JERRY

A NOVEL OF AMERICAN LIFE.

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OF

YANKEE AMERICAN LIFE.

BY

MARY S. GOVE NICHOLS.

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TO THE "READER" OF JERRY.

The Writer begs the Reader to bear in mind that this novel is what it professes to be—American. It was written in New York, and the Writer had lived from childhood amidst the characters and incidents here described. When she came to England, she submitted a specimen story to an English authoress for her judgment and possible approval. The lady complained that the characters did not speak good English, and asked if she should correct the manuscript. Before she was answered, she said, "But as the characters are American, perhaps they ought to speak American." On this principle "Jerry" was written. The characters think, speak, and act, not as English, but American characters.

The idiom of the English language differs in America from that which prevails in England. Counties in England differ; States in America differ, though not as widely.

The Yankee of the English drama is a compound of the many varieties of idiom in the different States, with a strong infusion of slang. The result may be an amusing caricature, but it is more or less false as a work of art.

The Reader will see in the following pages that the traditions of Royalty remain in the language of Americans, "Good enough for a King," or "a Queen;" the King's English;" "Where there is nought the King must lose his right;" "By George"—are common expressions; and the Writer remembers one old lady who always said, "George a' mercy," instead of "Lord a' mercy." It is true that English proverbs

are mixed with those of home growth; being "sent to Coventry" competes with being "rowed up Salt River;" and "Sure as death and taxes," remained till taxes came again to make the saying legitimate. The Reader will be offended with unusual idioms, and what will seem an unauthorised use of words, unless the American character of the book is kept in mind.

An American has a *fit of sickness*, or is *sick*, instead of having *an illness*, or being *ill*. He has *parlors* in his house, but no *drawing rooms*. A Yankee uses the word *smart* in the sense of active, clever, skilful. Common articles of dress have different names with Americans from those used in England. Ladies' and gentlemen's boots are called *gaiters* if made short. *Trousers* are called *pants*, or *pantaloons*; a *waistcoat* is a *vest*, and an *overcoat* is a *greatcoat*. An American rides on horseback, and he rides in a carriage. He does not take a drive, unless he drives. He calls wheat, rye, oats, and barley, *grain*, not *corn*; only maize, or Indian corn, is called corn. He uses bank-bills, instead of bank-notes. He kindles a fire instead of lighting it; and buys bundles of kindling, instead of bundles of wood. An English lady takes *a cab* and drives to a *draper's*, a *cutler's*, or a *chemist's*. An American lady *rides* in *a hack* to a *dry-goods store*, a *hardware store*, or an *apothecary's*. An English lady buys calico; the American lady buys cotton cloth, or muslin, and *print* is alone *calico* with her. The English say *a reel of cotton*; Americans say *a spool of thread*, and if linen thread is meant, it is so-called. An American lady *gets fat*; an English lady *grows stout*. *Crackers* in America are *biscuits* in Britain; as *griddle cakes* in Boston are *fritters* in London.

And now, having given these few illustrations of differences to explain why this book is not written in good English, the Writer commits it to the Reader.

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JERRY:

A NOVEL OF YANKEE AMERICAN LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

JERRY.

"I TELL you what, Squire Meadows, if that aint the best piece of hoss flesh you've seen lately, then my name aint Jeremiah Gerald Fitz Gerald, or Fitz Gerald Gerald, I can't zacly tell which, seein' my mother had me christened afore I can remember. Names and things gets somehow mixed up in my head. I cal'late that this ere mare will trot a mile in three minutes and forty seconds, in short days in the winter."

"But, Jerry," said Mr. Brandon, "speed is not the one thing needful in a horse for me. I have many jobs to do, plowing, harrowing, going to mill; and besides, my daughters want to drive, and they could hardly manage a horse that goes as fast as a gale of wind. I am afraid such a mare would have her own way with the girls."

"Kind as a kitten, Squire—the children go all round amongst her legs. She'll live on thistles, takes to a side saddle and a petticoat as kind and patient as Jerry, and what's more than all the rest," here the nasal twang became a whisper, and the raw-boned, restless-eyed yankee, known as Jerry Gerald said, hardly above his breath, "*She can't be bewitched.* Granny Sherwood has tried all her spells, can't be done. What do you think of *that?*" He raised his voice, his eye brightened, and he laid his hand caressingly on the mare—and then he added with lengthening features, and

sorrowful tone, "I wish I could say as much for myself—but I can't—more's the pity. Granny Sherwood got the whip row of me the first time trying, and she's held her own, and no mistake."

Mr. Rawson, the owner of the horse, now came forward, and, taking the bridle, turned the small head of the mare away from the light, and undertook to exhibit her good points. The enthusiasm of his groom was beginning to be quenched in his superstition.

A film had begun to cover the right eye of the mare, and the left was becoming a very little dim. Mr. Brandon wanted a horse, and Rawson wanted to be quit of one; but he wished Jerry's assistance in selling the beautiful blood mare. Jerry was what the Irish call "an innocent," the Scotch "daft," and the learned *non compos*. The people with whom he lived variously designated Jerry. Some called him "underwitted," others "half baked," some said he was "below par," and others said "Jerry knows enough, only he is *betwattled*."

He had started fair in the world, was a bright and even precocious lad, and an excellent scholar. At fifteen he begun to have epileptic fits, lost the power to reckon, and soon was bereft of all reliable usefulness. His widowed mother was deprived of her last hope and stay in her son, and died of sorrow. Jerry had migrated from one farmer to another, when he could work, and had found rest in the poorhouse, when he could not. After the death of his mother, in his first sorrow, he went, as idiot slave, to old Mrs. Sherwood, and carried for ever the idea, burned into his brain, that she was a witch, and had put a spell on him, that all time would fail to remove. This spectre followed the poor fellow everywhere, and if any were kind to him, as many were, this death's-head always intruded.

Jerry had lived a year with Rawson—had done all sorts of drudgery; had lived on crusts and bones, and odds and ends of every kind, eked out with apples; and had been drunk on cider, at all possible, and some seemingly impossible opportunities. In the winter he took to the barn, for comfort and company. He found warmth in the hay and straw, and companionship with the cattle, especially with the bright, beautiful mare, Bess Bite.

In the spring Rawson discovered that a close, warm stable, too little work, and a great deal too much Indian corn meal,

kindly administered by Jerry, had given Bess the hives; a semi eruption had come to the skin, and the eyes began to film. Instead of putting her on short allowance, with more work, and frequent washing and rubbing, Rawson decided to sell her.

Jerry had a great liking for Miss Caroline and Miss Wilhelmina Brandon, and great was his joy, when he discovered that Mr. Brandon wanted a horse. Poor Jerry had originally a loving heart, and Bess had won it, in a sort of communion with Mr. Brandon's young ladies. A bright thought had struck him, the brightest since the spell had been upon him.

If he could induce Mr. Brandon to buy Bess, and take him to take care of her, and the rest of his stock, and sometimes put a saddle on the beautiful mare, and see one of the young ladies ride her, what a happy fellow he would be—only that he was bewitched.

Jerry knew that Bess was getting blind, and that she was otherwise "out of health," but he concealed the fact with a care worthy of Rawson.

To Mr. Brandon's great surprise, the jockey offered the horse at a fair price, and Mr. Brandon closed the bargain, after Caroline had admired Bess, and Minnie had spoken kindly to Jerry, and patted the mare till she laid her small head on the sweet girl's shoulder.

"Now, Squire, the hoss is you'rn," said Jerry, "and I have a proposition to make—I want to throw myself into your bargain, free, gratis, for nothing. Bess would never thrive without me. Rawson haint got no use for me now. I'll live in the barn, and won't be no trouble, nohow. I can milk cows, feed hogs, chop wood, pick chips, and go to mill, and to meetin', though that's no use, for I haint got no clothes for that sort of work. Can I come with Bess, Squire?"

"Nonsense, Jerry," said Rawson, "take the saddle and bridle and go home about your business;" and he frowned savagely.

Minnie Brandon looked beseechingly at her father, and he smiled kindly on her.

"Mr. Rawson," said Jerry, "I should be too lonesome with only the saddle and bridle; could not stan' it nohow. I've sold the hoss for you, and I want the luck of getting myself throwed in."

"You can stay," said Mr. Brandon, and Rawson was

obliged to submit to the loss of his white slave, lest Jerry should expose the incipient blindness of poor Bess.

Jerry took off the saddle and bridle, and calling to the horse, as if she had been a dog, he started fort he barn. She followed him knowingly, but Rawson called out,

"None of your nonsense, Jerry; carry home the saddle and bridle for me, if you *have* got a new place."

"Look o'here," said Jerry, with a wink; "Bess wants her eyes wiped with a curry comb, so she can see how she likes her new quarters, and I'm the chap to tend to it, so good mornin' cap'n; Bess and I'm off."

Mr. Brandon paid Rawson, and invited him to drink some peach brandy, but the jockey refused—he never drank, not even wine, or cider—the people said because he could not be as sure of his wits for cheating, and might betray secrets, which he considered safest in his own keeping.

Minnie was immediately busy with benevolent thoughts for poor Jerry. To gather a decent wardrobe for him from her father's cast-off clothing was the first thought, and to wean him from the horse to the house, was the second.

All mortals love something, or they would die of a heart famine. Jerry loved the black mare, Bess Bite.

Before Sunday, Minnie had transformed Jerry's outward man, by a judicious selection from her father's wardrobe, and considerable planning, altering, and patient industry, and with the addition of a new vest, striped black and gold colour, the stripes running around.

"This ere jacket is jest the thing, Miss Minnie," said Jerry, "cause my heart can't break, when it's hooped with gold," and he ran his fingers exultingly along the yellow stripes. That next Sunday Jerry forgot that he was bewitched. Minnie was very happy for him, but Caroline had no part in this happiness. Poor Jerry was not even "Papa's hired man," to her, for he had no wages. He was only a miserable being, who was to do chores, and be kept out of the way. Miss Caroline Brandon was not troubled by her piety, or her benevolence, but she was more acceptable to the society of Easton, than her sister. The secret of this was a superficial conciliation. She knew everybody's weak point, just as she saw Fred Sherwood's love of horses. If an old maid wanted to conceal the fact that she was thirty-five, Caroline asked her with the most innocent face in the world, if she were

twenty-five, and when the lady said "I am more than that," Caroline said, "Is it possible!"

Caroline's highest desire was "to do well in the world." To do well with the two sisters, was "the differentest thing in nature"—with Caroline it meant to be respected, and well spoken of in her circle—she rather liked to be called proud—it was a sort of distinction, and added to the value of the notice she bestowed on people. To "do well in the world" also meant "to marry well"—and to marry well was to be the wife of the richest man in Easton, to have the best house and horses, the finest furniture and carriages, and to carry off the palm from all others, as far as worldly goods and consideration were concerned.

To do well with Minnie's definition, was to have a conscience, and live according to its dictates, to make her friends happy, especially her parents, and sister, and servants, and poor Jerry, and to do all the good she could in the world generally. Minnie seemed to her father to have been strayed or stolen from some Paradise of beauty and pure joy—she was more charming to him than the whole nine muses, and beguiled him to a sweet forgetfulness of the "Bleeding Heart" and a great many other painful particulars in his daily life—of which we shall speak presently.

To Mrs. Susan Brandon Minnie was "not half so handsome as *my* Caroline"—Mrs. Brandon was a very sensible woman, generally, but with respect to her daughters she was certainly a good deal cheated.

CHAPTER II.

THE BRANDONS.

I MUST ask my readers to go back with me to the marriage of Mr. Brandon with Mrs. Susan, his excellent wife, and the babyhood of the two young ladies whom I have just introduced.

One morning in "the month of roses," in the honeymoon of "the happy couple," Mrs. Brandon was early awakened by the sound of carriage wheels grating sharply on gravel.

"I am sure that waggon stopped at our house, Mr. Brandon, —there, they have opened the gate, but the bell wire broke last night—now they've shut the gate, and are driving off."

"Your hearing is very acute," wearily responded the husband—he did wish his wife would let him sleep.

"It is four o'clock," said Mrs. Brandon; "I guess I'll get up and see what they took—the white rose bush is in full bloom; may be they have cut it up and carried it off."

Mrs. Brandon hurried on her clothes and went to see what was taken; she found she had gained much, instead of losing little. On the flat smooth door stone, was placed a beautiful basket, lined with pink silk, and stuffed with down; and wrapped in exquisite white merino, there lay in it a little new born babe. It was not dressed, only wrapped in the soft and lovely raiment, such as one sees in the shop windows. Gold glistened over all. All had the look of luxury, but nothing seemed wrought or fashioned by a mother's love; that sweet maternal tenderness that lingers long, industriously, or admiringly, had never shed its hallowing influence over the valuable and beautiful wardrobe. No love nestled in the folds of a cloak for which fifty dollars must have been paid; it never plaited the lace of a cap and a robe, in whose meshes were twined the sorrows and joys, the sighs and weariness, and the comforts too, of a whole year of life.

The infant was clothed consistently with the wealth of nameless parents, bestowed freely on a nameless outcast.

Mrs. Brandon took up the basket; as she did so, she drew it against the white rose bush, and a shower of leaves fell on the little form, as it lay all unconscious of fate or flowers. This would have been a poetical omen to some women, but Mrs. Brandon was wondering where that baby came from; who had left it at her door; and why was it left. She would take it to Mr. Brandon, and see what he thought about it. But he was asleep, and she wanted to see what was in the basket. She put it on the table in the sitting room, and laid the sleeping babe on the sofa, and then she looked at everything in the basket. All was beautiful, but entirely unsuited to a country home. Mrs. Brandon could see that no woman's hand had arranged that little bed. A man had evidently put the pins in the child's drapery, for their points pointed the wrong way, and the beautiful lace cap was sadly crushed. Women are very tender of costly lace; they never

crush it as if it were cobwebs or paper—they love it even when they don't know the difference between what costs six shillings or six dollars, or between what costs ten dollars or a hundred.

At the bottom of the basket there was a little box, and a purse; the box had a Geneva watch enamelled, and set with diamonds, and a chain of curious workmanship, and considerable value; the purse contained one hundred dollars in gold, and a bit of paper, on which was written, "One hundred dollars will be paid quarterly for the maintenance of this child."

Mrs Brandon shook every article of clothing, and beat the basket, and then turned the purse wrong side out, and counted the money again, and then she betook herself to the baby, and removed the pins that the unskilled man's hand had assuredly put in the garments. It could not have been the doctor who secured the babe's clothing, for doctors know how to put in pins. She bared the small rose-colored form, and looked in every fold of its several wrappers. The minute specimen of a woman, that was to be, resented this close scrutiny and lifted up her voice in a very shrill treble, and Mrs. Brandon dropped all, to hush the unwonted noise.

It was a strange gift that had thus come to the young couple, for Henry Brandon and Susan his wife had been hardly a month married. He had been away from his native place since his fourteenth year, and now he was little more than twenty-one. He had come home a few months before in a terrible illness, in which he had nearly lost his life. Nothing saved him, but the tender, unremitting care of Susan Hervey. For months she had nursed him, as if he had been an infant a week old, and he had married her in the first strength that came to him, for the double purpose of preventing scandal, and having his tender nurse always with him.

Henry Brandon had been bred to mercantile business in the city of New York, and but for this terrible illness, he must have made a successful merchant. His disease had left him more like a grave feeble man of forty years, than a young man of twenty-one. Under these circumstances, it seemed less strange that he should marry a girl with no education, or ability for education in books, and with only her innocent goodness and industrial skill for her portion.

Henry Brandon's father entertained the opinion that his son's health could only be restored by country life and its

occupations and careful nursing. He chose rather to see his gentlemanly son married to a young woman, who was little above a servant, than to bury him, but no other consideration would have induced the Brandon family to consent to the union. Indeed they looked for his death as almost certain, and considered his marriage as a dying weakness. The father gave his son a cottage, and land for a garden and nursery. The vicinity to the city made the property valuable, and Henry had saved enough from his salary in the city, to stock his place with young fruit trees, and prettily furnish his house. In six months from the time he came home to endure his dreadful illness, he was probably as far recovered as he ever would be. Mrs. Brandon was nurse, and mother, and a wife, in all good intention, though really only fitted to be a servant, or housekeeper for her husband. She would reverence him always, as country women reverence their minister or doctor. She would always build the fire in the morning, and call her husband Mr. Brandon—that is, she would build the fire till they had achieved wealth, and servants, and to the latest day of her life, she would as soon call the Rev. Simon Jones by his christian name, as her husband.

Seven o'clock was a late hour in Easton for breakfast. The people made the best of their farms and gardens for the city market, and therefore they were early risers. They breakfasted at six, but Mrs. Brandon knew that her husband needed rest, and her delicious breakfast was always served at seven. It was five o'clock now. Mr. Brandon rose sometimes at six, though often he was only ready to come down when the breakfast was on the table.

Mrs. Brandon sat down to dress the baby. It was a plump little beauty, with a great deal of dark hair, and its little meaningless face was very pretty to the motherly young woman. She never once thought of refusing to accept it; if it had been her own child, born at four o'clock that sweet first of July, she would as soon have thought of throwing it upon the care of others. Besides, the golden coins were very acceptable, for most of Henry Brandon's money had been expended in furnishing farm and house, and Susan's only portion came with the baby. It seems much more natural and proper to call her Susan, than Mrs. Brandon.

"I will show Mr. Brandon *my* baby, and *my* purse of money," thought the young wife, who would have been very

happy, but for her excess of wonder. She was continually thinking where *did* the baby come from? Who brought it? Who were its parents? Why did they abandon so lovely a babe? Surely not from poverty—why, ah why? If Mr. Brandon were only awake, he might help her to think. The wonder was postponed by the hunger of the little lady. Ordinarily at this hour the pretty brindled cow had been milked, but nothing had Mrs. Brandon done this morning but wonder and admire, and nothing was she likely to do, unless Mr. Brandon would take the babe.

"I must wake him, he will keep her while I get some warm milk." Thus urged by the infant's need, the tender wife felt excused for disturbing her husband.

"What in the world have you got there, Susan? Whose babe is that?"

"It is ours," said his wife. "Whoever opened the gate this morning left this baby in a basket on the doorstep. Just see her pretty dress, and is not she pretty?"

Mr. Brandon was a gentleman always, and particularly since his illness, but he glared on his wife in anger, when he saw a strange babe in her arms. She had never seen him angry before.

"Have you agreed with somebody to adopt a mystery, and a secret?" said he bitterly.

"What *do* you mean, Mr. Brandon? I don't know any secret: the child was left on the doorstep, and that's all I know about it, as I hope to be saved."

"Who could basely abandon a new born infant?" said Mr. Brandon with a sudden revulsion of feeling. His tenderness mastered his anger, and he buried his head in the bed clothes and wept. He was weak and nervous.

"You should not cry, Mr. Brandon, for there was money in the basket to pay for keeping the baby, and she is a sweet little thing, with a head of hair as pretty as yours. I declare it looks jest like yours."

Mr. Brandon sobbed audibly, and again he said, "Whoever could abandon a tender infant?"

"You are nervous," said Mrs. Brandon; "this baby aint abandoned, but she is hungry. Now you jest cheer up a bit and hold her, while I get some warm milk."

Mr. Brandon did as he was asked to do, but he made an awful affair of it, and was very glad when his wife returned

with the milk, and a teaspoon, and a soft towel, to keep the rich dress from being soiled.

"I must get some plain clothes for the darling—such a lot of flowered spider's webs I never see. What shall we name her, and how shall I ever get breakfast?" exclaimed Mrs. Susan.

I have often thought how ever did our mothers and grandmothers get breakfast with more babes than one, and no help till one child was grown large enough to take care of another. But they did get breakfast, and dinner, and supper, and so did Mrs. Brandon. But it was very hard with all her wonder and admiration, especially when she found that her husband could not lessen the first, or join her in the last.

The only thing that was quite clear in this business, was, that Providence, and some very naughty people had sent Mrs. Brandon a bag of money and a baby at four o'clock in the morning, on the first day of July, 18—.

The day had not passed, when Mrs. Brandon became painfully aware that *her* baby was no welcome gift to her husband. With all the charms of the purse of gold, and all the beauties of a little rosy dumpling of a day old baby, it was evident to Mrs. Susan that her husband did not wish to share her love and care.

"Now you don't want to be No. 2, I can see that plain enough—you have always been A No. 1, and you don't want your nose put out of joint."

"If the babe were yours, dear Susan!" said her husband, annoyed by being called selfish in such vulgar words. "I can't bear to see you slave for the child of another person."

"There aint no slavery, Mr. Brandon, in doing for the ones you love best in the world. I have you and the baby now, and what shall we name her?"

"Call her Juliet—she comes to us in July"—said Mr. Brandon.

"Why not call her Henriett—Ah now I see where Henrietta comes from; your name is Henry, and I would like real well to call her after you."

"Henrietta is not a pleasant name," said he frowning. "She will always be called Hattie, and I can't abide nicknames. Why not call her Susannah?"——

"And have her nicknamed Suzy for me," said the lady almost in anger. "No, Mr. Brandon, if you are so stingy

that you won't give the little dear your name, you may at least find a pretty one for her;—or I'll wait till I can find one that somebody has throwed away."

"Thrown away, Susan dear," said Mr. Brandon gently.

"Well, just as you like, though I've said throwed away ever since I can remember, and it's hard learning old dogs new tricks."

Mr. Brandon was fastidious. He loved pure English, and he disliked vulgar proverbs. He had the instincts and the breeding of a gentleman.

