

THE
SHIP-CARPENTER'S FAMILY.

A Story for the Times.

BY WILLIAM E. S. WHITMAN.

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Coe American Studies

TO

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER,

AS AN HUMBLE TRIBUTE OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS LITERARY
USEFULNESS,

THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY ITS AUTHOR,

WHO IS NO STRANGER TO HIS TRANSCENDANT ABILITIES,

BOTH AS A SCHOLAR AND A DIVINE.

PREFATORY FROM THE PUBLISHERS.

ROMANCES, descriptive of the scenes and recording the incidents of social life, have always been read with lively interest. Till within a few years past, novelists confined their attention to what are called the higher grades of society.

In England lords and ladies; in America those who would be lords and ladies if they could, were considered as the proper characters to figure in works of fiction. Of late years, *nous avons changé tout cela*—we have changed all that; and now our inventive writers draw their material from more easy and available sources, from breathing, moving, acting, real personages, from those with whom every-day intercourse makes us familiar, who are our companions, whether high or humble, and with whom we are brought in contact in-doors and out of doors, by our hearth-sides and in the usual resorts of business. The occurrences, in which such characters are involved, are by skilful pens rendered instructive and entertaining, and the ordinary *vicissitudes of life* are rendered as important to the reader as its more stirring and startling events.

vi PREFATORY FROM THE PUBLISHERS.

It was to illustrate some of these vicissitudes and to deduce from them useful and agreeable lessons, that the story, which the publishers have now the pleasure of presenting to the multitudinous readers of their former issues, was written. And it is confidently believed that to all persons of sensitive hearts and generous emotions, "The Ship-Carpenter's Family" will make no ineffectual appeal.

Like those largely and deservedly successful books, "The Watchman" and the "Lamplighter," it strikes the chords of benevolent sympathy and elicits our admiration for the dispensers of life's holy and tender charities. It rouses our scorn for what is pretentious and ignoble, and causes us to estimate at its just value the actions of modest yet lofty worth. Written in an unambitious and natural style, easily to be comprehended by even uneducated minds, it contains nothing to displease the taste of persons of culture and refinement.

"The Ship-Carpenter's Family" is one of a series of books calculated to do good while they entertain, and to elevate while they interest—descriptive of social life in its common phases and illustrative of its strange vicissitudes—presented to the reading community with no small satisfaction by

THE PUBLISHERS.

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THE SHIP-CARPENTER'S FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.

TIMOTHY WILLIAMS, ESQUIRE.

THE principal objects of note in the office of Timothy Williams, Attorney at Law, were a small library made up mostly of reports, a deal table standing in the centre of the room and covered with a heterogeneous mass of blank writs, dogs-eared volumes, and a profuse array of illegible memoranda on the mantel over a spacious fire place. The floor was carpeted with dirt ingrained with numberless scraps of paper and refuse quills. Dust and cobwebs rested on everything visible to the eye, though the former was generally predominant. There was no need of curtains to the windows, for the sun's rays rarely entered, and, besides, Mr. Williams would have objected to such an innovation as a useless and fruitless expenditure of money. The remaining furniture of the

room consisted of a lounge with dislocated legs, and four or five broken chairs, one of which was a sort of arm-chair with a cane seat. This last named article was the favorite chair of the Squire.

When not attending Court or called away upon business, Mr. Williams was always to be found in his office. The only time he was at home was during meals, and he rarely took but two meals a day. It would have been supposed that a man so far advanced in years—for he was over sixty—would have retired before this from the noise and perplexities of a business life and sought the comfort and happiness of his family; but it was exactly the contrary with the Squire. His whole life seemed wrapped up in his profession, and his sole aim and ambition was to acquire wealth. Already was he known as a very wealthy man in the village, a fact which he emphatically denied, it was said, from a desire to avoid taxation.

It was a chilly, frosty morning in the month of October and the village clock was striking eight, when Squire Williams arrived at the foot of his office stairs. He was in a quandary, for thrice had he stepped his foot upon the first stair as if he were about to ascend, and as often had he drawn it back as if to take his departure for some other place. Again for the fourth time was he about to make another attempt to go up the staircase, when John,

his hired man, hastily entered the door, and, not being aware of his presence, they came in violent collision. So unexpected was the shock, it not only at once put a sudden termination to John's precipitate locomotion, but threw the Squire on the stairs. But it was a fortunate occurrence after all, for it seemed to obviate every doubt in the mind of the Squire, and in the excitement of the moment, to get him into his office. When both entered the room, John had apologized for the fifth time for his thoughtless heedlessness.

"It was indeed sheer carelessness, John," said Mr. Williams, brushing the dirt from off his clothes with his kerchief; "You ought to have had your eyes open."

"I know it, sur, but I axes yur pardon agin."

"But it was mudscow navigation John, main strength and stupidity. You came very near breaking every bone in my body."

"Ye spake the truth, sur, ivery word, sur; but the devil-a-bit cood I help it, sur."

"Couldn't help it, you booby, John? What, couldn't have seen me in season to have averted such a mishap? Why John, it's a case of assault and battery. I'll make out a writ for you immediately and have you arrested."

"Now here's a pretty state of things," thought John. "The old gentleman is a lawyer and will do

just as he says. He will fill out a writ and have me arraigned before a justice of the peace, and it will cost me a month's wages.

"Och an' it's a bad mornin's work, indade it is," and John gave utterance to the thought.

"What's a bad morning's work?" exclaimed the Squire starting up from the arm chair, in which he had but that moment seated himself. "What work have you now been doing wrong? Speak out you rascal, or I'll discharge you immediately."

"Why, sur, misknockin' yees down—the salt and batter case to be shure. Throth an' t'was an accident sur, an' I'll niver forgive meself for doin' it, *niver*. I'll be cut up into shoe-sthrings first, an' be sold to some old rapscaillon to tie up pertate bags, 'fore I will!"

"Knocking me down—assault and battery—potato bags," rhapsodically muttered the Squire. "John," continued he aloud, "you are drunk! you are out of your senses. You are *non compos mentis*! Explain this conduct or I'll have you sent to jail."

Now John had lived with the Squire ever since he was a boy, and therefore knew all his peculiarities, and many a time had they occasioned him a hearty laugh. But, unfortunately for John, these *freaks* of the Squire's as he termed them, were only seen by him when the Squire was engaged with

somebody else, for when he was brought in contact with him and he exhibited even the slightest eccentricity, his perceptive faculties seemed blunted at once, so desirous was he to please and do what he thought right. Judge then of his surprise, when he was asked for an explanation of his conduct.

"Square Williams," said John, holding his head down and nervously twirling around his cap with both hands, "I've worked wid ye four an' twenty years, an' though 'casionally I dhrink a dhrap of whiskey, sur,—ye niver knew me to get frisky once yet. I had too much respect for yer family, to do it, Square, an' many and many a time, sur, have I gone dhryer thin a contribution box, sur—to maintain mi position, sur. I know I'm a poor divil, Square, an' mee name is John Crogan, sur, but niver can it be said that John Crogan iver got dhrunk. Maybe I've bin out of my sensis as ye call thim, Square, but that wasn't mi fault, for I waz always an unlucky child. Bedad t'was to mi bein' waned too earli they said, but how cood I help it, sur."

During this speech of John's, Mr. Williams had re-seated himself in his chair, and had been a quiet listener. When it had appeared to him that John had finished, he ejaculated:

"John!"

"Yez, sur," was the prompt reply.

"Is this an explanation of your conduct, or have you been endeavoring to evade the question?"

"Faix sur, an' I havn't. Ye well know, Square, that mi eddicashon iz poor, tho' I can jump and wrastle an' work with the best of them, be gor. But when yees ask me to explain mee conduct, I hardly knew what yees waz drivin' at. But nqw, faix, I understand yees!" and thereupon he gave the Squire a correct account of what happened, as we have seen.

Mr. Williams seemed wonderfully amazed at the occurrence, and to express his thoughts he gave utterance to a guttural grunt, as was his wont.

"It is very singular," muttered he to himself, as he rested his polished bald head on his right hand on the arm of his chair. "Very singular indeed! John!" added he aloud, "what are you here for? Do you want anything of me?"

"Yez, sur, I came down bi Missus Williams' orders, to see what ye would be after havin' fur danner, sur."

"Ahem! What did we have yesterday, John?"

"Well sur, I b'lave it was sort of a paked-up danner, sur—(to himself,) at last mine waz."

"Ah! yes, ahem, if I recollect aright it was very nice. What day of the week is it, John?"

"Friday, sur."

"Ahem! Well, you don't eat any meat then, to-day?"

"No, sur."

The Squire hesitated for a moment and then muttered to himself—"Good." Then aloud he remarked, "Nor fish either, I presume."

"O yes, sur, we are allowed to ate fish."

Squire Williams paused. The problem of an economical dinner was undergoing a rigid investigation. It was not so much the quality of the viands, that had resolved itself into a calculation, as it was the cheapness. At length he spoke.

"John," he remarked, rubbing his hands together with considerable spirit—"Go up to Finney's meat-shop and tell him if he will give you a small piece of liver, you will buy six cents worth of potatoes. Here is the money; be careful and not lose it," and the amount was handed to John.

"Have you any other orders, sur?" inquired John, as he placed his cap on his head and opened the door.

"None; no other order at present," replied the Squire hastily, as he moved himself up to the small table by the fire-place, and commenced looking over a large file of accounts.

John took his leave, inaudibly exclaiming as he went down stairs—"An divil-a-bit of a danher shall I see to-day, shure. Yesterday I waz hun-

gry 'nough afther I'd aten, but to-day—faix! yesterday will be no circumstance, for I shall be hungry 'nough to swallow a 'hole jackass and chase the rider. Och, an' its bad luck; indade it iz."

CHAPTER II.

THE STUDENT.

MR. WILLIAMS had not long been engaged in examining his musty collection of accounts, when the door opened, and a young man of slender form and quite an intelligent cast of countenance entered the room. With noiseless step he advanced to the table which stood in the middle of the room, and, hastily drawing from his coat pocket a small batch of papers and letters and laying them thereupon, and then divesting himself of his outer garment and quietly drawing up a chair, he was soon engaged in perusing the contents of the letters.

Charles Edwards, for such was the name of the young man, was under the legal tutelage of the Squire. For at least one year had he closely applied himself to his studies, during which period he had acquired considerable information of jurisprudence, and was considered quite forward for one, whose *term of reading* had been of such short duration.

Among the young men of the village young Edwards bore an unexceptionable character, and though his family, which consisted only of a widowed mother, was possessed of but little property, the income of which barely supported them, still, by being prudent and economical, together with what he received occasionally from his percentage on collections and other little outside business, they had managed, ever since the decease of Mr. Edwards, five years before, to obtain a comfortable living.

With Mr. Williams young Edwards' expenses were small, a fact almost to be questioned, so penurious and exacting was that gentleman. But, although Squire Williams had consented to give young Edwards a thorough understanding of the law for naught, still it was understood between the two, that the latter should always hold himself in readiness to do what writing and collecting the former might see fit to impose on him. The only expenses then, to be incurred by young Edwards, was for lights and also a small consideration of a few dollars during the winter seasons, for his proportionate part of fuel. Outside of his necessary expenses he spent but very little, and he often was enabled, much to his heart-felt satisfaction, to bestow a favor for charitable purposes.

As we have remarked, young Edwards was en-

gaged in perusing the letters he had procured from the post, on his way to the office. As there were only two letters, they were soon read; and as there was no occasion for a reply, they were duly filed, and he was now quite ready to attend to his studies.

He was just in the act of seating himself to commence his daily task, when the Squire wheeled round from the table, and, throwing thereupon the file of accounts he held in his hand, he fixed his gray eye earnestly upon Edwards, and inclining his head forward, remarked:—

"Was there anything for me in the post-office this morning, Mr. Edwards?"

"O! I beg pardon," replied Charles, drawing from his pocket a letter, "here is something, sir. I had quite forgotten it."

The Squire seized the letter quickly, and, after examining the envelope, as was his habit, to see from what part of the universe it had come, the seal was torn, and in a few moments he had read its contents.

"Another appeal for charity, Mr. Edwards," he exclaimed, tossing the letter among a collection of waste papers. "Umph! I wonder if people think I am made of money!"

"Pray who is it, sir, in the present instance, if I may be permitted to ask the question—who solicits

charity?" inquired Charles, exhibiting a certain degree of interest.

"An unprincipled fellow!" rejoined the Squire, warmly: "A man who owes me three dollars sixty-two cents. There is his account, giving the exact amount"—(here he produced a bill from the pile which had undergone inspection.) "Yes, it's three dollars sixty-two and a half cents. I'll read it, Mr. Edwards: 'John Steadyman to Timothy Williams Dr, for professional advice, three dollars sixty-two and a *half* cents.'" The concluding portion was strongly emphasized.

"And what was the advice for?"

"Why, the good-for-nothing fellow came into the office one day last summer, and said that a man whom he had been working for would not pay him his wages—a matter of some seven dollars, I believe. He had implored him for it for weeks, so he said, and was not able to obtain a single penny; so he asked me what course he should pursue to get his honest dues, for he must have it to keep his family from starvation. He thought of suing. 'Mr. Steadyman,' said I, 'don't sue—don't go to law—you can't afford it.' I gave him this advice frankly and disinterestedly, and charged him this moderate sum, as you perceive, on account of his indigent circumstances, though I regretted it the very next moment."

Squire Williams coughed once.

"And what does Steadyman ask of you, Mr. Williams?" inquired Charles, in a mild voice, paying no attention to his tutor's concluding remark.

"He writes that it is impossible for him, at present to pay me; and that it would be an everlasting favor for me to cancel the debt, or, in other words, to make him a present of it. What an audacious fellow he is."

"And have you resolved to comply with his request?"

"I am determined to write him, Mr. Edwards, that I shall not tolerate his neglect to pay me any longer. I demand immediate payment, or he must suffer the consequences," and the Squire brought his hand heavily upon the table.

"By your own version of Mr. Steadyman's situation, he is very poor. How can he pay you then?"

"Yes, true, I am conscious of that; but he shall work out the debt. He is able to labor."

"Very true," rejoined Charles; "but to work out the debt, he will be necessitated to sacrifice three days; whereas, if you allowed him a little longer grace, he could earn the amount at his trade in two days, perhaps."

"The fellow has a trade then—ahem! What is it?"

"I believe he is a ship-carpenter, sir."

"Ship-carpenter—ship-carpenter"—muttered the Squire, relapsing into a thoughtful mood. "I don't want any ships built—navigation don't pay this season. Wonder if he knows how to construct a hog-pen." Then, as if a new idea had struck him, he exclaimed aloud, "Mr. Edwards, I'll sue him! I'll commence a civil action immediately. Take one of the blank writs on that table, Mr. Edwards, and fill it out. In the meanwhile I'll go and find an officer."

"Consider for a moment, Mr. Williams," said Charles, resolving, if possible, to touch a chord of sympathy in the unfeeling and hardened heart of his tutor before he executed his order—"what an unwise, I will not say unkind, step you are taking. If you cause a writ to be served on Steadyman, the chances of getting your dues are against you. He has no property; and the moment you bring an action, he takes the poor debtor's oath. As you well know, this will relieve him at once from his liability, and you will be obliged not only to lose your debt, but to pay the costs of prosecution. On the other hand, as he is a very honest man, so I have heard, he may be led to sacrifice some article of furniture or clothing to liquidate your claim. In my humble opinion, Mr. Williams, it would be

very hard and unjust to use any compulsory process. I pray you, sir, be as lenient as possible."

"But I can't afford to lose it, Mr. Edwards. If I had never looked after these little matters, I should have been an inmate of the poor house before now. Charity, you know, begins at home."

"You have no disposition I hope to take the last cent a man has for your own personal convenience, Mr. Williams?"

"N—n—no, no," replied the Squire, quickly. "But am I not entitled to my just dues?"

"As a matter of course, yes, sir; but where it is not convenient, or in the power of your delinquents to pay you on account of poverty or unforeseen circumstances, would you force them to meet your demands regardless of the cost?"

Squire Williams knew of instances, very many of them in his experience, where he had rigorously pursued this system; but now, sensible that he was cornered, and not wishing to commit himself, he merely said, "Ahem!—It is rather chilly this morning, Mr. Edwards."

Charles paid no attention to this evasion of the question, well knowing how and in what manner Mr. Williams had acquired his wealth; and this will also account for his not making any allusion to the fact. He had gone farther in his argument than he

had intended, for he was fearful that he should awaken the displeasure of his tutor, who was easily irritated. But Charles was charitable. When once a spark of pity or mercy was kindled in his bosom, it was gradually fanned into an inextinguishable flame. During the present conversation, he had refrained from fully expressing his thoughts and deep-seated convictions, for fear of being uncourteous or disrespectful towards old age. If it had been a stranger, his argument would have been entirely different. He would have severely censured and animadverted at length, instead of passing it over in silence with an implied rebuke. He had studiously endeavored to be as mild and passive as possible, for he felt that he himself was dependant on Mr. Williams' bounty.

"I am inclined to believe that you will not, or at least I should hope that you would not," continued Charles, steadfastly gazing at his tutor, resolving to extricate him from the dilemma in which he was placed, as well as to administer a gentle reproof by answering for him his own question; "however, Mr. Williams, if it is your request that I should make out a writ, I will obey you at once without a voice of dissent;" and Charles arose from his chair and advanced towards the table.

A knock was heard on the office door.

"Come in!" exclaimed the Squire.

"Ah! Mr. Steadyman, how do you do, sir; how's your health; glad to see you, sir; take a chair, sir;" and the Squire seemed quite pleased to see his visitor, as he shook his hand and drew him up a chair.

Mr. Steadyman seated himself and bowed his acknowledgments. He was a spare, thinly built man, and his right hand was minus three fingers. Though garbed in a green baize jacket and denium overalls, he looked neat and tidy.

"By-the-by, Mr. Edwards," remarked Mr. Williams, turning hastily, and addressing his student with a significant look, "my request in that little matter which formed the subject of our conversation is revoked. Ahem! I would advise you, Mr. Edwards, to re-read Story on Equity. Well, Mr. Steadyman," he continued, wheeling about and passing his hand through a sparse tuft of hair on the top of his head, "this is a fine morning out; little raw, but not uncomfortable! Did you wish to see me on business, sir?"

"I believe, Squire," remarked Mr. Steadyman, "that you have a little bill 'gainst me?"

"Ahem! yes, I think I have, Mr. Steadyman. Let me see—ah! here it is, fortunately, on the table. I had almost forgotten about it. Ahem!"

"I wrote you a letter, Squire, yesterday, in which I stated that I was unable to pay you, and in a fit

of despair almost, as I thought of my circumstances, I intimated that, as you knew how I was situated, you might possibly allow me the debt. 'Twas a mean thing, I know, to ask it of you, Squire; but times are so hard, and money so scarce, that I find it out of the question to make both ends meet at the end of the year."

Mr. Williams moved nervously about in his chair.

"Y-e-s," he replied, slowly, articulating distinctly each letter; "I have received a few lines to that effect. Your christian name is——"

"John C.," said Mr. Steadyman.

"Ah! yes, John C. Steadyman, brother to Sam, who keeps store up the street, I believe. Well, the letter was from you then. Ahem! Sam finds his business profitable I suppose; and they say he is very wealthy, Mr. Steadyman."

"Well, sir, really I couldn't—I——" Steadyman hesitated.

"It's no matter—no consequence at all," interrupted the Squire hastily, as he vigorously commenced stirring up a bed of glowing embers in the fireplace. "You are a ship-carpenter, then, Mr. Steadyman?"

"I served an apprenticeship at that trade, Squire, until I was of age, and have still continued to follow it for a living whenever I could get work.

For the past two or three seasons but very few vessels have been built, and, consequently, I have not been able to do much in that line. However, I have managed to get something to do. Sometimes I go out haying during the summer, and when winter sets in, I generally get a job to go out to Virginia to oversee a crew of men who cut ship timber."

"The latter pays you well, undoubtedly?" questioned Mr. Williams.

"About average wages, sir; say a dollar a day and found. But I'm obliged to pay my expenses to and fro, which will amount to twenty-five dollars; and when you but take into consideration that a job will only last me three months at the most, you will see that I do not have much to send home to my family, to supply their numerous wants during my absence."

"Yes," said the Squire drily. "Is your family large?" he pursued in his interrogatives.

"I'm the father of two children, both girls."

"Three, not including yourself," said the Squire.

"A tolerable large family."

"Yes, sir—it's a good many mouths for one man in my condition, to feed and furnish clothes for—but, Squire, as long as I'm blessed with good health, I shall never complain of my lot."

"You look as if you had been a hard worker, Mr. Steadyman."

"Well, Squire, I've managed to get a living ever since I was ten years of age, when my parents died—up to the present time,—during which I have had a good many hard knocks, which has nearly broken me down. When I was twenty-four I got married. Prospects looked bright then as I was doing well, had steady work, and one of the most frugal of wives. When Mary our first child was about six months old, I had scraped together nearly money enough to build me a small house. I had bargained for a small lot of land, which I was to give my note for, payable in a certain time, the owner taking a mortgage on the house. Everything being arranged, I built my house and in a short time was living in it. I was rejoiced with my success. Some five years elapsed and I had earned money enough to take up my last note, which would declare me the sole possessor of my house and lot, when almost to my despair, my house was burned to the ground. I was away at the time, and my family escaped with nothing but what they had on. All my effects—everything were destroyed. It was a terrible drawback, but not so painful as when I found that by the loss of my private papers, the man whom I had purchased the lot of, managed to take advantage of my

misfortune, and unfeelingly wrested the land away from me. I hardly knew what to do. Times were dull, and, though I had my health, I was almost disheartened. If it had not been for my wife and children, I believe that I should have destroyed myself. To make a long story short, I commenced life anew—but it seems my troubles were not at an end, for the very first day I got work, I accidentally cut off these three fingers with a broad axe, close up to the knuckles. This laid me up some three months altogether, because anxious to get out too quick, I caught cold and had a fever. When I got out at last, I found that I was not the same man physically speaking; my constitution had received a shock that never would be overcome. From that day up to this, which is a period of ten years, I have but barely earned a living. One thing I can say though, Squire—I have always paid my honest debts."

During this recital Mr. Williams had been indulging in periodical naps, but at the last disclosure of Mr. Steadyman's, he appeared suddenly relieved from his comatose spell and while his countenance wore an air of satisfaction, he drew one of his gastronomic coughs.

"You have indeed been unfortunate in your experience I dare say, Mr. Steadyman," said he,—
"but such things after all are not uncommon. As the poet says—'the web of our life is of mingled

yarn, good and ill together.' If I understood you, Mr. Steadyman, you said that you called to see me about that little bill of yours. I presume you wish to settle it. The amount is three dollars sixty-two and-a-half cents, a very small sum, sir, nearly one half the usual fee. Shall I receipt the bill, sir?" and he essayed to carry the proposition into effect.

Mr. Steadyman was about to say something in reply; but his heart failed him and he drew from his pocket a small leather purse.

"There," exclaimed the Squire, passing Mr. Steadyman over the bill and transferring nearly the whole contents of the emaciated purse to his own plethoric wallet. "There, sir, be careful and not lose it. Perhaps I can serve you again, Mr. Steadyman, in some way: I shall always be happy sir, to do you a favor. Good morning, sir."

"Thank you, sir," was the reply, and, bidding a good morning to the Squire and his student, whose heart had grown heavy and saddened, as he listened to the conversation between the two, Mr. Steadyman took his departure.

"That Steadyman is an honorable man after all, Mr. Edwards," exclaimed Mr. Williams, as he arose from his chair, and commenced drawing on his overcoat. "He pays his debts—or at least he paid mine. The poor man, by his own story, has been rather unfortunate. He is to be pitied," and the Squire took his hat and cane and left the room.

CHAPTER III.

THE LITTLE CHARITY.

WHEN Charles left the office towards night, having finished his studies for the day, he fortunately thought of a few purchases his mother had charged upon his mind in the morning. Hurrying briskly up the street he soon entered a small wooden store, in which Mrs. Edwards usually bought her supplies of groceries and provisions, and after giving his order to the proprietor, a chubby, rosy-faced man, and stating that he would return shortly, he passed out of the door.

With hasty steps he pursued his way further up the street, not stopping until he arrived at the foot of a flight of stairs and had ascended into a small room in the second story of a brick building, which contained a circulating library. Quite a collection of people, he found in the room—the greater portion of whom were mechanics and laborers.

Among the number he discovered Mr. Steadyman, who, while in the act of having a book which

laid on the desk, registered by the librarian, recognized him, and made his way at once towards him.

"Ah! good evening, Mr. Steadyman," said Charles, shaking his hand warmly.

"Good evening, sir," was the fervent reply.

"I presume you are a member of this association, Mr. Steadyman? Nearly every mechanic in town is, and I take it for granted that you are."

"I am sorry and almost ashamed to say that I'm not, Mr. Edwards, though I would gladly become a member if I could afford it. The book that I have selected is for one of my neighbors."

"You surprise me, when you say that you are not a member, for I thought that the subscription price was so small, that it came within the means of every individual in town."

"Very true, Mr. Edwards, as you remark, it's a very small sum, for the great benefit to be received therefrom—but notwithstanding this, it is not in my power to indulge the intellectual taste of my family, by becoming a member. Every dollar, nay every cent that I earn is scarcely sufficient to pay my necessary expenses. I'm quite favored though, Mr. Edwards; for occasionally as you see this evening, some of my neighbors who are members send by me for their books, and, after they have read them, they kindly allow me the same privilege. My oldest daughter Mary on our re-

ceiving each volume, reads its contents aloud to us, until it is finished. It is a great treat, I assure you, Mr. Edwards."

The conversation between Mr. Steadyman and his tutor had been vividly impressed on Charles' mind. His heart sympathized with Steadyman's situation. He felt that it was his duty to assist him; in his own quiet and unobtrusive way to furnish those means which would render his home comfortable and happy. Although he could ill afford it himself, he resolved to forget his own condition and take the preparatory steps towards carrying out his object.

Taking the advantage of Steadyman's absence, who had stepped aside to speak with a fellow mechanic, who had called his attention, Charles drew near to the librarian and passing him a two-dollar bill, requested that Steadyman's name be placed on the list of members. Bidding that official not to divulge through what agency it came there on its being known to Steadyman, he made a selection of a book, and was soon back to the store.

"Here are your articles in this basket, Charley," said the good-natured grocer passing the same to him, with a smile. "Is there any thing else this evening, any tea or coffee wanted?"

"Nothing else, Mr. Wells—unless it is to answer me a civil question."

"That I'll do with pleasure," and Mr. Wells seated himself on a sugar barrel and folded his arms.

"Are you acquainted with a man by the name of Steadyman?" was the inquiry put to the grocer.

"What, Steadyman the ship-carpenter?"

"Yes, sir."

"Yes, I know him, Charley, and an honest, hard working man he is too."

"He is in quite reduced circumstances."

"So I've understood. He has quite a large family, I know, and I've often wondered how the poor man got along—for you know he's only one hand as it were, to do the work of two."

"Does he ever patronize you, Mr. Wells?"

"Well, occasionally he happens in to the store but never buys much. He was in the other day inquiring about the price of flour, but when I told him what it was selling at, he thought it was too high and made up his mind not to buy any. I offered to give him a month's credit, if he would buy a barrel, but he positively refused to take it, saying that he never bought anything on credit if he could possibly avoid it."

"Did you urge him to accept your offer?"

"I did, but it was of no use. 'My family,' said he, 'have been living on corn meal and middlings since last summer, and I guess we can stand it a little while longer.'"

"I have an idea, Mr. Wells," exclaimed Charles, with no inconsiderable fervor, after a short pause.

"Out with it, then," replied the grocer, smiling at the young man's enthusiasm.

"I desire that you will keep it confidential."

"Oh certainly, Charley. What is it?"

"I have thought it my duty to do what I can in my power to relieve Mr. Steadyman's situation."

"It's a philanthropic undertaking, my dear boy, and one which you will be rewarded for hereafter. As a Christian man, I approve of your purpose. But how are you going to work? I know you have the heart; but have you the means?"

"Very fortunately," replied Charles, "I am the possessor of eight dollars. Four of it shall go to my own family and with the other half I will begin to execute my purpose. In the meanwhile, I will arouse all of my energies, and during my leisure moments will see what can be accomplished."

"But perhaps I can be of some service to you—who knows?"

"Will you assist me then in carrying out my object?" interrupted Charles, with his eyes flashing with joyful lustre and his cheeks glowing with unusual animation.

"Stop, stop, my noble boy, don't be so fast—just wait a moment until you hear me out. As I

was about to say, you have not yet explained to me in what way you are to render aid. As you have given the matter no thought nor reflection, the mode, which you have so hastily and prematurely adopted, to further your plans, may be impracticable. I do not wish to dictate to you, Charley, but as I am older than you are, and have had more experience in life, I would advise you."

"Pardon me, Mr. Wells, I was too hasty," replied Charles, allowing his enthusiasm to subside, "and for the moment I was so carried away by my intense interest on the subject that my feelings got the complete mastery of me;—but now that I have regained my equanimity, and am more cool and collected, I will state briefly my intentions. Day after to-morrow as you well know, is Thanksgiving day. In our beloved New England you will hardly find a single family-table, however lowly it may be, but what will be graced with a turkey or goose. I have concluded, therefore, as Steadyman's family will not, in all probability, partake of any such luxury on this time-honored occasion, to furnish them a turkey. I have four dollars to appropriate. A turkey will cost me one dollar and a half. The balance of the money I will lay out in flour. What do you think of my plan, Mr. Wells?"

"It's a judicious expenditure, Charley, and you have not only my hearty approval, but my co-

operation. We'll allow for the turkey, say one dollar and a half; that money will buy a large, plump fellow—you will then have two dollars and a half left. A barrel of flour will cost eight dollars—five dollars and a half is wanting. This amount I will contribute myself. Here's the flour." And the benevolent grocer forthwith went out to the back end of the store and rolled along a barrel of superior Genesee towards the door.

"Oh, thank you, thank you, Mr. Wells—your donation comes so unexpected that I can hardly realize the fact. It's a pity that there are not more men in our village like you, Mr. Wells! Here, sir, is your two dollars and a half." And Charles passed the grocer over the amount.

"Pooh! Don't trouble yourself, my dear boy, about paying that to me. Keep it, you may be in want of it yourself before to-morrow night."

"But I insist upon it, Mr. Wells. It is not right that you should carry my proposition into effect."

"But I can better afford it than you, Charley, besides, your noble and generous disposition to do good to your fellow-men, is not at all tarnished by your inability. The will to do good is the main thing, and which marks the man. I'll allow you, however, to furnish the turkey; now don't be vexed, because I have interfered with your arrangements."

"My good sir," exclaimed Charles, with considerable emotion, as he laid his hand upon the shoulder of the worthy grocer:—"by this act of noble and commendable generosity, you will receive the prayers of the Steadyman family, and will be blessed as their benefactor and true friend. As for myself, I can only return you my profound gratitude for your kindness."

"Thank you, Charley, but there, don't say anything more about it. If you'll bring the turkey into the store before I shut up, I'll see that both go safely to their destination, to-morrow morning."

Charles hastened out and shortly returned with a good size gobbler. Both articles being placed together, and set one side—he took his basket and wended his way home, with hurried pace, for he perceived that it was beginning to grow dark, and his parent was momentarily expecting him.

The house in which Mrs. Edwards resided was a neat, white-looking cottage situated a few rods back from the road, enclosed with a high white fence, and surrounded with tall elm trees, which at the present period were entirely stripped of their foliage, and threw out their gaunt skeleton branches to the sky. The front yard was tastefully laid out into flower-beds; but the flowers during the incipient reign of winter, had all disappeared, and every plant, with the exception of a few hardy annuals,

had either been removed or allowed to remain unprotected.

Mrs. Edwards had been waiting impatiently for some time for the return of her son, and, from his protracted stay, she had begun to grow apprehensive of danger befalling him. Tea had remained untasted, and the lamps had been lit, but Charles had not yet made his appearance.

Mrs. Edwards had anxiously drawn aside the chintz curtains for the purpose of discovering her son's approach, when the door opened and he at length entered the room.

"O, I was so fearful that you had met with some accident, Charley," she exclaimed, as she tenderly kissed his manly cheek and parted his auburn hair from off his forehead, "that I have felt very melancholy."

"I was delayed, my dear mother, beyond my usual time this evening, by a little private business that I wished to attend to," he replied, relieving himself of his basket, and taking off his hat and coat; "but now here, I am in good spirits, and, as you see, not a bone fractured."

"But you seem to be in remarkably good humor, Charley. Has anything happened this afternoon of extraordinary moment?"

"O, nothing of *much* consequence, mother. Nevertheless, I feel happy."

Mrs. Edwards was a woman who never made it a point to press a matter that did not concern her, and consequently she did not ask her son the reason why he felt happier this evening than the preceding one.

"Come, Charley," said she, drawing forth from the stove oven a plate of smoking biscuit, and placing it, together with a steaming tea-urn and pitcher of hot water, on the table, "are you ready for tea? It has been waiting so long, dear, I am afraid everything is cold."

"All ready, mother," said he, smiling; and they sat down to the table.

Mrs. Edwards was an intelligent-looking woman, of a fine and noble expression of countenance, and of graceful and prepossessing manner. Her son bore the same contour of face, as well as inherited the same amiable qualities of disposition. The conversation between them at the table was of a refined though substantial nature, and it seemed to be the desire of each to impart as much information to each other as possible.

Tea being over, and the tea-things removed, the astral lamp was lit, and the two retired to the sitting-room. It was a snug and respectably furnished apartment, betokening a general air of comfort and ease. A few pictures hung on the walls, among which was an engraved portrait of the de-

ceased Mr. Edwards. There was scarcely a family in the village who did not have one of these portraits in their possession; for Mr. Edwards, when alive, was an eminent lawyer, very popular, and much loved by the people, and his friends, when he was appointed Attorney-General of the State, caused a large number of these prints to be engraved and circulated gratuitously.

A very agreeable chat ensued between the two, Mrs. Edwards, during the while, also improving the moments in embroidering, an art in which she was quite skilful.

During the conversation, Charles gave his mother the full particulars of the event which occurred at the office during the forenoon, accompanied with the effort which Mr. Wells and himself had undertaken to relieve the destitute condition of the *Steadyman* family.

"My noble-hearted boy," said Mrs. Edwards, affectionately, "your mother might well be proud of you!"

"Though the idea was instigated by me," replied Charles, perceiving that his parent had evidently misunderstood him, and not wishing to take that credit which, he unselfishly thought, belonged to the grocer, "Mr. Wells deserves all the encomium you can bestow, for it is he, not I, who ren-

ders the assistance. I am entitled to no praise for what little I have done."

Mrs. Edwards was of a quick, discerning mind, and though her son's genial frankness and unpretending manner quite assured her of the truth of his position, she was convinced that although his means were limited, he had done something towards carrying out his idea. She therefore remarked, that Mr. Wells was a good man, and had already acquired considerable note for his many benevolent acts.

"This Mr. Steadyman, then, is a brother to the merchant, and whose family is so intimate at Thompson's?" continued Mrs. Edwards, selecting a new thread of worsted.

"Yes, mother, and a wicked man he is, too! He ought to be ashamed of himself, for not relieving his brother's wants. I always thought Mr. Williams mean and close-fisted enough; but for a brother to treat another in the manner that Steadyman does his, refusing to offer him the smallest pittance, as well as disowning his relationship, is, in my opinion, a heartless act, and ought to receive the severest punishment that is meted out to such sin!" and Charles's cheeks flushed with indignation.

"Perhaps there may be a cause, after all, Charles,

for his adopting such a course," said Mrs. Edwards, mildly, but she was conscious that she spoke unadvisedly. Still, she wished to ascertain if the better nature of her son was not being imposed upon, or that the object of his charity would not warrant his relief.

"John Steadyman," said Charles, feelingly, "is a man of sober habits, and bears a good character. There never was a harder or steadier worker than he; and even now, though his constitution is completely broken down, and he is deprived almost of the use of one hand, he still works as hard as ever, whenever he can get employment. It is because John has been unfortunate, and is in such indigent circumstances, that his brother acts thus towards him; while he, on the other hand, has amassed a few thousand dollars, and has grown so proud and aristocratic, that he will hardly speak to common folks. And now I would ask if his success in life justifies him to treat his brother in the manner he does. No! I know you will answer. Oh, mother, to witness such base inhumanity makes my blood run cold!"

It was a pleasure to Mrs. Edwards to behold the noble spirit of her son thus aroused, for it assured her that, standing as he was on the verge of manhood, the good seed she had sown in his early mind, had now ripened to maturity, and had pro-

duced that stamina and standard of character which she had so earnestly hoped and prayed for. When, therefore, he had finished, she could not resist the yearnings of her heart to clasp him to her bosom and imprint a kiss on his forehead.

"Yes, my dear boy!" she exclaimed, with all the warmth of a mother's love, "go on with your laudable and heaven-blessed mission. Render all the aid in your power to relieve the distressed and succor the afflicted. Be unfaltering in well doing, for ye shall reap if ye faint not!"

CHAPTER IV.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS.

THE day dawned without a cloud in the sky, and the cold and penetrating wind, premonitory of the approach of winter, whistled through the leafless trees and cut up their antic gambols with the myriads of dried leaves that lay scattered about on the frosted earth.

Breakfast being finished, we find Mrs. Edwards and her son seated in the sitting-room. The latter not wishing to go to the office at so early an hour, for it was but a few minutes past six, was attentively perusing the book he had obtained at the library the day previous, while the former was assiduously engaged in her embroidery.

"O, by the way, Charley," said Mrs. Edwards, pausing in her work, "excuse me for interrupting you, but I forgot to tell you last night, that we are invited to Mr. Thompson's house to-morrow afternoon, to partake of his Thanksgiving dinner. In the evening his daughter will entertain her friends. Notwithstanding I had made preparations to keep

Thanksgiving, Mrs. Thompson and her daughter, and particularly the latter, for she said that she would not miss having you there during the evening for a great deal, importuned me so perseveringly, that I at last accepted their invitation. They dine at four o'clock."

Charles closed his book, and a playful smile lit up his countenance, when the allusion to his particular presence being required, was made; but maintaining his gravity, he remarked—

"I hope that Dora (meaning the young lady referred to) was as urgent in soliciting the remainder of her company as she was mine. If she was not, I can hardly understand what she meant. Perhaps you can enlighten me, mother."

"You are trifling, Charley, when you manifest such gross ignorance, for your looks betray you." (However, I'll indulge his innocent stupidity, thought Mrs. Edwards.) "Perhaps Dora is partial to your company."

"I don't see why she should be, when it is currently reported that she is engaged to William Lyons, the young medical student." Charles slightly colored.

"Pooh, pooh, Charley! that might be, and still she have her preferences in the choice of friends. But why do you blush so? I am afraid that I shall be led to believe that you are more interest-

ed in this matter than you would have me suppose." Mrs. Edwards gave a significant laugh.

"O fudge, mother! You know that I never can converse on scarcely any subject, but that I blush exceedingly."

"Particularly such a delicate topic as we are conversing on," immediately rejoined Mrs. Edwards, endeavoring to look very self-complacent. "O fie, Charley!"

"The gist of the whole matter resolves itself into this," said Charles: "You presume to think that I have fallen in love with Dora, and that the attachment is mutual. Is it not so?"

"If it is so, how can her love be reciprocated, when you said that she was engaged?" queried Mrs. Edwards.

"I remarked that such was the rumor. But answer my question, mother. Do you think that I'm partial to Dora?"

"You skilfully brandish a trenchant blade, Charles, but you flourish it, as it were, with your eyes closed. Occasionally you prick your adversary. It was not because he was so agile that he escaped your well-directed thrust, but because you fought under difficulties. But to the point at issue. Yes, I think you are a trifle carried away with the lovely heiress." And Mrs. Edwards laughed outright.

"Now don't laugh, mother, for we now understand each other. The subject to be discussed, then, is—am I in love with Dora Thompson."

"Which, setting aside all argument," answered Mrs. Edwards, "you will acknowledge at once to be a fact."

"You are really provoking, mother. I believe your sole aim is to tease me!"

"You refuse to answer my question, then?"

"I will answer you frankly and candidly, mother, if you will only be patient for a moment. Your question is so direct, and I find you so invincible, that I succumb without further parley. I am not so particularly fond of Dora as to desire her for a wife. She has many faults which I dislike, and which I would be glad to see remedied. There is no doubt but that she is rather intelligent, and witty sometimes, but she is altogether too fond of dress, and is inclined to be coquettish. Another deplorable weakness—because her father is wealthy, she disdains to associate or even to speak to those of her sex who are not circumstanced like herself. However, notwithstanding these failings, which by experience or self-culture she may outlive or reform, I esteem her, and am civil and courteous to her. Perhaps, viewing the subject in one light, she is not so much to blame, as she inherits her faults from her mother, who,

you know, is a proud, arrogant and overbearing woman, easily flattered, and led to believe that she is the embodiment of all that is great, good and wise. At heart Dora is a good girl, and I really believe that if her mind had been properly moulded and her tastes judiciously cultivated in her childhood, she would have made a most estimable young lady. As you well know, Dora and myself have always been together, more or less, ever since we were children, and it is not strange there is a strong affinity between us. We went to the same school, were in the same class and spent our hours together at each other's house. No, mother, I do not like her well enough to make her my wife. Besides, if I follow your advice, I shall not get married until I am worth enough to take care of a wife."

Mrs. Edwards had listened attentively to each word that flowed from her son's lips, and her silent thoughts had given a ready response. She had hoped that Charles had never been allured by Dora's beauty or fascinating manner; but on several occasions she had been fearful that in an unsuspecting moment his gentle and confiding nature might have led him astray, and that he would readily yield to Dora's charms. But now that he had answered her question satisfactorily to her mind, she was fully convinced that he had stated

the simple truth, that it was from long intimacy, and not from any sterling merit, he esteemed her.

"I am pleased," said she, "my son, with your ready answer, which I see is the result of careful observation and sound reasoning. Your keen perception of men and things shows that your intellect is rightly balanced, if not fully developed. Dora, in one sense of the word, is a light-hearted, thoughtless creature. She lacks those substantial qualities that make the exemplary woman. As you remarked very properly, she might have made an estimable lady; but she has now so far advanced in years, that all her good qualities have become distorted, and she thinks and talks of nothing but those trivial subjects which to a sensible mind are distasteful and uninteresting. Her whole existence is absorbed in the latest piece of French dress goods or German jewelry for bedizening her person, and her sole ambition is to make herself either the belle of the ball-room or the observed of the street. So much for Dora."

During her remarks, Mrs. Edwards had clearly watched the effects of her criticism on the mind of Charles, and she was glad to see that it was having a salutary influence. On her conclusion, Charles arose, and after informing her that he

should be as ready and willing to listen to her counsels and obey her commands in years to come as in years past, he was soon on his way to the office.

The whole forenoon was devoted to his studies. Squire Williams had been in and out several times, but, save these interruptions, no one else had come to disturb him.

When the village bell had commenced ringing the hour of twelve—a practice which had been in vogue but a short time—Charles had finished his stint of reading, and, laying his book aside, he brought forth his diary.

This book contained only the rough and unpolished outlines of his private thoughts and observations. Its contents were of that nature which, when he was weary both in body and mind, he found infinite pleasure, if not relief, in resorting to.

After a few moments spent in serious reflection, Charles wrote the following:—

"Remember the poor. Now that winter is approaching, I cannot banish this thought from my mind. I feel as if I could embrace every child of poverty, and pour words of love and charity in their ears. To be benevolent is, in my humble opinion, one of the greatest duties of a man. 'He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord.'

A person may discourse on charity, eloquently picturing poverty in its most abject forms, and urging his fellow-men to give according to their means. But it will not avail anything. I believe it is best for such a man to give first, and let the homily come afterwards. He then sets the example. A man cannot set an example by an appeal—it must be by his acts! * * * If I were worth a thousand dollars this very day—my whole property, for instance—I would willingly give away one half of it towards an institution for the relief of indigent people. My heart is ever warm for them; and often, when I have passed a poor beggar in the street, and had not so much as a cent in my pocket to give him, my heart has sunk within me, and I would not even draw near and speak to him, for I *would* not preach what I *could* not practise. If I had approached him, like a thousand others, perhaps, and told him how much I pitied his situation, and how I felt for his lot, perhaps he would have rejoined, ‘Yes, no doubt you do good, sir, and I thank you much for this consolation. But remember, sir, “Give us this day our daily bread,” is your prayer as well as mine.’ Such a rebuff would be too much for me.”

A few other matters found their respective places,

and the volume was closed. Squire Williams entered the office.

“Have you heard the news, Mr. Edwards?” he exclaimed, hastily seating himself in his arm-chair, and violently rubbing his hands.

“What news, sir? What has happened, pray?”

“O, nothing of much moment, Mr. Edwards—only, Steadyman, who was in the office yesterday, was found by the roadside last evening, lifeless, to all appearance; but, after being carried home and the doctor sent for, he revived somewhat, and it was found that he had received a paralytic stroke. The poor man, by this calamity, is not only deprived of the use of his limbs, but has lost his speech. Ahem! It was fortunate that he paid my bill before this happened, for it would have been a total loss, without doubt.”

At this astonishing information, for such Charles considered it, he was at a loss for a reply. For a moment he seemed entirely prostrated; but mastering all of his energies, he at length remarked, with affecting emotion—

*“It is a lamentable affair, Mr. Williams.”

But this gentleman did not observe the grief that was depicted on his student's countenance, nor was he sensible of the throes of heart Charles

was so deeply afflicted with, or else he never would have replied so indifferently—

"Rather a sad matter, Mr. Edwards, but nobody seems to care anything about it. He was a poor dog, you know, and had no friends!"

When Charles went to dinner, he informed his mother of the deplorable circumstance, and, after painfully dwelling on it in detail with sad commiseration, he determined to visit the distressed family during the afternoon.

"It is quite fortunate that I have a little ready money," thought Charles, when he left the house and directed his steps towards the apothecary's. "If it had not been for Mr. Wells, I hardly know what I should have done; but after all, it goes for the same purpose, though under more heart-rending circumstances."

A few necessities in the way of choice delicacies which, Charles had presumed, would be wanted at Steadyman's house, were purchased at the apothecary's, and he then bent his way thither.

It was a small, comfortable-looking, one story and a half house, with a little door-yard in front, which contained a large pile of chips and mill edgings—Steadyman's winter fuel. The window-curtains were down, and to Charles, as he entered the door, everything wore a melancholy appearance.

"Is this Mrs. Steadyman?" he remarked, addressing a tall, pale-face woman, attired in a cheap, plain, calico gown, who was engaged in preparing a bowl of gruel.

The woman bowed in a respectful and ladylike manner, and answered in the affirmative.

"My name, madam, is Edwards," said Charles. "I come to express to you and your family my sincere regrets for the lamentable disaster which has happened to you, as well as to offer you my services. Here are a few articles which you may require." And Charles laid his parcel on the table.

"O, good sir, God bless you! for you are the gentleman to whom we are indebted for the turkey and barrel of flour that we received this morning. May Heaven reward you, sir, for your generosity." And Mrs. Steadyman grasped Charles by the hand, and wept profusely.

In an instant it flashed across his mind that Mr. Wells had sent word by the bearer of the articles referred to, that he was the donor, and desirous that the matter should be placed in its right light, being unwilling to deprive the worthy grocer of the credit which he in reality thought due to him, he gave Mrs. Steadyman a brief explanation. The good woman, however, persisted in reiterating her acknowledgments, and, much to his surprise, al-

luded to his act of kindness in the Circulating Library-room.

