

THE
F I S H E R B O Y .

BY

WILLIE TRITON. *friend*
along Trip

"The common things of life are the best stuff for description."

N. P. WILLIS.

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THE FISHER BOY.

CHAPTER I.

"Sleep on, sleep on! Pale manhood's dreams,
Are all of earthly pain or pleasure;
Of glory's toils, ambition's schemes
Of cherished love, or hoarded treasure.
But to the couch where childhood lies,
A pure, unmingled trance is given,
Lit up by rays from seraph eyes,
And glimpses of remembered heaven."

BULWER.

It was one of those lustrous days of March, that beam no where else with so tranquil splendor, as upon the Island and Cape shores of New England. That section of the coast in which our scene opens, thanks to a dawning spirit of progress, had lately received the boon of a public road. This social innovator winding meekly with the sinuous line of the shore, revealed to the traveller a nook of country which, up to this, had nestled a mere by-corner, in the world's great crossings.

Near where we stand, the gracious highway crosses a tiny brook. The streamlet is of modest pretensions, but like a pure, unfaltering character, its crystal waters have been the sweet dispenser of many blessings. Among these is the free welcome with which it has ever greeted to its bosom the strol-

ling cattle of the quiet neighborhood. And the tireless current for the noble use of privileges bestowed, is now receiving the well done of the faithful servant, by being advanced to greater usefulness; for not unfrequently, the panting beast of some way-worn traveller plunges into the pebbled ford, and there slakes its thirst in grateful adoration for Nature's bountiful gift.

Upon the time-worn bridge, under which the gliding rivulet, like the ceaseless passing of time, was wending itself homeward to the fountain whence it issued, stands in careless attitude, a youth. He is leaning gently against the slender railing of the arch-way, and gazing with fixed attention upon the running waters below. What invisible power could thus enchain him so long in that position! Perchance, his eye was first stolen by the speckled trouts in the golden brook below, until musing upon their skittish motions, Fancy had lured him to her bright realms, where the heart-longings of youth are pictured in the bland hues of Imagination. Ah, bright Imagination, kindly Divinity, that softly liftest the leaden curtain of earth, and revealest the universe of the soul! Who would exchange thy airy pinion for the iron car of sense! Who quit thy fairy regions flooded with the beauties of a magic creation, for the prosy fields of terrestrial life!

But lest too near approach arouse the boy from his reverie, we will while away a moment's interval, by creeping up the brown knoll hard by, and flinging a glance upon the surrounding prospect.

The scene spread to view, although not graphic, is yet mildly picturesque. Amid here and there homely features, elements may be detected in a subdued form, of deep beauty. Especially when swimming in the quivering azure of a golden summer day, the sweet loveliness exuded, loading the breathed

atmosphere, as with fragrance, is in sympathy with the tenderest emotions of the soul.

But let me attempt an outline sketch.

The surface of ground gently variegated, is curiously wreathed with hill, dale, meadow, and lakelet; which are here and there interspersed with coppice, just to relieve the baldness of aspect. On either side of the back-ground, strips of the verdant pine, or of pine interwoven with the more delicate oak, stretch embracingly around, at one point rising toward the dimension of forest; at another, falling off to mazy swamp wood. These woodland arms, stretched wooingly around, hide from view the sharp line of the horizon, except at a single point looking to the South. Here our duteous rivulet, after plodding a long weary way, through swamp, woodland and meadow, beside lowly banks, embossed with tangled grasses (save where it expands into pebbled fords) until, gliding by the spot where we stand, it winds and doubles in serpentine course, through a sedgy marsh, and, at length, stealing through the surf-packed beach, nestles securely in the bosom of mother ocean.

Through this inspiring vista, which has gradually widened, to make room for the changing passages of the persevering stream, loom a number of small craft, riding tidily at anchor, in the open bay, the blue waters upon which they sit so jauntily, appearing to rise in the far off horizon, to a greeting with the clouds.

Looking more closely, we observe dotted here and there upon elevated sites of ground, the dwellings of the hardy fishermen. These form most of the inhabitants of the settlement. Their lowly abodes are shaped so nearly alike, that but for slight differences in size, you could easily believe them to have been run in the same mould. But in respect to color, the contrast they present is striking; for while a few have

their shingled outsides bedaubed with pitch stained with red-ochre, after the manner of the Dutch; the rest have been left to take such hue, as off-handed Time, with his elemental paint-brush may have deemed fit to give.

In this cursory survey, we have purposely kept in reserve a single residence, differing immeasurably from the rest. Indeed, in comparison of size, as well as liberal appropriation of grounds and decorative culture, it swells from them all, in the majestic proportions of some lordly manor. So marked is its superiority, as to arrest strongly the attention. Approaching, we find it an imposing quadrangular edifice, presenting here and there a dash toward the architectural. A pretty, quaint portico looks demurely from the south front, and the uniform gable-roof is crowned by a graceful ballustrade. From the rear, stretches languidly an F, one part forming the spacious kitchen, and the other an omnibus for house-hold duties. Crowding near is the cosy granary room, and, apart from this, the handsome carriage house.

Just across the newly laid out road, which vexatiously runs so near the house, as to intrude on domestic privacy, stands the amply garnered barn. This, so to speak, venerable servant of the mansion, besides being the grateful home of the ever-cared-for farm-stock, has often served as a witching retreat to lure blithe childhood, to the sweet play of hide-go-seek.

Adjoining this quadruped-home on the East, is the spacious barnyard: its high fence of stakes twined with pine boughs, serving the ever grateful kine, either as shade from the fierce rays of summer, or shelter from the rude blasts of winter. Here, in the season, cosily hid in some wary tuft, nestles perchance a love-entranced robin, while her mate, perched near upon a breezy spray, warbles affectionately her golden notes in the gushing sunlight. At the South-west angle of the

barn, with its sloped top, is the thatched sheep-cote. Upon the peak of its ridge-pole, might sometimes of a scowling winter day, be seen a late snow-bird peering through the howling blast. The awry roof when sleeted with snow, has given many a neck or naught slide, from the summit to the greeting snow upon the ground below; and all with no watching eye, save the speechless moon careering through the majestic sky.

Adjoining the house on the North-west, is a large fruitful orchard. The trees, of great variety, are set with prim exactness. A rich esculent garden borders the North side of the orchard enclosure, and so abundant and luscious are the vegetables it has time out of mind produced, as to have brought high gustatory repute to the mansion table. A numerous band of relatives have been wont to look with an eye of common inheritance to the earliest greenings of the kitchen garden; and many a lone, poverty-pressed bosom, has throbbed with pulsations of grateful joy, as a sharer of the timely bounty it has unobtrusively dispensed.

The orchard is thus bounded: At the south-side lies the public road, and too public by far in the tempting season of fruit-ripening. The coy little rivulet already named, creeps noiselessly by the grassy border of the West side. On the North, the tall, dark pines rear their mighty heads, and seem to look haughtily down upon their less pretentious, but more productive neighbors. While an umbrageous lane steals moodily along by the East side, as if touched with remorse for conveying lustful feet so near the forbidden enclosure.

The entire orchard is surrounded by rows of once waving shade trees, poplar, balm-gilead, and such short-lived species, but now so far in their wane, as to stand the merest hulks of former majesty. Yet, like benignant humanity, never past being useful, they have opened their bosoms to the sharp

wood-pecker, and kindred birds, which nestle their young securely adown their hollow trunks.

Martin boxes, pretty miniature houses, are here and there perched upon the ridges of the out-buildings, or stand airily upon poles planted in the ground. Around these, the martin, swallow, blue-bird, and other graces of the feathered tribe, sail and twitter in the season, overflowing with gladness, at the wealth of nature and art, evoked for their joy.

Thus having thrown a glance about the surroundings, if the indulgent reader will venture with me, we will pass at once through the neat front yard, up the time-worn steps of the portico, and lay hand upon the latch of the front door. The handle of brass is chased, and below is a massive brass knocker. The frank portal yields responsive to our touch, displaying a broad hall through which we wend into the broad kitchen. A turn up the back stair-way, we come to an ambiguous defile, whence winding up another flight of stairs, we are ushered into the womb-like attic. Placing foot upon the open steps leading to the roof, and throwing over with one hand the scuttle, a spring fetches us panting from tire upon the platform of the "Look-out." Instantly, we feel the tonic air of heaven a-glow upon our spirits. The wide, varied landscape unrolls beneath our ken, ushering upon the sense a sweet and inspiring charm. And, as our eye turns toward the South, it falls with a sublime thrill, upon the rolling, reaching bay, flecked with its white winged carriers of plenty.

The Look-out is the favorite resort of all. It serves to relieve the monotony of domestic life; to give varied zest to happy visitors at the mansion; to sooth the wistful heart of neighbors. Here, the stealthy foot of childhood is wont to flee, to enjoy the purloined morsel; here mutual longing

youth have sometimes hied to breathe beneath the sailing moon, the rosy flame of love. But more tender still, is when some deep-hearted wife with tearful eye and heaving breast, clings with last fading look to the vanishing speck of the cruel vessel, bearing away, alas, perhaps forever, her life companion. Or with joy and gratitude too full for utterance, she hovers around her roseate brood of little ones, all watching with beseeching, expectant gaze, the dear, winged angel bearing to their arms their all of life.

Thus was the mansion like a city set upon a hill. Nor did it loom less hugely upon the vision of the neighboring fishermen because standing in so marked contrast to their own shrubless homes. Indeed, it seemed to have absorbed to itself the thrift, the rural beauty of the settlement. Even the inmates had accorded them a social preëminence verging upon veneration. And all eyes were wont to turn toward the glorious mansion with that sentiment of homage we instinctively feel for superiority.

The regal soul that conceived and gave the breath of life to this wonderful home, I can but vaguely limn. Regretfully, to me, his rounded life swells up to my memory only in shadowy cognizance. I have seen him only through the mouth-piece of tradition; or more really in the sublime energy of his works.

I know, however, that gracious Fortune exalted him to three happy, fruitful marriages. His last consort — a notable coincidence — had herself been twice married, and both times received the boon of children. But her star did not cease its propitious beams here. She continued multiplying her loves, honoring the sweet law of nature, that noble exercise but blesses the benignant power of giving.

Thus, their welded souls baptized in a nuptial flame, that grew brighter with age, they stood out the fountain-head and

representatives of a very numerous family. But the connubial fire did not scorch within their breast, the glow of active sympathy. On the contrary, the affection for offspring flowed copiously adown the family stream, and, after laving generous bosoms, came back impregnated with filial love, to well out to amplest grace, the life of the parental pair.

The loyal head of the patriarchal couple has long since been gathered to the realms of the future, but his sublunary life still flows as pure as the purling brook amid his broad acres. As fragrant yet blooms his spirit, as did once the sweet blossoms of his favorite orchard. And his memory continues to shoot as green as the mantling grass upon the turfy grave that hides his endeared form from mortal eye. Indeed, how little of the truly great can ever die. Such leave behind them a stream of light that broadens in descending the vista of years.

Souls there are, upon which the influences of life act like genial breath, that swells to comeliness the ductile glass. The gentleman of the manor was largely one of these. Offspring did not narrow, but amplified his being. Parental affection dried not up, but deepened the lake-water of his existence. His family sympathies were not weakened by being multiplied, but strengthened and expanded rather, broad like the vaulted sky, that shuts down in limited vision upon the standing observer, but lifts its arched curtain to him who actively moves.

His noble character shone brightly in every light, but in none more amiably than in the deep interest he showed for his children. This continued unabated, even after their majority. It is a remembered remark of his, that he wished a dwelling sufficiently spacious for all his family, where they might abide in continued love and friendship.

Wedded love! Divinest flower of earth! Purest image

of heaven! Thy magic touch transforms the soul, and awakens illimitable longings to bless!

Fortune is diverse in its influence upon character. To many it proves a fatal embrace, dwarfing the intellect, blunting the moral sense, and blighting the affections. Such are gradually drawn closer and closer within the coils of the monster Mammon, until the native lustre of their souls is crushed within them.

Yet to some, wealth is but the golden wand of genius. It breaks forth the outward substance of an inner power, the material expression of an affluent soul. It is the tangible of a spiritual creativeness, and its reflux is to expand and liberalize.

Such turn their riches to good, if but to satisfy the cravings of a noble nature. Their instincts lead them to give bright vesture to their ideals. These are the noblemen in the kingdom of Success. I need not say that Mr. Damon, the creator of the mansion described, belonged to this class.

Here in this dewy lap of Nature was cradled the child which takes the leading part in our tale. What spot more genial for the budding of an ingenious soul! Away from the festering marts of trade, adown the quietude of the country! The landscape grows pictured in the heart. The atmosphere flows with melody. Life distils with dewy gentleness. The seasons roll with softest harmony. The social hearth-stone cricket, the spring-greeting frog, the meek, grateful kine, the garrulous domestic fowls, the gleeful swallow, the frisking lamb, the choral songsters, and the wave-lashed shore with its plaintive resonance, were so many voices of Nature, attuning the soul to tender concord, and throwing a silvery veil of incense over life that no grim fortune shall ever quite dispel.

Ah, halcyon childhood! where all glows with the roseate hues of the heart; where all is sweet with the balmiest fra-

grance; where all wafts the mildest zephyrs laden with the richest melody. Thou first heaven! Alas, that thy bright illusion should ever be dissolved by the touch of sordid life, like a delicious dream dispelled by the pattering of a rainy morn. Oh, could we but extend thy empire of innocence and beauty over ripe manhood and tottering age, how blessed for the world!

Peace to childhood! Disturb not its golden dream! Scatter rather more profusely in its path-way the roses of innocent joy.

How much of the good of life depends upon the seeds sown in infancy! How much of its happiness is but the blossoming of an early nurture. Then guard well the footsteps of youth. Let it be the period for the ingrowing of that purity which no rubbing of after life shall obliterate.

Thus ruminating, our eye returns to the figure still motionless upon the bridge. But while revolving upon the wondrous power that could so arrest the ceaseless faculties of youth; of a sudden, as if electrified by a daring thought, the boy rouses with a spring, wheels around, and bounds off in the direction of the mansion, with a step so elate, as to denote the ending of an inward struggle, in which mastery has imparted new-born vigor to the spirit.

The sudden turn of the boy afforded but a glance to catch his portrait. But the outline rayed forth was distinct and vivid. He seemed rather large for one of his age, with exuberant raven hair, high, expansive forehead, dark, beaming eyes, but soft features; fair skin, slightly bronzed in the sun. He might not be called beautiful, yet there was something so free and open in aspect, and so gentle and lofty in mien, as to inspire you with lively interest.

His dress was slightly unique, not from lack of neatness, for it bore a prim air, and was here and there decorated. But

there was an odd assortment in the colors, and a queerness about the fit, that betokened straitened circumstances, rather than want of taste. Indeed, you might surmise it the cast off wardrobe, of some rich relative, cut down and furbished up by a mother's pride.

The eye thus kindled with interest, follows intently the receding form until it is shut off by the concealing door of the mansion.

Our curiosity awakened, the inquiring reader may like to know more of the being whom chance has thrown across our path-way. We will then follow his footsteps along those few years of youth, that form the portal of manhood — that glowing period around which are wont to cluster the brightest memories of life.

CHAPTER II.

In this wide world, the fondest and the best
Are the most tried, most troubled and distressed.

CRABBE.

It is sombre night. A black curtain palls the heavens; and the lugubrious wind, after moaning through the forest of tall pines near, sets up a sharper wail around the corners of the mansion, which it rocks with the frenzy of implacable grief.

In a front room, upon the second floor, near the fire which is jetting out and crackling upon the ample hearth, sits a woman, and by her on a lowly stool, is seated a lad. He is reclining his head upon her lap, while she moves at times her sympathetic fingers through the dark hair crowning so luxuriantly his fair brow. Mute have they been for moments, hushed evidently by the sounding gloom without. But what different emotions in each the lorn scene awakens! In the boy, it stirs up resolutions strong for the future; while to the woman, the shrieking wind is but the requiem of shrouded hopes! The candle has just darted up its dying flicker, yet a bright, though fitful flame is still upon the hearth. As the glancing light falls upon the mother's face, brightening her bold, yet expressive features, now furrowed with care and suffering, you almost seem to have before you the very image of grief.

"Mother," at length broke the youth in a cautious tone.

"Well, Walter," was the mild response.

A pause followed, for the boy involuntarily trembled, in

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view of the pang he felt sure his request would inflict. But gathering resolution, he continued. "Mother I must go to sea."

As these words fell from his lips, the fingers of the woman involuntarily clutched the locks they were toying, and a convulsive tremor ran through her frame.

"Oh, Walter! my son! how could you thus pierce anew my heart!"

"It troubles me," dear mother, that you feel so bad about it," said the boy, "but you must let me go; I've thought it well over, and am resolved.

"No, Walter, never; I can never consent to it, never. Oh, my son, how could you think of such a step!"

The tone of anguish accompanying these words brought a gush of commiseration to the breast of the boy. For a moment, he recoiled from his purpose. He regretted in his heart, having broached the subject to his mother. But now committed, the under-current of a cherished wish swept him on.

A moment's pause, and he continued in a more conciliatory voice.

"As much as I love you, mother, and however painful the thought of leaving home, still I must go, at some time. There is nothing here, that I can engage in for a livelihood. Others younger even than I are off, doing well. And to confess, I'm quite tired of this butterfly-life, I'm leading. I pine for action of some sort. I burn to plunge into the great ocean of life, and see what the world is made of. Fairly away, and I'd arrive at something, one day. Besides," he added, in a more sympathizing tone, "I can't be idle longer, and see you struggle so hard to support us. I long to help ease your hard lot, and do something in return for all you've done for me. Let me go, mother, and I'll soon earn money to build a

nice cottage, when we shall be no longer dependent upon others for a shelter."

He now met his mother's eye, with the hope of finding there a softened expression; but the same distressed look held possession of her grief-stricken features. A deep sigh was at first her only response. At length she exclaimed in accents of wild sorrow, "Go, I suppose you must, from me at some day, but never upon the sea. Its treacherous waves have already robbed me nearly of my all. They shall not take my only remaining hope."

"The bones of your grandfather and of three of your uncles," she continued, with deeper pathos, "are soaking in the restless ocean, their precious flesh, food for voracious fishes. Your own beloved father," and here the bereaved mother seemed struggling with overmastering emotions, "was drowned in very sight of our home. Just as his fond anticipations of return were on the point of being realized, when his heart was leaping to fold you for the first time to his breast, the relentless waves drew him beneath their lid forever."

"They had joyously told me of his coming, and then, when my feeble heart was overflowing with gladness to feel so soon his endeared presence, they, the unfeeling men! set down his pallid corse at my bed-side, as if in very mockery of my happiness."

"Oh speak not to me of the sea. Its very name is hideous, its memory a curse!"

The heart-stricken widow covered her face with her hands, overcome by the up-heavings of bitter memories. Yet, like a deep moving shadow, the darkness was but momentary. Regaining her wonted serenity, she continued.

"You spake, my son, of aid in my toilsome path for daily bread. Sweet to me is this token of filial love. I seize it gratefully, as a fragrant flower of your blossoming heart. To

advance *your* worldly prospects, any hardship would I undergo; but for *myself*, fortune has no longer a charm. Bereaved of those who gave joy to earthly possessions, I feel no longer an interest in this world, save in you. I will consent to whatever may promise for your advantage, except going to sea. But speak never again of that."

These last words struck the boy down-cast. For several moments he remained thoughtfully silent. At length in a desponding tone he asked:

"But, dear mother, what can I do for a livelihood, if not go to sea?"

Mrs. Carl quickly responded, her face brightening with hope.

"I wish you, my son, to be a merchant. It is a fine career."

"But how am I to get a place to begin with," inquired the boy in a doubting voice.

"I have thought of Mr. Williams," replied Mrs. Carl. "He has been very successful in trade. He is a nice man. We were intimate associates in early life. He always inquires about you with marked kindness, when he comes down from the city. Besides, you know, we are related to the family. We have only to mention it to him, and I feel sure he will take you at once."

"Think never of such a thing," replied the boy, with spirit. "I know the Williamses are rich, but how often have I been told, that their inheritance should of right have been shared with us. Can we ask a favor of these people, who are living at ease upon possessions belonging in justice to us, as well, — who seeing our hard life continually before them, have only smooth words to offer as consolation? If I must beg, let it be done of strangers, not of these dignified relatives, whose very smiles freeze up my better feelings. True, they always show

toward me a kindly manner, but it is mingled with such an air of condescension, as to leave no agreeable feeling. And if a person of greater pretensions happens present, I am made to feel an inferiority deeply mortifying. Indeed, the Williamses with all their amiable nature, seem ever occupied with two leading thoughts; namely, to magnify themselves in the eyes of those in stations below them, or to raise themselves in the favor of such as occupy higher positions in society. One thing is certain; they are not pleased to have poor relations hanging about them; and for one I mean to take good care not to stand in their way. Why, only yesterday I got a line from Harriet Williams, saying, I would please use with care the school-history she had loaned you for me. How this twinged me! I was believing all the time, that you had bought the book. Such a message! and from a girl! and one of my age! The furies take the contemptible volume! I could have scattered its leaves to the four winds of heaven.

"But suppose Mr. Williams out of pity for you, should take me with him, what but an underling of charity should I be, ever carrying about me a sore feeling of dependence. You know I've not the learning to bring me forward, and upon what friendly arm could I rely to hoist me into a favorable situation. Besides, we have no money to set me up in business, after serving out my time as clerk. Then I know I should become thoroughly tired of so much confinement. Lawrence, who has been with Messrs. Perry & Bumstead now these four years, told me the other day very frankly, that all is not so bright in a merchant's life, as it would seem to be. That the employment, however dazzling at a distance, is, in reality, wearisome and full of vexation; and that he has wished himself over and over again back upon the homestead farm of his father. The other day, I overheard old Mr. Hawes, whose opinion you think so highly of, telling some of

his neighbors, that mercantile life is the very worst they can think of for their sons — that not one in ten succeeds; that his own prosperous fortune was more owing to good luck, than anything else — that there are a thousand snares in the city to entrap the young and unwary — that such protracted in-door life is injurious, if not ruinous to health — and that the unvaried round of a shop-keeper's duties is calculated to dwarf the body, and narrow the mind. But if permitted to launch upon some pursuit where success depends rather upon the energy of one's own free arm, than upon chance or a hateful favoritism, I feel sure of making my way.

"As for Mr. Williams, if he really wanted my services, or wished to be generous enough to extend us his aid, why not proffer me of himself an invitation. He must see how needy we are, and he's not the thoughtless person to require being reminded of a trivial duty. The plain conclusion is, that he is averse to having connected with him even in business, one who might embarrass him in his social relations. Now, the simplest impulse of manliness forbids that I should thrust myself upon him. Any choice would be preferable."

Mrs. Carl poignantly felt the force of these objections. For she had frequently of late hinted to Mr. Williams in every way a delicate self-respect would allow, her choice of an occupation for her son; and how grateful she would be for assistance in advancing her wishes. But he always maintained an imperturbable silence, or adroitly turned the subject. She could not at the time conclude the merchant averse to receiving her son, so superior in her own eyes, but the arguments of her boy now placed the probability beyond a doubt. With hopes so desperate, what could she offer in response!

Bitter poverty, how remorseless thy fang! To a sensitive nature, how hard the alternative of asking a favor of an early associate now lifted to wealth, and flushed with pride!

A long pause followed. It was broken only by the maddened rain against the trembling mansion, or the sobbing wind around its wide-spread angles.

A silence there is more articulate than the voice of tongues. It is when the soul sends up from its depths, the convictions sealed there by the fire of nature. Amid the conflicting emotions heaving the widow's heart, the wringing truth was forced to her mind that further opposition to the resolution of her son, were a vain effort. But we are wont to cling to cherished hopes with a hero's trust, and the grasp of a martyr.

"Well," at length resumed Mrs. Carl in a dejected, but calm tone, "I must, I suppose, see your uncle Damon."

"Uncle Damon, and for what?" quickly asked the boy.

"To see if he will take you with him upon the farm, since you are so set against trying your fortune in trade," replied the mother in a still equable, but slightly ironical tone; at the same time watching the countenance of her son, for once since their conversation commenced.

"Why, mother, I am sure you cannot be in earnest. I know you better than to think you would have me yoked with Uncle Damon upon the old homestead, dragging along a weary life of toil, a slave to a host of greedy relatives, and in condition a little above the oxen in the stall—a life with nothing to gladden the present, nor to afford hope for the future."

The vehement tone in which these sentences were uttered, arrested the current of Mrs. Carl's remarks. For she did not seriously meditate placing her son in so thriftless a situation, as upon the farm, and her sincerity would not allow of trifling with her boy's feelings.

Mr. Damon jr., it may be observed, was the eldest son of his mother with her last husband. On the death of Mr. Damon, senior, the management of the home seemed all naturally to devolve upon this son. It was accordingly arranged that he

should have the occupancy of the homestead, and the improvement of the widow's third of the estate, as compensation for assuming her maintenance. But however noble this might be, as a filial duty, it proved in a pecuniary point of view a hard bargain. For the entire products of the sterile acres, were at most inconsiderable. While the cost of keeping up the place, bore as an onerous tax. Then there was the uninterrupted drain from the fleecings of a numerous family, who seemed as inexorable, as the locusts of old.

Mrs. Damon, as before observed, was blessed as falls to the lot of few mortals. Her own children, together with those of her late husband from his previous marriages, made up a family of rare amplitude. Indeed, she was the centre of a parental flock to remind you of the palmy days of the patriarchs.

The venerable grandmother possessed a warm and generous nature. Connubial happiness and numerous offspring had deepened and enlarged her sympathies. Time had softened the asperities of life, and mellowed her character to great richness. She seemed now a sun, beaming alike upon all. Honored and beloved by young and old, the going down of her life was as serene and glorious, as the most beautiful autumnal sunset.

Animated by the purest fealty to the sentiments of her husband, she continued cherishing the family friendship, he so nobly fostered in his life time. But these maternal indulgences at length widened off into abuse. From receiving the favors as a gracious gift, they came in the end to look upon it, as their born right to visit the mansion and partake of its generous hospitalities at pleasure. Thus rarely beamed a fair afternoon, without seeing at the homestead a throng of merry relatives. These maternal parties naturally ended with an abundant supper. Then followed in course the stuffing of aunts' workbags, in which were quietly wont to disappear cake,

doughnuts, and like delicacies of the table, for the sweet tooth of little ones left at home. And such of the company as were unprovided with these articles of their own, must have a basket of apples, a pitcher of milk, or a batch of Uncle Damon's excellent vegetables; while each would take a little, "just for a taste," of grandmother's new butter, so very nice.

Now, these gracious kindred, did not realize that constant drippings will wear away a stone, that many a little makes a mickle, that these pet favors, though delightful to receive, imposed in their supply a burden toilsome to be borne. The truth is, children of older growth, they had been spoiled by over indulgence. Always receiving, but doing nothing in return, had gradually wrought within them a degree of complacent selfishness, that rendered them quite callous to sympathy.

As for Mr. Damon, he bore it all with heroic resignation. His was not a soul to falter on account of trivial vexations. His indefatigable spirit imbued with the disinterestedness of a noble example, had welded habit to sentiment in an unwavering path of self-sacrifice. Still, at times, his fortitude seemed about giving way. *Qualities* are transmissible, but not *genius*. Mr. Damon inherited the patient endurance of his father, but not the old gentleman's resources of mind. Thus the weight of keeping up the establishment bore indeed heavily upon him.

But the numerous sharers in the sweets of his untiring exertions, had no manly eye to perceive this. A slight change on their part, a course of generous coöperation, in lieu of eternal filching, would have lightened his weight. But no, Mr. Damon might struggle on, until sunk beneath the wave of despondency, for aught they cared, so long as their stream of good things continued in uninterrupted flow. Curse on the craven spirit that can see a brave soul struggle on for another's good, with no heart in the beneficiary to share the unrequited toil.

Well, in time, Mr. Damon himself followed the way of the world, and took to him a wife. She was the very pink of the neighborhood, fair as a lily and sweet as a morning rose. How she could ever come to look with complacency on the swart features of the wiry visaged farmer, seemed marvellous. But, perhaps, his earnest and truthful life touched a sympathetic chord in her breast. For the female heart, though robed in earth's divinest beauty, is not always mere vanity. It is not always to be lured by the falsehood of show. It craves often nobler aliment than the lure of sense. It, not unfrequently, can pierce the fair fading form without, into the vital enduring qualities within; and, sometimes, with a sublime energy inborn, rise superior to the false conceits of society, and preferring rather to stake its happiness upon honest manly worth, than embrace fair, deceptive appearance.

This blissful event would, it was thought, reform the abuses at the mansion. But it did not. They were rather aggravated by it. For each relative in turn had very naturally to make a courteous call upon the new bride. This opened the way for longer visits. By this time, the ancient freedom was reëstablished. The young wife very naturally desired the good will of all her husband's friends, and she chanced moreover to be one of those amiable beings, who will submit to any sacrifice rather than risk giving offence. She buckled to with affectionate heart, to share lovingly her husband's burdens. But the more fruitful their exertions, the more freely thronged the good folks. They swarmed like bees to a banquet of honey.

Erewhile rosy-fingered Time handed them golden-haired nestlings of their own. This sweetened their labors, but only increased the pressing burden of their lot. They strove on with waning strength, until exhausted nature gave way, and left them, a strand upon the shores of life.

Truth is stranger than fiction. This devoted couple sunk to a premature death, the victims of over-worked energies.

Now, Mrs. Carl from her needy situation had shared herself too freely of the generous exertions of Uncle Damon, not to perceive the blight it would cast upon her son's prospects, to doom the boy to an eternal round of ill-requited labor upon the homestead.

Arrested by the force of this conviction, she hesitated long before replying. At length, with a saddened brow, she resumed.

"I can propose but one thing more; It is that you go to live with your grandfather Walfinch. He rarely notices children, but he has always shown marked interest in you. When an infant, he even asked that you might receive his name, intimating that I should never regret the favor. But previously, your father and his brother, carried away with a novel, had mutually promised that to whichever heaven vouchsafed a son, he should take the name of the hero. You proved the first blessing, and my dear husband was not the man to recede from his pledge. Your grandfather seemed to feel the slight, but it did not alienate his tender regard for you. He took a lively interest in your visits to his house, and seemed delighted to have you constantly in his society."

"Yet I never feel happy with grandfather," replied Walter. He is so very positive, has such an iron will, by which he would bend everybody to his own way of thinking. Then he so worships money. With him, all is looked at through gain. I am sure he could never understand my feelings. Indeed, it seems to plague him badly, that we are so poor, yet he always awaits our asking for whatever we must, just as if begging were a pleasure. Why, the room we live in, and the fire that warms us, are grandfather's. Are we always to live in such a state of dependency? If it must be your lot, pray let

it not be mine. Let me get away, and, for once, breathe the air of freedom."

The earnest tone of his words convinced Mrs. Carl, that beneath the sunny temper of her son, there lay a purpose, in vain now to combat.

Argument was over. Hope even sank below the horizon of faith. With forehead fallen upon her hand, she seemed fixed in a stupor of despair.

It was now near midnight, and Walter having tenderly imprinted a good night kiss upon the motionless lips of his mother, retired for sleep.

At length, arousing, and finding herself alone, the widow knelt gently upon the painted floor of the room, and yielded to fervent prayer. Yet no words were uttered, no sounds were audible. The emotions within were too intense for mere outward expression.

Thus calmed in spirit, she crawled into her humble bed. But the tempest still raging without, sent a chill of despondency to her soul. In a state of mind half frantic with despair, she pondered sadly upon the prospects of her son, but no angel-hope came to her relief. Imagination deeply aroused, only conjured up wild horrors of the deep. Over these, she brooded with excited feelings, until her soul trembled on the verge of delirium. When, after spent agony, her weary lids closed in a quietude of spirit approaching slumber, phantoms of the watery deep would rise in direful images to her startled brain.

Now, she seemed cast with her son upon the angry ocean. The tremulous barque, goaded by the ferocious wind and ireful lightning, leaps madly over the remorseless waves.

Again, she is clasping her loved boy upon a drifting fragment of wreck, forlorn cast-a-ways upon the wide waters, cut off from the world of life, with no kindred tear to soothe, nor human arm to rescue. The relentless waves dash angrily

against their frail refuge. The lurid sky yawns in mockery or knits its brow in dread defiance. A sea gull sails over them, flaps its broad wings, sends up a piercing scream, and then soars off in wild majesty!

Then, again betrayed by the treacherous element, they sink down, down, the watery caverns of the mighty deep. Scaly fishes or begrimed monsters dart fitfully around, awaiting a dainty carnival. Something clutches at her feet; she startles with affright, and is relieved to find herself in her own bed!

But the paroxysms of the soul are happily brief. Their very intensity sears up the glowing lava of emotion, and arrests its seething flow.

The fierce storm without at length ceased, and the tumultuous spirit of the widow, as if beating in unison with nature, had, likewise, calmed.

As she awoke in the morning, the golden rays of the rising sun were just beaming through the eastern window of the chamber, and all the more sweetly from the rage of the previous night. The tearful earth, as if repentant of the elemental warfare, was distributing the showery light with prismatic glory.

The depressed widow resumed her lowly duties of the day in a more tranquil frame of mind, but with a thought heavily fixed upon the future.

CHAPTER III.

"Oh, how he listened to the rushing deep,
That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep,
And his wild spirit wilder wishes sent,
Roused by the roar of his own element."

BYRON.

THE prevailing occupation of a people is wont to give bent to the career of its youth. Thus, in agricultural districts, the ambitious boy naturally betakes to farming as a pursuit. Where mechanical art rules, he lays his eager hand upon the craft of the artisan. While amid the hum of manufactures, the female even may be seen gracing the loom.

Maritime borders form no exception to the rule. They rather exemplify the truth the more strongly. In neighborhoods the inhabitants of which draw their life from the ocean, the boy does, indeed, "take to the sea as naturally as a duck to the water." The opening current of his life shoots as unerringly toward the great deep, as does the mountain streamlet.

But aside from this almost instinctive impulse, arising from hereditary association, there are seductive influences to draw him toward a life upon the ocean-wave.

Roaming about the world is congenial to the ceaseless spirit of youth; visiting different climes, gratifying to its love of novelty. Then, to the dweller upon the sea-coast, how captivating the majestic vessel, crossing daily his visual path-way, and walking the waters a thing of life. Of these winged beckoners coming from the unknown, and passing away into the mysterious azure depths, anticipation is ever painting a

glowing picture, the roseate feelings of childhood but heightens the charm, while fancy weaves all into a web of enchantment.

This enkindling passion for the sea, is fanned by many influences. It begins to wax in the little tyro, as he makes trial of his tiny craft, in the kitchen tub, or out-door puddle. It burns brighter in the youth, as he appropriates to himself a gayer craft whose qualities he tests with boyish enthusiasm in the neighboring pond or adjoining bay. It mounts still higher, as he listens to the longing sighs and heart-freighted tones of affectionate woman, pining for the absent upon the ocean. He observes with envious heart, how the anticipated return flushes the life-road of the expectant with the sunshine of hope; how hearty the joy that accompanies the arrival greeting; what a wave of happiness it dashes through the household; what a tide of sympathy it rolls through the neighborhood. How the heroic is stirred within him at the startling narrations to which he listens as spell-bound. How keenly is excited his ambition at observing the cordial welcome showered upon the returned from young and old. Then, there is the much coveted leisure of the sailor on shore; who, removed from his watery prison, circulates among the labor-fettered landmen with the lordly freedom of a monarch.

The whole style and bearing of the welcomed sailor are calculated to captivate the ardor of youth; his free and rolling manners, genial frankness, open generosity, gay and rustling attire, dashing drives, reckless with abandon and swell; and above all, that Neptune-like countenance, so gay, mirthful, responsive, as if laved in the dewy brine, and illumined by the Aurora of Nature; the whole calculated to make captive the youthful heart, and lure it to hanker after the sea as a veritable elysium.

Yet, however eager the rapturous spirit of youth for a sea-

career, there are few who having once laid their bold hand upon the restless main, but would leap to turn back to some vocation on shore. But a brief space suffices to dispel the bright illusion fancy had woven. It is now found, that the fleecy cloud had been gazed at from the bright within, not from the dark without. There was seen the silvery lining touched with the gorgeous hues of the prism — not the leaden canopy at once bleak and rayless.

That soft dream of the aspirant did not body forth the giant hardships and bitter privations of a sailor's life, the soulless days on passage, the weary night-watches, the perilous storms, the appalling shipwrecks, the horrid diseases in foreign ports. It did not vibrate to the ear the polluted language of the fore-castle, nor shadow forth to the eye, the fearful mutinies on shipboard, nor the brutal fights on shore. That beckoning vision did not point out the ideal sailor in a sea-rig; that is, in duck trowsers, baize shirt, and tarpaulin, with a pendent tar or grease bucket, besmearing spars or rigging; or in some fierce tempest, when the winds and waves contend for mastery, shivering under the vessel's rail, in a desponding pea-jacket or surly Nor-easter.

Now, Walter did not possess so largely as many others, this irrepressible enthusiasm for a sea-life. True, he was considerably infected by the pervading influence of his neighborhood, but the two powers within, that were foremost in shaping his career, were first an intense desire to see and know the world, but especially, an unappeasable craving to experience a larger and nobler life. Over these feelings his restless spirit had of late, brooded incessantly. They had swallowed up, as it were, his other sentiments, and had arisen to a mastery of his being — had possessed themselves of the helm of his soul, and were steering him on to the one point of his destiny.

Few fathers, I take it, not even those who have themselves arisen to successful commandership, would elect for a darling son, the roving life of a sailor. An experience strown thick with hardships, as bitter as the brine of the ocean, they would fain save a loved offspring.

Then what tender-hearted mother could calmly yield up her cherished boy, to the frowning perils of the sea. Neither obliterating habit, nor iron necessity, ever effaces so completely, the maternal sympathy of her nature.

But aside from these natural dreads for a sea-life, for her son, darkened by the loss of near and dear ones, whom we have seen the stricken woman lamenting to Walter, Mrs. Carl's pain at the thought of parting from him was increased by a succession of peculiar misfortunes that would have overwhelmed a soul of less fortitude. They fell too upon her in appalling train, moving from their shadowy realms in direful bands.

Mrs. Carl's first born child, the early blossom of wedded love, ere six downy months from its birth, was seized with fits. The dreadful event struck all with consternation. Intense grief and solicitude shrowded the household. Friends and neighbors transported with amazement, hastened to make offering of their aid, and to pour the balm of sympathy upon the distracted spirit of the parents, but nought could stay the mysterious disease. It advanced with fearful strides, the fits becoming more and more frequent, until the fair child sank into hopeless lunacy. Oh, what a blight fell upon the mother's heart, as this first budding intelligence of maternal love rose in joy, but to sink from her vision forever!

The second child was a girl. It bore the lineaments of uncommon beauty. A striking grace lay pencilled in its finely chiselled features. Its dawning soul could not but be watched over with the deepest parental solicitude. But,

alas! for the impotency of human wishes! In just six months from birth,—appalling coincidence!—at the precise age which first marked the disease of the hapless brother, as if bound in the folds of some inscrutable fiat of Providence, it, too, began to show the dreaded symptoms. The nurse at the time was tossing gleefully the little babe in her arms, and was remarking that its tiny life had just reached the brief span allotted its pitiful brother, when those remorseless fits had seized to devour his tender being, and that she prayed in mercy, gracious Heaven might avert so dreadful a calamity from the sweet innocent before her, when, oh! merciful heavens! as if in mockery of the kind woman's blessing, the helpless little one bent back, as if pierced with an arrow, raised its tiny hands in a wail of agony, and then sank beneath a whirlpool of convulsions. The scene was touching enough to pierce the stoutest heart.

The dreadful event flew through the neighborhood like wild-fire. The mansion was flooded with sorrowful neighbors, speechless with consternation. When the first wave of wonder was over, speculation grew rife, as to the possible cause of the astounding aberration. The superstitious believed it a visitation of divine wrath, for some secret sin committed by the parents. The weak minded attributed it to the diabolical agency of an old woman, long reputed a witch, who was now remembered to have heard breathe threatenings against the family. But the more sensible ruled within them the curious eye of their fancy, seeking not to penetrate the inscrutable secrets of Nature; and gave themselves to the nobler work of the good Samaritan, binding up the wounds of the stricken parents, and pouring into their lacerated spirits the oil of sympathy.

These children continued to live and grow. Indeed, they were remarkably fair to look upon. They retained the im-

press of a deep spiritual grace, while a more than mortal beauty shone from their delirious eye and hectic face. Yet, this brightened radiance was but the glowing monition of a lingering sunset. To the agonized sight of despair, it looked as if some fiend were touching with celestial hues the mirroring infant soul, only to wring with harder grip the parental heart, by magnifying the greatness of its loss.

But although reason was dethroned, some of the faculties flashed up into a more vivid flame, by the shifting volcano within. If the orb of light had withdrawn from the centre, it was pouring its effulgence with redoubled force upon the verge of the soul. Speech lay fettered in dumb incoherency, and kingly reason had sunk into a midnight of gloom, but Argus memory, and lynx-eyed perception, had acquired a Sampson-like strength.

The boy in growing up was kept with maternal vigilance within the bounds of care, but not so the girl; her deranged mind shot forth as erratic as a crazed comet athwart a harmonious sky. Her spirit was as restless as the chafed ocean. Defeating every means of restraint or confinement, she was ever escaping from home, and roaming abroad at will. These fantastic flights took her through dismal swamps, across fordless streams, and into people's houses at midnight; by what means it was mysterious to everybody. Contemplating her in this phase, one might have fancied her some haunting spectre left to wander up and down the earth.

Feats were at times done by her that looked really superhuman. Such may be mentioned as severing the links of her chain without apparent means; passing through fastened doors and barred windows, or running swiftly along the verge of the house-top. It would seem that the furies had gotten possession of the girl, and were hurrying her to and fro, just in contempt of the laws of corporeal and spiritual life.

Among other idiosyncrasies was a fugitive passion for some article for plaything. The coveted thing possessed, and toyed with a brief season, was thrown aside as a cast-off garment, for a new one. This seemed but an intenser form of that unsatisfying nature common to the universal heart. Her cunning and invention were most marvellous. Creating the means of escape, in some inadvertent moment, she would disappear like the vanishing of a ghost. Pursuing her were like chasing the shadow of a dream. Flying to the house of the coveted object, she would appropriate it, and return with the celerity of Ariel. All vigilance was baffled. Locks and bolts were merely so many gossamer threads. To attempt wresting the stolen article from her, was struggling with Hercules. In an encounter, her strength multiplied like that of a mad-man. Neither could one of her toys be successfully hidden from her. She would proceed straight to the hiding-place with unerring instinct.

As if to symbolize the work of ruination within, her hand seemed bent upon destruction, as naturally as the sparks fly upwards. Nothing ever so rare or costly could escape her sharp glance. Furniture, plate, food, toys and adornments, would disappear like the crumbling of frost-work. Not even her own clothing was exempt from the general devastation.

The maintenance of these children wasted of itself the income of a fortune. Still, Mrs. Carl with genuine motherly instinct, resisted all persuasion to have them placed in an asylum for the insane. Their very forlornness of soul stirred to its depths her tenderness of spirit, and made her shrink with anguish at the thought of entrusting them to others. Her devotion intensified from the helplessness of its object. Her affection grew into a species of delirium, which, while it honored human nature, showed the depth of love in a

mother's heart, and the abnegation of which a loyal spirit is capable.

After a considerable lapse of time in the flowering period of conjugal life, another child was born to Mrs. Carl. Like the other, it was a girl; a lily blond, with sunny ringlets, soft blue eyes, and sweet ingenuous face. Its unfolding life was watched over, with a solicitude trembling between fear and hope. But the fated period had passed, and each day was bringing fresh assurance to the mother's heart. If the others had been shorn of the sunlight of intelligence, this fair girl supplied a compensation. For she seemed transparent with the sheen of intellectuality. The deep shadows of her home could not drive the sunbeams of nature from her heart, and she bloomed into maidenhood a joyous sylph-like being, seeming just to touch this earth, so blithely did she trip over its dewy verdure. She shed a bright halo in the gloomy pathway of Mrs. Carl. But a young English physician whom some throw of chance, had brought to the neighborhood, saw the spirited being, became fascinated with her loveliness, and surrendered his heart to her spell. How hard to the mother, the thought of parting with the sweet solace of her poignant hours, of entrusting to a stranger the idol of her heart. Was she to gain a son, or lose a daughter? Had he come to fulfil the sweet law of nature to the wedded girl, to give fulness to her existence, to complete her womanhood, or would he, instead, scatter mildew upon her fresh soul, poison the well-springs of her joy, sap the foundation of her nature, and lay the cold hand of blight upon her life!

They were betrothed; but a few weeks before the bond of union was to be sealed, she fell a victim to consumption, that scourge of New England.

The fourth child was a girl, as well, a fine featured brunette, with raven hair, and large, lustrous eyes, bespeaking tender-

ness of soul. A native maidenly grace, joined to a modest charm of manner, made her a favorite throughout the neighborhood. Despite the dread penury of her home, the fair girl's favor was sought far and near. Especially, did many a rising young seaman press for her hand. The sailor above all others, listens to the voice of his heart, in choosing his mate. The coveted maiden was at length born off, by a gay young captain, as a happy prize from amid fragrant isles. But in six rosy months from the nuptials, she too was numbered with the blighted hopes of the bereaved mother.

Added to the other griefs of the widow, was the loss, as previously mentioned, of her husband by drowning. Bereavements there are, that do not disrobe existence quite of its vesture of joy, but the removal by death of a bosom companion—the irreparable sundering of two hearts, grown into a new life, in which every object reflects the bright image of this new birth—brings a desolation of woe, that must be felt to be understood.

The marriage of Mrs. Carl was at that early youth, when the virginal sentiments twine with greenest vigor; when the soul throws most fondly the gorgeous dreams of fancy, over the being of its choice; when the heart clasps with holiest persistence, the sweet idol of its own creation.

A woof of propitious circumstances cradled the dawning of the new life of the happy couple. Mrs. Carl was an idol-daughter, and a beauty. She grew up in those times of severe simplicity, when native worth could bloom into a lovely flower, free of the tarnishing breath of a perverted society.

Mr. Carl seemed likewise a favored child of Nature. His step-father perceiving the boy's promise, advanced him quickly to the command of one of his vessels. He did even more. When the young man had proved worthy of his trust, had sealed with success the high judgment formed of him, he did

not pocket all the earnings, and use Capt. Carl merely as an instrument to swell his own fortune. No, Mr. Damon was animated by nobler principles of life. With the generosity of greatness, he tendered the young man a principal share of the fine vessel he sailed.

Thus, at the early age of nineteen, the young captain could pace the deck of his own vessel, flushed with the emotions of lofty achievement; for this was when commandership had a meaning. It imparted lustre in the eyes of the settlement. It dazzled the eyes of the maidens. Capt. Carl was reckoned, too, among the finest looking of young men, one had ever seen tread a quarter-deck. There was a mingling of the noble and tender in his bearing, well calculated to captivate the female heart.

Thus equipped, the happy couple launched gayly upon the future. Golden suns were above, and sparkling waves danced beneath them. The very skies looked propitiously down. And the horizon of life broadened in azure tenderness upon their sight. But the morn does not reveal the meridian day. Sorrow came like a drenching cloud. Capt. Carl's step-father suddenly died. By this the son lost his share in the vessel by some informality in the legal conveyance. Soon another ill-luck stripped him of his hard earned all. Bereavement bowed down his spirit, and his maniac children strained his every exertion for their support. He seemed now on the downward disc of the wheel of fortune. His barque was struggling upon the receding billow. Every enterprise touched failed, like the crumbling of frost-work. Some slight thread would break, often in the last moment, to ruin all. The prestiges of misfortune foreshadowed him like an evil omen. The sentiment of ill-luck beat in his own breast, and jaundiced the vision of others. At last, his very name became a by-word of ill-starred-fate, and men feared to associate with him in any

enterprise, lest they, too, should catch the contagion of his evil genius.

There are two different spirits discernible in the struggle of life. One, when borne hard upon by the pressing train of ill-fortune, gradually yields, until its vision, darkened by the misty cloud rising before the horizon of its faith, sinks below the wave of dejection, in utter impotence of will. The other, like a staunch ship, sets its snug sail a trim to the careering gale, and doggedly beats into port; or, casting the anchor of Hope, it holds fast amid the roaring surges, until the brightening up of the pitchy skies.

When ill-stared Fate like a haunting Spirit pursues us, it is undoubtedly heroic, to spurn incredulously his seductive approaches; to turn a deaf ear to his illusive whisperings; to uncoil with main might the doublings of his gripping folds; in fine, to rush upon the athletic foe, and cut with the sword of decision the gathering web of our ruin. But who is quite equal to this? Who can resist the sombre delusions of ill-luck. Who annihilate the train of misfortune that wraps around the ill-fated like the atmosphere they breathe?

Such potency was not at least vouchsafed to the husband of Mrs. Carl. When the clouds of misfortune had gathered thick over his path-way, he gradually sunk into their shadow forgotten. He whose name had been bright upon every lip, no longer provoked the buzz of the fickle crowd. The melting waters behind the trackless ship close not more completely, than did the rippling wave of society over his golden past.

Thus to pass down the shady slope of life, is not the easiest of human lot. Yet Capt. Carl suffered in silence. No murmur was heard to escape his lips. His was a resignation that vaunteth not itself. It was a current too deep and tranquil

for that. Suffering could not shake the integrity of his soul. The serenity of upright intention beamed placidly upon his brow to the last. He could never learn the wily lesson of dishonesty. The insight of experience only repelled his nature from the guile of false seeming. Men called incapacity what was an inherent moral rectitude that debarred every species of deception. Indeed, he seemed too good for earth; and when he passed away, hearts dropped a smiling tear of gratitude, and breathed a sigh of relief.

We shall seek almost in vain for the grace of a sweet and noble character, amid the hill-peaks of successful life. As well should we expect a vesture clean after being drawn through the muddy pool of Dives. The dashing mountain cataract may figure to the passing eye, but we turn to the gushing rill, sequestered from view to taste the sweet waters fresh from the pure fount of Nature.

These afflictions of Mrs. Carl were followed by a long season of physical prostration. Overshadowing Dyspepsia came with his inexorable brood, to gnaw at the vitals of life!

And, now, there was left but a single flower in her family-garden. Who could blame the widow for worshipping this remaining solace, with the fullest passion of soul. With a nature enriched by deep experience, its full tenderness was concentrated upon this sole object of her affections. Well might the thought of parting with him cut like severing soul and body. Yet the wringing sacrifice was made. A flexible soul, she rose to an elevation with fortune. She triumphed over the tenderness of nature, but only with a pang deep and lasting.

How measureless the capability of the human soul! Trials we thought insupportable, gradually yield before the mastering energies of a true nature.

A giant grief may be likened to a mountain billow. It

comes rolling on, threatening to submerge our trembling barque, but the noble vessel, like a genuine spirit, mounts by degrees the swollen sea, until poised majestically upon its breezy ridge, it glows a-strong in the gale and sunlight of heaven.

CHAPTER IV.

"A thousand thoughts of all things dear,
Like visions o'er me sweep,
I leave my sunny childhood here —
Oh, therefore let me weep."

MRS. HEMANS.

To a kindly nature, struggles there are, in which victory brings no feeling of exultation. When triumph carries a gall of bitterness to those we love, the generous heart melts in sympathy, and in an excess of affection, we regret even the fortune we have achieved.

Thus was it with Walter. When he contemplated the tempest-shattered frame of his mother, as the outward symbol of a more disastrous wreck within, his filial nature was lively touched. When he reflected that the point gained toward his darling hope, had added fresh grief to the endeared author of his days, he was deeply moved. But as the memory of her consecrated life of affection to his every need and wish came rushing in distinct, swelling billows to his mind, a pulsation of tender emotion swept through his soul, and paralyzed every energy of his will.

Then there was the saddened thought of parting with many a youthful companion; of leaving, perhaps forever, the sunny haunts of youth, endeared spots that had become closely entwined around his plastic affections. To these might be added that sorrowful depression of spirit, which precedes the first step in the path of a new career.

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Under the thronging weight of these emotions, he more than half repented the resolution of leaving home for the sea. But it is not thus easy to arrest the momentum of a purpose, that has gained possession of our being. Then, the keenest regrets are but so many eddies in the stream of our destiny. The main current of our fate moves us on with irresistible sway and celerity.

In the ardor of youthful aspiration, Walter was eager to launch off at once, on board a square rigger. This would gratify his longing for seeing foreign lands, a desire that glowed in his bosom with intense fervor. But to this step Mrs. Carl interposed a heart-appealing denial. As a compromise, the humble lot of a fishing-cruise was agreed upon. To this end, propitious chance revealed a gladsome opening. An uncle of Walter, the only surviving brother of his lamented father, happened just then to be fitting out a wee craft for a summer's stroll a-fishing. This to Mrs. Carl seemed providential; and her overjoyed heart, embraced the good fortune with lively gratitude.

Capt. Carl, Walter's uncle, was a mildly man, of a pious mood, verging to the superstitious. He was one of those honey-moon characters which no amount of seething in the world's caldron can acidify. Even up to the sober age of manhood, he retained the petty, bauble disposition of childhood. His mental vision seemed cast with the iris of the summer rainbow. The crucible of life had in his case failed to precipitate the sweet foibles of youth; and had at length cast him out but a child of older growth, a little sere by the hand of Time.

But he possessed many qualities that looked toward the noble; and in his graver moments, there beamed forth in his bearing a certain classic dignity, that was really captivating. You would have said, that Dame Nature cut him out for one

of her noblest pieces of workmanship, but that he had been spoiled in the making up.

He was, however, a good seamen and safe navigator; and in those times of our growing commerce, his services were ever in ready demand. Still, his success was thwarted by a single eccentric trait, which hung upon his path, like an incubus. This was unsteadiness to a single line of business. But it did not spring from a bold, enterprising spirit, that chafes in the dusty harness of life, but from a restless imitative bent of mind, that like the flitting butterfly, is ever on the wing, for a novel object. Or it might have arisen from a perverted fancy that is blind to the immediate, and only sees distant objects in the bright colors of a hallucinating mirage.

Well, after being tossed about through youth upon the very wave of accident, he at last cast anchor in a berth, which afforded hope for a season of quiet stability. This was in the command he had gained of a fine brig plying between a southern port of our Union, and a famed city of the Old World. The time of which we speak, was, it should be remembered, in the infancy of our marine, when command brought distinction, and crossing the Atlantic was an achievement to be prided upon, for a life time.

This fine position of Capt. Carl joined to a gracious exterior filled his neighborhood at home with his popularity. He might now, it would seem, have yielded to the inflowing tide of prosperity, and been content to be borne along upon its glassy bosom. But no; the flickering star of his genius would not have it thus. He must needs follow the bent of his habit, and change. Well, we will not quarrel with Nature, if a little capricious in her manifestations, she does here and there vary the phases of human character. The diadem upon the brow of night, would be robbed of half its peerless beauty, did every star-gem beam with uniform splendor.

After one of his voyages, on a visit home to his children, Capt. Carl fell into the amiable fortune of a second marriage. To a mariner just landed from sea, every woman appears an angel; and although brave to the last amidst the perils of the ocean, yet the sailor yields readily to the fascinating spell of beauty.

With a resolution more honorable to the heart than commendable to prudence, Capt. Carl gave up at once his advantageous position, with the view of attempting something that might employ him nearer the bosom of his family. Springing his imitative faculties, he struck out a miniature-model of a fine coaster. When built, the vessel appeared a taunt, airy looking craft, a little unique to be sure, yet striking and handsome. But on trial, she proved so crank under sail, and so deficient withal in stowage, as to be neither safe as a sea-boat nor profitable as a carrier. The flaunting schooner was no inapt emblem of many a pretentious mortal who, though prepossessing to the eye, yet proves upon trial entirely inadequate to bear safely over the ocean of Time, the invaluable freight of Life!

Having sunk in this exotic enterprise the fruits of years hard beating the seas, he fell back upon the lowly calling of fishing. But this just then was not a reluctant step. In its loss of dignity or pecuniary emolument, he was soothed by the honorable anticipations of revelling more freely in the sweets of conjugal felicity. How happy that our unluckiest fate is accompanied by some gleam of brightness to reconcile us to the ill-fortune. It may be but a speck of light amid the surrounding gloom, but its nearness shuts off the greater darkness, as a ray of sunshine flung across our path-way distracts the attention from the portentous gloom of the approaching cloud.

If, then, Walter must go to sea, what more favorable than

a berth with his uncle. It is true that so humble a calling hardly fulfilled the ambitious aspirations of Mrs. Carl, but in the deep solicitude of her spirit, worldly preferment was forgotten.

Soon, alas, too soon, for the widow's aching heart, all was arranged. But a few days were now to elapse, before the sailing of the vessel, and this brief interval seemed shortened by the press of matters clamoring for attention previously to getting off. Yet Walter could not refrain stealing away more than once in the time, to gaze again and yet again upon the many endeared spots about his home. These looked like the serene face of friends that had sported with him along the rosy morn of life; and now that he must leave them, he felt all the more keenly how closely they had become entwined around the halcyon associations of his childhood.

There was, for instance, the Old Red School House, with its low gable roof, greatly revered as the rough portal to the fane of learning; and deeply enshrined in the soul of Walter, by the varied emotions of school-life. The very shrine of intellectual greatness, the venerable hall of science, seemed in no way vain of display. For instead of standing boastfully upon the "corners of four roads," it was modestly embosomed some half a mile away from any dwelling, amid a broad young woodland, through which straggled here and there a path, worn by the ceaseless feet of generations of youth.

Then, near the time-honored school-house, smiled the welcome *White Spot*, an oval shaped ground, singularly cut out amid the sapplings, as anomalous as a verdant oasis in a burning desert. This hemmed in tiny play-ground, had become worn to white sand, packed smooth by the daily shuffling and tramping of feet in the seductive and breathless games at ball during the school-recesses; but with a conscience less effaced by repeated rubbings this same "White Spot" would have

felt much to atone for, in the castigations it brought the involuntary truants, by luring them just one minute longer after the hated, but ominous double rap of the teacher upon the vibrating window sash.

A little further down, at the foot of the reeling avenue stretched the two long "*Hollows*," which like open natures, ever of a noon-time, drew the older boys to inspiring contests at foot-ball.

Hard by these, interposed the interminable swamp over which hung a mist of awe as profound as the unknown in the soul of man. Silence reigned there supreme, broken only at long intervals, by the wailing scream of some beseeching bird, or the curdling hiss of a cruel reptile. Useless too seemed this stagnation of earth, except for the dire phantoms it was wont to give forth in the dusk of a summer evening; or the witches it furnished of a gloomy day, to the superstitious part of the school.

But let us peep into the Old Knowledge Box, as the quaint temple of learning was facetiously called, by a waggish lad whose fertile fancy was more apt at instituting comparisons, than in discovering the cue to the solution of sums in Dabol.

Well, on creaking open the weather-beaten door, the eye runs wondrously through the high narrow entry, half piled with pine wood, and then falls with complacency upon the Old Oaken Bucket, with its thick wooden lip, and ponderous iron bail.

This dingy "watering pot," firmly clasped with iron bands, and strongly riveted, was made in the days, when good old Honesty had not discovered the knack of contriving his work fair to the eye, and, at the same time, introducing into it the elements of speedy dissolution.

From time beyond memory the grateful vessel had made its daily pilgrimage to the distant brook, as sure as the

promptings of insatiable nature. Especially of a sultry summer afternoon, might it be seen slowly swinging and surging its return, upon a puny pole, between two of the happiest of the sons of Dame Nature, quite oblivious to the exactions of father Time, or the dread of sore punishment in store for tardy feet.

Opening the "inside door," reveals the double row of long heavy benches of the school-room, rising with the sloped floor, and cut and scarred as deeply as Immortality herself could desire. In the aisle before us extending quite across the building stands the capacious stove, which, like a generous nature, is rough but warm-hearted, and, if at times partial in diffusing its favors, yet always whole-souled in its greetings.

At the left, upon the low, wide platform, rises from its four naked legs, the ever to be remembered Teacher's Desk. Despite the modest look and conspicuous position of this vanguard of pedagogical power, so completely impressed is it with the responsibility of place, as to be able to hold up its dignity, even in face of the whole school. Yankee-like it has served several ends, among them, the very convenient one of bowing the stubborn necks of sinning urchins, or of stifling their desperate cries beneath its irrevocable lid.

Within these humble walls, with knees upon the scarred form before him, Walter had sat many a live-long day, sometimes commendably enough with eyes intent upon book, but oftener, very likely, watching the sharp eye of the teacher, or gazing wistfully at the tiny black hands of the old silver time-piece suspended above. Or more likely still, ever and anon stealing a winsome glance, at some favorite upon the girl's side of the room. At one time, it may have been the pale, sympathetic face of Nancy; at another, the tender, blue eyes of Mary, with which rosy fingered Fancy was painting a sweet image of girlhood upon the sanctuary of his soul.

But the soft picture was purely within. It had yet no counterpart. It was merely a lovely ideal throwing its dawning flush over the youthful sentiments. Then this budding affection was moreover within the inner court of the heart. It was too sacred to be profaned by mortal touch. No intimacy could share it; not even the fair beings whose unconscious beauty, was the glowing pencil, were aware of the work they were doing. The bright image was of course graced with the nameless charms of perfection. How happy that the imagination can invest its object with its own bright hues.

But the Old School-House with its memory-embalmed surroundings, were not the only spots to cast a spell around the lingering feet of Nathan. There gleamed away on the other side of the mansion, the ever flowing mill-pond, thick with merry associations. By its stilly edges, Nathan with rod in hand, had whiled away many a happy hour, in trying to conjure up from its mysterious depths some of the varied watery tribe there ensconced; now jerking from below some coquette of a perch; again tugging away at an unwilling eel; or, perchance, ousting from his muddy bed some grim surly snapping turtle.

Or in the silvery moonlight of a winter evening, when the glassy face of the pond mirrored the exuberance of youthful glee, how fascinating had been the skating exercise, the jovial dance around the mirthful fire, kept up by poachings from the neighboring fences, the fleet coasting down the embankment, across the crystal ice, and neck or naught into the peevish underbrush on the opposite side.

