Which I oft compared
 To the agitation of a brook, that runs
 Down rocky mountains, buried now and lost
 In silent pools, now in strong eddies chained,
 But never to be charmed to gentleness:
 Its best attainments, fits of such repose
 As timid eyes might shrink from fathoming."

WORDSWORTH.

THE RETURN from the picnic was not as quiet and peaceful for all the company as for the Rector and his adopted daughter. Mr. Maurice's horses, unused to standing in harness as they had been all day by the banks of Lily Lake, became exceedingly restive and unmanageable. He contrived to restrain them until he had deposited Virginia at her father's house, when, as he stepped on the wheel to take his seat in the carriage, the animals started, reared, and plunged, throwing him under the wheels, and running away with Josephine still inside the carriage. They were soon stopped, however;

but Mr. Maurice, having been lifted from the ground, found it impossible to stand. The by-standers would have carried him into Squire Lee's, but, with his usual authoritative manner, he ordered one of the strong laboring men about him to lift him into the carriage, take the reins, and drive to the Rectory. Poor Josephine, pale with terror, was lifted from the vehicle. Mr. Maurice was found in a bad plight. Dr. Arnold pronounced the result of the accident a fracture of the thigh, which would confine him to the bed for six weeks at least, and perhaps lame him for life. "Sister Ellen" was much agitated by this occurrence, but congratulated herself upon having Mary at home to assist in the care of her brother. "Of course," she said, "he would have a nurse, but he would want company quite as much as care." A nurse was provided, — a sleepy-looking fellow, who cared more for his tobacco and his afternoon nap than for anything else.

Men are proverbially uneasy and impatient when confined to a sick-bed; but Mr. Maurice was cross, irritable, sometimes almost unbearable. He would not take the nourishment prepared by the nurse, because he took snuff; he scolded "Sister Ellen" till she shed tears, and declared "Anthony was a dreadful trial." Josephine and Mary's

society seemed to afford him all the comfort he was capable of receiving. He insisted that either the one or the other should read to him, sing to him, play chess with him, or amuse him in some way all the day long. Mary did what she could for him, from genuine kindness of heart, and sympathy with suffering. She thought him very wayward and whimsical, and she was sometimes frightened when he would press her hand and whisper, "O Mary, if I was as good and pure as you! You are a dear, dear sister to me."

Josephine's motives for constant attendance on the couch of suffering were far different; and though Maurice was fretful and cross, he would sometimes say very tender things to her, — words that she would cherish, and with which she fed the love that was growing up in her heart. Little did Mr. Marshall know of the web that was weaving in that sick-room; for he had much sickness and many deaths in his increasing parish, and was little at home during the first weeks of Mr. Maurice's confinement. The books Mr. Maurice chose for their reading were quite new to Mary. Her choice of books had been guided formerly by her mother, and since her death by Mr. Marshall. Once or twice she had closed the

volume Mr. Maurice had given her to read aloud, saying, very decidedly, "I would rather not read this book." He would never contend on that point with her, but simply say, "Ah! you little Puritan, you'll get over that by and by. Josephine is not so squeamish; she will read it to me."

All this time Mary was far from happy. She saw little of her father, and missed those pleasant talks she used to have with him. Though she thought she was in the path of duty when she obeyed Mrs. Marshall's instructions to do what she could for the comfort and amusement of Mr. Maurice, daily intercourse with a mind so unsettled, and a heart so ungoverned and tainted with the breath of sin, had the effect to make her at least uncomfortable.

She had retired to her room one evening with that unaccountable consciousness that something is going wrong, which all mortals doubtless have at times. It had been a day of unusual trials. Mrs. Marshall had spoken sharply to her, because she resented some familiarity of Mr. Maurice; and Mr. Maurice had scolded Mrs. Marshall for her fault in speaking, in the most bitter terms, till he brought tears to her eyes, and Mary felt

somehow as if she had caused dissension in the family. The moon shone full into her chamber, and she sat looking out into the churchyard. A slight tap at her door aroused her from the reverie into which she had fallen: Josephine entered, wrapped in her dressing-gown; her long raven hair unbound and floating about her like a cloud, and her dark eyes and brunette complexion lighted with an unusual glow. She came and knelt on a hassock at Mary's feet, and hid her face in her lap. Neither spoke for some time; at length Josephine, without looking up, said, "You will not think me very strange, Mary; but I do so want to speak to some one, and you can understand me. You must know, you must have seen, my love for — Mr. Maurice; and to-night, O Mary! to-night, he told his love for me. I am so happy," she added, raising her head and resting her burning cheek against Mary's hand. Then, lifting her large eyes and looking searchingly at Mary, she said, "I was afraid he was not all mine."

There is something in the breast of every woman, be she ever so young and untaught in the ways of the world,—it may be the whispers of her guardian angel, for

"They for us fight,
They watch and duly ward," —

that warns her of the approach of anything, in word or deed, that may dim the lustre of her brightest jewel. A blush of deepest crimson dyed Mary's face, neck, and hands. As soon as her heart-beating would let her speak, she said, "Josephine, Mr. Maurice is a strange being: I pity him, but I could never trust him." Josephine was relieved. Her eyes sunk, and the dark lashes closed over them, as she said, "O Mary, he has been so unfortunate! — a life of thwarted purposes, with no one to guide or care for him; but he is resolved on better things now, and is determined to fix himself somewhere and be respected." Mary smiled faintly, for she thought it would take something besides fixation to make him always respected. "Mary," said Josephine, caressing the hand she held, "I used to think you were so cold and stern, there could be no sympathy between us; but I have learned to prize you of late." The tears rose to Mary's eyes as she remembered how cold and severe Josephine once was to her, but she only said, "Thank you, Josie; I have tried very hard to win your love, and I am glad I have succeeded. But now quiet yourself for the night; I feel you trembling, and think you need rest." Josephine obtained a promise of secrecy, and went to her own room.

CHAPTER XIX.

"Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to woe."

BEATTIE.

"The mind is its own place, and in itself

Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven."

MILTON.

SEPTEMBER WAS half gone, with its golden days of plenty, before Mrs. Watkins began to look back to her life among silks and laces. When she heard from Miss Turner that the appalling cholera had abated, she sent word to the Rectory that she should expect Mary to go back to the city with her in two weeks. Mary felt a bitter pang when she received the note with these instructions. "But," she said to herself, as she took her way to the study, "it is best; I feel I am loving this life of idleness too well." She gave her father the note, and sat down by his side waiting his reply. It came with a deep sigh.

"It seems too soon to lose you, Mary," he said, affectionately; "I am sorry to part from you again, even for a little while; but I am happy to tell you I have the means to limit your stay to three months."

"No, my dear father," she said, "I cannot be willing that you should deprive yourself of your comforts for my sake. I have no doubt the discipline will be good for me, after this life of idleness."

"Idleness! Mary," said he, with surprise; "not surely since Mr. Maurice was hurt! I have felt that it was hardly right that so much of your vacation should be spent in the confinement of a sick-room. Mr. Maurice is whimsical, as people that have nothing to do are apt to be, and prefers your society and Josephine's; but I think you have been called upon too much."

A blush kindled Mary's cheek and neck, but she did not reply. She longed to tell her father some of the conversations she had had with Mr. Maurice, but they seemed so foolish to repeat, that she refrained. Mr. Marshall spoke of his wife's brother as a man of bright genius, but wholly governed by impulse, without any guide but his own wishes; he had been so long debarred female society, many things must be overlooked

in him that would be censured in one accustomed to home comforts. Mary rested her head upon the arm of the large study-chair for a long time in silence; at length she said, with a desperate effort, "Father, I have wished to speak to you for some time. I am not where I ought to be. There is a restlessness, an unrest in my soul, that I cannot explain to myself; but it unfits me for devotion, and renders my prayers a mere form." The tears came, and she could go no further.

"My daughter," said her father, laying his hand gently on her head, "my Mary, restless! uneasy! Have you examined your own heart for the cause?"

'Whatever passes as a cloud between
The mental eye of faith and things unseen,
Causing that bright world to disappear
Or seem less lovely, and its hope less dear,
This is our world, our idol, though it bear
Affection's impress, or devotion's air.'

Mary raised her head to speak, when the silvery voice of little Grace was heard at the door, as she said, "Sister Mary, Uncle Anthony wants you to come and finish the book you were reading to him yesterday."

"Grace, my child," said Mr. Marshall, "go and ask your Aunt Josephine to read to your uncle."

"He says, father, he will have no one but Mary to read that book to him."

A frown passed over the face of the Rector. "Sit here, Mary," he said, "till I return."

Taking his darling Grace in his arms, he went to the nursery. Mrs. Marshall was engaged in embroidering a frock for her youngest child. "Mrs. Marshall," he said very gravely, "I wish you to go and provide for your brother's wants: Mary will not be at leisure this morning."

When he returned to the study, he found Mary sitting where he had left her. Her curls hid her face, but he saw she was weeping. He did not speak to her at once, but went to the study window that looked out into the churchyard. This window was in a recess, screened from the room by a heavy crimson curtain. This was a favorite seat with Mr. Marshall when he was in perplexity or sorrow. The sight of the churchyard, with its daily increasing mounds, brought quietness sometimes to his soul, for he remembered, "This also must pass away." But now he rested his head against the window, and the expression of his countenance was a mingling of indignation, remorse, solicitude, and pity. His face was pale,

and his hands were clasped. After the first emotion, he turned, and said in a low tone, "Mary, my daughter, I feel that I have been very reprehensible in this matter. I wonder at myself, that I should have left you to read whatever such a mind as Mr. Maurice's might suggest. I cannot forgive myself that I should have allowed it; his society, too, I fear, has not exerted a favorable influence over you." Mr. Marshall could not see Mary's face, or he would have observed the same conscious blush that had before startled him. "Come and sit by me," he said, seating himself on the couch in the recess. Mary came at his bidding; he drew her towards him and laid her head on his arm. "My poor lamb," he said tenderly; "I, who should have been a watchful shepherd, have suffered harm to come very near to you; no doubt, the course of reading for these few weeks is the cause of your restless state of feeling. What books have you read to Mr. Maurice, Mary? I know something of his tastes; but hope he would not give you such garbage as he feeds upon himself."

Mary recapitulated the works she had read to Mr. Maurice, and some that she had commenced, but would not finish, when she found their character.

The look of sorrow and remorse deepened on her father's brow, as Mary recalled one by one the titles of the volumes. All of them were works which Mr. Marshall would have carefully withheld from his child. Mary longed to tell her father that it was not so much the reading as the conversations with the young man that had given her this troubled feeling; but he was Mrs. Marshall's brother, and she refrained. "I do not think," said Mr. Marshall, "that intimate association with a mind like Mr. Maurice's would be desirable for any young girl, and I ought to have said so to you and Josephine before; but you were so young, and I thought he would hardly notice you: and Josephine never relishes suggestions from me respecting her friendships. I will endeavor to employ your time myself while you remain, and promise me, Mary, you will read nothing without my approval."

She looked up into his face with that clear, confiding look which never failed to please. "I am so glad," she said, "we have had this little talk; I shall be better for it. But, father, I cannot bear you should take from your means to release me from Mrs. Watkins."

"It is not from my means," he replied; "a friend has

provided it." He blamed himself for saying *friend*, for it was Anthony Maurice who had provided the where-withal to release Mary from four months of toil under Mrs. Watkins.

Mr. Marshall blamed himself, too, that he did not feel more concern about Josephine's mind being poisoned by this trash, and he resolved to look further into the matter. At dinner that day a cloud seemed to hang over the family, with the exception of Mary, who looked more like herself than she had done for many days. Josephine's eyes were red with weeping, and Mrs. Marshall's face was the picture of trouble personified.

"How is Anthony to-day?" said Mr. Marshall, growing weary of the silence.

"He has hurt himself trying to rise," said Mrs. Marshall, "and is nervous and irritable, and says, if he is ever able, he will get away where he can do as he chooses."

This was said with a glance at Mary which seemed to say, "It is your fault that he cannot do so here."

The silence grew more ominous than before, and Mr. Marshall's face assumed a graver cast. As soon as the meal was finished, he went to the sick-room. He found the poor lame sufferer storming at his attendant in the most

violent manner. Mr. Marshall had never before heard him profane, and his oaths shocked him more than his passion. However, the storm subsided, or rather changed into dogged sullenness, at the appearance of his visitor. Mr. Marshall took his seat by the bedside, and instinctively took up the book that lay nearest to him. It was Byron's "Cain."

"Anthony," said he, in as kind a tone as he could assume, "it was my commands that prevented Mary's attendance here this morning. I am not willing that her pure mind should be made familiar with such works as this," and he laid his hand on the volume before him.

Mr. Maurice looked sullen.

Mr. Marshall proceeded. "Indeed, I think this cannot fail to be poison to any mind."

"You have read it, then?" said Anthony with a slight chuckling sneer.

"Yes, Anthony, and no penance would be severe that could efface from my mind the remembrance and the effect of such writings; volumes of which I must, not only as a Christian, but as a father, forbid the reading under my roof. Do not think me harsh or unkind, my brother; you have done much for me and mine, but all you could possibly do would not compensate in the least

for unsettling the faith, or sully the virtue, of one of my children; and the promises that bind me to Mary and Grace are sacred, next to my vows as a husband and a father."

Anthony Maurice was a man of the world, and, as such, a student of character: he read Mr. Marshall aright, and only wondered in his own mind how he could have made the one mistake in marrying his sister. It was either from having read the purpose of his brother, or from real feeling, that he said, as he turned towards Mr. Marshall, — the whole expression of his countenance changed, his fine eyes moistened, and his hand extended to him, — "Brother, I have done wrong; it was not design, but thoughtlessness, perhaps selfishness, in me. Had our mother lived, Ellen and I might both have been worthier of our friends."

He looked into Mr. Marshall's face, as if he would read the very secrets of his soul; but our Rector was impenetrable.

The subject was changed. Mr. Marshall spoke of his brother's broken limb, of his sufferings, and at length said, "Mary leaves us again in about two weeks."

"So soon!" said Maurice with a sigh. "She is a good little thing, and so fresh and free from worldliness, it is

really delightful to see her moving about, not thinking of herself. But why does she go back? Can't we buy her off? She is too high-souled for this employment."

"No employment would degrade her, but she would elevate any occupation," said Mr. Marshall gravely. "She is resolutely determined to support herself, and this seems to be the only opening."

"How I wish this leg of mine was what it should be!" said Mr. Maurice impatiently. "I would go immediately to Professor Henshaw, the great teacher of music, who is spreading his scholars all over the country. He would be delighted with Mary's voice, and I know we could make arrangements to have her taught, so that she might eventually instruct others. But it is of no use," he said, sinking back; "I am a poor, miserable drone, and can't even behave as I ought."

Mr. Marshall rose to go soon after. Maurice begged that Mary might be allowed to read to him occasionally, declaring that he could understand her better than Josephine or "Sister Ellen"; but Mr. Marshall excused Mary, saying that her time would be fully occupied in her preparations for her departure, and left Maurice to chew the cud of his displeasure at his leisure.

CHAPTER XX.

"Dreams divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves, as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity.
They pass like spirits of the past, they speak
Like sibyls of the future."

MARY WAS very happy during the two remaining weeks of her vacation. Restored to her usual serenity by the careful guidance of her faithful pastor, and her own earnest efforts to do right, and aided, more than all, by the Divine assistance promised to those who "call for it by diligent prayer," she went about singing like a lark, and making others happy, because she was peaceful herself. Jeanette had returned from her visit to Canada, and Mary spent many happy hours in her society. For the last week, they had gone out together, every day, into some of the beautiful dingles and dells with which Moreland abounded, sometimes with Grace and Alice for company. There was one spot which they frequented, which

they called Peace Dale, — a secluded valley not far from Squire Lee's beautiful grounds, and the source of the brook that watered them. The living spring here burst forth from a cleft of moss-grown rocks, and all along through the valley the windings of the stream were shown by a deeper green, and the osier-willows that sprung up in its course. One large weeping-willow dipped its taper fingers into the water, where the stream was widened and deepened by a branch coming from the hills above. Over the point where the streams met, a huge rock had been parted by a convulsion of nature, and in its fissure was a mossy nook, shaded by the willow, where Jeanette and Mary loved to linger. They had gone there the last day of Mary's stay in Moreland. Jeanette had read to Mary a part of Arthur's latest letter. Her golden locks were bathed in the sunlight that streamed through the overshadowing branches, and in her pure blue eyes were mirrored each passing thought, as plainly as the stars are mirrored in the silver lake. Alice and Grace were making baskets of burdock, and sailing them down the stream, their joyous shouts and laughter ringing through the valley. The two older girls watched them for some time in silence.

"Jeanette," said Mary at length, "I am glad the course of your true love runs so smooth. It does not seem to me you could bear much opposition, or trouble of any kind." Saying this, she put her arm about Jeanette's waist, and tenderly kissed her brow.

"I feel sometimes," said Jeanette, as her head rested against Mary's breast, "as if I could not bear so much happiness. The very greatness of my joy brings a pain through here," and she placed Mary's hand on her heart. "I have thought, dear Mary, that this deep, all-absorbing emotion was growing into idolatry, Arthur is so always present with me, everywhere, in all my thoughts, at all times; even in church, I think he is kneeling by me. O Mary, I fear it is already idolatry."

"O no!" said Mary fearfully, "not idolatry! I hope not even that 'inordinate and sinful affection' against which we so earnestly pray. It is natural that Arthur should be near to you; but would n't it be better if your life were a little less dreamy, and a little more active?"

"Perhaps so," mused Jeanette, playing with Mary's dark curls, that mingled with her golden locks, "but my dreams are very sweet. I had one—it was a real dream, not a day-dream—that I wish to tell you. It came one

night after I had written a long letter to Arthur, and it seemed so like truth! I thought Arthur and I were alone in the library at home. The bay-window to the west was thrown wide open, and the curtains put back, to admit the last rays of a glorious sunset,—one of our Moreland sunsets, Mary. My head rested on Arthur's breast, and his arm was around me; we were talking of the future, and our bright Southern home. Arthur had been telling me of his mother, and I had begun to love her, and to feel that she was my mother. Suddenly we looked out upon the lawn, and saw floating in the air what looked like a balloon, made of the most delicate material,—a sort of silver tissue. It glistened in the dying sunlight, and floated slowly toward the window where we were sitting. It came nearer and nearer, till it rested on the green bank before us. We now saw within it a bird of most brilliant blue and gold plumage. I was startled at first, and felt a cold shudder creep over me, and clung closer to Arthur, who seemed surprised, but not frightened, as I was. At length the bird began to warble, and her song—O Mary, if you could have heard it! my soul is filled even now with the delicious melody. As we looked and wondered, the form of the

bird changed into that of a perfect little cherub baby, with silver wings and a face so like my darling brother Frank,—who died before you came to Moreland,—so like him, that I clapped my hands, and shouted, ‘Dear Frank!’ I felt Arthur’s frame tremble, and when I looked at him he was deadly pale, and a cold, clammy dew stood upon his forehead and hair. ‘Don’t go, don’t go!’ he said to me, as I kissed his pale lips. ‘The cherub was calling me continually, ‘Sister, come! sister, come!’ and putting out his little arms to meet me. I felt Arthur’s arm tighten round my waist, and when I tried to free myself from his clasp, the tears came dropping on my neck from his sorrowful eyes, and he only said, ‘I cannot, I cannot.’ I sprang lightly from him, saying, as I looked back, ‘Only for a little, dearest.’ I went toward the cherub, and seemed to feel the light gossamer covering overshadow me. I looked back to Arthur, and smiled; in a moment I was sailing with my little companion far up—up—up. The sense of rising wakened me, and I found I had forgotten to close the blind to my east window, and the moonlight was streaming directly on my bed. Wasn’t it a singularly life-like dream, Mary?’

Mary could not answer; the tears blinded her as she pressed Jeanette closer to her heart, and for days she tried in vain to throw off a sad, dreary feeling, left upon her mind by this night vision.

The voices of the children reminded the girls that it was time to be looking homeward. Grace and Alice came bounding along. The dark locks of Grace were wreathed with laurel leaves mingled with the brilliant crimson of the cardinal-flower, with here and there the delicate fringe of the blue gentian.

“O, see what I have for papa!” said Grace, as she opened her apron and displayed a lap full of cardinals and gentians; “see, Sister Mary, his favorites for autumn; they grow all along up the brook, beyond the willows, and Alice has some moss, O, so pretty! for Uncle Anthony to put with those beautiful shells. He says he brought them from the far-off sea on purpose for you.” She looked up innocently into Mary’s face.

“I think that is a mistake of his,” said Mary laughing, “as I had not the pleasure of his acquaintance for some time after he came home.”

“Well, he says, Sister Mary,” replied Grace eagerly, “you shall not stay at Mrs. Watkins’s any longer than

he is able to be about. He told me so this morning; and then he took me in his arms, and said he would be a brother to me."

The unsuspecting Jeanette looked inquiringly into Mary's face, but she changed the subject, by showing Grace the flowers dropping from her apron as she skipped along.

Sunny days were those for darling little Grace, while she had Mary by her side, and could pour into her ear the tale of her childhood's joys and sorrows.

CHAPTER XXI.

"He seemed
For dignity composed, and high exploit,
But all was false and hollow. . . .
. . . . His thoughts were low,
To vice industrious. . . .
. . . . Yet he pleased the ear."

MILTON.

"Heart too capable
Of every line and trick of his sweet favor;
But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy
Must sanctify his relics."

THE BRIGHT September days were gone, and Mary was again an inmate of Mrs. Watkins's shop, more agreeably situated than before, for now she was in the fitting-room and shop most of the time,—the newcomers occupying her previous uncomfortable position in the work-room.

Anthony Maurice had arrived at the dignity of crutches. He was cross and surly the greater part of the time, although to Josephine he would occasionally

vouchsafe a tender word, or a smile, on which she would live for days. His books afforded him no pleasure; his time was spent in longings to get away. He cheered up somewhat after receiving a letter from Frank Brayton, his chief friend, informing him of his matrimonial engagement with a mutual friend, Miss Isabella Fitzgerald; and when he had answered the letter, time passed less wearily.

Mr. Marshall had spoken to Josephine several times, while Mr. Maurice remained at the Rectory, about her reading, and advised her to be cautious in her intercourse with him; but she, self-willed and determined, chose rather to please Anthony than to take heed to the wise counsels of her brother.

Finding that she was wholly governed by feeling, and had no fixed principles, Mr. Maurice gradually, by conversation and the authors he selected for her perusal, undermined her faith, and left her as lonely and desolate as a woman could be. Mrs. Marshall's brother left Moreland very suddenly, without any warning to the family, and without asking for any further intercourse even with his sister. When Josephine became conscious that he had really gone out of town, and that without one word

of promise to her, to whom he had made so many professions of love, her almost bursting heart found a slight relief in a letter to Mary.

MARY, my dear, my only friend, I am so desolate, I would willingly lie down and die. Anthony has gone, and that without one word of promise for the future, not one word to one to whom he has made so many vows! I remember you told me you could not trust him. How cold and heartless I thought you! but now, O what would I not part with to be as free as you! I am making deep confessions to you, Mary, but I feel that they are sacred. You may see Anthony; he goes to New York on his way South. One word from him would be so precious! Brother and sister know nothing of what I have written you; I do not think they suspect it: you will not betray me. There is something mysterious in *his* influence over me. I cannot understand it. When he was away, I felt as if I might and would be more womanly, and not betray myself as I have in a thousand ways; but when he was by my side, all was forgotten.

"I have made his eye
The lonely star of my idolatry."