"I have done only what I consider a duty," said he, thoughtfully. "But how is Mr. Steadyman this afternoon?"

Charles wished to change the subject.

"He appears to be a little more comfortable. The doctor was here a few moments ago, and administered a powerful opiate, which has begun to take effect. O, I am so happy to know that he is out of danger! Still I am resigned, if the Lord sees fit to take him from me."

"Mr. Steadyman has been very unfortunate for the past few years, I am grieved to learn."

"Ever since we were married," replied Mrs. Steadyman, "we have seen adversity in almost its sternest form; still our trust has always been with our Heavenly Father. 'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' At times we have seen moments when we were unprovided with anything to eat, and knew not wherefrom it was to come, still our confidence in the Lord has remained unshaken, and we can exclaim that 'he hath been' a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."

The devoutness and Christian meekness, with which these few remarks were uttered, showed to Charles that she might truthfully say, "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot." Here is truly an example of Christian resignation and sincere piety, thought he.

"This is, indeed, a world of joy and sorrow," he said, in a subdued voice, "and it is faithfully recorded, that although our lives be cast in pleasant places, we know not what a day may bring forth. Though not a professor of religion, I believe in the existence of a Supreme power, and a hereafter in which the just and good shall receive their reward, and the unjust and wicked their punishment. Though one, as you say, be poor and needy in the body, I am constrained to believe, that they can find refreshing consolation in the Spirit by reading His holy book and following its divine precepts."

Their conversation was brought to an abrupt termination by the entrance of Mary, the eldest daughter, accompanied by her youngest sister, Bessy, whom she was leading by the hand.

The elder one bore an amiable and intelligent expression of countenance, while the younger looked bright and interesting.

The two were quietly introduced to Charles by their mother.

"Kind sir," said Mary, in a voice of melodious pathos—"although my mother, without doubt, has expressed due acknowledgments, still allow me to return my gratitude for your noble generosity towards us. Words, sir, cannot express my feelings for the interest you have manifested in our situation; and, coming as it does from a stranger, my feelings completely overpower me."

"An' I, too, little Bessy thanks the gentleman." And the child rose up on tip-toe to kiss Charles, while he stooped over to enable her to carry out her intention.

"I have already stated to your mother," replied Charles, as he stood transfixed to the spot by the loveliness and fascinating grace of Mary, and listened to her declaration of unfeigned gratitude—"that I have done only my duty. If the happiness you derive from my unpretending act of charity is as warm as the satisfaction I feel in bestowing it, I am content. My only request is, that hereafter you will consider me one of your true friends."

"With pleasure, sir!" unhesitatingly replied both Mrs. Steadyman and Mary—"and"—continued the former—"we shall ever remember you in our prayers."

Charles took his leave, promising to call on the following morning.

CHAPTER V.

THE THANKSGIVING DINNER.

ON the subsequent morning, Charles fulfilled his promise by calling on the Steadyman family. He found that Mr. Steadyman was enabled to sit up in bed by the aid of bolsters and blankets, but had not regained his speech or the use of his limbs. The doctor's opinion was, that he did not think it probable he ever would recover from the shock, and that as long as he lived he would be as helpless as an infant.

On his entering the room, the invalid recognized him at once, and struggled hard to speak; but the attempt was useless, only an inaudible sound escaping from his mouth. His countenance, however, was radiant with a smile, as he surveyed Charles from head to foot.

"Are you in pain, sir?" inquired Charles, seating himself by his bedside.

Mr. Steadyman shook his head.

"Would you like to take any refreshment?"

Mr. Steadyman again shook his head, and looked up towards heaven. His lips moved in prayer.

There was here a pause, during which Charles gave way to his inmost thoughts.

"Can I attend to any business of yours which requires attention?"

The invalid feebly bowed his head, and looked towards the door. He desires the presence of a member of his family, thought Charles, and he arose and sought Mrs. Steadyman to whom he made known his errand.

"I'll get his memorandum book," said she.

The book being found, Mr. Steadyman gave Charles to understand that he was out of debt, but that there was money due him to the amount of seventy-five dollars, which he wished him to collect,—to which request Charles readily acceded.

"If there is any other business that your husband would like to have me attend to," said Charles, speaking to Mrs. Steadyman, "I hold myself in readiness for any service."

"You are very kind, sir," said she. "I hardly know how we ever can recompense you. We never knew what it was, sir, to have a friend until we saw you; and, as Mary remarked last evening, you appear more like our good angel descended from above, than mere flesh and blood."

"Consider me ever your friend and your support to the utmost of my ability," said Charles.

"You have already endeared yourself to us as a brother," was the reply; "for you have been our defence and refuge in the day of our trouble."

"May I prove myself such, Mrs. Steadyman," said Charles.

The door opened, and Mary and Bessy softly entered. Not observing their visitor, they approached the bedside, and tenderly kissed the cheek of their afflicted parent.

"O! here's Mr. Edwards, Mary," exclaimed Bessy, as she discovered Charles, who was concealed somewhat by a heavy, old-fashioned bureau. "I'm so glad you haven't gone yet. I told Mary you'd be here when we got back from the apothecary's, because you told us you'd stay;" and she approached his side and gazed tenderly up into his face.

"O! good morning again, Mr. Edwards," said Mary, laying off her bonnet and shawl. "Bessy's eyes are keener than mine, for she saw you first. You must pardon me, for my attention was directed to father when I entered the room."

"Certainly, Miss Steadyman, with pleasure; for I am glad to see you are so dutiful a daughter. As for little Bessy," he continued, lifting the child

up into his lap, "she is a good girl, I know by her looks."

"I tries to be good," said Bessy, nestling up to his bosom; "for I want to go to heaven, where mother says all good folk go when they die. Aint you sorry father's sick?"

"Yes, dear; but I hope it won't be long before he will get well again."

"An' if he don't get well, will you be my father?"

Charles turned towards Mr. Steadyman, whose eyes sparkled as he heard the innocent question of Bessy, and then kissing her little cheek, he replied:

"I'll try and see that little Bessy has plenty to eat and good clothes to wear."

"An' mother—an' father—an' Mary too?"

"Bless you—yes, darling."

"Then I'll pray for you again to-night," said she, getting down from his lap; "an' I'll tell my little angel star not to let anybody harm you."

Charles was moved by the touching simplicity of the child, and a tear glittered in his eye; but, quickly brushing it away, he cast a tender look at her, and remarked to Mrs. Steadyman:

"Bessy has early drawn near to her Saviour."

"I have striven hard to bring her up in the ways of the Lord," was the reply, "and bade her enter

the fold as one of the lambs of Christ. My teachings have not been in vain."

Early called and early blest, thought Charles. He arose to depart.

"I wish you'd stop and take dinner with us, Mr. Edwards," said Mrs. Steadyman, following him to the door.

"O! do, Mr. Edwards," exclaimed Mary and Bessy, simultaneously.

"You must excuse me. I would gladly avail myself of your invitation, but my mother and myself are engaged out to dinner this afternoon. I will endeavor to call on you this evening. Good morning;" and kissing Bessy, and glancing affectionately at Mary, he departed.

There was quite a family gathering at Mr. Thompson's house at dinner. The number of the members of the family who were present was limited, there being only two, and these were his wife's nephew and niece, a young man and his sister, whom she said were of a very wealthy family at the South—the principal portion of the company being old and intimate acquaintances, who resided in the village. Timothy Williams, Esq., and lady, Samuel Steadyman, the merchant, and wife and daughter, a Mr. Cornelius Timpkins, who was a wealthy bachelor, and Mrs. Edwards and her son, composed those of the latter.

The dinner, as Mr. Timpkins observed, was most *recherché*. The table was covered with luxuries, and the guests seemed well pleased, if we may judge by the ample justice they were doing to the viands. Squire Williams was eating heartily—in fact he was paying such earnest attention to his turkey, that when the gentleman who sat opposite to him politely asked him for the second time his opinion relative to a certain question, the Squire looked up, and with a bland smile, shook his head and replied—"Yes, sir, thank you; I'll take another piece of the turkey, breast if you please,—it's very palatable."

Mr. Timpkins proved himself an independent, off-hand man, a good epicure, a great talker, and his fund of anecdote seemed inexhaustible. The company were delighted with his sallies of wit and his exceeding rich sayings.

Mr. Thompson presided at the table in an every day sort of a way, despite the instruction he had received the night before from his better half. Once or twice he had accidentally overturned the gravy dish, which caused Mrs. Thompson to knit her brow, and scowl most ferociously, but aside from this he got along well enough.

Samuel Steadyman, who sat on Mrs. Thompson's right, partook of the dinner with his characteristic stiffness and formality. Whenever he entered into

conversation, he expressed his thoughts very briefly.

Charles, though he conversed occasionally with Dora, (not so much as she wished however,) was delighted with the conversation of Timpkins, and he wished to embrace every opportunity to listen to him. He had abandoned the task of attempting to make any talk with the young gentleman and his sister—finding their conversation not congenial to his taste.

The ladies were better listeners than talkers—although now and then they each engaged in a private confabulation.

After dessert, the company retired to the parlor, where Mr. Timpkins opened the conversation by remarking:

"Now, friend Steadyman, allow me to offer a remark to you on the subject, which you so grandiloquently introduced at the table. You well know that I am plain-spoken, and, when I say the indomitable aristocracy, of which you speak, remind me of that fungous kind of plant known as the mushroom, of which naturalists have so long sought in vain to find the seed, I state that which is the sentiment of the people at large. If my Lord Snootles and Boozles comprise English aristocracy, and are sustained from generation to generation, by those offensive, and I am led to say, *cursed* laws of

entail and primogeniture, it forms a striking dissimilarity to our upper tondom—to-day in full blast and to-morrow sunk into oblivion. Yes, friend Steadyman, these pretences to rank, utterly unmindful of birth, or to fortune, silent as to how it was acquired, engender an arrogant and domineering disposition that results in a presumption of power, and this ought to be frowned at and overturned by the people; and, when I say the people, I mean the honest hard-working mechanics, our laboring men, sir!"

The merchant felt galled by these remarks, for he was a very sensitive man, notwithstanding his cold and indifferent manner; still he took them all in good part, and never allowed his feelings to betray him.

"Mr. Timpkins," said he haughtily, "You are a gentleman of wealth, sir, and don't you form one of that class you have referred to? I mean no disrespect, sir, but I am constrained to believe, you have been cutting your own throat."

"Then it is wealth, sir, you would have me understand, that forms these coteries of our misnamed aristocracy, and which gives it tone and character. Friend Steadyman, the entire stock in trade of a hydropathic apothecary, concentrated into a gilded pill, and given to a few silly, weak-minded persons, creates at once the most absurd and foolish notions

I ever wot of. From mouldy cellars to windowless cocklofts, we soon behold wealth lavished beyond description. Now foreign airs are assumed, butterfly toggery put on, fashionable nonsense twattled, and white-aproned servants comprise two-thirds of the household. Their inferiors and former acquaintances are shunned and unrecognized. And all this, sir, because a few dollars are at command! No, sir, allow me to say, that you have formed an incorrect estimation of me as a man—you are mistaken most egregiously, when you rank me in such a class."

The merchant saw that he had overshot the mark, and therefore maintained a profound silence.

"La, me!" exclaimed his wife, "how droll Mr. Timpkins is this afternoon in his conversation. He means well enough, Mr. Steadyman, but he is such a very funny man. Julia, my love," continued she languidly, speaking to her daughter, "pass me my perfumery."

Charles enjoyed Mr. Timpkins' remarks. He considered them to the point, and queried in his own mind, if Steadyman and family and Thompson and family considered them a palpable hit. He concluded, however, that if they did feel the full force of them, they would say naught, because Timpkins was a wealthy gentleman and a universal favorite.

Mr. Timpkins continued :

"You intimate or would believe, that every rich man helps to form the aristocracy you speak of. Here you are in error. The aristocracy you uphold, and whose cause you advocate, comprises such men as Mr. Sylvanus Hargrave, Jr., your wife's brother, who by a streak of luck, came suddenly in possession of a fortune, which so inflated him and his family, that they make themselves great-big-nobodys—why, if you should remind this said Hargrave of his occupation in his former days, he would boot you out of his house. He would ignore the idea of such a thing. And oh, how it would shock the dignity of Hargrave's lady—begging her pardon, if it was publicly known, that she once pursued the quiet vocation of a serving girl, or if some officious individual like myself, perhaps, who knows no better, should publish that little event, perhaps it would be better to style it episode, when Hargrave's wife took in washing, to get money to be genteel. No, friend Steadyman, those in our blessed country who make a great 'flourish of trumpets' and call themselves the upper crust, is nothing more than the upper crust turned under. Our real aristocracy, if you consider wealth the basis, are those who, being brought up in the right way, have got that wealth by hard labor, by incessant application to business, by perseverance, in-

dustry and enterprise. Not those who have stepped from a peddler's cart, by the sudden and unexpected rise in pewter basins, into a drawing room, or those white-livered popinjays, who, because a small patrimony was left them, scorn those who work for a living, and treat their betters as upstarts and imposters. Our real aristocracy, friend Steadyman, comprise such men as the Lawrences, Appletons, Thos. H. Perkins, Harrison Gray Otis, Edward Everett, and a hundred others I might name. Such men as these, sir, are the pillars of state and bulwark of society. They are the men who endow our colleges, build our schools, and are untiring in appropriating their wealth for charitable purposes. On the other hand, sir, science and art would droop and die, if placed under the guidance and fostering care of our Hargraves. O, friend Steadyman, your idea of aristocracy, in the eyes of an intelligent person, though I do not profess to be one, are easily seen into. The fine, interwoven texture of the screen which conceals your *beau monde* from us poor outer denizens, is easily penetrated, and to the close observer and profound thinker the farce is converted into a puppet show."

Whether Mr. Timpkins had given any offence and his remarks had at last been considered a personal thrust, we will not venture to say. No reply was offered, and he had scarcely concluded,

when Steadyman and family majestically swept across the floor and left the room accompanied by Mrs. Thompson, her daughter and two cousins. Squire Williams, and wife, and Mrs. Edwards, Charles and Mr. Thompson only remained with Mr. Timpkins. The Squire, who had been a close listener to what had been said, was the first to renew the conversation. He briefly remarked that he was of opinion that Mr. Timpkins was more than half right in his views.

"He is wholly right, Squire," said Mr. Thompson, who had also been a rapt auditor, and who had refrained from making a similar declaration, before now, from fear of Mrs. Thompson. "Yes, sir, he is right in every particular. For one, I can testify to these facts he has presented us, for I have a practical knowledge of them. Since I have been married, I have not been myself, have not acted myself. Every man has certain weaknesses, I have mine, and the consequence has been that Mrs. Thompson has applied the thumb-screws and has me completely in her power. During my married life, particularly after I retired from business, I have been night and day a martyr to the fashionable, vain-glorious and puffed-up notions of Mrs. Thompson. Timpkins, *you* don't see through a glass darkly—you have been a close observer. Ha! ha! ha! I really believe you put a flea in

the ears of those who have left us. Hey? Timpkins. Stood it as long as they could, and have now left in disgust: and Mrs. Thompson, too. Ha! ha! ha!" and Mr. Thompson laughed heartily.

"The subject," replied Mr. Timpkins, pleasantly, "Steadyman introduced himself—and if he wished to have me express my sentiments without concealment, prevarication or favor, why, he has no doubt received satisfaction, and must stand the brunt. You know that frankness and fearlessness are characteristic of my nature, and if a few common sense remarks have served to irritate and vex Steadyman and family——"

"And Mrs. Thompson, and daughter, and cousins, don't scruple to speak it out, Timpkins," interposed Mr. Thompson.

"So mote it be, I cannot help it and will not retract," continued Mr. Timpkins. "However, it was not my intention to wound their feelings."

"Pooh, pooh, they'll get cooled off before they return," said Mr. Thompson, "I'll warrant you. Besides, you needn't apprehend that they'll be offended with you. No, no, Timpkins! You have too much money for that, my dear sir. Ha! ha! ha!" and Mr. Thompson gave vent to another prodigious laugh.

Charles longed to make an expose of Steady-

man's character, together with his treatment towards his brother, but a significant look from his mother, who evidently surmised his thoughts, as she sat conversing with Mrs. Williams, deterred him from so doing.

A few minutes passed, and those who had left so precipitately, made their appearance, with the single exception of Mr. Steadyman, whose immediate presence, Mrs. Thompson remarked as she seated herself with consummate grace in a capacious arm-chair, was required at his place of business.

They appeared to be in good humor, no trace of disaffection being visible on their round, white countenances.

"We have been examining your collection of paintings," remarked Mrs. Steadyman to Mr. Thompson. "I do think they are splendiferous, and so does our Julia. Mrs. Thompson assures me they are the productions of the great masters."

"Well, really, Mrs. Steadyman," said Mr. Thompson, with innocent frankness, "I couldn't affirm that such is a fact, because I don't know. Mrs. Thompson bought them I believe at an auction sale about a year ago."

Mrs. Thompson turned all sorts of colors, and unperceived by her friends, she looked daggers at Mr. Thompson, and muttered—"You're a fool!"

But regaining her self-composure and feeling that she must make an explanation or immolate her reputation by false inferences drawn from her husband's stupidity, she put on a most lovely and winning look and remarked—

"Mr. Thompson, I regret to say, my friends, has no taste for the fine arts. He is no connoisseur, and therefore it cannot be expected he should answer correctly. From a complete captivation of the productions of the old masters, I was led to purchase at a great expense during my European tour last season with the family of a distinguished member of Congress, a large number of their rarest and most valuable paintings, which were sold at the chateau of a French nobleman, who from reverse of fortune, it was said, was obliged to part with them. It was indeed an agreeable circumstance for me."

"I never was aware before, Mrs. Thompson," drily remarked Mr. Timpkins, "that you had such a class of paintings in your house. As frequently as I have visited here, you never have informed me of the fact, and knowing too, as you did, how ardently fond I was of the fine arts, I really think you would have told me of this before, Mrs. Thompson, and allowed me the pleasure of taking a peep at your pictures. But, perhaps, it was your inten-

tion to have surprised me on some particular occasion." And Mr. Timpkins bowed.

"If it was not so late in the afternoon, I would gratify your request, Mr. Timpkins;" said Mrs. Thompson, with a condescending air, "but if you would have me infer that you are a connoisseur, it will require a great many days for us both to examine minutely the execution and discuss their merits."

"O, goodness, my dear Mrs. Thompson!" exclaimed Mrs. Steadyman with much surprise, "it would take at least half a day to criticise justly that dear little dog on the ottoman. O, isn't he a love of a creature, lying there so quietly. Julia, my dear," said she, addressing her daughter, who was engaged in a *tête-a-tête* with Dora and Charles, "you look fatigued; I am afraid you are not well. I think you had better go home with me, and not stay to the party this evening."

The subject of the paintings now gave way to a discussion between Mrs. Steadyman and Mrs. Thompson on the precarious state of Julia's health, while the remainder of the company entered into a general conversation, Mr. Timpkins figuring as the principal speaker.

By half past seven o'clock the dinner party had broken up and the guests had returned to their respective homes. Preparations were now being made for the evening entertainment.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PARTY.

AFTER escorting his mother home, Charles hurried down to Steadyman's house. By him Mrs. Edwards sent a basket containing a few choice dainties for Mrs. Steadyman, and two thick woollen dresses and a lot of under garments which she presumed would be very acceptable to Mrs. Steadyman and Mary for winter wear, and which, quite fortunately, she could spare.

During his short tarry at Steadyman's house, Charles occupied his time principally in pleasing and agreeable conversation with Mary. He found her to be a young girl of ripe judgment, sound sense, and for one whose advantages for acquiring an education had been so meagre and limited, he was astonished to behold her evince great indications of talent. Her disposition appeared mild and gentle.* She had all the Christian virtues of her mother, and endeavored in her walks of life, so Charles thought, to exemplify that precept which

says: "Be ye not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." He also learned that she was employed by a tailoring establishment at the village, in sewing nearly all of their best custom work, and in this way she had earned enough not only to purchase all of her wearing apparel, but to contribute a little something towards paying the rent of the house. According to Mrs. Steadyman's statement, Mary had on several occasions, by taxing her physical energies to the utmost in her trade, providentially saved them from being turned out of the house.

Thus an hour slipped away, and although he was aware that his promise must be fulfilled by being present at Dora's party, yet he regretted to terminate his visit. Mary's purity, goodness and noble traits of character had made so indelible an impression on his mind, that he seemed irresistibly chained to the spot. At times he felt as if every word he uttered was inspired, so transcendently good and holy was the atmosphere he inhaled.

Mr. Steadyman, as he reclined on the bed, had been an intent listener to their conversation, and quite often his countenance exhibited certain signs of pleasing satisfaction. These demonstrations were specially observed by Charles, and his

heart glowed with infinite joy. He felt satisfied that his good endeavors to relieve their wants were being doubly blessed, and he felt induced to renew his avowed intention with redoubled effort.

Before leaving, a warm reciprocity of feeling, of free interchange of thought, was manifested between Charles and the family, and when he at last did take his departure, it seemed as if he had known them for years, so great a degree of intimacy had this visit occasioned.

Charles was soon ushered into the presence of Dora's guests. It was a select gathering, the wealth and beauty of the village. So striking was the contrast to the scene which he had left but a short time previous, that his spirits became at once depressed, and he felt in no mood for pleasure.

"I have been expecting you for a half an hour at least, and had almost concluded that you were going to disappoint me," said Dora with a smile playing about her black liquid eyes, after she had introduced him to the company, and bade him be seated beside her on a richly embossed ottoman in a small recess of the room. Dora was splendidly attired, and appeared bewitchingly fascinating.

"I should have been very sorry to disappoint you, Dora, after I had assured you this afternoon I would be present."

"But why are you so dilatory? was it owing

to business, pray; or did you wish to be excessively fashionable in your hour; or do you wish to be discreet by keeping silent?" and Dora laughed at her innocent inquisitiveness.

"If you are pressing in your request for me to inform you, Dora, I will comply without a moment's hesitation, for it's no secret."

"O, then, if it is not a secret, Charley!" she exclaimed, tossing her luxuriant curls in the air, "pray don't tell me anything about it, for it will be void of interest to me. But why are you so remarkably low-spirited? You have lost all of your usual vivacity. You didn't partake of too much dinner, did you? Come, get up, and let us take a promenade," and forthwith she pulled him from his seat, and before he could say aught, her arm was entwined in his, and they had commenced a circuit of the room.

It was quite a confused Babel of tongues to his ear, as they moved along. In many instances he found the language of an ordinary colloquy paraphrased in the most approved style. In one particular, a lady superbly dressed was indulging in sundry touches of a foreign tongue, imparting to her remarks that polish and brilliancy which she no doubt conceived the height of sublimity. It was Charles's opinion that it completely overpowered her at last, for it occasioned her to have re-

course to her vinaigrette an indefinite number of times.

"Don't you think my cousin is a brilliant creature?" said Dora, as they paused in front of a knot of young ladies and gentlemen, who appeared to be attentively listening to an eloquent description of Southern habits and manners by that young lady.

The remark was made in so loud a tone, that Charles saw that it was heard by the fair one herself, and therefore he felt himself forced to reply, much against his will, as he thought of her imbecile affectation and stupidity at the dinner-table, "I think she is!"

"Mother says she is a paragon," replied Dora. "See what an elegant satin she has on. I almost feel mortified to death with mine, yet mother says mine cost the most. That's some consolation."

"Who is that gentleman standing beside her, who just bowed to me?" inquired he, returning the compliment.

"Why, you forgetful ninny, that's cousin Sanders, her brother."

"Excuse me, Dora, for I didn't recognize him at first, he is dressed so differently from what he was at dinner. Besides, he has had his hair curled, which alters him amazingly."

"Isn't he a noble looking man?" said Dora,

warmly. "See what a classical forehead he has. He writes for the magazines, too, so he says. Mother feels very proud of him."

"Ah!" exclaimed Charles with unfeigned astonishment, "he is a writer, then. I never should have supposed it."

"Oh, that's because you are no judge of the human countenance, as I've told you a hundred times, Charley." "Now, if I," continued she, smiling, "could have only seen the tip end of his nose, I should have concluded at once that he had a massive intellect."

Charles laughed also. "I acknowledge," he remarked, "my incompetency, Dora, and to you award the palm of being an excellent physiognomist. But hush, he approaches us."

"Aw, Mr. Edwards," exclaimed the new comer, standing very erect, and with his thumb and forefinger playing carelessly with a massive watch chain which dangled from his vest pocket, "'pon me 'onor, I'm very glad to see you here in this gay and festive assembly. Er-r-r hope your-r-r enjoying yourself prodigiously. Er-r-r my adorable cousin," he continued, addressing Dora, "your-r-r lady friends are delightful creatures. Er-r-r in the magnanimity of my passion for intellectual society, I am perfectly bewildered."

"It gives me pleasure," replied Dora, "to know

that you are enjoying yourself, my dear cousin, though I feared you would not find my acquaintances so agreeable as the society which you cultivate at the South."

"Er-r-r precisely so, my fair cousin, there is, I must admit," replied he, shrugging his shoulder, and giving an arrogant look, "a vast difference, in fact, er-r-r a wide distinction between the society at the North and that which I mingle with at the South. In my last poetical attempt, which was published in the "Southern Trumpet of Etiquette," a magazine by the way, er-r-r devoted exclusively, I might say, to the er-r-r regeneration of society, er-r-r more explicitly to the exaltation of the upper classes, I very happily interpolated a few lines in prose preceding each verse, explanatory of the subject, in which I expressed, as well as proved this marked distinction. I gave the reader to understand that although fashionable society at the North was er-r-r delicious, at the South it was er-r-r ethereal and cruelly heart-rending. Er-r-r—but I must leave you, for I perceive in the distance the er-r-r light of my soul and the divinity of my affections, the charming, angelic Julia Steadyman. Au revoir."

"How refined and intellectual he was in his conversation," remarked Dora after he had gone. "O, how much I admire him! By the way,

Charley, notwithstanding he is not so well pleased with Northern society as he is with his own at the South, he has resolved to marry Julia Steadyman, and reside here among us. Look, behold how devoted he is in his attentions to her."

"You surprise me, Dora. Why, this is a case of love at first sight. He has only been here one day."

"O, you are mistaken, dear! For at least six months since, mother and me have been constantly writing to him about her, and advised him to come on and marry her. During this time Julia and her parents have fully understood the matter, the latter giving their unequivocal consent, and have allowed us to bring things to a crisis. You can judge for yourself how far we have succeeded, when I inform you that they will be married on New Year's."

A pair of sucking doves, and both well mated, thought Charles. "Well," said he, after a moment's pause, "I wish them success, and hope they will be as well pleased with each other during their connubial felicity—as they appear to be now. Would you like to be seated, Dora?"

"No, no, Charley, for there's mother and cousin Alice forming a waltz quadrille. Come, let us join the set."

"Ah! good evening, Mr. Edwards," exclaimed

Mrs. Thompson, with one of her most exquisite smiles. "We are very happy to have you participate. The set is now complete. Ah! Dora, my love, where's Mr. Lyons, pray?"

This gentleman, as our readers are aware, was rumored to be the intended husband of Dora Thompson.

"Mr. Lyons?" replied Dora, gazing around the room;—"Oh, there he is, mother, conversing with the Misses Holdens."

Mrs. Thompson cast her eyes in the direction indicated, and a frown stole over her placid forehead, but it was transient, for at the next moment she entered into a gay conversation with her partner.

She is jealous, thought Charles; she's afraid that one of the Misses Holdens will ingratiate herself in his affection. On a second reflection, he was apprehensive she might have thought that his attentions to Dora were uncalled for and unnecessary as long as Mr. Lyons was present—or that he had superceded or interfered somehow with that gentleman's prerogative. If she entertains this idea, she shall have no further cause.

"Miss Thompson," said he, "shall I have the pleasure of conducting you to Mr. Lyons?—perhaps you would prefer that gentleman as a partner, in this quadrille. As it is the first dance, he may

be displeased in not having you as a partner, a right to which he is entitled." And Charles glanced at Mrs. Thompson, but her attention was drawn elsewhere.

"Fie, Charley, he's already pre-engaged as you perceive. I shall not let you off so easy; besides it is too late now. The music has commenced."

When the dance was over, Charles conducted the fair Dora to a seat, and leaving her to the attention of Mr. Lyons, who then made his appearance, he hastened to join Mr. Timpkins, whom he had discovered with joy looking in at the door.

"Have just come from your house, Mr. Edwards, where I have had a very agreeable chat with your mother," remarked that gentleman after the usual formality of greeting. "How do you enjoy yourself? Having a good time, hey?"

"I cannot say that I am in my element, by any means, Mr. Timpkins," replied Charles. "However, I endeavor to make the best of it."

"Then it was not your choice in being here. Oh! I see through it. By-the-by, how's Steadyman's family to-night? I heard you was there. Don't mince matters now, for I know the whole story."

"I am happy to say that they are quite comfortable, Mr. Timpkins," replied Charles, coloring

slightly. He felt satisfied that his mother had given Mr. Timpkins his information.

"Glad to hear it. Then you don't enjoy yourself here so well as you might. Well, that's true, without doubt. Should n't suppose a young man of your sense would. Dora has been brought up wrong, yes, *wrong*, Mr. Edwards. But you have a correct idea of these things. Good night!" and Mr. Timpkins turned on his heel and left, before it was known that he had been present.

After supper the company began to disperse, although there were some who remained until a late hour.

Among those who were the first to go home was Charles. A light fall of snow had covered the ground during his presence at the party, and the air was cold and keen. Mrs. Edwards had not retired, but awaited her son's approach with fond expectation.

"It's very late for you to be up, mother," he remarked after he had comfortably seated himself by the stove attired in his dressing-gown and slippers. "It must be one o'clock or thereabouts."

"Rather late for me, I am aware, Charley; but I have managed to find employment during your absence, to keep me awake. How did you enjoy yourself at the party?"

"To tell the truth, mother, there was too much

formality and gingerbread show for me. Mrs. Thompson was as pompous and dignified as usual, and as for her cousins, they were beyond endurance. Dora, however, paid me the most gracious attention, and appeared extremely solicitous that I should enjoy myself; so much so, that I fear Mr. Lyons will consider himself slighted, notwithstanding Dora assured me he would not. I have come to the conclusion that she is not so much in love with him after all. But I don't suppose it will make any difference as long as her mother declares that she shall marry him, whether she loves him or not."

"As I suspected, my son, Dora is fond of you. Her special attention paid to you this evening is only a single proof of the fact. No doubt, if her mother had not been present, she would have got up quite a flirtation with you. Have a care, my son; mind that you are not yet captivated by those fascinating eyes of hers. So far you have proved invulnerable, still she may take possession of your heart when you least expect it." And, bidding her son good night, Mrs. Edwards retired.

CHAPTER VII.

TIMPKINS ON ARISTOCRACY.

A PERIOD of several weeks elapsed, during which Charles had been a frequent visitor of the Steadyman family. His mother on several occasions had accompanied him, and had rendered essential service by her aid. Mrs. Steadyman, Mary and Bessy, had also called twice on them at their cottage. Charles had succeeded in collecting nearly all of the moneys due Mr. Steadyman, and what remained uncollected, he had liberally made good himself out of his own purse, unknown to him. He had also taken upon himself all the duties and cares that are required of a faithful and dutiful parent towards his household, and had permitted himself to be called—by the suggestion of little Bessy—brother Charley. Every little want—though at times it was through dint of great exertion that he accomplished his object—he had managed to supply, and his exertions still remained constant and unflagging. At early dawn

of day he would be found either engaged in cutting up their day's fuel or in shoveling the snow away from the house. In short, everything that he did was conducive to their comfort and happiness. By the consent of Mr. Steadyman, he had caused to be constructed for his use a movable arm-chair which ran on wheels, and which enabled the invalid to be moved about the house with better ease and facility.

One evening—it was his natal day—we find him in his chamber, recording the following in his diary :

At last I have attained the age of manhood. It is, indeed, a new era in my existence. The sound that has saluted my ears to-day has awakened thoughts for serious reflection. That I am now a man appears almost impossible for me to realize. Why, it seems but yesterday when I was trudging off to the primary school, dressed up in short clothes, with mother's request ringing in my ear, "Come directly home when school's done, my son." But how time has flown. The few years of boyhood have danced joyously by, and now at length I'm a man. Sincerely do I hope that the seed which was sown in youth has now sprung up in rich soil, and that the plant of manhood will bring forth good fruit.

A plant to be healthy and so bloom as to be ad-

mired by the passer-by must be constantly cultured and nurtured by its owner. He must be assiduous and watchful, dig about its roots, loosen the soil and uproot all foreign weeds. He must water it often, and trellis it if it be needful. He must protect it, his eye must ever be on it; protect it from the scorching rays of a midday sun, from frosts, from the chilling, nipping winds of winter, and from the feasting eyes of the deceptive admirer.

Now my plant, manhood, I am resolved shall be well cultivated, for I wish to be beloved and respected by my fellow-men. It shall be nursed with tenderness. It shall be dug daily about its roots, every evil eradicated, and its growth urged in strength of character. It must be watered with good moral principles, and when it attains its growth and becomes a tree capable of bearing fruit, no storms of malice and spleen can uproot it; no cold of evil communication or heat of allure-ment can penetrate its bark; no woodman's axe of sycophancy or base deceit can harm it, but there it will stand, firm and unshaken in sterling integrity and moral worth. Its bounteous yield of examples may cause many to admiringly seek and engraft scions in their own minds, and its overspreading shades of influence and good will may also cause many to draw near and rally around its

trunk. So may it live until the "sere and yellow leaf" of life, and then may I not hope to realize that which Jeremy Taylor so beautifully expressed, when he wrote, "The death of the righteous is like the descending of ripe and wholesome fruit from a pleasant and florid tree. Our senses entire, our limbs unbroken, without horrid tortures; after provision made for our children, with a blessing entailed upon posterity, in the presence of our friends, our dearest relative closing our eyes and binding our feet, leaving a good name behind us."

A few moments spent in quiet meditation, and Charles went down stairs, and there, much to his pleasure, found Mr. Timpkins engaged in conversation with his mother.

"I really think, sir," resumed Mrs. Edwards in their colloquy, which had been momentarily interrupted by the entrance of Charles, "that the marriage which comes off to-morrow between Mr. Sanders and Julia is a fit and appropriate one, though it is with regret that I know it is to take place. Julia, to be sure, is a weak, feeble-minded girl, ever requiring the constant attention of her mother; but notwithstanding this, it is my opinion that if instead of marrying this conceited and worthless fellow, she should wait and be married to some intelligent and high-minded man, she

might be induced to conform in time to his tastes, and prove perhaps a worthy wife."

"The truth of the matter lies in a nutshell, Mrs. Edwards, if I understand the philosophy of it. In my mind it is an incontrovertible fact, that marriages among the children of such families as Steadyman's and Thompson's are always so hasty and premature, that the result is, that the dear wife and darling child find themselves egregiously deceived. In nine instances out of ten the young lady finds herself united in matrimonial alliance with some itinerant impostor, who has represented himself as a man of princely wealth and of high connection, to marry her money and not herself. I once knew a young lady of a rich family, who became enamored of a young man because he sported such an elegant moustache, and after three days acquaintance they were married. The fifth day, the bride on stepping into a carriage with her husband, discovered that his moustache was false, and that it was worn to conceal a hair lip. The consequence was that it broke her heart, and she died shortly afterwards. And this is all owing to their not being brought up properly. Such children are like poodle dogs. Scarcely out of their swaddling clothes when they are dressed up in the rig of fashion and taught to cut up outlandish didos. If it be a girl, then

she must have a governess to teach it foreign lingo; the dressing maids, one of which, so the maid thinks, is employed to oversee the other, and lastly a score of music teachers. Mama's imperative orders are to those in her employ, not for the world to dictate or admonish her little lady, because it would spoil her, and then mama's heart would break. She had rather have it talk poor English than to hear it was being taught to walk Spanish. If it is a boy, and he kicks over the dinner-table in a fit of passion, then he is a brave lad, and papa laughs heartily. At eight years, he has his own boot-black, tailor and fighting man. His whole boyhood is indulged in every extravagance without limitation. As for an education, fough! it's demeaning. If, perchance, he goes to college, among his collegiate companions he creates a profound sensation by his numerous exploits. He gives champagne suppers and retires to bed gloriously drunk. He declares that the faculty are a set of boobies, and his father can buy and sell the whole college. The result is that he is expelled. To his father, this is a gross insult, but he is obliged to swallow it, and he rewards his son by sending him on an European tour. Such in brief, Mrs. Edwards, is the way the children of our Steadymans and Thompsons are reared."

"I quite agree with you, Mr. Timpkins," said

Charles, "and will acknowledge that you have been a close observer in your life. In your remarks some few weeks ago at Mr. Thompson's, I was particularly interested, and thought them very apt indeed. It has always been my opinion that the aristocracy which you spoke of then was only titular or a spurious counterfeit, and the genuine aristocracy are the men of mind, and not of wealth and fashion. It is the mechanic, the artisan, and the every-day man who is a nation's glory and strength. They are the embodiment of Republicanism, that centre point which diverges the rays of industry, enterprise and talent. It is our men of mind whose knowledge and wealth make a life of power and glory. For no man do I, Mr. Timpkins, entertain a greater warmth of admiration and esteem than the class to which I have alluded. They are proverbial for their uprightness. Their course through life is one of uninterrupted Christian progress, whose high moral worth and rectitude becomes the bright and shining light in a community which sheds a genial, mellow effulgence on those around them. It is the man with energy of character, with undeviating straightforwardness, who forms that basis on which society rests. It is those men who are decided and bold enough to speak the truth regardless of the consequences; those who are governed by no pledge

or bias of mind; who will defend and protect virtue; who are the champions of right and justice; who scorn bribery and cast to the winds cajolery; those who are ever on the alert to extend a helping hand and a warm heart to the unfortunate. By one kind word or friendly act, such men have been the making of thousands of unfortunates who would have gone down to the grave unnoticed and uncared for by our aristocracy of wealth. Such noble actions, Mr. Timpkins, stimulate the reclaimed and give them renewed cheer and ambition if they should fall again."

"True Mr. Edwards, every word of it. Such is the class whom our pinks of fashionable propriety shun and despise. With what superciliousness do they look down upon our hardy laborers, who are endeavoring to earn an honest living from day to day in their various callings. And yet opulent ignorance does not stop to consider that on this very class whom they hold in such distaste, depend their luxuries of life, their deckings and trappings of wealth. If industry, and art, and science, and education were crushed, where would they be? And yet they are uncharitable. And labor is laughed at by arrogance; labor, which is conducive to health, which brings the rosy cheek, the keen appetite, the happy heart and contented mind—which when the day's work is done, he who performs it sits by his

fireside and reads aloud to his family from a book or newspaper, thus storing his mind with that information which results in knowledge. And industry and economy are productive of wealth, which establishes schools, founds colleges. Of how much more value than the gorgeous tapestries and fashionable geer which Mrs. Thompson delights in—which so inspires her mind and begets such an ideal aggrandisement of honor and distinction!"

A few other remarks followed, and Mr. Timpkins took his leave.

"Mr. Timpkins is a very sociable gentleman, and I hold him in the highest esteem, mother," remarked Charles on his departure.

"He is very agreeable, my son, and his conversation is ever replete with sound sense and wisdom."

"During our acquaintance, I have derived a vast deal of information from him, and consider him as one of my most valued friends. He never comes into the office, no matter how brief his stay, without telling me an anecdote at the least. I wonder why he does not get married! He's so rich and talented, that I should think all our wealthy young ladies would be falling in love with him,—though there is one objection, he is very plain looking—and besides, he wears very ordinary clothes. They might scruple at this."

"The reason may be, because he is so free to express his aversions to the fashionable society of the present day," said Mrs. Edwards reflectively. "However, I am inclined to think that he is not at all disposed to marriage, at least one would suppose so, by his being a bachelor so long."

"Very likely," rejoined Charles; "yet I will venture to predict if he ever does get married, he will have a wife that will be no common woman, mark that! Then Sanders' and Julia's marriage occurs to morrow!" continued Charles changing the subject. "By the by, mother, I believe we are not favored with an invitation. Don't you feel slighted?" and Charles smiled.

"I can't say that I do. If we had been invited, I shouldn't have accepted the invitation, for ever since you developed the facts co-existing between the Steadyman families, I have held a dislike to Samuel Steadyman. And although none of the family have spoken to us since they became aware of the assistance you are rendering John, I feel their acquaintance no loss. I bear them no ill-will, but wish them all the happiness they can desire in this world."

"I am of your opinion, mother. I harbor no evil thoughts against any member of the family, and will confess that I am sorry to see Julia throwing herself away by marrying Sanders. I pity her,

I am sure. Do you believe that the representations of Mrs. Thompson are well founded concerning the enormous wealth of his family?"

"I am predisposed to believe on its being known for a certainty, they will not be found as wealthy as she has represented. You well know that Mrs. Thompson would magnify and exaggerate their circumstances wonderfully to carry her points."

"True, and I shouldn't myself be at all surprised if he turned out a poor, penniless chap. Yet I'll not anticipate. It is said that it will be a very expensive wedding, costing Mr. Steadyman \$5000 or more, besides \$8000 for the house he has purchased, and intends to give to his son in law. Dora told me yesterday that she and Mr. Lyons and her cousin Alice, and a Mr. Tadpole, a nephew of Steadyman's will act as attendant to the bride and groom. He said that it was their intention, after they were married, to leave on the following morning on a bridal tour for the South. During their absence, which will be some three months or more, the house will be furnished at Mrs. Thompson's expense—or rather Mr. Thompson's, for it is he who will have to foot the bills after all, notwithstanding she receives the credit, because it was her proposition—so that on their return, it will be all ready for their reception."

"It is my opinion that Mr. Steadyman will find

this marriage ultimately will cost him what he little expects. How much better and more to his credit and character as a man would it be, if, instead of wasting his money in this manner, he would do all in his power to assist his brother. It's outrageous, my son, that he should conduct as he does."

"For my part, I don't believe, taking into consideration the course he has pursued, John will accept any aid from Sam if he should proffer it—for he is sensible that it will not be bestowed willingly and with brotherly sympathy. But it is a long road that has no turn, mother."

"Yes, that it is. And if Samuel Steadyman does not receive his just deserts on earth, he will most assuredly be punished hereafter. As I have previously remarked, I wish neither him nor his family harm, and would be glad to see them enjoy life according to their own tastes and disposition. Yet my son, pride must have a fall, and you needn't be at all surprised, when you hear that Samuel Steadyman is a ruined man! Notwithstanding since this contemplated marriage, he has retired from business, abundantly satisfied with his gains, the manner in which he is squandering them, they will not last him many years. Sooner or later, he will be declared a bankrupt. There is something in my heart that whispers this, my son, and leads

me to feel confident that such fate is in store for him. But it is our bed-time. Let us retire, Charley. Don't forget to carry that little jar of preserves down to Mrs. Steadyman in the morning, will you my son? Good night!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OPENING VISTA.

THE New-Year had approached with blithesome tread, and another link was added to the chain of life.

The wedding which had taken place at the appointed time, in our heretofore usually quiet village, had created a deal of stir, and nothing was gossiped for weeks afterwards, but this remarkable event. Various were the opinions expressed pro and con, and great was the desire to behold one who had been present on the occasion.

The intentions of Samuel Steadyman and lady, and Mrs. Thompson and daughter, that it should be strictly a select and *recherché* affair, were carried out to the letter, and now that the happy pair had taken their departure for the South to spend the honeymoon, they were in ecstasies at their brilliant success in wedding-making.

It was a cold morning some three weeks after the excitement had abated, and Charles was en-

gaged in shovelling away the snow, which had fallen the night before, from the door of Steadyman's house. He had worked perseveringly for two hours or more, and at last his labor was finished. On his entering the door, the childish form of Bessy was the first to congratulate him on his success.

"I'se proper glad you've got through, brother Charley," she exclaimed, as a smile increased the glow of her ruddy cheek, "because I wanted you to come in an' hear me say my lesson. 'I'se been ready a good while."

The young man was pleased to see the child so prompt and eager for him to attend to her recitation, and remarking to Mrs. Steadyman, who was engaged in combing her husband's hair, that little Bessy was making wonderful progress in her studies, he sat down and in the course of half an hour he had finished.

"Does I get along as fast as you wish me, brother Charley?" inquired Bessy after she had laid aside her book, and clambered up into his lap.

"I am much pleased with your progress, Bessy. You are a good scholar."

"O, I'se so glad to hear you say so, because when I get to be a big girl like Mary, I can teach school an' earn lots of money to pay you for your

kindness to us. Can't I father?" and the little one appealed to that parent with a joyful look.

The invalid bowed, while his bosom heaved with emotion: "an' I'll buy mother an' Mary a new dress," continued Bessy, her tiny, joyful laugh resounding throughout the room—"an' father shall have a bran new wrapper"—and jumping down from Charles' lap, as her sharp, quick eye espied her pet cat, "an' pussy shall have a little blue ribbon round her neck, an' won't I be so happy?"

The innocent anticipations of Bessy, forced Charles to smile, and he exclaimed—

"And what will little Bessy buy for herself?"

"O, I don't want nothing, brother Charley," she replied, affectionately caressing her little pet. "My angel star will take care of me." And then gently placing the cat in her baby crib, and bidding it to lie still until she returned, she darted into an adjoining room, singing a verse of that hymn in which the young ask for divine guidance:

"To learn and do thy will,
O Lord, our hearts incline;
And o'er the path of future life,
Command thy light to shine."

Mary entered the room—

"I was indeed quite fortunate this morning," she remarked in a tone of gratification—"for Mr. Barry has paid me this time promptly for the work

I have just returned;—and has given us a lot of nice waistcoats to make at an advanced price;" and she laid a small bundle on the table.

"This is joyful news," said Mrs. Steadyman—"Mr. Barry is very kind—indeed he is. May God bless him."

"I wish you much joy, Mary," Charles remarked, "at your good fortune, still I wish Barry was obliged to pay you double the usual rates for your work, for certainly you earn it."

"Oh, Mr. Edwards, how can you wish such a thing," said Mary, "when we receive all Mr. Barry can afford to pay us."

"Mr. Barry, my dear Mary, can never restore you and your mother your health after you have lost it. Little does he know how many nights you spend, in sewing and stitching on his work and wearing your very life out for the small pittance he allows you. It's really too bad. He ought to pay you more, Mary?"

She paused a moment for a reply. She well knew that Charles' heart ever beat warm for her family, and by his noble exertions he had placed them in their present comfortable and happy condition—an act which she was conscious never could be repaid. Still she had felt it her duty to do what little she could in her power towards removing a portion of the weight from off his shoulders, even

if it were at the expense of sleepless nights and incessant toil. She therefore concluded to refrain from revealing her fixity of purpose to him, because he had so often begged of her never to mention what he termed his kindness towards them.

"We ought to be thankful to Mr. Barry," she remarked after the foregoing reflection—"for even his smallest favor, Mr. Edwards. For you must acknowledge that mother and myself are under great obligations to him for his kindness in yielding to our request, when we solicited work. Such being the case, it would be ingratitude, sir, for us to demand or intimate to him that we wished higher wages, when he could get others who would be glad of the chance, to do his work as well, if not better, for the same prices. Mr. Barry would laugh at our request and that would be the end of it. You wouldn't wish such a thing as this, would you?"

"No, far from it, Mary! But I must reiterate my previous assertion, that it is too bad you should receive such a small remuneration. Another thing, Mary, I do not believe that anybody else would work so hard as you do!"