Far up the stream, emerged all silent from the sluggish waters, the fast anchored islet, frequented but in one season of the year, and then only for that mischievous and cruel, but most fascinating of sports—namely, bird's nesting.

Yet these stagnant waters surrounding the woody islet sent

up profusely from their muddy excrescence — like a fair child from ill-featured parents — the pure lily, so nice as a token of affection for sister. Then, there were the cool bull-rushes for the fantastic cap, and the tenacious flags, so opportune for mending grandmother's old chairs.

At the lower end of the pond where the stream makes a slight nodding toward the ocean, was the well used mill-dam with its bridge of unmatched planks, jutting out unevenly, like ill-assorted bed-fellows. On the upper end of one of these, Walter, sprawled upon his face, had lain time and again, gazing with dreamy inspiration upon the opaque waters below, which, like the ceaseless stream of life, would glide adown, to be seen no more. Once, losing his equipoise, he tumbled headlong into the hurrying current. He had not acquired the art of swimming, but from sheer instinct he floundered safely to the bank.

Or, standing upon the lower end of the bridge, enrapt with the view of the livid sheet of water, now ejected through the narrow crevice of the flood-gate, now pouring in majesty over the flume, while the big, mossy, slimy water-wheel, would turn over and over like the unvaried round of day.

Of a Monday summer forenoon, he would stop to listen to the garrulous chat of the merry washers, under the wide branching shade of the gigantic solitary oak, dipping their crystal waters from the unfailing spring, that oozed from the surrounding marsh.

But what interested him most deeply, because instinct with life and sympathy, was watching the newly arrived herring. These harbingers of awakening spring would scurry in the boiling brook below, or with a skill surpassing reason, leap the rough water-fall; or, alas, more likely seized in their career by the wily net, would lie flapping and gasping upon the sandy flat, no inapt emblem of some ambitious mortal, whose

vaulting strides up the ladder of Fame are cut off by the insidious hand of Death.

These were but a few of the haunts about his home, to which his soul had grown with the green vigor of spring-time. Parting from them was like cleaving the heart from its youthful loves.

So long had Walter lingered around the Old Mill, that the sun had sunk below the verdant pine-tops. Although hidden from view, he was still flinging profusely his crimson rays upon the gossamer clouds in the sky. Wending slowly toward home, the boy had but just emerged from the meagre woodland that skirted the pond, when his eye fell upon a female figure in the distance. She was in the broad field, on the other side of the rivulet, pursuing her way in a direction toward the brook. Walter, it must be confessed, inherited that amiable sentiment for woman common to his sex. His pathetic mood of mind, moreover, in view of leaving home, gave just then a peculiar liveliness to his feelings. But both circumstances could hardly have awakened unusual attention to so ordinary an incident as encountering a female upon a public road, but that the unknown betrayed a singular ungainliness of mien that grew more striking as she approached.

Her appearance was tall, but not shapely. Upon a narrow woollen skirt, and a little short withal — fell one of those tri-colored blankets of olden time, descending from the head, and pinned demurely under the chin. Her scanty garb, time worn and faded, betokened extreme penury to be her lot.

When first seen by Walter, she was making her way along with a fleet step, giving every now and then a wild toss of the head, and fetching as often a strange supple hitch, which set off drolly her ambulating gait. It was this latter particular, that struck Walter oddly. Yet as she neared the boy, her carriage gained in gracefulness, and he could not help noticing

that she was evidently timing her speed to meet him upon the bridge. They did pass each other there, just as if it had been pre-arranged. But sweeping by hurriedly, the girl darted upon Walter a shy glance, yet so full of searching earnestness, as quite to startle the boy with wonder. Near, her countenance betokened more youthfulness, than her figure at a distance would indicate. It might, moreover, under congenial circumstances, have been prepossessing; but now there was engraved thereupon so haggard and unreal a look, giving an expression so wandering and frantic like, as to arouse the curiosity of Walter to the highest pitch. Indeed, so lively was this feeling, that in proceeding homeward, he could not help turning round again, and yet again, to get one more sight of the strange mortal whom he had just met. But by a singular coincidence, as if mutually moved to it, by some presiding Divinity, they found themselves gazing at each other, always, just at the same moment. At length, fairly abashed, at betraying so much boldness, he hastened on to the mansion, where, concealed behind a pillar of the portico, he watched unperceived her receding form, until it faded from view.

Night was now fast lowering the gray folds of her majestic curtain, benignantly reminding all of the sweet season for repose. With pensive step, Walter opened the welcome door of his home, ruminating upon the mysterious incident that had seized him beyond his power to throw off. In his simple life, it bore the tinge of romance. The face he felt sure of never before having seen. This in a part of the country, so retired, that the appearance of a stranger never failed of creating a stir, was of itself a novelty. Then there was that deep, suffering look, the mystery of which he could not divine, and contrasting withal so strangely with her volatile movements. But the soft spring which more than any other, kept her image uppermost in his mind, was the marked interest she betrayed

for Walter, despite the evident pains she took to conceal it. Who can resist the charm of being preferred! And if the preference be shown by a female, at that guileless period of youth, before the heart has known deception, how quickening the delight! The virgin emotions awakened, are among the delicious drops in the cup of terrestrial happiness.

CHAPTER V.

"Farewell; God knows when we shall meet again;
I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins
That almost freezes up the heat of life."

SHAKESPEARE.

THE day was a bustling one at the mansion. The morrow being the one set for the sailing of the fishing-smack, the entire household were early astir for lending all needful aid in preparation for the departure. Then there were numerous calls from relatives and friends, to bid good bye, with hearty wishes for good luck and a safe return.

Walter had always been a favorite in the neighborhood. Yet now it became more fully apparent how deeply his gentle nature had won upon everybody. For young and old thronged the mansion to press his hand, and drop a tear of regret at the loss of one whose absence would leave a void in the settlement.

Such is the power of unaffected goodness. It steals upon the heart with the soft tread of rosy morn, but its sway is the inflooding of imperial day. True, it was an inconsequential boy, a poor widow's son who was the object of this artless ovation, yet who shall not say, that their simple tokens of homage, were not more expressive than the huzzas that crowd the steps of an emperor. Indeed, it is these sweet rills of affection, fresh from the fount of Nature, trickling here and there upon the rugged life bosom of the earth, that impart perennial vigor to humanity. Upon their purity angels may well smile with grateful emotion. Their collective waters happily im-

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pregnate with vivifying power, the briny ocean of life, whose treacherous waves so boldly court the eye.

These neighborly sympathies continued up to a late hour in the evening; when with that thoughtful solicitude which is the sweet offspring of maternal love, Mrs. Carl kindly urged her son to retire.

How sadly tender was breathed now their mutual "good night," shooting vividly as it did through their heart, the near reality of separation. Then, perhaps, it was their last good night upon earth. Inexorable Time and the treacherous wave, that were to intervene, darkly increased such an apprehension. Emotions of tender regret tinged the deepening cloud hovering over the horizon of their faith. Ah, how painful the thought of separating from those we truly love.

Walter might go, and soothe his agitated spirit in the oblivion of sleep, but for Mrs. Carl there remained a duty which must not be postponed till the morrow, lest procrastination prove the thief of time. Her unwilling heart would fain omit the painful task, but that might not be. Indeed, it need not be feared, for the suffering woman had become rooted in that integrity of habit, which can march boldly up to an unpalatable duty, if not always without trepidation, yet ever without wavering.

This sad duty was to pack Walter's sea-chest for the fishing-trip. The chest had been given to the widow, by a retired fisherman. The latter had received it from a veteran *salt*. This hoary piece of sea-furniture, was a relic of by-gone days and looked to have seen much hard service. Its shape was not unlike the kettle-bottomed ships of former times, that is, with tumbling sides, or top narrower than the bottom. It had doubtless received a brushing of green paint every voyage; and this, with the accumulating filth of the fore-castle, and the gangrenous effect of the bilge-water, had left a deep, dark

coat, of no named color, but retaining an odor which impressed the sense with the very spirit of a sea-going life.

For handle, on either end, was a neatly marled rope-becket rove through a firm cleet. The insterstices of the beckets had been filled with tar, amalgamated with oily sweat from frequent handling, which imparted to it an unnatural rigidity. Indeed, the external appearance of the old chest was very Neptune-like, and bespoke a career of rare vicissitude.

On raising the lid a musty void met the eye, except a *till* for notions in the upper part of one end. The interior had received no painting, unless a slight brushing from the hand of Time might be called such.

As the eye of Mrs. Carl fell upon the desolate space, she was reminded of nothing so much as a coffin in which was to be buried her fondest hopes. So intense were her emotions, that it seemed to her distracted sense, the body of her son, instead of his clothing, that she was going to place therein.

With an aching heart, the widow began to pack. — Dear reader, were you ever called to a similar office, of preparing with your own hands for the departure, — alas, perhaps forever, of a tenderly loved one, — to yield up your dearest affections upon the Altar of Duty? Then may you know the anguish of Mrs. Carl.

As article after article bedewed with a tear, was carefully folded in, the swelling bosom of the widow heaved with emotions which it seemed impossible for her to control. There were the warm flannels, the woollen drawers, the nippers, the comfortable mittens, which latterly she had set up night after night to finish, until her very temples throbbed with pain. Then her hand fell upon the fantastic forget-me-not, a gift from sweet cousin, all rosy with the dew of affection. Several articles of medicine were not forgotten; such as castor oil, salts and senna, a variety of mint-drops, and a bundle of

dried herbs, from thoughtful grandmother. Then came the box of fishing-paraphernalia which it would take pages to describe. And lastly, she carefully laid in a bible, as if this could prove an antidote to her griefs.

The chest closed and locked, Mrs. Carl stole into the narrow bedroom of her son. He was reposing as calmly, as if his future were a placid sea.

How beautiful was he to the adoring mother! A tranquil glow heightened the charm of his fine countenance. Angelic smiles seemed playing upon his sweet features, while upon his fair brow beamed the emblems of truth and purity. How could she give him up! How resign him to a world filled with snares for the unwary! Ah, the thought that her offspring may return to her no more, — may fall a victim to the disease of clime, — may find a grave in the ocean's depths; it is not this that brings the peculiarly fearful sorrow to a mother at parting with a son, for a life upon the sea. It is that her dear boy can never return to her the same pure being that he was; and that he *may* come back a foetid wreck from the luring but hideous gales of sin.

In the agony of her spirit, the suffering woman knelt by the bedside of her son, and there transfixed by deep emotion, breathed out her faith in earnest supplication. This simple exercise calmed and strengthened her mind. Imprinting a kiss upon his brow, she retired to her own humble cot. But not to sleep. The dread vision of separation pressed too heavily upon her soul for that. Her eyes were set aglare, while hearing grew painfully alive to the faintest echo. When the fevered sense from very exhaustion, sank into a lull, the lunatic brain was peopled with images, that came and went in boding train.

At length, the red chasers of Night heralded the approaching dawn. *The spirit ridden woman drew herself from the

bed, and touched a match to the awaiting fuel. The unstinted breakfast, by the hand of affection, was soon ready.

By this, the noise of a wagoner was heard, thundering up to the house. The front door opened and a man groping through the hall, and up the stair-way, entered unceremoniously.

"Good morrow, mistress Carl," quoth the wagoner; glad to see you looking so smart, this morning; confess, I didn't expect it; must be hard to let Walter go, but such trials are a part of life, you know, and we've only to put the best face possible upon the matter."

Mrs. Carl made no answer, except that a tear gushed from her over brimmed eye, like a pearly dew-drop, trickling upon the leaflets of a shaken flower. She arranged a chair, and pressed the honest wagoner to be seated.

"Oh, no, thank ye, can't stop just now. Skipper sent me after Walter's things. The crew'll all be along directly, and one'll stop, and call the boy. — Guess they're going to have a good turn out. 'Tis almost calm now, only a slight air stirring at the North, just enough to fan them out of the Bay. In the afternoon, the wind'll spring up at the So-West; that is, if t'works as it generally does, and this is just the thing for them, you know, when they get over the *shoals*. Then off they'll wind afore it, like a skein of yarn. The vessel'll soon be back I'll warrant; colors flying: all salt wet; as lively as a duck, after oiling. Faith, half wish I was going along myself."

The widow heaved a deep sigh and was silent. She merely pointed out Walter's sea-effects — the old chest, already described, a straw mattress, pillows; two woollen blankets; a quilt; also, the weather gear, such as boots, barvel, oil suit, etc. While these were being taken down stairs, she slipped into the bedroom, and awakened Walter.

The boy arose with that mysterious feeling of unreality, that settles upon one, at the fulfilment of a long expected event. While he was seated at the table, the widow made a pretext of going from one room to another, the better to conceal from her son, the emotions surging her breast.

As to the boy, he felt little inclination to eat; and scarcely had he swallowed a cup of tea, before the crew were seen approaching the house, by the Eastern Lane.

Mrs. Carl would not trust her feelings in presence of others, and her judgment bid her make the parting scene brief. As her eye fell upon the crew coming, she exclaimed in a tremulous voice,

"Walter, my son, they are coming."

The boy sprang from the table, seized his hat, and stood motionless before his mother. He appeared waiting for something; what, he could not tell himself. In fact, his state of mind was quite different from what he had expected. He had looked forward to the moment of separation as one of intense tenderness; but to his amazement there was not the vestige of an emotion swelling his heart; not even the remembrance of the sentiment so lively in anticipation. Indeed, he seemed struck with a paralysis of soul.

But not so with Mrs. Carl. To her the moment of trial had come. The billows of emotion raged even with deeper power within her bosom. It seemed that her lashed spirits must sink beneath their accumulating force. But the widow possessed a soul of strength. The roots of self-control had struck deeper from the storms of misfortune. It was now no time, she knew, for a scene. A display of feeling might unsettle now too late the purpose of her son. It could but tinge with deeper bitterness the sentiment of separation, when he should be away.

Stepping forward, and taking his hand in hers, in a suppressed voice, she said,

"My dear son, you are now about to leave me; remember always your mother; ever do your duty; be true to yourself, to your God; and may Heaven bless you.

Pressing her pale lips upon his brow, she accompanied him through the door, and returning, sank into a chair, giving vent to the anguish of her heart.

But there was another farewell for her reluctant eyes; and hastening to the window, she gazed upon his endeared form, until the forests' shades cut him off from view. Her heart now fairly sunk within her. The bright morning settled down upon her vision with leaden gloom. Such a day in all her dark experience, she had never before seen. Would that she might never behold another like it.

The parting thus dimly outlined, but faintly shadows the dark tempest that swept over the ocean bosom of the widow's soul. To an observer, it might have seemed to be bearing all before it. But no, as the gale increased in force, so did new resources of strength leap up, from the well-spring of her exhaustless nature. Indeed, the noble woman could be compared to some gallant barque, lost for the moment amid the rage and fury of the tempest, but seen at length again, dishevelled it may be in rig, but still careering in proud majesty, upon the now conquered and subsiding waves.

This yielding of emotion to reason was the supporting staff of her habitual self-control. Following the thrill of impulse, she could have thrown herself upon the neck of her son, and there sobbed out her spirit in despair. And many a moment of the day, when the sentiment of separation rolled back its bitter waves upon her, she almost repented not having yielded more fully to the exquisite luxury of her grief, as the last drop of happiness, remaining for her in life.

As for Nathan, it was some time before he could realize that he had actually set out from home. The parting-scene

with his mother floated through his mind, like a passing dream. At length he began to feel the novel sensations that lie at the threshold of a new career. The raw morning air fell at first with shivering touch upon his delicate system; but soon, the exhilaration of walking, and the comfortable warmth of his rough habiliments — a scotch-cap, neck-comforter, red-baize shirt, thick round-about, trowsers, and cow-hide boots, lent a keen glow to his animal spirits.

As already implied, a cart had taken in advance the general effects of the crew, — such as the sea-chests, upholstery, and fishing-tackle; still each fisherman circled with his arm a stuffed pillow-case, or bore in hand a bandanna handkerchief crowded to the corners. These were filled with articles of the nicer sort, such as it would not do, to entrust to the rough and tumble of the wagoner's hand.

The garb of the crew was unique. It could neither be called the rig of the sailor, nor the dress of the landsman. It had a decided mongrel aspect, being often like Joseph's coat, of many colors. The patching though rough, was firmly done, and the whole seemed got up rather for comfort than grace.

A certain brawn figure, with a coarse hardy look, were a fit setting in to the clumsy costume, floating around their limbs. Indeed, they might have been taken for a sort of amphibious race of beings.

Walter lit among them like a bird from another clime. As the boy, soft from his downy-bed of life, made his appearance, each eyed him with a quizzing, incredulous glance, which was followed by a dry, monosyllabic greeting, that put the boy, it must be confessed, somewhat ill at ease.

They spoke no more, till reaching the shore of the bay, but pursued their lagging way, with a gravity befitting beings bound to the realms of Pluto.

Leaving home under any circumstances is little calculated

to awaken sociality; especially with a class so taciturn as the fisherman. Then to be turned out of a soft bed of a raw March morning, with so dreary a prospect before, as a fishing cruise! This is indeed dampening to the most buoyant spirit.

In respect to the sailor, the case is different. With him the keen regret at parting from home and loved ones, is accompanied by feelings that tend to lessen the bitterness of separation,—such as the kindlings within at the idea of roaming abroad; of looking leisurely around upon the world's broad panorama; of gazing perpetually upon scenes of novelty and interest. These floating before his mind's eye, arouse within him the heroic, and lure his step onward.

But not so with the fisherman. No charming hues are reflected in the blue azure of his prospective landscape. On the contrary, all before him is a dreary waste of waters,—except so far, as the noble sentiment of duty, the sweet consolation of providing for loved ones; and the anticipation of a happy return, impart buoyancy of spirit.

Then, the genuine sailor, he who has become the adoptive heir of Neptune, is never long enough ashore, to become in any full sense wedded to it; not long enough for the roots of his briny nature to sink deep into the clinging soil of domestic affection. The sea has become his element, the ocean-wave his home; and one could now no more tame down his roving spirit upon the land, than he could lure thither the wild pinion of the sea-gull. It matters not how tempestuous may have been his last voyage; how many hair-breadth 'scapes he may have passed through; how often from the suffering depths of his being, he may have solemnly vowed, his foot again upon the dry land, the mountain wave should never wash it more. Still, a few days ashore, and the remembrance of these hardships and resolutions, disappear like the melting

track of the parting keel. Old associations like the memory of absent friends, come thronging in upon him, bearing back his restless spirit upon the ocean, whither he follows, if not with alacrity, yet with a regret softened by the power of a controlling sentiment.

With the fisherman, the circumstances are quite different. Half of his existence at least is a shore-life. Whatever his luck in the summer, when winter comes, he is sure, like some hibernating animal, to retire into his snug-hole, there to enjoy his little summer-garnered store. This season of sloth begets a lassitude that unbends the very spring of animation, and makes it doubly hard to set off in the early spring for a bleak fishing cruise. It is like transplanting a tree whose fibres are just beginning to embrace the warm, genial earth.

The crew stivered along across the gray old fields, yawning in the drowsy morn, then through the secret wood, still hushed in the folds of lingering night; when winding around the dark-wombed swamp, they burst upon the smiling skirts of the shore.

Presently, there glimmered up before them, the stretching chain of fanciful hillocks, scantily verdant with the sharp beech-grass. These formed the pleasing back-ground of the smooth, shelving beach. Through the little vistas formed by the sandy knolls, which the frolicking wind, in some fitful mood had tossed together, duskily gleamed the blue waters of the bay.

Upon their verge they were now standing. It was almost calm. A zephyr-like air came creeping from the hills and wood-land, just enough to ripple here and there the smooth surface of the waters. Save a modest undulation visible in the tiny stir of struggling bits of sea-weed, floating near the shore, the broad bay lay before them, calm and reposing as a

sleeping maiden whose snowy bosom from amid her golden tresses, gently swells to the bliss of delicious dreams.

Several small craft newly geared and painted, lay quietly anchored at different points some half a mile from the shore. They were sheltered within a sunken sand bar, that stretched all along the coast, and which, in a high wind, formed the only barrier against the spite of the winds that came galloping in from the Broad Atlantic. Which of these vessels was to be his, Walter could not even guess. But while revolving the matter, his eye fell upon a boat a little way off, turned over upon the sand. By the boat lay strewed a number of articles, and around it were huddled several men in a reclining posture. As our party approached, the others arose and greeted them, but it was done rather by looks than words.

At this moment, a fishing vessel at another point of the coast was seen to weigh anchor and make sail.

"Yonder she goes, the *Silver Spring*, as sure as I'm a living man," ejaculated one of the crew — a true son of Proteus, one who plumed himself on being always high line, and to whom the bare mention of fish was enough to bring a thrill of animation. "She's got the start of us, after all," he added, "I told our folks 'twould be so."

"Well, let her have the start," growled another voice. "The 26th of March, is early enough to set out a codding at any rate. There's no need of haste, I fancy. We'll all catch enough cold pig, or I'll be guzzled for a false prophet."

"But what have we here," his eye falling upon Walter. "A pretty mother's baby, eh? Ah, my boy, a hogshead of bitter ale's in store for you. You'd better have nestled behind your mamma's apron strings, this many a bright summer yet."

These barbed words in a voice of sonorous irony, could not but send a quaking to the spirit of the boy. Looking trem-

blingly up, his eyes met the broad gaze of the speaker, whose stalwart frame, overshadowing like a cloud, made him start back with awe. Still, so awakened was his curiosity, that he could not help scrutinizing the stranger whenever he thought his glances unperceived. The longer he looked, the more he was struck with the figure and mien of the man. He was powerfully built, and his countenance indicated hardy vicissitude in the furnace of life. A broad chest and firmly knit limbs showed him to have seen hard weather in his day, but his still equable air and supple movements, proved that neither age nor suffering, had broken the spirit nor enfeebled the body. He was not what is termed handsome, yet there lay in his expressive face, a union of strength and tenderness, a kind of manly grace, that might have touched the sentiments of a maiden, but over his boon companions, it exercised a charm all powerful in its influence.

The deep tones of Old Marlboro, (for this was the name by which he took pride in being called) blended with a certain racy, domineering ease of manner, proved its usual fascination over the boy, and from the first he could scarcely detach his eye from the graphic sailor. As Walter scanned his face, he thought to read there after all something of human sympathy, notwithstanding the withering words just fallen from his lips.

The skipper who all this time had been listening in a musing mood, now gave a yawning glance at different points of the heavens; then throwing a wistful look after home; he yet gave briskly the order to go. The boat whirled upon its bottom; and sinewy hands gripping the gunwale, bore it quickly to the water's edge; the keel on the way but slightly grazing the sand. The movement was an animated one, springing from that vigor, which shows itself in the first effort after long rest. Here, nicely poised in the water, the stern keel

just touching the shore, their effects were thrown quickly in; and the crew tumbling after, an oar set against the shore, pushed the boat adrift in a trice.

Walter now felt the last tie of home sundered; and a mortal disquietude sunk upon his soul like a hand of lead. The two stubbed oars, buried deep at each stroke to guard against fracture, were vigorously plied, by some half-dozen muscular arms, while the deeply laden boat moiled its way through the slow yielding water, as if reluctant to proceed upon its humble errand.

So nervously cautious had Mrs. Carl always been in exposing her last hope, that Walter had never before sailed over the water, even though his home was upon the very verge of the ocean. Accordingly the sensation he now felt was a novel one. It might be likened to the dizzying thrill one has on being poised too high in a swing, increased by the uncomfortable conviction, that a slip would precipitate him to the bottom of the sea, instead of landing him upon terra-firma.

By the heading of the boat it now became evident which one of the vessels ahead was theirs. She appeared the very smallest of the cozily anchored fleet, and could not have been more than thirty tons burthen. Her form was that of her class, full at the bow, narrowing at the mid-ships, and tapering off like a fish at the stern, which turned up into the air to remind one of the Tritons of old.

She was what is termed a pink-stern, a model borrowed very likely from the classic fount of mythology. Why its graceful, airy shape should ever have given place to the clumsy square stern, is without reason, except from the intermeddling of Fashion, which does not always consult Nature in its vagaries.

The bristling little pink with false rails around, and kids and other like fishing-hamper upon deck, sat squat upon the

water, looking as eager to start for the cruise, as a country lad upon his first adventure to the big town.

They were at length along-side. The surface of the sea from the shore had appeared perfectly smooth. But as they reached the offing, a long, gentle ground swell became perceptible. With this undulation the vessel rolled, very slightly, it is true, but the effect was to toss the boat up and against the vessel, in a style bewildering enough to the unsophisticated sense of the Fisher Boy.

Being in the bow of the boat, the place always assigned in a sea-going life to the youngsters, he was impatiently ordered by some half-dozen voices to jump on board. He was quite willing to heed the command; and as soon as he could disentangle his feet from the pother of fishing tackle, boxes, etc., that encumbered him, he fetched a leap, with the view of scrambling up the side of the vessel, and tumbling over upon deck; but in the flurry, his fingers lost their grip on the rail, and he would inevitably have fallen plump into the water, between the vessel and the boat, but for a vigorous arm that arrested his downward course, and sent him back headlong, over the rail, upon deck.

Ere he had recovered the shock of this ill-starred incident, a hoarse, wiry voice broke out — "There, you lubber, a hair-breadth more, and you would have gone sure to Davy Jones's locker, a dainty morsel for some bloody heathen of a shark. Ship on your sea-legs, now, in the twinkling of an eye; or ten to one you'll be making some other dastardly slip-bend."

Glancing over the side of the vessel, his eyes met those of Old Marl. They were beaming with a fine gush and twinkle of delight; while the furrowed physiognomy of the old sailor bore a frank gratulation, at the heroic feat of thus saving the boy.

Walter could not but feel a growing confidence in this

weather-beaten son of the sea, despite the rough handling he had received at the old fellow's hands. The force of his last injunction to ship on his sea-legs, now began to press with peculiar significance; for although the motion of the vessel was not great, the strange, drunken-like sensation it produced upon the boy's nerves, made him quite reel with dizziness.

The boat being cleared of her *dunnage*, was hoisted in upon deck, and turned over the hatch-way. While some began loosing the sails, the skipper gave the order to heave ahead. "Heave ahead," responded a voice. "Heave ahead, and save the tide," roared another. "Down with the things," squealed out the skipper, to the cook. "Cluck, cluck, rolled round the windlass; up went the main and foresails. The anchor was now a peak. Two or three heavy surges at the hand-spikes, and up bobbed the cable through the horse-pole." "All away, all away," echoed half-a-dozen voices. The jibs were run up at a round. The vessel slowly turned upon her heel, and pointed her prow toward the ocean.

"That's quick done," wheezed out a slim voice, sauntering abaftward, and panting for breath.

"Yes," chuckled Uncle Loggy, "many hands make light work."

The speaker was a superannuated fisherman, with a pair of duck-legs, run into a long lumpy body, like a couple of pegs, pushed into an oblong patch of dough. While the rest were getting the vessel under weigh, he, assuming the prerogative of veteran age, had quietly sat upon the combing of the hatch-way, a critical observer of the varied proceedings.

All hands were now busy clearing up decks. Old Marl was the busiest of all. True to his antecedents as a regular salt, he was coiling up, and laying away every rope and bit of yarn, with the nicety of a prim house-wife. "Here, you

land-lubber," ejaculated the sailor, to a youngster, who was complacently reclining over one of the kids,

"Just tumble this batch of rigging down the hole abaft there."

As the lad turned away, tugging the huge coil after him, the Old Salt added, "You mongrel fisherman have no more knack at keeping a vessel tidy than an Irish collier. A pretty muss the decks 'd be in, but for some one to look after you."

While thus getting under weigh, Walter was in a strange confusion of mind from the altogether novel and hurried movements around him. Disposed always to be useful, he was skipping about amid the bustle, ready at every one's beck. But the manœuvres of making sail over, he was again free to yield to his feelings. He now found the misty cloud of stupor, that lay upon his soul on the eve of parting from his mother, to have dissipated; and the bitter reality of the scene to come creeping in upon his spirit, like the penetrating drench of a raw east wind. As he gazed sadly upon the land of his home, slowly receding in the distance, his heart swelled within him, and a tear trembled in his eye, like the flickering of a forlorn hope.

Still, these acrid feelings could not override the sentiment for the beautiful in Nature, to which a dove-like life had attuned his breast; nor could they destroy the sweet soothing charm upon the sense, of the lovely scene unrolling around him.

To the westward there stretched the straight line of coast, losing itself in the dim distance. Partially sombered by forest, it was here and there brightened by some gayly painted building, bespeaking humble thrift. A soft morning haze hung over the land, creating a fantastic illusion, as if the Nymphs of the wood, and the Nereids of the sea were yet busy, weaving their matin love-spells.

A couple of miles to the eastward, at the heel where the pliant coast bends square to the North, shoots off south-westerly, a spur in the form of a narrow strip of grassy knolled beach. These two meeting lines of coast, form the deep angular bay, enlived in the summer by a variety of craft.

On the vanishing point of the beach, plumed in the distance, like a downy sea-gull, was seen the unchanging light-house, to the tempest-tossed mariner the brightest vision of earth.

Upon the horizon, hung here and there a white pinioned carrier of plenty, like an angel stooping from heaven. The roving eye would occasionally fall upon an intrepid solitary water-fowl, paddling fleetly over the scarcely ruffled bosom of the deep. These had lingered behind over winter. They might be likened to here and there a mortal whose eccentricities defy the ordinary usages of life.

Over the whole, the King of Day, which had just sprung from his briny couch, was flooding his royal beams, warming up the scene to a glowing beauty; the spirit of which could only be kenned by the eye of the gifted soul.

While Walter, reclining over the binnacle, wrapped in the sombre luxury of this melee of emotions, his not unpleasant reverie was broken by a rough voice, bidding him come to the cabin, and look after his things.

Going there introduced him to another phase of his new life.

In the pink-stern, on account of the narrowness of the stern, the cabin is more conveniently situated in the bow.

Nick off the small end of an egg, lay below a narrow flooring, with a boxed seat quite around for transom; fasten above this two tiers of shelves, for berths; run some beams across overhead, to prevent the tumbling in of the roof. In this ceiling set a thick glass, two inches by three for dead light. Then at the outlet run up a ladder with steps instead

of rounds, by the side of a narrow, straight fire-place and chimney on one hand, and a mouldy cup-board for dishes on the other; the whole crowned by a wooden funnel, over the chimney, and a little oval house over the gang-way, with a slide meeting, two short thick doors, to close the whole, and you have a semblance of the cabin of the Andes, — a name sufficiently imposing one would think for so tiny a craft as was the Pink.

This subaqueous abode comprised a few cubic feet of room, and so low was it, as scarcely to enable the tallest to stand erect. The vessel had not been cleaned in the Fall, but had lain hauled up, on the flats, and there were accumulated the must and mould of a year's gathering. As the motion of the vessel stirred up the bilge-water, the sickening stench thrown up, was enough to appal the stoutest nerves. What, then, to the sensitive taste of Walter, fresh from the sweet life of a soft home.

"Bah, what turkey-buzzard's nest have we here," drawled out Marl, worming his long sides down the gang-way.

"Not room enough to swing a cat round by the tail, — a dirty squeeze of it, before we get through, or I'll be hanged."

"He that's born to be jammed to death, won't be hung, drawled out a bleareyed fisherman."

"Nor be tickled dead at the feet, whimpered a young sprig, perched upon the transom abaft.

"Yes, Old Marl, like other big fish, must have deep water to swim in. He's one of your square-riggers, that need an ocean to veer and haul in," gravely exclaimed another.

"Tut, tut, squealed the skipper. There's many a worse place in the world. 'Twill be nothing, when you once get used to it. All things come by habit, you know."

While this bit of badinage was going on, the cook, a sturdy plant of some twelve summers, with head protruded into the

fireplace, holding a morsel of oakum under some ends of wood with one hand, and using his mouth for bellows, might be seen trying to coax the smothering fire into a blaze.

By his side were strown a tea-kettle, a baking pan, and several tin-vessels, all completely imbedded in rust and mould.

The first preliminary in setting things to rights in the cabin, was the distribution of berths. By an indisputable rule, the skipper takes the upper birth abaft, on the starboard side; while the cook, as a matter of convenience, has a lower one by the side of the fire-place. These two sole officers provided for, — namely, the cook and the skipper, or skipper and cook, rather, the other berths are distributed among the crew by lot.

Walter's lot fell with that of a big-bodied man, in one of the narrow under berths. His blowzy companion looked of sufficient volume to fill all the little space himself; and the boy could not but have a strange feeling of disgust at the thought of lying in so dark, disagreeable a nook, with such an animal of a man for bed-fellow, — the more so, as ever before, he had either reposed in a neat cot alone, or by the side of his gentle, dear mother.

"But Fortune turns up for us strange bed-fellows."

Scarcely were the berths made up, when the sharp sound, "hard a lee," brought Walter to the deck. The wind, it seemed, had changed just as predicted by the wagoner; and was now freshening in a gentle breeze from the south-west.

The vessel had got well off the Point, and was now contesting it with the stubborn little Cape.

"One more short tack, and we'll fetch by," said the man at the helm. Whereupon, about the vessel whirled, and before Walter could gain a clear notion of their whereabouts, she was in a position to weather the point all clear.

"She works like a well broke steer," mused Marl.

"Which passage?" inquired the man at the helm.

"The inner one," replied the skipper. "Half tide, water enough, start the sheets," he added.

The main, fore and jib sheets were eased a little. The wind just at this moment freshened, as if catching the spirit of the scene.

While the vessel, seized by the sweeping current, was born around the dizzying point, Walter was thrilled with excitement. The scene was as novel as unique. The low distant point of the Cape, at first but a thread in the dim horizon, had now become a present, tangible object. The long, smooth, shelving beach, reaching into the bounding ocean, wound round and round, as if evading solution; while the gliding panorama of the grassy knolls, the moving light-house, and the walking masts of the vessels in the harbor, the specks of men strolling over the hills, and the sailing gulls dotting the air, but lent animation to the picture.

The surface of the water was broken by boiling eddies, portending dark mysteries below. A little at the south was the dreaded Shovel-full, and further at the east, the long Pollock Rip, heaving and cresting at intervals, as if laboring to throw up the bones of ship-wrecked mariners.

Clear of the shoals, the sheets were eased fully off, and the vessel's bow kept direct for the Fishing Ground.

Another set of preliminaries were now gone through with. The cables were unbent from the anchors, and coiled snugly away down the hold; the slack of the halyards becketed up to the mast; a barrel of salt clam bait opened; and another lot cast for berths at the rail midships.

The skipper took his, by privilege, a-mid-ships. A place over the anchor was set off for the cook. And the rest of the space being divided, was distributed by lot. By good fortune Walter's berth fell by the side of Marl.

"You're as lucky as a colt," chuckled Fishall.

"Well, why," demanded the sailor, with a look of keen but open inquiry.

"Because you've got the boy by your side. He'll be a pretty little tender to keep your lines from fouling," sarcastically reiterated Fishall.

"Well, somebody must have the little fellow by him, I suppose," muttered Marl, with a tone and air of rebuke.

The berths appropriated, each in his own good time, added fixtures according to his liking, — such as cleets upon the kids to belay his line to; a little shelf for prepared bait, and a score in the rail, for the line to veer in. Lastly, the craft was brought up, and carefully put in its place.

This useful gear consists of a pair of hooks fastened by gangings to pendants striding either a wooden or marled rope cross-tree. This is bent to a lead for sinker, to which the line is attached. Little iron or horn swivels terminate the pendants, that the entrapped fish may swing round without fouling the craft.

When not in use, for the convenience of being portable, the line with the craft is kept wound upon a small hand reel.

The hooks daintily filed, — an art by no means easy, and strung with bits of bait, the lead is laid upon deck, and the pendants thrown over the rail, when all is ready.

"Dinner's ready," shouted the cook, thrusting out of the gang-way his greasy face besmeared with sweat and smoke.

"Dinner," reëchoed the skipper in a lively voice. "Come, boys, let's down, and take a bite."

Except the helmsman and one or two of the youngsters, all were in a moment in the cabin. The latter yielding to the sway of the green king, were supinely coiled up

under the windlass, in total indifference to the turn of their fate.

Walter felt no disposition to eat, but he was quite willing to follow the rest. As he descended the stairway a new sort of table greeted his eye. It was merely a long piece of pine board planed, with narrow strips nailed upon either side, to guard the dishes against the lurches of the sea. The upper end was set firmly upon two pegs; while the lower which extended nearly to the steps was supported by a wooden leg. It could be unshipped at pleasure.

The cook, or Dunderfish as he was called, pitched upon the table two freighted tin pans; the one filled with boiled salt cod and potatoes, and the other containing a frugal quantity of pork tried out to scraps. By the side of these, he added a huge but equivocally baked loaf of rye and Indian corn bread.

Each of the crew now pulled from the edge of his berth a bright tin pan, an iron spoon, and knife, and the attack was commenced silently and in earnest. A few raw onions sparingly eaten, was the only condiment or dessert to the classic repast.

Dinner over, each strolled about the vessel, as led by whim. One might have been seen stretched out in his berth, reading an old almanack; another, sitting upon the combings of the hatchway, leisurely filing up a string of hooks; while a third, with stub-pipe in mouth, and thoughts bent upon vacuity, was yawning in the sunniest spot to be found upon deck.

As for Walter, the tender sentiment for home, waxed stronger, instead of waning in his breast; and, as he noticed with strained eyes the low, narrow beach in the distance, from which they were flying, to grow fainter and fainter, until it disappeared below the horizon, giving place to an illimitable

watery waste, a forlorn feeling added poignancy to his sentiments; and he was forced to turn aside, into some nook of the vessel, to disguise the tears that were fast blinding his eyes.

CHAPTER VI.

"What care these roarers for the name of King?"

SHAKESPEARE.

"THERE she blows," shouted Fishall, who had just aroused from an extempore dozing. Drifting forward, yawning and rubbing his eyes, he commenced sweeping the blue expanse through his filmy peepers with the coolness of a naval quartermaster.

"Where away!" ejaculated some half-a-dozen voices, springing at the same time to their feet, and rushing forward for a look. In fact, the scene was really animating. Several whales, grampuses, and lesser leviathans of the deep, were sending up at brief intervals, spoutings in graceful spray, or rolling up their huge shiny sides in evident satisfaction, while the air was enlivened by here and there a clean gannet, or flapping sea-gull, sailing and wheeling through the upper deep, with most airy pinion.

"Fish there, you may depend on," brightened up Loggy. "Always fish where you see them ar customers."

"Shall we come to, and catch a fresh one," asked Fishall, looking inquiringly at the skipper, and seizing the jib-halyards with a motion to let them go.

"We'll run a little longer," musingly answered the skipper, who in a stooping posture, was straining his eyes under the main-sail, as if to pierce the future. "We're now only on the edge of the ground."

This life appearance upon the water, and in the air around them, sent a thrill of animation through every one on board.

The most sluggish clay seemed endowed all at once, with a most marvellous vitality. It brought vividly before them, the very gist of their voyage, — namely, fish-catching.

How trivial an affair will often enkindle aglow the human breast. Vaulting ambition is as near being appeased, by the successful sway of a fishing rod, as by wielding the sceptre of empire, — by the catching of a fish, as by the capture of an argosy. How fortunate for man, that humble schemes, as well as grand designs, are alike suited to awaken enthusiasm and inspire action.

Judging now the vessel far enough over the ground, he gave the order for coming to. Whereupon down went the jib, and half-a-dozen willing hands at the down-haul fetched it smack and smooth to the bowsprit. The main and fore sheets were eased off, and the helm becketed to the leeward. The lively craft, as if a conscious being, came boldly up to the wind, dashed off the spray from her fore foot, and, after shaking her canvas in the wind, veered off, and commenced a steady drift to the leeward, as if taking up a regular line of conduct.

"Chuck, chuck, chuck," dropped some eight or ten leads over into the water, bearing as many crafts toward the bottom for the first catch of the trip. But Walter was vexatiously behind the rest. It was many a posing moment, before he ventured to let go his lead at all, and when he did come to so bold a determination, he was doomed to deep chagrin; for the hooks, either eager for capture, or reluctant to leave the deck, caught in the scuppers, and held fast. With much plague disengaged from this, then came the endless unwinding, which made the elbows fairly ache with fatigue.

The whole crew, now inspired with hope, were ranged along the vessel's rail. Each crouched forward, with line gripped with nippers in right hand, wrist resting upon rail, and feet

planted firmly upon deck, waiting for a jerk back. Mute they were, as if the recognition of a bite depended upon hearing as well as feeling.

"See — see," jerked back Fishall; and in a moment, was hauling in his line with a set gait.

"Ah, he's here," chuckled Loggy. "Got him on?" asked a half-a-dozen voices. To this Fishall made no further reply, than setting to more vigorously, as if the matter were too momentous for speech.

Hooking a fish added to the general ardor. Each now bent lower to the rail, reaching forward his hand with intense expectancy.

Presently, a nibble was felt; then, another fish was hooked. Marl was now seen hauling one from the bottom, with his easy, swinging gait; and, all on board was the liveliest activity.

But Walter all this time, was in the sorriest predicament. In the first place, to hold the line at all, against the superincumbent weight of the ocean, taxed to the utmost his fragile strength. Then his nippers, not "broke," but increased the difficulty. At every roll of the vessel, the additional strain to his hand left the impression of a bite. And no sooner over this illusion, than there came another — namely, the frequent bobbing of the lead against the bottom.

In his confusion of mind, the notion crept in upon him, that it must be a fish weighing so heavily upon his line, — perhaps, a couple. Elated with the conviction, he struck at once to hauling up, but the first effort convinced him that the thing was not so easy as he imagined. In fact, he could not at first budge his line at all; but no one coming to his aid, he braced both feet against the bulwark, and laying back with full might, with both hands, he made out at length to start it an inch or two; then fleeting and repeating the process, thanks to the

gradual lightening of the weight, he finally succeeded in drawing his craft to the surface.

The moment he could get breath, he cast an eager glance over the side, to gain a sight of the captives. But how confounded was he to see no fishes, — but, instead, simply two hooks, — bare, save a shell-fish to one, and a bit of rock weed to the other. As for the rest, the pendants and gangings, were wound around the cross-sticks, in a pretty snarl.

The boy's flushed assurance on starting to haul up, the hero-like pluck, with which he tugged away so perseveringly, his virgin breast swelling with hope, and as he gained the goal of effort, the proud air of triumph, with which his features glowed, as he darted his eyes over the vessel's side to greet his prizes, — this, contrasted with the flat dejection that withered up his countenance, as the truth gleamed up, gave rise to a broad chuckle from the crew, at so ludicrous a discomfiture.

The snickering of the hands at the ridiculous abortion of this his first attempt at fish-taking, was indeed dampening to the ardor of the boy, but it did not paralyze his ambition. By the aid of Marl to clear his craft, and bait anew his hooks, he was soon again in trim. He once more threw his lead, with animating hope for better luck. Indeed, as the line hobbled over the rail, in its hasty descent, and the glow of reaction suffused his nerves, the spirit of the boy lit up into a blaze of energy he was not before conscious of possessing. It was the exquisite experience of a newly born. True, he had not actually caught a fish, but having worsted through the toil, he felt himself on the high road of success. He was at least, in the circle of activity. The chain of lassitude was broken. The future rose up in buoyant mirage. A manly feeling throbbed his breast.

The sun had now sunk below the horizon. The shades of

night began to gather round. The biting having ceased, the skipper gave the word *broaters*, — a term in the fisherman's nomenclature, signifying that all fishes taken after that sound is heard, are not reckoned to the catcher, but confiscated for the general benefit of the voyage.

The leads were drawn in upon deck, their catch of fish dressed down, and salted in the hold.

"Shall we heave too, now," demanded Fishall. To which the skipper replied, "yes."

Accordingly, the jib was stowed, the main-sail furled, the fore-sheets hauled abaft, when the obedient craft stivered along by the wind, just of a pace to hold her ground for the morrow.

"Well, the hussy's got on her night-cap, and 'tis well aired," quoth Marl, glancing at the fore-sail, as he stretched slowly his lank sides, down the gang-way. "I hope she'll have a quiet night's rest of it," he added, peering dubiously around the horizon. "At any rate I'm down for a doze."

Not many less than a dozen souls, or rather bodies, squeezed into so narrow quarters, as the Pink's cabin, were enough to give an uncomfortable feeling to any one, especially to a novice on board a fishing-vessel, but Walter was fast becoming used to the straits of his new life; and just now his spirit was too crushed with painful regrets of home, to be alive to anything in the form of mere inconvenience.

The hilarity of the crew, instead of diverting the current of his feelings, only added impetus to their flow. The low jesting of these men about the qualms of home-sickness, seemed the very quintessence of mockery. Each jibe went like an arrow against his heart. It swept like the breath of the grave over the blossom of his affections.

"We'll take supper," demanded the skipper. Whereupon a couple of huge tin-pans, filled with savory cod-fish chowder,

were set smoking upon the table. As the white layers of muscle rolled up above the impregnated water, like coral islets amid a spicy sea, the simple viand looked tempting enough for the dainty palate of a king.

The hungry crew did ample justice to the savory dish; for pan full after pan full disappeared in rapid turn. What sepulchre more unrelenting than a fisherman's maw!

Yet Walter could swallow but a mouthful. A deeper feeling than the sense of hunger was reigning within. Scarcely had Loggy gulped his last mouthful, before the boy who had remained at the table, in gentle deference to his betters, wistfully sought the deck, for the sweet luxury of solitude.

As he rushed into the night air, all seemed in harmony with his emotions. Yet a species of beauty of a sad and tender cast, broke upon his spirit. Night had shut down in dark folds upon the gentle bosom of the muttering ocean. Through the ether of the arching vault, the clustering stars were sparkling like brilliants set in a canopy of jet velvet. To the fancy of Walter, they were Angel eyes, looking down upon him in sweet sympathy, and discoursing of the deep, yearning affection of a mother's heart.

Reclining upon the hatch-way the boy yielded to the tender memories swelling his breast. How strange and unreal seemed to him the rapid scenes of the day, — the startling anticipation that hove up in his breast, the tender parting from his mother — the novel society into which he had been thrown, — the introductory scenes of a fishing-life. Indeed, he could scarcely believe himself the same being that he was the evening before. He seemed to have burst upon a new existence; and the past already began to mellow off into the back distance, like the dim outline of a receding coast.

He was aroused from this soft reverie by a call from the cook to appear in the cabin. He found them setting the

watch; and they were discussing with warmth, whether Walter should be called to take his with the rest.

He's got to come to it sometime, insisted Fishall, measuring the boy's ability with his own feeling of vigor. He might as well begin first as last. The sooner commenced the quicker over.

"My notion is to break in at once. 'Tis the way father served his boys. There was no babying with him."

"Yes, yes," squealed Loggy. "I knew your father well. He was a man, every inch of him — high fisherman for twenty years. His boys didn't get any favors, neither at sea, nor ashore; no ship's cousins where he was, and he made men worth something of them all. In fact, boys were good for something in them days, in olden time, when I was young. But what are they fit for now but to eat, and be in the way?"

"You're a set of boobies, to get up such a row about nothing," growled Marl. "You'll give the boy time to ship on his sea-legs, won't ye. Let me have his watch, if 'tis such a drug. One would think that nine men could manage a night, without calling on the little fellow. Let him sleep, and dream of his mother, and of the red roses under her window. Grim-faced hardship'll come soon enough, at longest. Then don't thrust his young neck into the yoke, before he's strength to wear it."

The skipper, always a peace-maker, decided that a watch should be given the boy, but arranged that it should follow his own, so that, in hard or foul weather, he could look out for the lad.

Walter felt relieved when the controversy was over. To be the occasion of excited feeling, was extremely painful to his sensitive nature. He felt many misgivings as to his ability to stand watch, but he would undertake any improbability, rather than so fall under the lash of words.

Matters settled, the boy flung off jacket and boots, and crawled into his berth. But it was a weary hour, before he fell into slumber. He could not abstract his thoughts from the crowd of emotions thronging his breast. Then his novel situation was by no means soothing to his mind.

The water striking against the fore-foot, then gently gurgling past, oddly seized his imagination; and when he was wont to fall into a doze, he had the illusion of sinking to the bottom, while the waves closed in whirlpools above him. But Nature, though yielding, never relinquishes her claims; and the boy at length fell firm to sleep.

A loud thump before the gang-way, was the first intimation he had of morning. This rough summons twice repeated, was followed by 'all hands a-hoy, up boys, and catch a thousand.' He aroused with a peculiar sense of oppressiveness, from the foul atmosphere he had been re-breathing.

A lurid light was faintly struggling from the tin cabin-lamp. The crew, one after another, commenced crawling from their bunks, rubbing their eyes, fetching a low grunt, and appearing as unwilling, as if about being summoned to the executioner's block. Reaching the deck, each, under that talisman, habit, went straight to work without orders. The main-sail was loosed and run up, the fore-sheet eased off, and the craft thus hove to for fishing.

There was at first no indication of fishes around. But the habit-ridden crew ranged themselves at the rail, as men following the humble bent of routine. There they stood, mutely attentive, as if enveloped in a mixed cloud of doubt and expectancy. Yet the tardy biting gave Walter leisure to watch the gradual incoming of glorious day.

The darkness, that for eight hours had brooded over the fathomless abyss, was fast withdrawing into the bosom of morn. Already the intense blue of the sky began to soften. The

sentinel stars that had beamed all night with undimmed lustre, one by one now veiled their faces, as if in modest deference to the approach of an august personage. Steadily, the wondrous transfiguration went on, as if an unseen hand were changing the scenery of the heavens. Dusky Night was being transformed to refulgent Day. Presently, arrows of light began to shoot up along the eastern sky. Soon the entire east was ablaze, filling the whole celestial concave with the inflowing tide of morning light. At length, the everlasting gates of morning were thrown wide open. A bright point as a flash of lightning appeared. It darted a golden gleam over the waters, and touched with rosy tint, here and there, a fleecy cloud floating airily in the blue azure. It seemed that heaven and ocean were inclining to the salutation of a morning kiss. He now appeared in full, the King of Day, springing from his briny couch, with the elasticity of youth, and the splendor of royalty. Rolling in a mantle of effulgence, he climbed rapidly the vaulted arch-way, flinging broadly his cheering rays, and flooding ocean and heaven with his imperial light.

To Walter, the scene was glorious beyond expression. He remained for some time rapt in the exaltation of his emotions. His soul seemed lifted to celestial heights, by the grand sublimity of the scene; while the bursting beauties of day, suffused his faculties with a glow of dewy freshness, that transfixed him motionless with delight.

And what scene in Nature more inspiring with noble emotions, than a fine sun-rise at sea. A beautiful sunset may awaken a more pensive feeling of tenderness; but when heralded by Aurora, uplifting the raven wings of night, the all benign eye of the universe darts up from below the molten horizon, casting broad around his genial stare, the soul receives a renovation of life, and is raised to heights of gratitude, inexpressible.

Meanwhile biting had begun, and was now increasing with welcome pertinacity. The crew warmed into activity gave way with brisk ardor. As for Walter, he had caught one. The successful feat brought a congratulatory shout from all around; and, as the huge fish, drowned stone dead, made its stark appearance to the surface, lightened by being poke-blown, it seemed that the Fates themselves had relented in sympathy for the toilsome hauling up of the boy.

"Sate ye," shouted the cook,—the fisherman's expressive call for breakfast. The crew gave a glance in the direction of the sound, but no one, at first, heeded the summons. The feeling seemed to be, that the opportunity just then, was too favorable for securing their end, to justify the losing of time in eating. But in a moment, Marl, planting his lead upon deck, wringing leisurely his nippers, and attaching them to his line, stalked off toward the gang-way. "I've no idea of starving this poor body, for a few tom-cod, more or less. The devil will get me soon enough at the longest," muttered the salt as he disappeared below.

Fishall availing of an unappropriated moment, snatched from the cabin a tin-pan of meal pudding, pork and molasses, with the tail of a fish for *rasher*. These he conveniently despatched in the intervals of the line's running. "Make hay while the sun shines," complacently ejaculated the fisherman, smacking his lips at the last morsel, evidently pleased at the thought of having kept so even a race with fast running Time.

As for the rest of the crew, each in his own peculiar way, managed at last, to get a bite of breakfast.

As the day strode on, the fishes grew more and more voracious. They lay flapping and gasping in the kids and upon the decks, wretched victims of man's cupidity. The scene was sadly animating; and Walter was struck with the relentless energy with which man pursues his prey.

In the ardor of fish-taking, the day sped on, as on eagles' pinions. It was now that early hour of the afternoon, when the sun looks down with fiercest ray. The light morning air had fallen to a calm. The vast ocean lay hushed, like a sleeping infant. The heat came down ablaze. The sky was clear of a cloud, except an ominous haze that was beginning to gather up in the south-western horizon.

"A sure weather-breeder this," portentously muttered Loggy, glancing toward the north-east, "catching season this," he added, in a drawling tone, as if listening to what response would come from the rest of the crew.

"Poh," sarcastically rejoined Fishall, giving way at his line with redoubled energy, animated very likely with the belief of a double game; and vexed at having to speak at all, amid his glowing enthusiasm for the sport. "Poh, we've been out so long, that I suppose you'd have us run in any way. But since we're on the ground, I'm for catching a fresh mess, at least, so as not to get the laugh upon us."

"Who spoke of running in, retorted Loggy, bridle quickly up at such rude snubbing; and that from Fishall, whom he had sided with but a moment before. I only mentioned the looks of the weather, and the catching season of the year. "Yes, yes, you youngsters are brave enough in fine weather, but when the pinch of the game comes, what are you good for? 'Tis an old saying and a true one, that 'know nothing fears nothing.' But as for me, I've had too many *brushes* about here, to crave any more in my old age. Besides, I'd just as soon my poor old bones would lie at rest in the good churchyard at home, as to be eternally drifting around among these dreadful shoals."

These last words fell in so mournful a tone, as to disarm Fishall of all temper for retort. The controversy, besides, was cut short, by a significant look from the skipper, who,

amiable and yielding to a fault, yet had been too long on board a square-rigger to succumb all dignity, even on board so insignificant a craft as the *Pink Stern*.

The sun in his tireless course had now well nigh reached the western horizon. His face was slightly veiled by frizzly, smoky clouds set deep in the vault, and reaching nearly around the circle of the horizon.

The biting having slackened, the skipper gave the word *broaters!* At once, all leads were drawn in upon deck, and preparations made for dressing down. Each one struck upon his line of duty, like men knowing their parts, and moved by an inward spring to perform them.

The *idler*, as he is called, counted out the fishes each man had caught, and gave him his tally to remember. The *throater*, after sharpening his knife, drew it across the throat of the fish, ripped down the belly as far as the navel, and then giving a slight cut on each side of the neck, to facilitate breaking the head from the back-bone, passed it on. The *header*, seizing the fish in one hand, drew it upon the table—a rough board, with one end fastened into the rail, and the other supported by a couple of legs to the deck,—first picked out the liver, to be preserved; and then tearing out the entrails, and jerking off the head to be thrown away, passed it to his companion, the *splitter*.

This latter, who was no less a personage than the skipper himself, after placing the fish against the cleet to prevent its slipping, drew his knife the whole length of the fish, cleaving the flesh from one side of the back-bone, then cutting off and ripping out the back-bone, from the navel up, thus performed his part. The *idler* pitched the splitted fishes into the hold of the vessel, where they were salted in *kenches* by the *salter*.

In this way, the work of dressing down continued to go

briskly on. Night had now fairly enshrouded the heavens. Her reign seemed the more complete, because of the dark gathering of the approaching storm. Not a peering star was visible. The gale had not yet begun to freshen, yet its sure on-coming was felt by every experienced fisherman on board. There are certain premonitions of Nature, that to a mariner at sea, portend a storm with a certainty rarely mistaken.

"Thick fish these," at length broke Fishall. Not more than three thousand of them for a hundred quintals, I calculate.

"Yes, if we could only get enough of them," joined the skipper.

"Grog," drawled out the cook, thrusting at the same time into the skipper's face, a britannia tumbler, two-thirds filled with a warm mixture of New England rum, water and molasses, with a sprinkling of ginger added.

"Hem," grunted the skipper with satisfaction, as he drained the last drop.

"Ah, that goes to the right spot," ejaculated Loggy, speaking up for once, in something of a shrill voice, as he quaffed in turn his portion of the exhilarating liquid.

At last the tumbler was presented to Walter. He hesitated. It was then the dawning period of the Temperance reform; and although he had never himself signed the pledge, yet he had become alive to the fearful evil of intemperance, as well as impressed with a sense of its being the duty of every one to refrain from the intoxicating cup.

"Take a little," urged Loggy, straightening up slowly from the bent position imposed upon him by the duty of throating, and regaining his perpendicular, with as much caution as one would exercise in taking the crook out of a rusty piece of iron, that he would avoid fracturing.

"Take a drop, 'twon't hurt you, I'll be bound. But 'twill

thaw the numbness out of your limbs, and help shake off the night fog.

Walter had begun to experience the dismay that seizes the green hand at sea, in the exposure to ridicule which nonconformity to established usage on board exposes him. Besides, of a yielding disposition, he had come to the conclusion, without reasoning upon the justness of such a course, that he would simply acquiesce in whatever might turn up to be the order of things.

In this mood, he put the cup to his lips intending to sip but a drop, merely for form's sake, but the first swallow diffused such a genial glow throughout his system, that he quaffed the whole without wishing to stop.

"That's you, my brave," shouted the old fisherman, animated to a high pitch; and groping his hand along in the dark to feel the cup, in order to make sure that the boy had actually finished the dram. "That's you." Away with all this ashore fol-de-rol, that I'll warrant they've been stuffing you up with. Stick to your fishing-gear, and you'll come out a man yet."

"Temperance lectures," he continued, "may answer well enough for parsons and their deacons to tom-fool the women folks at home with, especially when these *sancties* have a plenty of the critter in their cellars, in the shape of good Old Madeira; but 'tis shabby doctrine for the poor fisherman, standing cold and wet all day long at the rail—and ten to one having to dress down in the night. At such times, a drop or two now and then seems to go to the right spot, and put new life into a man. They prate about its being bad for the health, shortening life, and such sort of fandangos; but I don't see any so strong constitution men now-a-days, as used to be when I was young, and then every vessel that sailed for the banks, took along at least a dozen barrels of New England rum, besides a ten gallon keg full for each of the crew."

This extraordinary effort of the old fisherman, so in disagreement with his customary taciturn mood, seemed to arouse the crew from the lethargy which incessant work, and the chilly air had induced, and for a little while, there was a lively badinage going around, at the expense of shore occupations in general, and temperance societies in particular.

All this was far, however, from dissuading Walter that intemperance is not a gigantic evil. Still, the boy in his narrow judgment could not help but feel, that there lies after all a difference between theory and practice; and although a picture as true as startling may be drawn of the monstrous vice of drinking, still, when of a gloomy night, wet, chilled, and drooping with fatigue, the spirits sunk to zero, a little warm mixture may have the effect to revive the sinking spirits; falling upon the feelings like the grateful tones of a congenial acquaintance, which dispels the clouds of dejection, brooding over the soul of a dreary day of life.

At length came from the table the lively sounds of the splitter's knife, accompanied by the following solo,

"Always more, and never less,
Every time we come to dress."

The intelligence sent a thrill of gladness to every breast, such, indeed, as few landmen can conceive.

The dressing tables were now unshipped and stowed away, with an alacrity known only to willing hands. Then came the rinsing of the kids, and scrubbing and washing of the deck of its gurry, a matter of but a moment's time, with the abundance of water, so accessible from the briny fount of Neptune.

This done, each made personal ablutions which were copious, thanks to oil clothing, then just coming into vogue,—an invention by the way, which has proved a real boon to the

fisherman. As brief as was the interval that had transpired, the salter had thrown the last handful upon the fish, and was now upon deck, briskly washing off with the rest.

The wind, which had been veering round to the south-east, against the sun, began gradually to freshen. The dark, chilly air seemed instinct with the spirit of a terrific storm. A vague sense of this crept over the soul of each fisherman on board, but it found no utterance, save in a certain ominous silence, that reveals often with more significance than mere words. Danger at sea ordinarily lends no tongue to the seaman. A certain grave, portentous air is the nearest expression to trepidation that he commonly evinces. Men by grappling with the elements, lose, for them, by degrees, superstitious reverence. It may be that the conviction of being ushered suddenly upon the brink of eternity—in the very presence of Deity, strikes the soul with an awe so profound, as to seal for a time, the fountains of speech!

The last little duty was to run up in the rigging the ship's big lantern, the fisherman's star of hope against collision at sea. The light being well guyed out, one after another of the crew dropped below, with an appetite clamoring for supper. The repast on this evening consisted of boiled fish, with one other dish quite common at that time.

This, in the fisherman's expressive language, was termed *squeal*. It was no more nor less than water gruel sweetened with molasses, except that there were added little lumps of dough boiled in, termed *dodgers*, a soubriquet not altogether inappropriate, since from their greater specific gravity, they naturally sank, requiring as great a degree of skill to *fish* them up from the bottom of the dish with the spoon, as it would to hook a dainty tom-cod from the depths of the sea.

It may be observed that supper was preceded by another allowance of grog. The only distinctive feature in the cere-

mony of drinking this time was, the accompaniment of a pithy toast. "Here's to wives and sweethearts," said the skipper, as he raised the cup to drink; then, as the last drop was sipped, his lips involuntarily smacked, as if the delicious sentiment had imparted additional zest to the sweet draught.

Round went the cup, each monotonously repeating the homily, except the bachelors, who very complacently changed the sentence to "sweethearts and wives." When Walter's turn came, he faltered. The language shocked his sensibilities. He was about drinking without giving the toast, but Fishall interfered, and declared that he should give it. The boy, to end the matter, made the attempt, but foundered in the effort from the trepidation of sheer modesty. The scene brought a hoarse chuckle, at the expense of the boy's better feelings.

Supper over, the skipper picking thoughtfully his teeth for a moment, with a fish-bone, pulled out a manuscript book, having an ample duck cover. This was so dingy as to warrant the belief of its having served a like purpose for several fishing-seasons, and had, at last, been transformed from an old body to a new one, as a reward for faithful service.