I sit by your window and listen to the sighing of the wind through the churchyard pines, and I long to lay my head beneath their sheltering branches; and then come rushing into my soul the doubts he planted there of the future.

How I envy Jeanette, with her calm, placid smile! She cannot love as I love; I know it is not in her nature. She loves Arthur because he loves her; but I love, because I cannot help it.

I must not write more. I have already written more than is for your good or my own. I hope you may see Anthony. If you should, can you not persuade him to write me just one line, — at least to let me know that he does not despise

JOSEPHINE.

When Mary read the letter of the suffering Josephine, she grieved for her, but what could she do? What did Josephine wish her to do? She had not seen Mr. Maurice, neither did she hope or expect that he would call upon her *there*. She wished she could in honor send the letter to Mr. Marshall, but that of course she could not do. She was angry that Josephine should say Jeanette's

love for Arthur was not as deep and true as hers for Anthony Maurice. Why should she choose her for a confidant, younger than herself, and untutored in such matters? She was so abstracted turning these varied thoughts in her own mind, that a lady customer inquired the price of an article three times before she replied. Mrs. Watkins pushed her aside, called her a "stupid hussy," and waited on the lady herself. Soon after, Mary was called into the fitting-room, and was appointed to cut a dress for the same person. The lady was a happy, laughing creature. She regarded Mary with much interest.

"I do believe I have guessed right," she said; "is n't your name Miss Evans, — Mary Evans?"

"Yes," replied Mary modestly, "that is my name."

"I told Mr. Maurice I could guess, he is so good at description. He said you were a *protégée* of his, you sung beautifully, and were so good. Ah! I shall not tell you all he said. But you must look out for Mr. Maurice. He is a saucy fellow; — very kind-hearted and generous though, full of noble impulses."

Mary blushed to the tips of her fingers, but she forced herself to say, "I met Mr. Maurice at my father's; he is a connection of his."

"Your father's? Why he told me you were an orphan!"

Mary felt a little bit of wounded pride at being thus questioned, but she replied mildly, "I am the adopted daughter of one of the best of fathers."

"O yes! I do remember Mr. Maurice told me something of it."

They were interrupted by Mrs. Watkins, who sharply reproved Mary for being so long doing nothing, threatening to send her back to the work-room.

Mary did not venture to ask the young lady's name, but on returning to the shop she learned it was Miss Isabella Fitz-Gerald. She was elegantly dressed, and her carriage was in waiting.

Two young gentlemen came to her assistance as she stepped into the vehicle. Mary did not see them, but she heard the voice of one of them, and her first thought was to get out of sight as quickly as possible. She had hardly closed the door of the fitting-room when it was again opened, and she met the gaze of Anthony Maurice. He came forward with the easy nonchalance of a man of the world, and, taking her hand, would have given her a salute; but Mary drew back with quiet dignity, and he contented himself with kissing her hand.

"Now, Sister Mary," said he, "I did think, after so long an absence, you would have given me a brother's privilege, but no matter; I am mighty glad to see you looking so nice and fresh";—and he patted her rosy cheek.

Mary felt an undefined fear, and she drew away from him.

"Have you heard from home of late?" said he, carelessly.

The blood rushed to Mary's face as she thought of Josephine's letter, and then came the perplexing thought, "What shall I do?"

"One would think by that blush, Mary," said Maurice, taking one of her curls and twisting it about his finger, "that you had received at least one *love-letter*."

Mary felt annoyed, but woman's ready wit came to her help, and she said, playfully, "All my letters from home are love-letters. I have had two from father, one from Jeanette, and one from Josephine."

"Josephine? Ah! what does my little Josey say?"

"She said," replied Mary, meeting his full glance upon her truthful face, "she wished to hear from Mr. Maurice."

Mr. Maurice saw at once that Mary knew all, and he quailed for an instant under the light of those young eyes, that had never cast a false shadow.

"Well, Mary, I will write to her," he said, and a sad, pitiful look came over his features. "Poor girl! I did not dream that I was to make her so miserable. It is my fate, — I never look upon anything but to bring a blight upon it. I shall never be anything but a curse," he added, bitterly. "I swear I did not mean to win Josephine; it was only foolish nonsense on my part, to while away time. What can I do, Mary?"

Mary came a little nearer, and laying her hand on his arm, said eagerly, "Why will you not tell her this you have told me? it is the only reparation you can make."

Mr. Maurice looked at her, but made no reply. At length, with a deep sigh, he said, "Mary, I have a regard for Josephine, but she is not the woman I could take to my heart. Her affections are like a sheet of water: impressions are not lasting. But if you wish me to tell her that I am sorry for my folly in making love to her, I will do it, although it will cost me a great struggle. She has not depth to satisfy the cravings of my spirit. Insensible as you deem me, there are moments when I feel the

movings of my nobler nature, and long for better things than I have yet found in life; but I have no one to whom I can speak thus, no one who would understand these yearnings. My companions are all light and frivolous. I go and come, but what is life to me? Only an empty show.

'To feel

We are not what we have been, and to deem

We are not what we should be, and to steel

The heart against itself.

To roam along, the world's tired denizens,

With none to bless us, none whom we can bless.' "

Mr. Maurice could not have chosen a better way than this to produce in Mary's mind a desire to help him. The rich musical tones of his voice, and the pathos with which he quoted from his favorite author, touched Mary's feelings. She had an orphan's heart, and could not but sympathize in the utter desolation he seemed to feel. The reader must excuse her, if the tears were on her cheek, and a feeling of nearness to Mr. Maurice that she had never experienced came into her soul. She knew very little of the world at large, still less of the heart of a man of the world, and she could not but hope so much apparent feeling might end in penitence. Neither was Mr. Maurice altogether insincere. Many

hours of wretchedness were his portion, — wretchedness that the good and the pure know nothing of; and while he told Mary of his longings for a higher and holier life, who shall blame her that she listened, and longed to reach forth a helping hand?

“Mr. Maurice,” she said, in a voice trembling with emotion, and with a desire to say something that might do good, “are not these longings of which you speak suggestions of that Spirit, that loving Spirit, who strives with the children of men? And oh! if you would listen to that voice, it would help you far, far better than any earthly friend. But if you need counsel, where could you find on earth a better and kinder adviser than your dear, good brother, Mr. Marshall?”

Mr. Maurice shook his head.

“No, Mary, he is kind, good, all that you say, but he would not understand me, even as well as you do. Nobody can help me but you, Mary, and,” he said, looking solemnly into Mary’s tearful eyes, “*you can*. May I go to church with you to-morrow?”

Mary hesitatingly gave her consent, upon condition that he would do the first act of reparation that night, and write to Josephine. He promised, and they parted better friends than before.

CHAPTER XXII.

“Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert.”

BYRON.

“He could only speak

In undertone compassionate her name.

The voice of pity soothed and melted her.”

SOUTHEY.

EVEN AFTER Mary left Moreland, Mr. Marshall’s heart reproached him that he had not seen what effect association with Mr. Maurice might have upon a young, unsophisticated girl. Josephine looked pale and thin, and had lost that vivacity which was her great charm in society. He began to fear that this, too, might have connection with Maurice. Mr. Marshall was not acquainted with the depths of Anthony Maurice’s depravity. He only knew him as a young man without religious principle, self-willed and passionate, and fond of vain and

frivolous pursuits; further than this he had no knowledge of him, before he entered the family at the Rectory. Mr. Maurice was impulsive and generous, and Mr. Marshall had strong hopes, when he came into Moreland, that he would leave the wild and wandering life he had led, and become at least an estimable citizen. But as his acquaintance with him increased, his hopes grew fainter; for although he was always respectful and gentlemanly in Mr. Marshall's presence, some reports of his conduct and conversation abroad from time to time reached his brother's ear, and wakened him to a sense of something harmful; right glad was the Rector when Dr. Arnold pronounced his limb in a condition to travel. It was a relief to Mr. Marshall that Maurice was so ready to go; for he was his wife's brother, and he could not forbid him his house. After his sudden departure, which has been already mentioned, Josephine grew daily more and more taciturn and reserved; at last she kept her chamber, and came into the family only at prayers and meals. The household supposed Mr. Maurice had gone South, as he proposed, and were wondering that they received no intelligence of him, although he only said, "May be so," when his sister asked him to write. Two

or three weeks had gone by since his departure, when Mr. Marshall came in to meet the assembled family. His countenance bore a stern look, that always betokened some deep emotion beneath. Josephine with languid air took her seat at the table, when Mr. Marshall said very gravely, "My sister, here is a letter for you from New York." Josephine blushed crimson, for she thought of her letter to Mary, and supposed this to be the answer. She took it hastily from her brother, but when she glanced at the superscription, a deadly paleness spread over her features, and she could scarcely command herself sufficiently to ask to be excused from her untasted repast.

She did not make her appearance again that night. Next morning, she replied to Grace, who came to her door to summon her to breakfast, that she would be excused. Mr. Marshall thought of going to her room; but when he remembered Josephine's unhappy disposition to brook no interference in her affairs, he refrained. When dinner-time came, and she still refused to see Mrs. Marshall, her brother resolved to take the matter into his own hands. Going to her room, he said in a tone of mingled gentleness and firmness, "Josephine, I wish to

“speak with you.” He was not sure but she would refuse him admittance; but he heard her slow, unsteady step over the floor, and the bolt was drawn. He was wholly unprepared to see his sister as he found her. Her arms were flung across the table, her hair hung in masses about her form, while her head rested on her arms. She was dressed in a loose wrapper, although the room was cold, and her feet were bare. Her brother stood over her, and said in his most soothing tones, “Josephine, my dear sister, will you not tell me, your brother, the cause of this bitter suffering?”

“*There!*” she said, as she stamped her naked foot on the crushed letter of Mr. Maurice. Her face was like marble, cold and rigid, and the lines of grief about her mouth were deeply marked. Mr. Marshall lifted the letter from the floor, and was about to read it.

“No! no! no!” said she, snatching the letter from him. “It will be betraying him, and I asked for one line, *only one line.*”

This was said in a tone of bitter sarcasm, and she put the letter under her hand.

“Josephine,” said Mr. Marshall, struggling fearfully with his own feelings, “if you have been wronged or

injured, where can you find a more ready protector than your brother? You are now suffering; will you not come to your brother’s heart and unbosom your grief? You once said you had never known sorrow; I told you it was the lot of all; but, my dearest Josephine, we little thought in what form it would come to you. And now will you not let me be truly a brother to you?” Saying this he drew Josephine to his arms, kissed her pale cheek, and soothed her convulsed sobbing, as if she had been a babe. Weak and faint from exhaustion, her head sunk on his breast, and she laid the letter in his hand.

Mr. Marshall’s face was even paler than Josephine’s while he read the letter, and for the first time a bystander might have traced a resemblance between them.

“Heartless villain!” said Mr. Marshall, as he bit his lips, and crushed the letter beneath his foot.

“But I love him,” said Josephine, looking wildly up,—“yes, love him, better than anything in heaven or earth.”

Mr. Marshall felt for an instant a shrinking back from one who could give utterance to such a thought; but he remembered her suffering, and said, in his kindest tone, “My dear sister, listen to me. I have done wrong in this matter, very wrong. I have suffered the wolf to

creep into my fold. He would have defiled the pure mind of Mary, and has taken away the heart of my sister, not only from me, but from her God. O Josephine!" he added, bowing his head and covering his face with his hands, "what blindness in me, what want of care for the lambs of my flock! With the knowledge of human nature God has given me, I might have known the consequences. I trusted to — But it is past, and I am the one who deserves severest censure." His grief was intense; his strong frame quivered.

Josephine had never seen him so moved, and she forgot for a moment her own misery, in the agony of suffering through which he was passing. "Brother, dear brother, do not grieve thus," she said, putting her arms about his neck. "You are in no wise to blame for my follies; why should you be? If I had, as I ought, followed your counsel and advice, I should not be where I am."

Mr. Marshall did not speak. A long time passed before that noble heart arose from the depth of remorse which only those can realize who have felt the worth and peril of a human soul committed to their care. At length he said, "Josephine, tell me where you are. He

speaks in this letter of 'unsettling your faith.' Can it be that he has really taught you his infidel doctrines?"

"I am no infidel, brother, O no! but I cannot believe all true that I once thought certain. How gladly would I again have that trust in an overruling Providence I once had!"

"He has only shaken your faith then, my dearest sister; thank God, he has not destroyed it. It shall be one aim of my life to restore to you again the jewel the hand of unbelief would have taken from you, and to bind up your wounded affections. Josephine, there has been distance and coldness between us; but now we have known the sympathy of suffering, let us be truly brother and sister." And then he took her so gently along to the green pastures and still waters of his own bright faith, and discoursed so lovingly of the tender care of our Good Shepherd, that Josephine's sad heart revived. From that day there was a marked change in both the Rector and his sister. He lost that cold reserve that when wounded caused him to withdraw into himself, and became more genial in his daily walk. To Josephine were appointed many hours of bitter sorrow for the ruthless

waste of her heart's affections ; but when she did waken, (through sad struggles with self,) from her dream of disappointed love, she found herself possessing a new and nobler nature.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"If human life do pass away,
Perishing yet more swiftly than the flower,
Whose frail existence is but for a day,
What space hath virgin's beauty to disclose
Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breathing rose?

Not even an hour.

Then shall love teach some virtuous youth,
To draw out of the object of his eyes,
The whilst on Thee they gaze, with simple truth,
Hues more exalted, a refined form,
That dreads not age, nor suffers from the worm,
And never dies."

WORDSWORTH.

IT WAS a cold, raw November day. The first snow sprinklings of the season were descending, as if very reluctantly, and the whole atmosphere was pervaded with that stinging chilliness which penetrates through all clothing and makes the warmest clad shiver. Josephine sat at the study window, looking out toward the road. Her face was pale and sad; she had evidently been conversing with her brother on some serious subject, for he

looked graver than usual. Josephine, although her face was pressed against the window-frame, saw nothing without, till she was startled by the figure of Ralph, running with all speed toward the Rectory. His bright, handsome face was flushed, and, cold as was the weather, large drops of sweat stood on his brow. Josephine had only time to exclaim, "Why, here is Ralph, running with all his might!" when the boy burst into the room, and rushing breathless to Mr. Marshall, said eagerly, "Come, do come quick, to sister Jeanette, dear Jeanette!" and the child burst into tears. Mr. Marshall seized his hat and cloak. "Let me go too, brother," said Josephine, "do let me go, if anything has happened to Jeanette." He made no objections, and they all hurried along to the Mansion House.

"What is the matter with Jeanette?" said Mr. Marshall to the little fellow, who clung to his hand as they went along.

"O, she is sick, so sick, I fear she will die, and then —" The child's sobs were renewed.

Dr. Arnold's chaise was waiting at the entrance when they reached the end of the avenue. They went directly to the library, but it was some minutes before any one

appeared. Steps were heard on the stairs, and Dr. Arnold entered, accompanied by Dr. Thurston, a young physician who had lately settled in Moreland. Dr. Arnold was eagerly questioned by Mr. Marshall.

"Well, sir — don't know — don't know — can't say — bad case — bad case — over-exertion — bad case — rupture of a pectoral bloodvessel — small chance for life — hangs on a thread — must be kept quiet — better not go to her, sir — agitation, sir, bad, bad."

"But, Dr. Arnold," said the other physician aside, "will it not cause more agitation to refuse the gentleman? — for when she has been able to speak, she has called for her pastor."

Although this was spoken in an undertone, it reached Mr. Marshall's ear, and he waited for no further conversation, but left the room. On the stairs he met Squire Lee. Hours had done the work of years on that usually sunny face; deep lines of grief were there, traces of scalding tears, and a convulsed sobbing, which was almost heart-breaking. Mr. Marshall pressed his hand, but they exchanged not a word, and together went to the sick-room. Jeanette was sitting in a large easy-chair, propped with pillows, her head resting on her mother's breast. The pallor of death was on her cheeks, and her blue

eyes looked large and unusually brilliant. A faint smile lighted her countenance when she saw her pastor; she attempted to raise her hand, but could not. She looked toward the Prayer-Book, and without a word of conversation he knelt by her side, and poured forth from his heart the holy prayers of the Church. He remained on his knees in deep grief, after he had finished praying audibly. When he rose from that silent prayer, he took Jeanette's cold hand in his, and, in a low and gentle tone, breathed into her ear all those precious consolations he knew so well how to administer, pointing her to the "sure and certain hope of the Christian"; and as he spoke, the calm, peaceful expression deepened on the face of the suffering girl. Mrs. Lee was as composed as a summer morning: no agitation quivered her frame. She was thankful one of the family had self-control. She held Jeanette tenderly, and removed the life-blood that rose to her lips with every cough; and it was all done with such a calm, unmoved air, that Mr. Marshall felt reproached for his display of feeling; for he said to himself, "Under all this coolness the mother's heart must beat, and her composure is the result of self-command, for Jeanette's sake."

Josephine, who remained in the library, gathered from

the physicians that Jeanette had been out that morning, visiting several poor families in and about Moreland. She had taken an unusually long walk, and hurried home in the chilly air, to avoid the threatening storm. She was seized soon after with a severe pain, accompanied with a burning heat in her breast, and the cause soon discovered itself. Dr. Thurston happened at the time to be in consultation with Dr. Arnold, and they were both called in immediately. Dr. Thurston thought that with great care she might recover from this attack; although she would always be liable to the same occurrence after over-exertion.

After Mr. Marshall's visit was concluded, he left the house with Josephine, the latter not having seen any of the family. Her brother was to go to the station, to telegraph for Arthur Grey, and Josephine begged that she might accompany him, although the snow was falling very fast.

That walk and conversation were never forgotten by her. She felt deeply, that, if she were thus brought to death's door, the peaceful calm that pervaded Jeanette's soul could not lighten the "dark valley" for her; and she resolved that her future life should be a preparation for that hour "that cometh alike to all."

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Is there in human form that bears a heart,
A wretch, a villain lost to love and truth !
That can, with studied, sly, ensnaring art,
Betray sweet Jenny's unsuspecting youth?"

BURNS.

"And though thou now confess thou didst but jest
With my vexed spirits; I cannot take a truce
But they will quake and tremble all this day."

SHAKESPEARE.

MARY AND Mr. Maurice parted better friends than before. Next day they were at church together, Mr. Maurice taking his seat with Mary in the choir. He called on her twice during the ensuing week; and, contrary to her expectations, Mrs. Watkins seemed pleased with his visits, and encouraged a repetition of them, and treated Mary with marked preference in the house and in the shop.

The reason of this change in her mistress was beyond

Mary's comprehension; but it was a relief to be dealt kindly with, and a great gratification to see occasionally some one who could sympathize in her tastes, particularly her taste for music, and talk about her friends at home.

Thus time went on. Mary kept her faith bright and clear. Mr. Maurice never dared tamper with that. She was strict in the performance of her daily duties, and constant in her attendance at church; but for these preservatives, and the watch and care of the ever-present heavenly guardians, all the kind and delicate attentions of Mr. Maurice would not have fallen on soil so ready to receive the good, and reject the evil. She felt more kindly toward him, it is true; how could she do otherwise, when he was, as far as she could see, making efforts for a better life? But she was ever on her guard; there was, down deep in her heart, a sense of fear and dread which was always there when he came, and when he went, and kept but partially out of sight during his presence. She had been persuaded to go to several concerts with him, through the encouragement of Mrs. Watkins. He urged her attending the opera, but this she strenuously refused, although Mrs. Watkins pronounced her "a great fool," telling her she would "see more at one opera than at twenty concerts."

Mr. Maurice was piqued, somewhat angry, at her steady refusal, even when he offered to give Miss Turner or Mrs. Watkins a ticket "to matronize her," and did not call again that week. Mary had a consciousness of having done right, that upheld her through the constant banterings of Mrs. Watkins, who said, that through her foolish obstinacy she had lost her best friend, and deprived the shop of a good patron. Mary was a little disappointed that she did not see Mr. Maurice in church the next Sunday. He had been of late so constant there, and expressed himself so much pleased with all the ways at "The Free Church of St. Joseph," and so gratified with the preaching of Rev. Dr. Z——, that, unconsciously to herself, Mary had hoped great results from these good beginnings.

The next week the errand girl of the establishment was quite ill, and Mary was despatched with a parcel to be delivered by five o'clock in West Twenty-second Street. She was unused to walking Broadway alone. Her rare walks for pleasure were always through the more retired streets; but now it was late, and she must go through this thoroughfare. She was returning hurriedly home after the delivery of the parcel, when she was stopped at the corner of one of the cross streets by

a gang of rude boys and men, who obstructed the walk, at the same time using very insulting language. Mary, half dead with fright, was on the point of running down the cross street, when one of the larger boys laid his hand roughly on her shoulder, and with an awful oath, said, "What's your hurry, sis?" Quick as thought there came a blow from behind that levelled him with the earth, and she was led, faint and trembling, into a saloon near by. Not a word was spoken. Mr. Maurice found a retired seat, and took a place beside her.

"A pretty fix you found yourself in, Mary," said he, when he had ordered refreshments, not regarding the pale face and fluttering heart. "Now tell me which is worse; to be going about New York alone at this hour, or to go to the Opera with me and Maam Watkins for protectors?"

"But Mrs. Watkins obliged me to go," said Mary, as soon as she could speak.

"Curse Mrs. Watkins! Excuse me, Mary, but she deserves to be cursed, if she don't know any better than to send a young, green girl like you into Broadway after dark. I swear I'll give the old thing a piece of my mind on the subject."

"Don't speak so, Mr. Maurice," said Mary, attempting to rise; "I must go home."

"Go home! well, you look like it," said he, as Mary, finding she could not stand from trembling, sunk again into her seat. "No, my darling sister, I will not let you go yet, or alone. Here, take these," he added, passing her a glass of wine and other refreshments. But Mary was too thoroughly frightened to eat or drink.

"You shall not walk," said Mr. Maurice, taking her trembling hand in his; "I will order a carriage." Mary turned away; she did not like his looks or manner, or his tone of voice; neither did she like his constant recurrence to a glass of brandy punch that stood beside him. Men and women flocked in and out of that bright saloon, gay, laughing groups; but they took no notice of Mary. How she longed for one familiar face! and yet she started as if stung when she saw Isabella Fitz-Gerald pass, leaning on the arm of Frank Brayton. They looked haughtily at her, and went on without recognizing Mr. Maurice, and she heard the gentleman say, "It is a shame for Anthony!" She looked beseechingly into the face of her companion, and said, in a voice of distress, "Will you not take me out of this place? take me home

if you are my brother." He ordered a carriage and took his seat beside her. That ride opened the eyes of Mary to the deep and dark designs of Mr. Maurice. The stimulants he had taken overcame his self-control, and from protestations of brotherly love he passed to language not to be misunderstood. She proudly resented his advances, reproached him with the baseness of his conduct, and ended with commanding him to take her to her home, and never again to pollute it with his presence.

He tried to apologize; begged that they might be friends again; but her indignant "Never!" was imperative. The storm-beset mariner could not be more delighted to set foot upon his native shore, than Mary to enter once more the shop of hateful Mrs. Watkins. She exchanged no word with Mr. Maurice, and refused his offered hand in getting out of the carriage.

The shower of reproaches that met her from her mistress were suspended by the entrance of Mr. Maurice, who followed Mary into the shop, telling Mrs. Watkins not to trouble herself; he had taken her to ride, on his own responsibility. He took his leave, (having pacified Mrs. Watkins,) assuring Mary he should call for her to go to church next Sunday.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Foiled was perversion by that youthful mind
Which flattery fooled not, baseness could not blind,
Deceit infect not, nor contagion soil,
Indulgence weaken, nor example spoil.
Serenely purest of her sex that live,
But wanting one sweet weakness, — to forgive."