Ah my delicate, dark-haired, and really elegant friend, I pity you; with your nicely selected books, your pure, and even classical English—I pity you. Through the vail that covers your mind, I read these dark words, this bitter moment:—"As long as I live, or till death do us part, I must endure the daily martyrdom of bad grammar, and utter want of companionship. Oh if *she* could have been mine, she whom I worship across the gulf impassable"——

I will read no farther—darker grow the lines in my sight, more bitter the retrospect to the poor invalid, whose breaking heart had been called a brain fever. What is life to him? What is the wife, who will love, honor, and obey him for ever?—I will tell you. Life is a prison, and the poor wife is the sad servant, who waits lovingly upon the prisoner—she is sad and poor, because she must pine for love that can never be hers whether she is conscious of it or not. Let her bind to her heart the outcast babe, let her pray for babes of her own, else she is desolate; but no—no one is desolate who has duties, and faithfully performs them. Let me whisper then to the unequally yoked—grieve not, and aspire not after the impossible—strive not vainly for the love that lives in the fancy of the poet or novelist, but conquer respect and esteem by daily doing, faithfully and tenderly, what thy hands find to do.

"Now, Mr. Brandon," said the kind-hearted Susan, "if you'll find a real pretty name for my baby, I'll forgive you for not loving her—the little dear."

"Caroline means little dear," said Mr. Brandon, "we will name her Caroline, and call her Carrie."

"I thought you hated nicknames," said his wife,—but the baby was named Caroline, and called Carrie.

CHAPTER III.

NOT SO MISERABLE AS HE MIGHT BE.

Some men would have become sour and cynical in Mr. Brandon's place. Others would have grown worldly, and laid up their joys in mortgages and iron safes. Henry Brandon did neither. He did much better—he lived out doors. He did not rise at four o'clock a.m., and wander about till seven, in quest of health, because some strong persons have grown stronger in this way. He got his natural rest, and also his breakfast, before he walked or worked. Then he put himself under the tuition of an excellent gardener, and learned in practical lessons, of as many hours a-day as he could work, all he could teach him; and he read books about all sorts of soils and culture; and he took a quarterly review, two or three magazines, and a weekly and daily newspaper. Mr. Brandon was a pious man and a patient husband. There were some things that he considered "past praying for," and one of these was, that his wife should ever speak the English language;—therefore he endured patiently the hard fate of himself, his unteachable wife, and the maltreated language.

It was strange that Mrs. Brandon should have so much skill in some things, and so little in others. She could keep house, and manage the dairy admirably—she could cook exquisitely any thing that any one ought to eat—she could cut, and make garments, little and large—she did not drug her baby to make her sleep, for she knew how to treat the dear delight to cool, loose garments, a cold bath in the morning, and a tepid one at night; and she fed the babe wisely once in a couple of hours, during its first three months of life, making the interval longer, as the babe grew older. She knew better than to give her pap because a pin was pricking her, or when a tight sleeve had worn the delicate skin off the little arm, or because she was generally uncomfortable. A tumbler of milk, diluted a little with warm water, and sweetened with white sugar was put in the well scalded nurse bottle, for the darling to drink all she wished, and then she was expected to play or sleep till the next meal, and she generally fulfilled such reasonable expectations.

Why should Mrs. Brandon know all this, and more than this, how to win such a husband as hers, by her gentle and

skilful ways, and yet not know a plural from a singular verb, or an adjective from an adverb; and why should she always find herself inextricably bewildered in the labyrinth of words ending in scription? Description, inscription, conscription, proscription, and prescription, always did duty indifferently in Mrs. Brandon's vocabulary, and she would speak of a letter as having been proscribed, or prescribed, or described, but by a strange chance, she always hit upon every *scription* but the right one. Her husband could never divine why a woman who could thread her way through all the mysteries of clear starching, cream cheese, and cake making, could never by any amount of reasoning, see that there was at least the difference of an extra syllable, between portico and Portorico.

The most ungentle thing about Mrs. Brandon, was, that she could not bear correction. It was of no use; she never changed, at least never for the better in pronunciation or collocation. Why then should she be teazed or mortified with criticism, or tormented with fruitless efforts after emendation, which only ended in more inextricable confusion? Why should her husband remind her of her deficiencies, when her efficiency and proficiency were so remarkable? she could never understand the difference made by a prefix.

"I know things, and you know words, Mr. Brandon; every one to his trade, you to your preaching, and I to my mouse traps. I think you and Carrie, dear, would be bad enough off if I studied the *dixonary*, instead of getting your breakfasts and dinners, and making and mending, and doing no end of things for you."

"Susan dear, you know a great deal more than I do," said Mr. Brandon with a sigh, that was a sort of prayer for resignation.

"Now don't go to praising me; I hate soft sawder, as bad as I hate the grammar book, and dixonary, and prepositions, and nouns, and geniflictions, and all the hard words you are always throwing at my poor head;" and Mrs. Susan began to cry, because, as she said very truly, she "could not scold worth a cent, and worse than all, she could not scold *him*." She said *he*, or *him*, to save herself from the stateliness of saying Mr. Brandon on familiar occasions.

Mr. Brandon drew near his wife, and laid his delicate hand on hers.

"You'll never get your hands as hard and brown as

mine, if you work out doors forever," said she, proud of her husband's velvet palm.

"I wear gloves at my work," said he softly, not knowing whether to be ashamed of it or not.

"A cat in gloves catches no mice, and your garden will cost more than it will come to," said the candid Mrs. Susan.

"I think you are right," said the gentleman, "I shall sacrifice my hands." I read again through the vail, "No rose leaf hand can ever again rest in mine. Why then preserve a beauty that is an impertinence in my own, my only home?"

"Sacrifice your hands! you had better use 'em. Let your hands and mine be mates, as we are. If any piece of me was above my work I'd have it ampretated, like poor Joe Sickley's broken leg."

"Amputated, dear," said Mr. Brandon softly.

"There you go again. I am sure I haint no more peace than a toad under a harrow."

Next to bad grammar, Mr. Brandon hated vulgar proverbs. He shrunk into himself, and took down Pericles and Aspasia from his book-shelf. He put it back as if it had been a snake that he was not allowed to kill, and turned to make love to the baby. He could not have done a better or a wiser thing. Mrs. Brandon was conciliated—flattered. "He sees how pretty she is at last," said she mentally, and he did, and he wondered how he could have shunned the little innocent beauty so long. There she sat, with a pink frock, that even Mrs. Susan could not keep clean, with a sweet apple in one hand, and a rattle in the other, looking so happy, and proud, and independent, that no one could help admiring her. Mr. Brandon regarded her earnestly for a few moments. I saw beneath the vail darkness, and then fire, but ere I could read he was gone—out into the solitude of leafless trees, and dead flowers, of ice and snow, and winter, in the country. All this was more congenial to Mr. Brandon's mood than the smiling home, the sweet babe, and the careful wife within.

"He will never learn to help me take care of the baby," said Mrs. Susan to herself, "and I am afraid he'll never take to her. He must like me a deal, to be jealous of that little child. I wonder if he will go on being jealous when he has 'em of his own. I shall have to send mine off in a basket if he does," and she smiled merrily at her own thought alone with her treasure.

The pale dark man pressed his hand upon his side, as if to still the beating of his heart, and walked out upon the crisp snow. It was a sharp day, and he revived under the bracing atmosphere. A diamond is hardly a diamond, if set in lead. Mr. Brandon's home was to him as the leaden setting to the diamond. In the parlour of a merchant prince, where silken raiment rustled, and lily fingers evoked music for admiration or love, where all was rich and redolent of charms, Mr. Brandon would have seemed at home: a gentleman, a man of taste, of culture, a lover of books, and of music, and of intelligent conversation. In such a home, how large and varied would have been his happiness! But now he lived alone in a moderate Siberia with one beautiful thing in his home; and one being only that seemed really to be of the same material as himself; and this was the babe that he shrank from, as from the touch of fire.

"Why was she cast out, so beautiful and innocent? and why was she sent to bless and curse my home at one and the same time? for never can I abide that babe; I see pride, and heartless scorn, and selfish worldliness, written all over her face and form—spoiling her beauty as with mildew and blight, wrapping her young innocence in a poisoned robe, that shall canker all in coming years."

If Mrs. Brandon had known her unhappy husband's thought she would have said, "How awful jealous he must be, to be so mean and bad to *my* baby."

If Mrs. Susan should be the happy mother of a dozen babies in the future, no one of them will ever be so essentially her own as this; she will never say *my* baby with such a sense of property as now. Her husband has no part in her love, in her care, in her joy, or sorrow for this babe. It is hers, and the gold that pays for it makes it doubly hers; and the fact that her husband does not love the darling, makes it trebly hers. He will never be allowed to correct this child, or even advise correction. "Wait till you have babies of your own, and then you may manage them," she said, if Mr. Brandon ventured to remonstrate against any indulgence, which he seldom did, for as a rule he did not notice the babe at all. He seemed to have no eyes for her great beauty, and no ear for his wife's praises of it. "He is so sorry for her being put away from her own, that he can't take to her the leastest bit in the world," said Mrs. Susan to her neighbours. To

herself she said, "How jealous and fussy he is, but then it is all because he likes me so much, that he can't bear *my* baby."

CHAPTER IV.

LETTERS OF EXPLANATION.

INSTEAD of reckoning his blessings, as every poor mortal ought, but which a great many of us forget, especially when we have a multitude to reckon, Mr. Brandon walked on, carrying a weight of depression which made life a heavy burden.

"As long as I live, or till death do us part." This bitter, burning line, I read beneath the vail, as the crisp snow crackles under feet that fall with none of that elastic power, that lifts them with a bound and with no seeming reference to one's own will. With vague and listless step Mr. Brandon bent his way to the village post office. The postmaster handed him two letters. He passed out and broke the seal of one, and continued his walk away from home.

The novelist can read the husband's letters if the wife cannot. The first was from a fellow clerk, a friend and chum of Brandon's. It was dated,—

"New York, New Year's-day.

"MY DEAR HENRY,—The compliments of the season, though I can't stop for them, and would not make a call to-day, if I could help it. True I am happy enough to wade through the sloppy streets, and pay compliments that are like carrying coals to Newcastle; but I want to be alone with my joy to-day, and I want to tell it to my best friend, because you can appreciate it.

"Open your eyes, and your heart, Henry—Cornelia Graham is to be my wife. Yesterday we were engaged. (Mr. Brandon's hands trembled so violently at this point, that he involuntarily tore his friend's letter.) For a year I have been like one in the fire; under the circumstances I could not but despair, and now to have all 'the clouds roll off, and leave my heaven blue,' is almost too much happiness. I had feared all things. Her health has never been firm, and my

prospects have been too poor to allow me to hope that her father would consent to give a darling daughter reared in luxury, to a man who had only a bare competence. But all this is changed now. My Cuban uncle has made me his heir in his lifetime, and I am now the fourth partner with Mr. Graham, having the same amount of property in the concern that the other three have. They were cramped too, by these tight times, and uncle Jose's money and your humble servant were very welcome. I am sure of ten thousand dollars a-year now, probably something over, which is not bad for a young couple. Cornelia, my queenly Cornelia, will grace the proudest and happiest home in New York. Much as she has loved me, she could never have been mine if I had remained a poor clerk; it would kill her to be a poor man's wife, to dress poorly, to be no more a queen in society, and in her own home.

"I feel as if I were a man who had been imprisoned for life, and an earthquake, or some strange providence had thrown down my prison walls, and henceforth the green and smiling earth, the blue sky, and the whole world of beauty are mine. I tell you all this, because you know how beautiful she is. She was always your friend; she was never proud to you; and in your cool philosophical way, I know you have always loved her. It is true that with your disposition you can never know how the molten fire of my love has been poured out upon her; how I have worshipped, and shall ever worship her. I cannot make you understand me, dear Brandon, but you can guess at me. You are a miracle of a man—you can resign the city, and take to a garden in the country, and a sweet little country wife (how I would love to see her), and be quietly happy for ever. Oh that I had Brandon's cool blood, and wise head, and contented heart, used to be my prayer a thousand times a-day—excuse me—I say no more such prayers; but I congratulate you from my heart, as you will me.—Always your friend,

"CHARLES MAYO."

Oh thou pale, trembling, and most miserable man! art thou more alone than yesterday; art thou more forsaken than months since? Yes, there is an added loss, a more bitter pang. We may not seek the reason; we will only note the fact. It was long before Henry Brandon turned

toward his home, and when he did so, he was a wiser, as well as a sadder man. His second letter was from another dear friend, and was as follows:—

"New York, Dec. 31st.

"My Dear Brandon,—For six months I have wanted to write you, because when twice I have seen you, I could not talk; not I, Brandon—my tongue dried and clave literally to the roof of my mouth.

"I have been trusted as few young fellows like me are ever trusted, and now I shall confide in you, for the time has come. I thought Dr. Anson liked me, and thought me honorable, and all that, but I never knew till last June, how much confidence he placed in me. You must know, Henry, that I was present at the birth of your baby, and I, a six foot medical student with a big beard, was all the lady who was present, except the mother. Old Dr. Anson trusted me so far; but I never saw his patient, I only heard her voice, and never can I forget it. When the Doctor sent me for a basket and garments, and the furnishings for the little stranger, he said, 'Have them put in a trunk, and brought to No. 8 B. Street, and then come to me, for I may want you for some hours.' He did want me, and the poor vailed lady wanted us both, as heaven grant she may never want aid again. I had told the Doctor before this, when he asked me, that I was sure I could find a good home for a babe. I had seen your wife nurse you, Brandon, and I knew what a gem of a woman she was.

"At last the good old man gave me the little one, and I gave her the first bath, and pinned her up in some new garments awkwardly enough I dare say. The mother handed me a box from under her pillow, and I got into a carriage with my burden, looking like a bass viol, or anything but a baby, and told the Doctor's man to drive to Easton. We got to your house about four o'clock in the morning, and I left the basket on your door-step, and drove over the brow of the hill, and then I came back and saw the wee thing housed by your tender wife. The next week I paid you a visit, you may remember, and wondered with my good friends over the advent of their baby. I think it is time now to take you into my confidence, and I assure you, that in telling you that old Dr. Anson is the babe's guardian, and that I am his agent, I tell you all that I know, except that jewels of rare value

glittered on the mother's hands, the only time (I presume) that I ever saw her.

"I am delighted that the babe has so good a home, and so excellent a foster mother, and if ever you get over the hypo, I expect you will make a model father. Pardon me, Brandon, for keeping my own counsel so long, but I wanted to see how the whole thing would work; I am satisfied now. Your wife loves the babe as her own, and would as soon part with her own flesh and blood; and I am sure you will never tell her that you know anything more about the baby than she does. Your wife is no doubt one of a thousand, but I don't believe in trusting women, and you see good old Dr. Anson did not.

"I shall get my diploma in March, and if you like, you may make room for me in Easton. I should like to board at your house till I have made a beginning, and my interest in the baby will never make your wife jealous.

"Good-bye, Brandon—I feel better now this is off my mind, and I hope you don't feel any worse for the little information I have given you—I really wish I knew more for your sake.—Yours truly,

"J. H. Browne."

Henry Brandon returned to his home. His wife was in the kitchen, the babe was asleep in the sitting room, a bright fire burned on the hearth, and in a moment it burned brighter, consuming his two letters. One of them had made him feel more alone than if he were in a dungeon, and the other—we have nothing more to say of that now.

CHAPTER V.

YEARS OF CONSOLATION.

When Mr. Brandon had burned his letters, he felt very much relieved—why, I am not able to say, for Mrs. Susan could hardly have read them if she would, and she would as soon have thought of robbing the mail or the Post Office, as her husband's pocket; letters in each were equally safe from this model wife and mother.

The year succeeding the adoption of little Carrie made very considerable changes in Mr. Brandon's family. Dr. Browne graduated in March, and settled in Easton and boarded with Mrs. Brandon; and in June a new baby came, not in a basket, to bless the home, that Dr. Browne said was made on purpose for babies.

"Now you've got a baby of your own," said Mrs. Susan to her husband, "we'll see whether you'll care two snaps for it. I hope at any rate you won't meddle nor make with mine any more."

Dr. Browne laughed heartily, and Mr. Brandon smiled a sad smile as he answered, "Susan dear, one would think our family very unhappily divided."

"Not a bit of it," said his wife with invincible good nature, "we have got a baby a-piece now, and the old Harry is good to his own, and I take it the young Harry will be." This was the nearest approach that Mrs. Brandon ever had made toward calling her husband by his christian name. She felt her importance as a wife and mother, and this little familiarity was the result.

The first year of Mr. Brandon's married life had been a period of great suffering, but it had been very much ameliorated. He had out-door work—human life and happiness have been greatly abridged by in-door occupations. Voluntary prisons are often as productive of disease and death, as involuntary ones. He had no pecuniary cares, and besides Mr. Brandon was a poet, and had during this year comforted himself by writing a small volume entitled "The Bleeding Heart, and other Poems, by Sylvanus Semper."

I should have chosen a course somewhat more Spartanlike for Mr. Brandon, but as he was but little more than twenty-two years of age, I am disposed to review gently "The Bleeding Heart, and other Poems," as I know more of the causes of the melodious complaint than the editors of "The Broadway Meataxe and Coronal of Roses." I am disposed to regard their decapitations of the author as merely "a way they had."

This attack was doubtless the *similia similibus curanter* that Dr. Browne had not in his *materia medica*. Certain it is that Mr. Brandon got through the year, and found himself the father of a baby and a book, and the possessor of a good many peach trees, and a better complexion than when the year began.

There are some people who have an idea that there is not any happiness in life, but that of love-making. Such people would follow me through three mortal volumes to see if Mrs. Susan would not die, and her husband be restored to a proud flirt who would not take the best husband in the world without money, and who had not as many virtues in a lifetime as Mrs. Susan had in the scantiest moment of her kind and vulgar existence.

If Henry Brandon had been the happy possessor of a hundred thousand dollars, he might have had a honeymoon at Saratoga or Niagara, have been intensely jealous the next winter, and then have settled into the humdrum of trade and business, paying his wife's bills, till it took away his rest, and gave him the dyspepsia, and hurt his temper and complexion worse than Mrs. Susan's proverbs and bad grammar. He would have lost his love as effectually as if he had never seen its *ignis fatuus* gleam, and he would not have had the honest esteem that he now had. But he did not know all this, hence "The Bleeding Heart, and other Poems, by Sylvanus Semper."

"Had to make his confession," said Dr. Browne, after reading the book. "Could not keep shady, though he calls himself Sylvanus Semper. Well, the wife is worth having. I doubt whether the lady love would have been. I am glad Mrs. Susan will never meddle with the inside of her husband's book. She will only be proud of the blue and gold on her centre table. Good little soul! makes the best dinners I ever ate, and has the sweetest home that ever a woebegone husband and a most decidedly happy doctor luxuriated in.

Dr. Browne could appreciate the lady; he was not responsible for her. But Henry Brandon's unhappiness certainly had many ameliorations, and when his baby began to crow, and laugh, and make merry, he had to go alone, and rather persuade himself to be unhappy on occasions, or he might have forgotten the turtle dove theory, and have found himself loving all the world in the bright sunshine, and his wife's baby beside. He did incline a little toward the foundling, as his own young queen opened his heart, but he *would* nurse his notion that the babe came of a bad stock, and he found himself volunteering advice to his wife, ever and anon, about the subjugation of her will and the retrenchment of indulgences.

"Every crow thinks her own bird the whitest," said Mrs. Susan indignantly. "You may make your baby a pattern saint if you are a mind to, but I mean mine shall be a baby, and then a girl and then a woman. She never cost you nothing, and I aint never cross when I aint provoked."

Mr. Brandon withdrew discomfited, but comforted because everybody said that they had two of the finest children in the world. And so time passed, year succeeded year, Sylvanus Semper became an institution in a small way, honored in Easton, and paid five dollars a-sonnet by "The Broadway Meataxe and Coronal of Roses," or its successors, and various other journals. The garden flourished, the children also, though only the sweet Wilhelmina was ever born to Mr. Brandon. Eighteen years came and went, and Easton grew to be a village of much importance, and the Misses Brandon were the prettiest girls in it, and Dr. Browne was the best doctor, and Mrs. Susan Brandon was the best wife in many ways, but she still maltreated the President's English, and spoke more proudly of *my* daughter Caroline than was ever agreeable to her husband; though we can get used to sackcloth and ashes, clean linen is doubtless more agreeable at first, and in Mr. Brandon's case we may say it always was.

On the occasion of Minnie Brandon's eighteenth birthday, Mr. Brandon issued a new volume of poems. It was not the old "Bleeding Heart" retouched and new gilded, but a new affair altogether entitled "Trials and Consolations," and, as everybody now knew who Sylvanus Semper was, his own name occupied the title-page. As the book was successful the girls insisted that Papa could afford to take them to Saratoga. The proud and happy father consented, and they made a very elegant party. Mr. Brandon was a handsome man, very tall and distinguished looking. Caroline Brandon was a brunette, and as such, not unlike her foster father, while Minnie was a beautiful blonde.

Caroline's beauty was of a haughty imposing character, that commanded admiration, which she received as if it were only her due; whilst Minnie was lovely as the lily of the valley, and quite as retiring.

"My Carrie will win the day anywhere," thought Mrs. Brandon, while Mr. Brandon made music in his heart, by comparing Minnie to the delicate and shrinking mimosa, the moss rose, and other modest and yet delicious things. At

Saratoga Mr. Brandon found himself the latest lion, ostensibly on account of his book. Candour compels me to own, that some leaders of fashion among the gentlemen, and some ladies also, who delighted in making their circles especially attractive, had seen and admired Mr. Brandon's daughters, before they were aware that he was an author. They "read up" in a surprisingly short time, when they knew the fact, and they paid the author very flattering attentions, and they also noticed his daughters very properly.

