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THE
CRIMSON STAR;

OR,
THE MIDNIGHT VISION.

A ROMANCE FOUNDED ON FACTS.

BY

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(OF VIRGINIA.)

*Author of the "Golden Ladder; or, the Stolen Jewel," "Gem of the Lake,"
"The Secret Duel," "Slander and its Victims,"
"Who Shall be President?" Etc.*

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TO
MR. Lewis Schutt,
OF THE LAUREL HOUSE, CAUTERSKILL FALLS,

AND

MR. Joseph Cornell,
OF THE GRANT HOUSE, CATSKILL,
THIS WORK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED, AS AN
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MANY KINDNESSES
RECEIVED AT THEIR HANDS,

BY THE AUTHORESS.

PREFACE.

My aim and intention in penning this work is not mercenary, as some might imagine. I have always an aim to accomplish. As money has become paramount in this age, I feel there is a duty incumbent upon me, as a writer, to try and instill into the minds of the rising generation, true principle instead of gain. This one point should be our aim when we contemplate married life. Aside from matrimony, we should live as brothers and sisters, trying to aid each other; not grasping for wealth and destroying our fellow-mortals, as is too often the case. We should seek to do each other good, and try to elevate our fellow-beings to a high spiritual plane, as our Father in heaven has placed us here for some good purpose.

The ideas of this story were conceived, as I have already stated, while spending a few weeks at the hotel I have previously described. While gazing out upon the broad Hudson, the picture recalled to mind many incidents of the beautiful Rappahannock, which I have spoken of in my story.

I have tried not to exaggerate the character of my heroine, although she is a Virginian. We know there

are good and bad people, the world over; yet there are many, who have traveled through the Southern States, who will no doubt acknowledge all I have stated in regard to the hospitality of the people. Her father was faithful unto death, and when he heard that his daughter was dead, he could have exclaimed like one of old: O, my child, my child, "would to God I had died for thee!" The character of the mother of our heroine is an isolated case in the old Dominion. It is rarely ever a Virginia mother would instill into the minds of her children mercenary motives; but rather virtue, veracity, and economy. To marry where there is wealth and love is all right; but if money is to be the stepping-stone to happiness, then I tremble for such as embark in the floating ship, that will only sail over a stormy sea, which will eventually cause her timbers to be shattered upon the rocks of disappointment, woe, and misery. In this work I have touched on many subjects which existed in the days of slavery—not that I take any pleasure in rehearsing the old story; but, as my heroine is a Southern woman, I have introduced her maid, Lucinda, and Joe, her coachman, who have proved such warm friends to their old master and mistress during their troubles, and never forgot to weep and pray for their unfortunate daughter, during the years of her absence from Edge Hill.

Persons who have read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" will find a great contrast between the Palmore family and the master of Uncle Tom, or Legree. We hope that Mrs. Stowe will not omit writing one more book, in

which she can paint, in as vivid colors as "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the late trial which has agitated the minds of the people for so many months. I feel quite sure the book will be read by the general public with great interest.

In writing, I always try to punish vice and reward virtue, as I believe God will do when we tread the shores of immortality. If we live a pure life in this world, and carry out the words of St. James, "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you," then our lives will glide smoothly on, like the rippling stream of a summer's day; and when we reach the beautiful shore that John saw from the isle of Patmos, and join the great throng that no man could number, we shall have crowns upon our heads, harps in our hands, and our tongues will sing God's praises in the eternal world forever and forever.

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PROLOGUE.



THE writer, while spending a short time at the Grant House, Catskill, became familiar with the facts embodied in this romance. Its recital, which interested her so much, she hopes will also interest others. The village of Catskill is situated on Catskill Creek, at the foot of the mountains. History informs us that it derived its name from the fact that these mountains were infested with catamounts in the olden times; therefore the Indian name is very appropriate. This beautiful town contains seven or eight thousand inhabitants, who are intellectual, Christian people. The buildings are mostly of modern style, with but few of the Gothic order. The churches, with their loud-tolling bells and tall steeples, would remind one of city life. There is a great deal of business done in this town, considering the population. Stepping on *terra firma* from the beautiful steamers, the New Champion or Walter Brent, Capts. Black and Donohue's line, our eyes are enraptured with the lovely scenery which presents itself to our

vision. In front of us are the cerulean Catskills, rising in majestic grandeur. In ascending the hill on the right we see the spacious Prospect House, with its fine cupola and porticoes, surrounded by shady trees of various kinds, situated on the hill overlooking the grand Hudson. The scenery around this building is very fine: There are but few summer resorts which surpass the Prospect House. Farther on is Gunn's hotel, a large, commodious house, which is always well patronized.

As we pass along the streets, which are shaded by trees whose pendent branches overshadow the traveler as he walks along on his journey, then comes the Irving House, a large and elegant building, kept in first-class style, and may be termed a luxurious hotel, with every accommodation that heart can wish. We also pass the old Doolittle building, the house where it is said Rip Van Winkle found the people voting, when he came from the mountains, and where everything looked so strangely to him. It would require more than the pen of an Irving or Dickens to accurately portray the picturesque scenery surrounding this village.

A little way beyond, towards the end of the street, is Smith's Hotel, a commodious and well-kept house with pleasant rooms. After leaving the main street, turning to the left and riding about a mile, we gradually ascend the hill, when we behold the famous "Grant House," a building to all appearances of pure white marble, which is like a "beacon-blaze upon a mighty rock." It is situated on the brow of a tremendous hill, and to it has just been added a new building,

making several hundred rooms. It would remind one of Solomon's Temple on Mount Moriah, which the Bible says was constructed "without hammer or nails." We feel quite sure that the great architect, Mr. Amos Story, must have given his inventive powers full scope when he planned such an elegant edifice with all its modern improvements. There is no summer resort on the Hudson that can surpass this splendid building. It is magnificently furnished, and every comfort of a home may be here realized. It can only be appreciated by those who are fortunate enough to secure rooms for the summer months. How pleasant to ascend the cupola of such a house, and gaze with rapture upon the beautiful Hudson and the environs of the village, and how delightful are the promenades that the guests enjoy through those spacious porticoes; then the grounds are so beautifully laid out, in the most scientific order, being interspersed with trees and flowers of all kinds. The little summer-houses on the brow of the hill are so romantic, nicely shaded, and there we can sit and meditate on the grandeur of the scenery. Looking off to the right, we view the grand old Catskills above us, towering towards the skies. Then, glancing at the left, we gaze down on the depths beneath, in the valley, where gently glides the gurgling brook over mossy stones and smooth pebbles, and the shady trees wave their tender branches over the green grass, where blooms the mistletoe, and violet, and honeysuckle, and the singing birds are heard caroling their morning praises to the Great Father, who has created

the mountains and the valleys, and every living thing.
 "A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

Here, amidst this enchanting scenery which surrounds Catskill, we pen these verses while gazing wistfully at the cerulean mountains from the Grant House.

THE WILD FLOWERS OF THE MOUNTAIN.

The wild flowers bloom as pretty as ever,
 On the dark, dreary mountain at home.

Their petals are starry, their colors are bright;
 None can outvie them, where'er we roam.

"I bloom on the mountain," says the little violet,
 "But the sunlight bursts on me there;
 My petals are blue, and my fragrance is sweet,
 As if I grew in a garden so fair."

"I bloom on the mountain," says the fair-tinted rose,
 "Why should I not be admired?
 My beauty's the same, my fragrance as great,
 If I am on the mountain retired."

"I bloom on the mountain," says the white lily;
 "Why should I not be in a nook,
 When Solomon of old was not equal to my glory,
 If I am the plain lily of the brook?"

"I bloom on the mountain," says the little cowslip,
 "Are not my sweet blossoms pretty too?
 I grow in the sunlight, all the day long,
 And am wet with the nightly dew."

"I bloom on the mountain," says the wild honeysuckle,
 As it entwines the myrtle the most;
 "We love each other in the lowly forest,
 And that is why the flowers should boast."

Pretty flowers of the mountain, your germs combine,
 To illumine the nooks that are near;
 Your starry petals the garden cannot outshine,
 For God has planted you here.
 Then flowers of the mountain, bloom sweetly there
 Amid the dark forest and gloom,
 For One has transplanted you everywhere,
 To fill the world with your rich perfume.

Bloom on, bloom on, ye beautiful treasures,
 And may your bright germs each other entwine,
 Even the flowers are truer to their mission
 Than men, whom we think divine.

While looking at the little humming-birds, among
 the flowers, these verses were penned:

THE LITTLE HUMMING-BIRD.

Oh, beautiful bird, thou hast come
 Thus early in the morn
 To sip the nectar of the flowers,
 Before the early dawn.

Thou pretty bird, with fluttering wings,
 We welcome thy tiny form;
 It is from some bower far away.
 The humming-bird hath come.

Thou bird of thy tribe, thou art here,
 In a land of pretty flowers,
 And we hope the innocent
 May not be touch'd among the bowers.

Thou bird, whose beauty we admire,
 Children may meet thee at the rose;
 But thy keen sight may aid thy flight,
 And thou must leave thy little foes.

Thou bird, far away thou must fly,
 And leave the rose so sweet;
 Then, while fitting toward the sky,
 Thy little mate mayst thou meet.

Thou, quiet bird, must come again,
 And in the garden soon,
 To sip the honey from the flower,
 And leave ere the dawn of noon.

Thou bird of the grove, thou art free
 Amid the woodland bower,
 To chitter-chatter all the day,
 And sip the wildwood flower.

THE CRIMSON STAR;


OR,

THE MIDNIGHT VISION.

CHAPTER I.

THE WRECKED SCHOONER.

But while, like Passion, storms and moans the gulf,
 And pearls the beach with flakes of silver foam,
 Upon the other side, like Patience, swell
 The surflless billows of the bay.—MISS MOORE.

T was a stormy evening in November, some years ago. Dark and angry clouds flitted across the horizon; and the wind came in such tempestuous gusts as threatened to hurl the Manor House at Edge Hill from its foundation. "Oh, papa, what a storm!" exclaimed the silvery voice of Medora Palmore, as she stood beside a window watching the portentous clouds.

"Yes, my daughter," replied the old gentleman, as he was in the act of sinking into an easy-chair before a cheerful wood fire burning brightly on the old-fashioned brass and irons which shone like gold. "I fear," continued Mr. Palmore, "I greatly fear, from

the appearance of the horizon, that the poor sailors will have a stormy night." Medora stood gazing upon the Chesapeake Bay, whose mountainous billows appeared almost to touch the clouds. The elements seemed engaged in awful strife. The young girl gazed out with eyes full of interest and enthusiasm. Again she spoke, in a voice whose thrilling intonation at once charmed the ear.

"A storm indeed, papa!" she observed. "I perceive a large schooner endeavoring to make harbor, but the wind keeps her off. Oh! she is coming into Fleet's Bay. What a beautiful vessel! her white sails are fluttering in the wind. It appears that she will have some difficulty in getting safely in."

"Oh, no, I reckon not," said her father, rising from his seat, laying aside his pipe, and approaching the window. "Let me see, daughter, how the schooner makes her tacks; then I will tell you whether or not she can anchor in this harbor."

When the old gentleman had reached the window and taken a view, he smiled, saying:

"That craft is a New Yorker—a real Yankee—and she will anchor in the harbor."

The old man and his fair daughter continued to watch the vessel as she trimmed her sails to the breeze. The wind blew a hurricane from out a dark and lowering sky. The white-crested billows of the Chesapeake rose up into mimic mountains, and dashed their furious waters far up on the rocky shores of

Northumberland. But, after a brief struggle with wind and tide, the schooner succeeded in casting anchor in Fleet's Bay.

"Bring me my spy-glass, daughter, and let me see her name," said Mr. Palmore. "I think that same vessel entered our harbor some weeks ago. Oh, yes, I see! it is the Old Dominion. Her crew are a set of brave men, not easily scared by winds and waves. They do not seem to fear 'Davy's Locker,' although so many of the poor souls find it in storms like this. That vessel has been in this harbor several times," continued the planter, adjusting the glass again. "She is a fine wood vessel, and many a cord of excellent wood have I sold her. Her captain is a worthy man, and I am glad to see them safely in; they are all right now—all taut, as sailors say—to weather out the storm. Some of our neighbors do not like to see those Yankee schooners, now that we expect war; but I don't care, any way; they have their ideas, and we have ours, on the slavery question. They are safe for the night at least."

The old man laid aside the glass, returned to his fireside seat, refilled his pipe, and smoked away, the very embodiment of good-nature and content. Medora also left the window. She seated herself at a table, and took up her pretty needle-work.

"The storm still rages," said she. "I hope it will never be my fate to experience a gale at sea."

"There are storms by land as well as by sea, my daughter, and it sometimes happens that the former

are as disastrous to human beings as the latter. There is quite as much reason to fear the one as the other."

"Papa," resumed Medora after a pause, "I have a presentiment that something connected with water and a vessel is to cause me great pain and trouble. Do not laugh; but, since I beheld the sails of that schooner to-night, a sadness, such as I never before felt, has come over me, and I cannot shake it off."

"Pho, nonsense!" returned the old man. You are just like your mother—and all other women for that matter—ever talking about sadness, and dark forebodings, and impressions, and all other foolish notions. 'Tis enough to disgust a man with women. As to storms and shipwrecks, we must try to avoid them if possible; but what cannot be cured (as the old adage goes) must be endured."

"Well, pa," said Medora, endeavoring to smile as usual, as she was about to lay aside her work, "'tis a fact that, at the moment I beheld that vessel, a queer sensation almost overpowered me, and still continues to agitate my mind." She added, in a lower voice, "Perhaps you are to do some great things and become notorious in war: some folks say we are to fight the North."

"Go to bed, go to bed, and to sleep, my child; and when the bright morning streams, you will have forgotten all about your strange feelings, rifles and bullets."

"I heartily hope so," replied Medora, smiling, with another effort to overcome her foolish presentiment, as she mentally styled her depression of spirits. She was in the act of leaving the room and retiring for the night, when they were startled by a rap at the front door. They looked at each other with surprise. The storm and the lateness of the hour made a visit unaccountable in that part of the country. The old man advanced to the door, partially opened it, and authoritatively inquired:

"Who comes at this hour?"

"A stranger," replied a low voice.

"A stranger? He has chosen a late hour in which to make a visit."

"True, sir; but necessity compels me to intrude thus and now upon your kindness."

"Come in, friend," said Mr. Palmore; "the wind blows too keen and cold to stand on the steps for a parley. We hope you are a friend; since this political trouble we do not know our friends always."

"Certainly a friend," he said.

The stranger entered, bowing politely. The old gentleman requested him to be seated, at the same time intimating that he was now at liberty to explain the cause of his appearance. As the late intruder seated himself, he cast a glance at the daughter, who, with a lighted lamp in her hand, stood near her father. Medora trembled beneath his scrutinizing gaze—a chill contracted her very nerves.

"How strangely I feel," she murmured to herself. "Surely, this man cannot wish to injure us." She was riveted to the spot. Some power seemed to enchain her limbs. She experienced an irresistible desire to hear what the stranger had to say. Mr. Palmore also sat in a state of curious inquiry.

"A very stormy evening, sir," said the stranger, as he removed his cloak, and looked his host in the face.

"Yes," replied the planter, "we have had quite a storm; but the wind seems to abate. It blew very heavily about sunset."

"So heavily," said the guest, "that at one time I feared we would all make acquaintance with the bottom of the Chesapeake. 'Tis in consequence of this storm that I have ventured to call on you at this untimely hour of the night."

"What is it that you desire?" asked Mr. Palmore. "If I can do you any service I am at your command."

"Thank you, thank you, sir," exclaimed the gentleman, half rising from his seat, and then sinking back again. "We have been unfortunate during the blow, have lost our top-sail, and part of the bowsprit has been blown away, and we are out of water on board the schooner."

"Ah! I see," said the planter. "You are the captain of the vessel that came in harbor about sunset."

"No," was the reply; "I am not the captain but the owner of the vessel you have observed; and have come to ask the privilege of getting a little water on board."

"Certainly—of course; you are perfectly welcome to all the water you desire. Anything else we can do for you will cheerfully be done."

"I am exceedingly obliged to you," replied the stranger, rising as if about to take leave.

"Will you not remain during the night?" said the planter, with genuine hospitality. "The wind continues to blow so as to make it hazardous to attempt to go on board, I should think. We are happy to offer you all the comfort and convenience which our humble roof affords, if you can remain."

"There is nothing to prevent me treating myself to that pleasure, save the fear of incommoding yourself and family," he replied, slightly hesitating, and making a half bow to Medora. "It was with great difficulty that I reached the shore to-night; and, now I think of it again, the crew are very hungry, and cannot get breakfast without water."

"I will send some of my colored men aboard with a keg, and then you will be at liberty to remain all night, if it so pleases you," suggested the old gentleman.

"I thank you exceedingly," reiterated the stranger, who, from some unexplained cause, seemed to vacillate between a desire to remain, and a duty to leave. "I think it were better for me to return on board." At last, he said: "Two of the hands and the captain await me at the landing."

"By what name do you call your vessel?" said Mr. Palmore.

"The 'Old Dominion,'" replied the gentleman.

"Ah, I have sold her many hundred dollars' worth of wood. She has traded hereabouts for years, and a fine man is her captain."

"Yes," acquiesced the owner; "but he came near losing the boat this evening, I assure you. Many times have I been abroad, but never before saw destruction quite so near. On my life, as we came in, in trying to turn the schooner, the wind struck her, and laid her on her side. After the sails were blown away we lost an anchor; then we thought sure we could not reach the harbor. It was with difficulty that we succeeded in getting in."

"Yes, we watched you in the attempt, and perceived that you were in trouble."

The gentleman rose to depart. As Medora turned to leave the room, he fixed his dark, deep-set eyes upon the beautiful girl, while his aquiline nose appeared almost to touch the thin lips that parted in an attempt to smile; his gray hair, still wet with the salt spray, hung heavily about his long neck. Medora's heart beat nervously; and, hastily bidding good-night, she ran up-stairs. Mr. Palmore preceded the stranger to the door, where they parted, amid offers of assistance and accommodation from the planter, and profuse thanks on the part of the other, who, taking a last courteous leave of his host, soon found himself again aboard the schooner. The planter retired; but calm rest was not his that night. Strange thoughts obtruded themselves upon his mind, but he gave them little

weight. In the morning, before he saw his daughter, he spoke to his wife of having passed a restless night, and, without intending the connection, said that he presumed the stranger and owner of the "Old Dominion" would again visit them before he left the harbor.

"Well," replied the old lady, "it would be a pleasurable duty to us to assist the poor mariners by every means in our power."

"Yes, wife," replied the husband, "that is true, and characteristic of a Virginian; we take a pride in our hospitality. The owner of the schooner is a New Yorker, I think. Perhaps he will find us a civilized people. If we are Southerners, we know how to treat strangers, particularly those in distress."

"Now, old man," said his wife, "you are thinking about the war."

The discussion ended. Mrs. Palmore proceeded to hasten the morning repast, and soon the air reverberated to the cheering sound of the breakfast bell. As they were about to seat themselves, Medora made her appearance.

"Oh, mamma!" she exclaimed, in the pretty, playfully-pettish manner that so well became her, "I do wish you had not been in such haste this morning for breakfast; for I never felt so sleepy as I did when the bell awoke me."

"You had a long night in which to sleep, Medora; and your duties are not so arduous, my dear, but that

you might be in readiness for breakfast," replied her mother with a fond smile.

"Oh, the night was sufficiently long; it is not with that I find fault," rejoined the young beauty. "I did not close my eyes for sleep until the cock crew for day."

"Why, my daughter, what caused such unwonted wakefulness?" inquired her father.

"I do not know," replied Miss Palmore, as the smile faded from her lips; "I—I believe I was haunted by that strange man who was here last night. The white sails of that schooner flitted before my mind's eye until day-dawn." "The stranger must have touched your fancy, Medora!" cried her father, laughing, as though it were a pleasant pastime to tease his pet. "Quite to the contrary!" said the pouting girl. "As I cast my eyes upon that man, I had the most peculiar sensations I ever experienced in my life. I trembled like an aspen leaf as I looked upon him; yet I do not suppose that he would have hurt a hair of my head, for he appeared quite enough like an old gentleman."

"No, my child; he is the owner of the vessel we so sedulously watched last evening. You must have surmised that he was aboard, Medora, you displayed so much anxiety," said the old man, who loved his joke, even though it were a little coarse. "I remember now, you then spoke of strange feelings—queer premonitory symptoms. Love, they say, is a peculiar sensation. He looked at you as if he thought you rather suited him. I say, Medora, perhaps he will turn out to be a

widower or a bachelor in search of a Virginia wife. We shall certainly see him ashore again. I noticed a matrimonial glimmer in his queer eyes, when he squinted in your direction, but perhaps he would not marry a slaveholder's daughter; so we are safe enough."

"Papa, you are incorrigible!" uttered the pretty lips which looked so tempting. "I am sure your ancient friend with the queer eyes would never be so unwise as to think of me as a wife; and, even if he did, I should never become such with my own consent."

"Wait until you are asked," suggested her mother. "I presume that the gentleman is already provided with a better half; so you need not be so premature in your refusal."

Soon the subject of conversation changed, no one expecting ever to see the man again. After breakfast was concluded, Medora went into the garden; thence she sauntered into the grape-arbor. The trellis seemed almost overburdened with the luxuriant vine and delicious fruit. The ground whereon it was situated was slightly elevated, and, from her position she commanded a fine view of the symmetrical schooner as she lay at anchor. Two or three sailors appeared among the rigging; and, as the fair girl stood poising a magnificent cluster of the purple berries in her hand, it suddenly occurred to her, how grateful to the palate of those hard-working men would be a supply of the abundant fruit; and, while gathering the delicious grapes, in imagination she wandered away to sunny France, and

Eugene Appomore filled her mind, which was sufficient for us to pen these lines:

LASTING PLEASURES.

Oh! tell me not of lasting pleasures
In this cold world below;
'Tis only Heaven can grant those treasures,
In a world where mortals go.

There is a land where spirits blend
In yon bright realm above—
Where flowers bloom forever fresh,
And souls unite in love.

There, love is not a fickle fancy,
Vision-like to pass away;
But there it lingers on forever,
Through eternal, blissful day.

"I will go and suggest it to my father," she said, half aloud, and was about leaving the arbor when the sound of oars struck her ear. Turning her gaze again toward the water, she beheld a boat which had almost reached the shore. In a moment it ran upon the sands, and the visitor of the previous evening leaped out, and with hurried step took his way toward the house. Seeing the garden gate, he entered by that way, not perceiving Medora until he was close upon the arbor. Soon as his eye caught her fascinated gaze, he hastened toward her, and, with peculiar courtesy, and the smile that had made her shrink from his scrutinizing gaze, made tender inquiries after her health. Recovering her-

self, Medora replied with native grace, returning the compliment.

"We are about leaving the harbor this morning, Miss Palmore, taking advantage of the storm's abatement," said the strange man; "but my captain has just informed me that we are out of flour, etc., etc.; so I have come to beg a second favor at the hands of your excellent father. Do you think that he will furnish me with the needed provisions?" Miss Palmore was inwardly amused at this unsentimental conversation; but she replied, with a grace quite unconscious of its attraction—

"If you will accompany me to the house, you can speak with my father, sir;" and, as they proceeded side by side, they fell into easy converse regarding the beauties of the locality and scenery.

"And what do you call this farm?" asked the gentleman. "I believe it is customary with the Southerners to name their residences."

"You are right," replied Medora, "and the appellation of this plantation is nothing more romantic than Edge Hill."

"Certainly appropriate, if not romantic," returned the gentleman, "and consistency, you know, is a jewel. It is situated on such a hill, so near the river, it may well be called by that appellation. Although we entered the harbor during a storm, I particularly noticed this mansion—the location is charming, and the architecture just according to my somewhat fastidious taste. And," he added in a lower tone, and with

a furtive glance at his beautiful companion, "I fear, for me, the building contains a greater attraction within." Medora was confused at his boldness, but, as she had always heard the Yankees were good at guessing, she thought perhaps he was guessing too much.

Fortunately for the lady, just at this juncture they reached the door, where they found Mr. Palmore, who, with hearty hospitality, invited the stranger in and thus relieved his daughter from the embarrassment of entertaining one in whose favor she was not in the least prepossessed. Medora passed on through the parlor into the dining-room and escaped the eyes of the guest, who made his business known to the planter, and was furnished with the necessary supplies. As the strange gentleman was about to take leave for the second time, he handed a little blank book to Mr. Palmore, saying:

"Excuse my inquisitiveness, my dear sir, and the liberty I am about to take. Your kindness has ladened me with obligations. May I beg you to add to those already received, by transcribing in this book your autograph, with those of your family, and that of the county in which you reside?"

The wondering old gentleman complied; then the stranger, in return, furnished his own address:

RALPH BRUSTER,
Attorney at Law,
NEW YORK CITY.

He furthermore added the information that he was

on his way to Fredericksburg, on important business, when his vessel had been forced by the storm to enter the harbor for protection; and was pleased, moreover, to say that he regretted not his loss of time, nor one unexpected moment he had passed in Virginia; for the kindness of Mr. Palmore and family had inspired him with something *more* than gratitude and respect. The old gentleman smiled as he listened, and remarked:

"We are, sir, a civilized people, but desire to be treated with due respect and consideration. Should you ever again be caught in a gale, come to my house, and I will take the best possible care of you."

Again that strange smile gleamed upon the lawyer's face as he courteously replied:

"I do not think, sir, that I shall await a storm for my advent, but may drift along shore some of these days in a calm. Good-bye, for the present, and make my highest regards to your charming family."

So, with friendly clasping of hands, they parted. Mr. Bruster hastened to regain the deck of his vessel. She hoisted her sails and gallantly made her way out of Fleet's harbor. Soon she grew but a speck in the distance, and ere long vanished from the gaze "like a dream."

And beautiful eyes watched, Medora's eyes, the fast-disappearing vessel. The gaze of the Virginia belle followed her as she left the harbor, and she idly wondered if the "Old Dominion" would ever again "come sailing into" the bay. But she felt no regrets.


Too pure and unsophisticated for dislike, or to analyze character, the stranger had inspired her with none but unpleasant sensations. As she saw the lessening sail grow

"Small by degrees, and beautifully less,"

a load seemed lifted from off her heart, and unconsciously she drew a sigh of relief. The strange guest had naught about him to attract the heart of the young beauty, and Medora smiled, as she wittily said to herself—"He is a man, take him all in all, *I hope* we ne'er shall look upon his like again. He is a real Yankee, I know, even had he not stated that Massachusetts was his birthplace; he is in favor of the war, although he tried to conceal his sentiments while conversing with pa. Well, let him be what he may," whispered Medora, "perhaps we shall never see him again; so we will think no more of our midnight guest."

CHAPTER II.

THE COURTSHIP.

T the time Miss Palmore is presented to the reader, she had numbered about eighteen summers. Marriage at the South is generally contracted at a very youthful age; but Medora was still, in maiden meditation, fancy free, and considered that there was abundance of time to preserve herself from the horrors of celibacy. Numerous were the swains who bowed at her shrine, from the adjoining counties; and it was said that, the fame of her charms having spread even to Baltimore, that city had also contributed its portion of admiration. Nay, the last-mentioned quality had been from childhood Miss Palmore's daily food.

"Her face it was the fairest
That e'er the sun shone on;"

And the bewitching beauty pursued the even tenor of her way, lovely and beloved. Placidly beat her maiden heart beneath a brodered vest, and she evinced no desire to slip her fair neck into that noose which, to untie, is harder than the Gordian knot. Happy in her father's house, she was grateful for her lot, and experienced no ambition to exchange

"Her maiden gladness
For a name, and for a ring."

Medora had but one brother, who was at college at St. Mary's, Williamsburg, Virginia. The children of Mr. Palmore were idolized by their father. Strange to confess, the maternal affection was not so ardent. Are there not mothers and female relations, whose ambition renders them destroyers of their own children and kindred? We sometimes meet females who are more mercenary than men, and who would sacrifice much more to obtain wealth. Women have great power over their children and kindred; therefore, there is often much misery inflicted upon the human family by the descendants of our mother Eve. Ere we close our tale the reader will have seen the evils occasioned by the pernicious influence of ambition. But, as yet, our little family remains in a state of quiet happiness.

By a strange perversity, which Medora did not attempt to analyze, her thoughts were often occupied in recalling the image of the owner of the "Old Dominion." His piercing glance, which expressed yet seemed to withhold so much; his inexplicable smile; his unprepossessing physical appearance, and yet courtier-like manner, made up a whole that provoked her curiosity, and, in the absence of other objects of interest, occupied far more of her private meditations than she was at all aware of.

Strange are the occurrences which the daily sun looks down upon; and strange, "passing strange," the chance that sent the New York lawyer to invade the vestal life of Medora Palmore.

Fate, fate! how cruel sometimes is thy mission. Why, in an ill-starred hour, has the hurricane driven that bark into sheltering Fleet's Bay? Ah! the raging of winds and the dashing of waves must abate in time, although noble crafts may have been submerged, and valued lives lost. Yet a calm succeeded the storm.

Thus may be the life of our heroine. Like many of her tender sex, she was born to experience many changes in life. It would seem that she possessed something of the power of *prescience*. What else could fill her heart with unjust forebodings as her eyes beheld the flying schooner? And wherefore, even when the bark and its strange owner had disappeared, was she still tormented by a vague uneasiness? Determined to overcome what she styled her foolish fancies, Medora devoted herself more than ever to her family, and to self-improvement. Fond of horticulture, she passed much time out in the invigorating air, and showed, in her increased bloom, the truth of Dr. Holmes' beautifully-expressed thought, that "roses come to the cheeks of those who stoop to gather them."

Medora was essentially a domestic girl,—and, if her disposition be amiable, a domestic woman is certainly "a price above rubies." How happy is it in her power to render her family. No man desires a china doll by way of wife. The highest attainments of accomplishments and domestic qualities are compatible with each other. Such a woman our readers will in time admit

our heroine to be. Music, painting, the languages, were all at her command—such of the modern tongues, at least, as are deemed essential to the completeness of a lady's education—the five principal tongues of Europe. And even in the feminine arts of embroidery and needle-work were the pretty fingers of Medora quite *au fait*. Nature had been lavish in her gifts, and fortune not the less favored the beautiful girl. Her idolizing father spared no money in the education of his children; and Medora received the most of hers at a female institute of Baltimore—one of the finest seminaries of learning that the State contains. The nimble fingers of Medora could invoke sweet strains of music from the strings of her Spanish guitar; also, the Steinway piano sent forth its dulcet music through the mansion at Edge Hill. And they were also equally able at the concoction of biscuit, pastry, cakes, etc., etc. Puddings as well as landscapes, shirts as well as bonnets “grew and multiplied” beneath her touch; and, to her mind, poetry and house-keeping were not situated in the antipodes. Yet excellent Mrs. Ellis (if she “still lives”) continues to eulogize English wives and mothers! We contend that their equals dwell numerous on the Western hemisphere. Bad, indeed, must the heart of that woman be who increases not in goodness when she becomes a wife—that is, provided she marries a man instead of a brute. You start, elegant and kind-hearted young gentlemen! You opine, perhaps, that none of creation's lords ought to be classed with the

brutes. But if, with the assistance of patience, you peruse this veracious history to its *finale*, you will then be able to decide whether the writer is too harsh upon the opposite sex. If then you conclude that there is not sufficient reason to denominate some men brutes, why then the writer will admit herself to be in error.

“A creature nobly plann'd
To warn, to comfort, to command;
A being not too bright and good
For human nature's daily food.”

In short, she is no “angel in petticoats;” nor an ephemeral fairy, but, *de facto*, a woman, with passions of a human being, and the emotions of Eve's delicate daughter. She possessed reason, judgment, cultivated intellect, and a heart.