"I am not any the worse for work, am I, Mr. Edwards?" said she, smiling. "I converse as freely, and am in as good humor as ever, am I not?"

"All that may be, but notwithstanding this, if you continue pursuing your trade, in the manner you have for the past month, you cannot stand it much longer. Your constitution will not admit of it. Already I perceive your eye grows dim and your cheeks pale, and there is a stoop to your person which is all indicative of a slow disease. For my sake, Mary, please don't work so hard hereafter."

This latter remark was spoken with such peculiar emphasis and with such feeling, that at once, it sent a thrill of ineffable joy to the pure heart of Mary;—but like the last flickering of the expiring ember, the flash was only for a moment.

No, no, it cannot be, she thought; the ties that connect us are only those of friendship. He would not condescend to such a thing. And yet, she reasoned, why has he continued to devote all his energies, his leisure moments, in attending to our various wants and necessities, why has he been so faithful, kind and good, ever ready to advise and assume responsibilities. Is not this more than benevolence? But then his excellent mother has the same inherent qualities; it would not be supposed that she had anything in view! Perhaps, after all, it is the nature of the family to act and speak thus. Oh, my God, she whispered, help me

to solve this problem—give, oh, give me strength of mind, of discernment, to reason clearly.

"You are agitated, Mary?" exclaimed Charles, rising. "Have I offended you? if so I would ask your pardon, for it was unintentional."

"Oh, no, certainly it was no offence, it was a sudden pain," she replied. Oh, how she wished that she might be alone, to hold communion with her own thoughts.

"What's the matter, my dear child," said Mrs. Steadyman, approaching her as she spoke, and with motherly affection kissing her cheek. "Are you ill, Mary? Your walk to the village through the snow was too much for you—you look fatigued. Sit down and I'll run and get some peppermint for you."

Mary sprang up and intercepted her mother's progress. "Pray do not think that I am indisposed, mother," she remarked, "for I feel as well as ever. To be sure, I am somewhat fatigued with my walk, but I shall soon get rested."

Mrs. Steadyman yielded to her daughter, and briefly remarking, that an hour's repose would be of essential benefit to her—she was soon engaged in looking over the work sent by Mr. Barry.

Mary did not hesitate to follow the suggestion, as an opportunity would be offered her in her cham-

ber, to give way to her thoughts. Begging Charles to excuse her, she retired from the room.

The incident did not pass unobserved by Mr. Steadyman. He plainly saw the cause of his daughter's discomposure, and satisfied himself that the remark of the young man was made with the sincerest motives—that it was the sudden ebullition of a loving, genial heart. He therefore resolved to let matters take their proper course, earnestly praying that the darkness which enshrouded the mind of Mary would be soon dispelled, and she be sufficiently enlightened to act according to the dictates of her own heart.

On reflecting on what he had said to Mary during his conversation, on his way to the office, he was convinced, that by his fervent and impassioned appeal to himself, he had touched a tender chord in her heart. 'Tis true, after all, he thought, I love her, and her affection has been growing on me, ever since I first saw her;—but to inadvertently insinuate my love for her as I have, causing her, perhaps, to labor under vague and indefinite uncertainties, was altogether premature. I would have wished to wait longer;—to prove myself worthy of her love, before I expressed it; to have her see my faults and know my frailties; to convince her either by word or deed that I was ready and willing to execute anything she

might require of me. But, alas! In the fullness of my heart, I have disclosed my fondest desire, the most latent cherished thought of my mind. But the effect of my imprudence! what will be the result. Can I hope to believe that my love will be reciprocated? Was her embarrassment of mind an augury of success? Oh, glorious thought. Oh, happy future. But stop—I am again too fast. My brain is so fevered and excited, that I am bewildered—I look only on the bright side. What if she rejects my love—she, so good, so angelic, bids me, when I next see her, to hold my peace, as she denounces me unworthy of her sole affection. Cruel fate. Oh, if such was in store what would life be to me!”

“Return Dora’s love,” said an unseen voice.

Dora’s love, thought he. Pshaw! such love as hers does not gush forth spontaneously from a pure and sincere heart; it is not enduring or stable; it is but a whim, an idle fancy, painted in vivid colors to allure the eye, but to the heart it is as ice. No, no, I never can return such love as this.

But I am resigned, come what may. This suspense, this agonizing doubt which rests so heavily upon my mind, must be soon removed. I will see her this evening—and, giving utterance to the thought, he ascended the office stairs.

The long tedious day at length waned, and Charles found himself seated alone with Mary in the front room. It was a small uncarpeted apartment, containing but few articles of furniture, such as a common stained pine table covered with a cotton cloth, on which a large family bible was laid, surrounded with three or four other religious books, with four cane-seated chairs, and a lounge which stood by one of the windows. A candle stood on the ornamented mantel, whose light was obscure compared to the blaze of the crackling hemlock which burned so briskly in the fire-place.

The two had not spoken for some minutes. Charles had frankly and candidly declared his love. He had dwelt at length upon his circumscribed circumstances, had made known his faults, and requesting that she would consider calmly, thoughtfully and judiciously his proposition, he now awaited with firmness her decision. No smile illumined his face, every nerve and sinew of his whole system was strung to its utmost tension, and trembled with painful anxiety.

At last the silence was broken, and falling on his bosom, she exclaimed:—

“I am yours, take me as I am!”

There was such a world of blissful happiness contained in that final answer, that for a moment he was overpowered with joy; his dream of love

and bright foretaste of the future were now to be realized. Gently supporting her on his arm, he remarked with deep feeling:—

"This is the proudest moment of my life. I am indeed blessed. And though I am poor, as you well know, dear Mary, and everything depends on my abilities and exertions, still, as long as these hands can work, and I am not crippled or thrown upon a bed of sickness, I do not apprehend but what we shall gain a comfortable maintenance."

"I have no fears," was the meek reply, "for I feel assured you will succeed. There remains only one request for me to ask of you!"

"What is that, dearest?" he inquired hopefully.

"To seek the Lord and in him put your trust. Though you bear an exemplary character, and are high-minded, honorable and charitable in all your thoughts and doings, still there is this one thing wanting. 'As for God, his way is perfect; the way of the Lord is tried; he is a buckler to all them that trust in him.'"

"And thou shalt be my ministering angel," he replied, "and unto Him will I look for salvation."

That evening Charles returned home with a light step and happy heart.

CHAPTER IX.

TIMPKINS AT THE OFFICE.

ONE forenoon about the last of sleighing, Charles was stepping forth from the store of Mr. Wells, when he accidentally met his friend Mr. Timpkins, whom he had not seen for a week or longer.

"Ah! glad to see you, Mr. Edwards," he exclaimed, cordially shaking the young man's hand. "I was just on my way to your office. Anything new occurred of late?"

"Nothing of importance, sir," replied Charles, accepting that gentleman's arm as they bent their way towards the office. "I suppose you have heard that Mr. Steadyman has not received a letter from Sanders or Julia for two weeks, and he is fearful that something has befallen them."

"Yes, I was told so yesterday. And I also learned that he intends leaving for the South to ascertain the cause of their not writing. Mrs. Steadyman, however, laughs at her husband's uneasiness, and tells him that they are enjoying them-

selves so hugely, that they cannot find time to write. She rests assured that everything is all right, and there is no necessity of his going on to hunt them up. But Steadyman has resolved to go, and will leave to-morrow."

"Poor, weak-minded woman," said Charles, "she is easily deluded. Do you know whether Mrs. Thompson or Dora have heard of their whereabouts?"

"Mrs. Thompson pretends to know, although she does n't say much about it. She merely says that they are having a fine time, and Julia is much pleased with Sanders's devotedness and indulgence to her. She is endeavoring to dissuade Steadyman from going on, and declares that such a step is positively absurd, and looks as if he distrusted the character of her family. On the other hand, Thompson advises Steadyman to go."

"It is a curious state of affairs, Mr. Timpkins, and I fear the result. My private opinion is that this investigating visit of Mr. Steadyman's, will be attended with serious and important developments if not consequences."

"You have hit the nail on the head, Mr. Edwards. That's my opinion exactly. By the by, I hear that Thompson's family, with the exception of Mr. Thompson, have discarded you and your mother's acquaintance. Is it true?"

"Quite true, sir, although Dora, whenever we meet each other on the street, condescends to semi-recognize me by a slight nod; but it's given very coldly."

"The reason they assign," continued Mr. Timpkins—"or which Mrs. Thompson gives, is because you have not only supported poor John Steadyman's family the past winter, but have gone so far as to further degrade yourself, in her way of thinking, by offering your hand in marriage to his eldest daughter."

"My mother informed me that such were the facts, sir. It's to be deplored that every good action inspired by duty and charity, Mr. Timpkins, is treated with such disdain by those who presume to be the patterns of excellence and worth. But it is not to be wondered at, and I will not undertake to apply a remedy. My earnest wish is, however, that Mrs. Thompson and Dora may live long enough to see the errors of their past life, and repent before they die. But here we are at the office, walk up, sir!"

Squire Williams was taking his leave, when they entered the room.

"He's a singular kind of a man," remarked Mr. Timpkins accepting a chair which Charles offered him, "I believe he is the most absent-minded man in the state."

"It has resulted, Mr. Timpkins, from an over-pressure of the many cares and perplexities of life, and, forced by habit, his memory has become impaired."

"Very likely, Mr. Edwards. I have heard it related of him that one day last summer, during your absence in the country, he was found alone in this office, standing with unusual dignity in a corner. Intense curiosity prompted the intruder to discover, if possible, what he was doing, when he discovered that he was earnestly engaged in arguing some knotty point of the law, which had been raised by a formidable opponent of his in an important case, which had been recently brought to court, and which by Right of Appeal, was soon to come before a higher tribunal. The Squire evidently was preparing himself. But the pantomime soon wore another aspect. So absorbed did he gradually become in his cause, and so completely carried away, anticipating without a doubt, a flush of victory, that he launched forth in eloquent bursts of a gigantic argument, flourished his arms beyond any circumscription, and reviewed the case from beginning to end, breaking up only now and then and tenderly appealing to five broken chairs and this centre table as, "gentlemen of the jury," etc. At the close of his argument, which was a very affecting peroration, he

stopped with a jerk, appeared to survey the scene before him, probably to witness what effect he had produced on the inanimate audience, and then suddenly turning about, he seized his hat, and rushing down stairs into the street, he ran up to the first man he met, to whom he extended his hand, and exclaimed, 'Mr. Snooks, give me my one hundred dollars! I have cleared you at last, but it was a mighty tough job.'"

"This is indeed an apt illustration of my tutor's peculiar habit," said Charles, laughing heartily. "I was much amused myself," he continued, "by the following occurrence, which happened this last winter. Mr. Williams has an inveterate habit of seating himself in that arm chair before the fire, and, placing his arms a-kimbo, with his long, tapering finger passed through his hair, he will sit in this position for hours, sometimes, intently gazing without uttering a syllable, at the glowing bed of coals. One day on an ogling glance, I discovered him in this peculiar position, seemingly completely abstracted. The next moment, he suddenly started up from his chair, and, projecting his head forward, exclaimed in a very loud voice, as he shook his fist, "Mr. Peabody, you are a rascal!" then, as if coming to his senses on discovering his mistake, he immediately corrected himself by remarking in a very gentlemanly manner, "ah!

ahem! it's Mr. Edwards, pardon me, sir, it was a misconception. The weather is exceedingly cold out." Of course a conversation on the weather took place, which by the way was quite warm, though the apology was sufficient, without directing my attention to his meteorological allusion."

Mr. Timpkins' risibilities were excited by this ludicrous circumstance, but his laughter was soon restrained, and he remarked,—“But notwithstanding this habit and the chances he has run, in having shilling pieces poked on to him for legitimate quarters, he has amassed considerable wealth.”

“He is worth some sixty thousand dollars, Mr. Timpkins.”

“Is it possible!”

“Yes, sir.”

“And he has no children?”

“Worse than that, he has not even an heir. He and his wife are the last of their race.”

“Who in the world does he expect to leave his property to, when he dies. The old gentleman is so penurious, that he may express a wish to have his wealth buried with him.”

“It's a difficult matter to decide, Mr. Timpkins, in whose hands Mr. Williams' property will fall. I have often wished that after making suitable provision for his wife, if he should die first, he would

bequeath the balance of it to some one of our charitable institutions—or else leave it in the hands of trustees, as a fund towards establishing a school for the education of the poor children in our village.”

“Excellent idea, Mr. Edwards. Did you ever speak to him about it incidentally?”

“I once asked him what he thought of such a school, and he said that he should consider it a public blessing.”

“Has he or have you ever alluded to the subject since?”

“If I recollect distinctly, he broached the subject shortly afterwards by saying, if he was a rich man, he would contribute something towards establishing such an institution.”

“He did! Then depend upon it, Mr. Edwards, he has this idea in view.”

“It would be a just appropriation sir, after all, for I know of several instances where he has taken almost the last cent for professional services, from poor, unfortunate men who scarcely made a living for their families, and therefore were obliged to keep their children from the town school at work at a trade or send them out as hired help to earn what they could, in order that they could get along.”

“He bears the name of being very miserly and exacting in his dues.”

“I am sorry to admit the fact, Mr. Timpkins—

but, as far as I am concerned, I have no complaint to offer. He has ever been urbane, kind and liberal to me. But his business connexions with clients, Mr. Timpkins, I am almost tempted to think, are sometimes, unpardonable. He is quite an old gentleman, you know, and I cannot talk to him on his uncharitableness, as I would if he were younger."

"Respect for age, is a commendable virtue, however prone your heart is to inflict deserved condemnation. I hardly think, however, you would make out much, even if you did attempt to reproach the old gentleman. His propensity has become chronic."

"True, Mr. Timpkins, but on several occasions I have not refrained from reproving him mildly. Once in particular, he confessed that he exacted oppressively his dues, but it was a passion over which he had but little restraint."

The conversation at this point was brought to a close, by the entrance of a visitor. He was a young man of medium size, plain looking, and moved about with considerable alacrity.

"Good morning, gentlemen," exclaimed the new comer.

"How do you do, Mr. Lyons!" exclaimed Mr. Timpkins and Charles in one breath. "Take a chair, sir," continued Charles.

"You must pardon my intrusion, gentlemen, if I disturbed any private conversation, but my object in dropping in was to ask Mr. Edwards if he would join a private sleighing party I am engaged in getting up, to go out of town this evening and partake of a hot supper. All of our friends are going, and I shall be pleased to have you honor us with your company. Besides, Dora bade me tell you that you must be on hand." And Lyons laughed.

Dora bids me go, thought Charles—what can be her object, pray, in renewing my acquaintance. Can this be a scheme of her's to lead me astray?—or has she contrived this to get an opportunity to have a talk with me. But I will give the matter no further thought. I should not follow the promptings of my own conscience if I went. I have now renounced worldly pleasure in all its various forms, and my course must be one of rectitude and Christian principle—I will not go.

"Present my compliments to Miss Thompson," he remarked seriously, "and assure her that I am as interested in her happiness as ever, but I must beg to be excused from being one of the party this evening. Accept also, yourself, Mr. Lyons, my thanks for your kind invitation."

"Then I cannot prevail upon you to accept," said Mr. Lyons.

"It would be useless, Mr. Lyons."

"Well, I'm sorry. Good day, gentlemen, my time is precious and I must be off." And Mr. Lyons hurried out in a state of wonderment at the remarkable change, as he thought, which had taken place in Mr. Edwards.

"How do you get along with your studies," asked Mr. Timpkins, drawing his chair up nearer to the fire. "I presume that ere this you have come across the maxim, '*Æquum et bonum, est lex legum,*'" and Mr. Timpkins' eyes twinkled as he looked at Charles.

"Yes sir, as well as found another which reads—'*Bonum judex secundum æquum et bonum judicat, et æquitatem sericto juri præferi.*'"

Mr. Timpkins smiled.

"But to answer your question," continued he. "Mr. Williams is satisfied with my progress, I am happy to state, and feels confident that I can be admitted to the bar next spring."

"What, so soon as this, Mr. Edwards," exclaimed Mr. Timpkins, apparently astonished—"only two years and a half study, and not going to perfect your education at the Law School?"

"Mr. Williams thinks that it is unnecessary, sir."

"Well, so do I. You have all the qualifications to make a smart young limb of the law, and I have

no doubt in my mind but what you will make your mark."

"My only wish is to bear a good name," replied Charles, to the flattering remark of Mr. Timpkins. "If I only act well my part through life, there all the honor lies."

CHAPTER X.

THE TEMPTATION.

ONE day Charles was intently engaged in perusing the first number of a law magazine to which he had recently subscribed, when Michael, Mr. Thompson's man servant, entered the office and handed him a billet-doux.

On its being opened, it read thus:—

Dear Charles:—It seems to me an age since we have seen each other. As I have an important matter to communicate to you, I will appoint this evening at half-past 7 o'clock, at your house, or if you are engaged, the first evening when most convenient—for an interview.

Sincerely yours, DORA.

P. S. Send word back by Michael.

What can this important matter be, thought Charles, as he folded up the note and placed it in his vest pocket. But he could not fathom its object, and he concluded to grant a hearing as the only mode by which he could be enlightened.

"Tell Miss Dora," he remarked to Michael, "that I shall not be engaged this evening, and am at her service."

"The which?" vociferated the man servant.

The command was reiterated.

"Then 'tis this evening, sir? Shure an' I'll be afther telling her correctly, sir." And he departed.

At the tea table that evening, Charles read to his mother the contents of Dora's note, and asked her what she thought of it. But it was as incomprehensible to her as it was to him.

"It may be, my son, that she wishes to regain your friendship," remarked Mrs. Edwards after a moment's reflection.

"O, that she has never lost, notwithstanding she has been so cold towards me."

"Then she may wish to offer some apology for this treatment?"

"Which of course I would accept with all my heart," he rejoined quickly. "Dora is well-meaning enough, as I have always said, but she is so completely under the guidance and control of her mother, that—"

"She is inevitably ruined, my son," interrupted Mrs. Edwards.

"O say not so mother," replied he feelingly, "for I hope and pray that she may yet turn aside from the pleasures and vanities of this world, and

cry, 'Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.'

"Would that such might be her prayer, and she may be led to be as good and Christian-like as Mary, my son. But the future will tell."

The appointed hour at length arrived, and Mrs. Edwards, remarking that she would pay a visit to the Steadyman family, while he was engaged with Dora, hurried on her things and was soon off.

She had not been gone but a few minutes, when Dora entered the front gate and tremblingly rang the bell. Her heart palpitated with alternate hope and fear, for the message which the blundering Michael had given her was so ambiguous and indefinite, that she was uncertain whether she should find the object of her visit at home. But she was happily relieved from doubt, and when Charles made his appearance in response to her call, her joy knew no bounds, and immediately she saluted him with a kiss, and exclaimed, "O, I am so glad you did not disappoint me."

This unexpected greeting, for the moment, was so inexplicable to Charles' mind, that he was speechless, but regaining his fortitude, he invited his visitor into the sitting room.

"For the only time in your life, you seem to be quite foreign to me in your reception," was the

first remark she made, as she drew off her bonnet.

"I hardly know what to think of the manner in which you have greeted me," was the reply, "and I am at a loss to express myself."

There was a brief pause. Both seemed endeavoring to analyze each other's thoughts.

"Was I rude, Charles?" she at length remarked.

"It is a familiarity which I scarcely expected. But it is excusable."

"It has not offended you then?"

"No, Dora. You know that my temper is not easily ruffled."

"Still the same noble, generous and unprovokable disposition," murmured Dora, as her whole frame quivered with emotion.

"Charles," she tremulously exclaimed, "I have been cold and distant towards you: I have done you a wrong. I have attempted to discard the best friend I ever had."

"You have not offended me, Dora," said he calmly. "Have I not still continued to act towards you in every way becoming a gentleman and a friend, notwithstanding your estrangement?"

"Yes, I confess it, and this was what galled me the most. In vain I thought that by causing you to believe that I had rejected your acquaintance, because you saw fit to cultivate the society of that class which is so unpalatable and obnoxious

to me, in preference to mine, I should lead you to renounce it for my sake, and on your bended knee before me to implore forgiveness. But such a sacrifice was not ordained;—and instead of your coming to me, the proud millionaire's daughter humbles herself to not only ask forgiveness, but to tell you how much she loves you;" and as she spoke, her eyes became suffused with tears, and her cheek tinged with deep carnation.

But though her looks, lovely and fascinating in their mildness, and her voice full of tenderness and pity in its declarations, would have melted a man of even the most calloused heart, Charles sat unmoved.

"Yes," she continued hysterically—"since we were children, I have conceived an affection for you, which, notwithstanding the injunctions of my mother, I could not repel. At times I have thought that love returned, and with what assiduity did I then strive to please you! Again, I was in doubt, and this caused me to redouble my efforts to captivate you. For the rich Mr. Lyons I have no love, I cannot love him—but for you, Charles, my passion can never be allayed. Speak, then, and assure me that my love is returned?" and she threw herself, a suppliant at his feet.

But this renewed protestation, so decoying and affecting in its nature, only produced a feeling of

pity in Charles' breast. Again he thought of his espousal to Mary, of his obligations to his Saviour—of duty, honor, and right, and as he cast a look upon the prostrate being before him, his tongue found utterance:

"Dora," he said, firmly and calmly, "I shall ever esteem you, and wish your path through life to be strewn with sunshine and flowers—but, my hand belongs to another, while my heart is given to God. Arise, Dora."

"Alas! 't is true," she exclaimed, yielding to his request—"for I have now heard it from his own lips. O, Charles, reflect on what you have done."

"I have only followed the dictates of my own conscience, Dora."

"And make such a sacrifice! O, what injustice to thyself. Think not only of my love, Charles, but consider the wealth and rank which I give you! Would you prefer poverty to this?"

"Dora," he replied, "the good book says, 'The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low, and lifteth up.'"

"Both riches and power come of God, who reigneth over all; in his hand are power and might, in his hand it is to make great, and give strength to all."

"Despise not the poor. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of

the kingdom which he has promised to them that love him?"

The excited state of Dora's mind gradually abated as she beheld his face so serene and holy, and listened to the mellifluous utterance of these scriptural sentiments. Never before had she seen such a solemnity of expression and fervent outburst of gentle admonition. Such a remarkable change, so contrary to her expectations, struck her heart with awe, and made her tongue dumb.

"Dora," he continued, "though I never can be thine, you may always rely upon me as a true and faithful friend."

But she made no reply. Already a reaction was taking place despite the fear, the free outpouring of love and passion which had been demonstrated. Hate was supplanting love. Her throat swelled with that choking sensation premonitory of this venomous spirit, and jealousy was depicted in every lineament of her pale and ashy countenance. Her bosom heaved with tumultuous emotion, and in a husky voice she passionately exclaimed as she threw back her dishevelled hair and drew on her bonnet:—

"Go then to your rags, for as I loved you, so now will I abhor you. The day will yet come when you will rue the time that you treated my love with your contemptible frigidity and your

canting mockery of religion! Adieu!" and she stalked out of the room with all the characteristic hauteur of her mother, and with the growing fever of an unalloyed hate raging in her breast.

After she had gone, Charles knelt down on the floor, and with a heart overflowing with grace and compassion, slowly pronounced the following blessing:—

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee."

"The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee;"

"The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

CHAPTER XI.

A DISCLOSURE.

THE snow was fast disappearing, and Nature was putting on her Spring attire. A warm and copious rain of several days had caused a wonderful change in the appearance of mother earth, and in field and wood the violet and daisy had now ventured to put forth their tender shoots.

The nights were delightfully pleasant, the air so warm and refreshing, that on the evening we speak of, Mrs. Edwards had opened the windows of the sitting-room, and with Charles sat by one of them to inhale its balmy sweetness.

"There comes Mr. Timpkins, mother!" exclaimed the young man, plucking a flower from a lilac bush that stood near the window, and inhaling its delicious aroma, "now we shall have some news."

Mr. Timpkins appeared perfectly at home when he entered, for he came in without ringing the bell.

Mrs. Edwards met him in the entry and politely asked him into the sitting-room.

"Well, Mr. Edwards," he remarked, "Sam Steadyman has returned home. He came last night."

"Ah! and with what success, Mr. Timpkins?"

"It's a bad affair—just as you predicted. The sum and substance of it is that Steadyman went out to — and found Sanders and his wife at his father's house. Julia at first refused to own how matters existed, preferring rather to suffer her disgrace among strangers than to return home to her father's house and breast the storm. But Steadyman at last succeeded in prevailing upon her to make an expose.

It seems by Steadyman's version, that this Sanders and sister are the children of a poor family in —. Their father is an honest hard working cooper, but the mother is another Mrs. Thompson, proud as Lucifer, and is determined not to give up her aristocratic notions because she is poor. They once had property, but through the dissipation of the son and the extravagance of the wife and daughter, as well as the weak-mindedness of the father, it did not last long.

After this reverse of fortune, old Sanders was obliged to return to his trade, much to the mortification of his family. Young Sanders having no

trade, and too proud and lazy to work, preferred to live by his wits. The daughter spent most of her time in reading sentimental love novels, and the mother in deploring the gay times of their affluence, and refusing to associate with those on her level, while all three managed to keep old Sanders digging harder and harder every day at his trade, to earn money for them to keep up as fashionable an appearance as possible. In the meanwhile Mrs. Thompson was informed how matters stood, for she was solicited for aid. But the secret of their misfortune was carefully kept from the remainder of the family, while she supplied them occasionally with money, and boasted of their immense wealth. It would be naturally supposed, then, that when young Sanders wrote to his aunt that he wanted a young wealthy wife, she would do all in her power to find him one. The result you know. Julia, on her arriving at his house, saw at once that she had been duped, and with indignant mortification, she resolved not to let her parents know anything about it, but stay and make the best of it. Sanders, when he left home, borrowed four hundred dollars of Mr. Thompson, which lasted but a week after he had arrived at his home, and when Steadyman made his appearance, he had just succeeded in effecting a loan sufficient to take him and his wife on here, and

take possession of his house and claim her dowry, which Julia had consented to give him. But fortunately, Steadyman arrived in season to thwart his design, and has brought Julia on himself."

"This is truly astonishing news!" exclaimed Charles, much excited at what he had heard "Poor Julia, how much I feel for her."

"She has been most egregiously imposed upon," rejoined Mrs. Edwards, "if we may credit the story, and I do not doubt it in the least."

"And Mrs. Thompson is at the bottom of it," remarked Mr. Timpkins, "and there is no getting over it. It was she who made the match."

"What does she have to say for herself," inquired Mrs. Edwards—"and how does Mrs. Steadyman feel? I dare say you are thoroughly informed."

"Yes, I was present, when the affair was developed by Steadyman. Mrs. Steadyman at first declared it a hoax, and said that her husband had fabricated it from beginning to end. But when Mrs. Thompson was sent for, and heard the story, she laughed at the woe-begone countenance of Steadyman, and told him that Sanders had only been playing a cruel joke on him. With this Mrs. Steadyman fully coincided, and both laughed long and heartily at Mr. Steadyman's being so completely bamboozled as they said."

"And what did Mr. Steadyman have to say in reply," asked Charles.

"Nothing, positively nothing, Mr. Edwards, and it is my sincere and unqualified belief, that they, or rather Mrs. Thompson, in particular, will make him believe that he has been the victim of an innocent piece of deception, which Sanders has been practising."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Mrs. Edwards, with astonishment. "Why I should think Julia would corroborate her father's statement, and expose Mrs. Thompson's atrocity."

"Perhaps Julia is desirous that Mrs. Thompson shall make the affair as specious as possible, and she holds her peace," remarked Charles.

"I think not," replied Mr. Timpkins, thoughtfully. "For Julia, herself, cannot asseverate that Sanders was not playing on her credulity as well, and that he had pre-arranged matters before he left home, to marry her. Mrs. Thompson's sagacity at once sees this, and therefore it is of no moment whether Julia says anything or not."

"This is plausible," remarked Charles,— "and I shall not be disappointed if her scheme works. She is an artful, designing woman, Mr. Timpkins!"

"That she is, sir," replied he. "But it will cost her something to get Sanders out of the scrape, you may depend upon it. She will use her husband's money as freely as water to accomplish her design, for she has a great deal at stake. Thompson, as you well know is a mere automaton

in her hands, and even if he did suspect that something was wrong, she could easily blindfold him."

"Oh, what untold wickedness there is in this world, that is little dreamed of," said Charles.

"That there is, Mr. Edwards," replied Mr. Timpkins, "and if the facts were only known, our immaculate Thompsons would find themselves in a position not to be envied."

"Mr. Timpkins," remarked Mrs. Edwards, "supposing Mrs. Thompson had not resorted to any misrepresentation of the facts, or attempted to cover up the poverty of her relation, what would have been the consequence?"

"The result might have been the same as it may be now, in her reputation being tarnished."

"Admitting this, would it be overlooked?"

"In my opinion it would, because the wealth of her husband will save her; besides, she is the head and front of our first society, so called."

"Reasoning then from analogy, Mrs. Steadyman will entertain the same feelings of friendship as ever, and be on the same terms of intimacy."

"To be sure."

"There is one thing certain," remarked Charles. "If Mrs. Thompson should fail to carry out her design, a dissolution of marriage between Julia and Sanders cannot take place on the grounds of poverty."

"Perhaps Julia would pray to the Legislature that it might be declared null and void on account of mental imbecility," incidentally said Mr. Timpkins, smiling.

"A separation of the parties might take place," continued Charles, "until they are reconciled, by a divorce *à mensa et thoro*; but this would not deprive him of any marital right to her property."

"Oh! I think Mr. Edwards," replied Mr. Timpkins, "that as long as she has entered into this contract, she will have to abide its issue. There is no help for her. The old saying is, 'look well ere you leap,' and if she has made a bad trade, it is her own fault. This is only another instance, where I have seen the petted daughter tied to a mere appendage of mankind. It serves her right after all, Mr. Edwards—serves her right!" and Mr. Timpkins appeared quite pleased.

The conversation would have been prolonged still further if Mary and Bessy Steadyman had not suddenly made their appearance—the former reminding Charles of an engagement he had to call on the family of a poor and needy widow in their neighborhood. After they had gone, Mr. Timpkins and Mrs. Edwards engaged in a social chat. Their conversation must have been quite agreeable for it lasted until a late hour, sometime after Charles had got back and retired.

CHAPTER XII.

A JOKE WHICH WAS NO JOKE.

A FEW days after the arrival of Mr. Steadyman and Julia, whom should Charles meet one noon on his way home to dinner, but the identical Mr. Sanders?

"Aw, how d'ye, sir," he exclaimed with much delight, as he extended his delicate white-gloved hand to Charles; "er-Mr. Edwards, I b'live."

The young man with due civility exchanged the salutation.

"Aw, I s'pose you've heard, Mr. Edwards, 'bout the capital joke played by me on my wife."

"I was informed that you had turned out contrary to her expectations as well those of her family," replied he, with his usual *naïveté*, and determined, if possible, not to allow his interlocuter to imagine for an instant that he considered it a joke.

"Haw! haw! haw!" laughed Mr. Sanders. "And are you one," he remarked, "that has also been a gudgeon? haw! haw! haw! 'pon my word

'tis rich, decidedly so, haw! haw! haw!" and his sides shook heartily as he indulged in another sonorous guffaw.

Charles could hardly keep from laughing himself, as he beheld the curious gyrations that Sanders made, in giving way to his mirth, but his countenance soon assumed a placid look and he observed:

"I don't think, sir, you can infer from what I said, that I was one of the victims of your joke, as you term it, although I will confess to you, sir, that I believe what I heard is essentially correct in every particular."

This remark Sanders seemed to enjoy with better relish than the previous one, and he went off into such a terrible fit of cachination that it nearly suffocated him. On his recovery, he slapped Charles on the shoulder and exclaimed:

"Aw, ol' boy, allow me to give you an eclairsissement—now that you acknowledge you have been sold. Aw you see, Aunt Thompson and myself," he flippantly continued—"on my arrival in this place prior to my matrimonial alliance-er, conceived the idea of playing an artistical collusion on my intended wife and father-in-law-er, for the purpose of illustrating practically, how easily they might-er be deceived in forming acquaintances among the fashionable society at the North. I therefore ar-

ranged my plans accordingly, and after they were approved by-er, Aunt Thompson, I forwarded them to my-er fiscal agent, directing him to spare no expense in carrying them out. Among other things he was to inform my parents of the project-er, and to prevail upon them to take up their abode in a small cottage, which bespoke the appearance of lowly circumstances, and to-er request my distinguished father to-er condescend to pursue the vocation of a cooper. The-er step was decidedly depauperating, but not derogatory, to those in our circumstances. As I was about to say—after we were joined in wedlock,—and-er were on our way for the South, I could not forbear, when in New York, the-er great metropolis of the New World, to digress from my original intention, by engaging a suit of rooms at one of the first class hotels-er instead of the second class. Ugh! the-er thoughts of coarse fare, slovenly servants, incommodious rooms and-er unfashionable and unpalatable company, were altogether too much for my-er sensibilities—and as for my sister, who was in my secret, she declared at once that if it collapsed the whole arrangement, she would stop-er at the St. Nicholas. Aw, but it turned out all right.

"On our arrival at our city, I then commenced to execute my magnanimous design. Without any

delay-er, I conducted my wife to what I had so often told her was my

"Palace, where the perfumed light
Steals through the mist of alabaster lamps,
And-er every air is heavy with the sighs
Of orange groves, and music from sweet lutes,
And-er murmurs of low fountains, that gush forth
I' the midst of roses."

"As I had calculated, she was dumbfounded, or completely, as she supposed, taken in and done for. I then did not hesitate to inform her, or-er at least to give her to understand, that I had imposed upon her. I gave her an eloquent account of my family circumstances—of the condition of my finances, et cetera, et cetera, and concluded by telling her, that I expected that she would-er be able to support us both from her property. Aw 'twas delectable to see how like a charm everything worked.

"By my neglecting to write to my father-in-law, it caused him to make his appearance. He also swallowed the deception, and-er in a fit of anger, he carried Julia home. But it remained for Aunt Thompson to expose the whole affair—which she did in the most happy manner. My-er father-in-law was non-plussed, Julia amazed, but my mother-in-law declared that she had mistrusted that I was up to snuff, and she congratulated me on my tri-

umphant success. On my arrival yesterday, Mr. Steadyman not only asked my pardon for the injury, as he said, he had so unintentionally and wrongfully done me, but expressed a desire to heal up the wound by making me a present of a cool ten thousand. But-er the joke was so rich, that I told him that-er I had received more than the equivalent in the satisfaction of getting the laugh on him. Julia, the apple of my eye, also begged my forgiveness, and promised never to desert me, let what may occur hereafter.

"Aw, such, Mr. Edwards, is a somewhat lengthy account of the whole affair. Er-it is my intention to serve it up in a brilliant national epic, which shall excel the-er Odyssey of Homer, the-er Pharsalia of Lucan, and the-er Æneid of Virgil, which I have heard so much about, though have never seen."

It was with great perseverance that Charles had listened to the statement which Sanders had thought proper to favor him with, for he had serious misgivings respecting its truth. He therefore remarked—

"Mr. Sanders, this is altogether a novel version of the matter."

"Aw, but it's the correct one, as Aunt Thompson will tell you." And pulling out his watch, he further remarked—"Why, blame, if 'tisn't past one o'clock. Er-I must leave you, Mr. Edwards.

Good day, sir." And turning round the corner of the street, on which they stood, he was soon out of sight.

On his arrival at the house, Charles acquainted his mother with the conversation which had occurred between him and Sanders.

"Ah! my son," she remarked, "I am confident that no reliance can be placed on what he told you. I fully concur with you in saying that it is nothing more nor less than a tissue of falsehood and deceit, which he and Mrs. Thompson have devised as a cloak to cover up his real circumstances."

"The facts appear incontrovertible," continued Charles—"that this Sanders is a contemptible, ill-bred fellow, whose poverty is only exceeded by his knavery and impudence. Alas! that it was our ill fortune to have come in contact with him."

"Even so," replied Mrs. Edwards—"still we are in duty bound to treat him with proper civility, for every man is entitled to a certain degree of respect, whether he deserves it or not."

"This I have always endeavored to do, mother; no matter how offensive or even degraded a man might be, if he only treated me as a gentleman, I must be equally courteous to him in return. But for the present, let us drop the subject, for it is beneath our notice. If we only walk in the path of the godly, we shall in good time, receive the reward of the just."

CHAPTER XIII.

CONVERSATION.

THERE were two things that made glad the heart of Mrs. Edwards. One was that her son had embraced religion; not that he was not upright and good enough before, she thought, but because he would now feel more secure from the many temptations of the world, and be ready at any moment, if he were summoned to appear before his Maker. She also believed that it would serve as an example to his friends and acquaintances, and perhaps lead them to turn away from the ungodliness and sin with which they were surrounded, and induce them to seek their spiritual welfare. The other was that he had made such an excellent choice when he offered his hand in marriage to Mary Steadyman. She had consulted with Mr. Timpkins respecting this subject, and found that he heartily approved of his course.

"Mrs. Edwards," that gentleman had said, "Mary has all the qualifications to move in any

sphere of life in which she may be placed. She is intelligent, active and capable, and what more can a man wish for. Besides this, she is of an affectionate, amiable and self-sacrificing disposition—is frugal and saving, and, paramount to everything else, Mrs. Edwards, she is a Christian. To be sure she is poor and her family are destitute, but what matters this; it is no disgrace, it is only a misfortune. Because she is a poor girl, is she to be despised and trodden under foot? No! she must be lifted up, and treated with proper deference. The sympathies of a kind and generous public must be enlisted in her behalf, and if such a young man as your son resolves to marry her, not for riches, rank or fashionable acquirements, but for real intrinsic worth, the act is honorable and commendable.”

When Mrs. Edwards had informed him also of Dora's visit to Charles, and its result, he exclaimed jocosely:—

“Bah! Dora Thompson is as different from Mary Steadyman as cheese is from chalk. Dora is too fragrant of leather and prunella. She is like one of those dolls that you see revolving on a pedestal in the windows of a mantua-maker. What! she marry your son? Why, it would be his ruination. But there is no denying the fact, after all, Mrs. Edwards, that when she asked Charles to marry

her, it was the wisest and most praiseworthy step she ever made; and then because she was rejected, she went off in a terrible rage. Oh! that was bad—injudicious—horrible!” and Mrs. Edwards remembered that at this juncture Mr. Timpkins gave a contemptuous laugh. “But your son did right,” he continued; “he did not suffer himself to prove false to his *affiancée* by the flattering, subtle inducements held out by Dora. He acted honorably and nobly, Mrs. Edwards, and I never shall forget it.” The wistful glance that Mr. Timpkins cast at her then was not forgotten by Mrs. Edwards as her thoughts recurred to the conversation which had passed between them, the principal features of which she had thus so vividly brought to mind. And thus passed away two hours one evening, while she was seated alone in tranquil musing, and while Charles was paying his visit at the Steadyman family.

On his return, the events of the day formed the topics of conversation.

“I met Sanders and his wife and Dora, riding out this evening with a span of beautiful greys,” remarked Charles, reclining himself on the sofa. “As they passed, they all three turned their heads aside, and whipping up their horses, they dashed off at a furious rate.”

“I rather think you may safely conclude then

that Sanders has also cut your acquaintance," replied Mrs. Edwards.

"Which I do not at all regret," he replied. "We have now probably done with the Steadyman and Thompson families, mother."

"So it appears now that Sanders has refused to recognize you. Well, I don't know as we are the losers. On the whole, I think it is our gain."

"So do I, mother. By-the-by, Mr. Timpkins told me this afternoon that Sanders had accepted a present of ten thousand dollars from his father-in-law."

"Ah! that must be the sum then that he informed you he so conscientiously refused to take some few weeks ago."

"It's very likely. Mr. Timpkins also informed me that Sanders and his wife gave a great housewarming last night, and a very select and fashionable affair it was."

"Was he present?" inquired Mrs. Edwards.

"Yes, for half an hour or so, and then he was forced to leave, he said, because he was so completely disgusted with everything around him. He declares that he will never demean himself so again by going into that class of society. He considers it a disgrace to a person of refined taste, and says that he feels ashamed of himself."

A smile passed over Mrs. Edwards' countenance, but she made no reply.

"I suppose that we may now take it for granted," continued Charles, "that Sanders has fairly installed himself in the good graces of his father-in-law, who, I presume, is proud to acknowledge him as a son?"

"Yes, without doubt," replied Mrs. Edwards, "and this scion of a noble family, as Mr. Timpkins ironically says, like the blood-leech, will not relinquish his hold until he has sucked the last dollar from his purse. But before I forget it, I suppose Dora was present at the entertainment?"

"Yes, and she was so attentive to Mr. Lyons, that it was particularly noticed by Mr. Timpkins."

"What inference do you draw from this, my son?"

"I think that she will yet marry him."

"What, after she informed you that she did not love him?"

"She may have thought better of it; at least I hope so."

"It may be so, but it must have been occasioned through the untiring exertions of her mother, and not from the silent promptings of her own heart."

"She may learn to love him, mother?"

"Ah! my son, that love which is produced by sordid wealth, dazzling beauty, or fashionable ac-

complishments, soon fades and withers; it is scorched and blighted forever. Such is not genuine affection. Real love is that which gushes spontaneously from two pure and confiding hearts, self-sacrificing in its nature, and unenduring under all circumstances. Real love, my son, is a flame that grows brighter and brighter, and which death itself cannot extinguish. If Dora ever learns to love, it will not come from the heart."

The young man felt that every word his mother uttered was an oracle of wisdom and truth; and well did he exclaim as he retired to rest:—

"Ah! what would have been my condition if I had not appreciated a mother's love?"

And she was as warmly beloved in return; and when on his bended knee, silently offering his nightly devotion, that mother was never forgotten in his prayer.

CHAPTER XIV.

LITIGATION AHEAD.

ONE pleasant afternoon in mid-summer, Charles Edwards was seated as usual in the office, poring over a venerable law volume. His tutor was seated on his right, busily engaged in perusing an important legal decision, which he had procured at Court during the forenoon. Not a word had been spoken by either for some time, and it was so still that you might have heard a pin drop. This monotonous silence, however, was soon broken, by the door suddenly being opened, and in walked a thick-set son of Erin. Doffing a dilapidated hat, he gave a singular jerk of the head, intended for a bow, and exclaimed—

"Good afternoon, Square Williams!"

But, as Mr. Williams was seated with his back turned towards the door, and furthermore, was absorbed in his reading, he was unaware of anybody's presence.

Charles motioned the man to a seat, and was

about to inform his tutor his presence, when the door again opened, and there entered another Hibernian,—a tall, attenuated fellow, dressed in a suit of rusty grey, and who was recognized by Charles as Samuel Steadyman's man-servant.

"Good dhay, yer 'onor," said he, familiarly seating himself by the side of his companion, who very kindly offered him one-half of his chair.

Mr. Williams' ears remained deaf to the salutation.

Again the student was on the eve of informing his tutor of the presence of the two, when he was prevented as before, by the sudden entrance of another Irishman, who walked in with a semi-limp, followed by the appendages of a russet coat which streamed from his rear like a pair of huge shears. His face was pock-marked, and when Charles bade him be seated, his mouth opened as wide as if it were slit from ear to ear, and in his brogue, with a slight impediment of speech, he addressed Mr. Williams' back with—

"An' h-h-how d-d'ye, Square Williams? 'Tis a f-f-fine dhay, sur."

Whether Mr. Williams had finished his reading or had accidentally heard the last individual's remark, which caused him to look up and wheel round, is a matter of conjecture. But such was his movement.

The three Irishmen bowed simultaneously, as if one body.

"What's your name?" he inquired, pointing to the one who first entered, and whom we shall designate as No. 1.

"Patrick Cusack, sur," was the reply, and he arose from his seat and stood up.

"And your name?" he continued, directing his finger to No. 2.

"Michael McGrath, sur," and up he got.

"And what's your name?" and his finger moved so quick that it came in close proximity to No. 3's nose.

"J-J-John Ryan, sur, b-b-brother to M-M-Mike Ryan, who kapes store at the c-c-corner, sur."

Mr. Williams always endeavored to come to the point at once, in whatever he was engaged in, and whenever one called to see him, he wished to know without delay the nature of their business.

"Well, McGrath, what do you want here?" he remarked, bending his head forward, and looking steadfastly at No. 1.

"My name's not McGrath, sur," was the reply, "It's Cusack, sur. This is McGrath opposite yer."

"Well, Cusack, what's your business?" and Mr. Williams turned to the left, and fastened his grey eyes on No. 3.

"My n-n-name is not C-C-Cusack, sur, it's R-R-

Ryan, 't was Cusack that jest spoke, sur," was the answer.

Mr. Williams, as our readers well know, was of a nervous temperament, and the making of two such gross mistakes affected him so much that he appeared quite excited. Raising his hand, he again commenced anew to ask their respective names.

"What's your name?" (to No. 1).

"Cusack, sur, an' I'm not ashamed to tell it to yer again."

"Yours?" (to No. 2).

"McGrath, yer 'onor.

"And yours?" (to No. 3).

"R-R-Ryan, sur."

Mr. Williams' countenance wore an air of satisfaction, and he muttered *ahem!* With a slight twinkle of his eye, and tightly compressing his lips, he exclaimed—

"Cusack?"

"Yes sur, here I am."

"What do you want of me?"

"It's not merself sur, that wants to see yees, it's Mr. Gr.—" but before he could finish the sentence, Mr. Williams was calling for—

"Ryan?"

"Is it meself that ye w-w-wants, sur?"

"Ryan!" again he vociferated.

"Yes sur, t-t-that's my n-n-name, sur," and that individual stepped forward.

"Have you any business with me?" said Mr. Williams sharply, biting each word off as he spoke.

"N-N-No sur, it's not meself that w-w-wants to see yer, it's McG-G-Gr—"

"Well, which one of you is it that wishes to see me, speak out!" yelled Mr. Williams, becoming so excited that he threw his arms about like the fans of a windmill.

At this crisis, young Edwards, though suffering with an uncontrollable fit of cachination, was fortunately enabled to satisfy the demand of his tutor by informing him that it was McGrath, to which the said individual with his face drawn out with as much if not more stupidity and wonder than his fellows, responded by exclaiming—

"O yes sur, it is meself, Mike McGrath that wishes to see yer, an' if ye'll be afther sitting down I'll tell yer all about it shure."

Mr. Williams wiped the perspiration from off his brow, and seating himself in his arm chair, he gave close attention to his client's story.

"Ye see, sur," he commenced, "I've bin workin' for ould Sam Stidyman for ten years up to yesterday, an' as I have always bin very snug and savin' as Ryan and Cusack, sur, will testify, I've saved out of my earnin's a thousand dollars. Well yer see,

Square, yisterday I axed Misther Stidyman like a gintleman, if he'd be afther payin' me the thous- and dollars which he owed me, as I wanted to git married to Bridget Cusack, Pat's sister, sur, when don't yer think, sur, the ould hound wouldn't be afther payin' me a cint, an' said that he didn't owe me anything, sur. This made me mad, Square, but I didn't allow me feelin's to git the control of me, as Pat McGinn's did, when he pounded ould Storrs with the shillela, an' had to pay three dol- lars and sivinty-five cints, sur. I tried to rason with him, Square.

"Sez I, 'Misther Stidyman, didn't you agree, sur, when I came to work for ye, to give me fifteen dollars a month an' found the year round?"

"Sez he, 'I did.'

"Sez I, 'havn't I stuck to the agrament ten years?"

"Sez he, 'you have, Mike.'