Without the young ladies the book *might* have conferred distinction on its author at Saratoga. It *was* an advance on "The Bleeding Heart," &c., and it had been favourably noticed, but had any weight been wanted to incline the scale of success in the author's favour, "the delightful daughters of the dear poet" might have done duty admirably in that way. As it was, all honour was heaped on the *ci-devant* Sylvanus Semper. His want of domestic happiness had come to a good market at last, and the man who had nursed a a sorrow nineteen years, was made marvellously happy by it in the end. The great Mrs. Mayo, née Cornelia Graham, sailed down upon him, and took him and his daughters under her especial patronage. The blue and gold volume, and the blonde and brunette ladies found in her the most charming chaperone. It is true she had an eye to "the main chance." She did not patronise the family for their money; genius and beauty were current coin at Saratoga, and to these she bowed herself, but her young brother George, who was only nineteen, must be kept out of harm's way.

"You and your set are always keeping twelve deep about those Brandon girls," said George Graham to his sister. He was not yet in any set, being addicted to books, and very bashful also.

"Why can't you introduce me to the poet and his daughters? I have read his book, and you have not read ten pages of it."

"To tell you the truth, Georgy, Mr. Brandon is one of the unapproachables; and one of the young ladies asked me yesterday when you were passing, who that green young fellow was, who was watching us under his eyelashes. Do you really wish to be introduced, brother?"

George curled his lip and walked away. He would have seen the girls very wet, if not drowned in the dirtiest

Saratoga spring, before he would have submitted to an introduction after this. Still he hovered about with several other young men, like moths about a candle, and Minnie came to know him by sight, though neither she nor her sister ever made any remark respecting him, Mrs. Mayo's fib to the contrary, notwithstanding.

CHAPTER VI.

BESS BITE.

The aristocracy of an empire, or a kingdom, differs widely from that of a republic. In America, Literature, Law, Physic, and Divinity, confer aristocratic honours on their successful Professors by common consent, as titles do the same thing in countries where they exist. In the United States the successful merchant, or "merchant prince," as he is sometimes called, is quite the equal of the literary or professional man. There was an aristocracy in Easton, a good deal mixed, even as in Mr. Brandon's family, which was one of the first; and Mrs. Susan had no doubts of her claims to gentility, and yet Caroline always kept her mother out of the drawing-room, when there was company, as much as she possibly could.

The Sherwood family belonged to the aristocracy by virtue of title-deeds, bank accounts, the finest farm, and the best blood horses in Easton. Blood horses *are* aristocratic, but Mrs. Sherwood was an aged, and uneducated vixen, who managed her own farm, and could not manage her only son, who had graduated at Yale, nobody knew how, and least of all the young gentleman, who was authorised to write A.B. after his name.

Caroline Brandon had justified the hard prophecy of her foster-father, more than he was willing to admit. She was haughty and handsome, and sufficiently heartless to scheme for advancement by wealth and an unloving marriage. She is past nineteen, and the winter is come. The time of sleigh rides and parties was a felicitous season for Miss Brandon. Her father had not become rich; poets have been poor since the time of Milton, and that some of them are getting rich in

these latter days, is one of the strange signs of the times, and perhaps proves that they do something besides nurse their bleeding hearts, and puncture them periodically. But Mr. Brandon had a small competence. He had not bought his place in the aristocracy; he had it by virtue of his piety, and his black gown (he read the lessons on Sunday at the Episcopal Church), and also because he was a gentleman and a man of genius. Good clothes, and good manners, proved the first, and two books of poetry the last. Why then should not he have a horse that his daughters would not be ashamed to drive. Their good, old, fat, and serviceable Pomp had been utterly put to shame since the advent of Mr. Frederick Sherwood's blood greys. Then Frederick had a saddle horse, that carried him like a race horse, and even the farm horses were proud Morgan beasts, that did honour to the town.

"Papa dear," said Caroline, "we must have a horse. It is lovely sleighing now, and Minnie and I can't go to the village or anywhere else. We are absolutely imprisoned at home."

"Pompey is at your service every day," said Mr. Brandon, looking up from his review.

"Poor old fellow!" said Caroline with a mixture of scorn and compassion, "he ought to have a paddock, and a pension like ancient war horses. I am sure he shall never draw me after his old limbs again."

Minnie did not share Caroline's pride about old Pompey. He had been a good horse in his day, and had remnants of goodness, and good looks left.

"Min and I shall stay at home till you get a decent horse, papa," said Caroline, by way of ending her petition. "The old thing won't last long any way."

"A cracked plate will last as long as a sound one," said Mrs. Susan, who loved the horse that was nearly as old as her children, "that is, if it's used careful."

"We shall not use Pomp at all; papa will have money to buy a good horse from the last edition of his poems, and he ought to buy himself a keepsake," said Caroline.

She knew how to flatter her poet-father, but Mrs. Susan remarked, "Never spend your money till you have it."

The best proverb in the world was spoiled for Mr. Brandon if his wife repeated it, and he put an end to his daughter's

eloquence and his wife's quotations by remarking, "Find me a good horse to buy, and I will purchase; Pompey and I can agree over our work a good while yet I trust."

Caroline took the earliest opportunity to inform young Sherwood that her father wanted to buy a horse, that she doted on handsome horses, and that she would be forever obliged to him if he would find such a horse for her father as would really please him.

Frederick Sherwood looked at the speaker with the interest that a common admiration and enthusiasm always awaken, "By Jove," said he to himself, "there is one girl in Easton who has common sense. I have half a mind to give her my Jennet."

"Miss Brandon," said he, "I am glad you know one horse from another."

"I have always delighted in fine horses," said the lady, "but I never saw really beautiful ones till I saw yours."

"More common sense," said the young man mentally. "I know a horse that I think will suit you," said Sherwood; "she belongs to a rascally horse jockey; but I'll bait a hook for her for your sake, Miss Brandon, for I have a good opinion of a girl that knows one horse from another. There's my Vixen, what a beauty she is! Carries you like a bird. You never know whether she is in the air or on the ground. You must go a sleigh ride with Vix, not to mention your humble servant," said the young man making a bow compounded of gallantry, shyness, and good humour.

"I am sure I should be delighted," said Caroline, "but just now I want most to be obliged to you for such a horse as would please you. I know that only the most perfect can win your good opinion."

"I'll try," said Frederick Sherwood, and he went away saying to himself, there's one girl in Easton who has common sense. This saying he repeated till he was fully impressed with its truth, and till his admiration was very much awakened for Miss Caroline Brandon.

"I say, Rawson," said he to the jockey, "you can sell your black horse to Squire Brandon. He has a daughter that knows one horse from another."

"I do'nt think I'll be catched selling Bess this year," said Rawson, who was delighted at the prospect.

"I see," said Fred, "I've made a mistake. My wit always

comes afterward. I ought to have come along and told you that Bess was getting blind, or deaf and dumb, and advised you to get rid of her, and then sent a tin pedlar after her, and *then* you would have sold her for double what she is worth."

"You make yourself very merry, Mr. Sherwood, over my liking for my horse. If you owned her, would you sell her to Squire Brandon or anybody?"

I think, if I owned her, I should give her to Miss Brandon, the dark haired one; I believe she is the Miss of the family."

"She is not a Brandon at all," said Rawson, "They found her on their door-step when I was a boy."

"Well I do'nt care for that," said Sherwood, who, but for his admiration, would have cared a great deal. "She has got common sense. I tell you, Rawson; she knows one horse from another."

"She ought to be sharp, seeing she had to borrow a name when she was a baby, though they say she had a small fortune settled on her that Esquire Brandon never would touch. It was an annuity of, I do'nt know how much, but whether it was paid after she got over being a baby or not I do'nt know. If it was she might buy the horse herself."

"I thought you had decided not to sell her," said Sherwood.

"There's no knowing what I might do for a pretty girl with a long purse," said Rawson.

"I know you would empty the purse, whoever it belonged to, if you got the ghost of a chance," said Fred. "Take Bess over to Brandon's, and let them look at her any way. I want Miss Caroline to see her. It won't hurt Bess to be looked at, and I want her to approve of my judgment in horse flesh. It is a comfort to see a girl who knows one horse from another."

"I can't sell Bess," said the jockey, and Fred Sherwood left him, saying to himself, "that rascal will cheat Brandon out of his eye teeth now, and if I had any gumption I might have cheated him and got the horse somehow in the neighbourhood of a fair price. Well I can't help it."

Mrs. Susan would have said, "What can't be cured must be endured."

Rawson groomed his horse the remainder of that day. Never was a pretty girl more carefully got up for a ball, than was Bess Bite for her visit to Mr. Brandon's. She was a

pretty creature, what a Scotsman would have called "a braw bit of bluid,"—an Englishman, "just your sort,"—a western American, "a right smart chance of a hoss,"—and a Yankee, "just the thing and no mistake,"—or rather, all this *had* been true of Rawson's Bess, surnamed Bite in compliment to her master, who had been called Bite Rawson for years, on account of his being an accomplished horse jockey* and cheat, words by most persons considered synonymous. We have seen how Bess was bought, and how Jerry got himself "throwed in."

CHAPTER VII.

"A HAPPY FAMILY."

Mrs. Susan Brandon had managed Caroline's small fortune very prudently, and with as exact justice to her family as was possible. She considered herself and her services as belonging to her husband, and she took a reasonable sum for the boarding, care, and clothing of *her* baby. Notwithstanding this, when Caroline was ten years old, she had saved for her a thousand dollars. She bought a piano from this fund, and procured the best music masters for her, and then she went on saving. But as Caroline knew of her annuity, and indeed, all that Mrs. Brandon knew respecting her paternity, and as she was by no means of an economical disposition, and as she had always been indulged to the extent of her foster-mother's ability, Mrs. Brandon found it difficult to persuade her to save anything.

"When you are eighteen, dear, you shall do as you like with your own, but if you don't save nothing you won't have nothing."

Miss Caroline's majority was marked by a present from her patrimony of a grand action piano, and she had also a thousand dollars of her own, as Mrs. Susan said, "to do what she liked with." Caroline said, "I would like to have

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* Horse jockey in America means a trader in horses—a man who sells, buys, swaps, and cheats, till the verb to jockey means to defraud.

new furniture in the parlour, and new dresses for myself and Minnie and Mama, and Papa shall have a new writing-desk, and dedicate his next volume of poems to me." Mr. Brandon mentally decided that he had been unjust to his handsome daughter, when he saw his pretty new desk, and heard again the flattering condition attached to its ownership. The last penny of the thousand dollars was expended by the profuse Caroline, but before she had time to feel the pressure of her poverty, Dr. Browne came forward to place at her disposal ten thousand dollars in lieu of her annuity, which ceased henceforth to be paid. This arrangement seemed to all concerned, to break the only link of connection between Caroline and her unknown relatives. She was somewhat saddened by this, but at eighteen one looks forward with hope, rather than backward with curiosity. Her money and her mother's partiality gave her more than the prestige of an elder sister. She was a person of consequence, all acquiesced in this, none more sweetly than Minnie. Mr. Brandon was bribed into a recognition of the merit of his eldest daughter, because she appreciated his poetry, had purchased him a writing-desk, and had asked that he should dedicate his next volume to her. These were unmistakeable evidences of superiority. But the charm, the silken bond that bound Mr. Brandon to life and happiness, in spite of himself and all his poetical phlebotomy, was his daughter Minnie. Minnie wrought his slippers, and made his dressing-gowns, and they were beautiful as his poem of "Daisy Dell," or "Mignonne the Immortelle." Caroline wrought slippers and made dressing-gowns for herself; but Minnie studied her father's comfort in everything. She made order amid all the disorder of genius, and in doing this she never put the least thing in the wrong place. She never interrupted, but stole quietly to his side with a cushion or a footstool, and there she sat, so still that the most distressing poem was never hindered or shorn of its anguish by her quiet and joy-bringing presence.

It was really delightful the way Mr. Brandon enjoyed his misery, and, I must confess that my observation of the facts in his case has led me to enquire whether disappointed lovers and happy fathers, men slightly tormented with sins against taste, when they are busy, prosperous, and famous, do not afford the best material for poets, men of genius, and "Bleeding Hearts" generally. Mr. Brandon's poems were

always in the minor key. He seemed incapable of any effusion but the sighing sweetness of delicious sorrow. The sympathy he elicited was very great, and he had so many admiring, affectionate, and appreciative letters from romantic young ladies, and poetry-struck elderly ones, that he employed Minnie always to answer them.

"Here is your correspondence, my Mignonne. I hope you will find it interesting this morning;" and after she had examined a goodly number of these tributes, he said, "How is it, darling?"

"It is 'sugar time,'* Papa, with all the ladies this week, and I am a little sick. I will get it over, and answer them properly by and by. But I must have two sonnets and some couplets. You must not seem wholly ungrateful to your faithful subjects in the realm of song. Here's one lady so in love with you, that she is determined to come and see you. I wonder if she will wear her bonnet awry and have a hole in her shoe like the last one. Poor papa, I shall have to write a paper on Poet's Persecutions. Mama says what can't be cured must be endured, but I think what can't be cured should be put in the waste-paper basket, and also advised to stay at home."

"You must not be too severe on the aspiring mind and heart of our young country," said Mr. Brandon to his daughter.

"But, papa, I can't help loving best the women who stay at home, and the girls who don't write letters."

"That depends; you were greatly pleased with Mrs. Mayo, at Saratoga, and my Mignonne sometimes writes letters."

"Mrs. Mayo does not wear a dreadful bonnet, or untidy dresses, and when I write letters, I don't call a gentleman of forty years old, whom I never saw, 'the dear Adonis of Parnassus.' I tell you I am a little sick just now; I will get better and write worthy of my father's secretary in time."

And this was fame; and Mr. Brandon, though a sensible man, who cultivated dwarf pear trees, and grew large ones, enjoyed this swarming time of the ephemera.

Not so Mrs. Susan; the mail and post-office were not made for her, and she was alike indifferent to the merits, comforts

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*Sugar time in New England, is that period in early spring when sugar is made from the sap of the Sugar-Maple tree.

and conveniences of these institutions. Her kingdom was her home, and she ruled it wisely and well, never presuming to mind anybody's business but her own.

"Mr. Brandon makes poems, and I make pies, and I think he likes my pies rather better than I like his poetry. But I tell him, every one to his trade, and we get on famous by minding our own business, and havin' a girl a piece; he likes 'em both, and so do I, but Minnie is his, and Carrie is mine."

Mrs. Brandon had a deal of good prose comfort in Dr. Browne, her family filled the measure of her love and ambition, and on the whole, there was a fair share of sublunary bliss in Shadyside, the nursery and garden home of Sylvanus Semper, alias, Henry Brandon, Esq.

No one anticipated trouble, and yet there was one who was sowing to the wind, and who should yet reap the whirlwind, in this hitherto fortunate family.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BILLET DOUX.

"That's it, Miss Caroline, Jerry's your man; I'll just saddle Bess an' be off in no time. That ere chap," said he, turning over a tiny billet, fastened by a silver wafer, and directed "Mr. Frederick Sherwood," that ere chap is a judge o' hoss meat; and so I'll ride Bess, and not cut across lots on '*Shank's mare.*'"

"Jerry," said Miss Caroline haughtily, "put that note in your pocket; your hands will soil it."

"Not a bit mam, my hands are as clean as a silver penny; but I'll give this neat little letter a nice berth, and not let anybody see it, till I find Mr. Frederick Sherwood, but"—Jerry's face clouded over; he fumbled for the pocket at his side with trembling hands, and with difficulty he at last had the letter beneath "the gold hoops for his heart."

"Not over my heart," said Jerry, in a tone too low for Miss Caroline's quick ears. "In the right hand pocket, for only what comes from the heart, ought to be kep near the heart." This sort of soliloquy was the passing expression of a very

just thought, and gave place at once to the trembling terror that was taking possession of Jerry.

"Now be careful, and go quickly," said Caroline. "Give the note into Mr. Frederick's own hand, and don't wait for an answer; it is only about the sleighing party."

"It aint a bit o' use to tell me what it is about," said the ague smitten man. "She'll get it if he aint there; she'd bewitch it right out of my pocket, an' I could no more help it, than smoke can help goin' up, or a stone can help comin' down."

Miss Caroline was troubled, but she did not wish her perplexity to be seen by Jerry. She by no means desired her little note to fall into the hands of Mrs. Sherwood. She had that curious and excited consciousness, that accompanies affairs of the heart, and which in the utter absence of heart, was remarkably like the paradox in the play, where a gentleman never has any stomach, and yet his stomach always troubles him.

Caroline had this troublesome consciousness so severely, as to feel like apologising even to Jerry, for sending a note to Mr. Frederick Sherwood. How then could she endure the thought that his hawk-eyed, ignorant, vulgar, sharp-witted mother, should see that little silver-sealed and silent-mottoed billet doux?

Jerry was shrewd in calculation, and energetic in action, when the "spell" was not on him; all the world could not protect him from himself, when it was. Still he often felt the symptoms, and escaped a decided attack.

"I'll tell you what, Miss Caroline, if taint no matter about the letter till evening, I can manage it. I'll happen down to the village to-night. There's to be a turkey shoot at the Elm tavern, and a raffle at Bill Blake's, and there's allus hoss swoppin' at Tucker's, and plenty of black-strap and hot stuff. I'll find him at one or t'other, or all three, and if he's to be trusted, I'll give it to him."

Caroline's lips whitened to blueness, as she compressed them, not to speak too soon; and then a burning blush spread over her face and neck.

"What do you mean, Jerry?" said she, though she fully understood his meaning.

"I mean, if Mr. Frederick has not got so 'obejoyful' as to read your letter to the turkeys and geese at the raffle, or

to wad his gun with it, afore he opens it, why I'll give it to him. But I suppose you'd have a fellow use a little common sense and callation, would not you, Miss Carline?"

The difficulties that thickened in Caroline's path were certainly not to be despised. She had an important end to answer with this note. She could trust it to no one but Jerry, and he was liable to serious misfortunes. He was sure of being bewitched, if he went to Mrs. Sherwood's in the absence of Mr. Frederick, and quite as sure of getting inebriated, if he found the young gentleman at the village. In his caution to ascertain Mr. Frederick's condition, and fitness to receive a young lady's letter, he would be very likely to wait till somebody's generosity had put a glass to his lips, and stolen his little wit away. The light of his trembling sanity seemed always flickering into darkness, and yet from year to year he grew no worse, and when carefully and kindly treated, he seemed to improve, sometimes for months.

But what was Caroline to do? She had stood on the snow at the back door in her thin slippers, and the feathery falling flakes had thoroughly powdered her brown curls. It was not whiter than her forehead and throat. Her dark eyes flashed; she wanted to go to the very last sleigh ride of the season with Frederick Sherwood. Sarah Anne Greene would go, if she did not send an affirmative answer to his invitation. Her note of acceptance was a politic matter; it was the beginning of a series of meshes that were to form a net to catch a beau, and beau-catching is generally considered a delicate business, requiring a considerable degree of skill and good fortune; especially is this true, when there is a wild fellow to catch, with fast horses, a bevy of friends of both sexes, a large property, and annexed to all, an argus-eyed mother, who "has her wits about her."

There is an old saying, "Nothing venture nothing have." I am not sure that this proverb glanced through Caroline's mind, but her feet were chilled through. She had a good deal of faith in Jerry, and no other resource presented, but "to trust luck." So she said as carelessly as she could, "Well, Jerry, you can go to the village to-night, and mind that you don't offend my father by drinking, or you may have to live at Mr. Rawson's or Mrs. Sherwood's."

"The lord presairve me!" said he, shuddering. "Do go

in, Miss Carline; you'll catch your death a-cold, and git your hair all out o' curl into the bargain. I believe the sperrits of the just are shakin' all their feather beds to make this ere snow storm—I suppose t'other sort o' sperrits don't have no feather beds, but sleeps on iron shavins that won't burn up."

This last speech was the beginning of a sort of musing, which Jerry continued on his way to the barn, by muttering, "Well, I don't understand it; I don't much like this world anyhow. There's small comfort with a weak back, onstiddy limbs, a poor muddled head, and a wicked heart. I wonder if I'll shake feather beds up above, or sleep on red hot iron shavins down below, in the next world. I wonder if God made me; I'm sure I would not make sich a back," and Jerry put his hands on the lumbar region, and staying his weakness, he walked, stooping toward Bess. "Nobody seems to me to be made worth while, but Miss Minnie; and she's so happy, I'll warrant somethin will turn up, jest as it did with Bess Bite's eyes."

"Well, Squire, aint she a beauty?" said Jerry, as Mr. Brandon emerged from the stable.

"She has been badly treated, and is falling blind," said that gentleman. "Who has fed her, since she began to eat hay last fall, Jerry?"

"Precious little hay she's had, Squire; meadow hay is not the stuff for Bess; she's lived in clover, only 'twas Indian meal. The musty hay choked me to pitch it over. Ketch me to give it to Bess."

"You have seriously injured her by your method of feeding," said Mr. Brandon. "A horse can't live on Indian meal; it is not the natural food of the animal. Grass and hay are. You have done very wrong by the mare."

"I'll tell you what, Squire," said Jerry, drawing himself up to his full height, "I've used my best judgment, and my best kindness to your mare. It's clear she did not know what was best for herself, for she would eat a coverlid quicker than corn.* She's ate two blankets and a cotton comfortable since last fall. At first, I did not know what become of the things that I put on her to keep her warm, for there wan't nothin' left but the edges and sides of her blankets, and so I

* Indian meal and corn, are here used for maize; wheat, rye, oats, barley, are called grain. Maize only is called corn in the United States.

watched her, and I catched her in the fact of being too big a fool to feed herself, for I see her eatin' away at her blankets, and arterwards when the comfortable begun to come up missin', I found her out again, and besides, she ate all the pine boards near enough to her. Now, Squire, Bess is a smart mare, but a fool about her eatin'."