BYRON.

LITTLE SLEEP came to Mary's pillow that night. It had been a day of new trials to her, and sometimes she feared she had brought them upon herself by imprudence. Rigidly did she examine her own conscience. Something whispered that she was in danger, and should inform her father; and then came the thought that Mr. Maurice was Mrs. Marshall's brother, and she paused. Besides, what could Mr. Marshall do for her? he had no control over Mr. Maurice, and her time with Mrs. Watkins would not be out for some weeks. The matter is left with me, she said to herself, as she rose

from her sleepless couch, "I must bear this trial without earthly help"; and she knelt down and prayed for grace. She tried to forgive Mr. Maurice, as she said, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us"; but there was something in her heart that rebelled, — she almost *hated* him. This made her unhappy. She went to church early the next Sunday, to avoid meeting him; but she had only taken her accustomed seat, when he was beside her. Two or three times a week he would call at the shop, and because she would not see him alone, he would stand and talk to her across the counter. Mary was as cold and silent as decency would permit. If she was sent of an errand, (and it often came her turn,) Mr. Maurice would be informed of the direction she had taken, and would meet her, either going or coming; and although the walk on her part was generally a silent one, he more than once became her protector from the rude jostling of foot-passengers, and once caught her in his arms as the wheel of an omnibus was about to crush her to the earth. So bitter were her feelings towards him, aggravated as they were by his system of dogging her in all her walks, that she felt when he landed her safe, but faint with fright,

upon the sidewalk, that she would rather have sunk under the omnibus-wheel than have been indebted to him for her escape. Anxiety and perplexity wore upon Mary, more than the confinement and tediousness of the work-room. Mrs. Watkins scolded her continually for her cold, glum looks. Again and again did Mr. Maurice plead for a renewal of their friendship. He found at length, through Mrs. Watkins's assistance, an opportunity he had long sought, of seeing Mary alone in the fitting-room. He fastened the door as he entered, and going to her, he said, holding her resisting hand:—

“Mary, how can you indulge towards me such unmitigated hatred for a single offence? Do you call this Christian? I have told you many times that I was sorry for the offence, that it should never be repeated, and that it was wholly owing to that *last glass*. You know, Mary, I had no evil design toward you, and that my impudence was the result of accident,—an accident I swear shall never take place again. Who would have supposed your loving and sympathizing nature was capable of such *revenge*,—deadly *revenge*? Your pure faith, so free from cant and hypocrisy, and your daily life, so consistent and charitable, almost persuaded me to be a

Christian; but with your bitter feelings toward me, I do not see how you can call yourself ‘in love and charity with all men.’”

Mary trembled, but did not reply.

“Well,” said Maurice, dropping her hand and turning on his heel, “if forgiveness of injuries is no part of your creed, I can only say, I am disappointed in the only hold I had upon Christianity.”

Mary had a hard and bitter struggle with herself after he left her: perhaps she had done wrong; he might have been won to goodness, had she been more lenient. The “Go and sin no more” of the Scripture came to her like a reproach, and her heart softened to him; and then came the remembrance of the insult to her soul with stinging freshness, and the hatred revived. Thoughts of next Sunday's communion arose; how could she receive comfort and a sense of pardon in that sacrament, while she refused forgiveness to a fellow-creature? She was overwhelmed with the bitterness of her own thoughts. She wished she could walk out in the cool, bracing air; but she might meet Mr. Maurice. She thought of the daily evening service, where her heart often wandered, although her feet were seldom found there; but the same

fear that Mr. Maurice might meet her, and urge more of those unanswered questions, haunted her, and she did not ask permission to go. It was the evening which she once in two weeks devoted to writing home. She had received no answer to her last letter, written to her father just before that unfortunate ride. In that letter she had mentioned Mr. Maurice, and spoken of his kindness to her, but she had never received Mr. Marshall's reply, in which he cautioned her very plainly against Mr. Maurice, and requested her to have as little intercourse with him as possible, and on no account to go into the street with him. This letter never reached its destination. Young and inexperienced, with a conscience so tender that the least deviation from the path of duty caused her acute suffering, it is not surprising that she felt keenly the utter loneliness of her situation. Mr. Maurice had annoyed and perplexed her that day more than ever: and with a desperate struggle she resolved to open her whole heart to her father. She commenced a letter, but it seemed so cold and formal, and so pointless, that she committed it to the flames. She remembered how he loved straightforward sincerity, and how often he had told her to keep nothing from him, and she commenced another with better success.

This letter brought Mr. Marshall to the station the morning after his visit to Jeanette's sick-room.

New York, November, 18—

DEAREST FATHER:—

For three weeks I have heard nothing from you, and my heart is very weary to-night, and I long to sit at your feet and tell you all that troubles me. I have refrained from speaking of my perplexities to you for a long time, for I do not see that you can help me: and yet, if it is my duty, I ought to do it.

Mr. Maurice's constant attentions and presence have become very annoying to me. At first, it was pleasant to have some friend whom I had known in Moreland to whom I could speak of you all; but I now have reason to regret that I ever considered him a friend. If I had known any way to rid myself of his society, I would not have troubled you; even now my heart reproaches me, knowing, as I do, that he is Mrs. Marshall's brother. Mrs. Watkins, instead of helping me in this matter, encourages him in his intimacy here. But, my dear father, if I could tell you *all*, you would not wonder that I am irritable and nervous. My conscience reproaches me for the bitter *hatred* I feel towards him, and he has justly

taunted me with my want of "love and charity," and warned me not to appear at the Lord's table: and yet, with all my efforts, no change is wrought in my feelings toward him. My most earnest entreaties that he would refrain from calling upon me, or meeting me in my walks, are unavailing, and I have learned, by repeated and bitter experience, that his motive for seeking my society is not, as he professes, a kind one. My nerves are so affected by this continued trouble, that I am always at fault in the work-room and shop.

I shall look eagerly for a line from you, giving me counsel and advice. I already feel relieved, having unburdened my sorrows to you.

Your affectionate daughter,

MARY.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"She said she wished to die, and so she died;
For cloud-like she poured out her love, which was
Her life, to freshen this parched heart."

FESTUS.

"'Peace' ere we kneel, and when we cease
To pray, the farewell word is 'Peace.'"

KEBLE.

WHEN MR. MARSHALL reached the railroad station the morning after he received Mary's letter, a heavy fall of snow had so blocked the roads, during the night, that it was uncertain how long it might be before he could start for New York.

What concentrated suffering he endured while waiting for that tardy train! His suspicions of Mr. Maurice had grown deeper, till now suspicion was certainty. He knew that such a villain as he had already proved himself, would not scruple to accomplish his dark designs under favorable circumstances. Mary, he feared, had

not told him all; she wrote timidly, and what might she not have endured since this letter was written, from the united persecutions of Maurice and Mrs. Watkins! He paced the platform, unheeding the crowd gathering around. As he paused a moment in his rapid strides to look out on a happy group of children playing in the snow, a sleigh, very beautifully equipped, was driven rapidly by. A by-stander remarked, "That's young Grey, going up to the Squire's; he looks as if he had ridden all night." Mr. Marshall started: he ought to see Jeanette before leaving town, — it might be too late when he returned. He directed his steps toward the Mansion-House, and then, with his usual delicacy, remembered that it would be better not to intrude upon the first meeting of the young lovers. Old Mrs. Maynard was very low, and required his pastoral care, and he would see her first. Much to the joy of his sorrowful heart, the good lady was alone. Many times had he found his hope brighter, and his path clearer, after a visit to this aged pilgrim: but never was his wayworn spirit more refreshed and strengthened, than during this call; he came away with new trust in the watchful care of his ever-present Friend. When he entered the Man-

sion-House, Mrs. Lee met him in the hall, and asked him into the drawing-room.

"Jeanette is a little more comfortable to-day," said she, in answer to Mr. Marshall's inquiries, but her manner was constrained and cool. "She has asked for you," she said at length, "several times this morning, but I have put her off: any excitement overcomes her, and Arthur's arrival has agitated her. I think it would be well to avoid much conversation on her danger; she has never learned self-control, and I do not think she is conscious how ill she is. Her father spoke of the Communion, but of course, in her weak state, that is not to be thought of."

Mr. Marshall did not reply to this formal speech, but looked searchingly into Mrs. Lee's face to see if she really meant *all* that her words implied.

"I wish," she added, turning away from the inquiring eye of her pastor, "you would speak with Ralph; he is almost frantic, and I have forbidden his coming into Jeanette's room. I hear him in the library."

She led the way. Ralph was prostrate on the floor; his sobs were pitiful.

"Come, Ralph," said Mrs. Lee, endeavoring in vain

to lift him from the floor, "come, it is time you composed yourself. I am astonished that you cannot command your feelings."

The sobs were rather increased than diminished by these remarks.

"Leave him with me," said Mr. Marshall, "I may possibly quiet him."

Mrs. Lee closed the door after her; and Mr. Marshall, taking a seat on the sofa, said, very quietly, "Come here, Ralph, my son; come to me, I wish to talk with you."

That was a voice Ralph had always been accustomed to respect, and he came at once and climbed upon his pastor's knee.

"I don't love mamma, nor Virginia, nor God," he said, looking up with his tearful, swollen face. "Mamma and Virginia put me out of dear Nettie's room, when I promised I would not cry, and Nettie begged them to let me stay; and God took away my dear mother, and now he is going to take my sister Nettie, and I don't love him, and I wish I was dead too." And then came another fresh burst of tears.

Mr. Marshall waited until the paroxysm was over, and then said, gravely: "But, Ralph, my boy, if you

were to have your wish, and die now, how could you be happy, if you did not love God? Nettie is God's own child; he lent her to papa and mamma for some years, and now he calls her to Paradise. You know, my dear child, God has the best right to Nettie, and loves her better than you and I can love. Suppose I should go away into a far country, and leave my little Alice with some kind person, and provide for all her wants during my absence, and by and by I should return and claim her again as mine; should n't I have a right to take her home to myself? Some time you will know why all these things are, but now you must be willing God should take from you whatever he sees best. You are a Christian child, and I cannot think you do not love your Heavenly Father."

"But I want to see Nettie, and I want to be in her room."

"You want to have your own way, Ralph. The Christian child should

'Strive all day

To yield his will to others' will,

His way to others' way.'

When you are calm and quiet, and promise mamma

that you will make no noise, I think you may see Sister Nettie again."

Ralph looked up with his great black eyes, as if this were a lesson he understood, and did not exactly relish, yet did not dare rebel against. Their conference was interrupted by the entrance of Arthur Grey, looking pale and haggard. He shook hands cordially with Mr. Marshall, but turned away his face to hide the emotion which thrilled his frame. Mr. Marshall pressed his hand, and said, in a voice full of sympathy: "Jeanette is more ill than you expected to find her?"

"They call her better, more comfortable," said the young man, "but I fear the worst; for she does not seem natural to me."

"Not natural!" said Mr. Marshall, starting; "why? In what way do you mean?"

"O, it is unnatural that one so young, so beautiful, and so loved,—one who has everything to live for, should be so willing to go,—to go, and leave all so desolate." He could contain his grief no longer, but wept bitterly.

"It is *unnatural*," replied the clergyman, with a deep sigh, "it is contrary to nature; but it is a work of grace, and a precious proof of the love and tender care of our

Redeemer, who often thus lights the dark valley to the trusting child of God. It is a triumph of heavenly faith over earthly affection, that she is willing to leave even such love as yours, Arthur.

'Grace does not steel the faithful heart,
That it should know no ill.

But ever as the wound is given,
There is a hand unseen,
Hasting to wipe away the scar,
And hide where it has been.'

Arthur shook his head doubtfully, as Mr. Marshall slowly repeated these lines.

"Arthur, you do not do justice to Jeanette by your doubts. I have seen the widowed mother leave her helpless orphans in the cold world, without a misgiving of that care which hath said, 'Leave thy fatherless children with me.' You may feel that trust, if you will. It may be that in touching Jeanette, God has stricken the idol that keeps your heart from him; and in bringing her near the grave, he is showing you the unsatisfying nature of the dearest earthly joys. God grant, my son, the voice may not come to you in vain."

Mr. Marshall found Jeanette where he had seen her

the previous day. Her eye was brighter, and she welcomed him warmly, retaining his hand in hers, as he seated himself by her side. Her soul was calm and peaceful. Not a shadow on her path: she only wished Arthur might be willing to have it so. She desired to receive the Holy Communion; but the physicians advised her to defer it until the next afternoon, and recommended perfect quiet, expressing a hope that she might rally from this attack.

"I should love to have seen dear Mary once more," said Jeanette, looking up into her pastor's face, as he was about to leave her. "I owe much to Mary, — many a path of duty has she made plain for me."

Mr. Marshall did not notice the slight frown that passed across Mrs. Lee's face, but said, tenderly: "I hope, my dear child, you may see her again; and perhaps she may be with us to-morrow, if we are permitted to take that holy feast together. I am going for her to-day."

"How kind!" said Jeanette, faintly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"All things unto me

Show their dark sides: somewhere there must be light.

Let us think less of men, and more of God."

FESTUS.

MARY EVANS was weeping violently in the fitting-room attached to Mrs. Watkins's shop. Mr. Maurice had been there a long time. He had bought tickets for the first concert in New York of a famous cantatrice, and had brought one to Mary, hoping she would accept it, and go under his escort; but she declined, — did not even *hesitate* before such a temptation, as he thought she would, but refused decidedly. He had tried all his customary methods of courting her sympathy, coaxing, persuading, to no purpose. Then he had broken out into a paroxysm of passion that was fearful to behold; calling her everything but what she was, and swearing at her with oaths that rung in her

ears for weeks. Employing the most degrading epithets, he accused her of cant and hypocrisy, hinted darkly of what had already been said of her in New York; and added, if she hoped to rid herself of him by this sullen obstinacy, she would find herself mistaken.

She had given up to grief; her head was bowed on the arm of the sofa where he had left her. The door opened, and she heard again the step of a man. It seemed to her she could bear no more from him, and she trembled and grew cold, as she heard the bolt drawn after the door was closed. The sense of relief, of rescue, was almost overwhelming, when her father took his seat by her, and drew her towards him. Much she then and there disclosed to him which she had thought was for ever locked in her own bosom.

"Mary," said Mr. Marshall, when his indignation and sympathy for his daughter would let him speak, "I'll not leave you another day in this place. Can you get ready to leave with me in the express-train at eight o'clock to-night? It is now five. Don't trouble yourself about Mrs. Watkins. I cannot excuse her want of care for a motherless girl, or understand her encour-

aging this villain. I shall settle the matter with her, and pay her whatever damages she may require."

Mrs. Watkins was at first determined in her refusal to part with Mary; but when she found the clergyman was more than her equal in determination, she accepted a sum that doubly paid her for the remaining month of Mary's time, saying, that Mary had been so taken up for a month past with Mr. Maurice, that she had been of no use to her.

Mary was fearful that they might meet Mr. Maurice before they left town. She saw by the hasty step, and the firm, compressed lip, that there was a volcano of repressed indignation in her father's breast: but fortunately for them all, he did not cross their path. They were half-way home before Mr. Marshall had recovered his usual quietness, and remembered that he had not told Mary of Jeanette's illness.

She was deeply grieved with this intelligence, but thankful for the hope that she should see her friend once more in the land of the living.

Many were the surprises and suspicions at Mary's sudden return from New York. None were more astonished than the inmates of the Rectory; but they

obtained no light on the matter from the Rector, and almost as little from Mary, whom he had told to answer all inquiries as to her return by saying it was his wish, — that was sufficient.

* * * * *

"So the bird has flown! Clean gone out of your clutches, Anthony! Well, I must say, I'm glad of it."

This was addressed to Maurice by a handsome young fellow, none other than Frank Brayton, as they sat in a private parlor at the Astor House, over their Champagne and cigars. "Here's to her health and virtue," he added, draining his glass.

"Gone out of my clutches, Frank!" said Maurice, "I would n't harm the girl. It would be pleasant to be loved by one so good, and pure, and guileless."

"But instead of that, Maurice, by your own account, you have turned the very milk of human kindness in her breast into bitter hatred toward you; but cheer up, my good fellow, it is n't the first mistake of the kind you have made; and there's good fish in the sea yet."

"What a fool I am!" said Maurice, rising, with an oath. "Come! let's go somewhere, — anywhere."

"You are a strange genius, Maurice. Shall I tell

you what Donna Bella says of you, when you have these uneasy turns, and want to go 'somewhere, — anywhere'? She says she thinks you must have committed a great crime, that makes you so restless."

"Great crime! I've committed more than one," said Maurice with a sneer. "Come! let's go to the billiard-room."

Maurice strove to drive away thought, and he succeeded; for it was something to which he had accustomed himself. He had really been caught in his own net. Mary held a larger share in his affections than he was willing to acknowledge to himself. Her image was associated with his mother's memory. There was one bright spot in his dark, sensual heart sacred to the memory of his mother, and Mary's face, and her sweet, sympathizing ways, mingled with that remembrance.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Happy as heaven have I been with thee, love!

Thine innocent heart hath passed through a pure life,

Like a white dove wing-sunned through the blue sky.

A better heart God never saved in heaven.

She died as all the good die, — blessing, hoping.

There are some hearts, aloe-like, flower once, and die.

And hers was of them."

FESTUS.

"IT IS a month to-day, dear Nettie," said Arthur, as he held her thin hand in his, — "just a month to-day since you were taken sick. Dr. Thurston and Dr. Arnold both think a Southern climate would benefit you, perhaps restore you. Why will you not, then, give me a right to carry you to my bright Southern home? Here," he added, taking a letter from his pocket, "here is my blessed mother's welcome. Mr. Marshall has given his consent that Mary shall accompany us, and why should it not be so? Nothing could make you nearer or dearer, Nettie; but if you were my wife —"

"Yes, nearer and dearer; for it is a relation hallowed by the prayers of the Church," said Nettie musingly.

"And if you were my wife, Nettie dear, I should have a right to watch you night and day. It galls me to be excluded from your room. Dr. Thurston says, if you remain here, you cannot possibly get out of doors before June; and we all know that the air is necessary to strengthen you. Say, then, dearest, will you not try what the sunny South and my care may do for you?"

Jeanette put back the chestnut curl that had fallen as he stooped to kiss her, and, looking into his face with an earnest and truthful, yet saddened gaze, she replied, "Arthur, you are deceiving yourself. I feel that I can never reach that lovely home, which has been the theme of so many of our pleasant talks. It would be very pleasant to be called by your name, dearest," she added, seeing the mournful look gathering on his brow. "It is very kind of your mother to wish to take to her heart such a burden as I am in my present state. I will be your wife, dear Arthur, if you wish it so much, but I would rather die here in my childhood's home. There is something sweet to me in the thought of resting my weary head beneath the

shadow of our beloved church, and having my dying moments soothed by the voice of my own dear pastor. Do not weep, Arthur," she said caressingly; "you distress me. It would be wrong in me, dearest, — would it not? — to encourage your hopes, when I feel my days are numbered."

"But it seems strange that you, my gentle, yielding Nettie, should so strenuously hold an opinion at variance with the best medical advice we have been able to procure. Dr. Thurston told me this morning, that your lungs were perfectly sound, though weak; that he had known cases like yours, where the individuals had been entirely restored by passing a winter or two at the South."

Jeanette did not reply, but rested her head wearily.

* * * * *

The drawing-rooms at the Mansion-House were decorated with their accustomed evergreens at the Christmas festival. Jeanette was better, decidedly: so much stronger, that the physicians had given their opinion that, if the long, cold New England winter and spring could be passed at the South, she would regain her wonted health. She had dined with the family on Christmas

day. Arthur was by her side, proud and happy. He had gained his point; and in three days she was to be his bride.

"Did you choose the Festival of the Holy Innocents for your bridal day, my daughter, by design, or by accident?"

This was said by Mr. Marshall to Jeanette, as he sat by her side after the Christmas dinner. She smiled one of those sweet, heavenly smiles that leave upon the beholder a feeling of sadness mingled with pleasure, as she replied, "The Festival of the Holy Innocents was always to me one of the brightest pearls in the band of jewels with which the Church binds together her annual round of services; and to-day the closing lines of Keble for that festival are continually in my mind, —

'How happier far than life, the end

Of souls that, infant-like, beneath their burden bend!'

But I have not answered your question: I think our wedding was not appointed designedly on that day, but I am happy that it is to be then."

After the full service at church on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the Rector and his family — (who were the only invited guests save Dr. Thurston, who had be-

come a warm friend of the youthful pair) — met in the library at the Mansion-House. Jeanette had chosen the library, no one knew why; but Mary thought of her dream. By earnest persuasion Mary had been induced to act the part of bridesmaid. The bride looked touchingly lovely, in her dress of pure white. A cross tipped with gold, woven with a lock of her own and Arthur's hair, was her only ornament. There was a slight flush on the bride's face, when the service commenced; but it passed, and a holy calmness succeeded. Distinctly she uttered every word of those solemn vows. Hers was the only dry eye, as she looked up so sweetly when she said, "till death us do part." Even Mr. Marshall, with his lofty bearing and commanding presence, faltered, and Mrs. Lee, with all her self-command, wept.

The days succeeding the wedding were very cold, and nothing was said of the journey South till the January thaw. Then trunks were packed, and all arrangements made for the departure of the bridal party. Mary was to be their companion. Mr. Marshall and Josephine had come in to pass the last evening of their stay. To-morrow the clergyman was to part with three that were like children to him: and he felt saddened by the

thought. But his own feelings were but a secondary consideration, and he exerted himself to make the evening as agreeable and cheerful as possible. Jeanette was the most lively and animated of the company; she had not seemed so much like herself since her illness, and Arthur's cup of happiness was full. Dr. Thurston was there, and made arrangements to meet the bridal party in Savannah, during the winter.

The hour of parting came at length, and Mr. Marshall went to take leave of Jeanette. She coughed slightly, and, turning to Arthur, said faintly, "Water!" Dr. Thurston came forward immediately; his looks confirmed the fear that had thrilled like an electric shock through every heart. Arthur loosened her travelling-dress, as he held her in his arms, and Mary wiped the fearful life-blood, as it flowed from her lips. She spoke not, smiled once upon them all, and gave her hand to Mr. Marshall, but it was cold. She turned to Arthur, settled her head on his breast, and closed her eyes for ever. Before the clergyman, surrounded by suffocating tears and sobs, had finished the Commendatory Prayer, her soul was carried to the Paradise of the good.

What was Moreland now to Arthur Grey, — the place

where he had won and lost all that to him seemed worth living for? As soon as the burial was over, he hastened his departure. He would take nothing that was Jeanette's, save the cross she wore at her wedding.

As he was about to take leave of Mr. Marshall, he remembered what Jeanette had often said to him during her illness, — "When I am gone, let Mr. Marshall be your best friend; he will comfort you better than any one." He turned to him, and, grasping his hand earnestly, said, "If it will not be too much to ask, will you sometimes write to me for *her* sake?"

The clergyman returned the young man's warm grasp, and said, "It will be pleasant to me to write to you. God bless you, my son, and cause His face to shine upon you, and give you peace."

CHAPTER XXIX.

"Extended or contracted, all proportions
To a most hideous object. Thence it came,
That she, whom all men praised,
. was in mine eye
The dust that did offend it."

SHAKESPEARE.