"Well," sez I, "havn't I only drawn at the rate of six dollars an' sixty-six an' a half cints a month, for the 'hole time, sur. Yer see, Square, I had it all rickoned for me by Mike Ryan, John's brother, who, yer know, is the divil in fagures."

"That's what you say, Mike," sez he, "but when yer come to look at the book, as I told ye afore, yer'll see that we are square."

"I till ye what, Square, this was the second time

he said it, an' it made me feel ugly agin, be gor. An' if I hadn't thought of Pat McGinn's scrape, faix, I would have jumped into the ould rascal's bread basket, like a hungry dog into a pace of mate. But when I thought of this, I cooled down, an' afther I'd come to meself, I axed him—

"Ye say thin that we are square?"

"Yis," sez he.

"Misther Stidyman," sez I, "to the divil with your book an' show me the documents."

"What documents?" sez he.

"My racates, to be shure," sez I; "for ye know, sur, that ye niver give me a cint in the world, but what I gave ye a racite for it. Now show me the racates."

"Ah! Bedad, this bothered him, Square, an' he commenced scratching his ould pate an' saying nothing."

"Thin yer'll not be afther showin' me the docu- ments?" sez I agin.

"Mike," says he, "I don't owe ye a cint. Now be off an' about yer work, or I'll turn ye off."

"Wist!" sez I, "do ye know what ye are talk- ing about?"

"Git along about yer work," sez he, "an' give me no more of yer impudence."

"Thin ye'll not be afther payin' me my honest dues," sez I.

"Stop yer blarney," sez he, "yer bog-trotter, an' if ye don't go to work I'll turn yer off." An' off he went, and commenced talkin' with his young pup, Sanders.

"But, arrah! I knew too much for him, Square, an' instead of his tilling me to lave, I gave my own consent, an' instead of goin' to work, I went an' packed up my duds an' over I goes to Bridget's. Afther I'd tould her my story, I went over to Mike Ryan's an' tould it to him, an' axed him his advice."

"He owes you a thousand dollars?" axed Mike.

"As shure as I paid ye for the last plug of backy, Mike," sez I, lookin' him in the eye.

"An' you can prove it," sez he, lighting his pipe.

"That I can," sez I, for I knew it was comin'.

"Thin go over to Square Williams," sez he, "tomorrow, an' afther telling him yer story, ax him what ye shall do. That's the best advice I can give ye."

"An' Square, ye see I've done it. Now what shall I do. Shall I sue him, sur?"

"By all means," replied Mr. Williams, quickly, as he arose from his chair, and confronted his client.

"Do ye think that I will recover it, sur?"

"Ahem! I see no obstacle, according to your

own story. At any rate, I'll see what I can do for you."

"Ah! yer a fine ould man, Square," said the honest Irishman, "an' faix, I b'lave you'll do the business up right, for if any man can make pork out of pig iron, yer can, sur. Is there any questions that yer would like to axe me, sur?"

"Have you any bill made out of your wages?"

"No, sur; but I'll be afth—"

"No matter then. We'll sue for balance on account. Mr. Edwards, when does court sit?"

"The 5th of next month, sir."

"Ahem! Yes. Just in season—fifteen days," soliloquized Mr. Williams. "Well, sir," he exclaimed, "we'll make the writ out now."

In the course of fifteen minutes, the instrument was duly and properly executed, and the usual legal instructions given to his client.

"You will not forget Mike," remarked Mr. Williams, "to furnish me the bill of particulars, which the defendant will demand, and which I have explained to you, because after I enter the action, I must file them with the writ."

"I'll not forgit it, sur, shure. Good dhay, yer 'oner." And all three took their leave.

CHAPTER XV.

THE EVENING WALK.

It was a lovely Sabbath evening in the month of August, when Charles proposed to Mary that they should take their regular evening walk previous to their attendance at prayer meeting. Mrs. Edwards had concluded to remain behind with Mrs. Steadyman, until their return, and then accompany them to the vestry.

"Mayn't I go with you to walk, brother Charles?" exclaimed little Bessy, who was sitting on a small stool by the side of her father. "I'se a little girl I know, but I won't trouble you much."

"Certainly you may go, Bessy. Run and let your mother put on your bonnet and shawl, for we are all ready."

In a few moments Bessy was ready, and they left the house. Bessy skipped along ahead and commenced gathering a nosegay of wild flowers.

"How lovely nature appears!" said Mary, as she fondly leaned on Charles' arm. "Does it not fully exemplify the glory and goodness of God?"

"I have often wondered," replied Charles, seriously, "how a person of ordinary intelligence could disbelieve the existence of a God, when they paused for a moment and gazed on the face of nature."

"I have thought the same, Charles, and as often have concluded that it was owing to a sense of their own sinfulness, that they were not willing to acknowledge Him as the author of the rich bounties which He has so lavished upon them."

"Such a profuse array of beauty and mighty handiwork, ought fully to convince the disbelieving, skeptical mind, the power and wisdom of an omnipotent being. Now to the intelligent and reflective mind, it furnishes ample testimony of His existence."

"And still," rejoined Mary — "although the Bible says, 'All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee;' there are thousands who, I am sad to say, deny the existence of a God."

"It is because such minds are ignorant and uneducated, Mary. The divine attributes of a God are not comprehended, and they manifest no disposition to be enlightened."

"And does not this, as I remarked before, arise from a consciousness of their own sinfulness?"

"It may be," said he, thoughtfully; "but it re-

sults more particularly from gross ignorance. The ancients, although uncivilized and unenlightened, seemed conscious that by some unknown hand they were created, some invisible agency controlled their actions, and were led to erect idols to a Superior Being. But in our days, when the principles of evangelism are being so thoroughly disseminated throughout the universe, and the beneficent goodness and wisdom of a God are being taught, it certainly seems strange and almost unaccountable that so few are willing to lend an attentive ear, and to believe and acknowledge their own sinfulness, when they are the recipients of the innumerable bounties which are spread out for their use.

"And while they are enriched and realize all this," rejoined Mary, "it does seem strange that for one brief moment they do not stop and consider to whom are they indebted and from whom comes this source of wealth, enjoyment and goodness. They do not acknowledge that, 'Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the glory and the majesty, for all that is in heaven and earth is thine.'"

"Alas! it is even so. In the hurry and bustle of life there are thousands who do not even think from whence comes all their happiness, and for what were they created. The study of religion, and more especially the thoughts of a hereafter, never enter

their minds. God is forgotten, and his divine greatness is not acknowledged."

It was thus they discoursed until they reached the top of quite an elevated piece of land, at the foot of which wound a murmuring stream.

"You appear somewhat fatigued, Mary," remarked Charles. "Let us sit down and rest ourselves until Bessy rejoins us."

"O, what a lovely view we have," she remarked, reclining herself on the velvet sod; "see, the sun has sank to rest, and how beautifully hill-top and vale is lighted up, thus displaying in our dear land the gorgeous representations of an Italian sunset. The birds, too, have sung their evening carol, and each has lain its tiny head under its wing to sleep. There are a few herds of cattle returning lazily homewards, stopping now and then to feed on some dainty morsel by the roadside, or lowing at a distant animal, who still remains grazing in a neighboring field. O, is it not a lovely scene?"

"Ennobling and picturesque!" replied Charles, enthusiastically; "how wild, and yet how lovely. Before our gaze are dark and princely forests which have not yet felt the keen axe of the woodman—fields of grain whose surfaces undulate like the gentle ripples of a silvery lake—numerous stacks of new-made hay dotting fertile meadows

with their conical forms, and resembling small Caffre settlements. Then there is the low gurgling sound of some unseen stream as it winds its serpentine way along the bed of a solitary glen—dark ranges of mountains whose lofty peaks glisten like molten gold in the rays of the departed sun, and in the distance, scattered about in peaceful retirement, are red-roofed farm houses, each with its well filled barns and granaries; and, instead of flocks of children scampering over stubble fields to meet their father with their merry laugh as he returns homeward from his day's toil, you now behold whole families slowly wending their way to the village church. O, Mary, is not the mind aroused to a state of ideal felicity on beholding such a scene as this, and how grateful we poor sinful mortals ought to feel that we are permitted to live and enjoy these blessings which God in his goodness has given us."

Mary had zealously listened to the intoxicating eloquence of his tongue in his poetical description of the view which lay stretched before them, and when he had finished, she exclaimed:—

"Truly, Charles, our unworthiness is not deserving so much, and therefore it behooves us to ever sing praises and rejoice in his 'power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honor, and glory

and blessing,' for in him is our only hope and salvation!"

She had barely finished the sentence, when Bessy came bounding along like an affrighted fawn, and breathlessly exclaimed:—

"O, I'se so afraid!"

"What is the matter, child, you look very pale and are out of breath!" exclaimed Mary with anxiety, as she drew the little one to her bosom and pressed its throbbing temples to her cheek; "what has happened, pray? Is little Bessy hurt?"

"No, I'se not hurt, sister Mary, but I'se so glad I found you an' brother Charley," and she tremblingly clung closer to Mary's form.

"Speak, Bessy, and tell us what has alarmed you, then?" said Charles, drawing near and gathering up the scattered flowers which lay strewn around her, "because we are very anxious to know if any danger has befallen you, dear."

Raising herself up in Mary's lap and looking timidly around her, she then said:—

"You know the little brook down at the foot of the hill?"

"Yes."

"Well, I was down there picking a few real pretty posies, when before I knew it, a great big man with a segar in his mouth came right close to me an' tried to make a big shaggy dog he had

with him go into the water; but when he couldn't make the dog mind him, he swore, he did, real bad, an' in a fit of anger he caught his dog up an' threw him in. This made me feel real afraid, for I knew he was a wicked man, an' so I cuddled close down in the bushes, so he couldn't see me; but he did see me, after all, an' came up to me an' said that I was a pretty thing, an' wanted me to tell him my name; but I was so afraid that I couldn't, an' then he hallooed to two ladies who I saw at a distance coming out from the bushes, an' told them that he had found a prize. Upon this they both hurried along, laughing an' talking. When they got a little nearer, I saw that one was cous ——"

"Julia Steadyman!" exclaimed both Mary and Charles in one breath, "and the other must have been Dora Thompson. Well——"

"Yes, Julia Steadyman," continued Bessy, "an' the other she called Dora. Well, on they came, all the while talking with the man who declared that I was a water-witch an' had charmed him to the spot. This made them laugh louder, an' then both said, Mr. Sanders, I don't wonder at it a bit, for she is a love of a girl. Pretty soon they came up to where I was, an' when Dora looked at me, she said to Julia:—

"O, that is Bessy Stead——" but she hadn't pro-

nounced my name, when Julia whispered to her:—

"Hush, don't let my husband hear her name," an' then turning around, she made up a naughty face, an' said to Mr. Sanders:—

"O, what a fright she is!"

"She's a perfect little hag," said Dora.

"Now that I have a full view of her face," said the man, as my sun-bonnet came off on to my shoulders, "I declare she is."

"Throw her into the water," said Julia, "she's perfectly hideous. I shall faint."

"When she said this, I wondered what I had done wrong to be thrown into the water for, an' believed that the man wouldn't do it; but when he came towards me, I knew he was a going to do it, an' then I trembled all over an' tried to call for you, but I couldn't; but before he could take hold of me, I thought of my little angel star, an' then I ran away as fast as I could run. The wicked man ran after me a little ways, but he couldn't catch me. He then stopped an' whistled for his dog, an' set him on to me. O, how fast I did run when the big dog came barking after me, but he was a good dog, an' didn't bite me at all. When I got on pretty near the top of the hill, the dog went back, but I still kept on running an' trying to find you, for I didn't know but that the bad man would spring out from behind the rocks an' catch me after all. O, I'se so frightened until I

saw you, an' then I'se glad, for I know brother Charley wouldn't let the bad man catch me, would you?" and the little one gazed with self-assurance in his face.

"No, dear, that I wouldn't," he replied; "nobody shall harm you, Bessy, if I can prevent it."

"O, I'm so thankful that you escaped his hands, Bessy!" exclaimed Mary, kissing her cheek, "and have returned to us unharmed. But you are beat out with running so hard. There, lay your head upon my bosom and rest awhile."

"O, I'se not very tired, sister Mary!" she exclaimed, now entirely recovered from her fright. "But hark! the bell is ringing; it's time for you and brother Charley to be going to prayer-meeting. Come, let's go!" and up she got seemingly as sprightly as ever, and caught hold of the young man's hand.

The shades of evening were now falling fast, and nothing was heard but the shrill chirping of the cricket and the loud croaking of the frogs. As they slowly returned on their way home, no traces were seen of Sanders' party, although the narrative of Bessy's adventure was the chief subject of Mary's and Charles's thoughts, and which they once or twice dolorously adverted to.

Bessy remained at home with her father, while Mrs. Edwards, Mrs. Steadyman, and Charles and Mary went to the prayer-meeting.

CHAPTER XVI.

REVESSES.

It happened very fortunately for Charles that, situated as he was in the office of Mr. Williams, he was made aware of a deal of information respecting the private affairs of his townsmen. For as his tutor was the only lawyer in the village, he enjoyed nearly all of its legal patronage. The consequence was that Charles was privy to every counsel and to the unfolding of the business concerns of his clients. This was a prerogative due him as a student, and which he availed himself of every opportunity that presented itself, not to satisfy an inquisitive disposition, but rather to obtain that knowledge of things which was actually indispensable and of practical utility to him when he was settled in practice.

The suit which had been brought against Steadyman had resulted in the worthy Irishman recovering his just dues; and Charles found that it had only been the beginning of a compli-

cated state of affairs, and as Steadyman had secured the services of his tutor, he now beheld him almost daily involved in new legal difficulties—a great many of which bid fair to be not speedily adjusted. He also learned from the consultations that passed between Mr. Williams and his client, that the latter had sustained very many heavy losses by embarking in various speculations with Sanders, at whose instigation his money had been invested. The young man found that most of the suits that were being brought against him was for moneys loaned him from time to time, and which he had suffered either purposely or accidentally to go unpaid, and thus his paper was dishonored by protest. The result was that a considerable portion of his property in town was attached before he had prepared himself to avert the blow, and to save the remainder, which consisted of his house, furniture, grounds, &c., and quite a number of building lots lying adjacent, he deeded it to his son-in-law, with the intention of going through chancery—which, being done, he would reclaim what he had saved from the wreck, at all events. With the present impending difficulties which surrounded him, he determined to give battle to the extent of the law, and intimated to Mr. Williams that his son was ready to do all in his power to assist him.

“I will not be trampled on nor beaten if I can

help it,” he had remarked on several occasions to his attorney; “I will show the world that a man of my standing, cannot be trifled with,—and particularly by such men, for instance, as Wells, a poor, contemptible grocer, who, because I didn’t pay him the petty little sum of five thousand dollars, on its being due, has seen fit to force me by seizing one of my most valuable pieces of land. No, sir, although he has gone so far as to get an execution, he cannot get final judgment. I defy him.” And informing Mr. Williams that he would be led to resort to any procedure, before he would yield to his creditors, he left the office.

Nor was Mr. Thompson held exempt from financial troubles at this period. From Mr. Timpkins, whom Thompson had applied to for a loan, after having apprised him of his embarrassed situation, Charles learned that although he was not involved in any lawsuit, he was nevertheless in a very precarious state. He had not only transcended his income for the past few years, but had made a deep inroad in his principal. And this had all occurred from the extravagant manner in which his wife had forced him to live. On a careful retrospection, there seemed to be no end to the thousands of dollars which she had compelled him to spend to carry out her views of fashionable life. The items could not be enumerated, as he told Mr. Timpkins,

and he verily believed that the greater portion of his property was now nearly squandered.

"There is one debt," said he, "which my wife contracted last winter of \$10,000—the sum I wish to borrow of you now to discharge this liability—which she presented to her nephew—in the shape of furniture and upholstery for his house. Why, I'm mad with myself to think I ever consented to such a thing. And this is not all this nephew will cost me. I have his notes in my possession to an amount exceeding \$15,000, on which I can scarce raise the first dollar—though my wife tells me it is no use to fret, and assures me that they are perfectly good, and if he doesn't take them up soon, I can get them discounted where he is better known and appreciated than he is here. But I doubt this very much, for I am beginning to get my eyes open after I have been married twenty years. O, I have been made a fool, Mr. Timpkins, but after all, I am the only one to blame, for allowing my wife to have such control over me."

Thus stood the affairs of Steadyman and Thompson. The facts were self-evident to Charles, that they both were on the verge of ruin; that notwithstanding they had supposed their wealth inexhaustible, particularly the former, they were about to suffer the reverse of fortune. Steadyman is indeed playing an unprincipled game, thought he,

and he may succeed in saving quite a remnant of his fortune, after all. O! if I was only allowed to expose this artifice, this deep-laid plot of his to foil those to whom he is, I verily believe, honestly indebted. But such a step would meet with the disapprobation of my tutor. It is an office secret, and I am necessitated to keep it sacred. If I divulge, no matter how good my intentions, then the confidence which I retain, not only of Steadyman and my tutor, but my friends, is at once shaken, and hereafter I shall be distrusted. If I preserve my trust, then thousands of dollars are dependant on the result of mere chance. Alas! I am tied hand and foot—and can only pray that he will be defeated in his scheme.

As for Thompson, I have some pity for his mishap. It has been occasioned by his lack of firmness and an indomitable will. Mr. Timpkins after all done perfectly right in not loaning him the money. As he well remarked:

"I would have willingly loaned him the amount he solicited of me, if it had not been for his wife; for Thompson individually, is an honorable man, and pays as he goes, but his wife, ah! she has been his ruination. The way he is situated if I satisfied his pecuniary wants, it would have been encouraging Mrs. Thompson in her extravagance, and not benefiting her husband in the least. There-

fore, taking this into consideration, I refused to loan him the money, and frankly stated to him my reasons for so doing. Said I, Thompson, I have the money lying idle in the bank, and could accommodate you as well as not, but the fact of it is, my friend, if I let you have it, it goes to pay for the fashionable flummeries of your wife. And this will not pay. The act would not be consistent with my principles—as you well know.”

But Thompson, after all, succeeded in raising the amount by mortgaging his house to Mr. Lyons, and with the money he took up his note. On the fact being made known to Mrs. Thompson, she was horror-stricken, but evinced no disposition to retrench their expenses. The same marked characteristics also remained as ever the ruling passion of her Steadyman friends, notwithstanding their pecuniary embarrassments.

To the people of the village, the circumstances as far as they were known, of the two families, were drily discussed, and no sympathy was expressed for their calamitous situations.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DEPARTING ANGEL.

It was now autumn. For several days Bessy had been suffering with a severe cough, occasioned by her catching cold from the remarkable changes in the weather, but on the proper remedies being given, she soon got better, and having been so confined during her indisposition, she now awaited with lively expectancy the first propitious opportunity when she would be enabled to go out of doors again and breathe the pure air, and resume her customary ramblings. At last there came a pleasant afternoon, and she was permitted to go out, and well did she improve the time in chasing the butterflies over the fields, and in gathering flowerets on southern slopes, as she had been wont.

There was a large orchard to which Bessy strolled after she had become tired with play, and seating herself by the side of the fence, she watched the owner gather his golden baldwins and russetts. So interested had she become in gazing at the

farmer and his boys in their work, and beheld with longing eyes the luscious fruit which they shook from the prolific branches, which descended in such bounteous showers, that before she was aware of it, it had begun to rain. The rain had come on so suddenly, that before she arrived home, she was drenched through to the skin. The consequence was that a relapse of her cold took place, and she was thrown into a fever. Being of a frail constitution, the disease took a powerful hold upon her, and when it had arrived at its height, she was reduced to a mere skeleton. At this crisis the symptoms did not take a favorable turn, and the doctor shook his head in doubt, when he was asked if he thought she would recover. Though so completely prostrated as she was, she still retained her senses, and was enabled, though in a very weak faltering voice, to converse freely with those around her.

The family were bowed down with pain and sadness, and when they were at last convinced that there was no hope of her recovery, they calmly resigned themselves with Christian fortitude to meet the approaching calamity.

Poor Steadyman would not leave the bedside of his child, but there would sit day after day, and often through the night, watching her wan features, while the tears would stream down his cheek as he thought that they must so soon be parted.

As Bessy lingered along, gradually becoming worse, the visits of Charles and his mother were more frequent than usual. Mrs. Edwards was ever assiduous in her attentions, and did everything in her power towards making the little one comfortable.

One morning, just as day was breaking, the little sufferer woke up out of a restless slumber, and after gazing about the room, her eye at last fell on the form of Mrs. Edwards.

"Aint you tired and sleepy with sitting up all night with me?" inquired Bessy feebly.

"No, my dear," replied she, tenderly, as she drew near the bedside, and gently pulled the coverlid over her. "How does little Bessy feel this morning?"

"I se feel no better."

"Has your headache gone?"

"It feels better, auntie, but then it aches bad now."

"Poor child," murmured Mrs. Edwards, as she bathed her forehead with spirits of camphor.

"Does Doctor think I se going to die?" asked the little one.

"He hopes not, Bessy. We are doing all we can to get you well."

"I knows you are; you are all real good," said she, calmly. "But then, auntie, I se not afraid to die. If the Lord wants me, I se ready to go."

Mrs. Edwards was much affected at this reply, and as she looked upon the serene and peaceful face before her, she silently prayed that the Messenger of Death would stay his hand, and prolong her days a little longer.

During the forenoon the little one awoke from a delirious slumber, and exclaimed:—

“O, mother, I’ve seen my little angel star, an’ O, she’s so good an’ lovely; she didn’t want me to come away, mother, but I told her I wanted to see you an’ father a little while longer, an’ then I’d come right back like a good girl. She kissed me then, mother, an’ said I must tell you not to cry if I didn’t come back to you again, because she wanted me to stay with her forever. I know you’ll let me, mother, because she says I shall be a little star just like her, an’ watch over you all when you are asleep. I’ll shine bright, mother, so you can all see me every evening, for I know ’twill make you happy. An’, mother, she says I shall have a golden harp an’ sing sweet songs, just as you used to read me about in the blessed Bible. But don’t look so sad, mother, because your little Bessy’s going to leave you! I don’t feel sad; I can’t be sad when I feel so happy. Sister Mary’s going to stay with you an’ father, mother, an’ she’ll be as good an’ kind as she always was. An’ brother Charley, he’ll take care of you all, mother, because

he said he would. I know you’ll miss me after I’ve gone, if I have been naughty sometimes, but you must forgive me now, mother, because I’ve now always going to be good.”

She seemed much exhausted after she had finished, and soon gradually sunk away into a gentle sleep. A sweet smile brightened up her pale and emaciated countenance as she laid in calm and undisturbed repose.

Thus she laid until evening, when her breathings grew more short and quick. The doctor, on laying his hand upon her marble forehead, found it was chill and moist. No word escaped his lips, for he instinctively saw that the worst was known. The whole family, including Mrs. Edwards and Charles, were gathered around the bedside, each prepared to meet the mysterious dispensation of their heavenly Father. It was an impressive scene.

“Thy will and not mine, O God,” was all Mrs. Steadyman could utter as she bent over the form of her child and dropped a tear on its clammy cheek.

The child was aroused from her lethargy—a hectic flush overspread her cheek, and there was a preternatural smile radiant about her eyes as she softly whispered:—

“Don’t cry, mother, I’ve now going, for angel star is calling me. Good-bye, mother, father, sister,

brother Charley and Aunty. Let me kiss you all ; there, good-bye," and at the next moment the spirit of little Bessy was nestling in the bosom of its God.

On the following afternoon she was laid beneath the grassy mound. There was no long pageant-like procession that followed the body to the grave, but only two carriages, which contained nothing but sad and mournful hearts. The first was the family of Mr. Steadyman and Charles. Though the bereaved parents felt that their cup of affliction was now filled to overflowing, and that their hearts were plunged into the deepest wo, no word of complaint nor reproach fell from their lips. The second vehicle contained Mr. Timpkins and Mrs. Edwards, who sympathized deeply with their sudden bereavement.

A small white slab in the village church-yard bears the following inscription :

"LITTLE BESSY.

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHANGE OF COUNSEL.

SEVERAL months now passed away and the snow again covered the earth with its spotless mantle. The old year had gone, and while thousands had bade him a long and affectionate farewell, they had welcomingly greeted the new year with happy hearts and rich anticipations, and laid at its feet, their fortunes, hopes and fears.

The reign of the winter king was being marked with no events of any importance, save the affairs of Samuel Steadyman—who, much to his indignation, was vanquished in his numerous lawsuits as fast as they came up in court, and had acquired a notoriety throughout the country which, among the people at large, belittled him greatly. Yet among the satellites of wealth and fashion, which he had drawn around him, he was as ever as highly esteemed, and his legal difficulties were considered by such, as a base conspiracy of the *canaille* to break him down.

Since Mr. Williams had been Steadyman's advocate, Charles found that the more he saw of the latter, the more he was convinced that he was an arrant knave. That to gain his ends he would wilfully misrepresent and falsify every allegation and fact that he presented to his attorney, even when he was privately consulted, as well as in his testimony given on the stand; this last, however, he managed so skilfully, that it could not be proved perjury, though by many it was so considered. The consequence was, that Mr. Williams, in his eagerness to get the promised remuneration exacted for his legal services, did not stop to ask his client whether his statements were well founded, or his versions of the case were the facts as they existed, but without giving it a single thought he felt assured of their truth, judging from his client's well-known character for truth and veracity, as well as his high standing in society. He knew, to be sure, that Steadyman was playing an underhanded game when he declared himself insolvent and went into chancery, but this was not his business, so long as he got paid for services rendered.

To see his tutor made subservient to the base purposes of Steadyman, and to feel satisfied that he was being misguided and controlled by such turpitude and arch knavery, caused Charles at last to speak to him on the subject. After a lapse of

several weeks, during which Charles had freely expressed his views on several occasions on the matter, Mr. Williams was at length convinced that the course which his client was compelling him to adopt and pursue, without any regard to his opinions or instructions, was utterly wrong and censurable, and did not redound to his credit. He therefore informed Mr. Steadyman that as he had been unsuccessful with his cause, he should decline acting as his advocate any longer, and that what business remained in his hands he would turn over to him or to his legal adviser without delay.

On receiving Mr. Williams's note, Steadyman was much chagrined, for he had calculated that in the old gentleman he had found a pliant tool, which, being governed entirely by his machinations, would enable him to triumph over his creditors. But now that he was about to be deserted by one on whom he had so much depended, and who had swallowed with such avidity his golden promises of reward, and that he must now run the risk of employing another lawyer who would be more easily and readily controlled, it offended him beyond measure the more he thought of it.

"After all," he said to himself, "I must not allow the old Squire or that young student of his to believe for a moment that I am vexed, or they may be disposed to betray me, particularly Ed-

wards, who appears to be so conscientiously pious. Oh! it was an impracticable, unwise step on my part when I gave them a perfect knowledge of the state of my affairs and confided in them my designs—but I must make the best of it," and the gentleman hastily drained the contents of a goblet of sparkling Catawba which stood before him.

When therefore he called on Mr. Williams, in company with his new attorney, to procure his private papers, etc., he appeared very civil and conciliatory. With all the suavity of deference, he assured Mr. Williams that notwithstanding he had been unsuccessful in managing his suits, he thought none the less of his abilities and tact as an able lawyer, and should always recommend him to his friends. He also expressed a wish that what was talked over at various times in the office would be considered strictly confidential and never divulged. This request was acceded to.

It was a pleasurable moment to Charles when he saw the last paper delivered over to Steadymen, and was now sensible that his efforts in prevailing upon Mr. Williams to give up his business were crowned with success.

As to his affairs, he had given his word of honor that what he knew of them should ever be kept confidential, and therefore he resolved to no longer

worry his mind about them, feeling confident that justice would eventually be meted out to his creditors in the remainder of the suits that were pending, as in those which had been finally decided upon.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CALAMITY.

At last the term of the young student's legal studies had expired. For two years and a half he had devoted himself with close application to the law, and early one spring morning he stood ready at the foot of the office stairs to accompany his tutor to the shire town of the county, where he was to undergo the usual examination previous to his being admitted to practice. Punctual to the hour, Mr. Williams made his appearance with his horse and chaise, and bidding the young man to jump in, they were soon on their way.

The young man acquitted himself with the highest honors, and when he received his certificate from the Clerk of the Court, his tutor grasped him by the hand, and with tears standing in his eyes bestowed on him the most unbounded praise.

On their return home, Mr. Williams had occasion to visit a client of his, which detained him much longer than he had expected, and as evening

was approaching when they were ready to start, they resolved to shorten the distance home by travelling a back road skirted by a dense and heavy wood which was not much frequented at this season of the year. A very dismal appearance this wood presented on their entrance, filling the mind with vague imaginations and inspiring a feeling of dread. Still they apprehended no danger, and the old horse jogged on in his wonted pace.

The state of the road plainly indicated that quite recently there had been an overflow of water from some pond near by, which, after the freshet had subsided, had left the road in the wretched condition they were beginning to find it. The further they progressed they found that it was growing worse and worse, and they both regretted that they had not taken the road they had come. On each side large logs laid piled up promiscuously, some of which were very much decayed and covered with mouldy moss and other vegetable substances, while in the middle of the road dried leaves, branches and fragments of bark lay scattered about, and tall wiry grass which had sprung up spontaneously with an endless variety of dock and mullen. A poisonous miasma infected the atmosphere, and the chill damp penetrated their

whole system and caused a very disagreeable creeping sensation.

Several times they came to a dead stand still, by a log that laid across the road, but it was safely surmounted, and they continued on their way.

It had now become quite dark, and not being able to see the way to guide their animal, Mr. Williams gave him the reins, and trusted to his sagacity and trustworthiness in carrying them along safely. Occasionally they were enabled to see whether any obstacles were ahead to impede their progress, but even then it was merely conjecture.

They were engaged in conversation, when suddenly the horse stumbled, and in his fall they were both thrown out of the vehicle with great force. Though somewhat stunned by the fall, Charles soon recovered himself, and finding that he was but slightly bruised, his next thought was to ascertain whether Mr. Williams was safe and uninjured. On looking about he providentially found the aged gentleman laying on his stomach across the log which had caused the accident, in a state of insensibility. Gently lifting him up he carried him to the roadside, and after feeling his pulse found to his joy that there were perceptible signs of life. In a few moments he revived, and with

great difficulty, for he groaned most piteously, and told Charles that he was in excruciating agony.

The faithful horse was not in the least frightened, but remained on the spot uninjured. The only damage that was done the vehicle, was the breaking of one of the shafts, but this was quickly mended by Charles. Then drawing the chaise over the log, he shortly had the horse in the shafts, and placing Mr. Williams on the seat, in as easy and comfortable a position as possible, he drove as fast as he could for the village.

On his arriving at Mr. Williams's house, the family physician was sent for, who, after a careful examination, found that the injuries which he had sustained were dangerous, the most important being an internal rupture of the viscera. The only bones that were injured was the left shoulder, which was dislocated. Besides the services of the family physician, another skillful doctor was called in, as counsel, but like his colleague, he believed that the patient, being so far advanced in life, could not recover, and that no remedies could be prescribed which would have any curative effect on the hernia.

Mr. Williams was conscious of his situation, and desired the immediate attendance of his pastor. On that gentleman's making his appearance, he expressed a fervent wish to be baptized and par-

take of the communion—which request was cheerfully granted. The man of God then offered a prayer, which was responded to by an amen of the dying man. Towards morning he began to fail fast, and although powerful stimulants were given him, and everything done by kind friends to alleviate his sufferings, he gradually sank into the arms of death, with his hand enclosed in that of his dutiful and affectionate wife, who stood by his bedside, supported by Charles.

The old gentleman's sudden demise came quite unexpected to the ears of the people of the village; and although during his life he had been looked upon as a hard, parsimonious man, now that he was dead and buried, his faults were graciously overlooked, and a great deal of sympathy was manifested for his widow. There was one heart that was deeply affected at his death, and that was Charles. He felt that he had lost a good companion and a kind friend. One thing made him feel happy, and that was, that his kind old tutor had atoned for his inherent sinfulness before he died, and commended his soul to God for salvation.

As is usual on the death of a wealthy man, various were the questions asked relative to a will and to the disposition of property. In the present instance it was found that Mr. Williams had not

died intestate, but had actually made a will one week previous to his death. Some believed that the old gentleman had had a presentiment of his death, and had therefore prepared his last will and testament in expectation of that event, but be that as it may, for there are always such rumors rife among the superstitious, Mr. Williams had left such a paper, and those who had witnessed it, declared that he was perfectly sane and capable when he drew it up.

On the will being opened and read, it was found that Mr. Timpkins was appointed executor.

To his beloved wife he had bequeathed the sum of twenty thousand dollars, consisting of money and real estate; a legacy of ten thousand dollars in money, and the building which contained the old law-office and library was left to Charles Edwards. The balance of his property, including notes and money on deposit, amounting in all to forty-five thousand dollars, was left as a fund to establish and carry on a school for the education of the children of families in destitute circumstances. Charles Edwards, Peter Wells, the grocer, and Alanson Bryant, a well-known mechanic, were appointed as trustees. The provisions of the will were conformed with, and in the course of two months Mr. Timpkins had administered upon the estate.

To think that Mr. Williams had heeded the advice given him to establish such a school, caused Charles to feel much elated, and no words could express his unaffected joy as he reflected on this good and commendable deed. It was so great and noble, that it almost served to blot out all of his bad traits. His name would now be ever cherished sacredly, and handed with honor down to posterity. But the legacy which Charles had received, came so unlooked for, that he was led to tell Mr. Timpkins, that now he was so rich, he was unhappy, and felt disposed to contribute the bequest to the school-fund. But that gentleman strongly opposed such a step, and advised him to keep it in remembrance of his old tutor, if nothing more—and assured him that he knew he was doing right when he bequeathed it to him. The law library was quite acceptable, and more hallowed to Charles in after years than anything else, if we may except the favorite old arm-chair.

CHAPTER XX.

RESTITUTION.

CHARLES was made Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and at the meeting it was voted to delay erecting a building until the coming winter. During the meanwhile the money was to be invested in the most profitable manner, so that it would be accumulating until it was wanted. To this Charles attended to promptly, and judiciously loaned it out, payable on demand, to a sound concern in Boston. The journey to that city and his attention to other business matters of as equal importance occupied several days, which delayed him from opening his office as soon as he had contemplated.

At length the sign of "CHARLES EDWARDS, ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW," took the place of the weather-beaten sign of Timothy Williams, and now the young lawyer had fairly commenced the practice of his profession.

The first gentleman who honored him with a

visit on the morning he had opened was his old friend the grocer.

"Ah! my boy," said Mr. Wells, taking a chair, "glad to see you looking so well. So you have got your shingle out? Well, I hope you'll have more business than you can attend to."

"Thank you, sir," replied Charles, "and I shall ever hope to give satisfaction to my clients, as well as command their respect afterwards."

"You'll do it, I'm sure. You are made of the right stuff, as is well known. I am confident that you will never advise a man to go to law when there is the least possibility of his compromising the matter; and you'll never screw the last dollar out of a man when he is not able to pay one half the usual fee."

"God forbid," replied Charles, as he thought of the grocer's last remark. "It is my intention, Mr. Wells, to deal honorably and uprightly with every one. To the poor I am a friend, and for whatever I can do for them I ask no recompense."

"Just like your father for all the world," said Mr. Wells; "and it was this that made him what he was—so good, high-minded and beloved. He was a Christian in every sense of the word. I knew him well, Charles, and when he died our State lost one of her noblest children."

This allusion to his parent, coupled with the re-

cent death that had occurred, operated very seriously on the young man, but not yielding to his feelings, he briefly remarked:—

"May it be my constant endeavor, sir, to shun his faults and emulate his virtues."

"A noble intention," said Mr. Wells, and then diverting the topic of conversation, for he saw that it was unpleasant to his young friend, he remarked—"Well, I have at last settled with Sam Steadyman."

"Ah! have you, indeed?" said Charles, brightening up. "I congratulate you on accomplishing such a wonder."

"It has been strongly contested, 'tis true, but notwithstanding his trickeries and his plottings, I had no fears but that the judge would decide after all according to law and equity, which he did. As for the remainder of his creditors, they are not at all concerned but that they are well secured in their attachments, and will in good time receive all that he owes them."

"This is good news, really, and it gives me pleasure to know that you have got your just and honest dues. Why, he appeared to contest your claim with all the rancor and vindictiveness imaginable."

"Ha, ha, ha! yes; but it is easily accounted for, Charley. Just give me your attention for a mo-

ment while I explain; for it is the very matter that I came in this morning to see you about. Some twelve years ago I owned a tract of land of about six hundred acres, down below the village, which, together with the buildings on it, wood, timber, etc., I valued at \$9,000. After repeated solicitations I was induced to sell it to Sam Steadyman for the price I had offered it. Sam was then just getting up in the world, and was beginning to do a smashing business. Knowing him then to be perfectly good for the amount, and, as I thought, honest, I took his notes—one of \$4000, payable in six years, and the other \$5000 in twelve years. The first note he paid like a man, but the second—you know the trouble he has put me to in collecting it. It has resulted, however, in my getting back nearly one half of the land, Steadyman being unable to pay me the balance on his notes, or hoping to defraud me by attempting to prove that he had paid me. Such is a concise statement of the facts from beginning to end."

"The consummate rascal," said Charles.

"A fact which is now generally known," said Mr. Wells; "but as I was about to remark, the affair causes me to be your client."

"Then you are going to law again about the land?"

"No, far from it. I wish to employ you to draw up a written instrument."

"Oh! that I will do; but what is its nature?"

"I wish a warranty deed made of a certain piece of this land, which I wish to convey to a man who was once wrongfully and outrageously cheated out of it."

The young lawyer was puzzled to know what the grocer meant.

"Listen for a moment," said he, "for I see that I must enlighten you. After Sam Steadyman took possession of the land which I sold him, his brother John purchased of him a small lot and built a pretty little cottage on it. He was then at work at his trade and was doing well. In the course of five years, if I recollect right, John had earned money enough in Virginia to pay up what he owed on his house and have enough left to take up the last note which his brother held against him. The day before his return home his house with all its contents was burned to the ground. He found not even one of his private papers saved. The deed which Sam had given him being destroyed, the rascal took the opportunity of foreclosing the mortgage without giving John any knowledge or even intimation of the fact. On repossessing the lot, he then went to his brother, and after reviling him on account of his poverty, infa-

mously threatened to shoot him if he or any member of his house ever dared to speak of or recognize any of his family, or acknowledge him as a brother." Mr. Wells paused for a moment and then said: "But I don't know but you have heard all this before, connected as you are so intimately with John's family, and therefore for me to resuscitate the story may cause you to feel pained. Such was not my intention, however."

"Far from it, good sir," said Charles, calmly, "though I well know that poor Steadyman and his family were disowned by his brother, and the reason thereof. I also was aware, for I heard it from his own lips some two years ago, of your story in substance relative to his lot being wrongfully taken away from him. But to hear that it was his own brother that did so unjust and heartless an act, quite overwhelms me with astonishment. Truly Sam Steadyman has now proved himself a man totally devoid of principle, honor, and integrity; his conscience is seared with sin and iniquity. O that an injured God would cause him to be visited with some direful affliction, so that he might look back on his past career with a contrite heart, and strive in future to become a better and a wiser man. But is it possible that you are going to make a present of this lot to John?"

"As true as I'm a living man," replied the grocer, warmly; "because it rightfully belongs to him. Besides, admitting that it did not, it will be no loss to me, for I am rich enough, am prospering in business, and can afford to give away my surplus property. It is my intention to give him a deed outright of the original lot, which I am glad to know has more than doubled in value since he owned it."

"Such liberality is so uncommon now-a-days, that the act ought to be engraved in letters of gold."

"Tut, tut!—my boy, no praise," interrupted the grocer, "it's only a duty we owe to our Maker, who has placed us here on earth to assist each other. But I have but a few moments left, for I must get back to the store. Come, while I give you the necessary information, you write out the deed."

The instrument was drawn up, and properly signed and recorded according to law, and when the Steadyman family were apprised of the gift, their joy was uncontrolled, and the munificence of Mr. Wells was treasured in their hearts, and his name glorified with their lips.

CHAPTER XXI.

FURTHER DISCLOSURES.

THE young lawyer found business increasing daily, and his docket for the fall term of the courts, promised well. But, notwithstanding the unceasing demand for his services, and his assiduous attention to his business throughout the day, he never failed when evening came to pay his customary visit to the Steadyman family, where, remaining half an hour or so, engaged in pleasing conversation with those whom he loved, he would then either accompany Mary to the prayer-meeting, or take their regular stroll to their woodland retreat. Sometimes Mrs. Edwards or Mary's mother would go with them, and then again Mr. Steadyman would be induced to ride out with them to a neighboring village.

Now that he considered himself so rich, as well as prospering so well in his profession, he felt abundantly able to amply provide for their wants, without any inconvenience. The family were in

comfortable circumstances, and happy and contented. Their hearts were light and cheerful, and though shades of sadness often stole over their countenances as they spoke of the little one who was removed from their circle and was now one of the cherubim of her Saviour, still they had nearly recovered from the profound grief in which they had been plunged by her death.

One sultry, moonlight evening, Mrs. Edwards and her son called on the Steadyman family. The young lawyer was somewhat fatigued in mind with the labors of the day, but nevertheless he lost none of his wonted vivacity in conversation. An hour was agreeably spent in talk which undoubtedly pleased Mr. Steadyman, for he ever and anon gave an approving nod. Charles and Mary sauntered out to the road to take a short walk. They had gone but a few rods when they saw Mr. Timpkins approaching them.

"Ah! Good evening," he exclaimed, on coming up to them; "a beautiful evening, and just the hour for lovers to ramble about and talk over their future prospects. I myself have just been taking a short walk down to your father's lot, Mary. That's a fine piece of ground, Mr. Edwards, and worth a thousand dollars, every cent of it."

"I think so myself, and situated as it is on so commanding an eminence, it would readily sell for

that price. But Mr. Steadyman is not disposed to part with it now that I have agreed to pay the taxes on it."

"I would n't advise him to sell at all. It's a valuable house lot, and you may wish to build on it yourself one of these days," and Mr. Timpkins smiled. "But pardon me, am I not detaining you in your walk?"

"Not at all, sir, for we did not think of going far when we came out. But now that we have met you, your company would be quite agreeable to us, if you will join us in prolonging our walk, that is, providing you are not engaged or too tired to do so."

The invitation was accepted, and they leisurely pursued their way, until they arrived at a small interval, carpeted with an innumerable variety of flowers, and bordered on each side with tall and stately hemlocks and pines. The unclouded moon shed a mellow effulgence on everything around, even limning the dim outlines of the underbrush far in the wood with its silver brightness.

Mr. Timpkins well remarked, that it was a romantic spot.

"Then you have not seen any of Thompson's family since their return?" said that gentleman, as he seated himself on the rich sward.

The young man and his companion also followed

Mr. Timpkins's movement, while the former remarked:

"No, sir, it has been some two months or longer since I have seen any of the family, and then it was when they were on the eve of starting on their tour, so I understood."

"I ran afoul of Thompson in the street this morning, and he gave me a long account of their journey. They have been to all the principal watering places—and spent over fifteen hundred dollars. He declares positively that this is the last time he ever goes away from home, or again indulges his wife in any of her fashionable proclivities—and I sincerely believe that he is really determined to carry out at last his resolution."

"It would have been much better if he had taken this step years ago, he would not only have saved thousands of dollars by it, but would have stood higher in the estimation of his friends as a man."

"True, and it's a shame that not until now has he been fully convinced that he has of his own free will and accord allowed himself to be ruined irrecoverably by his wife. I have often warned him of the course he was taking, and advised him as best I knew how. On several occasions I flattered myself with the belief that he was throwing off the influence which his wife had over him, but

I was deceived, for at the next moment I saw him as ever gratifying her in even her most frivolous desires. But now he finds he can no longer, even if he is so disposed, keep up these appearances and maintain that position which to his wife is of such eclat. Why, even the very money which paid the expenses of their summer tour was borrowed of Lyons. It is indeed the most singular thing that so sharp a fellow as Thompson was in trade should have squandered away his fortune as he has done; but he has seen his folly, and I am now confident that he has made up his mind in good earnest to be master of his own will and exercise his own judgment in future."

"Now that he has become so poor, won't he be obliged to go into trade again to earn a living for himself and family?"

"No, for Dora has at last concluded to marry Lyons, who you know is very wealthy, Lyons holding several mortgages on the mansion house, will take possession and pay Thompson the balance of its value, which will amount to a little over nine thousand dollars, about one tenth the sum he was worth five years ago. After he is married he expects his father and mother-in-law to make his house their home the remainder of their days."

"It's very kind of Lyons to act thus by giving them a comfortable home, but I'm afraid that Mrs.

Thompson will soon manage to get rid of his property."

"No danger of that, for Lyons is not so easily blindfolded. To be sure he will be indulgent and generous to a fault, but you cannot induce him to be extravagant; he knows too much, his will is like iron. If Mrs. Thompson has set her heart upon getting hold of his money, she will find herself disappointed."

"But that was her object unquestionably when she prevailed upon Dora to marry him."

"Precisely, but she will catch a Tartar. However, it is a good match, for it may be the means of conquering the aristocratic spirit of Mrs. Thompson, and curbing the pride and vanity of her daughter. But excuse me Mary," he continued, respectfully bowing, "if I have introduced a subject of conversation which has been uninteresting to you. I really was so desirous to let Mr. Edwards know about it, that I embraced this opportunity while it was fresh on my mind."

"Certainly, you are excusable, Mr. Timpkins, though an apology was as uncalled for as it was unexpected, as I was as deeply interested in the information you gave to Charles; for I was already privy to their misfortunes."

Mr. Timpkins was satisfied, for he said: "Ah!

all right," and then commenced talking with her about the loveliness of the evening.

On their return to the house, though Mr. Timpkins was strongly pressed to remain and spend the remainder of the evening, he declined on account of an appointment which he had, now nearly due, and which he must not fail to keep. Mrs. Edwards walked a short distance with him from the house. When she got back, she incidentally informed her son that she had told Mr. Timpkins that there would be a wedding in two weeks, and he at once guessed who the happy pair were. The young man blushed, and then kept on turning over the pages of Mary's sketch-book, which they were engaged in looking at. Mrs. Edwards then resumed her conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Steadyman, each face during the while beaming with joy as they thought of the union of their children. It was a consummation devoutly to be wished.

On their way home that night Charles acquainted his mother with the total downfall of Mr. Thompson, and the contemplated marriage between Dora and Mr. Lyons.

"You will recollect," she said, "that the former I have always expected would take place."

"And I," he rejoined, "sincerely hoped for the latter."

CHAPTER XXII.

WORSE AND WORSE. HAPPY EVENT.

THERE had been a severe thunder storm during the afternoon, which kept the young lawyer within his office until the tempest had abated. After it had cleared off, he was about to go out to attend to the business which had been deferred on account of the shower, when Mr. Timpkins entered the room.

"Were you going out, Mr. Edwards?" he asked, confronting the young man.

"Such was my intention. But sit down, Mr. Timpkins, it's a matter that can just as well be attended to to-morrow. What's going on to-day?"

"Well, Steadyman has at last gone over the board, hook and line, bob and sinker. It was his intention, it seems, to go through chancery for the purpose of saving the balance of his property, amounting to some thirty-five thousand dollars, which he had deeded by a pretended sale to Sanders. He succeeded in getting through, but when he came to ask Sanders to deliver it over to him

in exchange for his notes, the young rascal politely told him that it had been a lawful sale and he must abide the consequences. The biter had been bit. In a fit of rage, Steadyman tore up the notes, and the result is that he has gone crazy. He was carried to the State Insane Hospital this morning."