He began writing in it the number of fishes caught by each man opposite his name, taking always the catcher's word for accuracy.

"Strange life, eh, boy," remarked Loggy, observing Walter to look with an air of curiosity.

"I was thinking," replied Walter, "what that book can have to do with the business of our voyage."

"Why, oh, that is the fish account book, and an important book it is too. If it were lost, the voyage could not be settled fairly."

"How so," observed Walter.

"Well, well," stammered Loggy, "I don't know that I can

explain all about it clearly, but the skipper can. He's got the learning, — Poor I, never went to school but one winter."

The skipper began — The footing up of the columns shows not only the aggregate of fishes taken on board, but the relative number taken by each man. The settlement of the voyage usually takes place in the winter, and is done in this wise:

From the gross stock is first subtracted the general expense. One fourth of the residue, is set off as the vessel's earnings. Then there is taken out one eighth for the shoreman for curing the fishes, and one sixty-fourth for the skipper's privilege. The residue is then divided among the crew according to the number of fishes each one has taken. From the gross share of each, subtract his personal expense, and you have the clear make of each man.

The account of fishes taken, all, save the watch, threw themselves into the berths, for a night's rest. Walter drooping from effort and exposure, soon forgot his memories in the oblivion of sleep.

He was awakened some time in the night by the brusque movements of his bed fellow. Springing up, he found the crew hastily drawing on their oil clothes, and confusedly fumbling up the gang-way.

As soon as he found himself able, he mechanically followed. But no sooner had his feet touched the cabin floor, than he felt the vessel to be pitching in desperate energy; and as his face met the midnight air, he was struck nearly with suffocation, by the fierce confusion of the elements. The gusty wind came, as if winged by a mad fury. It shot the large, pitiless drops of rain in blinding hate. The thick darkness was relieved only by the crested waves, that lay thickly on the lashed deep, like startling phantoms. The vessel seemed

agonizing with the infuriated elements. The scene struck Walter with fearful dismay. Indeed, he could only shut his eyes in very vertigo of soul, at some desperate plunge of the vitalized craft; or dodge below, as some supermaddened billow surcharged the deck with its foamy spite.

The practised hands of the crew, nerved with energy, soon brought the vessel to a double-reefed foresail. The overtasked jade now labored more easily, and the crew retreated to the cabin.

"A screamer, this," observed Fishall. "No fish to-morrow."

"Nor is that the worst of it," added Marl. "For if the wind should whip round to the north-east, as it often does in such gales, we're in no comfortable situation, away down here between Nantucket shoals and Chatham bars. These shoals are savage customers. They've taken the live oak keel out of many a stauncher craft than this little hooker."

"But So-easters are generally short-winded, especially when, like this, they come butt-end foremost," observed Loggy. This pertinent remark of the Old Fisherman, seemed to tranquillize the rest of the crew; for each returned to his berth without further conversation.

The boy had become so electrified by the harrowing tumult of the gale, that it was now many a feverish moment, before his startled senses could be tranquillized to sleep. But when he did sink beneath the wave of slumber, the whistling wind through the cordage, and the wild tossing of the vessel, only came as a wafting lullaby; for when he awoke, he found benignant day had already beamed, and the morning far advanced.

The watch seated upon one of the chests in the cabin, wore a doleful face; while the cook after having persevered vainly to knock up a fire, had at length hopelessly abandoned the

attempt. He was now beguiling the time, in giving utterance to many a plaintive anathema at the unlucky turn of his stars. All hands were now called to wear ship. The crew promptly mustered, but with a shivering, reluctant movement, as if in mortal dread of the very touch of exposure.

As Walter, the last one up, reached the topmost step of the gang-way, the wild sublimity of the scene without, burst upon his frenzied gaze, like the breaking forth of a new creation. Its terrific grandeur, while it struck with awe, elevated the soul to a height of giddy entrancement. The wind which had veered square to the north, was still blowing a furious gale. The deep, dark curtain, that during the night had completely canopied the sky, had been wildly rent by the storm king, and the fleecy fragments were now being rolled in deep moving masses, as if quivering in the breath of old Boreas himself.

The sea, under the pressure of the gale, was lifted to mountain heights, and the fierce aspect of the crested, ridgy waves, lent an intense thrill to the emotion of the beholder.

As for the tiny vessel, she reeled and tossed amid the tumultuous surges of the upheaving deep, as potentless as an egg-shell upon the surface of a boiling caldron.

What scene of earth compared to the sublimity of a storm at sea? How profound and intense the emotions it awakens! Here, the very finger of Deity seems to move in wrathful power before the eye, and the soul involuntarily cowers into self-insignificance, in presence of such irresistible might.

Wearing ship at sea is a critical evolution. To the excited vision of Walter, it magnified to one of imminent peril. But there seemed no other alternative; for continuing their present tack, would inevitably cast them upon the relentless shoals under their lee, clamoring for victims. Accordingly, each took his part of duty, as men left to no choice.

An experienced hand took his place at the foremast, and

laid the fore peak halyards clear for running. Another stood ready at the fore-sheet. The skipper then unbecketed the tiller, and steered the vessel cautiously around upon the other tack.

As the bow of the obedient craft fell off from the sea, her motion rapidly increased, as if by some unseen agency. And when she got in the position directly before the wind, what with the herculean force of the gale, and the powerful surgings of the sea, she rushed with a momentum absolutely dizzying. At this moment the fore-sheet was hauled in flat, and as the peak flew over, both it and the peak halyards were allowed to fly. As the ropes veered with lightning swiftness over the cleets, it sent a thrill of trepidation to the boy, that for the moment nearly stopped his breath.

A vessel was now descried near them. The sight sent a gleam of gladness to every breast. To Walter it seemed a star of Hope. It lifted suddenly the cloud of despair brooding over his feelings, as a flash of lightning glimmers amid the surrounding darkness. What more cheering than the sight of a vessel at sea? Especially in a storm is the blessed vision like the warm grasp of a friend in adversity. Drooping courage is suddenly revived. Even death itself is less bitter, when we share the dread fate with fellow mortals.

But the other vessel seemed to Walter to be in the most distressed condition possible. She pitched and rolled in apparent helplessness. At one moment reeling like a drunken man, with topmast verging to the water's surface, then desperately raising her prow, as if about to make madly a final plunge.

At the next moment, she would recede off into a hollow, between two mountain seas, when nothing but the top of her masts could be seen, giving belief that she was settling down, down, to the bottom of the great deep, never more to rise.

Then of a sudden she would rise swiftly up to the ridge of a mammoth wave, as if capricious Ocean had relented his late purpose, and was now going to toss the tiny craft to the brow of heaven.

Walter was not aware that his own vessel was making all the time precisely similar antics, — that what he beheld was in fact, merely one of those striking marine illusions, which, like the deceptive visions of life, present vividly to us the dangers and irregularities of others, while we remain blind to the incongruities of our own life.

As one after another of these huge seas, or *old sows*, as Loggy called them, paid their unwelcome compliments to the fragile craft, the shock sent a thrill of terror to the breast of the boy. At length there appeared a monster of the species. It rushed on bristling and foaming like a maddened war charger. It struck the vessel so ponderously, as to sweep the decks, and pour down the cabin in engulfing streams.

A momentary dizziness passed athwart the brain of the boy, followed by a leaping of spirit to know the worst. The tremendous shock, the helpless position of the vessel, and the cry from the watch, that all had gone by the board, brought every man with a bound from his berth; and when the streaming deck, the naked stanchions, like trees after a sweeping fire, broke to view, an exclamation of dejection was upon every lip.

But there was no time to bewail misfortunes that were past remedy. The only alternative seemed to be, to get the vessel back upon the other tack, and await the more regular forming of the sea. To men emboldened by peril, decision is but action. Accordingly she was changed.

The vessel now labored in less peril. As mental commotion subsided, the gnawings of hunger began to be felt. With the more veteran of the crew, this inexorable demand of Na-

ture actually became clamorous. And well this might be, since they had tasted nothing to stay appetite for twenty-four hours. After due search, the most that could be mustered, was a junk of raw fat pork, and a remnant of corn and rye bread, that had shared the general fate of being duly soaked in the briny water, with which they had been of late so copiously visited.

A few of the less dainty munched of this repast, to appease the keenness of appetite. But to Walter such extremity but deepened the cloud of his feelings, by recalling pictures of starvation at sea.

As soon as it was deemed safe, the tack of the vessel was again changed. She now lay in tolerable safety; but the night was confessedly the most trying one ever experienced by the crew. The Pink continued to ship water frightfully. In spite of the repeated working of the pumps, the water at times gained over the cabin-floor most alarmingly. The cordage and sails, neither new nor strong, and so long exposed to the strain of the elements, were continually giving way at some point. Thus all hands had often to be called, and as often to receive a drenching from the spiteful spray.

To be roused smoking with warmth from one's cot, into the chilly air, just as his eyes begin to be wearisome with sleep, is not the most agreeable.

Their woollen clothing soaked in brine, chafed their skin to pimple soreness. Indeed their suffering, mental and physical, rose to its culmination. They passed through that intense period, when the sensibilities are most lively, and the tenacity of life the strongest. Later, the nerves become dulled, and the hold upon life weakened. This, however, is but the kindly hand of Nature, soothing the journey to another life.

As to Walter, the heavings of his spirit were little less tumultuous than the tempest-tossed ocean. The din of the

jarring elements, instead of paralyzing his sensibilities, aroused his faculties to intense liveliness. He was up at every turn-out, active with the rest, although his inexperience did not permit him to afford that aid which his willing breast prompted.

But the sullen night at length wore away, as if turning upon the hinges of despair; and when benignant morn was heralded in the east, it lifted a cloud from every soul.

The gale rose to its height about midnight; after which the lulls grew longer, while the gusts became less fierce. Late in the afternoon, the wind had moderated to a stiff, whole sail breeze. But as the sea still ran dangerously high, the time was employed in repairing as best could be, the damaged sails and rigging. In the afternoon, the wind having got to the south-west, all canvas was thrown to the breeze, and the vessel's bow turned joyfully toward land.

The decks were soon strown with wet clothes, and, as the gale moderated, the sea went down like a spent horse. The cook now called out supper. All hearts bounded with grateful joy, forgetting in the glow of the present, the miseries of the past. Such is life upon the ocean-wave!

CHAPTER VII.

"Oh! what can sanctify the joys of home,
Like hope's gay glance from ocean's troubled foam."

BYRON.

"PRIZE O," ejaculated Fishall, bounding with excitement.

"Where away," shouted several voices, while as many of the crew rushed around the alert fisherman, straining their eyes in quest of the descried object.

"Dead whale, by jingo, believe so, faith; lucky dogs, ain't we, a voyage right here in the beginning. Skipper, shall we throw out the boat?" hurriedly exclaimed Fishall, almost breathless with interest, and absolutely deaf to the incoherent voices of the crew.

"Better wait, and see if 'taint a mermaid," drawled Loggy, with a droll leer. "Youngsters' eyes are apt to magnify, 'specially in the filmy morning."

Curiosity was aglow. Each took his turn at guessing out the unknown object. But the vessel coming up with it, revealed the truth. It proved a five-handed fish-boat, drifting bottom up, at the mercy of winds and waves. The spectacle was a sad one; for it was probably but the emblem of death. Its crew must have been lost in the gale. Still, it must be confessed that the commiseration felt for the untimely fate of perished fellow-mortals, was partially overridden by the near prospect of gain. How deplorable that the noble sentiments of humanity should ever be sullied by the greed of getting.

The sea had calmed down to a rippling mirror. The vessel was now gliding gently through the yielding water, raising

a modest wave at the fore-foot, which tumbled over in foam, under the lee, but at windward pencilled along in a gentle ripple as far as the main-chains, where it turned off in a beautiful angle, still travelling with the vessel, as if reluctant to part her company.

Chatham lights plumed up ahead, a two fold gift of welcome and warning to the mariner; while across the narrow beach, the main-land mellowed in dim outline. The sweet sight awakened irrepressible emotions of gladness in the breast of Walter. It was the visible link in the golden chain of home; and the sentiment was rendered more tender by the mellowing halo of distance and suffering.

This feeling arose to rapture by the appearance of some vessels which, having rounded the tiny point, were spreading their snowy canvas to the auspicious gale, and winging their blithesome way over the proudly swelling wave, directly across the fore-foot of the Pink.

These bright links of association brought home to his breast, with an ecstatic thrill, the golden picture of childhood. Indeed, they were the eye-touch of return; the hand-grasp after painful absence.

As they approached, several market smacks appeared snuggled within the bars, and the men looked active at their lines. This, and the tide having just made ahead for going over the Shoals, it was agreed to tarry a few hours as well, if but to make a catch to take home fresh.

Accordingly, the cables were bent, and the little vagabond of a Pink came to for a trial. The crafts were thrown with flushed hopes for brisk sport at catching.

But either from over daintiness, on the part of the little autocrats below, or for some other equally cogent reason, not a bite perched upon their ill-starred fortune for a long tedious hour. A consultation was held, and in the hustle of opinion,

it came uppermost that fresh bait must be the desideratum. A boat was despatched for some at a neighboring vessel. It soon returned with partial success. Still with this, there was no biting. It now became evident that they were not over favorable ground, but rather than change the vessel, they availed of the happy suggestion of manning the prize-boat for a trial excursion. The opinion proved correct, for no sooner had the boat anchored near the bars, than the biting commenced, and continued steadily through the day.

Toward night, the wind, which had fallen to a calm, sprung up from the north-east, continually freshening. At the same time, a heavy cloud-bank was seen lying around the western horizon, and appearances seemed to bode another gale.

"Breeding another storm," muttered Loggy, after many an ominous glance over the water and around the horizon. "Second part of the same tune, I'll warrant," he added, with growing boldness. "Better get over the shoals 'fore night, hadn't we, skipper—catching season, this. For one, I shouldn't like another such a brush."

The skipper falling in with the opinion of Loggy, the anchor was weighed, and after making signals to the boat, they squared away toward the point.

The movement was noticed on board the boat; but the biting being brisker than ever, Fishall, who swayed a tacit command, was too absorbed in the catch, to heed the call at the moment. Indeed, a kind of illusive enthusiasm seemed to throw a binding spell around every one; and, as one fish after another came over the side, light fingered sport managed to wheedle them of the fleeting moments, until the vessel had faded in the distance, and the sun was fast sinking below the threatening cloud rising in the west.

What had best now be done? To essay overtaking the vessel were idle. Doubling the point alone would lock them

fast in the arms of night, and expose them to incalculable perils; especially should the sudden lowering storm in the sky open its bowels of fury at an early hour.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said Fishall, brightening with the sheen of heroism, "We'll cross the bars." This was received by the rest with a look of doubt, but no one ventured a reply. Marl threw a significant glance at the line of breakers, just then combing near them, as if in defiance; but the old salt carried too much of the daring in his spirit to be outbraved by a mere fisherman.

Fishall was not, by nature, overstocked with pluck. But in this instance, the energy aroused by the novelty of power, and the enthusiasm fired by a good catch, had, for once, awakened something corresponding to heroism in his breast. Possibly the gladdening view of home added its influence.

Chatham bars are a congeries of hidden sand-bars, commencing somewhere off the middle of Cape Monomoy, running parallel with the shore, and reaching to Chatham lights. Exposed to the full rake of the Atlantic, the waves break upon them with fearful cresting, especially amid a gale, and even after its force is spent. Their dirge-like roar may be heard of a still evening for miles in the inland.

Walter himself had often listened in childish wonder to their wailing lullaby, not dreaming that it was to be one day his lot, to cross them in an open boat. Thus short is our ken of the future!

Mariners hold a mental dread of these sand-bars, as of all others in their neighborhood, and to seamen not familiar by experience with their relative position, their very name brings dismay to the stoutest heart. Hence, vessels never fail of doing them the homage of a wide berth. Their not being well known, may account somewhat for the awe that envelops them; since acquaintance with danger tends to ameliorate the

sentiment of terror, which danger at a distance rarely fails to beget. But let that be as it may, a certain mysterious awe continues to hang around these remorseless death-beacons! Even Fishall, whose youth had been spent in boat-fishing, and who was as familiar with every nook of coast thereabouts, as the finny tribes that periodically scour its sandy shores, had never ventured across Chatham bars. That he should have the boldness to do it now, might seem inexplicable, save by remembering that a bold rashness sometimes springs up in a timid soul, as the wildest tornadoes not unfrequently break forth amid regions the most placid.

Well, if cross they must, there was no time to lose in mere hesitancy. Accordingly Fishall unshipped the rudder and rove a long oar through a strong becket in the stern sheets. This was done to give him a mastery over the direction of the boat. The thole pins were at the same time examined, and where necessary, new ones substituted. All being ready, four oars were thrown out, spreading their blades like a double row of fins to the fleet dolphin.

The boat glided swiftly on. Still the men plied their oars gingerly, husbanding their strength for the moment of need. Reaching the verge of the outermost bar, the men lay on their oars a few moments, awaiting a smooth time. To Marl, as the post of honor, had been assigned the aftermost oar. But Walter being deemed a useless appendage, where only sinew hands could be useful, lay coiled up under the bow, in a state of intense anxiety.

"Give way now, boys," breathed Fishall, gripping and hugging with energy the steering oar, his eyes at the same time fixed with solicitous intent upon the spot of the most dangerous wave. The men wielded with nervous vigor. The boat flew over the fevered waves as if a conscious being. Happily, the bar remained comparatively smooth, and, as the trembling

boat neared the innermost verge of the shoal, a load of anxiety was removed from every breast. Each heart swelled with gratitude at so quiet and safe transit. But suddenly, as if touched with the wand of magic, a mountain wave gathered just astern, and came down upon them roaring and bristling like a rabid animal. Walter's heart quivered in his throat. The rowers peaked their oars a cock-bill, and laid graspingly hold of the thwarts. Fishall's eyes rolled in frenzied trepidation. Bracing firmly his feet, and renewing his gripping embrace with the steering oar, he awaited the result. It seemed that the fierce towering billow must submerge them beneath its emerald breast. Escape looked hopeless. But the fragile barque managed to mount the foamy crest, when, locked in firm embrace, the two sped on together, like delirious lovers. Indeed, the speed of the boat was so intense, as to thrill every nerve to the fingers' ends. As the waves caused by the velocity of the boat were thrown up on either side, at the gunwales, it created the sublime illusion of riding post haste to the very bottom of the deep. This intense emotion, was, however, but momentary; for the wave disdaining the union, soon outstripped the boat, and before another sea could be formed, she was within the shoal and out of danger. All now took a long breath.

The inner bar was yet to be crossed. This was less formidable than the outer one, yet it looked sufficiently appalling to keep alive the sentiment that had been awakened within them. They paused a moment to contemplate the peril of a second trial. At a favorable moment that they had been waiting for, Fishall again gave the word to pull away. In a moment, the boat was dancing among the trembling breakers. It proved rougher here than upon the outer bar, still they were about to achieve the feat nobly, when suddenly the boat struck her stem against the rib of an old hulk imbedded in

the sand. The unexpected concussion sent an electric thrill through every bosom. They sprang up, and reversed their oars with a view to shove off, but a rolling wave coming up behind, struck the stern, capsized the boat, and precipitated all hands overboard among the angry waves.

Walter struck the water in a state of utter bewilderment—a gleam of terror, a convulsive throe, a sinking down, down, the green waters receding from his filmy vision, like departing phantoms, a distressed oppression like a hand of lead, pressing upon his vitals, a waning consciousness, and a vague feeling that all was over—these were, at least, the dim sensations he could afterwards recall.

Rising to the surface by mere reaction, and instinctively grasping by good fortune a drifting oar, he was enabled to keep from again sinking. The first object that struck his conscious gaze, was the blessed vision of old Marl, whose head was bobbing among the breakers, looking like Hope cast amid the whirlpools of life. The keen sighted sailor had already caught a glimpse of the boy, and was bearing down for him with all the energy of a generous purpose. With an arm nerved by the force of humanity, he placed the boy upon the boat, and then carelessly struck off himself for the shore. Having reached it, he found the rest of the crew happily escaped from the treacherous element, into which they had been so summarily thrown, and giving heart-felt thanks in rough, but honest accents, for their hair-breadth deliverance.

The wrecked boat having drifted into the surf, Walter, half lifeless with exhaustion, crawled up the beach, and joined the rest.

By one of those felicitous threads in the web of chance, another boat's crew were upon the beach. They had come for a sojourn of a few days, for gunning, eeling, quahauging, and such like staple sports; and were, in consequence, well sup-

plied with comforts. On seeing the capsized, their manly sympathies could not but be aroused to the highest pitch, and they came bounding up in breathless haste, to proffer their fullest aid.

Fortunately, one found upon his person a supplied tinder box, flint and steel. With these, a fire was struck up under a hillock, and kept glowingly alive by means of dried grass and drift wood strewed plentifully around.

Another ran, and with alacrity of heart, brought them cold victuals. Thus refreshed, and warmed by the crackling flames, they began to feel like new men. Walter especially experienced a sense of renovation, that seemed to him like a new birth. He would not have believed himself susceptible of so delicious animation. It imparted the most exquisite elasticity to his feelings. Indeed, he would have been willing to pass through the same perils again, if only to taste the sweet glow of gladdening comfort, that was suffusing his system.

Flagging nature at length restored, the ill-starred fishermen began buckling up their spirits, in order to start anew for home. The other boat's crew freely tendered them such hospitality as they had to offer, — a night's lodging with them under their own boat that lay a little way off, turned over and banked up with sea-weed and sand, — not so dainty a sleeping apartment, they admitted, as might be found in the world; yet to the crystal conscience, and weary bodies, of rough, honest fishermen, as inviting of sleep, as the softest, silk-canopied couch, might be to the delicate attenuated limbs of the surfeited wretch.

But our home-bound fishermen were in no wise disposed to accept this frank hospitality. The little adventure of upsetting was after all but a mere jostle in the road of their journey. It seemed to have emboldened their natures, instead of

making them more timorous. They were besides desirous of intercepting the *Pink* before she crossed the bay.

So resolutely they mustered forward. But between the inception of a resolution, and the goal of achievement, there not unfrequently lies in the way many a knotty obstacle, overlooked in the hasty mental grasp of the route.

In making ready to start, they found that in the upsetting of the boat, much of her equipment had been lost. They were, however, promptly relieved from this embarrassment by the untiring kindness of the other boat's crew. But amid the pale of the surrounding darkness, first to strike unerringly the mouth of the channel, then to keep the devious depth through the wide waters across the beach, nearly filled with sand-flats, and quagmires of decayed sea-weed, was such as to tax to the utmost their keenest sagacity.

Necessity is the mother of invention. By towing along the shore to the mouth of the passage, then cautiously setting the boat ahead with oars, — all the time groping their way like blind men in a strange garret, — they succeeded at length, to gain the entrance way to the channel.

Then came a knot of troublesome vicissitudes, — such as grazing upon this shallow, floundering over that, sticking fast upon another, — then pushing the boat backward, side-wise, around, forward, — but all to little purpose.

At length, a good deal puzzled, they resolved upon a more summary and efficient procedure.

Plunge, dropped overboard one man, sending up a shuddering wail at the effect of the cold bath upon his nerves, a wail that made the darkness more hideous. Plunge, followed another, giving in turn a plaintive squeal, at experiencing a similar sensation to that of his daring predecessor. Then *plunge*, *plunge* they dropped into the water, like leads over the side of a fishing-vessel.

"Cold pig, this," muttered Marl, drawing in his breath, with a groan, as he crawled over the side of the boat, taking care to find a firm resting-place for one foot, before removing the other knee from the gunwale. I'd sooner be lashing on a jib-boom in the teeth of a screaming Nor-Easter, with the thermometer at zero, than trudging and shivering along in this "slough of despond."

"Only a touch of the wet blanket," chattered Fishall. The rest were silent. They had no feeling just then for pleasantries; and they thought, besides, their present predicament no joke.

Meanwhile Walter, who, thanks to the generous care of old Marl, had lain under the bow snugly tucked up in an old pea-jacket, was aroused from his dozing, by the splashing of the crew along side. Though of a gentle spirit, he was not one to hesitate sharing the hardship of suffering companions. With a feeling of sympathetic gladness, he boldly jumped over into the water with the rest.

The progress of the boat was now more sure, although not devoid of vicissitude. Using their feet for sounding lead, and their sinew arms for propellers, they floundered along through the obscure channel; now settling to the arm-pits in water, and again sinking to the knees in a quagmire of decayed seaweed, until at length, they felt the joyous relief of deepening off into the clear waters and firm shelving bottom of the bay.

Their success was achieved by meeting with a brave judgment the inevitable obstacles of their path-way. Their course was emblematic of a gallant spirit, bearing on steadily amid the muddy channels and devious currents of life.

The other boat's crew that had stuck to them like fast friends in adversity, now modestly took their leave. This was done in a simple and quiet way. Indeed, there seemed

no desire for display on either side. The others acted as if conscious of having merely done their duty, without caring to thrust a sense of obligation upon their beneficiaries. These latter as content to preserve the memory of a rich favor, and let its spiritual fragrance ennoble their own life for good.

Beautiful, indeed, is the rainbow form of politeness, but sweeter by far is the endeared act of kindness, flowing from the unaffected pulsations of a generous heart.

Although they had threaded the tortuous entrance of the bay, yet all vexatious obstacles were not yet surmounted. The night seemed of an Egyptian darkness. No moon hung like a silvery lamp in the sky. Not a star could peep through the black cloud enshrouding the heavens. The very spirit of darkness seemed brooding over the deep, settling gently upon the broad bosom of ocean, as with raven wings. Indeed, the imagination could be reminded of a night before creation.

The wind began to freshen. Appearances boded a speedy onset of the threatening storm. That it might overtake them before achieving the passage, was but a reasonable apprehension. It should be borne in mind, that their clothing was saturated with salt water, their skin chafed to soreness, and themselves drooping with fatigue and exhaustion.

This appalling prospect, added to a shivering numbness from sudden inaction, that was fast creeping over them;—along with a certain gloomy dejection, which a raw east wind is wont to work upon the nerves, were circumstances keenly disheartening. Moreover, there was no light nor compass in the boat to steer by; and, although Fancy conjured up no rocks under the lee, to inspire terror, yet to see the boat founder by shipping an unlucky sea, to get swamped in crossing the bar, or to strike the main-land wide of the mark, and foun-

der in the surf, were circumstances not particularly soothing to the mind, already dejected by exposure.

But men well inured in the warfare of life, are wont to be not easily discouraged. Their every day grapplings with sturdy nature, leave a fortitude and trepidation of character, that blinks not at difficulties. Such spirits anticipate in advance, the giant Danger, and coolly prepare for the onset. They are thus not easily overcome by his wily surprises. Their genius rises with the wave of emergency, instead of being overcome by it.

Moreover, in the intense excitement that accompanies situations of great peril, the soul happily falls unconsciously into an illusion. It is for the moment blind to the impending danger. And it is only when the trial has been passed, and is reviewed by the calm eye of retrospect, that the danger of the scene rises before the mind in its due proportion.

But striking random bearings of Monomoy and Chatham lights, which were sharply glimmering through the murky air, and shaping their course by judgment, that magnet of the soul, to which experience in life imparts greater trueness of touch, they awaited results, as men who had done what might be in the path of duty.

The threatening breeze did not, however, as it was feared, swell into a furious gale. It rather subsided to a hectic breath, which came creeping over the waters, like the feeble respiration of a consumptive man.

The boat under a single sail could only grope her way languidly. The weary hours lingered behind with sullen gloom. Talk, that swift winged messenger of Time, halted.

At length it was felt, they must be nearly over the bay. In truth, their strained vision drew forth from the shadowy realms of darkness, the dim outline of *land*. The sudden and marvellous effect the sight had upon the crew, filled Walter

with uncontrollable curiosity. Indeed, the very word "*land*," seemed a fairy wand, whose magic touch dissolved the fetters of the soul, restoring it to the joy of freedom.

As the older fishermen, each garrulous as half tipsy black-birds, were in a glee of excitement, guessing out the precise whereabouts of the boat, Walter still remained snugly rolled up under the bow, yet hardly willing to leave his warm, cosy retreat. As his eyes wandered thoughtfully amid the blank darkness, suddenly they chanced to fall upon something, that sent a startling thrill through his whole frame.

It was a crescent of white foam just on the weather bow. He was at first struck with the belief of its being a breaker, a phenomenon to which he had become painfully sensitive. Bounding from his covert, he gave the alarm with a shriek that shot like an arrow through every breast. All eyes darted instantaneously toward the spot indicated by the boy, and remained transfixed there in a wild, convulsive stare. But this sight proved but the prelude to a more gigantic apparition, for while standing petrified in amazement, there slowly emerged from the folds of the darkness, like a resurrection, a grizzly bulk, surmounted by an irregularly shaped phantom, which to their excited imagination, seemed the evil genius of night flapping his broad wings to destroy.

The crew catching the sight, sent up in turn, a simultaneous shout, so piercing as to make the darkness quake. It rolled back to the mysterious object like a deep anthem. The huge spectre at once slowly changed its direction, and was moving past them, when "*halloa*," shouted Fishall, — "*the Pink*, by jingo; lucky dogs, ain't we; after all, a miss is as good as a mile. *Halloa*, there," he repeated, "*send us a rope, — a rope, I say.*"

The familiar voice of Fishall was instantly seized by the quick ear of the skipper. A rope was sent with a gladdening impetus, and, in a twinkling, the boat's crew had scrambled over the side of the vessel, and were on board. Mutual congratulations were exchanged; then followed the breathless narrations of their hair-breadth escapes and other vicissitudes.

As for Walter, he felt an ecstasy of gratitude to be again on board of the *Pink*. He would not have believed the vessel so endeared to him. She seemed the warm genial hearth-stone of home after absence; and when he recalled the perilous scenes through which he had passed, he paced the deck in transport.

The skipper having a compass to steer by, might well presume on greater accuracy of reckoning than Fishall. Accordingly, the identity of the boat was merged into that of the larger craft.

The presumption soon broke forth into reality; for their exploring eyes now caught sight of a flickering light just ahead. It turned out to be on board of another fishing craft which was just rounding to for anchor, in the time honored anchorage, called the Deep Hole.

Guided by it, they felt their way along to a snug berth at anchor near the shore.

"Shall we heave out the boat, or go ashore in the prize-boat alongside," demanded Fishall of the skipper. The latter was too far in another part of the vessel to hear.

"Go ashore now, whew," interrupted Marl. "You're in a mighty hurry to see Mamma and Bess. Why, at this time of night, you'd be prowling over the old fields, awaking up all the roosters and barking dogs, far and near. Whereas, a couple of hours'd give you daylight to make your welcome

bow in. What chowder-heads these women folks make of you."

This bit of raillery from the *Salt*, fell like a snow-flake upon the bosom of the thirsty ocean. It did not elicit even a note of reply. Each seemed too intently absorbed for that, in the fulfilment of what was nearest his heart,—namely, getting home.

It may be safely asserted that the heart beats as warmly under a fisherman's jacket, as beneath the richest fustian.

Indeed, a simple life, while it keeps pure the native emotions, greatly increases their force, by bearing them onward in a few well defined channels.

Ere long, they pushed blithely off, from the vessel toward the shore. The boat now cleft the water more fleetly, than when taking them on board for the voyage. And altogether natural was this, for a different motive lay at the spring of their movement.

Now the boat touches the shore; they jump to land with bounding feet. She is drawn up with a will,—her keel barely touching the sand; and turned over with a whirl that would have graced a circus-rider.

But for Marl's unbending habit of care, the oars even would hardly have got snugly put away.

On they trudged with quickened step, the eye of Fancy fixed upon the dear hearth-stone rising before them in the sweet mirage of anticipation.

As for Walter, he felt like a new being, so marvellous had been the transformation in his entire consciousness. The chill air of ocean, softened to an aromatic gale, sighed mellifluous through the murmuring pine-tops, and its mild touch seemed like the soft gentle hand of woman.

It soothed the excitement of his feelings, and awakened

emotions of joy and love, that ran through his frame in halcyon currents.

At length, the dear, venerable mansion stood out before them, dimly in the mellow gray of night. Here the crew separated from Walter, each for his own home, — ever the sweetest spot of earth, but to the fisherman, the one single magnet of his affections. If, for the lowly, there be fewer objects to claim the homage of the heart, toward these the fires of love burn with a clearer, ruddier glow.

Walter stood a moment before the scene, distracted by the novelty of his emotions. Familiar, yet how strange everything struck his sense. It was the same beloved homestead of his youth. Yet to his mental vision how different from the one parted with but a little while before. In truth, a deep and intense experience had given a new lens to the eye of his soul. Besides, that longing for home, which during his absence, had given polarity to his every thought, was now strange enough to himself, felt no more. It was followed even by a sensible indifference toward the desired object, along with an odd perception of mind, not unlike that which comes from suddenly being rid of a long worn habit.

Strange anomaly of the soul, that seems even for the moment to lose the sense of enjoyment, when just on the boundary of possession. Is it that the swell of emotion forces the feelings to dead inanity, or that the wave of desire recedes to leave a cleaner breach for the mighty swell of the coming billow?

But he reaches the quaint portico, and lays his hand upon the massive brass handle of the door. This he had scarcely rattled a second time, before the responsive portal cautiously opened. Behold the transcendent form of his mother! Ecstatic moment! The bounding gushes of sympathy overleaped the flood-gates of his soul.

“Walter,” “Mother,” were all that utterance could vent; and they were instantly locked in each other’s arms.

What more graceful, more noble, than filial affection!
What deeper, purer, more angelic, than a mother’s love!

CHAPTER VIII.

"Maternal love! thou word that seems all bliss,
Gives and receives all bliss;—fullest when most
Thou givest! spring-head of all felicity,
Deepest when most is drawn! emblem of God!
Overflowing most when greatest numbers drink."

POLLOCK.

WHEN Walter awoke, the morning sun was streaming in brightly through the eastern windows of his narrow bed-room. The threatening storm had not vented its spite. Indeed, the puny demonstration proved to be only a little foible of Nature; for as if suddenly repenting itself, the vacillating wind hitched back to the south-west, the black clouds hurried away, and the sky put on again its wonted smile of serenity.

His first impression on opening the eyes, was of being still on board of the *Pink*, tossing upon the restless sea. But the comfortable neatness of his room, the golden sunshine flooding it, the soft tread of his mother, preparing the breakfast, and the genial crackling of the flames in the adjoining apartment, dissipated the illusion, and created sensations so delicious, that in a feeling of dreamy repose, he turned languidly upon his pillow for the luxury of a second nap.

"Ah, my son," sighed Mrs. Carl, as the boy finished relating the more startling incidents of the trip, "I hope the dangers and hardships you have passed through, will strike you with a dread of the sea; and that I shall be spared the anguish of another parting."

The boy made no reply. He had not the courage to de-

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stroy the illusive hope of his mother. Yet little did she imagine the mysterious workings within the breast of her son. The grim trials of his voyage instead of weaning him from the sea, had aroused the latent energies of his nature, and imparted a heroic complexion to his feelings; and, as the neighbors crowded around him with an air of intense sympathetic curiosity, to listen to his witching narratives, he was conscious of a glow of animation, that cast into oblivion the sufferings he had experienced, and made him more resolute than ever, for a "life upon the ocean-wave."

The sun was blazing high over the pine-tops, before the skipper made his appearance. As an act of courtesy to Mrs. Carl, he had called on his way to the shore, for Walter to join them in boarding the *Pink*. The severe brushing the little craft had encountered, rendered certain repairs indispensable, before it were safe to venture again upon the treacherous element.

This would bring a delay. Mrs. Carl seized the propitious circumstance to secure the interval for her son to remain with her at home. To this end, she wrestled so earnestly, and with such a tone of success, that the skipper yielded, though in so doing, he subjected himself to the fault-finding of the crew.

The boy was now free for a holiday stroll among scenes and acquaintances of his home. He could not but enjoy the furlough prodigiously. So long had he been tied up to the narrow tossings of a sea-life, that he now felt his expansive freedom, as does the wing of an uncaged bird. The woodland air mellowed upon his sense, in soft contrast from the raw breeze of the sea. The picturesque surroundings of the Mansion, had become dwarfed a little, it is true, in comparison with the illimitable ken of old Ocean, but they fell upon the soul with a charm as sweet as the fragrant violet of his native grove.

He was conscious moreover of a larger power of life. The germinating seeds of his faculties, quickened by intense experience, had burst through the clay of his being, and were sniffing the radiance of heaven. Nature wore a brighter, a more animating hue. A freshness of spirit gladdened his breast, and gave suppleness to his limbs. Life had for him a new charm.

The neighbors greeted him, too, in a style very different from their wont. He was no longer to them the insignificant, though amiable youth of past days. He had received a touch, as they termed it, of real life; and this bound him in a chord of sympathy with themselves. More even than this. He had gone through passages of peril, that had not happened even in their own varied experience, — sublime scenes known to them only through the eye of fancy. This embalmed him in their eyes with the heroic; and the tone and gesture — the eloquence of the illiterate — with which they addressed him, aroused to the verge of enthusiasm, the self-gratulation already throbbing his breast.

Then he had risen in social consequence marvellously among his youthful companions. He had been lifted to an undisputed elevation. He could now look down upon them from a position positively earned. This unfolded superiority might be likened to a beautiful flower that bursts into bloom in a single night, eclipsing surrounding shrubs.

Then what charm had gained the society of his female acquaintances! As he circulated among them, their gentle forms seemed to have caught new grace, their vivacious souls brighter sparks of ethereal fire. This was, however, but an illusion, — doubtless, one of those complacent arts of nature, to beguile to a happier state of mind, — but still a deception. It was but an image, mirrored from the golden rays of the boy's own imagination.

Still, their manner was obviously changed. There was a certain maidenly coyness which he had never before observed. This struck him oddly, while it but heightened the charm of his agreeable emotions. These blushing beauties fell upon his artless nature, like the magic brush, that touches with lively hues the beaming picture.

To a cursory observer, such tender graces might have been construed into that mysterious sympathy of the human heart, that will blush at its purest feelings, and elude the object it most tenderly desires.

But such was not the case. Their sweet deference did not spring from any seductive sentiment the boy was unconsciously weaving around them. It issued from a nobler source. It was that beautiful homage, the heart of woman instinctively yields to the heroic in man, that Desdemona inspiration that is thrall'd by noble daring, and manly energy. For we find that the zenith beauty of woman, is perceived only in contrast with her co-equal, man, as the grandeur of man is heightened when beaming in the azure heaven of woman. Thus the more pure, delicate, and gentle her nature, the more earnestly she seeks a manly trunk around which to wind her gentle tendrils. That is, as the shores of their uniting natures widen, do the waters of their common soul-lake deepen. Let us then spurn the sentiment that would render woman, *manish*, and man *womanish* — would bridge the circle of whose circumference they make counterpart segments, — would merge into an impotent unit, what nature designed as a blessed duality. The towering mountain peak catches a rare significance of grandeur, when mirrored upon the bosom of the placid lake below.

But this joyous state of mind did not continue long unclouded. The golden stream of his feelings flowed not without alloy. Ere long other thoughts, a little dispiriting began

entwining amid the wreath of his sensations. We will see how this was.

Two or three families in the settlement had gradually risen to comparative wealth, by shop-trading. The possession of substance, and their natural connection with the city, had inflated them with a species of vanity which took to itself airs of social superiority. The heads of a few other families having ventured into the merchant service, had in due time meritoriously climbed to successful commandership. Their taste liberalized by voyaging abroad, very naturally showed itself in the erection and adornment of more pretentious homes.

Worldly prosperity is apt to beguile the heart of its devotee into a feeling of superiority. It tends moreover to dazzle the eyes of the less fortunate into a feeling of envious admiration. And when wealth gained in a given pursuit seems to invest the possessor with superior address and intelligence, it never fails to turn the heads of the plodding poor, and make them restive under their own peculiar burden, in the dusty road of life.

Now, these two classes—namely, the traders and the ship-captains, acquired an influence of opinion, and set an example of style, that quite upset the simple and homely notions prevalent in the neighborhood. The result was to bring fishing into disrepute; and the calling had already begun to be looked upon as low and menial. Thus a branch of homely industry, which had been followed from time immemorial, bringing health, comfort, and contentment to most, and competence to not a few, became to be discarded. The quiet satisfaction of the past had departed, and a new era was following upon its heels.

It may be here observed, that although Walter enjoyed a most enviable popularity, yet he was thought to be tainted

with one blemish. This was what was considered an unwarrantable *pride*. He had ever been looked upon as a proud mortal, which was the more noticeable, as the circumstances of his life did not seem to justify on his part any such feeling.

Claiming for our hero no immunity from the weakness common to humanity, we must admit of there being something in his composition to warrant the notion very generally entertained of his possessing an inordinate self-esteem. Having admitted this much, we must in fairness say further, that this defect, if such it could be called, did not spring so much from an egotistical nature, as from a combination of circumstances, beyond human control. But the eye of the public which is very keen sighted to note the failings of its members, is not always so sharp to trace the cause of any peculiarity. The spots upon the sun are observed with little trouble, but the reason for this phenomenon, has baffled the most astute philosophers.

If the eccentricities of character could be looked at fully by the searching eye of truth, many an ungainly trait would be found to be simply superior worth forced from the channels of conventionalism. And if mankind were made to feel the touch of an Ithuriel's Spear, many a fair-seeming, smooth-tongued being, would spring up a hideous monster.

As for Walter, what was dwelt upon as an overweening pride, if not proof of excellence, was at least the result of circumstances which he might not control.

True, the boy was surrounded by penury. Discouragement like a dark cloud hung over his pathway. Still but a youth, he had as yet achieved nothing to swell him with lofty self-esteem. Yet a manly spirit pervaded his being; noble aspirations crowded his breast. Then there was the inspiration of blood. He was related both on his maternal and pa-

ternal side to the most pretentious families of the settlement. Indeed, the best of the Puritan blood flowed in his veins; and he could trace his descent direct to the May Flower, that anchored in Cape Cod Harbor. Whatever may be said to the contrary, there is something in the pride of ancestry, that appeals to the noblest instinct of our nature.

Besides, his mother, by an overweening care, might have formed within him the gales of self-love. At least, filial gratitude inspired him to achieve something worthy of her ambition, and deep toned affection. Then his anomalous situation related to the best families, yet not feeling free to associate with them on terms of equal footing, made him peculiarly sensitive to earn for himself a commanding position.

However humble his condition, he yet felt burning within an earnest of victory in the battle of life. Visions of a lofty career were wont to flit before his mental eye. Fires burned in the depth of his soul, that lit up his imagination to a splendor, that threw the actuality of his humble lot into insignificance. He would remain hours in day-dreamings, in which he was translated to other worlds, amid scenes more congenial to his panting spirit. These fairy regions were peopled with a race of a nature more consonant with his own unearthly spirit,—with a race actuated by motives that satisfied more fully the integrity of his crystal being. It was in one of these golden reveries, that we first saw him standing upon the turf bridge, not far from the Old Mansion.

Walter did not mingle so freely as was natural with his youthful companions. He appeared coy of their most animating sports. A pensive reserve showed itself at all times in his manner. This was mistaken for a native haughtiness of feeling. But its roots sprang deeper. He could not endure the thoughtless obscenity that would occasionally break out among his playmates, like the sudden miring up of a crystal

stream. It shocked his fine sensibilities, and turned the most joyous sport into loathing. The seeming hard lot of his birth hung constantly around him, like a cloud against a morning's horizon. It checked the current of youthful gleesomeness, and imprinted even a sedate hue to his youthful expression. And then there was the abstraction continually of the glorious visions of a golden future, ever rising before him to divert his mind from the present.

Thus what was looked upon as peculiar in the boy, was but a tender, yet deep, spiritual energy, that while struggling amid the tangled path of his lot, was opening a vista into the realms of the future.

What finer than youthful genius lit up by hues of heaven, casting its brightness without, to illumine its ascent up the lofty mount of Fame!

As we have before observed, amid the joyous greetings of his arrival home, twinges of mortification would now and then arise. In truth, his feelings had become somewhat tumultuous, now that the first wave of welcome had subsided. New flushed hope, that had given wings to his spirit for a freshened life, could not prevent the sinking of his feelings to a state of bitter dejection.

This abasement arose from contemplating how utterly he had compromised his future, by entering upon the despised pursuit of fishing. The pulse of his being had beaten toward a higher life, not only to satisfy an inward craving for elevation, but to wrest from his pathway the shadowing hand of penury, and to rise in the future to a social preëminence. But by yielding to the tender solicitude of his mother, he had sunk even deeper into the miry waters of an humble lot. This thought grew painful to him, especially so, as he reflected how it must widen the social gulf between himself and certain distant relations, whose equality he desired to com-

mand. The young females belonging to these, had shown toward him, as he fancied, a chilling reserve; and this, as he further thought, because of the disparity in their social position. In this the boy deceived himself. He looked at the subject through his perverted feelings. It was his own little world, and not the fixed sun that moved. Cooped up in a circle of narrow sympathies, they would gladly have welcomed him to friendly intercourse; even more, he might have won their intimate friendship; for nothing is more disinterested than a young girl's partialities. But he did not see it so. He continued nursing his wounded pride, cherishing the purpose of one day wringing from them a brilliant admiration. How often the susceptible soul preys upon the griefs of its own creation!

Before setting out from his youth-harbor, that is, fixing upon a calling, his career could not be divined. His future was hid by an impenetrable veil. He could retreat from the humility of his condition, behind the possibility of a future elevation. This buoyant anticipation sustained him. It enabled him to smother many a fancied slight under the lurking resolution of springing some day to a glory that should dazzle with its brightness.

But now he had set sails to his barque, had hoisted the colors of his calling. The voyage of his career lay disclosed to view, and oh how it falsified his taste and aspirations! and what a wide remove he had taken from the social point whence he started. This it was that brought to his mind a depth of abasement so profound, as to roll up a wave of dejection, darkening the whole vista of his life. But the gloomiest hours have an end; and if not blessings in disguise, like rainy days, they at least gladden the coming sunshine to our sense.

At least, thus was it with Walter. This phantom of per-

verted sentiment gradually rolled off from his ridden spirit. Through the darkness that had shut down upon his horizon, there twinkled the beckoning star of Hope. Although compromised to a calling held in low repute, by those whose opinions he most prized, there was yet left him this alternative: He might not wait for it inextricably to weave his fate,—to shackle the doom of his destiny. He need only make it the first round in the ladder of his climbing ascent. He could shake off whatever dust odium might attach, like the Apostles of old. He would only remain till his fledged wings could take him to loftier flights. This thought breaking in upon his troubled spirit, like darting sunbeams through rented clouds, imparted a joyous spring to his ambition.

It cleared up his dark vision, rolling back the clouds of despondency. Schemes congenial to his taste seized his imagination, and buoyed him upon the pinions of Hope. As his mind become occupied with its communings, and stretched beyond the strata of earth, into the realms of Fancy, he was more reconciled to his present situation. This moving in a round of drudgery, with the mind in a spiritual sphere of existence, is the life balm of those whose souls are leaping to some loftier round of existence. True, the restiveness of spirit it begets, brings little incense to the shrine of Mammon, but it places a rainbow in the sky of life, that steadies the eye of Faith. The boy was thus distracted by a flow of novel feelings. Day, upon brilliant wings, had flown swiftly athwart the arch, and was now nestling in dreamy repose in the crimson west.

In obedience to a sentiment of filial homage, Walter now set out for his grandfather's. He felt that another welcome was there in store for him. His feelings were buoyant at the consciousness of having risen in manly consequence, since parting with this venerable parent of his mother; and he

could not but set out with elastic step, at the thought of receiving the benediction of one whose nature was in earnest sympathy with every form of honest struggling in life. Accordingly, he sauntered thitherward, yielding to the gentle play of his emotions.

The shades of night were fast gathering round, dimming off objects to sombre outline. He had but just crossed the tireless brook, which was sending up its sweet plaints to the listful ear of eve, when he was startled by the appearance of a person on the left of the pathway near him. It was plainly a female, and his impression was of its being some woman, very naturally on her way homeward from an afternoon's visit. Hence, for the moment, he dismissed the figure from his mind; but perceiving afterward, that it continued to keep the same relative position and distance from him, his curiosity was awakened, and he pressed on with a view to overtake it. But his quickened speed did not bring the expected approach. This struck him strangely, and he redoubled his pace, but not a whit did he seem to gain upon the moving apparition. Indeed, it was very like chasing one's own shadow. Provoked as well as excited, at being so completely foiled, he let out his gait to increased strides. But it was all of no avail, the defiant elf still maintained its vantage ground.

Walter was, by nature, sensitively timid, but the first paroxysm of trepidation over, he was wont to wax bold, and gather a strength of resolution, that nothing could daunt. Determining to solve the mystery before him, he bounded forward, and ran with such speed, that the fence by his side spun backward like objects darting past a moving railroad car. But this was as futile as his previous efforts. There was still the unresolved wonder, fixed as if held in the wiles of Fate. Only now he thought he perceived a fine oscillation of movement, and a gliding forward, as if drawn by a magic wire.

Roused now to fullest excitement, his frenzied enthusiasm lent wings to his speed, and he flew as it were over the ground. Reaching the skirts of the road, the evasive myth disappeared entirely. This, however, but gave fresh impulse to his movement, and a few quickened bounds brought him over the mill-dam, past the Washer Tree, up the steep winding Hill, until he arrived panting before the door of his grandfather. His speed was none the less accelerated, because of the momentary apprehension, that behind every passing shrub, the vanished unknown might dart forth, and clutch him to a fearful embrace. At the door he paused a few moments to take breath, and we will devote the interval in attempting a sketch.

Walter's grandfather was a man of few words, — a man of action, rather than expression. His firm set character had been moulded in the hardy school of experience, instead of fashioned by the amenities of conventional society. His influence was felt rather in the deep energy of his life, than seen in the specious glitter of verbiage. He belonged to a class who move in obedience to an irrepressible inward spring, to which external pressure but adds vital force, rather than to those that are fanned along by the friendly gales of fortune.

Beginning his career as ship-builder, he had hewn out his rough way with a resolute arm, and thoroughly set the gnarled timbers of his fortune. By dint of sagacity united to an untiring energy, he rose to be considered one of the most consequential men of the town, although a singular straightforwardness of disposition, bordering upon obstinacy, had made him no favorite with the public. Throughout his toilsome ascent, he moiled his way quite alone; for this aloof standing world, very wisely extends the hand of aid only when the favor is not needed. As there were none upon which he could lean for prop, except such as were lured to

him by the sordid spell of gain, he might well be said to have been the architect of his fortune. This absolute dependence upon his own resources, joined to one of those sterling natures to which action engenders enthusiasm and success emboldens the faculties, could not but impart to him immense energy and self-reliance. But fortuitous circumstances contributed to solidify hugely these corner traits of character.

Of four brothers, he was the only one of the family group that had thrived. The others withered and dwarfed, held but a precarious existence, and that only under the fostering shade of his own vigorous branches. They might be seen shivering in the air of want, with eyes forever upturned for aid. His wife was a woman of soft nature, but of lively sympathies, and of a disposition intensely humane and benevolent. In consequence, the current of her life flowed all naturally toward the relief of misery, and she was ever seeking occasions for open-handed bounty. To prevent the wasting of his fortune, there was imposed upon Mr. Walfinch, the hard necessity of checking within limits the stream of the good woman's benevolence. This gave him the appearance of penuriousness, a trait which at the bottom he did not possess.

His four children came upon the horizon of life with rosy prospects, but by an inscrutable fate, their bright future soon blighted, they were sooner or later forced back upon their father in hopeless dependence.

The bridal joy of the eldest daughter ere long after marriage, was turned into mourning; and the widowed mother was forced to come with her two children, to claim the support of her father. She espoused a second time, but died in the meridian of life, under peculiar circumstances of painful sorrow. As for his other daughter, the mother of Walter, the tenderly beloved of his scion group, cruel Fate had caused

her, too, to disappoint his ardent dream of Hope. As if Fortune were contesting with him the battle of Life, face to face, every enterprise confided to others, had fallen back upon him a failure, whereas the undertakings of which he had retained the sole management, were always crowned with striking success.

Thus isolated from dependent aid, he might be likened to a man breasting the swelling current with unassisted arm. His children thrown back upon him for support, at that advanced period of life, when man having sown with faithful energy, looks for filial aid and sympathy, had the effect to knit every joint and fibre of his being. Chagrin falling upon an ardent nature, had acerbated his temper, melancholy arising from the failure of his dearest plans in life, had tinged his character with moroseness.

Thus he bore the appearance of being hard; but the world as usual did not read him aright. True, struggling Fate had left upon his exterior a tough-hued aspect, yet he carried still a royal nature within. You might have said, in the language of Franklin, that his faults were of that inverted kind, which makes a man appear worse than he really is.

A fact or two, may set this point in a clearer light. If he could not be persuaded to unite with the leaders of the Temperance cause, it was because he lacked faith in their sincerity. If he became estranged from public worship on the Sabbath, he faithfully read the Bible at home, and supported liberally the institutions of the gospel. If he kept aloof from town-politics, it was because he felt a disgust at the reckless manoeuvres of narrow-minded wire pullers. If his dwelling was furnished in severe simplicity, and his daily table ruled to scanty frugality, it was because he deemed these as essential republican virtues. It may have been further, because he was too persistent to lay aside habits formed in the early

times of need. But on a Thanksgiving day, a wedding, or upon any occasion of entertaining friends, when to spread generously the table bears with it an expression of unstinted welcome, his soul was wont to flow forth with most gracious liberality. And when he travelled, too, from home, he bore himself in a style or regal largeness. There was an amplitude in his whole character, when properly viewed, that abashed all meanness. Indeed, his nature seemed studded all over with green spots, that were really refreshing. These indicated a wealth of liberal spirit, that could scarcely have been found elsewhere, even in those good old primitive times, and which might now be looked for the world over in vain.

For example, he never allowed himself to receive toll at his grist mill, from destitute widows, or the extreme poor. Rarely could he be prevailed upon to take pay from a neighbor for having furnished a horse for a drive. Herrings taken in the brook, were distributed among any who might come for them, after reserving a mess for his own table; and a successful day around the *Beach*, seining for bass, was hailed as a boon in the neighborhood. Visitors and even casual callers, were greeted with well filled decanters, and urged freely to partake. At one time, when a dearth for bread was stalking with threatening aspect through the settlement, and one of his schooners ran the gauntlet through the British squadron in the Chesapeake Bay, and arrived safely home, he sent every poor widow in town a half bushel of corn, then selling at ten dollars per bushel. As a thing of course, neighbors were always sent a cut of newly killed beef or pork. Indeed, no balance sheet was ever made of favors.

But his passions were of giant strength. When fully aroused, the tornado was not more fierce; nor the lightning more vengeful. He was impatient of contradiction, and his

will was law. He exacted implicit deference, and whoever neglected to listen to the conclusion of one of his long winded stories, offended him for life. False pretence fared hard at his hands, and all manner of trickery shivered at his glance.

Possessed of a large antique form, his muscles had grown to iron by exposure. The pure red English blood flowed in his veins, and his countenance was of that bright, deep hue, which is still seen here and there among the descendants of the early settlers of New England. In fact, he lived in that part of the country, where there has been the least admixture of foreign population, where Puritan character is found least alloyed, a spot that has sent from its bosom many a noble son, but whose barren shores present little allurements to bind the step of the stranger.

Men slandered the old gentleman, who did not possess a tinge of his sterling character, his genuine honesty of purpose, his noble integrity of life. They carped at his nonconformity with the conventionalities of the village life, when with all his eccentricities, he possessed infinitely more strength and power of goodness than they all.

If he could not fawn, it was because a manly impulse sprang up in his breast, in protest against such degradation. If he could not assume the guise of false seeming, in order to conciliate and win, it was because stern reality had become too interwoven into the texture of his nature, to render possible such humiliation. He typified largely that quality of character found occasionally here and there in the world, which abhors the subterfuge of sailing under false colors, preferring the hard alternative of being misunderstood, unappreciated, of ill-success, or in fact, of any fate, to the most dazzling fortune, if accompanied by the loss of that fresh, throbbing, noble manhood, which is the first ray, the last vestige of the godlike in man.

His quaint gray home stood upon an elevated site of ground, and his broad acres stretched east and west, ending in luxuriant woodland at the north, and descending on the south to the verge of the sea. The place thus commanded a wide sweep of the ocean, and this could always be broadened by a time-worn spy-glass awaiting the curious in one corner of the parlor cupboard.

When Walter entered, he found his grandfather seated by a crackling oak fire which was burning brightly in the capacious fire-place, sedately smoking a stubbed clay pipe, as was his wont. A complacent grunt was all the response he vouchsafed to the boy's warm but deferential salutation. But when Walter with all the gusto of a youthful hero, related the thrilling adventures of his late fishing-cruise, the whiffs from the pipe grew more frequent and copious, his stern features relaxed, and the corners of his eyes moistened with sympathetic pride. In reality Mr. Walfinch loved very deeply his grandchild, and nothing but a stern, unrelenting pride prevented his confessing it outright. Left to the impulse of natural emotion, he would have folded the boy to his bosom, adopted him as his only heir, and cherished him with the tenderness of a youthful lover; so void had been his life of congeniality, and so much did he crave an object of sympathy, upon which to lavish the welled up affections of his heart. But our affections rarely flow in the willing channels of the heart. Either some obstacle dams up altogether the swollen current, or turns it to courses repugnant to the instinctive impulse of love.

Borne on by the glow of genial converse, the hours had flown swiftly, and the evening was now well nigh spent. Walter was standing near the door-way of the room, balancing in his mind, whether he should yield to the warm, pressing solicitations of the family to spend the night where he

was, at his grandfather's, or he governed by what seemed the paramount claim, as well as expectation of his mother; for his society, and return immediately home, when turning casually around, he was suddenly struck by a strange apparition. It was seen by him out-doors, through one of the windows, and appeared like the face of a female, close to one of the window panes, staring wildly toward him. But before he could collect himself from the shock which the sight gave him, sufficiently to scan the countenance, the figure had disappeared.

This startling incident was sufficient to turn the scale in favor of remaining for the night, and he reeled to a seat near the fire. Members of the family were quick to perceive the striking change in the manner of the boy, but no one could divine the reason, nor would any one summon resolution to inquire.

Erewhile Walter was conducted to his sleeping apartment. It was of that severe simplicity to remind one of primitive times. Very narrow, with wainscoted walls, unpainted, the only furniture was a single chair, a cherry-wood, crow-foot stand, and a small antique mirror, suspended obliquely from the wall. The counterpane of the bed was of woollen, and was a veritable product of the domestic loom. Upon the stand lay a bible, with heavy metallic clasps. Adown the only window of the apartment, hung a curtain, and it and the pillow-cases, were of snowy whiteness. Indeed, the closest eye could scarcely have detected so much as a stain, or particle of dust within the precincts of the room. An embalmed air of neatness pervaded the apartment, so palpable as to lay hold of the sense.

Walter lay with eyes opened, ruminating long upon the spectacle that had so excited him anew. He could not doubt its being the same that had so quickened his footsteps, on coming hither, and he thought to trace a resemblance between

the face and the one he met a few weeks before upon the tiny bridge. There was the same deep, suffering look, with a strange pertinacity to hang around his pathway. But who could this mysterious being be; whence came she; and what was her design upon the boy, that she was thus following upon his footsteps like a haunting ghost.

Excited conceptions of curdling stories, that had been pictured by the superstitious upon his childhood mind, began moving athwart his distempered brain in spectral troops; when lo, and behold, springs before his excited eye-balls, another apparition! It seems to issue from the depths of the dusky air; it settles slowly toward him, and becomes fixed over his breast. He cannot be mistaken. It is the same face he met upon the bridge; and the identical one, he had just seen through the window. He cannot now avoid, if he will, a scrutinizing look. Her hair hangs in wild, dishevelled tresses. A deep, entranced glow beams from her wild, burning eyes. But upon her brow there appears enthroned a calm, holy will, and there seems to play about her mouth, the angel smile of Hope.

There was thus nothing sinister in the expression of the face, and Walter would have spoken to the phantom, but his tongue refused utterance. He tried to arouse from his posture, but he seemed pinioned to the spot.

At length, when his faculties became collected, the spectre melted back into the darkness. He now sprang from his bed, but his knees were tremulous with weakness. A cold sweat lay upon his forehead, and the air of the room seemed failing him of breath. He threw open the window, to sniff the fresh air of heaven; and throwing on his clothes, he escaped out-doors, but all was quiet and natural. The stars in the upper deep were shining with undimmed lustre. Several headland lights were gleaming from afar athwart the water, with constancy of

blaze. The roaring distant surf came gently floating in low diapason upon the midnight air. A whispering breeze sighed mellifluously through the verdant pines near, and the old family dog came and licked sympathetically Walter's hand, as if to assure him that there was nothing to fear in the surrounding world of darkness.

Ashamed of his own trepidation, and fearful of awaking the family, he returned quietly to his room, but it was not till Aurora began streaking the east with rosy light, that he could compose himself for repose.

When that wary band of sentinels, the nervous system, has once been overpowered by fright, either by the presence of real danger, or by the illusions of the imagination, not unfrequently, the slightest touch by the phantom-finger, in the choir of our association, is sufficient to reproduce in exaggerated horror the original object of our terror.

CHAPTER IX.

"There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip,
Nay, her foot speaks, her wanton spirits look out
At every joint and motion of her body."

SHAKESPEARE.

"DOES she lay her course," demanded the skipper of Marl.

"Aye, and a point free," was the gruff response.

The latter speaker (in a musing mood) was standing astride the little crooked tiller, which he was sculling from side to side, as if to aid the Pink in her plodding course.

"Then keep her full and by," resumed the skipper, "We'll put enough into the pot. Those clouds look like giving us the wind more from the westward, toward midnight."

"Aye, aye," reiterated the Salt, with a true twang of a son of Neptune.

The vessel had now got past the Cape, and Highland Light was gleaming serenely over the undulating water.

"Another gallon to your score, eh, my lad," chuckled Fishall, who had just come out of the cabin, smoking a newly lighted pipe, so short as to answer the double purpose of luxuriating in the weed, and, at the same time, keeping warm a somewhat protruding nose.

Walter with great simplicity ventured to ask what the *reckoning* meant.

"Why, 'tis an old custom," replied Fishall, "that boys pay a gallon of liquor for every light they pass. It goes to treat

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all hands, and is called paying the *Footing*. You'll follow suit, of course."