JEANETTE'S SUDDEN death cast a shadow over the Rectory, as well as the Mansion-House. Mary was still there, although Mrs. Watkins had written for her to come back, offering her good inducements; and Miss Maynard had sought her as an assistant in village dress-making. Her father was not willing she should accept this latter situation, having learned from Josephine the ill-natured remarks Miss Maynard had continually made of Mary. Josephine was so changed, by the good use of suffering, that Mary found much comfort in her society. She never made known to Josephine the insight she had gained into the character of Anthony Maurice; and, although she acknowledged she had seen him often in New

York, yet she satisfied Josephine by saying her opinion of him was unchanged, — he was wholly unworthy of trust. Mrs. Marshall was not so easily silenced: having learned that Mary had often seen Maurice, she was constantly plying her with questions that she found it difficult to answer. On any other subject, Josephine would have come to her assistance; but here was unsafe ground for her, and she generally left the room when Mrs. Marshall made her brother the theme of conversation. Such questioning was very annoying to Mary; and instead of becoming less frequent, it had increased, since Virginia Lee had given Mrs. Marshall a hint, coming through Miss Maynard from Mrs. Watkins, that "Mary had been very much taken up with Mr. Maurice, and that was the reason why Mr. Marshall had brought her so suddenly home."

"I have it," said Virginia Lee, as she came into the nursery, where Mrs. Marshall and Mary were busily engaged sewing, one cold afternoon in February. She was holding up a letter; and as Mary looked from her work, she thought she had never seen any one as beautiful as Virginia. Her rich brunette complexion was glowing with the exhilaration of a sleigh-ride. Her jet-

black hair was braided in massive folds about a head of finest Grecian mould. There was a slight look of hauteur about her mouth; but her large, lustrous eyes, beaming and sparkling with life and health, contradicted the expression of the lower part of her face. She came into the room evidently prepared to pass the afternoon. "Here it is, — I have it, — a letter at last from Anthony Maurice."

"I am glad he has condescended to write to any one," said Mrs. Marshall, in an impatient tone; "and I am rejoiced to see you, for it is wonderfully stupid here this afternoon. Husband has gone to S—— to exchange with Rev. Mr. Trask."

"Mr. Trask? Dear me! I shall stay at home from church if that's the case." But your brother inquires for his 'pet sister.' Of course that's *you*," she said, at the same time casting a searching glance toward Mary. Mary felt the deep crimson flush that dyed her neck, but she did not raise her eyes.

"Well, I'm glad if he remembers he has a sister," said Mrs. Marshall; "I have tried in vain to learn something about him from Mary, but she is so close-mouthed that I have only been able to learn the fact that she saw

him almost every day in New York." This was spoken *at* Mary, but she did not reply.

"Perhaps she will tell you more now, for here is a note, Mary, for you, enclosed in mine; the color of true love, sky-blue, I declare!" she said, as she tossed the note into Mary's lap, after carefully examining the seal.

Mary started as if she had been stung. Would Mr. Maurice dare write to her, after what had passed? Her deepening and changing color attracted the attention of both Virginia and Mrs. Marshall.

"You need not be afraid to read it," said Mrs. Marshall, observing the reluctance with which Mary took it; "it is not at all probable that it is an offer of marriage."

Mary rose to leave the room; but before she closed the door, she heard Mrs. Marshall say, "How foolish she behaves! One would really suppose he was a lover of hers!"

"There is more in that girl," said Virginia, "than you think for. I always told mamma and poor Nettie she was artful; and now you see it."

"I wish I could make Mr. Marshall think so," replied Mrs. Marshall, with a sigh.

"I see he thinks Miss Mary a piece of sinless perfection," said Virginia, "and I could never understand how a person of so much discrimination as our good Rector could be so deceived. But there's no end to the influence of artful people! Straightforward individuals must stand one side."

Thus Virginia continued to add fuel to the flame that already consumed the heart of Mrs. Marshall. She knew and felt that, since Mary and Grace had been members of her family, there had been a change in her husband's manners toward herself. She did not realize that this change arose from her constant regardlessness of the feelings of the orphan children, and his perhaps too keen sense of their sufferings when wounded. Mr. Marshall's fault consisted in his not being able always to endure, without a frown or a murmur, his wife's littlenesses. It is very hard for a soul filled with high, generous, and noble impulses, to regard with feelings of tenderness and compassion the little, every-day meanness of a small soul, especially if that soul stand in the near relation of a bosom companion.

Mary went to the study: it looked cold and cheerless; the soul that gave it life was not there. She seated her-

self by the window, and looked out into the churchyard. The leafless shrubs about her mother's resting-place were visible, and, beyond, the newly-made grave of dear Jeanette. She thought of her own lone situation, and that she was as far from providing for herself and Grace as she was the last winter, and quite as dependent. Other girls earned their living; why should not she? Almost any manual labor seemed better than the life she led, taking the bread from the mouths of Mr. Marshall's own children: she wondered that she could have sat down so quietly under it. These thoughts came and went, until she had wrought herself into feelings of impatience, and determination that it should be so no longer; she could hardly wait for Mr. Marshall's return to tell him her determination. But what should she do? Were all avenues for gaining a livelihood closed to her? She would go, she thought, into some large town, and follow her trade; then came the bitter remembrance of Mr. Maurice and his arts, and she trembled, as she looked again at the outside of the note she held in her hand. O, if he had been what he professed to be, a brother, how much he might have done for her! Then came the memory of dear Jeanette, and her kind, sympathizing

heart, now lying cold and still; and Mary, with her subdued and Christian spirit, was tempted to think it strange that one so loved should be taken, and she, almost friendless, and, it seemed to her, so useless, should be left. If Mr. Marshall should be taken, where in this wide world could she go for counsel, — where would be her home? Thoughts, discontented thoughts, came rushing in. She felt that she was in Mrs. Marshall's way, when she remembered her cold glances and unfeeling speeches, and she longed for a *change*. Her hand rested on a little table near her, and on that table was an open book, the page turned down. Her father had evidently been reading it. Mary involuntarily raised it, and read: —

"Give me not what I ask, but what is good.
 Merciful Saviour, unto thee I look:
 O, teach me these repining thoughts to brook!
 I know I were not happier, though endued
 With all on which my unbridled longings brood;
 For joy to me hath ever been a gale,
 Which, like some demon filling the glad sail,
 Wantoned awhile on summer seas, and wooed
 To tempt o'er hidden shoals. Make me thine own,
 And take me: of myself I am afraid.

O, take me from myself! O take away
 Whate'er of self is in me, and I pray
 Give me on what my spirit may be stayed!
 And that I know full well is but thyself alone."

How quickly changed was the whole current of Mary's feelings! These lines seemed to her like the kind voice of her father reproving her for her repining thoughts.

The leadings of Providence during the past year, in giving her such a friend and protector as Mr. Marshall, in her time of greatest need, and, above all, God's love in giving her a place in his church and at his altar, came rushing to her memory, and deep penitence for her momentary rebellion and discontent succeeded.

CHAPTER XXX.

"'Life is a mingled gain,' — the good is theirs
 Who seek the good, and leave the ill behind.
 The evil, with its troubles and its cares,
 Darkens the gloomy heart, that seeks the load it bears."

REV. J. H. CLINCH.

MR. MARSHALL returned from his exchange with good news for Mary. He had seen and conversed with the famous singer, Professor Henshaw, and had made arrangements to see him in Moreland during the month. He had heard of Mary in some of his travelling tours through that region, and nothing but a press of business had at the time prevented his "looking her up," as he expressed it. Mary said to herself, "My trust in Providence shall never again falter." She was so delighted, she had forgotten her note from Mr. Maurice, which she had left on the study table. Mr. Marshall was looking at it as she came in. "Here is a note for you, Mary?" he said inquiringly.

"Yes, sir, I left it there," she replied, speaking very simply, but blushing deeply. "I would rather not read it; it is from Mr. Maurice, and came enclosed in a letter to Virginia."

Mr. Marshall looked intently at Mary, to be sure he heard aright; then, taking an envelope, without saying a word, he enclosed the note, sealed the envelope, directed it to "Anthony Maurice, Esq., New York," and put it among other letters he had prepared that morning for the mail.

Mrs. Marshall was quite indignant that Mary should not inform her of the contents of the note from Mr. Maurice, or say something about it. She had no way of venting her indignation but by a more studied coolness of manner, and an effort to say "cutting things." She once seriously thought of asking her husband, if he was aware of the fact that Mary was in correspondence with Anthony; but she had a secret feeling that he knew more about the matter than she did, and was obliged to content herself with telling Virginia of Mary's delinquencies. But Mary's heart was light; a new hope had sprung up in her breast, and she resolved to exert every energy for the attainment of the end she had in

view. She had not waited in vain; the path of honorable exertion was opening before her.

Professor Henshaw, according to promise, came to Moreland. He was a man hale and hearty, kind and pleasant in his manners. His reputation for integrity and uprightness stood fair before a critical world. His large benevolence led him sometimes to perform deeds of kindness that he could ill afford. Being perfectly enthusiastic in his profession, he would make great personal sacrifices to secure to the science of music a promising pupil. He professed himself more than pleased with Mary's voice. "It has volume and sweetness," he said, "and only wants scientific culture to make it perfect." Mary's earnest delight and childlike simplicity of manners charmed him, and it was an easy matter to arrange the terms on which he was to take her as a pupil. Mr. Marshall candidly told him her story, so far as was necessary; and the generosity of the singer's heart overflowed as he said enthusiastically, "Never mind, I'll teach the child. She will pay her board fast enough, after she begins to earn something for herself. She shall come into my family; Betsey is lonesome sometimes, and will be glad of her company; she's just the girl to suit my wife!"

"How long do you think Mary must practise before she would be prepared to teach?" inquired Mr. Marshall.

"She might teach a little in six or eight months; but I would rather keep her a year, before sending her out as one of my teachers; then I should be sure she would n't come back on my hands." This he said looking at Mary's timid face, and laughing heartily. "If she behaves well," he added, trying to look grave, "I shall, at the end of the year, find her a good situation in a seminary, where she may expect a salary of two hundred the first year, and at the same time be improving herself, and preparing for a higher salary."

"And can you always find such places for your pupils?" said Mr. Marshall.

"I have applications daily, that I find it impossible to supply," said the Professor. "A competent music-teacher, of good moral character, need not be out of a situation twenty-four hours."

"Mary, my daughter, what do you say to all this?" said Mr. Marshall.

"I am so thankful!" she whispered, while the tears gathered thick, and fell fast.

She wished she could go the next week; but afterward was glad the time appointed for her to leave Moreland was not till May; for she should once more spend the precious season of Lent under the guidance, and beneath the roof, of her beloved spiritual father.

* * * * *

Two years passed away, before Mary again saw Moreland, or any of its inhabitants.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"There are times when the storm-gust may rattle around,
 There are spots where the poison-shrub grows;
 Yet are there not hours when naught else can be found
 But the south wind, the sunshine, and rose?"

ELIZA COOK.

"She was a sacrifice
 To that sad kingcraft, which in marriage vows,
 Linking two hearts unknowing each of each,
 Perverts the ordinance of God, and makes
 The holiest tie a mockery, and a curse."

SOUTHEY.

THE FIRST year in Professor Henshaw's family Mary spent in acquiring a thorough knowledge of music: her application and proficiency were great, so great as to surprise even the Professor himself, who pronounced her the most thorough female student he ever had. Her whole time, with the exception of that part of it devoted to strictly religious duties, was given to the science, in which she had resolved to be a proficient.

Mr. Henshaw's family consisted only of himself and wife, and Mary had nothing in her home to call off her attention from the one purpose for which she was there. Mrs. Henshaw was a quiet invalid, who walked the daily round of her domestic duties with scarcely a wish or thought for the world without. She came to love Mary for the kind consideration she always manifested for her, and for the contrast, as Mrs. Henshaw often said to her husband, between Mary and a bold, forward singing Miss the Professor had once picked up in his musical rambles. This Miss proved very insolent to Mrs. Henshaw, and rewarded her benefactor by a clandestine marriage with an omnibus-driver, with whom she had made acquaintance in her daily rides to a juvenile musical class in a neighboring town.

Mary's lady-like and dignified manners, which had now become habitual, repelled everything like familiarity in the numerous crowd of aspiring or professed musicians that followed in the wake of Professor Henshaw. Mr. Marshall was well rewarded for the manly confidence he had reposed in the Professor, when he told him Mary's story. She was never left to go to the numerous assemblies and concerts which she attended with any one who

happened to be present, but always took the ready arm of her teacher. When he was out of town, she preferred the society of Mrs. Henshaw to any of the numerous applicants for the pleasure of her company, and in this way she was saved from acquaintances that would have been unprofitable. She acquired ease and self-possession, being often called upon to sing or play in large companies. At the end of the first year, Professor Henshaw procured her a situation as teacher of music in a flourishing female seminary in the city where he lived, at the same time telling her he should consider her "one of his family." Thus she had an opportunity to continue her education in other branches, while she gave instruction in music. This was that for which she had so longed all her life. Her loving heart was full of thanksgivings to an overruling Providence, and gratitude made every duty a pleasure. Her letters home were filled with that joyousness

"That outbalances ages of pain."

Mary's mind was naturally of a studious cast, and she had now every opportunity afforded by one of the most thorough schools in the country for improving her powers and adding to her range of thought. Music had been

with her a passion, a ruling passion; but it soon took its proper place, when she had time and means to cultivate her reasoning faculties. As her year at school drew near its termination, she longed to retain her place as teacher of music there; but it was only a momentary thought, for although Professor Henshaw and his wife both urged it, expressing their sorrow for her departure, she felt that she had no right to be dependent any longer on them. She already owed a debt which years could not repay. He would accept no remuneration. He had boarded her in his family two years, and given her gratuitous instruction, until she could now go forth and make something more than a living. Her conscience would not suffer her to accept his kind offer for another year. She made up her mind to return to Moreland for a visit, before entering on any new situation; and in the meantime the Professor had assured her, that, when he received notice of a place worthy of her, he would communicate the fact. She was packing her trunk for her home, her Moreland home, when the cheerful voice of her teacher called her to the parlor.

"Here, Mary, I have just taken this letter from the office. Here is a situation that I think perhaps may be

good enough for you"; and his little black eyes twinkled with pleasure, as he handed her the letter. "Show this to Mr. Marshall," he added, "he will know these people; some of the gentlemen are among the most prominent men in the country. The only objection I can see, will be that it carries you so far both from Moreland and from this city.

"May I read it?" said Mary, laughingly.

"To be sure, you little gypsy; who should read it if you may not? I'm sure it concerns you more than any one else."

"O no, my dear sir," said Mary, "I would not go to the best place in the world, if you and my father did not approve of it; and I am only sorry it takes me from here, if I must leave Moreland. I can never make you and Mrs. Henshaw any returns for all your kindness to a poor orphan girl."

Tears glistened in her eyes as she spoke. Professor Henshaw, like most musical characters, was very sensitive, and he was under the necessity of turning away to hide the drops that moistened his own eyes.

The same day Mary received a letter from Josephine, announcing the intended marriage of Anthony Maurice

and Virginia Lee. Mr. Maurice had carried out his previous resolution, and purchased a country seat in Moreland, which had become, as he had prophesied, by reason of the junction of two railroads, the largest town in the county. Further to prosecute his plans, he had engaged himself to Virginia Lee. He admired her beauty, and having reduced his income by extravagance and dissipation, Squire Lee's broad acres had as tempting a look as his beautiful daughter. Virginia, attracted by the immense California fortune still supposed to be at the disposal of Mr. Maurice, and somewhat by admiration for the genius and talents of the man, but, more than all, by an earnest desire for an establishment of her own, had consented to be his wife. Mrs. Lee was pleased. "Mr. Maurice," she said, "was not so much of a gentleman as Arthur Grey, but he had money, and Squire Lee had said he would probably be the next candidate for Congress; for his party was getting into the ascendant."

Mr. Maurice, being for the present wearied with *pleasure*, had taken *politics* for his ruling passion. Squire Lee knew his proposed son-in-law had led a wandering life, and Arthur had once told him he was very unprincipled; but he was older now, and really seemed desirous

of settling down and being somebody; besides, it would be so pleasant to keep Virginia near home. Mr. Maurice had only one against him at the Mansion House, and that was Ralph. By his quick perceptions he had gathered that Mr. Maurice was not agreeable to his sister Mary and his dear Jeanette, and therefore he could be no friend of his. All efforts on his part to establish a friendship with Ralph were repulsed with so much pride, that Mr. Maurice forgot himself, and declared, in the presence of Virginia, that the spirit of the sister reigned in the brother.

But there was other news in Josephine's letter, which, although it did not startle Mary so much as the announcement of this engagement, interested her more, and brought tears to her eyes and comfort to her heart. Arthur Grey had become a candidate for Holy Orders. "Dear Nettie," said Mary, as she folded the letter, shutting out all thoughts of Maurice and Virginia, "your prayers are answered, and Arthur now knows why you were taken."

Mary reached home a few days before the wedding. She found Josephine in a little trouble because Virginia had asked her to be *bridesmaid*!

"Bridesmaid at Anthony Maurice's wedding!" said Josephine. "How can I?"

"Will it be very hard?" said Mary, looking kindly at her. "I am sure I would rather stand for ever as bridesmaid, than once as *bride*."

"It is not," said Josephine, "that I feel sorry for this union, but because I feel so ashamed of myself. However, perhaps it will be good discipline, as Dr. Thurston says, when he undertakes anything particularly disagreeable."

Mary looked at Josephine with much pleasure. The rose had returned to her cheek, and the cheerfulness to her manner; but that bitter tone of irony was all gone, and Mary felt that she spoke truly, when she said she was not sorry for this marriage.

The contrast was as great between the preparations for the wedding of Virginia and Mr. Maurice, and that of Arthur and the dear departed one, as the characters of the parties were opposite. At this last festivity, everything was on a scale of magnificence rarely seen in Moreland; but not a tear was shed. The plan of a general invitation to the evening party was Mr. Maurice's proposition; for, with all his faults, he was not aristocratic, and he loved popularity. Therefore, in spite of Mrs. Lee's endeavors to keep up "the respectability of the family," everybody was invited, and everybody came.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"O let Thy sacred will

All Thy delight in me fulfil.

Let me not think an action my own way,

But as Thy love shall sway:

Resigning up the rudder to Thy skill."

HERBERT.

THE BUSTLE of the wedding being over, Mary's thoughts turned to the letter Professor Henshaw had given her for Mr. Marshall. She read it again herself, in the quietude of her own room, and prayed for guidance. It seemed to her as if she was prepared to fill this station; it was a very desirable one. The letter read as follows:—

Rocktown, April, 18—.

DEAR SIR:—

Knowing your interest in musical education in our own country, and your opportunities for procuring teachers in that science, we have concluded to make known our

wants to you, and trust in your good judgment to supply those wants. Several gentlemen of our town have young daughters whom they wish instructed in vocal and instrumental music. We are not willing to place our children in an ordinary "singing-school," nor are we prepared to encourage foreign masters in the instruction of our daughters in this branch of their education. We are willing to give a generous salary to any proficient female musical teacher whom you could recommend as having a thorough knowledge of the rudiments of musical science, and a suitable character in other respects. If such a person can be obtained, we have a room which we will prepare for an instruction-room, and will promise the lady one hundred and fifty dollars, with a suitable boarding-place, for the first six months, and, if we are mutually pleased, an increase of salary afterward. She will have under her care eight girls, from ten to fifteen years of age, and she will be expected to confine her musical instruction to the families with whom her pupils are connected. We think this a new and original plan, and we flatter ourselves it will succeed. We shall hope for some communication from you on this subject, in the course of a few weeks. We wish to commence

our family music-school during the summer, or early in the autumn at farthest; and write thus seasonably, knowing that you have numerous applications, and trusting this will receive early attention.

Very respectfully yours,

WALTER STEPHENSON,

For

STEPHEN HALL,

RICHARD HARRINGTON,

NEHEMIAH BURGESS.

PROFESSOR W. HENSHAW.

Some of these names Mary had often seen in the newspapers, and she feared she could never meet the expectations of such people. "And yet," she said to herself, "what will be required of me? Only my *duty*."

She took this letter to her father's study, and watched him as his thoughtful, earnest eyes read and re-read the epistle. She was forcibly reminded of the letter she had given him to read three years before, in that very spot, — Mrs. Watkins's letter. How exactly he had studied that, as he did this. Mary had passed, since then, from a fearful, timid girl into a self-possessed woman, but

with the same obedient, truthful spirit. Many visions went through her brain, as she waited patiently for Mr. Marshall to finish his study of the epistle. She thought of Grace, growing up so beautiful and so good, and she hoped to be able, in a year or two, to put her to the best of schools; and then she prayed that the shadows that had crossed her own young life might never fall on the path of Grace.

"These are great names," said Mr. Marshall at length, looking up from the letter, "as the world goes; an excellent situation I should think, if some of these gentlemen would only have the kindness to take my darling daughter into their own families to board. Rocktown is a large place, — some eight or ten thousand inhabitants, I think. It is a long way from home, two hundred miles or more, quite out of this diocese. Do you know, Mary, if there is an Episcopal church in Rocktown? I doubt whether there is," he added, rising and going toward the library and taking down a book of reference; "I have heard much of the modern fashionable infidelity of that region. No," he said decidedly, as he turned over the book he had selected, "it has no Episcopal church. The nearest church is at Stoney Brook, four

miles or more from Rocktown. This is a great drawback," he added, looking at Mary as the shadow lengthened on her face.

"Then I can't go," she said sorrowfully.

"Well, we will not be hasty, Mary; there is time enough to make it a subject of serious reflection. I will write to these gentlemen myself, and enclose it to Professor Henshaw. In the mean time you can be studying those lines of Cowper you were admiring yesterday; —

"Ah, be not sad although thy lot be cast
Far from the flock, and in a boundless waste,
No shepherd's tent within thy view appear,
But the Chief Shepherd even there is near."

* * * * *

"Well, I do think," said Virginia, as she returned from church about two months after her marriage, and met her husband in the drawing-rooms, where he had been lounging, reading papers, and writing letters, during her absence, — "I do think, of all the consummate pride I have ever seen, Mary Evans displays the most!"

So saying, she threw herself on the sofa, and commenced drawing off her gloves.

"What's the matter now," said her husband with a yawn; "you have n't fallen out with that poor child, I hope."

"Fallen out with her!" said Virginia, with a scornful toss of her head. "She was never a *protégée* of mine! It is very seldom I compliment her with an invitation to come and see us; but to-day, to please you, I asked her to be social, and call and see us often. And what do you think my lady replied? Why she said, with the most dignified air imaginable, 'Thank you, Mrs. Maurice,' making the *name* very *emphatic*, 'but my time is so occupied, that I have but little to spare for social visiting'!"

"And so, my wife," said Mr. Maurice with a smile, and the same look that had often startled Mary, "you can't guess, with all your penetration, the reason the little witch puts on such airs."

"What do you mean, Maurice?" said Virginia, looking at him with large eyes; "you don't think she wished to be Mrs. Maurice herself, do you?"

"Aha!" said Mr. Maurice, patting her rosy cheeks, "you are something of a Yankee, after all."

* * * * *

After much deliberation, and many letters between Dr. Stephenson, Professor Henshaw, and Rev. Mr. Marshall, it was decided that Mary was the teacher elect, by a letter from Dr. Stephenson.

Rocktown, May, 18—.

DEAR SIR:—

The letters that have passed between Professor Henshaw and myself, together with your letter, are now before me. We met last night for the renewed consideration of the subject of a music-teacher for our daughters; and the unanimous voice of the meeting was in favor of engaging Miss Evans for the situation. With regard to a boarding-place, we were so well assured of the careful training of your daughter, that we have no hesitation in receiving her into our families, to be three months with each of us, should she remain (as we trust will be agreeable to all) through the year. We shall hope to welcome your daughter as early in September as she can make it convenient to come. Her first quarter will be spent in my family.

