



"DO YOU NOT SEE? IT IS HE!"

WHO WAS HE?

A STORY OF TWO LIVES.

BY MRS. M. V. VICTOR.

NEW YORK:
BRADLEY AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS,
118 WILLIAM STREET.

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WHO WAS HE?

CHAPTER I.

THE GREAT FAILURE.

As the ferry-boat Colden moved out of her slip at the foot of Cortlandt street, at ten o'clock of a night in January, a few winters ago, her pilot was compelled to extra vigilance, for the river was full of floating ice. Two boats of the company already were laid up with broken machinery. Trips were, therefore, made with some irregularity, and much more time was consumed in crossing than when the way was clear. The night was cold, but not stormy, and many of the passengers remained on the decks to watch the glitter, and to listen to the crash of the ice. Among these was a young man who leaned over the railing, apparently absorbed in the turmoil beneath him. There was that in the creaking and groaning, the crushing of the drifting masses, and the sullen wash of the waters in keeping with his own mood. The whole world was as chilling and repulsive as that river, to one who was usually full of courage and energy. Ward Tunnecliffe had received two wounds straight in the breast, and on the same day—wounds hard for a proud man to recover from—one dealt at his heart by the woman he loved, and the other at his honor by his partner in business. The firm of Tunnecliffe & Bowen, bankers, was to fail on the morrow, and in such a manner as to cast discredit on its transactions. There was to be ruin, not only of fortune, but of good name.

For this, his brother-in-law, John Bowen, was sorely to blame; but he was a wily man, and Ward knew that all which looked suspiciously bad in the conduct of the firm, would be thrown upon himself.

Burdened with anxiety, he had gone, this evening, to find solace in the presence of his betrothed, as well as to break to her the news of the approaching disaster. He had dreaded this. Indeed, it was the bitterest portion of his trouble, to think that he must grieve and disappoint her, probably defer their union, and cast the first shadow over her girlish brightness. Yet, he had trusted her strength of character as he trusted his own, and would have staked his life on her fidelity. What, then, was his dismay, his astonishment, and more than pain, when, in response to his familiar ring and knock, the servant had announced to him that Miss Arnold was confined to her room by a headache, and would receive no visitors, but had ordered this to be given him if he called—a note—which, as he opened it beneath the hall-lamp, he had found to read:

"MR. TUNNECLIFFE—I desire you to consider our acquaintance at an end. I am ill this afternoon, or I would give you a personal explanation, for I am no coward. If you demand it, it shall be given in a few days.

"MAUD ARNOLD."

The envelop also contained the engagement ring.

This note was now crushed against the young man's heart. He felt the ring hurting him, as he leaned over the

ralling. He had left the house with a blank, lost feeling, thinking that he could not return to his sister's, where he boarded, that he should choke if he shut himself up in his room; and so had walked on and on for miles until he found himself in front of his office in Wall street. The sight of its barred windows was hateful to him, and he had turned away, dimly remembering that he had to see a gentleman in Newark, early in the next day—why not go out there to-night?

So here he was on the ferry-boat, looking into the rush of foam, ice and green water, trying to collect his senses and to become accustomed to his misery. All the honey of his nature turned into gall as he brooded over the conduct of his brother-in-law—"smooth, oily rascal," he called him in his thoughts—and of the girl to whom he had only been engaged three brief weeks, but who already had grown to be the best part of his life. The great wheel of the boat turned slowly round in the groaning ice and his brain turned with it. There was a spot of fire over his heart where the ring pressed against it, but the rest of his body was numb and cold. He had always been a man of strong passions, affectionate but jealous, noble but hasty in conclusions; and now the good died down in him, and the bad rose up and wrestled for the mastery. He did not know that he resolved upon any thing, or wished for any thing, only the wheel of the Golden seemed turning in his brain, which creaked and grew dark and threw out spokes of electric fire. "If the boat would only get to shore!" he dreamed that he should be safe; but its progress was slow, and his brain whirled round with a pain that was unbearable.

The boat was but a little way from the Jersey City slip, and the most of the passengers had left the stern of the boat to go forward, when suddenly the pilot shouted out: "Man overboard!"

The next instant there was a rush to the after-deck, the powerful machinery was checked as quickly as possible, while some brave fellows had off their coats and boots, holding themselves

ready to peril their own lives to rescue this which had been thrown away. But the ice, the foam, the darkness and cold were against them; there was not a glimpse of the object which went down beneath the drift to rise no more.

It was a clear case of suicide. One or two others, besides the pilot, had seen the man jump overboard. No one, however, knew him, or could describe him, there being no light on deck. He had come out of the gentlemen's cabin, at the time deserted, bareheaded, walked quickly to the chains, stepped over and leaped into the river.

As soon as it was quite certain that nothing could be done to aid the unhappy man, the crowd pressed into the cabin to see what discoveries were there to be made. Upon a seat, near the door, lay an overcoat and hat.

"Here! here's his clothes," cried one, catching up the first garment. "Why need a man kill himself with a coat like that?"

The poor fellow who made this remark was shivering in his own thin clothes. Doubtless, physical want was the only kind of suffering which appealed to his sympathies.

"The latest style," murmured an awe-stricken youth behind him.

"Here's a handkerchief."

"And here's his name in his hat. Ward Tunnecliffe."

"The same's on this here hankercher."

"Impossible!" cried some one, in a startled voice. "Why, that's Bowen's brother-in-law. They are bankers, doing well, too. I saw Tunnecliffe in his office to-day. I do believe that is his hat."

Incredulity, consternation, pity, vulgar curiosity, were written upon men's faces, and whispered in their voices. One gentleman had learned that Tunnecliffe & Bowen were going by the board—something dubious about it, too—was afraid their transactions would not bear daylight.

"A hard way to get out of the scrape."

"Don't believe it. It's simply absurd—one of the finest young men in New York!"

"But what did he make way with

hiss, fur then?" and so on, a Babel of comment and bewilderment, until the arrival of the boat compelled the dispersal of the crowd.

The next day New York had the pleasure of a sensation. The failure of Tunnecliffe & Bowen is not yet forgotten in some of its business and social circles. Although the event dates but a very few years back, dishonesty in the conduct of big moneyed affairs was not quite so fashionable as at present.

It seems that the firm had gone aside from its legitimate banking operations into the most daring stock speculations, using the money of depositors in such a manner as, in case of ill-success, to defraud them out of it, while it did not lay the firm open to criminal prosecution. Some of this stock-gambling was of a very reckless character. The firm had also given out a check for forty thousand dollars, to be drawn the day of their failure, upon a city bank in which it had no money deposited. Doubtless it hoped to raise and pay in the money before the bank closed, the previous day; but it had got in such straits as to make this impossible, and three o'clock had found it doomed. It was under the pressure of this unexpected disaster that Ward had flown to his affianced for counsel and sympathy. He knew, only too well, that her father would be one of the heaviest losers; and that Mr. Arnold was a gentleman of the old commercial school, whose ideas of honor in business were of the strictest kind, and who could not tolerate the system upon which the firm had operated. To Maud, and Maud alone, he had intended to confide the fact, that all outside speculations had been conducted by his brother-in-law, against his own convictions of prudence, and in defiance of his advice; and that the last most desperate ventures had been made during his, Ward's, absence from town during a few days of the past week. He had arrived home at noon of that day, only to have Bowen demand of him to raise the forty thousand dollars before the close of banking hours, confessing the predicament in which he had placed the firm. Angry

and astounded, he had hurried out to make the most earnest exertions, and to *fall* in them. He saw ruin coming, and felt, from his recent knowledge of his character, that his smooth, suave relative would contrive to slip the weight of dishonor upon his shoulders who was entirely innocent. Going thus, in the first flush of his trouble to her whose fate he thought bound with his, and being repulsed as he had been, it was not strange that a sort of madness had come upon the young man.

The ruin came, in the worst form. The morning and evening papers had each their share of the news—in the morning, the painful rumor of the suicide of young Tunnecliffe, in the evening, the failure of the firm, with hints of the nature of its transactions as affording a clue to the rash deed.

The indignation of those who suffered loss was tempered with awe at the summary punishment, self-inflicted, by one of the sinners. Even those who lost most heavily could not deny that they had always liked and respected Tunnecliffe; and they wished, most heartily, that he had not thus rashly thrown himself beyond their forgiveness and his own redemption.

Succeeding days confirmed the worst rumors. The firm had failed in a very disgraceful manner. Some of the losers would have dealt with John Bowen in a summary way; but he, bowed down with grief and regret, was in such deep affliction at loss of his brother-in-law, while yet he made so apparent that the dead man had been the only guilty party, that compassion began to take the place of wrath. Before a week had fled there were those who spoke of setting him on his feet again.

If Ward Tunnecliffe, before committing the fatal act, could have, with a seer's eye, perused the newspapers for the month succeeding his death, their contents would have deterred him from any such rashness. Were his spirit, in its present abode, cognizant of the comments made in public and private, by friend and foe, it must have suffered a great change from its earthly nature, if

it did not chafe with a terrible vexation. It seemed as if every event of his life was dragged into view, besides deeds attributed to him to which he had no claim—even as the river was dragged for his body, and his friends summoned several times to witness dreadful, disfigured corpses which were not his—for his body was never found. Not that these comments were unfavorable—generally he was spoken of with pity, and his general character admired, while his first great fault was condemned, yet palliated. But to the proud and reticent this very pity is galling; then, too, his sister's name did not escape some public remark; her unbridled extravagance, the style of her living, and her influence upon the firm, were two or three times very plainly referred to.

One fact, however, did entirely escape the Argus-eyes of gossip—the engagement between the young gentleman and Miss Arnold. As we have said, it had been secretly entered into, and, at the time of the catastrophe, was known only to Maud's parents and Mr. and Mrs. Bowen.

Upon one heart only lay the horrible consciousness that the world at large knew not the true motive of the suicide.

CHAPTER II.

SOME OF ITS CONSEQUENCES.

THERE was another person who broke all the little heart she had in a wild burst of remorse and sorrow, when the news came to her, coupled with the knowledge of her husband's failure in business. It seemed too much for one empty, foolish little brain to bear, and for a time the attendants upon Mrs. Bowen were afraid that her reason would give way, as her wild shrieks filled the house, alternating with bursts of hysterical laughter.

Susie Tunnecliffe had been her brother's pet and idol from her cradle. He had been father, mother, and all to her, since the death of their parents when she was twelve years of age. Not knowing what else to do with her, he had sent her to

the finest boarding-school to be found, and she had come out of it stylish, pretty, "perfectly charming." He was as proud of her as he was fond; he felt that she was vain, and a little selfish, but that was because she had no mother to extirpate these weeds from her character. That she should be absorbingly fond of dress, setting more value upon a new ornament than upon any other gift he could make her, he set down to her being a woman. For Ward was one of those men, himself a hard worker, earnest in his purposes, of keen intellect, who set aside every thing feminine at one fell swoop, as useless and charming. At least such *had* been his impressions until he met the young girl who taught him that somewhere in his breast had slumbered a far loftier ideal of woman.

The brother, then, had taken it as a matter of course, that Susie should be idle and exacting, insatiable in her pretty requests for pocket-money, and only capable of exertion when a ball was in prospect, or some other girl to be outshone. Fair as a lily, petite, with bright, innocent blue eyes, and glistening locks of the most lovely pale-gold hair, no one could dream of any thing worldly or selfish about such a sprite or seraph. To Ward she always appeared as a gay child, even after her marriage. Yet, fairy-like as she was, she was the essence of worldliness, from her passion for chocolate bon-bons to her affection for the brother and husband who always supplied her so generously.

She was a suitable wife for John Bowen. He was hard, plausible and ambitious, wanting a wife to be vain of, who should excite envy and spend to advantage the money he was quite willing to give her, provided he knew where to get it. Ward had never esteemed his brother-in-law as a friend or companion, their minds being of a different stamp, but he had respected his sagacity in business and believed him an honorable man. And so, perhaps, he had been, at the start. But let a man once begin gambling on Wall street, and have a pretty wife at home to make the most brilliant uses of a splendid income; let

him see others doubling and re-doubling their thousands in a month, and their wives and daughters moving into broader stone-fronts and going oftener to Tiffany's, and let himself have a taste for a ten-thousand-dollar horse and a quiet trot in the park after three o'clock of a nice afternoon, and the risks will grow greater and less prudent, until it seems but a small matter more when honor comes at last to go with the rest.

There had been some high words at the dinner-table of the Bowens the afternoon preceding the failure. When the dread hour of closing had arrived without the forty thousand dollars having been raised, the two gentlemen, each of them pale and silent, had entered the carriage waiting for them, with sensations quite different from those with which they usually viewed the handsome establishment, with its coal-black horses, silver trappings, and sable, white-gloved coachman. Neither had spoken on the homeward way; but when the long dinner hour had dragged itself by, with course after course of costly dishes, and Mrs. Bowen looking so happy and well-dressed, presiding over the dainty dessert, had come to the coffee, Bowen had dismissed the servants with a gesture, and spoke up, with forced gayety:

"Don't starve yourself to death, Ward. You haven't tasted a mouthful. At least, have a cup of coffee. I tell you we must begin again. We are young men, yet; and I mean, in a year from now, to be as prosperous as ever."

"I hope you're not sick, Ward," chimed in Mrs. Bowen, "for I know Maud expects you at the Academy to-night. And I want you to see me in my new dress—it arrived this morning by the Persia. There isn't one like it in New York?" She had been chattering, all through dinner, about the promenade at the Academy that night, and her wonderful dress, while her companions had not the courage to check her. Seeing that Bowen still said nothing, only playing uneasily with his fork—Ward burst forth with the indignation which had been growing within him, ever since morning.

"Why don't you tell her, John, if

you're a man, what she has got to expect? You will go to no ball this night, Susie—and never again, if you have the pride of a Tunnecliffe. We are beggars—and worse than that, let me tell you! I don't care for the beggary, but I do care for the dishonor. To-morrow the names of Tunnecliffe and Bowen will be *disgraced*. You will have creditors pawing over your new clothes and your jewels, Susie, and carrying off your silver forks before your eyes, in less than a week. But that is *nothing*. John has disgraced us, sister; he has done business as no honest man would have done it."

"That is false," retorted suave John Bowen, growing a little white, but not further resenting the words. "We are both in the same boat, Ward, and I'm no more to blame than you are. I expected you would bring the money to-day; I had every reason to expect it. I think you might have broken the news a little more gently to Susie—she's not strong."

Ward glanced pityingly at his sister's frightened face, the lips quivering like those of a child's about to cry.

"I should never have placed her in such a position, John Bowen. If I had known you for the scoundrel you are, I would never have given her to you."

With that, poor little Susie had sprung up and stamped her foot on the floor, her blue eyes flashing with a fire they were quite capable of, when she was angry.

"You shall not speak so of John, before me, if you are my brother. I don't know what either of you are talking of; but if there's any one to blame about any thing, I shall think it is *you*, Ward. I wish you would leave my house, sir, talking in this shameful way about beggars and failure. What does it all mean, John?"

"It means, Madame Bowen, that our firm fails to-morrow—a bad failure, too—I'm afraid every thing must go."

He said this with his usual selfish coolness; he did not feel a tithe of the sympathy with the distress and surprise of his wife, that her brother did; but she, with her usual meaningless way, turning upon some one, unable to distinguish

friend from foe, again gave battle to Ward.

"And you dare to come and tell me this, Ward Tannecliffe. It's your fault, I know it is. John has often told me that you did not know as much as a child about business, and now you've dragged us down, too. I'll never forgive you."

"I don't want you to forgive me, sister; but you are a woman, now, capable of bearing a little truth, and I'll tell you this, before I go, which I ought to have said sooner. You have your full share in the responsibility and the crime. A woman who thinks of nothing but outshining her friends—who regards husband and brother only in the light of money-getters—who hounds them on, constantly, in the chase for wealth, ignoring every thing that ought to be sacred—crying always like the leech, 'give! give!' can not be held guiltless, when her husband loses his rectitude, gives up his honor in the mad race. You will now enjoy the fruits of your folly. I warn you both that I will not be blamed by either of you, for this disaster. Thank God, there is a woman in this world, whose soul is not sold to the devil of display. I will see what she says about it."

As he paused, Ward snatched up his hat, which he had worn into the dining-room in his excitement, and went out, as we know, to seek an interview with Maud Arnold—and that was the last his sister saw of him. It was not a pleasant parting to hold in remembrance as the final one.

There had been another scene between the husband and wife, after Ward's exit, in which he took all her reproaches and hysterics with that soothing, imperturbable manner, which finally had the effect to quiet her down, so that she went to her chamber in quite a resigned mood. But here a sight met her eyes which brought home to her very soul all that that dreadful word—failure—meant. It was not a look into the crib where her only child was sleeping, a boy of two years, who was named after her brother, and who lay smiling in his infantile dreams—it was not this which moved her. There, upon

the great French bed, spread out to display every fold of its beauty, lay the newly-arrived dress from Paris—an emerald-green moire-antique, trimmed with point-lace, and to be worn with a set of shimmering pearls—a costume which would have made a very sea-sprite out of its fair owner, with her delicate complexion and pale-gold hair.

Not to wear a toilette like this was misery indeed! and Mrs. Bowen felt it so, as she burst anew into tears. But we will not mock the poor little lady. As she had been educated, so she was; and the trial which the morrow brought to her, was of a character to enlist real sympathy. For a time, the wing of the butterfly drooped. In that great shock of death, in that trembling waiting for some tidings of the corpse, in that remorse for the unkind words which had been the last to him, her brother, so kind to her always, so handsome, so much better than other men, she was miserable enough. She took comfort in her black dress, and was anxious to get all the baubles which were no longer hers out of sight. They gave up their house, furniture and carriage, and Mr. Bowen hurried his wife off to visit some relatives in a neighboring city.

He did not wish to be disturbed by any grief or complaint of hers; he was bent upon retrieving his fortunes. As for any sense of dishonor, which would so have tortured some men, it rolled off his sleek mind like water off a duck's back. He faced his fellows boldly, regretted, in undertones, the reckless way his brother had managed affairs; and took hold with such energy of new enterprises; that even those who had suffered by him were ready to lend him a helping hand. But there was ever present with him a shadow he would have given much to banish—the ghost of one whom he had driven out of the world, and whom he was still wronging, by innuendo, every day of his life. Had he known that another conscience shared this blame with him it would have been some relief; yet it shows the nature of the man, that, while he often started and shivered as at some unseen touch, he could not

refrain from taking advantage of Ward's inability to defend himself, by casting the dishonor upon him.

CHAPTER III.

A MAN OF ANOTHER TYPE.

THE same winter of the failure of Tannecliffe & Bowen, perhaps a month later in the season, a workman, by the name of David Duncan, presented himself at the immense cabinet manufactory of Smith & Bardell, situated near the East River, in the extreme upper part of the city, and asked for employment. He had no references—in fact, he said that he had just come over, though he had observed a piece of work done by his own hands, in their show rooms on Broadway. The inlaid work of the beautiful writing-desk which they had purchased at the late sale of the effects of John Bowen, had been done by himself in Paris, where Mrs. Bowen had obtained it. He had recognized it the moment he saw it. The superintendent, very glad indeed to obtain such a workman, yet eyed the applicant with curiosity if not suspicion; he was different in manner and words, from the majority who applied—a tall, athletic-looking fellow, with plenty of dark hair and beard growing unshorn about his face, with an air quite different from that of an artisan; and with a brown complexion which spoke more of a warm climate than of a rough life. His piercing eye met his employer's on equal terms; there was something peculiar about him, and yet he inspired confidence, for he seemed afraid of nothing, even a refusal.

"Your name is Scotch?" remarked the overseer.

"It is; but I am American, as I should think you might see. However, I have wandered about a good deal. I learned my trade in Paris. I was thought, there, to have uncommon skill. I like the work, and try to do my best, to please my own taste. I make most of my own designs in mosaic work; I have some with me now."

He produced a roll of papers, showing some exquisite designs for small pieces of ornamental furniture, novel in their shape and beautiful in the detail of the work.

"If I do superior work, I shall expect a good price."

"There will be no quarrel about that," said the overseer, who had made up his mind that no other shop should have a chance to secure this desirable person.

David Duncan was employed at excellent wages, to do the most delicate and costly work. There was a crowd of artisans in the great manufactory, and dozens engaged upon that particular branch in which Duncan excelled; he worked in a room with several others, except a little closet which he had to himself, where he was accustomed to finish off some of his finest pieces. He was on good terms with all his fellows, but intimate with none. They liked him, yet were afraid of him; there was a fire in his eye and a latent power in his quiet manner, which warned them not to provoke him; his satire was such as they did not like to cope with, quite different from their own coarse wit. It was all because he had been over the world so much they thought. Sometimes they called him a tinker, on account of his wandering propensities, and rallied him on being a Frenchman because he wore a glittering ring on his little finger. Such jests he bore with good-nature; he was patient with them, too, in instructing them in any superior manner of working which he had acquired abroad, and he would tell them amusing stories, which were entertaining, without being vulgar. They liked him, though they got angry with him for refusing to associate with them outside the shop. The more he excited their envy and curiosity the more they were determined to pry into his past life; they asked him if he had left a wife in a foreign country, if he had any children, where he hid himself of nights, etc.

"You all know my boarding-place, boys," he said to them. "It's respectable, I believe. If any of you like to come to see me there, I shall be glad to see you."

Some of them did go to his quiet lodgings, where they always found him either reading, or at work upon some little article, which he made and sold, at good prices, to dealers in fancy articles.

"You'll get rich, if you work evenings and spend nothing. You don't even seem to smoke a pipe, or have any fun."

"I enjoy myself in my own way," replied David, and as it was a way with which they had not much sympathy, they presently let him alone, which was just what he desired.

Quiet and excellent as the general tenor of his life seemed to be, there were irregularities in the habits of David Duncan which gave the good widow with whom he boarded, much uneasiness. He was sometimes out very late at night, long after the places of public amusement were closed. As the weeks rolled on into spring, and toward summer, these absences became more frequent. She was much puzzled as to what it could be which was getting the young man into this bad habit—his breath never smelled of liquor, he never betrayed the flush or lassitude of dissipation, was always up and ready for his early breakfast, showing no other signs of his late hours than a little paleness and a moroseness quite frightful to the timid woman.

"Whatsomever he may be about, there's suthin' on his mind, I know. He gets thinner every day, I'm sartin, though he lets his hair and beard grow so wild a person can't tell whether he's thin or not. It's an outlandish way; but I s'pose he learned it in furrin parts. He'll be down sick one of these days, with that trouble on his mind, and if he does, it'll be the last of him, for he's one of the kind that don't break easy, but go all at once when they do break," she mused.

Duncan would have been surprised had he heard this prediction. He was not aware how the slow fever which preyed upon him was wasting his vital energies; he only felt restless and strong, unable to keep quiet, with occasional times of dullness, when a novel weakness would come over him.

Night after night, until finally it came

to be almost every night, he would leave the house soon after supper, take a car down to about Twentieth street, then disembark, and begin his evening's employment. He was playing the part of spy; whether in his own interest or that of another person, it is certain that one who little suspected it was under his surveillance. A young Baltimorean was stopping at the New York Hotel. He had been boarding there since early in the previous winter; his name was Reginald Mugby Randolph; like all southern gentlemen he belonged to one of the first families; his mother was a Mugby, his father a Randolph; the latter was one of the leading lawyers in Baltimore, and owned large plantations in that State, and also in the far south, being as wealthy as he was aristocratic.

With such antecedents, and plenty of pocket-money, young Randolph had come to New York to spend a season, before settling down in his native city as a partner with his father. Of course he was much noticed and a favored guest in many of our best houses. Small, slender, with insignificant features and a sallow complexion, there was not much in his personal appearance to recommend him, while his mind was well-fitted to his body. He had been pushed through college, and his manners were unexceptional, except a slight touch of insolence inseparable from his bringing-up; he had a tolerable ear for music, and could criticise an opera; was a judge of horses and wines, and deferential in his manner to those women who happened to be beautiful and stylish. These accomplishments about exhausted his capacity. Our delicate belles thought him a darling and their mothers did not dispute the belief.

It was this gentleman whom the cabinet-maker had under his espionage. He knew, almost to a dot, how many thousand young Randolph had lost in betting and gambling; he knew where he spent his evenings and his nights, to what lady he sent the most numerous bouquets, what were his peccadilloes, and his worse vices, and finally, upon what plan he had set his heart. It was

known to all who were interested in either party that Mr. Randolph was paying his attentions to Miss Arnold; and, as the spring rolled by, and he still lingered, loth to leave, it became generally understood that the two were, or soon would be, engaged. All the other young ladies withdrew their hopes, as his devotion became so marked as to show that he was quite willing it should be understood. He had met Miss Arnold some time before Christmas, and had admired her from the first. Ward Tunnecliffe, with his searching observation quickened by the natural jealousy of his temperament, had been the first to observe this incipient passion, and his own declaration had been hastened by a fear that a suitor so eligible might flatter Maud away from him. Even after she had accepted him, and he had read love in her eyes, and heard it in her voice, and felt it in the rush of their two souls together, he had been a little jealous of the brilliant stranger—brilliant in the array of his wealth and connections, but immeasurably his inferior in manliness. Only a few days before the catastrophe, when he had called on his betrothed in the morning, to say good-by, before going off on his little journey, he had been vexed and disturbed because a bouquet had come in with Mr. Randolph's compliments, and Maud had blushed at receiving it.

No doubt, his fiery spirit, when he received that note from Maud, leaped to quick conclusions about her and this rival of his, and it may have been jealousy even more than despair, which drove him to the last extremity. Of course, being of the same sex as his sister Susie, Maud would leave a ruined man for one who could offer such inducements as this Randolph!

There had been a total severance of the houses of Bowen and Arnold since the failure. Mr. Arnold, indignant at the course pursued by the firm, and angry at his own heavy losses, had given Mr. Bowen the cut direct, and desired his family to have nothing further to do with theirs. He was sorry and shocked that young Tunnecliffe had

committed suicide, and for some days was very anxious about his daughter, who was ill in bed, and from whom the news was kept until she was again in her usual health. Knowing that the blow must fall, sooner or later, when she seemed quite well, he began, gently, to break the news to her.

"Don't talk to me about Mr. Tunnecliffe, father," she had said, "I am not at all interested in him any more. I learned something about him that I did not like, and I broke off our engagement before I heard of the failure. I'm sorry you've lost by them, father; but I assure you, I have been deceived in my sentiments toward Ward."

"You are certain that you did not really love him, then?" queried Mr. Arnold with an eagerness that was almost joyful.

"If I did once, I do not now."

"I am glad to hear this, my darling. I have been afraid to break the bad news to you. I can not tell how much I am relieved to think my daughter will not be blasted in her young hopes by this catastrophe. But it is very sad, Maud; and I am afraid it will shock you terribly, for all."

He was himself so agitated, that he did not notice the sharp tone in which she cried:

"What is it, father? I can bear it."

"Poor Ward committed suicide the night before the failure, Maud. He jumped into the river off one of the ferry-boats, and he never—" He was brought to a stop in his narration by a cry from Maud:

"I am his murderer, father—I feel that I am!" and clutching at her throat, as if she, too, were drowning, she fainted.

After that, she was ill for two or three weeks; but as she had been sick at the time of the tragedy, and this relapse did not seem at all connected with it, no one, aside from her parents, suspected the nature of her malady. During her confinement to her room, flowers and messages came daily from Mr. Randolph, and as soon as permitted, he called to congratulate her upon her convalescence.

Her parents, with natural solicitude, forced her to go out more than ever before in her life. By keeping her constantly surrounded with gayety, and in a round of pleasure, they expected to divert her mind from what appeared to them like a morbid sensitiveness with regard to her share in the death of Ward. She never told them how cold and curt was the note which had informed him of her desire to break the engagement, and that she had given him no reason for such a step. She had cause to feel remorse, more than they knew of, and it gnawed at the sources of her life, while they thought her successful in the effort to forget the past. She did not resist their efforts to keep her in society; she gave more attention to her toilet, was more complaisant to her dressmaker, more willing to go out to operas, concerts, Germans, receptions, than ever before—for when she was alone she suffered to an extent which drove her into any company, any occupation which could divert her.

But, to return to the cabinet-maker, who has nothing better to do with his nights than to spend them in spying out the actions of another man. It was a warm evening early in June; one of those oppressive "heated terms," which sometimes come in the first of summer. All the front windows of a house on Madison square were open, as they were in those of most of the neighboring mansions. The birds of fashion had not yet taken their flight, and the square was quite gay with the light streaming from handsome parlors, showing glimpses of rich curtains, costly panels and brightly-framed pictures. In this particular house, a woman was singing. A workman, passing, paused, as if attracted by the music; the voice was a sweet one, and the piano accompaniment deliciously played; David Duncan might be a judge of music, as well as an artisan, for he leaned against a tree which bordered the sidewalk, as much in the shade as he could get, and there remained motionless while the song went on. As usual, the mansion was built with a high basement, and he

could not see into the room where the singer was, except the upper portion of it. For some moments after the last note of the song ceased he remained in the same attitude. He had heard that song, often, and under different circumstances from this; and it had a power over him now, which he could not shake off, wrestle with it as he might. Presently some one came to the window. It was a young lady, and the full light of a street-lamp on the square fell upon her face. She did not observe the man standing in the shadow of the tree, and, as the night was warm, and the street quiet, she remained some time, leaning her head against the casement, as if weary.

Her soft muslin robe fell about her person in waves of beauty; the face was a noble one, with dark eyes and a white brow, whose regal lines were softened by the full sweetness of the mouth and the delicacy of the oval chin. After a long gaze at the sky, she sighed heavily, and as her eyes fell, becoming more accustomed to the darkness, she saw the man under the tree, motionless, staring at her. Her first impulse was to start back and close the shutter, but being courageous and the hour early, she remained looking at him. A strange feeling came over her, she pressed her hand to her heart; but when the sudden dimness passed from her sight, the man was walking rapidly away.

"How foolish I am," she thought, trying to laugh at herself, "it is one of Margaret's many admirers, no doubt, staring in at the basement window, waiting for a glimpse of his sweetheart, or an invitation into the kitchen."

While she was still thinking of the fellow, or rather of the curious impression he had made upon her, another step echoed along the pavement, and the young lady withdrew from the window, as she saw a gentleman coming up the steps.

"I wish he had stayed away," she said, "mamma is out, and I shall have to receive him alone. If he had not seen me at the window, I would not be at home."

Her face was not particularly animated in expression as she turned to receive her visitor, who was evidently as pleased to find her alone, as she was annoyed to be so found.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Miss Arnold," he said, with a bright smile.

"Did you call in the hope that we were already gone, and you should be saved the trouble of making your adieux?"

She gave him a seat on the sofa, and herself took one at some distance.

"Satirical, as usual; always a sting in the honey. You know what I mean, Miss Arnold—that I scarcely dared hope to find you *alone*, and yet I wished it. You go away so soon, now, and I can not part from you, even for a few days, without saying what has been so constantly in my thoughts."

He arose, took a chair, and placed it near to hers. His eyes were sparkling, his face smiling and confident; he would not see that she took on a look of reserve and hauteur; that she was resolved the conversation should not blossom into an open declaration.