"Bah," muttered Marl, "Don't get alarmed, before you're in danger. The boy'll do his part, I'll be bound, not a mean thread in the fellow."

The faithful Pink kept her way, bobbing along over the tiny waves, which swelled in size, as they drew away from the winding Cape, into the broad bosomed bay.

Weary of the pitchy prospect, and drooping with fatigue, the boy stole away to his bunk.

When he awoke in the morning, it was broad daylight. The cook had turned out, and was bustling away toward preparing breakfast. But the rest of the crew, overcome with exhaustion in working up the harbor, were still buried in slumber. Their deep respiration showed well enough, that they were afar off in the land of dreams.

But Walter was too full of curiosity, to remain willingly in the cabin. As he reached the deck, he was struck at once with wonder. The magic city, its interminable roar of life, the heterogeneous flash of activity, the gay craft in the harbor, all made up a scene which to the youthful eye of the boy seemed enchantment itself. It sprang upon his maidenly sense, like awaking to celestial visions. He could scarcely have felt more wondrously excited, if he had found himself in a new world.

Nestling upon the heel of the bowsprit, he sat distracted, gazing around in mute delight. His rustic eye, pellucid in the freshness of Nature, was enthralled in the mazy charm of Art.

Breakfast over, all hands were mustered to heave the vessel into the wharf. Lines being run and anchor weighed, the movement began briskly. Walter was sent in the boat along with Fishall; but for once the boy did not acquit himself so

acceptably as was his wont. The dazzle and clash of novel scenes and voices overcame his self-control. More than once, he found himself as motionless as a statue, absorbed by some striking object, quite oblivious to the duty before him. This could not fail to bring him under the lash of Fishall. It nettled too the skipper out of his imperturbable placidity. And even Marl could not refrain a rebuke, advising the boy to quit star-gazing and look to his business. They did not perceive this remissness to be but the natural working of an ingenuous nature in the boy — a spirit that augured an elastic step in the world's climbings.

As an interval must elapse before they could commence receiving on board the salt and stores, the day following their arrival was one of absolute leisure. It was passed by the crew in that state of beguiling indolence, which the occupation of fishing seems so fitted to transfuse into the nature. But in the evening, it was proposed to make a stroll in the city by way of recreation. This was favored by acclamation. Especially was Walter in ecstasy at the anticipation of actually seeing Boston, and thus realizing a splendid day-dream of his boyhood.

Accordingly, taking a harbor-wash, and donning their best go-a-shore habiliments, they stood in their shoes amazingly elevated in a delicate feeling of self-respect. To be sure, they could not be reckoned finely dressed, but they felt as hearty a sense of that indefinable charm that accompanies the renovation of the outward man, as could the daintiest fashionable, attired for the faultless elegancies of a lady's drawing-room.

Off they blithely started, suddenly changed in appearance from the men they had been during the day, while lazily yawning upon the spars and coils of rigging on board. Indeed, they would hardly have been taken for the same beings.

A new element had transformed them. The glow of vivacity that lifts the feelings on stepping ashore from confinement on board a vessel, can scarcely be imagined by a landsman. The embrace of mother-earth seems redolent with affection. The mingling current of warm fellow life, imparts a sympathetic flow to our feelings.

Marl being best acquainted with the city, led the way, with the view of glancing at such notable parts as might be most conveniently passed in the scanty time they had for the tour. The rest followed under that sentiment of deference we naturally feel for superiority. As for Walter, he was in a titillation of anticipation. What wonders of beauty were to break upon his enraptured gaze!

On reaching Washington street, his bright hopes were more than realized. The dazzling splendor of light, the sweeping by of elegantly attired people, the dash and animation of superb vehicles, the majesty of lofty and massive edifices, the magnificence of the shops, made up a scene that bewildered his sense with delightful curiosity. To his entranced vision, it was a magic scene, touched with a fairy life. His faculties were in a high state of agreeable excitement. He could have lingered long amid the bright conceptions of his teeming brain, and he felt a sweet glow of gratitude for the happiness he inwardly felt.

How keen the emotions of youth, as the susceptible faculties, opening upon a world of nature and art are kept in a perpetual glow of delightful wonder, while each successive scene unfolding to view, keeps up the enchantment. How unhappy that this glorious hallucination of soul should ever cease, — that there should be a time when the scenes of life have lost their charm, — a single moment in our brief span, when all the matchless contrivances of art, or the sublime wonders of Nature in her endless transformations, should pall

upon the soul! But is such a state natural? May it not be a moral perversion of the sensibilities, a condition of spiritual distemper? Are not Nature and Art ample to keep alive with freshened interest the unfolding faculties, until disembodied, the soul wings its transit to an abode where all is perennial joy?

"There," remarked Marl, as they wended along the prim walks of the Common, or Mall, as it was then called, "There rises the Old Liberty Tree. If some gracious Genii were to endow it with a tongue, what a burning tale might it not unfold. It could tell of many a thought-wombed council held under its protecting shadow, at a time when the spirit of Freedom was travailing for birth upon the new world. And does your eye ken that shadowy building upon the right, that crowns our modern Athens, as St. Paul's rears its mighty dome above the mammoth London? Well, that's our proud, old, noble State House, and no mean piece of architecture is it either. Its summit commands a prospect, that does a New Englander's heart good to embrace. Below, upon tablets of stone, one reads sublime memorials of the tempestuous passages of our forefathers, in their dark voyage to Independence. But the most grateful object for contemplation of all, is a full sized statue of Washington himself, the glorious captain that steered our frail Ship of State safely across the howling waters of the Revolution; and who, take him all in all, was, I conclude, a little the noblest piece of humanity big-wombed time has ever given birth to."

By this time, Walter had pressed close up to the Salt, and was drinking in, as it were, the very breath of his sentences.

"That large edifice," continued the sailor, "that I pointed out as we came along, is the Old Cradle of Liberty, so called, because here amid the lullaby surges of a seven years' war, was rocked into being an infant empire."

"And off yonder, to the north-east, rises Bunker's or rather Breed's Hill, where the haughty Britishers first caught a specimen of Yankee pluck. Daddy Bull here woefully found, that he'd just sent over his son Jonathan to pick out the eyes of the sire.—Ah, no monument's needed to guide the American heart to this spot; for the sacred place is not only engraved in lines of fire upon the country's soul, but 'tis enshrined in the memory of heroism throughout the world. Wherever a noble heart shall throb for liberty, there will be heaved a generous sigh for the heaven-born sacrifices that cluster around this spot."

"A little this side of Bunker Hill, is the Navy Yard. 'Tis here that preparations are kept up for engaging the enemy on the sea. And thoroughly is the work done, too. No botch-work there, I assure you. 'Tis all complete order and system; and everybody there, has to toe the mark. You'd see there, my boy, some big guns, and whopping ships, all kept as prig and shiny as a pewter platter."

"You seem posted up in these matters," interposed Marl.

"And why shouldn't I be," returned the Salt, "after going seven years at sea in the service, and two in the Yard. That's enough, I conclude, to get a tolerable acquaintance with Uncle Sam."

"And how did you like the old gentleman," demanded Fishall.

"Why to confess," growled Marl, "none of the best, or I'd been there now. He's rather an exacting master with the lesser tribe of his servants, but then he doesn't always forget them who serve him well."

Here the company falling in with a couple of benches, very opportunely placed along the walks for loiterers, they seated themselves, and began yielding to the veering current of talk. While the crew were scanning passers by, or indulging in

such trivial remarks as the circumstances suggested, Walter was absorbed in the amazing panorama that had just swept athwart his vision, like the corruscations of a gorgeous dream. His mind turned to prying into the meaning of what he had seen. There was a glancing eye that flitted upon the surface; his a deeper look, that strove to penetrate below. As for Marl, the golden associations of his youth, reawakened by the presence of familiar objects, loosed his tongue, which rattled on with a volubility in marked contrast with his usual taciturnity.

"Why how very greatly in haste everybody appeared to be as we came along. They seemed hurrying on after some sight, or fleeing quickly from danger," thoughtfully observed Walter.

"Neither," interrupted Marl, "a habit, only a habit, that's all, my boy. The city you must know's little more than a vast beehive where people throng to heap up riches. The intense struggle for success arouses the energies to the fullest, and this comes insensibly to affect even the ordinary movements of the body. The current of life in these huge marts of trade, does not flow evenly, as with you adown the country, but sweeps along in enormous whirlpools, into the vortices of which all are drawn by the mere force of circumstances."

"But how very nice it must be, just to live among so really sociable people, and so agreeable," continued Walter.

"A slight optical illusion that, as they'd say over yonder at Harvard. I must tell you that the bulk of the city people are not half as well acquainted with each other, as your country folks are, nor do they spend near so much time as the latter, in cordial social converse, and mutual kindly offices. True, the city brings the bodies of people together, but it separates their minds.

"But how very polite, everybody appeared," persisted Walter.

"Say affable, rather, my boy. Politeness is a word of deeper import. It springs from a native source, and is often seen from under the roughest exterior. It flows from the well-spring of goodness. Its basis is integrity, and its superstructure benevolence. In fact, 'tis simply kindness kindly expressed. Whereas, the gracious manner you notice is very much a matter of fashion or policy. Where the true character is not seen, a person is rated at what he seems, and this begets a habit of condescending courtesy towards whom it is the policy to conciliate."

"Then how finely dressed they all were," continued the boy, apparently without thinking that he was opposing the sailor.

"Gloss, gloss," growled Marl, that adds not a whit to worth of character. Artificial bodies they are, that tailors and mantuamakers make. Do ye know, that fondness for decoration in dress, is but an Indian trait at best, and not the most admirable one in the category, at that? Dress, 'tis a sinful thing; and the fashion of it as arbitrary as a tyrant; as unrelenting as Death; and as unblushing as crime itself. It turns the body into a legion of unnatural shapes, and sets people's wits agog. It pads up and glosses over the hideous spiritual deformity of people, giving the same faultless elegance to the most rickety and grovelling being, as to a soul of the divinest mould. 'Tis a mighty leveller, rolling down individual superiority, and imprinting society with factitious hues. But the worst about dress is, that it helps lure off the mind from the true objects of life, and fix it upon the most trivial of human aims. Ah, my boy, real beauty is not so much a thing conjured up by human device, as a native plant carefully nurtured within the soul.

"But the people all appeared so intelligent," drawled the boy.

"A slight illusion there, again," retorted Marl, rather sharply. "Saving a limited class of cultivated persons of leisure, the people of the city are not so well informed in matters of general import, as are the folks in the country. The city people may show more pertness, may have certain conventional notions and forms of speech, which they get a glibness in by eternally repeating — a certain prettiness of talk; but in strength of judgment, depth of intelligence, or originality of thought, they are far behind the better class of country folks."

"So delightful to be where one can go to shows, to spectacles, to concerts; and then how grand to be surrounded by so splendid objects. Why, 'tis glorious just to live in such a place," persisted Walter.

"Whew, boy. A touch of the reality would bring down that enthusiasm a peg or two, I fancy," sarcastically rejoined Marl. "Let me tell you, that it takes a little of the *rhino*, to follow up such places of amusement; and a surplus of the precious article is not what every city man even has to spare. With the mass of the denizens of a city, 'tis a struggle for life from hand to mouth; or a more intense struggle to escape the whirlpool of bankruptcy. Then, the frugal business man has a certain maxim, bequeathed him by that old sage, Ben Franklin. This, he holds as his chart and compass for success. It is this: "That Time is Money." Now, it unwinds the short thread of life a little too rapidly to be running after shows. Most, whose business, like a hard master, keeps them early and late, when once the day is over, are quite content to nestle snugly down, and rest their jaded faculties for the routine of the morrow's sun. And whenever these do start off for a moment's relaxation, their faculties have been so

overworked, as to be unfitted for the enjoyment of a performance. For you must know, that the interest of an exhibition depends more upon the listener than upon the actor. Most who go to the city, go there to make much money quickly, and then retire; and so enchained are they to this intent, as to find little gratification in aught else. This controlling desire obscures everything besides.

"As for splendor, as you term it, the bright novelty of that soon wears away, and with it goes the charm, like the cheating mirage of a summer sea. It fades like the pleasing lustre of a new house. Even the few of leisure who have little else for occupation, than to gild the flagging hours, become weary of their dulcet life, and the most cunning device for enlivenment, soon palls upon the sensibilities, like the surfeit of a rich banquet. Yes, he continued, waxing warmer, I'd rather be the raggedest plough-boy in the country, so I could have the open sky above, the blue hills before, and the breezes of heaven blowing freely around me, than your newest starched gent, in Washington Street, imprisoned among finery, and dancing attendance to the wiles of Trade. One quaff from the fount of Nature, is worth to me all the trickery of Art that can be mustered."

"Yes," urged the boy, growing more bold, "but then 'tis only a little while, struggling so. After gaining a fortune, they can retire to a handsome country seat, and enjoy their wealth; and how nice this must be."

"Only a few years, eh," retorted Marl, snappishly. "Ah, my dear fellow, 'tis generally a long passage, let me assure you, ere those who embark upon the uncertain sea of trade, reach the glittering port of wealth; and only the merest fragment of such as set out, ever find the port at all. Most run bolt upon the rocks of pure miscalculation, leaving their fragments wide floating for common plunder; or are driven

ashore high and dry, by the furious gales of mischance, a prey to the greedy wrecker; or what is still worse, foundered in heavy weather at sea, when down they sink, straight into the remorseless jaws of hungry creditors."

"Some, after having successfully braved the perils of the voyage, go down with all on board, just in sight of port. This is the hardest fate of all. 'Twas the dark misfortune of my own poor father to be one of these. After a life of intense industry, his head silvered by hard devotion to trade, just on the eve of retiring to spend the twilight of his days at a magnificent country-villa, nearly completed for him; by some unlucky endorsement, he made a dreadful slip-bend, and his fortune flew, as upon the wings of the wind. A horde of creditors pounced upon him, as if he were a common felon. Good, dear mother, died under the shock. Father lingered but a few years. Angel sister, the purest spirit of earth,—and here the veteran sailor covered for a moment his face with his hands, while his stalwart frame shook with convulsive emotion,—now that the cloud of adversity had burst upon us, was deserted by the hollow-hearted youngster, to whom in her guileless innocence, she had confided her pure affection,—when she, too, like a sweet flower, cut by the ruthless scythe, drooped under the stroke, and gently fell into the cold, unfeeling earth,—and I—I took to the sea, to hide myself from the face of men, and wash away the remembrance of my misfortune, in the storms of the ocean."

Again the rugged sailor covered his face, and remained a few moments in silence, his powerful frame heaving all the time, with deep emotion, from the mastery of bitter remembrances, mingled, it may be, with a twinge of remorse, for having dropped so unwarily a clue to his life, about which he had ever before maintained the most pertinacious reserve.

Walter had pressed closely up to the stricken man in sym-

pathetic reverence, while the rest of the crew, struck with commiseration, preserved a thoughtful silence.

At length, brightening serenely up, like the sunbeam face of a shadowy cloud, the sailor resumed. "The very few who make a successful voyage, and retire with the coveted leisure and abundance, find their sympathies to have been so narrowed by intense action in a single line of pursuit, as to render plain, natural life destitute of genuine relish. Besides, their minds so long active, crave by habit, continued excitement. They soon pine from pure lack of occupation. The truth now bursts upon them. In the exclusive pursuit of wealth, they have been chasing a mere phantom. Its Will o' the Wisp light has lured them off the upland air of humanity, into the swampy mazes of selfishness."

"Still," persisted the boy, "it must be very pleasant living in the city."

"A very natural inference for a youngster to make," quoth the sailor. "But there is a slight difference between fact and Fancy, my boy. Many a scene, bright to the ardent eye of youth, proves on inspection, but a dissolving view. The city is but a larger theatre. At a distance, the shifting scenes are mazy with magic beauty, and the painted actors fascinate us by their lordly strut and fine frenzy of manner. But a peep behind the curtain dissolves the illusion. We see but the bloated body of Bacchus, the rattling bones in the valley of Death, the reverse side of a gilded vesture, bald and tawdry. It has a fair form to look upon, but its breath is foul and contagious. If you would continue the illusion, approach not too near, nor look too close into its hidden mysteries. The enamored of the city think to embrace spiritual beauty, but awake hugging but a deformed carcass."

"But for one, I'd like to have wealth," exclaimed the boy, glad to save something from the wreck of his argument.

"Very like," rejoined the sailor, "but great possessions often prove but a millstone to drown a man in his own waters. An uncultivated rich man is something in the situation of an ant upon a fat carcass. He is in possession of an abundance, but can take only up to his narrow capacity of enjoyment. As for the rest, he is at most but a guardian for others to use or enjoy, — but a sentinel at the temple of wealth. It can hardly soothe the pillow of a dying man, to feel that he must leave behind what it has cost a lifetime to acquire, especially if he knows it will go to a band of dissolute relatives, to be scattered to the four corners of the earth."

The passing of loiterers had now nearly ceased, and feeling a chilly sensation from the damp of the evening, and from their long sitting, they all began motioning to return.

"Do you really mean what you've said," asked Fishall; "is there no good in the city?"

"I grant that there is," replied Marl, "but I like to take off the feathery edge of the boy's enthusiasm."

"Well, I think 'tis very convenient, at any rate, to have a rich father," cautiously ventured Fishall.

"Convenient, aye, but is convenience to be thought of in the battle for success?" bridled up Marl, a little touched at the unexpected opposition. "Did you not know, that the successful men have sprung nearly always from poor parents? Self-dependence tends to bring the requisite self-reliance and energy for success. Indeed, as human nature is, a father can scarcely entail a greater curse upon his child, than riches. The very notion of the child that he is independent, takes away all motive for effort, and the possession itself induces imbecility."

"But you wouldn't object to having enough to set a son up in business?" asked Fishall.

"That, oftener than otherwise, does more harm than good,"

replied Marl; "give a youngster capital to commence trade with, and ten to one, but he'll fail from sheer inexperience. On the contrary, let him earn his capital, and he is gaining his money and experience together, so that, by the time he has accumulated the requisite capital, he has the experience skilfully to use it."

"I don't quite see how that is," demured Fishall.

"Well, let me try to make it plain. Put a young man in command of a large, fine ship at once, and likely as not he'll soon lose her. But let him begin with the command of a boat, and so work his way up, until he gets the ship, he then has gained experience to take care of her."

Fishall was silent. He felt the force of the sailor's reasoning; and he was too unsophisticated to argue for the sake of arguing.

They wended along vesselward. But reaching a business street, the roving eye of Fishall caught sight of a red flag over a spacious door-way. Persons were passing up and down a broad flight of stairs, and the sharp voice of an auctioneer was heard in the room above.

"Let's go in a while," urged Fishall, "'tis not late."

"Nonsense," growled Marl, "some Peter Funk concern. You are sure of getting sold in such places; and of coming away with a lighter purse, less esteem for human nature, as well as a loss of self-respect."

But the allurements of the place, triumphed over the advice of Marl, and they all went up, except the sailor, who turned off to another store for a purchase of his own.

The room, brightly lighted, was packed with a motley throng. Dusty maps and gaudy paintings were hung around upon the walls. Tawdry articles were exposed here and there to view. A tall, slim man, with a keen eye and wiry face, was mounted upon a desk, attending to the sales. By

his side was an attendant, and in a corner was a book-keeper.

As they entered the room there was a hush amid the company, but the auctioneer bustled with livelier activity.

"Well," broke forth the man of sales, "Here's something will take your eye, I'll be bound," pulling out at the same time a paper-case, containing a medley of articles. "If you can't get suited here, gentlemen, you're hard to please, — silver-watch, gold pencil-case, magnificent breast-pin, and other articles too numerous to mention; from a gentleman's tooth-pick, to ear-rings fit for an empress. Just look here" — holding up to view, and displaying a massive ring, profusely loaded with stones. "Here's a little article that lord Chesterfield himself would have felt proud in wearing."

"Now how much shall I have a-piece for the lot. Mind ye, I sell the whole for so much a-piece. Make me a bid, gentlemen. How much shall I have — one dollar — seventy-five cents — fifty — twenty cents — anything you please, gentlemen. How much, I say, how —"

"Four pence ha'penny," struck out a voice from amid the crowd.

"Four pence bid," responded with a jerk, the auctioneer; "thank ye, sir — generous;" then suppressing a laugh, with a mock show of dignity, and drawling out the words, "f-o-u-r p-e-n-c-e. Why gentlemen, here's one article" — displaying a heavy yellow metallic chain; "that's worth the whole amount, at that rate, and leave you the rest for nothing. — Four pence ha'penny a-piece for the lot. Well, gentlemen, I'm bound to sell them at some price. They must be sold to close a consignment — and sell them I will — four pence — going, going — shall I have ten cents, nine, eight, seven?"

"Seven cents," echoed another voice.

"Thank ye. Seven cents — seven, shall I have eight?"

"Eight cents," issued from another corner.

"Eight cents; shall I have nine?"

"Nine cents," followed another bid.

"Nine cents, going, going, gone" — and down came the hammer with a bound.

"To whom — who takes it at nine cents; whose bid?"

"Mr. Frazier."

"Mr. Frazier — charge to Mr. Frazier."

There was an eager curiosity to see the purchase. The box was accordingly passed charily around, amid an occasional ejaculation of wonder, at the richness of the bargain.

"Ah, here's one more, interrupted the auctioneer," pulling along another box, "just one more left. Who'll take this at the same price? Who'll have it? — a bargain for some one."

"French," resounded from the middle of the crowd.

"Mr. French, charge to Mr. French," shouted the auctioneer.

"Heighho — two more," exclaimed the man of sales, as the attendant clerk placed two more boxes before him, "I thought we had the last."

A conversation now in an under tone took place between them, seemingly about the apparent mistake.

"Well, they must be sold at any rate," resumed the auctioneer. "Who'll take another, at the same price?" speaking in an unconcerned tone and manner.

"Bodfish," spoke out a voice.

"Mr. Bodfish; charge to Mr. Bodfish."

"One box now left, just one more. Who'll take it, gentlemen? The last you'll have, on my word. Who takes it? Another can't be bought for ten times the money, no, not for any price. Who has it?"

"By this time, Fishall had got thoroughly excited; and having found that he could borrow some dollar or so, of

change, from one of the crew — breathed out that he would take it.

"Who?" inquired the auctioneer, leaning forward to catch the voice.

"Fishall," spoke out the fisherman, quiveringly.

"Fishall, ah yes, Mr. Fishall. Step up, Mr. Fishall, and take your goods. Make way gentlemen for Mr. Fishall. Here, Mr. Clerk, attend to Mr. Fishall."

Fishall at length reached the counter, and was there politely informed, that his purchase amounted to \$75.28. The fisherman was struck aghast. He could not believe it. The clerk counted the articles, and made it plain before his eyes. But \$75 — a summer's voyage of itself. He was in consternation, and began stammering out something about not knowing.

"Ah, that's your game," screamed the auctioneer, "but no tricks. We take no jokes. Come, pay up, sir, or we'll put you in the way of doing it. We can't wait to chop logic."

Walter perceiving Fishall's embarrassment, made a push forward to reach his side. In his way, a burly youngster stamped upon his foot, and then squared round, and gruffly demanded why Walter had trodden upon his toes. There began a turmoil of sensation in the room. Fishall strove for a release from his bargain on the score of ignorance, but his broken-speech apology was only made the butt of coarse witicism. He then essayed a compromise by offering all the money in his purse for a release. But this proposition only increased the earnestness of the auctioneer.

"Eh, you long-shore fishmonger you. I'll warrant the had-dock bones are this minute sticking out of your sides, like quills from the back of a porcupine. You come up here with your gurry-butt blarney," screamed the man of sales, at the same time swinging his hammer with the flourish of a

French Fencing Master. "I'll teach you, I will, how to jole a cod."

Fishall was of a peaceful nature, but such burning words were not to be brooked. Throwing a glance of ineffable contempt, accompanied by a gesture of defiance at the auctioneer, he made a rush for the door of the room. The crowd pressed around to cut off his retreat, but once fairly aroused, the athletic fisherman ploughed his way through them, and down the stair-way amid the noise and scuffle. The rest of the crew succeeded with difficulty in following him.

Walter was the last. But on reaching the stair-way two or three youngsters pounced upon his neck, with the view evidently of wrenching off his grasp from the banister, and precipitating him headlong into the street. And before he could disentangle their wily attack, another big chap gave him a tremendous blow upon the back of his head, which sent the boy fairly twirling down the stair-way, and sprawling upon the pavement of the street.

Upon rising to his feet, Walter found himself in the midst of a *mêlée* with Fishall, who was exchanging blows with the crowd, striking full at random, so thick were the enemy upon him. The rest of the crew with uplifted voices were hastening to the rescue.

At this critical moment, Old Marl made his appearance, as a mountain of light. He sprang like a leopard in their midst, and unfolding himself in awful majesty, demanded in a voice of thunder, what was the matter. His towering energy was magic-like. Intimidated, the enemy slunk away, and the crew were soon standing alone.

They now again commenced making their way toward the vessel, well enough satisfied with their little adventure. It served, however, to increase their confidence in old Marl.

Fishall, a little ashamed of having been the occasion of

their misfortune, sought all means to turn the conversation to some other topic.

"There, boy," drawled out the fisherman, as they were threading a dark, narrow cross street, "do you think you could ever find your way down to the vessel again, if left here alone?"

"Aye, that he could," snapped out Marl, nettled at any disparaging allusion to Walter, and being otherwise in no placid humor toward Fishall, for the awkward scrape he had gotten the crew into.

For once, the judgment of Marl was appealed from by the simple-minded crew. They very naturally doubted so unreasonable a thing, as that the boy could find his way back to the vessel unguided. There was a little ripple of excitement arising from diverse opinion. But Marl, little disposed to brook contradiction, with a recklessness not usual to him, proceeded at once to put the matter to the test. So, after leading them around amid a perfect maze of windings, he bid the boy in a confident tone take the shortest route to the vessel.

Walter was as perfectly lost as if he had awaked up for the first time in the depths of Oregon. But he could no more than go wrong, and he was unwilling to risk the displeasure of the sailor, by any appearance of hesitancy; so striking off with promptitude, sure enough, as if directed by some unseen Mentor, the boy proceeded straight to the vessel, and in the shortest possible time, they were on board. Old Marl himself could not have come more direct. It was of course the merest chance, but in the eyes of the crew, it elevated the Salt to the dignity of a sage, and Walter to a boy of wonderful genius. He was ever afterward looked upon by them, as one destined to some important mission in life. May not the tide of fortune in the career of many a man, have taken its swell at as insignificant beginnings as this?

The next day there came on board a man, and applied for a birth to go with them a trip. His appearance was far from indicating that he knew anything of fishing, or that he could otherwise be of much value on board; but having room for one more hand, and there being now little time to look around for a choice, the skipper, after consulting some of the crew, shipped him.

He was a very young man; in fact, he could not be much above twenty years of age. But his limbs were sadly shrunk up, not from the natural decay of age, but from the blight, as it would seem, of some moral disease. Along his skinny, cadaverous hands, ran large, blue veins, swelling as if ready to burst their decaying cerements. His sunken, distorted face, bearing an expression of dreadful blight, looked as if he had been breathing the pestilential sirocco, or that some fierce vulture was even then at work, devouring silently the vitals of his soul.

His dress had a genteel fit, and the cloth appeared of superior quality; but it was most disgustingly soiled, and seemed no inappropriate counterpart of the melancholy body which they encased, — a fit emblem of a soul of natural grace, bedrenched in the cesspool of woe-begone humanity.

Old Marl, with that keenness of mental vision which belongs to the thoroughly experienced in life, saw at a glance, through the character of their newly shipped hand, but he was too genuinely a bred sailor, to interfere against the authority of the skipper, or to submit advice before being asked.

Still, so intense was his antipathy to the new recruit, that he might have been observed continually to dog the fellow about, and with an eye of insufferable scrutiny. As the green hand, in his flimsy way, set to work with the crew on board, the burning, lurid expression of mingled indignation and con-

tempt that alternately lighted up the countenance, and then lowered over the brow of the old Salt, like the scathing glimmering of a surcharged thunder cloud, was in striking contrast to his usual large and catholic amiability of feeling. Despite an iron will, which enabled him ordinarily to check his impulses, as with the grip of a vice, the heated caldron of his soul would now and then seethe over in some hard ejaculation, anything but complimentary to the new comer.

"Our new hand there isn't altogether to your liking," carelessly observed Fishall.

"Not a whit," responded the Salt.

"Well, why?" demanded Fishall, more to draw out his companion, than to express dissent.

"There'll no good come from having that chap aboard, else toss me into the sea for a false prophet. Do you not see, that his very soul has been gnawed out of him. Nothing left, I fancy, but villanous canker sores. He'll be spitting off his rotten notions, after some further acquaintance, you may be sure of."

"True, he's rather rickety looking in the joints; and a big halibut might drag him over the rail; still I can't see what very great harm he'll do aboard."

"Nothing is it to have such a maggot thrown into one's peck of dirt? Ah, yes," he added playfully, "he may not be able to damage us old sinners, but then we must keep the boy out of harm's way."

This latter allusion ruffled Fishall's sensibilities, and it cut off further conversation.

The fitting out finally accomplished, and everything aboard and snugly stowed away, all was now ready for the ensuing cruise. The deck had been neatly cleaned up, and the little Pink looked as tidy as an expectant country maiden on a Saturday afternoon.

Walter had the fortune of a distant relative in Boston. Mrs. Carl, who possessed deeply the refined sentiment of family friendship, reminded her son on parting, of the pleasant fact, and putting up his best suit, enjoined on him to be heedful in calling upon this kinsman, should circumstances allow of it.

As it was yet early in the afternoon, Walter, to whom his mother's every behest had always been as easy as the law of love, attired himself as tastefully as might be, and after getting what directions seemed fit, set out for the house, yet not without a feeling of excessive timidity.

By persistent inquiry, he found the house, and was received by his friends with expressions of agreeable surprise. Indeed, these city cousins literally showered the boy with affable attentions, and on his taking leave, bestowed their best wishes for his success, with the cordial solicitation that he would not fail to write to them, whenever convenient.

He had now only to return to the vessel. But in doing this, his good genii, that had so graciously guided him the evening before, seemed now to have forsaken him. With the illusory confidence of youth, he resolved upon getting back to the Pink without for once inquiring. So striking off in what seemed the right direction, he pursued his way with quick and confident step.

On and on he wended, but objects grew more and more strange in appearance, until out he bolted upon a long bridge.

Nothing disheartened, around he wheeled, and set off in another direction, but after much walking, he found himself again at a bridge, in another quarter of the city. He was now enough humiliated, to deign inquiring his way. What was his surprise on being told that Lewis's Wharf, where the Pink lay, was away off at the opposite side of the city. Once more he set out in the direction given him, but his

treacherous little brain proved again at fault, and round and round he roamed, until he found himself in a perfect maze of bewilderment.

The shades of night began to fall, and a darkness as palpable was fast gathering around his spirits; when while threading a new street, whom should he bolt upon but Winthread, their new hand. Hardly anything could have brought him a more vivid glow of delight. The very being whom the day before he had loathed, now burst upon his joyful gaze, in grateful welcome.

Such is the force of adversity, to change the eye lens of feeling! With the confiding air of youth, the boy seized eagerly the hand of Winthread, and pressed it affectionately, begging at the same time to be shown the way to the Pink.

The man with a bitter smile assented, but muttered in a hollow voice, that seemed to come from the caverns of ruin, that he must first call at a house near by.

Walter suspecting no evil, followed on, although the strange air of Winthread gave the boy a slight sense of uneasiness.

Winthread led the way until they came to what appeared an unfrequented street, with houses of a somewhat pretentious style, but rather dilapidated in appearance. To one of these they at length approached a deep doorway, in which stood leaning against a pillar, a female, whose slight form was partially revealed by a pale light that flickered from a lantern, suspended from the ceiling of the archway over the doorsteps. She greeted Winthread as he came up, with a few sentences, coarse, familiar, and jocose; and then bandying an epithet or two of double meaning, wafted him with her white plump hand into the house. Her demeanor toward Walter was softened to greater feminine propriety, still it failed to inspire him with that divine emotion, which the mere pres-

ence of women, rarely fails to awaken in the breast of guileless youth.

On entering, Walter lost sight of Winthread, and saw him not again in the house. But another young female of winning address appeared before the boy, and after leading blithely the way through a dimly lighted hall, up a crooked stairway, ushered him into a spacious saloon. It was very brilliantly lighted, and although a practised eye might have recognized a soiled carpet, defaced and ill-assorted furniture, yet to the rustic gaze of Walter, the effect was dazzling. A bevy of females were in the room, varying from sixteen or so, to an age unmentionable. There were some among them possessing features of fine mould, but with all there was a lack more or less striking of that sweet spiritual purity which is the fragrance of the female face. Their dress flauntingly bedecked, seemed but the bawdy colors of a prurient Fancy. Some were lounging in voluptuous posture, upon chairs, sofas, or ottomans, some leaning mechanically against rose-wood tables or marble mantels, looking with vacant stare at some trivial object, while others in a defiant ease of air, were sauntering up and down the room. Walter tremblingly took a seat. No one accosted him, and he remained a brief space, a silent, though not inattentive spectator. His entrance served to give a flush of movement to the throng, but it was rather the temporary acceleration of a waning pulse, than the strong glow of Nature.

Presently two females sprang to their feet, and commenced a striding promenade around the room; two others struck up a pert, gossiping chat; and all in one way or another, essayed to attract attention, and display coquettishly their persons. Now, one sprang to the piano forte, and commenced running her fingers over the keys in a kind of mock agility, another rushed to her side, and came out with a saucy ditty, while the

former thumbed in a laughable accompaniment. This over, the entire company circled in a general promenade. A fast miss now got possession of the instrument, and drummed out a thread-bare tune, throwing in occasional flourishes, by way of episode. The rest paired off for a cotillon, a requisite number assuming the part of gentlemen gallants; and it must be confessed that these performed their parts, if not with grace, at least with adroitness. The cotillon over, they all subsided into seats, and broke out into a merry bandying colloquy, accompanied by awry postures, and double entendre expressions.

All this time, Walter looked on in dumb confusion. Where was he? What could be the meaning of what he saw? He could not penetrate the cloud of a mystery that hung around him, yet the voice of Nature whispered "that all is not right." A moral disquietude possessed him. Sentiment became shocked. Feeling turned into disgust. And even Sense turned aside in loathing. With the fires of youth glowing in his soul and keenly susceptible to the power of female charms, all their low arts, their gross display, awoke no agreeable emotion within him. On the contrary, a painful sense of some great, moral derangement, like the unhinging of harmonious nature, oppressed him, and his soul turned away in disgust. Thus it ever is when purity first encounters debasement.

He could not penetrate the maze of his situation; could not look through the entanglement of his own feelings, but as his reason contemplated the shreds of humanity before him, an intuitive finger pointed them but the blackened ruins of Nature's Masterpiece. The fire of destruction had swept athwart the ocean of their soul, and had left but charred skeletons of former loveliness.

When the sun of moral beauty in the human soul has once set, how appalling the darkness! And if that human soul be

woman, angelic woman, how dreadful the blackness! How mournful that celestial beauty can ever be changed to a thing the most odious! and the brighter in glory, the darker in perversion. So woman in her native purity, the highest in the heaven of moral beauty, when she falls, sinks to the lowest hell of degradation.

In the race of the good, for reaching a higher spiritual millennium upon earth, what a hindering load is not that loveliest attribute of the female character, changed into a hideous monster, and hanging upon the skirts of humanity with clinched pertinacity!

Finding thus far their arts availless in beguiling the feelings of the boy, they approached each in turn to secure a personal conquest. But their stale efforts only embarrassed the boy's mind. He could not be touched by beings so destitute of points of sympathy.

While thus a prey to a species of tormenting disquietude, there suddenly darted through a doorway opposite, a youthful figure. She was of a light and graceful form, and most exquisitely attired. Approaching Walter gracefully, she gently laid her hand upon his arm, accosting him in tones so tender and moving, that he was instantly enthralled by the spell of her presence. In confidential, almost pleading accents, she begged that he would follow her to another room, where she would entrust him with her secret.

For a moment he hesitated, under a mingled feeling of timidity and suspicion. But glad to be relieved from his present awkward predicament, and beguiled it may be, by the seductive charm of the fair unknown, he summoned resolution and followed on.

She led the way into a small, but elegantly furnished chamber, and after closing the door, and handing him a chair, seated herself by his side.

Her small delicate frame had a fairy grace. Her pure classic features breathed the soul of refinement. Instinct with tenderness seemed her speaking blue eyes. Golden tresses fell profusely adown her swan-like neck, and rested upon a bust as white as the lily. A gauze mantle of silvery hue flowed gracefully from her handsomely turned shoulders, revealing a bust of exquisite symmetry, and an arm and hand of voluptuous mould. — From under her pendent skirt peeped a dainty foot. A single brilliant pinned her scarf, and another rayed from the velvet band that bound her forehead.

Walter could not but be captivated in the presence of such fascinating beauty, and when he felt her warm breath redolent with passion upon his cheek, witnessed her soft bosom palpitate with wild emotion, looked into the countenance of the girl lit-up with intense radiance, a paroxysm of emotion swept over him.

Taking his hand in hers, and bending close down to him, "Listen," said the fair stranger. "I am an orphan. My guardian thwarted my will, and I fled his roof. The young man in whom I confided, betrayed my confidence. I was entrapped and led to this house, by an agency unknown to me. I have now no more to hope for from society. Yet I feel an unconquerable craving for companionship, for sympathy, for love. There is here for me no congeniality. I would fly this place. Take me hence. Be my protector. Lead me whither you will, and take my all, fortune, heart, destiny. Oh do not hesitate. Think me not polluted. I am pure, at least in heart, Heaven knows.

And as the eye of the excited girl, melting with beseeching tenderness, fell upon his, the electric glance with her appealing words, aroused all the heroic and generous in his nature. Springing upon his feet, under the impulse of enthusiasm, he felt as if he could join his destiny with hers, and flee with the

fair girl whither she listed. Almost delirious with emotion, he sauntered, unconscious of his movements, towards the window, but his eye turning out doorward, what did it first fall upon, but the same form that he saw last at his grandfather's, and which had haunted, at times, his imagination ever since! It stood motionless in an angle of the court, partially enveloped in the gray folds of twilight. He was struck petrified; but this new vision dissolved as with a magic touch, the illusive emotion excited by the fair girl near him. And in its stead, there arose before his distracted vision, the image of his dear mother, in calm, admonitive air; and her closing impressive words seemed to issue from her lips, and fall in healing accents upon his troubled soul. "Beware of false appearances. Be true to yourself, to your mother, your God." The fetters of his soul were instantly broken. A new perception dawned upon him. A wise resolution sprang up in his breast. Bowing to the lady, he left the room, descended the stairway, and was in a moment upon the pavement. The figure that he expected to encounter was nowhere to be seen, but as he felt the air of heaven, a mountain load seemed lifted from his bosom.

Proceeding on, his eye caught the figure of a stalwart man making rapid strides towards him. As the approaching person passed a street lamp, a gleam of light therefrom shot upon his face, and revealed the well known features of Old Marl. With a bound of joy, the boy sprang to the side of the faithful sailor, but how confounded was he to find his welcome friend barely to notice him. He seemed, on the contrary, engrossed with some object behind the boy. Turning around, Walter perceived Winthred coming up.

"Aye, this is your game," roared out the Old Salt, a dark cloud lowering over his jagged features. "Well, I fancied as much. You'd fetch down the boy into your own muddy

slough, eh? I say," he bellowed, raising his voice to thunder tones. "The knot of the hangman under your left ear would be none to good for you, and I've more than half a mind to give you a stroke of introduction to the place.

Stung with these words, Winthread sprang forward and struck the sailor a passionate blow in the face. Aroused to the quick, the latter squared off, and dealt his combatant such a blow as to fell the other flat upon the pavement. The stroke was a fearful one, and Winthread lay prostrate and bleeding profusely. The belligerent thus summarily vanquished, the current of the sailor's passion, as if suddenly checked, was overflowing him with remorse. Old Marl was first at the side of the wounded man. Raising his head in his arms, with the tenderness of a woman, he endeavored to assuage his hurt.

The crowd soon began gathering, but not knowing who had given the blow, they could but little more than express sympathy with the suffering man, and breathe imprecations against the inhuman author, as it seemed, of the atrocious mischief.

Presently, a watchman was seen pressing through the crowd, with an earnest, authoritative air. With the aid of Marl, he hurried off the bleeding man to a neighboring apothecary's, where cordials were administered, and his bruises assuaged.

All this time, the attentions of Marl were those of a devoted wife. He seemed absolutely to forget himself in fervid sympathy with the suffering man. He would not leave him, until self-possession was regained, and then slipping his purse into the hands of the watchman, he took of Winthread an affectionate leave.

During the whole scene, there was not a word or sign of upbraiding on the part of Winthread, towards his malefactor.

The conviction of having richly deserved his fate, and especially the overflowing goodness of the veteran sailor quite disarmed him of a feeling for reproach.

If men for the most part come to hate those whom they have injured, there are natures so thoroughly honest, as to crave the necessity, of making reparation for what they may have destroyed.

On their way to the vessel, Old Marl preserved a dogged silence. This dark, moody air, hung like a cloud of terror over the boy. He felt conscious of having been the occasion of it; and his feelings were not unlike those of the young wife who feels for the first time the frown of the man, in whom her all is staked for life.

CHAPTER X.

"Though at times my spirit fails me,
And the bitter tear-drops fall,
Though my lot is hard and lonely,
Yet I hope — I hope through all."

THE morning dawned with a light wind creeping ripplingly adown the stream. The crew responded with alacrity to the call of all hands; and in a *jiffy*, to use the quaint style of Fishall, the mindful little Pink with sails hanging like the trowsers of a country lad, just decorated for a rural party, was noiselessly gliding out of the harbor.

None more glad to be rid of the glare and dust of the big city, than the fisherman. Its eddying current of intense artificial life bewilders, and its smoky, choking heavens, suffocates his simple nature. Well may he hail a return to the expanse and freedom of ocean with feelings of fresh buoyancy.

Lolling upon the deck, or reclining upon hatch-way, kid, or railing, each one carelessly lay, contemplating with tranquil delight, the animated scene unrolling around them. The resounding city with its forests of masts, its glittering spires, and mountain dome, were giddily receding in the distance. Off to the left, lay several huge naval hulks, sluggishly moored upon the flat waters, like so many surly chained mastiffs, awaiting some dire opportunity. Here and there an elevation was decked by some more pretentious edifice, serving as a land-mark to the inquiring eye. Before them rose a galaxy of islands, marking a beautiful labyrinth with the waters,

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all mantling in the deepest flush of May. Over all were showering the golden rays of the rising sun, which with the graceful sinuosities of the harbor, and the illusory movement of the different objects upon the shore, filled the mind of the beholder with the most agreeable charm imaginable.

"Nicks's Mate. Do you know boy what that means? Eh? No? Well, 'tis the place where a bloody fellow by the name of Nicks, hung his mate," quoth Loggy, turning towards Walter with a quizzing look.

"Any more of the same sort," muttered Marl, sarcastically.

"Not exactly, but I know of a good one though, that happened about here," replied the fisherman.

"Then let's have it," returned the sailor.

"Well, 'twas about Dick Carthwright, or Dick, as he was simply called. He was a hard customer, and cut up many a wild trick with the English. And if I were to tell all the stories I've heard about him, 'twould fill a book."

"No matter about the introduction," shouted a half-a-dozen voices, "let's have the story."

"Well, you must know," continued Loggy, "that Dick engaged for a living, in whatever turned up best. It made little difference to him, so long as things went to his mind, but when they didn't, he was off, like an unbroke colt.

"Well, once in the time of the old war, he found himself aboard a wee Pink-stern a fishing. They were at this time off Cape Cod. It was foggy, and thick, too, as mud. The crew were idly at the rail, and they were just talking over the chances of the war, when halloa, there broke out hard upon them, a British ship of war. She showed a double row of teeth, and the men aboard were as thick as pismires upon a sand-hill. To tell the truth, he was a saucy looking chap, and every man's hair stood right on *eend*. But when he ran

up the English ensign, and fired a gun, the ball of which went whizzing over their heads, and rattling through the rigging, like a scared partridge, their skin fairly crawled on their flesh.

"The enemy sent a boat aboard, and offered to let them go free, if one of the crew would pilot them into Boston Harbor. At this, all were struck dumb with fear. Boston, a little while before, had been in the hands of the British, but now the Americans had again gotten possession. If the truth should be let out, more than likely they would be seized, their vessel scuttled, and they themselves sent to Dartmoor Prison. On the other hand, whichever should stand pilot, would be pretty sure to get strung up to the yard arm for his pains, when it should really come out which party held Boston.

"But Dick didn't know what it was to be afraid. To find himself in some strange scrape, and then by some hocus pocus, work himself out, was just what he most liked. So he stepped forward and volunteered. The British boat now returned, and the ship squared away for Boston Harbor.

"Dick was a droll fellow, and as soon as he got aboard, began pacing the quarter-deck with a look of as much self-consequence, as if he had been the commodore himself. The commander of course didn't like this any too well, but Dick told him broadly, that Dick Carthwright happened to be captain of that ship. Pretty soon the commander gave off some general order, when Dick stepped up to him, and told him plainly, that if another order was given off without his consent, he would run them straight upon the first rock they should come up with. This threw the Englishman into a dreadful rage, and he drew his sword. But Dick was not so easily frightened. He ran off a string of such awful oaths, as made the Englishman, even, tremble. Then throwing off his boots and pea-jacket, with a ripping oath he swore he would

jump overboard and swim ashore, if he couldn't have entire command of the ship. This did the cure. The commander fancying he'd got some Yankee water-witch aboard, and thinking it best not to lose his pilot, gave in.

"All went smoothly afterward, Dick walked side by side with the commander, spinning him long yarns about America and the Revolution. Of course he took care to tickle the Englishman's vanity, and in a little while they were as familiar as old cronies.

"The fog now broke away, and the ship was fast coming up with the islands. Dick hit upon taking her in by a channel that would not let the Englishman see the American colors upon the fort, until it was too late. He was careful to keep the ship chock upon the leeward side of the channel.

"Presently they caught the sight of the American flag floating over the fort. The captain saw it first, and he was like a wild man."

"American colors," he screamed. "Then they've retaken Boston. What shall we do?" All the time looking half crazy.

"So they *have*," shouted Dick, appearing greatly astonished. "Then we must back out of this in double quick time."

"Heave about?" inquired the captain.

"No, not water enough," bawled Dick, "must wear ship. Man your weather-braces, hard starboard your helm," shouted Dick. The captain roared out the command after him.

All was alive. The big ship slowly turned upon her heel, but by the time she had got fairly before the wind, stram she struck upon the bottom. The captain was struck speechless.

They began at once to fire from the fort, and a barge was seen approaching.

"What can I do?" said the captain.

"Do? give me your sword and papers, and go below, and I'll take care of your ship," replied Dick.

The captain at length yielded. The barge soon came up.

"Who commands that ship?" roared out the officer.

"I do," shouted Dick.

"Who is I?" bawled the officer.

"Dick Carthwright."

"Then, Captain Dick Carthwright, haul down your colors."

This was a capital oversight in Dick. If he had at first doused the English flag, and run up the American instead, he could have held the vessel. Still, he stuck to it, that the vessel belonged to him. The government offered to allow him a part of the prize, and no small one was it either — a transport ship, loaded with all sorts of supplies for their army. But no, Dick would have the whole or none. And he lost the whole; for what's the use battling with Uncle Sam."

"A bran new story that," muttered Marl. "Never heard it before, nor read it, not even in Barber's Historical Collection of Massachusetts."

"But 'tis true, every word of it," replied the fisherman, a little warmed up, by the allusion of Marl. "I've heard the old folks tell it a hundred times; besides a great many others just as good, about our forefathers, and the pranks they cut up with the British. But they don't always get the best things into books."

"True, true, you're more than half right there," replied Marl. "Your book writers are more than half the time a flimsy pack, but green hands after all aboard the ship of life. The real sailors, the men that have had a touch of experience, have passed through the needle's eye of trial, are a little ripe in first hand knowledge, and could thus give us

something worth while to read, because they are not up to the trick of composition, have to remain dumb, and the field is left to a set of mountebanks, who, because they happen to have the knack of spinning a yarn, according to the rules of the schools, set themselves up as our high priests. But their manufactures are more likely than not, wish-a-washy stuff, either the relashed notions of others, or the flimsy vagaries of their own feeble fancies. But 'tis little bowing of the knee that these liveried preachers get from me. Their dainty sentences are too much like the glove-tipped fingers of an empty pated fop. Give me the hearty grasp of a full soul, that has a ring to it that sends a tingle to your fingers' ends."

"Why don't *you* write a book, Mr. Marlboro?" exclaimed Walter, his face brightening up, under the double blaze of timidity and a generous suggestion. "Surely you've seen enough of the world, and we all know how well you can paint up things."

But the boy felt this to be a wide latitude of familiarity, he was taking with the sailor, for whom he still had a feeling of awe, and he turned hesitatingly toward the furrowed face of Marl, to divine how this boldness would be received.

At this unexpected compliment, the susceptible sailor drew up his body like a basking alligator on feeling the warm sun, shifted his quid of tobacco to the other cheek, threw a serio-comic glance at the boy, while a merry twinkle danced in his eye.

"I write a book — I? Why not bid a Polar bear dance a hornpipe." Then resuming a thoughtful gravity, his countenance, after passing through several hues of emotion, finally blazed up with a radiance that betokened the consciousness of a divinity within; that the feeling of capability had perched upon the sunlit peak of his soul.

"Ah, my boy, this writing a book, is, I fancy, something

like a voyage of discovery—sure to turn out in the end, a long voyage, and a hard one. First, comes the tedious apprenticeship to get the trick of composition, as I have said. Meanwhile, every nook of the universe must be visited for images, else your style will prove as barren as a Scotch heath. Then comes the everlasting labor of composition, in which you must stick close to the line of thought, no matter how many bright scenes tempt you aside; and keep forever pushing on, no matter how bitterly jaded nature cries stop and refresh yourself.

“Nor is this all. The prodigious travail of composition over, a publisher is to be found. One could no more hope to get along without this fore-topsail agency, than a green captain might expect to without an owner. Now, this hitch in the becket is not so easy to be taken; for the small fry of publishers would be of puny force in helping to launch your newly freighted craft upon the tide of success; and as for the larger and better-fed gentry of the tribe, they are rather chary how they nibble at a new bait. But if one of these latter should condescend to take you under the glossy folds of his wings, and then vague fortune should fall into the humor of sounding you a blast from her conch, these gents are none too dainty to carve for themselves the lion’s share, and leave you the bones for picking.

“Well, a publisher hitched to your interest, the next is the dread of running the gauntlet of the press. Nor is this a slight affair either. For although these gentlemen of the quill are now-a-days tolerably civil, yet now and then one does not hesitate to give a cut of the lash, if only for the fun of it, or to try his knack at swinging the whip.

“At last comes the dear good public itself. And with them it is very much a matter of whim. You can no more tell how the popular gale is going to blow, than you can foretell the

weather in the Gulf-Stream. Some very good books have fallen dead-born from the press, while many an indifferent volume has had the good luck to fire ablaze the four quarters of the world. But where one volume wins its way to fame, there are ten that moulder in the vaults of the publisher’s warehouse. So you see, my lad, ’tis a long, rough, uncertain and weary road, from the setting out, when you first dip pen into inkstand, and the reaching of the goal, when you can put the cash into your pocket.”

“But it must be so glorious,” mused the boy, “to find one’s self all of a sudden famous; to feel that one is being read by the world, that his admirers are counted by the thousands, that he is all at once greatly multiplied.”

“True,” responded Marl, “but ’tis very much a lottery; and the chances are greatly against you; and if ’tis a blank you draw, after so much toil, how miserable is the feeling!”

The cook here shouted out, “Sate, ye,” a sound that cut short further argument.

The Pink continued ploughing her way under a brisk southwest breeze, until they struck soundings on George’s Bank. Here they made a trial for two or three days, sometimes fishing at anchor, at others adrift, hove to.

But Walter’s experience while on this bank, was enlivened by hardly a single ray of happy impression. The soundings were deeper and the fishes larger, than on the shoals, which added greatly to the labor and fatigue of hauling the line. Then the tide set wildly (it being spring-tide), and, rigmarole-like, was ever changing its course, sweeping often quite around the compass in the space of twenty-four hours. This caused the lines so to stray as to take 150 or 180 fathoms to reach bottom. Now, when some lordly fish, or more yet, a monarch-halibut seized the hook, if he did not snap the line at once, and march summarily off with the rest of the craft, it

would take several hands and a tedious while to worry his majesty to the surface, when he would break water a long way astern, floundering hitherward reluctantly, reminding Walter of the deceptive antics of a bird of his native hills, called the killdee, when in fear of losing its eggs or young. This incessant sweep of the rapid current upon the watery waste, awakened a strange feeling of insecurity in the breast of the Fisher Boy, and quite destroyed the sublimity of his emotions.

One day, while standing along by the wind, under a stiff breeze, they suddenly shallowed their water, to twenty, fifteen, ten fathoms.

"Breakers!" exclaimed Fishall.

"Ah, sure enough," joined Loggy, fumbling forward, and straining his eyes to get a clearer view.

All started up, and in a moment were staring in amazement.

There they were, long surges of breaking waves, on the weather bow, in reality. Breakers! out of sight of land, in mid ocean as it were, with nothing else around, far and near, but an illimitable watery waste! How desolate, how fearful the sentiment it awakened!

"They must be the shoal water of George's," at length mused Loggy. "Well," he added, "I've heard tell a great deal about this shoal water, but in all my fishing about here, I never saw them before. In fact, I doubted if there were any. But there's no mistake, there they are, and saucy looking fellows are they too."

Although the breakers were well up to windward, yet the current it appeared was sweeping the vessel with so fearful a rapidity toward them, that the skipper was obliged to put the Pink before the wind, and then she escaped only by the favor of a brisk breeze.

As they distanced the danger, Marl, in solemn tones, narrated to the crew the fearful stories of these shoals, that continued to haunt the imagination of seamen. In the line of vessels from Europe and from the East Indies, how many a noble ship with all her costly treasure of freight, and her richer treasure of human life, may not here have found a watery grave,—their skeleton forms tossed endlessly to and fro with the shifting sand and ceaseless billow—no inapt emblem of the turmoil of human life—until the judgment trump shall summon all to appear before the bar of the righteous Judge!

The swift tides, the blustering weather, and especially the scarcity of fishes on George's, induced them to try their luck elsewhere; so squaring away, they put the Pink's bow for Brown's bank.

On the way, they sounded every now and then, with hooks well baited for a trial; but no signs appeared of fishes, except here and there, a veritable green-nose cod, which they hauled up, looking an indefatigable worker after muscles.

Coming to what they thought the best ground, they made a searching trial, but evidently what they sought was not there.

The wind had fallen off to a calm, the ocean become a metallic mirror, and the shades of evening began to gather around. The crew were lounging promiscuously about the vessel, some ensconced in the cabin, others upon deck pensively contemplating the sad beauties of departing day. Loggy alone was at the rail, pertinaciously bobbing for squid. At length, some one feeling a little merry, tossed the old fisherman a pun; others, one after another, followed suit. The example proved contagious, and a lively scene followed. It seemed the aim to cover the veteran fisherman with a laugh, or perchance dislodge him from the berth he held so resolutely; but at their squibs he only chewed more vehemently his quid of tobacco; squirted the juice more cop-

ously, meanwhile, now and then casting at them a look askance, as much as to say, "Ah, my boys, I'm too old a stager to have my head turned by the jokes of youth."

But in a little while the tables were most effectually turned. "Squid, O!" ejaculated Loggy, at the same time jerking one over the rail by way of corroboration. "Squid, O!" was repeated from mouth to mouth through the vessel. The sound ran like wild-fire. If she had just struck upon a rock, the excitement could not have been more ardent. Intense bustle and tumult prevails. Each dives into some nook for his *box*, ransacks it for his craft, when one after another come tumbling and leaping along, without hat or boots it may be, but burning for a hand in the catch. In a moment all are glued to the rail, and 'tis sport indeed.

The squid, or cuttle-fish, is a peculiar species. His head is terminated by long feelers, and for weapon of defence, he secretes a bottle of inky liquid by means of which, when pursued, he blackens the waters around, and then darts backward, thus easily eluding his enemy.

He appears of a quiet, inoffensive disposition, but proves to have a most voracious appetite; and when the fisherman's gig — consisting of a cylindrical piece of composition of lead and pewter, polished bright, attached by the upper end to a line, and at the lower, having pins carefully lashed around it, reversed as hooks — is bobbing up and down, mistaking it doubtless for a nice, shining fish of prey, he seizes it voraciously, and is drawn on board by willing hands.

The squid is deemed most capital bait. As many as twenty fishes, it is said, have been exchanged for a single one, by some shrewd old fisherman, used to tip the points of the hooks after stringing on the other bait. Hence, no possible event is so calculated to awaken from their habitual lethargy a fishing crew, and precipitate one and all headlong toward the rail, as

if the very furies were in possession of them, as the cry of "Squid, O." Then this unique fish, like an earnest nature, seizes the hook quietly, but with a will; and what adds fun to catching them is, that they are wont to eject their ink bolt into the face of their captors, just as he is taking them over the rail.

The catch was a liberal one; and under the glow of animation the exercise begat, together with the buoyant prospect of a good day's work on the morrow, all were in the liveliest mood imaginable. The decks were cleared up with a will; supper was despatched with a double zest. Meanwhile, Loggy had cleaned a fine squid, and flayed him on the coals for a *rasher*; and all agreed that he well deserved the dainty morsel.

The plentifulness of squid led them to believe that there must be herring around; so they let down carefully their set net into the sea, veered it a short distance astern, and then hitched the seine to the vessel by a rope.

It remained calm, the surface of the sea was smooth, and the myriad stars, in the soft canopy above, looked sublimely down. The gentle liquid flaps of the fishes, as one after another became entangled in the meshes of the net, fell softly upon Walter's ear, through the hush of night, and carried his mind in holy, pensive thought, back to the recorded scenes of the fishermen of Galilee.

The catch, the next day, did not justify the expectation they had reasonably entertained. The presence of live bait in profusion, and especially the species which they had so abundantly taken, is regarded by the old fishermen, as indicative of the presence of shoals of voracious fishes, ready to grab at anything in the shape of bait; or, at least, to be the immediate harbingers of them. It was evident, then, they had only to wait patiently a few days, when full room for their activity would be found. But the spell of home was

broken, and hurried away by that impatience which movement in itself begets, the skipper ordered the sails to be trimmed for pushing further on.

On and on they stivered, sounding less and less frequently, until the monotony of sailing enveloped them. At last, all seemed to have become pinioned to their bunks, by that kind goddess, Sleep, rarely crawling therefrom except for meals. This they called bottling up sleep for future occasion.

"Land, O!" shouted the helmsman. The cry ran through the vessel, and, in a moment, the slumbering crew had broken the bonds of Morpheus, and were huddled upon deck, straining their eyes, some to make out the precise locality of the coast, and others to feast the sense upon the banquet of a novel scene. The first sight of land at sea is a blessed vision.

It proved to be the Eastern Coast. A brisk wind was blowing in upon the land; and the chopping waves thwarted by the adverse current, were so considerable as to give an unusually dizzying motion to the vessel. The land which at first seemed to touch the sky, as they neared, swelled out through the translucent atmosphere, having a mellow, dreamy look, well calculated to touch in a lively manner the Fancy. The novel scene dissipated for the moment the gnawing home-sickness of Walter, and filled him with intense curiosity.

On they went, ploughing their way down along the coast. The next morning the skipper judged himself off the outward entrance of the gut of Canso. The vessel was now headed in for land. They soon rounded in by a jagged promontory, and after crossing a deep bay, they entered a narrow strait, and finally came to in a cosy little cove near the shore. The change from the tumbling motion of the vessel at sea, and the raw ocean breeze, to the quiet gliding motion upon the sur-

face of the land-locked waters, fanned by the soft impregnated air from dale and forest, all enlivened by the novel and variegated scenery by which they were surrounded, was sweetly refreshing to the Fisher Boy.

Scarcely anchored, and the sails furled, or "the vessel snugly tied up," in the quaint language of Marl, — when a small black boat was seen approaching from the shore. On reaching the vessel, three men jumped on board; and one raising his hat to the skipper, accosted him with an air of mingled authority and respect. They proved to be rather uncouth specimens of English Officials, or as Marl had it, "the fag end of John Bull." They had certainly a blousy, besotted look, and a surly flching manner, but there was a tone of manly frankness in the few jerked, growling sentences they condescended to give from time to time, that went far to redeem the otherwise unamiable impression they left. Still, a rude, outlandish style proved them but rough beings, plants that had vegetated outside the flowery garden of the world's intercourse. They had come in the dignity of the English crown to see that no article subject to duty was on board. But after receiving from the skipper a stiff glass or two of grog, a junk of pork, and a parcel of tobacco, they deemed it hardly worth while to institute further search. They believed on the whole, the Yankees too honest to be caught smuggling; so with a hearty blessing upon the whole Yankee nation, they took a gracious leave.

The next forenoon was spent ashore by a part of the crew, some in filling water, others in cutting poles for gaff handles, etc. This over, all were let loose for relaxation. The license was lustily enjoyed. Running, jumping, leaping, scrambling over rocks, and such like athletics as give the limbs a vigorous pleasure, after being tied to confined quarters, were promiscuously indulged. Walter among the rest felt a novel pleas-

ure in bounding so fleetly over the bosom of mother earth, and drinking in the incense of her fragrant breath. Many a feat was achieved, that betokened agility, and many a prank cut, that evinced humor, by the jovial crew.

After dinner the anchor was got at once, and the Pink, borne by a propitious breeze, glided amidst the illusive land like a fairy; and when the sun plunged his fiery disc into the rolling ocean, they were well out into the beautiful strait of Northumberland.

CHAPTER XI.

"Calamity is man's true touchstone."