"Not so Jerry,—the mare is wise, you are the fool. You fed her on meal, which is too concentrated food for a horse."

"Too *what?* Squire, I never ate the dixonary."

"I mean Jerry, that corn without husks, and oats without straw, are too nutritious food for animals. The husk and stalk, the straw and chaff must go with the grain, or the animal will sicken and die. Bess wanted hay, or straw, with her meal, and so she ate her blankets, and the soft wood within her reach, to answer the purpose of hay, straw, or innutritious matter."

Jerry bit his nails, and thought, and thought, and bit his nails.

"Well, it allus turns out that I'm the fool, arter all," said he.

Jerry "happened down" to the village that evening, as he had promised Miss Brandon.

"Mr. Frederick, do you dare to let a poor man handle that ere gun of yourn?" said Jerry, as a party were assembling at the Elm Tavern.

"Hallo, Jerry! you here?" cries Fred, at the same time handing over his gun. A long nose poked into the pan, and sharp eyes detected rust, and presently a low voice muttered in Fred's ear, "Come out o' hearin' o' them chaps."

Frederick went aside with Jerry as if to examine the gun.

"What is it, Jerry?"

"Never shoot with a drop in your eye."

"Exactly, but my eyes are right."

"But that ere long Vermonter has a bet with you, and means to pony up the champagne, sham enough I guess, and he's got a rifle. I see Bill Clarke looking as loving at it, as if 'twas a baby. That chap will sweep you out as clean as a whistle. But that aint what I'm arter—I've got a letter for you, and you've got half a pint of hot stuff for me, and then you'd better take me home, cause I shall be kind o' onsteady in the limbs, and Bess might lose her room-mate."

"Just come to the lantern and we'll see," said Fred. In a moment more the little white messenger had given a real

joy to young Sherwood, and strange as it might seem to every one who knew him, and who had never known him to miss a raffle, a shooting match, a horse race, or a bet, he gave Jerry a tumbler of hot stuff, pitched him into his sleigh, and left long Vermonter to bet, and lose, treat the company to drink, and then win all the feathers with the birds under them before midnight.

The first throw of her dice was risked, and Caroline had won. The young man was a prize that many young ladies wished to win. He was handsome, had dashing, rather than fine manners, the best horses, the most brilliant turn out, a kind heart, and his pockets full of cards and dice. He had plenty of money which he valued very slightly. He had first-rate brandy and wine, and many friends, and for each and all he had a great liking.

Caroline Brandon was standing at a front window, with her hot forehead pressed against a pane of glass, gazing out into the clear moonlight upon the dazzling snow, as it lay pure and white, where each winter it had lain for so many ages. Jerry might have thought "Will my sperrit last as long and be as little changed as the water, ice, and snow?" but Caroline made no such query; she only asked herself, "What luck? Will Jerry find Frederick and give him the note? Shall I triumph now, or be shamed by defeat?" The sound of very silvery sleigh bells struck her ear, and her heart beat rapidly. Soon a graceful horse appeared, his proudly arched neck surmounted by a small and delicate head, his fine figure undulating like a wave, his long tail almost sweeping the ground, and a sleigh, fashioned after the pattern of a bird, and filled with furs, came up to the door.

Frederick Sherwood leaped lightly to the ground, and Jerry got possession of himself in a somewhat quadrupedal fashion. He was rather more confused by the motion of the sleigh and the "hot stuff" than was favourable to self-government, but he at last got tolerably upright, and shook off encumbrances, when he was brought to a wondering standstill.

"Now, if that aint the last thing I've seen and counted," said Jerry. "Two, four, six, eight, I never see the like afore. All the hosses and mares I ever see, had four legs a-piece, and this ere grey hoss has got eight legs, as sure as my name is Jeremiah Fitz—Jerry Fitz—no that aint my name;—but

the legs is clear if the name aint. But who'd thought of a hoss being made that way, any more 'n me, Jerry, being made so bad this way?" and Jerry came very near taking up a recumbent position on the snow instead of the hay, but after a time he succeeded in gaining his favourite quarters and company.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE YOUNG GENTLEMAN WHO DID NOT GET INTRODUCED AT SARATOGA.

George Graham was the young brother of Mrs. Mayo, who had been hindered by his prudent sister from making the acquaintance of the Misses Brandon. Mrs. Mayo generally understood the adaptation of means to ends. She failed more frequently in her brother's affairs than in anything she undertook to manage, and in this instance she succeeded in entirely defeating her own end. George Graham had dreamed of Minnie Brandon, awake and asleep, ever since his sister's foolish falsehood had sent him off in a tangent, vowing to himself that he would never again think of that little blonde fairy who haunted him like his shadow ever since.

George Graham was a student, with literary tastes, and some crotchets about education, which Mrs. Mayo, the oracle of her family, had examined, and discussed, and which she had pronounced *impracticable*, and what was worse, *vulgar*. The Grahams were of the real Simon Pure gentility. Poverty had not been known amongst them since Mrs. Mayo's Scottish grandfather started a tailor's shop just above Maiden Lane, in Pearl Street, with a capital of British broad cloth worth twenty-five dollars. From that day the Graeme had prospered; but it had been the especial privilege and prerogative of Mrs. Cornelia Graham Mayo to cleanse the family escutcheon from the slightest suspicion of vulgarity, or immorality, or ultra notions, or anything that could soil the lily-like purity of their respectability.

"I wish you would talk to George, Cornelia dear," said Mr. Graham, senior. "He is of no earthly use, and he will

be in mischief the next thing. He has graduated with honour, why can't he go into business, or study a profession, or—"

"Do something worthy of a Graham?" said Mrs. Mayo, proudly.

"Yes, I think well of your family pride, Cornelia. I like to think that no stain has ever rested on our name, since your great-grandfather, Sir Angus Graham, emigrated to this country. Now I am ready to take George as a partner, or if he will read for a profession, I will do all in my power for him. But this lecturing before Lyceums, and getting up Gymnasiums and Reading Rooms, is too much for my patience."

"It is not respectable," said Mrs. Mayo; "indeed it is vulgar, and I shall tell George my opinion."

"Better you than me," said her father. "He knows that you understand these things, and I hope you will make him hear to reason. He complains that I do not investigate his ideas. He cannot make that complaint of you."

Mrs. Mayo laboured with her brother as in duty bound, but her sacred things were not his, and the result was, the young man appealed to Charles Mayo, Esq., for advice and assistance. Mr. Mayo had taken his wife for his queen some twenty years since, and he had been a faithful and dutiful subject, duly regarding the morals and manners made and provided for him, and above all respecting the respectabilities. But he was a kind man, and, as such, George appealed to him.

"Charlie Mayo," said George, (all Mr. Mayo's friends called him Charlie, often to the disgust of his wife,) "you have a heart among your vitals—a thing that has been left out in our family."

"How little that boy knows of his sister," said Mr. Mayo to himself.

"And I want your advice and assistance."

"With all my heart, brother George. What is it?"

"I can't go into business; I have an invincible repugnance to making money, that I can never make any good use of. I can't be a physician; I do not like the profession. I am not good enough for a minister, and I have not ability for a lawyer.

"What *can* you be then?" compassionately inquired his brother-in-law.

"I want to be a young man just a little while. I want to study, think, and write. In time perhaps, I will come to doing something. I can't ask my father for anything unless I do as he wishes, and I have nothing independently of him."

"Well, what can I do, George?" said Mr. Mayo kindly, "just come to it."

"I have taken a fancy to teach school, and study human nature this winter. I want fifty dollars of you, and a letter of introduction to somebody somewhere, and I want you to keep my secret from the family."

"You may be sure I shall not tell my wife," said Mr. Mayo. "She would think you wanting in reverence to the family name if you were guilty of such plebeian conduct."

"That is what I want, Charlie. Tell no one my purpose, and least of all your wife."

"But where will you go, George?"

"Advise me," said George, with something of his sister's art. "Do you know any place within fifty or a hundred miles of the city, where I can teach?"

Mr. Mayo considered. "I have friends in Easton," said he. "There is an old friend of mine there, who has made himself famous—a poet. You know Brandon's poems. A No. 1, I suppose, are not they? I don't know much about such things, but I never gave him credit for such first-class love and misery as his poems tell of. Then there's a young man whose acquaintance I made at Yale last year. I had not visited my *alma mater* for twenty-five years, and I found a new generation. I made the acquaintance of a fine young fellow named Sherwood. I can introduce you in Easton, George, but I want you to think twice about this business of a profession. I might have been something, besides the slave of the counting-house, if I had not thrown over the profession for love, when I was a little older than you. I chose to be a merchant, and my wife's shadow, and she is such a bright substance that I have never repented. But it is one thing to throw over one's prospects for love, and another to risk yourself for crotchets. You may win in love, but notions, what it is the fashion to call 'ideas,' never do anything but ruin a fellow. However, I'll help you to do something, or nothing, as you like. When do you start?"

"When I have fifty dollars, and a letter which shall be a certificate of respectability in my pocket."

Mr. Mayo drew a sheet of paper toward him. "Shall it be Easton?" said he.

"I think so," said George with apparent indifference.

"Shall I write to the young man or the poet?"

"Both if you like, then I shall have two strings to my bow. Don't speak of relationship, I want to go on my own merits."

Mr. Mayo wrote:—

"Dear Brandon,—Allow me to introduce to you Cornelia's youngest brother. He has some romance in him, with which, as a poet, I suppose you will sympathise. He wishes to sink his relationship to us, and to keep school in Easton on his own merits. He is a good fellow, as you will find, and I am, as ever,—Your friend,

"Charles Mayo."

To Sherwood Mr. Mayo wrote a sort of semi-confidential note, as he had been very much taken with the hearty, frank manners of that young gentleman. He said—

"My Dear Sir,—Allow me to recommend to your attention and good offices, a young friend of mine, of good character who is at present under a cloud. He wishes to teach, and if you can assist him in this object, you will oblige him, and your friend, "Charles Mayo."

"There, these will do your business, I take it," said Mr. Mayo, giving George the letters and a hundred dollar bank note.

"Only fifty if you please," said George; "I am going to be a poor schoolmaster, and if I want more I can send for it."

"I suppose you will live the longer if you have your own way," said Mr. Mayo. "You will write and tell me how you get on. I will keep your secret, and Brandon will do the same for the romance of it, and you may make your way in Easton as a poor schoolmaster, and it is just possible you may not be a good one with all your theories about education. I believe in old methods and in majorities. The world is always wiser than world menders. No offence to you, George, but you will be wiser before spring than you are now."

"Very possibly," said George; "I only ask the liberty to go on with my education, and I thank you heartily for the assistance you are giving me."

And so George Graham went to Easton, and gave his letters as they were directed, and, as fortune would have it, he became schoolmaster. A few years later this school was an academy, and the master called a preceptor.

Mr. Brandon was delighted with young Graham and the slight mystery in which he indulged. The secret was a bond between the poet and the teacher.

Frederick Sherwood was not well pleased with Mr. Mayo's letter. He did not remember the peculiarly warm friendship he had extemporised the year before for Mr. Mayo. It was a time of excitement, and the friendship and the excitement had cooled off together. Then the letter rather mystified Fred. It did not seem plain, and frank, and "straightforward" as he expressed it. And worst of all, it introduced to his kind offices an elegant young man, whose very presence in Easton was a rebuke to the fast young man, Fred Sherwood.

CHAPTER IX.

FRED SHERWOOD TURNED MENTOR.

"Hullo, Min! surnamed the dreamer," and Frederick Sherwood stood before the thoughtful Minnie Brandon, as she sat in the folds of the red curtains getting a glow of the afternoon sun. She was deep in the mysteries of Faust, shrinking away from Mephistophiles, and yet drawn onward, she knew not how or why. Just so life led her. She did not understand it, she often shrank from it, and yet she lived on, and of late, life had begun to have an unwonted interest for her.

But here was an every-day actuality in the form of Fred Sherwood, her sister's accepted lover, claiming a hearing. This was what he generally claimed and seldom conceded.

"Now, Minnie, a sixpence for your thoughts. A penny for Carrie's would be as much as I should think of offering, but somehow you are a bit of a mystery, and I am a little curious, and willing to pay for my curiosity."

Minnie looked up and brushed away a tear. "Why, bless the child, it is crying. I shall have to tell your fortune. Come, cross my hand with silver, or shuffle the cards I have

in my pocket, or turn a cup. Minnie, that's *your* sort. You don't know the cards, but all the women know cups, they are 'deep in their cups,'" and he laughed lightly and took the Faust and held it wrong side up, and then looked mockingly at it.

"All the same to me, Minnie—German metaphysics and Mephistophiles. I have a confused notion that they are synonymous. But I never meddle with things that I can't understand. There are enough that I know like a book: cards, horses, girls, schoolmasters. I am learned in such lore, and I am partially acquainted with Jerry, and I can tell fortunes first-rate. I am inclined to the opinion that I am a stray Gipsy.

"Now, my child," said Fred with mock gravity, "you have been in leading strings to your sister, my honoured bride-elect, for a long time. She has had the care of your education, morals, manners, and so on. Now she consents to take charge of mine (a precious mess she will have of it, between you and me). Now, as a sort of offset in duties, I am going to take you under my wise and humane care. I begin by telling your fortune. You are beginning to get in love."

Minnie's cheek burned with a deep flush that spread over her forehead, face, and neck.

"Yes, in love with that city beau—Mr. Graham. I have no doubt he is wise though he can't drive a horse, and can upset a sleigh in a broad sweep, with only the ghost of a corner. You are a little mystery, Minnie; this city chap is a larger one. I want to find you both out, and with Jerry's help—pshaw! I am not a prudent magician. I ought to conceal the sources of my knowledge of the future. I want to predict a sunny future for you, but somehow my second sight is not of that sort; I wonder if anybody's is. Don't ghosts always appear to tell of some ill luck, some death or disaster, some confounded thing that you would give your horses' ears should not happen? I know it is so, and a shadow lies right across your sunshine, in my second sight, Minnie, and I believe in my soul it is that fellow Graham that casts it. But I can never make you believe it, poor little one!" said he, smoothing Minnie's hair in the tenderest and most brotherly sort of way. "Poor little one! you are smoother and prettier than my mare Vixen. I wish you had some of her spirit, and maybe you have. There's blood and

mettle sometimes when we don't expect it. Remember, Minnie, I'll stand your friend when that fine gold piece that the Devil is going to give you turns out a pewter shilling. An enchanted gift from Old Scratch always has to turn out worthless. You have heard of those things, little Miss Mystery, have not you?"

"What *do* you mean, Frederick?" said Minnie at last, when she found herself able to say a word in the ceaseless flow of his rattling talk.

"What do I mean! as if I had not been telling you for the last twenty minutes. I always tell what I mean. I am no fable, and no German myth, but a plain man at your service, who knows little of literature, and a good deal of horses and men, with a kind heart under my vest, and a great desire to serve my little sister, that is to be. Good-bye, child; if you want me, you know where I keep myself." And Fred was gone.

Minnie had been very thoughtful before he came. She had begun to question her destiny, and to rebel against her monotonous life. She had lived a little, for she had begun to love, but she hardly dared acknowledge the facts of her existence to herself.

A child of light, she sat there in the sun, this cold, bright day, and sought for wisdom from the poet and enchanter of Germany. She believed she would find it; with what reason? Fred Sherwood believed she would not find it; with what reason? In his own superficial, and kindly way, Fred loved Minnie, and wanted to be her brother and protector. He did not like German, and he believed German authors had no good in them, because Graham read Richter and Goethe.

There was something sufficiently incongruous to be droll in Fred's case, considering his character, if all had not been too pitiable.

"Upon my soul," mused Fred, "that girl is no more to be trusted with herself than a baby. She is so deucedly honest that she can't lie; and so perverse and unchristian that she must be posted up in the books of those heathenish Germans; and so sentimental that she might elope with that fellow Graham, if she had her father's secret consent, and he had money enough to pay the toll on any turnpike. Now, Carrie is a woman to be trusted; she carries herself like a queen of the race-course, never frets about religion, goes to church like

a Christian, and cheats the *old uns* first rate and a half. Fine girl that Carrie! and a knowing one; she'll manage me like a book when she has me fairly bitted, and I'll take care of Minnie, and keep her out of trouble;" and Frederick Sherwood stood unannounced in the parlour before his lady love.

"How do you do, Carrie; play us a tune will you? That's what you and the piano are kept for I suppose?"

Caroline turned to the instrument, and after sundry excuses and apologies, she selected a piece of music.

Before she began, Fred said, "I have been talking to Minnie in the sitting-room, and the sun; I wish you would be extra good to her, Carrie, she has got some trouble a-brewing, I believe, and I pity her in advance."

"I'll trust Min to take care of herself," said Caroline, and in spite of her lover's interest in another subject, she began to play. Frederick listened without interest, or attention, till Caroline paused to turn over, and then he said,—

"It's no use, Carrie, I don't care for the noise, and you know it. You can play for yourself as the birds sing. I talk for myself as the birds can't. Come, Carrie, you may stop. I hate pretence. I am in a hurry to own up. I asked you to play for form's sake, and because I felt awkward. Come now, and sit on the sofa and talk to a fellow,—no, you need not. I can do the talking. You were created to be looked at—for the express purpose,—high white forehead,—sharp, smart, black eyes, and a little rose in the cheek usually,—a good deal just now, a throat like a swan, a bust like ———, some thing or other. What do you suppose your name is? Don't blush! It is no fault of yours that you have no name, and you will have a good one as soon as you will name the day, and then you have a figure like a queen, and—— shoes as thin as paper. I'll bet my new whip and bells, and I'll bet the horse and sleigh, that they are as tight as taxes, and cut to make your foot look little."

"You are very impertinent," said Caroline, who said what she thought, though she smiled as she said it. And she had another thought, which if Sherwood had expressed it, would have been, "Softly, sir, till you take the bit; I shall bear your tricks and sauciness now, you will have to mind the rein by and by."

"Carrie, I want to talk to you about that schoolmaster that boards here, and that Minnie is half in love with."

Caroline frowned. "Min is not a fool—nor is she in love with a pauper—Graham is well enough for his work, as far as I know, and papa said he had a satisfactory letter from somebody in the city about him."

"And I had a very unsatisfactory letter about him."

"What do you mean, Frederick? Is Graham an impostor?

"I don't know what he is, but somebody that I got acquainted with at Commencement when I graduated, wrote me on his behalf. He wanted me to stand his friend, because he was under a cloud."

Mr. Mayo had committed an indiscretion, which some one has said is worse than a crime, by recommending Graham to Fred's kindness as one under a cloud.

"Now, I would like to know what Mayo means by 'under a cloud.' I would like to be enlightened. I hope he did not get 'a drop in his eye,' or 'a brick in his hat,' or make 'Virginia fence,' and so get leave of absence from *alma mater*. I heard somehow that he was really ground out where I was; and I am sure that thunderin' old College has not any business to turn up her nose at anybody, or anything, after graduating me. And then, this fellow knows more in a minute than I could buy with all my money. But it seems he's cheap after all. 'Under a cloud!' What business has a fellow to be under a cloud? And then he could not drive a hen in harness. I read Mr. Mayo's letter, and determined to be polite to him.

"I tried it the first evening at your house, and I'll be snagged, if I had not as lief been in an ice-cream freezer. He was as polite and smooth as an icicle in a six-weeks' frost. I believe he thought I was a dancing bear; and you were as respectful to him as if he had been a bar of gold.

"What in thunder does Mayo mean by this fellow being under a cloud?

"I have given Minnie warning, and I will set Jerry on the fellow's track, and now I want you to be extra good to Minnie."

"I do not know what your correspondent may mean, Frederick, but I understand that Mr. Graham is a good schoolmaster, and I am sure my sister will never disgrace herself, or do anything that I disapprove or counsel her against."

"That's it; keep Minnie tied to your apron string, Carrie,

and be extra good to her, and she will be all right. And now, having heard you play, and got your advice about Minnie, I am off. I wish I could stay longer, you are so deuced pretty and sensible, but we will have time enough to get tired of one another one of these days. Good bye, my queen," and Fred vanished.

CHAPTER X.

THE DUTY AND NECESSITY OF GOING TO CHURCH.

In New York George Graham went to church, or stayed at home, as he felt inclined. Sometimes he made a tour of New York churches. He went to one to see the fashions, to another to hear fine operatic music, to another to hear a celebrated preacher, who, one party said, was a living earnest man, while another party averred, that he was a mere mountebank, with some talent. But George had never attended church because he was a humble Christian, and wished to draw water from the wells of salvation in company with the lofty and the lowly, no matter how lowly, so that they were earnestly and humbly beginning in this world the education and improvement of the immortal spirit for endless duration.

Young Graham believed in education for the masses; the word education was nearly synonymous with salvation in his vocabulary. He had a great many notions, that he may possibly "pick and sort" one of these days, but he would be greatly surprised now to know how few he will save then.