Truly and respectfully yours,

W. STEPHENSON.

REV. MR. MARSHALL.

P. S. With regard to houses of religious worship, there are in Rocktown two Unitarian, one Universalist, Baptist, Roman Catholic, besides a meeting of Swedenborgians in the Town-Hall. There is a flourishing Episcopal Church little less than four miles from here.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"For never yet the heart has beat,
Too mean, too lowly, too unmeet
To do its proper part aright;
Nor hand has been too weak or small
To work for Him who works for all."

A WEARY JOURNEY of two hundred and fifty miles, on a glowing September day, brought Mary, as the shadows lengthened, into the vicinity of Rocktown. "Lower Rocktown!" called the conductor. Her heart fluttered, for the next station would be her stopping-place. The scenery and face of the country were totally different from Moreland. All was flat, level, and sandy, as far as eye could reach, and Mary thought her heart would pine for the hills and valleys of Moreland. A growth of shrub oaks started up among the rocks that surrounded her, and she breathed a sigh for the brave old forests of home; but the sigh was checked as it rose in her breast, by the reflection that she had come here,

not to see fine scenery, or beautiful landscapes, but "to get her living, and do her duty in that state of life into which it had pleased God to call her." By the time she had reasoned herself into a determination to be cheerful and happy as possible, the cars stopped, and she was handed to the platform by the careful conductor, under whose charge she had been placed. There was the usual number of dirty boys and lazy men about the station-house; but Mary was not the timid, trembling Miss she had been in New York, and although she had a feeling of sadness, not knowing one human face, she was not afraid. Stepping to the ticket-office to inquire for a conveyance to Dr. Stephenson's, she met a bustling, benevolent-looking man, who eyed her attentively.

"Ah, here you are! this must be Miss Evans, I think. I am glad to see you, very glad," he said, extending his hand to her. "This way, this way," he added, drawing her arm within his, and leading her through the crowd of idlers to the carriage that stood waiting. "Florence will be delighted to see you; she begged me to bring you to our house immediately; she is very lonely now, since Edgar died." And his laughing, good-natured face assumed a graver look.

"You are in trouble, sir," said Mary, observing for the first time the wide crape on his hat; "the presence of a stranger may not be agreeable at this time?"

"O yes, yes!" said the Doctor, wiping his eyes; "but we don't call you a stranger; we have talked of you so much, that we feel as if we had known you always."

Mary thanked him for his kindness, and begun already to feel at home; she had dreaded the first interview, but it was past, and how pleasantly! Often mountains of difficulty become level plains, when met in the path of duty. The air of comfort that reigned in and about the residence of Dr. Stephenson charmed Mary, and she was prepared to be pleased with everything. A few kind words, so easily spoken, will often change the whole hue of life to the sensitive soul.

Mary was ushered into the parlor to meet "Mamma" by Miss Florence, who, having seen her father from the window, came running and leaping down the road, laughing with delight. She was a bonnie lass of thirteen years, the sole remaining child of her parents. Her countenance was glowing with life and health, and her sandy hair fluttered in the wind as she bounded along.

"Here, mamma, here is Miss Evans. I told Lily Harrington I knew she would come to-night."

"Hush, my dear," said a tall lady, dressed in the deepest mourning, as she came forward to welcome Mary; "you are too boisterous, Florence; be quiet, and assist Miss Evans to remove her shawl. My brother, Mr. Hamilton, Miss Evans," added she. A tall, studious-looking young man rose from the recess of the bay window, and bowed gracefully to the new-comer.

Mary's head rested that night peacefully and gratefully on her pillow. It seemed to her that a kind Providence had opened a very pleasant path before her,—at least the entrance was strewn with flowers.

The society in Rocktown was of a different character from any she had before met. The families in which she taught were worshippers of *intellect*. Their morality was of a high tone; but it was morality induced, not by a humble sense of their own sinfulness and dependence upon Divine grace for strength to lead a holy life, but brought about by connecting the idea of vice with temporal degradation, and as beneath an intellect conscious of its superiority. Mary had been tried by disappointments and crosses; she was now to be proved by the

waves of prosperity. A letter written to her father at the close of the first quarter in Rocktown, may give us some information of herself and those about her.

Rocktown, December, 18—.

MY DEAR FATHER:—

It is now near midnight, and I steal moments from sleep to write to you, lest to-morrow's occupations may interfere with this pleasure. I wish you could have been here to-night to be present at one of those interesting *conversazione* I mentioned in my last. It troubles me that afterward, when I try to recall the thoughts thrown out at these delightful meetings that I may tell you, I can only recall here and there an idea; but the whole impression is beautiful, like that of music when it is perfect, seemingly elevating and refining, but after all somewhat vague and unsatisfying to me, probably because I am only a learner. You would understand and appreciate all these beauties of thought. I can hardly tell you how happy and contented I am. The want of the church, and my own dear early friends, are all the wants I feel. My class is very pleasant, and the girls make rapid progress in their music. Dr. Stephenson very kindly told me to-day, that if it was agreeable to

me, he wished me to make my arrangements to make his house my home during my whole stay in Rocktown, instead of passing each quarter in a new family, as was at first proposed. Indeed, I am met by kindness and consideration on every side. Mr. Hamilton, Mrs. Stephenson's brother, of whom I have spoken in my letters, has proposed to teach me German, and read French with me, in my leisure hours. I thanked him, and commenced last week. He appears like a pure, noble-minded person of brilliant intellectual attainments. He is reading law with Squire Harrington. I have been to church but twice since I came to Rocktown. The clergyman was dull and stupid; but I had the precious service, which is home-like everywhere. I am acquainted with but a single member of our church in this large town, a Miss Parsons, who joined our communion while attending school abroad. The families in which I teach are very exclusive, and yet I cannot call them aristocratic; for they all receive and treat me like a familiar friend. I look forward with a little eagerness sometimes into the future, when I hope to be able to send Grace to the Seminary at H—; and, my dear father, I trust I shall be able to help you put Alice there at school also.

Many thanks again and again for your unwavering kindness to me; without your love and counsel, what could I do?

I am sorry to hear Mrs. Marshall's health is so feeble; I shall hope to hear from home a little oftener after the Christmas festivities are over; there is no preparation whatever here for the celebration of that day. I shall be homesick then, I know.

Do write, Christmas day, to

Your ever affectionate daughter,

MARY.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

"The wail of regret, the rude clashing of strife,
The soul's harmony often may mar;
But I think we must own, in the discords of life,
'T is ourselves that oft waken the jar."

ELIZA COOK.

"The moon was watching on the hill,
The stream was staid, and the maples still,
To hear a lover's suit."

"THERE!" SAID Anthony Maurice, throwing his hat and cloak on the hall table, with an awful oath; "the jig's up, and I've lost my election!"

"What a dreadful noise you make, Anthony!" said Virginia, coming to the door to learn the cause of the violence.

"Noise? well, why should n't I make a noise? I reckon you'll do your share, madam, when I tell you you can't go to New York this winter."

"Not go to New York!" replied Virginia, reddening to the temples; "and why not, pray?"

"For the best of reasons, — there's no money," he said, striking his pocket; "and I've lost the election, and spent over two thousand dollars into the bargain."

"Because you've acted like a fool yourself," she replied angrily, "is that any reason why I should be cheated out of my visit?"

The husband turned pale as ashes, his lip quivered with rage; he brought his foot firmly down upon the carpet, and, raising his hand, said, with another terrifying oath, "Virginia, I swear you shall not go."

"And I say *you* shall not go without *me*!" and the angry wife swept haughtily out of the room.

"Curse this matrimony!" said Mr. Maurice, soliloquizing; "what a stupid ass I was to be caught with such a bait! I once imagined a sweet cottage in Moreland, but it was not *you*," he said, pointing to the door as if Virginia were still there, — "it was not you who was to occupy it with me. O Mary!" he sighed, "your influence over me was good, and you might have led me to better things, but you would not. A curse on all the sex, — allurers, betrayers, deceivers! I'll leave this horrid place to-night. Who would have thought I could have lived eight months in such stag-

nant water! I'll go and see poor Sister Nellie first, for they say she is really very sick. I thought she was only spleeny."

He reached the Rectory as Mr. Marshall, tenderly lifting his wife from the carriage, carried her into the house, and gently laid her on a couch Josephine had prepared.

"Why, Sister Nellie, you are really sick," said Mr. Maurice, approaching the invalid, and taking no notice of Josephine, who was sitting by her side.

"Yes, Anthony," said the sister, in a low, complaining tone, "and you never come to see me: when I'm gone, you'll think of your neglect."

"Well, Sis," he said, stroking his bearded chin, and looking into Josephine's face with a laugh, "we'll wait and see, as Dr. Arnold says. Ah, Josey," he added, observing her blush, "how is our friend, Dr. Thurston, in these days?"

Josephine did not deign a reply, but the deepening color of her cheeks betrayed her feelings. "Sulky! hem! well, well, here comes the parson, and I'll go and inquire for my pet sister."

Mr. Marshall made no conversation with Mr. Maurice.

when they met. Their paths seldom crossed each other; and now the cold sternness of his brother's manner awed Mr. Maurice for a moment; but at length he boldly asked if they had heard from Mary lately.

Mr. Marshall gave him a withering look, and coldly replied, "We hear every fortnight"; then, turning to his wife, he said, in a tone tender by contrast, "Ellen, do you feel fatigued by your ride?"

"O yes!" she said querulously, "I am so weary I can't think of riding again; the air is too keen for me, and the roads are rough. O, there he is," she added, raising her head as Dr. Thurston entered the room. "Why did n't you come before? I have been waiting a long time for you."

"Indeed!" said the physician, as he warmly shook the offered palm of Mr. Marshall, bowed coldly to Mr. Maurice, and pressed Josephine's hand in both of his; "waiting for me, are you?" he added in a cheerful tone. "You are better for your ride, and good nursing," looking tenderly at Josephine; "you'll be about again shortly."

"O no, Doctor, I shall never be about again, I am so anxious for the children. *Care* puts me back more

than anything, and there is nobody to look after anything."

A momentary shadow of distress passed across the face of Mr. Marshall; but it was succeeded by a look of solicitude, as he turned to his wife and left the room, saying, "Excuse me now, Ellen; I must finish my sermon for to-morrow."

"Josephine," said Dr. Thurston, as she waited upon him to the door to take his directions for the invalid, "it will never do for you to confine yourself so much to the house; you grow pale every day. I shall call for you to ride this evening; now make your arrangements to go with me. Will you?"

"If I *can*," said Josephine, hastily withdrawing her hand from his grasp.

Josephine had learned something of the worth of her brother, and had come to confide in him; not so entirely, perhaps, as Mary, for her nature was not so confiding; but to seek his counsel and advice, where once her haughty spirit would have walked alone. Accordingly, when she returned from her moonlight ride with Dr. Thurston, seeing a light in the study, and fearing to delay in carrying out her resolution, lest pride should

get the better of her desire to know her duty, she tapped lightly at the door. "May I come in, brother," she said.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Marshall, rising and putting away his sermon, which he was just finishing.

"I am afraid I am interrupting you, brother?"

"No, Josephine, I am glad to pause awhile in my deep thinking, and give myself to your pleasant society." He drew his large study-chair toward the fire, and placed the little rocking-chair beside it. "Anything new, sister?" he said by way of conversation, perceiving a look of perplexity on her face.

"Yes, brother," she replied, without raising her eyes. "I have been to ride with Dr. Thurston, and — and —"

"He has asked you to be his wife; I shall be most happy to call Dr. Thurston brother, if it is agreeable to you."

Josephine looked up with an arch smile, which was quickly followed by a shadow. "Do you think I should tell him of that foolish affair between Mr. Maurice and myself?" she said, growing more grave, while a tear glistened in her eye.

Mr. Marshall looked surprised; he hesitated a mo-

ment, and then said very gently, "No, my dear sister; I cannot see that you are called upon to speak of that to Dr. Thurston. It was a folly, repented of almost as soon as committed."

Josephine replied not, but the tears fell as she rested her head on her hand.

"Is your heart any less free to give wholly to Dr. Thurston, Josey, for this foolish fancy?"

"No, brother, no; surely not; but I have come to love truthfulness and sincerity so much more than anything else, and to have such a dread of anything like double-dealing, that it seems not quite *true* to Edmund Thurston to withhold from him the fact — bitter as the thought is to me, and much as I despise myself for it — that there was a time when I would willingly have been the slave of Anthony Maurice."

"My dear sister," said Mr. Marshall affectionately, "I think you are taking a morbid view of this matter: such a confession would certainly do him no good, and would probably excite in him a deeper feeling of hatred toward Maurice than he already has. Dr. Thurston is a man of quick, ardent temperament, and the knowledge of Maurice's villany toward you might lead to conse-

quences you would deprecate. Reverse the case. Suppose the Doctor himself had once met a coquette, for whom he had felt a strong youthful fancy, and she had jilted him; do you think it would be his *duty* to acquaint you with the encounter, or that he would be any less true to you if he did not? You know, Josephine, I would not advise you to act otherwise than conscientiously; but this is a point upon which I can judge better for you than you can yourself. Settle the matter *now*, sister, and do not let it come up again to trouble you."

Josephine mused awhile: at length, looking up smiling through her tears, she said, "I have given Dr. Thurston permission to call upon you for your consent."

"Which I shall be happy to grant, only that it will leave me minus — not a sister, for you will be mine still, but — a housekeeper."

"I am not gone yet," said Josephine, as she returned her brother's good-night kiss.

The next morning, two letters were laid on the study-table while the Rector was out. One was Mary's letter from Rocktown, which we have already given; the other was from Arthur Grey, a long, affectionate, and grate-

ful epistle, informing Mr. Marshall of the death of his father, and the division of his estate; and enclosing a check for five hundred dollars, — the first offering of his own property, — to be devoted, he said, "to the care and education of the orphan children you so kindly sheltered under your roof, when they were without a home. They were favorites of mine and of my sainted Jeanette; and I feel that I cannot do better with the means God has given me, than to assist you in their training and maintenance."

Mr. Marshall was overwhelmed with the burden of gratitude that filled his soul, — gratitude to the Giver of all; and there was not one repining thought for his own children mingled with that sacrifice of thanksgiving. It was only the day before that Grace had innocently asked him if she and Alice would ever go away to school, and now here were the means to send her, and that, too, without drawing on Mary's earnings! He read again his absent daughter's letter. "Dear girl," he said, soliloquizing as he folded the letter, "these are new temptations to you. I trust prosperity may not do what trial has never done, cause you to grow weary of *duty*. I am a little afraid of this transcendental atmosphere for one so full of appreciation of the beautiful."

CHAPTER XXXV.

"As men, for fear the stars should sleep
 And trip at night, have spheres supplied, —
 Just so the other heaven they also serve,
 Divinity's transcendent sky;
 Which with the edge of wit they cut and carve:
 Reason triumphs and Faith lies by."

HERBERT.

"I SUPPOSE MARY would be much gratified to go to church to-morrow at Stoney Brook," said Dr. Stephenson.

Mrs. Stephenson, and her brother, Mr. Hamilton, were reading together a new poem that had appeared in *The Halo*, a magazine published in Rocktown.

"I would drive her over," added the Doctor, "but I have a patient I cannot leave many hours."

"Yes," said his wife, looking up from the pamphlet, "she should go certainly. She is so self-forgetful, and desirous to make others happy, that we ought really to

make some exertion to get her to church on Christmas day at least. She and Florence have spent all their leisure time this week in trimming the school-room with shrub-pines from Brush Hill."

"I will carry her to Stoney Brook," said Mr. Hamilton, "if you wish it, sister."

"Thank you, brother. The love she bears her Church is the strangest trait in her character. It seems wonderful that one so earnest and truthful, so ingenuous and thoughtful, should dwell so much in the musty forms and ordinances of a religion which seems better adapted to the Dark Ages than to the glorious liberty of the nineteenth century."

"Patience, patience, sister," said Hartley Hamilton smiling; "with her early training, you could hardly hope that she would at once leave superannuated creeds and churches; but her pure and noble mind will yet rise and soar in the air of freedom. You are too hasty," he added; "she will yet learn to look from 'the shows of things into things themselves.'"

Mary was delighted with the thoughtfulness of her friends, in making arrangements for her to attend church on Christmas day; and she begged for Florence's com-

pany. This arrangement was pleasant to Mr. Hamilton; for children, he often said, were the truest part of mankind, and Florence the truest of children.

The young man had an earnest mind, and was a truth-seeker; but from the wells of true wisdom he would not draw; they were old, stagnant waters: so he hewed out to himself broken cisterns from his own perverted wisdom and understanding. His tastes were more poetical than matter of fact, and yet he had all the energy necessary for the accomplishment of great ends. To him the end to be desired in order to renovate the human race, was the liberating the mind from the thralldom of creeds, ordinances, and forms. He looked upon Mary with admiration, for her simplicity and freedom from artificial manners. He could not understand how one trained as she had been, under a system of what he called "formalism," and apparently so devoted to her Church, could yet retain that freshness and truthfulness, and earnest desire for wisdom, which she manifested.

Mary regarded him as a being of superior order; she loved to listen to the beautiful ideal of a perfect life that flowed from his lips. Dr. Stephenson's family were

all too well-bred to attack Mary's faith in any way, neither did they urge her attending religious services with them. Hamilton attended no place of worship: his own meditations with the works of nature were sermons and prayers sufficient for him. He had come thus far on Christmas day for the pleasure it gave him to make others happy, and he spent the time during service in the churchyard among the "holy dead."

The ride and the service were very pleasant to Mary, and the "Holy Feast" served to strengthen and settle a heart soon to be sorely tried. Florence was delighted. She had never been to Church before; and she rattled on after her return for an hour about "the wreaths and branches." Above all, she admired the service, for the simple, childlike reason that she, with a little aid from Mary, could take part in it.

New Year's day came, and with it Mr. Marshall's answer to Mary's last letter;—and it was written on the evening of Christmas day, by that dear study fire where she had so often sought and found counsel and strength. Filled as Mary's heart was with gratitude, by several choice "gifts of the season" from her pupils and friends, there was none treasured so closely or dwelt upon so fondly as this letter.

Moreland, Christmas, 18—.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER:—

It is Christmas evening, and I am alone in my study: my thoughts are with you. Did we not meet to-day in "the communion of saints"? How blessed are these reunions with the distant and the dead! Your letter, so full of pleasure, made me very happy; I rejoice in your joy. I am grateful that you have an opportunity for intercourse with intellectual society. Think not, my daughter, I would cast a damper on your joy when I say, be on your guard, lest you fall down and worship *intellect*. It is a godlike gift, but not so God-pleasing as "an humble, contrite heart." I am sorry, more than I can express, that you cannot be a regular attendant at church. Perhaps when spring comes you may be able to get to Stoney Brook oftener. If you were acquainted with the Rector, may be you would not find him so "dull and stupid." You remember what George Herbert says?—

"He that gets *patience*, and the *blessing* which

Preachers conclude with, hath not lost his pains."

My dear child, "take heed what you hear." I am personally indebted to Dr. and Mrs. Stephenson for their kindness to you, and also to Mr. Hamilton for his instructions in German.

It gives me pleasure to inform you that our dear friend, Arthur Grey, has enclosed a note for five hundred dollars to me, to be devoted to "the care and education" of yourself and Grace. It was very noble in him to remember his Moreland friends in this delicate way. I have placed the money in safe hands till your year has expired at Rocktown, when we will consult about the disposition of it; in the mean time, I continue to instruct Grace with Alice, as usual.

Mrs. Marshall is very feeble: the physicians give but little hope that she will be any better. She requires much of my attention, and this has made my letters to you less frequent; but, Mary, my prayers are poured out for you, and I never fail to commit my absent daughter into the hands of her father's God.

Mrs. Maynard, the aged pilgrim, is at rest: her death was peaceful, as her life had been faithful.

Mrs. Watkins sent to me a few days since, with an urgent request for you to come and be her *forewoman*! What do you say to the exchange? I think there could hardly be a greater contrast than between the society in which you now move and that of Mrs. Watkins's shop.

Josephine gives me permission to tell you a little bit of news about herself. She and Dr. Thurston have

concluded to walk the path of life together. I know you will join me in wishing their way may be as free from thorns as shall be for their highest good. The Doctor is a fine, cheerful, straightforward person, a favorite with all the family.

Mr. and Mrs. Maurice have gone to New York for the holidays. Mr. Maurice is earnest with Squire Lee that Ralph, who possesses your musical talent, should learn to play the organ. His father asked my advice; and I, fearing the result of making music a study with a boy of Ralph's ardent and sensitive temperament, preparing for a liberal education, gave my advice against it. I fear it would become a *passion* with him, and lead to the neglect of more important studies. I think Ralph's practical working qualities will eventually predominate over his impulsive temperament, especially if he will carry out that system of self-discipline which he has already commenced.

I have written you a long letter, and endeavored to tell you all the news, knowing that plain, matter-of-fact Moreland is still very dear to you.

Let me hear from you often. Your letters are always doubly welcomed by

YOUR AFFECTIONATE FATHER.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

"Therefore the poet
Did feign, that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods."
"If thou wouldst read a lesson that will keep
Thy heart from fainting, and thy soul from sleep,
Go to the woods and hills! No tears
Dim the sweet look that Nature wears."

MARY HAD been somewhat puzzled, when she first came to Rocktown, in the division of her time, that she might give to each of her pupils her proportion of instruction. Squire Harrington had fitted up a room that had formerly been a lawyer's office, with piano, carpet, seats, and blackboard, for general instructions in music. Mary, after trying several plans, fixed at length on the one she ever after pursued. Two hours every morning, and one every afternoon, were given to general exercises, and a half-hour each day to a private lesson to each pupil; thus occupying Mary seven hours of every day, while the girls could

attend to their other studies at the Academy. The parents were well satisfied with the arrangement, and the pupils made more than ordinary progress in music, with the exception of Emily Burgess; she, poor child, had not the slightest musical taste or desire. To instruct her was the only really disagreeable duty Mary had to perform during the day, and she never shrank from it, or for a moment gave way to impatience, as she for the tenth time during the lesson would try to give Emily some idea of a semitone, or the difference between flats and sharps. It seemed to Mary great folly for her to undertake to impart to Emily what nature had withheld, a musical ear; but still, from a sense of duty, and a desire to do all *her* part, she gave more time to her than to any other pupil, — time that she really needed for her own reading.

"Flora, can Emily run up and down the scale yet?" said Dr. Stephenson to his daughter, as she rose from practising her last music-lesson.

"Yes, father, I believe she can at last. But she cannot now tell whether she strikes the right note."

"Perfect nonsense! as I told her father, to wear out Miss Evans in drilling her into what she never can

learn. She has no more ear for sweet sounds than Beppo," he said, patting a large Italian greyhound, that was trying to poke his nose into his master's face.

"Beppo! why father, listen while I play this little polka, and see Beppo's ears move to the time; while Emily, I dare say, would n't know whether I was playing Old Hundred or a Waltz." Saying this, the little Miss rattled off a lively air, while the Doctor laughed heartily as Beppo's ears did move backward and forward to the time. "But, father, it would surprise you," said the damsel, turning round and round upon the music-stool, "to see how poor Miss Mary labors, fairly labors over Emily. I really feel angry sometimes to hear her so patiently tell her for the twentieth time the application of some simple rule."

"Mary's sweet temper is certainly unsurpassed by any of my acquaintance," said her father, casting a glance at Mr. Hamilton, who was apparently absorbed in reading, but in reality an attentive listener.