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

"THUMP, thump, thump," came heavily down the large end of a handspike upon the deck before the gangway. "All hands ahoy. Fish, O! Fish, O! They are here, double game twice running," hurriedly bawled Fishall, — and he was off in a twinkling, sawing away again at his line. The crew needed no second call this time. The inspiring sound of "Fish, O," the balmy state from enjoyed rest, the fresh feeling from pleasant scenes passed through, all helped forward a vigor, that sent them bounding up the gangway, most eager to feel the first pulsation of success.

In a moment, all were at the rail, in the highest ardor of activity. The completest silence reigned, as if utterance had seethed out amid the fervor of intense eagerness. Fishall with hat and jacket off, and sleeves rolled up, was bending to the sport, with a freedom, agility, and precision, that betokened the adroit sportsman.

The broad bosom of the sea, slightly rippled by a feeble, penetrating breeze, presented an aspect of quiet serenity. One or two large ships well in the offing to the North, were pursuing their solitary way, seeming on the very verge of civilization. The atmosphere was of that cold transparency seen in high latitudes. But when the sun sprang from his

briny couch, and flung his radiance over the broad expanse, all around shone, as if touched with a magic pencil.

Still, to the sensitive imagination of Walter, it seemed that he had been flung to another sphere, unknown to the soft, green earth of his home; and when the images of his mother, and loved ones came thronging upon his mind, he could not but suppress a tear of regret. But he was quick to dissemble the tender sentiment: and he threw himself into the ardor of activity, as if his heart were in the catch, instead of far away amid the scenes of his youth.

The water here was so shallow, not more than thirty fathoms, and the bite so lively and uniform, that ere the morning was far advanced, each had filled his kid, and was counting out upon deck, keeping his own tally.

There lay the handsome cod, vanquished by the art of man, shorn of the glory of their native element, flapping and gasping in the fierce rays of the rising sun, their crimson-arched gills, palpitating in the keen anguish of a fatal death-throe. Cruel, avaricious man! if every pang thou hast inflicted upon mute suffering creation, were to rise up in judgment against thee, what a mountain of condemnation would impend over thy guilty head.

But sentiment aside, what exercise more inspiring and withal more healthful, than taking codfish with hook and line.

The firm, erect, well poised attitude in hauling, the vigorous action of the muscles of the chest and arms, combine to develop muscular energy, while the mental stimulus is such as to impart that glow of animation without which exercise has little efficiency.

Try it, ye waning mortals, whose sluggish pulse and hectic breath show ye alas in the downhill road of life. Throw to the winds your thousand and one nostrums, and speed to the deck of a fishing vessel. My word for it one trip of hearty

fishing life, will more avail to restore that blessed boon, health, than all the endeavors of a score of the most sagacious of the sons of Esculapius.

The excitement became so general (perhaps the conditional promise of a new hat in the fall, contributed its share of influence) as to draw the cook likewise into the sport, which personage divided most devotedly his time between his line and the pot.

Hence, late it was before the greeting sound of breakfast came forth; and then even the usual scrambling toward the gangway did not take place. An earnest feeling held hunger at the time at bay. Yet at length one after another stole off below, snatched a bite, and was so quickly back to his line, as to have made it hardly possible to be missed. The genius of Yankee greed-getting could hardly have exacted anything more faithful.

Early in the afternoon, the bite began to slacken. But the skipper instead of taking it moderately in the beginning—that is, knocking off in season to complete dressing down before night, pursued that very common course of overreaching gain, which commonly defeats its own end,—and had the crew remain at the rail, 'till sunset. This brought them far into the night, before the fishes could be put snugly under the deck. Keeping so late hours, might have been borne for one night, but it was repeated time and again, fishing all day, and dressing half the night, until poor human nature could hardly stand up under it longer.

As for Walter, he came soon to being nearly used up, to employ a Hibernianism. The eternal dressing down over, it was with much ado, that he could drag his weary limbs down the gangway, to the supper table. Here, so complete was physical prostration, that as hunger ridden as he was, his spoonful of squeal was as likely to be poured into his bosom, as into

his mouth, to the no little merriment of the crew, — who, by the by, could not boast of being greatly more wakeful than the boy.

Supper over, it was a joyful leap into his bunk, where sweet slumber awaited him for a soft, delicious, but firm embrace. From touching his birth, 'till morning, he knew no more. All was glorious oblivion.

But to muster at the cry of all hands in the morning. Aye, that was the rub. Eyes glued in sleep, fingers sore, swollen, and the joints stiff as an iron poker, the body lame from over exertion, and the whole sense steeped in slumber, as if rolling in the waves of Lethe. Indeed, the effort was next to impossible.

Akin to this in trial, was the turning out in the night to stand watch. At so high latitude in mid-summer, the nights were at most, but short. They were moreover greatly clipped by the dressings down, which oftener than otherwise ran into midnight. So that with the number of hands on board, extending nearly to a baker's dozen, the watch came round to each only at long intervals. Yet those intervals were far too short for Walter.

The duty of calling Walter, could not but tax very sorely the patience of the unlucky mortal whose watch preceded the boy's. For to speak the sleeper's name, or even shake him pretty vigorously by the collar, had no more effect than it would to shout in the ear of a deaf sunfish. The only way that proved effectual in arousing the boy, was to tumble him out of his bunk, give him a stout shaking upon the chest; or, perchance, drag him upon deck into the midnight air.

The man who called Walter, took care always before going below, to reiterate the injunction, to keep a bright look out for ships that were crossing in their wake up and down the St. Lawrence. But one of these huge sailing leviathans, might

at any time have swallowed the tiny Pink Stern, without the boy's being a whit wiser for the incident, so completely did he become in a moment after enwrapped in the folds of slumber.

Moreover, whenever his watch came in the night, the rest of the crew had good reason to thank the boy for the luxury of a morning doze. For not only were the watchers that followed left to slumber on, but more likely than not the sun would get well up the arch before there was any mustering at all, and then not unless some veteran fisherman had awaked of himself, and so aroused the others.

In this stupor of sleep, Walter might have remained till the crack of doom, but for some overmastering agency. This sometimes came in that intolerable thirst, more powerful even than the drench of slumber. He would then suddenly awake, parched with an excruciating longing for water.

The oppressive air through which the cabin lamp feebly rays, seems like a lurid taper in a damp sepulchre. The hard breathings of the slumberers, to say nothing of many a lugubrious sound, falls upon his sense like the spirit of the nightmare, and makes him fancy himself in a tomb of resuscitating spirits.

Crawling over old Loggy who lies as inanimate as a dead whale, and stumbling at length upon an unwashed tin cup, from the cook's scanty cupboard, he is not long in making way to the water-bucket in the dirtiest nook of the cabin, thoroughly begrimed as it is without, and loaded with recreation within.

The foetid odor of the water, from lack of ventilation in the barrel, and especially the innumerable bits of scum floating thickly through the liquid, would seem to render the draught loathsome enough of itself; but thirst has the power to parch up delicacy of taste, and to change the disgusting

into the grateful. How supremely sweet were not those draughts! The nectar of the gods could not have been more delicious!

For a few days, it had been blowing so brisk a norther, as to forbid any attempt at fish-taking. Accordingly, the rail was abandoned, and the wee nook of a cabin became for the time being their hearth of life. This gave a joyful respite to sore fingers and jaded muscles, and the work-ridden crew, blessed the god of storms for the boon. It was rough without, but balmy repose gilded the horizon within.

Fishall had the watch on deck. The rest of the crew were complacently ensconced in the cabin, when unexpectedly a voice shouted at the top of the gangway,

"Gone — the rudder's gone! Sure's I'm a living man; saw it sink right out of sight."

"Don't say," groaned Loggy, dismally.

Old Marl darted upon deck, and in a moment returned, verifying the astounding intelligence. The crew were struck with an amazement bordering upon alarm; and well they might be, being as they were, upon a strange coast, more than a hundred miles from a convenient harbor, with no rudder to their vessel! Hardly could a situation seem more disheartening, if not perilous.

But the skipper seemed not in the least daunted. He had schooled himself into the belief, that all things in the end work for the best; and he showed himself in this case, one of those very few philosophers whose practice accords with their precepts. Still, as he pondered it over, the mortal difficulty of getting back to the Gut of Canso, without rudder, stared him in the face rather sternly. It seemed very like driving a horse through the main street of a populous city, without reins to guide. Disquietude weighed all the more heavily, from the novelty of their situation. At sea without a rudder!

Who had ever heard of a like situation! Accustomed troubles bring accustomed fortitude, but a new difficulty is accompanied by a strange feeling of embarrassment, appalling to the energies. But obstacles are vanquished by marching upon them with a bold step, and the pace forward is quickened, by the stern necessity which throws us upon the foe with no choice of retreat. The skipper and Old Marl, had both got in the school of life not a little of that fortitude, that meets with calmness a trying situation, strengthened by an inward force that rises superior to misfortune.

As soon as the gale had enough moderated, the anchor was weighed, when her bow fell off with a fair wind. Sailing before it, like riding down hill, would seem an easy affair. And it may be, when one has a firm check-rein to his horse, or a sure rudder to the stern of his vessel, but without those convenient appendages, it becomes rather an awkward feat.

After many fruitless attempts to manage the steering of the vessel, they finally hit upon the following successful expedient. The jib and foresail set, the mainsail was hoisted partly up. One man then stood with compass before him on the hatch, and main-peak halliards in hand. Hoisting the peak ever so slightly, caused the vessel to luff; and lowering it again, her bow would fall off. Thus, a tolerably straight wake could be made. Whichever way the wind, they found by a little judgment in trimming sails, the sprightly craft could be steered with wonderful ease. But what put the climax to their success, was sailing by the wind; or more astonishingly still in beating to windward. This, when it was smooth, they could do most admirably. The magic manœuvre was performed in this wise. The jib and foresheets were hauled close aft. The main-sheet left about a point free, when the thing of life as if proud of her ability, would glide forward, keeping the luff of the mainsail barely lighting in

the breeze, and making a wake as direct as the course of the wind itself.

To about ship, they had only to ease off the fore and jib-sheets, haul close aft the main-sheet, when the knowing thing would turn upon her heel, as pertly as a country maiden in a waltz. Indeed, one day in company with a number of vessels, she outstripped them all in readiness and precision of working, and left them all ere long well off in the distance to the leeward. Not one of these vessels in any probability for once imagined that the little craft that had thus so beaten them, was destitute of rudder.

Every one aboard felt, and with good reason, a keen glow of satisfaction at the striking success they had met with, in their very novel mode of managing a vessel. Intense anxiety now gave place to serene joy.

In the rubbish of the world's doings, there is many a feat of skill by humble hands, that needs but a fortunate setting, to make it admirably famous.

"What's the use of a helm at all," at length broke forth Fishall, in a gratulatory tone. "For, without one, we sail better it seems, get along faster, and save our trick in the bargain. When I build my ship, I'll leave out the rudder, I think. What say you, Mr. Marl?"

"Well, I'll hardly go so far as that," drawled the Salt, thoughtfully, "but I'll agree, that if Captains would attend more closely to trimming sail, there'd be less occasion to find fault with helmsmen. Yes," he added, "widening in thought, I'll not doubt there's vastly too much *steering* in the world—too much leaning upon old musty guides, and not enough standing upon one's own royal judgment."

"How's that?" inquired Fishall, evidently a little bewildered by being thus suddenly drawn into the region of generalization.

"Why," continued the sailor, "to make the thing more clear, there's your book worm of a student for example. He's forever grubbing away, amid the decayed mould of the past, feeding upon defunct notions and exploded theories. True, his cranium gets filled, but 'tis with a kind of lumber, that leaves his puny soul in but a rickety condition at best. If he'd make use of his wasted time, and misspent energies in searching the clew to the mysteries to the great, living, beating world around him, he'd become for all useful ends, I fancy, quite as wise, and, furthermore, would thereby catch a spark or two of vitality to animate his step through this crowded mart of life."

"Can you mention another case?" inquired the skipper, his eyes sparkling with interest.

"Yes," replied the sailor, "there's woman, magnificent woman, decking herself in the flimsy trickery of Fashion, spreading all canvas to outstrip her sex, and steer straight into the port of Matrimony. Can she not perceive that good sensible man, must look upon all such low arts, as the mere scum of vanity; that his royal nature can be brought to love only what is pure, noble, and free of guile.

"But the very worst steered craft that I know of, is the ship of State. Every year or so, likely as not, a green skipper and a bran new crew come aboard, and what with the ignorance of their new place, and their vanity of making a show of doing something, they bring the good old ship to make but a crooked track of it. If the noble craft were left more to her own bearings, she'd fetch about a better turn of it, I fancy."

The attention of the speaker was at this moment drawn off by the appearance of a dark cloud rising in the north-western horizon. Vivid glimmerings and forked chains of lightning

would light up in rapid succession its sombre lid, and then play upon its lowering brow, like fiery spirits caressing the sublime Genii of the heavens.

"A savage looking customer, that," mused Marl, casting doubtful glances, alternately at the cloud, and the tiny sails of the vessel. "A bell weather of the flock, to appearance. 'Twould be on the safe side to douse our calico."

The skipper gave prompt orders to take in sail at once. The crew sprang like men who act before the quickening menace of danger; and by the time the canvas was secured, the heavens were grimly enshrouded, as with the pall of midnight. The gentle leading breeze against which the vessel had borne her way so adroitly, now quietly vanished, as if borne off in a winding sheet of death. The calm was stark, breathless. The threatening elements like embattled warriors, just on the eve of a terrible onslaught, stood face to face, silent, moody, ominous. The stillness was the hush of the grave-side.

In a moment it came; first, the wind, in a sweeping, furious gust; as if it were about to snatch the mortal breath out of one; then the rain, in driving, pelting, pouring torrents. Indeed, it seemed that the very windows of heaven had been opened, and that the Deity had repented himself of having vouchsafed to man immunity from another flood. The deep toned thunder roared and bellowed like a maddened bull. It commingled with the jarring, frenzied elements, in startling confusion, and seemed every moment on the point of breaking its chains of confinement, to fall upon the devoted heads of all.

The harpy lightning shot through the wild gloom in fiery vividness, leaping from mast to deck with the ferocity of a rabid animal.

The peak of the jib had been left standing just to steady her before the wind, when under the hurculean force of the gale, she flew off with the speed of an arrow, and with a rush of motion that actually caught up the breath with intensity of thrill.

Walter had shared largely the evil of that miserable dealing with children, which ends in making them afraid of their own shadow—not from the kind, common-sense philosophy of his mother, but from the silly, superstition of early teachers and associates. He could not sit with quiet nerves at home, amidst the roaring of a violent thunder-storm. What then must have been his trepidation at sea, with all the elements of terror greatly increased? But he constantly strove with earnest purpose, to get the better of this weakness, and, in this instance, he at length so mastered his quailing emotions, as partially to enjoy the grandeur of the scene.

It was now evident the craft had got the full weight of the gale, and she was careering on before the mighty aerial current in thrilling majesty. Marl was standing near the fore shrouds in an attitude of calm contemplation, evidently in that entranced state of soul, to which sublime scenes of nature elevate imperial spirits, when all of a sudden, the stalwart sailor fetched a twitch and a writhe, as if shot by the spark of a double galvanic battery; and sending up a shout that was heard above even the roar of the tempest, "Man overboard!" he sprang abaftward, his eyes wild with excitement, his face haggard with intense solicitude, and every limb swelling with leaping force.

Every article of a floating nature that could possibly afford a chance boon to the drowning man, was instantly seized and thrown into the sea, regardless of its cost or value. The lashings of the boat stowed amid-ships were cut at a stroke. For-

tunately at this moment the gale lulled; the jib was lowered, and hoisting the peak of the main-sail brought the Pink head to the wind. Overboard now flew the boat, and in leaped Marl, Fishall, and another.

They pulled with frenzied energy toward the lost man. Around and around they rowed the conjectured spot where he fell, hallooing and shouting till the shades of night began to appear. The vessel meanwhile seconded their efforts by sailing and tacking near them, and occasionally firing a gun. But all was vain. No human figure could be descried; no human voice heard. Nought broke the stillness save the mocking sound of the clashing waters. It was the silence of death. He had gone; had sunk to rise no more; his brief span was over; his bubble of life burst. How sad, how mournful, how solemn! But a moment before in the full energy and young prime of years, without a note of warning, a staying hand for kindly succor, or a sympathizing tear to soothe the dread passage, he was hurried to that bourne whence no traveller returns.

Surely, "in life, are we in the midst of death."

At length, they returned on board, with heads bent in solemn dejection upon their breasts; and with hearts of sadness, the vessel was put again upon her course.

The drowned man, it seemed, went out on the bowsprit, in order to secure more completely the furled part of the jib. While returning, his feet slipping from the foot-rope, he dropped into the water, and was passed over by the vessel. He, nevertheless, came up close astern, sprang half his length above the surface, throwing up at the same time, his arms in a gesture of forlorn distress, accompanied by a cry of anguish, so bitter as to pierce to the core the sternest heart. A good swimmer, he instinctively struck out toward the vessel, and when last seen was buffeting the angry billows with the energy of despair.

Ah, what must have been his feelings, when all hope of rescue at last faded forever from his vision,—when the stern, dreadful reality of a final farewell to earth stared him irrevocably to view, and the horrors of a watery grave closed in upon his soul.

How sad and melancholy hung that night over the thoughtful crew! So sudden, so unexpected a death, in their very midst! One of their little band, a band knit closely by the common links of exposure and hardship; snatched, as it were, from them, taken just before their eyes, in the full flush of life, and hurled without a single note of warning, to the surging, angry, relentless billows.

How vividly it impressed them with the uncertain tenure of life! How it quickened their apprehension of the element at whose mercy they were floating! With what awful terror it clothed the memory of the fatal gale which like a stealthy murderer had come so direfully upon them.

The deceased possessed a kind heart, an equable temper, and a spirit of faithfulness to duty. Moved by that amiable principle of human nature, by which the virtues only of the departed are dwelt upon, these rough men, but with hearts of woman's tenderness, had many a good thing to narrate of their lost companion.

But it was a night of harrowing disquietude, especially to Walter. The shock of the awful scene continued to agitate him like a troubled sea. The imploring attitude of the dying man, and above all, that unearthly shriek pressed still upon his soul like a haunting incubus.

CHAPTER XII.

"Hail, Holy Day! the blessing from above
Brightens thy presence like a smile of love,
Smoothing, like oil upon a stormy sea,
The roughest waves of human destiny —
Cheering the good, and to the poor oppressed
Bearing the promise of their heavenly rest."

"THREADING this needle will be no easy matter, I fancy," mused Marl. Indeed, to succeed entering the harbor, did look, as if it might prove a perplexing feat. True, out in the bay, with a plenty of sea-room, they had contrived well enough to get along, but to run in through a narrow winding passage, with a strong breeze upon the quarter, was quite a different affair. But they had proceeded now quite too far, to turn back or even to hesitate. So, by the aid of a couple of long oars at the stern, and tending sheets pretty sharply, they did succeed in achieving the passage, and soon came securely at anchor in the harbor to the no little amazement of the inhabitants of the place, who had gathered wonderingly upon the shores, to witness so unusual a spectacle as a vessel running into their harbor without a rudder.

Excessively fatigued, all hands turned in early for a sound night's rest; but before many hours, Walter awakened, and found a strange bustling in the cabin. To his amazement the vessel was so careened, as to render it impossible standing erect upon the floor of the cabin, and the crew generally were

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scrambling out of their berths, and making all possible haste to reach the deck.

As Walter gained the deck, behold, the vessel so far turned over on her side, as to bring the water quite up to the lower combing of the hatch-way. Everything loose upon deck had either tumbled into the water or floated from off the deck, and all swept from sight by the current. The unlucky vessel was evidently in imminent peril of upsetting. Partially loaded with fish and salt, she must have sunk direct to the bottom. The moment was one, then, of real alarm.

But, fortunately, one of the inhabitants ashore happening about midnight to pass along the beach toward home, was struck by the unhappy predicament of the Pink. Surmising the cause, in a friendly spirit he quickly alarmed his neighbors, who as promptly turned out, and sprang forward to the rescue. Presently, the dark line of the shore seemed crowded with forms dimly visible through the gray folds of night, suggestive to the imagination of benignant spirits from the regions of Pluto.

Shouting lustily until they had awakened the crew on board, like men who apprehend at a glance the secret turn of a crisis, they suggested readily the means of relief. A hawser bent to an anchor ashore, and hitched to the main and fore halliards aboard, kept the hapless Pink from turning further over until she was righted, and finally floated off by the incoming tide.

The way in which the vessel evidently fell into the odd dilemma was now pointed out to them by the friendly shoremen, who, with good reason, congratulated the skipper, upon so lucky an escape. A wicked, sunken rock nestled in the harbor, over which, during the night, the Pink had swung, with the change of wind. On the ebbing of the tide, which is not inconsiderable in these latitudes, the keel caught upon

a verge of the rock which tripped the unsuspecting craft, as many a storm-beaten mortal, at length moored in self-security in some placid harbor of life, is suddenly struck by the fang of a secret enemy, at a time when dreaming of no evil.

Early in the morning, the crew set out in quest of the articles that had been swept from the deck of the *Pink*, in their night's strange vicissitude. A few of the least valuable of these were at once found upon the beach, where they had been left, high and dry, by the receding tide. A few others were at length discovered, behind hillocks and amid thickets, where they had evidently been secreted by covetous hands. But of the bulk of the straying articles no clew, whatever, as to their whereabouts could be traced.

What struck the crew as a strange episode, in their search, was, that on touching the shore they were greeted by several of the same men who had lent them so efficient aid during the night just passed; and who now proffered them the most cordial assistance to discover the missing articles, or ferret out any one who might have been so base as to steal them. They even swore roundly at the inhumanity of any one who could think of robbing the stranger and the cast-away. But strange to say, it turned out in the sequel, that these very persons were, beyond doubt, among the guilty ones; and that this little plausibility was merely a trick, to lead away suspicion by false pretence.

It is not the least among the anomalies of human character that men can be found who, at one moment will pour out their sympathies, like water, in succoring a distressed fellow mortal, and at the next, rob this brother being of the coat even from off his back. Men — shall we call them such? — who can look unaffected upon death itself, if some trivial article of acquisition come between them and the dread scene; can even rifle the dead body, cut from the swollen finger of the cold corpse the

last simple jewel of affection, the heart-felt token, it may be, of a mother's undying love. But this dire phase of perverted human character may too often be met with in any places, greatly exposed to shipwreck. It shows the sad depths of human degradation to which the morbid passion of gain will hurry the soul.

A rudder was at length with some difficulty completed, and securely hung. After being paid for, by a draft upon the owners in the States, they cheerily set sail, and ere long, were again upon their former fishing ground in the bay.

Here, the fishes showed no abatement from their former eagerness for taking the hook, and all hands soon became again dragged down with the toil of catching.

"The last fish this week, and I'm only too glad of it," joyfully broke forth Fishall, as late of a Saturday night his knife came down upon the splitting table, with a more lively ring than usual.

The soothing anticipation of the morrow's rest held a lingering charm over their minds, and their simple supper was despatched with a zest of spirits bordering upon hilarity. Even their usual eagerness for retiring was relaxed, as if to prolong the present enjoyment of future delight.

Ah, how grateful upon the jaded spirit of the fisherman falls the quiet shadows of a more than Cotter's Saturday night. It seems to him as if an angel stooping from heaven, and unlocking the huge door barred for six days, by grim Labor, lets him into the sweet banquet hall of Nature.

On awaking the next morning, Walter found all the rest of the crew, save the skipper and cook, snoring and puffing in their berths, as if struggling for dear life with that old arch giant, Slumber, —

"Weariness

Can snore upon the flint, when resty sloth
Finds the down-pillow hard."

The skipper, seated upon the narrow end of the transom, near the dingy fire-place, was actually lending a gracious hand at getting the breakfast, while glee-hearted Dunderfish, but too glad to be for once relieved from the heat and smoke of his everlasting drudgery, and not a little elated at the thought of so much dignity gracing his office, was dancing attendance upon the skipper's every behest, with all the deference and promptitude of a newly appointed knight squire. By his side loomed a couple of kids heaped with tempting doughnuts, fried in fresh liver fat, and still the fierce work continued to go on.

In due time, breakfast in full was joyously brought forth upon the table. It consisted of stacks of brownly crisped nuts, hot wheat bread, butter, nice corned cod boiled, and coffee. Surely such a repast might have tempted the dainty palate of a king. Then how sweetly inviting must it not have been to the gaunt appetite of the squeal-famished crew. However stilted philosophy may affect to condemn the pleasures of appetite, to a hungry man there are few things in life more welcome than a good savory meal. As the grateful odor curled up from the smoking viands, the crew were not laggard in mustering to the call to breakfast. Out they come rolling from their berths, yawning and grunting, fetching that peculiar kind of grunt which is indicative of inward satisfaction. Without giving themselves the trouble of doing their toilet, or of even dressing, they squat themselves around the table, and commenced without ceremony attacking the breast-work of edibles, like men bent upon vanquishing. The scene was such as to confound the notions of those fastidious people who insist upon morning ablutions, elaborate toilet, and thorough mastication at the table.

Breakfast over, each rolled himself back into his berth in order to complete the morning's doze. And two or three of

the crew, under the grip of their somnambulent powers, passed off into a profound slumber, that lasted till toward noon. But for the most of them, the claims of digestion proved too exacting; and after tossing restlessly from side to side, with vain effort to court sleep, one after another bolted upon deck for a quaff of the morning sunshine. The Sabbath morn greeted them with clapping hands; all around, in sky and upon ocean, wore a serene, pensive smile; and a sweet, holy emotion blossomed up in their freshened hearts.

Whatever of damp clothing that could be mustered from the cabin, was now spread upon deck for an airing; and while some of the crew were employed in the hold, packing the kentches of fish, in order to economize room, others might have been seen jogging away at the pump, to remove the pickle that had accumulated from the salted fishes.

These duties over, each made the most of the pint of fresh water prudence allowed him to take for a personal wash. Sore fingers were then dressed with as much care as is wont to be bestowed upon a new-born babe.

In the afternoon, all hands were wide awake. The day still continued very beautiful. With the exception of here and there a tuft of fleecy cloud floating in the soft azure, the heavens were entirely serene. A dove-like gentleness seemed to sit upon the placid bosom of the ocean. The sun gushed forth his exhaustless beams, filling the air with a subdued, but genial splendor.

The decks and cabin having been scrubbed, wore a sweet face of cheerfulness. The crew cleaned, personally, and dressed in their tidiest, looked pleasanter, and felt nobler. Indeed, they were filled with that delightful complacency, that accompanies an appeased stomach, a peaceful conscience, and a bright, lovely day.

Seated in the cabin, the skipper and Fishall, who were of

that fervent sect, the Methodist, and who themselves were religious to superstition, drew forth their begrimmed psalm-books, and commenced pitching their vocal pipes. True, their voices chorded but indifferently, yet, accompanied as they were by several others of the crew, who chimed in with a monotonous diapason, the singing had at least the quality of volume; and as the rough but tender cadences died away upon the ear, they failed not to awaken some of the purest and dearest associations of home.

Sabbath upon the ocean! How joyful the day! Upon every vocation, this glorious Christian boon falls with seasonable grace, but to the wayfaring mariner, tossed upon the ceaseless billow, it comes an unspeakable blessing.

To the weary, plodding fisherman, especially, it is truly a day of rest,—a day of sweet refreshing,—a season for calm, holy enjoyment. Floating so helplessly upon the boundless waste of waters, and surrounded by the mazy sublime scenery of ocean, are circumstances well calculated deeply to impress his open, susceptible nature, and touch with liveliness the mysteries of his divine faith.

Ocean! thou grand type of the glorious Infinite!—mighty, illimitable, unsearchable! What thought can compass thy boundless attributes, what expression body thy marvellous aspects! Now, grand, majestic, sublime; now, placid, lovely, beautiful. At one time, bold and terrific as a fierce war-charger; at another, sweet and tender as a sighing maiden! How fit an emblem is thy ever restless bosom, of the unsatisfying nature of man! Thy ever-changing scenery, how strikingly it typifies the unstable in human life! How profoundly thy deep, unexplored caverns appeal to the imagination, suggesting, with awe, the mysterious in the fate of man, and the dark, uncertain future whither he is hastening. Yet, in all thy fitful moods, thou art ever noble, grand old ocean,

lifting the soul above earthly grovelling, and inspiring it with lofty views, and generous aims.

As for Walter, so changed, so renovated was now the aspect of every thing around him, contrasted with but a day before, that, looking at life through his feelings, he would scarcely have believed himself on board the same craft, and among the same fellow-beings as formerly.

It is doubtless this variety, which lends that peculiar fascination so wonderful to a sea life; a fascination that binds with a spell all-powerful the feet of the hardy wanderer to the severe vicissitudes of the trackless main.

There is this difference between the condition of the lowly, and that of the offspring of fortune, that while the honied, velvet life of the latter soon palls upon the sense, and no change can bring richer delight than he has already enjoyed, but may bring disgust rather; to the former, the merest change is a happy improvement, and is naturally accompanied by that fresh complacency of feeling so conducive to happiness. That is, when we are once used to the harder lot, we glide into the easier with joyous feelings; but if the easier lot be ours at first, we fall to the harder with a cloud of dejection lowering around our path-way. Hence, it is better to commence the ladder of life at the lower round, and make our way up by gradual but firm steppings, when each pace upwards brings us to a broader horizon, and sweeter atmosphere, than to begin life at the top-round of the ladder, which can know no higher enjoyment, and if forced down by the unrelenting hand of fortune, must fall to a depressing level of disquietude.

They fished away in the spot where they now were, with unflagging activity, buoyed up from the depression of wearisomeness, by that elixir of a fishing crew, namely, the hope of full fare and a quick return. But the deck getting cumbered with gurry, it became necessary to throw it overboard, and change their fishing-ground.

Heaving the anchor a-peak, they found it fast to the bottom; and no purchase which they could bring to bear proved adequate to weigh it. After their best endeavors, they were obliged to cut cable, and leave this part of their ground-tackle behind them.

There was now remaining to them but the sheet-anchor, and they deemed it hardly prudent to drop this, lest in the event of losing it, they would be left in the situation most dreaded of all by seamen, namely, at sea without anchors.

The opinion now seemed to prevail that they should return home. True, they might continue on the ground, fishing adrift; and as it was in the gala of the season, and their salt was far from being all wet, this would seem to have been the more reasonable course. Yet no one on board even suggested such a thing. Each one, on the contrary, seemed to fear that something of the kind would be proposed. They had been absent just long enough for that longing sentiment after home, so honorable to our better nature, to have risen to its culmination, and the slightest pretext for turning their face homeward, they seized with the avidity of famishing men.

A simple life, with but few objects to direct the current of the affections, seems to increase their depth and strength, just as a stream delves its way all the deeper, as the banks within which it is confined grow more and more narrow.

CHAPTER XIII.

"I LOVE that dear old home! my mother lived there
Her first sweet marriage years, and last sad widowed ones;
The sun-light there seems to me brighter far
Than wheresoever else. I know the forms
Of every tree and mountain, hill and dell;
Its waters gurgle like a tongue I know;—
It is my home."

MRS. FRANCES K. BUTLER.

"CAM, cam, cam, not air enough stirring to blow away the breath from the nose of a dead chicken,—never shall get home at this rate, never," grumbled with a pathetic tone, Old Loggy, as he drew his unwieldly body out of the gang-way upon deck.

"No use in fretting. Wind'll come in its own good time," said the skipper, soothingly.

"Then heaven speed the day," answered the old fisherman, rather snappishly. "Come, boy," he continued, addressing Walter, who was standing near him, "can't you whistle us up a breeze? I'm not much of a hand for such tricks myself. In fact, used to think 'twasn't right, but I'll go in for anything now, that'll push us along."

"Tut, tut," broke forth the skipper, "I never knew any good to come from whistling on board a vessel, especially whistling to get a breeze. On the contrary, I've seen it followed by squalls enough to take the very spars out of the vessel. Shouldn't ever tempt the Almighty."

In truth, their patience had been greatly put to the test, by a tedious succession of light, baffling head winds, creeping lazily ever from one point of the heavens—namely, the south-west. Their progress all this time was, in the nomenclature of Marl, but a snail's gallop.

At long intervals, however, the feeble breath of wind, after sporting cruelly with their intense longing for a change, would wane and wane, until it completely gasped out, leaving a day or two of flat burning calm. A slight breeze would then spring up from the east, accompanied by an ominous thickening up in the sky. This would soon gradually veer around to the south-east, freshen, while the entire canopy of the heavens would undergo all the magic wonders of the kaleidoscope.

The vessel would now plough her way, as if eager to improve the moment; and the crew walking briskly the deck, under the electric thrill of rapid motion, and the charm of revived hopes, could not but be in the most happy state of mind possible. But in a little while, the rain would strike in, and presently pour down in torrents. Then would come the "stumps" as they were called, heard at the bow, indicating a change of wind, which was sure soon to follow, whipping in to the north-west, and after making a little feint here at blowing, would veer back to the south-west, and settle down at its old tune.

But for these free flaws, the goal, it seemed, would never be reached. And as it was, the distance between them and home, looked to the eye of feeling of interminable length, and the time rolled back and loomed up in the mirage of dejection as a space never to be spanned.

For a week after leaving the fishing-ground, the time, night and day, was about all consumed in eating and sleeping. Jaded nature now made sweet amends for past neglect.

The physical satiated, several of the more ingenious took to

haberdashing in order to kill time. Fishall cut out with his knife a very pretty hull of a schooner. Marl busied himself upon a curious ivory box, the materials of which he had got on a previous voyage whaling. While the skipper—and shall we say it—was absorbed in the setting together in the most fantastic manner, the patch-work of a quilt. No curious lady's fingers could have shown greater delicacy or skill.

This timely occupation was enlivened by each one's running off his stock on hand of old stories. By the time they had got round, these would bear repeating. Then came a string of old stories revamped. Bits of personal experience followed, threads of early life—scenes of love, courtship, marriage, in which Imagination, good, dear Divinity, helped amazingly to embellish the text.

This resource exhausted, there settled around them a season of dread melancholy, filled with sullen looks, snappish tones and ugly ways. It was that dire sea-curse which comes so strangely like a deep unsettling cloud to drive far away the sweet amenities of social life, making the faces even of boon comrades to look hateful.

This blank monotony was, however, occasionally relieved by some godsend of an incident, or perhaps, by a general discussion upon a chapter of the ways in early times.

For example, at a remark of Walter, about the badness of their diet, which had been of late rapidly growing worse and worse, as the cook shared the general languor and dejection, old Loggy took up the thread of talk in his own peculiar vein.

"Ah, my boy," quoth the veteran fisherman, "you know nothing of the hardships of fishing, as it used to be when I was a boy. When eleven years old, I went cook of a low decked banker, for sixteen men, all regular salamanders for eating.

"Hard times of it, I'll be bound," remarked Fishall.

"Well, it kept me pretty busy, but boys worked in them days. But then it must be owned, that we didn't have so many nice fixings in with the bill of fare, as they do now-a-days. 'Twas plain sailing after all. Brown bread, hasty pudding, squeal, stifled fish heads and beans, were the principal things. Pork and molasses were extras. About these latter, some would eat theirs as they went along, but most strung up their share of pork, and poured their molasses into a jug, to take home for their families in the winter. Fish and potatoes with pork fat, was called *fish and dip*; without the pork, it was *fish and pint*, that is, to eat the fish and potatoes and point at, or think of the pork. Doughboys, were sometimes boiled with the fish and potatoes. A few would eat these hot with their pork and molasses, but most of the crew strung up theirs to take home. In them times fishermen thought they couldn't afford to eat the bodies of the fishes they caught, but were content with the heads and back-bones, and good eating are they too. They used to save all the tongues and sounds of their codfish, all the fins, skinnets and junket of their halibut to buy vegetables with in the fall, at market."

"They lived so saving in olden times, that I should think everybody would have got rich," observed Fishall.

"Yes, owners and skippers did use to get ahead, but us poor hands had a hard time of it," continued Loggy. "First, we had to fit out in Boston. The fitters put aboard such stores as they liked, and charged what prices they thought best; then put on 6 per cent for six months, or 12 per cent per year, giving the skipper, perhaps, an extra demijohn or so, to pull the wool over his eyes. When they came to settle the voyage in the fall, the skipper must first have his sixty-fourth, the owners a quarter for the vessel, and an eighth for making the fish. Then taking out the great generals, the

small generals, what each had had out for himself, and for his family, there would be precious little left for the family to live on, after paying up doctors' bills, store-bills, and giving the gals each a new suit, and the boys a few dollars for spending money for frolics and weddings; for we used to have a good many mouths to feed in them days. Poor father and mother had twenty four children, and I and Jemimah, by the blessing of heaven, have given the light to eighteen; but poor us, we've got most through this empty world."

At this moment, the cry of "porpoises" was heard. Every man below sprang upon deck, and rushed forward, as if pressed on with a fury. And the skipper foremost of all seized the harpoon, that was lying upon the windlass ready bent to a coil of rope, leaped into the bow-sprit rigging, and poised the weapon for a throw. The vessel, at the time, was running quickly with a fresh breeze upon the quarter. The shoals of porpoises seemed in the merriest glee. Taking, doubtless, the hulk of the vessel for a huge whale, they appeared to vie with each other in sportive pranks about his body. Down they would come on the quarter, cutting the water with the keenest zest, and after reaching the bow, dart across the forefoot, as if for very fun.

At length, after aiming awhile in indecision, the skipper let fly, and had the good luck to pierce a large one through and through. Athletic hands seized the rope attached to the harpoon, and, in a trice, the bleeding animal of the deep, writhing in the agony of death, was roused up to the cat-head, and pulled in upon deck. But the companions of the captured fish, as if imbued with the instinct of humanity, all disappeared at once, seeming to shrink in horror in view of the barbarity of the deed.

The porpoise proved a plump one, and cutting off the blubber, and trying it out for oil, the muscle resembling that

of the ox, was kept for the table, and a dainty morsel it was, after so long fast from fresh provisions.

This incident served as food both for body and mind. The moody incrustation that had grown around them, like a mossy shell, appeared broken, and sociality was revived.

One morning, after a most satisfying meal of porpoise, a conversation sprang up, which became very lively and earnest.

"After all said," summed up Fishall, "fishing is a mean business. 'Tis a real dog's life to lead. Everybody looks upon it as a despised calling. It is a curse to our place. Nobody that follows fishing, ever arrives to anything, and I am going to get out of it as soon as possible. What say you, Mr. Marl?"

"Well," replied the Salt, with a thoughtful look, and with a tone of more than usual frankness, "To confess, I once had a prejudice against the calling, but a wider experience in life, has changed somewhat my early notions. I have now come to regard any pursuit honorable, that is honest. 'Tis the man that gives character to the calling, and not the calling that imparts dignity to the man. As Dr. Young justly says:

"Pigmies are pigmies still, though perched on Alps,
And pyramids are pyramids in vales."

"Agriculture was considered menial among the ancients, yet Cincinnatus was called from the plough to lead the Roman armies, and few men have been more truly honored by their country.

"If fishing has been looked upon as low and mean, it is because low and ignorant people have for the most part, been engaged in it. Let the business be taken up by men of intelligence, enterprise and high social position, and the sentiment in respect to it would change at once. This is evident from

the fact that gentlemen of the highest pretensions feel it a privilege to catch fish for sport. Now, what is beautiful as amusement, cannot be degrading as an occupation.

"Indeed, so far from being a debasing employment, it may be looked upon, in comparison with many other ways men resort to, to eke out a livelihood, a glorious avocation. No one can fail to perceive, for example, that hauling codfish from the deep, is in itself quite as noble as peddling wooden nutmegs, or even measuring tape behind a counter. There are some kinds of business ashore whose very littleness belittles the mind. There are many others which are so mixed up with deception, slander, and overreaching, that one cannot engage in them earnestly without imbibing more or less of these hateful qualities himself. Now fishing is free from all these influences, and is singularly calculated to keep the mind pure and simple, and the feelings chaste, warm and generous.

"In this respect fishing may be classed side by side with agriculture, two of the most honest and noble occupations of life. One reaping riches from the bounteous earth, the other drawing them from the exhaustless ocean, and both contributing to the wealth of the country and the happiness and welfare of man.

"It must be confessed, that the fishing business admits of very great improvement; and when we consider the inestimable value of fish as an article of food, and consider the boundless regions, the domain of the miriads of the finny tribes, together with the marvellous fruitfulness of the species, it becomes at once apparent how desirable are any means that shall look to the amelioration of the condition of the fisherman, and add to the lucrativeness of his craft.

"Though fishing has been greatly abused," continued Marl, "yet a good deal can be said in its favor. It is certainly a very healthful occupation, and this is no small item in the bill

of human welfare. It has justly been regarded as a nursery for staunch and able seamen. In the trying scenes of the late war with England, not a few of the bold hearts and defiant arms that successfully repulsed the foe, and protected our sea-board sprang from the ranks of the fishermen. And at this day, a goodly proportion of those noble commanders that at once honor and grace our marine, commenced their career as fishing boys.

"More even, I could point you here and there, all over the land, to many a gentleman living ashore in affluence, and adorning every profession in life, who commenced the world on board a fishing schooner.

"The chronicles of the past, tell us that many of the splendid cities of the world, among them London, Paris, and Havre de Grace, were once obscure fishing towns; and so strikingly was this true of Amsterdam, as to give rise to the remark, that that city was built upon fish-bones.

"And greater than all, and what should cover the humble vocation of fishing with everlasting honor, is, that Christ, our blessed Saviour and guide, chose for his disciples and bosom companions, who were to promulgate to the world, and to succeeding generations, the immortal truths of the New Testament, the despised fishermen of Galilee.

"The deplorable truth is, we are ever getting our heads turned and our souls corrupted, by suffering the longing eye to hanker after the dazzling unrealities of life. We wander like the prodigal son from the hearth-stone of simple nature, and become badly intoxicated over the drugged wines of Falsity. The unsophisticated youth, for instance, peers out through the loop-hole of his narrow existence, and the big world swells upon his vision like some splendid city flashing in the golden sun rays, but on entering this city's crowded precincts, he is sickened with the view of narrow, dirty streets

and squalid misery staring him on every side, and on looking deeper, is shocked with great blotches of pollution, like dark running sores upon the body.

"And when he gazes at society, dear, divine society, with its rustling silks, superb equipage, soft, complacent airs, he is quite fascinated. He feels to despise his rustic lot, and sighs for the golden bauble of his vision; but when permitted to grasp the flashing meteor, how astounded is he to find it little more than empty show and hollow pretension!

"It has been my fortune," he continued, "to see much of the world, to mingle intimately with all classes, and I have found the good and the bad, the noble and the ignoble, the refined and the vile, in every condition; and I have as often met with refinement of feeling, sympathy of heart, and real manhood, among the lower as among the higher classes, so called.

"But there is after all a real society upon earth, made up like the great Catholic Church, of kindred natures, of congenial spirits, of such as are drawn to each other by the chords of mutual love and esteem.

"What is needed in the world is more honesty of purpose, more independence of character, more genuine sympathy with the good, the natural, the meritorious. Each should be more true to his own noble instincts, should rise superior to the prejudices of society, should assert the dignity of human nature everywhere, should magnify the immortal manhood within him. For what are all the factitious distinctions of life compared with the possession of the fresh, vigorous pulse of nature beating within us.

"Well, how hard we strive after happiness, when the coveted boon is so nearly within our grasp. A peaceful conscience, congenial employment,—and if to these be added a few, a very few friends—yea, a single real heart-entwined

friend, with a healthful love for the exhaustless glories of nature, art and literature, — and little more is wanting to complete our little paradise upon earth."

At this conclusion of the veteran sailor, the crew remained for a time thoughtfully silent, while Walter felt a strange momentary sensation of despondency in contemplating what went so effectually to shiver his own bright vision of the future.

Meanwhile, their reckoning was so nearly up, that expectation on board stood a tiptoe looking out for land. None but such as may have experienced it, can picture the mortal impatience, felt at sea for the first sight of land, and especially, if that land be home. They looked and looked, straining their longing vision, until Hope seemed cruelly sporting with their fond anticipations.

At length, glorious vision! it appears. A propitious breeze wafts them joyously toward the grateful shores. The steadfast point beaming with a smile of welcome is rounded. The lovely waters of the Bay are fleetly crossed. Now comes the painful suspense, before the first flash of news. Are all their friends alive and well, or has casualty, disease or death been stealing its insidious foot among them, in their absence? A man approached on the beach.

"What of the news?"

"All are well."

Their hearts beat in a tumult of joy at the sweet tidings.

As Walter sprang upon the beach, the soft, fragrant woodland air fell upon his sense, with the keenest charm of delight, so bright and soothing was the green verdure upon the mellow landscape before him. This was the outward of that inner and deeper sentiment with which anticipation had colored the heart.

But as he wended homeward, he felt strange at the awk-

wardness of his own gait. The ground seemed unsteady beneath his tread. In fact he rolled and pitched, as if still aboard the capricious Pink; and he noticed the rest had a similar, ungainly walk.

CHAPTER XIV.

"Let me live amongst high thoughts, and smiles
As beautiful as love; with grasping hands,
And a heart that flutters with diviner life
Whene'er my step is heard."

PROCTOR'S MIRANDOLA.

It was now a joyous season at the Mansion. Walter's return had ushered in a wave of sunshine upon the parental roof. Grandmother, uncles, aunts, relatives, and neighbors, all were filled with gladness, and rushed around the boy to express their congratulations, and heart-felt sympathy. Oh the happiness of a cordial welcome, from warm, sympathetic hearts! It seemed to Walter to compensate for all the hardships he had undergone. As for Mrs. Carl, her joy and gratitude knew no bounds. It nearly took away the power of expression.

The Pink had been absent eight weeks, during which no tidings had been heard of her. They intended on leaving to be gone but a few days, and this unaccountable absence filled the friends at home, as well it might, with the most intense solicitude, and apprehension. All sorts of conjectures were framed as to the probable fate of the Pink, and even the most prudent and slowest of belief, shook their heads and looked serious when called upon for an opinion. They were then like friends risen from the dead.

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The following morning dawned brightly for the inevitable washing-out-day. Basking so delightfully amid the sweet charms of home, Walter would gladly have excused himself from the drudgery of washing-out, but his generous nature recoiled at the thought of shirking his share of duty with the rest.

On reaching the beach, he found most of the crew down there before him, briskly at work. They were garbed in a clean suit from head to foot, and their countenances were wreathed with an expression of radiant complaisance.

A scow was along side of the Pink, into which the fishes were being pitched from the hold of the vessel, and they were flying through the air, as if hurled by the spring of gladness. When loaded, the scow was slowly pulled ashore, and her burden tumbled into the edge of the water, or surf. Here a part of the crew stationed themselves, and each in a stooping posture, seizing a fish by the tail in either hand, and after scrubbing them together and washing and rinsing them until clean, added another and another, until the hands being full, he trudged them up the rising beach, and deposited them upon a rectangular pile, or stack, termed *Waterhorse*. Here the fishes remained a day or two, until the surplus water had become duly pressed from them, when they were carted by the shoresman, and spread upon the flakes for drying.

This washing-out was wearisome enough to Walter, but then he was standing upon his native shore, and the labor of the day once over, he could nestle till the morrow, amid the dear delights of home. Then the irksomeness of washing-out was relieved by the notable washing-out dinner. This was a bright spot in the fishing life,—an event looked forward to with keen anticipation, a pleasure beforehand that helped to dissipate many a weary day at sea.

It was given by the owners who were also shoresmen, as a

bonus to the crew for privileges received in return, and doubtless originated from the well known principle of human nature, that when the stomach is once appeased, the other powers of the man yield a ready acquiescence.

The washing-out dinner in the simple life of the fisherman was an event of more real lively importance, than the most sumptuous banquet in society. The preparations for it were little less extensive, and the circumstances with which it was invested, were not of much less eclat than those accompanying an old fashioned family wedding.

First, the neighborhood had to be scoured for the nicest pig, calf, lamb, or poultry; and this in a part of the country, and, at a time, when fresh meat was a rare and expensive luxury. Added to these were the puddings, pies, custards, and other forms of pastry, prepared by the good matrons of the day, who prided themselves, without vain pretension, upon excellent cookery.

This substantial and not altogether not luxurious board, was heightened immensely in charm, by the fast from shore-diet at sea, and the waste of the system, by a long forenoon's washing-out. Well might it be looked forward to, with a covetous, longing eye.

And thrice joyful was the moment, when the long polished table, stretched in the most capacious room, with floor well scoured and sanded, displaying in unstinted abundance the glowing savory viands to tempt the eager appetite. Around it ranged with alacrity the crew, with a sprinkling of the shoresmen. Their manner was pervaded by a kind of hearty and hale frankness, but mincing ceremony was no more seen among them, than if such a thing did not exist in the world. Yet there was apparent a kind of deferential respect, and, among the younger of the crew, a species of becoming modesty, or bashfulness, that invested the scene with

a certain air of restraint. Still, there were abundant evidences of genial good humor playing up in the countenances of all, and not unfrequently there would break forth a laconic remark, or a dry joke, that enkindled the company and enlivened the repast.

Not the least charming features of the scene were the bloomed matrons and the blooming maidens, who like freighted blessings with angel wings, were quick and ready in their attendance upon the company. It was no menial grudging service that they rendered, but that sweet happy bestowal from united hands and loving hearts.

The former mildly clad, with countenance beaming with gratitude and happiness. The latter simply garbed, but in their tidiest and prettiest, with bosom swelling with hope, eye melting with tenderness, and cheek crimsoning with modesty.

To the pure, impressionable soul of youth, what object so inspiring of delicious emotions, as the contemplation of a beautiful maiden, reared amid the sweet simplicities of nature. Swelling like a soft, bursting rose-bud, with the inimitable charms of Nature and her sex, — just standing upon the mysterious threshold of womanhood, she appears as unconscious of her deep loveliness, as the woodland bird of its matchless note, or the gay butterfly of the inimitable hue of its wings.

Ah, hapless man, couldst thou arrest from the inexorable ravishings of Time, and the heartless corruptions of the world, so divine, but fugitive charms; couldst thou fold the embodied joy forever to thy own needful, yearning heart; nestle there rapturously amid the soft palpitations of its virginal bosom; and drink in endlessly from the love incense of its fragrant breath, what a fount of perennial happiness would not be thine! How then to thy inner sense would this earth blos-

som like a beautiful garden; its radiant heavens beam with the prismatic hues of the rainbow; and life all around hang thickly with the golden fruit of human blessedness. This one need of thy nature fulfilled,—the fine germ of thy soul thus enveloped in the native beauty of a kindred existence, how would thy new life shoot up afresh from the darkness of chaos and blossom like a rose. What a heaven of heavens would it hang around thy perpetual view. How it would nerve thy arm valorously for the stern battle of Life.

Alas, that such a picture can rarely exist, except in the longing dream of the heart. Alas, that the wine of life must be so often spilled; that dawning innocence should ever awake to a night of shame; that the perceptions of moral beauty should ever be perverted by the corrupting influences of society, that the dearest and loveliest attributes of the soul, should ever be bartered for sordid gain; and that life should sink into a grovelling existence destitute alike of noble aim or spiritual beauty.

The washing-out done by the crew, the making or drying of the fish, was the part of the shoresman and his gang. From the water-horse, the fishes were carted, and spread for drying upon platforms entwined with twigs, called *flakes* or hurdles, situated in the most favorable spot to woo the breeze and sun. As the evening dew began to fall, or upon the approach of wet weather, the fishes were gathered in yaffles, but spread again whenever circumstances appeared favorable for drying. This process repeated a few days, they were ready to be packed into larger stacks for a smoother face, when of a fine drying day, they were thrown out for a final airing, they were either weighed off and despatched on board a vessel to market, or else stored for a more deliberate sale, according to circumstances.

Washing-out over, and the vessel thoroughly cleared out,

washed and scrubbed, there were a few days leisure to the vessel's company, before setting out upon the Mackerel Voyage. The married portion of the crew, and some of the more sedate of the bachelors, employed the interval in doing up the neglected home chores. But the youngsters were only too happy in the opportunity it afforded them, to appear trigged in their gayest attire, and saunter full-bloomed, all redolent with the perfume of their own fresh feelings, amid the welcome neighborhood. It was altogether natural that some of these latter should often of a fine afternoon, find themselves straying off toward the Fishing Flakes, attracted thither by the young damsels so busy there, garbed in short skirts, gloves, armlets, and sun-bonnets, lustily engaged in the general work. For in those days, the practice prevailed among the fishermen of employing young women to help at the flakes, whose efficient services could be secured for a trivial pecuniary consideration. Not unfrequently the wives and daughters of the crew, skipper and shoresman, and even of the owners themselves, did not feel too good to lend a helping hand. Indeed, oftentimes, some fair young daughter, the pride of the neighborhood, whose father, it may be, in solid wealth, could outweigh a score of some of your puny city misses, too delicate to look a rough North-wester full in the face, might have been seen among the number.

Without meddling with the vexed question of woman's rights, one thing is certain, that these simple young women of olden time, who never felt too good to labor with their hands, were never above the calling of their parents, who were always ready to assist in earning the money intended for their comfort and happiness in life,—in all the cardinal qualities of character grew up very excellent women—affectionate wives, good mothers, kind neighbors, and exemplary Christians.

Undoubtedly pursuit and association have their influence in the formation of female character, but the power of these is not radical, when the primitive elements are kept within the fountain of simplicity and truth. Else, how is it, that we so often meet with some fair flower of character, all fragrant with the grace and loveliness of nature, that has grown up amid the grosser associations of life, while we as often see another frail being cradled in the lap of luxury and boasted refinement, as hollow hearted and base, as a graven image.

Then let no one repine at the lot Heaven has vouchsafed her; and while she may make unremitting exertions to secure all the influences for a higher, a nobler, a more beautiful life, — education, society, wealth, — let her not forget that purity and intrinsic worth, may be preserved in every condition, and that these are ample to give a glow to female loveliness, that shall shine like the sapphire in the richest coronet.

CHAPTER XV.

“ Yet is the school-house rude,
As is the chrysalis to the butterfly,—
To the rich flower the seed. The dusky walls
Hold the fair germ of knowledge, and the tree
Glorious in beauty, golden with its fruits,
To this low school-house traces back its life.”

STREET'S POEMS.

THE fishing season was over. The first summer's experience in Walter's sea life, was now numbered with the fleeting moments of the past. Its hardships and checkered incident had broadened life's horizon to the boy, and imparted to him greater depth of character.

The mackerel voyage in the fall, which we have not here room to describe, being over, and the vessel hauled up for the season, Walter stood in his winter suit of new cloth, somewhat more of a man in stature, and greatly more in a complacent feeling of self-importance. He had achieved something, or, at least, had experienced a real grappling with life, and the consciousness of this lit up his imagination soothingly, and gave a sweet glow to hope. It sent the blood throbbing with keener vigor through his pulse, and imparted a more lively elasticity to his step.

There is something nobly charming in the first pulsations of successful achievement. The delight it awakens is scarcely less sweet than the blissful dream of love. The incipient power seizes the ardent and aspiring soul of youth, kindling

and glowing into a passion for generous and manly effort, casting outward its piercing beams, and lighting up a bright vista of the future, vague and dreamy, but grand and fascinating. The intoxicated youth feels suddenly endowed with an illimitable capacity. Great and noble deeds lie golden in his path-way; his heart distends with its own generous emotion, and yearns to press to its warm embrace the whole living world. His soul soars to the loftiest flights, seeking some career of grandeur that shall crown his footsteps with immortal honors.

This feeling sobers with age, and is dulled by the realities and disappointments of life, but it never becomes extinct; — not at least, so long as there is vitality in the heart, vigor in the step, and activity in the muscle. It is, in fact, the birth of action, living with its life, and dying with its death. Thus, we perceive, it is the getting, and not the possessing of wealth that keeps the soul full of the enjoyment of acquisition — the climbing up the ladder of Fame, and not the serene contemplation from its summit, that keeps the heart aglow with the sweet enthusiasm of ambition. 'Tis the moving wing that flashes in the sunlight. Thus, those who look forward confidently to a day of complete rest upon earth, a time when all the faculties may remain in a state of inactivity, fall into a dangerous illusion.

Glorious Thanksgiving past, a day of rare significance in those simple times, and one that gave a bright inauguration to the Winter's festivities, came the Winter's School. This, by time honored custom must always commence the first Monday after Thanksgiving day. Here assembled for learning, the youths of the neighborhood. High and low, rich and poor, the Abecedarian, and the most advanced of the People's College, all came together, to drink at the same common fount. Grading and classification, select schools, and schools for

the separation of the sexes, refined contrivances of the present knowing age, were out of the question in those primitive times. A neighborhood was but a larger family. Children played together, grew up with each other, usually attended the same church, at least, went to the same school, assembled at one festive board, intermarried according to individual bent, were attended in sickness by neighbors and friends, received genuine sympathy on their death-bed, and were laid in the same graveyard together at the close of life. To be sure, these simple rude societies were not free of the ills that everywhere beset human nature, and fester as people crowd into neighborhoods, but there was in them a cordial, friendly intercourse, a hearty, genuine sympathy, that seems fast dying out upon earth. Oh, that we could invoke the incense of the warm heart of the Past.

The branches taught in school then, had not widened off to such a range as we find now. There were no learned languages, with their eternal clatter. At most but the simple tough Anglo Saxon, quaintly spoken. No *ologies* diving into the mysteries of Nature. No ornamentals, save, perhaps, a sample of the marking stitch, or a humble effort at painting with the cranberry or chokeberry. No singing except an occasional solo from some repentant urchin suffering from the smart of the teacher's ire. The utmost scope given to the branches taught, were reading, spelling, penmanship, and arithmetic; and even of these, the latter branch was deemed quite useless for females. The softer sex were thought of hardly sufficient intellectual power to delve successfully into the abstrusities of the mathematics. At any rate, such hard and out of the way knowledge, could not be, it was contended, of any possible use to them. It would not render them more skilful in making bread, or weaving cloth.

The master was subjected to no such crucifixion, as exam-

ination. No committee of wiseacres sat in umpire over his claims. Our fathers had a simple way of testing qualifications. The popular apprehension decided first whether an applicant should be admitted to trial. If he then succeeded in conducting acceptably his school, he was reemployed. There was no third party to test fitness.

The primary element in a teacher's success, was his power or tact to govern. If he could rule his little kingdom, all was right. Literary qualifications were of minor importance. If he could not govern perfectly, it was all over with him, however competent he might be in other respects.

But in his authority, he stood alone, himself on one side, his little army of spirits on the other. Whatever his fate, he received no comfort or aid from parents. He must fight his own battles. Indeed, if the parents did not encourage the sly tricks of their little ones to out-wit the school-master, they certainly winked at them, and were inclined to look upon their mischievous pranks as evidence of smartness.

But then if they did not coöperate with the teacher in maintaining his authority, they never took the part of the child against the teacher. The practice was, if a child had received a whipping at school, to give him another, and send him back for a third.

The question of the master's supremacy was usually decided in the outset. If the teacher was ejected out of the doorway, or worse, thrown through the window, the first day, and then snowballed until acknowledging himself vanquished, by a combination of the older boys, it were about useless for him to attempt a resumption of his official position; but if by some *coup d'etat*, or *coup de main*, he succeeded in getting the reins in his own hands, all was right.

Government was too often arbitrary, harsh and impulsive, and punishments often severe, intemperate and cruel.

Scholars could hardly be expected to cherish affection for teachers exercising government in so despotic and barbarous a manner, and the most these knights of the rod and ferule could boast of in the way of fealty from their pupils, was a sort of trembling awe. Hence, it was no rare episode among the incidents of the last day of school, for some of the more daring spirits of the little empire, who during the winter, had felt the smart of the teacher's rod oftener than their haughty spirit was disposed to brook, and moved by that inexorable law, "as a man soweth so shall he reap," to overtake the master while this dignitary was on his way home, and come down with a sound drubbing upon his merciless head, and so wipe out the old score.

It were pleasing to attempt a picture of the Old District School, that had for so long pursued the even tenor of its way, but limited space bids us hurry on with this narrative of the Fisher Boy. Suffice it to say, that the current of school life, that had flown so evenly in the moss-grown edifice, was soon to receive a check. As we have elsewhere intimated, a spirit of innovation had already begun to dawn in the settlement. It was soon to show itself in the administration of the School. Several of the more progressive of the leading minds had for some time evinced a desire for employing teachers of a different character from those that had heretofore swayed the rule of authority in the school. By some accidental turn in the wheel of affairs, one of these revolutionists had received the appointment of agent; and he with the coöperation of the minister, procured the engagement of a teacher for the district school from abroad. The candidate for this new honor, was a young man of no more than twenty-three summers, who had just completed his course of study at college. He came fresh

from the fields of science, all fragrant with the rose of literature.

So bold a step of departure from the time-worn usage of the district, produced a lively sensation in the neighborhood, but for the moment, the grumbling of the opposition was drowned amid the fervor of public curiosity. Young maidens hastened forward their nice winter dresses, and summoned from the depths of beauty, their very best looks, wondering in their heart of hearts who was to be blessed with the new teacher's especial attentions. Matrons discussed the probabilities of his success with their husbands, and chatted about his imagined qualities, over a cup of tea with their neighbors. While the old men of the neighborhood, put on a grave taciturnity, ominously expressing the belief that the times were woefully changing, and that the American Republic could not be expected to last a great while longer.

The much looked for day at length arrived. Curiosity was on tiptoe. At half past 8 o'clock, the new school-master was seen to issue from deacon Goodman's, and make his way primly toward the old red school-house. He was a slender young man, but possessed of a graceful, genteel form, with a face of a pale, interesting cast. His dress was plain, but he was garbed in fashionable taste. There was something about his whole bearing revealing an air of the book, something that smacked of the midnight lamp.

On the way, he was observed of all who happened to live upon his route, and many a curious one took pains to cross his path-way, as it would seem by accident. They all noticed that he was very affable in manner toward Miss Goodman, who very naturally accompanied him to point out the way to the school-house.

This becoming manner of the teacher, so trifling as it would seem in itself, was yet made the text of a good deal of com-

ment in the district. The young maidens were greatly flattered, that Miss Goodman should be the first to win the regard of the teacher. They could not see what there was in Sally Goodman, so very taking. Besides, was not such familiarity very bold in a stranger, and he their teacher? They had never seen anything like it in all their born lives, they were sure. They guessed it would be one long while before they allowed him or any man, especially a stranger, to take such latitude with them.