George Graham had come to Easton on Saturday, and he spent Sunday at the hotel, and walked about, and took in the aspects of the place. On Monday he gave his letters, and was invited so cordially to Mr. Brandon's house that he could not refuse. There was a seeming so delicate and tasteful, and at the same time so manly and robust, about him that Mr. Brandon was irresistibly attracted to George,—who said to himself, "Poets ought to work out-doors. There is something morbid in men who always stay in the house; they are not manly, but womanly; education should be in the fields." And the young philosopher added another brick to

his system, which he may build so high, and so without foundation, that the superstructure may yet topple over on him. During the week, the school business was arranged, and the next Monday Graham entered on his pedagogueship. The intervening Sunday he stayed at home, though Mr. Brandon read the service in the church, as he did every alternate Sunday, the Episcopal denomination in Easton not being rich enough to indulge in the luxury of a pastor more than half the time. George had been baptised an Episcopalian, and had been regularly taken to Trinity Church, till he was old enough to take himself there. Mrs. Mayo who had led in the piety and prosperity of the family, had been accused of Puseyism; this was untrue, for at the time of the scandal, this ism was not the fashion in her set. It was whispered that she had a rosary; possibly she had one of pearls, or coral and gold, which she kept for its beauty, with very little idea of any other use for it. She might have been a little high, slightly elevated, for she said she thought evangelicals and very low church people were too fond of scandal. This was her reply to the tale of the rosary.

Fred Sherwood had endured Graham's elegance, his freezingly polite pride, and his position at Mr. Brandon's for two weeks. The Saturday ending the first week of the school, Fred had taken Caroline's advice, and given her and Minnie his opinion, as he expressed it. The third Sunday came, the Rev. Mr. H. was with his flock in Easton, and George Graham stayed at home. He thought of going, but he felt nervous and ashamed that he had given some foolish excuse the Sunday previous, and then no one invited him, fearing that they might infringe upon his liberty to go to some house of worship, toward which he might feel more inclined.

The cup of Fred Sherwood's wrath overflowed now. He came over on Monday to give his opinion, and get Caroline's advice again.

"Jerry," said he, "you hold Vix, while I go in for a moment."

He strode into the parlour, where he knew he would find Caroline practising her music. "Carrie," said he, "I'm mad as blazes, and I want your advice. What in thunder is the reason that a fellow can't go to church, and be decent, if the horse sheds are comfortable, at least half the day? I can tell Mr. gentleman Jack, or whatever his name is, who is down

here under a cloud, that it will thicken, so that he can't cut it with a jack knife or a hatchet, if he don't mind his p's and q's, and go to church. Mrs. Susan might forgive him occasionally if he had a bad headache, but Mr. Brandon *never* will. He is too good a reader for that. He'll go to Coventry for his comfort and mine."

Now Fred had the most earnest intention to be honorable, but one man's honor differs very essentially from another's. If a fellow were out of cigars, or good liquor, or "hard up," or "out at elbows," or worst of all, had lost a pet dog or horse, Fred was a good friend. His heart throbbed, his eye moistened, and his hand sought his pocket, and was generously filled for his fellow-sufferer, whether he was friend or stranger, worthy or unworthy. But if a man were crossed in love, if he differed from the respectable majority called "the world," and "society," on any question of religion or philanthropy, if he had got lost in the fog and confusion created by opposing sects, till he did not know truth's latitude or longitude, and was in danger of getting irrecoverably lost, the case was quite beyond Fred's comprehension or sympathy.

"A fellow should think as other folks do, especially his betters," said Fred. "He can do as he has a mind to, unless the old tabbies find too much fault, and then he must haul in his horns and hide, or get along with it someway, so as not to be sent to Coventry, where this fellow is sure to go if he is not seen to.

"Carrie, you'll see to Minnie, and be extra good to her, will you? That girl belongs to us, and I feel her a weight on my conscience."

"One would think you were paying your addresses to my sister," said Caroline, angrily.

"Upon my soul, that's a good joke," said Fred, biting his whip; "I did not know you could be jealous, my beauty. I would as soon swap my Vixen for that six-weeks-old grey kitten of yours, as give you for Minnie." Caroline pouted, and Fred went on, till he had made his peace, and until she had promised to be "extra good to Minnie."

"Now you are sensible, I'll go—if I stay, there will be another shower. It's a shame such a beautiful bang-up girl as you are should ever have occasion to wipe her eyes. There, be good now. I am much obliged to you for your advice, and I am sure you'll be good to Minnie."

Minnie was troubled for the new teacher. She was truly religious, and she had much common sense and observation. If any one had asked her what good it did Fred Sherwood to go to church the half of every Sunday, she would have answered in the words of Dr. Franklin, "If men are so bad with religion, what would they be without it?" She determined to advise Graham. He had been two weeks in Easton, and had seen nobody but the Brandon family, Fred Sherwood, and his scholars. Already there were whispered stories that he had been expelled from college. On his third Saturday in town, Minnie said, "Are you going to church with us tomorrow, Mr. Graham?"

He smiled, and said, "*Must* I?"

"You *must*."

"Why?"

"You need rest."

"Should I find it at church, think you?"

"We have pretty good music," said Minnie.

"That rests one," said Graham musingly.

Minnie grew bold. "Mr. Graham," said she, "it is no matter what we have at church. It is no matter what are your soul's needs, or whether you can be helped there better than at home. I am not going to consider the higher, or better reasons for going to church now; you *must* go, or you will not be allowed to teach our school."

Graham looked at her in astonishment. "We live in a free country, I take it," said Graham.

"Yes, you are free to stay at home from church, to outrage our people's sense of piety and propriety, and they are free to make you leave a position, that even Fred Sherwood thinks you are unworthy to keep."

"That is plain talk, very," said Graham greatly amused.

"Yes, I am a plain girl, in more ways than one," said Minnie smiling, and showing herself a very pretty one.

"Are you in earnest, Miss Brandon?" said Graham. "I never lived in a village till now."

"I am in earnest, and it seems strange to me that you did not think of all this before. No one, good or bad, wishes to put children into an immoral person's hands. Now the test of goodness and morality in Easton is, does he or she attend church? Already there are whispered stories against you."

"Will you tell me what stories, Miss Brandon?"

"The principal is, that you have been expelled from college."

"It is false!" said Graham, really aroused.

"I will say so," said Minnie quietly, "and if you go to church with us to-morrow, and take a class in the Sunday-school, and make yourself agreeable in a party we shall give next week, all will be well."

"And are you aware that this will be very heartless conformity on my part?"said Graham.

"Did you come here to do good or to do nothing, to stay or to go away?" said his mentor.

"You are wise," said Graham; "I will go to church and teach in Sunday-school."

"And mind you teach no heresy," said Minnie smiling. "If you do, we shall send you up to the Unitarian Church in the village. Our district is orthodox."

"I suppose it will be considered orthodox if I teach the children to be good and go to church."

"Yes, we have nothing better than genuine goodness."

At tea Graham spoke to Mr. Brandon about the Sunday-school, and the good man's face lighted up with a pleased smile.

"I must have Jerry in my class," said Graham.

Minnie smiled, Caroline frowned, and Jerry who had just come in with an armful of wood for the fire, took a pin from his right coat sleeve, and put it carefully on his left. This he did when he wished to remind himself of some subject for meditation or recollection.

When he was on his way to the stable he said, "That's a good youngster arter all. Fred telled me to look sharp arter him, but he'll do now. He's caved in about church and Sunday-school. I heerd Fred say he was a heathen, cause he did not go to church, and now he is goin'—I wish he'd take Fred into his class. Poor Fred! he's on the wrong road, if he does go to church. He'll break his neck some o' these times with a vicious horse, and his skin full o' brandy. But he'll be good to a poor bewitched fellow till then, and that is saying somethin' for him. What will come o' me when Fred's gone, and the old one has full swing at me with her spells, I can't muster courage to think. One thing puzzles me, and that's, what she, and I, and Rawson, and Fred, and Caroline, was made for? and what Bess was made to go blind for,

when she was kindly treated? I wonder if I'll know all about these ere things in the next world. I wonder if it's the *sperrit* of my back that aches, and the *sperrit* of my head that's so dizzy, whether it's *me*, or whether it is not me."

Philosophers have been quite as much puzzled with the *me*, and the *not me*, as Jerry.

CHAPTER XI.

FRATERNAL CORRESPONDENCE.

George Graham had written to Mr. Mayo as soon as he was settled in his new home. We give an extract:—

"I am domesticated here in the home of your friend Mr. Henry Brandon. I am taking lessons—lessons in life that I doubt not will be good for me. I have made the acquaintance of two semi-idiots down here. One is a half-witted serving man, or help as he calls himself, in Mr. Brandon's family; and the other is your half-witted brother-in-law. Yes, Charlie, as you predicted, I am growing wiser. What I shall be by Spring, Heaven knows, but I have met with such frank criticism and condemnation here, as is original and refreshing in my experience. Keep my secret; don't let *any*body know, and least of all Cornelia, where I am. If you love me, don't interfere with the rasping I am getting. I dread my excellent sister and her family *habeas corpus* so much, and prize my present position so highly, that you must be good to me, and not allow word or look to give a hint of my whereabouts."

George hardly felt safe within fifty miles of New York, and he was glad to be reassured by Mr. Mayo's letter. It was good, kind, and frank, and was as follows:—

"Dear George,—After all, you are not of as much consequence as you think. No writ of *habeas corpus*, no search warrant, and no detective will be sent after you. I have told everybody what you told me, that you were going south. How far south, even your father did not ask, he merely said—

'Well, George will write, if it is only to draw for money, and I hope when he is tired of roaming he will settle himself to something.' So you see your father is amiable, and by no means excited about you. Cornelia's health is so poor that I think she is very willing to give up her feeling of responsibility for you. I told her you said you were going south, and she said, 'I wonder if he will go into society in New Orleans. If so, he ought to be properly introduced'—and that was all. So be easy in your hiding-place. I have always heard say it was more difficult to find a thing hidden right in one's way than in an obscure corner. We have quite an overturn in the opinions of some of our folks lately. Cornelia has been really excited. I hope it may not be an injury to her health, and I can't exactly see what her decision will be. I have no doubt of its propriety however. If there ever was a woman to be trusted to decide on all questions of morals and manners, your sister is the one. She always knows, as if by intuition, what is proper.

"Our subject of excitement has been the preaching of our new rector, the Rev. Ernest Loftus. He is too evangelical I am afraid, though your sister has not as yet fully expressed her opinion about him. His ability is so great, he is so eloquent, and such a poet, and so handsome, that I think she hesitates, and does not believe what otherwise she would be convinced of. Last Sunday I waked up and took notes. I send you an extract. The text was, 'He shall break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free.' He said:—'God has set up an altar in the human heart, and forever a fire burns upon it—the fire of love for our brethren, which is hate of all tyranny, of all oppression. This quenchless fire shall burn until every bond is consumed. The doom of all tyrannies is decreed when men begin to muse upon them, to say "this is a a wrong, an injustice." Like the tiny spring that begins the Nile, or the Father of Waters, it may seem that one tyrant might drink every drop, and yet remain athirst, but it is only a seeming. Drop by drop the water is added at first, a little more and a little more is mingled, and a mighty flood rolls along the land and bears floating homes upon its bosom. So of the growth of thought. Truth gathers slowly; at first drop by drop is added to the living draught that only the few seem privileged to drink. But the rain descends, the floods fall, and "many waters" becomes the fitting synonym of the mighty

truth that is bearing man onward to the fulfilment of his destiny, when "every bond shall be broken, and the oppressed shall go free."'

"I give his words in my imperfect way, for I am no shorthand writer, but it is impossible to give you any idea of the moving, melting eloquence of the man. I am sure it will be very painful to Cornelia to decide that such eloquent preaching is too exciting and dangerous, but whatever she does decide will be as wise as a Bishop's best opinion, and will be received as such in our set. I will tell you the end when we have reached it. Meanwhile I am really concerned for your sister's health; but since magnetism has come to be considered entirely respectable, I think she will avail herself of its use. We learn from abroad that it is making its way in the most aristocratic circles, and I am glad of any help in her case. Her life is so exceedingly precious to me and others that any price might be considered too little to pay for it.

"I fear you have never done your sister justice, George. So much heart and so much intelligence, such pure taste and such exalted moral worth, were never before united in one person. You are very fortunate that she is your sister; I am supremely blest that she is my wife.

"I have written you a long letter, and I am sure it will interest you. I have nothing to say of myself, only that I am—Yours truly,

"Charles Mayo."

It is possible Graham did not feel of as much importance after he had read this letter from his brother-in-law. He had fancied his father and his family as extremely anxious about him, and he had trembled lest they should discover his agreeable home, and spoil it by their entreaties that he should return to them. And when he found that he was not an object of solicitude, he was vexed amid the peace he had so much desired. But he gave himself up to his new interests with much happiness. Minnie's character, so frank, fearless, and what his sister would have called unwomanly, was a constant delight, rebuke, and amusement to him.

"Whatever she thinks of me, good or bad, she is sure to say," said Graham to himself. Herein he was mistaken. It is true Minnie gave him credit and reproof, as she thought best, but she had exaggerated his errors and mistakes to him in her assumed office of mentor, and she had given him

credit for an abundance of wisdom and goodness that, we fear, as yet only existed in embryo with the young man. It was the possible George Graham that she worshipped—the man over whom painful and unpleasant experiences had passed—the man who should be humbled in his own eyes, who should see that the wisdom of a child or of a pure young heart that had learned in the school of a self-sacrificing Christianity, was far above his proud system-making selfishness. He began now to undervalue himself too much in his conversations with Minnie—to have a morbid humility. To all this Minnie answered, in her own frank way, "You are not as great a fool as you might be, George, and you are not wisdom impersonated altogether."

"And who is wise, Minnie? Commend me to the wise ones." He called her Minnie. Her father had asked him to call her so, as Caroline was called Miss Brandon, and Minnie was a very dear name to the loving father. "Commend me to the wise ones."

Minnie laughed. "I think Jerry about as wise as any one I know, for he knows that he is nearly a fool, and he is always trying to learn. You should see the number of pins he changes from one sleeve to another, to remind him of questions to be asked of my father and me, and of subjects for enquiry and contemplation in his own mind. I don't doubt that every pin has its separate wisdom, and if Jerry could only tell his thoughts he would very much surprise us. At any rate he has the grace of humility, and that is more than dogmatists and philosophers ——"

"And schoolmasters have," added George, laughing.

"You are improving," said Minnie. "You really do not know every thing this week, and next week I hope you will know less still, and in time I hope to see you rival Jerry in your search after what is wise and good. But I must not spend my time with you. My father has to prepare a new edition of his last book, and I am his secretary. If I work well, he has promised that I shall go to New York next winter, while he is superintending some illustrations and improvements."

"That would be too much happiness," said Graham, but Minnie was gone without seeming to have heard his remark. She had heard it however, and it was treasured in her heart. She only knew from her father that George Graham's home

was in New York, and that his character was above reproach. Mr. Brandon very much enjoyed preserving his young friend's incognito.

Mrs. Susan said, "The schoolmaster did not come in a basket to be sure, but he was nearly as mysterious as if he had." George had won the good lady's heart, and she sometimes said "he was as good as gold," and again she said "he was as good as wheat," and both these comparisons meant a good deal with Mrs. Susan. To her husband she said, "Your geese aint always swans, though you always think they are, but this one is a swan I do believe." And so Graham was duly prized by all the family, except Caroline. She considered him a low person, who was hired to teach school, because he was poor, and needed the money, and no merit atoned with Caroline for the lack of money, and all defects were covered by sufficient wealth.

Fred still felt rebuked by the presence of Graham in Easton. Minnie was still a weight on his conscience, and ever and anon he exhorted Jerry to keep a sharp eye on that loafing schoolmaster, and begged Caroline to be "extra good to Minnie."

CHAPTER XII.

BUYING A HORSE AND BECOMING A FREEMASON.

"Miss Carline," said Jerry, "it's no use talking, we can't get over it, nor under it, nor round it; Vixen belongs to Rawson. I should have been Rawson's witness if I had knowed enough. As it was, he took Mr. Frederick's hand write. The poor fellow had a realizin' sense of it all, when he seed the bill of sale next mornin'. I seed the tears when he led out Vixen, not because she's a sort of sperritual namesake of his mother, but because he has a heart, Miss Carline. 'Rawson,' said Fred, 'I'll give you double what you paid to leave the mare.'

"'I am satisfied with my bargain,' said old Bite, as politely as ef he had been asking one of the brethren to pray at the weekly prayer meeting.

"Fred throwed his arms over the mare's neck, and the tears *rained.* 'Rawson,' said he, 'I don't want to say I was drunk, and did not know B from bull's foot when I sold this beauty, but you know it. You know I would not take five hundred dollars for her if she was really for sale. You have paid one hundred, and have a bill of sale with my signature in your pocket. I wish to Jordan I could not write my own name, or that I had the comfort of being a minor again, and hoping and trusting in the day when I could make wise bargains. I'll give you two hundred dollars to put Vix back in the stable, and hold your tongue.'

"'Could not do it for three,' answered Rawson. 'I like the mare as much as you do.'

"'But you did not bring her up, and trot her out the first time, and then I'll be snagged if you ever loved anything but money, not even cogniac.'

"For I tell you, Miss Carline, that Mr. Frederick has been tryin' to leave off swearin', ever since he knowed you would go to live with the old one."

"Who said I would ever live with Mrs. Sherwood?" said Caroline angrily.

"Not I," said Jerry; "but as I was sayin', Mr. Frederick has been careful of his words of late. I asked him one day, if he did not think one idle word as bad as another. 'Why, no', said he, 'or I would not use three to one. I never say, "I'll be cursed" now, Jerry; that might be profane, and might hurt some folk's feelings, but I say, "I'll be snagged."'

"When Mr. Frederick said to Rawson that he never loved anything but money, the jockey turned blue—he allus blushes blue—I think because he is relation to that ere place that burns blue; he did not speak, and Mr. Frederick went on.

"'Will you take two hundred dollars, Rawson, and hold your tongue?'

"'You say,' said Rawson, 'that you were drunk. It would cost you more than your mare, if that were known.'

"Now, Miss Carline, Mr. Frederick is a good tempered fellow, he allus bore with the old one like a major, all breakfast and dinner time, or when he was scourin' his gun, or doin' anything he could not leave; she scolded him, and grumbled at him, and told him how much money he'd cost, and the price of the dogs, and how much it took to keep 'em, and how good for nothin' they were; she did not say nothin'

about horses, for they were her heart's delight, (more trouble for poor Fred; now, for that). Well, as I was sayin', he is a good tempered fellow as ever broke bread, or treated a poor white nigger to hot stuff in a cold night, but when Rawson hinted to him about you ——"

"What did he say of me?" said Caroline with flashing eyes.

"He said it would cost Mr. Frederick more than the mare if it was known that he got a brick in his hat, meanin' that he would lose you, Miss Caroline. But Bite had better not a' said it. I think Fred forgot all about bein' careful of his talk, for the way in which he pitched into Rawson, and told him what he deserved in Bible words, was not slow, Miss Caroline. I don't believe Bite has any notion that he's got any soul, and I could not believe it, even for the comfort of thinking he would have to pay in the next world for his capers in this. Mr. Frederick said he knowed 'twas no use talking of church to him, but says he, 'there's one place where a d——d sneak can't come,' and then I heard Mr. Frederick say under his breath, 'black ball,' and I went into a little cal'lation. I'll bet my striped jacket that Rawson's on trial at the mason lodge, and that was what Mr. Frederick meant. I expect I shall find Vix in her stable to-night, and I'll come and tell you if she does come back, but not a word to nobody, Miss Caroline, that I have told you anything."

"I am much obliged to you, Jerry," said Caroline, and "I assure you I shall not betray your confidence."

"That's what I calls lady-like," said Jerry, as she turned thoughtfully away. When she was fairly out of hearing Jerry said, "There's no such luck as making mischief between them two. He's hooked—snagged as he says, and she will never let him off. 'Taint in her to be honest. A drunkard that's got money is more in her eyes than twenty good Christians that has to airn their livin.' I did hope I could do him a good turn by tellin' her the truth, but there's no doin' nothin' for him. Poor Fred! he's snagged."

Just at this juncture Jerry spied Rawson on Fred's mare. He rode leisurely up, and dismounting, he leaned on the pet's neck and beckoned to Jerry. The mare took no notice of Rawson, but when Jerry came up she laid her nose on his shoulder as lovingly as a dog.

"Jerry," said Rawson, "you heard young Sherwood agree to take this horse back. You are a witness that he agreed to do so."

"I heerd him," said Jerry, "and I heerd him agree to give you a hundred dollars to let him take her back. I am a witness for both if I am for one.

"That's neither here nor there," said Rawson. "Between you and me, Jerry, I don't like the mare. She's tricky; Sherwood kept back all her faults. Now I don't want to say any thing of her being vicious, because he is attached to her, and it might hurt his feelings, or it might call his attention to her faults, and I might not find him as willing to take her off my hands. I just want you, Jerry, to get on her back and ride over to Mr. Frederick's, and tell him if he will send me the cheque I gave him for the mare, by you, no questions shall ever be asked or answered by me about this business, and no tales told. Do you understand?"

"I guess I do," said Jerry, jumping on Vixen's back as if he were sure of being carried to paradise. Fred was standing in the stable-yard with his arms crossed over his breast, and his head bowed, as if he had lost some near friend. The mare came up in her graceful beauty, and Fred leaped to her bit as a rover to his ship, a parent to his child, or a lover to his betrothed.

"What is it, Jerry? Has that infernal rascal caved in? By thunder, he is just that for robbing me of Vix."

"Vixen is yours again," said Jerry importantly. "I am witness," and he drew himself up very tall and straight, and passed his fingers very complacently over the yellow stripes of his vest.

"Well, Jerry, say on."