Charles was so astonished at this piece of intelligence, that he only remarked: "Lamentable after all."

"He's brought it upon himself," said Mr. Timpkins, "and he that sows the wind must reap the whirlwind."

"True," said Charles, "God has been made exceeding wroth at his past career, and has severely chastised him."

A few days after this development, Charles was passing Sanders's house, when he saw projected from the door an auctioneer's flag. On mentioning the fact to his mother, she informed him that Sanders had decamped, taking with him all of his wife's and mother's jewelry, and that the house and all of his effects were to be sold by the sheriff on an execution for debts. She also made further disclosures which had come to light, in addition to what Mr. Timpkins had told him about Steadyman's property. It appeared that Sanders after he had got it into his hands sold it unknown to any

one to a man in New York, who had come on and legally taken possession of it.

"And what is to become of Mrs. Steadyman and her daughter, now that they are reduced to penury?" asked Charles.

"They will be obliged to earn their bread by daily labor," was the reply.

"Alas!" said he, "what an example for their friends." "And yet," he continued, after briefly reviewing their past life, "such forms the class of society who in their prosperity create that vast distinction between themselves and what they term their inferiors. Wealth inflates their minds, begets an ideal aggrandizement of honor, creates a wide interval of relation between man and man, gives power and supremacy, carries an arbitrary sway over the opinions of men, and basely attempts to crush the principles of Right, Truth and Justice. In the eyes of such a class the poor man is expected to yield in submission; his privileges are considered nothing; though they may despise and trample on him, he is expected to suffer it all with meekness and forbearance."

"Would'st thou be poor, scatter to the rich, and reap the tares of ingratitude."

"Would'st thou be rich, give unto the poor; thou shalt have thine own with usury."

For one, I can truthfully say with Doctor Chan-

ning, "that I attach myself to the multitude, not because they are voters and have political power, but because they are men and have within their reach the most glorious prize of humanity." This able divine also says that there is one principle of the soul which makes all men essentially equal—which places all on a level as to means of happiness—which may place in the first rank of human beings those who are the most depressed in worldly condition, and which therefore gives the most depressed a title to interest and respect. Again, he refers to the sense of duty, to the power of discerning and doing right, to the moral and religious principle, to the inward monitor which speaks in the name of God, to the capacity of virtue or excellence. The power of virtue breaks down all barriers between the seraph and the lowest human being; it makes them brethren. It is this moral power which makes all men essentially equal, which annihilates all the distinctions of this world. Through this the ignorant and the poor may become the greatest of the race; for the greatest is he who is most true to the principle of duty. It is not improbable that the noblest beings are to be found in the least favored conditions of society, among those whose names are never uttered beyond the narrow circle in which they toil and suffer, who have but "two mites" to give away,

who have perhaps not even that, but who "desire to be fed with the crumbs which fall from the rich man's table;" for in this class may be found those who have withstood the severest temptation, who have practised the most arduous duties, who have confided in God under the heaviest trials, who have been most wronged and have forgiven most; and these are the great, the exalted, it matters nothing what the particular duties are to which the individual is called, how minute or obscure in their outward form."

It was a singular coincidence that one evening shortly after the foregoing events, there should take place two weddings on the same evening, neither Dora nor Charles dreaming that their marriages would occur at the same time. But so it was. Both had taken place without any ado, though Charles's was attended by his personal friends far and near.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOME SCENE.

A PERIOD of ten years has passed, during which many changes have been wrought in our little village. Old faces have disappeared and new ones taken their place. From the smart, thriving little place it was, it has become a populous city. The streets are all activity, wearing not only an air of business but of gaiety. The sidewalks are crowded with men and women, busily hurrying to and fro, each about their different vocations. Knots of men stand here and there in earnest conversation for a while, and then move on with such impetuosity, that a collision is not unfrequent. Ladies, too, join in the moving throng, and only slacken their pace, when they loiter to peep into store windows, garnished with the latest attractions of the season.

We have said that our village had wonderfully increased in size, insomuch that one would hardly have recognized it who had been absent during the space of time we have mentioned. Even that

which had been the outskirts of the place was now beautifully laid out in streets lined with umbrageous trees, and was now densely populated.

On the corner of one of these streets, on a commanding site, on which years before was built a little brown cottage, which was burned to the ground, stood a large two-story house of the plainest and simplest style of architecture. The plot which fronted this house was a flower garden, and the fence which enclosed it was covered with honey-suckles, so fragrant, that their perfume was perceptible at a great distance. There was another garden adjoining this growing with beets, turnips, cabbages, &c., and separated by a high board fence, with a little gate to enter in, from a velvet spot of green, where all of the nice clothes were laid to whiten on rainy days. In the rear of the house was a graveled yard which directed your steps to the stable, on which was perched at its extreme end a bird house, the exact representation of one of the meeting-houses near by, and occupied every spring with pretty martins.

The proprietor of this mansion was well known throughout the country, and no one enjoyed more respect and love than he. "Come in and partake of my fare," he said to the unfortunate hungered. "Here's money for you!" he told the moneyless; "and there's clothes for you," the needy. We

need hardly to inform the reader, that Charles Edwards, Esquire, was the happy owner of this estate.

Since his marriage he had acquired a name for being not only one of the most able lawyers in the State, but as a man who walked in the highest paths of Christian rectitude. Though he had given away largely of his wealth, it appeared to return to him again ten-fold, and he had accumulated a large competency. Blessed with one of the best of wives, who had borne him a little girl, whose childish prattle enlivened every heart of the household, and commanding the esteem of all who knew him, he felt nothing but happiness. His house was his paradise, and rarely did he leave it to be absent long, after his professional labors of the day were finished.

With him his wife's parents found a permanent home, Mr. Steadyman having recovered in a manner the power of speech, so that he could be tolerably understood.

It was late in the afternoon of the year whereof we write, when Mr. Edwards closed his office and directed his steps towards home. The same radiant happy look pervaded every lineament of his face, which had undergone no material change in the interval of time that had elapsed, and his step was as elastic and buoyant as ever. The street

still swarmed with human beings. The bustle, noise, and animation, did not escape Mr. Edwards's keen observation as he walked along touching his hat now and then to a friend, and taking a general survey of the scene.

Now, his quick, penetrating eye, would rest upon a moneyed lumber-dealer trafficking with a hardy lumberman, then on a fox-eyed fellow who was well known as a shaver of notes, standing at the corner of the street watching for a victim. At the next step he would pass by a stout-built and brawny farmer, who was entering store after store, endeavoring to dispose of his load of butter and eggs at the highest cash rates—then he would perceive the mechanic and artisan hastening rapidly across the street, barely escaping being run over by the carriage of a corpulent gentleman, retired wealthy, proud, and aristocratic, from the grease and ashes business. Then on his right he noticed trudging slowly along the edge of the sidewalk, a poor old mendicant, whom he recognized as the one on whom he bestowed a favor in the morning, and then casting his eye to the left he seasonably averted the jostle of a strutting fop, who was disposed to run everybody down who did not get out of his way. Mr. Edwards was on the point of turning around to ascertain whether the person behind him came in contact with the fellow, when his at-

tention was drawn to the other side of the street, where he recognized a young clerical friend of his to whom he reverentially bowed, and was about to cross over to speak with him when he heard his name pronounced, and at the next moment the speaker was shaking him warmly by the hand.

"Ah, Mr. Wells, is this you? How's your health?" exclaimed Mr. Edwards, linking his arm within that of the grocer's.

"Tolerably well, thank you—though I just now came very near having my ribs knocked in by that upstart who passed us a minute ago. As it was, before I could dodge him as you did, he stepped on to one of my corns, which aches most horribly. I should like to see him suffer smartly for his ungentlemanliness. By good rights he ought not to be allowed to run at large. Pray, what benefit can such a biped be to society?"

"Well, friend Wells, as you well know, it takes all classes of people to make up a community, and each have their various occupations. A community in very many respects," continued Mr. Edwards, as they leisurely pursued their way around the corner of the street, where there was less travel and confusion, "is like the human body—for it is afflicted more or less with all the ills that flesh is heir to—and it is, indeed, a hard matter to cure or eradicate them. If we behold the social body

cured for a while, we soon see another malady more frightful than the first appear, and before it would seem hardly possible, there arises to our wonder a complicated mass of disorders in their grossest forms, raging with all the virulence and malignity of some fearful disease, which so baffles our skill that no act of reformation is equivalent to a little cupping, or wholesome rebuke as good as a purgative or blister. Thus the community suffers, not like man becoming gouty, feverish, snarly, or currish, but rather bearing its afflictions with fortitude and forbearance, impressed with the belief that Drs. Time and Experience will, in the course of events, triumphantly succeed in healing permanently."

"Quite true," rejoined Mr. Wells, "and I will add, that one of the most aggravating afflictions to the human body, and I speak from experience, is a boil. Now, in nature, I am constrained to believe that that batch of audacious pomposity who would have run over us, comes nearer to this kind of a tumor on the social body than anything else I could compare him to."

The comparison was so facetious, that Mr. Wells could scarcely restrain his laughter.

Mr. Edwards laughed, more particularly, to see his friend enjoy himself so richly, than at the humorousness of the simile.

"The fellow reminded me strongly of Sanders in his palmy days," remarked Mr. Edwards, allowing his laughter to abate. "By the way, Mr. Wells, did you ever hear what became of him?"

"I can't say that I can give you any positive assurance of his whereabouts—though I know it was generally supposed that after his precipitate flight he had left for ——. What a consummate rascal he proved himself, if we may place any dependence on the revelations made by the penitent Mrs. Thompson on her death-bed."

"On that point I have not a doubt," replied Mr. Edwards. "Besides, if I had distrusted the truth of her statement, my suspicions would have been instantly dissipated when I learned of additional testimony which confirmed its truth, beyond a single dubious thought. You will recollect that shortly after Dora's marriage with Dr. Lyons, her mother died, and in a week afterwards she followed her father to the grave. Well, then the thoughtless girl saw the error of her past ways, and as I was overjoyed to realize, underwent a complete reformation. As you well know a reconciliation took place between us, and our families at once became on the most intimate terms. As I was about to say, one evening, a year ago, I think it was, when Dora was visiting my house, I was reading aloud the news of the day from our papers,

when I came across a paragraph to the effect that a man by the name of Sanders, in the city of —, had been suspected of committing forgery to a large amount, and had left for parts unknown. After I had finished reading this startling information, Dora at once remarked, that she believed the suspected criminal was her wicked cousin, and forthwith gave me such a lucid account of his dissolute and ill-spent life, which not only corroborated in every particular the truth of her deceased mother's story, but led me also to believe that the suspected forger, Sanders, and her relation of the same name, was one and the same person, and that he was guilty of the crime which had been committed."

"This is enough to convince me of the verity of Mrs. Thompson's declarations," remarked Mr. Wells, "as well as sufficiently plausible for me to agree with you in believing that Sanders is the forger. For if he would cut up such a trick as he did here with impunity, he is certainly capable of practicing his atrocities to any extent."

"Circumstances weigh heavily against him certainly," said Mr. Edwards, stopping in front of his garden gate, and swinging it open as he spoke.

"Halloo, papa!" exclaimed a bird-like voice, and at the next moment a little flaxen-haired, blue-eyed child stepped out from behind a rose-bush hedge

and essayed to climb up to Mr. Edwards's neck to allow him to caress her, an act which he was wont to do every afternoon on his return from the office. Bending forward he caught the little one up in his arms, and after permitting her to bid Mr. Wells good evening, he bestowed a kiss on her cherry lips, and moved up the walk towards the house.

"Well, what's my little daughter been doing this afternoon. Has she been to school like a good little girl?"

"Yes, I has, dike a dood girl, an' I'se dot a weard of merit."

Mr. Edwards clasped the child more closely to his bosom with parental endearment, while she exclaimed: "Please let Izzey det down, papa, an' I'll run an' det it an' show it to you. Mama's dot it put away!"

Allowing the child to carry out her wish, Mr. Edwards set her gently down on her feet, when off she scampered ahead of him for the house, followed closely behind by a large pet spaniel, who had bounded from out his kennel, apprehending that she was in danger. Finding that it was a false alarm, the dog turned back, and beholding his master, commenced wagging his tail and instantly ran and leaped upon him, and appeared quite glad to see him. Mr. Edwards humored the

faithful animal by romping with him a few minutes, and then bidding him go and lie down, he straightway entered the house.

Mrs. Edwards, although she had ripened into the full vigor of womanhood, still wore the same lovely and winning cast of countenance as in former years, and her disposition was as amiable, and her heart as artless and confiding as ever. The bloom of health tinged her cheeks, and when she laid aside the volume which she was perusing, and arose to meet her husband, she saluted him with a joyous laugh, which greatly increased their ruddy glow.

They had not long been talking together, when Lizzy came skipping into the room with her baby doll in one hand and the reward of merit in the other.

"I'se found you at last, papa," she exclaimed, advancing to his side. "I went out into the yard to show you my reward after mama give it to me, but you'd done, an' so I came into the house. Isn't it pretty? See what a pretty dittle pictur dere is on't," and she held the paper up to her parent's gaze.

"I'm glad that mama's and papa's bright-eyed Lizzey has been such a smart scholar, and hope that she will ever try to be as good as she is desirous to learn her lessons," and Mr. Edwards with-

drew his gaze from the gift, and tenderly looked into the face of Lizzy.

"I does try ever so hard," she replied, "an' when I spell dog, tat an' lots of other words, I wish all the time the teacher would let me spell dod instead, cos I love him so much. But where is grandma an' grandpa, mama?"

"They have gone out to ride, dear," said Mrs. Edwards, readjusting some portion of her child's dress, "I expect them back soon."

"Den I'll do up into the nursery an' pay with my doll until they tome, mama," and away the little one sped out of the apartment.

It was evident that the child which had just left the room was the hope and pride of its parents, and an object on which their affections were centered; not an hour ever passed away when they were together, but her name was mentioned, and so solicitous were they for her happiness and comfort that they were constantly planning something or other that would either impart pleasure or instruction to her mind. Thus did she spend her childhood's hours, so desirous to be good and emulate her parents in their Christian meekness that it was a frequent expression of Mrs. Edwards to her husband that the older their darling girl became the more she appeared like little Bessy before she

died. It would not seem strange then that the object, which was invariably uppermost in their minds, formed the subject of conversation almost immediately after she had glided out, and particularly in an instance like the present, when such an honor had been achieved as shown by the marks of approbation bestowed by her teacher.

Their conversation was brought to a termination by the sudden entrance of Lizzy, who joyously exclaimed:—

"Grandpa an' grandma have tome!"

Mr. Steadyman was trundled into the room in a large portable easy-chair which moved on castors, by one of the domestics, preceded by Mrs. Steadyman. The former, though his brow was wrinkled with premature old age and his limbs entirely useless and inert, seemed to be in excellent spirits, while the latter still preserved her quiet, unostentatious manner, and when she sat herself down beside her spouse and drew little Lizzy up in her lap, she felt perfectly happy and contented.

A pleasant chat now ensued concerning their ride, which was kept up until tea was announced. After supper, the lamps were lit and the curtains drawn, and then the family returned to the sitting-room, with the exception of Mr. Edwards, who was obliged to attend that evening a meeting of the

Board of Trustees of the Williams's School, the institution which had been established with the fund left by Squire Williams for the education of the poor children of the place, and named in honor of its benevolent donor.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A LIVE YANKEE.

DURING the space of time they had been married, which was a period of several years, the intelligent and wealthy Mr. Cornelius Timpkins proved as kind and doting a husband as he was witty and good-natured in his bachelorhood, while on the other hand she, that was Mrs. Edwards, was as affectionate and devoted a wife in return. They resided at the "old homestead" in which Mrs. Timpkins had passed so many pleasant hours with her son, and to which she was so strongly attached that she expressed a wish to Mr. Timpkins when she became his that he would consent to their always living there, which he readily did.

It was on the following morning, when Mr. Timpkins left his house and took his accustomed stroll down town. Mr. Timpkins walked slowly, for it was not his nature, as he had often humorously remarked, to put in the knitting work in his locomotion, but rather take it fair and easy, keep-

ing both eyes open. Naturally possessed of a quick and discerning mind, he never allowed anything to escape unnoticed, but was ever constantly observing something or other new and marvelous, which was at once treasured up in his mind, and when the proper time came, he related or described with that brilliancy and sprightliness for which he was so distinguished.

"Oh!" ruminated Mr. Timpkins, perceiving at a distance a lady moving towards him with dignified grace and bearing, "here comes a woman of fashion, the walking advertisement of some milliner's shop. Behold with what noble carriage she sweeps along, decked out in her flaunting silks and fineries. She stalks into a dry goods establishment. As a matter to be expected, she will cause a great sensation among the counter-jumpers, who will all move simultaneously towards her, bowing and scraping and politely inquiring how each can serve her ladyship. The most desirable patterns of the latest imported style of dress goods are called for. In a jiffy everything in the shape of dress goods will be taken down from the shelves, and the angel creature after pulling and hauling them over for an hour or so will finally make a purchase of a few hair pins and walk out with majestic tread; the yard-stick fellow would not even think of uttering a word of complaint as he sees

the rich brocades and satins in such an almost inextricable fix, but on the contrary considers it to be the proudest moment of his life and an honor that is almost insupportable. But how changed the scene if that humble mechanic's wife yonder, dressed cheaply though neatly, should now enter this very establishment; the enthusiasm of the clerks goes down to zero, and they whisper to each other, "she's only looking round." Perhaps one will venture after a while to show her the "latest fashions;" then quite reluctantly a few styles of calicoes and cheap de laines are displayed. A selection is almost immediately made, and then she leaves. But what a torrent of abuse falls from the mouth of the clerk upon her as he stands looking angrily at the little pile of goods, not in the least disordered. He is impressed with the belief that in the latter instance not only was his patience almost exhausted in showing her the goods, and his labor almost unendurable in returning them to the shelves, but was disgusted to know that he had so demeaned himself by condescending as he did to wait upon one of the common class. Well, well, such are the ways of the world, and it will be a long time before people will see themselves as others see them," and here Mr. Timpkins dolefully shaking his head and taking a pinch of snuff, paused in his speculations, for his attention was

drawn to the other side of the street to a spectacle which so excited his curiosity that he exclaimed, "I guess I'll go over and see what it amounts to, at all events!" and acting on the impulse of the thought, away he started.

The sight which attracted Mr. Timpkins's attention was a man haranguing a large crowd from a box which laid on the edge of the sidewalk. He was grotesquely dressed, and when Mr. Timpkins drew near he found that he was a Yankee soap maker, and was now engaged in telling a story to his hearers. Mr. Timpkins concluded to remain and hear him.

"Well," continued the Yankee, "as I was about to say before I sold that last cake, will anybody else have another; only twelve-an'-a-half cents. Nobody takes one—the trial of Snooks progressed. He was up, as I told you, for being inebriated, or, in plainer language, drunk. One of the witnesses testified that once 'on a time' he discovered Snooks going to Cheeseboro', a public resort, and impelled by some spiritual power, he walked up to Snooks and removed from his outside coat pocket a two-gallon jug, the contents of which he believed to be ardent spirits, if his situation was any proof of the fact one hour afterwards. Another witness testified that to the best of his belief as a sane man, and he was willing to stake his reputa-

tion as a cobbler that instead of Snooks being drunk, it was the prosecuting attorney, Mr. Pettifoger. This seemed to be proof positive in the mind of the Judge, and when summing up the case, which he did in the briefest manner possible, he gave his free and unbiased opinion according to law and more particularly to evidence, that there was a flaw in the warrant, and instead of its being Snooks who was on such a day guilty of being intoxicated, etc., Snooks's name should be erased and Pettifoger's inserted, and on this being done he should render judgment against Pettifoger as being guilty of the offence, and fine him five dollars and costs, just the sum, exclusive of the latter, that I will sell one box of my patent chemical soap for, one gross in a box, or one cake at twelve an'-a-half cents, warranted to extract oleaginous substance enough out of a butcher to illuminate a city cheaper and better than gaslight, moonlight or daylight, or take the grease out of any kind of woolen, cotton, linen, silk or satin goods as quick as I can pocket this gentleman's money and pass him over a cake. Who takes another? Ah! sold again and got the rhino. Anybody else have another; only twelve an'-a-half cents; nobody takes one. Well, gentlemen, if I can't cheat somebody else, I must finish my story by saying, who'll take take another cake of the only genuine Yankee

chemical soap, going at twelve for a dollar, five for a half, and the first gentleman who winks and draws his calf-skin takes one for twelve-an'-a-half cents. Nobody takes one; very well; oh! beg pardon, here's a gentleman that is thoughtful enough to buy a cake before they're all gone. Sold again!" and stooping over he passed Mr. Timpkins a cake of his soap, while that gentleman in return handed him the money.

There was a merry twinkle playing about Mr. Timpkins's eyes as he deposited the purchase in his coat pocket, which plainly signified that he was pleased with the tact and skill displayed by the Yankee in disposing of his wares, and that, although he was sensible enough to know that the fellow was a humbug, still he was willing to patronize him as long as he remained in the mood to relish his stories. Among the crowd he noticed several of his friends who also evidently enjoyed the humor of the lively and garrulous Yankee, insomuch that when he asked one of them who was a prominent merchant, if he had allowed himself to be taken in by the sharp and indefatigable vendor of soap, he answered that he not only had, but had also made up his mind to remain and buy still another cake, as soon as he had conceived another one of his agreeable stories. Mr. Timpkins then assented to the same thing, and both now gave their attention

to the Yankee, for he was about to entertain his audience with another scintillation of his genius.

"Well, gentlemen," said he, "I'll now tell you a little story about old Judge W—. Don't be in a hurry, gentlemen," continued he, perceiving that several were on the point of leaving, "for I promise you that the time I shall occupy in telling it will not be as long as I am in handing you over my cakes of invaluable patent soap, or as short as I am in making change for a half, when I offer you five cakes for that price. Who takes 'em? Ah! thank you, sold again. Now for my yarn. Some years ago, when Judge W— was practising law in a small town in a neighboring State; he had his office in a building which we call a ten-footer; it was on the ground-floor, and adjoined a barber's shop. One day while the Judge was in his office with his feet perched up on a table, deeply interested in reading a law book, a couple of Jack Tars who had just arrived in town from a long voyage, looked into the door, and after hitching up his pants and rolling his quid about in his mouth, one of them asked, 'If they could be after shaving a body here!' The Judge made no answer. 'Can you be after shaving a body here!' vociferated the sailor again. The Judge raised his eyes and saw that they had mistaken the character of his business, but nevertheless bent upon having

some fun, in a good-natured way, remarked, 'Shave you directly, my good fellows.' 'No you won't, either,' said Jack, scratching his head and looking at the large library of books, 'for I don't like the looks of your razors!' and off they went."

The crowd, unable to control their risibilities, now drowned the Yankee's voice with a hearty burst of laughter, on the subsiding of which he found no difficulty in getting rid of a larger quantity of soap than he had previously sold.

"Now, who'll have another cake," he said, strenuously endeavoring to take further advantage of the auspicious moment. "Nobody takes one. Very well. But oh! excuse me a moment, gentlemen," and the Yankee paused as he perceived a man whom he knew making his way through the crowd towards him. The man soon stood by his side, and, after both had indulged for a few moments in private conversation, he walked slowly away with considerable dignity. Mr. Timpkins had a good opportunity to examine the stranger, and despite the profusion of hair which grew on his face, he saw that his countenance wore a wild and unnatural look. Mr. Timpkins was questioning in his own mind who the stranger was, when he heard the Yankee exclaim:—

"Gentlemen, the eccentric character with whom I had just spoken is destined to become one

of the most remarkable men of the age. His name is Ichabob Snorter, and he is a gentleman of enormous wealth. But this is a secondary matter as it were, when compared to his genius, which, gentlemen, is so marvelous and worthy of admiration, that he has conceived the idea of stretching a wire suspension bridge across the Atlantic Ocean. You may laugh, gentlemen, and say how utterly preposterous and mad it is to even think of such a thing, but my friends, if I should allow myself to give you an inkling of *our* plans, for, gentlemen, I myself am interested in this stupendous project, having already advanced fifty thousand dollars in purchasing an interest, besides numerous other small amounts which have been used in experimenting; every doubt, I will venture to assert, in your minds would be dispelled, and you all would at once see its practicability, and would take all the stock you could get at any price, when we get ready to sell. I flatter myself, gentlemen, that I am smart, and can turn my hand to most anything and make money—if a humbug so much the better—and I have made money, gentlemen, an independent fortune, on my word of honor, and as true as my name is Bonum. Well, gentlemen, taking this into consideration, would one of you presume to think for an instant, that I would submit in having my credulities so outrageously imposed upon, as to believe the practicability of such a

scheme, and induced to risk my money in its advancement with Mr. Snorter's, if I once thought it was absurd and impossible? No, my friends, far from it. I am one of that kind who believes any thing to be possible in these days of progress and intelligence—and so I honestly believe that in this matter we shall be successful—and when the proper time comes and you hear of the reward of your labors, you will then say that Bonum, the Yankee, had his eye teeth cut when he went into Snorter's magnanimous undertaking. Laugh on then if you please, gentlemen—all I have to say is, who'll take another cake of my patent chemical soap—giving it away at twelve an'-a-half cents a cake—who'll have it—ah! sold again and got the money."

Mr. Timpkins now left the spot, having been fully compensated, as he thought, for stopping and listening to the witticisms of the active soap hawker. For several squares he heard his loud, shrill voice clearly ringing above the applause of the crowd, and he was forced to laugh, in spite of himself, as he thought of the scheme which he had adverted to. The voice, however, was soon lost to his ear, and a few steps more brought him in front of Mr. Edwards's office. This undoubtedly was the place of his destination, for at the next moment he was busily chatting with Mr. Edwards about what he had seen and heard on his way down town.

CHAPTER XXV.

DARK FOREBODINGS.

"WELL, Mr. Timpkins," observed Mr. Edwards, after he had listened to the incident which that gentleman had related with such zest,—“the Yankee, without doubt, is a sharp, shrewd fellow, and evidently knows what he is about—but as for that Snorter, I hardly know what to make of him.”

“If we may judge by this moonshine scheme of his,” interrupted Mr. Timpkins, “he is either laboring under a disordered mind, or is playing the part of a designing knave.”

“Quite likely it is one of these two—but as I was about to tell you, I have not only seen this Mr. Snorter, but have conversed with him.”

“You have!” exclaimed Mr. Timpkins, with astonishment. “Pray, when and where.”

“Last evening, while on my way to the trustees' meeting I was accosted by a stranger, who, after telling me his name was Ichabod Snorter, inquired if I knew whether any member of Sam Steady-

man's family was alive, to which I replied, by telling him, that since the night of Sam's escape from the Insane Hospital, where he had been placed for perturbation of the brain, caused by his heavy reverses of fortune, I had never heard a single word of him, nor any of the family. At this, off he bolted, and while he went down the street, I crossed over the pavement and pursued my way in a contrary direction."

"Well, this was rather a singular interview. What motive do you suppose he had in asking you about Sam's family, and then bolting off as soon as you told him."

"I think it is concerning a matter, which he sententiously alluded to in another interview I had with him this forenoon in the street—a matter which I am exceedingly pained to learn."

"What is it, pray?"

"This Snorter has signified his intention, that in the course of six months or thereabout, if he didn't come across Sam Steadyman in the interim, he should be under the necessity of enforcing a claim which he had in his possession, which *might* do a near and dear relative of myself and wife's, a deal of harm."

"And did he mention the name of the relative whom he thus menaced," inquired Mr. Timpkins, looking up in wonder.

"Yes. It was my wife's father."

"What, John Steadyman, Sam's brother!" earnestly iterated Mr. Timpkins, springing up from his chair.

"Such is the fact," replied Mr. Edwards, calmly.

"And what is the nature of the claim," said Mr. Timpkins, re-seating himself, and taking an enormous pinch of snuff. "And how does he intend to enforce it?"

"He said that it was for debt," observed Mr. Edwards; "and he signified his intention of taking the initiatory steps for instituting a civil action."

"Is it possible? But I can't believe it, Charley—can't believe that such a contract is valid," and Mr. Timpkins distrustfully shook his head. After a short pause he again remarked: "Did Snorter state when and in what manner the debt was contracted?"

"He averred that it was for money loaned my father-in-law some fifteen years ago, and now already due—by Sam, for which he took a promissory note."

"What is the face of the note, and how came it in Snorter's possession?"

"The note is for two thousand dollars. He purchased it, so he says, of Sam, one day when he was a little hard pressed for money, five years after it had been running. After the transfer had

been made he then went off to the Continent, where he had been travelling until this summer, when he returned."

"Did Snorter show you the note?"

"Yes, and it has Sanders's signature as witness. I examined it so minutely as to satisfy myself that father's scrawling autograph that he used to write had not been counterfeited."

"Well, admitting that everything is all straight," observed Mr. Timpkins, "there is one thing about the matter that doesn't look well in my mind. Why hasn't Snorter never acted like a man and notified John that he held Sam's demand against him, and thus had the matter properly adjusted on its becoming due. It's plain enough then, I think, that he is not disposed to amicably settle it, but rather satisfy a selfish and malicious spirit, by going to law."

"You are right, Mr. Timpkins, nor will he even make any compromise, so he says. His wealth is so enormous, that he is bent on engaging in a process of law to afford him a little pastime, if nothing more, during his stay here, he jocosely remarked."

"Why, this is not only heartlessly audacious, but grossly insulting," exclaimed Mr. Timpkins, warmly, rising to his feet; "why, if I had the man here, I should be tempted to cane him. But, after all, it's no use to get into a passion about it,"

he added, resuming his seat, and becoming pacified, "for you are not sure yet that he will carry his affirmation into execution."

"Be that as it may," said Mr. Edwards, distinctly enunciating each word as he spoke, with his accustomed firmness and decision. "I shall wait with patience until he commences the action, and then I shall hold myself in readiness to meet every contingency—have it settled honestly, and to the satisfaction of all concerned. In the meanwhile I shall not give myself any uneasiness about the matter, and if I should meet Snorter, shall treat him civilly as a gentleman, and as my duty as a Christian."

"But shall you not speak with John concerning the genuineness of the note?"

"I hardly know how to answer you, Mr. Timpkins, for I am undecided what to do. At one moment I think that it is highly imperative that I should broach the matter quietly, and discover in an indirect way whether he has any recollection of ever giving such a note. Then, again, I question in my own mind whether or not such a step would be as imprudent as it was necessary, for you know that if it should appear that he was not the maker of the note, and I should be forced to explain to him the whole matter, it might prove such a source of worryment to him that would be deplorable;

and God knows that I had rather suffer extortion, imposition, and pay the debt, unknown to any one except the payee, than for father and mother Steadyman, after they have lived so happily for ten years, to imagine that danger threatened their peace and serenity of mind; and that their earthly troubles were about to be renewed, when least expected."

Mr. Edwards during this fervent and spontaneous outburst of parental love and veneration, had arose and stood proud and erect before Mr. Timpkins. His voice towards the close of his remarks grew tremulous and his lip quivered, as his mind reverted back to the suffering and privation which his beloved wife's grey haired parents had undergone in days past. But banishing these thoughts from his mind, he soon gained the mastery of his feelings.

Mr. Timpkins had readily guessed the cause of Mr. Edwards's emotions, and being acquainted so well with all the workings of his nature, he deemed it proper to divert his attention into another channel of conversation, and thus give him an opportunity to subdue the throes of his noble heart. But before he could accomplish his purpose he noticed that Mr. Edwards had expelled the unpleasant conceptions that had clouded his brain.

And, therefore, as he got up from his chair, the

thought struck him, that as such a step was now unnecessary, it would be much better, perhaps, to propose to his son-in-law to take a walk. He therefore said, "Come, my boy, if you are not engaged, let us take a stroll up town and see what's going on on 'change."

Mr. Edwards glanced at his watch, and seeing that the hour was at hand when a client of his had promised to meet him, he told Mr. Timpkins of the fact, which gentleman, after being assured that his son-in-law had assumed his wonted placidity of countenance, excused him, and took his leave, just as the client entered the office to meet his appointment.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A RAY OF LIGHT.

As it was the last day of entering a prosecution for trial at the fall term of the county court, Mr. Edwards found his labors after the departure of his client of the morning, becoming more hurried and arduous; and thus during the entire day, until it was dark, was his whole time so wholly taken up with the calls of his numerous clients, that he was prevented from going home to dinner at noon, or even partaking of a hasty lunch at an eating-house which stood within a stone's throw. When at last there was a cessation, and he was relieved from the pressure of business which had so nearly exhausted him, he immediately locked the office, and hastened homewards with his usual alacrity, notwithstanding he felt so wearied with his day's work. At length he reached home, and no sooner had he closed the garden gate, than Lizzy darted out from a parterre of flowers, where she had been patiently waiting with her faithful dog, for his approach

sometime, and joyfully taking him by the hand, subsequent to her receiving the customary greeting, they walked to the house.

The evening repast had been delayed by Mrs. Edwards's instructions, until her husband's return, while she sat in a bay window that looked out into the garden, and listened with fevered anxiety for the sound of his footsteps. At last she heard his well-known step, mingled with the rapturous exclamations of Lizzy, "Papa has tome, mama!" to the top of her voice, and springing from her chair, she was just in season to meet them both as they entered the door.

At once all traces of that pensive solicitude which had settled on her countenance, now imperceptibly disappeared into a happy roseate hue, and the affectionate wife leaning on his arm, and fondly upturning her head as she smilingly looked into his face, exclaimed with a dulcet intonation of voice, as they sought the sitting-room:—

"I had begun to feel apprehensive that something ill must have befallen you, inasmuch so as you did not come home to dinner, that I have several times during the past hour, been on the point of sending one of the servants to the office to ascertain the cause of your detention."

"I have had my hands so full of business," replied Mr. Edwards, conducting his wife and child

to the sofa, "that I could not possibly come home to dinner or get any earlier to tea."

"You look well nigh beat out," said Mrs. Edwards, gently pushing back the hair from off his forehead.

"Yes, papa is weal tired I know," also chimed in little Lizzy, as she on his other side dallied lovingly with his hand. "Please, papa, don't work so hard," she added, with a mournful air, ceasing her dalliance, "for you'll det sick and den your 'Izzy, perhaps, will have no papa."

The sensibilities of Mr. Edwards were momentarily moved by the innocent and warm appeal of the child, and as he tenderly patted her dimpled chin, he was led to observe:—

"Then Lizzy loves her papa."

"Yes, I does," was the quick reply.

"Does she like him better than mama?" and Mr. Edwards smiled, for he could have foretold the answer.

"No, I love you both alike, dearly," and she tossed back her waving ringlets, and sealed the sincerity of the declaration by kissing them both.

"Well, well, Lizzy," remarked Mr. Edwards, as he drew her up into his lap; "then your papa will try and not get himself sick, to please little Lizzy and mama." Then turning to the latter, he said:

"I must admit, Mary, that I am somewhat tired as

my looks indicate, as you say, but your ever cheering, solacing, and familiar voice, has already so refreshed and invigorated me both in body and mind, that I am sufficiently rested."

Mrs. Edwards bowed her head, plainly evincing that in the warmth of her devotion and conjugal affection, in her constant and unwearied efforts to prove loyal to her liege lord, and to weld indissolubly their strong attachment, her highest and grandest object was to insure his earthly happiness.

There was nothing more beautiful to Mr. Edwards's mind than the mutual recognition of man and wife, of one object and one purpose—and when he beheld the partner of his joys, and hopes, and fears, assiduously striving to do everthing that her capabilities would permit, that would result to his good, he was alike strenuous and ardent in not only promoting her weal, but also in turning her efforts to the combined advantage of both.

"It is the last day," he continued, "that the lawyers have of entering an action, so that they can be tried this next court, and so you may imagine, my love, that with such an extensive practice as I enjoy, I must have been pretty busy. However, if I had attempted to please at first a great many who called to see me, I should have been detained much longer than I was, but I reasoned with them as cogently as I could, and had the satisfaction of

succeeding in getting the greater portion to abandon their idea of going into a vexatious law-suit, by assuring them that I would assume the responsibility of amicably adjusting their difficulties, without a charge to either parties for my services. There were also two other gentlemen that wanted me, who wished to secure my services in an important suit that is now pending, when I recommended to them the young lawyer who has just opened an office opposite mine, and I am pleased to know that they have employed him. Though he lacks experience, I think that he is abundantly able to take charge of their case."

"I am glad that you sent them to him," replied Mrs. Edwards; "for he is a young man not only of the strictest probity, so I hear, but of the highest moral sentiments. Such a young man ought to be encouraged."

"Your views correspond with mine exactly, Mary; and, thank God, as long as it remains in my feeble power, I shall ever strive to lend a helping hand to my fellow-creatures, when they are deserving of it. The great fault with mankind is, that whenever they are overwhelmed with business, they are so selfish, that they are not disposed to turn away a portion of their business to their less fortunate next door neighbor, whose family, perhaps, are actually suffering for food or raiment,

because his business is so limited. Now, this young practitioner, though he is a stranger to me, has, I understand, excellent qualifications, and he needs only a start to make him known in the world. In a few years, if he only conducts himself as I hope he will, his time will be incessantly occupied, and from the poor briefless lawyer of comparative obscurity, he will rise to the man of note and eminence in his profession. But hark! there is the tea-bell—let's go out—come, Lizzy!" and forthwith all three retired from the room.

Mr. and Mrs. Steadyman were both already seated at the table. Grace having been pronounced by Mr. Edwards, the family then fell to work on the bounteous display of food spread out on the snow-white cloth before them.

"This sirloin of beef is excellent; it's roasted admirably," remarked Mr. Edwards, helping himself to another slice. "Wife, will you please to pass me the potatoes?"

"It tasted very nicely at dinner," replied Mrs. Edwards, promptly heeding his request, "and I am glad that Bridget did not allow it to get overdone in keeping it warm for you. Won't you take another biscuit, husband?" she continued, passing him the plate; "these are some that I baked myself."

"Thank you," remarked Mr. Edwards, taking

one of the smoking hot cakes at his wife's solicitation. "I thought that they were uncommonly good when I was eating my first one, and was mentally astonished at the wonderful progress that I supposed Bridget was making in cooking under your superintendence, but to hear that they were made by you is a sufficient guarantee of their super-excellence, and I am not displeased to know that I labored under an erroneous impression, but on the contrary am pleased, for I shall expect to see Bridget's next batch of bread excellent and palatable."

"The yeast used in rising the bread," interjected Mrs. Edwards, smiling, "was alone made by Bridget, and that is the great desideratum employed in making bread, for if you have a poor article of yeast, your bread is generally inferior. Lizzy, dear, be careful and not spill your milk when you drink. Mother, take a little more of the plum-preserves, and help father to another piece of meat which husband will have the kindness to cut."

A beautiful smile shone upon Mr. Edwards's countenance as he commenced carving the meat, the obvious and manifest reason of which being that he was not so much gratified by the aptness which his wife had so adroitly shown in transferring the encomium he had bestowed on her for the superiority of the bread over to Bridget, as he

was to know and realize that such modest and reserved unpretensions formed one of the many noble traits of her character, a quality which he considered to be a gem so rare in poor human nature, that its worth was inestimable. His heart, however, prompted no reply after he had finished carving a tender slice of meat for his father-in-law. Nevertheless, he could not resist the temptation of gazing ever and anon with ineffable affection while he resumed his meal, on the being whom he thus so fondly loved.

When supper was over Mrs. Edwards reminded her mother of the weekly meeting that evening of the benevolent society of their church, which caused them both to immediately commence getting ready, so as to be there in season. As it was Lizzy's bedtime, she was accordingly undressed and placed with her baby doll in her crib. A few moments then sufficed for them to suitably apparel themselves, and when they were all ready, Mrs. Edwards observed to her husband:

"You will be sure and come after us at nine o'clock?"

"Certainly, my dear," he replied, raising his eyes from the newspaper he was perusing. "The meeting is at the parsonage-house this evening, isn't it?"

"Yes;" and then turning to her mother, she

said, "I think we had better walk up to mother Timpkins first, and then from her house proceed to the society meeting, which is only a few doors off."

"Very well; so be it," replied the matron.

"Well, we're going," said Mrs. Edwards to her husband and father; "be sure and come at nine, Charles. Good evening!"

"Good evening."

"Dood night, mama an' grandma," echoed little Lizzy's voice from her chamber at the head of the stairs, through the spacious entry which they were treading, which led to the front door.

"Good night, darling," replied both simultaneously, and the door was open and they then left.

After they were gone, Mr. Edwards commenced reading the news of the day from the evening paper to his father-in-law. On this being accomplished, and while the attention of both was engrossed with their own thoughts, the remembrance of his interview in the morning with Mr. Snorter flashed vividly across Mr. Edwards's mind. He was still in doubt how to act, notwithstanding he deemed it an absolute necessity to ascertain whether his father-in-law was the maker of the note, or whether he had any knowledge whatever of such a transaction with his brother. Still, he was loth to make even the slightest allusion to the matter

at all, for fear of the sad effects which he predicted to Mr. Timpkins would arise therefrom, and which he so dreaded. Then again Mr. Edwards thought seriously of taking the note up without anybody's cognition, if he could come to terms with Snorter. But supposing the note was fraudulent, and he should pay it nevertheless, wouldn't Snorter feel so encouraged and elated at his success in his nefarious scheme, that he would be induced to make another still better push without the slightest compunction of conscience? And yet how base and despicable would be such an honorable and honest intention, he queried, if I shall yield obedience to the impulses of a generous nature; I shall be knowingly conniving at and upholding an act which is a most wicked sin, and which, if I was called upon in my professional capacity to defend, I should refuse to do rather than defeat the ends of justice. No, no, I had rather sacrifice my love, my sense of duty towards my parent, than to even tarnish, by such thoughts as these, those innate principles which have governed me for years, and which I cherish so devoutly. Some step, however, must be taken by me sooner or later, that's very certain.

Mr. Edwards pursued this train of thought for some time, puzzled and almost perplexed to know what discretionary mode he should adopt to dis-

cover whether the note was genuine or not without his father-in-law having any knowledge of the matter, and thus be prepared in season to meet Snorter with the proper weapons of defence when he carried his threat into execution. At last a happy idea occurred to him, and the more he thought of it the firmer grew his conviction that he was now able to take a practicable step and one which would result in satisfying himself at least for the present whether his father-in-law ever gave such a note to his brother. There was an old note-book, he recollected, that was laid away with some old papers and memorandums in an escritoire stowed away in a closet in the library. This note-book belonged to his father-in-law, in which he never failed of recording every note which he had given during his life. To the library, then, Mr. Edwards hurried, and after overhauling the contents of the escritoire, which he found had not been disturbed for years, his eye at length fell upon the article he was in search of; it was a long narrow book, considerable worn and rusty with age, and when he began to examine its contents, nearly all of the leaves dropped out. The fugitive leaves, however, were immediately gathered up and restored to their proper places, and soon Mr. Edwards had concluded a careful inspection, and found no record made by his father-in-law of the

note. This discovery, though not proof positive, was sufficient to convince him that the note had not been lawfully made, for he felt confident that, if his father-in-law had been its maker, it would have been found recorded.

The question now arose in his mind whether or not Snorter was innocent of the suspicion he had fastened on him, but had really purchased the note as he affirmed, in good faith, and to relieve Sam Steadyman from his pecuniary embarrassment; that Sam, in short, was the guilty one, and had resorted to this means at the time to raise money. But why does Snorter object to a settlement, preferring rather to litigate as a source of amusement? Ah! the truth becomes transparent. He has discovered that he has been defrauded by Sam, and as he is not to be found, he now longs to vent his spleen upon his brother as the only means of avenging himself. Mr. Timpkins observed that Snorter was gratifying a purely wilful and malicious spirit, and I believe he is right in his presupposition. This hypothesis is strengthened by Snorter's statement that his wealth is so immense that it is not so much the money he wants as it is the pleasure that will be afforded him of going to law. "Well," he murmured after placing the note-book safely back in the escritoire and retracing his steps to the sitting-room, "after all, I have at last suc-

ceeded in satisfying myself that the note is spurious without being forced to undergo the pain in asking father Steadyman and of witnessing the consequences; I shall now rest easy and without discontent until I get wind that Snorter has taken the first step; then I shall bow my head to the storm with calm resignation, feeling confidently that He who controlleth all things will not allow injustice to be done."

Mr. Edwards's face assumed its usual placid and benign look as he went back to the sitting-room and began to converse with his father-in-law, and when in an hour afterwards he returned, from the society's meeting, with his wife and mother-in-law, he felt that in the opportune discovery he had made that a heavy weight had been removed from off his mind.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE INCOMPARABLE.

It was now late in the autumn. The Indian summer had passed and old winter had already forewarned his approach by a flurry of snow. The weather at this season, though generally fair, was disagreeably chilly, a sensation perhaps more sensibly felt by the sudden transitions it underwent from warm to cold. It was on one of these pleasant days when Mr. Timpkins entered the — Bank, an institution which the week previous he had accepted the presidency of. He had been seated but a short time examining cursorily the stock reports in the morning newspaper, when he casually looked up and discovered Mr. Bonum in front of the Cashier's desk in another room, in the act of counting quite a large roll of bills. This was the first time Mr. Timpkins had seen the Yankee since he last saw him in the street, and as he looked upon what he could see of his person, he perceived that he had exchanged his fantastic rig for a genteel fashion-

able dress. The recollection of the Utopian and preposterous undertaking that Bonum had spoken of on that occasion provoked Mr. Timpkins's inquisitiveness to not only draw him out, if he could, more fully on the subject, but, if he could not, to have as much fun at his expense as the circumstances would permit. Mr. Timpkins therefore stepped noiselessly into the room and carelessly leaning forward on the railing that was placed to resist encroachments upon official grounds by those not allowed to enter authoritatively therein, he determined to wait until Bonum had concluded his business with the official and then manage to get into conversation with him.

"I got into the wrong door in trying to find your bank," said Bonum to the cashier, passing him over the roll of bills he had finished counting. "There's twenty-five hundred dollars, I believe, Mr. Cashier, that I wish to deposit. My name is James Bonum."

The cashier was not long in recounting the money, and after placing it away in the drawer of a small safe which stood near by, and then registering Mr. Bonum's name among the list of depositors, he handed him a small bank book with the amount of his deposit recorded on the credit side, in account with the bank, together with a package of blank checks.

"Yes," continued Mr. Bonum, laughing, putting the checks inside of the book, and placing the whole in a side pocket inside of his coat, "I got into the wrong pen as it happened. I went up into the doctor's office in the next door supposing it was the bank, and did not discover my mistake until after I had opened the door and inquired, without stopping to think or even to look round, if this was the bank, when the reply I got from the gentlemanly occupant was, if I wished to make a deposit, he, that is the doctor, whom I presume it was, would be very happy anytime to accept all such favors, but if I was going to make a draw, he thought that I could be better accommodated at the next door, up stairs."

There was now a capital chance opened, as Mr. Timpkins considered, to take the initiative in having a little talk with the Yankee, and therefore he remarked, as he stepped outside the barrier, through a little gate, and advanced towards him with a most condescending mien:—

"Such mistakes, sir, occur quite often to strangers, and Dr. Lyons, who is a great wag in his way, whenever he is in his office improves the opportunity, by having a little sport."

"I should have been much more amused, and would have been willing to present the doctor with a ten specker if he had so blinded me as to

have taken my money, and not rectified the mistake until I had smelt a rat."