The matrons too were not a little shocked in their notions of propriety, by this first behavior of the school-master. They could not but swell with that very noble feeling—virtuous indignation. Rightfully the guardians of the public honor, it was fit that they should give utterance to their opinion upon the subject. Hence, they thought the conduct of the school-master very suspicious. It wasn't best to put too much confidence in people. Strangers, especially, needed to have a pretty close eye kept after them. It was no matter if he was genteel and innocent looking. These white livered young men with glossy locks were just the very worst to be found. It was "the still pig that drinks the swill." Coming from College didn't mend the matter a whit. They had heard enough about the pranks cut up at College. The biggest rogues in the world were such as had got their heads stuffed full of all kinds of learning. On the whole, they concluded the young man must at least be watched pretty closely.

The school commenced. The pupils saw at a glance, that a new sun had risen upon them. They found nothing as formerly, save the house and the familiar faces of comrades. The teacher began his rule by gentle, moral means. He addressed his pupils as rational beings, influenced by the law of kindness. He broached a thorough reform,—a change of text-books,—an innovation always so dangerous to a teacher,

—classified the school according to age, and stage of advancement, required them to learn the rules, give explanations, and define the words in their lessons.

For a few days, the school current flowed smoothly. Indeed, there was even a gush of enthusiasm from the spontaneity of youthful hearts, touched by the spring of novelty. The gleeful wave rippled along the school, like the sun-kissed wavelet over the pebbled beach. But before this youthful glow had subsided, an untoward incident fell upon the teacher's fortune, like a spark lighting into a magazine of powder.

A sturdy little fellow to whom a lesson had been assigned, failed in preparing it. Opportunity was given to make good the delinquency, but the second time the obstinacy of the little fellow triumphed. The teacher now with some little severity, ordered him to remain until the lesson should be prepared. At this, Rebellion shot from the little tyro's eyes, and flashed from his lowering face, like lightning from a summer thunder cloud. With a voice and gesture that would have befitted a much older person, he declared boldly that he would do no such thing.

The unexpected incident created a rush of sensation throughout the school. Scholars are ever eager for excitement, and anything that promises fun, they hail as a god-send. Their sympathies sweep them along with the weaker and suffering party, having little regard to justice or what is befitting; and they are ever most ready to show their colors. So long as no eddies got into the current of the school-life, the glow of novelty kept up an unruffled flow in the stream. But not one of the school was disposed to brook the slightest opposition, from the present incumbent. The chains of their former restraint had been worn too long to be thus suddenly removed with impunity. In little empires, as in great, long

existing arbitrary power should be changed only by gradual steps.

The culprit perceiving with the unerring instinct of childhood, that he was deeply entrenched in the sympathies of the school, held out in dogged defiance. Though a man of kindly feelings, the teacher comprehended the necessity of subduing this rebellious spirit to the authority of the school. To this end, he struggled till the falling shadows of evening cut short the contest, without, however, achieving the result. The unwilling captive released, darted home, a fire-brand through the wintry air. His wrongs portrayed by the eloquent tongue of passion, touched the sympathies of his family at the tenderest point. The whole household was inflamed with indignation. The father, an impulsive, headstrong man, happening withal to be of the opposition, flew into a tornado of passion. Throwing himself among the discontented of the district, a rebellion was at once fomented. Political interest drew some to its ranks, mere excitement attracted some others, while an eager curiosity swelled greatly the cortege.

It was unanimously agreed, among the malcontents, that a school-meeting should forthwith be called, to settle the matter without further loss of time. A few people of strong common sense, and of a decided independent turn of mind,—such as may be found in very small numbers in almost every village, quite ashamed of this much ado about nothing—remained at home. Yet the meeting was a large one—that is, the house was filled to its utmost capacity. Young and old, inimical and friendly, had gathered there with a common curiosity. The assembly was enlivened even with a sprinkling of the fair sex, and the teacher himself had shown the temerity to smuggle in with the rest.

Esq. Langdon was voted moderator by acclamation. This gentleman always presided at the public meetings of the neigh-

borhood, whenever present. He possessed a kind of ubiquitous trait of character, which enabled him rarely to miss his attendance, and consequently, the honor of presiding. The Squire was a highly respectable man; in fact, looking at him from all points of view, the most purely respectable personage of the neighborhood. He united in himself so many winning abilities, as to have long passed for the village oracle. His official character was as varied as country politics, and the offices he was called upon to perform, as multifarious as public life itself. A deacon of the church, he not unfrequently officiated in the absence of the minister, to the great acceptance of everybody. A justice of the peace, he was often called to try petty suits at law, as well as to judge knotty points of jurisprudence, and to draw up the last wills and testaments of such, as had deemed it prudent to set well in order their house, in this world, before leaving it for the next. Added to these he was one of the fathers of the town, a road commissioner, and was not unfrequently called to sit as referee or arbitor, in a complicated case of dispute. Sometimes, he had been called to perform the ban of marriage to some happy couple just entering upon their earthly paradise. And from time far beyond the recollection of Walter, he had represented the town in the General Court. He was supposed to have been elected and to retain this most honorable office partly because of his immaculate wisdom, and in part, because his family needed the emoluments accruing from so lucrative a situation.

Squire Langdon presided. He rose calmly, and with a grave, consequential air, briefly laid open the objects of the meeting. He possessed a pensive, gracious mien, that seemed compounded of wisdom and benevolence, which went far to captivate the imagination of the populace.

The father of the aggrieved boy first took the floor. He gave utterance to his excited feelings, with impassive verbi-

age. He even fretted and tore, until reason abashed, seemed to have descended from its royal throne, and to have withdrawn, in very shame. He took up his complaint, dwelt upon it, turned it over, hammered it upon this side and upon that, until it seemed huge enough to overwhelm the ill-fated teacher. He finally adduced his son as living evidence of the truth of his assertions, and wound up with the flippant remark, that such a man was not fit for a tinker, much less for a teacher.

The harangue of the next speaker was kindred in tone. He did not need to have been in the school-room, to know how things had been going on there. He could easily read the whole story in the children's faces, as he met them day by day, in the road. And for his part, he guessed there had been some strange doings in the school-room. He shouldn't wonder, if the *order* had been greatly out of joint. From what he could learn, the school-master had a bran new way of governing, a way that didn't seem to work very well, for it was clear that the scholars had gotten the upper hand of him. Well, it had turned out very much as he guessed it would, when they told him how they were agoing to change, and what manner of man they had gotten. The truth was, green sappling school-masters from out of the country were not just the thing to manage their salt-water boys. He didn't know of any better way to govern than the old fashioned way, namely, when a boy didn't mind, to whip him till he did. He sent his boys to school to behave. If they didn't do this of their own accord, they must be made to. He didn't wish the teacher to show them any quarter. If the boys stood out, the teacher might *kill* them, and the father would make coffins for them.

The unearthly tone of this last sentence, sent a wild thrill through every breast, and brought to his feet a tall, fierce

looking man, in whose face the fires of anger shot forth like tongues of flame, beneath a half-pent fire.

He was exactly of the same opinion as the last speaker. For one, he hadn't liked either the *order* or the *teaching* in that school. He was no friend to such new fangled notions. He was for the old way. Plain sailing was the thing to his taste. One thing he could say certain. *His* boy hadn't learned a word since the school had commenced. He didn't want his children coaxed up with sweetmeats. Bring them right up to the ring-bolt. Pinch their ears till they screamed, "O!" That would be one letter, at least.

There was now a pause. Squire Langdon, the moderator, with great propriety filled the gap. He descanted with verbose dignity upon the nature of the case. Usually his language was such, that you could not tell to which side he leaned, a circumstance which gave him the air of profound judgment, and a scrupulous care in forming an opinion. But in this instance, the preponderance of public opinion was such as to warrant a departure from his usual wont, and he very palpably hinted, that the best way would be to break up the school, and try a new teacher.

The school-master perceiving the current to be setting so unmistakably against him, arose, and in a calm, logical manner, endeavored to justify his course. He assured the assembly, that if permitted a fair trial, he could convince them of the virtue of his principles. But he found the torrent setting against him too strong to be stemmed. The school was broken up, and the teacher summarily dismissed in disgrace.

The gentle spirit of the teacher, crushed with the feeling of the wrong done him, took his departure from the district and place forever. So rude and mortifying treatment, just upon the threshold of responsible life, gave a shock to his sen-

sitive nature from which he never fully recovered. Hieing him to obscure life, he betook himself to scribbling and melancholy, and died a victim to morbid sensibility.

Meanwhile, the school was again started under the auspices of one of the old standard teachers of the district, the confidence of the community became speedily restored, and very soon all was as quiet as if there had been not a ripple upon the bosom of their late so agitated society.

"But all is not Rome that is of Rome." There were a few of the district whose finer feelings revolted at the treatment their late beloved teacher had received. Small in number, they were yet strong in influence of opinion, because of the universal faith in their elevated sense and truthfulness. The swelling tide of numbers and the whirl of human clamor, do not always bear away in their course the primal convictions of society. There often springs a counter current, flowing from the well-spring of honest nature, which, like the under stream of a mighty river, moves on noiseless and unseen, but certain and resistless, bearing the accumulated train of waters into the bosom of the ocean-eternity of truth!

Of the small number whose wrathfulness of soul rose in indignation at the spray of ignominy flung at their late teacher, and whose loyalty of nature bid them express without counting the cost, their fullest measure of disapprobation of the act, were Walter and his mother, and the families of two others whose sons were of about the same age as that of the Fisher Boy.

These three resolved quietly to withdraw from the school, and attend at the Old Parish, some two or three miles distant. In spite of their secret movements in the matter, their intention early leaked out, as the most vigilantly guarded secret is sure to do in a country village. The rumor had soon flown to every body's ear. As strange as it may

seem, it awakened a sensation, but a little less intense than did the advent of the late vanquished teacher. A decided feeling of envy ruffled the neighborhood, but the rebuke it bore for the abandonment of the teacher, plucked the barb from that emotion. Besides the parents of two of the boys, were not to be questioned for independent action. And as for Walter, although he encountered here and there, a fling of irony, as to the ability of his mother to support him in his ambitious pretensions, he arose after some struggles of spirit, above these wounding reproaches, resolving to allow their bitterness only to inspire him with higher purpose and firmer step, in the upward road of a noble career.

When the first wave of agitation had subsided, there was an honest feeling of regret, at the contemplated leaving of the boys. To lose from the society of their school, three of their choicest spirits, would be, it was felt, a great loss, and already the impending cloud of sorrow cast its shadow before. But both parties possessed too much pride of dignity, to advance overtures for a compromise, and each day's sun only brightened more clearly the devious paths of their course.

CHAPTER XVI.

"Love is a celestial harmony
Of likely hearts."

SPENCER'S HYMN IN HONOR OF BEAUTY.

THERE was now to be a new turn in the current of Walter's life. He was going to school at the Old Parish. The thought was very pleasing to him, and yet the delight it afforded was not unmingled with a certain indefinable emotion, that made him feel loth, after all, to commence bending his steps thitherward. In truth, the boy inherited by nature an uncontrollable bashfulness, and this, with a certain prestige which the Old Parish held in his mind, brought a tremulous emotion to his breast, in view of becoming a participator in its society.

The Old Parish he had ever been accustomed to look up to with feelings of profound reverence. All its scenes were associated in his mind with sentiments of youthful veneration.

There ascended the Old Parish Church, mellowed by time, yet ever fragrant with the sweet sanctity of worship. Here from time beyond the memory of Walter, had weekly held forth the Rev. Mr. Radcliff, the Revolutionary Patriot, the genial wit, the college bred scholar, and the ministerial oracle of the town. With his stately, venerable form, his graceful port, his antique costume, his elegant diction, tempered with benignity, the veteran preacher was pictured upon the mem-

ory of Walter, with ineffaceable distinctness, a living daguerreotype of the courtly times of the past.

Near the gray old church, stood the Town's Poor House, the dread of tottering humanity, but the almoner of Heaven-descending charity.

Not far from these, glared the Old Rickety Town House, looking consequential in its broad interest of the political family.

Upon the county road running through the neighborhood, might have been seen in lowly guise, about the only "West India and Dry Good Store" in town, drawing thither the needy from all quarters, and supplying them with the useful and ornamental with tireless hand.

In a broad neighboring field, where the frugal pines had refused to grow, was mustered the Yearly General Training. This inspiring pageant was sure to sweep for at least one day in the year, the whole living town into a focus, to have their pulses quickened by martial display, and to revel in social interchange and physical gratification.

On an eminence, stood the slumbering, red powder house of the Town, and near it squat upon the ground, the big iron cannon, that thundered out, of a fourth of July, the remembrance of our national birth day.

It was in the Old Parish, that lived some of the oldest and most consequential families of the town. Indeed, the very site was the most elevated part of the township, and overlooked the adjacent country, as the Parish people looked down upon those residing in other parts of the settlement.

Was it wonderful, therefore, that this favored centralization should feel a little puffed up with local vanity?

For the school then—in the Old Parish, so exalted in the mirage of his youthful fancy, he was to exchange the long familiar one of his home.

It was of a Monday morning that he set out, all flushed with the novel feelings of the change.

He started very early and alone, that he might have time to call on the agent of the district whither he was going, to secure the preliminary written permit, to enter on the footing of a member of the district.

Naturally timid, he would have been glad of the company of his two associates, to make his debut into the new school, but they had already received a certificate of admission, and, consequently, had no need of leaving home so early.

He made his toilet that morning with unusual care, as if inspired with a pleasing presentiment of the value of decoration. There are times when the soul would fain adorn the body with the blooming freshness of its own feelings.

After words of noble advice from his angel mother, he closed the door behind him of their simply furnished apartments.

The frosty morning air breaking in upon his sense, lent a keen invigoration to his elastic steps, while the warm eddying glow which the exercise of the route diffused throughout his system, awoke to beauty of perception every faculty of his being. As he bounded along the crooked and uneven way, smiling nature around swelled with an air of grandeur and sweetness upon his mental horizon, and existence itself, rosy with the bright wings of morning, nestled within his breast, as a halcyon boon, radiant with joy and love.

How happy those moments, when the soul, bursting the fetters of sordid life, breaks forth upon its throne of glory, like some sudden illumination of enchantment,—imparting a magic touch to the golden threads of our affections, and gilding every outward object with its rays of celestial fire.

Then it is that the inspiration for a grander life seizes and distends the soul; then that the heart pants with true pulsa-

tions for the noble and sublime ; then that we are transported to elysian fields, where vistas of enrapturing beauty shadow forth upon the enchanted sense the divine charms of an eternal blessedness.

These vivid gleamings of the soul, like gushing sunlight through April clouds, show to what serene exaltation we might attain were our life simple and noble, beautiful and true, in harmony with nature and congenial with virtue. They reveal, moreover, the transcendent, immortal nature of man, his boundless, varied capacity for happiness, while shadowing to his feeble comprehension the pure, illimitable joys of heaven.

Thus, the gracious divinity of his teeming brain cast her benign spell over his buoyant spirit, drawing to her charmed embrace the impressionable faculties, and breathing over them the dewy fragrance of her own sweet incense. Indeed, his mind seemed to have been gradually drawn inward until he was quite oblivious to the sharp outline of the world without.

In that enthralled, glowing state, he wended his way mechanically, a way not much less familiar to him than the time-trodden paths about his home. He soon approached a valley, one of those deep, regular valleys extending for many miles across the country, seeming to mark some energetic volcanic change at a previous period of the world's history. This was covered with coppice, extending to within a narrow margin of the bed, through which ran a tiny stream, dry in the summer, but now swollen by the fall rains, it was gurgling its way toward the ocean with something of the strut of a more lordly stream of water.

As he was turning an angle of the road, that brought to view a crossing of the stream, his eye unexpectedly fell upon the form of a girl. She was standing upon the opposite bank

of the swollen rivulet, across which a couple of rails had been lain to accommodate passers.

When the young girl first struck his view she had just placed her small plump foot upon the rustic bridge-way, evidently in the act of crossing, but catching a glimpse of the boy, she naively retreated, partially concealing herself behind a cluster of shrubbery, as if she shrunk from exposing herself in a new situation before a stranger.

This sudden meeting of a girl of about his own age, and unknown to him, completely aroused Walter from his sweet musings, and sent a wild flash of emotion through his heart. He stood for a moment irresolute, overcome by that strange delight that woman by her mere presence has the unconscious power of awakening in man. But summoning courage, he stepped boldly forward, and delicately tendered his aid for her crossing.

The girl acquiesced without solicitation, but with a charm of grace so unaffected as to touch the finest chord of the beautiful within his own breast. And when her soft, trembling fingers met his own, accompanied by a look of gratitude so sweet as to be richly laden with reward, a wave of delicious sensibility swept over his soul, and thrilled through every fibre of his being.

As her feet touched the coveted bank, she bowed to Walter a token of cordial acknowledgment, blushing at the same time, an apology for the sensation she had caused him, then turning upon the boy a final look of bewitching complaisance, she bounded off with a step as light and a movement as airy as those of a fawn upon the mountain green.

Walter was rivited to the spot spell-bound, entranced ; and there he stood, gazing with mute but enraptured emotions after the enchanting vision, until her divine form faded entirely from view. What was it that had enthroned so sud-

denly the fair girl in his breast? What that had imprinted her image, as with lines of fire, upon the beauty-tablet of his soul? Was it her exquisitely neat fitting dress, revealing limbs divinely moulded? Was it those soft, golden ringlets, toying so delicately her snowy neck and breast? Was it those joyous, speaking eyes, eyes of heavenly azure, mirroring a soul of melting tenderness, but pure as the gushing spring upon the hill-side? Was it that sweet, dainty mouth, around which played a soft, perpetual smile, ineffable of inward delight? Or, was it the captivating grace of her manner, so simple, so unconscious, yet so charming to his finer sense; or, with a more philosophic air, could it be attributed to the poetic complexion of his own feelings, enlivened by meeting a fair young girl under so pleasing circumstances, that had enkindled his imagination and clothed the living object of his vision with the gorgeous hues of his own impressionable soul? Or, further still, must it be more deeply sought in that mysterious sympathy of the human heart, which, like the magnet of nature, while it maintains its influence with unweildng persistency, evades all explanation as to the secret of its power? Was it one, or all of these combined, that had so wonderfully transformed his very existence? Of this, he did not care to seek the solution. He only knew that whereas before blind in the exquisite sense of the heart, he now saw with beatific vision. The fetters of his soul had dissolved, and his happy spirit was leaping in the sunlight of joy. All the traits of female loveliness that had ever gleamed athwart his spiritual vision seemed now concentrated in one sweet image that was glowing in his breast with transcendent brightness. He did not even ask himself if these enchanting feelings of his heart were shared or reciprocated by the angelic being that had called them forth. These emotions for the instant were too disinterested to claim homage from another; too generous

were they to exact a return. For the time, he was content to revel in the blissful dream into which he had fallen, and to enfold to his gladsome embrace the beaming image alone that had so entranced his soul. How pure the love that springs from the crystal fount of the soul, that casts the radiance of its own joy upon all without, that is happy in the supreme in the delight of its own gracious communings,—the love that is unmixed with the sting of remorse, unsullied with the sordid fang of passion.

Amid the bright dawning of his new emotions, he felt a mild force that lent a grateful elevation to his feelings. It was like the glow of power, the charm of possession, the sweet joy of a kindred spirit, the dew and sunshine of congeniality, the halcyon security of an intimate relation. It was a feeling kindred to that which glows in the breast of the mother as she catches for the first time the breath of her newly-born,—of the loving husband, who feels for the first time, upon his arm, the elastic weight of a double existence.

In this delightful mood he bounded forward with a buoyant step. Surrounding nature seemed to reflect the lively hues of his own emotions. The light air fanned his cheek wooingly. The verdant pines seemed joining their hands in love. The sky had a smile of joy. The fleecy clouds were soft with delicious langour; and even the sober and gray fields looked mild with a serene benignity. The tiny brook that he leaped was babbling in tones of affection, and the little gray squirrel that tripped athwart his pathway, seemed ready to nestle in his bosom and there chatter out its tale of life.

Reaching the agent's, and obtaining the desired certificate, Walter flew back towards the parish school-house. The low, quaint, red edifice soon broke forth to his view. In a few moments longer he was standing before its rough portal, blanched and furrowed by the peltings of the weather, and scarred by the vandalism of Yankee boyhood.

The teacher, with a mild, intelligent countenance, welcomed him within. As the boy entered, his abashed glance met a sea of upturned faces, and among them upon whom should his eye fall but upon the face of the identical girl whom he had met that very morning at the crossing described. As her glance met his, he thought to detect a delicate blush upon her cheek, that blush that obtrudes unconsciously at the strangeness of one's own sensations, while her eye suddenly fell upon the bench before her, as if fearful of trusting to view that feature of the form divine that is wont to reveal so unmistakably the emotions of the heart.

At so unexpected a re-encounter with the fair girl, a thrill of excitement shot through the frame of the boy. The blood mounted with a rush to his cheeks, and then subsided with a warm, tingling sensation to the verge of his extremities.

CHAPTER XVII.

"The cause of love can never be assigned,
'Tis in no face, but in the lover's mind." — DRYDEN.

It is a severe trial to a timid nature, that of being suddenly ushered into a society of strangers, and there left to delve one's way to an easy acquaintance with them. Besides, Walter was affected by a tender sentiment that colored all his perceptions, and placed him ill at ease in his feelings. This was all the worse, because he naturally desired to appear to the best advantage in the eyes of others, while the peculiar embarrassments under which he labored tended continually to surprise him into some little mortifying act of demeanor. But the two companions from his own district served in the outset to fortify his timorous spirit. The teacher at once approached the boy, in a gentle, winning way, and soon secured his confidence. One after another of the warm, generous-hearted school-mates won his regard by some tender act of welcome. In fact, the entire sympathetic current of the school was continually swelling up in his breast a community of feeling, until in a brief space of time he was on so easy terms of familiarity with the whole little community that he wondered that he could ever have felt as a stranger among them.

It would surpass the limits of our narrative to detail the many pleasing incidents of the winter's school at the Parish.

Suffice it to say that the season passed charmingly, leaving behind one of those bright spots in the sunny period of youth, that the heart clings to so fondly in after life. The entire community at the new school was quite superior in point of elevation and refinement to the one at home. The teacher, though a similar style of man from the one so summarily ejected from his own school, here enjoyed perfect success, being in a different social and literary atmosphere, and called to rule unlike elements of character.

A happy spirit of mutual good will throbbed through the school; and Walter, enjoying a high degree of mingled fortitude and self-respect from the summer's strengthening adventures and from the lustre of novelty around him, was thrown into a frame of mind most delectable. Not that there were no troublesome eddies in the stream of the winter's school, such as an occasional ripple of indignation at some fancied injustice on the part of the teacher; now and then a falling out between some rather intimate couple, resulting in a temporary alienation, but soon made up with deepened affection; here a momentary heartburn, there a little jealousy. At one time, a lump of gossip thrown among them as leaven; at another, the belching to light of some covert act or manner, demanding a rebuke from authority; and such like foibles of human nature which are, after all, but the spice of small societies. But, on the whole, the spirit of the school was excellent, and the improvement good; and Walter felt a degree of large tranquillity, such as he had never before experienced. His soul seemed to expand with elevating emotions under the benign influence.

If one idle trait more than another got ascendancy, and took to itself undue share of time, it was a species of intimacy that sprang up between the older of the boys and girls. This would not unfrequently be seen in interchange of furtive

glances, in forbidden slate communications of flattering addresses and arch replies, and in an occasional billet doux, containing here and there a pretty, but indefinite sentiment. Out of school hours the charming maidens were wont at times to have proffered them a more substantial expression of favor, in the form of fruit or some little gift-token, and they were as often subjected to those warm, delicate attentions that spring up between the sexes as sweetly as gush out the crystal waters from the fount of nature.

But there were three among the girls that shared more largely than all the rest, of this homage. Indeed, the whole school by accord raised them by its affection upon an elevated pedestal of worship. Yet in personal appearance, in individual character, and in that indefinable charm in which lies the mysterious power of woman, they were as unlike as could well be imagined. They seemed to unite by contrarieties, as nature often forms the closest union from opposite elements, for to appearance they were bound in more than sisterly concord.

Of this lovely trio, Angeline Readcliff was the queen flower. She it was that drew forth the heart-incense of the entire school. Her two devoted companions were but lesser settings to the central, lustrous diamond that flashed in the sunlight, and challenged the admiration of all. It was this girl that Walter encountered at the crossing, and whose eyes met his with such mysterious magnetism on entering the school. Nature and life had formed her among the loveliest of earth's beautiful flowers. The pet grand-daughter of the parish clergyman already noted, the sweet dignity of the venerable man of God, and his pure holiness seemed to have descended like a delicate mantle upon this tender lamb of his fold. One might have said that she had caught from the halo of earthly glory that surrounded the venerable man, as

the heroines of old hallowed lustre from the prestige of rank and wealth. The idol of her parents, she inherited from her mother a certain graceful affection not easily portrayed, and from her father a nobleness of soul that forbade all meanness.

From her tenderest babyhood she had been beloved by everybody. She had become the adoptive child of the universal heart. The instincts of the masses, true to the impulses of nature, had enfolded her to their bosom as by common inheritance. The affection, the reverence, which people felt for the village pastor was now lavished upon his sweet grand-child. The loving tenderness which his ministrations had swelled up in the hearts of his hearers now flowed forth upon the blooming scion of his old age.

But these profuse attentions did not spoil the girl, as flattery is almost sure to do, because, in this case, they were only an unaffected response to genuine worth, and sprang by natural impulse from the heart.

There are two types of female grace in the world. One is the off-shoot of culture and art, the other springs from the dewy lap of nature, and finds expression in the golden sunshine, the melody of birds, the gushing, dancing rivulet, and in all the sweet, joyous harmony of the universe. Angeline was a true child of nature, and of nature in her brightest and loveliest phase.

Artless, noble, and generous, she may yet have had faults, but as no one else could see any, we will not seek to find them ourselves. Her goodness of heart proved a talisman to win, and changed to delight the eye that strove for a blemish.

In her slightest movement there was an air of simple, but queenly dignity, that heightened her charms of person to the summit of perfection. Without this grace, her soft beauty might have palled upon the eye, like the golden fleck of the summer lake. But with it she stood out a beautiful statue upon a fine pile of architecture.

But it was not the outward beauty of her person that imparted to the girl her peculiar fascination. It sprang from a deeper source. It emanated from a beautiful soul. It was this that lit up her comely form with irresistible charms, this that drew the world to her in ardent homage, this that flooded her pathway with sunshine, this that surrounded her with a halo of loveliness to which every fibre of the angelic in man responded in tones of sweet accord.

But the young girl was as unconscious of this wondrous spell of spiritual beauty that she possessed, as the morning bird warbling in the breezy spray is of the sweet melody of its song. Accustomed from rosy infancy to the heart-homage of every body, she grew up in an atmosphere of genial incense. To be greeted always with the tones of love, to be regarded ever with the eye of affection, to hear continually words of good will, had ever been so much her portion as to awaken in her breast no other than a feeling of complaisant gratitude. It filled her with happiness, made her life joyous, and her spirit as blithesome as a summer butterfly.

The attentions of the more susceptible of the boys began in the course of the winter to assume an aspect of delicate gallantry, and more than once some one, more bold than the rest, essayed to give a significance to his partiality. To a heart less sophisticated than that of Angeline, these beguiling flatteries might have awakened an emotion of uneasiness, but to the simple-hearted girl they disturbed not the equalized flow of her sentiments. She took it but as a more ardent expression of the kindness she had always received, and she continued to move on in her wonted orbit, as some brilliant star amid a host of willing satellites.

It were not easy to find the secret of the power that the fair girl had cast over Walter. Philosophy may penetrate the hidden recesses of matter, may trace the subtle laws of

mind, may even detect the affinity of the affections, but there are mysteries of the heart too deep for her sounding plummet, too profound for her searching eye.

Still, it is permitted us to scan with philosophic eye, the train of circumstances that brightened the image glowing in his breast. Walter inherited deeply a tender and impressionable nature. The grief-stricken and gentle spirit of his mother, nursed by sympathy, this native quality of soul. His lowly condition kept him in close relation with the genuine in life. He was blessed by nature with a lively susceptibility to the beautiful. The scenes of rural simplicity that surrounded his early years imparted a sweet tone to his sentiments. A thoughtful turn of mind, imparted a pensive complexion to his ideas.

These ethereal flames of his soul finding no outlet amid the rich fields of literature, science, and art, were narrowed within their native confines. But they thereby gained in intensity what was lost in expansion. They gradually fired his nature, quickening every latent energy of his being.

With no outward objects for exaltation, they sought to create an image within, upon which to spend their fires. Woman became that image. In her, Walter saw, or thought he saw, all that most answered to the sweet cravings of his own soul,—truth, piety, fidelity simplicity, gentleness, grace, tenderness, love, consummate beauty. Not that he had met with any one woman thus endowed, but somehow from the crucible of his soul one had been struck out with just the qualities he could wish; and busy imagination kept pace with his growing conceptions, so as to continue the image up to the full measure of its charming proportions. He had attained unconsciously, precisely the object sought by the sculptor, in representing by inanimate form, his highest conceptions of female beauty: by the true poet artist who delineates

not any one woman whom he may have seen, but by the exercise of the high power of abstraction, selects from extensive survey, here one exquisite feature, there another, and then by the keen umpire of judgment and the gilding touch of taste, unites and blends them into one harmonious perfection, adding to all the nameless grace caught by passing through the alembic of his own peculiar feeling. Thus the artist presents his highest embodied conceptions of beautiful woman,—not of any one woman, but of woman in the abstract,—not of woman improved by the genius of man, but a beautiful creation drawn all from nature, and representing woman as she appears to the highest inspiration of the poetic, gifted soul.

It was such an ideal image of woman, or of all that to his sense was most beautiful and lovely in woman, that was pictured upon the tablet of his soul. Before this created image, he was ever kneeling in mute, adoring worship. With it he communed incessantly upon the mysterious secrets of the heart. It became his guardian divinity, holding him back from all that was low and base, and filling him with aspirations for the lovely and true. It was ever his noblest, sweetest companion, before him alike in the dark sea-watches of the night, amid the black mutterings of the tempest, and at the brightest blaze of noon-day, amid the thickest haunts of men. And finally when he lay down to sleep, it was his last conscious vision of earth, and the first bright image to greet his awakening sense, and in his dreams, it mingled freely in the peopled realms of that other land, swaying its sceptre even over the empire of sleep.

But how came it, that Walter's devotion for this bright ideal image in his breast was transferred to the fair girl, the queen of the village school? Let us hasten to tell all we know about that mysterious little secret.

The first morning, while going to the agent's he fell into one of those spiritual moods, as we have seen when the soul is entranced, and becomes lively susceptible to the beauty of earth and heaven. When the fair stranger first met his view, he felt of a sudden, a delightful transformation of soul. No touch of the electric wire could have been more sudden, more keen. As he handed the fair one over the scanty bridge-way, a wave of new-born emotion rolled through his soul. And on turning to pursue his way, after gazing in a state of delicious entrancement, at the receding form that had awakened him to new life, he felt conscious that the image which had been wont to usurp his breast, was there no more, and in its stead sat divinely enthroned the image of the fair girl who had just lighted in his pathway, like an angel from heaven.

It became a moment of profound ecstasy. The blissful dream of his youth was all at once realized. He had awakend to a new birth. A regeneration of existence had come over him. It was no longer a mere image, a picture of the imagination, indefinite and unsatisfying that he must now worship, but a real being of life, a creature of breathing flame, a veritable woman whom his rapturous eye had seen, his emotional sense touched, and who with himself was one of the great beating world of life and sympathy.

The reality was nearly overpowering. He seemed translated to a new world. The varied relations of life brightened up in glowing aspects. The future which had hung with such a cloud of gloom over his pathway became all at once as bright and serene as a summer morning. He felt as light and blithesome as an uncaged bird which sniffs the air and sunlight of heaven.

It is not contended that the love which Walter felt for the fair Angeline was the only phase which that master passion of

the human heart assumes. It was not for instance that love which absorbs the soul of woman, and throws her, young and beautiful though she be, prostrate in utter devotion at the feet of age and deformity itself, if that age and deformity be enshrined with genius and heroism, making the earth resound with acts of grandeur and power.

It was not that love, which is but the response of a grateful heart, a heart too generous to withstand long assiduous attentions of devotion on the part of another, or, it may be, becoming charmed by noble acts of friendship, is captivated, held in thrall, and finally subdued in sweet conquest.

It was not that true love which springs up between congenial natures, natures possessing bonds of common sympathy, beings with whom a mutual life has cemented a friendship that renders them, though distinct like the billows, yet one like the sea, hearts that have grown with fibres gradually interlocking, united cleaving with fleshly tenacity, bosoms that swell with a kindred emotion, an enraptured state in which eye answers to eye, and lip to lip, and souls are cemented in a union inseparable.

The love which Walter bore Miss Redcliffe was an ideal love. It could not be called real, only so far as it existed in his own soul. Indeed it was little more than an intense sentiment, a poetic enthusiasm, the beautiful creation of his own soul transferred by some mysterious power to a kindred being.

He had yielded the sceptre of power to another, had raised her to a throne of empire universal, had created her an immaculate goddess before whom he was to bow in unquestioned worship. Whether this partner of his soul possessed the qualities assigned her by the generous affections of Walter's heart, could not be known. If she did not, what a gulf of

misery might lay before them. How dangerous the path of love trod by woman. She decks herself and displays her arts in order to please. That may be well. But if in winning the prize, on securing the transfer to herself of that beautiful ideal man's longing heart has formed to himself, he wakes up to find that he has parted with a beautiful love, but has gained none in return, that the fair being that captivated him, possesses no qualities in correspondence with the image he had so long embraced and worshipped, that the reality has vanished into the air, that it is a phantom that he was embracing, that all has been delusion, how unhappy for him, how miserable for her!

Let woman then seek to be what she appears. Nature has fashioned her in person beautiful. It has given her the elements of a corresponding loveliness of soul. A soul as superior to the body in angelic beauty, as mind is raised high above matter. Let her cultivate this immortal part, that it may blossom with all the fascinations of a paradise, to equal, yea, surpass the most beautiful ideal that man is capable of forming of the beauty, the loveliness, the glory of woman. Better that woman strive to make her person hideous in the eyes of man, than that she lure him by a false exterior that has no correspondence of beauty within, to a spiritual grave of death, in which are shipwrecked all his beautiful hopes of life.

Walter did not ask himself the question whether his affection for Angeline was worthily placed. He did not care to be troubled with such a disturbing query. He was too blinded in the joy of his own dream to think of that. He only knew that he loved the fair girl with the full strength of his soul. And what was there to cast a shade of doubt, that this passion was genuine? Was not the girl very beautiful? Was there

not in her every feature and act something more than beauty, a certain captivating grace, that was irresistible in its fascinating power over him? Were not her parents enthroned in the respect and affection of the town? Were not her grand-parents revered and beloved to a point of actual worship? Added then to the personal charm of the fair girl herself, was the fascination of family position and influence. This element came in to deepen and strengthen his attachment to the object of his choice. It enlarged and elevated his happiness. It went to satisfy that early aspiration of his youth for social preeminence, for climbing to some loftier and more noble sphere of existence.

But such speculations were after all unworthy the purity of his sentiments for Angeline. His love for her was independent of all mere worldly interest. The sweet power which she held over him was deep, irresistible, complete. He felt a happiness in her presence all absorbing, delicious. Her every look was a bright ray from heaven. Her transcendent image was ever before him in his waking hours, and gave splendor to his dreams by night. Her very foot-prints he gazed on with emotions of tenderness, and the slightest rustling of her dress sent a thrill of delight through his heart.

Strange power of the human soul, that can first create a world of love, and then in a delirium of ecstasy rush blindly into its blissful waters. Thrice strange that having himself tasted this divinest emotion of earth, man should ever be willing to disown the loyal sentiment, as if ashamed of one of the purest feelings of the human heart.

Miss Redcliffe, as we have before said, was the worshipped queen of the village school. She instinctively drew forth the tender gallantry from the hearts of the older boys. Even the teacher could not always disguise a certain warmth of delicacy in addressing her. But the ingenuous soul of the

girl received this homage, but as another expression of that complacent love which she herself had ever felt for others, and which she was wont to receive from others in return. Feeling no exclusive interest in another being, she could not comprehend that she merited particular attention from another. Thus the unsophisticated girl, passed off the flattery bestowed upon her, with a coy grace, that but enhanced her worth in the eyes of the seeker.

Walter's eye was quick to perceive this. True, Angeline had given him no especial token of her love. But then sure he felt, that she had neither yielded her heart to another. He at least stood equal in his fortune with other aspirants. More than this, he had gathered some slight evidences of her partiality for him. The fond, eager heart catches at shadows. Then he could not but feel, that the being gifted to fire his soul to such a glow of passion, must possess a nature congenial to his own; that the beneficent Great Cause, ever harmonious in design, would not create a heart to awaken so intense a flame of affection in another, and yet remain insensible to the reciprocal exercise of those emotions in return. Indeed, he gradually came to persuade himself, that he was to be the first, the only choice of the young girl. Blissful thought! He felt this in its calm, awakening force, which is itself the inspiration of love.

In this sweet self-complacency, his richly freighted barque was being wafted delightfully upon the placid sea of Hope. But an unseen gale was soon to spring up, that would toss the fragile vessel in phrenzied desperation.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Foul jealousy! that turnest love divine
To joyless dread, and mak'st the loving heart,
With hateful thoughts to languish and to pine,
And feed itself with self-consuming smart;
Of all the passions in the mind thou vilest art."

SPENSER'S FAIRY QUEEN.

It was a dreary December night. The menacing storm at length broke forth, and the big rain-drops intermingled with sleet, came coursing to the earth in fierce, pitiless blasts.

In a low, dilapidated cot, a mere hovel in respectability, might have been seen a wretched family, consisting of a couple of parents, and some seven of their unhappy progeny. These latter bore a shrivelled and melancholy look, that was painful to behold.

The father with hair silvered, rather by hardship, than by age; with teeth loosened rather by medicine, than by organic decay; with a soul crushed by domestic griefs, as well as by deep thrusts from the dark hand of fortune, exhibited, nevertheless, vestiges of a haughty spirit and an indomitable pride.

The wife evinced no signs of physical decay. Yet her thin wiry frame, her nervous, startling motions, her sharp, bitter voice, her haggard wandering eye gave unmistakable evidence that the woman had felt deeply the storm of wrong, of misfortune, and suffering. Indeed, she was but the bitter concentration of her former strong nature. Her life had been steeped in the wormwood of unhappiness. Her soft traits had been crushed out, and what remained had been intensified and hardened into adamant.

Three of the children were deaf mutes; one was lame from the fracture of a limb; and upon all, want and misery were depicted in every lineament. Still, these offspring of misfor-

tune possessed features of classic symmetry, complexion of rare purity and a native vivacity, that bespoke them beings above the common mould. But their wine of life had been turned to gall, through the mildew blast of a cursed home.

Bleared-eyed jealousy on the part of the father, and domestic incapacity of the mother overlapped by ill-success in business, were the principle causes of their wretchedness.

And yet the morn of their marriage union shone serenely. They belonged to two of the wealthiest and most respectable families of the town. They were endowed by nature with surpassing beauty of person, and striking intelligence. Education had graciously dispensed to them more than her wont.

Thus at the outset of their voyage, all seemed to bespeak prosperity and happiness. But they seemed to have launched their barque upon the receding wave, and the treacherous waters had left them a strand upon the shore of life.

The howling storm increased. A blast of sleet brought a shudder to the heart of Mrs. Leeland.

"Where can Isadore be, that she does not return," exclaimed the mother in a tone of deep anxiety. "She has been absent from home now these three days. I fear something dreadful may have overtaken the poor child. 'T is an awful night this, to be out exposed." She added, after a moment's pause, "Oh, if we could only break her up from this strange way she has of roaming off, nobody knows whither! By and by we shall hear of the death of the poor thing."

"Never fear any such chance, interrupted Mr. Leeland, in a sarcastic tone. Did ye not know the devil to be always in luck; I never saw a drunken person catch any hurt in falling. I make no doubt some good fellow will pick the girl up at the right time. Ah, she's only following, I tell you, the wake of her blood."

This last sentence was uttered with an ironic leer of the eye, and in a tone so bitter, as to arouse all the maternal instincts of Mrs. Leeland.

"You've no more feeling for your children than a brute," retorted the incensed wife; "and if you had a drop of manly blood throbbing your bosom, you wouldn't thus insult the honor of your own child. What but your unmerciful cruelty first drove her from our door?"

"More like 't was your cursed shiftlessness. Such miserable housekeeping would drive a Hottentot from his own house. What a miserable apology have we here for a home; I'd as soon go live with cannibals."

During this tirade, Mrs. Leeland, goaded to the quick, was ready to launch again upon her husband with the force of a mad hyena. But at this moment the door opened, and Isadore, accompanied by a stalwart stranger, made her appearance.

"Ah, how glad I am that you've come," exclaimed Mrs. Leeland, springing from her seat to welcome her daughter, "I was getting to be so *worried* about you, but here you are, safe, and heaven be praised."

She hesitated going on, under a feeling of rebuke, in seeing her child in the company of a stranger. She felt that her husband would now have some plausible grounds for his biting and ugly sarcasms.

As for Mr. Leeland, had the same scene taken place, at some former period of his life, before he had quite lost all parental interest in his child, under the spell of his monomaniac insanity, he would doubtless have fallen into a paroxysm of passion, that no human power could have withstood; but the tie of his paternal loyalty had been sundered, and he now shut himself up in dogged sullenness, awaiting a moment to spit out some taunting reproach.

Isadore, in cast of feature, strongly resembled her other

sisters. She was the eldest and the best looking of them, and during her childhood, possessed a face that was indeed very sweet and pretty. But now, although every trace of comeliness had not been driven from her person by the weird Fate that presided over her lot, yet all delicate expression of beauty seemed lost in her tall, gaunt form, her pale shrivelled features, that bore an unearthly expression, and in a certain awkward, abstracted air, that made her seem as if some evil spirit had gotten possession of her.

From the impulse of a generous heart, Isadore set to work in earnest, to assuage the ill-plight of her stranger guest. She drew him quickly up to the fire-place, which she replenished immediately from the scanty wood-pile of her home, and then ran for a change of clothing from her absent brother's wardrobe. Her mother at the same time set before him some coarse and ill-prepared refreshments.

At another time, Isadore might have hesitated in showing so much freedom toward a stranger, in presence of her father, but when the heart has become thoroughly aglow with kindness, it hurries the step beyond the line of cold reserve; and, in this case, the suffering girl had become too much used to the bitter tirades of the insensate, to heed them beyond measure.

As the stranger's stiffened limbs began to thaw, and his spirits to flow with warmth, his tongue likewise became loosened, and he broke forth into the following exordium:—

"May the all gracious Heaven forever bless you, my dear angel of mercy, for thus taking pity upon a desolate wanderer, like me, up and down this cold bleak earth. I had about forsworn all good will toward human kind, having always come off so badly at the hands of the land-pirates; but this sweet, kindly act of yours brings back, I must confess, a spark of the love of olden times."

At the word *love*, the slumbering jealousy of Mr. Leeland took fire.

"Love the girl, eh? She must have a wholesome taste to pick up for a lover such a broken down hack as you are."

Old Marl, for it was no other than the old sailor himself, had not before noticed Mr. Leeland. But at the sound of his voice he cast a glance backward, when their eyes met.

"What say you there?" demanded the salt in a gruff voice.

"I say," reiterated the father, his whole frame firing up with intense energy, "I say the girl must have a wholesome taste to be taken up with such a vagabond as you appear, Mr. Marl, looking as if you had been drawn through the devil's cesspool."

"And is it against that young woman that you hold such language," retorted the sailor, rising quickly from his seat, his eyes rolling with fury. "If you shall dare breathe a syllable against her fair honor, I'll make you eat your own words so quick that you 'll not know that you 've done it."

"Insult me in my own house, eh, you wretch," and springing from his seat, he struck the sailor such a blow with a chair, as sent the stool in fragments upon the floor.

Quick as thought, Marl grappled his antagonist by the throat, and in the paroxysm of his anger, might have damaged Mr. Leeland irreparably, but for the filial tenderness of Isadore, who rushed between them, beseeching the sailor in heaven's name to spare her father. At the word *father*, the sailor's hand relaxed, and turning towards the girl with a look of utter astonishment.—

"Your father, and can it be possible! A thousand pardons I beg for my roughness. Upon my word, had I known this man to be your father, I would have suffered a thousand deaths,

rather than have laid the weight of my finger in anger upon his body."

"After what has happened, I cannot tarry longer under your hospitality. Go from here, I must, though it takes me to find a bed in the veriest slough of your bleak shores. But first let me tell you, man, how it came, that capricious fortune threw me among you at all; in order that you may have no reason to harbor an unkind thought against this sweet damsel who is an honor to her sex.

"Well, you must know that some freak of my poor brain sent me on a fishing voyage, in one of your craft last summer. The season over, following the bent of my roaming spirit, which is about as tranquil as the dancing spray of Niagara, I was led to make a trip south in one of your schooners. It was a little dubious coming on the coast, at this icy season of the year, but I've become somewhat accustomed to the gusts of this breezy planet. We had the good luck of making land early yesterday morning, and of tying our craft snugly up in your harbor, before the lowering tempest that had been muttering for two or three days in the sky broke forth in its spite.

"On getting ashore, while the rest of the crew set blithely out for their several homes, I declined all their hearty invitations to go along with them, and started confidently alone to find the house of a youngster who was one of our number aboard the *Pink* last summer. He lives somewhere in these parts. To confess, I had gotten up an affection for the lad while we were together. Somehow he won upon my good will prodigiously. If I mistake not, he is a noble hearted fellow, and possesses a larger share of the sweet grace of life, than falls to the lot of humanity in general. At any rate I was disposed to give way to my inclinations and seek out the

young man. But a sailor upon a strange shore of a dark tempestuous night, is about in the same plight as would be a land-lubber among the reefs of Florida. Suffice it to say, I found the navigation befogging enough to my salt water brain, and after winding about for a time, amid the mazes of my phantom perceptions, I at length brought up in the thicket of some crazy swamp. And while veering and tacking there like a muddy pated loon, beset by a score of guns, I fell suddenly plump into a big nasty mud-hole. Here I was in imminent danger of foundering my bewildered barque; and after crossing the Atlantic more times than can be counted on one's fingers and toes, might have seen myself in the sorry predicament of shuffling off my mortal coil, in this wretched situation, but for a sweet, gentle voice that glimmered up through the murky air, like blessed hope amid a tempest. It fell upon my ear, I imagine, like seraphic music upon the heavenward winged soul! What was my surprise to find the voice proceeded from a woman. With much ado the gentle creature helped extricate me from my wo-begone situation, and lead me safely to her warm home. How much do I not owe to this young woman!

"More, it seems to me, than to any human being, save my own blessed mother. No loving sister could have shown a forlorn brother more tenderness. No devoted wife could have given stronger proof of her fidelity to a world forsaken husband. No doating mother could have shown greater alacrity in rescuing a fond son in peril. Believe me, that young woman possesses largely the milk of human kindness. Beneath the guise of fragile woman, she bears a lion's spirit, for in the most perilous and trying scenes that I have passed through, never have I seen the boldest comrade exhibit a more cool and dauntless bravery, than she did in rescuing me from my danger. How little should we know where to seek a true loyal human heart. I had about given over woman-kind as

lost amid the frivolous fashions of life, but I will love them all now, and pray for them till the latest breath of my existence, if but to honor this noble example of her sex. May the gracious heaven forever bless you, my dear girl."

With this last sentence the old sailor, under the sway of a visible emotion sauntered toward the door-way, with an evident movement for departing, but suddenly arresting his steps as if checked by a sudden thought, he exclaimed:

"The lad's name was Walter Carl. May be you happen to know him, and can set me on the way to his house."

At the words Walter Carl, the blood mounted to the cheeks of Isadore, her breast heaved with evident emotion, and she subsided into a seat, near, covering her face with her hands, as if to disguise the feelings that agitated her frame.

The sailor gazed upon the spectacle with consternation, but feeling that his presence might aggravate the perplexity, he hastened to the door-way, and abruptly took his leave.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Trifles, light as air,
Are to the jealous, confirmations strong
As proofs of holy writ."—SHAKS. OTHELLO.

ALTHOUGH at the beginning of the winter school, life flowed serenely, yet ripples ere long began to break forth upon the gliding stream. The feeling of envy, that leaving his own school for that at the Old Parish, had engendered among Walter's former school-mates, only waxed stronger with the lapse of time. He and his two comrades had become stigmatized as traitors to their own school, and were exposed to sundry such petty annoyances, by the pestering spirit of their former associates. This was well calculated to ruffle the equanimity of the trio. It fell with peculiar force upon Walter, who for the first time in his life, found himself becoming unpopular. It grieved him sorely at the heart. The first symptoms of having drawn upon ourselves the displeasure of others, with what withering keenness it strikes the pure sensitive soul!

One evening, a few days after a great fall of snow, as Walter and his two companions were wending their way homeward, from school, they very unexpectedly encountered a huge ridge of snow stretched across their pathway. In its altitude, it assumed the character of a formidable breast-work. Behind this Sebastopol were snugly ensconced some dozen or more warlike spirits, ready to dispute any attempt at breaching a passage. The three boys were too proud-spirited to give in and sue for a passage, nor were they disposed to show

themselves so pusillanimous as to fall back, and so reach home by a circuitous route.

Balec, the oldest of the three, was an iron-framed, hard-fisted fellow, and as tough as the pine knots of his native woods. He was moreover awkward-gaited and clumsy-mannered, and might as likely as not stumble over his own shadow; but once let his ire become aroused, and woe to the unlucky wight that should fall into his sinewy paws. His grip had the force of a vice, and as unrelenting.

Jabez, the next, was a perfect leopard in strength and agility. His body partook of the litheness of the adder, united with the power of the boa-constrictor. The force of two beings seemed to have been concentrated in his own frame, and his spirit and courage were in a corresponding large measure. His father before him had been reckoned a giant, in strength, and Jabez was no unworthy son of his sire.

No boy of his age could stand before him in contest for a moment, and many a person of ripe age was obliged to succumb whenever there was a struggle for the mastery.

Walter could boast of less physical prowess than either of the other two boys, but he had received a considerable development of muscle, and he possessed a spirit, which when once fairly aroused, did not easily flinch.

Thus, with strong confidence in their mutual superiority, they entertained no thought of yielding without a trial. They accordingly prepared for the onset. Pulling well down over their heads their Scotch caps, they bolted forward upon a run in single file. But on striking the line of breast-work, they were so fiercely greeted with a shower of snow-balls as to become overwhelmed with momentary blindness, which caused them to stagger back for a moment's respite.

They next essayed to turn one of the corners of the snow-

line, but the whole posse of opposition pounced upon them and compelled them to fall back.

They now determined to break the line, when they found themselves in a hand to hand struggle, wallowing over and under in the snow, in smothering confusion. In lively conflict more than one felt the grip of Balec, or was compelled to cry for quarter, by Jabez. Although the spirit of opposition began to wane in force, yet by dint of numbers they still maintained their ground.

It was now nearly night. Indeed, the dusky shades were gathering around them. Suddenly a stream of water was seen to issue from a woody thicket near. It struck the centre of the ridgy line of snow, which disappeared rapidly under its melting force. A boy of the opposition impelled by curiosity rushed toward it, when he received the watery spout full upon his person. It set him into a frenzy of gyrations, and he jumped about as if shot with a charge of pepper and salt. Several others advanced, but shared only too well the same fate. Perceiving they had a new enemy to encounter they disbanded, and hastened on their way. Walter and his companions now proceeded homeward; but as they were turning an angle of their pathway, Walter was seized with a curiosity to mount upon a high post standing near, and cast his eyes in the direction whence issued the mysterious stream of water. As his eyes wandered about the thicket in the distance, they suddenly fell upon a female figure. She was standing near the trunk of an oak, in an abstracted air, with face partially averted. He gazed at the unknown a moment, feeling certain that he had seen the figure before, but when and where he could not recall. He rushed on after his comrades, but the image of the female he had just seen, lingered long in his mind. The feeling it excited was not of personal interest, but that of strange curiosity.

How often there hangs upon some trivial incident, a momentous turn in the career of our fate! One evening, on his way home from school, Walter happily bethought himself of having inadvertently left his speaking-book behind. He was too ambitious to risk a failure in declamation, and accordingly set out quickly in return, in order to repair the delinquency. On coming near the school-house, he was pleasantly surprised by hearing musical sounds. They seemed to glide upon his ear, through the still, soft air of twilight, in melodious cadence. His step was intuitively arrested, as if it were profanity to break the sweet harmony. The clear, pure voice, he recognized at once, as not unfamiliar to him; and as the warbling intonations swelled out into a silvery, joyous pathos, they excited his emotional nature to a pitch of rapture not to be described. Reaching the school-house, he clambered up an old fence, that ran by a window, and stole an eager glance upon the musical party within. The first form that his searching eye seized, was that of Angeline. She was sitting in a back seat, with a psalm-book before her, from which she was rehearsing, in preparation for the evening's singing-school. Near and around her were several of her school-mates, both boys and girls, participating in the inspiring exercise. They all seemed in a happy frame of mind, as if the pulse of life was beating sweetly within. Each ever and anon became the recipient of some delicate courtesy, on the part of the other, but the queen, toward whom universal homage flowed, was, as usual, the fair Angeline. The rest seemed to press around her person with unaffected gladness, and to catch a new light of joy from her presence.

Walter gazed upon the scene in mute rapture. He swallowed slowly his delicious sensations. He felt sure that he had not seen the fair girl of his heart look half so beautiful before. A soft, delicate flush suffused her countenance, that

imparted a peerless tint to her fine complexion. It seemed the bright rays of a glorious dawn mantling with celestial radiance, the azure heavens. Her bosom softly swelled and trembled as if in a giddy entrancement of some perennial joy. Her eyes by turns glowed with a melting tenderness, and then were lit up with a seraphic fire. It was the glowing inspiration of her singing, mingled with the sweet beatitude of feeling complacently beloved, that so transformed the girl's beauty into a loveliness supernal. But to the enrapturing eye of Walter, the vision before him seemed like the spirit of some dream, too fair for earth. In the language of Byron:—

“He gazed and turned away, he knew not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reeled with its fulness.”

As we have already narrated, Walter loved Angeline at sight. The ray of passion that shot athwart the sympathetic chord of his breast, was not less instantaneous than the answering touch of the electric wire. Yet time in her society had revealed qualities which deepened this first sentiment. Among these, and not the least, was the rich chorus of her voice. Angeline was by eminence the village songstress. Others among her fair companions could sing, but none like her. When her voice was heard in melody, others were eclipsed, as the stars veil their faces before the glorious eye of day. She had attended to singing as a science, with the best advantages her native place afforded, but her melody was not mere intellectuality of expression, not stiff, studied art, but tones of natural accord flowing from the soul, a spontaneous gushing from the fountains of nature, as the crystal stream oozes up from the pearly depths below. Her voice was clear, soft, melodious; now lit up with a smile, now shadowed by a tear,

varied with the changing feeling of the moment. Her music seemed the voice of love.

"Music! — O how faint, how weak,
Language fades before thy spell.
Why should feeling ever speak
When thou canst breath her soul so well."

MOORE.

Her silvery voice was always foremost in the church choir, and at the singing school; and during the recesses and noonings of the winter school, snatches of melody would here and there jet out from the wealth of her soul, like gleams of golden sunshine from the bursting, fleecy heavens. It was in such magical moments, that these breathing impulses of the soul, thrown off with the most unaffected, coyest grace, made the deepest impressions upon his heart. He drank in the stealing accents, as the first wild bird that drinks the dew from the violets of spring. It warmed to flow the vital flood of his heart, and waked its folded buds to joyous blossoming.

What power is there not in the music of the human voice! With what a force of charm do not its sweet tender accents fall upon the loving, susceptible heart of youth. Ah, woman! what magic gifts are not thine! With what ease canst thou not glide into the affections of man, and mould his sensibilities to thy will!

While thus gazing with unalloyed happiness, he was led to notice a young man, taller than the others, standing near Angeline, whose attentions seemed to partake of an earnest partiality. A vague trembling of heart arose at the suspicion. He scrutinized with anxious eye to see if these attentions were reciprocated by the fair girl. In the honesty of his heart, he could not discover that they were. Still, the warm courtesies of the young man gave him much uneasiness. A sensation

such as he had never before experienced embittered his heart. The sweet tranquillity that he had before enjoyed, was all at once flown. The bright star that had beamed so richly upon him, had all at once sunk beneath the horizon of his soul. In its place was left a green, sepulchral light, that grew more and more wan.

The company within the school-room, began now moving to come away; and Walter, in order not to be noticed, descended, and quietly retreated homeward.

The night hung heavily in the sacred interests of his heart. It was the first pang in the crucifixion of his heretofore pure love existence, and the anguish he experienced rent his gentle spirit. It fell like a blight upon his warm, generous hopes. He tossed during the night upon his pillow, in feverish disquietude. He nursed the ill-starred offspring of his jaundiced imagination, until it overtopped his spirit like the craven nightmare.

Yet, when serene morning dawned afresh, and he again sallied forth for school, in the vivifying air of heaven, he felt the sinister progeny of his brain to have fled, and his elastic spirit welcomed the wonted tone of his emotions. Still more, when he met at the school-room the angelic smile, the kindly tone, the cordial manner of Angeline, he felt it impossible that she could ever have thought of another, and he almost cursed the feeling that made him suspect a being so pure, so incapable of disappointing the fondest wish of his heart.

Yet, after the first reaction of this noble impulse, there would occasionally arise in his breast, after all, a twinge of doubt. Slight circumstances in the manner of Angeline were distorted to his predjuice, and at times he felt very unhappy.

He at length resolved to test his doubts. A thought as to the way, luckily came to his mind. He had received during

the winter many pressing invitations to be present at their evening singing-schools. Angeline, in her own artless way, had more than once joined her entreaties with the rest. He had always declined these, assigning as a reason the inconvenience of the distance, but really, perhaps, from the embarrassment one feels, in being present with equals at an exercise in which he cannot participate. But now, under the warmth of his new grown purpose, all scruples melted at once. He would accept the very next invitation, that he might satisfy the unworthy suspicion whether or not there existed a mutual sentiment between Angeline and the young man who had awakened his jealousy on the evening of the rehearsal. He would be able, he fancied, to determine as to the truth of his suspicions, by observing intently their mutual bearing. Fortune, that seemed guiding his fate, very soon threw an opportunity in his path. One noon, while speaking of the singing-school, Angeline coquetishly reprimanded Walter for slighting all their invitations to attend. The boy, with a boldness he had never before shown in presence of the fair girl, pleasantly retorted that he would be pleased to atone for his neglect, and that further he should be most happy to accompany Miss Angeline to the very next meeting. There was quite a little congratulatory outburst at this announcement, so unexpected.

It was a lovely moon-light evening that Walter set out to call upon Angeline, and go to the singing-school. His feelings were elate. A happiness was to be his, that he could hardly have dreamed of, as coming so soon. He was to be in the company of his beloved alone, to walk intimately by her side, to feel the sweet, gentle weight of her person upon his arm, in the hush of evening, when the shades of night could hide the blush of a too intimate word. Happy anticipation!

On a moment's reflection, however, he perceived that he was

acting rather from the dubious suggestions of his own heart, than following the sweet will of Angeline. It was not she that had graciously solicited his company, as the craving of her voluntary will, but he from motives of unworthy suspicion, had devised the step. This feeling troubled him greatly: it engendered a pang of remorse. It disturbed the purity of the sentiment his heart so loved to entertain toward the single object of his love.

Then how was he to secure the end he had proposed to himself, of determining whether the heart of the young girl was intact, or at least that her affections had been bestowed upon no other. If he had contrived to drop in upon the singing-school, at the Old Hall, unexpected and unobserved, there would have been a chance to satisfy his doubts. He could at least have watched her deportment, unseen. But as it was, being her engaged partner for the evening, the commonest courtesy would keep him near her, and exclude the attentions of others. The thought perplexed him. He felt abashed at his own short-sighted simplicity. He perceived how following a too ardent impulse, he had overshot his mark, and he at once foresaw that he was going thus early to be smartly punished for his departure from the path of manly trust. He had not learned that the way of the transgressor is hard; and that in the affairs of the heart, as in the business of life, he is apt to cut but a sorry figure, who deviates from the road of wonted integrity.

But these wan lights of feeling soon burned up with a brighter glow. Was he not to possess for the evening, the young girl's society? The sweet thought gradually gained empire in his bosom, and banished all dark bodings. A jealous man is wont to gain confidence in the presence of his love. The sunshine of her person dissipates the cloud of

suspicion, and he feels but too happy in the joy of the present.

He at length reached the home of Angeline. A maid in response to his gentle rap, appeared at the door. With faltering voice, he enquired for Miss Redcliff.

"She has been gone this half hour, to the singing school," replied the girl, with a tone of indifference.

"Gone!" repeated Walter in astonishment.

"Yes, with Charles Raymond."

"Gone with Charles Raymond!" exclaimed the agitated boy, as a pang of phrenzy shot up from the depths of his soul.

"Yes, he comes here to call for her quite often."

Walter, at this intelligence, was struck, as may be supposed, with utter consternation. Bitter jealousy, wounded pride, and indignation at the treatment he had received, seized by turns his breast, and then mingled in one overpowering feeling of deep anguish.

But the overmastering stroke of all, was the dark distrust which her apparent conduct had ushered in upon his soul, like the deepest gloom of night; that pure, divine faith he had conceived in her unfaltering integrity shaken to its lowest foundation, and the whole superstructure of her beautiful perfections, that fancy had woven thereupon, crumbled to atoms, and melted like the baseless fabric of a dream.