"You will be in Newport by the first of July, will you not, Mr. Randolph?"

"I hope so. I certainly shall, if there is any inducement that way. Only one thing can keep me absent even so long as that, and I will not make myself miserable by fearing that."

Now if the lady had wished to lead him on, she would have asked, after the innocent manner of women, under such circumstances, "What can that one thing be? I can not imagine."

Miss Arnold said nothing of the kind; she glanced uneasily toward the piano, asking:

"Did you bring the music you were speaking of, Mr. Randolph?"

"Yes, it is here. I could forget nothing which is associated with *you*. Will you try it now?"

"By all means; but I am afraid I shall not like it as much as you profess to. Our tastes differ very much, you know."

She was glad to get to the piano; she felt what was coming, and was determined to prevent it. If she could divert him with the music for a time,

other visitors might come in. It was painful to her to humiliate any one, and she knew that if he persisted in saying too much, she would be compelled to humiliate Mr. Randolph—further than that, she did not fancy the injury would go. He believed himself an eligible *parti*, and herself another, and that the two would make a most becoming match. Everybody thought so, her own parents, along with the rest of the world. She differed from them all; it was a brilliant catch, to be sure, and since she never expected to marry for love, she ought to gratify her friends by securing it; but she felt toward this man something worse than indifference. There was something about him which she did not trust; she despised his intellect, and she had no faith in his moral qualities. If he had been a good man, she might have submitted to what seemed the current of her fate; as it was, she struggled against it. That shallow, glittering smile played over dark waters; she did not like Mr. Randolph's sparkling eye, nor his small white teeth, nor the glimpse she occasionally had of his habit of regarding things which to her were sacred.

The young gentleman liked the change to the piano as well as Miss Maud herself; she had chilled him, despite his egotism, as he sat there before her; but now he could lean over her shoulder, and in the pauses of the playing make out to say what he was determined should be no longer deferred.

Unwittingly, Maud had placed herself at a disadvantage; she tried the new opera, and they talked about it carelessly; but, before she could arm herself against it, a firm hand clasped her own, a warm breath was on her cheek, and the words she had dreaded were poured into her ear—words passionate enough, full of southern fervor, and urged with the will of one not accustomed to giving up that which he coveted.

Miss Arnold was more moved than she had thought to be; her voice trembled as she said:

"Why did you take me so by surprise, Mr. Randolph? I would have spared you the pain of telling you I

must refuse the honor you have done me. I feel it to be an honor, and am grateful; but I can not—ever—be your wife."

"And why, pray?" he whispered, growing white with anger, for she had spoken in a decisive tone, despite the tremble of sympathy. "It is late for you to tell me this; I have had no reason to expect such an answer. I gained your father's permission this afternoon to speak with you."

"I know my parents favor you, and would be pleased. I have nothing against you, Mr. Randolph, except that I do not love you, nor believe that we would live happily together. I tried to avoid this interview," she added, gently.

"I do not believe it. You brought me to your feet only to mortify me; I shall not endure it. You *shall* not refuse me." There was something more fierce in his low voice than as if he had spoken aloud; it only served to show Maud what she had suspected, that his temper was fiery and ill-controlled.

"I shall use my own judgment, I presume. Do not forget yourself, Mr. Randolph, and please say no more on this subject. I would rather part with you in a friendly manner."

"We can not be friends," he exclaimed, his black eyes glittering, "we must be more than that—or enemies. I know why you refuse me. You still mourn for a man who died publicly disgraced. I know what the relations between you were; I thought you had more pride, Miss Arnold. I warn you, it is dangerous to play with fire. You have played with me—lured me on, and now you shall accept me, whether you like me or not."

"This is strange talk for a gentleman. I can not hear more of it. I must say good-night, and if we are to meet again as acquaintances, it will be after you have apologized."

"Good-night, Miss Arnold. Remember, I do not withdraw my suit. You will accept me yet. When I have set my heart on a thing, I never give it up. You will see me in Newport."

He made her a courtly bow, but his face was pale, and its expression one

that made her nervous despite of herself. She felt afraid of him, smiling at herself for the folly of the thing, for how could *he* hurt *her*?"

"If my parents could have witnessed this exhibition of temper, they would not annoy me by favoring his suit," she thought. The parlors were no longer pleasant to her, and she went up to her own room, glad that the trial—since it must come—was over.

Mr. Randolph had not said the truth when he asserted that she encouraged him. She had received his flowers, compliments, and his thousand attentions, as she had those of other young men, and if she had seemed to favor him more, it was because he had pressed his services upon her in such a way that she could hardly reject them.

Before Maud left her chamber, the following morning, her maid brought in her letters, among which was the following:

"Is Miss Arnold aware that a certain vessel is sailing under false colors? The real Reginald Randolph is with his father in Baltimore. The one now in New York is a cousin, who has already played the family some dangerous tricks. His name is the same, but the most of his representations are false. He has no means, except such as they are pleased to give him, having already squandered all that he inherited from his father. His habits are bad; the money which he spends here, he gains mostly by gambling, the rich young men, who are flattered by his patronage, falling easy victims to his skill. If Miss Arnold is sufficiently interested she can obtain all the information necessary, by writing to B. Randolph, Esq., Baltimore."

Again a singular thrill, like that which she had felt when she saw the still figure under the trees, agitated her. It was not the contents of the letter which disturbed her; she was too really indifferent toward Mr. Randolph to care whether he were what was represented or not. She could not explain to herself what it was. The most prosaic and the most coldly philosophic of people have moments when they are depressed or exhilarated by influences which are intangible. Maud held the letter a long time in her hand, and then laid it carefully away.

CHAPTER IV.

A BAUBLE.

DAVID DUNCAN was busy in his little private work-rooms, putting the finishing touches to a ladies' dressing-case. It was a neat and elaborate article, and he bent over it as affectionately as an artist over his picture, or a mother over her baby. No prettier toy of the kind could have been found in Paris or Geneva. A knock at his door interrupted him; one of the partners of the firm, Mr. Smith, came in, followed by a gentleman, the sight of whom caused the workman a momentary shock. Involuntarily he pulled his straw hat further down on his forehead.

"Have you finished that dressing-case, Duncan?"

"Very nearly, sir."

"Well, this gentleman was looking at those we have down-town in the show-rooms. He wants something extra. None of those pleased him exactly. I was afraid he would go to Ball and Black's, and get some of those foreign nick-nacks; so I told him about this you were getting up, if he was a-mind to wait a day or two. He said he should be driving to the Park this afternoon, and he would turn out, and take a look at it. Here's the case, Mr. Randolph; I think you'll own it's a beauty."

Duncan stood aside while the two examined the box.

"It's the prettiest thing I ever saw," was the comment of the young gentleman. "I had no idea such work could be done in this country;" and he coolly scrutinized the workman, through his eye-glass, as if he was as legitimate an object of curiosity as his dressing-case.

"Duncan learned his trade in France," said Mr. Smith.

"Aw!" politely responded the Southerner, for something in the steady eye of the "mud-sill" had caused him to drop his glass; "that accounts for it. But you don't mean to say," quite respectfully to Duncan, "that you painted this little gem of a picture on the cover?"

"I painted it. It is from a sketch which I made, last fall, while I was on a little trip up the Hudson."

"Aw! is it possible? You may not know it, but I assure you, you are a genius. You ought to leave cabinet-work and take to landscape-painting. I'd give a hundred dollars for that little picture, if it was on canvas or paper, and it's only four by five inches."

"Indeed!" said Duncan, quietly—his employer was much the most pleased of the two; he began to see that he had a wonderful fellow in his service, who could make money for him, and he prized him accordingly; he grew very affable about the case, raising the price, which had not been given, in his own mind.

Duncan took up a bit of ebony and begun another piece of work, as if the two were already gone.

The young gentleman examined the amber-satin linings, the silver key and mountings, the costly finishing, finally agreeing to give eight hundred for the case, which was to be sent, the next day, to his rooms at the New York hotel, when he would give his check for the amount.

"Be sure that you admit of no delay in finishing it," he said; "it is for a lady who leaves, the very next day, for Newport, and I wish her to receive it to-morrow evening."

"A betrothal present, perhaps?" remarked Duncan, with a smile.

"It may even be so," was the gay answer; "nothing more natural," and the graceful Southerner switched his boot with his riding-whip, and looked a great deal more self-satisfied than he felt.

"It would be the most natural thing in the world," said the artisan. There was something in his voice and the curl of his lip which attracted the remark of the young gentleman; he was not disposed to patronize that class of fellows, but this one had really something peculiar about him, and he condescended to ask:

"What is it, so natural?"

"For a rich young man, who can afford it, to want to marry a beautiful woman. And for the beautiful woman to want to marry the rich young man."

"These girls take devilish queer

streaks, though, sometimes," said the gentleman discontentedly; then remembering whom he was speaking before, added: "Not that they ever tease me with their humors. I don't think the money ought to be all on one side, either; I've never seen the woman so pretty that she could please me without she had plenty of cash. I like the English style of making settlements—then a man knows what he has to expect."

"A man," said Duncan, under his breath—"a puppy, you mean."

"What did you remark, fellow?"

"He was speaking about my dog," hastily said the head of the house, pulling the ear of that animal, and glancing angrily at his workman. "I'm glad you like the dressing-case so well, Mr. Randolph. I think, myself, that the young lady who gets it, whoever she is, will find it irresistible—it'll take her by storm, I'm sure."

"No matter about the young lady," said the purchaser, getting back upon his dignity; but at that moment he noticed a ring which the workman wore on his little finger, and a covetous light glittered in his black eyes.

"If you don't object, I'd like to examine that stone you wear. Did you pick it up in Paris? I don't see how you can afford to wear such a ring as that, my man."

"I got it, in the course of my wanderings."

"Stole it, of course," was the mental comment of the young gentleman, while he said aloud, "That's a stone of the first water—really a remarkably fine diamond. It looks well as a solitaire. It would make a beautiful ring with which to bind a lady's faith—eh? Upon my word, it just suits me. Perhaps you don't know the value of it. I would willingly give you three hundred dollars for it."

"It's not for sale."

"But three hundred dollars is quite a sum, my friend. You might furnish up a little cottage for it."

"How would you pay me?" suddenly asked Duncan, looking straight in the other's eyes. "In a check on a bank in Baltimore?"

The stranger's eyes fell, but he regained his calmness.

"Oh, as to that, any way you choose. Perhaps you play," he added, in a whisper. "If so, I will stake you five hundred against your ring, to-night, at Pugg's. What say?"

"I do play, sometimes; but not at your game. I shan't part with the ring at any price."

The Southerner turned angrily away. If he wanted a workman's diamond ring, he thought it insolent of the fellow not to let him have it. To have got this jewel for half its real value, and added it to the contents of the dressing-case, would have pleased him much.

"Be certain, sir, to deliver the case to-morrow noon," he said to Mr. Smith, and presently was on his way to the Park.

It may be conjectured from this that Mr. Reginald Randolph was not discouraged with the rebuff he had received from the young lady whose fortune he had resolved should mend his broken one.

To "storm her," as the cabinet-dealer had metaphorically phrased it, with costly gifts and persistent attentions, paid in such a way that she could not entirely reject them, must ultimately bring her to terms. Whether these presents were ever paid for, must be the lookout of those from whom he obtained them. His credit was good, for he boarded at the New York hotel, and was always expecting remittances from the South.

Mr. Smith had followed his valuable customer to the door, and Duncan was left with his work before him. Now that the gentleman was out of sight, some strong passion, which he had repressed until his sinewy, slender hands were in a quiver, took a more violent expression. He paced back and forth through his little shop, like a caged panther, muttering,

"If he had stayed one minute longer, I believe I should have shaken him to pieces."

When he had partially worked down his excitement, he sat on the high stool before his table, and drew the box toward him, leaning his head on his hand,

and gazing at the little picture on the lid.

"Who would have thought the box would have fallen into *her* hands? She has the first little sketch of this picture. It was made on the day of that excursion. She admired it, and would have it. Poor Ward Tunnecliffe! How happy he was that day. He did not foresee what a year would bring forth. How proud he was of the preference of that young girl—and how modestly she betrayed it! He felt himself a better man on account of it, I dare say. It was a proof of his own nobility that *she* should favor him! Oh, yes! What a pity that he can not see what a high-minded suitor she has chosen, as soon as he was out of the way. It would increase the evidence of her fine intuitions in such matters! Poor Ward! 'Whom the gods love die young'—or kill themselves. It would be bad for him to return, were such a thing possible, to this world, which he leaped out of so readily. Even his golden-haired sister is beginning to emerge, like a mermaid, from her weeds; and his little nephew, his namesake, has quite forgotten him, no doubt. His brother don't need him in the kind of business *he* is going into, and his lady-love—ay, there's the rub! Stay where you are, Ward Tunnecliffe, and ask no questions of the last arrival from our little earth. The circles have closed over your head, and were you to come back, you would have to look about for another sphere of action. Yes, yes! yours was the true wisdom. I will doubt it no more."

With this, he shook off whatever of his late mood still lingered, took up his dainty tools, whistling softly a gay little tune.

"I've half a mind to put Ward's initials in a corner of the picture, just to give her a little pleasant surprise," he whispered, presently. "But why should I prick a fashionable woman's conscience, even with a pin? It is made of vulcanized rubber, and is quite insensible. Let her mate with whom she will! 'Birds of a feather flock together.'"

An hour later, the dressing-case was

quite complete. He turned the tiny key in the lock, and pushed it away from him with a bitter smile.

"She won't keep it long, after that letter which was sent her—at least, if she has common prudence. I suppose I ought not to have meddled; but I could not see her going to utter destruction. She might have married a fool, in welcome; but I could not—quite—let her rush into such trouble without warning. The responsibility is off my shoulders, now. Nothing to me—I know it. But Ward Tunnecliffe loved her once."

CHAPTER V.

ON THE BEACH.

MISS ARNOLD was engrossed in the great duty of seeing that her trunks were properly packed, when a package was brought to her chamber by a servant, who said that it had been delivered by the city express. Taking off the various wrappings, she saw the dressing-case of which the reader has already heard.

"Oh, how beautiful! *charmante!* That must have come from Monsieur Randolph," cried her maid. "No one else knows how to send such beautiful gifts."

Her mistress did not heed this little excitement; she had been on her knees when she uncovered the box, and she now sat on the floor, holding it in her lap, gazing, with a pale face, at the picture on the lid.

"It is the same—the very same! This looks like a French article, and yet it can not be, for the sketch was only taken last fall. No doubt it is a favorite subject with artists. That must be the reason why I see it here. Yet they are so alike—it is certainly a remarkable coincidence. And that it should have been sent to me! I wonder who—" Here she just began to show some curiosity as to the sender.

She looked inside and out for some note, or at least a card, or initials; but there was no clue to the giver.

"He is so modest—so prudent," chatted the maid, "he does not send his name. It is like him. He is so generous—not like the young gentlemen of New York. Of course, Miss Arnold, it can be no one but Monsieur Randolph."

"I do not agree with you," said Maud, almost sharply. "Why should Mr. Randolph send me any thing so costly? You talk too much about him, Marie."

Marie shrugged her shoulders, and was not convinced.

Maud really had no idea that it came from the man whom she had rejected and made angry not forty-eight hours before. She had smiled at the recollection of his parting threat, that he would not give her up—and then, the picture! She could not help feeling that there was some mystery about the picture; a mystery which touched her inmost feelings, and made her fingers tremble, and her cheek pale, for it reminded her of the past in a vivid manner.

Who could have known that she had that sketch? Ah! it must have been Mrs. Bowen. She had shown it to her; they had admired it together. Perhaps Mrs. Bowen had come across this box, and had sent it as a cruel reminder. But Susie was not able to indulge in such costly reminiscences, even had there been a motive. Still, it might just be possible that she had owned this box, among the hundreds of expensive trifles with which her house had been filled, and that her brother had painted this picture on the cover, for he sometimes used the brush as well as the pencil; and that, knowing how much Maud liked the original, she had sent it to her to show her that she was not affected by the alienation which had taken place between the families.

"Poor Susie—dear Susie," murmured Maud, while the tears began to flow; "she was always an affectionate, forgiving little thing, if she was such a butterfly. I ought to have gone to her, in her misfortune, despite of father's command. Yet, if she knew all, she would have shuddered to meet me—she would have blamed me for helping drive him to death. I thought she was in Philadelphia. If

she has returned, I would go to her at once, if I could obtain her address."

Mr. Reginald Randolph would never have put his eight hundred dollars to so poor a use, could he have guessed the memories it stirred in Maud, or the source to which she attributed the gift. Afraid to send his name with it, knowing that it would be instantly returned, should he do so, and yet intending, when his plans were further developed, during his visit to Newport, to allow it to be suspected whence it came, he had ventured upon the present—not feeling the risk so great, since the toy was not paid for, and the dealer had received, instead of his check, only a promise to pay at thirty days. Should his plans fail, he could run away from his debts; should they succeed, the young lady's money might pay for the generous attention. Such finesse as this ought to have made a successful business-man of this scion of chivalry.

"We will not finish packing, to-night, if Miss Arnold sits so long with her pretty box," said Marie, at last, who had been silenced at the sight of Maud's tears, but could no longer restrain her impatience at not being able to examine the inside furnishing. "There is the largest trunk not yet begun—and we must find room for the dressing-case. It was fortunate to arrive before the trunk was filled."

"Yes, we must take this," replied the mistress; and so the gift was retained, and the hopes of the sender revived.

The Arnolds were to leave by the Sound steamer, on the following evening. Maud had part of a day before her in which to endeavor to find if Mrs. Bowen was in the city; but she was unsuccessful in her efforts, and went away resolved, as soon as she was settled in Newport, to write dear Susie a long letter.

Poor Susie! She had been such a belle in Newport, the previous season. How it called it all back to Maud, as if it were yesterday, instead of a year ago, when she found herself at the same hotel, occupying the same rooms to which those of Mrs. Bowen had been opposite.

Then, she had just begun to think that she loved Susie's brother; then, the sweetness of a first timidly-cherished dream was upon her, giving a charm to every thing, even to the vulgarity and frivolity of fashionable dissipation. Now, all was so cold and gloomy; the women were so foolish and the men so insignificant; "her doll was stuffed with sawdust," certainly; for Maud's feelings were like ashes.

Every day made the crowd more repulsive to her; there were plenty of pleasant, intelligent friends about her; but she did not like to dance, nor to entertain the young men who always gathered about her, like bees about a rose. She found herself growing very satirical; a judge instead of a devotee. She saw married women, like Susie Bowen, living only to dress and be admired by a promiscuous assembly; and she judged them much more harshly than she had the gay sister of the man she loved. Darling Susie! She, at least, had always looked innocent, with her fair child-face, and girlish gracefulness. The men used to swear they believed Bowen had brought her from the depths of ocean, with her pink cheeks and glittering hair; and, laughing at the fancy, the pretty sprite took more than ever to pearls and sea-weed and sheeny draperies of silver or emerald. There was something true to her nature and looks, in the innocent vanities of Mrs. Bowen; but these silly creatures, upon whom Maud now looked down with chiding eyes, had no such excuse for their follies.

Newport was dreary to Maud; yet it was haunted by a charm which kept her there, and prevented her parents from seeing how great the change in her really was. The shadow of past happiness dwelt there, glimpsing at her from balcony and ball-room—from the sunny beach and the eternal waves, whose faces, at least, had not changed.

The sight of the water was awful to her. She never looked upon it but that she saw Ward's dead face flashing beneath its surface; yet, for that reason, it had a fearful fascination. To seek out some secluded spot along the sands, and

to persuade her friends to leave her there, while they amused themselves, near at hand, with gayer company, was an almost daily resource with her. There the book would slip from her idle hands, and she would fix her eyes upon the sliding waves which came whispering to her feet, seeing visions of which none but herself guessed. It was a dangerous indulgence, calculated to undermine her health, physical or mental; her father would have snatched her from it, had he been aware of it; but, as it was, he was glad to see her surrounded by new influences, and to deceive himself by declaring that she was getting back her flesh and color.

When they had been a fortnight at Newport, Mr. Randolph arrived, stopping at the same hotel. Doubtless, he would have preferred Saratoga, as far as his own tastes were concerned, had not Miss Arnold been at Newport; and there was abundance of employment for his talent at this place, if not as much as at its rival.

Maud had never shown her friends the anonymous note she had received, placing her on her guard with the Southerner. In the first place, having already settled matters with him, as far as their present relations were concerned, she was too indifferent to have the truth of the letter investigated; then, she had a dislike to gossip, thinking people might find out Mr. Randolph for themselves; thirdly, she had a singular feeling about the letter, which made her averse to showing it.

But when he quietly persisted in renewing his attentions, she began to doubt if she had acted with discretion. She resolved to place the note in her father's hands, and let him make such use of it as he thought best. More from preoccupation than any thing else, this step she delayed from day to day.

In the mean time, she was much envied the attentions of the southern millionaire, and much wondered at for the coldness with which she received him.

"Don't think it necessary to be chilling in order to keep me at the freezing-point," he had said to her once. "I

take back the rash speech I made on that evening, when I was so stung by disappointment as hardly to know what I was saying. I withdraw all pretensions; but I do not wish to be marked out from the list of your friends. Treat me as you do others for whom you care nothing, yet who have the pleasure of being upon the roll of honor."

Maud received the explanation politely, ignored the past, and treated him precisely as she did all others in her train.

By this means he again placed himself upon a footing whence he might hope to gain a nearer approach. Her father treated him with marked cordiality; he didn't like *parvenus*, and the Randolphs were a family to which he should be willing to see his daughter add her name; he was anxious to have Maud entirely forget her first disappointment; and he told the young man, quite plainly, not to be disheartened at a first rejection—"girls often changed their minds."

Thus encouraged, and also winning pretty handsomely, just then, at midnight gaming-tables, Randolph was tolerably content.

There were numerous other young ladies, as rich as Miss Arnold, at Newport, from among whom he might have had his choice; and, as marriage was a matter of speculation with him, it is strange that he persisted in his difficult suit; but certain it is that the most selfish and dishonorable have attractions which they dignify by the name of love. He would not have married Miss Arnold without money, but with it, he preferred her to any woman of his acquaintance. Under the smart of injured vanity, and a fiery temper, he believed that he loved her; he vowed to himself that her will should yield to his.

Reginald Randolph was the impostor which the anonymous letter had declared him to be; he was the nephew instead of the son of the Randolph of Baltimore. But his family was the same, his connections as good, and his estate had once been nearly as large. His father before him, and then himself, had ruined their fortunes by various excesses; since he had parted with the last slave and the

last acre, he had supported himself by the same courses which had beggared him, oftentimes with an impudence that would have brought him into trouble, had not family pride compelled those who suffered not to betray him, using his uncle's name, and those of other relatives, for his own benefit. Finally, he had ventured into New York, and played the rôle there of which the letter had accused him, saying to himself that he had nothing to lose, and might have much to gain. He was no vulgar impostor, for he had the manners and education of those among whom he moved; probably he was just as good, in every respect, barring the fortune, as the Reginald Mugby Randolph whom he represented. Still, his game was an audacious one, and his reception by "our best society" would have been quite different in the light of the truth. Mr. Arnold, who was severe upon suddenly-made wealth, and whose doors opened so slowly to new acquaintances, did not dream of the danger he was in. Young Randolph was a little too gay to suit his strict ideas; but he was young, and would improve, while it was a real pleasure to be cordial to one of the blue blood.

The Arnolds had been at Newport six weeks. It was their intention soon to leave, and travel a month through the most picturesque parts of New England, take a trip up the St. Lawrence to Montreal, perhaps go to Saint Catherine's springs, and come home by way of Niagara Falls. Mrs. Arnold was not satisfied with her daughter's appearance, and began to hint at a consumptive tendency in her family. Mountain-air would be better than sea-air for Maud. Mrs. Arnold was a delicate woman, disliking exertion, not fond of change; but her heart was bound up in their only child, and she was not too absorbed in her own little daily vexations and ailments, to observe that something was wrong with the girl.

Maud was indeed falling into a mood of melancholy and abstraction unnatural to a young person moving in the midst of life and gayety. She assented to the

traveling plan with the same shadowy smile with which she yielded to every suggestion of her parents—a smile so sweet and unmeaning, without a bit of heart, that it was more painful than to have seen her fretful and exacting.

Whatever was the matter with her, it did not lessen with time, as they had expected her memory of her first love affair, and its tragic termination, would do.

It was one of those cool, bright days which often come in the latter part of July, that she went, with others, to see the bathers. She did not wish to go in the water herself, that morning, but sat upon the beach, her face shaded by a broad-brimmed hat, gazing absently at the merry, absurd crowd of men, women, and children, in their blue, scarlet, and purple suits, running on the beach, screaming in the surf, looking and behaving quite otherwise from the same crowd at dinner or at dance. After a time, she arose and walked further on.

"Come, George," she said to a boy of sixteen, son of a relative, "you are not going in the water. Let us get further away from this, where we can enjoy the society of old ocean, without seeing his white beard pulled by those irreverent frolickers. I have a book which you will like. You may read, and I will think."

"You do too much of that, cousin Maud, I'm sure," replied the youth, very ready to go with her—for he was just at the age to worship some lovely woman, preparatory to a real falling-in-love with somebody else—and in his eyes, Maud was the incarnation of feminine perfections—beautiful, stylish, good, marvelous in all that she did, said, or suffered.

"I am honored in being selected as your escort," he continued, as they strolled along. "The first thing I know, Mr. Randolph will be jealous of me. It's cruel of you to go off, and he, helpless in his bathing-suit, not able to run after you. He was cutting all those wonderful pigeon-wings in the water on purpose to excite your admiration. If I were a little older, I should feel ticklish about exciting his jealousy. He has such

wicked eyes—I should expect on dark nights to feel him creeping behind me, with something in his hand as sharp as his eyes."

Maud laughed in an amused manner; then said more gravely:

"Hush, George; don't say such things even in jest. Fortunately you are not any older, and you are my cousin, so you are safe. And please don't *you* tease me about Mr. Randolph. It's tiresome enough to have everybody else doing it. He is very disagreeable to me, and I'd like to leave him behind when I've company that suits me better."

"I'll never mention his name again, cousin Maud"—flattered by her confidence. "I don't like him, either; there's something artful about him. He's not manly and pleasant, like—I mean he's so different from—from—"

A spasm of pain contracted Maud's face. The boy saw it, and paused, without speaking the name upon his lips. He used to think that his cousin and Mr. Tunnecliffe were very much interested in each other; he had not known that they were actually engaged; but he was quick to see that Maud was distressed, and could not finish his sentence.

They walked on in silence, until Maud said, almost in a whisper:

"You said, George, that you should expect 'to feel somebody creeping behind you, in the dark,' though you did not know he was there. Do you ever feel such things? Don't you think, sometimes, there are spirits about us, although we can not see them? And that, still further, our bodily eyes may sometimes detect and recognize those spirit-forms?"

The boy looked earnestly into his companion's face, which wore an eager, anxious look, and those sweet, loving eyes had an expression which filled him with awe. He was troubled and embarrassed, but he had plenty of courage, and answered decidedly:

"I might *fancy* that he was behind me, when he was not; or, if he were there, I might *feel* him through the influence of personal magnetism, although

I did not hear or see him. When you go into a dark room, can you not always tell whether it is vacant or not? I can."

"Yes, but the dead, George! Did you ever see the dead?—plainly, as I see you now?"

"Don't look at me that way, cousin Maud, or I shall think *you* are a ghost, and run away from you. Oh, dear, I hope you are not getting to be one of those spiritualists."

"Why do you 'hope' so?"

"Well, I don't know. Only I've always thought you so sensible, for a woman. And it seems a sort of weakness."

He was much relieved by the smile which brightened her face, driving out that far-away, pallid look.

"Thank you, for your good opinion. 'Sensible for a woman'—eh? Now, I always thought we were the most sensible half of creation; but perhaps the boys think otherwise. Well, perhaps it is a weakness, to believe in any thing we can not touch or taste. Yet, it appears to me, that all religious feeling is founded in our perception of a spiritual state of which we have no actual proof. However, George, don't be alarmed. If I get to be a 'spiritualist,' I will keep it to myself. I don't like to mortify my fashionable friends. Have you read Tennyson's 'Idyls of the King'?"

"Not yet."

"I have it here. You like Tennyson, I have heard you say. There is no place so charming for enjoying true poetry as to read it within hearing of the grand rhythm of the sea. Here is a rock with the sunshine on it. Sit you down with your book, and be happy. I have another for my own reading. If you grow tired before I do, call me."

She wandered a little way from him, seated herself on the fine, white sand, where the waves broke almost at her feet, opened a volume which she drew from her pocket, and appeared to be reading. Her cousin, content with his book, full of quiet enjoyment of the seclusion and the bright day, was soon absorbed in the Idyls.

In the meantime, Maud's book shut

itself and fell into her lap. Her eyes were fixed upon the blue waters, not with the look of a dreamer, but with an expectant eagerness. The spot where she chose to rest was quite hidden from the gay people further down the beach, by a curve in the bay, and a small, rocky projection rising up nearer at hand. So lost was she in her thoughts that she saw and heard nothing until a hand closed over her own with a soft, firm clasp, and she looked up to find Mr. Randolph seated by her side.

"I saw you coming this way, and followed you, when I had finished my bath. Your cousin is busy, reading, and will not hear us," he began in a low, warm voice. "I can not live any longer as I have been living here, Miss Arnold. I love you more completely with every day and hour; this suspense is wearing me out. I followed you in the hope—in the hope, Miss Arnold, that your feelings toward me are kinder than they were when I spoke to you in New York. If devotion will make a woman happy, you will be happy with me. Do not draw your hand away—do not—I can not bear it."

His breath played over her cheek, his glowing, dark eyes shone into hers with a softness she had not believed them capable of; she felt the influence of his will and passion unstringing her nerves, but not shaking her resolve; when she found that she could not release her hand, she did not condescend to struggle.

"Mr. Randolph, you might spare yourself and me all this pain. I do not and can not love you, and never will; and without love, I would not marry you if you owned the whole State of Maryland. I do not intend to marry—you, nor any one else," she added, thinking this, perhaps, might soften the blow.

He would not be refused; he said all that his eloquence was master of to induce her to yield some shadow of a promise.

"You hurt my hand," she said, at last. "I will be obliged to call my cousin."

Then he got angry, again, as he had done at first; his cheek grew sallow, and

his eyes were like coals; but he released her hand.

"I will not be thwarted; I will have my revenge. Why do you find me so unbearable? I am not generally so detested by the ladies. Has any one been slandering me to you?" he asked.

"The simple truth is, as I have told it, sir. I do not love you. However, I have heard," she continued, looking him in the eyes, for she was indignant at his persistence, "that you are the nephew, not the son, of the gentleman you represent as your father. Do you think it honorable, Mr. Randolph, to deceive my parents in a matter of this kind? I have said nothing of my knowledge, as I have no desire to harm you; but you must see how little chance you stand to change my opinion."

His eye fell and he was silent for an instant; his rage melted away; when he spoke again, it was in an humble tone:

"I have deceived you and your friends, Miss Arnold. But if you will give me any hope for the future, I swear I will make the *amende honorable*. I will forsake all that you do not like in my present habits, and seek to retrieve myself and fortunes. My connections are influential; they can and will help me."