"I'm your man, Mr. Frederick. I am *witness*. Bite has got something in his head. He wants to be quit of you and the mare honorably. It is the fust honest trick I ever catched him in, and guess it's a white black-bird, and you won't catch many such. I'm to take him the cheque for a hundred dollars, and you are to take the mare, and nobody is to be any wiser for any thing that has happened; and mind you, Mr. Frederick, you are not to have a 'black ball' about you at the next lodge meetin'. I tell you this on my own hook, a little extra that I shall invite Rawson to pay for."

The mare rubbed her small head lovingly against Fred, and then laid it on his shoulder.

"Pretty Vix," said he, "I like your manners; you have not many loving ways, but you make the most of what you have,

and I like them all the better, I suppose, for their scarcity; plenty cheapens everything. After all, I am glad to find that Rawson has some good in him. If he wants to be honest, the lodge will help him. We have a set of good fellows. I'll vote for him, and give him a chance. Many a poor fellow has gone to Joppa, because nobody gave him a lift."

He took out his pocket book, and gave Jerry the cheque. "Tell Rawson, that I always remember pleasant things, and always forget unpleasant ones."

"I should have enough to forget of him if I did so," said Jerry, and he carefully bestowed the cheque in his right vest pocket, muttering, "No money over the heart, and nothin' of Rawson's there neither."

"Mr. Rawson," said Jerry, when he came up to that gentleman in his own door yard, "Here's your money, and Mr. Frederick says you are a good fellow, and he won't black-ball you at the lodge meeting to-morrow night." Rawson blushed cerulean, and Jerry went on—"I'd like for my part, a little cider brandy, or a mug of cider."

"I don't keep them," said Rawson, "I am a teetotaler, and it would be a sin for me to hold a cup to my neighbor's mouth."

"How long since you were out of somethin' to drink?" said Jerry.

"You forget, Jerry, that I am President of the Washingtonian Total Abstinence Society."

"Have you got three cents for a fellow that has not got no right of property?" said Jerry, shortly.

Rawson put his hand into his pocket. Jerry's face brightened. He withdrew his hand empty. "Go home about your work, you idle vagabond," said he. "You would be drunk directly if I gave you money."

"I haint got no black ball," said Jerry, and he turned away, and walked stoopingly, and sadly home. He brightened a little as he drew near the house, and thought of Miss Caroline. That young lady chanced very soon to pass near Jerry.

"Well, Miss Carline, it's all jest as I expected. He has sent Vix back, and Mr. Frederick has given him his hundred dollars, and that's all of it. Rawson is to keep dark, and not let you know of the spree, and Mr. Frederick is to vote him into the mason lodge, or at anyrate not to black-ball him out."

"Jerry," said Caroline, haughtily, "I must caution you against speaking of these things to any one but me."

Jerry drew himself up with a pride equal to that of the young lady. "I cal'late I am to be trusted," said he. "Mr. Frederick allus considers me as tight as a drum. Even Bite knowed better than to ask me not to tell. I allus takes care of my friends, and Mr. Frederick Sherwood is my friend, Miss Carline."

The lady softened a little and almost smiled. "We all trust you, Jerry;" but her crowning grace in his eyes was, that she gave him three pennies, and these would buy oblivion for his flickering sense the next time he went to the village.

A tumbler of black strap in summer, or of hot stuff in winter, made a six-hours' paradise for Jerry in ditch or snow-drift, or Bess Bite's stall, as the case might be. Miss Caroline passed on. Jerry jingled his pennies, and mused—

"Well now," said he, "which is the biggest fool, Fred Sherwood or me? Rawson's given him back his own, and he'd swear, if he had not left off swearin', that Rawson's a good fellow, and orter get into the mason lodge. And now Miss Caroline has made just as big a fool o' me—given me three cents. I've a kind of a hazy notion that two such fools aint no credit to our Creator, and if Miss Caroline and Rawson is, then I am out again in my reckonin'. I wish I did not have to study out these ere things with this dizzy head and achin' back, and onstiddy limbs of mine;" and Jerry walked musingly off, at an angle of forty-five degrees, and puzzled his poor brain, as sundry metaphysicians have done before him, and doubtless will again, before the mysteries of Providence are made clear to this world's wisdom.

CHAPTER XIII.

ABOUT LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

"Mr. Brandon," said Mrs. Susan, "can I talk to you, or are you too busy?"

"I am never too busy to listen to my dear wife," said Mr. Brandon, very tenderly.

"'Fair and softly goes far,' but I am in trouble, Mr. Brandon, and 'fine words butter no parsnips,' so you may let all the flummery go and try to help me."

Mr. Brandon was in his study. He had laid down his pen on the entrance of his wife. It was an event for Mrs. Brandon to enter her husband's sanctum. It portended something serious.

"Sit down, Susan, dear. I wish you would wear a cap," said he, glancing at her rough hair, now beginning to turn grey; and "can't you persuade somebody to give you a new dress once a-year?"

"It's little I care for looks, and I never had much looks to care for; and I don't know what I want of a cap, first in the ashes, and then in the flour; and as for new dresses, it takes you and the girls to dress up, and I like to have you. But you would not think of caps and gowns if you'd laid awake nights as much as I have lately. I tell you, Mr. Brandon, I am in trouble, or I should not trouble you."

"But you have no real trouble, Susan, dear," said her husband gently.

"But I have," said the poor woman, bursting into tears, and not having even a proverb at hand for her relief.

"What is it, dear? Certainly you should not keep real trouble from your husband, and lie awake at night, when he sleeps sweetly beside you."

"That's jest what I think, and so I have come to tell you at last. You know that my Carrie has been the pride of my life, and they say that pride *must* have a fall, and my heart's a-breaking for Carrie. I did not feel quite right when she was first engaged to Frederick Sherwood, because his mother aint any better than she ought to be; but I never thought but that he was all as right as a trivet, and now I am sure he drinks."

Mr. Brandon looked at her in surprise. "Susan, dear, you must be mistaken."

"It's as sure as death and taxes, Mr. Brandon. I have not heard to nobody. I've just opened my own eyes, and I've seen him tipsy twenty times. Jerry knows it, but you could not get nothing out of him. I would as soon pump in a dry well. But I know what I know, thanks to nobody. And now, Mr. Brandon, what shall we do?"

The poor lady buried her face in her apron, and burst into

a passion of tears. How often Mr. Brandon had felt that no trouble could be harder to bear than to see and hear his wife every day, and realise their utter unfitness for that bond that only death could break. He had thought that Christian patience could do no more than to enable him to bear cheerfully her presence, and that Christian charity had done its best when it made him speak always kindly, and, as she thought, lovingly to her. But now, as their first real trouble met them, after nearly twenty years of such misery as had been embalmed in beauty and bound in blue and gold, he bowed his head in anguish, such as he had never thought to feel, for his wife and her child.

Drunkenness had a peculiar horror for Mr. Brandon. It was such a vulgar vice, and his whole nature revolted from vulgarity. Then he thought of the beautiful Caroline giving the first feelings of her heart's love to a drunkard. The depth of sentiment born of Mr. Brandon's own disappointment, and kept always over-brimming, because he was a sentimental poet—all this was moved to a great misery in his heart, and he bowed his face upon his hands and wept bitterly.

Mrs. Brandon felt her first comfort in her great sorrow. "I did not know that you loved my Carrie and me so much," said she. "You can save her. She will never marry him if you tell her 'taint best. I can't say anything to her, for she could talk me round in no time. But you can talk to her—you know her. If I could talk as you can, I would go right to her, and tell her if she knew which side her bread was buttered on she'd never look at that fellow again."

"I shall certainly have a conversation with Carrie at once."

"Well, all I have to say is, don't tell her where you got your news. She is as proud of him as I am of her, and she'd never forgive me for finding him out. Now, you'll be carful of me."

"I will tell her that I have satisfactory information, and will not allude to you in the slightest."

"That's kind now, and as soon as you've broke it up, I'll get a new cap and gownd, and try to please you better."

"You are a good wife, Susan dear, better than I deserve, I fear."

"As if you did not deserve the Queen, if she'd have you, Mr. Brandon. You never need to sing small to me, for I

know you, and I would not give you for all the men in the world, and the man in the moon besides."

Mr. Brandon sent Minnie to ask Caroline to come to his study.

"My dear," said he, a good deal embarrassed, "I wish to talk with with you about your marriage with Frederick Sherwood."

Caroline was in her heart offended that this marriage was inevitable—that she could not escape it, and yet secure the property and position that it would give her. Frederick's habits offended her, not alone his being addicted to strong drink, but he had a habit of ignoring her, and of not allowing her to speak, when he had professedly come on purpose to ask her advice. Then he was fonder of Minnie than she liked. He dissatisfied her in almost everything except his estate; and yet she had made up her mind to marry him, and what she determined to do she did. She was offended that her father should speak to her on such a subject, and she added to his embarrassment by simply waiting, without a word, for him to speak.

"I am told that Frederick has got into bad habits, and I am grieved for you, Caroline. When a man is given to strong drink, woe to the woman who gives him her heart."

"I am well acquainted with Frederick Sherwood, papa, and I have seen nothing to hinder my marriage with him. He is a fine, generous young man; a little wild, perhaps, but he is young, and not under good influences at home."

"Liberal, he may be, my dear, but not generous, or he would not pain his friends, and ruin himself with drink. Are you aware, Caroline, that Frederick drinks to excess? A young man who is so regardless of the feelings of his friends and of his own character and usefulness, as to be an inebriate at his age, must have a very selfish nature."

"You seem to consider it a settled fact that Frederick is a drunkard, papa. You must have been prejudiced against him by some one, and as I know with whom you spend your leisure hours, I am at no loss to know who is vile enough to poison your mind and turn you against Frederick. I know he is wild, and somewhat reckless in his ways, but he is gaining in steadiness. He is always at church, he is kind to everybody, and gives a great deal in charity. I think there are much worse men in the world than poor Fred, and that you keep one of them very near you."

"My child, are you aware that marriage is a very sacred thing; that your marriage ought to be the holiest act of your life?"

"I don't know what marriage ought to be, but I know what it is, and those who have the least sacredness in their relations, perhaps prate the most about it."

Mr. Brandon blushed deeply, but he went on. "Caroline," said he solemnly, "would you marry Frederick Sherwood if he had only a decent suit of clothes and fifty dollars in his possession? If you marry a farm and some thousands in bank-stock; if you take this property encumbered with a drunkard, you will be a most miserable, broken-hearted woman before many years have passed. Your queenly beauty will be like a banner torn and spoiled and trailing in the dust. The light of your eyes will be quenched in tears."

Mr. Brandon bowed his head and wept. Not so Caroline. She sat erect, and her scorn flashed out on her father, whom in her heart she thought a very mean man.

"You need not go on," said she; "we evidently differ very much in opinion. You think marriage a very holy thing. I think it a contract that two people ought to fulfil to the best of their ability. I care nothing for the popular cant about love, misery, the rights of woman, and all that. I will secure my own rights. And I can assure you I shall never break my heart, if anything breaks off our marriage. It is enough for my friends to know that I intend to marry Frederick Sherwood. If you choose to listen to the slanders of a pauper schoolmaster you can do so, but no person shall speak to me of him but with proper respect."

She seemed almost fierce in her expression, and Mr. Brandon was silenced and relieved at the same time. He said in his heart, "She does not love him." To her he said, "Your fate is in your own hands, Caroline. I would fain save you from sorrow."

"If you want to save anybody you had better see to Min, who is in a great deal more danger than I am."

Caroline flung out of the study, angry with herself and Fred, and her father, and all the world. But she was not angry enough to allow Fred Sherwood and the largest property in Easton to slip through her fingers.

Mrs. Brandon stole up to her husband as soon as Caroline was gone. Mr. Brandon bent over her, put his arm around her waist, and said—

"My poor dear Susan, I fear I have but little influence with Caroline. But I am persuaded she does not love Sherwood, and that is a great relief to me."

Mrs. Brandon raised her brimming eyes to her husband's face, and said, "And you can rejoice that a woman don't love her husband! I thought you was all for love matches."

"My dear," said he, "I was rejoicing in the hope that he would never be her husband, because she does not love him, and that her heart will never break with outrage and unrequited love, if she does marry him."

"I did hope," said Mrs. Brandon, "that our children might be as happy when they were married as we are. I often think what would you do if you had married somebody else; but they say every Jack has his Jill."

Mr. Brandon had risen to try to comfort his wife, whom he sincerely pitied. He sat down thinking who could comfort *him*. His wife left the room, and Minnie came to him, and laid her soft cheek against his, and he was comforted.

CHAPTER XIV.

GOING TO PARADISE.

"A MOTHER is a mother, Frederick," said Mrs. Sherwood, putting a red bandana handkerchief to her eyes, and appearing to weep bitterly, though her tears were few and maudlin. "A mother is a mother, and you'll think of it, and realise it when I am in Paradise, where I cannot feel your unkindness."

"I don't see that you need go to Paradise, mother, to make me realise that you are my mother. I would prefer that you should bring paradise here, and then you and Carrie could live like ducks in a puddle, or cows in clover, and never have a bit of tribulation."

"You will never see an upstart girl put above your own mother in Paradise," said the sobbing Mrs. Sherwood. "The Power above would never do such an unreasonable thing as you are going to do. High among the angels your poor mother will sit, and have her reward for the sufferings caused by an undutiful son."

Fred was superstitious. His honoured mother was a little the worse for liquor. He was frightened at the familiar manner with which she treated the other world. His irreverence was confined to this world, and, as he expressed it, he always caved in to preaching and Scripture, and the like of that.

"Mother," said he, "just let alone paradise and the angels and rewards and punishments. I am afraid we are neither of us any too good for this world, let alone another. I want you and Carrie to agree to live together, like two kittens that have not learned to scratch. I can persuade her; she will listen to reason. You know there will never be any trouble between you and me about property. I will buy out your third and your life-lease of the house, if you say so; but why break up the old home; I love it like a dog—yes, more, like a cat. So do you. Why make trouble, then, because I want company? You complain of my sprees, with good reason. Let me bring Carrie home and she will help you to cure me. By thunder! mother, you had better do that than go to paradise."

"The house is mine while I live, and do you think I'll ever take a come-by-chance into my respectable home?"

"Mother, mother! how dare you say that to me, and of my own wife that is be, and your daughter?—a girl that is as innocent as a new-born babe! Look at me!" he thundered in his mother's ears. She looked up at him. "If you ever hint to me again about Carrie's birth, which for all we know may be as honest as our own, I will never call you mother again: I will never look at you, or speak to you—and, more than all, *I will hate you.*

Mrs. Sherwood was thoroughly frightened at Fred's violence. She loved her son, and she quailed utterly at the thought that he might come to hate her.

She whimpered out, "Let that go, and forever; but I want my own house over my head while I live."

"What do you want of a two-storey house and ten rooms, with an addition of kitchen, milk-room, and chambers over that? Must you live in twenty rooms, or can Carrie and I have one or two of them?"

"I want peace and respect and gratitude from an ungrateful son."

"And you can't have these if I bring home a wife! Well, I like peace, too, and I'll tell you how I will get it. I'll sell

out my right in the homestead. I'll sell to Joe Putney. You are fond of him. He hived your bees when they swarmed on his hat. He walked home with them, and put them in a patent hive, and called the swarm a 'Godsend.' He has weighed cheese and measured wheat after you a few times, and detected slight errors of yours in weight and measure. No; I won't sell out—I'll rent my part to Joe, and I'll take Vixen and Smash, and go to the village and set up for a gentleman."

Mrs. Sherwood had been head of the house, and the head of the farm, and the head of all business, since the death of her husband years ago. The idea had never entered her mind that any one else could take her honors or profits, or her hard work, and the luxury of complaining of it from her.

If Fred had conjured the ghost of his drunken, thriftless, kind-hearted father from the grave, Mrs. Sherwood would not have been more alarmed. She turned pale and trembled, and became entirely sober, as Fred caught his hat as if to fulfil his threat. He saw the wild alarm that he had caused his mother, and as the infliction of pain was no part of his plan of living, because it hurt him to see suffering, he stopped short and said—

"Now, mother, I am a good fellow, as you know, when I find the road clear; very docile when not provoked, and all that, but I would never stand a row with a woman. There are two ways for us. Pity we can't choose wisely. I'll get married and settle down steady, and be sober. You and Carrie may divide the house and the work to mutual satisfaction. You will straighten it all out between you, and never have any difficulty, or if you do, mind I'm never to hear of it. Now, if this can happen peaceably, then I go along after the old sort, only better; and you go along the same fashion, only not so lonesome, and with more help, for Carrie will keep a servant. If it can't happen in peace, I'll sell or rent, or go to Rice's Hotel to board, with my dogs and rifle, and Carrie, Vixen, and Smash. This is my ultimatum. I give you five minutes to make up your mind, to take us home, or go to Paradise, or be saddled and bridled by Joe Putney."

Mrs. Sherwood amiably assented to her son's not very clear proposals, and Fred patted her on the shoulder, and told her she was a good mother, and was growing handsomer, and that she would shortly have two dutiful children instead of

one, who he acknowledged was not any better than he should be.

Fred sallied forth in the best possible spirits. He saddled Vixen and started for Rice's, to treat his good luck and gamble till day-break, very likely. If he is a winner he will take a short nap and be abroad early, and settle the preliminaries of his marriage, and perhaps get Carrie to name the day. If he has ill luck he will go home surly, and Carrie will not see him for two or three days.

"Tight times," said he, as he came in sight of the school-house, "to make a fellow imprison himself there four months. I wonder if I have done all I ought toward entertaining this honored guest of Mr. Brandon, and protegé of my friend Mr. Mayo. I don't see how I was to be his friend if he would not accept my friendship. No one can be saved against his will. I think I have done the handsome thing. Hallo, here's Jerry."

"Well, old chap, how is all the world and his wife?"

"Well, all the world is about as big a fool as common, and his wife is a bigger one."

"Where are you going, Jerry?"

Jerry was on his way to the school-house to get a book of Graham, for Mr. Brandon, but it was one of his black days, and he could not give an intelligent answer. He trembled, and his eyes ran over, and Fred exclaimed, "What in thunder is the matter, Jerry? you don't cry for trifles."

"I've never cried much since she put the spell on me," said Jerry, "my head's been too hot. Somehow it's burnt up the tears, and I've felt a great deal worse, Mr. Frederick. It's a hard case all round. I could tell you what I suffer if t'was not your own mother that's done it."

"Nonsense, Jerry. The old lady has sins enough on her head, and she has done hard things enough to you, but she has never laid a spell on you, that is your nonsense. You are cracked, Jerry, like all the rest of us. Everybody has a weak spot, and that about the spell is yours."

"So you've telled me a great many times, Mr. Frederick. I only wish I could believe you, but I knows what I knows."

"Well, never mind the spell now. Is there any trouble about me at your house?"

"I think there is, Mr. Frederick, for Miss Carline's eyes is desput red, and she looks proud like."

"I'll go and see her," said Fred.

"I ruther you would say nothin' to her, Mr. Frederick. She will know that I told, and I could not bear her, and the spell too. You have to keep your own secrets, and you may as well keep mine. I'd ruther Miss Minnie know'd I told things than Miss Carline."

"Why so, Jerry?"

"You'll find out who's reasonable and who aint soon enough without my tellin' you. I likes to have somethin' of my own, besides three cents, tho' no man prizes three cents for what it will buy higher than me. But a man's character and conscience is the best sort of property after all, Mr. Frederick. When I've drinked a tumbler of black strap, or a mug of hot stuff, and lay down to rest, I like to think, if I freeze to death, or anything happens so that I never wake up, I like to think that I had a good character and conscience when I laid down. I've a notion that I am likely to take sich property into the next world, and I've a notion that there's a good Almighty Bein' there who is a judge o' sich goods, and knows the value of them. As to Miss Minnie, I believe she's relation to this good Bein'. As to Miss Carline, I have my doubts, and I can't sell 'em or give 'em away, and so I must keep 'em. You understand, Mr. Frederick. I feel as tho' you'd e'enamost cured me of the spell to-day. I did not mean to speak about Miss Carline. Don't tell for pity's sake, Mr. Frederick. You know I aint quite right in my upper storey to-day."

"I take," said Fred, laughing, "Carrie's gloriously handsome in harness; whether she'll draw will remain to be seen, but you shall not be hurt, Jerry. Here are three pennies for you," and he rode on.

Jerry jingled the pennies in his right pocket, and then he put his hand to his left to see if the note Minnie had written to Graham for her father was safe.

"I wonder," said Jerry, 'if 'twas this letter or Mr. Frederick that sent the spell away. It's sure and sartain that I don't feel nothin' of it to what I did."

Jerry seemed a sort of circumstantial evidence to the truth of the doctrine of magnetism and impressibility. All Minnie's notes were laid over his heart, where he never carried pennies. He seemed to have an instinct against pennies, probably from the bad use he made of them.

Fred rode on, but presently he became very uneasy in his mind. He felt sure that Jerry had a note from Minnie Brandon for the schoolmaster. He turned back, and came upon Jerry just as he emerged from the school-house, with a package in his hand.

"Well, Jerry, you carry the mail it seems. That's for Miss Minnie I take it. I am going up there. I am not easy in my mind. You may give me that parcel, and I will give you my errand to the village, and here's sixpence more for hot stuff."

"Mr. Frederick," said Jerry, "I am glad you aint in earnest."

"But I am in dead earnest; so hand over." Jerry drew himself up erect; for once in his life, the energy that came into his face and figure seemed to transform him.

"I haint been trusted any too much in my life," said he, "but the man haint been born yet, who can call me a traitor."

Fred was softened for an instant.

"Nonsense, Jerry," said he, "I only want to see that fellow's handwriting."

"How do you know it's a *fellow's* handwrite?" said Jerry.

"Don't be a fool," said Fred impatiently. "Give me the parcel and I'll give you your letter and sixpence."