Underlying Walter's fervent love for Angeline was his sure trust in her truthfulness of spirit. He felt this to be the golden cement of all her graces. If his bright imagination had decked her image in all the charms of his own susceptible heart, his sincere, earnest nature would fain have her as beautifully perfect in the larger virtues of an unshaken character. In his exacting conception of her perfectness, she was without crack or flaw. The circle was not more complete in its

symmetrical roundness; the spheres not more harmonious in their sublime evolutions; nature not less deviating in its silent, profound exactness; nor the eternal laws less changing in the hand of omniscient power. Indeed, all these grand elements of the universe might be changed by the wise Law-giver, but how could there be change in this pure, blissful object of his finest creation. No, she was pure, good, incorruptible; incapable of deception or of change. Whatever might be his own fortune in securing the affections of Angeline, he could have no doubt of the native trueness of her soul. On this point, he could lay his head upon the pillow of her trusting soul, and sleep on in sweet, confiding repose, forever.

Then how great was the shock of the flashing note that told him that she had left him, and her plighted word, and gone with another. To what a deep of depths it thrust the bright vision of his hopes! How it struck out from his pure heaven all the glorious dreams of his future. How it paralyzed the tongue of his energies! Into what abject distress it prostrated his whole nature.

Ah, how beautiful is that sweet, trustful love of the pure youthful heart in the perfection of woman. She lights before his radiant eyes, the brightest vision of earth, resplendent in the peerless charms of her outward form, and incomparably fascinating in the matchless graces that animate it. The magic, mystic tie of sex exalts in the imagination of man, all these native outward graces with which nature has enrobed her, to a bloom of inexpressible beauty. In this state, the fond, believing heart, assigns a corresponding perfection to all the attributes of the soul. It cannot be doubted that what is so lovely to the eye, must be correspondingly so to the mind and to the heart. Any other thought would be sacrilege, profanity. Alas! that he should come later to learn, that the

sweetest joys are often the most fleeting, that the most precious objects of sense are often the most perishable, and that the most beautiful, the most lovely creature of nature, the perfection of nature's glorious handiwork, may be the weakest, the frailest thing of earth.

Walter retraced his steps in a state of mind more easily conceived than expressed. At times the girl's image would rise in his heart, in all her wonted fascination, and a sweet tongue within would plead her innocence, on the ground of some misunderstanding; then a feeling of bitterness would spring up, obliterating all the hopeful wishes.

His way took him directly by the singing Hall. As he came abreast the Church Grave Yard, which was only on the opposite side of the road to the Hall, he stopped a few moments, hesitating whether to go in, or proceed on his way home. He could hear the choral voices, issuing from the hallowed building, and his heart palpitated with strong emotion, at the inspiring sounds. The moon was full up in the heavens. Fleecy shreds of clouds were scudding fleetly over her silvery disc, creating the illusion of rapid motion, on the part of the celestial queen herself. Indeed, she seemed to Walter to be hurrying across the arch of the sky, in order to dart off into illimitable space, and thus be rid of the unhappiness of earth. He would fain join her train, and be ushered into the regions of chaos. Turning toward the precincts of the slumbering dead, a feeling of awe crept over his spirit. The shadows of the moon flitting across the gravestones and the straggling shrubbery, seemed like shades hovering in grief over the departed. His own affections, too, might be buried in a grave as deep.

While thus musing, a slight rustling caused by the wind among the branches of an old elm near, drew his attention thither. In a moment his roving eye fell upon a female form

near. She was standing partially concealed by a mossy slab, her eyes gazing wistfully in the heavens. As a gleam from the moon lit up her face, he felt sure of having seen the countenance before, but now there was a pallid expression fastened there, that made him shrink with awe. A few trembling moments elapsed, before he could shake off the superstitious fear that had seized him, sufficiently to move from the spot to which he seemed rooted. But gaining at length the better of his weakness, he walked boldly toward the apparition, which glided rapidly away, as he approached, and soon disappeared entirely, as if dissolving into the surrounding air.

Under the trepidation excited by this casual incident, he decided to go into the singing school. On entering, whom should his enquiring glance first meet, but the bright face of Angeline. The fair girl was fully under the inspiring glow of singing. As her eye met Walter's, a bright carnation mantled her cheeks, that added a still deeper richness to her beauty. Indeed, she looked to Walter inexpressibly lovely. For the moment, all his bodings flew as upon winged steeds; and a tranquil joy swelled through his breast that was momentary happiness.

When the exercises broke up, Walter, under the impulse of his haughty spirit, was proceeding to go directly home. But an acquaintance whom he met there for the first time, after a long absence, held him apart awhile in welcome interview. The rest of the company meanwhile ebbed out of the room slowly, as if held back by the lingering spell of song. Angeline was among the very last to leave, making apparently a pretext for tarrying, by humming over the tunes given out for the next week's meeting. Yet she evinced an embarrassed and impatient air. The quick eye of Walter noticed this, but he was at loss to divine its cause. At length, as Walter was moving to go out, Angeline herself cloaked and hooded for the

wintry air, brushed by him, near enough for a mutual recognition. Charles Raymond followed after her, and as he came up on the stair-way, solicited the favor of accompanying her home. But Walter was filled with surprise to hear the girl respectfully but firmly decline. An irresistible emotion impelled him to follow after them. In the street, Charles repeated his solicitation to Angeline, which was the second time declined, yet he clung to the girl's side, as if destitute of the commonest sentiment of courtesy. At this outrage upon manliness, Walter's soul boiled with shame. He walked up, and addressed Angeline, more as a protector, than a rival. She accepted with evident gladness, and even nestled to his side, as if with a sense of security from annoying intrusion. Charles still followed after for some distance, then approached and bidding Angeline good evening, in a most awkward manner, slunk away homeward.

It was a happiness as unexpected, as keen, to find himself alone by the side of Angeline, her accepted companion. The unspeakable delight at first fettered his tongue, and filled his every movement with ungainliness. Yet, the girl's going off with Charles, and thus breaking her engagement to him, was an incident enshrouded in a good deal of mystery. But a few simple words from her pure lips cleared that up. In Walter's invitation, the expression ran, that he would see her to the singing school, intending to convey the idea of calling for her at her father's, while she took it to mean, meeting her at the Hall, and thence seeing her home. The ambiguity of the phrase was the occasion of the mistake, in which Walter confessed himself at once at fault. Her going with Charles was on her part, a mere neighborly courtesy. She could not have avoided it without being rude.

The sands of time in the Winter's school had nearly run out. The teacher conceived it desirable to close up with an

exhibition of his school, that, while it should show the pupils' progress, would at the same time, serve to embalm in their breasts, his winter's labors. Walter and Angeline, with the rest, took a conspicuous part. This brought them much together, and under very agreeable circumstances. But each preserved toward the other a delicate reserve, often reaching to an embarrassment that betrayed their mutual interests, and fanned the flame they strove in vain to conceal.

Yet toward the other boys, Angeline was the same coy, blithesome, graceful being, as at the commencement of the school.

Among the conceits that not uncommonly break out among scholars at school, was that started by some fanciful youth, of the boys' exchanging letters with the girls, at the close of the school. It was to assume the character of a parting memento.

This sweet device, savoring quite of gallantry, contributed to swell the tender enthusiasm that had been ripening mutually in the breast of the school. There was about it a tinge of delicate romance. A dreamy sentiment, a warm word could be dropped in these poetry-epistles of school affection that would paralyze the tongue of bashful youth in conversation. Ah, how sweet to youth is the fragrant breath of its own warm heart!

Walter was to reciprocate billets with several of the girls, and among the rest, with Angeline. After much pains-taking he succeeded in something that answered his taste, for the others, but when he came to Angeline, he felt greatly embarrassed. He could not summon forth the sentiments that suited his feelings, and the choicest language he could command seemed too poor for her exquisite ear. He wished to express himself so as to portray the inspiration glowing in his soul, yet in a manner so delicate and reserved as to run no risk of offending her sensibilities. He wished the language itself

to breathe the fervor of his own heart. He would fain enkindle in the breast of Angeline the sweet affection that eddied in his own warm nature. But, alas! how impotent did he feel for this end. He would willingly have pledged a lifetime of study and practice, could he have possessed for but a moment the eloquence which this culture would secure him.

He labored long at his delightful effort. He brooded over it by day, and it mingled by night with his dreams. He attempted over and over again to embody with clearness the vague conceptions of his brain. But nothing suited him. This expressed too little, that too much; here he had divulged his sentiments too nakedly; there his thoughts were too concealed. These, too animated, those, too tame. Thus days and nights melted into the oblivion of the past.

At length he awoke one morning sweetly refreshed. The evasive lucubration of his brain had taken to itself a graceful shape. It now lay in his mind a little poem of his heart, each word of which was a tendril chord of love. Seizing his pen, the bright sentences reeled off like golden threads, and the letter was completed to his joyful enthusiasm.

He next began fondly to speculate upon the complexion of Angeline's missive to him. Hope pictured to his heart the bright dreams of anticipation, and time dallied with his feelings with sweetly painful suspense.

Examination day came. The room had been scrubbed and decorated, and looked now, neatly fresh and verdant. Teachers, pupils, parents and friends all assembled, overflowing the rustic temple of learning with ardent, enthusiastic nature. Garbed with tidiest care, and each face wearing its sweetest look, the whole scene had the bloom of the morning rose. Each bosom kindled with varied emotion, but a common sympathy swayed a sentiment of grateful accord.

All passed off with mutual satisfaction. Each congratu-

lated the other, and received a heightened recompense in the generosity of his own feelings. As the weight of anxiety was lifted from one and another breast, the heart leaped up with bounding joy, and the countenances of all became wreathed in sunny smiles. The remarks of the committee and the closing address of the teacher were eloquent and affecting, because falling upon sympathetic ground. A happy school-closing is one of the bright days of a pupil's life.

Next came the exchange of billets. Walter hurried away with Angeline's, under a feverish impatience. How neat and beautiful its form! How sweet and dainty the superscription! His heart panted for the delicious draught awaiting for him within. He opened it. It was nice, pretty, written with care; but he looked in vain for the fervor that glowed in his own bosom. A seeming coldness pervaded the lines, that sent a chill to his feelings. He felt disappointed. How easy to foster into life some sweet dream of our own wishes, until a touch of the Ithureal spear of reality dispels the illusion and brings dreariness to our hopes.

But on re-perusing day by day the gentle billet-doux, a new spirit seemed to exude from its delicate lines, and, ere long, it became linked to his heart in golden association with the happy vision of his life.

CHAPTER XXI.

"'T is a history,
Handed from ages down; a nurse's tale —
Which children, open-eye'd and mouth'd, devour;
And thus as garrulous ignorance relates,
We learn it and believe." — SOUTHEY'S *THALABA*.

THAT'S a strange story about the Yonker, "Unc. Oaker," mused Walter.

"I agree that it is," replied the venerable fisherman, "but I believe from my soul 'tis true, every word of it, for I fancy having once seen the strange sight myself, and if I didn't, I know enough persons that have."

"Be so good as to narrate the particulars," resumed Walter, with an accent of lively curiosity; "I have often heard the story mentioned, but have never been able to learn a full account of it."

"That would take too long time just now," replied the fisherman, "but the upshot of the affair in a few words, as I have heard it, is this: —

"There once lived on the Beach, near the bend of the Cove, a strange, mysterious man and a young woman, whom people took for his daughter. They lived together all alone in the sorriest looking hut that can be imagined. It was framed with drift-stuff, filled in with meadow-turf, beach-grass, and sea-weed. They used the joints of a whale's backbone for stools, and shark's jaws bristling with teeth were stuck here and there on the sides of the hut.

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"The old man was small of stature, with a sunburnt, briny face. He wore a thick, full beard, flowing almost to his knees, which was sprinkled with gray. His feet were covered with some tough dried skin, which was laced up his leg, serving as a boot. A fur skin fell from his shoulders, which was girded around his waist. This was turned according to the weather, sometimes presenting the fur, at others the skin, outward. Upon his head was a curiously formed cap of birds' skins. A fowling piece, fishing-rod, draille, and net were the only articles he was seen to have.

"The young woman was garbed in a similar manner as the man, except that in cold weather she wore a close hood, enveloping completely her head, neck and face, with apertures for her eyes, and in summer an enormous brimmed hat, with gauze veil stretched around the brim.

"She always accompanied the old man whenever he went out, whatever might be the inclemency of the weather, but she was never seen to assist him, or exert herself in aid, in any manner whatever.

"All who had ever caught a glimpse of the young woman bore the same testimony, that she possessed a gentle, feminine countenance of great sweetness. There was a delicacy in her limbs, and a grace in her movements that was quite marvellous. But she seemed bound to the old wretch, whose footsteps she everywhere followed with undeviating constancy.

"They avoided society, and shunned the gaze of curiosity. No one could be found who had ever spoken to them, and an impenetrable mystery hung about their pathway.

"One day, after a dreadful shipwreck that happened near here, when the few survivors had crowded upon the beach, this young woman was seen to issue from the hut, and stealthily hold a conversation with one of the sailors. Since that time neither the old man nor the young woman, his companion, have been seen or heard from.

"On searching their hut nothing was found save a few cooking utensils, and a knife, rusty and clotted with blood.

"Various have been the stories as to the existence and fate of these strangers. The more common belief is that the old man was some son of Neptune who, having captured a fair passenger from a ship in the Indian seas, bore her to this distant shore, and bound her in a perpetual vow of celibacy to his destiny. But having broken her vow by talking with the young sailor, she expiated her fault by death, inflicted by this son of Neptune.

"From that time shrieks and groans, as from a person in death agony, were not unfrequently heard near the spot where stood the hut; and of a dark, lowering night, persons were wont often to see a strange, unearthly light, that while it filled them with horrid fear, exercised over them a mysterious fascination to lure them far away down the beach."

This conversation passed between Walter and one of the crew, while on their way, to haul off the fishing pink for another summer's cruise. The boy had compromised with his mother for one more season at sea. The experience of the past year had only awakened a stronger propensity for an ocean life, and he would fain have consummated his darling intention of rushing on board a square-rigger in the merchant service but for the anguish he saw such a step would bring to the heart of his poor mother.

Their thick-set boat moiled her way lazily through the crisping waves, fanned by a gasping air; and it was quite dark before they struck the shore of the beach at all. And when they did, finding themselves only at the Inward Point, some five miles from the outward one, they very naturally decided to haul up where they were, and tarry for the night. So turning over their boat under the lea of a hillock, and banking her cozily up with sea-weed, they were, in snug condition for a night's slumber.

But Walter could not tie down his wakeful spirit so readily. The buoyancy of limb that comes, upon first springing ashore, after wearisome confinement in a boat, took possession of him. The associations of the previous spring, too, imparted liveliness to his feelings. Under the double influence, he bounded off with some others for the genial luxury of a stroll. It was, of course, a mere aimless ramble, and for that all the more delightful.

Falling into an abstracted mood, he soon found himself apart from the others. Striking the East shore, he padded over the smooth, shelving beach, his eye drinking in the inspiration of the dusky scenery, his mind hovering upon the dream-land of Fancy.

The flap of a sea-gull disturbed his reverie, when he became aware how far he had wandered from the boat. Night had completely assumed her reign, having let down her dark curtain in the West.

With a slight apprehension that he might lose his way he set off with nervous step to return. Before making half his distance, he felt conscious of becoming fairly bewildered. There was not the vestige of a guide to direct his uncertain foot-steps. The way, too, was precarious. Hillock and hollow, marsh and creek, staggered his faltering feet.

The brisk exercise had warmed his blood, which in turn imparted a tinge of fervor to his mind. The embarrassment of his situation filled with disquietude his feelings. Imagination was busy amid the supernatural, and Memory turned to the story of the Yonker.

Amid this hallucination, his perception was seized with a blue spectral light in the distance. The vision quickly approached him, enlarging and assuming a deep, fiery aspect until within a few yards, when, exploding with a loud noise, the scintillation shot off from the centre, and arraigned in a

circle of deep brilliancy. Within the starry belt, the outline of a human face gradually appeared to his wild gaze. The sight seized him with profound terror. The figure struck him as the same features that had so often haunted his footsteps, only now the hair stood out dishevelled, as if streaming in the breeze, and upon the haggard, suffering countenance, were here and there large clots of blood. Continuing to approach, the dismal apparition now stood within fearful nearness of his own person, when a piercing shriek, as of excruciating anguish, rent the air and fell with lightning thrill upon the ear of Walter. Under the shock, he swooned to the earth in a paroxysm of terror, and in a moment all consciousness had faded from his mental vision.

On returning to consciousness, he was aware of but little more than the cold touch of the ground, the stark chill of the evening air, while a ghastly vision haunted his memory. He arose to his feet, and with stiffened limbs set out anew. For some time he wandered over the grizzly beach in hopeless bewilderment. And he was on the point of yielding to despair, when his eye fixed itself with beaming hope upon a faint light in the distance. He had before thought it only some inferior star in the distant vault; but now, suddenly, as if by revelation, he felt it must be a stationary light upon the beach. He followed it, and was led directly to the boat, where the light had been set by the thoughtful crew, as a beacon to guide back the strolling hands.

They listened with speechless awe to the curdling narration of Walter. All the wild accounts afloat of the Yonker were but too true. It were sacrilegious to speak lightly of the mysterious affair ever again. Seamen are affected by the marvellous and the strange. Stories of the supernatural thrill a congenial chord of their nature.

The next morning, the wind being contrary for sailing, it

was thought most expeditious to tow their boat along shore to the Powder Hole, where the vessel on which they were to embark for the summer's fishing cruise, had lain through the winter, hauled up on the flats.

But they found it a wearying toil, it being half tide, and the current setting perseveringly against them; and the bold energy and stout muscles of the crew were put fairly to the test, by the time they had reached the Point. Here they found their old low decked schooner, moored by her weight upon the uncomplaining flat, as an overtasked mortal resting from his labors. She was mouldy as a long neglected cheese; but after much scrubbing and drying, the quaint cabin was rendered tenable, and exhausted by the stretch of the day's tug, they were all very willing to embrace early the night's slumber.

As indifferent as they had become to objects around them, by the mere sinking of physical energy, they could not but be struck by the exceeding serenity and beauty of the closing day. Not a breath of air ruffled the glassy bosom of the ocean. Not a speck of cloud could be seen in the heavenly vault. The atmosphere exhibited a transparency rarely noticed. In the midst of the universal calm, the sun fell behind the western horizon, like a golden ball dropped into a sea of molten lead. It was as if Nature had paused to contemplate the sublimity of creation.

But this lovely grace of Nature proved but the hectic blush that bodes dissolution. In less than three hours after sunset, there burst forth one of the most furious and awful gales within the remembrance of the oldest of the crew. It seemed as if Nature, repenting her own existence, had turned in awful phrenzied power upon self-destruction. Life and nature are full of contrasts, but none had been experienced greater than this.

The irrepressible force of the gale drove in the dead lights of their vessel, and no efforts on the part of the most skilful could secure them back in their place. The lights were in consequence extinguished, and the cabin drenched with driving spray and sleet. It was a dreadful night, even to the housed fishermen; what must it have been then to the unprotected seaman upon the angry waves. Walter thought he had never before experienced so much suffering. He was prepared to expect hard exposure at sea, but so much of it, snugly ensconced in a vessel's cabin upon the land, was unlooked for by him. In this cold and gloomy predicament, they shivered through the night.

Early in the morning, covering their shivering bodies with clothing as best they could, the crew, one and all, crawled upon deck, with a shuddering curiosity. The scene was terrific. The energy of the raging elements nearly took the breath out of Walter. The ocean all around was lashed wildly into foam and spray. Nought could be seen above but the imperious storm-cloud that seemed to hug the earth and sea with phrenzy. The rain, wreathed by the intenseness of the wind into coarse mist, now drove in blinding thickness, now in cutting blasts. The tide, goaded by the maddened sea, had swollen above the low beach where they were, and the whole point of land forming the harbor had become submerged beneath the clashing waters. One would have said that remorseless ocean had made a successful war upon earth, and that hereafter man was to be tossed forever upon the treacherous wave.

As soon as a lull enabled the crew to peer through the storm, something broke upon their straining vision.

"What was it?"

"A wreck."

"Where?"

"Ashore upon the Shovel-Full."

"Gracious heavens!"

"Can we get to her?"

"No; impossible at present."

Their manly sympathies were aroused to the utmost. The ill-fated vessel, with keel apparently welded to the sandy bottom, reeled like a drunken man. The fretted waves dashed over her with engulfing impetuosity. Her dishevelled ropes streamed in the wind, and she looked forlorn and touching. What more pitiful than the spectacle of a wrecked vessel at the mercy of the maddened elements!

But their deep solicitude for the vessel paled by the side of the awful apprehension felt for the fate of her company. Had they been suddenly precipitated to a watery grave? or were they still hanging upon the wreck in dreadful suspense?

With the genuine, noble sympathies of honest, simple natures, they watched the vessel with sleepless vigilance. At length people were descried on board. What a thrill of excitement the vision sent through their bosoms! How every impulse of their big hearts leapt forth and nerved itself to attempt a rescue!

The wind by this time had veered from the east into the south-west. It had moderated its fury, and the drenching clouds had rolled back in the sky in distant threatening. The water too, obeying the general subsidence, had ebbed from the beach.

It was still thought too hazardous to attempt boarding the distressed vessel; but they found no difficulty in pulling ashore to the inward bend; and gathering in a knot upon the grassy beach, awaited with intense anxiety an opportunity for extending relief.

Presently the people on board were noticed to move about.

They seemed earnestly engaged upon something. What could it be? Soon their long-boat danced upon the water, under the lee of the vessel. What were they going to attempt? To land? Preposterous! They would certainly be engulfed. The crew ashore, in the earnestness of their sympathetic nature, made the most energetic signs in their power to dissuade those on board from so dangerous an exploit as the trial to land.

Under ordinary circumstances, the waves, under the herculean force of the gale, exposed to the whole range of the Atlantic, would have run with a mountain height, to menace the sure engulfing of so small a craft as a ship's long-boat, but here, checked in their impetuous career by a strong counter current that forever ran with the speed of a race-horse around the Point, had thrown them into a wild, tumultuous fury, that made it seem impossible for a boat to live a moment amid the breakers.

Then the peril of the landing was imminent. The shore, from the tide mark, was shelving, running quickly off to great depth into the ocean. The mountain waves would roll in, with careering sublimity, strike upon the shore, and run foaming to a great distance up the hard sanded floor of the landing, and then retreat as hastily. The under current thus formed, was so overpowering as to render extremely uncertain the most energetic efforts to extricate one's self from the surf, and make way up the beach.

But no such difficulties seemed to daunt the wrecked seamen. In due time their boat was seen to part from their vessel. Fearful moment! Their fate hung upon how slender a thread! How much were not a few short moments to reveal!

As to the crew ashore, they could scarcely believe their eyes. As they gazed in amazement, their hearts froze in

alarm. More from instinct than reason, they sprang and fetched from their boat ropes, oars, and everything they had, which they thought could possibly aid in the rescue.

The landing boat experienced the most thrilling vicissitudes. She looked so potentless amid the angry, surging billows. At one moment she would disappear entirely from view.

"There, she's gone!" would exclaim with bitter anguish, some one of the anxious fishermen.

"No, there she is!" would shout another, as she was again tossed to view.

As she neared the shore, escaping every danger, as if kept by some guardian divinity, Walter's searching eye fell upon a female form, enveloped in the folds of a cloak, and reclining upon the stern sheets. At the unexpected sight, his sympathies were excited to their utmost. Curiosity, tender sympathy, thrilling heroism all possessed him, and raised his soul to conscious power.

As the boat touched the shore, another billow struck her fated sides, and capsized the frail bark in the surf. A wild shriek rent the air. Walter, rushing forth in consternation, sprung into the foaming surf.

The boy knew no more, until finding himself upon the beach by the side of the rescued female, with both boats' crews endeavoring to recall the swooned female to life.

She at length opened languidly her eyes, and murmuring faintly the words, "My father," sunk back from the undue effort. She was quickly conveyed to the light-house, not far distant, where all means that Christian hearts could suggest, were used for her immediate restoration.

The fishing crew with grateful hearts returned to their vessel, and after refreshing themselves with food and slumber, entertained each other in recounting the thrilling marvels of the boat's landing.

It appeared that the wrecked seamen, hurled into the maddening surf, struggled long, but ineffectually, against the powerful under current. Perceiving their case to be hopeless, the fishing crew, with the clear eye of experience, seized upon the only means of their rescue. Binding ropes to two of the most athletic of their number, these rushed into the surf, seized each a drowning man, when the two were hauled ashore by the nervous arms upon the beach. Walter, the first rescued, was found clasped in a drowning embrace, by the young woman whom he had with so generous an impulse perilled his own life to save, and the two, perfectly unconscious, were fast drifting seaward.

Early the next morning, a messenger appeared by the side of the vessel, bringing invitation that the father of the rescued lady craved the happiness of seeing the fishing crew at the light-house, to express acknowledgments for the priceless favor he had received from the strangers. He was a Polish exile of noble birth, seeking a home in the new world, where he had friends that had preceded him. Curiosity in the bosoms of the crew mingled with a natural emotion of complacency, prompted them to see the noble strangers again, and receive their heartfelt thanks. Accordingly, each decked himself in his best, and all set out for the light-house. Here they were met by the grateful father, who, overcome with emotions of gratitude towards his deliverers, lavished upon them every testimony his soul could command, of his grateful love. He seized the hand of each in tenderness, and pressed it to his bosom. He hung fervently upon their necks, and kissed their bronzed cheeks in manly emotion. He laid at their feet all his little wealth, saved from his vast fortune, — his money and jewels. These the noble fishermen absolutely declined accepting.

As they were about leaving, it was announced that the rescued lady could not be persuaded to neglect the opportu-

nity of adding her grateful thanks to those of the father. She was still very weak, and her physician deemed any undue excitement as dangerous to her recovery, but the feelings of nature in her breast overbore those of prudence.

As each one of the crew, in turn, was conducted to the side of the suffering lady, who lay bolstered upon a couch, she seized with emotion his hand, pressed it first to her lips and then to her heart, in mute but fervent gratitude. She possessed no tongue with which to express the feelings of her soul, but there was about her slightest movement a sweet, lofty grace, and there beamed in her countenance a smile so ineffably thankful, that the hardy crew would have felt repaid a thousand fold for any dangers they had encountered, in effecting her rescue, even if the deed itself had not brought with it its own sweet reward.

As Walter approached her bed-side, she gazed for a moment intently into his face; then seeming to recognize his features, her countenance suddenly lit up with a tint of immortal bloom; her eyes moistened in deep tenderness; and her whole frame shook with emotion. Grasping his hand in both hers, with eyes imploringly uplifted, she was about pressing it earnestly to her breast, when overtaken nature gave way, and she fell back apparently lifeless.

All other attentions were now lost in solicitude for the fainting girl; and Walter, with the crew, fearing their presence might but add to the general embarrassment, quietly withdrew.

The next morning they were informed that the young Polish lady, though feeble, had been restored to consciousness. Although she had received a deep shock from the scenes of the previous day, yet she was not deemed dangerously ill; and if no new circumstance conspired to derange her nervous system, she might look to a restoration in a few days.

The intelligence came with especial delight to Walter. Aside from the feelings of humanity, he owned in his heart to a peculiar interest felt for the fair stranger. It might be traced to the self-forgetful heroism of his own conduct; it might proceed from the charm of her noble grace; the mystery of her life, or the peculiar relations in which he found himself with her, and the passionate tenderness of her gratitude. Whatever it might proceed from, yet as he contemplated her beauteous form in the silence of his thought, he felt a strange emotion arise within him. But when the image of Angeline sprang in his breast, that of the fair stranger faded into oblivion. It was the paling of the moon before the glowing god of day.

CHAPTER XXII.

"What a damp hangs on me!
 These sprightly, tuneful airs but skim along
 The surface of my soul,—not enter there;
 She does not dance to this enchanting sound.
 How like a broken instrument, beneath
 The skilful touch, my joyless heart lies dead!
 Nor answers to the master's hand divine!"

YOUNG'S BROTHERS.

It was a beautiful morning in June, that a fine looking schooner might have been seen just rounding to, in the time-honored anchorage of the Deep Hole. Presently a small boat, manned with five hands, darted from the vessel, and pulled briskly for the shore. One of the buoyant spirits aboard this gay little carrier was Walter Carl.

Two fruitful years have elapsed since we parted the boy's company upon the old gray beach. In this bright interval, we shall find that time has sat but lightly upon his fair brow. Fortune has not withheld him her smiling face; and with benignant Nature, he has found boon companionship.

Having gradually overcome the scruples of his mother against a sea-life, he had at length escaped the uncongenial employment of Fishing, and he now found himself greatly more happy, in the larger variety of life to be met with in the Coasting Trade. This rambling manner of sailing, enabled him to venture farther and farther from home, until his last absence had been a very delightful trip to one of the West India Islands.

The sunny south, with its gorgeous scenery, its sensuous air, its languid, passionate life, and its picturesque costume, while

it cast a delicious dreamy charm over all his faculties, but deepened the sentiment of love that glowed in his heart.

But in all respects, Walter was not the same boy as in the tender years of childhood. Busy Time had left happy traces of his sculpturing fingers upon his person; and the actual of life had expanded his intelligence and schooled his spirit. His glossy, raven locks had assumed a rich brown color. His sweet, piercing eye had become more tender, calm and spiritual. His delicate, fragile form had developed to a stoutness, that seemed to indicate strength in repose. His soft, fair complexion had ripened into a rich color, resembling that of the maturing fruit. Indeed, his person, bearing, and expression betokened a gain in character, courage and manliness, traits not always overlooked even by the finer delicacy of the female eye.

Walter bounded over the beach toward his dear home, with gladsome feet. Oh, how joyful was the anticipation of the meeting with his endeared mother! He knew that her love for him was deep, sincere, purged from all earthly dross—that it came from the bottom of her heart. Time and distance and silent nature, when alone in the dark night-watch, and in the more lonely haunts of strange men, had awakened the filial sentiment in his own breast to a passion.

To feel beloved is sweet, but to feel assured that this love springs from a truthful, strong, disinterested soul, a soul capable of appreciating worth, of comprehending the nature of its own passion, of making the sacrifices which true love requires, this brings a tranquil security of joy, that is happiness in its most blessed state.

Walter was taking along with him a little money, the earnings of his voyage,—a few gift-articles, the products of the torrid zone, gathered on his way; such as fruit, preserves, wine, birds, and beautiful shells; trifles they might be in them-

selves, but were they not earned by his own honest arm? the relics of his own travels? and they would be presented as the gifts of affection. They could not but bring a gleam of sunshine to the brow of his mother, and cast a gilding ray upon her declining years. She who had striven so hard, had suffered so deeply, had waited so long and patiently, had done all, getting nothing in return, was now to be assured that the day of recompense though often long deferred, yet surely cometh. Walter felt a peculiar joy in being able to bestow even so little. He had so long been the recipient, having nothing but gratitude and thanks to return for favors, that this power of giving something substantial brought to his breast a feeling of peculiar pride and pleasure. He only wished it were greater, that he had possessed the wealth of the Indies, to lay at her honored feet.

Very soon Walter was locked in the affectionate embrace of his mother. How richly blessed was the moment to the loving woman! Hope and anticipation were blended in joyful fruition. How her heart thrilled with gratitude, as she thought how many others had found a watery grave, or had been cut off by pestilential disease, while her noble boy had been returned to her. Then he came to her in blooming health, a picture of life and beauty. More than all, he had come to her bosom, his heart untravelled, his purity unsullied. She felt this in his fragrant breath, she read it in his clear, tranquil eye. She knew it by the instincts of maternal love.

Having decked himself tidily in garments which the fond hand of affection had so nicely prepared and held in store for him, he sauntered out amid some of the localities about his home which were so endeared to his youthful association. He then ventured farther, strolling off to the haunts which he remembered Angeline was in the habit of frequenting. Indeed, he more than half wished to meet the fair girl, or at least

catch a glimpse of her dear form. But so early pleasure was not to be his.

The next day was the Sabbath. It was a lovely morning, serene, sunny, soft, fresh as the dew, and fragrant as the breath of new mown hay. The birds carolled gladsomely amid the trembling foliage, and the roses blushed with modest joy, under the windows. Indeed, it was one of those days, that seem nectar-drops from the full bumper of heaven.

He set off with the rest of the family for the Parish Church, with lustrous feelings, with the feelings of ardent youth just returned from long absence, expecting from others the same joyful welcome that was glowing in his own breast.

As he entered the portal of the Church, his bosom swelled with delightful emotions. He was everywhere greeted with expressions of warm, gracious welcome; yet his eye did not fall upon Angeline. But he felt sure of seeing her as beautiful as ever in the choir, from which she rarely absented herself. Yet after the first prayer, rising with the congregation, and turning with expected hope toward the singers, how blank was his disappointment to perceive her place vacant. A feeling of painful solicitude seized him. Why was she absent? indisposition, absence from home, indifference to his return, which she must have known. Was it any of these, or what was it that had kept her away? Cruel conjecture haunted his breast for the rest of the day. He breathed his own jaundiced sentiments, rather than the hallowed incense of the house of God. So easy is it to pervert the heaven within us, and change the milk of love into the gall of human bitterness.

His steps homeward were languid. The night was dreamless of joy. The next day and the days following were passed upon the rack of suspense. Suspicion, with heavy armor, clanged at his footsteps. He could learn nothing of

Angeline. He dared not even ask. He greatly feared to betray the intensity of his feelings. Like the murderer, he bore about him concealed the momentous secret of his heart, until every shadow seemed endowed with a searching eye to penetrate his secret, and a trumpet tongue to proclaim it to the world.

At length, in one of those bold moments that accompany an excited mind, he resolved upon knowing his fate; seizing a pen, he addressed Angeline, soliciting the pleasure of an interview at her father's on an appointed evening. Too impatient to wait the tedious course of the mail, and not caring to entrust the important missive in the hands of another, he filled the little trust of messenger himself.

The maid who came to the door, at Mr. Redcliff's, received Walter's billet with a bland smile, and the boy flew homeward with a beating pulse.

Yet he felt much disquietude of mind as to the propriety of the step he had taken. Would she not deem it presumptuous in him to address her so boldly, and might it not wound her delicacy to be thus drawn into a disclosure of her real sentiments toward him? Then how brief was the interval between him and his fate. He could wish even to prolong his troublesome suspense, if ill fortune was to be his. He trembled as upon the verge of a chasm that might yawn and engulf him.

Time, with unwearied wing, at length ushered in the eve of his appointment. Attiring himself with fastidious care, he set out with nervous step for the house of Angeline. The evening was calm. A gentle quiet reigned around, a placid sweetness distilled upon his spirit, but he was stirred too deeply within to be soothed by the velvet hand of nature.

The cottage of Angeline presently broke to view. It was nestled modestly behind a small garden of shrubbery and flowers, which were rippling in the moonlight sheen, as if to

waft him with gracious welcome. How exciting the vision! He stood a moment in the garden path. A light glimmered softly through the shutters of the green blinds, and the door stood slightly ajar. Was it not a token of expectance and welcome? How blissful the thought! There are moments in which are distilled the joy of years.

At his gentle tap, the fair girl came instantly to the door. The very promptness of her movement was a volume of sweet revelation to his heart. How perfectly beautiful did she appear to the boy's enraptured eyes. How neatly attired, how exquisite her toilet, how tasteful her decoration, and, more than all, what a sweet smile of grace lit up her features as she blandly welcomed him in. Wealth and Fashion may gild their votaries with the fabrics of earth, and the gems of the sea, but there lies in the simple taste of nature, a wondrous skill that can surpass the most cunning devise of art.

The evening passed most happily with Walter. A serene joy filled his heart, such as he had never before experienced. Could it be, that he was in possession of what in the distance had beamed with such fascinating power upon his longing heart? The reality appeared to him a blissful dream!

The fond couple were sweetly alone, yet there grew up between them no personal familiarity, that coarse wile of a prurient taste, no base flattery, that false coinage of the heart. Not even social freedom was established. Deep emotions find not a ready utterance. Exquisite sensibility is shrinkingly timid. Theirs was rather a silent communing, the sympathy of the eye, the magnetism of look.

Then Walter felt the embarrassment of a new situation. His soul had not yet moulted its maidenly reserve. His tongue was fettered by lack of culture, and the sailor possesses not the small change of talk by which society manages to fill up the gaps of time.

But time flew with rapid wing, and when he arose to depart, he was surprised to perceive, that the antique clock in the corner indicated the hour of eleven.

His steps homeward were as light as those of a fawn. The ground felt delightful to his touch. Passing objects bore the greeting smile of friends. The air came laden with balmy fragrance, and the very darkness seemed gloved with velvet smoothness.

There is one moment in life, when the heart having attained the goal of its wishes, pauses an instant in the fulness of its happiness, wishing nothing more in life.

Such was the present state of Walter. Every form of disquiet had disappeared, behind the glow of his present emotions, and any lot in life he would welcome, if accompanied by the joy that reigned now in his breast.

Walter had gained permission of Angeline to continue his visits. This he did for some time, without its becoming known in the neighborhood. Circumstances favored the secrecy.

Her father's house had been built fronting the south and the ocean, according to the custom then in those parts. But a road afterward having been opened, passing near the back of the dwelling, that part had been arranged and occupied as the front, so that the paternal roof now had, so to speak, two fronts, the one exposed to the public, and the other shaded by an enclosed yard of shrubbery and flowers.

This latter way afforded a secluded entrance. Then it being the season when the male portion were nearly all away upon the ocean, great quiet reigned in the settlement. Indeed, the place bore for the time the aspect of a perpetual sabbath.

Walter instinctively chose for the time of his visits the hush of the evening, that brief period when the reign of day

having ceased, and night not yet commenced her career, there is a pause, as if the pulse of nature were ceasing to beat.

Exuberant of happiness were these secret love calls of the Fisher Boy. They were all the more purely sweet, from not being exposed to public gaze. There are emotions we care not to share with the public. They lose their aroma by being exhaled, like some delicious beverage.

But one evening, on his way to Angeline's, just as he was entering the garden gate, whom should he meet but a neighbor, who resided next door to his mother's. How unlucky! He felt the affair must now be out. The apprehension disturbed not a little the evening's pleasure with the fair girl.

The man happened to be a sedate, uncommunicative being, but this visiting of Walter to the house of Angeline, at that time in the evening, attired in his Sunday's best, was suspicious. At least, the secret was too good to be lost to the public. He would fain unlock it for their edification.

The news flew over the neighborhood, as if travelling upon the wings of the wind. It burst upon gaping minds, like a summer thunder-gust, setting the tongue of gossip agog, and the whole spirit of the neighborhood ablaze. What more diffusive than the busy-body spirit of a village curiosity?

Walter shrank at the thought of his sacred sentiments being thus exposed to grovelling eyes, and himself the burden of an unscrupulous tongue, yet he was not free of that feeling of vanity, that springs from the consciousness of being in the public eye.

But when he found himself the subject of an invidious comparison, he felt stung to the quick.

"Angeline's the best girl in the place," said one. "Beautiful, good as an angel, the only daughter, the idol of her family, and beloved by everybody. She could take her pick from all the young men at home; or as to that, get the nicest young

man in Boston. She'll hardly take up, I should think, with Walter Carl, and a fisherman."

"What think you the old folks 'll say, when they find it out," said another.

"The Redcliffs are descended from a superior family. They have always prided themselves greatly upon their quality of blood, and, although they ever show themselves kind and affable to everybody, yet it is easy to perceive, that they are brimful of pride and lofty notions. The Carl folks I think 'll hardly come up to their ideas of social dignity."

In the ardor of his sentiments, that narrowed down his perceptions to the single point of solicitude for Angeline's affections, he had not embraced in the horizon of his changing sea, the probable course her parents would shape toward his wishes.

But the veil of illusion began to be raised. The uncertainty of his success with Angeline's parents pressed with disquietude upon his vision. Thus it ever is in life. One object of the heart gained, another rises, sweeping back the tide of our feelings to the point of trembling Hope.

Still, he tried manfully to rise above the clouds of darkness that at times surrounded him. The heart is incredulous of the whisperings of its own dark fate. But the truth was soon to burst forth in noon-tide blaze.

One bright morning he met Baleb and Jabez, who persuaded him to go along with them to the haunt of an old fortune teller in an obscure corner of the town. This shred of humanity had made his appearance in the neighborhood some few months before, as strangely as if he had just dropped down from the clouds, pretending that once knowing the year and day of one's birth, he could cast the horoscope of his star, and deduce from it the whole fortune of his life.

The arrival of this interpreter of the Fates, created a

sensation of wonder in the neighborhood. Old women telling fortunes by tea grounds, by cards, by inspection of one's hand, had been among them from time to time, but none before had plunged into the depths of astrology, like this man; none had invested the subject with so profound mystery and awe.

Then everybody testified that the fortunes told by this man had all come out exact. Not less mysterious his means, than startlingly true his revelations. How strange that love of the marvellous in the human breast, that swallows so eagerly the phantoms of its own credulity?

Well, this leech-worm of the credulous in poor humanity, having taken his first gulp from the wave of village curiosity, had retired to a miserable hut where he was living in ambiguous relations with two females more resembling some weird witches of the darkest times of the past, than respectable beings of civilization.

Here he continued to impose his wondrous art upon such as favored him with their presence, and the sum of a quarter of a dollar, as a magnet to turn the key of his mysterious box that opened into the secrets of life. And in spite of the wretched, almost disgraceful character of them, numbers from all parts of the town thronged daily the old astrologer's precincts, partly from curiosity, and in part from the diversion to a village life.

Balec and Jabez had become infected with the ruling fever, and their social influence over Walter was such as to draw him along with them.

They found the old fortune teller blind, but with a pretended inward sight that eclipsed the brightest beam of day. He cast down his divining rod, and the past, the present, and the future rayed clearly before him. He first began with Balec, then with Jabez. He gave recognizable traits of their character, touched upon past incidents of their lives, then mapped

out their future in pleasing lines. The two boys were filled with delight. To see themselves, as in a glass, and reflected, too, in so comely proportions, was gratifying to their self-love.

Next came the turn of Walter. His fortune, like the fortunes of his two companions, were portrayed in flattering colors. The astrologer proceeded, thus gayly until reaching the twenty-second year of the boy, when he suddenly paused in his narration, a shadow passed over his brow, and he hesitated to proceed on. When urged to do so, he intimated that the dark Fates had revealed to him something alarming in the life of the boy at this period. He then suddenly recalled something inadvertently omitted in the portion of the fortune already given. It was an incident just about to transpire, something of great significance, and which would change the current of his whole future. The blind revealer dwelt upon this expected incident with so much persistency, and stated minutely so many circumstances connected with it, that Walter could not but refer to his relations with Angelina. A presentiment of some great disappointment passed over his mind.

They all set off in return. Balec and Jabez in buoyant spirits. Walter, thoughtful and downcast, dwelling upon the dark presages of the fortune teller. His mind was in that disturbed state, when the fear of losing the prize we have won, keeps up a painful solicitude, and transforms every doubtful circumstance into an omen of ill.

On reaching home, he entered the house in breathless haste. It seemed that the presence of his accustomed apartments would restore equanimity to his mind. When in moments of fervid apprehension upon some critical turn of our fate, the presence of familiar objects, like the society of well known friends, tends to allay excited distrust, and induce that golden serenity, so blessed to tranquillity of soul.

But on entering his bed-room, a billet upon the table attracted the notice of Walter. It came unmistakably from Angeline. The delicate paper, the neat folding, the exquisite address, were all hers. How clearly lay revealed the characteristics of her soul upon the awaiting missive. How vividly this golden link in his associations ushered before him the sweet image of the fair girl.

He seized it. A tide of feverish impatience rushed through his heart. A shadow of fearful apprehension dimmed his vision. He paused before opening it, as if standing upon a brink amid some unknown ground, where a step forward must plunge to a fate uncertain.

Tearing the seal, the first glance revealed the whole. A vertigo of soul came over him. He sank into a seat, overcome by his emotions. At length, regaining sufficient composure, he read the following lines:

DEAREST WALTER:—I am pained in feeling obliged to tell you, that I cannot longer receive your visits. But we will part good friends, and I shall ever pray for your happiness.

Let us remember the past only as a bright dream, that will soon melt into the blending future, to be thought of no more.

I thank you for all your kind attentions, and subscribe myself, gratefully,

Your friend,

ANGELINE."

As he finished, a throb of anguish, like an edged sword, pierced anew his spirit. He sank back in deepest misery of soul. If day had been suddenly struck from his sight, the shock to his sensibilities could not have been more keen. That beautiful world, which but a moment before he embraced with so loving a heart, like the mirage of a sweet dream, had suddenly departed, leaving the darkness of midnight pressing

upon his rayless orbs. Ah, how bitter the first pang of blighted hopes!

It was long before he became sufficiently soothed to reflect at all upon the subject of the letter. When he did, a tinge of wounded pride seized him, at the bare suspicion of having been jilted by the flattering girl. Indeed, at times, he felt toward her a positive hatred, so violent and sudden were the transitions of his emotions. Wildly restive is the goaded spirit of youth, before receiving the curb-bit of experience.

But on contemplating more closely the import of the letter, he began to believe that its decision was not dictated by the will of Angeline herself. The dawning impression threw a gleam of hope over his darkened spirit.

Seizing his pen, with the eagerness of a desperate man, catching at an object of safety just appeared to view, he addressed a letter to Angeline. A haughty tone of feeling ran through the impassioned lines of the missive, yet there were here and there touches of tender fire, well calculated to melt so generous a heart as Angeline's.

The next day, Walter received in reply the following:

"DEAREST WALTER:—I fear my brief note of yesterday may have offended you. If so, I tearfully implore your forgiveness. Do not believe that I could willingly wound your feelings. No, my dearest friend, knowingly to give you the slightest pang, would bring the deepest misery to my distressed spirit.

Heaven knows how my poor heart has struggled against the claims of duty; how it has bled at every pore, in being torn from the object of its affections; how it now lies groaning in the bitterness of its keen sorrow! But alas! the cherished purpose of the heart seems not our own.

From my earliest recollection, I have been taught implicit

obedience to parents. This has been the golden rule of my life. To me it has been a sweet law of love, for my own dear parents have ever proved to me the truest, the kindest, the best of friends. Next to my Maker, I have felt for them the deepest gratitude, the holiest trust. Too wise to err, too good not to consult my highest happiness, I have ever clung to them with a faith of deepest affection. They have been my sun, my world, my universe of life. But for once I feel that that they are unkind, harsh, nay, cruel. It seems that they have become suddenly changed; that some evil spirit has possessed them to destroy forever the joy of their fond daughter.

But they have commanded, and I will obey; for alas, what other course is left for me; what other course consistent with duty, with self-respect; what other course not forbidden alike by the holy precepts of the Bible, by the sacred interests of society, and by the claims of virtue itself.

Then let us submit to the stroke that separates us, with trustful resignation. A wise Providence may design it for our greatest good. The sweet rainbow of promise may lie concealed behind the cloud that envelops us, yet joyfully to break forth upon our enraptured gaze. At least, we will place an unshaken faith in the wisdom and goodness of him who doeth all things well.

And, now, adieu, my ever
dear friend,

ANGELINE.

P. S. Pardon me for returning with this, all your dear letters. I would fain preserve them near me, as mementoes of happy days, alas, now flown; but as often as I should see them it would open afresh the wounds of a bleeding heart, and make me more and more miserable."

The perusal of this letter awakened tumultuous emotions in

Walter's breast. Yet it allayed his worst fears, and imparted a sweet glow to his feelings.

All was now clear to his mind. It was just as his heart had divined. Angeline, as ever, was all his own. Blessed assurance! Indeed, this last letter revealed the blissful truth more brightly than ever. He could almost submit to losing her, as it seemed he must, just to be so clearly assured of her pure, her deep, her abiding affection. Then how noble her sentiments. It is doubly dear to be beloved when the affection flows from exalted excellence.

But her parents, not approving her choice, had interposed their will, and the dear girl, like a good, self-sacrificing, dutiful child as she was, had yielded up her happiness to parental command.

In contemplating her course, his feelings were alternately those of pain and joy; of pain, that her affection for him had not impelled her to break through all obstacles, and rush confidently to his bosom; of joy to perceive her animated with a spirit so heroic, so self-sacrificing. That she bowed so fully to the shrine of duty, made her all the more lovely to his eyes. The very obstacle that barred his hopes, enhanced her worth. Her sway to principle was the shuttle that wove the shroud of his hopes.

But the course of Angeline's parents stung Walter to the quick. The pride of his nature was aroused at the disparagement which was implied in this revelation of their sentiments. Yet he could not free himself of the bitter consciousness of his humble condition, and of the despised calling into which he had been thrown by circumstances beyond his control.

He spent hours of deep solicitude in pondering upon how could be removed the obstacles that separated him from the object of his love. True, he felt secure of the girl's single affections for the present, but he could not fail to perceive that

unless the barrier so cruelly thrust between their free communion, were overcome, the stream of her love that now flowed so purely towards his own breast, must in time, be inevitably turned into another channel.

It were hopeless to think of reconciling her parents to his wishes. He could devise no possible way to compass so blessed an end. Their prejudices were too deeply rooted in the unyielding substratum of human nature to admit of a ray of hope in that direction. Could he succeed, then, in gaining her will to his own, of drawing her into that state of delirious emotion, when a woman, from the ardor of her confiding spirit, flings wildly aside the most sacred ties for her lover, and thus override the firm feelings of her parents? With a faith springing from the potency of his own affections, he felt able to achieve this.

But could he be so unfeeling, as to tear away this pure young girl from the fond arms of those who had given her birth, who had nursed and nurtured her frail existence with the holiest instincts of parental love, united with moral and religious principle, until she had blossomed into a lovely flower, throwing beams of sunshine upon the growing shadows of their declining life, and loading with fragrance the very air of their sweet homeside? Did she not belong to them by the fullest rights of nature? Could he cruelly lay so sacrilegious a hand upon the inviolable ties of family? Should he ever pardon himself for bringing down an unending gloom upon that roof, which had ever before beamed with domestic joy?

Yes, he felt from the depths of his nature that he could do all this. Yet, a slight feeling of revenge, it must be confessed mingled here with the reasonings of his mind. What natural right, he asked himself, had any human being, to interpose an obstacle to the free mutual will of two virtuous hearts, upon a point so momentous, as one affecting their highest happiness,

yea, the very moral existence of their whole future. True they were her parents, but was she not given to them for a holier, a higher purpose, than merely to gild their brief span of life. Was not the girl's own happiness, her eternal welfare, the happiness and welfare of the man whom nature had pointed out as her husband, and all the growing and widening relations, that spring out of the married life of a single couple through all coming time — should not all these great and holy interests upon society and the world eclipse the puny preference of her parents for a few brief moments? Were they not under the strongest natural obligation — did not the whole tenor of their very religion, teach them unselfishly to consult the child's happiness in preference to their own? Then could, they hope for any success worthy the name, in attempting to resist the great law of nature which binds hearts as it wreaths the sunshine, and is as resistless in its sway as is the incoming of the tidal wave? But suppose by persistently thwarting the wishes of their child, they finally succeeded in alienating her mind from the object of her heart, how were they ever to compensate her for the immeasurable loss they had occasioned her, a loss that might leave her future life strawn thick with the blight of a mildew? Could any power of parental affection, or any fascination of home delights, which they could ever possibly summon, make amends for depriving her of that one great need of a woman's nature, namely, of being wedded in love and friendship to the man of her choice?

They objected to his inferior social position. But what were position, wealth, family connections anywhere, by the side of the moral existence, the social happiness, the affectional life of two truthful natures, just launching upon a sea so momentous. Especially how insignificant were such considerations, in a country like ours, with no established classes, and

where all factitious distinctions are as changing as the ever changing seasons.

Besides, might not her parents find themselves mistaken in their conceptions of the boy's character, and in their estimate of what he was capable of achieving in the future. Might not their views undergo a change, and they come to regret when, alas, too late, their opposition to their daughter's wishes! How blind, it must be confessed, are we to the future. How precarious are the brightest schemes of men! How many golden marriages, shaped by parental wills have early set in gloom. While how many inauspicious unions formed by willing hearts have gradually brightened into prosperity and honor.

These were some of the thoughts that crowded the fevered brain of the boy. They strengthened him in the resolution to overcome, or at least, circumvent the will of Angeline's parents. His conscience once appeased, the ardor of his affections nerved up his determinations with an energy truly impassioned, and he set to summoning plans for the accomplishment of his purpose.

But as he turned the subject over in his mind, new views broke forth. Suppose he could persuade the girl in her excited state of emotion, to abandon her parents and fly to his own arms, what would he then find himself in possession of, as the so much coveted burden of life, a woman, or a partial maniac? Which would best fill the measure of his love, and satisfy the full cravings of his exalted affections, a woman with all her social relations intact, joyous in the calm serenity of a healthful state of mind, making no earthly sacrifice for him, but rather borrowing lustre from the new relation, or a kind of crazed soul, disjointed and fragmentary, coming to him in a state, that was a species of intoxication, with the loss of

much that was most sacred in marriage. He did not fail to perceive that man's heaven of love consists in perfectly possessing a woman that perfectly possesses herself, one that should come to him with no earthly relation severed, no social tie broken by the change, perfectly independent in all her affinities, yet so attuned to his own nature by the sympathy of congenial love, as happily to make the will of him her own. The glory of man's conjugal felicity was to have the sweet mastery of a kindred soul that was strong, self-reliant, and governed by its own free will. It was not a subject, a slave, a mere creature subdued to his own whims, caprice and selfish appetite, that answered his conceptions, but a coequal, a partner, a companion, a friend. He reflected upon which would be most likely to perform with him benignly the voyage of married life, she who should step into the boat with a calm expectation of the dangers of the sea, and with a tranquil will to meet any fate, or she who had rushed with infatuation to his side.

Then when the frenzy of the moment was over, how would she be likely to be affected with a contemplation of her state. Would she maintain the same happy attachment to his fortunes, or might she not grow weary, and repent her haste?

Then, how was he to supply what he had deprived her of, in the loss of her friends? These were, after all, social ties which he could never of his own might, hope to restore. True, the central depth of a woman's love is, or ought to be, in the joy of her husband, but this does not supersede other ties of love and friendship. She may cherish and exercise the warmest affection for all her friends, and take none properly belonging to her husband. Indeed, his store of wealth in his wife's love, is nobly increased by her freedom to strengthen in the bonds of good will the family ties of her youth. The depth of feeling and genial sentiment which she thus acquires

are all his own and will concentrate with sweet power upon his daily life. It will create a sunshine upon his family hearth, that will give a brighter spell to home.

The man who would cut off his wife from friendly intercourse with her natural friends, hoping thereby to secure her more firmly to himself, makes a fatal mistake. He sins against high heaven, and against the dearest rights of society. If he succeeds, he will only have corrupted the soul that should be the angel of his inner life. He has destroyed with his own hands, the beauty of his dearest treasure. He has acted the part of a tyrant; his course is that of a wretch.

But Walter did not feel to accept the whole burden of this reasoning. He would not of his own accord turn Angeline from her parents and friends. He would win her for himself, and if they chose to withdraw their friendship, theirs would be the responsibility. Still, he could not get rid of the feeling, that he would be at least the occasion of the rupture. And this sorely troubled him. As he dwelt upon it, the more huge it grew, until he rose to an excited state of mind, and when the contempt with which her parents had treated him flashed across his mind, he boiled with pride and indignation.

A new resolution sprang up in his breast. He would relinquish forever his claims upon Angeline. Whatever the consequences to his future happiness, he would not take her, if he could, on the hard condition of the hatred of her parents and the alienation of her friends. It would be heroically sweet to hug to his heart this one great grief of his life, and suffer and be strong until he had arisen to a full mastery of his emotional nature; but to endure the silent reproaches of a bosom companion, whose every look would remind him of having robbed her of her dearest friends, would be more than he could endure.

With this resolution he seized his pen, and wrote the following:

"DEAREST ANGELINE:—How cruelly has not Fortune frowned upon me. After experiencing the bliss of believing you mine, how excruciating the thought of your being turned from me forever. But it is joy unspeakable to be assured that I still possess your affections, although this joy is mingled with pain to think that the bright light of your love wanes for me, only to delight the pathway of another.

"I will not speak harshly of your parents, because they are your dearest friends upon earth; and for your sake I will drink to its last dregs, this bitterest cup they give me. They think me unworthy of you; and except in the single purity of my love, I feel from the sincerest depths of my soul, that they are right. But did they know how fondly I doat upon your very existence; could they see the purity of my intentions, the sincerity of my heart, the strength of my love; could they understand how their sweet approbation to the exercise of our mutual love, would fill my bosom with never-ending gratitude, how it would nerve my arm to battle bravely with life, with what devotion I would study your every happiness, with what might I would strive to lay the treasures and honors of the world at your feet,—could they believe all these, as I feel them, I am sure in an excess of tenderness, they would relent, and would show the same alacrity to restore you to my arms, that they now do determination to throw you from my path forever.

"Your decision, dear friend, breaks my heart. It strikes the universe of life from my soul. Yet I cannot but bless you from the bottom of my better nature, for being ever true to a noble principle. I embrace the hand that wields the fatal blow. Farewell, dearest Angeline. No. I cannot yet say the final word. I must see you once again,—but once, if but

to breathe the sweet fragrance of your presence and receive your parting embrace ; till then, adieu.

"Thine in anguish,

"WALTER."

The evening appointed for the parting interview of the unhappy lovers, was as beautifully serene, as their bosoms were disturbed and wretched. How differently now did nature greet his every sense from what she did at his previous visits ! Then the spirit of joy pervaded all without as well as within ; and the tiniest shrub in his pathway bore him a smile of gladness ; now everything appeared enshrouded in the dejection that palled his own breast.

Angeline met him with a soft step at the garden gate of her father's. She took his arm with a movement of sadness, and the two in the profound depth of their own grief made a turn or two in the adjoining lane. A calm, gentle spirit seemed to breathe in the silvery atmosphere around them, but it brought no tranquillity to their throbbing hearts. The moon sailed benignly in the placid heavens, but it lay no balm upon their bruised spirits. Few words were exchanged between them. Their hearts were too full for utterance. Their intercourse was the mute eloquence of feeling. Their parting was the bitter sob of the grave-side. One, a single kiss, the only one, sealed their mutual love. Their maiden lips, met for the first time, in sweet, tender sympathy.

The parting over, Walter bounded homeward with rapid gate. A mountain of oppression had been removed from his heart, and from the void that followed, there came a lightness of feeling, that lent wings to his movement.

Arrived at home, he threw himself upon his bed in a state of feverish bewilderment. The scenes he had just passed through, had seemed so strange, as to leave a cast of unreality

in his emotions. He endeavored with firm purpose to allay the excitement of his mind, and court the gentle balm of sleep, but with his best efforts to the contrary, the fever upon his brain increased, and the dewy morning came bringing no slumber to his restive eyelids. He tossed upon his pillow in hapless woe. Every thought of the past made him more and more wretched, and he silently accused himself for having in his precipitancy to throw off his ties from Angeline, been the executioner of his own happiness.

In resolving to part forever with Angeline, he believed to have mastered his own emotions, but how treacherously he had deceived himself. He thought in the act of their separation, he had given proof of an unshaken purpose, but alas how fragile proved this strength of resolution. In a moment of heroic ardor, he believed himself capable of shaking off the fetters that bound him, and pursuing the freedom of his course. But how little he knew his own heart. The very effort he made to rid himself of the thrall of her affections, but bound him to her in double chains. Now cast off hopelessly from her, the image of the dear girl would rise with increased tenderness ; and when the trance of her loveliness came over him, his whole nature sickened with languishing despair. The single thought of how happy he might have been in the ever sunshine of her love, and how miserable must be his existence without her, overwhelmed him with deepest anguish.

He turned to every side with distressed heart, he groaned in bitterness of soul. The day seemed stripped of its beauty, the night disrobed of its loveliness. Appetite fled from him as a gaunt spectre. The faces of friends no longer beamed with joy. Even the sweet voice of his dear mother, seemed to have lost the charm of its tone.

To escape human gaze, he flew to the haunts of his youth, to the glorious sea-side, to catch the low plaint of its ceaseless

billow, to the old, welcome pond, to drink of its dreamy quietude, to the venerable red school-house, to invoke the sweet voice of the past. Then he plunged into the depths of the woody thicket, and there amid the stillness of nature, communed, but it was only with the unseen spirits of his haggard thoughts. All was vain essay. The very key-note of his soul was disordered, and every other chord, when touched, only vibrated a mournful dirge.

The familiar scenes of his youth became painful to his sense, and he resolved to fly away from home, as the nearest approximation to the escaping from thought.

The observant eye of Walter's mother had noticed the sudden attachment of Walter to Angeline; and during the whole of his relations with the beautiful girl, nothing had escaped her vigilant eye. She felt proud of his choice, but with a fuller knowledge of human nature than her son, she was troubled with a keen solicitude for his success, and now, that the rupture was apparent, she felt how well grounded had been her worst apprehensions. As she saw her beloved son thus blighted in his pure affections, and lying prostrate like a bruised reed, in the pathway, her heart was moved with commiseration. She longed to unburthen herself in sympathy with her afflicted child, but a profound delicacy forbid; and as for the boy, no treasure of earth could have induced him to share his secret sentiments even with his confiding mother. The cause of his disappointment was but too plain; and that her darling son should be thus rejected because of his humble life, aroused her proud spirit to the fullest measure of feeling. She felt a positive indignation towards the authors of her son's unhappiness. But when she reflected upon the past, her own course arose in self-condemnation. She bitterly reproached herself for having so selfishly urged him into a career of life, that had so sadly compromised his fortune, and

bid fair to wreck his happiness. What would she not now give to recall the past. But the bond was now broken, that held him to her footsteps. She was now willing, yea eager, that he should go from her—should launch upon the broadest ocean of life, encounter all its hardships, hazard all its snares, if with the prospect of conquering a position, and reclaiming his happiness.

With considerable difficulty, a release was at length effected from the vessel to which he was bound, and Walter, with a swelling heart, bid a tender adieu to his home. Yet the farewell with his mother lacked its usual expressive fervor. No tears were shed; few words were uttered. A deep, controlling sentiment, mutually comprehended, but which neither dared reveal to the other, seemed to embarrass emotion, and set a barrier to that natural flow of feeling which is the eloquence of human affection.