She had never felt so sorry for him as then; it was evident that he had grown to really love her, whatever had been the motive which first prompted his suit. His passion, such as it was, was sincere.

"I am glad that you mean to do better," she said, gently. "I shall pray that you may succeed in redeeming your name and honor. When you do so, you may count me one of your best friends."

"Is that all?"

"All that I can promise," she said, rising to her feet.

He cast a glance about the place, to make sure of his position. The boy had fallen asleep over his book; there was no one else in sight, and by causing Maud to take a step or two away from him, her cousin, reclining against the rock, was also hidden from view.

"I've a mind to kill you," he said, between his teeth.

"Would that be like a southern gentleman?"

"Are you not afraid?"

"Not at all. If you meant to harm me, you would not threaten."

She began to walk toward her cousin; she did not wish to call him; for she knew that "a scene" at a watering-place like that, would be very disagreeable and mortifying. She was not at all alarmed; but she felt annoyed beyond expression, and resolved to tell her father at once what sort of a gentleman Mr. Randolph was; she would awaken George, and return.

"You first humble me, and then laugh at me."

The grasp on her arm was not a playful one; a dark face confronted her:

"I will drown you," he said; "nobody else shall have you. I will send you to find your lover. He liked the water so well, let us see how *you* take to it."

"George!" she cried, for she saw, now, that he was in earnest—"George! George, come to me."

Even then she would not shriek any louder than might answer to awaken her cousin. A woman's pride is as strong as death. Maud would, perhaps, rather have died, than have had the curious, gossiping crowd running to her rescue, and been obliged to explain the nature of her danger. His hand was over her mouth.

"I can drown you and no one will be the wiser for it," he continued, drawing her toward the surf. "I will drag you out, for I am a good swimmer. They will say that you, too, killed yourself, because young Tunnecliffe set the fashion."

Maud could not speak; but just then she ceased to struggle, and pointed with her finger toward the bay. There was something in her look which made Randolph, whose back was then toward the water, turn around. A small row-boat had shot out from some unseen cove, or had been gaining way from some greater distance. When he had looked before attempting his desperate exploit, nothing was in sight. Now the boat was not twenty rods away; its single

occupant was bending to his oars with all his strength, and his eyes were fixed directly upon them. Randolph released his hold.

"Do you not see? It is *he*!" cried Maud, in an awe-struck whisper. "I have seen him before."

She forgot about her danger, about the man by her side, who said, with a forced laugh:

"I was playing, Miss Arnold. I only wanted to frighten you," and sauntered off behind the rocks until hidden from sight, when he walked away rather more swiftly than was consistent with dignity. Maud was unconscious of this by-play; she gazed at the boatman, who was now quite near to shore, and who arose in the boat to keep it off the beach with his oar. Since there was no need of his assistance it seemed as if he had changed his mind about landing.

"Ward!" cried Maud, stretching out her arms to him.

The man, a tall fellow, in the regular sailor garb, stared at her as if she were a lunatic, pushed his boat back, and began paddling away.

"Ward!" she called again, in a voice like a shriek, and as the little boat darted off in the sunshine, she fell upon the sands.

That cry of love and despair aroused the boy; he would not believe that he had actually fallen asleep over the "Idyls;" but he saw his cousin sink, and sprang to her assistance.

"What is it, dear Maud? Pray what is the matter? Are you ill?" he asked, when he had dashed her well with salt spray, and she was sitting up on the beach.

"I shall be well in a moment, George. But tell me, truly, as you value your soul, did you see any one in a boat, and if you did, who was it?"

"I saw a sailor rowing away, when I ran to you. He was a darkish fellow—a stranger. Was it that fellow who frightened you? I would shoot him, if I had him here."

"No, George, he did not frighten me. But I saw some one whom I have seen before. Come, let us go home. And do not say any thing to mother about

my being ill. I shall get over it, presently."

She had the nerve to walk back to her hotel without any appearance of the scene she had passed through, exchanging salutations with her friends by the way; but when she reached her room, instead of dressing for luncheon, she was glad to shut the blinds, and rest herself in the cool darkness.

CHAPTER VI.

A LITTLE PARISIENNE'S STORY.

"It was *he*! it was *he*!" she muttered, over and over to herself. She hardly thought of Randolph. "It was Ward," she continued to whisper. "Why did George not recognize him? Ah, he shows himself to no one but me. It was *he*! He follows me. When I go home I will find Susie and ask her if she, too, has not seen him. He loved her so."

It is doubtful if Maud really believed that she had seen Ward Tunnecliffe in the body. She was yet too fully in the possession of her reasoning faculties to believe that. She knew the proof of his death was positive. At least four persons had seen him when he leaped from the ferry-boat; he had gone down beneath the ice, and had not risen again. No human being could have lived five minutes in those freezing waters on that winter night. He had never reappeared. All these facts were as patent to her as to the rest of his friends. She never, for more than a moment at a time, overlooked them. We say, for more than a moment at a time—because there *were* periods when, for a brief instant, she believed that she saw Ward Tunnecliffe, alive, before her. This was at the moment when the person who resembled him, or the spiritual presence of the dead, was actually present to her. Having once seen this startling resemblance, of course she was constantly looking out for it; therefore, constantly imagining that she found it; as a frightened child, wandering in the woods at twilight, finds what it fears in every shadow.

"He watches over me," she repeated to herself; "he has forgiven me, or else he would not do that. He came, this morning, to save me from death. Strange, strange!"

When her mother came to ask her if she did not feel well enough to dress for the evening, she found her flushed and excited.

"Your hands are hot—your pulse is quick."

"It is nothing, mother. I have been frightened; but I am getting over it."

Maud felt that Randolph's conduct could not be palliated, and ought not to be kept to herself. She sat up, and told her mother about it, only concealing *who* the sailor in the boat had seemed to her to be. Mrs. Arnold was surprised, and alarmed.

"Your father will punish him as he deserves."

"That is just what I dread, mother. It will make the affair public. I think Mr. Randolph will go away, now; it will not be pleasant for him to stay; and if he does, had we not better keep the matter between ourselves? I should not like to become the heroine of *such* a romance, dear mamma," and Maud laughed, a little nervously.

While they were discussing the matter, a servant handed in a note; it was from the Southerner, saying:

"MISS ARNOLD: I do not hope to be forgiven for what has occurred. The curse, which I inherited from my father, was a violent temper. Under *your* influence, I should have forgotten that I could be angry or unjust. But of that I will not speak. I write this to say that I will not further annoy you. I leave by the evening train. The greatest favor you can do him is to forget, R. M. R."

"A favor easily done; and now, mamma, I suppose we need say nothing about the affair on the beach to father. If he refers to Mr. Randolph's absence as if I were to blame, I shall tell him about the deception he is practicing. That will be enough."

She tore up the note, as she was speaking.

"So be it, for the present. Above all things, let us avoid gossip. We had

enough of that dreadful kind of notice, last winter. Maud, shall I send Marie to dress your hair? If you look and act as if nothing had happened, probably nothing will be guessed."

Thus it proved. Miss Arnold was unusually admired during the evening promenade. All that her beauty ever lacked to the common observer was color and warmth; it was too cold; but this evening, the flush lingered on her cheek and the light in her eye; she was dressed with care, and seemed gay and happy. Those who had heard of the sudden departure of Mr. Randolph, scanned her with curiosity, which was not gratified by any thing they could learn from her, and she escaped with a few whispers about her probable rejection of the Baltimorean.

But from this time the change which Mrs. Arnold had remarked in her grew under her mother's observant eye. It had been proposed to her to leave Newport immediately for their northern tour; but Maud was no longer desirous of leaving. She begged for another week or two. All she cared for was to take her cousin for an escort, and to go out along the beach to the spot where their little adventure occurred; there to sit and watch the in-rolling waves for hours, while George read, or made paper-boats, or talked to her half-unheeded. He was a boy of quiet tastes, and very fond of her, so that he did not find this kind of service so wearisome as it might otherwise have been. He, nor any other, had the key to her actions.

"Come, cousin, we must go home. I am getting hungry; and aunt Arnold warned me to bring you back in season."

Then she would arise, with a sigh, and a pale, disappointed look, and with lingering glances backward at the blue water, return home, without appetite or spirits.

"There must be an end to this. I don't like Maud's looks. We must have another change of air," Mrs. Arnold finally declared; the trunks were repacked, and the change made.

Wherever they stopped, if it were but

for a single day, Maud's beautiful dressing-case must be taken out and placed on her table. Quite mistaking the giver, she loved it because of the picture on the lid. She would sit with it before her for hours. Marie jested about the sender, but her little pleasantries fell on deaf ears.

The variety of travel did Maud less good than was expected. Her eyes seldom lost that eager, searching look, which gradually grew to be their one expression. When her party entered a railroad car, a saloon, drew up before a hotel, or in any place encountered strangers, her swift, nervous glance ran over them in a manner which many remarked. It was as if she were expecting a friend, whom she was disappointed not to meet. The girl herself was unaware of the traces her secret thought was leaving on face and manner.

The Arnolds spent several weeks journeying from one lovely place to another. It was the latter part of September when they reached home, and reopened their city house. The first thing the mother did was to send for the family physician. He did not like the child's appearance, yet could detect no traces of disease. He asked her mother if she had any great mental uneasiness. Mrs. Arnold confessed to the engagement which had existed between her daughter and Ward Tunnecliffe.

"It takes a long time to recover from a shock like that," said the old doctor, shaking his head. "Maud was always high-strung; her nerves have not recovered their equilibrium yet. I thought, last winter, that her sickness was entirely mental. Poor girl! it was too much for her. Does she talk much about her griefs?"

"No, doctor; she never mentions his name."

"That's bad—that's bad. These silent troubles are the most dangerous. I wish, madam, you would win her confidence—make her talk to you. The more the better. I don't like her looks. It's a bad sign when a woman's tongue-tied—it's not natural. Make her talk; and keep her out-of-doors all you can."

Prompted by this advice, Mrs. Arnold exerted herself, more than she had ever done before, to watch her daughter and to win her out of the silent way into which she was falling.

"Why do you grieve so about Ward?" she finally said to her, determined to probe the hidden wound. "He is gone; he can not come back. He went, too, by his own rash deed. Is it right for you to waste your young life, to make all who love you unhappy, by your constant sorrow for him? You are our only child, Maud, and it makes us wretched to see you in this state."

"Indeed, mother, I am not so very unhappy. What makes you think it? But I can never forget that perhaps Ward would not have—drowned himself"—with a shudder—"if I had not sent him that note, when he was in so much trouble. Is it not strange that girl should have come here that very day? If it had been before, or after, we might have talked together, and it might have been explained. I am so afraid that I wronged him. Ah, mother, there is nothing so hard to bear as remorse!"

Maud's head went down on her mother's knees, and a groan, very pitiful to hear from one so young, burst from her lips.

"What is it about a girl, Maud? I never heard any thing."

"No, mother, I never told you, for I was afraid after Ward—killed—himself—that others would think more wrong of him. I forgave him, mother; when I thought that he did it. But lately, and more and more every day, I believe the girl lied."

"Tell me about it, Maud. It will be better for you to talk with me; perhaps my judgment will assist yours in coming to some conclusion. I shall not be afraid of judging poor Ward harshly. Whatever were his errors, they are between him and his God. He was too sensitive to the world's opinion, else he would never have been so rash."

Holding her mother's hands, Maud lifted her pale face, with the dark circles under the eyes, and the desolate, yearning expression within them.

"There was a girl came here, mother, the very day it—happened. She asked to see me, alone, a few minutes, and Marie brought her to my room. She was small and young—about my age; pretty, with black eyes, and dark, wavy hair; a French girl, speaking our language in a broken, childish way. Perhaps it was because she was French that Marie was so ready to admit her. When we were alone together, she burst out crying, and when she was a little more quiet, asked me if I knew of any pupils I could get in French and music for her father or herself—they were very poor, they were not long over, and they had no references. I did not know what to say to her. I was sorry for her; yet I could promise her nothing until I knew more about her, even had I pupils to recommend. I began to tell her that I would speak to you, and that we would come together to see her, yet all the time I felt as if I were being imposed upon. She was young, and seemed artless, and in trouble, and yet her eyes did not give me a pleasant impression. While I was blundering over what to say to her, she interrupted me:

"I like not to tell mademoiselle w'at I muz tell her; but 'tis de right dat she muz know. She may be very angree, now; but she happier, sometime, and then she went on to tell, in her broken way, that she would not have been in America now, but in her own belle France, where they had friends, though they were not very rich, had it not been for that young man—the faithless, false Mr. Tunnecliffe. She related to me, at length, how they had met, when she was out walking with her father, under the beautiful trees, and how the young American had been so kind to her father; and they had met and talked often together about many things—Washington, Napoleon, all these great officers, until her father was quite enchanted with the charming young man, and invited him to their poor apartments.

"She gave me the dates, mother, and it was the very time that Ward was in Paris with Mrs. Bowen, last fall, two years ago. Then she went on to say

how she, too, learned to love the fine stranger; she was child, but sixteen; and he brought her flowers and presents, and told her how sweet and how pretty she was, and how he loved to hear her sing. She used to sing for him at her dear old piano for hours. Then the time came when he must go back to America; she was very sad and wept much; but he kissed her, and gave her his picture, and told her that when both of them were a little older he should be ready to marry—that he might never come back to Paris, but that if her father and herself would come over to New York in about two years, he would find her father, a great many pupils, and he would marry his little Antoinette.

"So her father, who thought so much of the stranger's promise, sold off all his little furniture, the piano, all, gathered in all his small debts, and had just money enough to pay their passage. They came to America, joyous, full of hope. When they arrived, they easily found out Mr. Tunnecliffe, for he was a great banker. He went to him, to tell him she had come. He was not glad to see her; he broke her heart. He said she did mistake that they should marry. He would do something for her father when he had time—now, he was very busy. But he could not marry poor Antoinette, for he was just engaged to a rich and lovely lady, and she must not tell Americans she came over to see Mr. Tunnecliffe.

"Mother, I did not believe her yet; I said so; she had a gold chain about her neck, and she drew forth from her bosom a miniature, and showed it to me. It was her likeness, mother—a colored photograph, on enamel, I think. The locket was gold, and the picture looked as if taken when he was a little younger than then. My heart withered when I saw it. I hardly knew what I did; but I believe that I emptied the contents of my purse in her lap, and told her to go—that she was welcome to Mr. Tunnecliffe.

"As soon as she was gone, I wrote a note to Ward, telling him our engagement was at an end, and placing my betrothal ring inside the envelope, gave

directions for it to be handed to him when he called. At first, I thought I would see him, and hear his account of the affair, but I had such a headache I could not hold up my head. I felt that I should do my self-respect injustice to see him in such a state, so I sent the note. That was *the last*—the very last! Oh, mother, is it not dreadful?

"Sometimes I believe that girl's story to be either entirely false or much exaggerated. I torture myself guessing what Ward suffered when he got my dismissal in the hour of his business trial. It is too much! Sometimes, I can not bear it."

"Have you been to see the girl since?"

Mrs. Arnold's voice was calm and soothing, for she was alarmed at the intensity of feeling now revealed to her.

"No, mother. I was so agitated that I never thought to take her address, and she did not leave it. Sometimes I hope that I may meet her on the street. If I ever do see her again, I will compel the truth from her, whatever it is."

"All this entanglement can never be straightened out in this world, Maud. It is your duty to brood as little as possible over what can not be changed. If it is any comfort to you to think Ward innocent of such heartless conduct, you may safely believe him so. You know that all kinds of impositions are practised for money; and on some very slender thread of flirtation or indiscretion, such as any young man might have been led into without real sin, she may have strung her story. At all events, he has gone from us, your parents are still here; will you not try, for our sake, to forget the past?"

Maud kissed her mother, while her tears flowed with a freedom which was healthful. She did feel the better for this confidence—yet she had confessed only half of what weighed so dangerously upon her mind.

For a few days Maud was more like her old sweet self; she sang to herself, as she moved about the house, was playful with her father, and willing to submit to her mother's wishes about

going out and having company. They were so relieved at this improvement they were ready to spoil her with indulgence. One golden October afternoon she was sent out for a drive in the park. Some circumstance prevented Mrs. Arnold from accompanying her daughter; but Maud was quite content to be alone. The pale sunlight, the soft air, the bright leaves fluttering silently from the frost-tinged trees, filled her with a melancholy so calm that it was almost peace.

"Drive slowly, Robert," she said to the coachman, "it is so pleasant here."

It was Saturday, and the usual concert was taking place. She had the carriage stop at a distance from the gay thousands congregated on the Mall, as parti-colored and gorgeous in general effect as were the autumn groves. Soft notes and louder bursts of melody were wafted toward her. As she sat dreaming, listening, yielding to every temptation of her vivid imagination, it may be that the old fancy resumed its full power. Certain it is, that when she reached home, in the dim dusk, after that afternoon of enchantment, she burst into the dining-room where the family were about to sit down to dinner, a wildness in her manner which caused her parents to start with an unpleasant foreboding. She had not removed her hat or shawl, and paid no attention to the presence of the man-in-waiting.

"I have seen him again!" was all she said.

"Maud, what folly is this? Go to your room and make yourself presentable."

Mr. Arnold spoke sternly, in mingled impatience and alarm.

"I tell you I have seen him," she repeated. "Nothing on earth can convince me to the contrary. Do you think I could be mistaken? It was he—living, well—not his spirit. I looked into his eyes; I touched his hand! Oh, why will he treat me thus?"

The pathos with which she spoke the last few words brought tears to Mr. Arnold's eyes, but he would not let her see that he was otherwise than angry; the fear, of which he and his wife had

spoken in whispers, was strong upon him now—a fear of something less endurable than death. He took her by the arm and led her into the library, followed by her mother; he was calm, outwardly, for he saw how dreadfully his daughter was excited:

"Tell me all about it, Maud. Just who you saw, and where, and how. Only try to be reasonable and quiet about it."

"I know what you think, father—that I am out of my senses. It is not true; you need not be afraid of that. I saw Ward again, to-day, and if I had any doubts before, when three times I believed I met him, I doubt it no longer. Living or dead, it is Ward I see."

"What makes you think you meet him?"

"I got out of the carriage this afternoon, in the park, to walk a little way and gather some colored leaves, and feeling thirsty, I passed under the arch of the large bridge near the lake to obtain a drink of water. He was sitting there, on one of the stone seats, reading a book. I had time to look well at him before he saw me. He has changed much, and he wears a different dress, but it is Ward. I was not very much startled. I walked straight up to him, laid my hand on his, and spoke his name."

"You were crazy, Maud. I can not let you go out again alone."

"That was what he said. He looked at me with a stare, saying in such a cold, cold voice, 'a mad woman!' and shaking off my hand, he walked away from me. I would have run after him, but I had not the power. He wished me to think that he did not know me, but I saw his face flush even when he spoke so rudely."

"You have made some mortifying mistake, my child."

"Do you think I could look straight into his eyes, and not know him, father?"

"What hour was it when you saw him under the bridge? Was it not a little dark, there, these brief afternoons?"

"It was after sunset; it was not broad

daylight; but I could see plainly enough. I would not have gone down if it had been at all dark; it would not have been proper."

They cross-questioned her, in vain, to elicit something which they could use to refute her simple, persistent assurance that she had seen Ward. They could get nothing from her but the reiteration of this—to her—fact. She grew more calm as they talked with her, regaining her natural expression, and they thought best to seem to be convinced, and to drop the subject. At her mother's request she prepared herself and came down to the neglected dinner, but her appetite was evidently forced.

"If he would only give me a chance to explain, mother, I would be content. I do not blame him for keeping away from me," she whispered, when her mother came to look at her, in bed, under pretense of the good-night kiss.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SKATING CARNIVAL.

Mrs. Bowen was again a happy woman. We will not do her the injustice to say that she had forgotten her brother, who had cherished her more tenderly than ever her husband would cherish her, admiring and indulging her in a way that had fostered even her gratitude—she had not forgotten Ward! Oh no! there was not a day that she did not drop some tear to his memory, while the awful manner of his death afflicted her with a frightened, unpleasant consciousness which never entirely left her. "If only he had not committed suicide!"—and she wept in the daylight and shuddered in the dark, feeling never quite so gay and at ease as she had done before that calamity. But comparatively, she was a happy woman. Mr. Bowen was reinstated in business, doing well—exceedingly well—and had bought a still finer house than their former one, high up on the Avenue, had furnished it "charmingly," and had recalled her from that dreary banishment, back to

her own beautiful world of New York, with her visiting-list reestablishing itself, and money, *ad libitum*, with which to go shopping. Her brother had been dead a year, and she was to take off those black garments, and clothe herself in robes not quite so gloomy. Much discrimination could be shown in the selection of second-mourning. She was almost as youthful and pretty as ever in those soft, black and white things, and lilac, and lavender. It gave just that shade of pensiveness which made her child-like beauty most touching—as painters love to depict fair flowers half in shadow.

We have hitherto mentioned the ease of conscience with which Mr. Bowen slipped the largest load of guilt on to shoulders powerless to repel it; and with what admirable suavity he persuaded his friends that his sins were only mistakes of judgment, or rather of circumstance, and that, really, his business talents were not such as should be hidden in a napkin.

Three months had not elapsed after the failure before a most favorable compromise had been effected; money had been loaned "the surviving partner," and he soon was in the full tide of business, with none to make him afraid. Some few of his former friends, like Mr. Arnold, continued to treat him coldly; but, on the whole, the broker was more than satisfied. Even Mr. Arnold's judgment had been less severe, after he was paid sixty cents on the dollar, with the assurance that, although no longer legally responsible, Mr. Bowen held himself bound, in honor, to pay a hundred cents, as soon as he was sufficiently prospered to do so.

So great an art had Mr. Bowen of placing himself always in the right, that none thought of criticising his taste in buying himself a new establishment, and dashing out with more than his former splendor, before the hundred cents on the dollar actually were paid. His creditors, glad to see him "recovering himself," looked confidently forward to the time when his credit should be fully redeemed, and when they, too, should

rejoice in the full discharge of their compounded claims.

In the mean time, there was a little secret about his present rapid success. When the assets of the firm were turned over to the creditors, there were certain investments in two newly-formed petroleum companies, made by Ward Tunnecliffe, from means of his own. These at the final settlement were withheld from the list of assets, as being neither the firm's property, nor as possessing any real value. The creditors knew nothing of them, and, it is possible if they had, they would have taken no account of them, as the two companies were then merely and purely an experiment. The shares, if put upon the market then would have sold for much less than they had actually cost. Hence, and for other reasons, perhaps, Mr. Bowen kept discreetly silent about them. Of course Mr. Tunnecliffe's sister, being his nearest relative, was his heir.

After the compromise was effected, some time late in the summer, it chanced that those two petroleum companies' stock suddenly rose immensely. Mr. Bowen still said nothing about *his wife's* share in this good fortune. Before selling out, he saw fit to pay a visit of inspection to the oil regions, when, finding the property really extremely valuable, and the companies already beginning to pay large dividends, he went home, well satisfied to keep the stock. Mrs. Bowen, by her agent, drew her dividends; Aladdin's palace was bought and the Genii of the lamp established therein. Mrs. Bowen only had to rub the lamp once in six months, and the Genii would be sure to appear.

So much for the lately embarrassed gentleman's present prospects. It became daily more apparent to him that his brother-in-law had been a great fool to take so dark a view of their little misfortunes; if Ward had been less rash, he might have owned the lamp, and been living in comfort and splendor, instead of making food for fishes. Yet, there was this to be remembered—and it softened the regret he felt at the young man's folly—if Ward had had a

voice in matters, those profitable shares would have been divided among the creditors, and *they* would now be enjoying the magical lamp! Perhaps it was best as it was.

But why, even as the brother-in-law assured himself of this, smiling inwardly, did the smile turn to a cold chill? Why did he, who knew not what it was to be troubled with a nerve, start, and glance about, while a wet and frozen hand seemed to reach out and touch his breast?

Mrs. Bowen and Maud Arnold were great friends, nowadays. As soon as the former returned to the city, and let her abiding-place be known, Maud had gone to her. She had her parents' consent to this, though not their approval. If they had denied her request to renew the friendship, she might have openly rebelled, for those long months of winter which had brought so pleasant a change for Susie, had been less prosperous to Maud. Her whole mind was occupied with one illusion, or what her friends treated as such. She felt that unless she had a confidante, who sympathized and believed with her, she should indeed go mad. She only too painfully understood that it was already hinted that she was touched with an aberration of mind.

So powerful had been her own conviction that Ward was alive, and not far from her, that she had over-persuaded her father and Mr. Bowen to search out the pilot of the *Colden*, and each separate person who had seen Ward throw himself into the river, and sift their testimony more closely even than had been done at the time of the occurrence. Nothing was elicited upon which the lightest hope could be hung. The story was, and remained in all its few details, as it has been told. A man, without his hat, of a height and build corresponding with young Tunnecliffe's, had walked out of the gentlemen's cabin, at that moment unoccupied, stepped over the chains, and leaped into the river. He had never risen to the surface; he could not have been rescued, for dozens of eyes were watching, and there were no small boats out, nor could there be, in that drifting,

dangerous ice. Immediately after, Tunnecliffe's hat and coat were found in the cabin; he was known to have gone on the boat, for the ticket-agent on the New York side remembered him; he was not known to have left it, except in the manner described—he had never been seen or heard from since, by any one but this young lady who clung to her statement with such strange obstinacy.

The inquiries made to satisfy Maud were as private as possible, for her parents were naturally sensitive about having her morbid fancy become known. Still dissatisfied and urgent, she insisted upon Mr. Arnold's secretly employing two detectives to search the city for the missing man. This he did, or pretended to do, in the hope of quieting her, until her mind should have time to recover its tone. Whether these detectives did or did not perform their duty, the tidings for which Maud waited, day after day, never came. She grew more pale and listless with each succeeding week, indifferent to every thing, yet always with that strange, bright, eager look of the eyes, piercing through those on whom her glance fell. Many evenings, at twilight, she would take her seat by a front window, and there watch the sidewalk until bed-time. Although not permitted to go again to the Park, without company, she asked to go nearly every day, when the weather permitted, and to win the privilege she would consent to skate, or take any other prescribed exercise, though her friends knew that her brain was filled with the secret thought that she might again meet the phantom visitor.

Very late in February there came a cold term which placed the lake in finer condition for skating than it had been previously. A carnival was talked of and decided upon. It was one of the first of those out-door festivals held in America, and attracted large crowds of spectators as well as active participants. The afternoon was as cold and brilliant as the most zealous devotee of the art could have desired; the throng upon the ice was novel and gorgeous to look upon, the skaters being all in costume,

and the dresses generally of the gayest colors. George Arnold, Maud's cousin, prided himself upon his skill on the ice, and would not be satisfied until Maud had promised to go with him, on this occasion, and in character. In the carriage which conveyed them to the Park were two or three older relatives, who were to observe a duennaship from the shore.

Miss Arnold was an elegant skater, if not as proficient as some in this fascinating accomplishment. Her slender, supple figure, and movements full of ease, always attracted admiration. George, with boyish enthusiasm, had dressed himself in a costly suit of green velvet and silver, supposed to represent Endymion, though he had to explain to all inquiring friends what character it was expected to support. He had insisted that Maud should play the part of Diana, and as Diana she came, but it was as her serene ladyship under a cloud. Her dress of gray poplin was edged with silver, and in front of her little gray cap was a silver crescent; over her shoulder appeared the legendary quiver filled with shining arrows, and in her hand she held a little bow. In her paleness and her calmness she looked very like the goddess; all this gayety was something apart from her own individuality; she was amongst, but not of it; she had only come to please George, and—perhaps—to discover him somewhere in the fantastic crowd. Alas, for Maud! into this one wild, delusive dream had her life resolved itself! She looked sweet and sad as Diana's self, and George was proud of her as he led her out upon the lake, which was filled with skaters before their arrival. The ice was in its greatest possible perfection; gay laughter and merry shouts rung on the sharp air; George tired his cousin out in a little while; but not having in the least fatigued himself, he left her in a chair near the shore, and went off to execute some of his particularly difficult feats.

Miss Arnold quietly watched the constantly changing scene before her. She had thrown a thin gray veil over her

face to protect herself somewhat from the admiring attention she received from passers-by. All sorts of people flitted and glided over the polished floor in front of her—awkward but happy Teutons, rosy and fat, in their native skating dress, fairies, princes, Atalantas, all the usual variety and sameness of like occasions. For a time she was amused. But the great grief which was so swiftly withering her youth asserted itself even here. She fixed her eyes on the frozen lake, and as she gazed, it seemed to break up, groan, drift and crash, while amidst its shivered fragments she saw a struggling form. So lost was she in this terrible work of her fancy that she was about to start up with a shriek, when the tone of a woman's voice, who was passing her, arrested and called her to the present. That voice! she knew it in a moment—it was the French girl's. A couple were gliding by, quite near, but so absorbed in each other that they had not observed Maud; they were already so far past that she could not catch a glimpse of their faces, but she knew the chattering accents, the slim waist, the short foot and the black, braided hair of Antoinette. In an instant every faculty of Maud's was on the alert. She had in her pocket a black silk mask, which she now put on, doubling her veil over her face, and awaiting the return of the two, who were skating slowly, engaged in conversation. Presently they turned about and repassed her. Yes, it was Antoinette, dressed as "*La fille du Regiment*." Maud was sure of it, though the girl also wore a mask. They came so close that she distinctly recognized the bird-like chatter, sweet, but not soulful, and saw the little, dark hand pressing her companion's arm, as she looked up at him while she spoke.

At first Maud thought she would speak to her at once, asking her to step aside with her a few moments, when she would wring from her, in the name of the dead, the truth or falsehood of the story she had told. Nothing but the presence of the stranger prevented her calling Antoinette by name. She debated

within herself how best to arrest the girl without including her companion. In the mean time the two went slowly on, turned, and came back for the second time. It was evidently not skating, nor the scene around them, which absorbed them; they were conversing hastily and eagerly, paying no heed to what was passing.

In her desire to be rid of the person who accompanied Antoinette, Maud, for the first time looked attentively at him. He was quite small and slender, and wore a domino, probably for purposes of concealment; but Maud was certain, after a moment's observation, that he was Mr. Randolph. She had no intimation of his being in the city; nevertheless, she felt sure of its being him. Her first emotion was fear lest he, in turn, should recognize her.

"I wish I was back in the carriage," she thought, looking after her escort; but George, though not far distant, was drawing marvelous spread-eagles on the ice, and did not observe her signals. Second thoughts assured her that to call her cousin would be to attract attention and recognition, for George was well known to Mr. Randolph. That the Southerner had come to the Park in the hope or for the purpose of meeting her, she believed. Yet her dread and dislike of him were scarcely so strong as that wish of hers to have another conversation with the French girl; so she sat still, with a quickened pulse, trying to decide upon what course to pursue.

Slowly they passed by, without turning their heads in her direction, went farther on and were lost amid the throng.

"They will not leave the lake so early; I wish I could trace that girl to her home. If I could but get her address I should pay her a visit to-morrow," mused Maud. "Why are those two together?" was the question which next suggested itself, and so pertinent was this as to arouse, the more she dwelt upon it, vague suspicions, which, while she could not shape them, would not be driven away. Her cousin came up to ask if she would not skate again.