God does not permit absolute perfection to inhabit this nether sphere. Therefore, our heroine is only human nature, and will continue to be nothing more nor less all through our story. We do not mean to paint an ethereal woman this side of the grave; we wish only to portray the true character of a Virginia belle in our happy days.

Surely, a pretty girl with a warm, loving heart, who dearly prizes her parents and kindred, is by no means so rare an object.

Some months had elapsed since the “Old Dominion” had been driven into Fleet's Bay, when a letter was handed to Mr. Palmore, at the office. It was addressed to his daughter, and bore the New York City postal

mark. The mind of the old gentleman was considerably "exercised" (as they say in New England) as to who the correspondent of Medora might be; and his astonishment was not greater than that of the fair recipient when she beheld the name of Ralph Bruster appended to the document. For the benefit of any of the male sex who may be in the lawyer's predicament, we transcribe the remarkable epistle; first begging permission to indulge in an appropriate quotation from our especial favorite, Dr. Holland.

"He would write her a letter—resort of timid lovers from time immemorial. Oh! blessed pen, that will not stammer! Oh! brave ink, that will not faint and fade in the critical moment of destiny! Oh! happy paper, that cannot blush! Oh! faithful cup, that bears one's heart's blood to the lips one loves, and spills no precious drops."

So much for Dr. Holland's lover. Now we will return to ours, and his letter.

"Lady! but twice beheld, yet *never* afterward to be forgotten—can you forgive the liberty I take in addressing you, when not even the conventional necessity of an introduction has passed between us? The madness of *love* is upon me! My sole excuse (and what man who has enjoyed that bliss would deem it an insufficient one?) is, that I have seen Miss Palmore. That vision of loveliness has filled my heart with an emotion never before experienced; it has quickened every pulse of my being. That heart which I had deemed hard has become soft as a child's, completely

subdued by this new and overwhelming passion. When, on that memorable stormy night (a happy night for me) when I beheld you standing with the lighted lamp in your hand, were you waiting for the *bridegroom*, watchful virgin? standing there, beside your respected father, an image of youthful beauty and filial affection! Was it only my rash fancy, or *did you understand*, and tremble with maiden bashfulness beneath my perhaps too ardent gaze?

"Beautiful Medora! you perceive that I have learned your name. Lovely Medora! and again we met in your garden.

" 'Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower.'

"There you completed your conquest—there you entirely subjugated my heart.

"Shall beauty such as thine be forever buried in the country? What! consign to obscurity a face and form worthy to grace an emperor's court! Never, beloved Medora. Permit it to be my envied lot to bear you into a circle which you are fitted to dazzle and charm. Let me make you queen of all you survey.

"My heart goes in advance of this letter; my soul faints as it asks itself what is to be the welcome of this epistle! Will you condescend to listen to an old man's love? and consent to become the joy, the pride, the *darling* of his heart? He will do all in the power of man to compensate you—even for the kindness of receiving and reading this. Cast *it* not into

the flames, although my heart is now on fire. *To love me as I love you* is more than I can expect; but give me your respect, your esteem—oh! give me yourself. You should be in New York, and no doubt all the fair belles of this great city would sink into comparative nothingness, were you to appear.

"Pardon, pardon the illusion—but I have *wealth* untold. Be my wife, and it is yours. Never a wish shall be denied; take all I possess; I ask only yourself.

"The generous hospitality received from your esteemed father can never be forgotten. I beg you will present to him my grateful thanks and highest respect. I await but one word of encouragement from you to put him into possession of all necessary credentials as to my character, position, circumstances, etc., etc. I would have come to you myself, even before this, but that it has been impossible for me to leave my business at present.

"My heart beats wildly as with the passion of youth. That heart, dear Miss, is on fire; neither peace nor rest can it again know until I hold against it your *willing* hand. *Medora! Medora!* I feel that you are to be mine."

"Not a word about the war," said Medora, as she folded the letter and laid it aside.

This strange epistle, with its seeming simplicity, yet really artful subtlety, Miss Palmore was far from appreciating at its real value. Her first impulse was to laugh at the absurd rhapsody of an old man. When

she re-read it, she could not but feel, yet she was scarcely able to define, its utter want of delicacy.

"I am certain," she murmured, "that, had he the wealth of Peru at his command, I could never love him; and I pray God that, without love, I may never marry living man. Let me not be duped into a wealthy match. Is not the world already filled with misery arising from such unholy unions? Yet, if this man really loves me—and why indeed should he seek, save for love?—far be it from me to treat with indignation a true affection. Well may they say,

"Scorn no man's love; though of a mean degree,
Love is a present for a mighty being."

"I do not comprehend, nor, I fear, appreciate what he calls his overwhelming passion; but I can return his letter, with a few gentle words of refusal. But"—after a long, thoughtful pause—"I am certain that I neither like him nor his letter."

Medora sat busily embroidering, into life-like colors, an Egyptian lily, when her father entered the library. Medora dreaded the raillery of her fastidious parent.

"Well, my morning-star" (this being one of his favorite pet names), "and who may be your Yankee correspondent?"

"Guess, as they say in Yankeedom," she merrily replied, while the color sensibly deepened on her cheek.

"Well, here goes! I guess (looking profoundly wise) that 'tis a queer-eyed old gentleman, who popped in upon

us at dead of night, like a genteel ghost, some months ago."

"Papa, there is surely Puritan blood in your veins. Your 'guess' is charmingly correct. How did you make it out?"

"You must be careful whom you allow to be your Mercury, if you wish your 'tender secret' preserved. I had the honor of receiving that voluminous epistle at the office, and I have not yet become so antique but that I recognize a New York post-mark when it is put right under my nose."

Medora, blushing and laughing, rose to put the letter into his hands.

"Keep it, Medora, keep it; I shall not read it. No man, be he as ugly as his satanic majesty, and as old as Methuselah, relishes having his love-letters perused by another than the one whose eyes they were intended for." Then, more seriously: "I have confidence in you, my daughter; do you intend to reply?"

"Only by a few words of refusal, papa; any man merits that respect—and I shall return his letter."

"As your heart dictates, thus act, my child. I have never meddled, either to make or mar a match, and I never mean to. But you see the difficulty arising now between the North and South: war is evidently on the carpet, since John Brown made his bloody retreat in the State, and our people have been intending to endure this trouble no longer. Therefore, be considerate, and remember, if you should even commence a little flirtation with your midnight admirer, you might get

into trouble; so I warn you in time to flee from the wrath to come. You must decide."

As the old gentleman ceased speaking, Mrs. Palmore entered the room. Medora stood with the open letter in her hand. What instinct was it that made her almost fear her mother's scrutiny?

"What have you there, Medora?" inquired the old lady, with spectacles astride her nose. The daughter silently offered the letter for her perusal. No scruples beset the conscience of Mrs. Palmore, who made herself mistress of the *billet doux* in an incredibly short space of time.

"Oh!" murmured she, as she drew near the close of the epistle; "he is rich it appears, and wealth untold?"

"So I suppose," said Medora; "but I do not wish him, had he the world at his command. I think it a great piece of indelicacy to write to me without even the salvo of an introduction."

"Ah, my dear," replied the crafty mother, "a man in love is not to be judged by ordinary rules. You remember the old saying, 'better be an old man's darling than a young man's slave.' They say there will be war, but I do not believe it."

"Yes, mamma, and I also recollect another elegant and appropriate distich, or stanza, as brother Vincent used to say:

'Luve, luve, luve!
Luve's like a dizziness;
It wanna let a puir body
Gang about his business.'

And, laughing lightly, Medora escaped from the room, and, hastening to her own, quickly wrote this, her first love-letter, enclosed it in an envelope, and dispatched it to the office.

"That will end all discussion," she mentally ejaculated.

On a beautiful sunset eve in June, the Palmore family occupied the piazza. Jasper Palmore was now at home, and, at this moment, engaged in an exciting game of chess with his sister. All at once a "solitary horseman" was seen advancing toward the house. He alighted, and slowly came forward; as, he approached, he developed into Mr. Ralph Bruster, who, without bashfulness, offered his hand, and addressed Mr. Palmore by name.

"I believe I see our friend Mr. Bruster," said the old gentleman, taking the proffered hand.

"Right, my dear sir, and this time not accidentally blown here by a storm, but willfully come to claim your gratefully-remembered hospitality. Having business in the direction of Fredericksburg, I could not resist a desire to call and inquire after the welfare of yourself and family."


Mr. Bruster was invited in, and, upon entering the porch, received the due introduction to the family, and was thus for the first time presented to Medora, who, under the circumstances, was compelled to receive the uninvited guest with politeness.

Quickly the evening fled, and Medora was obliged to acknowledge to herself that the strange man pos-

sessed a fund of conversation, and was able to make himself exceedingly agreeable. He alluded to the war, but hoped it might all blow over, and supposed it would. He recalled all the few incidents of his storm-driven visit; he dwelt on, and magnified, the kindness of Mr. Palmore; quickly and correctly he read the covetous heart of the worldly hostess, and contrived to incidentally mention a thousand telling items. When bed-time arrived, he arose to take leave, and go in search of a hotel. Hoary dissembler! He had come with the intention of passing more than one night beneath that roof. Of course, he was pressed to remain, and very graciously consented. How different were the visions that visited the pillows of the various inmates of Edge Hill Manor-house that night! Mrs. Palmore and her strange guest—what saw they in the future? And, ah! what dreamed not the beautiful Medora!

CHAPTER III.

THE PROPOSAL AND ACCEPTANCE.

HE next morning, while seated in the parlor, after breakfast, Mr. Bruster was not at all diffident in making his business known to the daughter, who felt herself compelled to listen to his overtures of love and adoration to the girl who sat amused, while listening to his admiration.

He had come a long distance to make it known, and she treated him with formal respect. But the sweet gentleness of her manner only tended to augment the passion of the lawyer. He appeared to Medora more in the light of some aged relative, than as a suitor. From respect to his gray hairs, she listened kindly to his love-tale, but gave him never a word or look of encouragement.

But Mr. Bruster was an old fox, not so easily scared from his game. Like an expert lawyer, he pleaded his case well, and left her to dream upon the eloquence of his address;

“For a winning tongue had he.”

He was going up the river to Fredericksburg upon “business,” he said, and would return in about a fortnight. In the most respectful manner, he begged

our heroine to reflect upon what he had said; to grant him the indulgence of quiet meditation; and, above all, not to forget that he loved her more than he could express, and, unpossessed of her, would be forever unhappy. As he left her, he pressed her hand to his lips, and, when it was released, she beheld a tear upon her slender fingers.

Medora mechanically watched from the drawing-room window her ancient adorer ride slowly out of view. She musingly murmured,—

“Even in our ashes grow the wanted fires.”

After such an exhibition of affection, it was impossible for her to feel quite so indifferent to the fate of a New York lawyer. “Love engenders love,” says the old adage; and, even though a woman cannot love, yet she has a heart full of sympathy. Men, aware of this gentle feeling that exists in the female breast, have made use of it to decoy many a beautiful woman on to destruction. The serpent’s powers of persuasion have descended to many of the sons of Adam.

After the departure of their visitor, the mother of Medora was greatly “exercised,” to discover the subject of their long conversation in the parlor. Having conceived magnificent ideas of the wealth and social importance of Mr. Bruster, Mrs. Palmore, so far from being averse to this match of disparity, had determined to do all in her power to further the suit. Medora was by no means inclined to satisfy the curiosity of her maternal adviser.

"I should as soon think of wedding my grandfather," she gayly cried, as she ran out of the room to prepare for her daily ride.

"And, ma! he is an abolitionist; and, my dear mother, if there were no other objection, he and I would hardly agree, as our educations have been so different."

"No, no; I guess not," said her mother.

Faithfully, at the expiration of the stated time, appeared the lover *per se* at the door of his youthful mistress. Partial satisfaction sat impressed upon his marked features. "Faint heart ne'er won fair lady!" And what had Mr. Ralph Bruster, the keen legal adviser, to do with discouragement! He remained only a few days, but he was far from idle during this time. Never was princess wooed with more knightly ardor. Subtle and eloquent, his language might compete with that of hunchback Richard, when he sought to beguile the widowed heart of Queen Anne!

The lady, at least, could no longer doubt his sincerity—his eloquence she had always been obliged to own. Again he described his feelings upon their first meeting, and, for the hundredth time, expatiated upon her exquisite charms. The beauties of nature, the surroundings of her home, seemed to acquire new elegancies from the language in which they were now described. In choicest words he painted the bay, the river, the groves, the grottoes, and the "leafy verdure" of Edge Hill. He went from beauty to beauty, until his fair listener almost persuaded herself to the

belief that the orator himself partook of the beauty he so eulogized.

But not with one of the surroundings of Edge Hill had "his winning tongue" to do. In imagination he bore Medora to his own home on the Hudson; dilated upon the unsurpassed beauties of the noble river; described in glowing accents the Tappan Sea, and declared that his fairy-like yacht should from henceforth be called the "Southern Star!" Then, he had traveled "far and wide," and Medora's charmed ear drank in descriptions of other lands she had longingly desired to visit.

Love she certainly did not—could not—feel for her wealthy suitor; but her respect bowed down before one of so much learning and experience, and who bore her into such different scenes of life, and so new a world of thought. He was enthusiastic in his description of the romantic village of Catskill, and also spoke of the beautiful scenery of the Mountains; but dwelt more particularly on the rural scenery and exquisite grandeur of the Cauterskill Falls at the Laurel House.

Our hero at length took leave of Edge Hill, but he bore away with him two satisfactory promises, to wit: Mr. Palmore pledged himself to return his visit in New York; and Miss Palmore had consented to reply to his next letter. His last whispered words in Medora's ear conveyed again to her intelligence that, should she ever consent to become his wife, he would make her the happiest woman on earth.

"Oh, man!—is treachery your boast?
And faith to disavow?
Ye're falsest when ye promise most,
And when ye lowliest bow."

Patience! let us see the end of this eager wooing. Mrs. Palmore, true descendant of Eve, had accidentally overheard the last conversation which took place between Medora and her lover; and the old lady found much to incense her, at the lack of judgment in the manner of her daughter.

"Medora, why are you so cool to Mr. Bruster? He is a most agreeable person, and one in whom, I am sure, your father has confidence, or he would not have promised to return his visit."

"He must visit soon then, or he will be in the war," said Medora. "Mamma, Mr. Bruster did not presume to find fault with my manner; on the contrary, he pronounced it most graceful, and full of charming *naïveté*."

"Don't be silly and Frenchified, child!" Then, after a long pause—"Medora, is your heart of stone?"

"Mamma, ask the gentleman; his is sufficiently antique to have become ossified."

"Pshaw! Mr. Bruster is very rich."

"Alas, for him! his wealth cannot purchase for him a single juvenile grace."

"You cannot do better than marry him. Wealth and position are by no means despicable conditions of matrimony."

"Marry him, ma! and go North at such a critical

time, when we know there is going to be a rebellion?"

"I do not believe it," said her mother.

"I could never, *never*, love Mr. Bruster."

"And yet he is more learned and agreeable than any young man that you have ever known."

"Assuredly; and I must confess that I feel much more kindly towards him than I did at first."

The old lady hastened from the room, her step seemingly quickened with joy to hear her daughter concede even so much in favor of the New York lawyer.

The summer was fast fleeting, and autumn was approaching with visible strides, when Mr. Palmore, having a little business in that direction, was persuaded by his wife to no longer delay his visit to the North. According to her command, he was by no means to neglect visiting Mr. Bruster. Mrs. Palmore wished to hear accounts of this much-eulogized property from an eye-witness, whom she could implicitly trust. The planter, like a good husband, obeyed the instructions of his better half.

Mr. Bruster was more than delighted to welcome his Virginia friend, and the father of the young lady who had captivated his heart, as he made no scruple of informing that personage. Masculine antiquity seems easily enslaved by feminine youth and beauty. An old man may really love a young girl, but he must be a very foolish old dotard to believe that a young girl can really love him with a passion deeper than that she feels for her father. Ardor, on the part of the youth-

ful maiden, for old age, is out of question, and yet we see such disparity united every day of our lives! Ah, but *love* is far enough away! Money, position, some such selfish reason is the motive power. Can we wonder that there are so many shipwrecks of matrimonial happiness?

When Mr. Palmore took leave of his hospitable host, of course invitations for future visiting were exchanged. Mr. Bruster announced that he hoped to have the pleasure of seeing him again in a few weeks; having a law-suit pending in Fredericksburg, he would avail himself of the opportunity, and once more look upon his charming family.

The planter was a man of some penetration, and by no means so infatuated with Bruster and his gold as was the partner of his bosom. After he had visited the lawyer, he could not but perceive that his host, from his manner of living, must be in excellent worldly circumstances. But, in regard to the man himself, uncomfortable and unaccountable doubts beset the mind of the old gentleman. In conjugal obedience, he had taught himself to look upon this person, whose acquaintance had been formed in so peculiar a manner, as his probable future son-in-law; but the anticipation by no means gave him the satisfaction that, in years gone by, when joking little Medora on his knee about that important personage, he had hoped to experience.

Ah, well for present comfort is it that the future is veiled, always veiled. Mad would we be from our

births, could we but once lift the cloud behind which sits destiny.

The night of his arrival home, after the old couple had retired, Mrs. Palmore endeavored to relieve her mind by questioning her lord. She did not think of the political trouble that was just about to break out in fury upon them.

"Wife!" was the reply she received, "I had rather not say anything in regard to Mr. Bruster, as I passed only a few hours beneath his roof, and know very little more about him than I did on the first evening he happened to come here in a storm; and, were I to give my opinion of the man, I should say that he appears like one that has been in a storm all his life, and not only wrecked himself, but others, connected with him in some way, are even now on some sterile rock, from home and friends away. And besides, I know there will be war between the North and South, and I do not wish Medora to leave us."

"Dear me!" exclaimed the old woman; "husband, what a queer man you are to form such notions about things in general, and a man who appears such a perfect gentleman, and who is so wealthy."

"Oh, yes!" answered Mr. Palmore, winking his left eye at some imaginary auditor; "so it was with Richard the Third, and Henry the Eighth, and that Alexander who married Cleopatra, and caused her to be put to death after a honeymoon of nineteen days' duration—then reigned *alone* for fifteen years. 'Tis said

that murder and parricide were the fashion in those times, brought in by princes and princesses. Thank God! those days, and those men and women, have passed away. But, strange to say, wife, I fear that some of the dregs have been left to torture some one in our new country."

"Don't talk again about my *queer* notions, Mr. Palmore; they are only surpassed by your own."

"Well," said the husband, coolly, "we cannot account for strange 'impressions.' Our ideas flow spontaneously, and 'tis not in our power to throw them aside. But, seriously, Mrs. Palmore, what I have uttered in regard to the stranger who was blown here in a hurricane, like an evil spirit, are ideas that have been suggested to me by some power, I know not what. Time will prove. I only hope, that I may be mistaken in regard to Bruster. One thing, at any rate, is certain: I will never consent that he shall marry my daughter—no, never! Although he's a rich man, and may possibly be a good man, yet Medora is happy in my house, and here she shall stay so long as it pleases her so to do. When she chooses to change her situation and name, she has admirers whose parentage we know, and men whom Medora has been acquainted with from childhood."

"Oh, dear! old man," interrupted his wife, "how childish you talk. Can Medora do better than to become the wife of a wealthy New York lawyer? Go to sleep."

The old lady was quite out of humor with her liege

lord, who, however, soon gave notice, by certain peculiar nasal sounds, that, like a good husband, he obeyed her last command.

Again the weeks computed themselves into months, but they brought Medora no *billet-doux* from her hoary lover. Although surprised at his remissness, she could not but feel relieved by the conclusion that he had given up the pursuit. The eagle does not relinquish chase, nor is the vulture easily diverted from prey. Perched upon some lofty peak, he watches the innocent lamb at its gay gambols in the sunny fields. At length, with "one fell swoop," he rapidly descends and seizes his helpless victim. Lost! lost! lost! The rocks, the mountains, the very hills seem to echo and re-echo the eternal cry. We fancied she liked a Frenchman, as we always said, by coquetting; yet whether she would see him again she did not know—only knew that he was at a school in Paris. But what has such simile to do with the well-bred, refined, wealthy Ralph Bruster? Read, and ye shall learn. Could elegance such as his become vile? or a manner so gentle become wicked, especially to a wife? Oh, no; that seemed an impossibility.

Nature has caused the tiny seed which is deposited in the earth to spring up and put forth a blade of grass. She has caused the wide-spreading oak to spring into existence from a little acorn. She has caused the cooling brook to glide through a burning desert, and the umbrageous grove to overshadow the traveler on his journey. Nature has also ordained

that man and women should be; and, in the construction of human beings, it would seem that some are composed of good material, while others again are concocted of a combustible matter which appears to have originated in the lower regions. God's works are perfect. The mountains, the rivers, the tiniest of the flowers complete from His hand. Man owes his degradation to his own sinful nature. But we will leave the argument to metaphysicians; and, ere we close this chapter, let us take a peep at Edge Hill and its inhabitants.

'Twas an evening in early spring. At an open window sat Medora, wearying her eyes in the endeavor to make out the fate of the suffering heroine of a late novel—wearying her sweet eyes by the fading twilight, when, suddenly, a white-eyed negress bounced into the room.

"Miss Dora, dar is a strange gemmen at de gate. He bin ax me was de massa at home. I telled him 'No, sir,' kase I knowed dat massa and missus done gone ober to Col. Edmundses dis blessed arternoon. Den he kinder larfed, and ax was Miss Medora in de house. I tole him 'Yes, sir.' 'Where is she?' says he. 'In de house,' says I, 'as I done tole you already.'"

"Well, where is he, Lucinda?" inquired her mistress; "you surely have not left him *out* of the house all this time."

"De Lord! Miss Dora; whether he am, he sartin able to help hisself. Afore dis chile had time for to say what ole massa done teach me long time ago—'horse-

pertality, no formality,' dat's it—he jumps off de horse, spry as a June-bug, and entered in. No 'casion to be in such hurritude," added the daughter of Ham; as her indulgent mistress hastily rose from her seat, "kase he is an ole one, an' 'mazin' ordinary at dat."

Medora laid aside her book.

"Into what room did you conduct the gentleman, Lucinda?"


"No 'casion to kernduck him—he 'vited hisself, and derposited hisself in a chere in de drawing-room. 'Celey says she's seen him here afore, and she thinks dat he look like he is dat Yankee lawyer what makes b'leve he likes de niggers so well dat all he wants is a chance to sell 'em."

"Silence! Lucinda; you allow your tongue too much license, my girl."

Medora, with a light foot, entered the drawing-room, and who should she find awaiting her there, sure as life, but Mr. Ralph Bruster! The New York lawyer rose to meet her.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WEDDING.

RACEFULLY impressive was the salutation of the gentleman; apparently, the joy of his heart was too great for words. The lady's "Mr. Bruster!" had in its sound more of surprise than of pleasure.

"I hope my little Virginia girl has not forgotten me," he said, respectfully kissing the fair hand that was extended to him in welcome.

"A face once seen is never forgotten by me, Mr. Bruster," replied the lady, with a smile. She could no more help being sweet than the rose could withdraw its fragrance.

"That adds another to your list of perfections; a retentive memory leads to the happy inference that you possess a constant heart." And the lawyer thought what an admirable witness she would make in a case where recognition of countenance was required.

Then followed a long conversation, in which his remissness in writing was ingeniously converted into a virtue rather than a fault: his feelings were such that he could not trust them to the care of Uncle Sam's postal arrangement; he had hoped to have been with her long before the present date, and, now that

he was happy enough to find himself once more in her presence, all he had suffered seemed but as a troubled dream. 'Tis useless to relate what followed. Woman can recall to mind what has been said to her on like occasions, and man can remember or imagine what he has said, or would say, to her whom he was determined to win.

So, we will omit as much of the courtship of our hero as possible. The crocodile tears he shed, and the tender kisses he imprinted upon her hand, are sufficient to prove what he thought the proper way by which to gain a lady's favor. Calling her "dear child," his little "Virginia girl," showed great address.

In due course of time, Mr. Palmore and his lady returned from their visit. Surprised were they to behold their unexpected guest, but surprise was smothered by politeness. All the mercenary plans of Mrs. Palmore returned upon her, as she again beheld the wealthy suitor of her daughter. She remembered all she had heard him allege in regard to his vast possessions, and her sordid heart fairly jumped for joy when she recalled to mind that the truth of this had been affirmed by means of the visit of her husband to New York.

Wealth! money! gold! What power has it over the human heart! It drives reason from its throne. It destroys, comparatively speaking, the love of parents for their offspring. It has caused more souls to be engulfed in misery than aught else upon earth. The love of gold has caused more misery in this world than

any one thing; yet we see the human family bowing to the insatiable idol.

But Mrs. Palmore was only excited by the desire that her daughter should become rich and powerful. To marry a New York lawyer; to ride in her carriage, attended by obsequious lackeys; to possess plate, diamonds, pleasure yachts, and all that belongs to a wealthy and fashionable life, were delightful anticipations to the ambitious mother; but, at the same time, she believed this much-courted son-in-law to be a fine man, and one who would treat her daughter most kindly. For Medora, like most Southern girls, had been brought up as tenderly nurtured as a hot-house plant. Such women, when the storm comes, find themselves illy prepared to meet it. Hence so many of our Southern women so early lose their charms, and pine away and die when the chilling blasts of adversity fall upon them. When a flower is reared in the shade, with just the proper quantity of dew and sunshine, how fairly it blooms; but expose the tender plant to the scorching sun and biting winds, and, alas! how quickly it is destroyed. It is the sensitive plant which shrinks from the rough finger; when it is pointed at, it droops, withers, and falls to the earth; it has not power to resist the magnetic finger which crushes it.

Mrs. Palmore was little versed in the botany of human nature. The present was before her, clear, and attractive; little thought she of the distant future. The lawyer pressed his suit, knowing the war was fast approaching.

After a delay of several days, Mr. Bruster suddenly proposed immediate marriage. Medora, at first, positively refused; but the evident desire of her mother to see the union solemnized astonished her, and somewhat staggered her resolution.

"Surely," she reasoned within herself, "I shall be doing right to act according to what my parents think best; but oh! ma, dear ma, you know that Eugene Appomore and I have kept up a regular correspondence since he has been in Europe, and I know that Eugene loves me, and will return when he finishes his education. Yes, I know he will; I think of him, and cannot help it, although he may never come back."

Her poetical ideas always were excited when she thought of Eugene, and she whispered these stanzas:

"I THINK OF THEE.

"I think of thee, I think of thee,
When the stars are shining bright,
And when the rude wind howls around
My lonely home at night.

"I think of thee, I think of thee,
When thou sweetly smiled on me;
I hear thy voice, which is so dear;
Sweet are my thoughts of thee.

"I think of thee, I think of thee,
Now far away thou be,
At midnight hour, when dew-drops fall
Upon the leafless tree!

"I think of thee, I think of thee,
As the glistening ivy twine;
Each little rose-bud, with its germ,
Seems but to me the vine.

"I think of thee, I think of thee;
Alas! I do repine;
My constant heart, it doth lament
That thou canst ne'er be mine."

"I respect Mr. Bruster. I have never told him I loved him; he does not even expect it, and has told me over and over again that he will be satisfied with my respect. I have never deceived him. I told him I was partially engaged."

"Oh! impossible indeed for youthful beauty to love, as a wife should love a husband, age whose hairs are white with the frost of sixty winters, and whose face bears many furrows of inexorable time."

When he was about to take leave he gained her consent, through and by means of many fair, strong promises of tenderness unfailing, and kindness everlasting.

"If my parents are willing, if they desire it, I will become your wife—if not, I will never disobey them," said she.

"Not if your heart prompted you to marry one to whom they were opposed?"

"Never!" she cried. She did not think either would consent.

"If ever so desperately *in love*, you would not elope?" asked the wily lawyer.

"Not with mortal man!" she cried indignantly. "I will ever endeavor to do my duty towards my parents—to obey them is my duty. When I marry I shall try to love and to obey my husband; that will be an easy matter, so long as he is kind. I do not know what I should do, if he proves the contrary. I have never been tried. Should I ever disgrace myself and family, it will be as much my misfortune as my fault. Necessity and unkindness have often driven people to do desperate deeds; but I apprehend no cause for my committing such acts."

"I hope not," said Mr. Bruster. "If you become mine, you shall have no excuse for not being happy."

Then the lover left the lady he loved, and, entering the room where sat the father and mother, with great dignity of manner proffered his suit. He might not have been quite so persistent, had he not known that the rebellion was just bursting forth, like a sleeping volcano, and in a short time all communication with the South would be ended.

Mr. Palmore sighed heavily as he listened to the proposal. After Mr. Bruster had ceased speaking, there was a silence of some moments; then the father of Medora spoke.

"Sir," he said, "I am not willing to permit my daughter to go so far from home, and from her parents. If you will remove South, and she is willing to become your wife, I have nothing further to say against it. You are absent from your home very frequently, and for long periods. Medora is young and inexperienced,

and my child would be very lonely in her Northern home. God forbid she should become unhappy, particularly just at this critical time. My son will be away, and if she should go, then we will be all alone."

"Your Southern life is very different from our Northern one, I know," replied the lover; "and I do not deny that, for a while, your daughter might feel like a stranger in a strange land; but she would soon become accustomed to Northern rules and mode of life."

"We are now on the verge of war," said the planter, "and my daughter is better off here with her parents. I love neither snow nor icebergs. However, if my child is willing to try the frigid region, she can do so. I will not prohibit the union."

The consent of Mrs. Palmore it was not difficult to obtain. Among other attractions that the match held out, she said, she was sure that the change of climate would be of immense benefit to the health of Medora—who never experienced many days of serious illness in her life. Mr. Bruster promised to bring his wife to visit her parents whenever she should express a wish to do so; and that she should write three times *per diem* if she desired. "As to the war," said the lawyer, "Medora can write, and even visit her parents, if she wishes; she can also run the blockade. All things will be well," prophesied he.

"Pooh, pooh," said the planter. "All is well, that ends well," replied the dissatisfied father, as he passed out of the room, with his handkerchief to his eyes. "Poor girl, poor girl!" he muttered, between what

sounded very like sobs. "I fear that you are one among the many of your sex who are born to travel a rugged path; but I cannot, will not, meddle to dissolve the union."

As for the elated Mr. Bruster, he hastened back into the room where he had left Medora, to convey "the glad tidings of much joy." As he announced the result of his mission, Medora looked astounded. She certainly expected that her father would object. But, as she had given her consent to abide by theirs, she could not now retract. She seemingly was controlled by something, she knew not what; although she did not really love the old man, yet he fascinated her with his intelligence and tenderness, caused her to consent to become his wife. Women are often led astray by kindness; so it was with our heroine.

So Mr. Bruster left, to return again in six weeks to claim his bride. He expected to make his fourth appearance in the ship "Old Dominion;" and he jokingly observed, that he hoped his bridal advent would be preserved from storms. In the finest of spirits the lawyer left Northumberland. To him the sun shone with redoubled brightness; all nature seemed revived; for he had gained his point. His promised bride was to him enhanced in value, because she came somewhat unwillingly to his arms. His hopes and heart beat high.

How was it with the bride elect? A dead apathy seemed to have fallen upon her heart; yet she imagined she loved the lawyer, she mistook for satisfac-

tion in having obeyed the darling wish of her mother's heart. If father and mother invoked it so to be, Medora concluded that it must be right. She knew it was all a joke about running the blockade, but she really imagined she could visit her friends if there should be war; and, if not now, in a few years she knew the strife must eventually end, and then all would be right between the two sections of country.

Autumn, dreary autumn came again. October, with its falling leaf, returned once more. Trees were dropping their rich foliage; sweet-scented flowers were faded and gone; fields had given up their green, and become sere and yellow; the few grapes which yet clung to the vines were shrunken and withered. "The melancholy days" were coming fast, and Medora Palmore was to become a bride; work-women had wearied their eyes over satins and laces, and the lady was soon to be in readiness.