"And she told us to-day," said Florence, running and jumping upon her father's knee, "that if our mothers and fathers were willing, she would form a class in Botany out of school hours, when the days grew a little

longer, and take us to walk, and show us all about the flowers."

"Very kind of her," said the Doctor, smoothing the glowing ringlets of his daughter, and smiling as he thought of his wife's habit of calling them "auburn"; "very kind indeed of Miss Mary, but she will find this a barren soil for Botany."

"Plenty of wild-flowers, sir," said Hartley Hamilton, looking up, as if he quite entered into Mary's idea, — "plenty of wild-flowers all about Osier Pond, and through Oakland woods; and down on the rocks by the shore, mosses and lichens."

"But you don't expect these girls to tramp about through the swamps as you do, Hartley?"

Mr. Hamilton made no reply, but resumed his reading.

Time did not lessen, but increased daily, the favor with which Mary was regarded at Rocktown, particularly in the family of Dr. Stephenson. And when the bright, joyous spring days came, and the Botany class was formed, and all her pupils, accompanied almost always by Mr. Hamilton, and sometimes by Mrs. Stephenson herself, (who declared it made her think of her own

spring-time of life,) started for a botanical excursion, Mary came into special favor, and the "Miss Evans" was changed by the whole family to "Mary."

A new field of thought had been opened to Mary in her German readings,—beauties of which she had before heard or thought as something quite out of her reach. It was an ever new delight to Mr. Hamilton to teach Mary, so intelligently did she select the finest passages; and there was something very flattering to him in the pleasure with which she would drink in the beauties of Schiller and Goethe, as they fell from his lips, and never grow weary.

Mr. Hamilton had no taste for the amusements of the day; he was not even fond of music, except perhaps a simple ballad as Mary warbled it forth, from very necessity. Then he was charmed, and would strike in with his deep bass voice, which was exceedingly musical, although nothing indebted to scientific culture.

Mr. Hamilton and Mary were often left, during the warm summer days, (while the other young people were riding or sailing,) in the cool, quiet verandah, drawing mystic beauty from their favorite German authors.

"You keep a journal, of course?" said Hartley, one

summer evening, as she was rejoicing over a new-found beauty in Goethe.

"I never have kept one," said Mary, blushing deeply, as if she had discovered some neglect of duty. "It is strange that I have not," she added, musingly, "but my letters home have been journal-like."

"One's memory is so treacherous," said Mr. Hamilton, looking up into Mary's truthful face, "that I think you would find something of the kind of great assistance, in gaining and retaining knowledge of the inner life. My past journal seems to me like an old friend, tried and familiar, with whom I can consult or counsel whenever I will, and in whose presence I am never alone."

"I have a Commonplace-Book," replied Mary, "in which I note down the most impressive passages I find in my reading; but I never thought of writing my own thoughts upon them: it would seem like 'dimming the fine gold.'"

"Rather say polishing the fine gold!" said Hartley, with a look of unfeigned admiration.

Mary wondered, when she was alone that night, that she had never thought of keeping a journal, and, more than all, that Mr. Marshall had never suggested it. It

might be a great help, she thought, in her religious life, and she resolved to commence at once.

Some extracts from her Journal at different times will give an idea of her inmost thoughts.

"June 10, 18—. Brilliant summer is here, with the long golden days and the pleasant sea-breeze. I never thought so much of the sea as since I have been in Rocktown. Mr. Hamilton and I went with Florence to the sea-side to-day to gather mosses. He repeated those lines that I so often heard years ago from Mr. Maurice,

'Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean, roll!'

and I could not but contrast in my mind the pure, spiritual nature of the one, with the gross, sensual character of the other. Mr. Hamilton's society is delightful; everything seems tame and commonplace beside his thoughts. His ideas of inspiration trouble me; he says, 'Why is not the great and glorious All-Father as willing to impart to me inspiration, if I seek it truly from him, as to men who lived ages ago?' He seems an earnest truth-seeker; why is it that he does not find it in the sacred volume, which he studies so constantly? His religion appears lovely as it is manifested in his daily *life*: so

kind, considerate, thoughtful; and yet when I try to comprehend his *faith*, there is to me a barrenness, an undefined nothingness about it.

"I feel sad to-night; I could not go to church yesterday, and was it not my fault that I did not go? Yes, I will be true to myself. I sat up so late Saturday night, reading Bettine's letters to Goethe, that I overslept myself, and was not in season for so long a walk."

"June 15, 18—. To-day I enter on the last quarter of my year at Rocktown. Dr. Stephenson, Squire Harrington, indeed, all my friends here, have often said they could not let me give up my class at the end of the year; and Mrs. Stephenson said to-day, she would not hear of it. But my *duty*, where is it? Josephine is to be married in October, Mrs. Marshall grows daily more feeble; will it not be my *duty*, and ought it not to be my pleasure, to take Josey's place at home? Be still, ungrateful heart! Can it be that I feel a rising of discontent, when I think of sacrificing all these delightful friends and returning to my father's house? My father! to be with him ought to be an inducement to leave every other pleasure. To help him, ought to lead me gladly from the most inviting friendships."

"July 7, 18—. It is three weeks since I have written in my journal. Florence, dear child, has been very sick. She was seized in the night with croup. The noise of her breathing wakened me, and I called her parents. For two or three days she hung between life and death; she clung to me during the whole of her illness. How fortunate that she did so! for Mrs. Stephenson was so prostrated by grief as to be unable to assist in the care of her. Hartley stood over her, as she lay almost lifeless in my arms, and thanked me warmly for my care of her. He has a noble heart, and yet he shocked me when he spoke of baptism as an 'obsolete ceremony.' Florence is almost well again, but very pale and gentle. I have tried to teach her, in our hours of privacy, something of my *faith*; and the child listens eagerly. It seems to me right to have done this.

"Miss Parsons called this week upon me as a member of the same Church as herself. I felt ashamed of her, and the way she run on about *Church*, and *Church people*, telling what they do and what they do not believe, with as much authority as if she was the expounder of the faith. Dr. Stephenson said, after she was gone, 'Taking her exposition of the belief of the Church, it is

an ecclesiastical omnibus, and she is appointed to take the tickets.'

"I was wicked enough to think she wished to gain favor with the family, by leaving the impression that belief in anything was not essential."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"A flower that in its withering
Preserved its fragrance long;
A spirit that had lost its wing,
But still retained its song."

"**H**OW SHOULD you feel, wife," said Dr. Stephenson, as he threw down the newspaper one hot day in August, and commenced fanning himself violently, "if Mary should take away with her Hartley's heart, or 'his inner life,' as he calls it?"

Mrs. Stephenson raised her head from the couch where she had thrown herself, and looked as if she had been dreaming. "You are not serious, husband?" said she, smiling incredulously.

"Never more so," he said. "If I am not mistaken, it is a *crisis* with Hartley."

"He ought to look higher," said Mrs. Stephenson, hesitatingly.

"He might look farther and fare worse," said the Doctor, resolutely. "I don't wonder at all, wife; I am sure, if I had been a young man, I should have proposed long ago."

"She is very fond of Florence," mused Mrs. Stephenson.

"She is kind to every one," said her husband, wiping his glasses, "and every way worthy of Hartley, who is as fine a fellow as need be, only a little *misty*."

"He would object to her bigoted faith," said his wife.

"O nonsense, wife! what's faith where love is concerned? No, he will rejoice in the delightful prospect of mystifying her as fully as he has bewildered himself. What was your faith, pray, when I married you?"

Mrs. Stephenson smiled, for she remembered she was brought up one of the "straitest sect."

"We met last night," continued the Doctor, "in the music-room, and proposed to give her four hundred dollars if she would stay another year; but she said, very decidedly, and, I must say, very beautifully, after thanking us and expressing with tears her warm interest in her pupils, 'Gentlemen, the path of *duty* is the path of

my choice. I must return home and keep my father's house for him, at least for the present.'"

The last month at Rocktown was not so perfectly happy for Mary as its predecessors. After the first dawn of suspicion as to the nature of Mr. Hamilton's feelings for her crossed her mind, she strove to withdraw herself from his society. An undefined feeling of uneasiness in his presence, and a weariness in his absence, troubled her. Several times he had spoken to her with so much tenderness of voice and manner, that she was startled, fearful lest she had put herself forward in some unmaidenly way.

"September 8, 18—. I am to leave Rocktown next week. Florence hangs upon me continually, begging me to come back. I have obtained her mother's permission to give Florence my best Prayer-Book. She will value it for itself, I think. Hartley said some things to me last night that made me fear I had not been as dignified and reserved as I ought to have been; and yet it was not so much what he said, as his look and tone, and the warm pressure of my hand. When we parted he said, 'There will be a dark shadow across my path when you are gone, Mary.'"

The day for Mary's departure came, and her pupils took leave of her with weeping eyes. Florence almost smothered her with kisses, and at the same time put a dainty note into her hand, saying, in a whisper just loud enough for everybody to hear, "Uncle Hartley would not stay to see you go, but sent you this."

"Just like Hartley," said Dr. Stephenson, wiping his eyes by way of sympathy; "gone off to Osier Pond to drive away thought."

Mary longed to read the note; but miles of her homeward journey were gone over before she took it from its hiding-place. At length a real interest in its possible contents prevailed, and drawing a thick veil over her face, she proceeded to read this, her first love-letter, in a railroad car. Mary was astonished at the depth of feeling Hartley expressed for her; she was amazed that he had seen through all her disguises, and guessed that his love was returned. It was very pleasant to be thus loved with such manly devotion, and wholly for one's self. It was a new joy to Mary, and for a while she rejoiced in the delight. Flowers seemed to strew her path for life. Respected as the wife of Hartley Hamilton must be, moving in intellectual society; but above

all, to feel herself the star that should light the life of such a noble soul;—it was a delicious dream to her young, loving heart. Sternly, for a moment, did she bid conscience and duty be quiet, and let her enjoy the vision. But *duty* had been too long the guide of that truthful soul to be cowed by one rebellious word. Conflicting thoughts came thick, fast, and overwhelming, and she was still lost in thought when she heard the cry, "Moreland Station!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"Give me but
Something whereunto I may bind my heart,
Something to love, to rest upon, to clasp
Affection's tendrils round."

MRS. HEMANS.

"I turn to Thee alone:
O bid my fainting spirit live,
And what is dark reveal;
And what is evil, O forgive,
And what is broken heal;
And cleanse my nature from above,
In the deep Jordan of Thy love!"

REV. MR. MARSHALL, with Grace, Alice, and Ralph, and the two little girls, Minnie and Isabelle, stood on the platform looking eagerly for "Sister Mary."

Did she meet her kind, large-hearted father with less warmth than a year's absence demanded? She feared so; and reproached herself for it.

He was changed; his dark locks were thickly silvered,

and that frame, so tall and robust, looked thinner and not quite so erect.

Mary pressed her father's hand and wept, when she saw how disease and suffering had weakened Mrs. Marshall's mind, and reduced her always slender figure to a mere skeleton. Mary had not told her plans: she had kept them for pleasant surprises to her friends at home. She showed her father a letter she had received the day before she left, from the gentlemen in Rocktown, urging her return, expressing their personal regard for her, and making her advantageous offers of larger salary; and then told him her reply.

"And this was sacrificed for me, Mary," said Mr. Marshall. "It is too much: I cannot let you deprive yourself of such a place and such society for my comfort."

"No, father, nothing is too much for me to do for you; and it is better for me to be in Moreland," she added, with a deep sigh.

She made an earnest effort, for she saw how sore was the need to be cheerful, and she succeeded much of the time, in spite of the heartache. But she must reply to Hartley's note. Day after day passed, and yet she

could not bear to seal her destiny forever, and dash from her lips a cup that seemed so brimful of happiness. She felt her father's earnest gaze upon her pale face, as he handed her a letter with the Rocktown post-mark. Hartley had a right to be impatient. She came so near fainting, that her father supported her to a seat.

"You are sick, my daughter," he said, gently; "watching and care have over-fatigued you."

"O no!" replied Mary, struggling resolutely with her feelings. "It is not that, it is *this*," she added, turning away her face, and giving him the note she had first received from Mr. Hamilton, and the yet unopened letter. She hid her face in her hands, and gave way to a burst of passionate weeping, such as she had not known since her head rested on her dying mother's pillow.

"This is enough, Mary," said Mr. Marshall, after reading the open note. "Have you replied to this?"

Mary shook her head.

"I think by your agitation that the young man has guessed the truth; — Mr. Hamilton is dear to you. Try to calm yourself, my daughter, and tell me, is it so? The acknowledgment need not cause you shame."

Mary did not speak. Mr. Marshall waited some time,

and then continued, "The path of duty, Mary, is very plain, so far as this: this letter demands an immediate answer. It is an honorable and gentlemanly epistle, and does credit to the head and heart of the writer; and I am persuaded my Mary's reply will do credit to her training," he added, taking both her hands in his, as she ceased sobbing. "Is there any insurmountable obstacle in the way? If you feel for Mr. Hamilton that affection without which there cannot be happiness in the married life, let nothing here at home interfere —" He turned deadly pale. "Mary, it is a fearful thing to trifle with, or regard lightly, the heart's best earthly affection; and it would be a life-long grief to me to know you sacrificed your feelings, and the feelings of another, for the comfort of my home. Let no thought of my claims upon you as a daughter interfere with an arrangement that may conduce to your happiness for life. Although it will be very sad to lose you from my family circle, I will readily give you up to one who has a higher claim upon you."

"No, dearest father," said Mary, who had regained something of her self-possession, though she trembled still with the strength of her emotion, "I cannot marry

Hartley Hamilton, dearly as I love him, without leaving what is dearer to me than my life. It is not my earthly father's house alone I must leave, if I become his wife, but the house of my Heavenly Father, and become an exile from the Church in which I was born and nurtured."

"Can it be, Mary, that Mr. Hamilton is *opposed* to your religious faith?"

"Father," said Mary, slowly looking up with her truthful eyes into his sympathizing face, "dear as he is to me, I must say it, he is opposed to all creeds and all churches; but not with *bitterness*. O no! there is no bitterness in his soul; and his heart yearns for the truth, and it seems strange that one so earnest and sincere should be left to doubt and deny what is dearer to me than life."

"Unaided human reason, my dearest daughter, is but a poor guide to the humbling truths of our holy religion. I am sorely grieved for you, Mary," he added, drawing her towards him, "but this is a matter in which your conscience must guide you; I would not dare even to advise you. Act for yourself and Mr. Hamilton as your sense of duty dictates. My claims upon you as a

father, I repeat, are inferior to his; for you have given each other a treasure of earthly love; and nothing but a belief that his influence would win you from your duty to God would warrant you in casting from you the choicest gift the heart of man can bestow. Let us seek counsel where we have so often sought it in the darkest times."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"Yet even the greatest griefs
 May be reliefs;
 Could he but take them right, and in their ways.
 Happy is he whose heart
 Hath found the art
 To turn his double pains to double praise."

HERBERT.

"**Y**OU NEED not be alarmed about Hartley," said Dr. Stephenson to his wife, as he came in one frosty morning in October; "Jacque Griggs says he saw him before daylight in his skiff on Osier Pond."

In Oakland woods, Hartley Hamilton had built what he called a wigwam, of willow boughs, and often in summer had spent whole days and even nights there. Many of his books and writing-utensils were there. The wigwam was adorned on the inside with mosses, sea-weed, dried grass, and flowers, picked in his botanical rambles with Mary. In his absence he moored his boat under

these sheltering branches. Let us look over his shoulder as he makes an entry in his Journal, after his early row on the pond.

"*Osier Pond, October 3, 18—.* I am better now. Nature is my physician: she never frowns upon me, or casts back the wealth of love I lay at her feet. This is a precious letter of Mary's, although it seals us separate for ever. How purely and nobly she shows me her whole heart! And yet, while she listens to the voice of her inner soul, she tells me she cannot be mine. Between us there comes the barrier of a harsh, rigid, and bygone *creed*. There is nothing false in her truth-loving soul: she submits to the destiny that separates us, although it crushes her young heart. The thing some men call conscience, which has often caused man to take the life of his fellow, calls upon her to sacrifice her heart's best treasures on the shrine of *religion*. This is the religion of church and priest, but not the worship of nature's God!"

Mary's Journal lay open before her, and there was the same date. Tears blistered the page.

"*Moreland, October 3, 18—.* I have sent my letter to Hartley, and we are for ever parted. My swollen

eyes and aching heart tell something of the struggle between duty and inclination. I could not have believed that any suffering would have made everything look so indifferent, so lifeless. I move about like an automaton. My all-absorbing love for Hartley seems to have dried up every other stream. I look upon my blessed father even with coldness. How very kindly and tenderly he looks upon me! I wish he would not; for his kindness brings up this heart-bursting, and indifference is more easily borne. Will the sun never look bright to me again? Grace brought me a beautiful bunch of cardinals and gentians, and I did not even thank her, but looked up so coldly! It must have grieved her, poor child! God grant she may never pass through what I am enduring. I often think what dear Jeanette once said, — she feared her love for Arthur was idolatry. I understand now what she meant. Sometimes I think my influence might in time have led Hartley into the right path; but when I remember that his persuasions led me lightly to regard important truths, I tremble to think of the fearful gulf of unbelief over which I have stood, and into which I have looked with almost longing eyes."

The next entry in Mary's Journal which we shall give, was written the Christmas after her return.

"*Christmas, 18—*. To the world a season of festivity; but to my lone, desolate heart, the annual remembrance of my mother's death. How lonely has the house been to-day! but the desolation has been more congenial than gayety. Grace and Alice are at school, at the Seminary in H—— where I taught music. I insisted that my portion of Arthur's benevolent gift should be spent on Alice. Arthur is studying divinity in the same city, and the girls see him often. Josephine and Dr. Thurston are very happy. She says she thinks she loves Edmund Thurston the more for having known the villany of Anthony Maurice. I hope I am not envious of Josephine's happiness; but somehow it gave me the heartache, when she took me over her house, and said, playfully, 'Pretty soon you will be fitting a house for yourself!'

"I know I am wicked and rebellious; and I know father thinks so, for how very sad he looked to-day, when I told him I could not go to church. I have not been to the Communion since I came from Rocktown. Is this a remnant of Hartley's influence? I am afraid

that, instead of cheering my poor father's life, I add to his already heavy burden of sorrow.

"I have had several petitions from Professor Henshaw to teach music, with offers of large salaries; but what are they to me? I know father thinks I did wrong to decline playing the organ in church. I believe I have done but one thing that really pleased him this long while; and that was burning the volumes of the Halo I brought from Rocktown. Father pronounced their tendency *infidel*, and asked me so kindly to destroy them, that I should have been very ungrateful to have refused, although it cost me many a sigh to commit to the flames pages over which I have mused with one 'so loved, so lost.' I once loved the quiet study talks with father, but I trembled to-night when he asked me if I would give this evening to him. It is quite dark, and he will be waiting. I must go."

Mr. Marshall and Mary sat in silence for some time, looking mournfully into the fire.

"Mary, my daughter," he said, at length, "why do you thus forsake the Table of the Lord? You need comfort; why not come where it is offered you so lovingly?"

"Because, father, my affections are dreary and cold, and an earthly love has so chilled all heavenly desires, that —" Tears prevented Mary from proceeding.

"And yet, my dearest daughter, you have renounced that earthly love at the call of *duty*, and bravely put from you a cup of earthly bliss, lest it should wean you from the *truth*; and now you will not come and receive the reward that is promised you: 'No man hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the Gospel's; but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life.'

"Mary," he added, laying his hand gently on her head, that rested on his arm, "you have given up the earthly love, but you will not take the heavenly. I see that your daily duties here, while they occupy your hands, do not employ your mind; this is why I was urgent that you should play the organ for our church services. This state of things must not continue, my daughter. Do not think me harsh, if I say I shall be compelled to advise your acceptance of some one of the numerous situations Professor Henshaw offers you."

"Do not send me away from you, dear father!" said Mary imploringly.

"If I send you away, it will be because I love you too well to see you wasting the energies of your mind in brooding over the past. Mary, I have my suspicions that you keep a journal. Is it so?"

"Yes, father," she replied, looking up with surprise.

"My advice to you, then, is to commit it to the flames." Mary started.

"Why, father?"

"Journal writing, to one in your state of mind, is worse than useless. A diary of simple events may be serviceable, but a record of feeling will certainly not be for your good. Trust me, I speak from experience. Such a record encourages a morbid sentimentalism, and sometimes selfishness."

Thus did Mr. Marshall continue to converse with Mary, drawing from her a full confession of her sorrows; and when, after praying with her, he affectionately bade her good night, with the usual blessing, Mary confessed to herself that for many months she had not been so peaceful or so prepared for duty.

Fortunately for us, she did not immediately destroy her Journal; but she closed it with a seal, hiding it away in an unfrequented corner, and it was a long time before it came to light.

From that day the struggles in Mary's breast were met bravely; it would be more correct to say, in a Christian-like manner; and the Easter vacation, that brought Grace and Alice from school, and Arthur Grey to Moreland for the first time since the death of Jeanette, found Mary restored to her usual calm cheerfulness. Not that Hartley Hamilton was forgotten. Nightly she prayed that he might find a surer Saviour than his own unaided reason. That was an Easter full of pleasant memories to the family at the Rectory. The same holy day that witnessed Arthur Grey kneeling at the altar, to be set apart as a minister of Christ's Church, found Grace and Alice kneeling at the same altar, to renew the vows made for them at their baptism.

CHAPTER XL.

"For not that which men covet most is best,
Nor that thing worst which men do most refuse:
But fittest is that each contented rest
With that they hold; each has his fortune in his breast."

SPENSER.

"Life hath as many farewells
As it hath sunny hours,
And over some are scattered thorns,
And over others flowers."

MRS. SMITH.

FOUR YEARS had elapsed since the events recorded in the last chapter. Mary was now sole housekeeper at the Rectory. The parish gossips pronounced her an "old maid," although she had scarcely reached her twenty-fifth year.

Grace and Alice had left school, and Mr. Marshall's other daughters, Minnie and Isabelle, had become very lovely under Mary's constant care.

Mrs. Marshall had closed her eyes on earthly things,

and rested beneath the churchyard pines. Mr. Marshall was considering a call to a large parish in the city of B——. Mary, with tears in her eyes for Moreland, had said, "Dear father, I know you will do what is right."

Ralph had suddenly displayed a desire for military renown, and a situation had been procured for him at West Point, where he had gone, notwithstanding all his sister's anxious endeavors to make him look with contempt on military ambition and glory. Squire Lee was more willing to part with him, as his home was made uncomfortable by the presence of Mrs. Maurice. Anthony Maurice, with his fortune, genius, and brilliant talents, had fallen step by step, till his wife had been obliged to seek a refuge from personal abuse in the home of her childhood,—there to embitter by her unhappy temper the last days of her parents.

"Mary," said Mr. Marshall, "I have declined the call to B——, giving up 'the larger field, and much larger salary'; for I feel that the strong affections of my people, and their united love for me, and my deep attachment for everything belonging to this parish, should not be disturbed by a call that can be answered far better

by some other clergyman. And I have other pleasant news," he added, — "at least it is pleasant to me, and I think it will be so to you."

Mary had sprung from her seat at the study-table, where she was adjusting the weekly family accounts, to assist her father in removing his outer garments. "Dear father, I am glad you are not to leave Moreland, everything is so dear to me here"; — she looked toward the churchyard. "But what is the other pleasant news?" she added, as she brought his slippers.

"I said pleasant news, Mary; there is something painful about it too. Arthur has asked my permission to take away Grace."

Mary turned pale.

"Are you sorry?" said her father, tenderly supporting her.