"You'll take cold if you sit still so long, Maud."

"No, George, I like it here. I'm not at all cold; I have a good view of the people, while I can be quiet myself."

With a mock gesture of adoration, young Endymion glided away, leaving Diana to her solitary mood. Suddenly, another figure, among the skaters, drew her gaze, as it did that of many others. It was that of a man, tall and lithe, dressed in a novel and appropriate costume, representing the god Uller, distinguished, in the legends of the North, for the brightness and strength of his arrows, and the swiftness of his skates. His long yellow hair flowed down his back in a torrent, and his long yellow beard glittered with frost as if his breath had frozen upon it. His garments sparkled in the sunshine with a thousand little frost-points, and there seemed to be ice upon his helmet; a steel visor concealed his face. He, like Maud, had a quiver full of arrows, but of giant size, and he carried an immense bow. Wherever he moved he attracted universal regard, not more on account of the splendor and originality of his costume than the grace and skill of his movements.

As Maud watched him, the eager look leaped to her eyes; she bent forward, gazing intently. Ward Tunnecliffe had once been unrivaled as a skater. Often had she, the previous winter, followed his graceful movements with admiration; something now in the form and motions of the stranger, brought back his image with strange vividness. The old mad fancy came upon her. She started up, with a low cry, which drew the eyes of several persons upon her.

"What is it? are you ill?" they began to question her.

"It is nothing," she said, sinking back in her chair. "I was calling a friend; but I see that I am mistaken."

A sort of cunning, not native to her mind, now actuated her to repress her excitement, and to await some further revelation. We call it cunning, but it was the artifice of a loving heart, eager to verify its presentiments—or, was it the subtle instinct which is sometimes given

to the insane? Her friends, could they have seen her flushed cheek, and wild, brilliant eye, while they read what was passing in her thoughts, would have said it was the latter. For a long time she watched the solitary skater, who spoke to no one, and to whom none spoke. The sun descended on that short February afternoon.

"Cousin Maud, they say it is time for us to go home. Aunt is tired and hungry, and she is afraid you will take cold."

"Well I'm neither tired nor hungry, George, and not at all chilly. I would like to stay for a little while after dark, to see the illumination. Go and ask mother if we may stay. We can return by the cars; and we will promise to be at home before eight."

"Good for you, cousin Maud. It will be folly to stop a couple of hours longer," and he sped away, well pleased with his errand.

The moon was shining in full splendor as the sun went down. A silver radiance blent with the rosy flush of sunset, filling the twilight with a rich bloom which would have made the glare of the calcium-light impertinent. The officials had the good taste to defer the illumination for a brief time.

No sooner had George departed on his errand than Maud arose and struck out across the lake toward the flying figure whose long yellow locks and glittering garb she had not for an instant lost sight of. She could not have overtaken him, but that he turned and glided in her direction. The full moon shone against the silver crescent in her cap; she had removed her mask, and her face, white and impassioned, with its intent, eager eyes, was plainly revealed. Before the god-hunter, with his bow and arrows, reached her, he faltered in his course, turned and shot off in another direction. It might have been accidental, but to Maud it was evidence that he wished to avoid her. She followed after him. He, not aware of being pursued, did not exert himself to distance her, but swept along easily, as if for the pleasure of the movement; yet it re-

quired all her strength to overtake him. When she was almost by his side she called out pleadingly,

"Ward!"

The hunter looked behind him at his girlish pursuer; then, as if satisfied that he was mistaken in supposing she spoke, resumed his way, but at greater speed.

"Ward!" she called again, more loudly, in a voice full of terror lest he should not heed or hear her. "Wait one moment for me."

The hunter sped on more swiftly and she sped after him. Forgetful that others might wonder at what they saw, oblivious of every thing but that he was again eluding her, she followed on with a speed which surprised herself; spectators began to think that this was a trial of skill between the superb hunter and this slender, beautiful Dian, and paused to look after them as they shot by. Half-way around the lake the strange chase went on, when Maud was again by the hunter's side. She stretched out her hand and grasped his arm.

"You can not deceive me, Ward; I know you. I always know you, no matter what shape you take. Only tell me, whether you are dead or alive! If it be you, Ward, or only your spirit, I care not, so that you will not avoid me thus. I want you to forgive me for that cruel note which I wrote you. Indeed, indeed, it was not because you were in trouble—I did not know of that—it was because that French girl told me that you were bound, in honor, to her!"

All this time they were speeding along, side by side, he, as if he heard her not, she clinging to his arm, and forcing out her words passionately with the purpose to say them and to make him hear them.

"Ward," she continued, finding he would not speak, "I shall not be long away from you. I am dying of grief. My friends know this thing is killing me. If I had not been so harsh to you, I could have borne it better. Oh, my God," she added, softly, to herself, "he can not speak to me, or he would! It is his ghost, but I am not afraid of it."

CHAPTER VIII.

A PLAN UNFOLDING.

It was a moonlit February evening, only a night or two after the great carnival, that David Duncan, the cabinet-maker, sat at the tea-table with his landlady. The neat but dingy room contrasted illy with the pure splendor of the outer scene of which he had a glimpse through the undrawn curtain. The food upon his plate was almost untasted, as he idly played with his cup, staring out of the window with a preoccupied air.

"You don't eat nothin', nowadays, David. I declare, it goes ag'in my conscience, to charge you for victuals, when you don't touch 'em."

The widow looked really troubled, as she said this. Mr. Duncan had made his home with her so long, and had always been so considerate toward her, and such an excellent young man, that she regarded him more as a friend than a boarder. He had broken off that bad habit of staying out of nights, and had, latterly, seemed to be in better spirits and health than when he first came to her; it pained her to see him again losing his appetite and wearing that absent, melancholy look; and in her simple mind she turned over a plan for getting him out of his lonely ways.

"He stays too much in his room of evenings; he needs company to 'liven him up. He works too hard, and reads too much, and don't see enough of the girls," she thought. "Young men of his age ought to be fond of female society—it's natur', and I don't believe in goin' ag'in natur'." Now, at least, she had come to the conclusion to try artifice to get her boarder out of his forlorn ways, and it was with a purpose that she made the remark she did, on that particular evening.

David looked at her with a pleasant but melancholy smile.

"Don't let your conscience trouble you on that score, Mrs. Farwell. I shall recover from my fit of the blues in a few days and then I shall eat twice as much as I ought, which will balance the account."

"I don't know about that. You ain't

No, no, your shadow is dearer to me than all the substance of this world," and she began to moan and sob as she clung to his arm, still flying over the ice with her silent companion.

By this time they were opposite the chair which Maud had occupied. Suddenly the hunter turned, and with a firm grasp detached her hold from his arm, and forced her into her chair.

"My ring!" cried Maud, as the moonlight glanced like fire from a ring on the little finger of the hand which gently, but forcibly, held her down.

Then, at last, her companion spoke, in a cold, low voice which was familiar and yet strange to her.

"Maud Arnold, you wrong yourself and others who love you, by this mad fancy which you are nursing. Ward Tunnecliffe has gone to that

'Undiscovered country from whose bourne No traveler returns.'

You can not bring him back. Are there not others who can take his place? If he could see you thus, he would be pained. Think no more of him; follow your present duty; be what you ought to be."

A darkness came before her eyes; she knew that he was leaving her, but before she had recovered the will which his touch had rendered powerless, the phantom skater had glided away, and was lost in the throng.

The hand which had touched hers was as cold as death itself, but not more cold than her own, when George came back, and she laid it on his.

"Unbind my skates, cousin; I feel faint and tired, and must go home, after all. If the carriage has not gone yet, I will go home in that, and you can stay here if you wish."

The carriage had not gone; in a few minutes Maud was on her way back to her chamber, which she did not leave for many weary weeks thereafter. A recurrence of the brain-fever of which she had had a slight attack the previous winter caused her old doctor to shake his head,—and still more gravely he shook it, when the fever had passed away, and it was known what a wreck it left.

never no great eater. I tell you what it is, if I was your mother, I should be concerned about you. You work too hard, and you don't go out enough. After bein' shet up in that close shop all day, that smells of paint and varnish, you ought to stir 'round more of evenin's. Young folks need amusement. Now, David, I tell you, candidly, I'd like to see you makin' up to some nice, likely girl. You've got enough laid up, I know, to keep a wife as she ought to be kept; and well-behaved, honest young men, like you, are not so plenty that they can afford to shet themselves up. They're mighty skase, I tell you."

Duncan laughed.

"Well, Mrs. Farwell, you pick me out a wife, will you?"

She looked at him a moment, to find how to take him; he was given, at times, to sarcasm, as well as to saying fine things which she hardly understood.

"Be you in earnest?"

"I've no objections to your selecting the lady, though I reserve the right of refusal if she don't please, Mrs. Farwell."

"Well, now, of all things! I'm real pleased, and I'll set to work at once—though I'm no match-maker. I know several smart, pretty girls that would be a downright help to a man, instead of a henderance."

"That's what I want. I want a woman to love me, Mrs. Farwell—to love me, for myself—not because I can make a good living for her, or save her from work. She must be young and modest—pure in heart as a lily, and she must have the capacity for loving wonderfully developed. As for the rest I don't care; she may be too poor to get herself the wedding-bonnet—the poorer the better!"

"How you do go on, sometimes, about the rich, Mr. Duncan! Don't you think that rich people are just as apt to be good as poor ones?"

"I think they are as hollow as china-dolls, the women, especially. They are made to hang fine clothes upon, that's all."

"I can't think they are all that way, David. But, about your future wife! that tickles me. I know several, as I

said. You don't want no common girl, for you've got more education yourself than most mechanics, and you ought to have a ladylike wife. There's Alice Wood, that teaches in the public-school in the next block, poor thing, I'd like to see her able to quit work; and then there's that poor little French thing that gives music-lessons and boards with my friend, Mrs. Miller. I like Mrs. Miller, but I don't think she gives them girls enough to eat."

"It is not every one as poorly calculated for a landlady, as you," said David, with a smile.

"Now, what do you mean by that?" ejaculated his companion, her benevolent face taking a puzzled look.

"No matter what I mean. Tell me some more about the little French girl. But, understand, I don't like foreigners. I must have an American wife."

"That's right enough, Mr. Duncan. But this little thing don't seem so much like a foreigner as some; and I mentioned her, because you spoke of some one to love you so dreadful much. I reckon she's all affection, she looks such a melting, gentle little thing. She'd love anybody to death that was good to her, I'm sure. And then, she has no relations, and you would have her all to yourself, and you speak French, and have been to the country she came from, and I'm sure she'd take to you. She's right genteel and pretty, too."

"Quite a list of recommendations. I'm almost tempted to make her acquaintance. If you think Mrs. Miller is starvin' her, why don't you propose to her to board with you? Then I could have a fair chance to decide whether we would suit each other. Do you know her name, Mrs. Farwell?"

"Really, I disremember her last name, it's so foreign. But they call her Antoinette, sometimes, to Mrs. Miller's. I've got an errand around there this evening, that I've been puttin' off this long time. S'posin you come with me. You might get a peep at ma'm'selle, in the parlor."

Duncan had been holding this conversation with his landlady more to divert his thoughts from another subject

than because he had the least idea of following her kindly suggestion. Nothing could have been further from his purpose, at that time, than to look out for a wife; in his heart of hearts there was a bitterness against all womankind; but when Mrs. Farwell mentioned the name of Antoinette, something like real interest took the place of the simulated attention he had hitherto given.

"I will go with you," he said, pushing back his cup; "but, remember, there's to be no hint of match-making. I'm not a marrying man—unless I happen to be more charmed than I expect to be. When I lived in Paris, learning my trade, I knew a little girl, quite a child, by the name of Antoinette—I used to call her 'Nettie'—she was fond of me; I made her toys out of bits of wood. It has given me a fancy for the name. I will go and see your ma'm'selle, for the sake of old associations. Antoinettes are as plenty in Paris as flowers. Of course this is not the same one; but I would like to see her."

"I'll be as silent as the grave about our conversation," said Mrs. Farwell, rising, in high spirits, to go for her out-door wrappings. "I don't care, in partic'lar, whether you marry or not. I only want to get you out of them low spirits a little. A walk 'll do you good this bright, bracing night."

In a few moments more they were on the pavement, walking cheerfully along, Duncan endeavoring to shorten his long strides to the step of the round little woman to whom he had given his arm. Mrs. Miller's three-story-and-basement brick boarding-house, on the Sixth avenue, was not over half a mile lower down, and a few blocks across. They were soon ringing at the door.

"That's ma'm'selle, singing, now," whispered Mrs. Farwell.

Duncan heard a sweet, strong, but rather sharp voice, trilling a difficult passage over and over, to the accompaniment of a boarding-house piano. When the frowsy servant ushered them into the parlor, they found no one there but the singer. She turned to see who had entered, and, not recognizing Mrs. Farwell,

was about to rise and leave the room, but the good lady was too quick for her.

"You needn't call Mrs. Miller," she said, first, to the servant; "I know she's busy, and I'll go right out where she is." Then, to the young couple—"Really, now, I've forgot your name, miss, though I've seen you several times. This is Mr. Duncan, Miss—"

"Sevigne," said the young lady, coldly.

"Laws, yes; I remember now, though it's rather Frenchy for me. You won't mind passing away the time for him a few minutes, while I run up and see Mrs. Miller, will you?"

Miss Sevigne condescended to smile at this informal proceeding, for a glance at the stranger had excited her curiosity, if not a deeper interest; and seeing the smile, Mrs. Farwell took herself away, delighted at finding her little affair already so prosperous.

A few commonplace remarks were interchanged between the two thus left together. David Duncan saw that the French girl was indeed very pretty and very ladylike, childlike in a certain artlessness of manner, and with large, soft, dark eyes, that promised an abandon of dependence and tenderness to the one who should win the regards of their owner. But he had traveled a good deal over the world, and had met such eyes before, especially in French girls. He was quite certain that, twice or thrice, when he encountered them suddenly, those eyes were studying his face with a curious eagerness.

"It seems to me, Misteer Duncan, as if I had met you before," she said, at last, in apology, "though I recollect not where. But that is impossible—'tis ver likelee you do resemble some friend of mine—though I make not out who, at this moment."

"We may have met in your own land, Mademoiselle Sevigne. I lived some time in Paris, and before you came away."

"C'est possible! How delightful! It makes us like old friends. What did you there?"

"I was busy at my trade—that of fine cabinet-work. It is probable that we may have met on the streets only."

"That is most reasonable; for I never knew one of your name. Yet I am so certain I have met you."

She was excited and pleased to talk with some one who knew her own dear Paris so well as this American; her chattering speech flew from subject to subject, now in French, now in her broken English; and when Mrs. Farwell returned to the parlor, after a good hour's absence, she was at the piano, singing a little French song which David had asked for. Other of the boarders now coming in, the visitors took their leave, one of them much gratified with the success of her experiment.

And Mrs. Farwell had but little reason to doubt that her experiment would prove a lasting success. Twice within the following week David Duncan spent the evening at Mrs. Miller's; and, at the close of a fortnight, Miss Seigne had adopted his suggestion, and had applied to his landlady for board. A better room, a more open part of the city, and two or three new pupils, had been the ostensible grounds of this change. It was comforting to Mrs. Farwell's motherly soul to see these two young persons opposite each other, at her table. Already, in anticipation, the arrangement was a permanent one. She knew that Antoinette was, day by day, more fascinated with the manly and intelligent young mechanic, who, she took care to let her know, laid up sums of money, and had the pride to care for a wife as if she were the first lady of the land; she could see the flush come on the girl's cheek, and the light to her eye, when David's firm step rung on the pavement; she knew that she held her breath to listen for that step, that she put flowers in her hair, and adopted every little coquetry of dress which her means afforded, to please his fastidious taste. And David brought books and flowers to Antoinette, coming out of his room, where he used to bend over his work of evenings, to while away the time with her, joining his voice with hers at the piano. It made Mrs. Farwell's dull-parlor quite bright when those two handsome, interesting young persons were in it.

One evening, when she had been at her new home a couple of weeks, Antoinette was obliged to go out of an errand. She put on a plain cloak and hood, and slipped out, took the first car down town, and got out near Madison Square. Here she walked into the square, and, as she slowly crossed it, she was joined by a well-dressed man, whose arm she took, and the two promenaded back and forth for a long time, engrossed in conversation. Mademoiselle was not aware that David Duncan had followed her, and was watching her every movement from the shadow of the park-fence.

It seems that he had not yet forgotten his old occupation of a spy; it came quite natural to him, now that he had a woman to watch, about whom it behooved him to know as much as possible.

When her long consultation with the gentleman came to an end, they parted, and she returned as she had come. The next morning a new magazine lay by her plate, and in it an exquisite carved and painted paper-folder, which the cabinet-maker had made with his own hands.

Her smile and blush of thanks were all that he could have desired. That afternoon ma'm'selle came home from giving her lessons as happy and musical as a bird; she put on her prettiest dress, with a bunch of scarlet geraniums in her hair; there was an expectant light on her face. David did not say much to her, at the tea-table; but Mrs. Farwell had a woman's instinct, and she took good care to keep out of the parlor that evening.

Antoinette never afterwards remembered just how it came about, but in her desire to be entertaining to Duncan she talked about a great many things, and finally began to tell him what she had heard about a Miss Arnold, who belonged to the rich people, and lived in Madison Square.

Did he remember, or was he not in New York at the time when, last winter, a year ago, a young Wall-street banker threw himself into the river, off a ferry-boat, and was drowned? His name, she thought, was Tunnecliffe, and the affair was a great deal talked about, owing to the high position of the relatives, the

failure of the firm of which he was partner, and the melancholy result of the failure. She had been in New York but a few months at that time, but she remembered it very well—the search for his body, and his portrait in the papers.

Yes, Duncan recalled it, though he did not come to the city until just about that time. "What about Miss Arnold?"

She was, it seems, engaged to Mr. Tunnecliffe, though the engagement was recent, and not generally known. She had brooded much over his death, and now, it was said that her mind had become disordered, and her parents were about to sail with her to France, in the hope that a change of scene, or the skill of the Paris medical faculty, would do something for her. She was an only child, and they were heartbroken about it.

"It is, indeed, a very sad story," said David Duncan, in a low voice. "What shape does her madness seem to take?"

"She insists upon it that her lover is not dead—that she has seen him several times, alive, in the body or spirit, no matter which. She says it is *he*, dead or alive. Finally she worked herself into a brain-fever over the absurd fancy, and when she recovers from that, her mind is possessed with *zat* one idee."

"An absurd fancy, you may well say, Miss Seigne."

"Why she should care so much about it I no guess; she did break off her engagement with him before he killed himself."

"Who told you that?"

She glanced up, surprised at his sharp tone, colored deeply, and stammered,

"Oh, it was *ze* report, I believe."

"But nothing was known about their affairs. I never saw any reference to it in the papers, and I read all I came across about it."

"Oh, I think some one told me, who knew *ze* family. It may have been one of my pupils. I believe she was—jealous, you call it."

"I've just solved a little mystery, in my own mind, Antoinette," said David, after a moment's reflection. "You know you have often said that it seems as if we had met before—that I puzzle you

by reminding you of some former acquaintance. Now, I don't believe it was any acquaintance. I guess it was only young Tunnecliffe's portrait in the papers. You probably saw that a great many times; and speaking of him has reminded me that I was said to resemble him. At the time of the tragedy, my fellow-workmen, and others, often noticed the resemblance. I used to be annoyed with it."

Again Antoinette looked into his face with eager scrutiny.

"You are very much alike—*zat* is true," she said, with embarrassment; "but your hair and complexion are darker, and you are different, after all. but you are right—*zat* must be it."

"One can not judge so well from the crude likeness in a weekly paper," added Duncan, carelessly, "but I have had it mentioned to me so often that I can not but think there must be something in it. It is flattering to me," he added, laughing, "since he was said to have been a handsome man."

"Yes, very handsome," responded the French girl, with a guilty consciousness of a certain painted photograph in her trunk up-stairs—"but *ze* flattery might be to *him*, after all;" and she gave the cabinet-maker a look out of those soft eyes very tender and beguiling.

"I have heard that Tunnecliffe spent a year or two in Paris; perhaps you met *him* there instead of me," remarked Duncan presently.

"Oh, no, I should say not; *zough* it may be," and the French girl shook her pretty head, and looked innocently into his face.

She was very charming that evening, but David did not say what she expected he would; the more effort she made to please, the colder and more abstracted he became; finally retiring to his room at an earlier hour than usual. Antoinette hurried to her own apartment and tore the scarlet flowers out of her hair, bursting into tears of vexation and disappointment. She was tired of teaching music for a living, and of being tossed about on the sea of life, and she loved the cabinet-maker as well as it was

possible for a nature like hers to love any thing but self. She respected him greatly, feared him a little, and loved him passionately. He was so strong and self-reliant, so well-informed and self-possessed, he would take such good care of a wife, and there was something so indefinably attractive and peculiar in his manner. Never before had a man gained such absolute power over her; for, although she had had several entangling alliances, she had always known her own part in them to be more or less selfish, while now she felt ready to kiss the feet of this new ruler in humble subjection.

While Antoinette lay sobbing upon her bed, too vexed to undress herself, David Duncan sat by his little work-table, in his room, lost in study. His mind was disquieted; a curious temptation was besetting it.

"It would be the easiest thing in the world," he said, half aloud. "I will do it. Yes I will do it; six months ago I would have scorned the idea; but these facts which I have learned have changed my mind. If that poor child is so settled in her belief, all I shall have to do will be to corroborate it. I shall have no trouble."

He arose and walked twice or thrice across the floor, with a smile on his face which totally changed its usually grave and moody expression—a smile of triumph if not of joy.

"I must find out if they actually sail in the next steamer," and having settled his resolve he undressed and went to bed with the manner of one well satisfied with himself.

Yet this resolve, which David Duncan had fixed upon, was no less than to take advantage of Maud Arnold's present state of mind and his own remarkable resemblance to the late Ward Tunnecliffe, to personate that individual, and persuade Miss Arnold into a hasty marriage with himself.

Strange and audacious as the scheme appeared, it yet promised well, if one could view the young cabinet-maker in the light of a fortune-hunter, for Miss Arnold was wealthy and beautiful.

Mr. Randolph would have known how to improve a chance like that.

CHAPTER IX.

TUNNECLIFFE'S DOUBLE.

It was the day before the one set for the sailing of the Havre steamer on which Mr. Arnold had engaged passage for his family. Mrs. Arnold was as busy as people generally are on such occasions, not only attending on the important duty of packing, but receiving innumerable farewell calls from friends, only a few of whom were permitted to see her daughter.

Maud had recovered from her dangerous illness, and was to all appearance doing well; she had been out for a drive two or three times, and was able to take her meals with the family; but her parents, in dread of some fresh and fatal excitement, kept her as secluded as possible. Her physician had said that when she was once upon the sea, she would improve rapidly; but until then, she had better not be permitted much company; and in this they had acquiesced, not only from fear of nervous agitation, but from pride, to prevent her real condition from becoming known. For they, as well as the doctor, believed the mind of their child—their lovely, intellectual child—to be overthrown; but not beyond restoration; and they hoped to effect this restoration in a foreign land. There certainly was but one point upon which any one could question Maud's sanity. That she had lost the sweet composure of former times, was true; that startled way, that eager, listening look, those nervous shocks to which she was liable, were all threatening symptoms, yet her mind betrayed not the slightest wandering, except when she spoke of her dead lover. Of him she always talked as if he were alive, and would come back to her.

On this balmy spring afternoon, Maud was in her chamber, finishing the preparations for her voyage. The soft bloom of convalescence was on her cheek, but in her eyes there dwelt an unspeakable melancholy.

Mrs. Bowen and her beautiful boy, Ward's namesake, were with her, Mrs.

Bowen having come to make her farewell call. Maud laid aside her work, seated herself on the carpet, and drew the child to her arms, kissing his yellow, glistening curls and white forehead.

"I think he grows more like Ward, every day," she said.

"I think so, too, Maud. He is growing his very image," and the tears came into the mother's blue eyes. "I can never forget my brother while I have my boy before me. Oh, dear, I feel so unhappy, sometimes. Ward was always so very, very kind to me, and I'm afraid I used to tease him," with a tremble of the voice quite pathetic in her; then, lowering it almost to a whisper, "Do you know, Maud darling, I was quite startled the other day? I don't know that I ought to tell you; but nurse had little Ward out in the Park, and a strange man came along and spoke to the little fellow and kissed him—which is nothing unusual, since the child always attracts attention—but the strange part of it is that Ward cried after the man, and called him his uncle. Nurse told me, when she came home; but she said it was a dark man, roughly dressed, and did not look at all like my brother. There! I know I ought not to have told you," she concluded, foolishly, for she knew the rumors about the state of Maud's mind, and that she ought not to excite her with a story like that.

"I assure you, it will do me no harm," said the young lady, with a sad smile. "I know very well what my friends say and think of me, dear Susie, and I know, too, or hope, that sometime they will have reason to change their minds."

"I am so sorry you are going away," broke in Mrs. Bowen, wishing to obliterate her mistake as completely as possible; "I shall be more gloomy than ever; you are the only one I care to talk about my brother with."

"You'll not be very gloomy, I trust, Susie; you have begun going out, and you have hosts of friends. But as to going away, you can not regret it half as much as I. If it were not for openly rebelling against my parents, I should re-

fuse to take this trip. I do not want to go away from here."

The tears began to fall as she said this. "Ah, yes, I know, Maud; but the doctor thinks it best. And indeed, indeed, I hope you will come home very well, and as happy as you once were."

"That is because you do not know my heart," was the simple reply.

"Well, I really must say good-by, and not keep you from your packing any longer. I shall try and get down to the steamer in the morning for a last peep at you. I'm so sorry you did not get around to see my new curtains; they are said to be the handsomest in town. By the way, Mr. Bowen says he met young Randolph in a restaurant, last night. I did not know he was in town again. Now, Maud, why don't you take him? I think he's very nice; though he could not be Ward's equal, of course."

"Tastes differ, Susie," answered Maud, not caring to go into the details of Mr. Randolph's character and position.

"Well, good-by, darling; if you stay long in Paris, you may expect me over after you."

The two friends parted with a warm embrace, and then Maud clung long and silently to the little child. When he and his mother were actually gone, she sat by the open window, too listless to go on with her employment.

"They will kill me if they persecute me thus," she murmured. "I know that it is all done in love; but why can not they indulge me in my own way? They must tear up every root that holds me here, and then expect me to blossom anew."

While she remained idly grieving, again, as when she was packing her trunks for Newport, her maid came in with an important message; she had a large bouquet composed of every sweet spring flower, and accompanying it a sealed missive.

The delicate odor of a certain rare blossom, which had always been a favorite of hers, stole the color from Maud's face, it was so intense with memories of the past; the strength went out of her fingers, which trembled so that she could

hardly break the seal. She made some excuse to send Marie from the room—yet there was nothing which she recognized in the handwriting upon the envelope.

When alone, she drew forth the note and read:

"DEAREST MAUD: I pray you be calm while you read what I have to say. Do not allow yourself to be surprised or agitated, lest I have reason to blame myself for addressing you so abruptly. They tell me that you have been very ill—and on my account! I am sorry that I repulsed you so, that evening, upon the ice, at the lake. I might have known how impossible it is to deceive true love. And you have been sick on account of it! I had my reasons, Maud, for not wishing to be known. They were good ones, I then thought, but I have changed my mind. And my harshness made you ill! They say that you are *insane*, because you recognize me through all my disguises. I know better, Maud, and I have now to atone for all I have made you suffer. But, as yet, I am not quite ready to reveal myself to others. For this I will give my reasons; for, can not we meet, without the knowledge of others? You go away to-morrow. I must see you. Will you not write a few words, telling me how and where? A boy will call for your answer in half an hour. When I think of the manner of our separation I would not ask this of you, had I not learned some facts which explain your conduct at that time—and had I not proof of your love in all that you have suffered, for my sake, since. When I come to talk with you, I will tell you all. Be silent, for the present; I only ask it for a little time. Direct your answer to David Duncan. WARD TUNNECLIFFE."

Maud held the letter, her face growing white, but she neither screamed nor fainted; only an intense light grew gradually in her face, as if the lamp of joy had been kindled in her soul and was shining through her features. The letter was not so much of a surprise to her, after all! Had she not *expected*, daily and hourly, some such tidings as these? She was, in a manner, prepared for it. Joy is not half so killing as sorrow. She bowed her enraptured face over the flowers; then read the note again and again. She thought but little of the handwriting, or any other outward proof

of the truth of the letter. She had within her own heart evidence sufficient of its truth, and the more she realized it, the calmer she became. There was a slight tremble in the fingers which penned her answer, but it was the thrill of haste and eagerness.

"DEAR WARD: I am not agitated; I am hardly surprised. I have long looked for such tidings, and it seems almost natural that they should come. I scarcely know how to appoint a meeting; but meet we must, though it should be first in the face of the whole world. Father and mother have promised to dine with some friends this evening. They will leave the house before seven. You can come here. We have a new man, who will not know you. I will send Marie out of the way, and will myself receive you in mamma's little room. You know very well where that is. MAUD ARNOLD."

This she addressed to David Duncan, and shortly after it was written, a boy called for it, as promised.

When Mrs. Arnold came into her daughter's room, a little later, she could not but notice the change in her appearance. It was as if some pale, pensive lily-bud had suddenly flowered into a laughing splendor. There was a smile on the lip, a beam in the glance, which had been absent many melancholy months.

"Why, my child, are you reconciled, after all, to going abroad?" she asked, her own care-worn face lighting up.

"Yes, mother, quite reconciled."

"And do you really feel as happy as you look?"

"I don't know how I look, mother, but I feel happy and contented."

"This will be good news for your father, Maud. It has worried us so much to see you ill and miserable."

"I trust you will have good appetites for your dinner this evening, then," responded Maud, kissing her mother's cheek, and laughing.

She was not conscious of any hypocrisy; she only felt that Ward was living, that she should see him, and that his interests demanded present secrecy.

"Perhaps I had better decline the dinner, even at this late hour. Will you

not need my assistance? I do not wish you to fatigue yourself."

"Marie has already done every thing, dear mother. There is absolutely nothing more to do, but to lock the trunks. I shall rest myself, this evening; and do you and father enjoy yourselves as much as possible."

"I will have John bring a nice little dinner to your room, since you must dine *solitaire*. We shall be back very early. And now I must dress, I suppose."

"Well, mamma, command Marie all you wish. I have nothing more for her to do. Only, this evening, I'd like her to go to Mrs. Bowen's for me; it will not take her much more than an hour. And tell John to bring up my dinner by six. I believe I am hungry."

Another little unconscious falsehood, for when the dinner came, Maud could not eat three mouthfuls of it, though it was dainty and delicious enough for a princess.

"It is very nice, John, and I am not sick, at all, to-day. I'm too happy to eat, I believe."

"You look well, that's certain, Miss Maud; and we're all glad enough to see it, though it would be more to our satisfaction if you'd show it by a good appetite. When I feel well I'm allers hungry."

She laughed, a ringing laugh, like a child's.