Reader! ponder well these lines. Whether you are married or single, old or young, let the mind dwell seriously upon the bridal hour of the heroine of this story. We say that the young lady is getting ready to be married, but is it love that is to cement the union? She is daily expecting the arrival of the groom in his vessel, the "Old Dominion"; but does she watch for his coming with love-lighted eyes? The family at Edge Hill were all in confusion, as is usually the case at a country wedding. Numbers of guests have been invited, and Medora tried hard to be-

lieve that she thought well enough of Mr. Bruster to become his wife. Eugene had dropped the correspondence, and she knew not why.

Bruster, knowing that he had gained his point, was determined nothing should stand in his way. Therefore, being a shrewd lawyer, he managed his case well, and one we will speak of another time had to pay the forfeit. In six weeks from the time he left Virginia, he was to return and bear away the prize—the beautiful and accomplished Medora Palmore was to become Mrs. Ralph Bruster.

Fair winds and good luck bore the "Old Dominion" on her voyage, and wafted her into the harbor of Fleet's Bay in the prime of time. She arrived during the night, and when Medora awoke at sunrise the next morning, and, looking from her window, beheld the sight, her heart trembled in her bosom in the same inexplicable manner as when her eyes first looked upon the fatal schooner.

"Oh!" thought the Virginia girl, "is that the vessel freighted by my future lord and master? Cease struggling, foolish heart! thy beatings tell me that it can be no other. Ah! what makes me feel so strangely? and wherefore am I tempted to wish that I had never been born? There is now no storm. The sky is beautiful and clear. The sun is just issuing from his eastern home, and the blue waters of the Chesapeake never looked more peaceful and serene."

Tears filled the lovely eyes that looked upon the calm landscape. Her reverie continued:

"What, what is to follow this strange union? O

God! that I durst withdraw my consent. No! 'tis impossible. My mother would die of chagrin. Matters have progressed too far. I myself could not endure the gibes and stare of the wondering neighborhood. My word has been given. To-day is the appointed time. O God! Mamma, mamma, wherefore have you abetted this unsanctified union? Merciful heaven forgive me if I am about to do wrong."

All this the pale lips whispered to themselves, as the beautiful head leaned out of the window. "The political strife now seals our fate; we are going to war, and it may be a long while before I see my home again. And what a strange freak for a groom to come in a vessel. I know he has explained all, in his letters, by saying that he came in the 'Old Dominion,' and accidentally met and fell in love with me."

Just at this moment, a light footstep was heard ascending the stairs, and there came a gentle tap at the door. Not wishing to be seen in tears, Medora did not withdraw her head from the window. The intruder proved to be a domestic, come to announce the arrival of the bridegroom elect. Mr. Palmore, with usual inattention to etiquette, and out of the hospitality of his heart, had sent to summon his daughter to meet her appointed lord. Medora could not help but smile inwardly at the simple goodness of her father; but she immediately checked the symptoms of a disrespect she was far from feeling—for she fully returned the deep affection of her parent. Medora turned and saw it was her maid.

"Go away, Lucinda," she said to the loquacious and excited *femme de chambre*; "and do not come to me again until I summon you. Give my love to papa, and say that, not feeling very well, I must be excused for not making my appearance for a while." The girl vanished; conveyed her message to Mr. Palmore, who forthwith made elaborate excuses to the guests, among whom was the clergyman who was to officiate at the approaching ceremony, and whom Mr. Bruster had asked permission to bring with him from New York; he said they had been intimate from college days.

Breakfast, which meal the impatient lawyer had declined to take on shipboard—as etiquette, of course, demanded—was prepared for the guests in true Southern hospitality and sumptuous style. The reverend gentleman, who had argued with Mr. Bruster the un-conventionality of appearing at the house of his bride before the matutinal meal, when he viewed the table which groaned under its weight of luxuries, added a silent clause of the audible blessing he invoked, that this argument had not prevailed, and that Mr. Bruster, as usual, had been victorious in argument.

After Medora had dismissed her maid from the room, she locked the door, and, throwing herself upon the bed, burst into a flood of tears. After the paroxysm had subsided, she knelt in prayer, and earnestly besought God to direct her course through life, and to give strength for her to perform the duties of a wife. From the exhaustion of her feelings, she gradually subsided into an easy slumber, in which the

white sails of the "Old Dominion" were still before her. She awoke with a start, and a feeling of terror came over her. "Oh! that crimson star, and that bloody hand uplifted," she cried. Just at that moment her mother entered the room, with a pleasant smile upon her countenance, saying: "Good morning, my daughter; how do you feel? The groom has arrived."

"Oh! ma," said Medora, gasping for breath, pale and trembling; "such a shocking dream!"

"What was it, my dear?" said her mother.

"Why, ma, I dreamed it was midnight, and I was standing at my window, gazing out upon the widespread canopy of the heavens, and the whole firmament was lighted with stars. But the largest star I saw was a red one—oh, so red, ma, that it was crimson; and it seemingly shot towards me, and near it was a bloody hand, uplifted. It looked as if it were bespattered with blood. The hand was that, apparently, of Mr. Bruster, and he was—— Oh! ma, I cannot tell any more—it is so horrible. I shall not forget this dream. I will tell it all another time."

"Who is here?" she cried aloud, almost beside herself with the reality of her vision.

"No one but your mother," said the old lady, quite terror-stricken to behold her daughter in such a state of excitement on her bridal morning.

Medora arose and staggered to her chair. "It was only a dream," she murmured, between her pale lips. "It might be a vision for good or evil, weal or woe."

Her mother tried to console her, telling her that

dreams were not always to be thought of. Perhaps she had been premeditating too much, and had not slept soundly. She left her to her own meditations. Medora sat for a while, like a statue on her chair, gazing out upon the wide waters of the blue Chesapeake, and the weird-looking vessel which lay at anchor.

"What, what does it mean?" she cried; "what is about to befall me? I am not superstitious, neither know I anything concerning that strange belief they call 'spiritual manifestations.' I have never even believed in presentiments. But oh! horrid, horrid dream!" she exclaimed.

She remained all day in her room. In the afternoon the sound of feet came rushing to her door, and she was compelled to admit the four bridesmaids, who, full of sport and vivacity, soon filled the silent room with tones of mirth and glee.

"Come, fair Medora," cried Miss Carter, "you have moped sufficiently all the day long; 'so get thee up now, my bonny, bonny lass,' and submit to be decorated for the prettiest bride in the country."

"Well, tell me what to do," returned Medora, smiling languidly. "I will promise to be obedient."

"That is sensible, indeed! Well, in the first place, eat this nicely-prepared dinner that Lucinda is bringing in. Are you aware, 'maiden mine,' that you have fasted all day?"

"I must confess that I do not experience a very realizing sense of fullness, as the Rev. Mr. Moore would say," replied Medora.

At this moment one of the young ladies, who had picked up a book, burst into a peal of laughter.

"What in the world is the matter? Is approaching wifehood a fit subject for mirth?" asked Ida Carter, with mock gravity.

"Oh! here is a novel called 'Cellia,'" cried the silly reader, "and, upon my word, the heroine falls in love *after* marriage, and *not* with her husband; and, dear, dear, she is about to elope with the fellow. Was there ever such a want of decorum? I hope that will not be the case with you, Medora; but, really, that future liege lord and master of yours, down stairs, is a century too old for you."

"Belle Meredith! have done with your nonsense," cried Ida Carter. "Medora Palmore knows too well that it is not *proper* to think any man superior to her husband, much less to elope with him. She is a country girl, my constituents, brought up where virtuous principles are breathed in the very air. We are not full of romance and intrigue from our cradles, as are some of the city belles. Had Medora been brought up in New York City, like her excellent but somewhat antiquated intended (here her beautiful eyes seemed running over with mirth), and had she been in the habit of running constantly to balls, theaters and operas, and remaining out with gentlemen until one and two o'clock in the morning; then, perhaps, we might argue the case, as my friend, the lawyer down stairs, would say. As it is, a country girl for me, North or South, East or West. They are the

women who generally are virtuous, and, should they happen to slide a little out of the holy path, they never rest, soul or body, until they have regained their footing."

"Well, really, Miss Ida," said Belle Meredith, "you have preached us quite a sermon upon virtue. I did not mean to attack that stiff and icy personage; I was speaking of falling in *love after* marriage—although he is a radical, I know. Such men have been the cause of the threatening war."

"Would not that be the very opposite of virtuous?" interrupted Ida Carter. "He should be Union; yes, yes, he is one of the Union men surely, now. But Belle, what on earth is the matter with you? here you have come up to the bridal chamber to aid in making her to become a wife, and have nearly crazed her with your foolish talk."

"Well, really," drawled the mischievous Meredith beauty, "who knows? A woman is not exactly an iceberg, or, if she were, does not science extract fire even from ice? Suppose a woman be married to a man as old as Methuselah—suppose she is daily to be brought in contact with another, young and bewitching as Adonis—is it possible to prefer the thistle to the rose? Cannot one love, and yet remain pure in heart?"

"True, oh! true, most sage Penelope! There has been in this tempting world more than one Lucretia! But methinks this is strange conversation for the ear of a bride. Excuse us, Medora," cried the amiable

Ida, as she threw her arms about the neck of her friend and kissed away a trembling tear; "we should not have been so thoughtless. Come now, ye maidens all, 'tis time to equip the bride. Let us strive to display the very acme of taste;" and she sung, melodiously,

"They tell me, gentle lady, that they deck thee for a bride;
The wreath is woven for thy hair—the bridegroom by thy side."


"Excuse us, Medora," said the bridesmaid; "we are rebels, therefore we often rebel; but perhaps in ignorance we do many wicked things—so we beg to be pardoned."

Then she ceased suddenly, and bit her lips, as one who had committed something *mal à propos*.

In two hours the bride was in readiness. Why should we describe her attire? Every one has seen a beautiful bride. Well, fairer than she, pure and beautiful as the morning star, looked Medora. Her dusky curls hung in rich luxuriance beneath her costly veil; pearls, worth a prince's ransom, gleamed upon her snowy neck and arms. In short all was *comme il faut*; and the girls, after exhausting their vocabulary of adjectives denoting admiration, ran away to dress themselves, in order to captivate the hearts that the bride would in charity leave to them, as Ida laughingly said.

CHAPTER V.

THE BRIDAL TOUR.

OON, all too soon, thought Medora, the brides-maids came flying back, like a flock of white doves. The gentlemen were summoned, and with them Mr. Bruster. Our heroine trembled visibly as he approached her. Nothing could exceed the gentle dignity with which he saluted her. Pale as a lily, she looked as beautiful as that spotless flower.

Well might the heart of the white-headed groom tremble in his breast with the ardor of a young lover. But was it conscious love that made her shrink and tremble as her almost husband placed her arm within his own? Alas!

The bridal procession descended to the room where the company awaited them, and, in a brief time, irrevocable words pronounced Medora Palmore the wife of Ralph Bruster. The groom was dressed in extreme style, tempered by a gentlemanly taste; but his gray locks were visible—the furrows which the burning share had not ploughed *untimely*. His deep-set gray eyes sparkled with a certain animation which was not agreeable to look upon. Yes! there he stood, the reputed husband of our beautiful Virginia

flower. Medora Palmore (we mourn the abdication of her maiden name) had become Mrs. Ralph Bruster—at least so she heard herself repeatedly called, upon this bewildering evening. Let not the reader forget it.

The father of the bride had much ado to swallow a sob, as the benediction of the minister fell upon his ear; but the mother had not even the grace to affect a tear and smiled with hearty approbation as she embraced the young wife. The old man shrank from the darling of his heart. He possessed more intuition than the ambitious mother, and, stealing away, he shut himself up in the library, and wept as David wept over Absalom. The entertainment was conducted entirely without his assistance; yet the guests did not fail to pronounce it charming, splendid, princely. There seemed to be everything for which any one could wish. The land flowed with milk and honey, and Edge Hill seemed converted into the promised land of Scripture. The guests dispersed at a late hour, and Mr. Bruster received many invitations to various wedding parties to be given in their honor. The citizens of the county desired to recognize him as a gentleman who had married in their midst, although it was whispered that he was an abolitionist. But he declined all solicitations, saying that imperative business called him immediately to New York. When he took leave of Mrs. Bruster's relations, he did extend a kind of lame invitation to them to visit his wife, but took especial care to appoint no time.

Melancholy was the parting with Medora. "Oh! it will be so long before I see you again," she cried in anguish, as in her bridal chamber she took leave of her brides-maids. Two of these young ladies had been her school-mates in Baltimore, and sore it made her heart to part with them. But it was over. The last good-night had been said, and Medora is at length alone; 'tis a relief—alas! no. What makes her start, turn pale, and endeavor to flee? 'Tis an approaching sound; nearer and nearer it comes; it reaches the chamber door. O God! 'tis the footsteps of the bridegroom. Alas!

Morning again returned. The bridal party were to go up the river as far as Fredericksburg, and thence home by railway.

Medora tried to believe there would be no further political trouble. Mr. Bruster said there would not be war, when he knew it was at the very door, like the destroying angel who scattered the blood upon the posts of the door of the Scythians.

Poor old Mr. Palmore embraced his trembling child, and said: "Before we meet again, Medora, Virginia's soil will be drenched with the best blood of her noble sons. My darling, the parting hour has arrived, and your old father must give you up. But remember, Medora, while I live, this is your home also. Whatever, *whatever* occurs, your father will be true to you; *he* will continue yours under all and any circumstances. James Palmore is your loving father through glory and sunshine, through sorrow and shame."

Medora wept convulsively, and hung upon his bosom, until the old man was obliged to put her forcibly away. A few tears showed themselves in her mother's eyes, but the wealth of the son-in-law congealed the briny fountain. Like the famous Miss Killmansegg of the golden leg, Mrs. Palmore now beheld everything through a golden medium. Her senses seemed steeped in liquid sunshine, just as we see the many every day. Such avaricious females are rare through the South; yet, as there are always thorns amid the most fragrant roses, so the old lady was of those classes. She never told Medora once to wait for her beau in France. The servants crowded around to take leave of their young and idolized mistress. Their grief was of the voluble order, eminently African. Lucinda, in right of her late office, considered it incumbent upon her to be exceedingly pathetic.

"O Lord! Miss Medora," she sobbed, "is you gwine to leave us now for good? Oh! de Lord, I wish to heaben dat ar ole vessel had nebber anchored in dis harbor; den Massa Bruster had got some odder angel for his wife, and you nebber leff us."

Medora shook hands kindly with her late Abigail, and in her heart silently echoed the wish so uncomplimentary to the lawyer. Medora was assisted into the carriage, and driven away amid the most pathetic lamentations of father, and mother (who appeared to begin to realize that she had lost her child forever), brother, and domestics.

Jasper Palmore had but little to say in regard to his

sister's marriage, as he had been but a short time from college, and his mind was employed in the political affairs of the country; yet he dearly loved her and wished to see her happy.

The groom did not appear in the least affected. The carriage reached the shore, a gay boat awaited them, and in a few moments the feet of Medora trod the deck of the steamer "Seabird," which, puffing and blowing, and a favorable wind, soon bore her out of sight of her dearly-loved home. She watched until the last point of well-known Edge Hill faded from her view; then turned aside to weep.

Many eyes watched the fast-vanishing boat until it disappeared in the distance, and, even after all traces had long vanished, Lucinda declared that she could see it.

The family returned to the daily routine of duties; but melancholy brooded over the deserted mansion, and it would seem that a funeral, *in lieu* of a gay wedding, had just taken place.

A new era had now commenced in the life of our heroine. They soon arrived at the city of Fredricksburg, situated on the Rappahannock river. New scenes began to interest the mind of Medora, and she now experienced the delights of traveling. Their reverend companion parted from them in the antiquated city, leaving the newly-married pair alone. They passed on from place to place until they arrived in the bustling city of New York. After a stay of a few days at the hotel, they proceeded up the Hudson. Medora

had now arrived at her new home. All was elegance, and nothing had been forgotten or neglected.

"Why should I not be happy?" she asked herself, the evening of her arrival. "I will try to be so," was the responsive thought. The mansion of Mr. Bruster was a very fine one and the locality splendid, but Medora wondered how people could manage to live with so few servants. Eight was the number which she had left in the house of her father, and she felt that four in Yankeeland accomplished more than all she had left behind. She often thought of her own maid Lucinda.

In the household of the lawyer, servants had no time for day-naps and lounging around, as our slaves did before the emancipation, when slavery was thought to be such a bug-bear by some of our northern philanthropists.

Mrs. Bruster had always been lenient, and she continued to treat her white subjects with discriminate kindness, so that she soon gained their respectful affection, as many Southern people do.

Now behold Mrs. Bruster in the home of her husband, with everything around her to make her happy, as far as money could accomplish that end! But true happiness between the sexes cannot be bought with a price. The beauties of nature about her delighted our heroine. Imagine the pleasure of one who beheld for the first time the glorious Hudson. Medora had left a very beautiful and romantic part of the country, but the scenery which now she viewed daily filled her heart with a new pleasure. She was fain to admit that

the Hudson far surpassed the dearly-remembered Rappahannock.

Yet even the beauties she viewed recalled those she now saw no more. To forget early associations and kind friends is a hard task; to learn to live without them is a daily death. The mind is a powerful agent, not always subject to our will. That of our heroine delighted in reminiscences, and, against her better reason, wandered away to visions of the romantic hills of her native river, to the blue rolling waves of the broad Chesapeake; and she even remembered with pleasure the cooing dove and the mournful song of the whippoorwill, and "all the love-spots that her infancy knew."

Nothing was forgotten, not even the silent graveyard—God's acre, as it is beautifully called by the Germans—with its moss-covered tombstones, where she had seen the yellow clay thrown up, and a darling little brother let down into the cold, cold earth. She had watched the clod heaped upon a grandparent in the same place; and, in her new home, her heart wandered away to her living and her dead. The more the cry of war sounded, the more unhappy she was. He knew not that her thoughts dwelt continually upon her home, or that she was the least unhappy. Woman's nature is to conceal her grief. Few of them there are who have not, alas! too early

..... "Learned the art
To bleed in secret, yet conceal the smart."

In all the time that Medora had now been absent

from home, she had not been allowed to write to her parents and friends. Whenever she spoke of so doing, Mr. Bruster would reply that he had just written, or was just about to do so, and that would supersede the necessity of her doing so. In a short time the rebellion did burst forth like a burning volcano, shaking the whole earth; for the first three or four battles were perfectly terrific, and the loss was disastrous on both sides. As Medora felt that she had naught of the felicity of a bride's new-found happiness with which to overcharge her letters, she did not object to possessing an amanuensis for a while. Our heroine was not an inquisitive woman, and troubled her husband to reply to few questions. She knew nothing about his affairs. This life was one, among many, whose pages, if written out, would offer but little to please the reader. Extremely cautious and reserved was he, both as to oral and epistolary communications; and the war was now raging, and the thought about her brother's determination to join the regiment filled her mind with sadness, as she knew how short his life might be.

She did not pretend to be a politician; therefore she did not discuss the war-question much, although she thought our Northern friends a little too over-officious in other people's business. However, time went on, and, little as Mrs. Bruster desired it, she could not choose but think it exceedingly strange that she was not introduced into society. She imagined it was because she was a Southerner. Her husband's wealth and profession certainly entitled him, she thought, to

wealth and precedence. She had just come from a State where men of his profession rank high and possess great influence.

"Mr. Bruster," she said, at last, "it is very singular that I do not hear from home—from my father. What think you is the cause?"

"Oh, I have not yet written to them," carelessly spoke he. "Besides, the letters would be intercepted."

"What! not written?" said she, as the tears started to her eyes. "Not written to them, nor mailed the letter written by me last week? Why, what will my parents think has become of me?"

"I do not know that it is necessary to trouble yourself, as you are properly taken care of."

Medora was thunderstruck. She could scarcely raise her eyes to his face, and, at length, woman-like, burst into tears.

"I have my business to attend to, and no time for mawkish letter-writing," said he, leaving the room in a passion at the sight of her tears.

At that moment her servant-girl entered the room with an astonished look.

"Ah, it makes but little difference now, what they think; the war has cut off all communications. You might have mailed my letter, before this happened; because some weeks have elapsed since it was written. As I requested you to mail it, I thought, sure, it had been sent."

"An' sure, what is it that's ailin' ye?"

The language was homely, but the tone so kind that

Medora wept convulsively as she replied that she was only thinking of friends, and the beauties and pleasures of her Southern home.

"Home, is it! sure enough! and isn't it meself that 'ud cry, too, if crying 'ud do a bit o' good. An it's often that I be wishing meself back in Dublin. I do be a stranger in the land, an' ye have been kinder nor any other, an' it's all of us 'ud say the same. An' don't take it as a liberty when meself says the same, an' that 'tis sorry we are when we sees the likes o' ye in trouble; an' 'tis to the Holy Virgin I pray for ye, it is."

Although our heroine was entirely unaccustomed to the Irish, yet she felt no disposition to laugh or make fun of them.

"I thank you for your prayer, my excellent Mary, but I am no Romanist, and 'tis to *God* and to the *Saviour* I pray."

Here the approach of Mr. Bruster announced itself. Woman's tears sometimes quickly dry themselves, and thus Medora's disappeared—whether from pride or principle remains to be seen. She managed to appear quite cheerful; and, leaving her thus, we will turn our imaginations to that spot in the "Old Dominion" where first we beheld our heroine, and to which she had sadly uttered—

"THE BRIDE'S FAREWELL.

"Why do I weep to leave the vine
Whose clusters o'er me bend?
The myrtle—yet, oh, call it mine—
The flowers I love to tend!

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

Medora was like many others of her sex who have been reared in ease and affluence. She did not dream that changes must and will come. One so pure, so good, that she imagined all the world were the same. Deluded woman! When will reason return?

CHAPTER VI.

THE HOME ON THE HUDSON.



GAIN it is a stormy evening, but Medora is not with them. Mr. Palmore and his wife sit alone beside the fire. The former lights his pipe, and, after a few whiffs, speaks "out of the fullness of his heart."

"Wife, why does not Medora write? Strange, strange, is it not? It cannot be that our daughter is so much taken with style and new faces that she has forgotten her old parents."

"Style, indeed," said her mother, "such things never affect those who have always been used to it, certainly not; well, if she did write, we could not get the letters now. Yes, yes, had she written at first we would have received them; but now, I know, all communication is cut off." Interrupted Mr. Palmore—"That is not the case. If my daughter has not written, there is serious cause for it. She has not been brought up in obscurity—that being so, she should not be dazzled by her present surroundings. I make no doubt that my wealth is greater than that of Bruster's. Medora carries more to her husband than he is able to give her. I know I placed several thousand dollars in her hand the morning she left, a bride, and she no

doubt has given it to him long before this, as women never look very far in the future. And we know not what may happen to her during this rebellion. Her antiquated husband, although exempt from the battlefield, may wish to become notorious in his shady days, and engage in war; and, poor girl, she must be very lonely. Even had she gone to him a portionless bride (and I thank heaven 'tis very different), Medora has too much good sense to be puffed up by wealth."

"That is true," acquiesced Mrs. Palmore; and then there was a silence, which was, after a while, broken by the father, who, like Lord Ullin, cried:

"My daughter! oh, my daughter!"

"I have often regretted," confessed Mrs. Palmore, "that I encouraged her to marry that New Yorker; but he appeared like such a fine man that I certainly thought she must be happy with him, even though she was much younger—it would be as well as if she had married a more youthful man—the young so often marry and turn out badly, I thought a man so much her senior would prove more constant. It appears that men have lost their real devotion to women. They have changed toward the gentler sex. The most of them love but a short time after the bonds of matrimony are tied. I often feel badly about it."

"That is so, wife," said Mr. Palmore, laying aside his pipe; "men in these days do not love with the same vehemence as they did when you and I were young. Instead of my love growing colder it has steadily increased towards you. Even when you en-

couraged that poor child to marry that homely, gray-headed fellow, I could love you none the less; although, to tell the truth, I was angry with you for a while to sanction anything that might make her miserable in the end."

"Oh! never mind, James; it will all come right some of these days."

"I am sure I hope so," said her husband, with a deep sigh.

"Why do you sigh, dear?" said the old lady.

"Because my heart is sad, wife, and I fear that all is not right."

At this moment the bell rang for supper. The lonely old couple entered the next room, and seated themselves to hot coffee and muffins.

"I wonder if Medora is as fond of hot muffins as she used to be," said the old gentleman, as he put the third delicious compound upon his plate. The remark was not a poetical one, but it showed the depth of the parent's love. Thereupon followed a dissertation upon the different manner of living in other countries, which was broken in upon by the sound of rapping at the front door. Lucinda, upon answering it, received a letter, which she immediately took to her master, saying, with her usual freedom, as she delivered it:

"I hope dis is from Miss Medora, master. I think it mus' be, kase it come in de night. All oder tings come so strange, like her husband—mus' be from her, from Medora."

"I hope so," replied her indulgent master, pushing back his chair, and arranging his spectacles. His hands trembled as he tore open the envelope, and the old lady sat in eagerly-expectant silence. As Mr. Palmore glanced quickly over the epistle he remarked: "Strange, strange that she does not herself write. Ah, I thought it could be smuggled through the lines somehow; the old chap is not so hard after all. But why should Bruster institute himself her corresponding secretary?"

"Is it not from Medora?" anxiously inquired the old lady.

"No, it is not."

"Who, then?"

"Why, after all I suppose it may be said to be from her. Her husband wrote this letter. Ah! I guess he is too busily engaged in the war," said the planter.

"That is very strange. Surely my child cannot be ill—tell me, quickly!"

"No," replied her husband; "she is well—if we may believe the contents of this sheet—sends her love to us, and is highly delighted with the North. There is some mystery connected with this, Mrs. Palmore. My child has never yet been undutiful or disrespectful towards her parents, and she must be aware that our hearts crave a letter from her own hands; but we must be contented at such times as these. I only wonder how it reached here after all; if she had written at first, we would have received it long ago."

The old lady arose, took the letter, carefully exam-

ined it. Not a trace was there of Medora's neat chirography. Silently the disappointed mother re-seated herself, and for a season rocked industriously. The silence was broken by pert Lucinda:

"Master, 'scuse me, but didn't Miss Medora wrote one word 'bout Cindy?"

"No," was the short reply.

"Den Miss Medora nebber write de letter—dat's a fac'. When she say she comin' home?"

"She did not say anything about it."

"Den she nebber knowed dat letter was sent—dat's a fac'," quoth Lucinda, sententiously, shaking her woolly cranium.

"Girl! it may be a long, long time before you again see your Miss Medora, if ever again that happiness is vouchsafed us."

"Don't say dat ar, master, for de Lord sake. I is most crazy to see her now."

"Suppose I send you to live with her, Lucinda."

"Oh!" replied the girl, with a toss of her red turban; "me like dat well 'nough. But dat ar ole husband of hern might pick me up and sell me to de traders down South; kase our Joe says dat de Nordermen is de woss masters under de sun. I don't know much, but I don't want to go; and I does know dat Miss Medora nebber write dat letter, kase she nebber say one word 'bout Cindy."

"You cannot be sold now, Lucinda; the North are fighting to free you."

"Ah! is dat so?"

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"Yes; did you not know it?"

This to Lucinda was more positive than that in said epistle; there were few allusions either to the father or mother of Mrs. Bruster. Scarcely a word passed between the old couple during the evening. An additional cloud seemed to have come over their hearts. About bed-time Jasper entered.

"My son, we have heard from your sister."

"Rejoiced to hear it," said the young man, throwing himself upon a sofa, and passing his fingers through his redundant locks. "The young ladies, Meredith and Carter, have worried me to death with their queries, and philippics upon false friendship, short-lived affection, etc., etc. I am relieved that our bride has at length found time to write. What's the news?"

"Not much. The letter was from Mr. Bruster, and very unlike Medora."

"Mighty queer, to say the least. Has the polar climate up there completely frozen up the heart of *ma belle sœur*. What a devoted wife, truly! permitting that dotard to write her letter. What can the old gray-bearded man know about the 'loves' and 'doves' of a woman's letter? What does he know about the last new bonnet, and the latest pattern for lace pocket-handkerchiefs? What an exceedingly uninteresting epistle it must be, eh? The first time I saw that man, I thought that he had accidentally dropped from the North Pole, and was afraid to touch him lest I'd freeze my digits. So you suppose that he has trans-

lated his beautiful bride into an iceberg, thus to adapt her to his case and climate, eh?"

"He was always a radical," said his father. "He only knew how to use his blarney and guess, and so he has finally guessed right this time; for he remarked, the first time I saw him, that war was being opened, and, if so, it would be critical for the South."

"Well," said Jasper, "all that I can give is my life; but that shall go freely. I shall be in the next battle. I should not be at home now but for business which called me away."

"My son, my son! I feel sure something is wrong with Medora. She must be either ill or unhappy that she does not write. A hundred icebergs could not change her warm heart and gentle, loving nature."

"Ah! well," sighed the old father, "let us to bed. Time, the great inspector, will eventually make all things clear—that's one comfort." And yet he sighed again, drearily, as though his heart was almost too full.

Plenty and comfort filled the mansion at Edge Hill. The winter was pleasant; neighbors, kind and sociable; had it not been for anxiety in regard to their absent one, our friends would have considered themselves among the happy few.

Let us turn our eye towards the grand Hudson. The winter is cold and dreary. Mr. Bruster is but little at home; business claims all his attention now; he has not a moment of time to give to the pretty girl

who had once so much power over him. In a few months her beautiful eyes had grown dim to him; her tall and majestic figure attracts no more; her gentle and winning smile is lost upon him; her amiable disposition is not appreciated. All her merits sink into nothingness with one whose heart is crimsoned with deeper crimes than his gentle wife could ever imagine, in her wildest dreams; he is one of the strongest abolitionists, and often taunts her with the institution of slavery.

But Mrs. Bruster endures his sneers and his neglect with all the patience imaginable. Irish Mary, and Thomas the coachman, were about all the persons whom she now saw. These domestics were mutually lovers, and Mary had induced Thomas to believe that her mistress was really an angel. They were indeed devoted to Mrs. Bruster. We should always endeavor to gain the good will of such persons, for even a servant may be enabled to do us, at some time, either much good or much evil.

The reader will see, before the close of our story, that Thomas and his lassie were of some service to the lady in whose employment they were. The war was now raging; there had been a great battle at Bull Run and several other places. Oh! what gloom now pervades her mind. Nearly a year had elapsed, when, one day, as Mrs. Bruster was fixing a coat for her husband, she felt something away down in the lining, rolled up. She thought it might be a valuable greenback; and, having needed money many times when he

would not give it to her, but would tell her she was a lazy, extravagant little vixen, she thought she now had a prize, and did not intend to give it to him, if it should prove to be money. So she finally, after taking two or three stitches, caught at the roll of paper.

Woman's curiosity prevailed, and the *billet* was read. To the overwhelming astonishment of the reader, it was signed, "your wife." Everything swam before the eyes of her who had thought herself, if not a beloved, at least a respected wife.

This letter had been written the previous summer, while Madame Bruster was in her obscure abode; when the husband had told Medora his wife had been *dead* years, and he had no child.

The poor heart-stricken woman saw at once her condition—that she was like all other women. She knew not why he deceived her; and when she found she was the dupe of a villain, she shrieked.

"Oh, my God! my God!" she gasped, and, with the fatal letter in her fingers, fell insensible to the floor.

Mary came rushing in, and caught up the lifeless form, and placed it upon the bed. After a prolonged syncope, she showed signs of returning life. A glass of wine enabled her to sit up. Ah! how changed she was; how rigid had become the mobile features; how marble-white the fair skin.

She wrung her hands together, as from her purple lips there issued these words:

"O God! is he married?" Then, suddenly turn-

ing upon the girl, she exclaimed: "Mary, has Mr. Bruster another wife?"

The servant looked as though she would like to speak, but dared not. Medora again exclaimed:

"Mary, has Mr. Bruster another wife! Tell me, Mary; is he married—if my hus— if—if Mr. Bruster has already a wife?"