"I have often wondered that he has not taken some unsophisticated chap's money when he has been in the mood for having a little innocent bantering, and just as they were about to leave, astonish them by refunding their money. But the doctor would not be guilty of such an indiscretion. He would consider it carrying his diversion too far."

"I don't see why he should, it would be entirely harmless, and then I am sure no sensible person would take offence. Now, I myself am something of a joker, and have gone so far in the perpetration of a little piece of innocent and amusing trickery, that I have had the felicity of seeing it go off so well, that the unsuspecting person paid dearly for it, of her own free will and accord. This is what I call joking to some advantage. But let me relate you the case in point, sir, that is, with your permission."

"Go on, sir, I am all attention," replied Mr. Timpkins. "But before you begin, I think we had better withdraw to my private office. You there can tell your story without interruption." And Mr. Timpkins pointed to an adjoining room, which they entered. After both were seated, Mr. Bonum commenced:—

"When I was a young man just out of my time, my friend said that as I was such a good judge of human nature, and had exhibited such tact and shrewdness in swopping knives, and in short, never permitted anybody to get ahead of me in trading, I ought to keep store. Well, as luck would have it, I had a few hundred dollars by me, which I had made in trafficking one thing for another, and getting to boot more than both articles were worth, and with this sum I set myself up in business. As it was in the country, I kept a general variety store, in fact, my store was the great receptacle in these parts for the productions of art and genius. Nobody could ever enter my store and inquire for no matter what, but that I could produce it. One day one of our nabob's wives, who always holds the strings of her husband's purse, visited my shop for the purpose of buying a shawl. I passed the shawls down, and the lady after having spent half an hour or so in examining them, concluded that she wouldn't buy one. She had no fault to find with the shawls, she said, and even admitted that they were stylish enough and worth more than I asked for them, but the reason she wouldn't take one was simply, because she wanted a higher priced one. Now, thinks I, this is a very weak-minded woman, and I'll play a joke on her, and just as she turned to go out of the store, I

stepped between her and the door, and in an uncommon bland manner said, that I was very sorry that I could n't suit her to a shawl that day, but as I expected another invoice of shawls of nearly the same style, but more expensive, by the stage on the following afternoon, if she would only call in, in the evening, I should be extremely happy to show them to her first, and did not doubt but she would purchase one. The lady seemed much pleased, and promising that she would call, left the store. No quicker had she gone than I, without delay, took a few of the best looking of my "stylish" shawls, and after having doubled them up neatly, I packed them up in a small box, and after having nailed on the cover, and expertly directed them to myself, I set the box away under the counter for "future reference." On the following evening my shawl customer entered the shop, and as I had watched her approach, I was at that moment apparently hard at work, in opening a box on the counter.

"Have they come?" she inquired, in a hopeful tone.

"Rather think they have," I replied, removing the cover of the box, and letting its contents prove the truth of my assertion. "They have come all the way from New-York, and are not to be

beat. The only fears that I have, now that they have come, is that I cannot sell them."

"Oh, *yes* you will," remarked this lady, affected with admiration, as I took out one of the shawls and spread it on the counter. "They are really beautiful to behold. How large and foreign this one is in appearance. Pray, what's the price?"

Now the term "foreign" touched me wonderfully in one of my weak spots, and much to my astonishment, fifteen minutes afterwards, for I had it on my tongue end to say fifty, I quickly replied that I couldn't afford to sell one less than one hundred dollars.

"Cheap enough!" said she, "besides, I have my first pick. Here's your money."

"Now that I saw the lady was in earnest, and had made up her mind to take the shawl, I was far from being inclined at this state of the game to spoil my good joke by letting the cat out of the bag. So what did I do but put on a very demure face and pocketed the cash, and then did the shawl up and handed it to the lady, who departed perfectly overjoyed with her bargain.

"It is unnecessary for me to add, perhaps, that the balance of my shawls were afterwards offered for five dollars a piece, but being a drug in the market, I gave up all hopes of selling them. I then tried to give them away, but unfortunately

nobody would take them. As a last resort, I attempted to lose them one day as I was going to a neighboring village, but no sooner would I drop one and whip up my horse to leave it, than the boys would run after me with the shawl in their hands, crying as loud as they could yell, 'Mr.—Mr., you have lost a shawl! you have lost a shawl!' Egad, as I couldn't sell 'em, lose 'em or give 'em away, and so I took them, after I got home, and made them up into horse blankets. Still every woman in town admired the shawl of the lady with envy; it was so rich looking, and more than that, it was so costly. Now, sir, don't you think that this was joking to some advantage, and am I not exculpated from any attempt to pass off goods under false pretences? In short, sir, did it not prove that I was smart for a boy?"

"To be sure, sir, you made money out of the operation," replied Mr. Timpkins, exhilarated for the moment with the Yankee's story, but putting on a staid face, he added, "But you will not deny, sir, that it was by deception that it was done, and is not money obtained in such a way ill-gotten?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I suppose it is, sir. But my dear sir, the longer I live the more I am convinced that people in this world must have their eyes open whenever they have dealings with one another; all the talk about honesty of trade and

honesty of purpose in mankind is gammon; it's no such thing; the world is one great humbug, and the man who can gull, dupe, hoax, hoodwink, outreach, or in short practice every kind of imposition and humbugging up to the handle is a darn smart fellow. That's my doctrine, sir, and I flatter myself that for one I know how to live up to my creed so well and with such perfection, that if you can produce the man who can go ahead of me in inventing and practising catchpennys to catch the pennys of the people, or is quicker to see through any kind of sleight-of-hand, mummery, delusion, falsity, or any species of deception that you can enumerate, why, he can take my i. o. u. for all that I am worth, and I will go right straight to—no I won't, either, I'll go to bed. But, sir, I have never come across the critter yet whom I will knuckle under to."

"If such erratic and fanciful notions constantly control your actions, I hope you'll not perform any finesse on me before you leave," and Mr. Timpkins's eye twinkled as he moved himself away from the Yankee.

"Oh, sir, I am not so blind to all honor and honesty to pull wool over every man's eyes that I meet, for in a great many instances it would not pay; I always know my man. Neither would I have you understand that I am so incorrigible or lost to prin-

ciple that I would not hesitate to commit any crime. No sir. My profession has been to fabricate humbugs, shams and monstrosities—to make a great noise in the world about something which in reality was nothing—to present something as a miracle of wonder for the people to behold, talk about and run after, and it was for the people to decide whether they were counterfeits or illusions, or actualities. If my patrons were keen-sighted and long-headed enough to discover the verity of the matter, it was well and good, and while they acknowledged themselves sold, like gentlemen, they kept still and persuaded their friends to visit me, so that they should not enjoy their laugh alone; while on the other hand, if they were soft, weak and shallow-minded persons, while one half would make a great ado about my being an impostor, threaten to break me down, prosecute, and kick up a devil of an excitement, the fools didn't know that it was just what I wanted, for it brought me into notice: the other half believed that I was an injured man, and demonstrated their sympathy by giving me crowded houses; mistook my pungent neological and nonsensical descriptions for eloquence and classic lore, believed my assertions and misrepresentations to be stubborn and undeniable facts, and in short were so well pleased with my entertainments, that they praised my artifices and monstrosi-

ties up to the skies, and were in high dudgeon if aught was spoken against them, so unsuspecting and sanguine were they with the assurance that they were everything they were cracked up to be. No sir, there is a wide difference between a juggler and a knave."

"I would not impute to you any of the means that are employed by the latter, far from it, Mr. Bonum," said Mr. Timpkins, "though I am free to say that the same motives that actuate him govern you also, for from your inordinate love of money you unscrupulously descend from the true dignity of man and adopt a mode to gain your end that lays your character open to suspicion to say the least. You will pardon my candor, for it was not my intention to hurt your feelings."

Mr. Bonum laughed outright.

"I like to run afoul of a plain-spoken man," he remarked, "once in a while; it does me good. But we'll pass this by. Mister, what's your name?"

"Timpkins, sir."

"Well, Mr. Timpkins, don't you think I'm what the world calls smart? Now, answer me this in your candid way; am I, or am I not, for you no doubt have heard of me or seen me before this?"

"In the popular acceptance of the term you may be what people call smart."

"Good. Well, now don't you think that I am

uncommon smart, as smart as a steel trap, as the saying is?"

"I think that you are not so smart but what you have your equals, if not your superiors. It is my private opinion that a man is never so smart but what there is somebody else who can get the better of him sooner or later."

"That's just what I'm coming at. Now, Mr. Timpkins, I cannot agree with you, if that's your opinion, and I suppose it is, or else you would n't have said so. I have no idea of arguing the point with you however, firstly, because you cannot "jar me a loop," if we should hold a discourse until the millennium; and, secondly, my time is so precious, that by good rights I ought to be off. I'll stop long enough, at all events, to prove to you that in the course of my experience, I have knocked about the world these forty years, and I never was taken in yet. I have been head over heels into every kind of a speculation that you can think of almost, from the exhibition of a nondescript partaking of the forms, habits, manners, &c., of any class of birds, beasts, fishes, and reptiles, that the kingdom of natural history affords—this was one of the most profitable humbugs I ever got up—to the legitimate, laudible, and respectable vocation of hawking about the streets the best article of patent chemical soap ever invented, for taking the

grease out of every kind of cloth. There has been no scheme afloat, calling afoot or undertaking going, but I have had a hand in it, and from which I never failed of reaping a harvest. Now the proof of the pudding is the eating—and the proof of my smartness is in the pile of money I have made out of my operations. I have cleared over two hundred thousand dollars, sir, on my honor, and before I dry up, I mean to be worth treble the amount, in clean cash. Yes, I have set my heart on a million of dollars, to tell the truth."

"I have seen by the papers that you were reported to be worth very near the amount that you say you are, and quite likely it is true. But remember, Mr. Bonum, because you have always been fortunate in your various ways of making money, it's no evidence that your stock of luck will last forever. In your race after wealth you will meet with a counteraction one of these days, brought about in a manner, perhaps, that will be a practical illustration of the truth of my axiom—that a man is never so smart but there is somebody else who can get the better of him sooner or later. It's a checkered life, Mr. Bonum," and Mr. Timpkins rather thought that the Yankee would now have something to say about his gigantic undertaking, yet he did not anticipate, for he was quite as well entertained with the divertise-

ment he had afforded in his conversation, as he would if he were now to enlighten, or, perhaps, more particularly amuse him with his scheme.

"'T is a checkered life," reiterated Mr. Bonum, "but when a man gets so well versed in human affairs, to know how to take the advantage of circumstances, like the wily politician who pulls the wires, he is almost certain that he will carry his points. But it is not *every* man who can do it. No, *sir!* 'T isn't *one* out of a hundred thousand."

"Your statement is based upon a mathematical calculation, I suppose," drily remarked Mr. Timpkins. "Well, then you must be a phenomenon."

"Precisely," replied the Yankee, bowing his head; "and one who is a whole team and a horse to let. And now that I have kicked myself out of the traces of my soap cart, I—"

"What, have you relinquished your present business?" interrupted Mr. Timpkins, with unfeigned wonder.

"Yes, sir, sold out horse, cart, stock in trade, &c., &c., etc., etc. But as I was going to say, having closed out my traps, I am now going into a spec that will not only astonish the natives, but will cap the climax of all my previous undertakings." Mr. Bonum hesitated.

Mr. Timpkins foresaw what the Yankee was coming to, and therefore thought it best not to

express any curiosity, but let him take his own course.

"Did you ever hear of a man by the name of Snorter?" asked the Yankee, after a short pause.

"Yes, sir, and have seen him also."

"Are you acquainted with him?"

"I do not enjoy that honor."

"Then you are, indeed, unfortunate, sir, for Mr. Snorter is bound to be one of the greatest men that the world ever saw. I mean in his sphere, as the projector of an enterprise of such magnitude, that his name will be handed down to posterity as the Ursa Major of tact and skill. Mr. Snorter is a very odd genius," continued Mr. Bonum, his enthusiasm increasing as he spoke; "he is unmarried, and has got any quantity of money. His wealth amounts to nearly ten millions of dollars. If he only was in town, I would like to take you over to the hotel where he has been living in princely style and introduce you. But as he is not, having left about three weeks ago for Europe on an important matter connected with our project, I must necessarily forego the pleasure until his return, which will be in about nine weeks. Then you must go with me and see him."

Mr. Timpkins courteously expressed his thanks for this candid and pressing invitation. Then assuming a look of mingled wonder and astonishment, he added, with a low and trembling voice:—

"What can this Cyclopean enterprise be."

"Only laying a suspension bridge across the Atlantic Ocean, sir," replied Mr. Bonum, shrugging up his shoulders, while he gave utterance to the expression with as much nonchalance, as if he deemed it as but trifling and unimportant a matter as the erection of a mole hill.

Mr. Timpkins could not restrain his laughter.

"You will pardon me, I hope," he at length remarked, "if I am somewhat amused at the novelty, if nothing more, of the idea you have advanced. But how do you purpose going to work to build the bridge, and when?"

"The latter question can be answered better on Mr. Snorter's return, but the former I will cheerfully enlighten you on, and after I have described to you our plans, I will leave it to your own judgment, your own sense, to believe or disbelieve its practicability. But—" and as Mr. Bonum fortunately cast his eye up at a small clock standing in a niche, and beheld the hour, he started, and cried, "Zounds! it's past eleven o'clock, and I have got to leave in the cars at twelve for New York. You must therefore excuse me, for I perceive I have no time to lose. Good morning," and off he went. After he had gone Mr. Timpkins leaned back in his chair and laughed most uproariously, at the rhodomontade of the loquacious Yankee.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE FALLEN.

A HEAVY fall of snow had mantled the earth during the night, and in the golden rays of the sun every object to the eye, far and near, beautifully glittered in its spotless raiment. The air was cold and piercing, and the few who had ventured out of doors, for it was quite early in the forenoon, were wrapt to the teeth in thick woollens and furs.

"Kind sir, will you please to give me a few cents?" but the gentleman to whom this tender appeal of charity was addressed turned a silent ear and continued on his course.

"For the love of heaven, good sir!" persisted the child, seizing him by the hand and looking imploringly into his face, while a gush of tears filled her eyes and trickled down her cadaverous features, "do spare me at least *one* cent."

Mr. Sylvanus Hargrave, Jr. stopped. The world knew him as a man of wealth and abundantly able

to relieve the poor and distressed, but the world knew that such was not his nature.

"And this little beggar, too, knows that I am rich," he muttered. "And because I am decently well off," he reasoned, "must it be my duty and my lot to support every pauper in town? No, I know too much for that; I have a better use for my money."

Mr. Hargrave Jr. paused, for he heard a low stifled sob from the child.

"If I should give this beggar something," he continued soliloquizing, "ten to one I'll meet another and I shall have to give to her too, and there'll be no end to my giving if I once commence. I shall have all the beggars in town around me like a swarm of bees, and then what's the consequence? Why, I shall be ruined. No! my mind's made up, I'll not give anything to the ——"

Mr. Hargrave Jr. was about to exclaim very emphatically *brat*, when he paused as suddenly as if a thunderbolt had struck him. He gazed on the child's scanty dress. He beheld her eyes suffused with tears, while her fragile form shook and trembled like a leaf with the cold. For once in his life Mr. Hargrave Jr. felt influenced by a power most strange and unaccountable to his mind because its potency was irresistible. The man whose charities heretofore had been as cold as the breath of the

morning, now drew forth from his pocket a copper coin which had been nestling by the side of a capacious pocket-book overstocked with bank notes, and tossing the same to the child, he nervously ejaculated:—

"There, take that and be off with you, quick!" Mr. Hargrave Jr. then continued on his way as he spoke, and while a frown stole over his visage, he audibly muttered, "remember the poor and needy. Ahem! D—n our minister. If he preaches from that text again I'll curtail my benefits."

The child, with a smile of gratitude beaming on her countenance, tightly grasped the coin in her hand, while she hastened across the street to the shop of a baker. As she attempted to open the door her feet slipped from under her and she fell her length on the icy walk.

There was a gentleman drawing near at the time of the accident, who had seen Mr. Hargrave Jr. when he gave the child the pittance she had solicited, and likewise had beheld her when she fell. This gentleman was Dr. Lyons, who was on his way to visit one of his patients. Accelerating his speed into a run, he almost immediately reached the child, and gently lifting her insensible form up, he found that she had not sustained any injury, but was only stunned from the effects of the shock she had received in her fall. The kind-hearted

doctor produced from his pocket a medicine case, and taking therefrom a vial containing a powerful restorative, he poured a portion of its contents down the child's mouth, and in a few minutes he had the joyful satisfaction of seeing her nearly revived to consciousness. On fully recovering from her bewilderment, the child rubbed her eyes as if awakened from a dream, and in an endearing voice she exclaimed:—

"I thank you a thousand times, and so will grandma when she knows it, sir, for your goodness," and then, as if transported with joy, she added, "I am so glad that I didn't lose my penny that the gentleman gave me, for I shall not now go home without any bread for poor grandma."

"Where does your grandmother live?" inquired Dr. Lyons, replacing the medicine case in his pocket.

"Down in Dark Alley, as it's called," was the reply.

"What's her name?"

"Wilkins, sir, or widow Wilkins as she's called."

"Have you any parents living?"

"No sir. I have no father nor mother. Grandma takes care of me."

"And your name is——"

"Hatty Wilkins, sir," said the child quickly, drawing her tattered shawl more closely about her.

"Well, Hatty, you have answered my questions promptly and with considerable brightness. We'll now therefore go into this baker's shop, and while I am getting your bread you can warm yourself by the stove, for you are shivering with the cold."

"Are you then going to buy me some bread? a whole loaf!" exclaimed Hatty, scarcely able to credit what she had heard.

"Yes, Hatty, and you can keep the cent that old Hargrave gave you, and here's a dollar to go with it to keep it company," and Dr. Lyons extended a bill of that denomination to the child, coupled with a movement to turn round and go into the shop.

"Oh, no; stop, noble sir, I can't take so much money, and from a stranger too; it's too much!" was the artless reply, as the child instinctively stepped back with unaffected modesty, refusing to accept the proffered charity.

But Dr. Lyons, as he reflected on the lack of commiseration of the aristocratic Mr. Hargrave Jr., would not listen for a moment to what the child said, but actually forced the money into her hand, while he remarked: "Tut, tut, child, take it and don't say anything more about it," and when he saw that he had succeeded, and after she had carefully put the money away in her pocket, he added, "Now let's go into the baker's, and after

I have seen about your bread I will accompany you to your home, for it's only a short distance off, and I have a patient in that neighborhood."

The child was in raptures to hear this unexpected announcement, and emanating as it did from one in whom she saw the only real friend that she ever came across in her daily rounds in asking charity, made her little heart palpitate with ecstatic emotions. She also discovered that her benefactor was a physician, and she was therefore led to speak to him with more familiarity on their egress from the baker's, than she would, if she had not been apprised of the fact.

"Did I understand you to say, doctor, that the gentleman who was so good as to give me a penny, was named Hargrave?" inquired Hatty, as they walked along.

Dr. Lyons, after shifting the basket, which contained a large quantity of bread and cakes, from his right arm, which had become tired by the load, to the left, remarked:—

"Yes, and for one who has so much money as he has he is an ungrateful old dog. He'll get his deserts though one of these days if he doesn't mend his ways, the unfeeling old reprobate. It's a wonder to me how he ever came to squeeze out of his purse that cent, for I should have thought he'd have wanted it to help pay the expenses of

one of his fashionable soirees, which costs him so much, as he brags about. Yes, it was Mr. Sylvanus Hargrave, jr., Hatty, whose unfeeling, frigid heart, was softened to the value of one cent, just the price of his hopes for redemption hereafter, on beholding your pitiable condition."

"Mr. Hargrave, jr.," repeated the child several times to herself, as if striving to recall the name. "Why, it was for one of Mr. Hargrave, jr.'s daughters," she presently remarked, "that grandma done some washing for two weeks ago, and because she has not paid grandma, who has been every day to see her since, we have suffered dreadfully for something to eat. For poor grandma could n't get any more work to do, and though I went about begging harder than ever from early in the morning until late at night, I have scarcely got enough to eat during the whole time for even grandma. Sometimes I was almost tempted to steal a loaf of bread, when nobody would give me any, but thrust me out of doors and called me a dirty little beggar, the same as Maggy Stevens did, but then she was caught and sent to the lock-up—but then I thought of what grandma had often told me becomes of all those who do such wicked things, and I was so afraid that I drove away the thoughts and worked harder than ever."

"You did right, Hatty, not to do as Maggy

did. It was noble and praiseworthy in you to drive away those evil thoughts and resist temptation, even if you did go hungry, than to displease God and sin like bad Maggy, and then get found out, and punished by going to jail. Always try to be honest, Hatty, no matter how great or bitter the sacrifice may be, for such a virtue never goes unrewarded. As for the debt of Hargrave's daughter," continued the doctor, as they rounded the corner of the street into one of the most vile and iniquitous neighborhoods in the city, "I'll talk with your grandmother about it, and as I am acquainted with old Hargrave, jr., if your grandmother will give me her permission, I'll see that he pays the debt."

They had now reached a long, narrow alley, bounded on each side by a row of one story tenements, the roofs of which were covered with such a body of snow, that the weak and rotten frames were scarcely strong enough to support the weight. These dilapidated dwellings were occupied from the garret to the cellar, by the lowest class of people in the city, whose vicious propensities were so great, that it was almost imprudent for a stranger decently clad, even in broad daylight, to visit its filthy and corrupt purlieus without undergoing some petty depredation at the least, by its depraved and abandoned cormorants. Dr.

Lyons understood this state of things, but apprehended no fear, as he had a patient in the vicinity, and was therefore well known by nearly every family.

"Here's where grandma lives!" exclaimed the child, stopping and pushing open the door of an old rookery which was not tenantable for any human being. "And here's grandma too."

The room that Dr. Lyons was ushered into, was squalid and abjectly furnished. The woman thus spoken of, was at that moment kneeling down on the hearth and endeavoring to ignite a small handful of chips by blowing forcibly with her mouth a few expiring embers in the fire-place. Hearing the voice of her grandchild, the dame arose and turned around. She was miserably dressed, and her face, to appearance, once indicated beauty, but now it was sallow and wretchedly care worn, an unequivocal confirmation in Dr. Lyons's mind that she had seen a great deal of trouble in her life. Her hair was streaked with grey, and her form was bent with age.

Dr. Lyons relieved himself of his load, and confronting Widow Wilkins, he remarked:—

"Here is a basket of bread that I have brought you, which you will please accept. Hatty will explain to you the manner in which I made her acquaintance. As I shall be obliged to leave you

now, to visit one of your neighbors who was wounded in the fracas that occurred a few nights ago in the drinking-house opposite, I will conclude this visit by asking if Mr. Hargrave, jr., is not indebted to you a small amount for a little work that you did for one of his daughters. You need not scruple to tell me, as you probably know my name, and have no occasion to distrust the honesty of my question, or the purity of my motive in asking you."

The Widow Wilkins glanced at Hatty, who was busy in taking out the contents of the basket, and placing them on a huge pine board, supported by four small upright scantlings, the same answering the purposes of a table, and mistrusting that her grandchild had been the informer, she remarked to the doctor whose face she recognized, while she heaved a sigh:—

"You are Dr. Lyons. To tell the truth, doctor, Mr. Hargrave, jr., does owe me a small amount. It's a very small sum, only one dollar, but it's honestly due me, and Mr. Hargrave, jr., ought to pay me. If he only knew how much I suffer for the want of it, doctor, and also knew—but it's of no consequence. My sufferings are almost more than I can bear," and Widow Wilkins turned her head to wipe away a tear.

"My object in asking you about the matter, my

good woman, was simply this. Being told by Hatty that you had failed in your endeavors to get your pay of old Hargrave, I thought that as I was acquainted with him, I would ask your leave to allow me to see if I couldn't get it for you."

"Oh, my good sir, I now have much to thank you for, for the kindness you have already shown to myself and grandchild. I would not, therefore, even think of soliciting such a favor. I —"

"Pooh! nonsense," interrupted the doctor. "Let me have your bill against Hargrave and I'll try and make him fork over. If he is anyways obstinate or mealy-mouthed about it, I'll place the demand into the hands of my friend, lawyer Edwards, for collection."

"Did I understand you to say lawyer Edwards?" inquired Widow Wilkins, somewhat agitated.

"You did, ma'm. Have you ever seen him—if you haven't, I'll acquaint him of your situation this very night if he's at home, and if you never knew what a friend in need was, you will when you behold his noble form."

"I have heard of him," laconically replied Widow Wilkins, averting her eyes to the floor while a shade of gloom passed over her face.

"I might have known better than to ask if you had ever seen him," said the doctor; "for if he had once seen you or had heard it intimated

that there was a person in our midst, in such a state of utter destitution as yourself, he would have been here without delay, and at once relieved you and your grandchild. If there ever was a philanthropist it's Charles Edwards."

"I have heard as much," replied the dame, producing a faded cotton kerchief and wiping away the tears from her eyes, that now flowed quite freely.

"Yes, it's true what I've said, and everybody knows it too. If there ever was a man that lived up to his professions of religion, it is Edwards. But what, what's all this crying about, my good woman," exclaimed the doctor, unable to account whether it was an expression of pain or pleasure.

"Why do you weep?"

"It was but a passing thought that occasioned me to weep," said she, tranquilizing her emotions. "It's so long since I have found vent for my feelings that I could n't contain myself any longer."

The humane doctor, after hazarding a guess at the cause of this sudden outpouring of tears, was led to believe that it had been occasioned by his telling her that he should inform Mr. Edwards of her circumstances, and that she had been shedding tears of joy in anticipation of a happy result from his visit. On this being settled in his mind, he

wisely concluded not to continue the subject any longer. He then briefly remarked:—

"Come, my good woman, be of good cheer, and get me your bill against Hargrave, for I must now be going."

Widow Wilkins finally reluctantly consented to grant the doctor's request, but as she had no paper suitable, or pen, or ink, at his service, he noted the amount in his private memorandum-book, lest he should forget it, and promised that he would draw the bill off himself on his return to his office. He then bade Widow Wilkins and her charge good morning, while he went on his way further down the alley to visit the patient already spoken of.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A FRIEND OF THE FALLEN.

DR. LYONS was good as his word, and did see his friend Edwards at his house that very evening. They were both seated in the library alone.

"Fortune placed me in contact this morning," spoke the doctor, after he had been seated but a few moments, "with a little girl on — street, who had met with a slight accident, who lives with her grandmother down in Dark Alley, they are in the most wretched circumstances imaginable. I called with the child on the dame, and found her to be in a state of abject want."

"In Dark Alley!" remarked Mr. Edwards, bending over and opening the register as he spoke, for the temperature of the room required a little more heat. "Oh, yes, the locality is quite familiar to me, for there has been a number of families living in its demoralizing and pestilential precincts whom I have already delivered from its bad and infected atmosphere, and now have the happiness of seeing

them all doing well in the world, and enjoying quite a respectability among decent people. But what's the name of the dame you refer to, my dear doctor."

Dr. Lyons then gave Mr. Edwards a succinct account of his visit to Widow Wilkins. He did not demur either from commenting with severity on the unfeelingness and illiberality shown by Mr. Hargrave, jr., to Hatty, as well as his condemnatory neglect in not paying the small sum due to the widow.

"You have enlisted my sympathy," replied Mr. Edwards, after the doctor had finished; "and I will call on Widow Wilkins to-morrow forenoon, if the weather does not prevent."

On the morrow, Mr. Edwards wended his way to Widow Wilkins's house. It was a bright sunny morning, yet the air was keen and bitter cold, in fact so penetrating, that before Mr. Edwards had got half way there, he was necessitated to step into Mr. Wells's store, which lay on his way, and there spend a few minutes in warming himself.

Mr. Edwards, however, took advantage of this momentary delay by purchasing of Mr. Wells a few groceries and provisions which he thoughtfully considered was most needed by the widow, as well as buying a small sled load of dry hard wood,

already sawed and split, which stood in front of the store door of the grocer, who had been but a short time in town from the country with his load, and who was warming himself by the grocer's stove prior to his going out to dispose of his wood.

After giving directions to the man to place the basket which contained his purchases on his load and follow him, Mr. Edwards buttoned up his coat to go.

"Shall you go up to the caucus to-night at the City Hall, Mr. Edwards?" inquired the grocer, just as that gentleman was about to open the store door.

"I think not. It's a meeting, I believe, for the purpose of nominating candidates for city officers the ensuing year, isn't it?"

"Yes sir. But you'd better go up," and Mr. Wells significantly smiled.

Mr. Edwards drew on his gloves and shook his head, as he replied:—

"Friend Wells, I believe that my fellow-citizens will make as wise and judicious nominations as if I were present to assist them. They always have nominated excellent men for the management of our municipal affairs, and men that I have never felt ashamed to cast my vote for."

"I know that you have always invariably shunned all public gatherings of a political nature, and stuck close to your profession, but I didn't know

but that you *might* go up to the hall to-night; it's just as well though, I s'pose," and Mr. Wells cut short what he had to say and looked towards Mr. Edwards, whose attention had been directed for the moment to the movements of the man with his team outside the door, suddenly remarked:—

"Excuse me, friend Wells, I must leave you, for I see my man is all ready and waiting to start off. Good morning!" Mr. Edwards then pursued his way on the sidewalk for the widow's, while the countryman followed after him in the street with his load.

Ten minutes brought them to the entrance of Dark Alley. Upon Mr. Edwards casting his eyes down the court, he saw that nearly opposite the place designated by Dr. Lyons as the abode of widow Wilkins, the passage-way entirely choked up by a mass of beings composed of men, women and children of both sexes, plainly indicating to Mr. Edwards's judgment by their profane and obscene shoutings that there was some kind of a disturbance taking place. Bidding the countryman to drive his team down the alley until he came to the place where the row was going on, he hurried his steps onward in hopes to quell the brawl, as he had done on a previous occasion. But he was anticipated, for no sooner had one of the principal ring-leaders, who was the proprietor of the groggery

wherein the row commenced, discovered his approach, than he cried out in a stentorian voice:—

"Hook it, every mother's son of you. Here comes Squire Edwards!"

This command coming as it did from one who was recognized by that contentious fusion of rags, rum and rascalities, as the supreme authority, was at once obeyed, and the crowd scattered to their various retreats. The precipitate flight that each made to the cellars and ground-floors of their lurking holes, and so quickly made by the magical mandate of this one man, struck Mr. Edwards as something so remarkable, he concluded that if they would obey him in one instance so expeditiously, they would be tractable in another. He resolved, however, to abstain from any allusion to the subject of his thoughts until a more appropriate opportunity presented itself, and on coming up to the man whom he at once knew by name, he briefly remarked:—

"Mr. Tippler, you did well."

"I allers do, Squire," was the reply of that individual as he placed a modicum of tobacco in his mouth, in addition to the still larger quantity that was already there, "an' when they don't mind, yer see I break their heads, it's benefishal for their health. I never came across but one pup, an' that was Dutch Charley, who wouldn't toe the mark

when he was told; an' he, Squire, after I'd knocked him down with this 'ere sledge hammer twelve times a running, got up an' had the cheek to tell me that I couldn't do it twelve times agin. Dutch Charley was a perfect bull, Squire, but he's kicked the bucket, poor fellow," and Tippler held down his head with a mournful air.

This man is not so depraved but that he has feelings, thought Mr. Edwards. Certainly, he is not so hard-hearted but that the demise of his companion has made an indelible impression on his mind. Faith, I do believe that I can redeem this whole sink of iniquity through the instrumentality of this one man, who holds such a powerful sway over their minds. At this point of Mr. Edwards's reflections, his ear was startled by a noise behind his back, and on looking around, he saw the countryman inflicting a severe castigation with his whip over the head and shoulders of a dirty ragged urchin whom he had casually discovered on the back of his sled, in the act of purloining one of the packages out of the basket.

"Hold! my friend," cried Mr. Edwards, rushing to the scene of action, closely followed by Tippler; "do not, I beseech you, flog the boy."

The countryman at once desisted, and hardly had he relinquished his iron grip on one of the boy's arms, when Tippler stepped up to the sled,

and upraising his muscular arms, he caught the urchin by the nape of the neck and threw him headlong into a pile of noisome vegetables which had just been thrown out of one of the cellars into the gutter.

"Well, Squire, if you want your stuff stolen, so be it; it's not my loss, any how," remarked the countryman in a stiff dictatorial manner in reply to Mr. Edwards.

"Ef I've done wrong, Squire, I'll go and pitch the young cove back again," was the honest remark of Tippler.

Mr. Edwards could not help smiling at the artless simplicity of the latter, notwithstanding he was grieved to see the practical evil arising from the disposition of the former. Albeit he did not choose to offer any timely observation on the principle that governed the countryman, judging from his remark that he was of a nature that knew no leniency or restraint, when he was aroused in a matter in which he was personally interested. As for Tippler, he repressed what his heart yearned to say to him, until a more fitting time, being satisfied that he exerted an influence over his idiosyncrasies, and that when the proper time came he should not only reclaim him, but carry on the work of reformation with his aid, through the God-forsaken families, whose existence was a blight

on society, and the objects of wrath to the Being who created them in his own image.

"Well, squire," continued Tippler, satisfied that his proposition was not approved by that gentleman. "Now, what's your business in these parts this morning. On another charitable visit, hey?"

"You have guessed right, Mr. Tippler, and I wish to find Widow Wilkins's house. Doesn't she live there?" and Mr. Edwards raised his hand and pointed to the building nearest to him on his left.

"Right as a trivet, she does tie up there, and mighty poor off she is too. But say, squire, can I be of any help to you," and Tippler first looked at the sled and then at Mr. Edwards.

"No, Mr. Tippler, thank you; I shall not want you this time."

"Then I'm off like a jug handle," responded Tippler. "But if you should happen to want me, squire, all you've got to do is just halloo, an' I'm on hand like a picked up dinner for a muss, or any thing else, as long as I can serve you."

Mr. Edwards returned his acknowledgments to Tippler, and then stepping to his side, he added in an undertone:—

"By the bye, Mr. Tippler, I wish you would call at my office when you can find it most convenient,

for I have got something that I desire to say to you in private."

Tippler at once consented, by saying: "Perhaps, squire, 't wont be for a week, an' then agin, perhaps, 't wont be for a month—but howsomever, I'll call sometime, or rather, when I can slip away."

He then turned on his heel and went into his dram-shop, while Mr. Edwards walked up to the widow Wilkins's door and knocked.

"I would like to see your grandma," he remarked, to the child who responded to his knock. "Is she in?"

"Yes, sir," replied Hatty, in a gladsome voice; "and if you are Squire Edwards, you will please walk in."

But Mr. Edwards, before doing so, motioned to the countryman to drive his sled up to the door; which, on being done, he then requested him to bring the wood into the house, while he took the basket and carried it into the room.

"I don't see your grandmother here, my little one!" exclaimed Mr. Edwards, as he set the basket down on the board table.

"Grandma is up stairs," said Hatty, pointing as she spoke to a small scuttle which opened into the garret, and accessible by a ladder which reached it from the floor. "She's slicking up a bit."

"Ah, yes," remarked Mr. Edwards, and then

bidding the countryman, who was coming in at that moment with an armful of wood, to pile the wood away in a corner in which he had noticed a diminutive heap of chips; he added, that he would also assist him, until the widow came down. Both then went hastily at work, and by the time that the job was finished and the countryman gone, Widow Wilkins presented herself to Mr. Edwards. Scarcely had her eyes met his when her bosom heaved tumultuously, and her whole frame was seized with a violent tremor. This sudden trepidation, however, was transient, and no sooner had it passed away, when she calmly, though in a very plaintive voice, remarked:—

"Squire Edwards, I can hardly find words to convey to you the sense of gratitude that I feel for this unsolicited benevolence. I—I," but the poor woman could go no further—she had fainted.

Mr. Edwards sprang at once to her relief, and raising her head from the floor and allowing it to rest gently on his knee, he dashed a dipper of cold water, that was fortunately near at hand, into her pale and emaciated countenance. The effect of this treatment was almost instantaneous, and Hatty, who had been so much alarmed, that she was crying bitterly as she knelt by the side of the unconscious form of her grandparent, now had the un-

speaking gratification of beholding her so far recovered as to get up unassisted.

"Were you injured, or do you feel anyway ill, my good woman," inquired Mr. Edwards, as he conducted her to a chair. "Because, if you are," he continued, "I'll run and get a physician immediately."

"Oh, no my good sir," she replied, using all her physical energies to calm herself. "I feel perfectly well and am uninjured, sir."

"I regret very much, with unfeigned sorrow, madam, to see you so overpowered with this small favor that I have seen fit through Divine instruction to render you," remarked Mr. Edwards, mildly, yet solemnly; "and as you are not yet composed, would supplicate that you will not have anything more to say in acknowledgment. I know by what I have already seen that you would fain, freely, and heartily, if it were in your power, return unto me ten fold as a requittance, and I am satisfied beyond measure to behold this disposition, this spirit. Still, if I was to crave anything in return, it would be that God, to whom we are indebted for everything that we eat, drink, wear, and enjoy, would vouchsafe in his goodness to bless and sanctify that which has been provided for you, and as he now hears the mental outpourings of your heart, regenerate your soul unto grace. As I

think it proper that you now should be left to your own reflections, I will therefore retire, assuring you that I will call again in a few days. Make yourself as comfortable and happy as your circumstances will permit, with the means that has been provided for you. If, perchance, you should want for anything before I visit you again, be so kind as to send Hatty, for such is her name, I believe, to my office, and I promise you it shall be forthcoming."

Mr. Edwards then departed, gently whispering as he closed the door, which hardly supported itself on its leather hinges:—

"May our Heavenly Father bless and watch over this hapless family, with parental care. Show thy marvellous loving kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee."

CHAPTER XXX.

POLITICAL.

ON Mr. Edwards looking over the daily paper the ensuing morning in his office, he was astounded to read that he had been nominated almost unanimously by his fellow-citizens without distinction of party for the office of Mayor of the city, and that the general belief, so the editor of the sheet stated, was, that he would accept the nomination. Then followed a high eulogium on his abilities and character from the same writer, which Mr. Edwards quietly passed over until he discovered that the gentleman who had presided at the meeting was no other than the grocer.

"Ah!" he exclaimed to himself, laying the paper down on the table, "I now see why my friend Wells wished me to go up to the meeting last night. It is now explained. He knew that I was to be the nominee for the mayoralty. O, friend Wells, you did wrong not to tell me, for you well knew that I have stoutly and unhesitatingly refused

to permit my name to be ever used or even mentioned for any office in the gift of the people."

The sentence was hardly completed, when a knock was heard at the door, and to the answer of Mr. Edwards, a young man entered and handed him a letter. On tearing open the envelope and perusing its contents, he found that it was from Mr. Bogart, the chairman of the committee, who had been chosen to inform him of his nomination for the elevated post that he already had been advised of in the public print. The letter concluded by begging of him to accept this small tribute of appreciation from his fellow-citizens, who not only esteemed him for his mental endowments, but particularly for his intrinsic merit as a man.

Mr. Edwards could hardly repress his feelings at this voluntary and spontaneous meed of distinguished deference and approbation that had been paid him, and when he drew forth a sheet of paper to pen the reply that his conscience dictated, he inwardly prayed that the step he was about to take would not incur the displeasure of his friends.

The reply was soon indited, and the young man left. Mr. Edwards being then left to his own reflections, now became so intensely abstracted with the workings of his mind, that when he looked up—how long after the young man had been gone, he was at a loss to tell—he beheld Mr.

Wells standing before him. After the civilities of the morning had been exchanged, and the grocer had seated himself, he then congratulated Mr. Edwards on the honor that had been conferred on him, and positively declared that his election was an issue that public sentiment not only expected, but demanded.

"And why does public sentiment demand my election, Mr. Wells?" questioned Mr. Edwards, resolving not to let the grocer know yet a while his refusal to accept the nomination. "Has not the policy of our municipal government been liberal and progressive?"

"Allowing such to be the fact, sir; admitting that those who have controlled our affairs have never disgraced their constituents by a single act of official corruption or breach of faith, this is not the point I wish to argue, for these same men have been re-nominated on account of their faithfulness to their long-tried principles. It is the mayor we wish to oust, and not one of the other city officers. Our mayor has proved himself void of all integrity and principle, for during the term of his office he has on several occasions basely attempted to fasten on us for his own personal aggrandizement some of the most outrageous schemes to plunder the treasury and to increase our taxes that I ever heard of, and if it had not

been for the wisdom and intelligence of the Council who would not barter away their 'birthrights for a mess of pottage,' he would have succeeded in his nefarious design. Now, the people must have another man for his successor; a man that will be a credit to us, and not an unscrupulous and designing knave who is a stain, a stigma upon us. Now, the person that we have so judiciously selected to occupy this office of trust and to be an ornament to the station, as well as a source of pride to every man, woman and child in the city, is you. Now, what have you got to say for yourself?"

"I cannot but express my sincere and fervent thanks for this unexpected and I might with candor say undreamt of testimonial of the good opinion in which I am held even unto an homage by my friends. But, Mr. Wells, from the bottom of my heart I deeply deplore that such a choice should fall on me. I claim no worth, no reward for what little I have ever done in my own quiet and unobtrusive way toward ameliorating the condition of the poor and the advancement of equality of society. I have never sought fame, nor have I been ambitious for popularity. My sphere of life since I entered upon the field of action has been devoted chiefly to my profession. I have never aspired after office, because it was not my nature, and if my profession had never paid me a single

farthing, I should have rather earned my bread for myself and family by the side of the honest everyday laborer than to have ever thought for an instant of seeking after or taking any office that could have been offered me. My private conviction is, as I once told you, Mr. Wells, that the man who hankers after office is never impelled by any honest motives; his policy is selfish, sordid and lustful; he is an adept in all the trickeries and chicaneries of dishonesty, and will step over even the bounds of decency to gain his ends.

"Neither is the office-holder a paragon of virtue and that sanctity which he would like to have us believe, but which he so desecrates. When fairly installed in office, the pledges that he solemnly made are broken; he no longer feels himself dependent on those that placed him there, and therefore he maintains a stoical indifference to every favor that is asked of him. If accused of filching from the public crib, with one hand he points to his past acts or to his standing in society, while with the other he heaps together his malfeasance and conceals it until he sees no chance of a re-election.

Now, for a man to take an office, and think of being honest, consistent, and upright, is out of the question. No man, Mr. Wells, can keep his character unsullied, or his conscience unpricked, who

holds an office. Let ever so high-minded, conscientious, and worthy a man, take an office from necessity, as he calls it, when once he tastes of its sweets, like the confirmed drunkard, it is hard to give up his habit. He now becomes a violent partisan. If he was elected by the whigs, and is a whig in name, then, no sooner does the democratic party come into the ascendancy, and there is a prospect of their keeping it for years, than he becomes a democrat in spirit. He is now a political weathercock. The loaves and the fishes, Mr. Wells, generally overcome all conscientious scruples."

"You have given literal facts in a nut-shell, in the terseness of your views in relation to the general average of office-seekers and office-holders. In one particular, however, I can hardly agree with you."

"Oh, I did not mean that my remarks should apply to our own home affairs; for, I must confess that the measures that our city fathers have adopted, and the policy that they have pursued for years, has not only been wise and liberal, but has been entirely satisfactory in my mind. I referred to the antagonistic parties of the day."

"And so do I," replied Mr. Wells; "and as I was about to say, I am not prepared to agree with you in the idea that you conveyed, that the best men who hold office are liable to become dishonest

morally, as well as politically. Has not such a conclusion been formed rather hastily?"

"The question is settled at once in my mind, without a doubt," remarked Mr. Edwards; "when I but look at the character of our men who are scrambling after office, and ask, who are they, and what are they? They are our little great men, who are as void of principle, as they are of ability and competency to discharge the functions of the office, they are so eager to get. They are men who court popularity, and will go any length to acquire it. They are men who have no self-respect even, and care not for the respect of others. I have always held that evil communication corrupts good principles. Now, would an honorable man, or a Christian man, following in this train of ratiocination, suffer himself to be placed side and side in the same yoke with this class of men? If he did would n't the natural inference be, that he would necessarily imbibe the same obnoxious vapors that hang about them, and in course of time wade as deep in the slough of political corruption as they—using, perhaps, what is worse than all, their garb of religious professions, or their good name which has never been tarnished by reproach, as a cloak to conceal their deformities. But then, Mr. Wells, I cannot harbor the thought that any man of probity, and especially a man who is a professor of

religion, would make such a sacrifice and descend so low as to abandon himself to the slimy embrace of politics, and accept an office. We ought all to be more high-minded, to be above such a thing. To come to the point at once, friend Wells, there is but one way for an office-holder to be honest, if such be his proclivity. He must govern an honest people, and it is the latter who are very much to blame if we have bad men in office."

"I agree with you there," said Mr. Wells; "and we in this city have learnt a severe lesson by electing the present incumbent of the mayoralty, through party machinations. We have now, I am happy to say, left political differences and preferences out of the struggle which comes off on Monday next, and have concluded to nominate a citizen candidate for mayor, and the same for our other municipal officers. That candidate is you, friend Edwards, and if the large and enthusiastic meeting at the city hall last evening, as well as their unanimous vote, is any criterion to go by, then it is a sufficient proof of the sincerity of the people's honesty. We want a man, as was stated in the caucus, at the head of our municipal concerns, who knows nothing but the prosperity of the city. We want our government to be liberal, yet economical in their appropriations; who owe no fealty to any particular set of men, but who will administer our

concerns with that prudence and discreetness, which is for the common good. Come, friend Edwards, will you accept the nomination?"

"To tell you the truth, friend Wells, I regret to —" but Mr. Edwards, after proceeding thus far, was interrupted by the grocer, who had a presentiment of what was coming, while he exclaimed:—

"Pooh, pooh, friend Edwards, I know that you have always been reserved and unpretending, but your many laudable acts are known to the people, notwithstanding you have studiously endeavored to keep them from being known. The boon then that we offer you for your sterling integrity, moral worth, and Christian rectitude, is to place our concerns under your guidance. Once again, will you accept the nomination?"

"As I was about to remark, friend Wells," replied Mr. Edwards, in quite a serious tone, "I have, to your astonishment when you hear it, and perhaps to your umbrage, though I hope not, refused to stand as the nominee, and have already informed the chairman of the committee to that effect, my reasons for so doing, you have already been informed."

The grocer at this announcement did not know what to say. He was wofully disappointed, for he had supposed that he could prevail upon Mr. Edwards to stand; still he was not angered. After

a few minutes, or until he had collected his scattered thoughts, he at length rose up, and grasping Mr. Edwards's hand, he exclaimed with considerable feeling:—

"I believe, friend Edwards, you have done right—done nobly after all; but nobody but such a man as you would have done so. There is more honor in knowing that you could have been made mayor, but refused, than in being made mayor by accepting," and the worthy old grocer again pressed his hand with unusual warmth.

Mr. Edwards was as deeply affected as his venerable friend, but soon composing himself, he observed:—

"Friend Wells, there are a great many men in town whose availability entitles them to be made mayor, but who from retiring habits have never been prominent before the people. Seek out such a man and nominate him."

"I will do my utmost to bring about such a thing," replied Mr. Wells, relinquishing his grasp and buttoning up his coat, "but I have stopped longer talking with you than I intended when I came in. I must now be going. Good morning."

The grocer had but just gone, as it were, when Mr. Timpkins came into the office, appearing in unusual good spirits.

"Ah! Charles, you have achieved a greater

victory," exclaimed that gentleman, "by not consenting to be run for mayor, than if you had. It all goes to prove that popularity isn't worth a straw, neither is an office, when men run after it; but when that runs after them, then it is an honor to be proud of. But whom do you suppose they'll nominate now?"