"Joy acts differently on different constitutions, I suppose, John. There, take away all but the coffee."

"It does me good to hear you laugh like that, Miss Maud. We be all sorry you be going away; but if it makes you well again, 'twill be all right. So you won't have nothing more?—none o' the chocolate custard?"

"Nothing at all but the coffee, John. I'm going down to mamma's room presently. I don't wish to see any one, since papa and mamma are out, excepting a person by the name of Duncan. He is to call about seven, on a little business, and I will see him there, where it will be quiet."

"Very well, Miss Maud. I won't let

nobody else in, because missus said you mustn't be worried with callers."

When he had gone out with the tray, Maud sat a little while sipping her coffee. Marie had already assisted her to dress, and had gone out, not only on an errand to Mrs. Bowen, but with permission to take the rest of the evening for making such farewell visits as she wished, as she was to accompany the family abroad.

"They all say I look so well," thought the young girl, setting aside her cup and going to the mirror.

She had vexed Marie, and disarranged half a trunkful of dresses, to take out a robe of dark-blue silk, Ward's favorite color. She had placed a knot of the blue violets from the bouquet in her hair and another on her bosom. She was prettily dressed; but it was not this which made her so lovely. It was the radiance of happiness which emanated from her whole expression, or, rather, the diviner radiance of love, beaming from her soul as from a sun; for hers was one of those natures for whom love makes an existence. When Ward Tunnecliffe gave into her keeping the heart he had so long withheld from others equally beautiful and equally his mates so far as the eye of the world could discern, he had believed that hers was just such a nature, and he had looked forward to a union with her with a deep rapture, feeling that it would be one of

"the world's great bridal."

Equally deep had been his disappointment on that terrible day when she had sent him from her, as he thought, because of a business failure. The truth was that poverty, or disgrace itself, would never have kept their hearts one hour apart; but to a woman who loves well and nobly there is, one sin which can not be forgiven—the sin of the man who professes to love her, against another woman whom she generously credits with a love as profound as her own. That Ward should have pledged himself to that foolish, fond French child, and come from her to Maud, was the one cruel wound which to Maud proved incurable. Yet even this did not kill her

love. It *might* have done so, had not that tragedy torn him so quickly from her and from life, as to fill her with remorse, and to awaken the dreadful doubt that she might have judged him upon too little evidence. Why had she not *first* made the accusation and heard his defense, instead of sending him that note of dismissal?

This agony of remorse it was, no doubt, which lightened her love and grief until it took the complete possession of her which we have seen—and from the first moment when she conceived that she had beheld Ward alive, this was merged in the keen desire for atonement. She wished to atone to him for that harsh dismissal; to explain the cause of her conduct, even though she received no satisfying account from him of his acquaintance with Antoinette, was the one longing of her life. Especially since the day when she had seen the French girl and Randolph together, in confidential discourse, were her suspicions awakened that she and Ward had, in some manner, from some wrong motives, been made victims of a conspiracy. All the conduct and character of Randolph were such as to justify this suspicion. The more she brooded over it, the more palpable became this theory, and the wilder her desire to meet her lover, in spirit or body, she scarcely cared which, so that she could communicate with him and express her penitence.

And here approached the hour! Ward was alive; she had seen *him*, warm, breathing, human—no chilling phantom of another world. Ward was alive! The infallible prophecy of her heart had told her no false promise! He was coming to see and speak with her; she held his written confession in her hand; the past was annihilated—all that stood between her and the hour of their last happy meeting—she neither doubted nor feared—she did not

"look before or after"—

one consciousness only possessed her—that Ward lived, and was coming!

Her face shone with a calm rapture; yes, she looked lovely and happy enough to give joy to the coldest suitor.

In the mean time, David Duncan, with a step which now quickened and again faltered, as if his mind still hesitated over the scheme it proposed, approached the house where Maud waited. He passed and repassed it before finally ascending the steps and ringing the bell. Maud sat in her mother's boudoir with clasped hands and inclined head; when she heard the bell, she arose to her feet and stood motionless, bright and still as if a statue had been carved of light instead of marble, and thus David found her when the servant bowed him into the room and retired. For a moment the two gazed at each other; seeing that rapt countenance, it may be that the man had soul enough to feel regret at the deception he was practicing—or it may be that joy and passion at sight of the beautiful prize before him, overwhelmed him for a moment with silence. Maud was the first to move; she held out her arms to him, with a smile, and then each sprung into the other's clasp, as if there was no more separation for them.

After a time the girl raised her head from his breast and looked him keenly in the face; it was not that she doubted, but that she could not too eagerly assure herself.

"I told them so, Ward. I repeated it again and again. They said to each other that I was going mad—as if I did not know *best*!" and she laughed, in happy mockery of others' unbelief.

"It was a blessed madness," said the man, kissing her.

"I always *felt* it, Ward; I was as certain of it then as now. But you are changed—very, very much changed, for so brief a time;"—again with that keen look from which he shrunk.

"It does not seem a brief time to me, Maud."

"Nor to me, either; you know that! It is a lifetime—longer than all the rest of my life, though it is but fifteen months. And you have been so lonely, so desolate—no, Ward, I do not wonder that you have changed. I, too, have been sick—and sad. Have I changed so much?—have I grown old too fast, Ward?"

Pretty coquetry of women! with which, in their moments of profoundest agitation, they would disguise something of what they feel. Maud knew that she was more beautiful than ever; and the shy, loving glance which she raised to his as she asked this, had in it no fear that he would condemn her for faded charms.

"You are improved in every way, my darling. Once you were too timid—love was too new to you. You would not let me guess how much you loved me—but to-night, our sorrow has made our love so sacred that you are willing I should see and feel it all. This is happiness."

The cabinet-maker was doing very well with his part of the play.

Maud blushed, drawing a little further away from him.

"Let us sit here, on mamma's sofa. You can stay but an hour, Ward, and as yet you have told me nothing. Why must you still conceal yourself? Why not remain here until my parents come in, and let them know, at once, why it is that I have recovered my happiness? It will be terribly hard for me to keep your secret, I'm afraid."

"There is no very good reason for my remaining amongst the dead any longer; indeed, there was never any good reason for it, and that is what makes it harder, now, to invent some excuse for my folly. Desperation, shame, and despair at having lost *you*, Maud, tempted me into hiding from my friends and the world. I have still too much pride to acknowledge my weakness—to take my old place, and bear the 'nine days' wonder' of my acquaintances. Yet, when I found that you still loved me—when I heard that your very reason was shaken with doubts and hopes—I could not longer withhold myself from the impulse which urged me to your side. Maud, since we do thus truly love each other, tell me what it was that urged you to return me your betrothal ring? There is a mystery there which I do not entirely fathom, though I have traced it partially out."

Maud laid before him the story of the

French girl's visit—all that she said, and the likeness which she had in her possession.

"I did know a child of that name, in Paris," said her companion, in answer, "whose father was a music-teacher. He was old and poor, almost dead with consumption. I did him many favors; sometimes, of an evening, when my work was done, I went to sit an hour or two with him, for he liked my company. But I never paid much heed to Antoinette; she was pretty, but a little too bold to please my taste. I saw that she was an artful little creature, capable of caring for herself, and I did not lavish much pity upon her. Where she obtained the picture, I can not guess; for I did not know that one of that kind was in existence."

Maud did not doubt a word of this explanation; she thought she saw further into the matter than her lover; she was certain that Randolph had some connection with it, which was enough to explain any amount of treachery.

"I was too hasty, Ward. If it had been any thing but *that*, I should not have heeded it. But I said to myself, 'If he can deceive her, has he not also deceived me?' You must forgive me."

"I will, most fully; but I shall impose a condition—that you never doubt me again! never, *under any circumstances*."

"I am ready to promise any thing," was the half-laughing response.

"You do not know how much that promise implies. Supposing, for instance, that I should be *unable to prove my own identity*!—that your friends and mine should say—'this is not Ward Tunnecliffe!—this is some bold impostor, making capital out of your insane fancy'—that all the world, save you, should fail to recognize me."

"Such a thing would be simply impossible, Ward. You have not been absent so long as to prevent you from being known by your most casual acquaintance. Just as I know that I am not insane, do I know that you are Ward Tunnecliffe. Stay here, and hear what my father says."

"Not to-night—I can not, just yet."

"But to-morrow we go. Can you let the sea divide us, Ward?"

"That is what I wish to talk about, and we have but a few moments left us, Maud. As I have said, it is hard for me to come out now, and make the necessary explanations to my friends. Besides, I am confident that Mr. Bowen will dispute my identity; he has property of mine in his hands, and will be loth to give it up. I wish to avoid a fuss, here and now. I will follow you to Paris, by the next steamer; in four weeks we will meet again; and then, if my darling has that faith in me which I believe she has, she will consent to a private marriage. When it is all over, and nothing others can say can change the facts, we will go to your parents, and explain all, to their satisfaction. Will not this hope sustain you, Maud, for a few short days?"

"I do not like to let you go again, so utterly. I am afraid this will all seem like a dream to me, when I do not see or hear you."

"But, sweet, you believed in me when you had so little proof, how can you doubt now? I swear to you, if we both live, you shall see me in Paris within a month. You shall be my wife, within a month, if you consent, Maud."

"Not till my parents know and approve, Ward. But they will. Of course they will be only too glad to see me well and happy again. You are not going—so soon—are you?" and she clung to him with tears.

"I *must* go; the hour is more than up. Believe me, if important interests were not at stake, I would not torture you by any necessity for concealment, even for a few days. But it is best so, believe me, darling. Good-by, for a little while, only a little while. You ought not to weep, child; you should, rather, be very happy."

"I know it, and I *am* happy, Ward—only it is so hard to let you slip from me again. But I will be brave."

"Only a month, and then my darling will be my wife."

She felt the almost fierce pressure of his arms, and the next moment was alone.

CHAPTER X.

A WOMAN'S MADNESS.

It was a disagreeable surprise to the Arnolds, to find, when they were a few hours out at sea, that they had Mr. Randolph for one of their fellow-passengers. They acknowledged his acquaintance only by a chilling bow, for Mrs. Arnold had revealed to her husband the false character in which the young man had appeared, though she withheld from him the deadly assault he had once made upon their daughter. The young gentleman received their coldness with humility—not presuming to intrude himself upon their notice through the early part of the voyage. But one sunny afternoon, when Mr. Arnold was leaning idly over the rail of the vessel, in a pleasant mood with himself and all the world, seeing that the weather was so prosperous and his daughter so much more like her old self, the graceful Southerner ventured to approach him. With that winning candor which so quickly disarms an adversary, he reverted to the past; spoke of being left an orphan at an early age, and exposed to all the temptations which wait upon youth and riches—flattery, indulgence, the influence of gay associates—and of how he had thus been led astray into courses of life which his maturer judgment was now learning to condemn.

He confessed that he had assumed his cousin's name, in New York, with a vague idea of retrieving his fortunes by a wealthy marriage; and delicately insinuated that it was the beauty and nobility of Miss Arnold's character which had first awakened him to a sense of his own baseness, and led him to abandon a suit to which he felt himself so unworthy a party. He stated that after leaving Newport he had returned to Baltimore only to find that the better part of his nature was thoroughly aroused; he lost all taste for his former gay and extravagant pursuits, and had finally gone to his uncle with a full confession of all his faults and follies, as practiced in New York.

His uncle had forgiven him the use

of his name and influence, and finding after several months' trial, that his efforts at reform were sincere, had proposed to him that he should go into business for himself, as some settled occupation would be the surest means of diverting his mind, and keeping him from a return to his former dissipation. As a proof of the trust he was willing to repose in him, he offered his nephew his share of a profitable partnership which he held in the house of Guizots, flower-makers, Paris. Randolph, senior, had transferred his interest entire to his nephew, with no other provision than that he should pay him back half the original capital, at the end of five years, if he found himself abundantly able to do so. In proof of all this, young Randolph showed the papers to Mr. Arnold, who could not refuse to look at them, so humbly and graciously were they offered; nor could he withhold from the warm-hearted and candid Southerner his sympathy, and his earnest hopes that he would be able to hold to his good resolutions, and be prospered in his present career.

His good wishes were received with lavish gratitude; but the young gentleman did not yet consider himself worthy of being re-instated in the friendship of the ladies of Mr. Arnold's family, and presumed upon no such request. He did not seek to approach them even through the courtesies of the table, keeping his seat at the doctor's table, while the Arnolds were, of course, at the captain's. So much did this modesty win upon the favor of Mr. Arnold that, before they parted, on the arrival of the vessel at Havre, he invited Mr. Randolph to call occasionally at their hotel, as they should be lonely, and glad to welcome familiar faces. As he remarked, afterward, to his wife, "there was nothing so excellent for keeping young men out of bad habits as the society of really refined women; and if poor Randolph had truly set himself to the task of reform, they were bound to render him this much assistance. If they should continue to discountenance him, he might become discouraged, and say to

himself, that if good people considered him irretrievably bad, he might as well become so."

All this was true enough, and Mr. Arnold would not have been the kind-hearted gentleman he was, if he had not felt so; the trouble was, in his own simplicity of character, he was incapable of fathoming the duplicity of a nature like Randolph's.

In inviting Randolph to call upon them, the father did not consider that he was renewing the right of the young man to become his daughter's suitor; he did not suppose he would aspire to this; also, Maud was, now, in the eyes of her parents, an invalid, whose peculiarities of mind would prevent their encouraging any one's attentions, at present.

The family obtained suitable apartments looking on a wide and pleasant boulevard; the May weather was enchanting; and so many of their American friends were in Paris, they were soon surrounded by a gay circle which had little to do but to enjoy itself. In this circle, Randolph became a favorite, his name, his southern associations and his chivalric manners being quite sufficient to recommend him. In the meantime Mr. Arnold neglected to call at Guizots, flower-makers, to find if the young gentleman had duly presented his papers and been installed a member of the firm.

It was not Randolph's first visit to Paris; he was quite at home in that city, and almost as good a Frenchman as a native. Mr. Arnold, also, when in active business, had made frequent voyages to France; but Maud had not been abroad since she was quite a child, and had much to see and admire. Her parents were delighted and surprised at the genuine interest she took in what passed around her; willing to walk, ride and visit, charmed with the bright, beautiful French capital, as full of wonder and joy as a child, she was so well and blooming that it seemed useless to consult any physician in her case. That this improvement was real, and not a feverish impulse, they became convinced.

Maud, nowadays, never referred to

Ward Tunnecliffe, and they believed her healed of her mental malady. They did not dream of the sweet secret which she held in her heart, the source of all her happiness and bloom.

But when a first steamer and a second arrived at Havre, and Maud received no letter nor intimation of her lover's presence in Paris, her brilliant spirits began again to droop.

"It seems to me you study the passenger lists with great interest. One would think you were expecting friends," her mother remarked to her, the day after the third arrival of a ship.

Maud did not hear her; she was saying over to herself, "I swear to you that, if we both live, you shall see me in Paris within a month!" The month had expired, and she had not seen him: what had happened to Ward? The paper fell listlessly from her fingers.

"You look pale, this morning. I hope you are not going to be ill again," continued her mother, uneasily. "Do you see any names of friends on the passenger list?"

"No, mother," but as Maud's eye again ran over the column, a flush rose to her face.

"Who is it?" asked Mrs. Arnold, who noticed the flush of recognition.

"I see no name that we are familiar with," was the evasive reply, and Maud handed the paper to her mother, who scanned it carefully without finding any name she recognized.

On first reading the list, Maud had passed over this—David Duncan—for all her emotions on that night of Ward's visit had been so engrossing that she had not since recalled the direction he had given for her note. Now, however, she remembered it, and knew that Ward had come.

Where he would first present himself to her, or in what guise, she could not guess; she could scarcely conceal the flutter of expectation which kept her so restless. That day she accompanied Mrs. Arnold on a shopping expedition; in the afternoon they had a drive on the Champs Elysées; but Maud could not have told whether she purchased a red

or a green silk, or in what part of the city they were driving; the answers her companions elicited were ridiculously vague, when they addressed her; her eyes scanned every passing form, expecting, every instant, to behold *his*.

"Do see that lady in the carriage with the cream-colored horses! I believe it's the Princess B——!" said Mrs. Arnold, in a low voice.

"Yes, mother, it was delicious," murmured her daughter. She had only caught the word "cream," and supposed she was discussing their dessert.

"How fashionable these little dogs are!—almost every carriage has one," was the next attempt of the matron.

"I suppose the Empress encourages their manufacture," responded Maud.

"Why, child, how absurd! But, see, there goes—"

"Who?" cried Maud, turning pale.

"Victor Hugo, himself; I know him very well, by sight."

"Pshaw!" said Maud, in a vexed tone, regaining her color.

"I thought you admired him very much."

"So I do, mamma. Which is he?" and the girl rallied, and tried to appear interested.

"He is lost in the crowd, now; you can not distinguish him."

Maud strained her eyes, but it was not the great novelist she was endeavoring to find. She "adored" Victor Hugo; but what was he to her, on that day of days, when, every moment, she expected some word, or signal, or sight of the dead alive?

Her expectations were doomed to disappointment. When, at dusk, they came back to their apartments, she had received no token of Ward's presence, nor was there any missive awaiting her. When Mr. Arnold came in, he had tickets to the theater at which Ristori was then playing.

"Come, ladies, make haste with your tea, we shall be late."

"I believe I am too tired to go out this evening, father."

"Then we shall not go," said he, decidedly.

His wife saw that he had something important upon his mind, but his daughter was too engrossed with herself to notice it.

"Well, papa, I certainly do not wish to disappoint the whole party. I know that mamma has been very anxious to see Ristori. But I must dress. I will not be fifteen minutes about it."

Mrs. Arnold, whose dress required no changes, leisurely sipped her tea, while Maud, calling on Marie, flew to her chamber to prepare for the evening.

"My blue silk, Marie. No; I will not touch the white one!—and those violets in the vase—place those in my hair and bosom. Let those curls fall upon my neck, just as they are now. —Ward always liked my hair so," she was thinking, as she said it. "Now, Marie, how do I look?—as well as usual?" and she gave a triumphant glance at herself in the mirror.

"Mademoiselle knows that blue is her color," said the maid, "and as for her looks, I think she must expect Mr. Randolph at the theater—her cheeks and eyes are bright, as if she expected an admirer."

"I presume Mr. Randolph will be there, but you know I do not like him, Marie," laughed Maud.

She had recovered all her spirits, which had sunk when she came home and found no word awaiting her. It now seemed to her most probable that Ward would be present in the theater to which "all the world" was flocking, and that he would there contrive some communication with her. This hope it was which, upon second thought, had decided her to go.

While she was preparing herself, Mr. Arnold was making an exciting revelation to his wife.

"I do not know whether it is prudent to take Maud out to the theater to-night, or not," he remarked, in a voice which caused Mrs. Arnold to set aside her cup and give him her full attention.

"On account of her being so fatigued?"

"No, not that. I met a person in the city to-day—the last person in the world, certainly, whom I should expect to meet."

"Well?"

"I should not like Maud to meet that person suddenly; the shock might be fatal to her."

"Who was it?"

"And he may be at the theater to-night. If it gave me such a tremendous shock, what would the effect be upon her?" musingly.

"Who can you be talking about, Mr. Arnold?"

"I'll tell you," he said, leaning forward, and speaking in a whisper. "It is Ward Tunnecliffe!"

His wife gave a slight scream. "Impossible!"

"You may well say that. Yet how can a man doubt the evidence of his own senses? I met him to-day at James Munroe & Co.'s Banking Office, No. 6, Rue de la Paix. He walked into the reading-room when I was there. It was broad daylight, and I saw him more plainly than I see you now. What makes me the more certain that it was he, was, that upon encountering my glance, he slightly started and colored."

"Did he seem to recognize you?"

"He bowed, went hastily to the clerk with whom he had business, obtained some money, and went out. He would have bowed, I suppose, if he had not known me, seeing the manner in which I stared at him. I must have turned pale. If it was not he, it is the most remarkable case of resemblance that I ever knew or heard of—voice, step, manner, form, features—why, I tell you, Mrs. Arnold, it was he!"

This he said with an air as if more to convince himself than her.

"How could it be he? Of course you inquired his name?"

"No; I went to the clerk, and asked who it was, saying I was quite certain I recognized one of my New York acquaintances. He referred to his book and said that the gentleman was 'David Duncan, New York City,' that he had only arrived in Paris the previous night, and had come there to register his name, and open a bank account."

"Well, Mr. Arnold," said his wife, with a sigh of relief, "you are as foolish

as Maud. Doubtless this is some one who strongly resembles the late Mr. Tunnecliffe—perhaps a cousin, or other relative—and you, influenced by poor Maud's assertions and fancies, at once see the man himself. Truly, now, if Maud had never got that crotchet in her head, would you have been so quick to-day to see a dead man in a living one?"

"I really believe that it has made no difference. I tell you, wife, the resemblance is *remarkable*! In fact, it's Ward himself. Nothing can persuade me to the contrary. I now believe that Maud has been in the right all the time; that she has really seen him, and that her convictions have been as reasonable as mine are now. We have persecuted the poor child without cause. Why he should pursue such a strange course of action, I can not conjecture."

"I can but think that you are mistaken, Mr. Arnold."

"If it was not he, it was his ghost!"

"That's Maud over again," said his wife, impatiently. "Here is some person who happens to bear a strong—an astonishing, if you please—likeness to a dead man, and you two, at once, lose all cool power of observation, and declare that a man who has killed himself is still alive. *How can* Ward Tunnecliffe be alive? and *why should* he be moving about the world under a false name, making his friends so much unnecessary trouble?"

"I can no more answer these questions, than you can, my dear wife. All I can say is, it seemed to be he. There was some slight difference, of course. This man was thinner and darker—perhaps a trifle taller, though his thinness would give that appearance—but in all other respects he was the exact counterpart of Ward."

"Better say counterfeit," added Mrs. Arnold. "You do not intend to mention this to our child?"

"No; I am only afraid that she, too, will meet him, and that the consequences will be dangerous. If I had had a moment for reflection, I should have addressed the person, and satisfied myself more fully. Should I again encounter

him, I am resolved to compel him to disclose himself. In the mean time, I pray that Maud may not meet him."

"Perhaps we had better not go out this evening."

Just then Maud entered the room, radiant and beautiful.

"I have half resolved not to go out, since you are so tired," said her father.

"Oh, papa, I am rested now, and desire to go very much. I shall be vexed at having taken all this trouble to no purpose. I know that I am looking my best this evening, and I don't wish to

"Waste my sweetness on the desert air."

It was not often that Maud betrayed so much girlish vanity, or put on such pretty, willful ways; her father was overpersuaded by them, though secretly doubtful of the propriety of yielding.

Half an hour later, the Arnolds were in the brilliantly-lighted theater. Ristori was magnificent that night, quite entralling Mrs. Arnold; but the secret which burned in Maud's heart, and the strange conviction which had taken possession of her father, prevented these two from yielding to the spell of the actress. The glance of both roved incessantly over the house. It was intensely annoying to Maud, when Mr. Randolph came to them, between the acts, chatting about the people and the place, and demanding her opinion of the queen of the stage. Maud had formed no opinion; and her mind was too crowded with its own hopes and fears to have room for his commonplaces. Presently, he, too, grew impatient of her indifference, as she of his presence. Leaning over her, so as to speak unheard by the other occupants of the box, he suddenly remarked, in a venomous whisper, which recalled to her vividly that ugly scene on the sands at Newport,

"He is not in the house, Miss Arnold; so you need not grudge me a little of your complaisance."

She could only reply by a look of pale surprise.

"Ah, you change color; your conscience is not easy. You scorn me, Miss Arnold! Supposing I tell your

father, who is so proud of his family honor, that Miss Maud has a secret understanding with a poor adventurer, a base cabinet-maker, a mechanic, who takes advantage of his likeness to a man she once loved, to impose upon her credulity, and betray her into a marriage, before her friends are aware of her danger? This is fortune-hunting extraordinary! It shames *my* poor attempts; for, Miss Arnold will do me the justice to believe, that I loved *her* even better than her fortune, while this fellow is guilty of every conceivable baseness."

Maud could not arrest his words, could not answer him; she grew cold, from head to foot, staring him in the eyes vacantly, while his own glittering, triumphant glance never left hers.

"He is not here to-night; but we both know that he is arrived."

"Will you be so good as to leave me, Mr. Randolph?" Maud finally said.

She did not believe his assertions; he had not staggered her faith in Ward—and yet—and yet!—oh, that horrible doubt which just darkened the mirror of her love for an instant, and passed away. She wished to be alone; to get home—to get away from that wicked, rejoicing look of her mortal enemy, for, in that hour, she hated Randolph more than she had ever despised him.

"No, Miss Arnold," he said, softly; "I shall *not* leave you. You drove me from you once; you enraged me, and I forgot myself. But I am under better control now. You can not make me angry with you. I am resolved to *protect and defend you*. I came across the water with no other object than to watch the machinations of David Duncan, and save *the woman I love* from becoming the victim of his fraud. It is my duty to let your father understand the position in which you have placed yourself."

The orchestra was playing a fascinating overture, which had the effect to attract the attention of others, and prevent this conversation being overheard.

Maud's eyes flashed:

"It will be unnecessary, Mr. Randolph.

I am quite able to take care of myself—"

"Your friends think differently," he gently suggested.

"Oh, yes," said Maud, with a bitter laugh, "some of them think me insane, I believe. Perhaps you do. But I know perfectly what I am about. If I have made any mistake, I shall be more anxious than any one else to have it corrected. It will not be necessary for you, sir, to trouble my father. I shall lay my own case before him; and, doubtless, Mr. Tunnecliffe will soon be present, in person, to support me. At all events, it can never become necessary for you to interfere in our family affairs. It will not be permitted."

"Your parents may not be so ungrateful as you, Miss Maud. They may feel themselves under deep obligations to one who shall interfere between a child laboring under a mental disease, and an unprincipled adventurer."

Maud shrunk under the infliction of these subtle stings. Here was this man addressing her in a tone of assumed superiority, as if she were, indeed, a mad or foolish child, who must be watched as one not capable of self-government. Self-respect would not allow her to reply to him; she turned to the stage, as if ignoring his presence. Again he bent over her:

"One word more, of friendly advice. Do not confess to your parents the mistake you have made. It will only confirm them in their fears as to your mental state. I believe you sane enough, and the victim of this person's strange resemblance to another, and his intention to deceive you. But if you tell your parents how far you have been fooled, especially if you grow excited, and declare this adventurer to be, in truth, the dead Ward Tunnecliffe, do you not see in what danger you place yourself? It will probably end in your being turned over to a Parisian madhouse. My advice to you is, to say nothing to your friends; but when David Duncan contrives to keep his appointment with you, that you at once assure him that you have at last discovered the

fraud he is practicing, and will deliver him over to the proper authorities if he continues to persecute you further."

Finding that Maud made no reply to this, he concluded:

"I do not expect that you will judge my motives generously. But I have pointed out what I regard as the safest course for you. If you are discreet you will follow it," and with a bow to her and Mrs. Arnold he returned to his seat.

Maud did not know when the play ended. She arose with the others, mechanically, took her father's arm, and was placed by him in the carriage. Her brain felt heated, weary, and dizzy. Was she, indeed, going mad? She asked herself this question over and over, each time feeling less assured as to the answer her own reason gave her. Perhaps she *was* going mad. Perhaps her friends were correct in their fears for her. How had Randolph learned of the understanding between her and Ward Tunnecliffe? How did he know of that one visit, made only the evening before he and she left New York? How had he so swiftly made his own arrangements to accompany her? How long had he been on the track of this David Duncan? What did he know in support of his assertions? Could it be that what he had said was true? Was she the victim of a cruel deception? More rapidly than the whirl of the carriage-wheels, these, and a hundred other, questions whirled through her brain, producing confusion and weariness. Before reaching home she had resolved to tell her father all, and to obtain the benefit of his judgment and advice; he would, in a few days, at furthest, know that a Ward Tunnecliffe, real or pretended, had arisen to claim her hand—why not tell him all, that night?

From this step she was deterred by the fear that he would pronounce her insane. If he suspected her sanity, all that she might say would only damage her cause. Mr. Randolph's warning was a wise one, in that respect. Mad! Great heaven, that *she* should be so humiliated! Perhaps she *was* mad, she mused again. Yet she had heard it said

that persons becoming insane never suspected their own danger. And her heart again bounded to be free from this dreadful idea.

By the time they had alighted and ascended to the saloon, she had resolved to be silent for the present, and to allow Ward Tunnecliffe to appear and plead his own cause with her parents. She would consent to no secret marriage, nor to any further delay in his announcing himself to those who had a right to know of his existence and claims. Tomorrow!—yes, to-morrow, she felt sure, he would come, and make all right.

Kissing her parents, she hastened to her own room, before they had time to remark upon her agitation.

CHAPTER XI.

A WOMAN'S CUNNING.

THE evening after the departure of the steamer which bore away the Arnolds, David Duncan was lying on the little hard hair-sofa in his landlady's "parlor." The hour was late, and he supposed the inmates of the house were all in bed, he having gained admittance with a night-key; but too restless to like the thought of his close room, he had come in here, turned up the light, and was trying to read a newspaper. Its contents, however, would make no impression on his mind, it being too full of other matter; only the passenger-list of the Havre steamer, to read which he had obtained the paper, continually stared at him.

"So Randolph is on board the same ship," he mused. "It is not by accident. I know the fellow too well. Strange, that he has slipped through my fingers in this style! I thought myself a match for him. I wish, now, that I had brought matters to a crisis here; or had sailed with them."

"A few days will not suffice him, and I must be after them by the next steamer. He will gain nothing by his adventure. He has probably nothing in view but to try his luck again with Miss

Arnold; he thinks that in a foreign land, with no competitors, he may have better success. What a thorough rascal he is, any how!"

Here the door from the hall softly swung open and he was startled from his meditations by an unexpected visitor. Antoinette Sevigne came in, and, as he arose from his lazy attitude, approached smilingly, seating herself on the same sofa, and beginning with some embarrassment:

"Is it late, Mr. Duncan? I suppose it must be, but I was sitting up, sewing, when I heard you come in from outdoors, and as I did not hear you to come up ze stairs, I knew you was in ze salon. I had something so much on my mind—you will pardonnez me, that I came down so late!" and she gave him a half-shy, beseeching glance which would have made some men forgive her any thing.

"What is on your mind, Miss Sevigne? Our good landlady will prove an excellent counselor, if you are in trouble, I have no doubt. Not that I am not willing to serve you, but I suppose women are the best advisers for their own sex."

"I think not so," said the French girl, with a shrug of disdain. "Women, zey hate each other. I like not a woman confidante. But, Meester Duncan, 'tis not myself I come to you about. No, no. If I have trouble, I put it up with; I have great courage. Since my father died I have grown quite accustomed to be alone—alone!" with a piteous little sigh.

"You are too tender and guileless to live alone, Miss Sevigne; you ought to marry," was the response.

Again she gave him one of those sharp glances, but he was looking down on his paper, and she could not tell how much or how little he meant.

"Ah, Meester Duncan, do not jest with Antoinette," she whispered; then, after a pause, "but you ask me not what I have come here about."

"I am waiting for you to tell me. A woman can not keep a secret long."

"If you have no curiosity to hear, I will not tell," she pouted.