"Mr. Frederick," said Jerry, who really supposed he had carried a love letter and had got one in return, "leave a poor half-witted, dizzy-headed, weak-backed, shaky-limbed mortal man his honour. If I should give you this ere, I should never bear to live with myself another day in the world, let alone the nights." And he shuddered with horror.

Fred was provoked by what he considered a very unreasonable opposition to his will.

"Jerry," said he, "give me that letter, or I'll tell the old one to put a spell on you."

"You have telled me often enough, Mr. Frederick, that she could not do it. I knows well enough she can, but I am sure and sartain that it would be a deal easier for her if I should be so mean as to give up my trust."

Fred was enraged by this continued opposition.

"Do you know," said he, "that I could take that packet from you in a minute, and break every bone in your worthless skin?"

Jerry answered calmly,

"No, Mr. Frederick, I don't know any sich thing. I believe in good and bad sperrits, and I'd sooner believe that a legion of both sorts would help me master you, than that you would do such a dishonorable deed."

"You are a fool," said Fred, suddenly altering his tone; "nobody wants your letter, but I have given you a pretty fair trial, and I think all the better of you, though it was not of the least consequence any way."

"I know'd you was'nt in airnest, Mr. Frederick." Fred had started toward the village, but he turned short round.

"Jerry," said he, "if you ever tell of this, I'll break your good-for-nothing neck."

"I aint careful of my neck, but we are friends, and friends never tells."

CHAPTER XV.

A LETTER FROM GEORGE GRAHAM TO CHARLES MAYO.

"DEAR CHARLIE,—

"You must know that my school is not in the village, but for some twenty families scattered about over the pretty country, and making a district. The school-house is placed as near the centre as possible, so as to accommodate all. I have forty scholars in my school. The eldest have numbered a score of years, and there are some very small people who find their way on the smooth snow road, in good weather, and on the hand-sleds of elder brothers, when the weather is stormy or very cold. These sleds are 'a great institution' for 'intervals' and 'noon-times.'

"There is a hill-side near the school, and pedestrians going down it are sometimes tripped up, and seated in a sled that comes on the path after them, in a very unceremonious manner. There are traditions of certain masters who have been treated to involuntary excursions of this sort.

"I have a good warm school-house, thirty feet long and twenty-five feet wide, with a large square hole cut into the attic for purposes of ventilation, a good large stove, and plenty of dry wood, and your brother George and his young people

are as comfortable a family as you could find. We have spelling-school once a-week, and the best spellers are appointed captains and choose sides, and have a clerk on each side to mark the number of words mispelled, and duly to report which side beats. All this is very pleasant. I have hardly known anything better in education.

"My scholars are taught to read, as well as it pleases chance —to spell well, thanks to the emulation of the spelling-school. They write after G.'s method, which I find a good one; and their proficiency in mathematics is worthy of a country where the ubiquitous dollar is reckoned so many times ten thousand in a year. Besides, the unlucky fellow who misses his sums is kept after school to do them, with or without my help. Geography and grammar are especially honoured in our school; and I have a pale girl who sits alone who has mastered Latin and rhetoric, and is chopping logic for her amusement.

"When I was a youngster at school, the master used both rod and ferule ever the heads and hands of refractory scholars; but the majority of my pupils, including the master, votes against our Young America being thrashed, and so we go on governing ourselves like men and women, instead of being beaten like brutes. I made an arrangement with the Committee of the District that enables me to turn any incorrigible reprobate out of school which insures that we shall have none, for every one loves school and would feel banishment to be the worst possible punishment.

"I have introduced music, and it is a great happiness to the scholars, and almost everybody wonders that it was never introduced before. A few 'old fogies' have complained that the children lost time by the singing, but we very soon persuaded them, or put them under the pressure of public opinion. So we have peace, and my school gets a great deal of praise.

"Congratulate me, Charlie; I have proved that I can live away from home, and that I can work for my living. I have given some lessons on Saturdays because I am thought to be a poor fellow who is obliged to teach; and a daughter of your poet friend gives me plenty of advice and reproof that she would keep entirely in reserve, if I had come here with the prestige of my family and friends in New York and as one of the heirs of a millionaire. All this amuses me very

much. The people think me a little too proud and aristocratic for my place, but, on the whole, I am very happy as school-teacher in Easton.

"You must not think me disrespectful to your wife, Charlie, because she is my sister, and it might not be proper for me to give an opinion of her merits. It is much more graceful for you to praise her, inasmuch as you are no relation of hers. You may be sure I value my family at a high figure, as you merchants say, so please find no more fault with my modesty in expressing my opinions of you, or Cornelia; but believe in my respectful affection.—Yours truly,

"GEORGE GRAHAM."

George Graham's conscience was not well satisfied with this letter. He did not half believe in his sister's merits. He doubted her from intuition and observation, but why should he breathe his doubt to any mortal? Surely no present reason existed for such a course; but then he did not love to tarnish his interior honesty by leading Charlie Mayo to suppose that he thought Cornelia the greatest and best woman in the world. George Graham's position with regard to his brother-in-law was a delicate one. If he had not been honest, we can pity him, and remember how often we are crowded into a corner and cover ourselves all over with pretences.

Mrs. Brandon was too much troubled to think of a new cap or "gownd." Her husband had failed with Caroline, and that young lady went about proud, cold, and cross.

Soon after Jerry had told Fred that he thought there was trouble in the family about his habits, Mrs. Susan happened one afternoon to be on what she called the "Piazzard," at the back of the house. She was clearing the snow away that she might close the blinds, and, while thus engaged, she heard Fred say, in a very tipsy tone—

"They're all down on me, Carrie—your old ones and my old one—and I'll be cussed if I am going to stand it. If you mean to marry me, you'll name the day; and if you are not, I'd like to let daylight through that schoolmaster."

"Frederick," said Caroline, taking hold of his arm, and steadying his steps, for he reeled in his walk as well as in his words, "you must go home now, you are not well; go home and get some sleep, and come to-morrow."

Fred turned fiercely upon her, and asked her if she meant

to insinuate that he was drunk. "Do you believe your vulgar old mother, or your precious milksop of a father, or that chap that I'll gibbet yet?" said he.

Caroline earnestly urged him towards the gate; he resolutely refused to go. Though very angry, she feigned grief, and, putting her handkerchief to her face, she pretended to be weeping. Fred was softened in a moment, and allowed himself to be sent home.

Poor Mrs. Susan was an unwilling witness of this scene. Her heart was aching for her child, and yet she dared not speak to her. "I'll speak to Dr. Browne," said she, "may be he can persuade her."

She went into the house, and there she found the excellent Doctor, who had remained a bachelor amid all the attractions of Easton, taking the many duties and charities in his practice instead of a wife. He had boarded with Mrs. Brandon till he found himself obliged to receive students, such was his zeal in his profession. Then he had fitted up a house of his own, which was kept by a wonderful old couple of African descent and great capabilities in all domestic affairs.

Mrs. Susan found herself alone with the Doctor in the sitting-room.

"Oh, Dr. Browne," said she, "I am in such trouble—my poor Carrie——"

"Your poor Carrie!" said the Doctor, "why, she is rich as a Jew, and will soon be a great deal richer."

"But don't you know about Frederick Sherwood, Dr. Browne?"

The Doctor put on his impenetrable face, though he knew very well Fred's inheritance and his habits.

"It's no use," said Mrs. Susan, "it's no use, Doctor, your putting on your solid face; you know as well as I, and I beg of you to help me; I can't do nothing with her; but it's spoilin' my temper, and breaking us all in two. You know I am pleasant in my disposition, or always used to be, but the sweetest wine makes the sharpest vinegar, and I'll be fit to pickle all the cowcumbers in Easton by the time they grow again. I *can't* have my Carrie marry a drunkard."

"Mrs. Brandon," said the Doctor, "this young man must have been slandered, and surely you are not a woman to listen to slander."

"I don't care nothing for slander, Dr. Browne, it will rub

off when it's dry; but it's our own selves that always sticks to us. And I have seen him this very night so much the worse that he could not walk straight; and she helped him. Now, what can I do, Doctor?"

Mrs. Brandon fortunately had her handkerchief, and she wet it with her tears, all the time begging help of the Doctor.

"My husband has done his best and failed."

"Does she love Sherwood?" said the Doctor.

"I am sure I can't tell. Love is a gift good enough for a king, and whoever could go and give it to a drunkard?"

Dr. Browne was puzzled and troubled. He was the friend of both families. Mrs. Sherwood had already besought him to do his best to break off the match, but he knew Fred's heart was set upon it, and he saw in it the young man's only chance of being checked in his downward career. The Doctor wished very much to oblige them all, and all their interests were so hopelessly antagonistic that he was troubled.

"I will do my best in the premises," said he to Mrs. Susan, and then he went away, thinking what the best could be, or should be, or ought to be. He had no idea that Providence would set him a very severe task for Frederick Sherwood and Caroline, before he had considered much longer.

While Dr. Browne and Mrs. Brandon were *tete-a-tete* in the sitting-room, Minnie was paying a visit to the wood shed.

Jerry sat on a log, in his own expressive language, "chop-fallen."

"Are you sick, Jerry?" said she, very kindly.

"Yes, and no, Miss Minnie. I am sick of myself, and my dizzy head and the hair on it, that haint been properly tended to, and my foxy boots when there's candle ends enough; and I'm sick of my aching back when there's choppin' to be done; but I aint sick of you, and your face like a star shinin' down into the dark that's all round me. But sich a flock of troubles I never see. There's Bess, with all my care and kindness, is stone blind, and your father believes I did it; and every time I see Rawson, he twits me of spilin' the mare's eyes. He's spiteful because I got a chance not to be his nigger, thanks to your kind heart; and so he comforts himself, tellin' me I'll get turned out of my place, and go to live with the old one again, and get the spells," and Jerry shuddered as if he had an ague fit.

"Don't trouble yourself about that," said Minnie. "My father will not part with you, Jerry, while you do well."

"But maybe I won't do well. There's Fred, Miss Minnie; Jerry can trust you with his trouble. There's Mr. Frederick, I should say, he's in sich a hurry to get to the Old Nick, that he upset 'tother day on the Ferry-road, without the shadder of an excuse. How do I know but that he will upset to-day in a worse place. I never knew him to do sich a thing before. I think he must be pisoned. The last time I see him, he said, 'Jerry,' says he, 'Rice's brandy has strikenine in it, and it flies in my head.'

"'It will strike you ten, pretty soon,' said I, and he laughed, but his laugh sounded holler.

"'Jerry,' said he, 'these women will be the death of me. I must back Carrie, you know. I should be sure she would win, if she was not pitted against the old scratch. But I never saw the old one worsted, and it makes me uneasy, unhappy, Jerry; and the fact is, I drink too much. It is a pity that I have three cents to spare so often.' And he threw me three cents as he said it.

"Now, Miss Minnie, Fred is not a mean-spirited fellow, and it adds to my troubles to have him rowed up Salt River. It seems to me that the Great Bein' who rules all creation, might manage that old woman, so that she could not torment Fred so bad, let alone her nursin' him on milk-punch, ready made from her own bosom, when he was a baby, and gittin' him into habits that he'll never git out of."

Jerry had moved Minnie deeply, but she had come on a mission of her own to him, and she said—

"How are the roads, Jerry?"

"Good enough, a good ways under the snow, Miss Minnie."

"I want you to go to the village; papa wants to send to the Post-office."

"I am your man," said Jerry, brushing his coat sleeves, and counting the pins on them.

"Jerry," said Minnie, gently, and she laid her hand on his arm, and then she spoke in her low and tender tones, "you will not drink anything at the village."

"Honour bright, Miss Minnie; I'll take nothin' if the world falls down. Trust Jerry when you asks him like that," and he gave her a look that had the light of sanity and salvation in it.

He put his hand to his vest pocket. "I'll buy three cents worth of peppermint drops, and bring 'em to you, Miss Minnie."

"I am very fond of them," said Minnie, smiling at the idea of taking peppermints from Jerry, yet fully determined to take some when he returned. "I would rather take them from him than from some of those who despise the poor fellow; and, besides, I think he is gaining in sanity. He does not have the spells nearly so often. If I can persuade him never to drink again, his life may be much better and happier," and Minnie went her way with a new hope and a new happiness in her heart.

CHAPTER XVI.

TROUBLE.

Jerry's presentiments were justified. Fred Sherwood was overturned on the Ferry Road, and he lay in the best chamber of his mother's house, sunk in a down bed, and four great glaring windows let no light in upon his apoplectic brain. His eyes were glazed, his face a leaden purple, his breath came slowly and stertorously from his heaving chest. His mother, in trembling terror, bent over him her worn, thin, and sallow face. Her red eyes had real tears in them. He did not see her; he did not know that any one grieved for for him.

Sherwood had been brought home sensible, though terribly hurt, and had drunk heavily of hot brandy and water, which had induced his present state.

Rawson had come home with him, and said that he had picked him up from a pile of rocks by the road side. Fred told him he had only sprained his ankles, and he had directed Rawson to secure Vixen and Smash to the back of his team; and he had induced the horses to submit to Rawson's care and guidance, a feat that the white livered scamp could not have accomplished except with Sherwood's persuasive authority. The remnants of the sleigh were left at the roadside, Rawson being promised the wreck for his very opportune service.

Arrived at home, the farm hands carried Fred to the very

best chamber, because he had met with an accident, and Mrs. Sherwood instinctively respected an unhappy accident. In this spirit she treated her son to hot brandy and water. Neither she nor Rawson had the least suspicion that Fred might be fatally hurt. He spoke sensibly, though unable to walk, and hardly able to move.

"Tim," said Fred, as they laid him down, "help me off with my duds. I want to be safe in bed, for my head is raising a young hurricane.

"There—easy Tim; I am sprained all over as bad as my ankles; careful, Tim. Let me see what I want—my head swims—send my mother with hot brandy and water—take care of Vix and Smash; rub them down with—pepper sauce—no, not that—my head—take—the right thing, Tim; I'll pay for the—bitters—send the old—my mother—you hear," and he sank exhausted.

Mrs. Sherwood came up, quite determined to give her son "a good piece of her mind" with the brandy; but she was alarmed at his appearance. She spoke to him gently, bathed his face and hands with camphor, and he revived enough to swallow the large tumbler of poison she had brought him.

Tim took care of Fred during the night, and Mrs. Sherwood went in and out continually, drinking no ardent spirits, thoroughly frightened and sorrowful, and thinking whether she ought to send for a doctor. If Fred came out bright in the morning, he would not forgive her for exposing him. He was restless and delirious till toward morning, when he fell into a heavy half-coma. Mrs. Sherwood watched beside him, in a state of uncertainty what she ought to do that was very distressing. She had no lack of experience as to sprees, drunken sleep, etc.; but she had no experience of Fred's being hurt. Never before had he met with the slightest harm in connection with the most vicious horses.

Mrs. Sherwood loved her son, and feared him. She did not like to expose his accident and its cause, and she did not like the item of expense that the doctor's visit would involve, and, worst of all, she dreaded that Fred should be really in danger and send for Caroline Brandon. Like one who shuts his eyes in the vain hope that it will lessen his peril, she deferred sending for the physician, thinking "he can't be very ill, for he has no doctor." She thought and thought, as she sat by her son's bedside, till late in the morning, when Fred awoke with

a start, and cried out in great anger, "Who has tied me?—Take off these infernal ropes!" and he began feeling his head and limbs with his left hand, the use of which was fortunateately spared him, to see if he were not fast bound with great cords that were cutting him, especially around his head. When he discovered that he was only bruised and swollen, he told his mother to send for Dr. Browne.

"I have only been waiting for you to wake," said Mrs. Sherwood, but she was in no haste to move.

Fred saw this instantly, and said, "You need not wait any longer. I am awake, and want the doctor in double quick time. You need not send for Carrie till I tell you to. Now, can you move? and tell Tim to ride Smash; he'll need an airing; and tell him not to let the grass grow under the horse's feet on the way."

Mrs. Sherwood retired with alacrity, and then Fred tried to turn, and could not, and then he muttered, "A pretty fix, and to be left in it—all by the cursed jealousy of these women—no, not that; but by the mean selfishness of my own mother. Carrie would have sent for her—I am sure of that. Oh! how I hate selfishness, and jealousy, and all that devilish brood!"

And Fred was in earnest. He believed himself to be thoroughly unselfish, and generous in all things, as he was liberal of money. He bit his lips to restrain himself, till what he had to say could be poured on the heads of the parties concerned. His bodily sensations grew worse every moment; his head dilated to the size of a hogshead, and was full of pain in all its ample dimensions. His eyes were as if filled with fire, and the four large windows of the best chamber poured a scalding glare of light through the white curtains that was wholly insupportable. He tried to move again, but could not—motion was denied to all his body corporate, except his left hand and arm. He found himself burning up with fever, distracted with thirst, and cursing the light as if it were a fiend. His mother did not return, and he shrieked in his agony, "Shut the blinds—for heaven's sake shut the blinds."

Mrs. Sherwood had drunk nothing since the night before, and in her first joy at seeing Fred in his senses she had proceeded to the bottle-closet to make amends for her self-denial. She drank no stinted draught, and then adjourned to the kitchen to "rest herself with a pinch of snuff," where she

incontinently fell asleep in her chair, not having slept during the night. Meanwhile her wretched son was groaning with pain and thirst and burning anguish, that made his little remaining reason reel on its throne.

At length Mrs. Sherwood was roused by a hearty shake from Dr. Browne, who tried one shoulder, and then both, before he could wake her.

"My good woman, what the deuce do you mean?" cried the doctor. "Do you know that your son is killed? Why are you sleeping at such a time?"

"Who says my son is killed?" screamed Mrs. Sherwood. "He is awake, and very bright and well, and don't need you any more than his poor mother, who has been awake all night, nursing him, and must now be abused because she is so beat out that she fell asleep in her chair. O that I were in Paradise," sobbed Mrs. Sherwood.

Dr. Browne knew by long experience that when Mrs. Sherwood began to talk of Paradise and to pity herself, that she was full "three sheets in the wind," and was to be treated cautiously. So he said, "My dear lady, you are wild to fatigue yourself so as to fall asleep in your chair. Do take a glass of cordial to revive you."

He poured a teaspoonful of tincture of camphor into a tumbler of water, and gave it to her, remarking, "So, Frederick is better—nearly well, you say. It is lucky I came, for your sake. Would you like me to look in upon Fred, and give him some good advice, as long as he don't need a doctor?"

Mrs. Sherwood caught at this. The doctor might frighten Fred out of his irregularities. The fact was Dr. Browne had been up stairs, guided by Fred's groans, and had found him delirious. There was no one in the house but Mrs. Sherwood, Tim having stopped, on his way back, to tell the tale of the accident; and the other farm labourers had taken their breakfasts at their homes, and had gone to their work at a distance from the house. So the doctor felt the importance of amicably awakening Mrs. Sherwood. This was now accomplished, and she went with the doctor to her son's room. The shock she experienced on entering entirely sobered her, and she asked, in great alarm, what she should do.

"Close the blinds, and darken the room as much as possible."

"I only left 'em open to dust, and then for the dust to settle, so that I could go over the room again. I'll keep 'em close—I allus do, for the sun spiles everything"—she ran on, mechanically, though really very much alarmed. When the room was darkened Tim came, and was sent for water to a spring that had the happy temperature of forty-five degrees Fahr. the year round.

Dr. Browne bathed his patient with this water in which he put arnica, and he did the good work himself, for he had achieved good fortune by his own good will and earnest efforts. He could take off his coat, roll up his snow-white shirt sleeves, and expend a half-hour's labour and magnetism on such a "bad case" as Fred Sherwood, with the heartiest good will. He was "the man of the people," emphatically, for he could make Mrs. Sherwood believe in his tender sympathies, and in the depth and everlastingness of his friendship, when it was his private opinion, which he kept religiously to himself, that the old woman, and all who were in any way related to her, would be greatly benefitted if she were translated to her much-talked-of Paradise.

Dr. Browne's opinions never did any one any harm. They were exclusively his own. The poor unhappy mother tried to help the doctor, her hands trembling and palsied by long years of labour and excessive drinking; and he, with the blandest manner in the world, begged her to sit down and rest. He told her that he feared she would be deprived of her rest too much, for even a mother's love and her good constitution to bear up under. He talked smoothly to the old lady, made Tim useful, and did all in his power for his agonised patient.

The exclusion of the light, the cold bath, with the marvellous remedy, the soft magnetic hand of the doctor, and something given internally, soon brought Fred to his senses.

"Dr. Browne," said he, in a whisper.

"Presently," answered the doctor, in a tone equally confidential.

Very soon he left Fred, and went over to the rocking chair, where Mrs. Sherwood sat in deep affliction. He stood by the back of her chair, and then he laid his hand on her head—then he took her hand and felt her pulse.

"My dear madam," said he, "I must prescribe for you." He drew a bottle from his pocket, put something on her

tongue, and then begged her to go to her own room, and compose herself to sleep.

"I will take the medicine," sobbed Mrs. Sherwood, "but I cannot leave my child, and I never lay down in the day-time."

"I know you are always cruel to yourself," said the doctor, "but you must rest, for, by and by, we shall need you more than we do now."

Dr. Browne glanced at the bed. He saw in every line of Fred's face that he was just going to swear. He made a significant and soothing jesture to him, and then he took Mrs. Sherwood's hand and gently led her from the room.

"Now, you will take my advice," said he, in the kindest yet firmest way.

"I will," said the sleepy Mrs. Sherwood. She sought her room instinctively, much more asleep than awake, more drunk than sober, more a besotted animal than a woman or mother; and yet, through all, she felt the doctor's kindness, and her last waking thoughts were, "What a good man Dr. Browne is! How I wish I was in Paradise!"