"You ask me too much, mam," said Mary. "We poor hired girls must shut our mouths and eyes to the faults of our employers."

"Well, this letter purports to be from Mrs. Maria Bruster, who calls herself his wife, and reproaches him for living with a — with one who is not so. Oh! oh! Mary, I shall die."

When the lawyer was at home, she heard nothing but bitter epithets against the South, which had been her home; and the reader must suppose that still augmented her grief.

At this moment, for the first time, she was led to believe. "Oh! that I had never discarded Eugene; oh! that I had waited his arrival; but, 'tis done, and I am lost."

"It is yourself," said Mary, "who is young and beautiful; and a pity it is that you are not the real wife of the gentleman."

Medora seemed about to faint again, but, by a violent effort she controlled herself, and besought Mary to reveal all she knew, promising that she should be brought into no trouble thereby.

"Well, my lady," said the girl, "I have been here

about two years, and lived with Mrs. Bruster till a few months before you come. One day, Mrs. Bruster went away with her little son Robert. After she had been gone some weeks, Mr. Bruster also went away. When he returned, he informed us that his wife was dead, and that the little boy had been left with his grandmother; an' he looked so serious, and sober-like, that we thought it was all true. His wife had been very severe with us; we could not do enough work for her; she gave us but little to eat. An' whin you came, me lady, you were so different, that Thomas, meself, and the other servants remarked it; an' now, shure, we have become so much attached to ye; an' I am shure, me lady, if we have any access to the Vargin, we will besach her to protect ye, who has been so kind to us servants."

Medora gazed intently at the girl while she was speaking. The more earnest Mary became, the stronger was her brogue. A long silence ensued, during which Mrs. Bruster appeared buried in thought. At length she spoke:

"Go now, Mary, to your work. I feel much better. Do not open your lips to any one concerning what has occurred. Time will unfold many dark deeds, and justice will overtake the wicked; but the righteous shall never perish, nor their seed go begging bread. A vague idea flitted across her mind in regard to the young man who she supposed was then in Paris; how queer it was, in her lost condition she should dream of him!

When Mary had left the room, Medora refolded and replaced the fatal letter. That night Mr. Bruster returned. He said to Medora that he would now be less than ever at home—that his business in New York was so urgent as to require the whole of his attention, adding:

"I have received a letter from your father. They desire to have your portrait. You can sit if you choose. I will send up an artist. In consequence of the war it will be a long time before you can visit them."

"An artist engaged!" she whispered; "what do I want my portrait taken for, now that I am so thin and corpse-like? I am sure my parents would not recognize me. May I not see my father's letter? I should like to," cried Medora, with a manner a charming mixture of eagerness and timidity.

"No, I do not choose to have my correspondence examined by everybody."

"Am I not your wife? and you say you have received a letter from my father, and you will not permit me to see my own papa's letters?"

"No," said he, in a bitter and sarcastic tone. "You what? my wife! Ha! ha! well, the war will soon be over; then you can go and stay at home altogether. Yes, yes," laughed he.

"Well, then, I will write to them myself," said Medora, in a sad but firm tone.

"I forbid it," said he, sternly. "I wish you to have no intermeddling of relations. Should you write,

then soon you would wish to visit, and, the first thing I should know, there would be some intrigue on the tapis.

"*Dare you doubt my honor?*" cried Medora indignantly. "I was brought up to value virtue as sacred as life."

"No, not as yet; but you are so unlike the rest of your sex. If you saw a handsome young fellow, you would soon forget your husband."

"I am incapable of deception," said our heroine, while the blood crimsoned her cheeks, and a deathly paleness followed.

"Well," sneered he, "the safest way is to give you no opportunity; and so, good-bye for two or three days."

"Ah! politics, politics," whispered Medora.

The reader can imagine the feelings of the wife, who had just discovered that she was the dupe of a villain. Yet sometimes caution is necessary. The wretched girl threw herself upon her bed, and, in anguish that cannot be described, passed a sleepless night, her trouble now being too acute for her mind to dwell on anything but one.

Oh! reader, what an awful hour is that when the villainy of him with whom you have stood up before the altar is forced upon the mind of a young, confiding, virtuous woman. The horrors of the lost in the dark spheres can be no worse, in our opinion. The heart that trusts, and is deceived, is a broken pitcher at the cistern, indeed. There are thousands of inno-


cent women who can and will sympathize with the heroine of our story. She is alone in an immense mansion, is not permitted to pen a line to her parents, has no society but the Irish servants; yet she was as quiet as possible. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and I will repay."

Medora Palmore had been taught to read the Bible, although she had been raised in a slave State, and born of Southern parents—or what the consequence might have been of what was now revealed to her, we are not prepared to say. She had been one of the belles of her State, courted and beloved by all who knew her.

In a few days Mr. Bruster returned, accompanied by a gentleman whom he introduced as the artist he had formerly mentioned, and who was a tall, dark, distinguished-looking man. As Mrs. Bruster gazed upon the new-comer, she felt strangely. What on earth could have induced her husband to bring so attractive a man into the house? she mentally asked herself; for she knew his suspicious, jealous disposition.

She was introduced to Monsieur Delancy, and told to prepare herself for a sitting. She turned deathly pale, the artist too acted very queerly, staggered and caught hold of a chair, made some remark about the tedious ride. Madame Bruster called a servant and ordered wine, seeing the stranger looked fatigued. He gladly accepted the invitation to drink, in which all joined.

Then the artist declared that he would be, on the



following day, sufficiently rested, after his journey, to commence at once; but must go to New York for a day or two. Medora was soon in readiness, after his return, for her first sitting. In due time the picture of the beautiful woman was completed. Many were the hours they passed alone, although, as much as possible, Mr. Bruster remained in the room.

Medora knew not what she thought of the painter. Her mind seemed to be in chaos. Unaccustomed even to think for herself, she felt as one driven helplessly along by a strong current.

And what thought the painter of Medora? Uncontrollable looks and inadvertent hints assured her of his admiration.

What a dangerous position was this beautiful woman now in! A handsome, intellectual, fascinating man thrown continually and alone into the society of a woman whom he admired more than any lady he had ever seen.

But Medora was married. True, she had seen a letter from a woman claiming the prior right of wife to the very man whose name she bore. But she had ceased to believe in that letter. After due consideration, she felt herself compelled to pronounce it false. She had also ceased to believe in the honor of Mr. Bruster, thinking that he had deceived the poor "Maria;" that it was "Maria" who was deceived, and she herself the honored wife: the noble girl of Virginia could not believe she was the disgraced one. But who was this handsome Frenchman? Why

was he sent to her by her own husband, as she had brought her mind to believe that she was the lawful wife, and Maria the counterfeit? Yet we say that she had ceased to have any faith in the legal adviser as a man of honor, but she did not now suspect him of villainy towards herself. She thought it impossible that he would have dared to contrive and carry out such a tissue of deceit in regard to her, who was highly connected, and had so many influential friends at home.

Wretched as she undoubtedly was, she could no longer loathe herself as a dupe, and, however innocent, really, in the eyes of the world, utterly ruined. A ray of sunshine had entered her darkness. Her heart had become more buoyant. Light again entered her languid eyes. She did not dare to analyze her feelings, but she was conscious that all the fresh emotions of her youth had come again. The blue sky seemed as of the sweetest sapphire; the green fields and the waving trees were of emerald brightness; the grassy plains, the leafy trees, the brilliant flowers, were as they ever had been. She knew that the sunny atmosphere possessed more of loveliness or power of imparting delights than of old, and she knew that the change, the sensation of ecstasy, was in her own heart. She felt, to the core of that heart, that she was happier, and she dared not ask wherefore. Alas! poor Medora. So gentle, so pure within herself, that all creation was beautiful; yet her mind wandered back to the home of her childhood, and could but wish to be at Edge

Hill, even though the bayonet glittered, and the roaring of the cannon might sound in her ears.

She did not know why, but Eugene, the French student, seemingly occupied her mind more than anything else. The war was now drawing to a close; the surrender of General Lee soon followed. A few months longer and all was over, and no other State suffered as much as the "Old Dominion."

CHAPTER VII.

THE TWO PORTRAITS.



WHEN the artist was about to take leave, Mrs. Bruster invited him to call upon her occasionally.

"I am so lonely here," she said, with a sad smile. "Have you not a mother, or a sister, whom you can bring to see me?"

"I have neither mother nor sister," replied the Frenchman. "When one sees ladies like madame, one cannot but choose for a wife."

The courtesy of manner took away what might appear rather a broad compliment. "However," as Medora said to herself, "one would not be French unless one flattered." But the keen-eyed Gaul noticed the blush that his words had brought to the cheeks of his fair hostess, and was satisfied.

Monsieur l'Artiste took his departure, and with him bore away the duplicate of the portrait which he had been ordered to paint. He imagined this all unknown to any one but himself; but Mary, the Argus-eyed, had caught a glimpse of the love-robbery, on the easel, in his room. The original portrait was sent home to Medora's parents. Her husband, being a shrewd man, by strategy sent it through the lines.

Weeks ran again into a month or two, and beheld the lawyer yet overwhelmed with business cares.

No longer was Medora his "little Virginia girl," his "beautiful fairy queen." Alas! she was now a forsaken woman, who daily wept over her condition, but there came no relief. At length, the Winter closed, with its dreary gloom, and Spring, revivifying Spring returned again.

"SPRING VOICES.

"Sweet Spring returns, and the Winter is o'er;
The birds sing as sweet as in days of yore;
The bunting flies from its wint'ry nook,
And glides by the side of the silvery brook;

"As if to catch some wild wood notes
From the forest song in the air that floats;
It flutters and chirps, for its heart is gay,—
For it knows the Winter has passed away.

"The snowy mantle we see no more
Spread on the forest, the vale, and shore;
The voices of Spring to the glad earth call
Through forests dense, over cliff-tops tall;

"And gentle violets, from grassy beds,
Modestly raise their innocent heads,—
Timidly shrinking upon the plain,
As fearing the love their beauties gain!

"These are the voices we oft-times hear
Thrilling with music the ether clear!
Gurgling rivulets, clattering brooks,
Meeting each other in leafy nooks.

"Flowers spring from their earthy beds,
Kissing the dewdrop with tiny heads;
Each little cup perfumes the air,
And blossoms are springing in gardens fair!

"Let those now love who never loved before;
Let those who always loved now love the more;
The Spring, the joyful Spring appears,
The happiest season of revolving years."

Flowers, birds, trees, the rapid river, each again renewed their youth, and Medora alone seemed miserable—she is alone.

The lawyer soon wearied of his darling. He could have said, as Lord Byron pronounced of one: "Thou art none the less charming, but I am fond of change."

Fond of change! Just such characters we meet every day. Bruster was one. The woman whose eyes had held him spell-bound now became a wearisome burden. Oh, man! wherefore so fickle? An angel in the place of Medora Palmore would have received just such treatment. A libertine has no compunction of conscience. Rich and poor, high and low, he places upon the same platform. With such a one, birth, talent, rank, have no influence; and such a one was Ralph Bruster, as, perhaps, the reader has already perceived.

The portrait, as before mentioned, had been sent home to the parents of the fair original. The reader may, perhaps, imagine that the picture was a source of infinite comfort; so, in some respects, it was—yet they saw a sad change. Medora always wore a smile upon

her face ; but now there was a sadness, which the old folks could not account for.

It was accompanied by a letter from our hero. The parents hung with delight over the representation of their beautiful child.

"Where shall it be hung?" inquired Mrs. Palmore of her husband.

"In our chamber, by all means," replied the old man. "There it will greet mine eyes the first thing in the morning, and look upon me the last at night, just as she once did ; and I shall almost imagine she is here, poor child. Only she looks too grave," he remarked ; "she thinks of the war."

How the picture was admired, caressed, and praised ! and every voice pronounced it so natural, and the unknown limner of the highest merit.

"A proficient—a proficient, undeniably!" said the gratified father.

All the household seemed to gaze upon the newly-arrived treasure, and even the neighbors came in to look at the "counterfeit" of her who had been so esteemed and loved by them all.

After the father and mother, Lucinda esteemed herself as possessing the best right to the picture. If gazing could have dulled its bright coloring, it would soon have faded. Oh ! can aught be more tender than the love of a parent for a child ?

Mr. Palmore wrote a letter of thanks to Bruster (which was never seen by Medora); dilating upon their rapture on receiving these mementoes of love ; and

then, for a long while, nothing more was exchanged between them. To all of Medora's inquiries Mr. Bruster turned a deaf ear. When she spoke of writing, he would remark that letters would not go now anyway. This was his excuse. The driver was ordered to say that the horses were not in condition when she wished to drive. He tried every way imaginable to punish her.

Her life was in darkness, indeed. Pale, thin, and wan, she wandered from room to room, calling up visions of Edge Hill and its environs. "Oh ! that I were once more beneath my father's roof. What to me is wealth, now that I am forsaken ? What have I done to deserve such treatment ? Father, in heaven, pity me !" she would exclaim, wringing her delicate hands.

For hours she would sit in silent meditation. One morning she wandered out for a walk, and, after proceeding some distance, seated herself in an arbor, which looked out upon the river, there repeating these verses :

"I ASK NOT FOR WEALTH.

"I ask not for wealth, for soon it is gone—
Like the rainbow it passes away.
But give me the heart that to mine doth respond,
For such love will never decay.

"I ask not for fame, which flies like a shadow,
As a bubble that floats on the stream ;
Like a zephyr that blows gently in the morn,
And passes away as a dream.

"I ask but one boon—God grant it to me—
To meet those in Heaven I love.
From sorrow and pain we shall ever be free,
And sing with the angels above.

There, wrapped in sad reverie, she was roused by a rapid footstep. Looking up, she beheld Mr. Delancy, the artist. Oh, Medora, if you only knew this man.

"Am I intruding, madame?" he said, gently; and with his peculiar grace of manner, extended his hand.

"A friend never intrudes," replied the lady, as she touched the proffered hand, "and I am surfeited with solitude, and quite agree with one of your compatriots, who opined that, though solitude was sweet, 'tis pleasant to have some one to whisper to"—then blushed at her own remark.

But, as only French courtesy can, he guided the conversation, until Medora was charmed into forgetfulness of her unhappy fate. Mr. Delancy offered her his arm.

"How strangely I feel," whispered Medora.

They had made but little progress when they were met by Mary, who came to inquire if Mrs. Bruster wished to drive.

"If I can take the horses," replied our heroine, surprised at the liberty accorded her.

"Thomas says they need exercise, madame."

"Well, then, Mr. Delancy, if you are so disposed, I will show you some of our beautiful views."

"It will afford me too much pleasure, madame; for

we hear but little these days but war news, which is very uninteresting to a Frenchman."

"And to me also," said Medora; "and, as I am Southern born and educated, my principles are antagonistic to the present political strife. You French have fought us more than once," said Medora, affecting a smile.

"None of my family, I assure you, madame, have fought against this country."

Seeing the artist was not so inattentive toward the South, she gave him an indefinite invitation to ride.

Medora always felt so strangely in the presence of the artist, although he showed extreme attention whenever he saw her.

She dreamed of no harm arising from the invitation, which he quite as innocently accepted. Having been invited many times to his house by Mr. Bruster, he saw no reason for declining a morning drive with the lady of that gentleman.

Thus were some hours very pleasantly spent. It was a long time since Medora had enjoyed a drive, and never had she met with a more interesting companion. She began to feel more like Medora Palmore, and almost forgot that she had exchanged that name for Bruster. Once she remarked, with a pang, that she had reason to doubt her legal right to that name. But, oh! impossible. It could not be. What! she, the innocent Medora, lost to friends, lost to society, lost to reputation? It could not be. She put the idea away. Surely, it was more than she could endure.

She was his wife, and Maria the dishonored one. But she had a most enjoyable drive. When she returned to the house, unfortunately, the lawyer was at home. When the carriage drove up to the door, the lawyer stood very near, but he did not offer to assist her to alight. His countenance denoted anger, but Medora never dreamed that one so weary of her could be troubled with jealousy. She was satisfied that Mr. Bruster no longer loved her, and, without love, it is said jealousy cannot exist.

However, the lawyer invited the artist in and treated him with polite hospitality. Mrs. Bruster felt and was looking unusually well. For weeks she had scarcely beheld a human face, with the exception of the servants. After a short stay, Mr. Delancy took his leave, and Medora was surprised to hear the lawyer invite him to come again—for she saw he was angered.

When they were alone, then the cloud dropped rain—a rain of words, with which we will not pollute these pages. Suffice it to say that Medora heard herself called a name that must fill with indignation every innocent heart, and open anew the wounds of the guilty.

“Oh, oh!” she exclaimed, “that dream, that *horrid dream*. That *crimson star* and that bloody hand uplifted! Is this the reward that I am to receive for leaving my Southern home, my father’s house, and my dear friends, to cling to a husband who, I thought, loved me dearer than aught on earth, and who promised before God to love and cherish me so long as we both do live?”

“A *husband!*” he repeated, smiling ironically. “A husband forsooth! I have been the husband of *many* a simple girl like yourself. If you are one of the F. F. V.’s, you have been the dupe of a Yankee lawyer this time; and when I first met you, there and on that very trip, then I was bound for Fredericksburg, it was to reconnoiter your harbors and gain all the information in regard to your strength.”

Medora’s innocent brain refused to comprehend his meaning. She really did not define his words; but sat weeping silently, while he heaped abuse upon her. When he had exhausted himself he left her alone, and the day passed with her as many another had flown. Nature, in all the lavish beauty of May, could not awake a natural feeling in the bosom of our heroine. Her soul, like that of Job, was stricken down by trouble; the vivacity of her nature was overshadowed by sorrow—she seemed a wreck. But she was not entirely without hope. Thank God for hope! When hope is gone, then woman is lost. She hoped that she would at some future time again behold Edge Hill—that her foot might again press the soil of Virginia, and that at last she might be laid beneath the earth of that State which covered the remains of the immortal Washington, and many other great warriors. Medora, feeling her entire innocence, believed that God would avenge her wrongs. Could every one have such faith, how much better would it be! Cool and calm, she bore with resignation her misery.

The night after having met the artist at his house,

Mr. Bruster astonished her by making his appearance. Weeks had passed since he had thus honored her, and, little as she could esteem him, she could not choose but be glad of some human presence.

After supper had been served, and he had fondled his pet Newfoundland, he wandered uneasily about the room, seemingly in an unhappy state. Medora, deeming it her duty, endeavored to make herself agreeable, but to little purpose.

"Mr. Bruster, I should be glad to see you at home more frequently. This house has appeared like a dungeon since you have deprived it of your presence."

He glanced keenly at her, to observe if she spoke in irony. Perceiving that it was all in good faith, he merely turned his back upon her, ejaculating an emphatic "humph!" The lonely evening was at length over, and this happy and congenial couple retired. Medora quietly wept herself to sleep, but not before she had made up her mind to escape to Edge Hill, even at the point of the bayonet, at the very first opportunity that offered for flight. Just before daylight she was awakened by the gleam of a light in the room. What was her terrified astonishment in beholding Bruster standing at her head, in one hand a lighted lamp, in the other a loaded pistol!

"Now, madame, prepare to die! you are faithless," cried the inhuman fiend.

Arising upon her knees in bed, she screamed aloud, and protested her innocence.

"No," said he, with the most deliberate coolness and cruelty, "*you* are not my wife; my wife still lives. *She* never deceived me, although I banished her from my presence."

"O God!" she cried, in tones of the wildest anguish; "is this my lost condition? Is this the man that wooed and won Medora Palmore? Can it be possible that I am betrayed and murdered? Oh, that crimson star!"

He grasped her arm, and endeavored to drag her from the bed by her beautiful hair.

"If you care not for me, oh! at least, have mercy upon your unborn child, the innocent victim of a deceived mother."

He heeded not her petition, and was about to fire, when Mary rushed into the room and dashed the pistol from his hand, which exploded as it fell to the floor.

"Holy Vargin! an' will ye murther yer own wife? The saints protiect and save her."

"I was jesting," said he, coolly; "only testing her courage. What does she mean," said he, "by that crimson star and bloody hand?"

Medora fell back in a deadly swoon. Mary stood by to receive her last breath, for she assuredly thought the poor lady about to die. Bathing her pallid temples, she continued to murmur pious ejaculations.

Ralph Bruster, snatching up the exploded weapon, left the room. Ringing the bell violently, he ordered Thomas to prepare his horse, and before Medora had recovered from her swoon he was off and away.

When that unfortunate girl again opened her eyes, she beheld the faithful domestic leaning over her.

"Has he shot me?" said Medora.

"No, me lady; I was in time to save yer precious life, praised be the saints. He would have murdered ye in an instant."

"Yes, in a moment more I should have been weltering in my own blood. Thank God, and you, Mary, my life is preserved. Oh, my dear parents! were you aware of my sufferings, it would kill you."

Her utterance failed from excess of emotion, and Mary begged her to compose herself. The excellent girl brought some hot coffee, which Medora persuaded herself to partake of, and in the course of two hours was enabled to rise and make her toilet.

Restless and wretched, she could not remain in a quiescent state. Snatching up her mantle, she wandered away to her favorite bower. The sun was just peeping from behind the hills. As she sat, idly watching the swift current of the Hudson, and wondering if there was peace to be found beneath those onward waters, she heard the crushing of leaves, and the next moment the figure of a man presented itself. As she recognized his person she almost fainted again, for it was Delancy.

"Madame," he said, hurriedly, but with his ever-gentle, high-bred manner, "excuse, pardon this intrusion; but a horrid circumstance—information that I have received, brought me hither. A plot, a secret plot is in machination. Your life is in jeopardy."

"What—what is it?" exclaimed the terrified woman. She knew there was a battle just fought in Virginia, and thought, perhaps, her brother was killed; and by chance he had come to inform her of his death.

"You are to be murdered!" answered the excited Delancy, "and, unhappy me, I have been the cause. You are first—then I am—to die. Your husband is a tyrant. God help you, madame. You shall be saved."

"How do you know this?" asked Medora, almost paralyzed with horror, and also wondering why this stranger should take such an interest in one whom he had met in a business way.

"By accident, madame; by accident I have come into possession of this knowledge."

"Tell me what you have heard," said Medora, faintly, ready also to distrust Delancy; for a woman, once deceived, is apt to look upon all with suspicion. "Tell me, tell me quickly!" gasped the lady, pale and trembling.

"I came hither to tell you," replied the artist. "As I was wandering on the shore, I heard near me a low talking. I paused to discover whom it might be. It proved to be Mr. Bruster and your domestic, Tom. They were concealed in a ravine, and conversed in guarded tones. I heard these words: 'Be in readiness, Thomas, with the yacht; and have all prepared as I have ordered. If we can manage it, it will be a consummation most devoutly to be wished; moreover, variety is the spice of death as well as life. One thou-

sand dollars are yours, Thomas, my boy, as soon as that d——d artist and his paramour are dead.' Thomas consented to all, and then they parted."

"Oh, gracious heavens!" cried Medora, clasping her hands and raising her beautiful eyes to heaven. She apostrophized, "He is determined to kill me, and I am innocent."

"Yes, *chère* madame," exclaimed Delancy, taking her hand impulsively within his own; "you are innocent, and you shall be saved. Do all that he requests. 'Keep a good look out,' as you say in *l'Amérique*, and leave the rest to me. I hastened to inform you of your situation, and put you on your guard. God will protect the innocent and the helpless. Despond not; cherish *l'espérance*; trust in *le bon Dieu*, and in me, this humble servant. Farewell, until we meet again;" and he pressed the hand still within his own. She released it, for the strange electrical feeling that ran through her body was an enigma. He hastily retired.

Medora made the best of her way back into the house. *Reader, pause*, and regard her situation. Just having escaped murder the night previous, and now threatened again by the father of — oh! horror of horrors.

The hours dragged slowly by to the wretched woman, but at last night came again; and, to her astonishment, brought Mr. Bruster home in one of his most agreeable moods. He endeavored to be most amiable, even attempting to caress and pet her. In the course

of conversation, he alluded frequently to Mr. Delancy, asserting that he was an acquaintance of years' standing, and one of the finest of men—which was a base falsehood.

Mrs. Bruster was astonished. She thought within herself: "Either one or the other, or perhaps both, of these men, are about to play the villain. Alas, perhaps both are in league against me—whom can I trust?"

She felt that her reputation had gone, but her life even become dearer. She wished to live to atone for her thoughtlessness.

While they were engaged in taking tea, Mr. Bruster proposed a sailing party for the next evening, which, he said, if clear, would be full moonlight, and that he would invite a few friends. Medora consented. She had for months been living an almost intolerable life; prohibited writing to her friends, and entirely destitute of society, she had heard from Bruster that her brother was a colonel in the Rebel army and never expected to see him again, thinking at the time his regiment was engaged in battle.

But the most victorious on earth have ever been those who have gone through the fire of adversity and trouble. She often whispered prayers for the safety of her only brother's welfare on the bloody field of battle.

The next day Thomas was engaged in preparing the yacht, and by evening all was in elegant readiness.

"What a beautiful evening we shall have," said Bruster to Medora.

"Yes; the sky is clear and serene, and just sufficient wind to be agreeable."

"Thomas!" cried the lawyer, "are all the refreshments on board? Don't forget the wine-cooler, and send down the baskets of fruit, etc., etc."

"We are happy," said the lawyer, "since we hear no whistling bullet nor rifle shot."

"Yes," whispered Medora, with a sigh.

"Aye, aye, sir," answered Thomas, who for a small portion of his life had followed the sea, and who now appeared to be up to his eyes in never-ending business.

"But you are not surely going until the guests arrive!" cried Medora, as Mr. Bruster offered his arm to conduct her to the boat, and whose heart trembled with apprehension as to the non-appearance of the artist; and vague alarm filled her breast.

"If they have the bad taste to forget an appointment, I shall not be so silly as to neglect this moonlight. It must have been just such a moon that looked down upon 'Lorenzo and Jessica.'" And then the eccentric man commenced to recite, and to recite in such a tone and manner, that the intellectual Medora almost forgot her uncertain fate, and repeated the part of Jessica with spirit.

LORENZO. "The moon shines bright. In such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise—in such a night
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressida lay that night.

JESSICA.

"In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew;
And saw the lion's shadow o'er himself,
And ran dismay'd away.

LOR.

"In such a night
Stood Dido, with a willow in her hand,
Upon the wild sea-banks, and wav'd her love
To come again to Carthage.

JES.

"In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

LOR.

"In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew;
And, with an unthrift love, did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

JES.

"And in such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

LOR.


"And in such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

JES.

I would out-night you did nobody come—
But, hark! I hear the footing of a man.

CHAPTER VIII.

HER VISION FULFILLED.

HE footsteps proved to be those of the artist, who apologized for his late appearance, saying he was detained to finish a picture.

"Ah! well," replied the lawyer, "we are all ready now."

Medora's heart trembled within. She thought there might be truth in what the artist had asserted.

They embarked, and, after they were seated, Medora remarked that they were to have had company.

"Yes," said the old man, "but I guess they will not come, as it is rather late. Hoist the sails, Thomas; we are losing the beauty of the evening."

"Yes, beautiful," thought Medora. "Perhaps this is the last moonlight I shall ever see."

The orders were obeyed, and swiftly they glided down the Hudson.

"How do you like these moonlight excursions?" said Bruster to Delancy.

"Very much, when we have pleasant society, and something nice to drink," replied the artist, in a very matter-of-fact manner.

"Yes," said the old man, looking a little sideways

at Delancy; "we have some very fine wine on board—would you like to indulge?"

"Yes," replied the artist, "after a while; not just now."

The poor woman began to tremble; she thought of what she had been told.

"Oh! mercy," she whispered to herself, "will he carry this wicked plot into effect? surely he is not a fiend, and only a devil could commit murder. Alas!" she whispered, "it may be true."

There are none on board, beside those we have already mentioned, excepting a mere lad, who had been as a servant in the family but a few weeks. The undaunted spirit of woman came to her relief after a few moments' meditation; and she thought over all she had heard, and determined to save her own life if possible. As Bruster passed his lady, he said to her.

"How beautiful is the scenery of the Hudson? Nyack is such a splendid town," he said; "I always liked an elevated village."

"Yes," replied Medora; "there could be nothing more sublime than some parts of this river. Those high peaks of the Moose which the Overlook is situated on, and the Highlands and Palisades, are more beautiful than any other spot on the river, except the village of Catskill; and some of the places upon the hills are magnificent."

"Fine place to drown one," said the artist. He then paused, finishing his sentence—"pretty deep water; and a fine moonlight night."

Yet the lawyer never dreamed his plot was suspected.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the old man, as though highly delighted with his clandestine measures.

"Drowning would be more preferable in these times. If I were to die suddenly, I would rather be drowned than shot," making some sarcastic allusion to the late battle which had been fought.

After they had sailed quite a distance, the artist was invited into the cabin to take a glass of wine. The three entered, and the glasses were filled. They noticed that he poured his from a different bottle, but, however, they closely watched his management. The cake was handed, and each one ate a slice. Medora held her glass, untasted, in her hand. The artist appeared to drink his, but deftly managed to pour it upon the floor by his side. The lawyer did not notice the trick, and felt sure that the wine would soon have the desired effect. Perceiving that Medora did not intend to drink hers, he tossed off his, and laughingly said that she would never become intemperate. "You Southern women are a little too particular. I like to see a lady social," he remarked, with levity.

"I never did like wine," said she.

"Put it down, then, and let us take a promenade on deck."

Medora obeyed his request, and arose to go; but the keen eye of the artist watched every movement of the Yankee, knowing that he was very shrewd in all things. But the French are very discriminating.

After ascending the deck, Bruster walked gentlemanly up to Medora, pressed her arm into his, and very leisurely promenaded up and down the boat, as if he were seriously meditating some particular subject. But few words passed between them. He made some remarks upon the beauty of a moonlight excursion, and our heroine, feeling very sad at the time, merely sanctioned what he said.

After a few paces up and down, suddenly the lawyer stopped; and, at the same instant, a plank, which was fixed at the yacht like a table-leaf when hoisted, attracted her attention. She thought, if one should step upon it, it was dangerous, it being so slender that it must break, and a person upon it would evidently fall into the river. Our heroine carefully noticed the maneuvers of the man who was by her side; she remembered his former conduct; her ruin flashed upon her memory more vividly than ever. She thought of all the cruelty with which she had been treated, and of the evening when he attempted to murder her in her own chamber, in the silent hour of the night. All his villainy came rushing more forcibly upon her youthful mind. She gazed intently into his dark, flashing eyes, and but one thought seemed to be rooted in her penetrating gaze. She trembled like an aspen leaf in the quivering breeze, as they slowly walked up and down the deck. As they passed and repassed the trap-like door, her blood almost ran cold in her veins. She fancied she could hear the pistol, shot, or even feel the cold waves of the Hudson rolling over her. She was

as pale as a lifeless corpse; her pulse flew, her heart palpitated, her brain reeled.

Yet woman's courage did not entirely leave her, even at that critical moment. No, no! It came with all power, and she felt determined within her mind that, if he attempted to carry out his notorious plot, she would save herself if it were possible.

In an instant more, as these thoughts were revolving in her mind, they passed again the slender plank on the edge of the boat; and, with a tiger's grip, he caught her by the arm, and was about to send her headlong, reeling on the brink of the plank which had been fixed for her destruction; but, just as they neared the trap, there came a back flaw in the wind, which blew the main-sail over, and the boom came whirling by Medora's head like a shot. She, with the intuition of a woman, when danger is near, tears herself from his grasp with a sudden jerk, bends her form, and shuns the boom, which struck him, and whirled him over the side of the yacht. In the twinkling of an eye he went splashing and dashing into the foaming waters of the broad Hudson. In another moment he was grappling at the rail, trying to rescue himself from a watery grave; but, by so doing, he struck his hand against a sharp spike, which projected from the side of the yacht, that glided swiftly over the water; his strength gave way, and he raised his hand, crying aloud:

"O God! I am lost! lost! lost! Save, oh! save

me! For God's sake, save me! save me! Oh, my poor wife—my incarcerated wife!"