"O no, father! if it was any one but Arthur, I might be. He is the only man worthy of our sweet Grace. I never thought it before, but she is very like our dear blessed Jeanette in character." She looked again toward the churchyard, and saw the youthful figure of Grace, leaning on the arm of Arthur Grey. They were coming from Jeanette's grave.

* * * * *

Four years passed again, and Ralph, with his glittering epaulettes, claimed from her father the hand of Alice Marshall. They had been attached from childhood, and having been so long one in heart, their marriage was looked upon as a matter of course.

The same day that witnessed this wedding, as Mary sat in the study, thinking of this brother and sister, now doubly brother and sister, her eye rested on an obituary notice in a Church paper that had just been opened: —

"In Rocktown, on Easter even, Miss Florence Stephenson, only child of Dr. Walter Stephenson, aged twenty years and six months. In the communion of the Catholic Church, in the confidence of a certain faith, in the comfort of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope, in favor with God, and in perfect charity with the world."

Mary remembered the Prayer-Book she had given Florence, and the many quiet talks they had held together touching matters of faith, and with her tears was mingled thankfulness that this young heart had been brought into the truth, it might be through her influence. Her stay in Rocktown, she would hope, had not been altogether useless.

Mr. Marshall told Mary that day the story of his early life, and she felt grateful to a kind Providence, who had permitted her to comfort his declining years. He was dearer than ever to her. His two younger daughters had grown into womanhood, and might find new homes; and Mary found an unspeakable pleasure in the thought that her life would be spent under the shadow of the Church, and in the companionship of her father.

"His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed,
Her welfare pleased him, and her cares distressed;
He tried each art, reprov'd each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."

CHAPTER XLI.

"Thought! busy thought!
. o'er all the pleasing past
In quest of wretchedness perversely strays;
And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts
Of my departed joys.
And every pleasure pains me to the heart."

THE SUMMER following the wedding of Ralph and Alice was a fearful season. Pestilence stalked through the length and breadth of our land, and Moreland did not escape. Mr. Marshall and Mary were indefatigable in their attentions to the sick and dying, allowing no thought of danger to themselves to prevent their listening to the calls of suffering. Minnie and Isabelle had returned from the Seminary at H—— to escape the scourge, and were efficient auxiliaries in the family, while Mary was constantly sought for watching and nursing abroad.

But the fearful pestilence found them even in the

quietude of the Rectory, and a few short hours saw Isabelle, the younger of the sisters, changed, from buoyant life and full health, to cold and lifeless clay. Poor Minnie was almost heart-broken, and wandered about the house without aim or purpose. She had never been separated from Isabelle even for a single night, and this sudden stroke bewildered her. The stricken father resigned himself meekly to the blow, and went as usual, administering consolation to the sick and dying, while grief pressed sore upon his own heart. Mary exerted herself to an unaccountable degree: she soothed Minnie, watched by the death-bed and closed the dying eyes of one who in life and health had despised her, even Virginia Maurice; went from house to house with cordials, both for body and mind; counted over with her dear father "their gathering store in Paradise"; and when sometimes her own hope would flag, or her wearied heart grow faint, she would go alone into the church and walk those solemn aisles, or kneel at the chancel-rail, imploring help. But the darkest day passes, and September, with its nights "frosty, but kindly," checked the frightful epidemic; and fearful faces and trembling voices began to assume their wonted calmness. The people generally

returned to health and business; but Mary looked pale and exhausted, while Minnie was calm, but more abstracted.

"Mary," said Mr. Marshall one morning, when Minnie, as was now quite common, excused herself from coming to the table, and he observed also Mary's pale face and untasted breakfast, "I have a plan which I think will be for Minnie's health, and perhaps benefit us all. The General Convention meets in Cincinnati this month, and I propose taking you and Minnie to attend the meetings, making a short stay in Philadelphia with Arthur and Grace, and calling perhaps on our way home at Sackett's Harbor, and see how Ralph and Alice look in the barracks. I see what you are about to say," he added, as Mary looked up from her cup of coffee, with which she had been playing for the last few minutes, with a look of amazement; "you are considering the *expense*. What will you say when I tell you, my people not only volunteer to pay all our expenses, but also to supply my parish with the services of the Church while we are away, and repair the Rectory thoroughly during our absence? Did the Lord ever place an unworthy servant among so kind and generous a people?"

"So *grateful* a people, father," said Mary, rising and seating herself beside him. "Are we to go soon?"

"I expect we shall be absent at least three weeks, perhaps four. Can you prepare as soon as the first of the week? We will give Grace and Arthur a pleasant surprise, and perhaps they will let little Herbert or Jeannette come with us when we return to Moreland."

"Trust Grace for parting with her little ones, even to come to her own dear home, unless we bring her too," said Mary, smiling, and looking more like herself than she had done for some weeks.

Mr. Marshall observed the change, and argued well for the effect of the journey, at least upon Mary. "Call Minnie, my daughter, and let us hear what she says to our plan."

Minnie came at her father's bidding, cold and pale as a statue. "Minnie, darling," said her father, as he took her on his knee, and rested her cheek against his, "would you like to go with sister Mary and me, to see Arthur and Grace?"

Minnie shuddered, and shook her head.

"But you will go if I wish it very much, and think it is for the best?"

She gave a lingering and silent assent. Tears came into the father's eyes, and Mary wept; Minnie looked up wonderingly, sighed deeply, but there were no tears.

So quiet had been the even tenor of Mary's life, that she had not taken a long journey since the memorable return from Rocktown, and the brilliant hues of autumn, and the exhilarating coolness of the air, were charming to both her and her father; but they brought no smile to the cheek of Minnie.

Our travellers reached Philadelphia on the evening of the second day after leaving home. When they came to the house of Rev. Mr. Grey, which was in — Square, all was so hushed and still, and the servants moved about so noiselessly, that they feared there was sickness there, and were not surprised, when ushered into the drawing-rooms, to learn that Mrs. Grey was in her chamber.

However, Mr. Grey was soon called, and his smiling face and hearty welcome removed all their fears, and he bade them congratulate him on the birth of a second daughter.

Every day spent in the society of this happy family brought the color to Mary's cheek, and vigor to her frame; but poor Minnie roamed over the house, and

fixed upon nothing with interest but the *baby*. Of Mr. Marshall's children, Minnie had always been Arthur's favorite, and it grieved him to see how sorrow was wearing into her young heart, — a heart that he had only known as joyous and happy as the spring birds; and he used every exertion to awaken her from her grief. Nothing moved her from her abstracted silence, till Arthur took her with him on one of his parochial visits. It was with a design of showing her how far greater bereavement than hers could be borne, that Mr. Grey obtained Minnie's reluctant consent to go with him to see Susan Dale. The fatal scourge that had broken up so many families, had left her without any claim upon fellow-mortal for relationship. Her father, two brothers, and a twin sister had fallen, and she, a young girl of seventeen, was left, enfeebled by disease and in comparative poverty. Arthur told Minnie the story of Susan as they went; and when she saw her emaciated by suffering, dependent upon hirelings for care, and yet so peaceful and grateful to God for leaving her the precious ministrations of Christ's Church, Minnie's heart was melted.

"How selfish and wicked I have been," she whispered,

as she kissed her father good night, "to forget all the dear, kind friends that are left me! Forgive me, dear father, it shall be so no longer."

Mr. Marshall pressed his weeping daughter to his heart, and said: "'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.' Let us not refuse to say, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

CHAPTER XLII.

"They also serve, who only stand and wait."

MILTON.

"So, be it, Lord! I know it best,
Though not as yet this wayward breast
Beat quite in answer to thy voice;
Yet surely I have made my choice."

"FATHER," SAID Mary, as they were left alone after dinner in the spacious apartment Mr. Grey had arranged as a library, "I think I shall not go with you to Cincinnati."

"Not go to the Convention, Mary!" said Mr. Marshall, in a tone of mingled astonishment and disappointment. "Why, I thought that was the chief attraction of the journey!"

"Yes, father; but Arthur, I know, wishes to go, and surely it is of more importance for him than for me. We cannot all leave Grace; and if I stay, Arthur will feel free to go."

"I can't think of your being disappointed in this cherished wish, Mary; perhaps Minnie would rather stay than not."

"I think she would," replied Mary, "but she might fall again into those moody turns, from which she is beginning to arouse herself. Besides, dear father, it will be better for Minnie to go without me; she will become more self-dependent. She is very fond of Arthur's society, and he loves dearly to pet her. And on the whole ——"

"On the whole I must consent to my daughter's arrangement; and although contrary to my will, it is, I own, a most unselfish plan on your part."

And so it came to pass, that Mary saw her father depart with Arthur and Minnie for the beautiful State of Ohio, and that gathering of the Church to which she had often looked wishfully. She suppressed the sigh that rose to her heart, and turned to caress the newcomer.

"Grace, sister dear, I have a wish, — shall I tell it?"

"Yes, Mary; if it is anything I can procure for you, you are sure of it."

"I wish you to let me name this darling babe, and choose her godmother."

Grace looked at Mary with wonderment, to see if she knew what she was saying, as it was only the day before she had told her the baby was to be called "Mary Evans," and she wished her to be sponsor.

"Will you call her Isabelle, and ask Minnie to stand for her?" said Mary, without apparently observing the look of wonder with which Grace regarded her. "It will do Minnie good," she added, "and be good for baby; and will please father, I think, very much."

"Minnie is very young for a godmother," mused Grace.

"Yes, darling, she is young; but no younger than one little girl I remember, who had the imprudence to have a little baby of her own before she was quite nineteen."

Grace smiled and blushed, and then said, "She was willing, if Arthur could change his mind about it."

Mary saw no difficulty there, and so the matter ended for the present.

A few days after the departure of the party for the Convention, Mrs. Harris, the wife of the junior warden of Mr. Grey's parish, called on Mrs. Grey. She was the most intimate acquaintance Grace had in the city; and when she politely urged Mary to go with her to a

lecture to be delivered that evening before a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, Grace obviated all Mary's objections, and the invitation was accepted.

The immense hall where the lecture was to be delivered was brilliantly lighted, and Mr. and Mrs. Harris, with Mary, were in season for obtaining the best seats; and Mary found ample amusement, before the commencement of the lecture, in observing the assembling audience. She was recalled from watching a group of merry girls seated near her, by the voice of the President of the Society, who arose and introduced to the audience Hartley Hamilton, Esq., from Boston. How quickly was the whole current of Mary's thoughts and feelings changed! For a few minutes a partial unconsciousness came over her. She did not raise her eyes, or move; but she listened to the musical tones of a voice that had been—that *was* dear to her. She gathered in the beautiful and noble thoughts that fell like pearls from the lips of the speaker. The subject was one of deep interest,—*"The Tendencies and Temptations of the Age,"*—and most eagerly Mary caught here and there a word that said, as plainly as words could speak, that unbelief had passed or was passing away. Mary did not *think*: she

lost herself; and, after her return home, could scarcely believe that this was not one of the wild, visionary dreams that sometimes visited her slumbers. She blundered upon a suitable reply when Mrs. Harris asked her opinion of the lecture, and made some incoherent remark to Grace when she asked who lectured, and whether she was entertained.

But little sleep visited Mary that night. Disciplined and schooled as she was, thoughts of the past, with its crushed hopes and never-forgotten love, would come. The moonlight came into her room, and she arose and looked out. The streets were filled with people returning from their prolonged amusements; carriages rolled rapidly by. How she longed for the peace and quietness of Moreland! — and yet, she thought, “he may be near.” She hastily put down the curtain and walked the room. She could hear the loud beatings of her heart, and a low, musical voice which said, “There will be a dark shadow across my path, Mary, when you are gone.” She wondered if there was a shadow across his path now. Perhaps his home was lighted by another’s smile. This was a new thought to her, and she did not relish the bitter pang it brought to her heart; she supposed she had

taught herself long ago to feel that he could never be aught to her but a friend. Perhaps she was even now committing a great sin in thinking of him. For a time she was given to tormenting thoughts, but self-discipline, and an earnest desire to do right, prevailed, and the struggle ended in a deep and earnest prayer for protection against “all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul”; and with the morning light peace and quietness revisited her bosom. Mary studiously avoided afterward the many invitations for walks, rides, and sight-seeing that were given her in the absence of her father; she had sufficient excuse for declining politely, for Grace had not yet left her chamber. Mary feared a revival of the feelings of the lecture evening, but she would not have been woman if she had not felt some curiosity as to the whereabouts of Hamilton: but she heard nothing. Once, indeed, she saw his name in a newspaper, as pleading in an important case in court. Grace knew nothing of the story of her love, for Mary had that instinctive delicacy which forbade her speaking to any one of a lover she had refused. Her father’s ear alone had heard the tale of her sorrow.

When the party returned from the Convention, they

found Mary looking thinner and paler than when they left; while Minnie was much improved by her journey. The color had begun to return to her cheeks, and her step had resumed something of its former elasticity. Arthur amused even Mary by recounting the many times Minnie had been taken for his wife; and how very grave Mr. Marshall looked, because they rode some hours in the stage with a young gentleman who was laboring under this delusion, and Arthur did not undeceive him, but confirmed the mistake by addressing Minnie as "my dear." Father thought it was not quite clerical, but Arthur still relished a joke in spite of his cloth. "Sister Mary," he added, "it need not surprise you if you see this young gentleman at Moreland Rectory before many months, as I observed, after my true relationship to Minnie was made known, he quite forsook my society, and devoted himself exclusively to father. But, Sister Mary, I have something to tell you which interests you personally. I met my old acquaintance, Archie Stanwood, who was in H—— when you were at Professor Henshaw's. He asked most particularly after you, and said a great many things, in his usual self-conceited vein, which I shall leave him to tell you himself some time."

Mary colored deeply, but forced herself to ask, "Has he a parish yet?"

"O, yes! and needs a wife, he says, most amazingly. From the account he gave of some of his parish scandal, I should think he had more than his share of Maynard & Co."

"If he had the proper dignity," said Mr. Marshall, gravely, "which would have prevented his repeating the scandal, it might have prevented the scandal itself."

"Perhaps so, father; but he thinks a helpmeet would be the best preventive, and will try for one at Moreland Rectory, I reckon."

Mary's color grew deeper, and the expression of her countenance distressed.

"I trust, Arthur," said Mr. Marshall; "he will not come to Moreland on any such errand. He has already had the mind of the family on that subject; and I am sorry that he has not sufficient self-respect and discretion to keep his own secrets."

Arthur saw at once how matters stood, and ceased his jokes when he knew they caused pain.

CHAPTER XLIII.

"O, if there be a sight on earth
That makes good angels smile,
'T is when a soul of mortal birth
Is washed from mortal guile.

"When some repentant child of Eve's
In age is born anew;
Or when on life's first buds and leaves
Falls the baptismal dew.

"But all the same! The soul that, in
That laver undefiled,
Is truly washed from wrath and sin,
Must be a little child."

REV. A. C. COXE.

ARTHUR GREY had returned from his journey full of life and spirits, but with a severe cold. He was so hoarse on the following Sunday, that Mr. Marshall conducted the services, and preached for him. The next day he took remedies for his cold that kept him housed. In the evening, Dr. Davis, a friend, and the

physician of the family, called in haste. He had come for Mr. Grey to visit a gentleman that had been taken suddenly ill at a hotel. He was a stranger in Philadelphia, and had desired to see a clergyman of the Church.

"But you are not fit to go out to-night," said the Doctor, observing the hoarseness of Arthur's voice.

"I should go certainly in such a case," said Mr. Grey, rising and moving towards the door.

"Perhaps I could go in your place, Arthur," said Mr. Marshall, "as the gentleman is a stranger. I really think prudence demands that you should not take this chilly evening air."

After the persuasions of the family and the counsel of the physician, Arthur was induced to resume his seat by the fire, and allow Mr. Marshall to go in his stead.

On the way to the hotel, the clergyman gathered all the Doctor knew of the stranger, which, although he said it was "next to nothing," surprised Mr. Marshall. He was a young gentleman by the name of Hamilton, a lawyer from Boston, or thereabouts. He had been pleading in an important case, now pending in the courts. He had spoken of no friend by name, but had once mentioned Rocktown in a half-waking state.

On entering the sick-chamber, the physician walked to the couch, and, gently taking the hand of the patient, felt his pulse. The young man opened his eyes. Before he could speak, Dr. Davis said in a low tone, "I have brought a clergyman to see you, Rev. Mr. Marshall."

A look of perplexity crossed the pale brow of the young man; but when Mr. Marshall approached, he put out his hand, and said faintly, "Thank you."

Dr. Davis motioned to the nurse to go into the ante-room; then, coming again to his patient, he said, "I leave you now for a while with Mr. Marshall. You must not exert yourself too much; you are by no means out of danger: your pulse is better to-night; and if you do not have any return of yesterday's symptoms, you may get up again; but beware of excitement."

"Marshall? — Marshall?" whispered the sick man, as the door closed after the Doctor; "no, no!" Then turning toward Mr. Marshall, who stood by the bedside, he said, "The name seems familiar. I am away from all my friends," he added, motioning the clergyman to take a seat by him, "and have refused, till to-day, to have them informed of my situation, although I know I am very sick. There is not one of them," he said, fix-

ing his bright, intellectual eyes earnestly on Mr. Marshall, "that can give me what I need, or comfort me in the least concerning the future. I was once, sir, an unbeliever." He paused. "Yes, I was an infidel; but that passed away. I cannot tell you," he said, much moved, "what first shook the foundations of my unbelief. Let it suffice that, about half a year since, I lost one who was dear to me as a child. I was with my niece during the whole of her illness; it was the first time death had touched one of my cherished idols. Florence had been for several years, before her parents and her friends,—who were all more or less tinctured with infidelity,—a humble follower of Jesus, a baptized member of his Church. Many times in health, when I would talk or reason with her, she would say so sweetly, 'Uncle Hartley, my Saviour is all my hope for time and eternity. Do not cloud my faith with your doubts; but bring your longing soul to His cross, and you shall be satisfied.' At times she would plead with me with tears, and say, 'You have been yearning and seeking for truth these many years, but you have never tried Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.' I turned from it all, and tried to love again the cold,

heartless philosophy I had sought before; but it had lost its charm."

Mr. Hamilton's voice faltered, and Mr. Marshall, taking his hand, said, "My dear sir, all you say has interested me very deeply for you, but I fear this exertion may prove unfavorable to your recovery."

"No," he replied faintly, "I have but little more to tell. Her departure was calm and peaceful, and I promised her, as her dying head lay on my breast, that I would seek truth and rest where she had sought and found. I have sought them *here*," he added, as his hand rested on a well-worn Bible and Prayer-Book. "These were her dying gift."

"And you have found peace and rest," said Mr. Marshall, with deep emotion in his tones, as he took the books in his hand.

"Yes, yes," said the young man musingly, "in a measure; there is still darkness and doubt about my path. But I resolved, before I came to Philadelphia, that on my return home I would end my doubts by receiving Holy Baptism; for I believe, although faintly: and now — what hinders me? I have already deferred it too long?"

The clergyman replied, in the words of Philip the deacon, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest."

"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!" said the young man, earnestly clasping his hands.

Mr. Marshall kneeled by the bedside, and poured forth the solemn confessions of sin, and promises of pardon, that so abound in the prayers of the Church. Afterward he talked quietly for a few minutes of the loving kindness with which God receives the repentant, returning sinner; and how Christ makes himself known to the earnest-minded in the sacraments of his Church. He then gave the young man his blessing, promising to come in the morning with Rev. Mr. Grey, and give him the sacrament of Baptism.

When Mr. Marshall returned to — Square, the city clocks were striking the hour of midnight. The family had retired, except Mary, who waited in the study for her father's return.

"T is a chilly night," he said, as he seated himself on the couch before the cosey study-fire that Mary had prepared for him. "I think it is rarely colder than this in New England at this season. Come and sit by me, my

daughter; I have something to tell you, that will make you very glad."

Mary seated herself by his side; but some minutes elapsed before he spoke. He had entered on dangerous ground. It was many years since Mary had spoken to him of Mr. Hamilton; he could not know how it might affect her to know that he was dangerously ill, and so near. For Mary to know that Mr. Hamilton had bowed his proud heart to the religion of Jesus, and was next day to be received into Christ's fold, would give to her a joy no other intelligence could bring; but might not speaking of him revive feelings that must be quenched? He looked at Mary's pale face, lighted with the glow of expectation. "Mary, dear," he said at length, "there may be some pain mingled with the pleasure I wish to impart."

She raised her eyes to her father's face with the same truthful, trustful look that had its dwelling there long ago, and replied, "Yes, father, there are few joys but have a touch of sorrow: yet I am sure joy has ever been, in my cup, by far the greater part of the draught."

Mr. Marshall pressed her hand, and another long silence ensued.

"Was the gentleman to whom you were called very sick, father?" said Mary.

Here was an opening, and he replied, "Yes, Mary, very ill, although more comfortable than last night. My interview was a very gratifying one: the young man has been an unbeliever, but—" He looked at Mary with a keen, inquiring glance.

There was a bright spot in either cheek, as she clasped her hands, and said in a low whisper, "But he is an unbeliever no longer. God be praised!"

"Yes, Mary, I have seen Mr. Hamilton, and he has not only given up his unbelief, but now calls upon me, as a minister of Christ's Church, to give him the badge of a member of Christ,—the sign and seal of his forgiveness."

Mary bowed her head: she could not speak. She had so schooled and disciplined her heart, that not one feeling of self marred the thought, "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

Afterward, in her own room, she wept that he was ill, and among strangers.

The next morning was a mild, autumnal morning, without any of that chilliness that had characterized its

predecessor. Mr. Grey was so much relieved of his cold, that he accompanied Mr. Marshall to the sick-chamber of Hartley Hamilton. They found him sleeping.

As they waited, Arthur took up a Prayer-Book. "What does this mean?" he said in a tone of surprise, as he read on the fly-leaf, "Florence Stephenson, with the love and best wishes of her friend and teacher, Mary Evans." The Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity was written below, unmistakably in Mary's hand.

Mr. Marshall put his finger to his lip, and made no reply, for the sleeper was awaking.

The physician had been in, and feared the drowsiness was an unfavorable symptom. There was to be a consultation on his case in the afternoon. His countenance was calm and peaceful, but exceedingly pale: the fever was entirely gone, and his hand was cold and clammy.

"I expect my sister," he said faintly, "in the first train from the East. I wish to have her present, when I make those solemn vows."

Mr. Marshall looked at his watch: the train was due; and it was not many minutes before they heard voices

in the hall, approaching the sick-room. They stepped into the ante-room, that the brother and sister might meet without the presence of strangers. Dr. Stephenson and wife came in with Dr. Davis, who introduced them to the clergymen. Mrs. Stephenson was dressed in the deepest mourning, and her step had lost that bounding elasticity which Mary had so much admired in their walks by the sea-shore. The first conference between the brother and sister was not long; and when the clergymen were called in, Mrs. Stephenson was kneeling by the bedside, weeping bitterly. The sick man's hand was on her head, and he was endeavoring to soothe and calm her agitation.

Mr. Marshall commenced the Office for the Visitation of the Sick, and went from that to the baptismal service. In the mean time, Mr. Grey had covered a small table with a white napkin, and placed on it, filled with pure water, the silver bowl which he had brought with him. The responses of the sick man were audible, although faint, throughout the services; but when he came to answer, with Arthur Grey, his chosen witness, to the Questions in the Baptismal Office, his voice was clear, strong, and unfaltering. It was a very solemn scene.

Every one present was affected to tears, and the strong men bowed themselves.