At first, David had felt no desire to listen to the communication prepared for him. He read the girl as plainly as he did his paper; he knew that she was, or imagined herself, desperately in love with himself, and he had no intention of encouraging her further than was necessary to complete the links in the chain of evidence he had of her playing a bad part in a certain history. It was this purpose to obtain, unawares, her testimony, which had led him to fall so graciously into good Mrs. Farwell's plans in his behalf, and to encourage her in getting Antoinette as a boarder under her roof.

But, though not intending to persuade her into any deeper passion for himself, he did not think it prudent to chill her into anger or reserve; so he now laid aside his paper and bent toward her with an air of interest.

"What is it, Antoinette?"

"Can you not guess?"

"If it does not concern yourself, whom does it concern?"

"Who should it concern but *you*, David? You remember our conversation, a few evenings ago, about your resemblance to the young man who committed suicide?"

"Very well—every word of it."

She gazed straight into his eyes a moment or two, trying to read his nature by the light of her own. It was a daring proposition which she was about to make; if it should be rejected, she would have taken a false step not easily gone back upon.

"What have you on your mind, Antoinette?"

Her little dark hand fell lightly over his.

"You are ambitious, Meester Duncan; you are educated more than most men in your rank of life. Why will you stay a poor mechanic, when you might be rich and honorable—when you might have every thing?"

"How can I have it? Dear me, Miss Sevigne, if you have any royal road to fortune, pray point it out to me. I have answered a good many advertisements proposing to teach the secret,

'How to get rich,' but the recipes were all unsatisfactory."

"I do not think this would be unsatisfactory. But you would have to act with courage. All that will be necessary is the boldness to grasp and hold—do not you understand? do you not see?"

"I am still in the dark. You must speak plainly to me. You know I am terribly rough in my dealings—I have none of your French finesse."

"That is why I admire you so much," she said, softly. "But I did hope you might help me to say it—for it is a daring thing. You say, all your acquaintances say you so much resemble the late Mr. Tunnecliffe—why not assert yourself to be him? Why not take his place, he quit so suddenly?"

There was a silence, and then the cabinet-maker asked,

"How could I do it?—such a thing would not be so easy—and what would I gain by it? Surely, Antoinette, you do not wish me to marry Miss Arnold, under such a deception, and get rich in that way?"

"No, no, no! I never thought of zat! You would not do zat?" she exclaimed, with a sudden fright in her voice. "Miss Arnold has gone to France—she sailed to-day; and I do not believe she will ever come back; her health is poor, they say," and her voice grew more assured as she recalled these facts. "What I meant, was this: Mr. Tunnecliffe left some property to his sister, which has since become valuable. You might claim it. If you could get it, you would be a rich man. Of course, you will have to prepare your evidence, and study your lesson well. It will not do to come forward as the dead man, until you make ready much proof. You must get his handwriting and learn to imitate it; you must be familiar with his family history—I know all zat."

She spoke rapidly, leaning toward him with a persuasive earnestness.

"Of course the ground would have to be carefully laid out," he said, after some deliberation; he had no idea of betraying to her that this plan was not new

to him—that he had already advanced far on the way to its completion—above all things, that his first revelation had been made to her rival, Miss Arnold. "One would have to be cautious—and wise. You must have thought this thing over in all its aspects, Antoinette?"

"I have thought it well over. I am convinced it can be done."

"What share in the benefits do you propose to yourself, child? Surely, your interest is not purely unselfish?"

She blushed, and lowered her eyes.

"It would be quite enough for me to see you successful."

"Then you do not demand a share in the profits, though you originate the enterprise?"

"Oh, Meester Duncan!"

"Well, well, little one, we'll not talk about that to-night. I should not be so ungrateful as to forget my best friend. Do you propose to help me in this difficult undertaking; and if so, how?"

"I saw *this* in one of the morning papers, and it helped me to a plan," she said, giving him a printed slip—an advertisement for a French maid, to which was attached the name and address of Mrs. Bowen, to be answered on Monday, A. M., this being Saturday. "Above all things it will be necessary that you shall become familiar with the little detail, the small affairs of the family—things which happened in the past, most especially, when this Ward Tunnecliffe was a child—and you must have some of his writing for to copee—don't you see? If you wish, I shall apply for this situation; when I get it, I shall be so sorree—so sympathetic—wiz de lady for her loss of such fine brother. I shall make her talk much, I shall find out all, and I shall tell you all, so fast as I learn it. I will make her talk of old times—the little boy's childhood, when she was baby. I shall look about very quietly, and get some old letters, and ozer things. I will work very quick and very silent. Shall I?"

There was a flush on Duncan's dark face; he shut his teeth together hard to keep back what he was near saying.

"What a little she-Lucifer if it is! And she purs as soft as the prettiest puss! Little wretch!" was what was on his tongue; but he repressed it, and instead, said thoughtfully,

"You might serve me very much indeed, in that manner. It is the most plausible method by far. Indeed, without it, I should find it hard to play the part of an impostor. And to you belongs all the credit!"

There was admiration in his tone, and she looked up with a smile. She hoped that he would say more, that he would declare that if they succeeded she would share, as his wife, in all the benefits; that he would show his appreciation of her devotion by a pressure of the hand and a kiss—any thing to betray that she was gaining over him the power she coveted.

But the grave young cabinet-maker, to whom she had succumbed more because he was indifferent to her pretty ways than from any other reason, did nothing of the kind. He arose and walked up and down the room a few moments, thinking over what had been said; then he paused before her, held out his hand and drew her up from the sofa.

"It is midnight, and we ought not to be here, Antoinette. I think favorably of your suggestion; there will be another evening between this and Monday. To-morrow, then, I will meet you here again. It will be Sunday, and we shall be alone in the evening, probably. We can then finish what we have to say."

He led her to the hall, and she ran up stairs, satisfied, yet dissatisfied. He followed slowly after, returning to his own room.

"I've heard about such women as that," he muttered, "but I never had the pleasure of an acquaintance with one before. Her art beats the deuce! Now, if I had need of her assistance, nothing could be more admirable than the step she proposes, but I have another way of managing the business. I have gone straight to Miss Arnold, instead of attempting the Bowens. Still, she may help me. I

shall thus be able to keep her where I can find her at a moment's notice. And when the time comes to punish her for her tricks with that Randolph, I shall be able to make the punishment all the more complete. Yes, I think I shall allow the little minx to act out the part she proposes."

The result of his night's deliberations was that Antoinette Sevigne, when they again met on the Sabbath evening, for further consultation, was encouraged in all her propositions. She was to be early in her application at Mrs. Bowen's, the following morning, for the situation of lady's maid, and she had little doubt of her success; if she obtained the situation, she was to acquire, with as little delay as possible, all the requisite knowledge of the antecedents of the Tunnecliffes by means of which David Duncan would be enabled to personate the young gentleman. It would be easy for her to communicate with Duncan once or twice a week, as he would always be at Mrs. Farwell's, on her evenings out, and they would be allowed any amount of private conversation in the little parlor, Mrs. Farwell being rejoicingly confident that an engagement existed between the young couple.

"Are you competent to play the part of lady's maid? I should think it would require a different class of accomplishment from yours," and the cabinet-maker smiled as he regarded the girl by his side.

"Ah, I will make very good maid. Madam Bowen will never have a better!" she answered with a laugh. "My embroideree looks like painting, Meester Duncan, I assure you. I am very skillful with the needle, and as to the hair—look at mine! Is it not well done?"

Antoinette had beautiful black, glistening hair, and she was always very careful in its arrangement; he appreciated the coquetry of this appeal.

"Your hair, Miss Sevigne, is so fine, it could not look otherwise than charming. Perhaps this Mrs. Bowen has not such beautiful locks for you to display your taste upon."

"I have seen her, Meester Duncan. She is very pretty, her hair is like floss-silk, of a gold color; she is a blonde, very handsome, so men say, but she has no depth—no expression; she is too fair!"

"I don't fancy blonde beauties, myself," said the cabinet-maker, with a smile. "I like some spirit, some daring in a woman; I like black hair and bright eyes. So you think you will make a satisfactory maid, do you, little one?"

"Oh, I shall be very humble and patient. I shall put up with all the humors of madam; I shall adore her little boy, so like his poor, dead uncle. I shall do much nice work, and be very much liked. Never you fear! But I do not say, Meester Duncan, that all this will be pleasant. I shall have to associate with servants, and I must give up all my music-class, a serious loss. But I do it all most willingly, for your sake. When you get to be the great Meester Tunnecliffe, whom all the young ladies were so fond of, you'll not forget poor Antoinette?"

"Never! I shall never forget Antoinette. She shall have her reward. If our plans are consummated, she shall set her own price. What she demands, that she shall have."

"Your gratitude, that will be all she will demand," was the low answer.

The girl's cheeks were flushed, and her voice trembled. David did not doubt the nature of her feelings for him, nor that they were sincere of their kind. How passionate, how engrossing they were, he did not, indeed, divine. He thought a creature of her artfulness, and who had lived a life of coquetry since she was old enough to run alone, would easily recover from any fancy she now cherished for him, when his union with another would put an end to her hopes. He had not much respect for her attachment, or perhaps, despite the part he was playing, he would not have allowed her to go on serving him. But the French girl's nature was one of those which, though untrue and bad, has a boundless capacity for devotion when it does form a true attachment.

CHAPTER XII.

TWO LETTERS.

Mrs. BOWEN was delighted with her new French maid. A creature of such taste, intelligence and industry was rarer than diamonds. She might buy jewels, whenever her purse was full, but this kind of a jewel was notoriously rare. She was so glad that she had secured her services in season for her round of watering place visits. The pride of her life, her matchless golden hair, never before had been dressed to such advantage. She knew that she had exquisite taste in judging of what became her Undine-like style, yet this quick-fingered maid would make suggestions which certainly were improvements. Then her French was that of an educated person; she quite corrected her own, under its influence, and the girl, although she must know she was a treasure, never presumed. She was patient and willing—fond of children, too. She would wile little Ward from the arms of his nurse, and praise him to his mother, until smiling Mrs. Bowen would repeat how much he was like her dear lost brother, after whom he was named. When her tears came, Nettie's were always ready to follow, until the sister took solid comfort in grief which was so sympathetically encouraged. She found herself talking hour after hour, when the girl was sewing in her room, or brushing out her bright hair, about that darling brother. Until, unconsciously to herself almost, she had lived over their happy childhood and brilliant youth, in all its trifling incidents. Nettie certainly was a good listener, who never yawned nor diverted the subject, but who led her on with delicate questioning, to speak all that was in her heart.

Mr. Bowen, too, was led to take much notice of the pretty French girl; first, because of his wife's constant reference to her perfections, and secondly, because Nettie herself willed it. She wanted him to be pleased with her, and did not fail to make him so. She always had a pleasant or sparkling reply, when he chanced to address her, which made him think how pretty and how smart she

was. At the same time she had plenty of dignity, the real article, and very becoming to her piquant features when they were forced into an appealing gravity by any attempt of his at too rough a jest. She expected, some day, to be this gentleman's sister-in-law, and she held in memory what would be becoming to such a change in their relations.

Mr. Bowen was not a person of oversensitive perceptions. He could laugh with a pretty servant and bandy a joke with her without any sense of personal degradation—as he could cheat a man on Wall street, and feel never the worse for it, provided it were done in the regular way. He never did that which was openly bad, and would have been indignant at the assumption that he was capable of any thing not becoming in a stock-broker and church-member; but he had a patent conscience of the vulcanized rubber kind, smooth and shining in its finish, and warranted to stretch without injury.

In these days of his renewed prosperity there was a radiance of success which emanated from him like an aureole. He was in high physical health, while his mind had just active employment enough, and of a kind which best suited it, in conceiving and executing schemes for his aggrandizement. Good dinners, sat at long, with congenial friends to help him with the wine, and a lovely wife to grace the head of his table, were beginning to have their legitimate effect, in a broader contour of the smooth face, and a slight fullness of person, not unbecoming.

His former failure, and the sad catastrophe of his partner's suicide, were fading into the dim background of the past. He seldom started, nowadays, with the feeling of the frozen hand clutching at his heart. If Susie had not sometimes disturbed him, by talking or crying about dear Ward, he would have ignored the past successfully. It annoyed him to have her "go on" about her brother, though he had the good taste not to betray it. It certainly was a fortunate thing for Susie that Ward had left that stock in the Petroleum Company

to grow into the vast proportions which it had assumed since his death. The income from her interest in that company was quite equal to all that he made on Wall street, though his operations had been gratifyingly successful. He would not like to be deprived of so handsome a thing as that; and if Ward had lived—why—of course—he and Susie would have had no share in this good luck. That serious-faced Miss Arnold would have been Mrs. Tunnecliffe, spending all the money which his Susie now spent so delightfully. Providence had not been so harsh in its dealings, after all.

Why, then, should a shadow fall, in the midst of this noonday brightness? One pleasant day, late in April, he came in from lunching on oysters at Downing's, and settled himself, with a satisfied sigh, in his office-chair. He had done a good thing, that morning, with Eries, and was comparatively indifferent to the rest of the day. The sun shone through the plate-glass of his window, on the green velvet of his table and the sweet nicety of his fresh carpet.

"Here's a note was left while you was out, sir," said his office-boy.

He opened it immediately, scarcely pausing to observe that it was not in the usual business-envelope and masculine writing of his correspondents.

If there had been any eye upon him while he read it twice over, it would have perceived a slight pallor subduing his high color—a perplexed, mystified expression stealing over his smooth sharpness; but the boy was whistling on the door-step, and the office, at that moment chanced to be empty of visitors.

"What the old Harry can that mean?"—and he read the note the third time, now beginning to scrutinize the handwriting which he could not decide upon as being that of a woman, though it did not look like that of a man. It was as follows:

"MR. BOWEN:

"Dear Sir: We are in possession of information which renders it highly probable that your brother-in-law, Ward Tunnecliffe, who was supposed to have committed suicide by jumping from the ferry-boat *Colden*, the

winter before last, is alive, and will shortly return to his friends. Not doubting but you will be glad to receive this information, we have taken the trouble to transmit it to you. If your brother does not appear, within a month, in his own person, to confirm our suspicions, we will then give you our grounds for believing as we do.

"New York, April 29th, 18—."

No name was signed to this communication.

Mr. Bowen was naturally startled by this unexpected revelation; surprise was his first and strongest emotion; the next—shall we admit it? was not joy; it was more like vexation. His thoughts were something in this wise:

"When a person is once dead and buried, why don't he stay so? I call it confoundedly impertinent to make people all this trouble for nothing. The disgrace and annoyance of a suicide ought to be sufficient, without making a nine-days' wonder by coming back to life when they're not expected. There's poor Susie's never got over it! If he should happen to really go off the handle, before her, she will have it all to go through with again! That's what I call a deuced selfish proceeding—getting one's friends in mourning twice. It won't be agreeable to give up the house and furniture, and the Pennsylvania income, even for the sake of having Ward back. A good fellow—but squeamish. Shouldn't care to go into partnership with him again. Sticks about trifles. But, pshaw! I don't believe a word of this impudent note. Why don't 'we' sign our name? Somebody who has heard of Miss Arnold's freak of fancy, is trying to get up a sensation. It *can't* be true! It's simply absurd. He drowned himself before plenty of witnesses, I'm sure. I wouldn't say a word about it to Susie, for the world. Her mind is none too strong, and it might affect her as it has poor Miss Arnold.

"Well, if it *is* true, I hope it will not be announced to Susie too suddenly—he ought to have the sense to come to me first. It will be a great shock to her."

Mr. Bowen was restless the remainder of the afternoon. He could not help

looking at every one who passed the window, or entered the door, with a nervous glance, as if he expected to be confronted by Ward, or his ghost. This uneasy sensation did not leave him during the evening, nor the following day, nor for many successive days. He kept looking behind him in the streets, and starting in hall and corridor, as if ghost-haunted. This uneasy state of mind fretted his temper; he was less bland than usual, and Antoinette, who had sent him the note, as an initiatory step, and who secretly watched him, was alone aware of the cause. He said nothing to his wife of the mysterious communication which he had received; and he was almost as startled as when he first read that, when, one night, she turned in the bed, stole her hand into his, and breathed in an awe-struck whisper:

"John, what if Ward should not be dead, after all? Do you know, I often feel as if he were not?—as if he were coming back to us."

"I suppose all who lose dearly-loved friends feel that way, Susie; especially, when the death has been sudden, and the body not recovered," he answered, after a moment's silence. "It is natural. But I pray you not to cherish such morbid fancies. Take warning by Maud Arnold."

She said no more. She could not account to herself for her present frame of mind, for she did not recognize the influence which had produced it. The writer of the note was also the author of this presentiment. Within the last week or two, she had once or twice, when Mrs. Bowen had been talking over her brother's death, insinuated a doubt.

"But why is madam so certain that her brother is dead? There may have been a mistake—it might have been another."

"No, Nettie, don't say that. If it was not my brother, pray what became of him? What object would he have in staying away from us? breaking my heart?"

Then Nettie shook her head, as if the matter was too deep for her. In this

way, unconsciously to Mrs. Bowen, who scarcely noted from whence the suggestion first came, she gradually produced a state of mind favorable to the *dénouement* which she meant to hasten.

With all this uneasiness which she had provoked in others, Antoinette was herself uneasy, and growing more so every day. For the first fortnight, every thing had progressed to her liking; but then, to her great disappointment, on one of her visits to Mrs. Farwell's, Duncan had informed her that pressing business must take him out of the city for at least a month.

"It is business which can not be put off," he said, "and, in fact, I should have gone a week sooner. I lose much by the delay. I would not attempt it, at this time, but that it is important to the very matter we have in hand. It will not give you any too much time, Antoinette. We must not move too quickly in this game, lest we lose it by rashness. When I return, every thing will be in train, and the end not far off."

So he had gone away, and she had felt desolate and jealous. The strongest passion of the poor French girl's nature was jealousy. Why could Duncan not have told her the precise nature of his business, and to what place he was going? She had confided all to him, risked much for him—why had he not placed equal confidence in her? If she had not known, positively, that Miss Arnold was in Paris, she would at once have suspected the truth—that Duncan was following her up with the intention of working upon her diseased fancy, and securing the heiress, before attempting to deceive the Bowens. But that he had actually sailed for France never came into her mind. She thought that game too bold a one, from the first; and she believed that Duncan felt a tender interest in herself. No, Miss Arnold was safely out of the way, but where was David Duncan, and what was he doing? Why did he not write to her? She called often at Mrs. Farwell's, always hoping that there would be a letter for her, under cover to that good lady, but

never asking for it, for fear of betraying her disappointment, and knowing that it would be delivered, if there. She received no message whatever; instead, she was obliged to parry Mrs. Farwell's questions about David—where he was—when he was coming back—was the wedding to be this summer, and would they board with her?

Antoinette always said that he was well, and was coming back soon, as if she heard frequently from him; laughing in answer to the marriage question, without making any direct reply. For one thing, the girl was devoutly thankful to her good genius—that was, that Mr. Randolph had betaken himself to a foreign land. When she read his name on the list of passengers who sailed with the Arnolds, though surprised at his abrupt departure, which she was aware must have been suddenly resolved upon, she was immensely relieved. Nothing could have given her more satisfaction. Now that she was in love with Duncan, and meant to marry him, she wished to disentangle herself from the relations which bound her to the Southerner. Randolph was not a lover of hers—at least, not now—though she had aided him in some of his bad practices. She knew that he had sworn to marry Miss Arnold, in spite of her scorn and coldness, that he had never entirely abandoned the project, and that it could only have been her influence which carried him to Paris. That he should succeed in marrying her, was the second dearest wish of Antoinette's heart. If he had remained in the city she would constantly have dreaded that some knowledge might come to Duncan which would ruin her hopes of winning his love. His love and respect seemed to her the things in the world most worth gaining. At the same time she had a keen appreciation of the temporal advantages waiting upon the position of his wife, should he be successful in his attempted imposture. As she looked around upon the luxurious home of her mistress, as she folded her silken robes and fingered her flashing jewels, she said constantly to herself, "Soon all these will be mine!"

Success was not yet so assured but that she had many forebodings of failure. Nothing was neglected, on her part, which promised aid in this dangerous undertaking; sly and subtle as the air, she pervaded every thing with an unseen influence. While she acknowledged to herself the boldness of the scheme, and expected success, she was prepared for the worst. If Duncan should be discovered an impostor, he could leave the country. She, who knew all things, knew that he had quite a sum of money saved from his earnings; and since he was so familiar with Paris, and liked it so much, they could return to her own country, where he could find plenty of employment in the rare branch of his trade which he practiced. In dear Paris they could live and love, and be happy in their own way.

With such thoughts she kept herself sufficiently busy, while the month of David's prescribed absence rolled away. It was now well into May; Mrs. Bowen was full of plans for the summer; so many light dresses and shawls to be selected, so much business with the dress-maker, such important consultations with her French maid! Really, it would seem that the getting up of a summer wardrobe was a serious labor, taxing the physical and intellectual powers of a pretty woman in the severest manner. This labor quite agreed with Nettie's instincts, also; and the two got along together without a ripple of disagreement. Nettie took all the deeper interest in her mistress' preparations, that she hoped soon to be making similar preparations on her own account; she took lessons for future use. That all should be consummated this very season was her hope; she wanted Duncan back before the Bowen establishment should be closed for the summer, that the birds might be caught before they took wing.

The four weeks of his expected absence passed without bringing his return. That vague uneasiness grew upon her; she was jealous of—she knew not who nor what. In the light of her growing despondent mood, the folly of their contemplated crime became more apparent.

If Duncan would only come back, she would ask him to abandon the project she had originated; he would marry her; she would give up these visionary splendors which she had coveted. Thus her mood vacillated, as the moods of a guilty mind generally do.

In the latter part of May she chanced to be looking over the Saturday's paper when she saw a letter advertised for Antoinette Sevigne. She at once asked permission to go for it; her heart throbbed with impatience until the letter was in her hand. Then a dull weight of disappointment settled down upon it. It was not from Duncan, after all. It was a foreign letter, postmarked Paris. The writing was Mr. Randolph's; she recognized it, before breaking the seal. Her curiosity to learn what he might have to say to her was not equal to her regret at not receiving tidings of Duncan.

"He wishes to inform me that he is about to be married, or is married, to the heiress, at last; and to inclose a final check which shall pay me off for the iniquity I have practiced for his benefit, and close our acquaintance. I despise him—and, doubtless, he despises me. But he was the meaner—he was a man! I hope he is married. I never wish to hear from him again." She muttered these things to herself, in rapid French, with quivering lips, as she made her way out of the crowd at the post-office, and entered an omnibus which should take her back up-town.

She felt no inclination to read the letter, which she thrust into her pocket, while she sat gloomily wondering where Duncan was, and when he would return. It was not until she was in the little chamber at Mrs. Bowen's, with her hat off, and the door locked, that she cared to find out what Randolph had thought of sufficient importance to warrant writing from Paris. It possessed more interest for her than she had imagined:

"Paris, April 30th.

"MY CHARMING LITTLE ANTOINETTE:—You will be delighted to hear that I am in a fair way to another disappointment. If I do not look sharp, I shall be outwitted by a greater rogue than I am! *'C'est impossible!'*

—not at all, my dear. There be many rogues in this wide world, as you and I ought to know. But I owe you an explanation for leaving New York so suddenly, without asking you if you had any messages to send back to your many friends in this witching metropolis. Of course I but followed my beacon star. I learned that Miss Arnold, as you assured me that evening in the park, was destined for this country, and I resolved to follow. I told her that my uncle, on my reformation (!) had consented to give me an interest in a business here, and I thought it an excellent time to be taking the benefit of his goodness. I am going into the manufacture of artificial flowers, as something eminently fitted to my abilities. I have dealt in things pretty and artificial so long, that this just suits me. If I can I intend to persuade Miss Arnold that Paris agrees better with her than New York, and that her father can return whenever he finds it necessary, leaving her to the care of a devoted husband. I am not at all sure of success in this. After two years of 'toil and trouble,' which you alone can fully appreciate, I do not seem to be any nearer the prize than at first. I don't know, really, why I did not abandon the track long ago. I might have had any one of a dozen others, for the asking. But this 'fairest, coldest wonder' just suits my fastidious taste. I shall prize her all the more, for the difficulty I have had in persuading her.

"But, to the point. I suppose you have missed your interesting cabinet-maker, who has, if I guess right, quite run away with little Antoinette's heart. You told me of his remarkable resemblance to young Tunnecliffe. I remembered the fellow very well. As I told you, I once bought a dressing-case of his manufacture, and saw him in the shop, where I went to take a look at the article. A sharp, shrewd, intelligent fellow. He snapped me up, once or twice, on that occasion, which made me take more notice of him. When you told me about his looking so much like Tunnecliffe, I contrived to get a glimpse of him, a few times, when he was coming from his work. What do you suppose was my astonishment to see this very person come out of the Arnolds' house the evening before they sailed? I knew the old folks were not at home, for I had been lingering about the premises, as I have a habit of doing, and saw them going off in their carriage. This person went in, staid an hour by my watch, and came out. I saw him dis-

tinctly; you know there is a lamp opposite the house. I followed him back to his lodgings, which were at the address you gave me. I was thoroughly puzzled, until, by hard thinking, a little light dawned on the affair. He is making capital of his likeness to her dead lover, to win upon the young lady's feelings, and induce her to a marriage—probably a runaway affair. Such were my suspicions, and acting upon them, I resolved to follow the pair, and interrupt the business; for I expected nothing but that he would be on the same vessel. I had no time to see you. I had difficulty in obtaining passage at so late an hour, but a merchant who, from illness in his family, desired to delay his trip, sold me his ticket, and I got on, at the eleventh hour.

"The cabinet-maker was *not* on board. But I did not regret my undertaking, as I succeeded in getting back into the good graces of the old money-prince, and had opportunities of renewing my friendship with his family. I kept a good look-out, after our arrival, and was not at all surprised to see, yesterday, the name of David Duncan, as just arrived from your city. Have you missed him? I've got him under my eye, and intend to keep him there. He is playing a deep game. Miss Arnold is completely duped by him. I don't doubt that she will marry him, the first hour she can escape from her parents. I am bound to give them warning. In their gratitude, perhaps they will insist upon her marrying me. So I hope. I have sent you, by express, a box of our choicest manufactures. Money is rather scarce with me at present, as I have, as yet, drawn nothing from the firm. I don't know, however, that I am indebted to you. I paid you, I believe, for the service rendered.

"Thinking you might desire to know my prospects, and where your cabinet-maker had gone to, I have written this. Be a good girl, and I will send your Duncan back to you in a very short time.

"As ever, dear coz, R. R."

As she read this, the girl's face grew furious. When she had finished, she threw it on the floor and stamped on it, while the dark red rose of her cheek grew yellow and pale.

"Fool, fool that I was!" she exclaimed, in her own language. "That I did not see it, that I did not suspect it! Ha! he has abandoned me for that young lady! I am not to his taste! the base

mechanic! the low fellow! He saw the chance to marry that proud creature, and he has fled away from me, secretly—he has left me to the ruin of my hopes, and gone to her! Why did I not see it sooner, and set the officers of the law after him? Ha! I hope Randolph will be too quick for him. Ha, ha! he will not get her, after all his trouble! Randolph will see to that!"

Of all suffering, keenest and most pitiable is that caused by jealousy. There is nothing to mitigate the pain. One may find comfort even in sorrow for lost love, but in jealousy there is no consoling balm. This girl, who had once made another suffer, now shrank from the sharpness of the serpent's tooth. Once, she had gone to that good and beautiful Miss Arnold with a story which she knew would poison the springs of her life. By some curious fatality this same woman now caused her to writhe under similar torture. She had robbed her of her faith in the man to whom she was betrothed; now, the man whom Antoinette had chosen as the object of her passionate devotion despised her, and was making himself dear to Miss Arnold. She scarcely thought of the retribution, or its justice. She lay crushed beneath the ruin of the fairy structure she had built. Alone, deserted, in a false position, with Duncan at the feet of Miss Arnold! She was afraid he might succeed. To her bitterness was added the fear that herself had placed the temptation before him. She had urged him to a crime, and he, once started on this new road, did not intend to hold back at the spot she pointed out. He had broken from her, and gone on, with the mighty will of a strong man.

Yes, there is one mitigation to the pangs of jealousy; a mitigation possible only to the bad; but poor Antoinette was bad—she was cursed with an impulsive nature which had, never had the benefit of right training—and she gave way to bad impulses quite as easily as to good. There was revenge! Such revenge as was possible to her, she would have. But how to effect any thing in

time, was the question. It was clearly impossible that she could reach Paris before matters had righted themselves there. Either Randolph would have exposed the imposture, or Duncan would have succeeded in obtaining Miss Arnold's hand in the false character which he had assumed. She could do nothing to prevent that, and, as she realized this she stamped again in impotent rage.

But she would do all the injury which yet lay in her power. If Duncan expected to come back, and impose on these Bowens, attain their property and live at his ease as Ward Tunnecliffe, he should be disappointed in that. Although the confession of the plot existing between them would be to her own detriment, it should at once be exposed; these people should be placed on their guard. And she would some time have the satisfaction of facing Duncan's wife, and showing her how she had been fooled.

She heard the door-bell ring and the servant admit the master of the house. It must be near the dinner-hour. Mrs. Bowen was out, and might not return until late, as she was going to dine with some friends, and with them, visit the opera. Her husband had declined the invitation, as he had some business in his library, at home, that evening.

Antoinette smoothed her hair and changed her dress; then waited, about as patiently as a caged panther, roaming back and forth across her little room, until assured, by certain sounds, that dinner was over, and Mr. Bowen gone to his library. She was not at all hungry; and she wished to gain his ear before he became absorbed in other affairs; so she picked up the trampled letter, descended, and rapped at the library door.

The man of business was surprised when his wife's maid came in, with excited face, and a letter in her hand. He supposed it some of her private matters about which she wished to ask advice, and, though busy, was disposed to make himself amiable, and meet her requirements. He was seldom cross to a pretty woman, and he now laid aside a bundle

of documents, and looked at her pleasantly.

"What is it, Nettle? A letter from home? No bad news, I hope?"

"It concerns you as much as me, Meester Bowen, so I will be obleege to trouble you to read it."

She reached him the letter, and he read it through with one or two exclamations of surprise. When he had finished, he laid it down before him with an annoyed air.

"It seems there is never to be an end of this business. Poor Ward can not be allowed to sleep quietly in his watery grave. Somebody is forever seeing his ghost poking about somewhere. What with Maud Arnold's mad fancy, and this man's impudence, we are likely to have a mess of it. I suppose it is this fellow, then, whom poor Maud has seen from the beginning, and mistaken for Ward. Of course, if she had been in possession of her right senses, she could never have made such a mistake. I think her brain has been affected, since that first attack of fever;" then, after a pause, with a suspicious look at his visitor, who stood before his table quite self-possessed, because so thoroughly aroused, he asked,

"Who is this R. R.?"

"Mr. Reginald Randolph. You know ze gentleman. You are aware zat he was a suitor for Miss Arnold's hand—and fortune?"