Medora did not understand what he meant by saying, "My poor wife!" She thought, of course, *she* was the wife he referred to in his last moments. She saw the death struggle. At that instant, the vision in her dream came vividly to her mind—a shooting star, which appeared like a ball of fire, as it passed before her; then was presented to her eyes, as he threw up his arms, the "bloody hand" which she had seen in her dream at the midnight hour.

"My poor, incarcerated wife," he cried. O God! forgive my sins." The last words died upon his lips: "my wife; oh! my——"

While Medora stood apparently paralyzed, as pale as a ghost, wringing her hands in agony, and screaming at the top of her voice, gazing at the awful scene before her, she shouted for the artist to save him. In an instant more the Frenchman was by her side, to try and rescue the drowning man, followed by Tom, who was just in time to see the old man sinking for the last time.

"Oh, heavens!" she uttered; "is this the Southern Star? No, it is one of crimson hues; which, like a blazing comet, has destroyed him." She then repeated, in her agony, these verses, scarcely knowing what she said

"MY HUSBAND'S GRAVE.

"Beneath the broad expanding waters,
The lawyer lies in tranquil sleep;
He heedeth not the surging waters,
As they proudly o'er him leap.

"The sea-grass is his winding-sheet,
And the coral-bed his pillow;
There, there lieth his body quietly,
Till God shall roll away the billow.

"No tombstone hath he to show his name,
No green sod near his grave;
But the sweeping billows of the sea
O'er the lost one's body wave."

Tom, with consternation and remorse depicted in his countenance, nervously inquired of Medora how Mr. Bruster fell over, on seeing the trap which was fixed for her destruction had not been the cause of his misfortune.

"Why," said she, "the boom came rushing by us like a whirlwind, and struck him, and threw him over; and I, too, liked to have perished, only that I saw it coming, and, shunning the blow, saved myself."

Then he gravely remarked: "What a sad fate!"

The artist stood gazing on the terror-stricken scene before him. "Great God!" murmured Delancy, as he meditated on the last sight of the dying man, as his gray hair floated on the snow-capped billows, and sank forever from the gaze of human eyes. Soon, ah! soon all hope has fled. Medora stood upon the deck watching the blue waters which had so recently swept over the form of her deceiver, and felt as Dido did, when she stood upon the wild sea-banks, on the shore of Carthage, with a branch of willow in her hand, and waved her lover to come again to her.

Our heroine saw her false lover as he rose, and sank

forever from her gaze beneath the surging waves, by moonlight. All creation seemed silenced at the midnight tragedy! Not a sound could be heard, save the foaming waters, which tossed their white caps in the silvery moonlight. The beautiful Hudson, which she had so often admired, now, to her, like the bitter waters of Marah; the trickling gore, as it dropped from the lawyer's hand, seemingly changed the river to blood.

Pale and trembling stood the Southern girl on the deck, gazing wildly on the scene before her. Almost in a death-like agony, she whispered:

"He has gone"—gasping for breath—"but he made his own tomb, and sleepeth beneath the sepulcher of the foaming deep."

The pale moon shone brightly, and the twinkling stars seemed to send forth, from their different magnitudes, a more profuse light upon the globe. Medora thought of that crimson star which she had seen in her dream, and that bloody hand which warned her of her fate. The zephyrs blew gently, and all nature was tranquil, nay, even sublime, on that fatal night. Yet it was a sad evening. The blue waters of the Hudson never looked more beautiful than on that night—that night, that long-to-be-remembered night. That fatal moonlight excursion was to be remembered by Medora Palmore as long as life last.

The waters of the Tappan Bay seemed to sound mournful; the depths of the mighty deep seemed to send forth its groans in sympathy for her who stood

watching all its emotions, at a late hour, by moonlight.

All that was beautiful in nature had changed in a short time, in the mind of Medora, and she was melancholy. She viewed by moonlight the grandeur and loveliness of the scenery of the Hudson; but, reader! imagine her feelings. Delancy stood almost motionless by her side—each one truly sad. The artist was then tempted—tempted. Tempted to do what? to reveal a secret which he had so long kept. “But not just yet,” he whispered; such a strife it was for him to keep it from her.

The yacht was just nearing the shore, and the nearer it approached the more melancholy our heroine felt. Yet she nerved herself to endure all that might befall her through life. Relief seemed to come to her aching heart, for she knew too well that the man who had taken her happiness had brought his own misery and destruction upon himself. She could not blame herself but for one thing—that was marrying a man so much her senior, and coming so far from her dear father and mother, and all the loved ones that her infancy knew. The lines of the poet were made more vivid in her mind than ever. The happy days of her childhood, and Edge Hill with all its beauties, came rushing upon her, as she slowly paced the boat up and down, wishing every moment that she was on shore and in her own chamber, where she might be at least a little quiet, although she never imagined that peace of mind could ever be enjoyed.

There was not a bright spot on earth for her—her mind never was absolved from the fatal tragedy.

The glass of wine left by Medora had been poured by the artist into a bottle, who saved it in order to test if it really were poisoned.

“Come, Mrs. Bruster,” said he.

“Do not call me by that name,” said she, with an involuntary shudder. “Call me Palmore, if you please.”

“Mrs. Palmore, then,” he said; “come, go with me, and let us satisfy ourselves whether or not there was poison in the wine.”

They hastened from the Southern Star, and soon reached an apothecary’s shop, and handed the wine to the druggist to analyze.

He told them that there was prussic acid in the glass—enough to kill a person in five minutes.

“When did you sell such a narcotic?” asked the artist.

“This morning,” he answered.

“To whom did you sell the poison?”

“To Lawyer Bruster, who is one of our neighbors.”

“You did?” said the artist.

“Yes.”

“He is the one who attempted to administer the dose, but was knocked over the side of the boat by a flaw of wind, on a sailing excursion, and was this evening drowned.”

“Good!” said the druggist; “he was an old

scoundrel. He treated his wife badly, and then stole a young girl from Virginia; and I did hear that he attempted to shoot her one night, very recently. He deceived her in marrying. The minister he carried down with him was as black-hearted a villain as was Bruster. There is a sweet pair of them gone."

"Is he also dead?" asked the artist.

"Yes; and on his dying bed he confessed the crime, owning how he had been engaged in that affair, and said that the beautiful girl stood before him, with an infant in her arms, reproaching him for her ruin. He also imagined her parents were around him in his last moments. His horse ran away, and he was thrown from his carriage and broke his leg, and from the inflammation he died."

"Ah, well," said the artist, "it is all over now; he is drowned."

Little did the druggist think that the lady who stood there was the betrayed and injured woman abducted from her friends.

They left the store, and Medora hurried home. The artist accompanied her to the door, where, upon parting, he begged her to let him know where she would be after she had left.

"Madame," said he, "the scene through which we have just passed was enough to bear your spirits down to the earth; but you are innocent of any wrong in any way whatever, and, when your mind becomes composed, remember that you have a true friend in Henri Delancy, and will ever have as long as life lasts. I

felt strangely attracted to you from the first moment I beheld you; but my passion was a holy flame. Your purity and amiability left a deep impression upon my heart; but I have nothing to reproach myself for. I acted as a gentleman, and you will find me ever the same. I felt it my duty to warn you of the impending danger about to befall you;" and, as he bade her farewell, he pressed her hand. Each one trembled. They parted. The wretched woman entered the house, and Mary met her.

"Where is Mr. Bruster?" she asked.

"He is drowned," said Medora; "he was knocked overboard by the boom."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mary; "he is gone, then. He caused that wicked Thomas to engage in trying to find a plan to drown you and the gentleman who took your portrait; I heard it awhile ago, ma'm. But Tommy has lost his money, and I am glad of it; for all the bulls that the Pope could have thundered would not have pardoned the foolish boy had he succeeded in that plan towards one so innocent and kind as yourself. The devil came over Tommy. He owned to me that he did it for money; he said he was sorry to do such a thing. He thought he could be pardoned. I try to be a good Catholic, and pray to the Virgin Mary, and all the saints; but if Tommy had drowned you, ma'm, he would have lain in purgatory forever, shure; and I believe that."

"Well," said Medora, "I am going to leave in a few days."

"The Lord be praised, ma'm! You don't tell me so. I'm sure, now is the time to stay. Ye can be in peace now, ma'm!"

"I have no right here, Mary. Mr. Bruster had another wife; she will soon hear of his death."

"Well, then, ma'm," said the girl, "I am going too; for she was not kind and good as you have been. Neither Tommy nor I liked her, and we were not sorry much when we heard that she was dead."

"Ah, well," said Medora, "perhaps she had trouble; and that might have made her cross."

"Perhaps she did, ma'm; but, shure, an' she was a real Yankee lady, for she said that us servants could never do enough for her."

Mary stood weeping, as Medora rolled a package of clothing into a bundle, and placed a twenty-dollar bill in her hand, with a few presents for Tommy. As she handed them to Mary, the girl wept as though her heart would break.

"An' is it you, ma'm, that be going to give Tommy these presents—so wicked as he has been?"

"Yes," said Medora. "The Bible teaches us to do good for evil."

"Well, ma'm, no one need say to me, hereafter, that the people in the South are bad folks, if ye *had* slaves; for God knows you are one of the best-hearted ladies I ever met."

Medora bade Mary farewell, and closed the door. The girl hurried from the room in tears.

She then seated herself, and penned a letter to Mrs.

Maria Bruster—in case the lady should ever enter the house—how cruelly she had been deceived, and how badly she had been treated. On the following morning, she took some money, and, ordering the carriage, drove to the boat, which was to take her to the convent, at Mount St. Vincent, where she would not be annoyed with the horrid war-cry and bloody troubles of the conflict. She knew it would be almost impossible for her to get home then; and, besides, her situation was such that she had better wait a few months any way. Therefore, she determined to bury herself within the walls of a nunnery, at least until the war was over. After traveling for sometime, she reached the convent. Upon approaching the Superior, she trembled—wondered why it was she felt so strangely. But we are all subject to internal feelings, which predict many mysterious things. As Medora applied for admittance, the lady Superior looked strangely at her.

"Have you been married?" she inquired.

"Why should she ask me that question?" was Medora's mental thought. "She must not be so inquisitive; I will bear my own troubles within my breast."

"You are young," said the lady, "and look as if your heart were breaking." She then caught the hand of the girl, and said;

"We are alike born to trouble. I once had a sweet little boy, but he has been torn from my bosom by a——" She then paused.

"A villain," whispered Medora, seemingly catching the sentence as it died upon the lips.

"Do you know where your child is?" asked Medora.

"Yes," said the Superior, "but I have nothing to do with him. His father took him from me, and imprisoned me in an insane asylum, when I was as sane as I am now."

"How cruel!" cried the girl. "Excuse me, madame, for being a little inquisitive now; but does your husband yet live?"

"No," said the Superior; "I heard that he was drowned a short time ago, while in a sailing yacht, up the Hudson."

As these words fell from her lips, Medora turned pale.

"I heard his body was recovered, and he was interred in the old homestead; but I cannot credit the story, for I think my sister would have written to me, and stated the facts.

"What is the matter?" asked the lady; "you look as though you were about to faint; you are a reed well shaken by the storm."

"I am," said Medora, as the tears rolled down her pale cheeks.

"Would you like to tell the name of your husband?" asked Medora, feeling more interested. "Perhaps I have heard of him."

"Yes," said the lady. "I do not care now, for it has been some time since we parted, and I may spend my days in this convent. His name was Ralph Bruster, a lawyer of New York; we were from Massachusetts formerly."

As the words fell from the lady's lips, Medora fainted. The Superior caught her in her arms, and called sister Josephine to remove the helpless girl into a room. After a few moments, she opened her eyes, and said:

"Oh! madame; is that so?"

"As you have heard some of my story, I will now relate it all.

"My health was a little impaired; I had a slight cough. One day, after my husband had been absent some weeks, he came home from New York in a much better humor than was usual for him. I married him when I was quite young, but we never lived happily together; therefore, his absence was not much annoyance to me, as one might suppose. He was one of those men who have no heart, but a very small soul, and very fickle-minded. He loved me very much—so he said—when we were married, and I was devoted to him. He was talented and wealthy; therefore, I thought I should be happy with him. But my life was only a blank; and, as I think I can confide in you, I will tell you my sad story which, for the sake of my child, I hope you will never divulge."

Medora told her that she would keep her secret, and the Superior proceeded with the painful narration:

"My husband came home from New York, as I have previously stated, and remarked to me that he had to go South; that business called him to Charleston, S. C.; that the war was about to break out, and he had been employed by the Government to go there

on particular business; yet he regretted leaving his family so much; and said to me: 'Perhaps you would like to accompany me, as your health is not very good. It would be a pleasant trip for you; and we shall be away only a short time.' 'What can we do with Robbie,' said I—'take him along?' 'No, no!' said my husband; 'I will take him to his aunt's. I am going to Boston in a few days.' So I thought I would like to go, knowing that he would stay but a few days; so I told him I would accompany him.

"The next day, I dressed Robbie nicely, and he kissed mamma good-bye. The last kiss that he has ever imprinted on my lips was on that morning, when he and his papa stepped into the carriage, and drove to the boat, and in a short time were steaming up the Hudson; then, by rail, to Massachusetts.

"Oh! how often, in imagination, I have seen my darling child, as he looked on that morning when he went away. He was so happy to think that he was going on a visit to his little cousins.

"In two days my husband returned, and told me the little fellow was perfectly delighted when he reached the city, and met his relations; he did not want to come home when his papa came. Then my husband left sufficient money to defray his expenses, and his father presented him with a little purse of gold, for his own spending money; and the little fellow no doubt thought that he was quite a man.

"I have never seen my child since that morning. When my husband came back, I was all ready, and we

started on our Southern trip. By steam and locomotive power, we were whirled from one point to another, until we reached our destination. The trip was pleasant, had I been traveling with one congenial with myself; but my husband was one of those morose, eccentric men, who had not a wish, nor a desire to please any one except himself. He was not agreeable, but, rather, taciturn all the way. Had he been more pleasant, I should have enjoyed our travel more.

"After we had reached Charleston, we stepped into the carriage to drive to the hotel. He remarked that the Southern climate was salubrious; that he felt quite sure my health would be benefited, if I would stop a few weeks in the city; and I felt, myself, that a warmer climate might improve my cough. In a short time we reached the hotel, and were shown to our room, where everything was comfortable and cheerful. After I got a little rested, my husband came up to take me to tea. My travel had made me quite hungry, and I enjoyed a fine supper. After we returned from the tea-table to our room, Mr. Bruster seated himself in an easy-chair, and smoked one of his best havanas, and looked as though he was in a deep study. I caught up a book from the center-table, and commenced to read; and, while I sat reading, he arose from his seat, put on his hat and coat, said he was going out for a short walk, and would soon return; but he staid until a late hour. When he came back, I had retired for quite a while.

"I noticed that he had been imbibing a little too

freely; however, he remarked to me that on the next morning we were to go riding. 'The drives and promenades,' said he, 'in this climate, are very fine in the morning, when the flowers are in full bloom. The air is impregnated with the perfume of the jessamine, heliotrope, and various other floral shrubs, which renders a drive refreshing'—which I readily acceded to.

"In the morning, I made my toilet quickly, and was ready, very early, to accompany him.

"About nine o'clock, a very fine vehicle drove up to the door; but, instead of a barouche, it was a closed coach. I then remarked: 'Husband, why did you not order an open carriage? then we could have a better view of the country.'

"'Step in, step in,' he said, clasping me tightly by the arm, as we passed out." At this moment Medora sighed. "He jumped in with the agility of a schoolboy, and off the fleet-footed horses bore us, over hill and vale; and on we rode, until I was tired.

"Then I remarked, 'How far are we going, Mr. Bruster?' He glanced at me with a scowl. 'I thought you wanted to see the country, for a short time longer,' said he. I said no more. Then, after riding we drove up to a large iron gate. The premises were surrounded with a high stone wall.

"'What place is this?' said I.

"'It is the penitentiary; I thought perhaps you would like to see it.'

"'Oh, yes; I do like to see all the public buildings of a strange city,' I remarked.

"The driver sprang from his seat, the steps were lowered, and Mr. Bruster helped me from the carriage; and the great iron gate was unlocked, and swung on on its hinges; and we were passing up a beautiful pebbled walk. In a moment more, we were in a tremendous building; and, as I held Mr. Bruster's arm while passing along the corridor, I heard strange voices, and grasped his arm more tightly.

"'What is the matter with you?'

"'Nothing,' said I. 'I only heard a screaming.'

"Just at that moment, a corpulent gentleman met us at the parlor door; and, smiling pleasantly, invited us to be seated.

"'Is this the lady?' said he, turning to my husband.

"I thought strange of the manner in which he addressed us. He then directed the most of his conversation to me—he wished to know how I liked the Southern climate; how long since I had arrived, and how long I expected to stay, etc., etc.

"I thought the climate would benefit my health, for which purpose I had come.

"He thought I would enjoy my trip, *et cetera*.

"As I turned my eyes toward my husband, to speak to him, he was gone. I thought strangely that he had left me so unceremoniously, and had not excused himself, but supposed he had stepped aside to make some inquiry in regard to passing through the building.

"The corpulent gentleman still sat by me, and kept

me in conversation. I presume we sat for over twenty minutes; and, when my husband did not return, I was induced to ask the stranger where he had gone?

"'Gone home, madame,' said he, 'gone home.'

"'We came to see the penitentiary.'

"'Penitentiary, madame! you are in the insane asylum,' said he.

"'What does this mean?' said I; 'I am not insane. My husband will be back in a few days, will he not?'

"'He may be back to see you in a few weeks, when you get better. We will soon cure you.'

"'Cure me, sir! I am not sick. I have a slight cough—that is all.'

"'Oh! never, never mind. Come, go with me to your room; all will soon be right.'

"'O God!' I cried, as I sank back in my seat, and, bursting into tears, clasped my hands in prayer; for then I saw I was duped.

"'I had been abducted by my own husband, for some vile purpose; and, when the reality flashed upon my mind, I thought I would lose my reason, then and there. I wrung my hands in agony, and begged the stranger to send me back to the hotel.

"'No, no,' said he, 'not just now. Now we will go to your room.'

"'Then, clasping me tightly by the arm, he said: 'You cannot go home until you are cured.'

"'Then he escorted me to my room, which was beautifully furnished, and had every comfort that the heart could wish for.

"The doctor was very courteous, and told me he was the principal physician, and treated me so kindly, that I thought that I could confide in him. I told him that I thought my heart would break with grief. I then stated to him how my husband had deceived me by telling me he was taking me to see the penitentiary, and brought me to an insane asylum; how he had deceived me in bringing me away from my darling child, and brought me to this secluded spot, for a purpose which I could not understand. And, as I spoke of my darling Robbie, who had been taken in such a clandestine way, to deceive me, it was more than my poor heart could bear. It was then I wrung my hands in agony, and tore my hair in such a manner, that I know the man thought I was insane. I knew that my husband was a wicked, cruel man; but I could not realize the dark deed which he had committed.

"The kind man pitied me; I know he did. He gazed at me intently, but only said: 'You will soon be well; never mind, you shall have every attention, and in a little while you will meet your husband and child again.'

"'My husband!' said I; 'I never want to meet him again in this world, a man that would treat me thus; out, in the spirit world, God will judge between him and me. But my Robbie; oh! my Robbie. Yes, I shall see my child again, and we will be happy yet.'

"At first, the physician did not mind what I said, in regard to my being crazy; for all insane people say they are not crazy. He remarked, after a short

while, that he saw my mind was not in the least impaired.'

"Afterwards, he said to a friend that he felt quite ashamed of himself, for letting a Yankee pull the wool so closely over his eyes; especially at such a time, when everything was in political confusion—when it was hard to distinguish friend from foe. And when the faculty found that I was all right, they did not know what construction to put on this strange freak of my husband.

"They knew that there was intrigue behind the curtain, and supposed I might have been placed there as a spy, as the war was about to break out. From our appearance, they knew that we were wealthy. At such a time, they thought I should be sent home immediately; therefore, they wrote to Mr. Bruster to come for me—that my mind was thoroughly restored.

"Some weeks rolled on; he did not come, neither did they hear from him." And, as the Superior related her sad story, the tears rolled down our heroine's pale cheeks, as it brought her own trouble more vividly to mind.

The lady proceeded with her narrative. She remarked that persons who were so unfortunate as to become insane should always be kept in their own families, as many of those institutions destroy the little spark of rational feeling people have who are put under their care. "But the Southern asylum was managed very differently from others which I have read of; servants were not permitted to tyrannize over

the sick and afflicted. The hospitality of the physicians and the kindness of the help would have aided greatly in the restoration of my mind, had it been in the least impaired. My own case was similar to that of a Mrs. Packard, of Illinois, who had been abducted by her cruel husband, and he was an Episcopalian minister. I never knew the lady, personally; but, from what I have read of her works, she evidently was one among our talented women. But this good man, this very pious man, tore a mother from six children, and incarcerated her, just as I was; and for years she suffered from the inhuman treatment of which ignorant servants and inhuman physicians were the cause.

"Through her husband's vileness, he succeeded in making the old gentleman (his wife's father) believe that his daughter was really insane; he managed to extort large sums of money from her father, which enabled him to keep her there for years; but she, being a good, pious woman, prayed daily and hourly to God to send her forth from that prison. He heard and answered her prayers; therefore she succeeded, after a long struggle, in convincing a few friends that she was not insane, and had been incarcerated to gratify the wicked whim of a false and designing man. And through their influence she was enabled, after a long struggle, to get out; and, through her perseverance and influence, she has been enabled to be the means of several bills passing the legislature last winter, in regard to the treatment of insane people. She has done much good in regenerating the

management of many of these institutions through the West. And I do not doubt but God will bless her labors abundantly, as she has been the wheat sifted from the chaff. Her case was a sad one. Many of our sex have had to suffer from inhuman husbands likewise, but 'the wicked shall be caught in his own snare.'"

'Twas then that Medora thought of the watery grave at the midnight hour.

"I have digressed from my subject, but this poor woman was paramount in my mind. Now I will proceed with my sad fate:

"The winter of 1860 passed away, and the spring of 1861 came forth; and the first shot was fired on Fort Sumter. From that came all other battles which laid waste the fair cities and green fields of the Southern States, and saturated their soil with the blood of the best men of our country, both North and South; and the people were mourning over their ruins, as 'Caius Marius mourned over the ruins of Carthage.'"

At this moment Medora trembled and gave a deep sigh, which seemed to come from the depths of her heart, knowing, at that very time, that the only brother she had was in the Southern army. But the lady Superior, being so interested in her narration, scarcely noticed the effect her conversation had on our heroine.

"The war was raging fearfully at the time I made my escape. They did not like to send me away; and, as my husband did not come for me, there was no more

watch kept over me, and I knew they did not care whether I ran the blockade or not; so I made up my mind to escape at the very earliest opportunity. But I shall never forget those good people, and their kindness to me while incarcerated in that asylum. What I disliked most was having to eat at the table with those poor crazy people.

"I knew that no one would molest me; therefore I went out one afternoon for a promenade in the pleasure grounds. I passed on till I reached the iron gate, and it was opened just a little way. I would have liked to say good-by to the physicians and servants, and thank them for their kindness, but I dared not go back, for fear they might detain me. So I hastened on through the gate quickly, and on I sped as hurriedly as if the pickets were after me. I walked a long distance before I came to a hotel. I had a little Confederate money, made a present to me by one of the physicians. I also had gold. I managed to get along until I reached the camp of one of the Northern officers; from there I was sent through the lines, on to New York.

"But I knew, if I went home to my husband, he might do even worse than imprison me in an asylum; and, for a while, I did not know where to go. I wrote to my sister, in Boston, stating my arrival from the South; saying that my trip must be shrouded in mystery for the present; that, at a future day, I would tell her all; that I had recovered my health, and in a few months I should visit her; but concealed my where-

abouts for the present, as I then intended to come to this institute, and live in obscurity, for a while at least.

"In answer to my letter, I received all the information in regard to my child—that he was well and at school, and often inquired for mamma. This letter made me sad; yet a weight seemed lifted from my mind.

"To live with my husband again—a man so totally devoid of natural feeling, and inhuman, as I had proved him to be all my life—was sufficient to detain me from going home. Being a Catholic, I therefore was determined to become a Sister of Mercy; and to live a secluded life was all that I desired in this world.

"I may live and die in this convent, now that my child is being educated and cared for."

Medora, trembling and almost gasping for breath: "What does this mean?" said she.

"Do you know him? have you heard of that man?" said the lady Superior.

"Yes, I have heard of him, and perhaps know too much of him."

"Does he live?" said the Superior.

"No;" said our heroine, "he is dead."

Although the lady had imagined that all her love had flown; yet, when she heard positively that he was dead, an arrow seemingly penetrated her soul.

"Dead! dead! Do you mean to say that Ralph Bruster is really dead?" she cried. "You do not tell

me that he is gone! Is it really true that he is no more? Oh! the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, save him!" and the poor woman fell senseless to the floor. She had heard that he was drowned, but she thought, perhaps, it was not true, until that moment.

"What has come over the Superior?" said Sister Josephine; "she is never sick, and is in very good spirits generally."

"She is troubled," said Medora.

"Ah, yes;" replied the nun.

The Superior was carried to her room, and Medora to hers, and for several days they did not meet again. When, at length, they met, each one was more calm, and they talked together like sisters.

Mrs. Bruster did not stop long at St. Vincent after hearing the death of her husband confirmed. She left the convent, and took possession of her property. She soon visited her sister and her little son, and took him home. She found on her bureau the letter written by Medora, but there was no name signed. It seemed, by some strange instinct, that the lady suspected that Medora was the woman who had been duped by the same vile wretch that had destroyed her happiness for life.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BIRTH OF IDA.



H! what strange things sometimes come to pass. Although our heroine had kept her secret, yet the lady suspected all, she said to her, and offered her a home. But Medora told her of her father's beautiful plantation on the Chesapeake, and of the wealth she had left behind.

"Oh," said the widow of the lawyer, "I perceived at once that you were a gentleman's daughter, and, so soon as I caught your hand, I believed that you had been deceived by some false heart; and now I know it, for that man who has met such a fate once pretended to worship me, but he soon grew weary of me, and I—I was miserable, and made others so; even my poor servants could not please me. But after I came into the convent, and turned my attention to religious duties, I thought often of Mary and Thomas, who were such good servants, but I was too hard upon them. I have suffered for having been so harsh. Many penances have I done."

The Superior gave Medora good advice, and parted from her with a promise to visit the convent as often as possible. This was Mrs. Bruster, who had been in-

carcerated in a cell by her husband, and had now escaped. The dead woman had come to life.

"Oh! could we see beyond the present moment, how differently would we act." Here was a girl, treated in the most cruel manner. Who would have believed that Medora Palmore would have killed a worm—she who had been so kind and good to every human being? She, it is true, did not treat her French lover, Eugene Appomore, just right; she should have waited his return, yet she did not. But, oh! that old mercenary mamma—she caused all this trouble. Her father's slaves at Edge Hill loved her dearly. That can easily be seen by her parting with the colored girl, Lucinda, on the morning of her departure from home. No doubt God heard the prayer of that ignorant African. Medora had requested her to pray for her; yet, in an hour when sorely tried, she saved her own life at the expense of another. If people would only have faith in their Creator, He would deliver them from many difficulties. No power can stand before the arm of God. He, who sends his angels on earth to save his children; such as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. A furnace heated even seven times hotter than usual cannot singe the hair of a true child of God. Therefore, Medora was saved from the grasp of a tyrant. She was saved from the deadly narcotic which he had prepared; she was saved from the pangs of the *death-dealing bullet*; she was rescued from a watery grave. In his last attempt to murder her he failed, and fell a victim in his own snare. The reader may be won-

dering why it was that she escaped so many dangers? Let them recall to mind the teachings of Christ and His apostles; let them cast their minds back to the days of St. Paul, when he was in a ship, sailing under Crete, over against Salmone; and, falling into a place where the seas met, they ran the ship aground, and the vessel was burst asunder by the waves. But were the apostles lost? No; each one swam to the shore. Some understood swimming, while others did not; but they who were less skilled in the art came ashore on broken pieces of the ship, and all reached land in safety.

If we trusted in God, we would get on more smoothly in life. The heroine of this story was taught to have faith in her Creator, from an infant; therefore, when she was a prisoner—as her own home was a prison she knew that she had been wronged in the most cruel manner—she only wept, and prayed to God to deliver her from such acute misery and disgrace.

We shall see the end of this romance, if we have patience to continue to read. It is with difficulty that we can resist dwelling on certain circumstances too long; and we hope our kind reader will excuse us if we dwell longer on a character than the reader should admire. We are apt to say too much on a subject which is uppermost in our mind for a moment.

But we will leave the heroine in the convent at Mount St. Vincent, and try to picture to our reader the Family at Edge hill.

The summer had passed away; the flowers had nearly bloomed their last for the season; the leaves were turning yellow, and falling to the ground; the birds did not sing so sweetly; the rushing waters of the Rappahannock burst on its shores more furiously; the wind howled drearily and mournfully. The beautiful, but antiquated, plantation at Edge Hill bore a dreary appearance.

Jasper was in the army, and all was dread. Scarce a smile ever visited the lips of the parents of Medora. Every battle that was fought, they knew not but that their only son might fall. He had been promoted to a colonel, and was a very excellent man. Colonel Palmore was one of General Lee's favorite friends; yet a sadness rested on the countenance of each individual.

Poor Lucinda, the house-girl, had no more jokes to tell. She never looked toward the harbor and saw a vessel, but she was sure to say something about Miss Medora, and the old man who carried her away. She sometimes said she was sick; sometimes, that she was imprisoned. But she was an African, and no one paid much attention to her sayings.

One evening Mr. Palmore came in, and, as was his usual rule, seated himself in a corner, lighted his pipe, and smoked away swiftly. As he puffed the tobacco, he looked sad; and, casting his eyes up toward the mantel, remarked to his wife that he wished the portrait of Medora removed from the room, for he could not sit down without her gazing into his face; "and,"

said he, "she looks to me most imploringly, as though she said: 'Oh! papa, do something for me.'"

"How long has the portrait looked in that way?" asked the wife.

"For some months," said he; "but I thought it was only imagination, and said nothing about it. But now there seems to be a call, as if some one is whispering to me, and says: 'Come, come!' and it must be my daughter, for we cannot hear from her. She has never written a letter herself at all; and there is some mystery in her conduct."

"Yes," said the old lady, "I think so too, husband, but we must not give way to such imaginations. Medora is certainly a woman of good sense, and has sufficient courage to protect herself, although she is amiable. But I will remove the portrait if you wish."

Mrs. Palmore was feeling as badly as her husband. The old lady rang the bell for Lucinda, who answered it immediately.

"Lucinda," said Mrs. Palmore, "get upon a chair, and assist me to take down the portrait of Miss Medora."

"What for, missus?" asked the girl; "is you gwine to send it away?"

"No, no; your master wishes it hung in the parlor."

"O Lord! ma'm; I is sorry for dat. I doesn't go in de parlor often, and I does sit in de chamber; and de picter ob Miss Dora keeps me company when you

and ole marster is away. I almost think dat she will speak to me, and hold out her hand once more."

"Ah! well," said her mistress; "go and fix it in the parlor, and you may look in whenever you please, if that will do you any good; we are not so cruel as some of our Northern friends imagine us to be."

"Dat's so, missus, sure."

Away ran Lucinda, holding on to the picture. With the assistance of her mistress she hung it up, and, as she sprang from the chair to the floor, she exclaimed:

"God save and protect Miss Dora, wherever she is in dis war. But de heavens knows, missus. I believe she is in a dungeon, or some sort ob close place, sartin, missus; cause, sometimes I think dat she started to come home, and de Yankees done got her and put ner in prison."