But if the profound grief, which in Walter absorbed every other sentiment, checked for the moment the deep current of his filial love, Mrs. Carl was affected by far other feelings. Remorse for having vainly compromised the happiness of her son, bitter pride toward those who were so acutely wringing his pure heart, and driving him hopelessly from her presence, together with an irresistible presentiment, that she was never more to see his dear face, paralyzed the very chords of maternal affection, and implanted sentiments too poignant for utterance. Yet, if upon her brow there sat a marble placidity, as if in resignation to the will of fate, far below, in the depths of her soul, were breaking into flame those corroding fires that slowly eat out the love of life.

CHAPTER XXII.

"These lips are mute, these eyes are dry,
But in my heart and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel;
I only know we loved in vain;
I only feel — Farewell! — Farewell!"

BYRON.

WALTER stepped upon the wharf in New York city from the vessel upon which he had made thither his passage from home, with a movement of forced alacrity. He embraced greedily the change from the dreary passage of the way, with time unoccupied save by nursing the cruel feelings that were torturing his breast, and yet no definite aim of life lent healthful energy to his step toward the future, and he seemed pinioned to the baleful present by the sentiment that centred, hopelessly, his thoughts upon the happy past.

Roaming aimlessly through the streets of this vast metropolis of the new world, not knowing (not much caring) if he might at the next step become inextricably bewildered amid the mazes of its interminable windings, and the vortices of its human currents, now sauntering amid the forest of shipping, those magic carriers over the mighty ocean; now seeking to beguile a weary moment in some grateful park, that smile of nature amid the din of art, he soon began to feel in its full force, that sharpest of all dreary feelings, the profound loneliness of being in a crowd, of being amid an ocean of human beings, without one in the countless host with a bosom beating responsive to his own.

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He strove to dissipate the dejection pressing upon his bosom, by contemplating the splendid development of civilization around him, and in enlisting his admiration for the genius of man in the noble works of art that greeted his eyes. But it was a fruitless effort. The better sentiments of his heart tinged the brightest thoughts of his mind, and left him in a state of gloomy misanthropy.

Finding no solace in the crowded mart where he was, an impulse seized him to plunge off from this dense focus of civilization to the precincts of human society, that happily he might find amid the solitudes of nature that balm which was denied him among the haunts of men.

After much discouraging enquiry and looking around, he at length found a passage on board a lake boat, so termed, making trips between New York city and Seneca Lake, a beautiful expanse of water in the interior of the State. The picturesque, and at times sublime scenery, upon the banks of the noble and majestic Hudson; the long reaching Erie Canal, that first grand link between the bustling East, and the rising West, and a glorious monument of the genius, energy and perseverance of man; the verdant, teeming earth yielding everywhere of her generous bounty; and the evidences all around, of thrift, of rapid prosperity that greeted his eyes, as he was conveyed along upon the route; served to divert his mind from the feelings that were brooding over his soul, and at times to impart a buoyancy to his spirit; but they brought no permanent peace to his distracted bosom.

Finding the winter to commence setting in with premonitory rigor, he returned hastily to New York city, and there engaged himself as first officer in a schooner bound for the South. Taking so responsible a position was rather a bold stroke for one of his tender years and poverty of experience in nautical life, but so long idleness had made him impatient

for occupation, and there had gradually sprung up in his bosom a species of desperation that imparted a reckless tinge to his character.

During the first part of his passage, the severe and exacting duties of his new state absorbed his full energies, and ruled out in a good degree the bitter sentiments of the past; but when they approached the crescent coast of the Mexican Gulf, the soft airs that impregnated the sunny clime, breathing a sweet tenderness; the serene and lovely beauty that floated in the air, and brooded with dove-like wings over the water; the gorgeous, voluptuous skies, redolent with passionate hues; and especially the low, sandy coast, covered with pine so exactly resembling that of his home; all were so inspiring of the very spirit of love, as to induce an excess of his passion, and overwhelm his soul with a torrent of languishing regrets.

After touching at several American ports upon the Gulf coast, the vessel proceeded up the Mississippi to New Orleans. There appeared much in the character of the people, and in the scenery of the places through which they passed, to seize forcibly the attention of one so ingenious as Walter. He was lively struck with that northern element of character engrafted upon a southern trunk, throwing up for the time its home principles, feigning indifference to the surrounding institutions, and forgetful of all, save driving for the main chance of getting.

On arriving at New Orleans, the object being secured for which he bound himself to the vessel, he obtained a release. Here Mr. Carl very naturally fell into the company of other mates, boarding ashore, who drew him into their society out of pure craving for companionship. The young man as a diversion participated very freely with the lively shore pranks of these seamen adrift, but his heart was too pre-occupied for

their often questionable manners to leave any stain upon his pure mind.

He hailed the opening of spring with gladness, as bringing a period of change, and getting on board a steamer, was speedily conveyed many hundred miles up the river to Pittsburg. The novel and striking features of this vast inland passage kept his mind in an intense state of curiosity and interest, and he at times seemed being conveyed to a new sphere of existence.

The route from Pittsburg to Erie lay over a rough and slippery country, and the comical incidents by the way, with the squibs and cracks of the jovial stage party, lent a zest to this mode of travelling entirely new to Walter. Departing from Erie, and coasting the silvery lake, after one or two startling upsets, they reached Buffalo, blessing their stars for so safe a deliverance.

To find a bustling city, with docks crowded with vessels, and quays covered with merchandise, at so remote a point from the ocean, in the midst of what Walter had been accustomed to imagine an interminable forest, seemed, to his astonished eye, some magic picture transformed to life.

There were in the harbor two or three vessels of the remaining squadron of the immortal Perry, being employed in the general business of transportation. Walter could not but contemplate with deep interest these proud vestiges of American prowess; and he thought it ignoble that they should be thus retained for the ordinary purposes of commerce, after so brilliant and signal a career. His youthful patriotism would have preferred to see them inviolable from the sordid touch of gain, a spirit so rooted in the American mind. As he revolved over the glorious battle of Lake Erie, other sublime scenes in the struggles of our nation came to mind, and he could not but envy those who had nobly fallen in defence of their coun-

try, and thus earned a niche in the temple of Fame, and a place in the heart of a grateful country. How sweet, could he find a death so happy!

His morning and evening walks were upon the pier of the harbor, stretching into the divided waters of the Lake. How novel to his view, and yet how beautiful, lay the broad expanse before him, dotted here and there by some winged sail or shooting steamer. There is nothing more soothing to the troubled heart than a silent stroll by the sea-side.

But as the fretted waves dashed against the granite walls of the pier upon which he was standing, the complaining surges brought up reminiscences of his own native shores; reminiscences at once so tender and sorrowful, that, in an excess of emotion, he could have yielded his body to the merciful wave before him, there to forget in the sweet oblivion of death the wretchedness that was blighting his heart.

Leaving Buffalo, that gateway between the East and the West, he visited several of the ports that are scattered upon the coast, stretching around the lake; then, after strolling leisurely a-foot to the Ohio River, he sailed fleetly down the swift gliding stream, and, at length found himself, pennyless and dejected, in the big, bustling city of Cincinnati.

None, save those who may have experienced it, can imagine the mortal disquietude that seizes upon one, on finding himself friendless and without money, far away from his home. The splendid, teeming world seems an overflowing banquet from which in his abject poverty he is shut out, for the lack of one little key to unlock the door of entrance.

But Walter, however much a prey to the innate grief that seemed consuming him, was not one to yield to any ordinary vicissitudes of life. Spurious natures, are they who, when overtaken by some great misfortune, in a fit of desperation, give way to courses of ruin. A genuine character yields

never to the shocks of fate, but like some royal mountain oak, every blast from the gale that rides upon the storm, but sends still deeper the roots that uphold its majestic trunk.

After a good deal of search in quest of some honest employment, he at last engaged himself as pilot, or steers-man, on board a canal-boat making semi-monthly trips between Cincinnati and a small city some fifty-four miles north of the queen city of the West.

The captain of the boat had an aspect so forbidding, that Walter would have hesitated making the man's acquaintance at all, but for the sore pressure of need that drove him to seek employment. With a Carolina sun-burnt skin drawn over a huge Kentucky frame, and eyes small, half open and wretchedly inexpressive, there was withal a surly mastiff look about the face, that made one almost tremble to approach him.

But nothing is more deceptive than appearances. Those who pretend to read the "mind's construction in the face," would in this instance have signally failed; for this man beneath an uncouth and harsh exterior, bore a nature as kindly and genial as could be found among human kind. Walter in his need for sympathy, nestled to the very heart of the stranger, and felt almost happy in his warm society. The boatman was also very intelligent, ever conversing in moments of leisure, which were many (for he was none of your greedy drivers in the mart of business, but took the world "fair and easy,") upon History, Biography and Science. There was a philosophic tone in all he said, mingled with a fine common sense, that quite captivated Walter.

But the man was thoroughly an infidel, and his sceptical speculations which seemed to pervade the whole character of his mind, came near working the ruin of Walter, and of proving of serious loss to the man himself. For the sophistic reasonings of the boatman, came gradually to unloose the

moorings of Walter to the great truth of a future accountability; and as he contemplated the inequalities of human condition, and the apparent injustice in the distribution of the gifts of fortune, he began to lose by degrees that nice sense of the sacredness of personal integrity, and the firm principle to persevere uncomplainingly amid the hardest vicissitudes of our lot. Indeed, at times, he began to sigh for an opportunity to carve out for himself, by some sudden stroke of daring, what he fancied his share of the world's good things. Such opportunity ere long appeared.

The business of the boat upon which Walter was engaged, consisted in transporting produce, chiefly flour and whiskey, from the interior town whence she started, to Cincinnati, and in conveying, on her return, goods for the merchants of the place. The captain being empowered to receive the pay for the sale of the produce that he took to market, and being frequently entrusted with considerable sums by the merchants in his place, to meet their payments in Cincinnati, it would not unfrequently happen for him to have upon his person a large sum of money. Whether from a habit of culpable negligence, or from perfect confidence in the immovable honesty of Walter, the captain was at times grossly careless in the keeping of this trust, leaving often his pocket-book crowded with bills in the pocket of a loose garment thrown off in the hurry of the moment upon the transom of the cabin of the boat, while he was himself away for hours. Generally, however, on leaving the boat, or at night, before retiring, he was careful to place the treasure in a small closet, lock the door, and take the key with him.

Once in particular, a lion temptation sprang upon Walter to seize this pocket-book, and fly with its contents as his own possession to some place of safety. He had not much difficulty in reconciling his conscience to the bold theft. Was not

the world, mused he, a matter of chance, and death an eternal sleep? Right and wrong were mixed up here below in strange confusion, the wrong greatly preponderating. He then was a fool who would submit to plod wearily through life, and neglect the opportunity to seize his share of this world's goods. Then, the loss would not fall upon his friend, the captain; it would be shared by many who would not feel it much, and who, more likely than not, had obtained their possessions in a manner quite as questionable as the act he was revolving would be.

The opportunity for escape was all that could be wished, the probability of detection merely nothing. He could take a time, when the captain would be absent from the boat for some time, hasten with the money to a broker's for exchange, step on board of a steamer, as one or more was leaving for below at almost every moment in the day, and take ship from New Orleans to Europe. There were no telegraphic spirits then to travel faster than the swiftest steamer down a rapid current, and cut off retreat.

Then what a sweet revenge would he not take upon those at his home, who had contemned his poverty, as he should appear among them, rustling with wealth and with the lustre of foreign travel upon his brow. How sweet it would be to flood with joy the heart of his mother, with so brilliant a return; and to have the means of placing her above want, and in a position equal with the best in the neighborhood.

How he came by his money would be no matter. People never ask *how* a person obtained his substance, but *is* he wealthy?

What helped to work up Walter's mind to the daring thought that held possession of him, was the lowly, abject condition of poverty in which he found himself, contrasted with the wealth and splendor that passed daily before his eyes.

Plenty and happiness seemed emptying their horn into the cup of every one but himself. He alone was cursed to crawl like a worm upon the slimy earth. He did not perceive that his own state was that of the million; that we are prone rather to look up with envy, than down with gratitude; that the successful were often in a worse bondage of fear of losing what they possessed, than he could be in despair of getting where-withal for comfort.

At any rate, he pursued his thought; he actually took steps to carry it into execution, not that he had fully resolved to commit the deed, but he wished to see how easily he could do it, if he would.

Scrutinizing the lock of the door which shut up the money, he purchased another so nearly like it, that the key just fitted that in the door. Taking a time when the captain would surely be absent for half a day, at least, he ran across the city, found a steamer, just ready to leave for New Orleans; and directly on his way was a broker, who would exchange his money for gold, or give him a draft upon a responsible house in Europe. He went to the closet. There was the pocket book, stuffed with bank bills to the amount of several thousands. It was but the resolution of a moment, but he could not take the momentous step. His hand was stayed from the dreadful fate that overtakes sooner or later, him who lays violent hands upon what is not his own. At one moment, it was the pure image of his mother rising in pleading tones; at another, the sweet face of Angeline that made him loathe the turpitude of the act. He was not held back by any nice scruples of conscience. The fear of a future retribution did not appal him. But all the moral influences and education of his youth arose in solid phalanx, and locked him, as in a vice, from the dark deed.

As he put back the money, closed the door, and sprang

ashore, a fresh feeling of relief and an elevating consciousness of strength rushed sparkingly through his bosom; and the noble glow of gratitude that suffused his breast, at the glorious thought that he had been able to rise above so great temptation, and vindicate the royalty of human nature within him, he would not have exchanged for the wealth of a continent.

The boat continued leisurely to make her plodding trips. At the town where she stopped, at the end of the route, and the residence of the captain, — a place which for convenience we will call Montville, there was usually a rest of a week or more. In this time Walter stayed on board the boat, but took his meals at the captain's. At first there was much in the quaint features of the city — for city it was, though a very small one — it being more than half Dutch, and in the localities about the region, to interest the young man. Then the captain would sometimes take him out to ride, to visit some noble forest or golden harvest-field, or, perchance, a horse race, or other Western amusement.

When not thus diverted, he spent the time on the boat reading, or reflecting upon his unhappy lot.

One afternoon, as Walter was sitting upon the bow of the boat in a dejected state of mind, a covey of little girls came tripping merrily along. Apparently, they had just been let out of school, and they looked as blithesome as an uncaged bird. What more gladsome than a troupe of school-girls ringing their joyous choral voices upon the greeting air.

As the artless bevy were passing the young man, they fell into a sportive mood, and began dallying with the ropes that bound the boat to the shore. Presently one of them, a miss of nine or ten summers got a rope so coiled around her, that she could not extricate herself from it. In her helpless plight, she intuitively cast an imploring look toward Walter. The young man stepped quietly ashore, gently uncoiled the rope

from the trembling girl, and thus set the captive free. The fair damsel finding herself so nicely taken from her condition of alarm, breathed her thanks to her deliverer, and bestowing upon Walter a sweet, earnest look of gratitude, ran off joyously with her companions.

The next day, the same girls appeared; and the one whom Walter, the day previous, had befriended, whose name was Adelgitha, brought along with her a beautiful bouquet of flowers, as a token of grateful remembrance for Walter.

This or a similar gift was often repeated; and every day the little school-misses were sure to pass the boat on their way to and from school. The company would occasionally be varied, but Adelgitha was sure to be among the number, the first to greet Walter on coming, and the last to bid him adieu. Indeed his casual acquaintance with the girl soon grew into a budding friendship; and not unfrequently would she hie herself away from merry companions and spend an entire Saturday afternoon with Walter upon the boat. Sometimes he would assist her in the preparation of her lessons; and then she had ever a thousand eager questions to ask him about the wonders of the sea.

The charming society of the beautiful little maiden was very sweet to Walter. She was a bright ray of sunshine in his gloomy pathway.

At that unconscious age, before the maidenly feelings have imparted a coy grace to the woman, her openness of manner, her confiding, unsuspecting spirit was all the more delightful to the friendless young man. She would sit for hours leaning upon his arm, her large, dreamy eyes occasionally suffused with tenderness, listening to the witching narratives of Walter, while he, warming with the glow of enthusiasm, was but too happy to find so devoted a listener.

One afternoon, while reclining in the cabin, a prey to boding

thoughts, he was startled by a wild shriek, and a dull splashing sound, followed by a piercing cry of alarm. Springing out of the cabin, and upon the tow-path, he was in a moment at the scene of disaster. He found there a band of little children in the wildest frenzy of excitement, now shrieking for aid and now wringing their hands in deep agony. Darting his eyes upon the bosom of the canal, he caught a glimpse of some article of clothing dimly visible just beneath the surface of the opaque waters of the canal. Quick as thought, he sprang in, seized the drowning girl, and, in a moment, bore her safely to land. By the time he reached the bank, a crowd had gathered round; and overcome more by undue excitement than by over exertion, he yielded up his fair burden to humane hands stretched out so eagerly for succor. As they lay aside her dripping locks, how his heart throbbed with joy, to perceive that it was his sweet little friend Adelgitha, that he had been so fortunate as to rescue from a watery grave! But the thoughtless rabble hurried the girl off, without so much as thanking her preserver; and Walter returned to the boat, feeling happy beyond expression to have been the means of saving his little friend; but somewhat chagrined at the treatment he had received at the hands of the crowd.

Weeks passed, and the autumnal sickly season approached. Disease, like an insatiate archer, began stalking through the city, and entering one fair dwelling after another. Among others, the family of the boat captain was struck down. The captain himself soon after shared the same fate. Walter could now no longer board at the captain's, and he commenced taking his meals at the tavern. At length Walter was himself struck with that scourge of the West, namely, fever and ague; only in his case, it was complicated with other dreadful symptoms. At times, he was almost sick to the death. But if his body was shaken with torture, his soul was doubly

racked. With no friendly arm to allay his pains; no kindly voice to assuage his griefs; suffering from inward distress, with a gloom lying like a thick pall upon the future, into what a midnight of darkness was he not thrust. At length, a neighboring woman, reduced to abject poverty by a drunken husband, came to him, bestowed upon him tones of sympathy, and proffered him succor. Walter was surprised, that she who could scarcely find sustenance for herself and family, should be the first to offer him aid. He did not then know that active sympathy is more frequently found with the lowly than with the high; that they who have suffered themselves, know well how to feel for others, and that often he who has but a little, feels more lively the impulses of giving, than he who can boast of much.

Walter ere long was removed to the tavern kept by two vixen sisters. Here he was thrust into an attic room of the house, upon a bed of straw, and there left to chew the cud of misfortune, at his leisure;—and what with steeping in catnip tea, and much shaking and sweating with his disease, he felt at times to be near shuffling off this mortal coil; nor did he much care for such a summary result. But bye and bye, a down-East doctor, having patients in the house, happening to stray to Walter's precincts, took at once a lively interest in his case. He had the young man removed to a lower room, and well cared for. From that time, Walter began rapidly to recover. Blessed be the quality of the human heart that can thus embrace a brother in a distant land!

CHAPTER XXIII.

"I find a pious gratitude disperse
Within my soul; and every thought of him
Engenders a warm sigh within me, which,
Like curls of holy incense, overtake
Each other in my bosom, and enlarge
With their embrace his sweet remembrance."

SHIRLEY'S BROTHERS.

"To the generous mind
The heaviest debt is that of gratitude,
When 't is not in our power to repay it."

FRANKLIN'S MATILDA.

"WHY mother, only think," exclaimed Adelgitha, as the little girl ran into the house almost breathless with haste, her sunny locks all dishevelled by the breeze, and twirling nervously her summer hat by the guard,—“only think, that good, dear young gentleman of the boat, that I have told you all about so many times, who was always so kind, and pleasant and interesting to me, whenever I went there, is the very one, will you believe it, who saved me from drowning in the canal, and they say he is now at the Mansion House, very ill.”

“Are you sure of what you say, my dear,” replied Madam Radesky, the little girl's mother.

“Yes, quite sure. Indeed, I'm certain; for I had it from Jane Seymour, whose father knows all about it. How generous, to peril his own life to save mine. 'T was just like him. But how can I ever repay him. I'll run to the hotel and offer him all I have in the world, for I owe him everything, even to my life.”

“Perhaps that would be imprudent, just now,” remarked

her mother. "He may be too ill to be seen. Yes, he was, indeed, very generous, so nobly to restore to me my drowning daughter; and then, so modest to lock up the generous deed within his own breast.

"Yes, he is a lovely young man, broke forth Adelgitha, so good, so kind, noble in every thing. He looks and acts and speaks just as it seems to me would some of the persons I read of in father's books. Yes, I really love him. But, I fear he has not good care at the hotel. Can we not bring him home — at our house? Oh, how I should love to take care of him myself."

"I agree with you, my daughter, that we should show him some mark of our gratitude. But we will consult your father, who will be in presently."

Count and Madame Radesky were noble Polish Exiles. In their own country, they had become obnoxious to the Russian government, for having evinced too warm sympathy with their patriotic countrymen. In consequence, their princely estate had been confiscated, and they themselves warned to leave the country. Afterwards, however, the Russian Minister perceiving how strongly entrenched were these excellent people in the affections of all classes in Poland, revoked the hard decree, so far as to allow the doomed couple to remain, and to enjoy a portion of their estate, on condition of their making important concessions of their principles. This, these patriotic and spirited people refused to submit to; and gathering up what little remained to them of their personal effects, they immediately sought a home in the New World.

Count Radesky finding himself in the necessity of resorting to some means for family sustenance, opened a beautiful floral garden for public exhibition in Cincinnati, Ohio. This proved very congenial to their mutual taste for flowers and for the

science of Botany, a taste which by culture had almost grown to a passion. They thus found themselves very happy in their worldly prosperity; and amid the joys of the outward and inward world, little Adelgitha was born unto them; but all sublunary joys are uncertain, and in a little time from their successful establishment in the new world, that memorable flood of the Ohio River, which is still remembered to have happened, inundated their gardens, and swept in a single day, their little store of all to destruction. Now reduced to great extremity, they were, however, so fortunate as to find a friend who advanced them a sum sufficient to purchase a small farm, which was their present home. The Count proved not to be one of those persons who because highly born affect to despise labor, and who will resort to almost any means of support, rather than sully the hand with weary toil. And his wife, though very beautiful, and possessed of rare accomplishments, having been reared in the very lap of refinement, took a sincere pleasure in yielding cheerfully to vicissitudes, and an honest pride in grappling with difficulties, while uniting her energies with those of her husband in achieving an independent home. They belonged to that very small class who act upon the beautiful truth, that exalted character can in no wise be affected by the necessities of mere human employment, and that the lustre of a genuine lady or gentleman is sure to beam forth even from under the lowliest guise of life.

After a time, unexpected gifts from relatives and friends in their mother country enabled them to enlarge their acres and adorn their dwelling, which with their own efforts and the rise of real estate had brought them to possess at this time by far the most beautiful and valuable estate in all that part of the country.

It was in this family, that Walter now found himself installed, as if by magic. And everything in his new home subserved

to render his stay happy in the highest degree. The Count and Madam Radesky lived together upon terms of the most perfect connubial affection. While the sentiment between them did not ever take to itself flattering airs of fondness, so did it not break out at times in an eddying current of mutual displeasure. The stream of their love was too deep and placid in its flow, to show itself in ripples upon the surface. Their union being the result of mutual choice, misfortune had still further deepened and united their common sympathies.

Although now possessed of independent means, and still at the head of large business operations, the Count had not become engrossed by the sordid love of money. Early culture, a literary taste, a passion for the fine arts and for nature, united with an affection for the amenities of social life, came to his relief and kept up a happy balance between the spirit of acquisition, and the love of exalted enjoyment. And his house was the focus of the culture and intelligence for miles around.

Their little daughter Adelgitha was being brought up as we should suppose a child would be, by parents of so fine intelligence and justness of judgment as possessed Madame and the Count Radesky. They watched over this little transcript of their matrimonial love, with the deepest parental solicitude. Not only did they give themselves with the utmost truthfulness of effort to the just unfolding of her youthful intellect, but they guarded with more than argus eyes all those little influences that thickly surround childhood, and gradually temper the susceptible soul to a moulding that is only fully revealed in future years. But they did not seek to force an arbitrary growth of the mind, but allowed the shoots of intelligence to spring up spontaneously into the genial sunlight, limiting the supply to healthful nourishment, and guarding it from noxious influences.

Walter could not but be as happy as possible in his new

home. He was treated by the whole family with all the delicacy and kindness that generous and grateful natures could prompt. There beamed in the air that surrounded him a light of joy, of refinement, of elevated intelligence that flooded his own bosom with sunshine. Indeed, in time he became too happy, falling into that infatuation of illusion, that haunts the breast of the caged bird, which peers out upon the blooming verdure of nature, and fancies that every shrub in the broad world will bear it the same sweet welcome, that it is ever receiving from the fond hand of affection in its own gilded elysium.

There was no one feature of adornment to the residence of Count Radesky, that contributed more fully to absorb Walter's interest, than that gentleman's library. It was quite voluminous and the selections had been made with great care, bringing together nearly all the really choice works of all nations and times.

Walter was from the first a frequent visitor to this sacred tomb of embalmed spirits; and from cursory perusals of such authors as chanced to hit his fancy or taste, he became more and more enlisted, until at length his whole soul got fired with the passion for reading. His mental acumen grew in the end so intense, that he actually devoured the divine food so abundant before him; and his sharpened faculties, instead of getting satiated, only waxed stronger and keener with the aliment upon which they fed. He felt an expansion of mind, an enlargement of soul, a refreshing of spirit, a thrill of delight, that opened upon his intellectual vision like the joy of a new birth, as he began more and more to comprehend the master spirits of bygone centuries—those true kings in the vast empire of mind,—to fathom with them the profound depths of philosophy, to dive into the hidden secrets of nature, to soar amid the brilliant realms of imagination, and to tread the flowery meads of fancy and feeling.

At length the tide of ages seemed rolled back, the vast concourse of the heavens was lighted up in majestic beauty, and he felt surrounded with the sublime spirits of all times. These diffused around him the inspiring glow of their presence, and the young man became spell-bound to the genius of literature and science. He could not leave the library; he might be found there at any time, morning, noon and evening; and often past midnight, the glimmering light through the shutter might have revealed to the passer the presence of the young man in his wedded haunt. At last, his health began to fail; it was perceptible in his waning eye, in his pallid cheek and distracted air.

Mrs. Radesky noticed this, and suggested a remedy. She proposed that Walter supervise the studies of Adelgitha, while she would teach the young man two of the modern languages of Europe, with which she was best acquainted — namely, French and German.

Walter at first received this proposition with intense reluctance. It cost him a struggle to resolve to tear himself away from the fascinating library; but when he reflected that an acquaintance with the languages themselves would enable him to appreciate those authors of genius, whose spiritual beauty cannot be transfused through a translation, he began to feel a willingness for the change.

The time given with Adelgitha was a sweet and pleasant pastime. She learned almost by intuition. He merely aided her in getting at the mysteries of the lesson; and oftentimes she would outstrip him in sagacity and rapidity of perception. Then she was so ingenious, so teachable, so grateful for aid, so earnest in quest of truth, that the pains he bestowed was a pleasure that compensated all labor.

The mode which Mrs. Radesky adopted to teach a modern language, was as novel as it was ingenious and successful.

She began by presenting some visible object; and then connected with it the sound that represented the thing. After making sure of the sound, this was analyzed, and each element made familiar to the several organs addressed in learning the language, by repeated practice. After getting familiar a stock of words, the representation of visible, tangible objects, she commenced with thoughts or ideas, and pursued an analogous course. In this way, Walter found, in a short time, that he could not only speak and write the language he was learning, and understand it when spoken by others, but he saw himself enabled to read the classical authors with considerable ease, and with a perception of their latent beauty, which he had never before been conscious of.

In this way twelve months flew by most delightfully with Walter. Yet he began to feel impatient for change; not that he experienced any lassitude or weariness of feeling in his present delightful intercourse, but because a new desire, or rather an old one, brightened up in his breast. Among the books that he had been reading, were entertaining travels. They had awakened within him increased enthusiasm to see the world, to get information at first hand, to quaff at the fountain of the stream, to know man as he is, to commune with majestic nature; in fine, to rise to the full stature of manhood.

Walter communicated his new project to the family at the tea-table. Little Adelgitha heard it with tearful silence, but her infantile bosom swelled visibly with emotions of regret. Mrs. Radesky was charmed with the romance of the enterprise, but she expressed unfeigned sorrow at the thought of losing the society of Mr. Carl, and of being deprived of the opportunity of giving further proof of their gratitude for the inestimable favor he had done them. Her attachment to Walter was sincere. The young man's frank and genial nature had won greatly upon her womanly susceptibilities, and it cost

her a deep inward struggle to reconcile herself to the thought of parting with him, perhaps never to meet again. Count Radesky was too much a man of the world, not to perceive that it would be vain to think of retaining the young man for any length of time in his family. Therefore, he entered into Walter's projects for the journey with warm interest. He possessed, himself, an enthusiasm for travelling; and his extensive information enabled him to be of essential aid in advising Walter upon his projected plans. A fine sense of delicacy hindered the Count showing too much regret at losing the young man's society, while his whole treatment of Walter had been such as to assure how cordial had been the happiness of entertaining him, and how hard must be the sorrow of having him leave.

We will not attempt to describe the parting scene. Walter took his leave on horseback, well provided with the means of an extensive tour in the United States. It was only after a few days that he felt in its full force the loneliness of his feelings, and how much he had lost in leaving a family endeared to him with all the ties of affection and kindness.

CHAPTER XXIV.

"Between the acting of a dreadful thing,
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream;
The genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council; and the state of a man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection."

SHAKESPEARE'S JULIUS CÆSAR.

WALTER awoke from a deep slumber by a noise as of shuffling of feet over his head, and a rustling sound, as of persons in violent struggle for mastery. This was followed by a suppressed shriek and a heavy, deadened plunge, as of a log thrown into the sea. He was greatly startled; and half rising in his berth, he listened with dread for further revelations. Nothing more coming to his excited ear, he threw on hastily his clothes, and rushed upon deck; but the splendid ship that was bearing him majestically over the bosom of the vast ocean, was holding her wonted way amid the solemn beauty of night, and everything upon deck was regular and quiet. Concluding that he must have been mistaken in his apprehensions, he retired again to his berth, and soon fell asleep.

But at the change of watch in the morning, the startling intelligence came to light that the chief mate was missing. The alarm circulated like a flash of lightning throughout the ship, and the greatest consternation prevailed on board. All sorts of conjectures were made as to the cause of his mysterious disappearance, but the sailors with great unanimity persisted in the belief that he must have slipped overboard accidentally in his watch, and they mentioned one and another circumstance to corroborate their opinions.

Days elapsed, and no clue had been gained as to the fate of the missing man. So sudden a loss was well calculated to send a shock to every bosom, and the vacancy of so important trust as that of first officer, was severely felt. Yet the captain promptly assumed the duties of the departed mate, and the discipline and routine of the ship's duties went on, without apparent interruption.

But Walter could not reconcile to himself the mystery of the affair. He gradually came to the belief that there must have been foul play connected with the loss of the mate. The noise that startled him on the evening already mentioned, was capable of such a construction. And he now brought to mind other incidents and remarks which at the time passed for nothing in his mind, but now, in connection with the great event, had a palpable meaning in their bearing. Then the crew were unusually silent, secretive, were frequently together in private consultation, and bore all the time in their countenances a sinister expression, as if some dreadful deed hung over their souls. At last, Walter could not resist the firm conviction that a dreadful conspiracy had been concocted by the crew, and that the disappearance of the mate was the first scene in the awful tragedy.

He fancied, as he watched narrowly everything around him, that the after guard had an impression similar to his own. The captain looked concerned, and never ventured forward of midship. The wife of the captain, a beautiful young woman, who was making her bridal tour with the noble man of her choice, seemed pale and apprehensive, whenever she appeared upon deck. The other people aft, in one way or another, showed a disturbed mind.

Walter wished much to communicate his suspicions to the captain, or, at least, to some one of the cabin people; but the etiquette of ship life, and other circumstances, gave him no

opportunity. But he thought well upon the posture of things around him, took his part with deliberation, and prepared his mind for any emergency.

Matters went on in this way, until late one night when the wind was blowing briskly, he was alarmed by a sudden noise in a distant part of the ship. He was prepared, and sprang with a single leap out of the gangway, which he closed and bolted as he passed through. As he reached the midships of the ship, the appalling spectacle struck his excited gaze, of the captain struggling with deathless energy in the grasp of two brawny sailors, who, after much effort, succeeded in throwing him into the sea. The sympathy and indignation of his nature was aroused to the highest pitch. Springing to the cabin gangway, he met there the second mate, steward and stewardess, preceded by the wife of the captain, all full armed. Walter seized the pistol from the trembling hand of the latter, and fired upon the foremost of the gang, who were approaching with apparently murderous intent. He fell disabled, but not dead. The sailor takes fright at the sight of fire-arms. The remainder of the sailors perceiving with what they had to contend, retreated hastily forward, intending there, it is presumed, to be joined by the watch below, and all to make a determined stand. But finding the watch below secured there by the precaution of Walter, and themselves pushed to the last extremity by the heroism and activity of their pursuers, they surrendered, asking for quarter. All were secured by the second mate, and placed firmly in irons. The watch were imprisoned with more difficulty.

On investigation, it came to light, as Walter had suspected, that a bloody conspiracy had been hatched by the remorseless crew. Their plan was to make way with all the after-guard, except the wife of the captain, whom they would retain. Walter was to be saved under strict surveillance, as their

navigator, until they reached their destination, when he, too, was to be sacrificed, upon the maxim of security that "dead men tell no tales."

With deep feelings of gratitude, for what seemed an almost miraculous deliverance, they were yet in a plight that can be better imagined than described. They were hundreds of miles from any land. The mulatto steward and stewardess could not be much depended upon beyond their own sphere. Indeed, they knew actually nothing of the ordinary duties of working ship. The wife, flooded with distress for the loss of her husband, was little less than deranged, in view of her bereavement. The only two, then, able in any degree to cope with the difficulties of their situation, were the second mate and Walter. But the former was a host in himself. Of great physical force, a thorough seaman, brave, cool, and sagacious, he united the resources of many inferior men. But he knew nothing of navigation, and that essential duty fell upon Walter.

Releasing two or three of the most trustful of the fettered mutineers, on promise of faithfulness to duty, they were enabled, by keeping the ship under short sail, to do pretty well. But the duties proved too severe for now Captain Carl. He fell sick of brain fever, and for some time, his life hung upon a trembling balance. In this dreadful crisis the young widow performed a part, that while it showed to what sublime height of heroism the soul may rise, added a gem to the full crown of the virtues of noble woman. She assumed the place of nurse and physician to Walter, and no affectionate sister at the best home, could have been more kind or devoted. In addition, she stood a watch, relieving the mate at times from his post on deck, kept the reckoning of the ship, which she had learned from her husband, and encouraged and sustained

the drooping spirits of all, by her cheerful and bland expressions.

One dark, stormy night, the wind blowing heavily, Walter was aroused from a drowsy slumber, by an awful shock and crash that fell upon his startled nerves like a clap of thunder. Although still very weak, excitement filled him with energy, and he gained the deck in a moment. A huge ship had just become disengaged from the violent collision which had just happened between it and his own ship, and the other, now like a dark cloud, was disappearing to the leeward. No one on board answered to his repeated call of distress, and it was plain that his ship was going inevitably to the bottom of the ocean, her decks being already on a level with the water. In so awful a crisis, there was but one alternative, and the merest instinct suggested the desperate part that he must take. Launching an empty hencoop, which, with much difficulty he disengaged from the place where it was lashed; he hurriedly jumped astride of it, and made all possible haste to push a little distance away, lest he should be swallowed up in the vortex that would be caused by the sinking vessel.

Daylight revealed to him in burning colors, his wretched condition. His own ship had sunk to rise no more. No other vessel upon the wide watery waste could be descried, to gladden his straining vision. The storm had slightly abated, but the sky still yawned, in lurid hate, and the ocean around dashed in angry surges. There he clung with difficulty to the vestige of plank that barely separated him from dread eternity; weak in body, crushed in spirits, with no rescuing arm above, and with but the fathomless caves, filled with devouring sea-monsters below him. How awful, how appalling the moment! Death, relentless death, already stared him face to face, and soon, very soon, he must answer the dreadful summons, and be hurried to that bourne whence

no traveller returns. As he sat alone upon the world of waters, he had time for bitter reflection. What a vicissitude of fate had not been his. The past arose in distinct, vivid outline, the future was shadowed in vague, fearful imaginings. How insignificant now appeared to him life, and all its vain objects of sense; how momentous arose to his vision the sacred interests of eternity! Thus day and night passed, bringing no human rescue. The cravings of hunger at length stole upon him, and the parchings of thirst broke out upon his vitals. An excruciating fever set into his veins, and delirium seized his brain. Amid the phantoms of his excited fancy, groaning tables tantalized his longing taste, and running streams lured him treacherously to their bosom.

The physical vanquished, the spiritual battle commenced. All kinds of visions haunted his burning brain. Now, his dear mother, in deep, affectionate tones called him to her, but as he rushed toward her arms, she vanished from his sight. Now, the sweet face of Angeline pressed close to his, as if she would rest her fair head upon his bosom; but as he would fain clasp her beloved form, she eluded his grasp, and he found himself rigidly holding the sides of his coop. Then he was transported to the delightful family of the Count Radesky, at one time toying with the silken curls of the beautiful Adelgitha, at another, listening to the spiritual tones of Madame Radesky, but the next moment he would awake from his trance, and find the pitiless elements but mocking his delusions.

One night he was continually visited by an apparition that resembled the strange being that had hung around his pathway so mysteriously. She kept his company like some persistent death watcher. Whenever he closed his eyes, there would be the same deep, suffering face, earnest, entreating, pleading look, with hair dishevelled, and eye wandering with frenzy.

At length, feeling conscious of departing energies, he carefully lashed himself to his little bark of refuge by a rope that had remained attached to it by chance, and resigned himself to the future of his fate.

CHAPTER XXV.

"Human life is checkered at the best,
And joy and grief alternately preside,
The good and evil demon of mankind.

TRACY'S PERIANDER."

WHEN Walter awoke to consciousness, he found himself in a comfortable room, with an amiable attendant at his side, administering to his every need. He was at first too weak to speak, but on gaining force he eagerly inquired where he was, and how he came there. He was told that he was on board a ship coming from South America, and bound to Antwerp, in Europe. That one day, the look-out descried something upon the water, very distant to the leeward, whereupon the captain, who made it a rule to pass nothing upon the sea without actually determining what it is, had a boat despatched, which returned with Walter, apparently dead; but by assiduous care, and the devotion of a skilful physician on board, he had been restored to life. Walter felt a glow of gratitude at this rehearsal. "After all," ejaculated he to himself, "how humane and noble is the human heart!"

Days passed, and he continued to gather in strength. One day, on descrying land upon the Old World, it being very pleasant weather, Walter was taken upon deck for the first time, to participate in the general joy. As he was about being again removed below, a lady from among the passengers passed him, and their eyes met. He felt sure of having seen the face before, but where, he could not tell. The lady seemed affected by the same embarrassment; but after a moment's hesitation, she passed on, and descended to the cabin.

Walter not feeling so well from the exertion of being taken

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to the deck, he did not again leave his room until the ship arrived at Antwerp. Here he was taken to the home of the American Consul at that port, where he received every kindness the most exacting nature could desire.

It would be impossible to describe his emotions upon stepping foot upon the Old World; and as he sauntered through the quaint old city, with its many thrilling mementoes of a former time, his feelings were excited to the verge of enthusiasm. One day, standing in company with Miss Belmont, the daughter of the American Consul, in the Square, admiring the noble pile of the Antwerp Cathedral, a carriage drove slowly past them, and stopped. The footman descended, approached Walter, and deferentially begged the favor of his address. It was granted. Turning toward the carriage, the middle piece of which was down, he perceived that one of the inmates was a lady, and he recognized her as the one whom he met on board the ship. The lady returned somewhat warmly his salutation, and the carriage rolled on.

The next day, a gentleman elegantly attired rang the bell of his room, and politely handed Walter a package. On opening the unexpected parcel, he was most agreeably surprised to find therein a beautiful picture very richly set, which he had no difficulty in recognizing as a miniature portrait of the lady whom he met the day before upon the Square in front of the grand Antwerp Cathedral. There was, besides, a handsome sum of money in the package, in gold, and a bill of exchange for a much larger amount upon a well known Banking House in London. Accompanying these treasures, was a gracefully turned and modest letter, expressive of unfeigned gratitude toward Walter, for having once so nobly risked his own life to save hers; a regret that circumstances did not permit her to ask the privilege of seeing him in person, and begging if she might be permitted to ask his acceptance of the accompanying

gifts as a slight token of her heartfelt esteem, until she should have it in her power to make some more befitting return. She added in a postscript, that she was to leave the city that very hour.

For a moment Walter remained in a state of amazement at this new turn in the web of his fate; but presently the truth gleamed upon his mind. She must be the identical lady whom he rescued from the boiling surf, at the Point of Cape Malabar, and the very same whose face struck him so cognizable once on board the ship that bore them in company to Europe. But why did she not see him and make herself known at once. Another mystery. How romantic it all seemed! Would marvels never cease in his checkered life? But he had become too used to strange vicissitudes to be long excited. He laid by the gifts with emotions of tranquil delight, trustful that the future would reveal all to light.

Previously to the incident just narrated, Walter had completed his arrangements to make a partial tour through Europe. Having at his disposal but very limited pecuniary means, he had expected to be under the necessity of making his journey on foot, and living by the way in the most scanty manner possible. But so intense was his desire to visit the spots and feast his greedy eyes upon the scenes that were so endeared to his memory and fancy, that going a-foot he did not account a very great hardship. Indeed, he would have crawled upon his hands and knees, he thought, had there been left no other way to accomplish his wishes. It was not the delectable care and genial comfort of travelling that he sought, but to administer to the cravings of a spirit of truthfulness for nature, and to gratify a chivalrous love for those glowing associations enkindled by reading and study. Then, what treasures of nature, what beauties of art, what glorious associations of history was he not soon to possess! All the hardships he

had undergone, all the sufferings he had experienced were as nothing by the side of the well-filled cup of happiness that he was soon to quaff to his fill. Indeed, his trials only prepared his mind for a keener relish of what was in store for him.

In this delightful mood, with the full means at his command to choose his mode of travelling, he set off, after taking a grateful leave of the family of the Consul, and the many friends he had made, during his short stay in this interesting old city of Flanders. While we will leave the young man to enjoy unmolested the pleasures of his route, we will turn to other scenes in the thread of our story.

Walter, after leaving the charming family of Count Radesky, spent full two years in travelling in his native country. This journey was made for the most part on horseback, that very exhilarating and mind- tonic mode of travelling. This was at a period when public conveyances were less numerous than at the present time, and in the course of his tour, he met with much hardship, and not a few adventures; these seemed, however, but to impart robustness of limb, and vigor of mind. He visited in the course of his journey, almost every place of note or of interest that he could possibly discover from Maine to Texas, and from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains. He thus drank deep at the fount of Nature in the grandeur of our country, and had his perception enlarged of the exhaustless wonders in our glorious and broad domain. It served, too, as an excellent preparation for profitably travelling abroad, and enabled him to form the acquaintance of distinguished intelligent men in Europe, upon the broad principle of mutual advantage, for the truthful and reliable information he could impart of his own country.

But he began to be weary of journeying at home, and the time ripened for him to transfer his interest to the other continent. The Count Radesky, in his unbounded generosity, had

furnished him ample means to complete his tour upon both continents, and gave him besides letters of credit upon his banker in Philadelphia. But what with sending at times small sums to his beloved mother, and of relieving frequent cases of distress that he met with on his way, he found himself at the end of the two years almost quite destitute of funds. His sense of justice would not allow him to tax further the generosity of the Count Radesky, and impressed with the belief that a humble mode of travelling possessed many advantages in enabling the traveller to see life from an intelligent stand point, he shipped in a large bark lying at Philadelphia, bound to India, by the way of the Sandwich Islands. The passage out was all that could be wished. The captain's youthful bride imparted lustre to the sentiment of ship life. There were, besides, several missionaries, male and female, those sublime spirits in the cause of religious devotion. The weather was fine, balmy and golden. Many diversions of a healthful and elevating kind were devised, in which the sailors often were invited to participate. And Walter thought he had hardly ever enjoyed himself much more pleasantly. But on their return, the sad scenes occurred which we have briefly described, and which gave so sudden a turn to the course of Walter's life.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"Death is the privilege of human nature;
And life without it were not worth our taking.
Thither the poor, the pris'ner, and the mourner
Fly for relief, and lay their burdens down."

ROWE'S FAIR PENITENT.

A DEEP cloud of gloom hung over the paternal mansion. A noble spirit had passed from earth. Mrs. Carl had left this suffering vale of life, to find a mansion where sorrows are no more.

The bereaved woman had struggled along in her daily path, with a tranquil brow, while cheered with the solace of her son's remembrance, and the hope of his final return; but when the dreadful intelligence came of his shipwreck and probable loss, her strong spirit gave way, and she continued waning until merciful death clasped her to himself. Her last moments were peaceful, like those of a grand soul, and she sank gently into eternity like the quiet setting of departing day.

In the same upper chamber where we first met her with Walter, lies now stretched her pallid corse, with a face still serene in the calm repose of death. The room is partially darkened, here and there hang the emblems of mourning, and the few who enter tread softly, as if their feathery steps could disturb that spirit now hushed forever, which had wrestled so bravely with the storms of life.

The funeral day arrives. It is a sweet autumnal afternoon, and the very anniversary of Walter's departure from home. The fallen leaf from the withered foliage, and the crimson glories of the forest, seem in touching consonance with the sol-

em scene. A holy, pensive calm pervades nature without, as if heaven had lain the hush of her hand upon earth in sympathy with the quiet entrance of a prized soul to her joyful abodes.

Relatives, friends and neighbors fill the stricken mansion, as if moved with a common sentiment of condolence, and many stand without in the attitude of mournful grief. The services are fervent, impressive. All hearts are touched, but there is no need of gifted words to awaken latent sympathies. There are lives more eloquent than human tongues, lives so embalmed in the common heart, that the tiniest finger laid upon their full stringed soul-harp, touches a chord that thrills with keenest vibration through every fraternal bosom.

The services over, the long procession moved with solemn march to the grave-side. There the irrepressive sobs attest the depth of the common grief. The unrelenting earth closes over her who in life had no foe, in death will be long remembered, yet in whose pathway trial and suffering ever lay in thickest gloom. How unequal seem the fortunes of life! The last sod is laid upon the round grave, and the remaining company sadly retire. — No, there is one that lingers long behind. She remains fixed to the spot, as if rooted there by a sentiment beyond her power to control. She is a comely maiden, exquisitely attired in deep black, with a face of classical beauty of form, and of great depth of expression. Who may she be?

"It was a most affecting occasion, that we have witnessed this afternoon," observed sadly Miss Angeline Readcliff to Mr. Charles Raymond, two of the company who were wending their way homeward from the funeral just described.

"It was, indeed," replied the other. "What a pity that her son should have caused her so much grief."

"To what do you now refer, Mr. Raymond?" asked Angeline with an earnest look of inquiry.

"Why, they say," replied Charles, "that her son, upon whom she doted very fondly, has fallen into bad ways, and the news of it broke her heart."

"No, you mistake," interrupted Angeline, with energy. — "It was the intelligence of his death, that caused her last illness."

"Ah, yes," replied Charles, "that may have had something to do with it, too, but it was the report of his becoming dissipated that gave the fatal stab."

"Who says so," demanded Angeline, with evident feeling. "Who dares thus stab the peace of an honorable family — ruin a fair name? I will not believe it."

"Perhaps you are a little partial," remarked Charles, in a caressing voice; "If I remember rightly, you were once very intimate friends."

"Yes, Mr. Raymond," answered Angeline with spirit, "Walter Carl and myself were once friends, lovers, if you please. It was a pure youthful sentiment, nothing more. My friends opposed the continuance of his addresses. I yielded at once to their better judgments. He submitted with manly grace, and we parted. We are nothing to each other further, but from common justice I will not tamely submit to see him vilely slandered. His character is as incorruptible as truth itself. I beg, Mr. Raymond, that you will not ever again pain me with so base an allusion."

Charles felt stung with remorse for having wounded the feelings of the girl of all others the dearest to his heart.

"Pardon me," he said, "I did not wish to be unjust, I was but repeating what I had heard, which I confess is a very unsafe rule."

"But who was that young lady dressed in black, so attentive to the family?" he asked, very willing to turn the subject.

"That is Miss Isadore Leeland," answered mildly Angeline,

a little repentant for having betrayed so much feeling. "She has been very attentive during the entire illness of Mrs. Carl. No daughter could have been more kind, affectionate, and devoted.

Her family became reduced from affluence to extreme poverty. I think there was some difficulty between the parents. At any rate there was much distress at home, and Isadore led a vagabondish life away from the maternal roof. In one of her nocturnal rambles she met with, it is said, a lady who had been shipwrecked upon our coast. Strange to say, an intimacy grew up between them, which has lasted since. The lady was a foreigner and is very rich. Since her father and mother have died, Isadore remains at home, educates the children, and under the auspices of her patron the family have greatly prospered."

"Ah! how romantic a circumstance," observed Charles. — At this moment they arrived at the house of Mr. Readcliff, and bidding Angeline good afternoon, he took his leave, and turned homeward.

CHAPTER XXVII.

"And nymphs were there, whose very eyes
Seemed almost to exhale in sighs;
Whose every little ringlet trilled
As if with soul and passion thrilled."

MOORE.

WALTER was pursuing his European Tour with delightful ardor. He had visited many of the principal cities and places of noted interest in Germany, that fatherland of the Teutonic heart; had spent a dazzling month in Paris, that splendid world in miniature; sojourned awhile with feelings of gushing freshness amid the beautiful lakes and picturesque scenes of Switzerland; had crossed with glowing heart the royal Alps, and was now luxuriating in sunny Italy, that immortal land of genius.

At every step in his route, his enthusiasm was excited and refreshed, either by some spot of intense historical interest, some noble work of art, bearing testimony to the sublime genius of man; or by some grand or charming scene in nature. The costume, manners, political and social institutions, and individual traits of character, were to him matters of lively interest.

Indeed, his whole course was a perpetual ovation, in which every object in his pathway contributed to his joy. He felt continually his soul to enlarge, his mental vision to expand, his heart to ennoble. Broader views of life, higher aims of achievement, more generous principles of action swelled his heart. Local prejudices, narrow feelings, illiberal tenets, melted gradually from his breast, like mist before the rising sun. His happiness was constant and serene, and was of that

exalted kind that leaves the soul in a strong, healthful and refreshed state.

He was made fully aware of what great advantage was his knowledge of French and German, by enabling him to circulate freely with all classes, and to appreciate their peculiar character and mode of thought. He perceived that he who travels without an acquaintance with the language of the nations he proposes to learn about, or of some language which will afford him a medium of communication, labors to great disadvantage.

Walter was tarrying now a season at Naples, both to enjoy its noble bay, and to improve, under a master, his acquaintance with Italian, which he had begun to study with deep interest. As a relaxation from severe application, he had the habit, afternoons, of taking a stroll amid the environs of the city, and yield to the musings of his mind.

One beautiful afternoon, as he was passing a magnificent country seat, he applied for permission to see its attractive garden. The porter retired respectfully with his application, and in a few moments returning, opened his gates and graciously welcomed him within the charming precincts. He was here presented to a liveried servant, who with obsequious delicacy showed him minutely over the fascinating grounds, profusely enriched with the beauties of nature and art. He was thence invited into the superb chateau itself, where a lady approached him on his entrance, and politely offered to conduct him through the apartments of the stately edifice. Her intelligent appearance and dignified bearing impressed Walter favorably, and he thankfully accepted. He thereupon followed his accommodating guide, and was well repaid for the time spent. As he went from room to room, surprise followed upon surprise. Here it was the curious architecture that seized his attention; there the quaint decoration that attracted

his observation. At this point the costly furnishing that he must stop to admire; at that, some work of art, or relic of antiquity, that he gazed upon with deep emotion — a picture by some grand old master, a piece of sculpture by some immortal genius, or an unwieldy armor worn by some member of the family, in some renowned exploit.

At length, having completed the tour of the house, Walter was conducted into a small apartment, in which was a table spread with wine, fruit, and every luxury of the country.

Here he was blandly invited to be seated, and partake freely of the refreshments before him. Pointing him to a seat, and taking another opposite to him at the table, while Walter was regaling himself in the pleasures of appetite, the lady gave a succinct account of the noble family through which the lordly mansion had descended for many generations. As Walter motioned to go, the lady gave him a pressing invitation to repeat his visit on the following evening, when he might be pleased to see the establishment under more flattering circumstances.

Punctually at the hour appointed, Walter, under an irresistible feeling of curiosity, presented himself at the gate of the lordly residence he had visited the day before. As he approached, the gate flew open, and presented the garden and house under the magical effect of a grand illumination. The fountains were playing; and as the pearly jets gleamed in the streaming light, giving an illusory animation to the statuary just visible through the trembling foliage, he was moved with feelings of novel delight. As he advanced toward the house, soft strains of sweet, melodious music, came floating upon the impregnated air; and as he entered, hall after hall, richly festooned, and brilliantly lighted, charmed his sight. Indeed the whole scene appeared one of enchantment.

He was presently conducted into a magnificent apartment,

in which the art of man seemed to have surpassed itself. All his dreams of oriental splendor were here realized. The architectural beauty, the richness, the splendor, the gorgeousness, disposed with the most consummate taste, made the young man fairly reel with bewildered delight. Upon a rich ottoman was reclining the most beautiful female that Walter thought he had ever seen. She was strictly of the Italian type of beauty, and it seemed that Nature and Art had vied in perfecting the most lovely gem of woman. Attired richly, but in the most exquisite taste, there was in her manner a certain languishing grace, that threw over her person a species of fascination not easily described.

She arose and greeted Walter with a matchless ease of breeding, that is the most rare and difficult attainment. Seating herself by his side, she commenced a graceful and sustained conversation upon the attractions of Italy to the stranger. She spoke in the purest English, except that there was a slight foreign accent, that but heightened, however, the charm of her intonation.

But a few moments had elapsed of this delightful *tete-a-tete*, when a low rumbling sound was heard, at the first vibration of which, the lady bent forward and listened with anxious suspense.

At the repetition of the sound, she darted out of the room with alarm depicted upon her countenance. As Walter cast his eyes upon the garden, which was visible from the windows of the room, of a sudden the jetty darkness of midnight succeeded the most brilliant illumination. Presently a man rushed into the room with a face haggard with anxiety, and seizing Walter by the arm, thrust him without explanation or ceremony into a closet, the door of which seemed to close by a spring. At once he felt himself descending down, down, whither he knew not; but the sensation of dismay that seized

him sent his heart throbbing to his throat. But landing speedily upon a stone floor, the door of his caged box sprang open and revealed nought but a world of darkness around him. In a moment, however, he perceived an aperture of light, through which he barely squeezed, and scrambling along an embankment and through a hedge, succeeded finally in reaching the highway, glad to be so safely through the mysterious adventure.

The next day as Walter, walking toward the harbor, revolving in his mind the strange incident of the preceding evening, his attention was diverted to a boat approaching the shore, that had just set out from a beautiful brig lying a little distance off at anchor. His interest continued to increase, in observing the admirable discipline in the rowing, and the precision with which she glided over the water. As the boat neared the shore, Walter thought the well dressed gentleman steering in the stern he had seen before. And as he jumped upon the landing, Walter, carried away with a flood of emotion, sprang upon the sailor's neck exclaiming, "and Mr. Marlow, is it you?" They stood locked in each other's arms, while the crew stood by in amazement.

It was, indeed, no other than Old Marl, who having come unexpectedly in possession of property, that was saved from his father's estate, had purchased a fine brig, of which he was in command. His intelligence and experience had enabled him to take advantage of the shifting currents of commerce, and he had realized a large sum from his last voyage. He was intending, he said, to retire to America and go to sea no more, having become tired of roaming, and being convinced that a snug home, surrounded with peace and contentment was the nearest condition to happiness to be found here below.

"Then you will take to yourself a wife," observed Walter.

"Who knows," replied the sailor, shifting his quid of

tobacco, "if I can find the fair damsel who gave me a lift, one dreary night."

"Ah! who was it?" asked Walter.

"Well, come on board and spend the night with me, and you shall have the whole story."

Walter accepted. 'Old Marl,' or now Capt. Jameson, related to the young man, circumstantially, all that had transpired in his history since they parted. Walter, in his turn, detailed the incidents of his life, keeping nothing back, not even the adventure of the preceding evening. To this latter, Capt. Jameson shook his head, with a knowing smile, and bid the young man beware how he became fascinated with appearances. "But," he remarked, "I have some anecdotes of my own experience, of a similar nature to relate, which I will reserve to beguile the tedium of our passage home; for we are bound to Boston, and I mean to take you along with me. You have roamed quite long enough. Go home and cheer the declining years of your mother! Settle down upon some useful occupation; and slowly, but surely, achieve a character and independence."

Walter was but too glad to accept the kind proffer of his friend. In a few weeks they set sail, and after a favorable passage, arrived in Boston. The first man whom Walter met upon the wharf, on landing, was a neighbor of his family, who conveyed the heart-rending intelligence of the death of his beloved mother.

He hastened home, but with a heavy heart. All the touching traits and devotion of his mother arose to his memory, and nearly overpowered him with emotion. He upbraided himself for staying so long from the sunshine of her presence.

Before entering the house, he hastened to the grave-yard, where he knew she would be buried. Some one had erected a beautiful marble slab over her grave, appropriately inscribed,

and surrounded it with willows and flowers. He wept there long, and with the tears of true filial affection. Oh, what would he not give to call back that dear spirit, the mother of his youth. How hard that he could not have been present to smooth her dying pillow.

The next day, as he approached his mother's grave-side, he perceived there a female reclining over the slab in an attitude of sorrow. He was struck with her form and countenance. It seemed to him that he had seen the face before. The lady was tall, graceful, and very beautiful. He would at any time have been interested in her appearance, but now all interest concentrated upon the impression she made upon his memory of the past.

As Walter advanced, the young lady arose and moved quietly away.

That night was a restless one for Walter. He could not command the forgetfulness of slumber, for the image of the young lady at his mother's grave-side hung about his pillow; but now it was no longer the sinister vision that had haunted so long his footsteps, but a benignant spirit, attuned to him by the sympathy of grief, that would nestle in his bosom.

For weeks after, as he continued daily to visit the grave-yard where reposed the sacred remains of his mother, he would often find there the same young female. He watched her and studied her closely. Everything seemed to indicate that she was drawn to the spot by the genuine sympathy of grief. In that light she grew, in his eyes, inexpressibly lovely, and he longed to have free communion with her soul.

He could restrain himself no longer; and one day, as he found her still by the side of the grave, he walked boldly up and accosted her. As she turned her full eyes upon his, a deep carnation suffusing her face, the strange image that had

so long haunted him seemed blended in hers, and the emotion that seized him sent a tremor throughout his system.

Their acquaintance, however, grew rapidly from this. He felt a deeper and deeper interest in her society. From her lips he learned all the particulars of his mother's illness and death; and they wept over the touching traits of the noble woman that Isadore from time to time narrated. In the end, the beautiful girl gave a truthful account of her family afflictions; her own wanderings; her following the footsteps of Walter, as the only way to gaze upon his loved form; and a confession of her own sacred sentiments. Walter was moved, was touched; and there, in the old grave-yard, over his mother's grave, they plighted their mutual faith.

"Then it is to you, my dear Isadore, that I owe these beautiful records over my mother's tomb."

"I did, indeed, cause their erection," replied Miss Leeland, "but another hand than mine furnished the means."

"A lady whom I once had the good fortune to assist, and who has since proved my greatest of benefactors."

"I should be most happy to know her, then."

"You may, if you will come to-morrow to my house, for she happens just to have arrived, and will depart soon for the West, where she has relatives."

"But I am expecting an old friend of mine from Boston, to-morrow."

"It matters not, bring him along. Any friend of yours shall be welcome."

The next day, Walter with his friend, Capt. Jameson, called at Isadore's. The parties gazed at each other, on being introduced, with mutual surprise. After much delightful embarrassment, the whole truth broke out. The lady was the very same whom Walter had at first rescued from the surf, and the very one who had been imprisoned so long upon the beach with the

Yankee; and, afterward, whom Isadore had saved from falling into protracted illness. Little Adelgitha Radesky was her niece. At the time of her shipwreck, she was making her visit to her brother's, and when Walter encountered her on board the ship that rescued him, she was returning to settle up her affairs preparatory to making her home in the Western world. She was now on her way thither, — and how fortunate the meeting!

"Ah, what treachery have we here," shouted Capt. Jameson. I came in all weathers North, to claim my lady love, and make a bridal tour in my clipper brig, but here I find her in the arms of another. Is this the way you serve a brother mess-mate?" — addressing Walter.

The latter turned, with a gentle bow, to Isadore.

"O no," responded the latter, archly. "A nature so generous as yours needs kindred qualities in a companion. Let me commend you, my dear Capt. Jameson, to my adorable friend, Md'le Radesky. The latter gracefully smiled, and the two entered into lively conversation upon the present state of Poland.

The preliminaries were soon arranged. Walter and Isadore were to wait a year, out of respect to the death of his mother, before their marriage was to be consummated. In the mean time, Capt. Jameson was to make one more voyage, and Md'le was to repair to the West, and bring her niece to witness the ceremony.

Time flew swiftly. It was a joyful day at the old mansion. Relations, friends and neighbors were gathered in joyful congratulation. Maidens and youth attired in their prettiest, and with exultant hopes, were present to view the ceremony. Esq. Langdon appeared, in order to tie the hymeneal knot. At length there entered the room Walter and Isadore, Capt. Howard Jameson and Md'le Sophie Radesky. People could not at

first tell whether the latter couple were only attending companions, or had come really to experience the rosy fate of Walter and his bride. But the Esq. soon cleared up all doubt upon that point, by tying between the gallant captain and his spouse, the endeared knot that knows no untying.

The next day, the entire party, including the beautiful Adelgitha, who was betrothed to an American gentleman, worthy so fair a prize, set out on a bridal tour to the seat of Count Radesky, in Ohio, amid the parting benedictions of friends.

Charles Raymond and Angeline Readcliff had been married six months before.

THE END OF THE FISHER BOY.