"Yes, yes. I've heard Mrs. Bowen say a good deal about it. I knew he was rather fast, but I didn't think him so unprincipled. Why, he belongs to the real F. F. V.'s. I thought him a gentleman."

"Quite as much so as ze most. He ought not to be severe upon this Duncan, for he passed himself off upon you rich people as his wealthy cousin instead of his bankrupt self."

"How came you to know so much of him?" with another suspicious glance.

"Oh, I am his fourtieth cousin, Meester Bowen. He has French blood in him, you know. Our families were related. But mine had ze misfortune to grow poor," with a shrug. "But

when he came to Paris, we chanced to meet. I was a leetle girl then. When my father died, I made my way to Baltimore, but my relatives were not pleased wif zeir poor cousang. They got me situation in New York, as music-teacher. When Reginald came to this city, he found me out, and we were very good friends."

"Indeed?" Mr. Bowen had scarcely heard the explanation; he was thinking of the letter which he had received three weeks before; he spoke his thought aloud, unconsciously:

"Perhaps, after all, Ward is really alive. Either that, or else it is all one piece of plotting. I got a note a short time ago, warning me that my brother would soon reappear."

"I know it, Mr. Bowen. I can tell you just what was in that note, for I wrote it myself."

"You?"

"I wrote it," she repeated, defiantly, "and I am going to tell you just how bad I have been. You see, in that letter, Randolph accuses me of being in love with this Duncan. I was in love with him. He had great power over me, and when he proposed to me to come to this house to find out all I could about the true Tunnecliffe, zat he might imitate him, you call it, I did consent to come for zis sole purpose. He know zat Mrs. Bowen had much propertie zat was her brother's, and he wanted zat, you see! We should be rich, great people. I was persuaded when I knew it was all wrong. But I did not think he would serve me so, else I would see him dead first,"—her black eyes blazed, so as almost to scorch Mr. Bowen.

"It was very wrong of you," he said, gravely.

"Oh, I know zat. We are all poor sinners, Mr. Bowen. You was not verree particular when you made your grand failure, and poor Antoinette, she thought it would be fine to be great lady. Besides, I loved zat big rascal—but I hate him now!"

The sleek stock-broker, albeit nettled at her impertinent reference to his

peccadilloes, could not but laugh as the angry girl brought her foot down with a stamp, like a passionate child, to emphasize her assertion.

"So you wrote to me, to pave the way for further deception?" he remarked.

"Yes; we had our plans well laid. I think we should have succeeded. But he has gone over to Miss Arnold, and I care not."

He referred again to the letter, reading it through less hastily than at first. When he came to a certain paragraph, wherein Randolph referred to the dressing-case, a peculiar expression came over his face, which Antoinette could not interpret. It was as if a sudden light had broken upon him, revealing something unpleasant. He flung himself in his cushioned chair, and stared at the wall. He was interrupted in his reflections by his visitor:

"I will bid you good-night, Meester Bowen. I will go, directly, and pack my leetle trunk. I will leave here this evening. I care not to meet madam again. She is a good leetle lady, and I regret my duplicitie wiz her."

"Where will you go, Nettie?"

"To my old boarding-place, for the present. I will get back my pupils and teach music again. I am well-punished for making a lady's-maid of myself, and telling so much falsehood. I could kill him, if I had him here, ze villain."

"Not so bad as that, Nettie. Perhaps, if he don't get Miss Arnold, he'll come back to you yet."

"I will not have ze traitor."

"But what I was going to say is this. Do not leave here to-night; and do not say any thing about this matter to Mrs. Bowen. You can give her warning and leave in the regular way. I do not wish her to be frightened or shocked; she is too delicate to bear such excitement. I will write to the Arnolds by the next mail, to keep me posted, and use my judgment about how much or how little I make known to Mrs. Bowen.

It is the least you can do to repair the injury you have intended, to remain a few days longer at my request."

"Perhaps you mean to have me arrested," suggested the suspicious girl.

"And if I did, I could arrest you at your boarding-place as easily as here. No, Nettie, I will deal more honestly by you, than you have done by us. I have no object in making this request, except to save Mrs. Bowen from excitement and distress. Since your attempted fraud has failed, I shall not seek to punish you for it. Will you remain?"

"Willingly, if it will save madam any trouble. She is like a child, so simple and so pretty. I like her much; but zat Duncan?"

"There, there! Go to your room, Nettie, and compose yourself. There's no great harm done thus far. I have work to do this evening and must set about it."

He waved his hand with his usual graceful suavity, and she retired from the room. But when she had disappeared, something very like a frown gathered on his brow, which grew blacker the longer he reflected. There was something which gave him more uneasiness than he confessed.

"I ought to start for Paris by the next ship. Yet, if I should be mistaken, I would have my trip for nothing, and it is inconvenient for me to leave my business, with no partner to take my place. Mrs. Bowen would insist upon accompanying me, too; she has hinted at Paris several times of late. The better way will be to write. It will keep me longer in suspense, but a letter must answer."

He at once drew writing materials towards him; and, with some care, composed the epistle and sealed it ready for the mail. When Mrs. Bowen came in from the opera, celestial in blue and white, with water-lilies in her shining hair, her husband met her with a compliment; he had cleared his brow, and "Richard was himself again."

CHAPTER XIII.

"WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK."

It was the morning after that little side-scene at the French theater which had not been set down in the play and which concerned so few of the spectators. Before the hour of a fashionable breakfast Reginald Randolph was sauntering up and down the pavement in front of the Hotel de Tours. He had already discovered it to be the stopping-place of David Duncan. At about nine o'clock that person came forth and, apparently unaware of the spy upon his movements, walked rapidly away in a direction leading toward the boulevard at No. 20 of which were domiciliated the Arnolds. Randolph followed him, at first keeping some distance behind; but, as they approached their destination he hurried forward so as to place his foot in the open hallway at the same instant with the other, who halted and looked him in the face, instead of addressing the *concierge*. For a moment the two men confronted each other, Randolph's eyes glowing with hate and triumph, while the glance of Duncan was cool and contemptuous. Then the former turned quickly, asking to be directed to the apartments of Mr. Arnold. To make this important visit in the company of another, and that person his enemy, did not suit Duncan's purpose; as Randolph ascended the staircase, he turned away without even leaving a message with the attending servant.

In doing this he made a mistake, giving his rival the opportunity he most desired of appealing first to Mr. Arnold.

The family were at breakfast in the pleasant parlor when Marie brought in Mr. R. Randolph's card. Maud, after a restless night, had arisen and dressed with a mind comparatively quiet. Fully expecting a visit from Ward, she wore her prettiest white morning-robe, with a rose in her hair and fairer ones in her cheeks. Now, as she sat at table, sipping the strong *café au lait* in the hope that the stimulus would quiet the fluttering of her pulse, her ear was

strained to catch every sound in the halls or on the street. When Marie came in with the card, her face grew as white as her dress. Who else would call thus early? Who but Ward?

"Who is it?" asked Mrs. Arnold.

"Mr. Randolph," said her husband.

Maud caught her breath, and the color came back to her face along with a look very much like anger. Why did he remain away and that detestable person come?

"He only asked for Mr. Arnold," said Marie; "he did not inquire for the ladies. He said he would like a few moments' interview on important business."

"Very well. I am at leisure. If the ladies have finished their breakfast, you may show him in here."

Mrs. Arnold rose to retire, with Maud, who paused before leaving the room. She knew, very well, what the important business was, and she feared the effect of the communication upon the prejudices of her father.

"Wait a moment, Marie, before you show Mr. Randolph in. Father, I know his business. He wishes to persuade you that white is black, that Mr. Tunnecliffe is not himself, but an impostor, using his name. Father, I know better. I saw Ward before we left New York. He came to me and told me all, promising to follow us here by the next steamer, to see you and explain all. He is now in the city; I saw his name (an assumed one) among the arrivals yesterday. He will visit us to-day—I know he will!—and your own senses shall convince you. All I ask is, that you will not allow Mr. Randolph to prejudice you, so as to cause you to refuse to see Ward. He is a bad man, you know, quite unworthy of your friendship. I tell you Ward is alive and loves me still."

She observed a glance of intelligence pass between her parents when she mentioned that Mr. Tunnecliffe was in the city and that she expected a visit from him that day. Instead of treating her statement lightly, as had been their wont, they listened attentively. Mr. Arnold forgot that an impatient visitor was walking up and down the hall,

wondering why he was kept so long waiting.

"Maud, I must confess that I yesterday met a person, who if he was *not* Mr. Tunnecliffe was enough like him to be his double. I think it *was* he. But I am not absolutely certain. We have all heard of these remarkable resemblances, and there is much reason to fear that you have been imposed upon. If Ward was alive, and in New York, pray why did he approach you secretly, why hide from me, why act, in any manner, as he has acted? We used to esteem him a most honorable young man, and this conduct does not seem native to him."

"I can not explain it, father. I only believe that he will make his own excuses, and that before many hours. I hope so, for I am tired of the position in which I am placed. It is not pleasant to be treated like a—mad woman."

A flush mounted to her father's face.

"It will take something effective in the way of excuses to make me forgive such a hide-and-seek game as this, if he has really played it. I quite agree with you that this folly has been sufficiently prolonged; to-day it must end. I will find Tunnecliffe or his double, and quickly bring out the truth. If it is Ward, he must at once resume his proper relations to society; if it is not he, you shall be confronted with the impostor and convinced of your mistake. But we are keeping Mr. Randolph in the corridor all this time."

As the ladies passed out at one door the southerner entered at the other.

"Pardon me, Monsieur Arnold," he said, with his usual deep bow, "for this early call. I desired to steal a march upon another visitor, and I was not a moment too early, for he was upon the steps when I arrived. It is said that guilt is always cowardly. I leave you to judge if it looked well that he should run away when he saw me, (who came purposely to confront him,) instead of attempting to carry out the rôle which he has had the assurance to assume."

"I must know of whom and what

you are speaking before I give my opinion. Be seated, Mr. Randolph," said Mr. Arnold, somewhat coldly.

"I am impulsive, as usual," and the young gentleman smiled, as he seated himself comfortably on a sofa. "I forgot to state my case before I asked your opinion upon it. The fact is, sir, that the story I have to tell is a singular one; but, since it can be corroborated by numerous witnesses, I need not be afraid of your incredulity. I have found out to my satisfaction, the cause of Miss Arnold's curious hallucination concerning Mr. Tunnecliffe. You must, you will, pardon my intrusion upon your family affairs when you learn the danger she is in, this day and hour, from the deception which has been practiced upon her feelings. I should be a party to the threatened catastrophe if I did not interfere to prevent it, even at the risk of making myself still more disliked by Miss Maud. There is to-day in Paris a certain mechanic, a cabinet-maker, who plied his trade with the firm of Smith & Co., New York—David Duncan by name—who, I am authorized to state, upon information given me, has taken advantage of a singular, a really wonderful likeness to the late Mr. Tunnecliffe to palm himself off as that gentleman. His object is to oust Mr. Bowen from such property as his wife inherited from her brother, and to secure a double good fortune in the hand and heart of Miss Arnold. The game is so bold as almost to insure success by its very audacity. I should not seek to thwart it, had I not indisputable proofs of his identity, antecedents, and intentions. I, myself, purchased the dressing-case which I had the pleasure of sending to your daughter, of Smith & Co., and saw and talked with this man, in their warehouse. He made the case; and it was an exquisite piece of workmanship. I was struck, at the time, with the fellow's taste and intelligence, and a certain impudence in his manner, which, were he in the South, would soon be taken out of him. I did not remember Mr. Tunnecliffe clearly enough to remark the likeness, at that time; though

it's altogether probable that it made an impression upon me, unawares to myself. There was a sort of daredevil air about him which I absolutely admired. I saw that he had originality about him; but, I must say, I had no idea it would take such a startling way of showing itself. To conceive and execute such a strategy requires fine talents!"

"You appreciate them!" remarked Mr. Arnold, with a quiet smile. He was absorbed in the young gentleman's recital, but could not withhold this bit of irony. "How came you so soon to know of his arrival in Paris?"

"Because I was on the look-out for him. I came over on pur—" here Mr. Randolph, remembering the Guizots', flower-makers, stammered in his speech. "I received intimation before I left New York, of this person's plans. I need not say that it is he whom your daughter has constantly mistaken for Mr. Tunnecliffe; and when you see him, you will not be surprised at her mistake."

Mr. Arnold did not say that he *had* seen him, and had been similarly impressed; he preferred, first, to hear all that his accuser had to say.

"I was not surprised that, at a distance, on the street, or in the park, she should have made this mistake; but I *was* surprised," continued the visitor, "when I saw this person come out of your own house, the evening before your departure, having sought an interview with your daughter during your absence, knowing you to be absent, in order to take advantage of the enfeebled condition of her mind, (caused by illness,) to impose upon her as the man to whom she had been affianced, and to induce her to pursue a course contrary to the instincts of her lovely and candid nature."

Here he paused, disconcerted by the sudden start with which Mr. Arnold rose to his feet, and the wrath which gathered on his brow; for he could not decide whether he had any share in the anger which he had provoked. It was certainly not pleasant for a man of Mr. Arnold's hauteur to be reminded, by one

who had no particular right to such freedoms, that his daughter was of unsound mind, or that she had been guilty of holding secret conference with an adventurer. For many long years the quiet gentleman had not been warmed by such a fire of rage as now suddenly burned in his veins. He was tempted to strike the daring informer, thrust him out of his house, and then call Maud before the bar of his displeasure. He could not doubt Randolph's statement that she had been induced to hold an interview with this person, and to keep it secret, for had not she confessed as much?

He had thought, at the moment, such a proceeding to be suspicious on the part of the pretended Tunnecliffe, but it had not struck him as being so extremely bad as it did now in the light of another man's opinion. If the double Duncan had come into his presence just then he would have been permitted small chance for explanations. Walking once or twice across the floor, Mr. Arnold paused before his visitor with an attitude unconsciously so threatening, that the latter shrunk a little into the corner of the sofa.

"No more, Mr. Randolph, until I have questioned my daughter. She is nervous and morbid, we know, but Maud is prudent and thoughtful, for all. She has meant to do nothing wrong; but I will see that this matter is untangled at once. I thank you for your good intentions. It may be that your communication will be of great service to me."

"Believe me, sir, it was not pleasant for me to make it. But I have reason to think that a secret and speedy marriage will be the result of his visit to the city, and I could not do otherwise than warn you. I have had my eye on this Duncan a long time. I assure you, if, after seeing him, he succeeds in waking a doubt in your mind as to his identity, and you then can have the patience to wait until I can obtain proofs from across the water I will convince you by many witnesses. I know his boarding-place in New York, and some of his friends there. But enough. I

have placed you on your guard. No more can be necessary. I do not think myself competent to advise—but, this is glorious weather, and a little journey into Germany or Switzerland might foil the fellow and benefit Miss Arnold's health."

"I thank you." Mr. Arnold waved his hand with an air which could hardly fail to be understood as one of dismissal, and his visitor immediately took leave of him.

As he went down into the street he looked about him with some hesitation. Untruthful as Mr. Randolph was by nature and habit, and selfish as he was in his present aims, he was at least sincere in his belief that Duncan was an adventurer of the worst kind, aspiring to secure the heiress by means which even he despised. Not for a moment had it crossed his thought that the cabinet-maker might be Tunnecliffe in disguise. That view of the subject had not occurred to him. Had he entertained such a suspicion, however, the only change it would have made in his feelings would have been to awaken hatred instead of contempt. He despised the mechanic, and felt a sort of base pleasure in showing him that he knew and would expose him; but, Tunnecliffe he would have hated, as an equal and a successful rival, had he imagined the person really to be Ward. In that case, the unscrupulous nature which had first set the French girl upon an attempt to break the engagement between the lovers, would now have exerted all its subtilty to prevent a meeting of the parties which might be followed by recognition by the parents of the lady.

As we have said, descending into the broad, sunny street, he looked about him with hesitation. After the haste and excitement of his interview, there flashed across his brain, in the first moment for reflection, a vivid picture of Duncan as he had appeared when they confronted each other on the steps. Then, he had been too full of his purpose to receive the full impression, or, at least, to be conscious of it; but now he remembered that quite a striking

change had taken place in Duncan's *tout ensemble*, and one quite favorable. His hair and complexion were lighter, by several shades; the former was cut and dressed in the latest fashion; the rough beard had been shorn away and only a small mustache left, such as Tunnecliffe always had worn; his dress was fine in material and stylish in make.

"Confound his impertinence! he *did* look like a gentleman—and like *him*, too—too much like him to suit me. I suppose the fellow has got hold of some old likeness of Tunnecliffe; and has got himself up in as close imitation as possible."

Just there and then it struck him, for the first time, and with nearly the force of a conviction, that perhaps this *was* Tunnecliffe! that the game might be just the reverse of what he had been believing! He turned a sickly yellow at the thought. He had wasted too much time, conscience and money, to be thwarted now by any thing so simple and fatal as this. No, it was impossible! he would not make himself uneasy about such a bugbear as that. Yet, somehow, the idea, being once lodged in his brain, would not be driven out. It staid there, and it troubled him.

All this time he was walking slowly back and forth in front of the Arnolds' like a sentinel on guard. In fact, he resolved to constitute himself a guard. If it *should* be Tunnecliffe it would be all the more necessary to prevent his meeting the family, though how it was to be prevented he could not reasonably plan.

"If I could only secure his arrest! If I could invent some complaint against him which would consign him to a Paris prison until Mr. Arnold could be influenced to leave the city!"

But, Duncan could not be arrested, either as a political enemy to the great Napoleon, nor as a criminal fleeing from his own country. A block or two below the hotel occupied by the Arnolds, on the opposite side of the boulevard, was a small park, across which was the pathway which he and Duncan had followed that morning. Doubtless Duncan

would soon renew his call, and he would come through this park. Randolph finally crossed over, entered it, and sat down on a bench near the arch, where he could see whoever passed. He had not waited many minutes when he saw Duncan coming from the direction of his hotel and entering the further side of the park; there was but one thing he could do, with any promise of success, and this he resolved to attempt. Rising and walking to meet him, with an aggravating sneer upon his face, he intercepted him, in the pleasant, tree-shadowed avenue, in the midst of passing groups of children with their *bonnes*, and ladies out for the morning air. There were not many of the braver sex on the gay little promenade at this hour of the day; but one of Louis Napoleon's semi-military police stood not far away, looking towards the two men at the moment they met.

"You need not jeopardize yourself by calling upon the family whose acquaintance you are so anxious to make," said Randolph, standing so squarely before the other as to compel him to stop. "I know you, fellow, and assure you that your game is blocked. Mr. Duncan will not find it so easy to impose upon a gentleman of Mr. Arnold's sagacity as he did upon the credulity of a soft-hearted young lady."

The blood mounted to the face of the one addressed, but he made no reply, save by a haughty glance, so full of fire and so free from guile, that his enemy's recent suspicion grew into conviction; as the other attempted to pass on he stepped backward, keeping himself in front of him.

"The cabinet-maker has taken to the garb of a gentleman; but Mr. Arnold is prepared for him. If you make the smallest attempt, sir, to pass for what you are not, steps will be taken to arrest you for a conspiracy with intent to defraud. Neither will you succeed in trapping Miss Maud into a secret marriage. The lady herself may be willing—she is rather romantic, I believe, if not absolutely afflicted with lunacy; but her parents have her under

surveillance since they have heard of your designs."

"Insolent!" muttered Duncan, growing white, as quickly as he had grown red, at the manner in which Miss Arnold was spoken of. Every nerve in his body, thrilled with a sudden fury; his insulter's face was before him, sneering quietly, provoking the blow which, the next second, would have been planted between Randolph's eyes, had he not dodged and received it on his shoulder. It laid him flat on his back, and made stars dance before his vision, but he picked himself slowly up, as if with great difficulty, while the *bonnes* screamed and the ladies turned pale.

Duncan was passing on, without looking to see what became of his antagonist, when the hand of the officer was laid upon his arm. He was under arrest! How annoying! how unspeakably exasperating, just at this time! As the truth forced itself upon him, that his anger had got the better of his discretion, he caught Randolph's eye. There was a malicious smile in it—although his face was white with the pain in his shoulder—which allowed Duncan to see that he had insulted him and spoken lightly of Miss Arnold for no other purpose than to provoke him to an assault. And he had fallen into the snare! The subtlety of the enemy was an overmatch for his prudence. To be deprived of his liberty for twenty-four hours would not ordinarily be so important a matter; but now it was not only vexing but dangerous. Of course Maud was aware of his arrival, and already wondering why he did not fly to visit her. His further delay would not only cause her great unhappiness, but would probably be used by her friends to get her out of the city—for he saw that Randolph had some such object as this in view. Of course he should eventually discover her whereabouts, and reassure her as to his intentions—but, in the mean time, days must pass and Maud would suffer.

While he was biting his lips with impatience at these reflections, Randolph was pouring forth voluble complaints to the policeman, accusing his assailant of

being a quarrelsome person who had assailed him upon slight provocation, as well as hinting that his business in the city was not of an honorable character, and that he had left his own country for reasons best known to himself. Duncan, as we know, was no stranger to Paris, its language was fully at his command, he was familiar with its peculiarities, and knew that he could defend himself when brought up before the prefect—but the delay he could not obviate. A light fine and twenty-four hours' imprisonment were the least he could expect.

Worse than this was in store for him. When the prisoner and his accuser were brought up for hearing, more attention was paid to the case from the fact that they were Americans. Randolph boldly accused his assailant of being there under a false name, for some criminal or political purpose, and of bearing a very bad character in his own country. He stated that the only cause of the assault upon himself was that, recognizing the person from his notoriety in New York, he had warned him against getting into trouble. With admirable frankness he gave references, for his own character, to the Guizots and to several prominent Americans then in the city.

As to Duncan, what friends could he appeal to? If he sent for Mr. Arnold, that gentleman would doubtless at once confirm the statement of Randolph that he was an impostor, going about with two names. Now, if this double-faced individual really were Ward Tunnecliffe, here was a dilemma which must have forcibly taught him the folly of throwing away a good name and position, casting himself bankrupt upon the world. It was considered suspicious of itself that he could give no references, and he was sent to prison to be kept in confinement until his case could be more fully investigated.

It would have aggravated a more saintly soul than Duncan's to have seen the pleasure with which his rival listened to this decision of the cautious justice. Powerless to revenge himself at present,

he said, in English, with an accent which should have made his enemy thoughtful of the future,

"I owed you something before, but this doubles the debt. When I get out of this we will settle our affairs, Mr. Randolph."

The southerner laughed as he turned lightly on his heel, leaving Duncan to the solace of prison reflections.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT CROSS-PURPOSES.

In a quaint little French village, close by the sea, the Arnolds were spending the hot summer days. Their establishment was delightful—a tiny, furnished villa, built expressly for summer dwellers, with two excellent French servants, besides the inestimable Marie. They had good cooking, cool rooms, the sea-breeze, the level stretch of sandy shore for a promenade, the blue waters of ocean for a glory in their sight; altogether their life would have been as pleasant, picturesque and free from care as their hearts could have desired, had not the great disappointment of her life continued to bear so heavily upon Maud.

They had taken her out of Paris the day after the events recorded in our last chapter. All that day and evening she had remained in a state of intense suspense and expectation. But when the last hour at which visitors could be expected had gone, and there was neither caller nor message, she passed into a sort of dead stupor or faint, the result of overtaking her still delicate system. In this alarming condition she continued half the night, and only came out of it so exhausted and listless as to fill her parents with apprehension.

"If I could get hold of that scoundrel, were it Ward himself, playing these silly pranks, I would shake the folly out of him," muttered her father, annoyed beyond endurance by this new excitement. "Pack our trunks, Marie; for to-morrow we shall move in search of some new scene of quiet. I trust not

even that intrusive southerner will be able to find us out immediately."

So an hour was spent, in the morning, searching the papers for an advertisement of some sea-side situation which he thought would suit them. During the search, he came across, in the police report, a brief reference to the arrest of the American, and immediately guessed that Duncan had gotten himself into trouble, and was glad to know him safe, until Maud could be taken out of his way. He now understood why Duncan had not presented himself, but thought best to keep the knowledge from her. It was his first intention to seek an interview with the prisoner, and decide for himself, once for all, who he was.

While deliberating upon the course to be pursued, the son of his former partner in business, when he had an interest in some French manufactories—a young gentleman who had been very polite and attentive to them, during their stay in Paris—called to pay his respects to the family, and to propose taking them upon some excursion to the environs.

Maud, pale as her morning-dress, was reclining in a large arm-chair, looking so drooping as to fully corroborate her father's statement that she was ill, and that they thought of leaving, for the sea-shore, that very day. The young French gentleman cast upon her a glance of tender concern which betrayed the manner in which his feelings were interested. The lovely American girl had not been five weeks abroad without making a conquest. St. Bernard, who had waited upon them soon after their arrival, had not only been charmed with his father's old friends in general, but with Mademoiselle Maud in particular. He was in love with the genial, homelike air of the Arnolds' *ménage*, and more in love with the fair daughter of the house. Maud met his look of solicitude, but it brought no flush to her cheek; she felt not even a thrill of girlish vanity at this evidence of her power.

Monsieur St. Bernard immediately interested himself in helping Mr. Arnold to a decision as to where to go. He recommended the small village which they

resolved to select, as a lovely, retired place, yet with sufficient reputation as a watering-place to insure the accommodations which they would desire. Before noon it was all arranged, and the sunset found them whirling rapidly away from beautiful Paris toward the solemn sea. They took with them the same servants they had previously employed, and were careful not to leave their address with the office or attendants. As their apartments were rented for the season, they left them in charge of the *conciierge*.

"And where does Monsieur propose to travel?"

"Oh, several routes. We may go to Geneva,"—a sort of duplicity which Mr. Arnold excused in himself by promising his conscience to go there before the season was over.

When Mr. Randolph called, the evening of their departure, he was well pleased to find them gone, and that they had neglected to leave any particular address. He trusted to his wits to discover their whereabouts should he think it prudent to trouble them by his presence during their absence.

Not so well pleased was the man of two names, who called at the same house, making the same inquiries, about half an hour later.

Randolph had entertained no idea of appearing against his assailant when he should come into court; and as the scrutiny of the police could detect nothing absolutely wrong against Monsieur Duncan, he was released on payment of a fine, and was again a free man, though he understood that he still was under a surveillance which would have been unpleasant had he been conscious of any guilty plans against good order and law.

As soon after quitting the court as he could make himself presentable, Duncan (or rather, Ward Tunnecliffe, as it was written upon the card he handed the attendant) was inquiring for Mr. Arnold, only to be disappointed by hearing the news of his departure. When he could elicit nothing from the *conciierge* except that he mentioned Geneva, and that he retained his apartments in Paris, the visitor set out to trace the travelers to some

depot, to find, if possible, the route they had taken. Before he had been gone one minute, an officer of the police had his card from the hand of the *concierge*, and was shaking his head over it; to be registered as Duncan and to be visiting as Tunnecliffe was certainly suspicious; and the young gentleman ought to have known enough of Paris not to have made the mistake. In the mean time the young man had got upon the track of another American family, and was about to step aboard a train bound Vienna-ward, in full belief that he was pursuing the lady of his heart, when the hand of the official pressed his arm, and he was informed that he could not leave Paris until he had explained the little difficulty about names. Vexed and thwarted as he had been for the last two days, the American could but laugh to think of a criminal or political coloring being given to his little game.

He explained to the officer, with great volubility, that it was but an *affaire du cœur*—a little love-affair in which no one was interested but himself and the lady; and that he had assumed a fictitious name to blind his rival to his being across the water—that it was only jealousy which had tempted the other to cause his arrest, etc., etc.—that there was not a shadow of treason or intrigue upon his conscience—laughing in so frank a manner and looking so honest and handsome, (and a trifle threatening as he referred to his American's rights), that the man was fain to let him go just as the train was moving off. He had his ticket, however, and managed to secure a place at the last instant, and was soon moving away, happy in the speed of the steam-giant, quite unsuspecting that another similar giant was bearing poor Maud as rapidly in the opposite direction.

Thus it chanced that Maud was in the village by the sea, trying, at last, resolutely, to convince herself that her father and friends were in the right—that she had made a terrible mistake.

Trying, too, to teach her heart forgetfulness, and to please her father, by looking with favor upon young St. Bernard.

This gentleman had followed them, about a fortnight after they were domiciled in their tiny villa, and had sought an interview with Mr. Arnold, asking permission to address his daughter—soliciting the parents, after the French fashion, to lay his offer of marriage before their child.

At first, Mr. Arnold had refused consent, explaining, that, although highly flattered with the compliment, and sincerely admiring the character of his friend's son, he did not think the state of his daughter's health warranted him in encouraging a suitor; and that she, being their only child, was too dear to them to be resigned to a foreigner, with the prospect of long intervals of separation.

St. Bernard would not receive these excuses, saying, that as long as they entertained no personal objections to himself, he must request them to at least allow mademoiselle the privilege of expressing herself on the subject. Mr. Arnold then went so far as to confess that her present ill-health was due to the melancholy induced by the death of a young gentleman to whom she was betrothed. This information gave St. Bernard great pain—he staid in the village a day or two, looking pale and sad, then returned to the father, renewing his offer, and saying that he was convinced a woman capable of mourning so sincerely for the dead, must have a most loving heart, and that it was his hope to be able to awaken in it a second attachment. When they saw how true was his regard, and of how many pleasant qualities he was possessed, and contemplated the change which had come over their once joyous child, the parents began to wish that his hope might be fulfilled.

They told Maud what he had said. To their surprise, she asked time for deliberation. The offer had come at a lucky moment for the suitor, though at a threatening one for the absent claimant. We all know that after long periods of suspense, despair, inaction, there succeeds a mood of desperation, when one is easily moved to consent to what the fates would appear to have in store.

Maud, having resigned the prospect of happiness, and grieved to see the anxiety of her parents, was tempted to yield to their advice—to accept a heart when she had none to give in return. Any thing seemed to her better than this dreadful monotony. She asked a few days for deliberation, which all concerned were quite willing to grant her. Poor child! none suspected the extent of her suffering during the time of probation. In one hour she would almost bring her mind to a calm, full consent—in the next the image of Ward Tunnecliffe would rise up before her as she saw him that last evening in New York, and she would call herself mad to doubt that he was alive and would speedily find her.

In the mean time, letters were forwarded to Mr. Arnold from Paris, among which was one written by Mr. Bowen after the confession of Antoinette.