"No, no, I hope not," said Mrs. Palmore. "Go now to your work, Lucinda."

The girl obeyed. After the removal of the portrait, Mr. Palmore said that he felt much better, for her piercing eyes did not follow him so closely.

All went on as usual at Edge Hill; only the season looked dreary, and it was in October that Medora was married and left her father's house. The season of the year is very apt to make an impression upon our minds. When anything occurs in life that turns out well, it is apt to be remembered; and if the contrary, it is also not forgotten. But, as yet, the parents of our heroine are in darkness in regard to her situation. The war is still raging. Jasper Palmore is on the bat-

tle-field. Some of our bravest men were falling, and the Southern army failing to gain what they so much desired, which was, to be as a nation to themselves. But, as old Mr. Palmore said, "All is well that ends well."

The evening after that in which Lucinda had removed the portrait from the chamber, she ran up stairs for something, and rushed into the room that Medora always had occupied when at home. As she entered the door, she shrieked and fell down the steps. The old people flew to her assistance, and asked what on earth was the matter.

"Oh! my Lord," said Lucinda. "Missus, I saw poor Miss Dora standing at the room door, with a baby in her arms, and she looked almost dead. She was no more like dat portrait dan nothing; still it was her, kase she looked like she would speak every minute."

The poor girl wrung her hands and wept. Her mistress said:

"I reckon you are mistaken, Lucinda. My child is a long distance from here."

"Well, dat may be, but dat was her spirit, sartin; kase I nebber was so scared in my born days."

"Well, Medora would visit us, in body or spirit, if she could, I feel sure. If she was dead she would come, as our departed friends do visit earth."

"Dat was her spirit, den," said Lucinda.

"The Yankees surely believe in spiritual power. That, perhaps, accounts for their gaining the victories now; they may have consulted some of their warriors

who have fallen," said Mr. Palmore, with a sarcastic smile—although he was more inclined to believe the story of the girl than was his wife, for he had been troubled by some such visions, but had not mentioned it to the family. Lucinda went into the kitchen, and there was no more said. When Jasper came in, he missed the portrait of his sister in a moment, and asked what had been done with it. He was at home on a furlough.

"It is in the parlor," replied his mother.

"Why was it removed?" asked the young man.

"Because your father wished it," was the reply.

The son gave a heavy sigh, and said:

"Mother, there is something wrong connected with the marriage of my sister, and she is in trouble."

"Why do you think so, my son?"

"Because I have felt so strangely at times, when I looked upon her face. It appears to me that she would change from a smile to weeping, and look very sad; very unlike my sister's natural disposition."

"Well," said his mother, "it is very strange that you all have these impressions about the child; and even Lucinda declares that she saw her spirit. I do not know what such things mean. However, if she is in any trouble, I am sure that she must blame me, for I was the only one of her family who encouraged her to marry that old man. But he appeared to love the child so much, that I thought she would do well to marry him."

"Oh, mother, this man has broken many hearts, and, perhaps, she is one of the victims."

"Well," said Jasper, "there is something wrong connected with her in some way, and I really do hate to go near her schoolmates; for I have been asked so many questions, which I have been unable to answer, not having heard from her—all that has been written having been done by her husband. I had rather be on the battle-field than submit to such inquiries about my sister."

"Well, perhaps we will hear from her one of these days, 'when this cruel war is over.'"

"I hope so," said Jasper. "Good bye, I must go," and he left the room; but his mother noticed that tears stood in the eyes of her son, and she began to be infected with the general superstition in regard to her daughter; but she tried to distract her mind from the thought.

The next day was the Sabbath; and, at the usual hour, the carriage was driven to the door, for the purpose of conveying the family to church. As they were all seated, and the driver closed the door, he said:

"One more person is needed in the carriage, master, to make the usual number."

"And who may that be, Joe?"

"Miss Dora, sir; I don't know when I thought of her before this minute. She used always to go to church, rain or shine."

"So she did," replied his master.

The driver jumped upon his seat and drove off. As

they neared Heathville, the bell sounded mournfully. The colored man had reminded them of their stray lamb, and the tolling of the bell appeared to sound different from any which they had previously heard. The minister arose, and the words of his text were taken from Deuteronomy, xxxii. 43: "Rejoice, oh ye nations, with His people; for He will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land, and to His people."

The Rev. Dr. Kirk preached a powerful sermon, and he appeared to particularly emphasize his words to the just and injured, wherever they might be.

Mr. Palmore's family returned home, each one comforted; even the wild and thoughtless Jasper. The parents believed that God would protect and comfort their offspring, wherever she might be.

"Strange," said Mr. Palmore to his wife, as after dinner they were seated in the chamber, "strange that Joe should have spoken of Medora, as he was closing the carriage door this morning, wasn't it, wife?"

"Well, husband, our slaves always loved our children."

"Yes," replied the old lady; "but it appears as if our colored people think as much about the poor child as we do, and I am glad to perceive that they have not forgotten her."

"I do not see how they could," said the old gentleman. "It may be, now, that the Yankee lawyer treats his wife much worse than any Southern man does his slaves."

"Nor I," said Medora's mother; "for she always made herself a little simpleton about Joe and Lucinda. I could never keep any cake or pudding around, for her begging for it between meals for them; and I am sure they fared as well as we did."

"I do not think that slavery is exactly right," said the old gentleman; "but the North has meddled entirely too much."

"Ah! well," said the old man, "they will all soon be free."

"Well, be it so. I had much rather that my children were kind to my slaves than tyrannical—the latter they should not be, were they disposed."

"I wonder how Medora gets along at the North," said her father; "for I guess she does not have a maid to undress her now, and around the room all the while, to answer every beck and call."

"Neither will she have slaves in a year or two more."

"Poh! wife, you talk silly; she has white servants, I suppose, if she has any," said Mr. Palmore. "The old man whom she married had several when I was there."

"Poor child! I fear that she has seen some hard times since she left our house. But really, brother Kirk's sermon, to-day, gave me great encouragement."

"So it did me," said the old gentleman. "We have faith, and believe that our daughter will be protected under all circumstances of life. I sometimes think that she will come home and live again with us."

"Yes, she may," said the old lady. "I hope so, if all should be right."

"Right or wrong," said Mr. Palmore, "she is my child; and, as I told her when she left my house, in honor or dishonor she is mine, and I will protect her as long as I breathe."

"Suppose that she has met with some wonderful disgrace, and has dishonored herself and family; would you then recognize and receive her?"

"Most assuredly I should. This is why there are so many lost women in the world. When a daughter, or sister, or relative, acts wrongly, she is denounced by her friends and acquaintances; and at once feels she is destroyed—plunges herself into deeper and deeper misery, and often becomes the lowest wretch on earth; when, had those parents and relatives forgiven and pitied the fallen, she might have repented, and lived a different life. Our Saviour forgave the woman that was brought to him, and why should we not do the same? The disciples wanted her stoned to death, but Christ said: 'He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone;' and they all went out, hanging their heads down. Such is the world. The very people who condemn others are much worse than those persons whose names they take pleasure in tarnishing. Would to God we could see ourselves as our Maker sees us; and then, what poor, miserable souls we would prove ourselves to be. If old John Brown could have seen the misery—the blood which he spilt—he no doubt might have acted differently."

"True enough, husband. But, really, I do not apprehend any such trouble about my child; for we saw her married, and the minister went home with them, all right, I guess."

"Guess—sure enough, as they say at the North," said the planter. "There is too much guess-work in the world now. If people knew more, and guessed less, they would be wiser. It is natural for the Yankees to guess."

The conversation ceased, and the old gentleman took a walk along the shore; and, as he watched the rippling waves, his mind wandered away to Medora, because she had so often said that wind and water, in some way, would cause her trouble.

We will say no more about the family in Virginia just now, but turn our eyes toward the convent at Mount St. Vincent, and see what has become of the heroine of this story.

Oh! dear; she is sick. Sister Josephine is her attendant. Now she thinks of her mother, and the kind Lucinda, who were always beside her bed when she was ill; but she must bear the loss of friends and servants. Soon a beautiful little daughter is born; her eyes and hair are like her mother's. The kind nuns come around, to sympathize and pray their usual prayers. Medora has been for months brooding over this moment, and a mere wreck of a woman was to be seen. No wonder Lucinda saw her looking so badly, if the girl really beheld her spirit.

A heart that is stricken with such trouble suffers

more, in our opinion, than one could in any other situation on earth. To be deceived in love is, in any way, death itself. But Medora Palmore must endure her misfortunes.

The babe was handed to her; she kissed it and wept, and said:

"Poor, little unfortunate soul! No loving father, and only the shadow of a mother!"

Then the tears poured from her eyes, as if her heart would break; and a whisper was heard, as though a prayer were offered. She pressed the infant to her breast, and fell into a swoon.

Reader, no doubt she beheld in imagination the father of the babe, drowning, struggling for breath. In a few moments she revived; the infant was removed, and she became more composed. The lady Superior paid her good attention, and the feeble woman recovered much faster than one might have supposed. The kindness of the nuns and the priest had a great influence on the mind of Medora. She had always heard so many horrid stories about the Catholics, that, like many others, she thought them a wicked set of people. But she proved to the contrary, during her stay in the convent. She had been educated in the Baptist faith, and never expected to see the inside of the walls of a monastery. But she was agreeably disappointed. She was well nursed and kindly treated; the consequence was, she almost became one of them.

Weeks rolled slowly by. The young mother improved rapidly. It would seem that the most acute

suffering can be endured, and even cured. It is almost impossible to believe that this tender flower could have borne so many storms through which she passed. Although blighted and withered, she was not destroyed; yet that dream and its reality often came to her mind. Oh! that crimson star, and that bloody hand.

When the infant was about three months old, Mrs. Maria Bruster visited the convent, and found a change in things in general; but yet her sympathies were excited for Medora. She brought her little son with her.

Medora was delighted to see them. When Mrs. Bruster beheld the babe, she wept, for it very much resembled *her* husband. She told her little boy that he now had a sister. The little fellow must have wondered how his sister came to be found in the convent of St. Vincent; but, as he was small, we suppose he did not think much about it. Mrs. Bruster then spoke of Thomas, the servant, who, she said, had called upon her "to ascertain the whereabouts of the lady who was on board the yacht when her husband was drowned. The gentleman," said Tommy, "who was also on board on that day, has desired me to ascertain, if possible, where she now is."

"He means you, of course," said Mrs. Bruster, to Medora. "Shall I reveal to him where you are? I have heard the history from a druggist near our town, and, my dear girl, you have my sympathies."

"No," said Medora; "there is no necessity for Thomas to know my whereabouts, or any one else—un-

less I could inform my dear parents; but that I dislike to do just now."

"No," said Mrs. Bruster, "there is no necessity for making them unhappy. Therefore, wait with patience. You could not have entered the convent unless you had promised to remain a twelvemonth."

"That is true," said Medora, "and I will remain during that time; and, perhaps, for life."

As the babe lay in the lap of the young mother, Mrs. Bruster watched it closely. "What do you intend calling your babe?" asked she.

"Well, I do not know," replied Medora. "If it has no name for years, it makes no difference—poor, unfortunate child."


"She is a little beauty, and she should be named. Suppose you permit me to name her; and, should I lose my child, she shall become my heir, as I have no near relatives, only one sister, and she is wealthy."

"Well," said Medora, "if you desire to name her, you can do so, whether you give her anything or not."

"I shall call her Ida Blanche, then," said Mrs. Bruster, and kissed the babe. She took her departure after having given the mother some affectionate advice.

CHAPTER X.

MEDORA'S ESCAPE FROM THE CONVENT.

NE morning, Mrs. Bruster, as she stood in the doorway, was approached by a stranger, who bowed very politely. She returned it, of course. He then said to her: "Madame, will you oblige me by informing me where the lady now resides, who was on-board the yacht when the gentleman who formerly owned this farm was drowned? I understand from Thomas, a former servant here, that you have seen the lady in question—lately seen her; and, by informing me of her whereabouts, you would confer an inestimable favor."

"Are you a relation of the lady?" inquired Mrs. Bruster.

"No, madame; but I am her friend."

"I had rather not give you the information that you desire, sir; but you can ascertain her whereabouts by visiting Mount—"

She then paused a moment. "Sir, if you please, I cannot inform you." The young man thanked her for even that much light upon the subject. He bowed and left. He heard the word "mount," and had heard of a certain convent, and did not know what mount. He

knew it might be Mount Holyoke, or Chimborazo, as they called it. Yet he remembered that there was a convent there. The thought that Medora must be there seemed to strike him with a great deal of force. The young man was no other than the artist. He had passed many unhappy moments in thoughts of her. He often wondered where she could have concealed herself. Some months had flown, and brought no tidings of her whom he had so dearly loved. Her portrait was all the comfort he had. He thought strangely that she did not recognize him. We must not peep into the future; yet we know he hoped he should find her. He knew there was a convent up the Hudson, and he would try some means to reach it; and, if there was no such person, he would start for some other mount. He would trace the world over to find her—the only woman he ever loved.

As he left, he wandered to the steamboat, to go up the Hudson. When he arrived at his journey's end, he saw the convent.

"There," said he, "she is gone from me forever. That building denotes her confinement for life; that is Mount St. Vincent. That is what the lady meant when she said 'Mount—' and said no more. "But oh! perhaps she is a mother long before this; but what care I for that? Oh! could I but see her once more, I should be most happy," said the artist, as he gazed upon the walls of the convent which he supposed contained the object of his affection.

He stood and sketched the nunnery; and a more

beautiful scene was never beheld. Then he turned away from a place which gave him pain and pleasure at the same moment. Delancy made his way home; but no rest to a heart that loved, when he knew she did not recognize him.

He often wandered in the direction of the place where he had often beheld her. The garden arbor was visited by the artist. He could be seen, once in two or three weeks, regularly, standing gazing into the garden as though he watched for some one.

Spring had come again. The grape-vine was shooting its green tendrils over the arbor where the belle of the South often sat when she first came North. During the first summer, she believed herself the true wife of Ralph Bruster; and at times he would walk with her in the garden, sit beneath the vines, and, although she did not love him with the wild enthusiastic passion with which some love, she respected and liked him. She knew not then that a venomous reptile lay entwined in the shape of a man. But the reader has seen his career and his end.

We say that the first the artist saw of Medora Palmore in the North was at her house, and painted her portrait. He then saw her in the arbor, and the sight of so beautiful a woman was printed indelibly on his mind—her face, her tall, majestic figure, her sweet and amiable smile. Her first appearance was never obliterated from his mind; he was young and passionate, and one who loved and made no pretense.

But she is now lost to him. He wanders the fields;

he traverses the meadows; he ascends mountains; he travels through valleys—but no sight, no sound of her name. She lives as though she were dead to him. Oh! how wretched is the heart that vainly seeks its treasure, its idol; but often it is lost, lost to us forever. Few are there in the world who find the invaluable treasure. The one who loves another with a pure and platonic affection is a diamond of the first water. And is the artist the affinity of the lady who is now in the convent? That remains to be seen.

Oh, Medora!

There are many people who search for different things and certain persons; but, in some cases, they are never brought to light. Sir John Franklin started in search of another continent, but he has never been heard of since; or, rather, nothing very favorable of his adventures. And we know that these things occur. Tourists are often unfortunate in their adventures; therefore, if the artist shall be so blest as to find the lady of whom he is in search, we seriously hope that she may prove genuine. If she should reciprocate the love of such an ardent youth, surely they would be as happy as Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. But, as yet, we see little prospect of the Frenchman finding the nun. We will leave him searching rapidly, and see how Medora progresses.

She is looking much better; her spirits are reviving. Sisters Jacqueline and Josephine are her room-companions. They are women of refinement and education, such as could sympathize with a wounded heart.

Such persons are treasures, and a blessing to the world, in or out of the convent. The Superior was also a very fine woman, but quite a different temperament from Madame Bruster; she appeared to sympathize with the Protestant sister. Medora enjoyed the Catholic worship very much. Their faith is said to be very strong.

Christ has said: "If ye have faith, ye could remove mountains; and if ye have faith, and say to the sycamore tree, be thou plucked up and planted into the sea, it would obey."

This is why many churches are so feeble. They need faith. But Medora Palmore saw the power of faith in many instances, while she was within the convent walls. She was strengthened in her religion by seeing the nuns exercise so much faith in Christ, the Virgin Mary, St. Peter, St. Paul, and many other saints. She was led to believe that these pious men and women, who had been upright on earth, and had passed into spirit-life, must have more power in the future state than she had before imagined.

The prayers she offered were answered; their influence was felt; the atmosphere in which they breathed was thrown around her, and she became more happy, more spiritual, more holy. When the carnal is absorbed in spiritual things, then the soul becomes tranquil, and more prepared for association with those who have passed into another state of existence.

Medora was happy as we could expect, and even more so than many would have been. She knew that

the roaring cannon was heard, and glittering swords were unsheathed on the soil that gave her birth; and she also knew that her only brother was engaged in the mighty conflict; and, although at a future day she might reach her home, her dearest friends might all be consigned to the silent dust, and Edge Hill forever desolated.

Our heroine had rushed to the convent of St. Vincent to secrete herself from the world, as her troubles were almost unendurable.

We do not wonder that her drooping spirits began to revive; for we feel quite sure that it was not a crime to rescue herself from a watery grave; she could not have much compunction of conscience. The reader has seen the clandestine movements of the hero of this story. They have also seen the meek and quiet manner in which Medora bore her misfortunes.

She was flattered and won by an old man, who had deceived her; and was partially engaged to another, who was in France at the time. She had loved the young man; but it seems that he had become more interested in his studies than in her, and she had become a little piqued, and married the wealthy New York lawyer.

We have seen the last attempt to murder her. Now, who that possesses a heart could blame the innocent girl, when encouraged by her mother to forget her first love, and marry the legal adviser whose jealous disposition drove him to destruction? He had accused the Virginia girl of infidelity, which was as false as

his own heart. The artist loved her, it is true; but where and when had they ever met? this is the enigma which must be solved. She had not encouraged his passion in the least, although she was aware of its existence.

How many females have we in these days, who, under the same circumstances, would have acted as Medora Palmore? There are but few, is the opinion of the writer. We see and hear of false wives very often, even when they have kind husbands. But this young lady knew that she was not a wife, after she found that letter; yet she tried to believe herself the true wife, and Maria the deceived one; but she soon found herself a deserted woman, just as poor Charlotte Temple.

But the artist was not a Montravil, nor a Belchor. Treachery and villainy was not in his heart. He loved Medora with a pure and ardent affection; yet he concealed his feelings as much as possible. If he had made any advances, he would have surely been repulsed, although she suspected that she was not a wife, but had been duped by a villain. She felt conscientious in such things, and believed it to be her duty to be constant even to the man who had betrayed her. How few Medoras have we in this age!

There are a class of brainless nonentities, who really believe that all women only need an opportunity to be false. We feel truly sorry for such a class of ignorant mortals. We sympathize with such as have so little knowledge of the female character.

Thank God, there is another class of observers of

human nature. There are men who know and believe women to be truly virtuous from principle, and not because they have never been tempted. It must be a very ordinary woman who, if she is thrown into the world to obtain a livelihood, does not have some such trouble to combat with. But the city which stands after being besieged is the one of courage and strength. So it is with women. When we hear females boasting of their good names, we are led to wonder if the pure, angelic creatures had ever passed through the temptations of others of their sex, and remained pure. Then we would admit that they were stainless. But we often fear there are many like queen Bess, as jealous of their superiors as she was of her beautiful cousin, Mary Stuart.

But, perhaps, those very individuals who have often been heard to boast of their purity, were some homely maiden or widow who had never left the smoke of her father's or husband's chimney. We do not wonder that such ladies are virtuous, for they could not well be otherwise.

We have often contended that a city must be besieged and stand the storm; then, if it does not surrender to the enemy, but drives them back, that city is substantial.

The heroine of our story has something of which to boast.

Thus it was: she knew that the artist loved her, but she evaded his compliments, and shunned everything which might lead him to think of her only as a

friend. She was young and beautiful, forsaken, and wretched as woman could be, when the handsome artist came to her house for the purpose of painting her picture. She knew that he admired and loved her. She also wondered who he was, and thought strangely of him. But here was woman's conscience; here was woman's virtue, that is so often abused by the opposite sex.

The artist dropped a few affectionate words inadvertently, and Medora could have reciprocated his passion with all the fervor of woman; but her education and conscience taught her differently. She shrank from the man whom she could have adored.

Oh, Medora! could you have known all, and who this handsome adorer was, and what it was that first induced him to take his pencil, brush, and easel—but we dare not say more.

Reader, was not here self-sacrifice? And we believe that there are many just such conscientious women in the world. Medora Palmore is not the only woman who has loved, has conquered her passion, and preserved her purity. This is almost the first lesson that young ladies are taught in Virginia—to retain their virtue, if they lose their lives.

She is still in the convent. She dreams of her childhood. The beauties of the Rappahannock and the day of her false marriage were never out of her mind. Ida Carter, and the novel called "Celia's First Love," often came before her. The laugh of Ida sounded through her ear, as she said: "Well, upon

my word, the heroine of this story falls in love and is going to elope with a fellow."

She remembered the beautiful language of Belle Meredith, as she chided Ida for talking over such things in the chamber of a bride, and gave such an elaborate description of virtue. Medora never forgot these things, and often prayed to see Edge Hill and her schoolmates again, and to be restored to honor and peace once more. Christ has said, "Whatever ye ask in my name, ask in faith, nothing doubting, and ye shall receive."

The Virginia girl had learned to exercise faith, and she really believed that the Almighty would aid her in reaching her friends, and that she would again be happily restored to all that she had been so basely torn from.

Oh! why cannot we exercise faith? It is the duty of all mankind. Our heroine should be an example, if she is within the walls of a convent.

Her infant grows rapidly. It is beautiful. It attracts the love and admiration of the sisters, and even the priest became infatuated with the little darling. Medora was delighted to see her sister nuns take such an interest in her babe. She was devoted to her child, and every mother becomes interested in those who love her children.

Mrs. Maria Bruster lost her son, and her heart was almost broken. After recovering from her trouble, she visited the convent, and appeared much attached to the pretty and interesting Ida.

"Now," said Mrs. Bruster, "I suppose that this little creature must be my heiress. She, at some day, may be in possession of all I am worth."

"Perhaps you may re-marry," said Medora.

"No; I have suffered enough, and heaven knows I never wish to wed again."

Medora smiled, saying:

"Well, perhaps my infant will be fortunate, after all."

"Yes," replied the lady by whom the child had been named, "I hope both mother and child may yet be happy."

"Perhaps so," said Medora, the tears starting to her eyes.

Mrs. Bruster kissed her, and left the convent.

The twelvemonth is nearly up, and the Virginia girl is thinking of taking the veil, and remaining for life in the monastery. She now believes that her babe has met a mother in the wife of Ralph Bruster; and she knows not that the artist is rambling in every direction, like poor Werter, who shot himself on account of Charlotte. Our heroine thought she had better become a nun than go into the world again and perhaps fall into trouble. She dreaded to impart the secret of her troubles to her parents or to any of her schoolmates.

CHAPTER XI.

MARRIED TO HER FIRST LOVER.



HENRI Delancy had become almost wild. Twelve months had nearly elapsed, and he had never heard a word, only "Go up to Mount—" and he did go up, but no satisfaction could he gain.

Her portrait had been wept over; many times had his lips pressed the inanimate canvas.

"Oh!" thought the ardent youth, "I would to God that I could once more behold the original of this painting—that I could now tell her what I have suffered on her account since the last moment we parted at her door. But alas! poor girl, I fear that she is lost to me forever; and to her family. She must be dead, or in the convent of St. Vincent. If the latter is true, she might as well be under the marble, for all the happiness that I shall ever derive from her society. But oh! Medora, Medora, why did you rush into a convent? Why did you leave one who would have loved you forever? Yes, as long as this heart continued to beat, Delancy would have loved and cherished her who excited his first fancy."

The young man was wandering on the Hudson in

the same direction whence he had overheard the plot between Bruster and his servant, when a thought struck his mind with great force.

The dull season of winter had passed, the showers of spring had fallen on the earth, and vegetation was budding forth beautifully.

He longed to fall at her feet and tell her all; he desired no longer to deceive her; his heart was burning to pour forth its adoration and unveil its secrets to her. He felt that he had done wrong in one thing, that he had not opened his heart and concealed nothing on that fatal night of the tragedy, when he parted from her at her own door. He squeezed her hand, but dared not speak. He often reproached himself; yet something seemed to say to the artist, "Go up the river to Mount St. Vincent, and you will find a sketch worth painting." He at first did not move, but continued to use his pencil in drawing some little scenery which had struck his fancy. A moment after, his pencil fell from his hand, and a voice appeared to say, "Go where you are bidden." He turned around, and was in the act of starting in some direction, when the command of Jonah came into his mind. The words sounded near by: "Go and say to Nineveh 'Forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed.'"

"I will go," said Delancy, "let the consequences be what they may; for, if I disobey this unknown warning, misery may follow me all the days of my life. If I obey, Nineveh may be saved, and I may enjoy a happy existence. I will obey this secret call. I do not see any

one; but there evidently is some one near me, who sees further into the future than I do, and wishes to aid me."

He hurried off, and started up the river to Mount St. Vincent. A pleasant sail in the steamer soon bore him to the desired haven of rest. As soon as he set eyes on the convent he felt relieved. He had looked upon the building with horror; but now it appeared differently to him. He approached the spot. "Now," thought he, "what am I to do here?"

It was late in the afternoon—a time taken by the nuns for a promenade in the garden. The sisters generally walk with them, but their eyes are not always upon every girl. This Delancy knew from reading about the Catholics. As he stood and watched the building, a thought came into his mind: it was to ascend the convent wall, if possible, and try to obtain a glimpse of a human face. But how was it to be done? He could not imagine at first. It is a tremendous edifice. Surely, any one would risk his life to attempt to ascend those walls. At length, it occurred to him to obtain a ladder, were one obtainable. He looked in every direction, but no ladder presented itself to his vision. He turned around almost frantic. He felt that Medora was then in the building, and, if he did not see her in a few days, that all was over for life. He made up his mind to succeed in seeing her at the point of death.

"Although it costs my life, it is death without her. I will ascend that wall in some way." Then, turning

his head in a different direction, he beheld the wished-for ladder. It reminded him of Jacob's, which reached from earth to heaven. It was placed there in case of fire. With one step, almost, he reached the spot, and asked the owner for the use of this article for a little while. She was a lady, and she consented. The young man had only handled pencil and paper all his life, except, a while, powder and ball; and she must not suppose him a Samson. But ah! what is it that love cannot do? Delilah—Delilah was at heart! and he caught the ladder in his arms, dragged it to the nunnery, and placed it against the walls. He stood and gazed upon the steep walls of the building for a moment, as if he was meditating the consequence of a fall; but in an instant more he sprang forward, with as much agility as Crassus did when he dashed his horse through the Parthian army. The thought of the artist was the same as that of the heroic Roman—"If the Parthians slay me, I will die for thee, Rome." Neither the rugged chain of mountains, nor the supplications of Octavius, deterred the Roman commander from doing what he believed to be his duty; and, although he was slain by the barbarians, he died in honor of his country. "For thee, Medora," the artist exclaimed, "I will likewise die;" and, with the rapidity of a squirrel, Delancy ascended the ladder—the brave Crassus for a moment.

"There never was a victory gained," thought he, "without some defeat." As he reached the top of the ladder, he could see the windows of the nunnery.

The garden beneath looked beautiful. Some of the flowers were just closing their petals. The air seemed impregnated with fragrance. "I will sketch the scene," thought he. Having pencil and paper in hand, he sketched the nunnery from the top of the wall. After he had finished, he thought to himself, "Is this all for which I came? Am I to be disappointed? Is there not a glimpse to be had of the sweet face which I believe to be immured within these walls?"

As he was in the act of turning around to descend the ladder, for fear he might be seen, he beheld a female come to the window. His heart beat with joy. "Ah!" said he to himself, "perhaps I may see the face of the one I adore."

He waited with a palpitating heart. Directly, another young lady came and leaned upon the shoulder of her friend, as though she loved her. She was tall, and thin, and pale; but she looked heavenly as she raised her eyes to the skies, and appeared to move her lips. The artist sat motionless for a few moments; then, in an instant more, the beautiful face of Medora appeared beside those of the young ladies, and in her arms she clasped an infant.

"O God!" said the artist, "there she is." He grasped the ladder tightly, or in his agitation he would have fallen. His heart beat vehemently; his blood almost ran cold; a chilling sensation pervaded his body, and he felt as though he would fall. "I am gone now," he whispered; but held on with all the strength he possessed.

"I have seen her once more, thank God!"

He then seemed to revive, and his courage returned. He gazed wistfully into her face. She had on a light wrapper, and her hair still hung in ringlets around her shoulders; and her lips parted with a sweet smile, as she stood and let the babe play at the window.

"Oh! what shall I do?" thought Delancy, "to attract her attention for a moment."

Taking out pencil and paper, he hurriedly wrote a few lines. Perhaps the reader would like to see what they were. A queer place from whence to date a love-letter, certainly; but he cared not for place and circumstances; therefore he wrote from the top of the ladder.

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL.

"ST. VINCENT.

"I write you, my dearest and most beloved of all on earth, from the top of the ladder.

"O Medora, dear Medora! I deceived you in regard to my identity; but it was in order to see you, and to be near you, that I assumed this name. Permit me, dearest, to explain all, as this is the last time I shall see you, unless you listen to my plea.

"I am Eugene Appomore, your long lost and absent lover; but never have I ceased to think of you a moment, through all these long years of strife. Now I will make an attempt to give you an idea of my absence, and my suffering since we parted.

"I passed through my collegiate course in France, and graduated with high honors. I became fascinated

with my pencil and brush; therefore, I thought I would stay awhile, and visit Italy, to see the finest scenery in world.

"I had written you several letters, which I never received an answer to; then I made up my mind to sail for the United States; but the war was in full blast, and all communications cut off, or I should have written you immediately.

"I came to New York (intending to fight for the Southern States), and ran the blockade to Charleston; was captured, and thrown into prison for over a year.

"Dear Medora, I suffered very acutely. I lay on the bare planks of the cold floor, with one blanket over me; and my food was coarse, such as I could hardly swallow. But, in all this suffering, you were never out of my mind, dear girl. After this, I was drafted into the Northern army, and was compelled to fight against the South. It is true, I was promoted to a colonel—gained reputation; but honor sinks into nothingness without you, dear one. But now that this bloody war is over, and the North and South are friends again, I am happy. I then resumed my occupation as an artist; and, on the very day I had intended to start for Virginia to see you, by accident I met a stranger who was inquiring for a good artist, for the purpose of painting the portrait of his wife. I was introduced to him at my hotel. He requested me to go to his house to do the work; saying that he would meet me in his carriage, on the following day. He told me he

was then residing at a country-seat, up the Hudson. You must imagine my feelings on being introduced to you, my own beloved, and lost one to me.

"Medora, when I saw that you were another man's wife, I thought I should die. O, ye gods! how I suffered. No tongue can describe my feelings. The little girl that I had thought I should see again in Virginia was now Mrs. Ralph Bruster, whose portrait I had been brought here to paint. My brain reeled; my blood ran cold in my veins, the moment you were introduced to me as the gentleman's wife. You remember, I grasped my chair quickly, and seated myself; I could not have stood a moment more. You gazed at me strangely, and remarked that 'the ride was long and tedious;' and called for a glass of wine, to refresh me—which I drank with your husband.

"I was happy to see that you did not recognize me. I supposed that my long whiskers, sunburnt face, and French cap was some disguise. For me, then, I assumed the name of Henri Delancy, which came into my mind at that moment.