There was one person, not in that room, who joined heart and soul in that service. Mary knelt in her chamber, and prayed to Him "without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy," that Hamilton might have help from on high to keep those solemn vows.

CHAPTER XLIV.

"His heart was open as the day,
His feelings all were true."

"Earth's purest hope was o'er him flung
To point his upward flight."

THE EVENING succeeding the baptism, the family were seated around the pleasant study-fire, enjoying for the first time since her confinement the company of Grace. It was not cold enough for furnace-fires, and the happy group were assembled in the study, when the door opened, and Dr. Stephenson was announced. The Doctor had followed close upon the steps of the servant, and was in the room almost as soon as the announcement. Mary arose, meaning to glide out by a side-door, but a look from her father said "Stay," and she obeyed. Dr. Stephenson went about the apartment in his usual free and easy manner, shaking hands warmly with each individual, as he was

introduced. When he came to Mary, Mr. Marshall simply said, "My daughter."

The Doctor started back with real surprise; then, catching both her hands in his, "Good heavens, Mary! is it you?" he said, as he drew her toward the light, and looked into her face so long and earnestly, that he brought deep blushes to her cheeks. "This is too good! So you would n't have Hartley! Poor fellow! he's more worthy of you now, as your father here can tell you. But you'll go and see him? Ah! I forgot; that would hardly be the thing — but — I'll manage it," he said, in his merry, cheerful tones, so familiar to Mary's ear.

Mr. Marshall came forward at that moment, to relieve her painful position. "My son here," he said, turning to Arthur, "is quite confused. He cannot think how Mary should come to know you so well, when you are almost a stranger to the rest of us."

"Mary, dear child!" replied the Doctor, wiping his eyes, "there was a great blank when she left Rocktown. But I have come to consult you, gentlemen, about Hartley, — Mr. Hamilton. My wife is urgent to stay; but Hartley and I both know that she is so overpowered

with her feelings that she would be just good for nothing. We had a consultation on his case this afternoon. I think my presence was of some service. Knowing, as I do, Hartley's constitution, I can judge of the character of the diagnosis."

"And do you think the immediate danger is past?" said Mr. Grey inquiringly.

"Yes, with watching, care, and good nursing, of which he must have the very best. The greatest danger to be apprehended is from imprudence. He is an imprudent fellow at the best. Why, before he left Rocktown, he was out all weathers, with a severe cold, walking over to Stoney Brook, to church and Sunday-school; up nights, lest the workmen should set fire to the new church in Rocktown ——"

Mary exclaimed, she could not help it, "A new church in Rocktown?"

"Yes," he said, smiling, and then looking graver than he had done; "that was the only ungratified wish of my Florence, except, perhaps, *one other*," — and he looked at Mary, while his benevolent eyes filled with tears. "Hartley has never ceased, since she left us, to strive for the completion of this church, and now it is finished.

But," he added, turning to Mr. Marshall, "you spoke of leaving town. Do you go soon?"

"Probably next week; perhaps not till the latter part of the week," replied Mr. Marshall.

"Well, gentlemen, I must go myself to-morrow. I ought to be in Rocktown to-night; I have two very sick patients. Hartley has an excellent nurse, they tell me, and I think it will be best for all of us if I carry my wife home with me; provided you will keep us informed daily by telegraph how Hartley is? What a blessed thing is the telegraph!"

The clergymen promised to comply with Dr. Stephenson's request, and he rose to go. But he could not leave without once more taking both Mary's hands in his, and whispering, as he bade her good night, "He's true as steel; he has hardly looked at a woman since you left us."

Mary could not help smiling through her crimson blushes at this characteristic remark, but took the opportunity to retire from the room while he was making his adieus to the rest of the family.

* * * *

"Well now, father, please explain," said Grace, as she

sat on a footstool at her father's knee, and looked into his face. "Mary has left, to give you the opportunity."

"Well, my darling Grace," he said, "how much have you gathered from the events of the evening?"

"I have only learned that this sick young man is a rejected lover of Mary's during her sojourn in Rocktown."

"The old gentleman seems to take the rejection quite to heart," said Arthur.

Minnie rose from the recess where she had been sitting, and stood by her father, resting her hand on his shoulder.

Mr. Marshall hesitated; he was pondering how far he had a right to say anything on the subject; then, reflecting that they already knew so much that the whole truth might have a good effect, he placed his arm about Minnie's waist, and, earnestly looking at the two, he said, "Can either of my daughters think why Mr. Hamilton was rejected, when he had everything the world can give, — fortune, family, high position, intellectual and moral worth?"

"I think," said Grace, dropping her head modestly, as if afraid to venture an opinion, "he was not quite good enough for Mary."

"And I think," said Minnie, smiling, "she would not leave us."

"It was this," replied Mr. Marshall; "he did not believe the articles of the Christian faith; and though Mary loved him very dearly, she loved her *duty* more."

"But he believes now," said Grace, the smile on her face shining as it often did through a few tears that had gathered in her eye, a circumstance from which Arthur had long ago given her the name of "my rainbow." "O how I wish Mary could see him!" she added earnestly.

Mr. Marshall went the next afternoon to visit the sick man. He met Dr. Davis in the hall in a state of great excitement.

"That rattle-brained doctor," he said, "I am afraid has finished my patient. He had no sleep, the nurse tells me, all night. Talk of prudence! careful watching! and then come and inform a man in Mr. Hamilton's state, and in the old man's blunt way, that some lady-love of his has turned up in these parts. His pulse is rapid and his fever increased."

"Perhaps I had better not see him to-day," said Mr. Marshall; "and yet, if anything can calm his excitement, it will be prayer."

Dr. Davis assented. Mr. Marshall found the invalid propped with pillows, his face flushed, and his eye brilliant with excited feeling. He grasped the clergyman's hand with an earnestness quite startling, and said, "I have been trying to thank God for sending you to me, but there seems to be a confusion here," placing his hand on his head. "Can I hope to see my Mary? — Mary, whom I have loved so long and faithfully, and whose character appears so transcendently pure and lovely, now I know the source whence she derives her goodness. Tell me that I may see her!" he said, eagerly reaching towards Mr. Marshall.

The clergyman quietly took both the hot hands of the patient in his, and, stooping over him, said, in a firm, gentle tone, "Wait God's time; your duty now, my son, is to calm yourself. Any excitement or agitation retards your recovery: you are by no means out of danger." He hesitated; the mild, decided tone had its effect; and he added, "Should your danger increase, and your end be apparently drawing nigh, I think you may see Mary; and if by the blessing of God you are restored to health, you may meet her when you will: more than this I cannot say, and you must forbid your-

self talking, and as much as possible thinking, on this subject." This was the best course that could have been taken with the young man, for it gave him enough of hope to prevent anxiety preying upon his spirits.

He was calmed and soothed by the conversation and prayers, and Mr. Marshall left him in a much more promising condition than he found him. His visits were repeated every day, sometimes alone, and at other times in company with Mr. Grey. Mr. Hamilton's recovery, although steady, was very slow, and when Mr. Marshall and his family left town, he could sit up but a few minutes. The sick man spoke but once again of Mary, and then confessed to an earnest, restless longing to see her. Mr. Marshall simply replied, "That is not waiting God's time."

Mary's heart meanwhile was full; but she sought no mortal breast to still its throbbings. Into the ear of her ever listening Friend she poured the tale of all her joys and sorrows. Every member of the family strove in the best way to soothe and comfort her, by carefully avoiding every reference to the peculiar circumstances, but Arthur could not refrain from telling her, the day she left Philadelphia, "How sorry I am you are not to be an old maid!"

CHAPTER XLV.

"By every hope that earthward clings,
By faith that mounts on eagle's wings,
By dreams that make night shadows bright,
And truths that turn our day to night:
For joy or grief, for hope or fear,
For all hereafter as for here,
In peace, in strife, in storm or shine,
My soul is wedded unto thine."

MORELAND NEVER before appeared so beautiful and dear to Mr. Marshall, as when he stood once more by his favorite study window. Since he had been Rector of St. James's, the town had quadrupled in numbers, but the growth had been on the other side of the village,—the church and Rectory remained in quiet seclusion. Nevertheless, by the blessing of God on his faithful labors, his congregation had increased, in proportion even beyond the growth of the town. The people of his parish had, during his absence, thoroughly repaired the Rectory: the favorite window had been cut down to

the floor, so that one could walk from it into the churchyard. The trees and shrubs had grown wonderfully all about the place. Slips of the willow that Arthur had planted over Jeanette's grave were now large trees. The clumps of maples and elms, in the scattered but brilliant remnants of their autumn dress, contrasted gayly with the dark foliage of the firs and pines, and the light delicate tracery of the deciduous larch. The narrow mansions were many in that sacred spot; and the graves already encroached upon the thicket of pines and hemlocks beyond the first precincts of the churchyard. They dwelt together in one family, the inhabitants of that precious place of rest. No divisions separated the graves of the rich and poor; and although families rested together, there were no aristocratic iron railings to part common from uncommon dust.

"This place is very dear to me," said Mr. Marshall, turning to Mary, who stood by his side watching the golden and purple clouds, as they shed a brilliant glow over the falling leaves; "I don't know how I could leave it."

Mary sighed, and was about to reply, when Minnie entered, looking a little vexed, although a smile lurked

in the corners of her mouth. "Father," said she, looking archly at Mary, "there is company in the parlor,—a young clergyman, Mr. Stanwood, inquiring for Mary."

It was Mary's turn now to look vexed: Mr. Marshall also was annoyed. It was Saturday night, and this persevering young man would probably spend Sunday with him. Mr. Marshall was hospitable, but he knew the young man's errand, and could hardly give him with sincerity the warm greeting with which he generally met his brethren of the clergy. Mary was half resolved not to see Mr. Stanwood: she had met him years ago when she was teacher in the Seminary at H——. Even then, his condescending kindness was not agreeable to her. Within the past year he had offered Mary his hand. She had tried to mingle as much kindness as possible with her refusal; and his inordinate self-conceit would not suffer him to believe that her decision was final; therefore he had come again. On further consideration, Mary thought it would be very awkward for her father without her, and Minnie, she knew, would hardly speak to him; therefore she entered the room at the time of the evening meal with ease and self-possession.

But Sunday passed, and so adroitly was the affair man-

aged, and that without any apparent contrivance, that Mr. Stanwood was not once left alone with Mary. Evening came, and Mr. Marshall took him to a third service in a neighboring district. Mr. Stanwood was getting desperate, and during the ride home he broached the subject by saying, "I have come here, brother, as you have probably guessed, to make one more effort for Mary's hand." Mr. Marshall made no reply, and he proceeded: "I have known Mary many years; I met her first when she was with Professor Henshaw; I saw her often at our musical *soirées*, though of course she moved in a different circle from my sisters." If Stanwood could have seen the expression on Mr. Marshall's face, he would have paused here. "I met her often," he repeated, when he found Mr. Marshall said nothing, "and own her quiet dignity and freedom from affectation attracted me even then. Five years after I saw her again, as the sister of Arthur Grey. He was on his bridal tour, and spent a few days at H——. They were at the first hotel in the city, and my mother and sisters called on Arthur and his bride. I need a wife, indeed I do, Brother Marshall, exceedingly, and have never met with any one who seems every way so fitted for the companion of a clergy-

man. My mother is prepared to receive Mary as my wife; and a further acquaintance with her, I am persuaded, will bring my sisters to regard her with affection. My position in the Church, and in the world, are well known to you; and I hope for your consent, when I shall have made known my wishes in a private interview with Mary, which I trust you will permit me after our return. I could say more, but I forbear."

"Insufferable coxcomb!" was on Mr. Marshall's lips, but he gave no utterance to the indignant expression. However, he put an end to the young man's hopes at once, by telling him in a cool and dignified manner, that any attempt for a private interview with Mary would only be attended with pain to both parties, as her mind on that subject could never be changed; that he would do well to confer the *honor* he had intended for Mary upon some other individual; that she had wished to regard him as a friend, but could not look upon him in that light unless he ceased to speak to her of any nearer relation. The young man was not to be found next morning: he had left in the early train, without a parting word, affording by his departure great relief to the family at the Rectory.

Advent season was drawing to a close, indeed, it wanted only two days of Christmas, and yet the weather was unusually mild. Mary and Minnie were busily engaged in trimming the parlor with evergreens for the season. They were making a wreath of princess-pine for a beautiful engraving, — “We praise thee, O God!” — which had just been received as a Christmas present from Grace to her father. The girls were both in their neat morning dresses, while some of Mary’s curls were loosed from the comb that generally held them. Minnie’s usually smooth tresses were much ruffled by the exercise of arranging the wreaths. Branches of hemlock and cedar, twigs of laurel and ground-pine, were scattered over a large cloth in the middle of the room, placed there that the refuse branches might be more readily removed, — the furniture was disarranged, the curtains were unlooped, — when the door-bell rang. Minnie flew like a spirit out of the room, while Mary, satisfied with the idea that it was too early in the day for callers, except to the study, calmly went on finishing the wreath she had commenced. The door slowly opened, Mary raised her head, and the wreath dropped from her hand. Faint and dizzy, she would have fallen, but Hartley

Hamilton sprung to her side as she sunk on the sofa near by. He drew her to him, and by words of endearment soothed the strange fluttering of her heart, and said, in those low musical tones, that had a charm in themselves: “Mary, are you not mine, — mine, whom in the solitude of my own heart I have loved for eight long years, and whom I now regard with a nearer and tenderer love, since I look upon you as a treasure kept for me by my Heavenly Father’s hand, — guarded, watched, and tended for me by the Good Shepherd, till I should be, not more worthy Mary, but better fitted to keep this sacred treasure unspotted from the world?”

Mary did not reply, but she put her hand in his, and looked with her pure and truthful eyes into his face, with that sweet, confiding expression that said, plainer than words, “I am yours.” Then came back to her heart all that tide of emotion that she had striven so long and so earnestly to bury down deep in her own bosom; now it came welling up, and she wept tears of joy.

Hartley suffered her to weep; tears even dimmed his own eyes. Then followed a long, unbroken silence; they were enjoying one of those unalloyed seasons of delight that come but seldom to earth’s children.

Mary was aroused by her father's step in the hall, and she whispered, "Let us go to my father."

"Our father," said Hartley.

Mr. Marshall was seated in his favorite window. He did not notice the entrance of the happy pair till they came quite near.

"We come seeking your blessing, father," said Hartley.

Mr. Marshall arose, and with a hand on each head as they knelt before him, said: "The Lord bless you, and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace."

It was long past midnight before the two gentlemen left the study for their own rooms. Their conversation had been deeply interesting to both. Mr. Marshall was delighted to find how truly Mr. Hamilton appreciated his beloved daughter, and with the depth and purity of his affection for her; but more than all was he charmed with the single-hearted earnestness with which the young man spoke of his future, as devoted to Christ and his Church.

"To-morrow will be my first communion, dearest,"

said Hartley, as he stood with Mary, at sunset on Christmas eve, by her mother's grave; "and I am so unworthy, and perhaps unprepared!"

"Unworthy, Hartley, but not unprepared. Who is worthy?"

"I know it, Mary; but to spend all 'the dew of one's youth' in doubting and denying this precious sacrament is but poor preparation." The young man spoke mournfully, and leaned on the headstone.

"Hartley, dearest," said Mary soothingly, "do not distress yourself with doubts. Did you not begin a new life at Baptism, and can you not believe that all your doubts and unbelief are washed away by that all-sufficient sacrifice which we to-morrow commemorate? And where can we find grace to do away 'all hardness of heart and unbelief,' but in the way of Christ's appointing?"

"You will help me, Mary, you do help me," he said tenderly; "and your precious father, how gently he led me along, and how lovingly he bade me welcome to the feast, when I opened my doubts to him last evening! One seems to feel secured and sheltered in his presence; and what must it be to live under the same roof? It will be very sad to separate you from him."

Mary covered her face with her hands, and tears slowly trickled through her fingers. "That, and leaving *this spot*, are the only bitter drops in my full cup of happiness."

He drew her to a seat near the long, drooping boughs of the willow next Jeanette's grave. "It does seem nearer heaven here — does n't it, Mary? — than at Rocktown."

He spoke somewhat sadly, but she replied cheerfully. They had mused and talked a long time. The last faint streaks of purple and orange were fading from the west, when they heard Minnie's voice as she came toward them.

"Papa thinks you are not very prudent," she said, smiling archly, "and fears you have forgotten it is December, instead of July, and that Mr. Hamilton is but recently recovered from severe illness."

Mary rose in haste. She feared she had exposed Hartley's health, and she could not even smile when Minnie whispered to her of old Deacon Barker, who wrote in the Bible he presented to his fifth wife on her wedding-day, "You have made this December happier than any May."

News spread in Moreland without the aid of telegraph; and by Christmas morn, which rose bright and cloudless, there were but few women in the parish of St. James but had heard of the very handsome, gentlemanly stranger, who had inquired the way from the hotel to the Rectory. The landlord declared he was "every inch a gentleman," and the landlady added, "And so pretty!" But when it came to be known that Mary was the object of his visit, the surprise of the gossips was almost boundless. Miss Maynard, who still held her post as the village dressmaker, declared herself in favor of gratitude, and wondered if Mary Evans thought of marrying and leaving the Rectory without a housekeeper. She always thought her proud and "stuck up," but she was not prepared to believe that, after being supported so long, she would leave Mr. Marshall the very first opportunity. But her cherished doubts were scattered when she saw Mary and Hartley enter church together.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"I know, I know no place below,
 Like the home I fear and love;
 Like the stilly spot, where the world is not,
 But the nest of the Holy Dove.
 For there he broods 'mid every tree
 That grows at Christmas tide,
 And there, all year, o'er the font so clear,
 His hovering wings abide!"

REV. A. C. COXE.

THE CHRISTMAS dinner, arranged under the auspices of Josephine, and eaten at Spring Cottage, (which the united taste of Dr. Thurston and his devoted wife had made one of the loveliest dwellings in Moreland,) passed off much to the satisfaction of all concerned. Mr. Hamilton was introduced to Mary's friends, and Squire Lee (now Judge Lee) discovered in him a young lawyer whom he had often remarked in the way of his profession, as promising great things in the future by his eloquence as an advocate. Judge

Lee was now an old man, much broken by time and trouble. All his children rested in the shadow of the grave, except Ralph. The profession of a soldier led him far from his early home; and the hearth of Mr. Lee was very lonely. Mary had ever been a favorite with the Judge, and his pleasantest hours in these days were an occasional quiet evening at the Rectory. Though he rejoiced in her pleasant prospects, he was saddened by the thought of losing her presence, which was always to him like sunshine.

Hartley Hamilton left Moreland after the holidays. He had besought Mary earnestly to be his wife in the course of a few weeks, but his entreaties were unavailing, and Easter Tuesday was the earliest day she would name.

An extract from one of Mr. Hamilton's letters to Mr. Marshall during the winter, may give us an idea of his train of thought. After the usual salutations, he writes:—

"You bid me, my dear sir, consider you as a parent: that privilege is very dear;—not only to think of you as the father of one whose gentle influence is always near me, but also as my father and guide in matters pertain-

ing to the spiritual life. I have thought much of your few kind words about my profession. The legal profession is very dear to me: it was the choice of my boyhood; but I will confess, that sometimes, when I stand pleading the cause of my client, there comes a voice to me, saying, 'Might you not, will you not, plead for Christ and his Church?' Did I believe as I once did, that this inner light is the *sole* guide of the human soul, I could not hesitate. To seek the priesthood would be for me to renounce, not only wealth and position, but what to me is far dearer, all those early day-dreams and associations that mingle with my boyhood's aims and purposes."

After Mr. Marshall's reply, he again writes:—

"Your persuasions are very powerful, and your suggestions so kind and fatherly, I know not how to thank you as I ought. Thoughts of my *unworthiness* to occupy so sacred a position as that I am contemplating, have driven away all my earlier doubts. I was in A—— last week and called on good old Bishop X——. He spoke very warmly of you; and when I introduced the subject of my change of profession, his counsel was almost the same as your own. In parting, he spoke so

tenderly and earnestly of the toils and self-denial that were the privilege and pleasure of every true minister of Christ, that my decision was made, and I have ventured to look forward to Holy Orders.

"This change in my life must make no difference in my plans for Easter. I have already served longer than Jacob; and the Lord willing, I shall pass Good Friday and the great, glorious festival with you, and claim my bride at your hand on Easter Tuesday. My income will be sufficient at present for our comfortable support, and this change may possibly not remove Mary so far from all her early friends.

"I had a very kind note from Judge Lee, informing me of his intention to retire from public life, and urging me to establish myself as a lawyer in Moreland, promising me his influence, &c. This was very kind of the old gentleman: he spoke so touchingly of dear Mary, that I could not but love him, and told him confidentially our plans.

"Mary mentions in one of her letters, that you are spoken of for the Bishopric of ——. I wish you could read how beautifully she writes about it. Her brave devotion to *duty* is an ever-present example to me, sur-

rounded as I am by error and unbelief in its most captivating forms and associations. The Church here grows very slowly, as I remember you told me would be the case, in an atmosphere where the Divinity of her Lord was questioned. Two of Mary's pupils received confirmation at the last visitation of the Bishop, and it rejoices me to add that my sister, Mrs. Stephenson, is looking forward to the same holy rite."

The winter flew rapidly with Mary. Her love, deep, true, and earnest as it was for Hartley, was not allowed to become in her mind all-absorbing. The poor and sick people of Moreland, who looked to her for many little comforts and counsels, were faithfully cared for, and her household and social duties were not neglected. She was never absent-minded when her father was near, but joined in his plans and listened to his counsels as ever. To Minnie she was a very tender sister, gradually bringing her to have that care for her father's comfort that had hitherto devolved entirely upon herself.

Early in March they learned, by a letter from Arthur Grey, that, during a visit to a sick person at the hospital, he had been confounded by a meeting with Anthony

Maurice. He had been brought there, suffering from an attempt upon his own life, which in the end proved successful. He died "as the fool dieth," with a curse upon his lips. The remnants of his property were divided between Alice and Minnie Marshall, the only heirs.

Mary felt that Mr. Hamilton had been guided by the leadings of Providence in changing his profession; and though it left the place of their residence as yet uncertain, she knew that to be with him would be *home*. But it was a little awkward, when inquisitive people would ask where she was to live, to have no satisfactory reply. Happy was she, then, as she clasped her father's hand, and thanked him for planning for them: and such a plan! It was too blissful, she said.

After the wedding, they were to go to Rocktown, to visit Hartley's friends, and return at their leisure to Moreland, where Mr. Hamilton was to pursue his preparatory studies with Mr. Marshall. They had in contemplation an incipient call to Rocktown, which had been suggested by his friends there, as the ultimatum of their wishes, when he should have prepared for ordination; but for the present they were to remain at the beloved, precious Rectory.

Thus were frustrated all Miss Maynard's roseate prospects: she had already designed to have herself named to Mr. Marshall as a fitting housekeeper, trusting to the future to mature her plans. But

"The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft a-gley."

The last week of Lent brought Hartley to Moreland. The tint of health glowed on his cheek, and an expression of rest and peace were daily deepening on his brow.

They knelt together, that happy pair, on Easter morning, to celebrate His death who had risen again; and they arose refreshed with the same grace, trusting to the same promises, looking for the same end. The flowers were lovely on that altar during Easter-tide, when Hartley and Mary made those vows that were to bind them "till death do part."

Rev. Mr. Marshall's manner was very touching throughout the marriage service; but it was affecting even to tears when, they kneeling, and he with arms spread over them, his white robes reminding one of the wings of an angel, pronounced the proper benediction:—

"God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you: the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that ye may so live together in this life that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. Amen."

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