"I haven't any idea who'll be their second choice. I hope, though, it will be some good man, somebody who has never had any thoughts of such a thing."

"So do I hope it will be a man who would reflect lustre on his administration. But the acts of the man that will be the nominee must be well known before we bring him out, or else we may catch a Tartar. Such an instance, if it should occur, would be like the story that I have often told about our present president. Did I ever tell it to you?"

Mr. Edwards shook his head, while Mr. Timpkins supported himself by resting his right hand on the table, as he commenced:—

"It was the day after the opening of the last presidential campaign, and before we received the news who the Democratic nominee would be; the opinions given who would be the candidate were as various as a paper of 'sorted Sharp's' needles. Some reckoned Douglas would be the man; others

persisted on its being Cass; others Buchanan; and, in brief, every one that I heard hazard a guess presented the only *available* man in their way of thinking whom they thought could possibly be elected. Old Hargrave senior, you know, is the only Democrat of any prominence in these parts, and he at the time strongly affirmed that Cass would be the nominee and no other, for, said old Hargrave, *no other can be elected*, no matter who he is. On the evening of the day I allude to there was quite a large crowd gathered in the Exchange discussing the merits of the various men that had been named. Hargrave was getting quite warm on the chances of Cass, when suddenly, I forget who it was, came running into the room and said that the news had come, and the vexatious question which had been such a bone of contention was now settled.

"Is it Buchanan!" exclaimed one. "No." "Douglas," said another. "No." "Of course it's Cass," remarked old Hargrave with philosophical placidity. "No sir-ee," replied the man loudly. "Who is it, then?" asked a dozen voices at the top of their lungs. "Out with it."

"It's Frank' Pierce of New Hampshire, gentlemen!"

"Frank Pearce," said Hargrave, evidently much astonished at first. "O, yes!" he continued, while

his face brightened up with a smile. "Why, he's just the man after all. Frank Pearce can be elected, for he's known so well. The Baltimore Convention couldn't have made a better nomination.' Old Hargrave proved a 'trump card' during the campaign, extolling *Pearce* and the many great acts which he said he was so noted for. But Hargrave let the 'cat out of the bag' after *Pierce* and not *Pearce* was elected, by telling me that he couldn't imagine then who in the devil *Pearce* was, or what were his antecedents. The other day I met the old cock, and it occurred to me that I would ask him if he had ever found out who *Pearce* was. The only reply he gave me was, as he held down his head, 'if I had kept posted on the doings of the present administration.'"

Mr. Timpkins did not remain any longer to converse with his son-in-law, as it was now past noon, and it was high time that they were at home to dinner.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DARK ALLEY.

THE Christmas eve had been cold and dreary. The wind, as it began to grow dark, blew and howled, and the sleet came rushing in eddies, fearlessly threatening to destroy every dwelling, and leave its inmates shelterless to its mercy. It had been a dark night, and when the member of a family with fear and trembling turned aside the curtains, and peered out of the window, naught could be seen but cold, cold rain, and snow, pattering on the panes of glass, just perceivable by the bright rays of the solar lamp on the centre-table. Now came a heavy blast, and the tall, skeleton trees, ice-bound as they were, bowed in humiliation. Their branches snapped and were hurled to the ground. Fences careened and were torn up from the frozen earth, and lay scattered about. Houses and barns shook and rocked, yet providentially but few sustained any damage. It was a fearful storm. It rose in dense clouds—it piled

itself in drifts—it came as noiseless as it went. The morning following was cold and raw. But neither its severity nor the bad state of travelling, daunted Mr. Edwards from setting forth on a mission, that ought to have been accomplished the previous night.

Mr. Edwards had narrated to his wife his visit to the widow Wilkins, and after freely talking the matter over one evening, it was finally agreed that if he could influence the dame to come and bring her charge to their house, they would there find a permanent home. And, we can pay her something besides, if she comes, so Mrs. Edwards had said, for she will be of considerable assistance to me, in sewing for the family. It was then all arranged that Widow Wilkins, if she consented to take up with their proposition, should be employed as seamstress, and that little Hatty should be clad neatly and tidily, and go to school with Lizzy. The evening that the gale had commenced was the time that Mr. Edwards had made up his mind to call on the widow, and tender his proposition to her. But when evening came he was debarred from going by the increasing fury of the storm. But the hopeless family were not forgotten that night by Mr. Edwards. Unlike many other men of his acquaintance who were seated with their families before the warm, blazing fires, perfectly

unconcerned for the welfare of others, as the elements raged without with unabated fury, while they laughed, and sung, and talked, as they piled on more fuel, and then watched the flames lick the dry wood, wrapping it in a complete sheet of fire, while it cracked and snapped, and generated into fleecy clouds of smoke, and then escaped with a roar into the chimney—unlike these men who were enjoying the comforts of their fireside, and were far from having a wish flit across their cold and unfeeling minds, for the well-being of those not so fortunate as themselves—unlike these men, Mr. Edwards felt sad, cheerless, and depressed. As he gazed about the room and beheld the comforts of life that he was blessed with, and then heard the sweeping, blustering storm without, he could not help contrasting his situation with those less favored. Once or twice he had been on the point of going forth to battle with the elements, and betake himself to those whom he supposed he could succor, but such a thing was almost utterly impossible. Then he would reseat himself with his family and again give utterance to words of pity and commiseration for the destitute and distressed. And when on that night, he at last retired to bed, it was not to close his eyes in sleep, but rather to again express his feelings in prayer to his Maker,

supplicating him to befriend and protect the homeless and impoverished.

At length the morning came, and Mr. Edwards arose, after a night of much mental suffering. Breakfast was had earlier than usual, and while the family were eating, the hired man was harnessing the horse into the large double-seated covered sleigh, which was to carry Mr. Edwards to the widow Wilkins. The morning meal was quickly disposed of, and Mr. Edwards, after being invested in a thick woolen shawl, which his thoughtful and affectionate wife closely wrapped about his neck and shoulders, walked to the door, and found the hired man with the team all ready. Without any delay Mr. Edwards jumped into the sleigh, and bade his man drive to Dark Alley. The streets not having been "broke out," the going was very rough, and at times the horse reared and plunged with such force, as his feet sunk through the ice-crusted drifts of snow, that his driver had as much as he could do to manage him. However, they at last arrived at Dark Alley in safety. But what a scene of devastation lay stretched out before Mr. Edwards's gaze. Nearly all of the wooden tenements had either been unroofed, or the whole building made a complete wreck. To a large extent every building in that vicinity had sustained some damage, either by a portion of the chimney

being blown down, or the black and worm-eaten clapboards stripped from its front or rear. Snow was to be seen everywhere. It had piled itself up in solid masses in the desolate garrets, that were exposed to view, and nestled in the chinks and wider interstices of every frail and battered old hulk that had withstood the storm. Not a single soul was to be seen, the unsheltered ones having either fled or sought refuge with their more fortunate neighbors. Not a voice even was heard, to relieve the monotony of this dreary and lonesome place.

Mr. Edwards, on finding that he could not possibly go with his sleigh any further, commanded his man to wait where he was until he returned. He then stepped out from the sleigh on to the snow, which he found sufficiently strong enough to bear him on its icy surface. The hoarse wind whistled a doleful tune in his ears as he went down the alley, and he trembled and shook spasmodically with its cold and piercing sharpness. On nearing Widow Wilkins's house, he found, to his joy, that its exterior had been but slightly damaged, and when he entered the door, he saw not only the widow and Hatty seated before a glowing and cheerful fire in the narrow and contracted room, but also a group of other poverty-stricken creatures, mostly women and children, to whom the widow

had given hospitality. The large board table stood in the middle of the floor, was covered with the fragments of all that was left of the widow's stores that had been provided by Mr. Edwards. The room was redolent of the odor of a pipe that an old, ill-shapen, and grisly woman had been smoking as a solace, and the rank and nauseous smell of a gin bottle, that had been frequently resorted to by another female as haggish and repulsive in appearance, to drown trouble. Mr. Edwards was almost forced to beat a hasty retreat in consequence of the offensive effluvium, but he rallied as he approached the widow, and in a choking voice observed:—

"How do you and Hatty find yourselves this morning, Mrs. Wilkins?"

The widow arose from the board that formed the seat for the miscellaneous party who were closely huddled together and engaged in talking over their night's adventures, and while an extempore pallidness passed over her face, she replied:

"It was an awful night, sir; but, thank Heaven, we escaped unharmed."

"But I didn't, Squire Eddards," interpolated the crone who had been smoking the pipe, and who knew that gentleman by sight; "myself an' family, which is composed of these four grown up

gals, were turned plump out o' the house. Jingo, 'twas a terrible storm, warn't Betsy?"

The young woman who was thus appealed to to corroborate this statement, merely said, "Yes, old woman," while she then added, as she looked at Mrs. Wilkins:—

"An' we should have frozen to death if 't hadn't been for the widow who took us in."

"An' starved to death!" exclaimed another female who had eaten more heartily than the rest of the savory meal that Mrs. Wilkins had provided for them.

"The widow's a gallus woman," coarsely remarked the only man who was present, who had an uncommonly ugly and rubicund countenance; "ef she aint, then d—n my eyes. But say, Squire, what brought yer down here among us poor devils? Come to spend merry Christmas with us?" and the man screwed his face up with such a chuckle, that it created a general giggling, with the exception of Mrs. Wilkins, who held down her head as if in disgust at the discourteous fling of the man. Mr. Edwards, on the other hand, looked upon the remark of the man as a species of jest peculiar to his nature, and was therefore in nowise disposed to receive it as a slur, however unbecoming it was. At a glance he had satisfied himself that however besotted and vile the man was, he

was naturally possessed of a warm heart. Taking, therefore, a five dollar bill from his pocket-book, he extended to the man, while he pleasantly remarked:—

"No, my good fellow, such is not my object, though I would joyfully, if I could, remain here all day and point out to you and these people the sin and wickedness which you revel in, and endeavor to correct your unworthiness and your obduracy by teaching you the merit and excellence of a well-spent life; to put you in the paths of morality and rectitude, and to tell you how to follow the precepts of Him who is now so wroth at the course which you are now pursuing. I have heard that crime has stalked forth in midday in this alley—enormities so great, as to be called murder. Now, hearts prone to such guilt as this, or even guilt of not so culpable a nature, as for instance the petty thefts so rife in this neighborhood, cannot indeed be so inhuman as not to relent, or so frigid as not to be softened by one kind word. Here's these children, my kind friends, these young boys and girls who are being trained, I have no reason to doubt, for a life that may end perhaps on the gallows, while their souls are consigned to that dreadful place which the bible tells us is the punishment of the wicked. Now, my friends, you who are the mothers of these offspring, would you

prefer that they should lead the life that they are being fitted for, or would you like to see them undergo such a reformation that will make them honest men and respectable members of society? But I have now said much more to you than I intended when I commenced. I hope, though, that you will ponder and reflect on what I have said; weigh the meaning of every word that I have uttered in your minds, for I advise you for your good, both temporal and spiritual." Mr. Edwards, on concluding his exhortation, then placed the bill in the man's hand, remarking at the same time:—

"Here, my good fellow, take this money and go to the grocery at the corner of the alley and lay it out in those necessities which you think most needed by these people. Hurry back, if you please, as soon as possible."

The man jumped up on receiving the money, while a tear stole down his rough and weather-beaten cheek. The female who had been seated by his side, who was his wife, also got up at the same time and followed him to the door.

"I'll go with you, Buck!" she whispered in his ear as she greedily eyed the money.

"No yer won't, either," said he, compressing his lips and scowling ferociously; "I know well 'nough what yer want me to spend the blunt for ef yer go; yer'll want a keg 'stead of a bottle of

gin this time to swill down yer gullet; but yer can't come it any how, old gal, so stop yer clack an' stay where yer are, ef yer don't, I'll put yer eyes in mourning. I'd have yer know when such a man as Squire Edwards puts confidence 'nough in me, who's such a d—d old cut-throat, to go an' buy yer all something to keep yer from starving, yer don't think I'd shove the blunt up for yer special benefit, do yer? ef yer do, then propel back to yer seat, for yer mistaken. Back with yer, ef yer don't, I shall——"

But the female well knew the character of her husband, and she at once slunk back to her seat, while he disappeared. No sooner had he gone than the women and children commenced a general jabbering in an undertone, while Mr. Edwards, whose heart was filled with joy, as he had overheard Buck's reply to the female, assuring him that the few brief remarks he had uttered had already made an impression on one mind—took the occasion to call Mrs. Wilkins one side to converse with her.

"I am about to offer you a proposition," said he, "my good woman, which I beg you will accept without demurring, coming as it does from two hearts that have ever sympathized with those in a situation like yours, and influenced as they are by Divine goodness, their loftiest aim is to do what

little they can during their probation in this world towards rendering happy as many as they can, who do not possess the means to ameliorate their worldly condition. To relieve your mind from any suspense, Mrs. Wilkins, I would now conjure you in behalf of my wife and myself, to take Hatty and go with me in the conveyance I have already waiting for us up the alley, to my house. There you will find a home, with all the comforts of life furnished for the remainder of your earthly pilgrimage. Hatty will also share the same bounties as yourself. She shall not only be the companion of my little Lizzy, but she shall also enjoy alike her advantages."

As Mr. Edwards had anticipated, the poor woman at first would not listen to his proposals, preferring rather to eke out her existence where she was. But after remonstrating with her, during which he dwelt on the bad influences that surrounded her grandchild, as well as depicted the various means by which she might be led astray, particularly if she was left alone by her sudden demise—he, at length, found that she gradually yielded, and finally consented.

No words could express the joy that Hatty experienced when her grandmother informed her of the change that was to be made in their home, and as she clapped her hands and danced about the

room, she silently wished that her companions could only be as well provided for. Widow Wilkins's neighbors felt alternately pleased and vexed, the latter feeling arising from a susceptibility of jealousy, as they saw her bustling about the room engaged in getting ready. But their temper was mollified on the sudden appearance of Buck, who set a large basket filled with edibles of nearly every variety on the board table, subsequent to his depositing in a corner a huge bunch of faggot.

"Here's half dollar back, squire," said he, handing Mr. Edwards the change. "I've got 'nough in that basket, I reckon, to last this crowd a week, that is, if my wife don't shove any of it up spout on the sly for gin, an' I reckon she won't, as long as I'm round."

Mr. Edwards would not take the balance of the money, but added a like amount, and told Buck to keep it. He then told him that as Widow Wilkins and Hatty was now going to live with him at his house, he could make this house his home, retaining what furniture and cooking utensils he found, until he called to see him again.

"I will call and see the proprietor during the intermediate time, and will see that your rent is paid. I shall expect though, when I call on you, to find you engaged in some occupation, and if I

see in you any indication that you mean to reform and do something for yourself and family, I shall then offer you all the aid in my power."

The hard-hearted Buck was so affected at this unexpected and noble generosity, that he was completely thunderstruck. All the events of his bad and dishonorable life came up before him, and he wept like a child.

"'T is the first kind word or act that was ever done by an outsider for me," he at last exclaimed, in a penitent voice. "An' I mean now to try an' be honest an' respectable, see ef I don't. Sall, too, shall turn over a new leaf," continued he, looking at his wife; "won't you, Sall, won't drink any more ef I won't, will yer, Sall?"

"I allers said that I'd stop rumming it when you did, Buck," replied the female with firmness, "an' I'll stick to it like a Trojan, for I never liked the nasty poison. The children too, if you'll go to work at your trade, shall be sent to the Williams's School, instead of spending their time in stealing and cutting up their develtries in this alley, as they have done."

Buck then faithfully pledged himself to go to work at his trade on the morrow, if he could find employment. The remainder of the outcasts of society were staggered at first, at the sudden transformation he had shown, knowing, as they did,

that he was one of the most notorious characters in the alley. They, however, came to the conclusion, after listening to what one of the old hags had whispered in their ears, who professed to be wiser than the rest, that Buck was only working a game to blind Squire Edwards.

Mr. Edwards now bade the occupants of the room an affectionate adieu. Then hurrying out with Widow Wilkins on his arm, while Hatty went on before them, he placed them both in the sleigh, and then got in himself, after he had wrapt the buffalo robes snugly about them to protect them from the cold. The hired man, who was in the grocery near by, warming himself, while he watched Mr. Edwards approach, now came out, and taking the blanket from off the horse, he got on to the seat, and drove back to the house.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A CASE OF CONSCIENCE.

THE holiday weeks flew rapidly by, during which period Mrs. Wilkins and Hatty had become perfectly at home at Mr. Edwards's house and had won the affection of every member of his family. There was nothing but what was done to enhance their happiness.

Hatty had been clad in new clothes, and no one would have once supposed, so altered was her appearance by this simple change—that she was the beggar girl that only a few weeks before, went about the city soliciting charity. She had become the devoted companion of Lizzy, and both were never seen separated from each other, save when Hatty went to bed with her grandmother. So strong was their attachment, that they were permitted to be in the same class both at the day and Sunday school, and to sit by the side of each other on the same seat—and to read out of the same book. No quicker were they out at the primary school;

than they came directly home and went up into the nursery, where they would amuse themselves with Lizzy's playthings, or when tired of play, Lizzy would sit quietly and listen to a story that Hatty would relate, concerning some little incident that had happened in her eleemosynary rounds, when she lived at Dark Alley. Never was two children more loving or of a nature more self-sacrificing, than these. They had no quarrels, never entertained any hard feelings towards each other, but to the contrary it had come to such a pass that they zealously contended to make one another's circumstances a bed of roses.

Mrs. Wilkins also had everything placed at her disposal that she required. She attended church with the family, eat at the same table, and was treated with proper deference by the servants. To all appearances she seemed reconciled to her situation, and was at ease. But at times, however, she had exhibited a singularity of conduct, that had attracted Mr. Edwards' attention, which he was not able to fathom or account for. So anomalistic was it, as he thought, with her general uniformity of manner, that he mentioned the fact to his wife, but she surmised it was only caused by their kindness to her, and thus the matter was put at rest, until one evening some days after, when he and his wife, together with the latter's parents, were seated in the sitting room—the subject was again revived.

No allusion however was made to it until Dr. Lyons and his wife, who had been in spending the evening, had both gone.

The reason of its then forming the theme of conversation was owing to a few remarks that the Doctor had made during the evening, in which he took occasion to animadvert with pungent satire in the presence of Mrs. Wilkins, who happened to be in the room at the time, on the kind of aristocracy which Mr. Hargrave, jr., and family formed a component part. The Doctor had instituted a comparison between what he termed the consolidated substance and the gilded ethereal show of society—meaning by the former the intelligent working classes, as he explained it, and by the latter, that which styles itself the *bon ton*. After he had got through, he politely asked Mrs. Wilkins, among the rest, if what he had said, was not pertinent to society of the present day—when she answered by merely nodding her head, and in a few minutes after she begged to be excused, alleging that Hatty required her attention, and left the room. This circumstance did not escape Mr. Edwards' watchful eye—and he was now more surprised than ever. Why his wonderment was more increased on the present occasion, was, from the fact that she had never before acted in this manner, only to himself and his family. But when in one of these moods, and when spoken to by himself or his wife or his

wife's parents, she appeared so estranged, that no sooner had she uttered a reply than she hastened up stairs and secluded herself in her room for hours. But in the present instance he found that she not only behaved in the same queer way to others besides his own family, but also had perceived an additional caprice. She was so emotional that her cheeks flushed with an unnatural glow. It was not strange, therefore, that he should mention the incident, after his visitors had taken their leave.

"I have my doubts after all," he remarked to his wife—"that you formed a correct opinion, when you thought that it was occasioned by an innate sense of gratitude to us for our goodness to her and Hatty—which she could not express."

"The conclusion that I arrived at, husband, when we talked the matter over, now is certainly underserving of belief, I must confess. You will recollect, however, that my opinion then was inferred from the great amount of sewing that she accomplished daily, and her positive refusal to accept any remuneration for her services as long as she remained here; and from this circumstance I at once took it for granted that she imagined she was so beholden to us, that she was bent on doing anything she could do, as the only hope of ever requiting us. But now, since you detected a still more sur-

prising similarity of conduct, I cannot comprehend its meaning."

"You may be right after all, Mary, in the opinion that you have repudiated," said Mrs. Steadyman, "and perhaps her conduct was occasioned by more remarks that the Doctor made, which touched her feelings."

"This is not at all improbable," replied Mr. Edwards—"yet I cannot credit it at present. As for the remarks of the Doctor, I cannot bring to mind anything that he said, which would have affected her in the manner I have described. Can you, wife?"

Mrs. Edwards reflected for a moment, and then observed—

"Did you notice anything out of the way when the Doctor spoke of Mr. Hargrave, jr.?"

"Let me see," said Mr. Edwards, hesitating, as he endeavored to recall to mind something noticeable in Mrs. Wilkins's appearance at the time referred to by his wife. "Yes, it strikes me that she showed symptoms of embarrassment," he added, "but it might have been fancy on my part, after all."

"No fan-cy of—mine," drawled Mr. Steadyman, whose speech had been rendered imperfect, as we have before stated, by his paralysis; "I—saw her

quiver when doctor hit Hargrave Jr. off; am not—mis-taken."

"Then I did not labor under a fallacy or misapprehension," said Mr. Edwards, "for Father Steadyman says he noticed it at the same time."

"Really, the matter is now becoming quite paradoxical," observed Mrs. Edwards.

"Not so obscure or inexplicable," remarked Mrs. Steadyman, "but that I believe I can add a link in the chain of evidence already given, which will make it as lucid as it can be made, I think, under the existing circumstances."

"Then you have ascertained the cause?" said Mr. Edwards, happily.

"No, Charles, it is only a matter of conjecture from what I gleaned from Mrs. Wilkins by the merest accident. You will remember that on New Year's night Mrs. Wilkins kept herself in her room the greater portion of the evening. After Mr. and Mrs. Timpkins had gone, I went up to bed, and when I passed her door on the way to my room, I heard her sobbing at a great rate. After reflecting for a minute, I considered it my bounden duty to go and see what the matter was, for I didn't know but that she might be unwell and required assistance. So impressed was I with this apprehension, that I did not stop to knock at her door, but in my excitement went directly into the room,

and there I found Mrs. Wilkins seated by the bedside, crying most piteously, with the bible that you gave her as a New Year's gift lying open before her on the bed."

"Are you sick, my dear woman?" I remarked, as she hastily closed the good book and catching up a kerchief commenced wiping away the tears.

"I am not," she briefly replied, somewhat confused, I suppose, at my sudden entrance.

"Then why do you weep," I said. "There must be some cause for these tears. Come, confide in me, my good woman," said I, seating myself on the edge of the bed, "if you have any troubles, and I will try and assuage your grief by reading out of this blessed book what our Heavenly Father says to the widow and the fatherless."

"I have read it over a great many times," said she, "and after many years of probation the prayers of a penitent heart were at last answered."

"But why this affliction, then, since you know that one regenerated unto faith can always find consolation in God's holy book?"

"I know it," said she, calmly; "I know it, but O, do not desecrate His great name by believing that I am as pure and holy as yourself or the rest of this family," she cried, "for I am not, and never expect to be."

"Pray explain yourself," said I. "Surely your

piety is not assumed, for God knows the heart, and you say that he has answered your prayers.'

"'No, no,' said she. 'If anybody was ever sincere in their motives when they experienced religion and atoned for their past transgressions, it was I when I offered my heart as a burnt-offering to my Heavenly Father, and notwithstanding I have been surrounded by wickedness in Dark Alley for years, I can conscientiously say that I never backslid.'

"'I then attempted to convince her that as all flesh was alike, so was one Christian as pure and holy as another; there was no difference. But still she persisted that she was not justified in saying that notwithstanding she tried in her humility to be pious and devout, yet she could not be so heavenly-minded as the family—meaning ours—who had taken such compassion on her situation and tried to make her so happy. A suspicion of the truth then flashed across my mind. This, then, thought I, is not only the real cause of your weeping, but accounts for that singularity of conduct which you have on several occasions shown towards the family. You think that you are not so good or so holy as we, because it is not in your power to reward us for our sympathies. As I had found it useless in my attempts to convince her of the parity of Christians, I resolved to drop the

subject, which I saw affected her quite sensibly at times. Bidding her therefore good night, I retired to my room.'

On Mrs. Steadyman's conclusion, Mr. Edwards could not but admit that she had furnished almost unmistakable proof, in addition to the incident that his wife had already given, and that her opinion—meaning Mrs. Edwards's—was correct, and he was now satisfied. Besides, the development of his mother-in-law had greatly depreciated the marked surprise which he had evinced on Mrs. Wilkins's emotion that evening when she left the room, insomuch that, without any further discussion, he opined that the reason was obvious; that when the doctor spoke in such condemnatory terms of Mr. Hargrave Jr., Mrs. Wilkins's mind at once reverted to the bill that the doctor had so generously paid out of his own pocket, on finding that Hargrave would not settle it. To be sure, said he, Mrs. Wilkins refused to take it, on learning the fact, but then the doctor had put it in Hatty's Savings bank as a New Year's present, which was not only another proof of his goodness of heart, but placed her, as she thought, under greater obligations. The family, after prayers, then retired, each one convinced that the singular conduct exhibited by Mrs. Wilkins towards themselves, as well as towards Dr. Lyons, and which

at first had so elicited their wonder, was only an overflow of the profoundest feelings of gratitude for the acts of kindness rendered her, which she could not repress if she remained and continued in conversation with her benefactors, and therefore to disguise the workings of her surcharged bosom, she hurried to her room, there to find relief to her feelings in a flood of tears, while she prayed to her Maker to give her strength and endurance that she might be able to requite them for their benevolence. This conviction was clenched on the morrow by an untoward event which they were necessitated to submit to, and which caused them much pain. It seems that after breakfast Mrs. Wilkins requested to speak with Mr. Edwards before he went down town, in private. The result of this interview amounted to Mr. Edwards finally consenting, after many entreaties on her part, that she should be no longer dependent on their bounties; to allow Mrs. Wilkins to leave the house that very forenoon and go into Mr. Bogart's family, who lived near Mr. Timpkins's, as nurse, where she had applied for and obtained a situation the day before. The conditions which Mr. Edwards stipulated were, that Hatty should remain where she was, to which Mrs. Wilkins gave her free consent.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE POTENCY OF MORAL SUASION.

AFTER having accompanied Mrs. Wilkins to Mr. Bogart's house, where she had found employment, Mr. Edwards proceeded directly to his office. He had just comfortably seated himself before the warm blazing fire he had built, when who should make his appearance but Mr. Tippler, followed closely at his heels by a grizzly, hirsute dog, who was a most savage looking animal.

"Morning, squire," exclaimed Tippler, removing his hat and seating himself in the chair, which Mr. Edwards proffered him. "Wolf, lay down in that corner," he added, speaking to the dog; "an' be easy, for you are in a lawyer's office."

The dog rolled his large, bloodshot eyes about the room, as if satisfying himself that there was no occasion at present for his services. Then after performing a circumvolution several times, he obeyed the injunction, and shutting one eye, he kept the other open, fixed on his master.

"That's a remarkable beast, squire!" observed Tippler. "He'll do anything that yer'll tell him to do. Has remarkable propensities."

"I should judge by his looks that he was quite ferocious," observed Mr. Edwards.

"Allers docile as a lamb, squire, unless I winks at him, an' then he's got no reason. He's a perfect catamount, 'specially on cats an' rats. Sometimes he takes a notion in his head to show his grinders to one of our city swells, an' ef they resent it, then he goes a leetle further, an' nips their trowsers leg. Ef they then get wrathful an' try to kick him off, then he shuts that vice of his'n an' chaws away 'till he eats their leg off. But he never fancies this kind of amusement except when he's antic an' wants to have a leetle fun."

"Rather a harsh way to enjoy himself, Mr. Tippler. I hope you were not so cruel as to teach him this!"

"O no, squire, it's nat'ral—'t was born in him just as much as his propensity of eating the legs off of every table he comes across, ef he takes a notion. His bump of destruction is orful large."

"This last is quite an amusing voracity, Mr. Tippler. I hope his canine appetite will not be awakened while he remains in the office."

"No danger of that, squire. He knows the difference between pine an' mahogany legs. The last

named are flat an' stale to his taste, an', therefore, he's pertickler to make a meal out of pine ones, cause they taste sweet, an' have no small bones to stick in his throat."

"Well, he is certainly a most remarkable dog!" exclaimed Mr. Edwards, scarcely repressing his laughter.

"That he is, squire. He's worth his weight in gold. Just see how he keeps that one peeper closed. He knows that we're talking about him. Now, see him wag that stub shot. That shows that he knows we're talking some good about him. Now, ef we'd said anything that was bad, he'd 'ave growled leetle easy an' showed his grinders, to let yer know his feelings were hurt, an' that he should n't stand it, ef we did n't dry up. I tell you what, squire, those that know his pints, say he's a remarkable pup, aint yer, Wolf?"

The dog commenced wagging his tail, as Tippler snapped his fingers at him, while he fastened both eyes on Mr. Edwards, as much as to say, does the gentleman agree with you in your last assertion? which Tippler comprehended and remarked, "It's all him." The dog evidently understood this expression, for he at once closed his left eye, while he kept the right one open as before. Mr. Tippler then wheeled himself round in his chair, while he remarked:—

"I've called to see you, squire, as yer wanted me to, when I got time. Sorry couldn't come afore, but business prevented. But better late than never, as some of our neighbors said, when they had n't had a meal o' victuals for a fortnight, an' then I sent them over 'nough to last a week. I'm at last here, an' am yer humble servant—what's the business, squire, propel."

"Mr. Tippler," said Mr. Edwards, "may I be allowed to inquire, how you have acquired such a control over the people of Dark Alley?"

"Certainly, squire, for that's the easiest question I ever had asked me," replied Tippler, laughing. "Why, bless you, squire, I does it with these fellars," and he stretched forth his large and muscular arms, and drew them backwards and forwards several times. "Yer see," he added, after this demonstration, "I takes a striking liking to them, when they don't come up to the scratch, an' by this means, they allers stand in fear of me. How do you like my style, squire?"

"It is, I dare say, a very effectual style in its way, Mr. Tippler, but don't you believe that you could adopt another mode, which would be decidedly better and much more commendable."

"That depends on circumstances. Ef a fellar, for instance, should give me any cheek, I gives him a show to either take it back or keep quiet;

but ef he don't do one of these two things, but keeps on his blarney, then I'm compelled to give him a touch of the noble an' manly, by taking "down his house," as we say. That's 'cording to Hoyle—but ef you can recommend a different style, I'll think on't a while an' give yer my 'pinion."

Mr. Edwards paused for an instant, and then remarked, quite seriously:—

"Mr. Tippler, did you ever read the Bible?"

"Well, now you've got me, squire," replied Tippler, expectorating a mouthful of tobacco juice in the spittoon. "You've asked me though an honest question, an' I'm bound to tell you the truth, I hav n't of late years—say fifteen years ago."

"I am glad to hear that you have read it sometime during your life, but am afraid that you never recollect what you did read," and Mr. Edwards closely watched the effect his expression had on Tippler, but he was dumb.

"It says in the Bible," continued Mr. Edwards, "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also! Can you recall this passage to mind, Mr. Tippler?"

Mr. Tippler to this made no reply, but sat steadfastly looking at the fire. Mr. Edwards resumed:

"That good book furthermore says—" Love your

enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you! Have you any recollection of this verse, Mr. Tippler?"

Still Tippler sat unmoved and speechless.

"My friend Tippler," persisted Mr. Edwards, perceiving at last that individual was beginning to be slightly affected at what he had said—"do not hesitate to tell me your thoughts; you know well enough that I would not think any the less of you, if you should freely confess to me your neglects to read or inability to remember these holy precepts which are recorded in the word of God, together with the derelictions of life that such an omission have caused."

"If a man who has turned in the least way from an honest life," at length Tippler uttered, gloomily, "an' has been what you might call a jolly fellar, happens to be placed in contact with one who has never done anything wrong, there's a feeling that comes up in his throat that chokes him so bad, that he wants to hide his head somwheres. I've often heard that such was allers the case, but I never experienced it before until now"—and Tippler looked quite lugubrious.

"That feeling, friend Tippler, is the reproving pang of conscience—a sensation which in truth does make 'cowards of us all.'"

"I never thought I was a coward before," replied Tippler, wiping the drops of perspiration from off his forehead, with his coat sleeve—"but now I believe it—for I'm as weak as a drowned rat, by listening to what you've said."

"Then you will acknowledge, that if you should now go back to Dark Alley, you would stand in fear of your companions, even if they should insult you—"

"No, I'll not admit that, Squire," exclaimed Tippler, regaining in a measure his customary firmness—"that's contr'y to natur. I will say, nevertheless, an' I say it boldly too, that when I'm in your presence, I'm a coward, an' would n't show fight ef I was mauled to death by my worst enemy. Yer talk an' actions, Squire, wilts me right down, an' somehow or ruther, I feel like another man. It's true, Squire, as sure as I'm sitting here."

"And has this change in your feelings been wrought by my striking you?" asked Mr. Edwards.

"No, sir."

"What then causes you to stand in such fear of one who has never laid the weight of a finger on your person?"

"Moral suasion, as yer call it, I 'spose, Squire."

"Then is not moral suasion a better weapon than your fists?"

"'Tis for yer latitude, Squire, but in mine

't would not answer. It requires a knock-down argument."

"Havn't I used it successfully in your latitude?"

"Yer have, Squire, but yer see yer're a different man from me."

"And is there not a chance for you to become a better man than I, and do more for bleeding humanity, than ever I have thought of doing?" pursued Mr. Edwards in his questioning. Tippler again was silent.

"The same Being that created you," continued Mr. Edwards, "created me also, friend Tippler. In His wisdom and goodness He endowed you as well with the same passions and the same mind; but you have chosen to direct your thoughts into another channel, and thus perverted your mental powers by those pursuits which you have followed. But, friend Tippler, possessing yet as you do those noble powers, which in your ignorance and its accompanying evils, you have so ingloriously debased, it is not too late to reclaim yourself and become a man. Yes, friend Tippler, and it is for the advancement of this end that I have desired this interview. You are not so bad in the scale of humanity, but what there is ample time for you to not only shake off the shackles of demoralization that bind you, by a contriteness of heart, but to also accomplish a great deal of good. There is your

business, for instance—to strike at the root of your transgressions, for I cannot believe that you ever committed any offence of a more censurable nature—there is your business, of dealing out a deadly poison daily to your fellow creatures—and bringing misery and woe to their firesides. You are well aware that the cause of temperance is now agitating the public mind in many of our States, and multiform are the ways devised to suppress the evils of intemperance. In our own State we have had laws enacted, some good ones while others have been highly injudicious. There are men also assiduously engaged in efforts to bring about a general reformation—men who I'm sorry to see are very intemperate in their opinions, and wild in their beliefs. These men are the supporters of the injudicious laws I have alluded to, enactments which were and are unadapted in their construction to meet the general want. But there is another class of men, friend Tippler, who do not rush onward in a rabid, fanatical course, determined to quench the fire of intemperance in their zeal by persecuting and inflicting severe punishments on those who do not instantly abandon the traffic. No, these last kind of reformers are merciful, more moderate, and therefore are surer of gaining their end. The laws that they are in favor of and uphold, are not unconstitutional, oppressive or repug-

nant—but wholesome, judicious and salutary enactments. They are men who believe that the traffic is a curse to mankind, and has a most pernicious and horrible effect in its consequences. But the mode which they adopt and practice is one which effectually bruises the serpent's head. Friend Tippler, I belong to this last named class of reformers, and would now appeal to your feelings, your sense of right and wrong, when I request of you to abolish your traffic. You cannot deny but that the cause of temperance is great and good, and that intemperance is an unnecessary evil—and wherever it prevails is a source of general degradation. Would you then have your fellow creatures enjoy respectability and happiness, or would you see them become inmates of our poorhouses and jails. Can you hesitate to relinquish that traffic which not only destroys reputation, mind, and blasts the happiness of families, but sends its victims to an untimely grave and eternal punishment hereafter? for which you alone are morally responsible to your God! or would you give up your business and have compassion on those unfortunate men and women who thirst for liquor. Plead earnestly with them—pour words of encouragement in their hearts and bid them to resist temptations by strength of moral principles. Only think, friend Tippler, of the vast amount of good you

might accomplish by abandoning your business, which is now the fountain head from which flows all the vice that blackens Dark Alley. Now, friend Tippler, arouse those dormant energies which have so long slumbered—exercise that will which has been so unwillingly curbed, and commence this great work which will so tend to elevate the miserable condition of the families in your neighborhood, and lead them onward to a noble future. In carrying on this work of reform, you shall have my aid, and we'll both contend strong in arms and accomplish all that we can. Perhaps we may not raise but one family from their depravity out of the hundreds which live there; but let not this discourage, but stimulate us, to work all the harder. Come, friend Tippler, what say you." And Mr. Edwards laid his hand in the kindest manner on the individual's shoulder. The conscience-stricken man started up from the intentness of thought into which he had been plunged, during the remarks Mr. Edwards had uttered, which had penetrated to the innermost recesses of his heart, and while an anxious smile diffused his countenance, he remarked in a husky voice—

"Squire Edwards, I don't know what to say, but I feel as if I should blubber right out like a baby." There was an intermission of several minutes, during which neither spoke. The silence, how-

ever, was soon broken by Tippler's exclaiming in a faint voice, while his broad chest heaved synchronical with his quick and heavy breathings, "Squire Edwards, I begin—to feel bad agin—right here!" Tippler placed his hand on his forehead. "Don't stop talking—talk more—I—feel better when yer talk," and Tippler sunk back in his chair. Then Mr. Edwards took Tippler's hand within his own, and kneeling down on the floor, in a clear mellifluous voice he prayed, and in that supplication that went up to heaven, he implored his Maker to absolve, purge and purify the penitent's heart, and to make him a good man; to protect him from all evil, and to give him faith to believe. Mr. Edwards prayed long and earnestly, and when he arose, Tippler retained his hand, and staring vacantly about the room, he exclaimed vehemently:—

"No, that warn't mother's voice, she's dead an' in her grave, poor woman, years ago; but I warn't bad when she lived; I didn't sell rum. Was that yer prayer, mother? I allers minded yer when yer was alive. I warn't vile then, cause yer said I was a good boy. Buck! Buck! where are yer? Yes, yes, I recollect yer told me yesterday, Buck, yer had reformed an' got work; but I didn't try, did I, Buck, to make yer break yer promises to—to—Squire Edwards, who wanted Tippler to come

to his office to pray for him, an' Tippler went. But 'twas mother who prayed, warn't it? No, 'twarnt. 'Twas." But the spell that had bound the penitent was broken, and while the tears flowed copiously, he let go Mr. Edwards's hand, and remarked with deep pathos:—

"Yer'll not feel hurt, Squire, ef I ask yer a question?"

"No, friend Tippler."

"Will yer prayer then allers make me feel as good as I feel now?"

"If from this moment you resolve to lead a new course of life," replied Mr. Edwards, "and not only strive to gain the respect of others, but to command the love of God by daily walking in the paths of true piety, you will become not only a useful member of society, but will reap the reward of the just man made perfect hereafter."

"Then," cried Tippler, fervently, "I'll try an' be henceforth a better man; an' the first step towards it shall be a general cleaning out of my rum-hole this very afternoon. Yer'll call an' see me as soon as yer can, won't yer, Squire?" and Mr. Edwards, as he shook Tippler's hand, gave him positive assurance that he would.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

INCOMPREHENSIBLE.

DURING the interregnum of three weeks that had now passed, Mr. Edwards had devoted all of his leisure moments during each day in visiting Dark Alley and aiding Tippler in carrying on the work of reform which had been agreed upon. Their progress, however, was slow, as Mr. Edwards had anticipated; still they were not disheartened. The amount of social poverty and misery which they encountered, dwelling in the fetid atmosphere of damp and chilly rooms under ground, was almost incredible, and would have discouraged men of ordinary benevolent feelings, but it only served to inspire the hearts of our two missionaries with renewed vigor and zeal.

One forenoon Mr. Edwards had locked his office and was on his way to Dark Alley, when before he had proceeded a dozen rods, he met Mr. Timpkins.

"I have just left your house, Charles," remarked

that gentleman, "and have rather unpleasant news to tell you, though nothing, my dear boy, of a nature so serious as to occasion you any alarm. Let's walk down to your office, and on the way I'll explain to you."

Mr. Edwards nervously linked arms with Mr. Timpkins, as he retraced his steps to the office.

"The gist of the matter is," remarked Mr. Timpkins, "your wife's father is sued."

"Sued!" reiterated Mr. Edwards with painful wonder. "Sued for what, pray?" and then while a multitude of thoughts swept through his brain, he added, as a suspicion of the truth glimmered upon his faculties, "Ah! I apprehend at once the truth of this process; it is relative to that note which Snorter holds; he has commenced his action, then, in earnest. But how does my father-in-law stand it? how did it affect him when he saw the summons?"

"I happened, quite fortunately, to be in the sitting-room talking with Mr. Steadyman, when Hatty picked the summons up in the entry," replied Mr. Timpkins, as they entered the entry and ascended the stairs which led to the office, "and bringing it in to me she left the room. The moment I opened it I comprehended its meaning, which I gradually communicated to Mr. Steadyman. Your father-in-law was struck with amaze-

ment, as you may suppose, but he never quivered a nerve however, but to the contrary, sustained the most remarkable equanimity."

At this announcement Mr. Edwards felt immediately relieved from the painful misgivings that had weighed so heavily on his mind, and as they went into the office, he remarked with complacency:—

"Did father Steadyman have anything to say touching the legitimacy of the note?"

"Nothing, not a syllable," responded Mr. Timpkins. "But then I am satisfied from what he did say, that the note is a forgery—I suspected as much months ago, you will recollect."

"What did he say?"

"He simply remarked, after I had told him that it was in three weeks from to-day that he must appear before the proper tribunal to answer unto the action—instituted against him—that he was perfectly willing to go to court, feeling assured that 'justice knows neither father nor mother, justice looks to truth alone.'"

"Why, that is a maxim of the law which he has heard me repeat quite often, in instances when my client has been wrongfully accused to my certain knowledge, and there were fears entertained that I should not get the case," and Mr. Edwards's face, which had brightened up for the moment, now

mingled with a pensive shade, as he added: "However grievous and deplorable it is to even suspect that a fellow-being can be guilty of so heinous an offence as you have alleged, I am now constrained to concur with you in the allegation. I conscientiously believe it to be a forgery!" and this last expression was pronounced with slow and measured intonation. "Yes, a rank forgery," he continued, "for I have got in my possession very strong circumstantial proof that my father-in-law never gave such a note to his brother. This evidence is an old note-book, in which father Steadyman always made a record of every note that he signed. When I made this discovery I seriously distrusted the legality of the note, but now from what father Steadyman has implied in that maxim which he quoted, my suspicions are confirmed without the shadow of a doubt."

"This being settled in our minds, the next question that arises is, who forged it?" remarked Mr. Timpkins.

"I'll tell you what my opinion is in regard to this. I think that Sam is guilty of the offence, and that he did it to raise money. This Snorter being a personal friend of his, and being so very wealthy, Sam hypothecated the note to him, and drew the money, without any suspicion on Snorter's part."

"That's my opinion precisely, Charles, and now

that Snorter has returned from Europe, where he has been for three months past, on business connected with that visionary project of his and Bonum's, he finds that he needs a little relaxation, and therefore he has determined to *amuse* himself during his recess in the manner that he informed you he should."

"Then he has been to Europe," inquired Mr. Edwards; "why, he gave me to understand when I saw him last, that he was going to hunt Sam up, and if he wasn't successful in finding him during the coming six months, he then at the expiration of that time should commence the action."

"Oh, that was all moonshine, as you now see. I don't believe he ever made an inquiry to any body else but you about Sam's whereabouts."

"But you will recollect that I told you that such was his intention?"

"Yes, perfectly well, and I remarked at the time that I believed if Snorter did carry out his threat, it would be nothing more nor less than satisfying a wilful and malicious spirit."

"Or, in plainer language, believing that Sam, in all probability was dead, and finding that the note was fraudulent, he resolved to revenge himself on Sam's brother."

"Well, your defence is good enough, Charles. Keep cool, therefore, and let him go his length. There is one thing you can depend on, and that is,

for a man to undertake to recover an amount of money for debt, which is wrongfully due, is, as impossible as the attempts of the fellow who was astride a beer barrel, who had his mouth to the bung-hole, and was trying to reason it into good cider. If Snorter wants to dance he must pay the fiddler," and Mr. Timpkins's levity was quite refreshing to Mr. Edwards.

"By the way," added Mr. Timpkins, rising from his chair and moving towards the door; "I saw the Yankee this morning, and he wished me to meet him at the Exchange to-morrow forenoon at eleven o'clock, when he will go with me to the hotel where Snorter is stopping and introduce me to him. I readily accepted Bonum's invitation, when he invited me, because I had a two-fold purpose for seeing Snorter. One reason is, because I may find out something of importance to you relative to this note, if I have a chance, and the other is, because I wish to enjoy a hearty laugh in quizzing him on his preposterous scheme—an enterprise which is a good offset to that stock-jobbing affair of laying the wire cable across the ocean—a plan which, whether feasible or not, so far as I can hear, is not in good hands, and is likely to take in some good men on both sides of the ocean," and Mr. Timpkins, in concluding, opened the door and hurried down stairs.

Mr. Timpkins having gone, Mr. Edwards hesitated whether he should go immediately to Dark Alley, as he had contemplated before meeting with that gentleman, or whether he should proceed at once to his house to ascertain what effect the event of the morning had had upon the remainder of his family, and to comfort them if it was needful, when just as he had concluded to adopt the latter course, he heard heavy footsteps on the stairs, and at the next moment Mr. Snorter walked unceremoniously into the room. Mr. Edwards was altogether taken by surprise at this sudden intrusion of a visitor who was least expected, but he quickly recovered his presence of mind and bade Mr. Snorter be seated.

"I've come on business, d'ye see, Squire," remarked Snorter, seating himself and looking around with an air of wonderment. "I s'pose that portrait up there was taken for Squire Williams, warn't it?" added Snorter, whose eye had fallen on the picture as he gazed about the room.

"Yes sir," replied Mr. Edwards as he sat down in the favorite arm-chair which had belonged to his tutor when he was alive, "and an excellent portrait it is. But what is the character of your business with me, Mr. Snorter?"

As Mr. Edwards had surmised, Snorter replied that it was concerning the note which he held in

his possession. But this answer was so vague and indefinite that Mr. Edwards felt it obligatory to ask what he meant.

"I mean, d'ye see, Squire, that I have nipped the proceedings in the bud," replied Snorter.

This piece of intelligence completely electrified Mr. Edwards, but controlling his feelings, he remarked:—

"What is the cause, if I may ask, of your taking this step, for it is but a few hours since that the summons in your case was served upon my father-in-law to appear at Court and answer unto your charge?"

"The cause is better known to myself, d'ye see," observed Snorter doggedly, as he stroked his long beard.

"May I be allowed to ask you, then, one question, sir?" said Mr. Edwards mildly, taking no notice of Snorter's discourteous reply to his previous question.

"Go ahead," and Snorter, as he spoke, muttered, "if I am worth two millions of dollars, I just as lief common folks would ask me as many questions as they want to."

"Is the cause of your staying the proceedings in the action which you brought against my father-in-law owing to your discovering the abode of his brother?"

Snorter replied in the negative.

"That is sufficient," observed Mr. Edwards; "I have no more questions to ask."