"Oh! Medora, lost Medora; with what vigilance I have labored to find your whereabouts, all the while, is more than I can describe. After my first visit to you, for fear you would after a while find me out, I wore a mask, under which I was able to conceal myself from your scrutiny. How strangely, dear Medora, we were thrown together! But Providence permitted it to be so, that I should be the means of saving your precious life. But, oh, how painful it was

for me to see and know that your husband was unkind to you. For you, dearest, I would have sacrificed my own life; for, if the wicked plot which was concocted by your husband and servant had succeeded, I would have risked my life to save yours. And, if that had been impossible for me to have done, we both would have perished together. But fate did not will that it should be so. Now that I have seen your lovely face, refuse not my request.

"On the evening that I separated from you at your door, I was tempted to unburden my heart and unmask my face, and tell you all; that it was I, Eugene—Eugene Appomore; but, in your state of excitement and feeble health, I dared not do it.

"Oh! Medora Palmore—as you once told me to call you—for God's sake, hear my plea! For nearly a twelve-month I have searched for you; and, by the aid of Providence, I am to-day blest with my desire, after risking my life. Now, dearest, will you not fly with me? You may be contented within these walls, but it is only because you had so much trouble without, and knew not how otherwise to bury it. But now I see you have a darling infant in your arms—it must be your own. If you will go with me from this place, I will forever prove a faithful husband to you, and a father to your offspring. Tell me—tell me quickly, in few words, should you receive these lines, how I may manage to release you from this building. If you refuse, the cold sweat of death will soon fall upon me. To love another woman is impossible. From the first

glimpse I had of you, when but a child, I loved you dearly; and now that you have matured into a lovely, charming angel of earth, I cannot live without you; but your situation forbade my making it known. Now you are free, I ask you to be mine forever. If you refuse, I am lost—lost! forever lost! If you accept, earth will hold no heart so happy as mine. I send you my picture; but, in either event, I am

“Ever your devoted

“EUGENE APPOMORE.”

He folded the paper, and tied it to his small pen-knife, and threw it toward the window. The young ladies had left, and only Medora stood in view. The artist felt his hopes revive as the paper fell in the right direction. He noticed that Medora looked more attentively; then it appeared to him that she noticed something particularly. All at once she sprang from the window, and rushed into the yard. Then, casting her eyes upward, she beheld the artist on the wall. He let the string fall at her feet. She trembled and turned pale, but she caught the paper in her hand, and in another instant she was gone.

In a few moments his fate was to be sealed. Denial or acceptance must come, and he must be prepared for the worst. His heart was beating wildly, and his temples throbbing. She came to the window and threw down a paper, which was attached to the same string, and fled.

Now preparing himself for the worst, we will not

detail how he obtained the paper, nor how eagerly it was read. Here it is:—

“ST. VINCENT.

“DEAR HENRI OR EUGENE:

“In heaven’s name, Eugene, is it so that we shall meet again? I cannot realize that this letter is from your pen, my long lost and absent friend. I know not why I went to the convent window this afternoon; it is something that I have not done since I have been within these walls; but, being attracted to the window, I saw the floating string, and, by some supernatural power, something seemingly forced me to see what it was; therefore, I rushed out into the yard and caught it into my hand, as a boy would catch his kite. At the moment, I turned my eyes heavenward, and there I beheld a man on the wall, and—oh, Eugene! Eugene! is it you? Can it be possible? Are the good angels around us trying to cement the broken links together? Yes, I believe it is so. In a moment more I flew back into my room, and, on tearing the paper open, I recognized your photograph. Oh! Eugene, I feel so strangely my brain reels. I feel as if I shall scarcely survive this shock. Joy has often produced death. My heart throbs—my pulses fly. It is a dream—surely it cannot be true that I shall once more behold your dear face again. One week from to-day, I was to take the black veil. My troubles had been so great, that I had renounced the idea of visiting my best friends, my dear parents, again. To become a nun, and live a

holy life, and reach heaven at last, is all that I have desired. But, oh Eugene! that I have seen you, and know that you still love me, is sufficient for me to escape from the convent.

"My heart—my heart now tells me where its home is. Yes, I will go with you. I have been most kindly treated here; made many friends with the nuns, and the lady Superior has treated me like a sister; but now I will not stay. Ah! well do I remember the first day you came to paint my portrait. I thought then how strangely you acted; but the mystery is all solved now.

"On Saturday next, about *four* o'clock in the afternoon, the convent gate will be open, for the purpose of the putting in of coal and wood. Have a carriage near. I will go.

"Ever yours,

"MEDORA."

Readers, can you imagine the feelings of the young man as he read the above?

"Oh," said he, faintly, "what is there that time and courage cannot accomplish?" But he checked the feeling by whispering: "'Many a slip 'twixt the cup and lip.' I may not get her, even now; but I will use my best exertions. I thank God, she loves me. I am happy."

Down, down the ladder he came, scarcely knowing where he was. He walked back, and caught up the ladder with tenfold more power than when he

had removed it; he carried it back to the owner, whom he offered to pay for the use of it, but who refused any remuneration.

Henri returned home. He sketched no more until some months after. He was quite another being. A smile flitted over his countenance during the week, at times, but the young man could not sleep; no more slumbers for him, until he found her whom his soul loved. The twelfth verse of the thirteenth chapter of Proverbs may well be applied to his case: "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life."

The day arrived when Henri Delancy was again to near the convent walls. Never before had the familiar scenery appeared more beautiful to his eyes. Love appears to change the hills, the valleys, the lakes, and the rivers. All seem to speak the language of a passion which is uncontrollable; and all who have felt the pungent power in their hearts must have some sympathy for the young man who is on his way to the convent to endeavor to release her whom his heart adores.

As he drew near the spot he trembled. An aspen leaf would not have quivered more in a gale of wind; but courage he was determined to have, and of courage he was not destitute. He had ordered a carriage to be at the post she had named, and he was at the appointed place on time, at four o'clock.

Medora was preparing to escape. In the morning she had kissed the lady Superior and her sister nuns for the last time; but they did not for a moment sus-

pect that those kisses were the last which should be imprinted on their lips by our heroine. As she gave the parting kiss, tears lingered in her beautiful eyes, for she knew that the day had arrived for Eugene to come for her; and, being aware of his ardor and determination, she felt quite sure that the last day had been spent in the nunnery. As the clock struck four she looked out of a window, and saw the men putting in coal and wood; casting her eyes further on, she beheld the carriage. Her frame trembled; her lips quivered; her heart beat wildly. The time had come; the attempt to escape from Mount St. Vincent must now be made—the place where she had passed many happy days with the sainted sisters, and mother superior, and the father confessor.

But Medora had again seen the face of the only man she had ever loved on earth. She was even a school-girl again; yet it was when she was very young that Eugene had gone to France to finish his education, and while there he became interested in his brush and easel; and how queer it was that he should paint her portrait! Medora had learned by acute experience to conceal her feelings, but now they must burst forth from a heart which could no longer keep the passion pent up within her bosom. She flew like light from her room, with her infant in her arms. Down, down the long, winding flight of stairs she glided, and onward through the spacious halls she tripped lightly; and, as God would have it, when she reached the lower hall, the front door was open—for

one of the wonders of the age. Previous to this morning, the door, when open, had been guarded by some one standing near; but this afternoon no one was visible.

When Medora reached the door, she offered up in her heart a prayer to God, and to the mother of Jesus, for her safety while beneath the sainted roof of Mount St. Vincent; and, with a tear lingering in her beautiful eye, she flew like lightning from the door. As her feet touched the ground, she was met by the man who had induced her to leave the sacred portals of the monastery. One long breath was drawn, and one shriek of pleasure was heard, and these words fell from the lips of the artist:

“My God! my God! is it you, dear Medora? is it possible that we have met again?”

“Yes,” she replied, “but not a moment have we to spare. Oh! Eugene, Eugene,” she whispered.

He caught her infant from her arms, and, holding her hand, they walked a few steps very quickly, and then she was lifted into the carriage in an instant. Eugene Appomore—we will drop the fictitious name, and call our hero by a dearer one to her—Eugene seated himself by her side, and ordered the driver to drive as fast as possible; and in a short time they had arrived at the boat. After they were on board, then the artist had a little time to express his deep feelings to her, who possessed a heart to reciprocate every emotion of his excited soul. “Oh, dear Medora!” was all he could say, tremblingly, while the tears burst forth from his eyes.

He clasped her hand ardently, and was as pale as death, and quite as immovable as a statue. For some time they gazed into each other's faces; and Medora, for the first time in her life, awoke to feelings that she knew not before that she was capable of enjoying.

Oh! reader, if you have loved, and have been separated, and have met again, you can better imagine the pungent feelings of the heroine and hero of our story. We say they sat motionless, and gazed into each other's faces, each one in tears, each one's heart throbbing like that of a young bird when in the hands of a child. Each countenance denoted the emotions of the hearts of the lovers. The eyes always speak the language of the soul. Is there anything so sublime, so transcendently beautiful to the human heart, as the object of its own affection? We say, nothing on earth can so elevate a human being as love—pure and platonic affection.

Eugene and Medora, the injured Virginia belle, were now happy. Even to look upon each other was a never-ending source of bliss. Their hearts beat with one pulsation, each eye lighted with the same electric fire, each lip trembled with the tender passion which enraptured their souls.

Oh! how sublime and superlatively beautiful all nature appeared to the lovers, who had so long been separated by the walls of Mount St. Vincent. But now they are happy. In a few hours they reached New York, and stopped at the St. Nicholas. They had intended to go on immediately to the minister of a Bap-

tist church, and be married, but the fatigue and over-excitement rendered Medora unable to accomplish their marriage on the same evening that witnessed their escape.

When they reached the hotel, she had a burning fever, and felt that death would soon seize her vitals. The meeting of one she had so dearly loved, whom she had supposed lost to her forever, and listening to his sad story, as he explained to her why he wore a mask to conceal his real identity—this was more than she could endure; therefore she was thrown into convulsions, and some hours elapsed before she recovered. The sweet little Ida Blanche was scarcely thought of during all this excitement; but when the young mother believed that she was about to die, she spoke of her infant, and wished it to be given up to Mrs. Maria Bruster, who had formerly wished to adopt it.

Eugene escorted his intended bride to a chamber, and wished to go immediately for a physician; but Medora requested him to wait, thinking, perhaps, that it was her fright in escaping from the convent which had overpowered her nerves, and the excitement of meeting him under such circumstances, and hearing from him that he was the artist disguised, who had so long and truly loved her; and that, if she remained quiet, she would soon recover from the shock. But her fragile form was not strong enough to pass through such excitement, and quickly overcome it. She was ill all night. Eugéné sat beside her, and wept bitter

tears, which flowed from a heart that truly loved—such tears as Mark Antony shed when he believed that Cleopatra had murdered herself.

Who could not sympathize with the young artist? His wildest wishes are now on the very verge of destruction. His life had been embittered for a long while, in consequence of the woman whom he had just released from those confining walls. Now she lies almost speechless and powerless, and has a dear babe for him to take care of. A nurse was procured for the little cherub, whose playful glee was not subdued by the illness of her mother.

"This is to be my fate," she said to Eugene.

CHAPTER XII

THE BRIDE'S ILLNESS.



WHAT could more shock a man than to be on the verge of matrimony and true happiness, and to see the idol of his soul laid upon a sick bed—perhaps a dying couch?

Oh! how changeable is life; and how little do we find ourselves prepared to meet the sudden changes of misfortune which are so apt to fall upon us. Eugene was like a bruised reed. Mangled was the heart of the artist who had worshiped the portrait of the girl which he had painted previous to this moment. But just as soon as he had the original in his possession, she is laid low upon a bed of sickness.

There are many constitutions which cannot bear over-excitement, no more than could the heroine of our story. Love, fright, anger, all are passions which overpower the human system very materially.

On the following morning, Medora requested Eugene to give her pen and paper, so that she could write to her father that she was ill. The request was granted.

Propped up in bed, she wrote a letter in very emphatic language, requesting him to come—come immediately

to her; sealed it, and sent it on to Virginia. The purport of the letter was certainly very unfavorable; for, when she wrote, she expected to be carried home a corpse. The letter was sealed with black, in order to induce her father to come quickly to New York.

After Eugene had mailed the letter, he returned to the bedside of the invalid; and, sitting beside her, tenderly kissed her cold brow, and the hot tears fell upon her burning cheeks. She opened her eyes, and said to him:

"Oh! Eugene; dear Eugene! do not grieve for me. I am unfortunate—my life has been a mystery to myself. I have been a suffering woman, but I am now ready to be offered up." And, placing her hand on her heart, she exclaimed: "Here is peace—here is quietness, notwithstanding all that has passed."

"Yes, my sweet girl," replied the artist; "you were perfectly justifiable in all you did. I was a witness to all that happened that night."

She smiled, and said:

"God's will be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven."

She closed her eyes, and fell into a slumber. Who can imagine the heart-burning pangs of the Colonel? "God save her—save her life!" was the aspiration of every breath he drew, and of every look he gave. The young man prayed earnestly, for once in his life. If prayer was offered in faith, how often would we receive the wishes of our hearts! God has never been known to turn away from one soul who has asked in faith, and nothing

doubting. The pages of the New Testament teem with blessings which have been poured upon the sons of men, after they have prayed aright. Christ Himself prayed at the tomb of Lazarus, when He raised him from the dead; when He was in the flesh, He called upon a Supreme Being to aid Him.

The artist, no doubt, used all the power within him, when he asked God to preserve the life of a woman whom he loved with all the ardor of which man is capable. His prayer is answered. He had loved and been compelled to resist all attractions for her, and was so unfortunate as even to witness the brutal treatment which she endured, and dared not interfere.

Medora was gradually restored to health. As soon as she had sufficiently recovered, they were married in the private parlor, by the Rev. Mr. C—. They had no elegant wedding—no external show. Medora was attired in a plain silk dress, and exhibited no pretensions. They were truly happy children of nature. They returned to their room, and awaited the arrival of the father of our heroine. Nothing can mar the peace of pure and true love, such as Medora and Eugene now enjoyed. Happy, happy! Language cannot describe their pleasure. A purer atmosphere seemed to be thrown around them. Heaven was begun on earth. They appeared to have inhaled the air from the spirit-world. They were as happy as flesh and blood could be. There were no mercenary principles in either heart, and they were destined to make each other happy. Just as God intended his children

to be they were. Providence, for some purpose, had separated them; and, even when thrown together in such a strange coincidence, which caused Eugene to mask himself in order that she might not recognize him? it was wonderful. Did she never suspect anything extraordinary in the stranger? She only knew that her heart went out towards the artist, but dared not permit herself to encourage such feelings.

The officer would have sacrificed his life, in the attempt to rescue her from harm. Providence interfered in the villainous plot, and the Yankee lawyer paid the penalty of his own crime.

Each one believed the other to be sincere; and there was no deception between Eugene and the Virginia girl. We say that they were superlatively happy; and little Ida Blanche appeared delighted with her new father—the only one, indeed, whom she had ever known. We will leave the bride and groom to enjoy their happiness, and return to Mount St. Vincent.

When Sisters Jacqueline and Josephine missed their friend, they were very much alarmed. Little Ida was first sought for; for they supposed that the child had crawled away, and hidden her mischievous self in some corner, and that her mother had gone to look for her. But, upon a close examination, Sister Florina—for by that name had Medora been called—could nowhere be found. The nuns rushed to and fro, in every department where they supposed the sister might be. One ran into the room where the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of Jesus was represented, thinking, perhaps the nun had

visited the Holy Mother to offer some prayer; but she was not there. She was not in the room of the Superior. They ran into that of Father Hennipen, and with a breathless gasp, as if they were frightened out of their wits, asked the priest if Sister Florina had been in his room. The old man was reading, and, laying his book down with quite an astonished air, replied that the nun had not been near his room for several days; that he had wondered why she had absented herself so long.

"She is gone, then," said Sister Jacqueline, "for we have searched everywhere, and she is not to be found."

Father Hennipen was thunder-struck at the unexpected news. No sister had eloped from the walls of Mount St. Vincent, previous to this moment, and the father confessor was worried about it.

"How could she have got out?" said the priest. "There is no way of escape from this nunnery, unless we choose to have them go. Florina was one of the sweetest girls I ever met, and the last one I should have supposed would have wished to escape these walls; and her babe was an idol to us all."

"Yes," replied sister Jacqueline, "little Ida was our pet, and we are almost crazy."

"She came in with her own free will," said the priest, "and, had we known that she wished to leave, she would have been welcome to go; although she was just on the verge of taking the black veil, and becoming a nun for life. We have lost a treasure, but we must pray for her return to the Catholic faith."

"Yes," replied the sister, "we were going to take the veil together, and we so much regret her absence."

"We may hear from her again," observed the priest. "She has not eloped from the convent from any particular antipathy to us, I feel quite sure."

"We believe the same," replied the sisters; "but it would be a satisfaction to know why she left, and how she got out of the house."

"So it would," said Father Hennipen. "Perhaps she will write and let us know. The servant who was to watch the door on Saturday, when the wood and coal was put in, must have been negligent. Perhaps she may know something about the escape."

Sister Jacqueline ran off and called the servant whose office it was to guard the door. The poor, affrighted girl looked ghostly, when she was asked who was at the door on Saturday, when the fuel was put in. She felt duty-bound to tell the truth when questioned; for she was a firm believer in the Catholic faith, and to tell a lie involves a great penance. So Bridget expected what was coming, being aware that one of the sisters had escaped.

"Were you at your post on Saturday, when the wood came?" asked the priest.

"I was sick, sir," said Bridget.

"Who occupied your place?"

"No one, yer riverence. Shure, had I been able, I should have been there meself."

"Why did you not send some one else?" inquired Father Hennipen.

"Because, sir, I could get no one to go. I did ask Maria, but she was possessed of the devil, and would not hear me. To tell the truth, sir, there was no one at the door when the fuel came. I will not tell a lie—to be punished in purgatory one of those days."

"That is right," said the priest, "to tell the truth."

"Are you aware that one of the nuns has escaped?"

"Yes, sure, yer riverence; I heard it an hour after she had flitted. It was the fine lady who had the baby. I feel truly sorry, for she was a heavenly being, sure; and had she taken the black veil, heaven would have had an angel sure."

"You think then, Bridget, that Sister Florina went out when the door was open upon Saturday?"

"Yes, yer riverence, I do."

"Well, that is all I wish to hear. You may go," said the priest.

Bridget stammered out: "I guess the lady has gone over to the rebels; because, her brother was in the Southern army."

"So I heard her say one day; and she always felt sad when she read the papers, and would speak about the sufferings of the South. But God knows I am sorry she has gone away."

The girl quickly left, feeling very thankful to get away from her interlocutor. The nuns left the room to meditate upon the absence of their lost sister.

Some days after the escape, a letter was handed to the Mother Superior. It proved to be from Sister Florina, now Mrs. Eugene Appomore, who had been separated

from the man she truly loved long, long ago. She stated in this epistle how strangely she had recently met him in such an uncereemonious manner. She also requested the Superior to ask the priest to forgive her for absenting herself from the convent, and stated why she eloped. The explanation was very satisfactory, and, in beautiful language, she said that her heart would ever be with the nuns, the holy mother, and the father confessor. She admitted their kindness to her, in the most emphatic language, and begged pardon and forgiveness for leaving; but spoke of her attachment to a gentleman a long while ago, previous to having entered the nunnery. She announced her marriage; said that she was perfectly happy, and intended in a few days to return to her home in Virginia. The lady Superior read the letter to the priest and the nuns. They all wept, and repeated many prayers for their absent sister Florina. Her room-mates, sisters Jacqueline and Josephine, wept as bitterly as though she were dead—which, indeed, she was to them, as though she had lain in her tomb.

The name of the Virginia girl and her babe sounded within the convent walls for some time. Father Hennipen offered many prayers for her safety, happiness, and prosperity through life. The letter of Medora was a great satisfaction to the priest and all the nuns; and even poor Bridget was blessed by it, for then all knew that she told the truth. Strict Catholics, however ignorant, endeavor to act correctly, for they very much fear purgatory.

We will say no more about the nunnery, as the

reader has seen the excitement caused by the elopement of our heroine. We will go back to the homestead.

It is natural that the parents of Mrs. Bruster, as they supposed her to be, should feel more and more anxious to hear from their long-absent child. One afternoon in September, the planter rode out to the post-office, and, upon entering the store, a gentleman handed him a letter. As the old man glanced at the seal, he trembled, and looked like marble. Slowly taking his glasses, he seated himself, and read the epistle. As he read, his lips quivered.

"Poor child," said he, while tears stole down his withered cheek.

"What is the matter, Mr. Palmore? Is any member of your family dead?" asked a young man.

"No; not when the letter was written; but I fear my daughter will be dead by the time I shall have reached New York."

"Oh," said the young man, "that is Mrs. Bruster, I believe."

"Yes," replied the father. "I have suffered enough for five years to kill ten men. My son was wounded during the rebellion—came near death; and now, perhaps my daughter is dead."

He folded the letter, placed it in his pocket, and rose to go home. "What could have induced her to seal it in black?" said the old gentleman in a whisper, as he reached the carriage. "Ah, I guess she did that to induce me to go on quickly. I will go immediately."

He drove off as fast as the horse could travel, and the poor old man wept all the way. Oh! how tenderly this father loved his daughter, whom he believed to be even then in the spirit-world. He hurried home, and, upon entering the house, he looked so strangely that his wife noticed his unusual appearance and said:

"Surely, you must have heard some bad news to-day, husband."

"I have."

"What is it?"

Mr. Palmore thrust his hand into a pocket and drew out the letter, which he gave to his wife. As she took it into her hand, she saw the seal and became quite nervous.

"Oh! this is from New York, and from my child; yes, that it is—from Medora."

The old lady usually possessed much courage, but now it failed. She shook so that it was with difficulty she could hold the letter in her hand until she read it. However, she perused it carefully, but stifling her sobs all the while; then wept aloud, rising from her seat, and, thinking of the letter, buried her face in her hands, exclaiming "Oh, my daughter! my darling Medora is gone. Who knows but at this moment she may be dead."

"Hush! hush!" said the husband; "weeping cannot fetch her back, if she is dead."

"Oh, heavens!" said the mother, "she must be dead. Dying far away, and uncared for among stran-

gers!" and she wrung her hands in anguish, and reproached herself for influencing her daughter to marry away from home.

Medora had said nothing about her romantic life. She had only said that her husband had been dead quite a while, and that she had omitted writing in consequence of the war, and other reasons; but that her illness had induced her to pen a letter in the last moments of her life; her end was near, as she supposed. As the mother read, the anguish of her heart was great. She imagined she saw her child draw her last breath; she could almost fancy that she saw the black hearse, as it drew her toward some cemetery far away.

Here conscience was at work. Now are the moments when the mother of Medora suffered for her mercenary conduct. She really believed that her daughter had passed into spirit-life. Oh! what sufferings did a selfish parent endure. All the world looked, to the old woman, like a dense wilderness; not a gleam of light shone upon her heart; all was dreary, all was darkness within.

Medora had spoken of her infant, and had requested of her parents to remember their orphan grandchild. She also spoke of the colored girl Lucinda, and begged her father to tell the domestic that her mistress had never forgotten her, although a long time had elapsed since she had left Edge Hill; and requested her father to remember her to all the colored people, saying that she had never forgotten them in

health, and, now that she was so near her end, every one at Edge Hill was more vividly in her mind. She said that her babe had been adopted by one Mrs. Maria Bruster; but, in case of that lady's demise, she hoped her father would take care of the little orphan.

As the old lady sat reading over the letter, and weeping, Lucinda came in.

"Oh, missus," said the girl, "what is de matter wid you and ole marster?"

"Lucinda," replied her mistress, "your Miss Dora is dead by this time, we suppose."

"Oh! mercy, missus, you don't tell me how dat Miss Dora is dead?" and the poor girl burst into a flood of tears. A sister could not have appeared more grieved than did this servant girl.

This does not look much like slaves being treated like brutes, as Harriet Beecher Stowe has asserted in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." However, we are not all constituted alike, and if our Southern friends are not composed of such loving natures as the Beecher family seemingly are, we should be pitied more than blamed; but in too many cases she has described our people as tyrants—which we know to be utterly false.

Mr. Palmore had refrained from tears as much as possible; but, seeing his wife grieving so intensely, and even poor Lucinda so much affected, the old man could not help bursting into tears afresh.

"Get my clothing," said Mr. Palmore to his wife, "I must leave for New York as quickly as possible. I can travel now, thank God. The war-cry sounds no

more; but oh, oh, my poor child! had she tried to reach her own dear home, and died here, I, like Jacob, could lie down and die in peace."

With the assistance of Lucinda, his wardrobe was soon ready; it had been plentifully sprinkled by the tears of both, as they packed it.

"Don't weep so much, girl," said her master to her, in a feeling tone. "If your Miss Medora is dead, tears cannot bring her back; and if she is living, money cannot keep her in the North. Now the war is over, I will fetch her home at the risk of my life."

Lucinda said, low to herself, as she left the room: "God grant dat Miss Medora libes, and dat dear little baby, and dat dey come home to us again; den dis chile would be happy. I don't care about de niggers all being free; I will stay wid Miss Dora."

So saying, she hurried into the kitchen to tell Joe to put the horses to the carriage, to take her master to the steamboat. As she approached the coachman, he looked surprised at the girl, and said:

"What is the matter, Lucinda?"

"De Lo'd-a-massy, Joe, poor Miss Dora is dead; and ole marster is gwine to fetch her body home, all de way from New York, if she ain't buried afore he gits dere. And, if she is, he is gwine to take her up and lay her here in de ole grave-yard."

"You don't say so," cried Joe, as much astonished as the girl was; "how eber did you hear dat?"

"Ole marster got a letter dis afternoon," replied the girl, weeping all the while.

"If dat is so, she mus' be dead; but Joe don't believe it. I think dat Miss Dora ain't so sick, but will come home, and lib on de ole plantation yet. I guess she is only gittin' tired of dat Yankee husband she done married some years ago."

"What make you tink dat, Joe?" asked Lucinda.

"Bekase I had a quar imagination some weeks ago, and saw her come home, an' she was married to anoder man dan dat ole gentleman she went away wid. He was dead, and she was married to a fine young man."

"I hope so," ejaculated Lucinda, and wiped away her tears. Joe's queer imagination seemed to be a great consolation to the heart of the girl.

In a short time the carriage was ready, and Mr. Palmore took leave of his wife in tears, and hastened to the boat. The feelings of Mrs. Palmore can better be imagined than we can depict them. Days and nights passed slowly away, to a mother who was waiting to receive the corpse of her daughter, on the way to the homestead to be interred. Oh! what acute suffering the parent of our heroine endured for many days.

Colonel Palmore came home, and found his father gone; and when he heard the reason of his absence, he fainted; he loved his sister dearly. As the poor old woman bathed the temples of her son in cold water, she said, in a low tone:


"Oh, mercy! my son was spared on the field of battle, and now is he going to die? All my children are to be taken from me. I have sinned in the sight of heaven, and my affliction is great." Her conscience

smote her for all that passed. She knew too well that she had encouraged Medora to marry the lawyer.

But Jasper recovered from the shock, and was soon himself again.

CHAPTER XIII.

MEDORA AND HER FATHER REUNITED.

HE spacious building at Edge Hill had long been silent. Nearly five years the war-cry was heard, which augmented the trouble. And, from the day when Medora had left the old homestead, the house had appeared dreary. No more songs were sung. Her fine-toned Steinway piano and Spanish guitar had not been opened nor touched a dozen times. Her parents wanted to send the instruments to her, but not receiving a letter in so long a time, it was no more thought of, for her husband was able to buy all she needed. But now the funeral services were next expected. Her little canary bird folded its wings, and sang no more songs. How strange this was! The soft tread of a cat could be heard as it walked through the silent house, everything was so still. The only sounds in the dwelling were sobs and groans from the old lady and the colored girl Lucinda. Many of the slaves had left; but two or three house-servants would not leave. The acute sufferings of the mother of our heroine can only be imagined by persons who have suffered likewise. Conscience—conscience, the midnight tormentor—racked the heart of Mrs. Palmore until she was sick. She knew that something must

have been wrong, from the fact of her daughter not having written until she was prostrate upon a sick bed; that was sufficient to induce the parent to believe that all was not gold that glittered. What a fine excuse were the national troubles for the lawyer, before he fell asleep beneath the waves of the Hudson. Little did the mother know the sufferings that her innocent child had endured; little did the old lady dream that she had been the first spoke in the wheel which bore her daughter onward to misery untold. She had encouraged her child to marry a man whom she could not love. Oh! that every parent, every relative who has the care of a young female, may remember the fate of Medora Palmore, and also remember the agony of an unfeeling mother—for now the time has arrived for Mrs. Palmore to be punished for her sins. The reader has seen that Medora has passed through the fiery furnace of affliction. The oven had been heated seven times hotter than usual, but the angel of God descended and quenched the flames; she has come forth untouched, as was the case with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Who can distrust their Maker? Is there a being on earth who could be so vile as to forget the great Supreme, who watches all our actions and all our thoughts? He rescued her at a midnight hour, when an assassin attempted to shoot her in bed. He rescued her from a watery grave, when her life was a second time attempted. He also rescued her from Mount St. Vincent, and she became the wife of the

choice of her heart. She had endured all the taunts of the radical lawyer in slavery; he often called her the doll of viscurva, and tantalized her all he could, when at home, in regard to slavery—just as if she had ruled the Constitution and the United States. But, as yet, the frantic mother does not know of all these mysteries. She is weeping and moaning, anxiously expecting the arrival of her husband; and her heart sickens when she thinks of the approach of the corpse of her daughter.

Reader, should you have a mother, just let her imagine herself in the wreck of mind in which is the mother of Medora.

At this time, the mansion at Edge Hill is almost draped in mourning; and, in this wretched state, we will leave the family for a short time, and return to the bride and groom.

The reader has seen the happy union between Medora and Eugene, but there is one more scene of pleasure to be witnessed before they leave New York. Mrs. Appomore sat one evening rocking and singing to her babe, while Eugene gazed into her eyes, as though he really believed her to be an angel, when a low rap was heard at the door. The young mother ceased her lullaby, while Eugene stepped softly to the door, and opened it.

A tall old gentleman entered, bowing very politely, and asked if Mrs. Bruster was in. As his voice fell upon the ear of Medora, she sprang forward into his arms, exclaiming:

“O heavens! my father, my father! my long-absent father!” Screaming with ecstasy: “My dear, dear father!”

The old man burst into tears, pressing her to his heart, and exclaiming:

“Thank God! thank God! My child! my child! Oh! my lost Medora. You are alive, my long-lost child!” was all he could utter, while the tears trickled down his withered cheeks.

Our heroine could not utter a sentence, but “Father, dear father!—I am so happy, so happy!” and, burying her face in his bosom, she wept as though her heart would burst. Some persons weep for joy, which is strange to us. Reader, here is a darling child restored in health and happiness to a tender father, who loved her as dearly as his own life.

“But where is your husband—the lawyer?”

“Oh! dear papa; he is dead! He was accidentally drowned.”

“You are a widow, then?” said her father.

“No, no;” she replied.

Eugene stood amazed, but enjoyed the scene. After Mrs. Appomore had collected her thoughts, she exclaimed:

“Oh! my dear parent, we are once more happy, and here is a husband of my own choice.” She then presented the artist to her father; they clasped each other's hands as father and son. She put the sweet little Ida into his arms, saying: “Here is another cherub for you to caress.”

The old man smiled as he took the pretty babe in his arms, pressed it tenderly to his heart, and kissed it many times, exclaiming :

"God bless you, my child! This is too much pleasure, Medora," was all the old man could utter.

Oh! was ever love more tender than that which existed between James Palmore and his amiable daughter? The happiness which they enjoyed was supreme.