"A very singular thing has occurred," the letter went on to say, "since your departure, and as you may be as deeply interested in it as myself, I take the liberty of making you acquainted with the particulars. We are both aware that since my brother's sudden death your daughter has fancied that she has seen him alive. I have now learned the reason of her superstition on this subject. It seems there is a person in this city who closely resembles him—the likeness is said to be marvelous. He is a cabinet-maker, whose name is Duncan. Well, a few weeks ago, in fact a day or two after you sailed, in answer to an advertisement of Mrs. Bowen's for a lady's maid, there came to her a little French girl, whom she engaged, and who gave entire satisfaction. Mrs. Bowen was never tired of dwelling upon her perfections. This evening the little termagant burst into my library, in a rage with somebody who had written her a disappointing letter, and, under the excitement of her anger, made a startling and curious confession. She avowed that she was engaged to be married to the aforesaid Duncan, and that they, being cognizant of his resemblance to the late Mr. Tunnecliffe, had formed a plot between them for imposing upon his friends and relations as the person himself. The plan was so audacious as to be scarcely credible; yet it showed great cunning, and might have succeeded. An important part of it was her coming into our house, in the guise

of a lady's maid, in order to obtain such knowledge of Ward's habits, history, handwriting, etc., as should enable them to carry forward the fraud. Another curious matter is the manner in which the thing has been betrayed. Mademoiselle is jealous—and a jealous Frenchwoman, you know, is a fury. It seems that this enterprising cabinet-maker has deceived her ladyship, as well as the rest of the world. Instead of being content with what he would have made by claiming Ward's property from us, he has preferred to secure Miss Arnold and her fortune, by deluding her into a hasty marriage, before knowledge of his treachery could be divulged by Antoinette. But the curious part of the matter is that that elegant southerner, Mr. Randolph, who is a second cousin of hers, should be her informer. As he, also, is a suitor for your daughter's hand, jealousy has made him sharp-eyed, and he has informed himself of the affair in progress. He wrote that Duncan was in Paris. I do really trust that this will reach you in season to prevent any serious termination of his fraud, or that you have yourself detected him as an impostor. I would also caution you against Mr. Randolph, whom, from the tone of his letter, I suspect to be almost as much of a scamp as the cabinet-maker. With Mrs. Bowen's and my own sincere regards to Mrs. and Miss Arnold, I remain,

"Very truly yours, JOHN BOWEN."

"P. S. One trifling fact causes me some annoyance—indeed, it throws me into a state of doubt to which I would put an end by a trip across the water, were not my business in such a condition as to demand my presence here. It is well known to many of his friends that Ward, with that eccentricity which always marked him, dabbled in cabinet-making while he was abroad—indeed, learned to do some very pretty work. The coincidence is strange—quite enough to awaken suspicion. If such a thing did not seem absolutely impossible, I should almost believe with Miss Maud, that my brother-in-law is still alive. However, I can not really think so. I tell you, that you may be helped to the truth of the case. I dare say nothing to Mrs. Bowen, for she is so susceptible that we should have nothing but hysterics for a month."

This letter threw its recipient into a long reverie. He was not so much astonished at the body of the epistle as he was at the postscript. The story in the

former had already been partially revealed to him by Randolph; but that even the matter-of-fact John Bowen should begin to hint at the possibility of his brother-in-law not having left the world as abruptly as was supposed, gave him "food for thought." He recalled with a new interest, instead of endeavoring to deface the impression, the vivid picture left upon his mind by the person whom he had met in the banking-house. It was true that person did not seem to recognize him, did not even give any sign, as would have been natural to the real Ward, yet an inexplicable expression had flashed across his face as his eye encountered Mr. Arnold's.

"The long and the short of it is, I am going to Paris to hunt him up." Having decided this, Mr. Arnold folded the letter without communicating its contents to the ladies, and the next morning announced his intention of going to the city, "for a change," he said, "and to purchase some little articles needed in the family supplies. In the mean time," he said, to Maud, "let this matter of St Bernard's remain in abeyance until my return. I will take him back to Paris with me and persuade him to wait patiently for your decision."

CHAPTER XVI

RECONSTRUCTION.

MR. ARNOLD had been three days absent in Paris. It was a lovely summer morning; the sunlight, warm but not oppressive, shone into the little parlor of the villa, and glittered on the blue ocean visible from its windows. A light breeze from the sapphire waters fluttered the lace curtains of these windows and brought in the scent of flowers from the tiny garden beneath them. A great pear-tree shadowed half the plot of ground; on a rustic seat against its trunk sat Mrs. Arnold, reading a new English magazine, and occasionally eating a berry from a basket at her side. Maud was alone in the sunlit parlor. She, too, had been reading; but the book wearied her, for she dropped it, listlessly, from her hand, fixing her eyes

upon the floor. Long and solemnly she pondered. She was thinking of St. Bernard, and the answer she should give him when her father and the Parisian returned. That mood of commingled indifference and weariness which had induced a tacit consent to the young man's addresses, slowly but surely passed away.

"No, no, *never!*"

She spoke the words aloud. Her own voice roused her from her reverie. She arose and walked restlessly about the room. Now she looked at herself in the tall mirror, now bent over the vase of flowers on the little marble slab underneath the glass. Perhaps it was the odor of these flowers which so affected her? It was a simple bouquet of violets, fresh and full of sweetness. No influence is so searching, not even that of a strain of remembered music, as that of the perfume of flowers with which some act or thought is associated, to recall the past to memory.

Maud was in America again. She was at home, in their own charming villa on the Hudson; it was a day late in summer, a golden morning like this; she, dressed in blue, and happy as girls are, in their girlish dreams, was walking about the pleasant parlor, even as she walked now, when she was surprised by the entrance of an unexpected visitor; she blushed, she looked beautiful; she was afraid he would notice the sudden throbbing of her heart; it was Ward Tannecliffe, who had come out from the city to call upon her, and whom she now suspected, for the first time, to be the hero of her future—the arbiter of her destiny. He brought her a bunch of violets—the simplest thing he could bring; but he gave it to her with a look which changed her girlish fancies to the emotions of a woman.

As she drew breath above these violets here in France, she was living over again that happy morning in America. All consciousness of St. Bernard fled afar—a foreign, a distasteful memory; only Ward and herself lived and loved, were together, and were happy. The blue waters which glimmered, instead of being the sea upon an alien shore, were the bright-flowing waves of the Hudson.

So fully was she engrossed in reclaiming the past that she hardly changed color when she heard some one speak her name; and turning, beheld Ward Tannecliffe standing in the room, alone with her, his hands held eagerly forth to grasp hers and draw her to him. Again doubt vanished, as it always did when she actually beheld this person.

"Oh, Ward," she said, simply, "how cruel you have been to me!"

"I know it. I have been every thing that was impatient and wicked and senseless, my darling. But, my foolish farce is at an end, never to be played again. I am not to blame, however, for our painful separation since we came to Paris. It has worked upon me, I think, as severely as upon you. That first day of my arrival I could not get my affairs into shape in time to present myself properly before your father, as I intended, (for I did not propose to test your faith in me by asking for a private marriage, as I had suggested in New York,) and the following morning, that haunting shadow of ours, Randolph, contrived to have me arrested, and before I could free myself from prison, you had again taken flight. I gave chase in the wrong direction, and have been following will-o'-the-wisps ever since. I haven't the grace to explain it all now. Your father is in possession of the facts. All I desire—all I can do—is to look at you, to touch you, to be sure that I really have sight and hearing of my darling."

He held her hand tightly, he drew her close to his side, and smiled down into her eyes with his own full of joy. The long anguish of a year and a half swept out of her memory; like a child wearied with some excitement, she leaned her head against him, answering his smile, while tears gathered and fell from the intensity of her content. As he looked upon the happy face, so bright, yet so worn and pale, a spasm of remorse contracted his own; he felt that hot film pass over his eyes which is the near approach of strong men to weeping.

"What will father say? Can you explain?"

It was strange to herself that she did

not doubt him—that she was willing to take the past on trust. Complete as was her own confidence, however, she felt that there were others to be propitiated.

"Father has already said 'his say'; it remains, now, for his daughter to decide whether she can 'forgive and forget.'"

Maud turned in surprise. Mr. Arnold stood in the room, looking so placid as to show that the astonishment, on his part, was all over with.

"Father!"

"I went to Paris expressly to find the young gentleman. I have been entirely successful in my mission. This is the person whom I found, after a short search. He was as diligently occupied, at the time, in searching for me. Whoever or whatever he is, was, or shall be, such as I found I accepted. I leave it for you to decide, Maud, whether this be Ward Tannecliffe, his ghost, his double, or a base counterfeit of the original man."

"You laugh, father. But you are now convinced, surely, who it is?"

"There have been complications which make the matter doubtful. Do not be too easily convinced, my child."

"You may say any thing you please, father. I will not dispute now. I am simply fully satisfied."

"Without an explanation?"

"Without a word." There was a bright smile on her face—more like a still radiance than a smile; there was no color in her cheek, yet she did not look pale—light seemed to take the place of bloom.

"Well, Mr. Tannecliffe, all I can say is, that you have not, as yet, proved yourself worthy of such faith," remarked Mr. Arnold.

"I know it," was the humble reply. "I only wish that to confess my faults was to insure their forgiveness—that to repent of them was to overcome them. There is a long and frightful list of them: obstinacy, high temper, impatience, indiscretion, wrath, blindness of passion, foolhardiness—every thing but rascality. That I leave to my excellent brother-in-law, and Mr. Reginald Randolph, F.F.V."

"It will be very pleasant to you to

find fault with yourself, when that young lady shakes her head in such flattering dissent," said Mr. Arnold, good-naturedly. "Well, well! make it up between yourselves. For my part, I am hungry. And I wish to greet Mrs. Arnold with a good-morning. Where shall I find your mother?"

"Step through the window into the garden, papa—she is there under the pear-tree."

"I will bring her in to witness the wonderful resurrection; and then I shall demand some lunch."

Prosaic middle-age! The young people in the parlor did not feel as if they should ever require food again.

Mr. Arnold returned, in a few moments, with his wife. He, evidently, had not prepared her whom to expect, for when she saw the young man standing there, holding Maud's hand, and looking slightly embarrassed and high-colored, she paused, broke off the sentence she was speaking, growing quite pale; but her piercing glance rested on him, until, apparently assured, she held out her hand, saying,

"If it isn't Ward, it's his ghost."

"You called me insane for saying the same thing," cried Maud, archly.

"Well, you have made us a great deal of trouble, Ward; I only hope that you have reasonable excuse to urge."

"My excuses are far from reasonable, dear Mrs. Arnold. They are as wild and wrong as they can be; but, such as they are, you shall have them. Will you listen to them now?"

Mr. Arnold slipped out on a foraging expedition to the pantries; he had heard the story once, and was not interested in its repetition.

Ward led the two ladies to a sofa, and was not reproved when he chose a seat very close to the younger.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW AND WHY.

As Ward Tunnecliffe leaned over the railing of the *Colden's* deck, on that night of accumulated wretchedness, upon

which he had learned the dishonesty of his partner, and the unfaithfulness of his affianced, he had not, at first, contemplated suicide. The temptation came to him, as he grew dizzy with the rush of foam and water and the crackle of shivered ice. It would be such an easy way of ridding himself of this sudden burden which was crushing him. He thought himself more ill-used and unhappy than any other human being; but, alas! on that very boat was some other unknown, wretched creature more desperate than he; for, even as he leaned there, clenching his teeth and hands, came that loud cry to the pilot—"Man overboard!"

Then occurred that rush to the end of the boat which already has been described. Ward did not join in the crowd. A cold thrill ran through his veins as he listened. The same impulse had been upon him, only he had not been quite miserable enough to obey it. At the same instant, a curious thought, or impulse, took possession of him. Why not die, to the world, and yet, live in reality, an attendant, as it were, upon his own funeral?

If he had had two moments, instead of one, to resolve this idea, he might have rejected it; but, acting on the first impulse, he slid into the deserted "gentlemen's cabin." Every eye, at that instant, was fixed upon the water, waiting for some glimpse of that which was never to reappear. Upon a seat, near the door, lay an overcoat and hat. His instinct assured him that these had been left there by the suicide, who had leaped bareheaded and coatless into the water. He quickly exchanged these for his own, which he put in their place, and had hardly completed the disguise, when the crowd began to return to their seats to discuss the melancholy circumstance. He glided, unperceived, into the fore-cabin, where he kept as much as possible in shadow, fearful that some one might get a chance to recognize the appropriated clothing. He heard many of the remarks made, and already began to experience some of the unpleasant consequences of his rash proceeding.

The discovery of the suicide's hat and coat, on the vacant seat, gave free flow to conjecture and gossip. People were too much excited to heed him particularly, in his shabby coat and hat. Indeed, they did not at first come into that part of the boat; and when they did begin to straggle to the front, he went out on the fore-deck, and kept his face from the light.

Several persons made remarks to him about the tragic incident, which he was forced to answer, in order not to appear strange. "Hadh't a dime left to buy myself a drink with, I reckon," said one. "Mebbe the police was after him with sharp sticks, and he didn't like the notion of being up in the papers," added another. "Oh, that's nothin', nowadays," remarked a third; "I wouldn't mind it a bit. Forgery and fraud is quite the fashion, very aristocratic, as the big-bugs say. It's a credit to a man to fail, if he only smashes up big enough. That young feller was a fool!—to go and make way with hisself. He ought to have considered 't a feather in his cap if he had failed. Don't you say so, comrade?" to our hero. "A big fool," he answered, curtly, turning away from these men. He thought over his contemplated errand to Newark. He could hardly make an errand there now, yet he must go somewhere.

In the mean time the boat was again under way, approaching the Jersey City slip. Young Tunnecliffe, no longer himself, dead yet alive, in the garments of an unknown, himself a stranger to his own disguise, with a curious feeling of mingled freedom and bondage, worked his way through the pressure, to the front, and was the first who leaped ashore.

To call New Jersey a "foreign land" is a stale joke to New Yorkers, but it indeed seemed a foreign land to him, as he paused in the ferry-house, and strove, against the whirl of his brain, to recollect who and what he was. "Who and what?"—he laughed one of those low laughs more appalling than groans. In the morning he had been a flourishing banker—young, with great personal and

mental advantages, affianced to a beautiful girl, and with a name of which it was his pardonable weakness to be proud. Now he was nobody; he had cast away his own identity. Homeless, friendless, penniless, and *nameless!* Absolutely nameless, isolated from what had been his world. The sensation was a novel one, and the young man tried savagely to believe that he was pleased with it.

"If I were only on one of the Fejee Islands, now, all would be as it should be," he muttered.

The whistle of a locomotive reminded him that he was still in the center of civilization; the night-train was going out, the bell rung, and he had only time to dash through the gate, and jump on the last car without his ticket. There were not half a dozen persons in the car, and the lamps burned dimly. The train was approaching Newark before the conductor reached him; in the mean time, he had found a stray bill in his vest-pocket, with which to pay his fare. His great fear was that the conductor might recognize him; but, as he had never before been on the night-train, and the felt hat was drawn over his face, as if he wished to sleep, he escaped that danger. He had time, before reaching the station, to examine his inside-pocket wallet, and was not displeased to find that it contained about three hundred dollars in greenbacks.

When he stepped out on the platform at Newark, he had taken a new resolution. Since he was not on a Fejee island, the best place in which to conceal himself would be the great city from which he had just fled. He had heard of men, whom the officers of justice were in search of, concealing themselves for months, successfully, scarcely a stone's throw from their former haunts. If they, why not he, after whom no pursuit would be made? "Police-officers do not pursue dead men," he very sagely reflected.

It was now after eleven; before daylight the western express would pass on its way to New York; he told the station-

master that he was going back on that, and, curling himself up in a corner of the waiting-room tried to sleep. Knowing that he looked like a suspicious character, he began to feel like one. Still, thus far in his own experience, he felt no regret, save a sharp pang at the thought of the shock of his suicide (he already thought of it as *his* suicide), to his sister, Mrs. Bowen. Dear, pretty, careless little Susie would almost break her heart over it. True, she was thoughtless and improvident, and her extravagance had been the means of leading her husband into dishonorable risks, and when there had been high words between the two men, in her presence, that evening at dinner, she had sided with her husband, and was bitter and sarcastic upon her brother, throwing the entire blame upon him; but, she was his sister, his only near relative, and with all her feminine faults, was very near to him, as he to her. He knew now, thinking it over, that she would be frightfully afflicted for a short time, and reproach herself, and hug her darling little boy, Ward, his namesake, to her heart, and drop burning tears on his golden curls. However, she had a husband and child; she would soon forget the lost brother.

There was another idea over which the young man brooded, which gave him a feeling of absolute joy. It was not a pure joy, but of that bitter, unhealthy kind, of which human nature becomes capable when some injustice has turned its honey into gall. If he returned to the city, he would watch Maud Arnold. Arnold was a traitor's name, and he should have known it from the first! His eye should be often upon her when she knew it not. He would mark what manner of man would be her next choice. Doubtless it would be that contemptible scion of chivalry, Randolph. Women were all selfish, even his own sister Susie; and because this Baltimorean had been introduced to her with a grand flourish of social trumpets, Maud had become greedy for an excuse to break with *him*! He could see just how the thing had worked. She had

heard some rumor of the coming failure, perhaps of the abused credit, and had seized the opportunity to break the tie which bound her to a man poor and disgraced. She would run no risk in doing so, of failing of a better suitor, for it was evident to all concerned, that Mr. Reginald Randolph was infatuated with her. All women were selfish triflers, looking out with a sharp eye for the best bargain, and an unlimited supply of future dress-goods; and yet, he had thought Maud of a nobler quality. Yes! he had not loved her for her beauty, delicate and proud as it was; nor for her girlish charm of manner, her accomplishments, her pretty dresses and elegant surroundings. These were all well, and belonged to her as a matter of right; but he had believed her of a nature as passionate as his own, finer, more exalted, to which love could come but once, to awaken and develop all the possibilities of sense, soul and spirit. That she moved in a fashionable world, whose aims were beneath her own, and that she graced it by her loveliness, while yet she shone above it like a star—with fancies like these he had delighted to regard her. He had gazed into her eyes, until in their dark blue depths he had beheld heaven itself, and had resolved to purify himself for this sweet companionship. Maud! Maud! if it had been any one but *her*, he should have expected it! What a fool he had been! Because he desired to see perfection in her, he believed that she possessed it. Well, his pride wanted humbling, no doubt, and, God knew, it was humbled enough. The note and the ring made a burning spot over his heart, but all the rest of his body was cold as ice. Such thoughts were not conducive to sleep, and he heard each quarter as it was struck by the city bell.

Our hero was never more self-deceived than when he said to himself that his pride was humbled: it was never more fierce and intractable than at that very moment. It was pride which had driven him into this curious isolation, while jealously gnawed at his vitals, he ignoring the pain, and cheating himself into

believing that he was amused with his experiment.

Even in the midst of these engrossing passions, his nice sense of personal exclusiveness made him loathe the touch of the strangely-borrowed garments. He knew not what of foulness or disease might cling to them. The coat did not fit him well, and there was about it an odor of drugs. When there was no one to observe, he took off his hat and examined it, as well as he could by the turned-down light. It seemed clean and decent enough; there was no name in it, save that of the maker.

Presently he began to feel a curiosity about this unknown wretch, in whose garments he was disporting; he pitied him, even to tears; he would like to know if he left wife or child; for, if so, he felt the impulse to aid them, could he find them out.

Overcoming, as much as possible, his distaste to a closer contact with the coat, he felt, in all its pockets, for some clue to the identity of the suicide. His search resulted in nothing, excepting a half-emptied bottle of laudanum. Not a scrap of paper, no card, purse, handkerchief—only the bottle of Lethe.

Two men, that night, had passed, each from their little stage of action—one to that future from which we need seek to know no more of him—that "bourne from whence no traveler returns"—the other to enact a new tragedy or comedy, as the fates should dictate, on a new arena, *not* that of the immortals.

We need not detail, step by step, how he got back to the city without recognition, how he took obscure lodgings from which, for many days, he dared to venture only at night, and how he succeeded in considerably changing his personal appearance, by darkening his hair and complexion, and allowing his beard to grow over his face at will.

The money he had with him enabled him to pay his way, and, though, doubtless, observed with some suspicion on account of his want of employment, and keeping his room through the day, he was charitably supposed to be nothing more than some gambler, or forger,

hiding from the detectives; and as he had chosen lodgings purposely disreputable, so long as he paid, the mistress was not disposed to "peach." Not even when his likeness appeared (an excellent caricature) in the pictorial weeklies, was he ever associated in the least with it. His occupation, during those dreary days of confinement, was reading what was said about himself and his family, and sneering at the weakness of human nature, (without applying his homilies to himself!) This kind of life soon grew too tiresome to be endured. As he was now a bitter condemner of fashionable society, and the ways and morals of the rich, he resolved to identify himself with the working-class—to become a *bona fide* toiler, earning his daily bread by the sweat of his brow, mingling with honest workers, and doing his best in a sphere of life as far as possible removed from former influences. Now came into use that skill which he had acquired, while abroad, as a worker in fine cabinet-work. During the two years which he spent, with his sister, in Paris, he had devoted many of his idle hours to mastering a trade. This was partly owing to a great taste which he had for that kind of labor, and also to a theory of his that every man, however independent, should provide himself against contingencies by learning a trade. Susie had laughed and scolded; but he had persevered in his idea, until, with much pleasant triumph, he had presented her with some exquisite specimens of his workmanship. Therefore, being already fitted for this calling, he naturally chose that of a cabinet-maker. He used to have a reputation among his friends, as an artist of no mean powers, and, by adding beautiful little pictures to the other fine finishing of his handiwork, he rendered it more costly and desirable. By the time when he applied to Smith & Co., as related, the unchecked growth of hair and beard, with the change in their color, the difference in the style of his dress, and such other artifices as he could adopt, rendered him tolerably secure against casual recognition.

Much of his life for the succeeding

fifteen months already is in narrative. He quietly pursued his calling, only disturbed by the necessity for great watchfulness in avoiding former acquaintances—and by a restless lounging and jealousy, which all his pride and anger could not stifle, which led him to haunt the vicinity of Maud's home. He said to himself that he was indifferent to her, yet he would linger for hours in the square to obtain a glimpse of her at the window, or alighting from the carriage on her return from some evening amusement. The same feelings induced him to observe sharply the habits and doings of the man whom he supposed would shortly marry Miss Arnold; and, in this manner, he became aware that he was a gambler, and that he was deceiving the circle of his New York friends. Now, although Ward persuaded himself that he despised Maud, he could not think of allowing her to marry a man of that character without fair warning.

When the Arnolds went to Newport, after they had been absent a few weeks, his uncontrollable impulses got the better of him, and he too took a short holiday of a fortnight, going up to Newport as a sailor, and hanging about the beach, where he could obtain daily glimpses of Maud. Here, on being a witness of the scene between her and Randolph, he first began to suspect that Maud did not favor the southerner's attentions.

That fall and winter some other circumstances gave him a hint of the reason which had induced her to send him that note, breaking their engagement. Once with the clue in his hand, he followed it up with steady persistency. Maud's exclamation, when she recognized him at the skating carnival, helped him materially to his conclusions; but it was not until after Antoinette Sevigne went to Mrs. Farwell's to board that he obtained the whole story of the misrepresentations she had made to Miss Arnold.

He had known Antoinette in Paris, where he was fond of her, and kind to her, as a brilliant child, while he did many favors for her poor old father, a musician of much talent, but impoverished

and unhappy. The old man died shortly after the Tunnecliffes' return to America; his daughter came over, first to Baltimore, then to New York; but he did not know of her presence in the city. It seems that Randolph was better acquainted with her, and when he saw that his rival had been successful in his suit, one of the first of his many disgraceful plots, in his determination to break up the match, was to bribe his pretty French cousin (who had told him of their former acquaintance) to undertake the part which she acted with such spirit. He had obtained a *carte de visite* of young Tunnecliffe, from which a larger copy had been taken on enamel, painted, and inclosed in a gold locket. Antoinette, who evidently always had cherished a passion for Ward, and who was fiercely jealous of Miss Arnold, entered willingly into the deception.

It was doubtless his resemblance to himself, which, unknown to her, led her afterward into such an attachment to Duncan, whom she only believed to be what he appeared.

Ward, sitting on the sofa in the sunlit parlor, holding Maud's hand in his own, and telling all this rapidly to Mrs. and Miss Arnold, was very effective in those passages where he dwelt on his great love for Maud, which he had fought against in vain; he laughed at his attempts at self-deception, when he had persuaded himself that it was dislike, and not the strongest jealousy, which had led him to keep such watch over her. The mother quite gave way to tears, and his own eyes were not dry, when he spoke of the effect upon him, when he heard of Maud's illness, of her constant love for him, and that her friends doubted her sanity because she asserted her belief that he was alive.

"I felt that I must run like a madman, storm the door, burst in upon you all and avow the truth. But the knowledge of her frail health warned me against such a shock. I knew that I must proceed more cautiously. Moreover, something was due to the friends whom I had deceived; I once had brought them very conspicuously before

the public; I did not wish to act the farce over. I thought the best and most discreet way was to have the *dénouement* in a foreign land—to allow rumors to reach our friends by degrees; and by the time Maud and I were married, and had completed our wedding-tour through Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and were once more back in New York, the buzz of gossip would have subsided, and we could be happy in peace."

He looked into Maud's face as he uttered the last bold sentence, and was not displeased at the blush which overspread it. By this time, Mr. Arnold had succeeded in allaying the hunger remaining after a hasty breakfast at a station, and was ready with his part of the explanation:

"I received a letter from Mr. Bowen, as I have already stated to Ward, giving some singular information which would have rendered me certain that David Duncan was a dangerous impostor, had not a little fact in the postscript taken strong possession of my mind. I well recollected a conversation I once held with Ward, about the time his attentions to our daughter were growing marked, in which he avowed his belief that every healthy young man ought to learn a trade, no matter how fine his education or how brilliant his prospects, and stating that he had carried his belief into practice. 'I am as good a cabinet-maker as there is in the land,' he said, laughing. While I admired his principles, I could hardly consent to them, for I am, as you know, a little prejudiced in favor of the nobility of leisure and culture; but, no matter about my ideas at this time. When I read the paragraph, this conversation returned to me, and along with it a return of the sudden conviction I had felt, when I met a certain young man at my banker's in Paris. I did not attempt to explain to myself why he should be masquerading in this fashion; I only said, 'It is Ward, after all, and I'm resolved to find him within a week.' Whether I should thank him for the trouble he had made us, cut his acquaintance, or forgive him, I did not attempt to decide; the first thing was,

to see him and hear him, and leave the rest to fate. I started for Paris with this determination. On the morning after my arrival I went to Munro's to ascertain if the name of David Duncan was still upon their books, when, whom should I see, looking over the files of New York journals, but the very man I was after? I went and stood near him, without speaking, attentively scrutinizing him. He did not perceive me for some moments. I was convinced of Ward's existence, and that I saw him before me; however, I thought I would notice what effect his sudden discovery of my presence would produce. Presently he looked up. I met his eye, but gave no sign. A flash of joy shone over his face, not at all like the look of guilt; he sprung toward me, grasped my hand, made two or three efforts to speak before he succeeded in saying, 'How fortunate! I have looked for you until I gave up in despair. Only give me an hour, Mr. Arnold, and I will explain myself'—and I drew his arm within mine, walked out with him to a restaurant, called for dinner, and gave him the hour he asked for. He might have made out a better case, but, also, he might have made out a worse one. Suffice it, that I gave him permission to amend his ways. Then, as I had an appointment with St. Bernard, I was obliged to meet that gentleman and explain to him why his suit must be abruptly terminated. He behaved well—was glad that Mademoiselle Arnold was to be restored to happiness, (for my part, I should like him better for a son-in-law than this romantic runaway,) but, girls will have their way. Don't pout, Maud—St. Bernard behaved most creditably, and endeavored to conceal his disappointment. I shall always like and admire him.

"Then, to finish up the business, as I was walking, next day, with Ward—who was impatiently waiting for me to attend to some affairs of my own before leaving Paris—I encountered Randolph. He turned a sickly green when he saw who was my companion, and was passing on with a bow, when I detained him a

moment. 'Sir,' I said, 'I have a letter from Mr. Bowen. Your French cousin has betrayed you. I do myself the justice to bring our acquaintance to a close.' He had a very unpleasant expression, but did not make any answer."

"Yesterday was one of the longest days of my life," said Ward, when Mr. Arnold closed his narration. "I persuaded your father to take the night-train, and he put himself to that discomfort to oblige me. So here we are, this morning, and may this be the last of our melodrama."

"I think, myself," said Mr. Arnold, half angry and half rejoiced, "that the sooner you make an end of so foolish a play the better. Let the last scene be a wedding, of course—last scenes always are! Maud, I'll give you five thousand francs to go out and buy the dress and veil—and give you a week to get them made up. I'm tired of this."

"Let us go back to Paris, then, at once," cried Ward, growing wonderfully animated. "Let Marie bring the bonnets and shawls. There will be a return train this afternoon. Poor Susie! I wish she were here to go with us. She likes shopping better than any other earthly employment—she would be so delighted, little darling!"

"I think to-morrow will be quite soon enough for our expedition," answered the mother.

"Nay, Ward, you have not done Susie justice," said Maud, gravely; "she has been very sad about you; and she will be the happiest woman on the face of the earth when she hears of your safety. Only, we must be very cautious in breaking the good tidings."

"Yes, yes, I will see to that," remorsefully; "it was a shame, I know. My whole course has been absurd. But, I can not change it by repentance. I will write to Bowen, and he will tell Susie all. The shock won't hurt *him* any! except the grief he will feel at giving up that oil-stock. I'm afraid he and I will never coalesce. I would rather thrash him than shake hands with him! However, for Susie's sake I shall restrain myself. Dear Susie! You'll help me

buy a shawl for her, will you not, Mrs. Arnold?"

"Don't melt into air in my absence," said Maud, looking back and laughing as she went for her wraps, for he had asked her to walk with him by the sea.

"No danger of that. My old self fits me too well for me to forsake it again. I'm better satisfied with myself than I deserve to be."

How delightful that walk on the shore proved—how unaccountably it was prolonged—what a new blue there was in the sky, and new meaning in the whisper of the ocean as it melted at their feet, youth, love and happiness alone can understand. Only one shadow fell across the brightness of that perfect day, for Maud; and that was the thought of St. Bernard, alone and wretched, in Paris.

Poor St. Bernard! The light of this bright star of the occident had shone upon his dreams only long enough to reveal to him the possibilities of his own nature. All was dark to him now; but—he was a Frenchman, and, therefore, it may be inferred, a philosopher. Let us hope that he consoled himself after the manner of a true Parisian.

The next day there was a shopping expedition to *la belle* Paris; but the Arnolds were too much pleased with their sea-shore residence to desert it, and there all the preparations for the marriage were made, and there it took place, not a month later, in sight and hearing of the eternal sea, whose monotone of music ran on under the lighter melody of joy. St. Bernard, chivalrous as any knight of olden time, did not refuse to be present at the wedding. His face was a little pale as he wished the bride a happy future, but he did not "mope" or look pensive. On the contrary, he exerted himself to make the occasion a merry one; and Mrs. Arnold, in her admiration of his conduct, assured him that if he would visit her, in America, she would find him a bride quite as lovable as the one he had lost.

When Mr. and Mrs. Tunnecliffe arrived home, in the autumn, Mrs. Bowen was quite prepared for the occasion, and gave the fullest scope to inquiry and explana-

tion, by having a magnificent party, and telling every body all about her brother's running away in a fit of ill humor. "The world" thought he had, all this time, been in Paris, and that Maud had met him there by chance; and as he was more interesting than ever, and seemed to have plenty of money, the past was politely ignored. Mr. Bowen

made the best of what he could not help, warmly welcomed his former partner, and requested his gratitude for the admirable manner in which he had managed Ward's property in the latter's absence. As for the other conspirators, they vanished from the scene, and were wise enough not to again appear upon it.

THE END.