"To convince you that I have quashed the proceedings, Squire, here's the proof," and Snorter produced a large leather pouch, rotund and plethoric from its contents, and opening it, he took therefrom a package neatly tied up in brown paper, and threw it into Mr. Edwards's lap.

"Why, this is money, bank bills, and a very large amount too, I should judge!" exclaimed Mr. Edwards upon undoing the package and discovering the fact. "You have made a mistake, sir."

"Bank bills!" ejaculated Snorter, taking the package from Mr. Edwards's hands, "Oh yes," he continued, "I recollect now; there's the paltry sum of ten thousand dollars in this paper. Bah! I'll not encumber my pocket with the stuff," and Snorter contemptuously flung the package into the fire, to the utter astonishment of Mr. Edwards, who exclaimed, as he sprang forward to save the package from the flames, but he was not in season, for it had almost instantly burned to a crisp.

"Are you aware what you have done, sir?"

"Never was more conscious of anything in my life, Squire," remarked Snorter with supercilious frigidity, "or else I shouldn't have done it, you know. But don't worry yourself and think that I

have met with a loss, for I am frequently given to enjoying myself in this manner, d'ye see, because if you want to know, my income is so large that I cannot find ways enough to get rid of it as fast as I receive it, you know, and so I have adopted this mode, d'ye see. Therefore, I would again say, don't concern yourself about what I have done, for it is a circumstance so trivial that it is not worth while to allude to it to anybody, d'ye see. Here's the papers that I supposed I'd got in the first instance. I only made a mistake in a slight difference of size, you know," and Snorter tossed into Mr. Edwards's lap another smaller package, which, like the former, was enwrapped in brown paper.

Mr. Edwards was so completely thunder-struck at the incident which had just occurred, that he could hardly believe what he had seen; but on coming to his senses, he rose to his feet, and after satisfying himself that he had labored under no delusion, by examining the ashes of the burnt money, he turned around to speak to Snorter, but lo, he had gone! Stooping over, he picked up the package which he had dropped from his lap on to the floor when he got up, and tearing open the brown wrapper, he found that it contained Sam's note, accompanied by a writing, the purport of which was, that Snorter had abandoned the legal measures he had taken to recover its value for reasons he was not at liberty to divulge.

On Mr. Edwards' arrival at the house, his family were rejoiced to hear of the suspension of the suit, but neither could they or himself form any idea how it had been brought about; but when Mr. Edwards related how Snorter had destroyed the package of money, the whole affair assumed a more enigmatical shape, and they were more confounded than ever.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE RESULT OF A COLOSSAL
CONCEPTION.

At the appointed hour Mr. Timpkins met Mr. Bonum at the Exchange, and forthwith they repaired to the hotel where Snorter was staying. As they walked along they attracted a great deal of attention from the by-standers, for Bonum had gained such a notoriety that everybody was anxious to get a peep at him.

"As I was about to tell you, Mr. Timpkins," remarked the Yankee as they crossed over to the opposite side of the street to avoid a dense mass of people who had blockaded the sidewalk, and who were vociferating most lustily for Bonum to expatiate on soap, nondescripts, suspension bridges, etc., "my distinguished friend Snorter, when in England, consulted with two very celebrated gentlemen, Professors Snigglemiggle and Pendleton, respecting our bridge project, and the result is that we have taken their advice and concluded to get

up a counter scheme which is no more nor less than tunneling the bed of the Atlantic."

"Still more wonderful, Mr. Bonum!" exclaimed Mr. Timpkins, apparently staggered at this disclosure, but in reality feeling as if his sides would burst with laughter.

"It will be the master stroke of human wisdom," replied the Yankee quite emphatically as he drew in a long breath. "The idea, even, is sufficient to shake the whole world to its very foundation. I tell you what it is, Mr. Timpkins, it was a golden moment when I ran afoul of Mr. Snorter," and the Yankee spoke in such an impassioned manner, that Mr. Timpkins saw that he trembled from head to foot. "Yes," he continued, "and Dame Fortune placed me in contact with Mr. Snorter under very extraordinary circumstances too. It was about a year and a half ago, I believe, when I was in New York, I happened to be in the smoking-room of the Astor House one day, when I saw a gentleman in the act of lighting his segar with a five dollar bill. So dumbfounded was I at this piece of extravagance, that I took the liberty of drawing the gentleman's attention to the fact, by asking him if he knew what he was doing; but he coolly told me to mind my own business, as he could afford it, if I couldn't. I then begged his pardon, and by degrees got into conversation with

him. I learned that his name was Snorter; that he was immensely rich, notwithstanding he was so ordinarily dressed and was very eccentric. I then acquainted him who I was, and from that moment we became on the most intimate terms. After I had been acquainted with him a week, he one day told me of the project which he had conceived, and which he was then devoting the greater portion of his time in experimenting upon. In this scheme I at once saw an opening from which, when perfected, and we began to sell stock, I could realize a fortune that was worth having, and, to make a long story short, after a great deal of working I at last succeeded in prevailing upon Mr. Snorter to sell me out and out a half interest in the project, for which I paid him fifty thousand dollars in hard cash, and to bear my proportional part of the expenses, whatever they might be, in experimenting until we could make it work. Since then Mr. Snorter has accompanied me in my peregrinations about the country, and while I have sold soap, he has been actively employed in experimenting. Our costs of experimenting have been so enormous—for you see, every week or so Mr. Snorter had to have a new model made of some mountain, valley, river, city, village, or something of that sort, that he had discovered was situated somewhere on either this continent or that of Europe—that I have mort-

gaged nearly all of my property to raise money to pay my part of the expenses. But I have not begun to expend what Mr. Snorter has, for while I have only paid out in all nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, it has cost him double the amount. Why, this trip to England of his, as one item of expense that has accrued, cost us seventy-five thousand dollars. I paid Mr. Snorter the balance of ten thousand dollars which was due on my part yesterday morning, which squares the yards between us so far."

"Seventy-five thousand dollars!" reiterated Mr. Timpkins, now really astounded at what he had heard. "Why, how could he manage to get rid of so large an amount?"

"Experimenting, sir; experimenting with Professors Snigglemiggie and Pendleton. And when at last, as I might say, they had gone so far as to cry Eureka! which had appeared to them in the shape of this counter scheme, Mr. Snorter was so overjoyed that he offered to pay their bills over to America, if they would come, for fear that he might forget one of the many important facts which had been the result of their labors."

"And did they accept the offer?" interrupted Mr. Timpkins.

"Yes sir. And as I was about to add, after Mr.

Snorter had importuned them several days, they finally consented, and are now at the hotel."

They had now reached the hotel, and as Bonum disengaged his arm from Mr. Timpkins's as they entered the door, the latter let him take the lead, while he followed him up stairs to Snorter's room. The Yankee did not stop to knock at the door, but pushed it open, and bade Mr. Timpkins to enter. No sooner had Mr. Timpkins entered the apartment, when he recognized Snorter bending over a large table standing in the centre of the room, overspread with a monster chart, on which he was intently engaged in some geometrical reckoning with a pair of compasses and rule. There were two other persons present, who were recumbent on a sofa apiece, each smoking a highly flavored segar, while they sipped occasionally a wine-glass of Catawba which they held in their hands, whom Mr. Timpkins readily surmised were the professors.

"Mr. Snorter!" exclaimed the Yankee as he approached his *confrere*, "allow me to introduce you to my friend Mr. Timpkins, who is—" but here he stopped suddenly as he heard his own name pronounced several times in quick succession, and on turning his head one side he beheld one of the professors with his forefinger placed across his mouth, indicative of silence, while he exclaimed in a whisper:—

"Hush—sh, Mr. Snorter has got an idea!"

The learned gentleman then gulped down the contents of his wine glass, while he fell back on the sofa and commenced puffing away at his segar at such a furious rate, that when Mr. Timpkins took a second look at him, his head was enveloped in smoke.

"Then my distinguished friend, Professor Snigglemiggie," continued the Yankee, in a tone of voice scarcely audible, as he addressed the gentleman, who had commanded him to be silent, "allow me to make you acquainted with Mr. Timpkins, president of one of the heaviest banking institutions in the city. Mr. Timpkins, Professor Snigglemiggie, professor of Occult Sciences in Phlebotomy College, London." Professor Snigglemiggie instantly got up, and in the most gracious manner shook hands with Mr. Timpkins. The same formality was used by the Yankee in introducing Mr. Timpkins to Professor Pendleton, who also displayed as much, if not more comity as his associate—a degree of politeness which Mr. Timpkins thought had been slightly overacted by their numerous potations of the morning, rather than from any natural cause. Mr. Bonum having done the honors of the occasion, seated himself between the two eminent gentlemen, on the sofa, while Mr. Timpkins, on observing that they had commenced

a private confab, modestly retired to a chair which stood by the window, at the extreme end of the room, and commenced taking a survey of the apartment. The most noticeable feature of the room he found was its walls, which were nearly covered, as it were, with diagrams of various sizes, representing the plans of Snorter's project. There was a large table also, standing near a monstrous terrestrial globe, covered with a profuse assortment of maps, together with a number of quadrants, theodolites, barometers, and areometers. Underneath the table was piled up a great variety of lines, rods, plummets, graduating scales, &c. Mr. Timpkins's eyes then rested on the two professors, whose countenances he perceived, particularly their nasal organs, were of that color, which gave positive evidence that they were addicted to something stronger than the wine they had been drinking. They were flashly dressed, and judging from their *toute ensemble*, his private opinion was that they looked more like a couple of rascals than two honest men. His attention was now arrested by Snorter's operations, who was in the act of making certain hieroglyphics upon a slip of paper, which, after having done, he bowed his head an indefinite number of times, for the time being, as if satisfied with the result of his labors. Then looking up, he observed the Yankee, to whom he remarked:—

"Ah! Mr. Bonum, where's your friend, Pinkins, that you said you was going to bring in to see me."

"Timpkins, you mean, sir. Here he is," and the Yankee arose and introduced that gentleman. This ceremony being performed, the Yankee then remarked:—

"My distinguished friend, Mr. Snorter —"

"Mr. Snorter, honorary member of the principal Scientific Societies of Europe, beg your pardon," interrupted Professor Snigglemiggle, blowing a dense volume of smoke from his mouth as he spoke.

"Mr. Snorter then," continued the Yankee, obsequiously paying proper obeisance to the eminent gentleman who had so kindly jogged his memory as to a fact which he would have forgotten to mention, "who has had the honor to be made, through the influence of these two august persons, Professors Snigglemiggle and Pendleton, honorary member of the principal scientific societies of Europe, will you deign to give Mr. Timpkins such an idea of our project as will not fail to convince him of its feasibility."

Mr. Snorter at once gave his assent, after he had assured Professors Snigglemiggle and Pendleton, in the most dignified manner, that he would be as brief as possible, as they had requested of him.

"About eighteen months ago," began Snorter,

"I conceived the idea, d'ye see, of throwing a wire suspension bridge across the Atlantic Ocean. From that time I have been day and night engaged in trying to study out the best route for my bridge, until down to about six months ago, when I at last hit upon the route, by a very slight circumstance that occurred while I was experimenting with my model. It was this, I had got tired of work and was on the point of resting for a moment, when I happened to sneeze, d'ye see, when, to my horror, I saw the model of both the Continents of Europe and America fall to pieces, by the tremendous concussion that had been produced, you know. There was one thing, however, that the disaster gave me positive evidence of, which could not have been determined in any other way. I saw at once that if my bridge had been stretched across the ocean, from any of the points I had before supposed was firm enough to support its ends, it would have been destroyed by the earthquake which had occurred, for such I termed my sneezing. This led me to make explorations on both continents, and see if I could n't come across among the ruins, some portion of a mountain which stood unharmed. After dipping all of the water out of the Atlantic, with a little pint pitcher, I commenced walking over the cities, towns, and mountains, which laid collapsed. I had just straddled

over the Rocky Mountains from Oregon to New Hampshire, when I detected a mountain standing, whose towering peak had escaped uninjured. To my joy I found that it was Mount Washington, the highest summit of the White Mountains. So elated was I, d'ye see, with this discovery, that I jumped up and down, I stubbed my toe against a small fragment of Mount Marcy, in New York State, and the consequence was, that I pitched three times my length, headforemost into Europe. On raising my head, which had only sustained a slight abrasure of the skin on the occiput, I found that my neck was laying across a ridge of the Alps, and on rising to my feet, which laid in the Adriatic Sea, and shaking off the debris of a couple of small mountains that rested on my shoulders, again to my ecstasy I beheld that Mount Blanc stood unharmed. I had now solved a problem which for years I had been at work upon, and which now had been unfolded to me by the slightest accident, d'ye see. There was then no time to be lost, and while the discoveries I had made were fresh in my mind, I thus determined the route for my suspension bridge. Mount Washington was to be used for an abutment on this continent. I then should leap to the mountains of Newfoundland in order to accommodate the telegraph, and swallow up the plan of sub-oceanic wires by making the suspen-

sion bridge the conduit. I then thought it best to leap next to the peak of Teneriffe, in the Azores, thinking that that volcano in the winter time would be a capital place for foot passengers to stop and warm themselves by. From this place I then intended to throw my wires across to the Pillars of Hercules, and the summit of Mount Blanc would make a good holding ground for Europe. To prevent my bridge from sagging, I had resolved to place big floating ships to sustain the curves, anchoring them in mid-ocean with long chains. Such, in brief, Mr. Timpkins, was the route I had adopted, a draught of which I presented to Professors Snigglemiggle and Pendleton on my arrival in London for their approval, d'ye see."

"And they disapproved of it, I suppose," remarked Mr. Timpkins, with an innocent look.

"On the contrary," responded Professors Snigglemiggle and Pendleton, in one voice, "we heartily approved of it, but on due reflection we were led to suggest a counter scheme."

"Which, after I had examined the plans of the tunnel across the British Channel, from Calais to Dover, I thought so well of, that I instantly set myself to work, and with your co-operation, produced in the space of one week a complete draught of the new project," and Snorter directed Mr.

Timpkins's attention to his delineation, which hung on the wall. "But let me describe it to you," he continued, "which I can in a very few words, d'ye see, on account of its simplicity. That dot on your right is New York, while the one on your extreme left is Bristol. The lines running parallel from point to point, are supposed to be the tunnel—a trifle over three thousand miles in length—of an elliptical form, twenty-five feet from apex to base, and fifty feet subcontrary. I intend that the whole structure shall be built of angular blocks of granite, neatly dove-tailed in each other, the interstices being filled up with cement. Well, all I've got to do, d'ye see, as soon as the workmen get fairly under way at each terminus, say ten miles under ground, is to put down copper dams in mid-ocean and pump out the water, as you see by the figure, which represents my apparatus, d'ye see. Then I intend to sink shafts into the tunnel, you know, to raise the dirt, and make a string of islands all along the route, d'ye see, convenient for storing coal for steamships passing to and fro. Each one of these islands will be named after every stockholder. Every kind of produce will be raised on these islands, to be sent down these central tubes or breathing holes, which I have sketched in red ink, to go on the sub-oceanic railway which will then be built, to Europe or America, as the market

commands." Mr. Snorter's description at this crisis was brought to a sudden termination by Professor Snigglemiggle, who glibly exclaimed, as he threw away the stump of his segar:—

"The great advantage of this scheme will be, that you will escape erratic icebergs, which might have broken the aerial bridge that Snorter first thought of, and above all, the sub-oceanic tunnel will cut across rich veins of ores and metals for as poet says:—

'Full many a gem of purest ray serene—

The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.'

And not only will gems be found, but also great beds of virgin coal will be cut across, not yet emerged for men to view or dig."

"Yes," observed Professor Pendleton, relieving his associate, after he had tossed off a bumper of the Catawba, "think of the great geological discoveries, that will enrich the world, and the invaluable mines that will enrich the stockholders one million fold, if the tunnel is only cut."

"Again," observed Professor Snigglemiggle, "think what a capital route it will give for the telegraph wires, all so safe from hooking anchors, grounding icebergs, and the sports of the 'fiery monsters of the living deep.' And then, again, the package and mail express atmospheric tubes will take their place beside the telegraph wires."

"Wonderful! wonderful!" exclaimed Mr. Timpkins, apparently as enthusiastic as those around him. "What a delightful railroad ride it will be, three thousand miles under the ocean, while the whole route will know no night, it being illuminated by gas or electric lights placed at proper intervals."

"Electric lights—another idea, hurra!" exclaimed Snorter, seizing the compasses in the excitement of the moment, and essaying to dip them into an empty Champagne bottle, to make a note of this valuable discovery.

"Then you will laugh," continued Mr. Timpkins, suiting the action to the word, for he could n't contain himself any longer, particularly after Snorter had made such an egregious mistake in his flurry, "to hear old ocean vainly roar and rumble overhead, as you glide safely beneath the bottom; or, pity the poor tempest tossed sailor who is struggling against superficial tempests and furious storms. Oh! the thing will work beyond a doubt—don't you think so, Bonum?"

"Yes, sir-ee!" cried Bonum, "and the only thing that troubles me is, that we cannot issue shares enough to supply the demands, because we have limited the shares to ten thousand, to be sold for one hundred thousand dollars per share."

"Then you have estimated the cost of building

this tunnel at one hundred millions of dollars," remarked Mr. Timpkins.

The Yankee answered in the affirmative, while he added, "including also what it has cost Mr. Snorter and myself."

"I hope," continued Mr. Timpkins, "that the stock of the sub-oceanic tunnel and railway, if it is taken up and the money paid in, will not be taken off by modern improvements in financial operations, calculated to relieve over-burthened treasuries."

"I shall make as much as I want without resorting to any Schuylerism," replied the Yankee, "you may be assured."

A few raps on the door at this moment were heard, to which Bonum bade the person to "come in," when a colored servant entered, and said that he, Bonum, was wanted in the parlor below. The Yankee then excused himself from his friends and retired from the room.

Bonum had been absent nearly an hour, during which time Mr. Timpkins had listened with ineffable delight to the glowing prospects that Snorter and his two professors anticipated was in store for them. At length Mr. Timpkins heard a loud shout, and on going to the window and looking out into the street, to see what the noise meant, he noticed

a large throng of men and boys congregated in front of the hotel.

"What can so many people be about, do you think?" he observed, after making known to Snorter and the two professors the circumstance.

"Why, can't you guess?" exclaimed Snorter, approaching the casement and gazing at the vast number of persons beneath. "They have heard of the sub-oceanic tunnel, and wish to take stock in it before we are ready to sell, d'ye see. I—" but before the speaker had finished the sentence the door was flung open, and Bonum, accompanied by two others, whom Mr. Timpkins recognized as the Chief of Police and his assistant, walked up to Snorter, while the former exclaimed:—

"You are my prisoner!"

The arrest was no sooner effected when the two professors significantly looked at each other and seizing their hats and overcoats they left the scene in quite a precipitate manner.

"Yes, you consummate rascal!" exclaimed the Yankee, livid with rage, after he had explained to Snorter the cause of this procedure and had heaped anathema upon anathema upon his head; "by your duplicity you have ruined me, and now you must take the consequences of the law. Bear him away to jail, Mr. Officer."

Snorter however protested in his innocence of

any evil intention towards Bonum, and while he declared that if the sub-oceanic tunnel did not remunerate him one hundred fold for every dollar he had already invested in helping the thing along, he would reimburse him a similar amount of his own fortune of two millions; but the officers of the law were inexorable, and despite his entreaties they marched him off. As the Yankee followed on behind, Mr. Timpkins stepped up to him, and placing his hand on his shoulder, remarked:—

"My friend Bonum, you now have a practical knowledge of the truth of the axiom which I gave you when you was in my office, 'that a man is never so smart but what there is somebody else who can get the better of him sooner or later.' The best advice I can give you now is, to take what money you have deposited in the bank and go into some honest respectable business, doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. Farewell, Bonum!" and Mr. Timpkins, to get rid of the crowd that had begun to press round, made his exit out of a back door and wended his way homeward.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE DENOUEMENT.

ONE of the most notable and praiseworthy thoughts that the reformatory enterprise in which Mr. Edwards was engaged, had suggested itself to his wise and philanthropic mind, was the erection of a Model Lodging House in that haunt of poverty and wickedness, Dark Alley, to be used on its completion as a home—until he could find employment for them—for every debased family whom he should reclaim, and who promised to amend their ways by a life of usefulness. The work had already been commenced, and was progressing rapidly under the workmanship of Mr. Bogart, who was a master carpenter. The building was to be of wood, very large and commodious. It was being erected on the site on which stood one of the old tenements occupied by widow Wilkins, and afterwards by Buck and his family, who had moved after Mr. Edwards had informed him that he had bought the land, and the purposes for

which he intended it, to a respectable portion of the city, where he and his family were residing in a small cottage which Mr. Edwards had hired for them until his lodging house was finished, in which Buck would then have a home until he was able to provide one for himself; and the chances for such a possibility looked well, for Buck had found employment with no other than Mr. Bogart, and as he had proved himself an excellent workman at his trade as a joiner, and had given up all of his bad habits, that gentleman made him foreman of Mr. Edwards's job.

As we have elsewhere stated that not a day had passed during the three weeks that had elapsed since Mr. Edwards first broached the idea to Tippler of revolutionizing the state of things in Dark Alley, but he was seen either in the forenoon or afternoon, in company with the reformed liquor seller, penetrating into the lowest holes of that sink of vileness, the consequence was that he caught a severe cold by being exposed to its miasmatic dampness; but even this ailment did not lessen his energies or deter him in the least from pushing onward in the work he had commenced.

It was on the day of Snorter's arrest, towards the close of the afternoon, when Mr. Edwards was returning from Dark Alley, where he had been to see Mr. Bogart about the size of a room in the insti-

tution he was building, which he intended should be used by the occupants of the lodging house for moral and educational purposes. This was the second visit he had made to Dark Alley during the day, and as it was quite a long walk to his house from that place, and feeling quite enervated as well as tired, both from his professional duties of the forenoon and his philanthropic labors of the afternoon, he concluded to stop at Wells's store to rest himself awhile. While seated in the counting-room of the grocer, that gentleman showed him the evening paper which contained, so he found to his amazement, a brief account of the arrest of Snorter on the charge of victimizing James Bonum to the tune of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars by inducing him to engage in two of the most astounding vagaries of the age. Then followed a description of Snorter's schemes, together with the various rumors afloat where this Snorter belonged, and what his vast property which he boasted of consisted of, and where situated. No reasons, however, were assigned how the Yankee had at length realized the imposition which Snorter was practising on him, and on the whole, taking the affair all in all, it was enshrouded in mystery. The indefatigable reporter, however, stated that in all probability he should be able, when the examination came off, which was to take place on

the morrow, to give a full and complete version of the matter which had caused such a profound sensation in the city, and among stock-jobbers in particular.

When Mr. Edwards got home, he found his family listening to an account of the great event of the day from Mr. Timpkins, who, together with his wife, had come to take tea and spend the evening at the house. After he had finished, Mr. Edwards then acquainted Mr. Timpkins of Snorter's procedure at the office, which caused that gentleman to remark that he did not believe Snorter was a sane man, but on the contrary was laboring under a dreadful mental hallucination.

This opinion was at once unanimously agreed to, and after a few remarks relevant to the case were made by Mr. Edwards, who stated that it was now evident that the money that Snorter had burnt was the same paid to him by Bonum, the subject was dismissed, and the family went out to tea. After supper the topic of conversation was Mr. Edwards' model lodging house. Each one seemed to be delighted to hear of the rapid progress Mr. Bgart was making in its construction, for they felt sure that the sooner it was finished it would furnish an additional auxiliary for Mr. Edwards to use in his reformatory movement. Mrs. Timpkins had just reminded her son of his wife's oft-repeated

caution to guard well his health while he labored in Dark Alley, when one of the servants entered the room and gave Mr. Edwards a note, which she said a boy had given her, who was waiting at the door for an answer. Mr. Edwards quickly perused its contents, and while a shade of sadness flitted across his pale brow, he told the domestic to inform the messenger that he would be on hand. He then remarked to Mr. Timpkins that the note was from Snorter, who implored him to attend to his case on the morrow, to which solicitation he had unequivocally consented; "for," said he, "as Snorter relented and stayed the action which he brought against father Steadyman, now that he is in trouble, is it not right that I should defend his cause, particularly if he is not accountable for what he has done?"

There was no objection raised why Mr. Edwards should not act as Snorter's counsel, and therefore on the following morning he visited the unfortunate man, whom he found incarcerated in one of the cells in the jail.

In conversing with Snorter, Mr. Edwards found that when he spoke with him about the scheme which he had projected and which had ruined Bonum, Snorter persisted in declaring that it was not only practicable, but that Bonum was trying to work some underhanded game with him to get con-

trol of his interest; "but," said he, "he can't do it, you know, for I'll spend every cent of my fortune of two millions in contesting my right." On the other hand, when Mr. Edwards asked Snorter any other question irrelevant to the scheme, or to the amount of property he professed to be worth, he gave back such rational answers that he was satisfied that on everything else save the phantasy of his brain and the boast of his enormous wealth, he was a sane man. When therefore in Court, Mr. Edwards arose and stated to his Honor that he was convinced in his own mind that there was no occasion to examine the prisoner on the charges preferred against him, and wait for the action of the Grand Jury, for he was confident that Snorter labored under a derangement of the mental functions, and then Mr. Edwards related to the Court as a proof of the fact the infatuated pertinacity which Snorter had showed in his belief of the practicability of his wild and extravagant project. Mr. Edwards then cited from a judgment of Sir John Nicholls, who said that "the true criterion is, where there is delusion of mind there is insanity; that is, when persons believe things to exist which exist only, or at least in that degree exist only in their own imagination, and of the non-existence of which neither argument nor proof can convince them, they are of unsound mind. Mr.

Edwards felt quite exhausted after proceeding thus far in his remarks, for he was attacked with a severe coughing spell, but he soon rallied again and was on the point of continuing his remarks, when he observed a gentleman advancing towards him, whom he recognized as the Superintendent of the State Insane Hospital.

"You are right!" exclaimed that gentleman, shaking Mr. Edwards' hand; "that man is insane. Sit down, therefore, and allow me to present to the Court a statement of facts which may astonish you." Mr. Edwards at once obeyed, while the Superintendent asked permission of the Court to offer a few remarks, the proof of which he did not presume to think would be denied.

The Judge assured the Superintendent, after consulting with the District Attorney, that anything he had to say would not be deemed improper or out of place, whereupon the Superintendent observed:—

"May it please your Honor; the man, who is now arraigned before this court to undergo a preliminary examination for the offence alleged against him, is not in his right mind. As a *prima facie* evidence of this fact, I need only to inform this Court that about eleven years ago he was examined before a Justice of the Peace and quorum, and declared to be insane, and consequently was placed

under my charge at the State Hospital, but on the night of the day of his commitment, he managed to effect his escape, and although at the time I caused active search to be made for him, he has remained undiscovered until yesterday, when it was made known to me by the way of a letter which I received, that he was in this place and as irrational as ever. Without any delay I procured a warrant for his arrest, and taking the record in which his name was registered at the time of his commitment, I set out for this city, where I arrived last night. The first thing that I did was to call on the person from whom I received the information of his whereabouts, who kindly placed in my possession the affidavit of a young man who died in prison eight months ago, who affirms that this Snorter, as he calls himself, and who was so named by the young man after the escape from the hospital, travelled on foot to —, when almost the first person he happened to meet was this young man now deceased, who was no more nor less than his son-in-law. The young man, it appears, was a professional gambler, and finding his father out of his head as well as out of pocket, he had compassion enough on him to make him his 'stool-pigeon,' as it is called; that is, a man whose business it is to entrap the unwary and induce them to bet because he does. His father's insanity, so

he affirms, was mistaken by a great many for an eccentricity, and by the absurd notions that he got into his head he was taken for a fool, and because he invariably won, no matter how reckless he was in betting, the green ones thought to be sure their chances were better than his, and were led to put up their money, confident that they would win also, but the result generally terminated against them. 'Snorter' thus proved a valuable accomplice for the young man, who remained with him, so he affirms, until one year and a half ago, when, owing to the young man having committed a heavy forgery, and being suspected as the criminal, he was forced to leave the place. He therefore took his father with him to New York, and after placing in his hands a thousand dollars and bidding him to go and hunt his family up, he intended to slip over to England in a clandestine manner, but just as he was about to step on board the steamer as she was ready to leave, he was nabbed by an officer, who took him in custody and carried him back to —, where he was tried, convicted and sentenced for life to the States Prison; but his term of imprisonment only lasted some nine months, for he was taken sick and died, and on his deathbed he made a full confession to the chaplain of the prison of the wicked career he had lived, together with the facts I have given relative

to his father-in-law, who caused the same to be taken down in writing by a Justice of the Peace, and while one copy was forwarded to the parents of the young man after his decease, another was sent to the brother of the young man's mother-in-law, who resides in this city, with directions that it should be given to her if she was alive, in order that it might prove instrumental in hunting up her husband, as well as to assure her that he, the young man, had repented for his life of sinfulness. No effort, however, was made on the part of the unfeeling brother to find out whether his sister was alive, and if successful, to place in her hands this lost document, but quite fortunately, it was accidentally found in a pile of old rubbish on his premises by a person who was doing some work at his house, to whom it proved a god-send. This person, may it please your Honor, is my informant concerning the missing monomaniac, who, ever since the valuable discovery that was made of the document which I hold in my hand, has been on the alert, as far as circumstances would permit, for 'Snorter,' but without success, until day before yesterday, when they both met in the street, when a mutual recognition took place. From 'Snorter,' my informant learned that after he had been in New York a week he went to the Astor House to board, and it was at this hotel where

Bonum became acquainted with him. As for what has transpired between them both since their acquaintance, it is not for me to offer any remarks, unless it is to say, that if Bonum was fool enough to be carried away with the phantasies of an insane man, he must abide the consequences.

I will now, therefore, may it please your honor, submit the proof of what I have said, feeling assured that you will cause the unfortunate prisoner to be delivered over to me, by virtue of my precept, and allow me to remand him at once to the hospital. And the superintendent placed the affidavit, together with the hospital record, into the hands of the judge, who, after carefully examining them both, subsequent to their being referred to the district attorney, spoke in substance as follows:—

“As Mr. Ichabod Snorter *alias* Samuel Steadyman, has been identified by Dr. Beech, the superintendent of the State Insane Hospital, as being formerly an inmate of said institution under his charge, and whereas the proof of Mr. Ichabod Snorter *alias* Samuel Steadyman's insanity, is clearly and incontrovertibly manifest in this record of said institution, as well as in the affidavit of Gustave Sanders, now deceased, I command the officers who has said Snorter *alias* Steadyman in charge, to deliver him over to Dr. Beech, superin-

tendent of said hospital, by virtue of his precept. And furthermore, the action now pending between James Bonum *versus* Ichabod Snorter *alias* Samuel Steadyman, is non-suited.” The court then adjourned, and the crowds of people who had been present took their leave, the larger number of which remained outside of the court-house, to direct the arrows of *persiflage* at Bonum when he came out. But the Yankee, though perfectly bewildered at the result, was sensible enough to sneak off unperceived, in a roundabout way for the hotel, where, after settling his bill, and then repairing to the bank and drawing out what he had on deposit, he hastened down to the depot, just in season to leave in the train for New York. In spite of Steadyman's resistance, who declared that they were mistaken in the man, that his name was Snorter, the projector of an enterprise which he should now accomplish with his own fortune, he was taken by Dr. Beech and the officer who had him in charge, and placed in the former's sleigh, and thence conveyed to the State Hospital.

Marvellous as were the developments that had been made, Mr. Edwards never betrayed any emotion, so petrified was he at what he had heard. On his stepping outside of the court-house, he was met by Mr. Timpkins.

“Well, Charley,” exclaimed that gentleman,

after assisting his son-in-law into his sleigh, which stood near by, for he perceived that he appeared quite weak, from the effect of his cold. "This day has been, indeed, an era in our lives, and as for myself I hardly know whether I am standing on my head or heels. But," continued Mr. Timpkins, whipping up the horse and driving off, "my dear boy, everything and more too, is known at the house, and instead of your being under the painful necessity of rehearsing the facts that have been elicited at the court-house, on your arrival home, the folks will be under the pleasurable duty of making you agreeably surprised. But I'll not keep you in suspense. While Sam Steadyman has been made known to you under the incognito of *Snorter*, so has his wife come to light under the name of Mrs. *Wilkins*, and has given your family a full account of everything that has befallen her family since their sudden disappearance."

"Truly, God has wrought wonders this day," uttered Mr. Edwards, undergoing a feeling, which his tongue could not express in words. After a moment's pause, he at length exclaimed, "But little Hatty."

"Oh! she is the fruit of the marriage between Julia Steadyman and Gustave Sanders. But her mother, poor girl, died years ago." And Mr.

Timpkins, as he spoke, reined the horse up to the front gate.

It was a halcyon re-union. But there was none who shed tears of joy more profusely than Mrs. Samuel Steadyman, and while each member of the family, together with Mr. Timpkins and lady, and Dr. Lyons and lady, looked upon the once proud, haughty, and aristocratic woman, now but the wreck of her former self, as she stood humbled and humiliated by the gall and wormwood of adverse fortune, they could but exclaim, "Great has been the fall thereof."

From her lips Mr. Edwards learned, that when she left her former residence, she fled with her daughter to the outskirts of the city, and there, under the assumed name of *Wilkins*, they attempted to gain their subsistence among that class of society which they had held in such contempt. But it seemed, she calmly said, after two years had expired, and I had given up all hopes of ever seeing my unfortunate husband on earth, for I had supposed that he had destroyed himself after he had escaped from the asylum, that if God had not inflicted severe punishment enough upon me in his anger, and just as we had begun to find plenty of sewing to do, and were as you might say, living comfortable, He saw fit to remove my darling daughter from me. In my distress I then called

on my Heavenly Father to deal mercifully with me, but He heard me not, for I felt so abashed and condemned in His sight, that I dared not confess my past ungodliness and ask Him to create me anew. Well, after Julia was taken from me, the only sunbeam of my existence was little Hatty, who was then able to run alone. It was only for her sake that I cared to live. We remained, I believe, about a year after Julia's death, in the house that we had rented, when I found that I was running behind hand, in spite of all I could do—and then again the judgment of God grew more severe, and I was forced to vacate the house—it became my lot to take up my abode in Dark Alley among the very dregs of society. I then felt my affliction was just, and one night, after going the entire day, without tasting but very little food, my wilful and perverse heart was at length softened, and for the first time in my life I prayed to my Heavenly Father to “wash me thoroughly from mine iniquities, and cleanse me from my sins.”

“For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.”

It was then my prayer was heard, and although I lived only from hand to mouth from that time, until Dr. Lyons discovered my situation and I was relieved by you, who would have been the last person I would have called upon for succor, I could

at any moment say with truth, that “I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.”

It was one day towards the setting in of the winter, when chance threw one of Mr. Sylvanus Hargrave, jr.'s servants in my way. The servant was in search of a washerwoman to do some washing for one of my *brother's* daughters, and asked me if I would go. At first I hesitated, for fear that I should be recognized, and such a circumstance would bring, what my brother would have termed disgrace upon his family, if I was known to be his sister, but after considering the wretched state of my condition, I at last consented to go, believing that whatever happened would be for the best, which it so turned out, for in one of the out-houses I accidentally discovered while I was at work, a small package directed to me, which proved to be the affidavit of my deceased son-in-law, the contents of which you already know. The disclosures that the penitent young man made completely astonished me, but I kept it secret, and resolved to be on the look-out for my husband when he should come to the city. Some two weeks or more passed after I had made this discovery, and then Dr. Lyons called on me, who kindly offered to communicate to you my destitute circumstances, while he assured me—though such an assurance was

needless, for I had seen years and years before," and Mrs. Samuel Steadyman glanced at the worthy old ship-carpenter and his wife—"proofs stronger than holy writ," that such was your noble disposition—that you would instantly relieve me. At first I couldn't think of permitting myself to be the recipient of any favor that you might offer me, knowing that I was not deserving even your commiseration, but after a while I finally consented, and you know what followed. But after I had become one of your family, and realized every exertion that was made to make me happy, and as I saw that such was ever the proclivities of your God-like nature towards the poor and needy, my conscience was again aroused to a sense of its former guilt, and while I felt condemned not only for my past doings, but also from not making my true name known, and throwing myself at your feet and imploring pardon, I determined that whenever I could find a chance where I could work and earn my own living, I would go—for I felt that I could not remain any longer subjected to the beneficence of a family whom I had spurned from me and treated with such contumely in my better days, and who now in return were overwhelming me with kindness. There was also a circumstance that occurred, which made me revert back with horror to those days, which I had consigned to ob-

livion by uncontriteness of heart. It was on one evening when Dr. Lyons was here, and animadverted quite severely, but justly, on that class of society of which I had been a prominent member—and when you cited Mr. Sylvanus Hargrave, jr., as a fitting subject for a scathing rebuke—and when I recalled the instance of my working in the humble though honest capacity of a washer-woman for that wealthy gentleman, who was no other than my only brother, and who had refused to pay me the small pittance for my labors, supposing me to be some poor outcast, who would be afraid to raise a vindicating voice in defence of my just rights, if he did wilfully cheat me out of my hard earnings, while he would take a twice told amount and think nothing of giving it to one of his daughters and advise her to purchase some fashionable frippery of the season—it reminded me of numerous instances in my own vain-glorious career, where I had done the same, and at once I felt like a guilty culprit, and could only conceal my emotion by leaving the room."

At these declarations Mr. Edwards looked at his wife and then at her parents, while all four now saw that the singular conduct which she had exhibited, and which had so excited their wonder at the time, was now explained.

"There was not a day that passed," Mrs. Samuel

Steadyman continued, "while I was under your roof, but that I prayed that God would enable me, sooner or later, to return unto you ten-fold, for your goodness towards Hatty and myself, and believing that the manual labor I performed was not sufficient to recompense you, I thought that the best way I could accomplish my purpose, would be to leave your house, and unknown to you assist you indirectly in some of your benevolent doings, and then, if I was found out, to tell you who I was. Well, with your consent I left this house, leaving Hatty, however, for I knew that so long as she remained here she would become a much better girl, under your instruction, than if she went with me.

"After I had taken my situation in Mr. Bogart's family I found that our next door neighbor was Mrs. Timpkins, and when your mother called into the house, and I was introduced to her, she scrutinized me so closely, that I feared she had discovered who I was, but she failed to recognize me, and my mind was now wholly at ease. One evening, a short time since, when she and her husband were at our house, engaged in a social converse with the family, Mr. Timpkins commenced telling Mr. Bogart about a certain Mr. Snorter, who had been absent in Europe nearly three months, on business relative to one of the most absurd and irrational

notions that was ever conceived, and which Mr. Timpkins set forth in the most fanciful colors, as he will recollect, and whose immediate return was daily expected by a Mr. Bonum, who was interested in the scheme. I also learned another astonishing piece of news, which Mr. Timpkins desired should be kept private, which was to the effect that Mr. Snorter, or in other words, my unfortunate husband, had in his possession a note against his brother John, which he had threatened months ago to you, to sue on or about this time. In this latter piece of information, I saw a chance, so that if I could only find my husband as soon as he arrived, I would try and make him desist from doing any such thing, for I knew that the note was a forgery, and that he had taken such a course to gratify that same old feeling of hatred which he has ever held against John. If I succeeded, then, thought I, there will be one act of kindness which Providence has placed in my power to do, in return for your goodness. After I had made up my mind how to act, I visited the hotel daily, until I found out that my husband had arrived. Then I wrote a letter to Dr. Beech, the purport of which, as well as of the result of his visit to me you are already informed. Well, as you also are aware, I met my husband in the street, where we both recognized each other, but although he declared that I was his wife, he

maintained that his name was Snorter, and then went on in a long rigmarole about his great project and his immense wealth. Knowing that the only way to get along with insane men is to concur with them in everything they say, I was forced to listen and commend his delusive notions. After he had got through, he then told me how he had commenced the suit, not two hours before, against his brother for the recovery of the money due on the note. The idea then occurred to me, to tell him that he couldn't succeed in selling the stock of his tunnel scheme, if he went on in his prosecution of the note, which I did, and the result was that he believed it. Determined to strike while the iron was hot, I forthwith repaired with him then to his lawyer's, where he at once settled up the costs of prosecution, and signed a paper, discharging his brother from further litigation. On this being done, I dispatched him without delay to your office, when you know what happened. As I was then obliged to go back to Mr. Bogart's, for I wished to be on the look-out for Dr. Beech, when he came, there was not a convenient opportunity afforded me of going out again, until yesterday noon, when I hurried with all possible speed down to the — Hotel, where, after telling one of the servants that I desired to see Mr. Bonum, I soon had that regret—for I did regret to behold a per-

son whom I knew my unfortunate husband had so easily deluded—and so I told him, but at first he would not hear to what I said, so infatuated he was with the novelty of the project, but after I had begged of him to take a sensible look at not only its absurdity, but its impossibility, he stood momentarily aghast, and then leaving my presence he rushed out of the room down stairs. I waited some time for him to return, but as he did not come, I slowly retraced my steps towards home, when, before I had got half way, I was joined by Mr. Timpkins, who communicated to me everything that had occurred in my husband's room after Bonum returned. I was somewhat agitated, but I managed to repress my feelings, for fear that I should expose myself, until I got home, and then I went directly to my chamber and there gave way to the poignant grief which so preyed on my mind. Last night was one of acute anguish, but when dawn came I felt more consoled after I had finished my devotions, for then I felt prepared to meet with fortitude whatever might befall me during to-day. During the forenoon your mother came in to Mr. Bogart's, and asked me if I would call with her on your family after dinner. I was on the point of declining, when it seemed as if some preternatural power snatched the negative from my tongue and bade me to go. Forced as I believe by divine in-

struction, I did not recall my answer, but went. No sooner had I got here and stepped into the front entry, when Mr. Timpkins made his appearance, and requesting me to step into the library a moment, he followed me in, and without a moment's warning he told me that Dr. Beech, previous to his going into the court-room in the morning had seen him and told him *all*. That no sooner had he learned of the disclosures, than he hastened home and bade your mother, whom, by the way, he kept entirely ignorant of what he had heard, to invite me to call here with her, so that he might be enabled to tell me before I saw the rest of the family, that everything was known, and that after he should bring us together, he should hurry off and get you. I will not describe our meeting, for I am so overjoyed to know that you all have freely forgiven me, that it is one of the happiest moments I ever experienced."

On the conclusion of Mrs. Samuel Steadyman's narrative, there was not a dry eye in the room, and while the old ship-carpenter assured her that the past was forgotten, he fervently prayed that the transgressions of her husband, his brother, might be tempered with mercy.

Spring came on apace, but Mr. Edwards did not live long to breathe its aromatic sweetness. The cold that he caught in Dark Alley settled on his

lungs, and he fell into a rapid decline. Although he had beheld the completion of his model lodging house, as well as seen every room occupied by reclaimed families, he had hoped that his life might have been spared long enough to have fulfilled his mission in Dark Alley. "But then," said he, one day, speaking of this to his family, "I shall die with the satisfaction of having made a beginning in this work of reform which somebody else more competent than myself will, by the grace of God, continue until it is accomplished."

Mr. Edwards was conscious of his precarious condition, and when day after day his numerous circle of acquaintances, composed of the rich and poor, the halt, lame and blind, came from far and near to take their last farewell of him on earth, his dim eyes would again sparkle with their wonted brilliancy, and his tremulous voice sound sweeter than ever, as he briefly murmured:

"Weep not, my friends, because I am about to leave you, for such is God's will. We shall meet again in heaven."

On his approaching dissolution, Mr. Edwards bade each one of his family an affectionate adieu, and placing the hands of his wife and mother in his, he faintly uttered:—

"Into thy hands, O God, I commit my spirit!"

He then fell back on his pillow and expired without a struggle.

Never did the death of one, whose name was renowned for his superior intellect, patriotism or heroic achievements, cause a greater degree of sadness to be so generally felt as the demise of this humble citizen, and when the day arrived on which the funeral rites were performed, even the heavens shed tears as the remains of this good man were borne to his resting-place in the tomb, followed by a lengthy collection of the masses, preceded by the city authorities, military companies, and benevolent societies.

Not a store, counting-room or place of work was open during the day. The merchant laid aside his ledger, the mechanic his tools, and the beggar preferred hunger rather than to pursue his customary rounds for charity on a day when such universal respect was being paid to one "who," as Mr. Timpkins remarked as he shed a tear, "has sunk to rest, leaving the 'noble legacy of a good example' behind him."

"But our loss," replied the old ship-carpenter, "is Heaven's gain!"

When Mr. Edwards' will was read, it was found that he had bequeathed to his beloved wife one-third of his large property for the support of herself and family; to the various benevolent socie-

ties of which he had been a member, he was as equally beneficent, while the remaining third, which consisted of the model lodging house and fifty thousand dollars in money, he left in trust in the hands of five of his fellow-citizens, with instructions that the proceeds of the latter should be appropriated during the winter months in purchasing the necessities of life for the inmates of that institution.

Mrs. Sarah Steadyman and her grandchild found a home with widow Edwards, while Samuel Steadyman busied himself daily in chalking out on the walls of his room in the hospital various models of his sub-oceanic tunnel which he contemplated building himself in the "course of human events."

When Mr. Sylvanus Hargrave Jr. heard how his sister had turned up in such an extraordinary manner, his pride was so shocked that he took to his bed, but on becoming convalescent, he thought better of a certain resolution he had formed, and modified it so far as to ask his sister to call and see him, if it ever should be her fortune to marry a millionaire.

Mr. Cornelius Timpkins resigned the presidency of the — Bank on being elected a Senator to the State Legislature. He still resides at the "old homestead," with his affectionate wife. One evening, when reading a back number of an English paper that had been given him, he came across the following paragraph:—

"English Jemmy and Highflyer Bob, two of the most notorious 'confidence men' in London, left in the steamer which sailed last week for America, in company with an American gentleman to whom they had passed themselves off during his stay in the metropolis—the former as Professor Snigglemiggle, and the latter as Professor Pendleton, of Phlebotomy College.

"Since their departure, we are credibly informed that they *relieved* the American gentleman of thirteen thousand pounds sterling in experimenting (?) with the model of a sub-oceanic tunnel, the idea of which was suggested by English Jemmy, who is *au fait* in original ideas. We hope that the honors that the American gentleman had conferred on him by our two worthies will not so overpower him that he will abandon his project, as we shall look forward with anxiety for its accomplishment at an early day."

Mr. Timpkins, after showing the paragraph to Mr. Wells and Dr. Lyons, folded the paper up and sent it on to Mr. Bonum, whom he afterwards learned was engaged in hawking a new article of patent chemical soap which he had invented in the Southern states.

Tippler, the reformed rum-seller, some months after Mr. Edwards' death, became quite noted as a temperance lecturer, and is now engaged in lectur-

ing in the principal cities and towns of the Union.

When summer came there was not a day went by but there could be seen in one of the church-yards of the city of —, towards the close of the afternoon, a mournful family standing by the side of a sarcophagus overshadowed by the pensile branches of a weeping willow—

"MANY ARE CALLED, BUT FEW ARE CHOSEN."

And as they gazed upon this inscription on the marble tablet before them, they loved to prolong their visit to the spot and linger over the memories of him who had gone before them.

One word more:—

Sincerely do we hope that the moral tendency of what we have written may prove the instrument of good. If such is the effect, then our humble and unpretending effort has not been one of inutility, and, when we rest our head upon our pillow at night, we shall have the proud satisfaction of knowing that the plain and simple story of the SHIP-CARPENTER'S FAMILY, with all its faultiness, has been the means of contributing one mite towards the well-being of society.

Reader, farewell!

THE END.

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