(If our lives were never embittered by suffering, we could not enjoy pleasure when it comes. If we are laid upon a bed of thorns, then we know how to appreciate a couch of roses. } And Medora Appomore had passed through both scenes in life, as the reader has already seen. She asked many questions about her mother, brother, and all her acquaintances. Her father could talk but little, and did not say much for the evening. He appeared truly overpowered. He gratified her wishes in conversation as far as he was able; and, after sitting up quite late, they retired. Mr. Palmore had not slept so soundly for years, as on this night of his arrival at the hotel. He had expected to find his daughter dead, or dying; or, perhaps, interred. How great, then, was his revulsion of feeling on the following morning? He asked a few questions about her first husband, which Medora promptly answered; telling him what a sad fate the lawyer had met, and that she, like many other young widows, had found one whom she fancied, and had married again. All now was right.

The next day, when the chambermaid came to ar-

range the room, Mrs. Appomore saw a new face—a different girl from the one who had hitherto waited upon her. Upon looking more closely, who should the new-comer be but Irish Mary, who had saved her life. As the girl approached Medora, to ask some question, she stepped back in amazement.

"Do you know me?" said Mrs. Appomore.

"I have seen you, ma'm," said Mary. "You look like a lady I once lived with, but you are much stouter than she was."

"What was her name?"

"Mrs. Bruster, ma'm."

"And where did you live with her?"

"At a beautiful country-seat, on the Hudson, ma'm, And she was a dear, kind lady, I assure you, ma'm."

"I am the same lady, Mary," said Mrs. Appomore.

"The Lord be praised! An' shure, ye be the identical lady, I do be believing;" and, seizing the hand of the bride, Mary gave it a hearty squeeze, and the tears streamed down her rosy cheeks.

"Ah! Mary," said Medora, much affected, "you once saved my life, and I have often prayed to God to protect you through this vale of tears."

"Thank you, ma'm; and its meself that has often begged the howly Vargin to protict ye also."

"What has become of Thomas?" asked Medora.

"Tommy and myself are married now, ma'm," said Mary, smiling through her tears.

"Indeed! And so you are married?"

"Yes, an' Tommy is employed in this hotel. I loved

Thomas when we lived in your house; but that black trick he was engaged in, when he was going to help that old man to throw you over in the river, put me out with him. He had to say his beads often, and at last was forgiven. So I married him, and he has proved a first-rate husband."

"I am really glad of it. Well, Mary, I shall perhaps never see you again after to-day; but you will ever have my best wishes and prayers. You were kind to me when I stood greatly in need of it."

"Thank you, ma'm. And I see you have another husband, and a beautiful baby; and a fine man does your husband look to be."

"Yes; and a good man, Mary, which is superior to all else," replied Mrs. Appomore.

"Sure enough, and that is the truth, ma'm."

In her joy at meeting her former mistress, Mary had almost forgotten her duties; she now hastened from the room, saying that she would return again. Left alone, Medora fell into deep thought. She remembered more vividly all that had passed between her and Mr. Bruster; the vision of Mary recalled everything. But she cast aside those gloomy thoughts, and remembered her dear husband, father, and child; and the thought of going back to her old dear home in Virginia, with the choice of her heart, and meeting all her old school-mates, banished her sad feelings. She knew that many of her gentleman acquaintances had fallen in the war, but yet she was happy.

The morning was fine, the sky clear; all nature

appeared to inhale the pure oxygen which invigorates mortals while upon earth. Colonel Appomore and his wife were taking their last stroll up Broadway, previous to leaving New York. As they wandered along the street, they met Mr. Palmore. He smiled, and said, as they approached each other:

"Now, my dear daughter, you must bid farewell to New York, and the Northern States, for I wish you and your husband to go home with me, and there pass your days, at Edge Hill, on old Virginia's soil. The slaves are all free, but some are still there, and we could not drive Lucinda and Joe away; so you will see them again."

She laughed, and asked Eugene if he was willing to go.

"Yes, my love; you know I am. I am like Ruth, who followed her mother-in-law into a strange land—'Where thou goest I will go; where thou diest I will die; thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God.'"

"Strong language," said the father; and they laughed at the enthusiastic husband.

Returning to the hotel, they were all ready to leave, when Mary came rushing in to bid them farewell.

"This was one of Mr. Bruster's servants," said Medora to her father; "she was a faithful girl, and one of my kindest friends."

"Is that so?" said the old man, smiling.

Mr. Palmore then opened his pocket-book and presented a large bill to the astonished girl. He also

told her, if she ever got into trouble to write to him, and he would relieve her; and gave her his address.

The girl was enraptured; she had never had so much money in her life at one time. She courtesied, and wept, and implored the Virgin Mary to bless them all their lives, with all the sincerity of her heart. Mrs. Appomore then made her some handsome presents, such as she thought would be of most use to a working girl. The package was left on a bureau, with Mary's name marked thereon. As they were about to enter the carriage, Thomas came running up to them, and, with tears in his eyes, begged the good lady to forgive him for his sin, saying that he remembered the past, and had atoned for all, through the mercy of God and the Holy Virgin.

Medora smiled, and bade Mary and himself farewell, forgiving all of Tommy's frailties, and begging them to live happily together. The vehicle rolled away; they soon reached the depot, and the Virginians were on their way home. There was much to mourn, when they reached their home, as many of the neighbors had fallen in the army; but Providence had fought the rebellion, and it was now ended.

The reader must suppose that Mrs. Palmore had suffered quite enough during this long period of suspense. The delay of her husband only confirmed her in the belief of the death of her daughter. Oh! how keenly she was punished for her wicked, mercenary feelings. This old lady was an exception to Southern character, for there are but few who love money so well.

She had been the cause of her daughter marrying a man who had embittered a portion of her life with sorrow. The cup had been drained to the dregs; but Medora had survived it, and now the old woman is getting her draught in return. God never intends His creatures to be punished innocently. He, at some future day, will permit the aggressor to fall into trouble in some way; and, if they are not overtaken in this world, the next sphere of their existence will repay them for all their wickedness done while here. Darkness will overshadow them; every wicked person will meet with his reward.

Mrs. Palmore wept like Rachel, and refused to be comforted. As she sat musing alone in her chamber one evening, Lucinda came rushing in, crying out:

"Oh! missus, here is a letter, handed me by a man at de gate; but he is done gone now."

The old lady quickly tore it open, and read the few lines which it contained, which were nothing more than for her to send a carriage and wagon to the steamboat; that they had landed, and were waiting for conveyance. Not a word about Medora. The old lady began to weep afresh; what must she not have suffered for a few hours!

But will the reader sympathize with her? I think not, if they will cast their minds back to the hours of courtship between the lawyer and the beautiful and innocent girl of Virginia. Let them dwell upon the acute sufferings of Medora while Bruster lived; let them remember the mock marriage, his different at-

tempts to murder her, how she begged on her knees for her life to be spared; and, but for Irish Mary, she might have been murdered. The mother was the cause of all, to a greater or lesser extent; but now she suffered keenly for her advice.

They will soon be there, with their melancholy burden; and, poor old creature, she takes a seat in a corner and weeps. Jasper, too, in deep grief awaits the coming of the lifeless body of the loved one to the homestead. Lucinda, weeping at the window, gazes at every passing object, and tells what she sees.

"Let me know, Lucinda, when the carriage arrives," said Mrs. Palmore.

"Yes, missus," replied the girl, and, just at twilight, Lucinda, who had strained her eyes nearly out of her head, exclaimed:

"Dey is comin', missus. Oh! Lord, dey drive like dey is got a corpse in de wagon, sure enough; Miss Dora is dead, for sartin, dey come so slow, missus. I see old marster sit in on de front seat of de carriage, and he has got his handkerchief to his eyes. Look, mars' Jasper, and see how slow dey comes."

As Lucinda ceased speaking, the old lady gave one shriek, and threw herself into Jasper's arms. The carriage drew near, but the mother knew it not; she had fainted. As the vehicle approached the gate, Lucinda sprang forward, saying:

"They are here now, missus."

The old lady opened her eyes, and tried to move, but she could not.

"Wait, mother;" said Jasper, "they will be in directly." He was bathing her temples in cold water, and trying to revive her.

She, in a moment more, shrieked: "Oh! my son, my son, you were spared to me, but now my daughter, oh! my daughter is dead; my darling Medora, my dear child is gone." And she wrung her hands in the most excruciating agony, expecting every moment to see the coffin brought in.

The colored men had rushed from the kitchen to meet the deceased—their beloved young mistress. All was in consternation.

In another instant, Lucinda bounded in with a babe in her arms, and exclaimed:

"Lord, missus, here is Miss Dora's baby. She ain't dead. Here she is."

The old lady raised her weeping eyes, and her daughter rushed into her arms. But her mother could not move a muscle, she lay completely exhausted in such grief, almost insensible.

"O mother, dear mother," exclaimed Medora; that was all she could say, while she buried her face in her mother's bosom, weeping. Mrs. Palmore feebly threw her arms about her child, and said, in a faint voice;

"Thank God! thank God! you are alive."

We will omit a description of the universal transport. The scene was now changed; the joy was overpowering, her father came in, and introduced the new son-in-law. He was received with all joy, and the little infant was almost devoured with caresses. "I am

so happy! I am so happy!" Medora constantly repeated.

Happiness had indeed returned to Edge Hill, and none seemed more delighted than Lucinda and Joe, the house servants, who had been so devoted to their young mistress.

The parents were much pleased with the husband their daughter had chosen, and a happier family was never seen.

The old gentleman gave up the plantation to his daughter and her husband, and the old couple sat down in ease and quietness. Lucinda was as fond of the little Ida as fond could be. She often laughed, and told "Miss Dora" that she had seen her spirit standing upstairs, by her room door, with a baby in her arms.

"And I knowed den, Miss Dora, dat you would come back some day."

The news spread abroad, and, in a few days, Edge Hill was besieged with callers. The meeting between Medora and her bridesmaids was very affecting. In a few weeks after their arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Appomore gave a large wedding party to Colonel Palmore—as he had married the pretty little blue-eyed Meredith, who chattered so about the heroine of "Celia's First Love," on Medora's bridal morning.

The splendid-toned Steinway piano vibrates through the mansion at Edge Hill. The gentle touch of Medora's delicate fingers, while she played her favorite airs of the olden times, extorted both pleasure and pain from many throbbing hearts. Tears of joy, and smiles

of admiration, ran like an electric shock through the large assembly, while the walls of Edge Hill resounded to music and merry laughter once more. The Frenchman was charmed and delighted with the bright eyes and smiling faces of his wife's friends, who welcomed him so enthusiastically to his Southern home. The world to her, seemingly, was now a paradise. The waters of the Rappahannock often recalled to her mind the beautiful scenery of the Hudson. All that had passed was indelibly imprinted upon her loving heart. The scene of pleasure ended the guests quitted the antiquated mansion, leaving the bride and groom to enjoy their felicity, with all the blessings that earth can afford.

Notwithstanding all this excitement and pleasure, Medora never forgot her former friends; neither did she wish to punish her enemies. In a few days after her arrival home, she fulfilled her promise which she had made to Mrs. Maria Bruster, the lady who would have adopted little Ida in case of her mother's death, or had she taken the veil; but, on receiving an answer from a friend, the sad news came that this kind woman had passed into the spirit world! Her life had been a scene of turmoil, disappointment, and sorrow; yet, at her demise, she kept her promise. She had willed the most of her large estate to little Ida, the offspring of her unprincipled, false-hearted, and brutal husband; for he had brought death upon himself, and woe and misery to the hearts of many others.

The place is noted on the Hudson for its romantic

location. The house stands all alone, and at times is uninhabited, as it is a cold, bleak place in winter.

It can be distinctly seen from the cupola of the Grant House, in Catskill. The weeping willow, which is an emblem of melancholy, bends its graceful twigs over a little brook which glides gently through the valley, where wild flowers bloom, and evergreens flourish, which have been so often plucked by the hand of the unfortunate widow of the New York lawyer; for it was in this house that she drew her last breath.

We will not be too accurate in our description of the building, as the property is now owned by strangers, whose ears, perhaps, may have never heard this sad story related.

We now leave our heroine, and her quiet little family in possession of all the comforts of a Southern home; yet they spend much of their time during the summer months at the North. Little Ida is now a grown young lady, and also her two French sisters, Lillian and Gracie, whose beauty would surpass a Catharine of Medicis, or a Cleopatra.

It is amusing to hear the young ladies, every season, disputing over their summer tour. Part of the family are desirous of going to Saratoga. They declare that the water of the Washington Spring, at the Clarendon Hotel, is the finest mineral water in the world, and the most conducive to health. They say that even the shade of the trees which surround the springs, and the grassy mounds, transport their imagination to Persia, where the palm-leaves fan the inhabitants.

Others would like to spend more of their time at the palatial Grant House.

"Oh! mamma," says Ida, "I know that Lillian would like to go to Saratoga, but I want to go to the Catskills, where we spent a month last season so pleasantly. I do like a mountainous country. The location is perfectly beautiful, being on the brow of the hill, which is almost perpendicular; and to gaze on those cerulean mountains, which are so vivid to the eye, far and near, is perfectly enrapturing. The air is pure, and the flowers are fragrant, that one almost imagines they are in fairy-land. I enjoyed the scenery from the cupola—as I gazed out upon the beautiful Hudson, which almost inspired me with poetical ideas—and the promenades through those spacious balconies, so much! The drives are beautiful; the surroundings of no Asiatic potentate's dwelling could ever surpass these grounds."

"Oh, my dear," said her mother, "you were always enthusiastic in your feelings; and, as you grow older, you become more like your father. I am sorry, but really, my daughter, you are vain, and I fear you may become tyrannical. Such a disposition would be destructive to your happiness forever. However, I hope for the better. But remember your sisters; their tastes must be consulted also, no matter if they are a little younger."

"Oh! ma," said the beautiful blue-eyed blonde, Lillian, her golden ringlets falling gracefully over her shoulders; "I don't care where *I* go, so long as the

guests are congenial, and we can enjoy equestrian rambles and terpsichorean feats."

"Well, my dear," said her mother, "I am very glad you are so easily pleased. I feel quite sure that your father's taste will be to go farther up in the mountains, as he is a great admirer of nature."

"Well," said Ida, turning away from her mother with a dignified air and the tread of a gazelle, "I suppose we will be guided by pa."

"Then we will spend most of our time at the Laurel House," replied her mother—"as your papa lives in a world of his own. He idolizes his wife and children; yet the pencil and brush are his inseparable companions, and I am sure there is no place on the globe, not even the Falls of Niagara, can surpass the Cauterskill Falls, at the Laurel House; and he told me only last week that he was going, principally, to sketch. He remarked that, during his tour in Europe, there was no scenery in Italy which could surpass the grandeur of these falls, where the water rushes in torrents over a peak of rocks 180 feet above the level of the sea, and the lower falls at a height of 80 feet. What sublimity! what grandeur! With what enthusiastic admiration one stands underneath the falls, and watches the water as it pours in torrents down the precipice, dashing its silvery spray over the flinty rocks, foaming like the sea-waves! Could we wish a more sublime aspect in nature? One other point he named that he would like to sketch, was Sunset Rock, which, no doubt, will make equally as fine a picture. But the entire surroundings

of this place are so exquisitely magnificent that even the talent of a Michael Angelo would be inadequate to the task of picturing the far-famed summer resort."

Just as Mrs. Appomore had finished her remarks, her husband entered, with a smile on his countenance, asking:

"What is the meaning of this tableau?"

"Why, dear," replied his wife; "we were only discussing our summer tour, up North."

"Well, where did you decide to go, darling?"

"Just where you please, husband."

"You know what I said the other day in regard to our travels. We shall visit several places this summer, but spend the most of our time at Schutt's Laurel House. I told you I wished to make sketches of the prominent points of Cauterskill Falls. I do not know but that my sketches may have been better, in our days of sadness, than they would be now; but, being particularly fond of scenery on the Hudson, I still cling with tenacity to its surroundings."

Here the conversation ended, and we leave our readers to judge for themselves how smoothly the lives of our heroine and her little family glided along over the rugged paths of life.

We hope that our story may make a good impression on the mind of mercenary parents and relatives; and we also trust that the Christian fortitude with which Medora bore her trouble will enable others to bear up, under similar circumstances—for the sting of misfor-

tune is truly unpleasant—perceiving the power and wisdom of God exhibited in this tale. We have endeavored to depict vice in its true colors, and to give virtue its real merit and due reward.

Perhaps our readers would like to know whether our heroine ever gave her parents a history of her troubles during the many years of her absence from home. We are happy to say that she did. As she had never been deceptive in any respect, she could not keep the important story from her best friends. And we hope our readers will remember, that when children are born of parents who married for true love, their offsprings are more intellectual, amiable, and more likely to live to old age.

During the recital, the old couple were deeply affected, and they could but rejoice, like Jacob of old when he beheld Joseph.

James Palmore exclaimed: "I can now die in peace," and, using his own quotation on the morning that his daughter left Virginia as a bride: "All is well that ends well!"

Mrs. Sarah A. Wright's New Books.

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Now that our story is ended, we will try and amuse our readers with a series of poems and sketches on different summer resorts, which will no doubt interest persons who enjoy travels.

THE LAUREL HOUSE,

AT

THE CAUTERSKILL FALLS.

LEAVING Catskill village for the mountains on the Clove road, the scenery is grand and imposing, winding round and round the hill till we reach the summit. To the left as we pass on, we cross Moore's Bridge, where the water comes leaping and dashing its furious spray over a peak of mossy rocks of tremendous height, flowing down the brook, passing on through the grove. The road is richly shaded with birch, maple, and fir. As we pass on, if in the evening, the silvery moonbeams fall on the shrubbery like so many glistening diamonds. When we ascend the hill, we behold an opening between the trees; then a beautiful mansion of modern structure meets our gaze, located in a grove near the Cauterskill Falls, which have become so noted in history. Standing on the piazza, in front of the mountains, we view a perfect landscape of loveliness. The Round Top rises before us in its azure grandeur, overlooking hill and valley; then, turning to the left, we see High Peak raising its lofty head towards the skies. This location cannot be surpassed in America.

We must not omit the romantic spot called Mary's Glen, as it is one worthy of particular notice. It is a beautiful ravine, shaded with tall trees and shrubbery, through which runs a gurgling brook, where pansies and wild flowers bloom. It is not necessary to dwell but a moment on the falls, as we have already described them in our story. We can only say that the Cauterskill Falls are grand, sublime, and no spot on earth that we have ever visited can vie with these rocky caves and lofty peaks. To behold the hand of God in Nature's work is truly elevating to the mind.

There is a gradual descent from the portico to the falls; fine grounds, shaded with evergreens; and the fragrance of

flowers is wafted on the morning breeze. At the descent of the hill is the Spray house, which stands on a platform projecting a little over the falls, where there are all kinds of refreshments which can be enjoyed by the guests. Here we can view the towering mountains, the sunken valleys, twinkling stars, and gushing waters which come dashing their furious foam over a precipice of rocks 180 feet above sea-level, sending their snow-white spray over the stony cliffs with tremendous force, and gliding on down over the second falls, which are eighty feet above the surface. This is one of Nature's grand panoramas, which leaves an impression on the mind never to be erased. We can gaze on, on, until the soul's admiration is truly gratified. Turning from this entrancing picture, we stroll through the grove, where there are rustic seats and benches. There one can sit and watch the scenery around, by sunlight or moonlight, and be reminded of Robert Burns and his Highland Mary while sitting under the gay green birch, and inhaling the fragrance of the hawthorn blossoms.

The Sylvan Lake is one of noted interest, as there are pleasure row-boats for the accommodation of the guests. This is truly a Paradise, but not Milton's "Lost." The croquet grounds are beautifully shaded, where all can enjoy this game. The billiard rooms are large, airy, and as comfortable as the main building. There are fishing ponds and shooting grounds connected with this resort, which is a luxury rarely heard of. It is pleasant to enter the splendidly-furnished parlors, where everyone is perfectly at home, and can enjoy, on a cool morning, a cheerful wood-fire in the good old-fashioned Franklin. It is also truly gratifying to behold the elegance of the table, on entering the dinning-room, and view the shining silver and clean linen. The greatest attractions are the pleasant faces and kind hearts of the proprietor, L. Schutt, and his lovely little wife, who is always trying to render her guests happy. We will close our article by writing a poem on Sunset Rock, at the Laurel House, which attracts so much attention, while the beautiful orb of day is resting its last rays on the towering fragments.

THE RISING AND SETTING SUN.

WRITTEN AT SUNSET ROCK.

I respectfully dedicate this Poem to MRS. LEWIS SCHUTT, of the Laurel House, Cauterskill Falls.

THOU glorious orb, supremely bright,
Thou art shining o'er the hills,
To show thy vast and glorious light
O'er rocks and running rills.
Thou art the eye from the upper world,
That overlooketh land and sea ;
No mortal can resist thy power,—
The rose bendeth its leaf to thee.

Thy scorching touch is withering, too ;
The flower beareth not thy heat ;
It blooms, it fades, it droops and dies—
Not so with the golden wheat.
Thy beams come forth with the morning light,
From a brighter world on high ;
Thy rays, illuminating the broad earth,
Spread clear for us the blue sky.

The eye that watches from other worlds
Is fixed in a sphere above ;
It reviews the earth as it revolves around,
And we confess that " God is love."
There is no orb in Heaven's high dome
Can compete with thy bright rays ;
Thy course is onward, and still the same ;
The world will ever on thee gaze.

CLARENDON HOTEL,

SARATOGA SPRINGS.

WHILE on business at Saratoga a short time ago, we were taking a morning walk up the main street in search of the Washington Springs. On ascending the hill we beheld a tremendous building, situated on very elevated ground, surrounded by porticoes, in a shady grove, where umbrageous trees wave their tender branches over green mounds, which form a circle around a portion of the building. From this hotel extends a long porch, through which guests can pass to the Washington Springs without touching their feet to the ground. While gazing on this exquisite structure, which is so luxuriously furnished, an idea came into our mind—What a great convenience this must be, particularly to invalids, as they can reach the springs, which are but a few steps from the door, and enjoy the invigorating waters this well-known spring produces ! The mineral being a tonic, there are no springs in Saratoga can surpass this water. It may be necessary to make a few comments on the dining-room, as it is rare that such a room is seen with so many chandeliers, whose pendants droop like diamonds, which dazzle the eye of the beholder. Every luxury the market can afford is spread before the guests, scientifically cooked. It is well known that the Lelands are renowned as hotel-keepers.

SPRING-TIME.

I respectfully dedicate this Poem to CHARLES E. LELAND.

WRITTEN AT WASHINGTON SPRING, SARATOGA.

O SPRING, revivifying spirit—hail, all hail !
Rejuvenating nature with thy smile.
The valleys laugh and sing, green hill and vale,
The leafy trees all clap their hands the while ;

And crickets chirp, and bullfrogs' twanging chords
 Delight the ear, while sea-birds on the wing
 Kiss sparkling waves. Creation without words
 Thus breathes a jubilant to balmy SPRING.

Shall we be mute, nor join the choral choir?
 Ah no, with "deeds, not words," we'll emulate
 Another spring—rekindle Nature's fire,
 Man's *wintered* spirit to resuscitate.
 As freely thou receivest, freely give;
 For "Mercy is twice blest"—the *Almoner*
 With the recipient only loves to live—
 Like Spring, reviving human hopes with her.

For hath not FLORA's magic wand transformed
 The snowy clouds to sun-lit drops of rain?
 Dissolved earth's frosty mantle, aye, and warmed
 Each honeyed calyx? Joy's returned again!
 The snowdrop, jonquil and unnumbered flowers;
 Their resurrections, e'en from crystal urns
 Are hailed with rapture, and this world of ours
 Is "Paradise Regained"—when Spring returns.

Then hail, prolific Genius! and instill
 In human hearts a love that is divine,
 Invigored by keen blasts—cold cannot kill
 The glowing sons of God. With bread and wine
 Mete out the Sacrament; let generous grace
 Raise Gratitude; pluck out Want's *frigid* sting;
 Let tears of joy baptize the human face,
 As ice, to dewdrops, is transformed by Spring.

THE DELAVAN HOUSE,

ALBANY, N. Y.

It may seem monotonous, to some, to follow on in a series of sketches of this kind; but, as the season is approaching, we do not know that it is out of place to speak of the different places of pleasure resort, while there are so many seeking summer homes. In our visit to Albany, we called to see a friend who was stopping at this hotel. Although we knew the reputation of the Lelands as hotel-keepers could not be surpassed in this country, yet we must confess, the elegance of this house is truly dazzling to the eyes. We feel quite sure that no place in Paris or London can even compete with the magnificence of the Delavan. What might astonish one is the moderate price of board, considering the luxuries which are spread before their guests.

CHARLES E. LELAND,


Proprietor.



CONTINENTAL HOTEL,

SARATOGA SPRINGS.


WE do not doubt but that there are many persons who will be delighted to hear that there is one hotel whose proprietor is a physician, as we are always liable to sickness. This house has been refitted, handsomely furnished, and will be kept as a first-class hotel during the summer months; but in fall and winter as a medical institute, by N. Bedortha, M. D., who is so well known to the people of Saratoga, having had sixteen years' experience in that town. Many of his patients can testify to having received the greatest benefit, in a short time, with but little expense or trouble. Guests can avail themselves at all times of medical skill and advantages to receive treatment adapted to their cases. The various baths, well-cooked food, and neat table are very great attractions to the house. This hotel contains large rooms; the sick can be accommodated with good nursing, and those who enjoy health are surrounded by the society of congenial guests. Strangers should not overlook this sketch; it may prove to their interest, if they visit Saratoga. Prices are moderate, and every attention is lavished upon the guests. Before making up your mind, call on Dr. Bedortha, and see his elegant establishment, and you will want to stay with him during the season.



WOODSTOCK HOTEL,

AT THE FOOT OF THE CATSKILLS.

WE are very happy to learn that J. E. Lasher has opened the hotel above named. We truly regret his misfortune in losing the Overlook Mountain House. The news ran through our heart like an electric shock. Having lost all by fire once ourselves, we know how to sympathize with others who have met the same misfortune. We feel assured, if the guests who spent their summers at the Overlook will avail themselves of the opportunity of making a tour to Woodstock, they will find Mr. and Mrs. Lasher the same genial souls, knowing how to manage a hotel with as much discipline as they did when they were at the top of the mountains. They are equally as capable of making people happy as in the days gone by. We do not doubt for a moment but that Woodstock will become as famous as was the Overlook, for the scenery which surrounds it is most beautiful. His vehicles are regularly at West Hurley, to meet guests at the cars.



CIRCULAR STREET HOUSE,

SARATOGA SPRINGS.

IN noting the various places of pleasure resort, we should not overlook a very prominent private boarding-house on Circular Street, between Phila and Spring Streets, opposite Dr. Strong's celebrated Institute. There are many wealthy persons who are sufficiently able to pay the prices of the most extravagant hotel, but who would prefer a more quiet home, where they can enjoy spring water and lovely scenery, and where the noise and bustle of fashionable life is excluded. To such persons we can recommend the Circular Street House, as a large, commodious building in modern style, elegantly furnished, and having every comfort heart can wish. Only three minutes' walk to the Congress and Hathorn Springs.

J. PALMER,
Proprietor.



AMERICAN HOUSE,

SARATOGA.

THERE will be crowds of strangers this season at Saratoga; this we do not doubt, and it is always necessary to know, when we travel, where to find a first-class hotel; and, as experience is always the best teacher, we can cheerfully recommend the American. Having stopped at this house a few weeks ago, we know it is kept in first-class style—fine airy rooms, good board, and the most cordial attention.

BENNETT,
Sole Proprietor.

—o—

HUESTIS HOUSE,

SARATOGA.

AMONG our sequestered rambles while we were in Saratoga, looking a little way off from the Clarendon, we noticed a handsome building, which is kept as a first-class boarding house. We know there are many persons who will be glad to learn that there are such houses at this pleasant summer resort, as they would prefer a secluded life when they visit this watering place for health only. This commodious building has a piazza surrounding it, shaded by a row of beautiful trees, which evidently is a great attraction to the house in hot weather.

J. L. HUESTIS,
Proprietor.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

MUSIC, it is said, hath charms to tame the savage breast. We feel sure that music has a great impression on the mind of every one. King David, the great poet, spoke of the harp of a thousand strings. We are sure that the old king, as he was so fond of music, would have been charmed to listen to the Ernst piano, which is one among the best-known instruments in New York. It has an exquisite tone, and we would never weary of the music which this instrument produces. It was established in 1840. Sole successors to Lighte, Newton & Bradbury, manufacturers of first-class pianos.

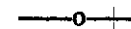
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The Way to Catskill.

THOSE who want to go to this beautiful summer retreat, made poetic by its surroundings and the genius of some of our best authors, will adopt our advice to take the steamers *New Champion* or *Walter Brett*, Captains Black and Donahue, leaving New York every evening, at 6 o'clock, from foot of Canal Street, and enjoy the magnificent scenery of the noble Hudson, surrounded by every comfort and attention an earnest desire to please can suggest. No dust, no noise, but the cool, swift pace that makes one truly happy; and we usually forget the cares of life while enjoying such a pleasant sail up the river.

BLACK & DONAHUE,
Proprietors.



The Popular Line of Steamers.

As there are thousands who may be traveling this summer who would like to know how to get to Saratoga, we would state that the pleasant steamers *Sunnyside* and *Thomas Powell* leave New York daily at 6 P. M., Saturdays excepted; also Sundays at 6 P. M. The fare from New York to Troy is only \$1.00, being 40 cents cheaper than by the way of Albany. It is a very pleasant trip up the Hudson, during the warm weather, as a moonlight sail is always romantic.

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ANTON RUBINSTEIN.

NEW YORK, May 24, 1873.

Messrs. STEINWAY & SONS,

Gentlemen,—On the eve of returning to Europe, I deem it my pleasant duty to express to you my most heartfelt thanks for all the kindness and courtesy you have shown me during my stay in the United States; but also, and above all, for your unrivalled Pianofortes, which once more have done full justice to their world-wide reputation, both for excellence and capacity of enduring the severest trials. For, during all my long and difficult journeys all over America, in a very inclement season, I used and have been enabled to use your pianos exclusively in my 215 concerts, and also in private, with the most eminent satisfaction and effect.

Yours very truly,

ANTON RUBINSTEIN.

DR. FRANZ LISZT.

WEIMAR, September 3d, 1873.

Messrs. STEINWAY & SONS,

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After so much well-deserved praise, permit me to also add my homage and the expression of my undisguised admiration, with which I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

FRANZ LISZT.

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HOME ON THE MOUNTAINS.

Among the beautiful scenery of the Catskills, are many places of Summer resort, but none to be more admired than the one we have selected for our Sketch. This romantic place is located about three and a half miles west of the Mountain House, in the most central part of the Catskills, and on an elevation of twenty-eight hundred feet above tide water. This is surely one of the most delightful spots on this Continent. About half a mile distant is one of the many extra beautiful spots in the Mountains, HAINES FALLS, one of the most noted along the Hudson. In front of the Clifton House the scenery is not only beautiful, but grand. Those lofty old Mountain Sentinels ROUND TOP and HIGH PEAK, with the green and varied drapery rise up in front, and at no great distance, and seem placed there to guard this beautiful spot from the hand of the destroyer. These with their surroundings, recall to mind the words of the wise man, who said: "The flowers appear on earth, the time of the singing birds is come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land; the song birds, the murmuring brooks, the fragrant flowers," are all to be enjoyed by a residence at the Clifton House, which is built in modern style, large and airy, with every comfort that man can wish for. The proprietor sets a fine table, the food is well cooked, everything clean and neat. This is something every one should remember when seeking a Summer home. The guests that frequent this House are intelligent, refined, and wealthy people, who go to the Mountains for genuine pleasure, and not superficial enjoyment, as is too often the case in other places. Many dear little babes are rescued from the grave by enjoying the Mountain air. This Hotel will accommodate from seventy to eighty people.

This comfortable property is for sale, as the proprietor wishes to go South.

P. O. ADDRESS,

FRANK HAINS,

Box No. 836, Catskills, N. Y.