The doctor returned to his impatient patient. "She's safe—What is it, Fred?"

"Are you sure she won't come back?"

"Quite sure."

"Are you certain she is not at the door listening?" Dr. Browne stepped to the door and opened it. Mrs. Sherwood's room was across the hall, and a loud snore saluted him from her open room. He went across, and noiselessly closed the door.

"Make yourself easy, my good friend," said he; "she is safe for six hours. Now, what is it?"

"I want Caroline Brandon," said Fred earnestly. "I want her while I can talk to her."

"I will bring her here as soon as possible," said the doctor.

Tim was called, and directed what to do in Dr. Browne's absence, and then the kind man went at once to Mr. Brandon's, and told Caroline of Fred's accident, carefully and tenderly, as was his wont. It was a pleasure to him to soften all the rough points in the case to the young lady, and he would have treated her with the same considerate kindness if he had known he should never see her again, as he did now, when he felt assured that he should hold her hand and her purse through years of suffering on her part, and of advice and

service on his. For was she not to have Fred Sherwood, and much trouble, much money, much ill-health, and probably many children?

The proud and beautiful young lady was a mine for Dr. Browne to work in coming years, and there was no calculating how many rich pockets he might find in it. So he satisfied his benevolence and his love of his professional interests, by speaking most tenderly and respectfully of Fred Sherwood. This kindness and consideration met its present reward from Miss Brandon in the most obliged sweetness and dignity of manner; and every kind look and gentle tone, and all the concealment and glossing over unpleasant facts, on the part of the doctor, was an investment for him, at the highest rates of usury, in Caroline's books. He did not calculate on this. He simply wished to be kind and good to all; and yet an enemy would have sworn that he was as full of guile and schemes for his own advancement as Mrs. Sherwood was of brandy on her bad days.

CHAPTER XVII.

WORK FOR JERRY.

Caroline sat by Frederick Sherwood, and held his hot hand, and bathed his head, and gave him most tender attention. So it seemed to him—tender and very precious.

"Now, Carrie," said he, "don't scold a fellow. I'm going to own up—you shall know the long and the short of the whole business; and you won't blame me altogether when you know. I think you will confess that you have not been just perfect yourself,—but never mind, you are as near it as anybody.

"I had a talk with mother the other day about building, and I never saw her so deuced bad. She fairly frightened me. You know I have not got your nerves. Well, she threatened me"—Fred gasped; Caroline gave him some medicine from the tumbler; then he begged for a glass of water, which he drank off, and proceeded.

"There now, I feel better, thanks to the man who invented

water. Well, as I was saying, mother threatened all sorts of devilment, and I knocked under. I did not like to speak to you about it, for you think I have not any spirit. I tell you what, Carrie, I have not your nerves. Now, all this has worried me, and, to tell you the truth, I have drank too much to try to get quit of the whole thing. Yesterday I took some brandy at Rice's. I really believe the brandy was poisoned; either I was wrong in my head, or the liquor was bad. I never lost my wits before.

"More water, Carrie." He drank, and she bathed his head, and he went on:—"By some unaccountable hocus, I upset on the Ferry Road. How it happened I don't know. I can't tell how long I lay insensible, but when I came to myself, Vix was smelling me. Her breath was 'warm on my cheek,' as the song says. The thills were broken short off when we tipped over, the horses were at liberty to go along, but they stuck by the stuff. Vix is just like you, Carrie—all fire and spirit, and lightning and blue blazes, to everybody but me. She is as good as a girl to me; not because I can master her, for she could go to Halifax for all me, but she consents to play the agreeable for me always. As luck would have it, that fellow Rawson came along, just as I got my senses and found out I could not move. I was going to try to crawl on Vixen's back, but I could never have made it out. Rawson put me in his sleigh, and Vix and Smash consented to follow, and here we are."

By this time Fred was entirely exhausted, though he had rested many times, and had taken an hour for his narrative. Caroline gave the medicine, bathed his head again, and encouraged him to go to sleep,—but this could not be. He had a purpose in sending for her, and he could have no peace till he had told her all that was in his mind. The doctor came, examined his patient's pulse, looked at his eyes, and felt a good deal of alarm.

"Too much mental activity. Can't you keep quiet, Sherwood, now you have got Miss Brandon to keep you company?"

Fred shuddered. "Carrie," said he, "leave me with the doctor." Miss Brandon retired. Fred attempted to speak, but the red in his eye became more glaring, and a fierce delirium succeeded. The doctor recalled Caroline, and presently Mrs. Sherwood made her appearance. The instant Fred caught sight of her, he shrieked—"That's Jezebel, all

in black—all in black—with fire eyes, and snakes for hair, and pump handles for arms. She'll pump fire and brimstone on me. Take her away—take her away."

Mrs. Sherwood burst into loud sobs, and declared she "would not stir a step," and talked of Paradise, and very resolutely took her seat. Again Dr. Browne's kind eloquence drew her from the room.

Caroline Brandon begged Dr. Browne to take her home. She was too frightened to take a step by herself. The doctor hurried her away as fast as possible.

As if by a strange sympathy with young Sherwood, Jerry was seized with trembling and great emotion as soon as he heard of Fred's accident. Minnie discovered Jerry in the woodshed, overcome by his feelings.

"What is the matter, Jerry?" said Minnie, in great compassion, when she saw his miserable appearance.

"O, Miss Minnie! it's the hardest trouble that has ever come on Jerry."

"Do tell me what it is."

"Well, Miss, it's hard tellin' what a body does not jistly know hisself. It's this way, Miss Minnie. One of my best friends is in trouble, about as bad as he can be, I guess. Nobody knows his ways as well as I do, and nobody could do half as well by him as I can, and there stan's his thunderin' old mother to put the spell on me as soon as I go near him. Now, Miss Minnie, don't say she won't do it. I knows a great deal too well she will do it. What I wants of you is to say to me, 'She'll put the spell on you, Jerry, and no mistake, and very likely it will kill you. But what o' that? You will be killed a-doin' your duty. You will help Fred, and give him a deal of comfort, may be save his life, if you go right in the face and eyes of the spells and take care of him. Yes, go and take kinder care of him than if he was a baby.'" Jerry drew himself up erect, and seemed more a man than Minnie had ever before seen him.

"Now, Miss Minnie, can't you say this to me, with a good conscience, and can't you pray for me while I'm there, and make my torments lighter? I knows that the good God will hear your prayers and answer 'em."

"Jerry," said Minnie, solemnly, and she went up to him and took his great bony hand in hers. No woman but his mother had ever touched his hand, but Minnie held it softly, and said,

"Jerry, you must go and take care of Fred, and bear whatever his mother chooses to put on you. I know that you will do it, and maybe Mrs. Sherwood will be good to you, for she loves her son."

"I don't believe she'd quite do her wust now Fred is sick, if she could help it," said Jerry; "but I can bear it, if you say so, if it kills me; and I've a notion it might be good luck for me to die. I don't believe I should git in any wus world, or find wus folks than Rawson and Mrs. Sherwood. I feel now as if I could bear anything she could do, but when I'm away, and can't see you, and do see her, I am afraid I shall wither and shake so that I can't do Fred a bit o' good."

A bright thought came to Minnie.

"Jerry," said she, "I am fearful Frederick is dying; you must go to him and try to save him. I will pray for you, and I know God will help you, and here——"

She took from her neck a small watch, with a gold chain; the name was engraved on the watch. She threw the chain over Jerry's neck.

"Right over my heart," said Jerry, and his tears fell fast. "I can do it now, Miss Minnie, and bear all I'll hev to."

Minnie had never before seen Jerry shed tears. He left immediately to go to Fred; and Minnie related the circumstances to her father, remarking, "I do think Jerry is growing more sensible."

CHAPTER XVIII.

CHARMS.

Dr. Browne's office at Mrs Sherwood's was no sinecure. He had never before had a case that demanded so much thought, management, and skill. Night and day his service was required. He had to watch Mrs. Sherwood, and he had to watch with Fred. He succeeded by trying every means in his power in keeping the anxious mother out of the room, but he could not prevent her from cowering about the door, lying on the mat at the threshold, where Fred's moans and imprecations were all distinctly heard by the wretched woman.

Jerry's purpose to take care of Fred was entirely confirmed by his conversation with Minnie, and he went directly to the house. As he passed up stairs, guided by delirious curses, he beheld Mrs. Sherwood on her knees by the door of Fred's room. Jerry's heart did not fail him; he did not tremble or hesitate, but went forward, as if Mrs. Sherwood had been the dog, who, more fortunate than the mother, had gained admission into his master's room.

When the sorrowing woman saw Jerry, she rose from her knees, and hope and joy entered her heart. She laid both hands on Jerry's shoulders, and said, with great fervour—"The Lord will forever bless you, Jerry, if you will save my son's life."

"Ill try, sure and sartain," was his reply, as he hastened to disengage himself from her friendly detention.

Fred did not know Jerry, though he fixed his blood-shot eyes upon him, and paused in a torrent of wild exclamations and imprecations.

"Mr. Frederick," said Jerry, firmly, and he laid his large cold hand on his forehead.

"That's good," said Fred, "that will put the fire out."

Jerry did not wait for his hand to become heated, but he went instantly for cold water, and gathered towels, and wrung them out of the water, and laid one upon the hot head, and the other upon the chest of the sufferer.

"When the airth is in a fever, the good God rains cold water on it," said Jerry.

"Wash me down, Jerry," said Fred, "as you would Vix or Smash."

Jerry's heart beat high with joy at the recognition. He gladly obeyed. The result was, that Dr. Browne declared that Jerry was a miracle of a nurse, and that he should go into partnership with him, and that the company would cure the patient.

"Jerry," said the wise physician, who was never sparing of kind words, "you have worked a miracle the last hour by your good nursing. I shall have to make a bargain with you to be my assistant; I would make a doctor of you, if I were not afraid of spoiling the best nurse in the world."

Jerry felt proud and pleased, and never once thought of the "spells" that had been his dread for so long. Fred was sound asleep in an hour after Jerry began his ministrations. The

Doctor kindly prepared him for some trouble with his patient during the night, but he continued manageable, and slept a good deal, and Jerry changed the pins in his coat-cuffs many times, and looked often at the little watch which he took from his pocket, when he was at liberty to do so, and laid his hand on it when he was not.

"How many things I'll have to think of when Mr. Fred gets well. Who'd 'a thought it!" said Jerry. "Here am I, no more troubled with the spells than if the old one did not live here! I wonder now if prayers and watches would not be good for other troubles! I wonder if Miss Minnie won't pray for Mr. Frederick as much as for me. If I can be cured o' the spells, then he can be cured o' his troubles."

He took the largest pin from the coat-cuff where it was reposing and put it on the other, to remind him of something very important.

Toward morning Fred became very restless, and when daylight and Dr. Browne came, they were welcome. Jerry had evidently something that he thought was of great importance, about which he wished to consult the physician, but before he had an opportunity to speak, Fred begged to see the Doctor alone. Jerry went forth trembling to await his time.

"Doctor," said Fred, "have I my senses?"

"Certainly," said Dr. Browne, blandly. "How could you doubt it?"

"Why, I suppose you know I have been kicking out of traces, troubled with Jezebel, and a few others of the same family."

"You have been somewhat unsettled," said Dr. Browne, "but you were never possessed of more intellectual clearness than now."

"You are a Justice of the Peace, I believe, Dr. Browne?"

"I am."

"I want you to make my will, and marry me to Caroline Brandon to-day," said Fred, hurriedly. "I rely on you to carry this through. Will you agree? Don't say no; don't put me off, or, by Jove, I'll put the string on, and drive over you."

"Mr. Sherwood," began the Doctor, in the gentlest and quietest tone.

But Fred's face was purple. His reason was gone; he raved of Jezebel, and Jerry came at the Doctor's call to

endeavour to restore him to sanity. He put Jerry from him violently, and struck Dr. Browne a heavy blow in the eye, and became so dangerous in his manifestations that Dr. Browne, Tim, and Jerry invested him with a strait-waistcoat.

"Now, Doctor," said Jerry, resolutely, "I have something to say to you, and you must give me a hearing."

"Certainly, only our patient must not be troubled with our conversation, Jerry."

They passed into the antechamber, and Jerry said, "Now, Doctor, if you was sure and sartin that there was a medicine within a half-mile that would cure Mr. Frederick, would you go arter it?"

"Certainly, Jerry."

"Well, then, will you lend me your horse and slay, and stay with Mr. Frederick just one hour, and I'll get the medicine?"

This proposition was too much for the Doctor's dignity. "I have no horse to spare, and I can't allow my patient any medicine but my own," said he, losing his usual amiability of manner and gentleness of tone.

"Dr. Browne," said Jerry, "it's time you know'd what I mean, but it's hard tellin' you. You know what I've suffered with the spells."

Everybody knew, who knew Jerry, that he considered himself bewitched by Mrs. Sherwood.

"I know," said the Doctor, shortly.

"Well, you can see that I am cured, and I want to get the same medicine that's cured me tried on Mr. Frederick; and you need not be jealous of it, Dr. Browne, for it's only Miss Minnie's prayers."

He put his hand on the watch, but he could not bring himself to speak of it.

"I could never have come here and worked for Mr. Frederick, and done him the good I have, if she had not prayed all Mrs. Sherwood's evil sperrits and evil spells away from me. Now what I want is, to go and ask her to pray for Mr. Frederick."

"All right," said Dr. Browne, much relieved as to the medicine: "you shall ride with me, and Tim shall watch with Mr. Frederick till you return."

And so it was settled.

Minnie smiled at Jerry's errand and his earnestness, but

she promised to pray for his patient, and he returned, and resumed his place in the sick chamber in an incredibly short space of time.

Tim was discharged, and Jerry was alone with Fred, whom he instantly relieved from the confinement of the strait-waistcoat, and, after bathing him, he swathed his chest with towels, wrung out of the cold water. The result was very happy. Fred recognised his friend, but was a good deal disposed to violence.

"Now, Mr. Frederick," said Jerry, "you must lay still and go to sleep. I am a-goin' to help you, and you must help yourself. You knows the Lord helps them that helps themselves. Now, Mr. Frederick, I've got somethin' to lay on your stomach, but you must agree to be quiet, and then you'll be charmed."

"I'll agree," said Fred, a little wildly.

Jerry took off Minnie's watch, and laid it on his patient's chest, and passed the chain around his neck.

"Ill smash it," said Fred.

"You could not," said Jerry, "no more'n you could smash Giberalter. I knows that you can't move for an hour, so you'd better let alone tryin' and go to sleep, and wake a well man. There's a deal bein' done for you that you don't know about."

Just as Jerry confidently expected, Fred sunk to sleep almost instantly. Jerry watched him and the watch steadily, and just before the expiration of the hour he removed the charm gently from Fred's neck and put it in the pocket over his heart.

Fred waked, and was sane and quiet, and Jerry's faith in prayers and watches was confirmed.

"I'd like Dr. Browne to see him," muttered Jerry. "It's strange how much 'tother world can do for this. I believe there's somebody there, and somebody that *is* somebody, sure and sartin. And why should not there be? What a mean sort of creation 'twould be not to have any world but this 'ere—a world full of achin' bodies, and folks that goes all wrong, jest as heavy things fall down. If I thought the good God had not got any world but this, and no good angels of his own, I should not think enough of Him to pray to Him, or git Miss Minnie to. I knows this world, I feels it in all my bones. There must be more worlds, and better ones. I

am sure there's more of 'em, 'cause there never was only one thing of a sort, not even a hum bird; hum birds are made by the hundered. If there's one thing, there is allus plenty more —men, birds, fishes, grasshoppers, crickets, and so on. There is ever so many worlds just the same, and some of 'em must be better than this."

And Jerry was comforted.

CHAPTER XIX.

MATRIMONY.

"Now, Doctor, thanks to your skill and Jerry's kindness I am about able to take in the bit and start again. I take it, you'll think I am quite ready when you have heard me out. There's many a slip between the cup and the lip. Yesterday I thought Carrie would miss of me, and what she cares much less about, my property. Now, I am afraid I'll miss of her. Doctor, I want you to cure me, and see my will made in favour of Carrie, and then I want you to help us to tie that knot with our tongues that we can't untie with our teeth. If you will do this, I'll give you a bond for five hundred dollars."

"Mr. Sherwood," began the Doctor.

"Don't mister me; call me Fred, if you mean to serve me in this affair."

"Well, *Fred*," said the Doctor, smiling pleasantly, "if you will be calm and collected——"

"Cool as a cucumber, Doctor."

"If you will be calm and collected," repeated the Doctor, "I will do three things for you in less than a week. First, you shall have your will made, as regularly as if you were going to die, instead of living to three-score-and-ten, the term I propose to insure you for; second, you shall be fast married to the finest girl in the county; third, in a week from to-day you shall ride a mile with Vixen or Smash, which ever you choose."

"And hold the ribbons?" said Fred, very earnestly.

"Farther, this deponent saith not."

"Now about the will, Doctor. I want all right about the

farm, so that Carrie can go about and build and do anything she pleases; so I'll will and deed the farm to her—I'll tie it in a double knot, so that my mother can't do any mischief. She is provided for, and I'll provide for Carrie. As to my money, I shall hold on to that; I am not sure that I shall want my wife to know how much I spend. Now, Doctor, I shall leave it all to you," said Fred, very much exhausted, and his eyes beginning to look wildly bright.

The Doctor soothed his patient, and assured him that he would do all that he could ask, and then he resigned him to the care of Jerry, and went to see Miss Brandon. There was much diplomacy between Dr. Browne and Caroline. Both were careful to do everything in a proper and tasteful manner; both had a plenary care and concern for their own interests.

The Doctor approached the subject of marriage through the golden gate of the deed and will of young Sherwood's property, and after speaking of Fred's desire to will and deed his farm to Caroline, he remarked, *en passant*,

"That young man's generosity and nobility of character are very remarkable. He will not have his wife placed under the slightest restraint from his mother——"

"Of course not," said Caroline. "No one could expect that he could or would place the wife of his choice in the power of such a woman."

This was slightly confidential; but if Dr. Browne expected Caroline Brandon to make a more full expression of her opinions or sentiments respecting her mother-in-law elect, he was disappointed. She had not another word to say of Mrs. Sherwood.

"I suppose," said Dr. Browne, very quietly, "that you would not object to the marriage ceremony being performed at once."

Caroline opened her eyes as widely as possible. She was astonished. She had been listening to proposals of marriage settlements, but she had not thought of marriage as so near —so inevitable.

"I wish Mr. Sherwood to be well before I marry," said she, firmly.

Dr. Browne saw that he had a difficulty to meet, and he saw also a way to meet it.

"Miss Brandon," said he, "it is by no means certain that you will ever be the wife of Mr. Sherwood, if you wait for him to be restored to health."

"Surely you do not think him dangerous, Doctor?"

"If Mr. Sherwood has not been internally injured, I think he will recover."

"Oh, Doctor, promise me that you will cure Frederick."

"With your help, my dear Miss Brandon, I think I can promise. If he is thwarted now, I cannot answer for the result. If you will marry him to-day, I can almost insure his life."

Caroline reflected a few moments.

"Doctor," said she, "I rely on your discretion. Will you speak to my father? Tell him the urgency of the case, and ask him not to mention the matter to any one, but to be prepared to go with me at three o'clock this afternoon to Mrs. Sherwood's. But, Doctor," said she, with a shudder, "shall I be required to stay there, and must my marriage be made public and talked of by every one?"

"All that can be arranged as you wish, Miss Brandon. As to care, Mr. Sherwood has the best possible nursing from Jerry. As he gets better, you can see him daily; and as soon as he is able, you will do well to take a trip in some desirable direction."

Caroline was silent, and a tear glistened in her eye. She brushed it impatiently away.

"Miss Brandon," said the Doctor, very kindly, "I will have the papers executed, and all things in readiness for the ceremony at three o'clock. The papers can then be given into your hands or your father's, or retained in mine."

"I wish them to be recorded, and remain in your hands, Dr. Browne."

"Very well; then at three P.M." The Doctor said, "Good morning," hastily, but kindly. He had work to do, and he did it. At three o'clock he was in Frederick Sherwoods' room, prepared to take Mr. Brandon and Tim for witnesses of the will and deed, and also of the marriage.

He requested Caroline to wait below till the papers were executed. Just as they were finished, Fred having made a great effort to affix his signature, Mrs. Sherwood burst into the room.

She had all the day had that sort of consciousness that animals have on the approach of a storm, although the sky is clear, and all nature is calm and still. Up to this time she had not entered her son's room since she was forbidden to do so by Dr. Browne. Now she swept in like a whirlwind.

"I knew it! I knew it! she exclaimed, in a tone of mingled rage and grief. "My son is dying, and you have made a will and a deed for him, and Caroline Brandon is to have my hard *airnins*, and my poor boy hasn't no more sense than if he was in his coffin."

Mr. Brandon shrunk appalled from the furious woman. Tim dodged out of the room and went to seek Jerry, who was dividing his attentions between Vixen and Smash during Dr. Browne's visit.

Dr. Browne calmly put the papers in his pocket. Fred's wavering sanity failed him altogether. He shrieked "Jezebel!" He leaped from his bed and felled his mother to the floor by a blow on the face, much after the fashion of the one he had administered to Dr. Browne when he was rewarded by a strait-waistcoat.

"Mr. Brandon, will you call Jerry?" said the Doctor, as he raised Mrs. Sherwood in his arms, and bore her quite insensible to her own room.

Fred sunk away exhausted after his exploit, and Jerry put him to bed like a baby, laying Minnie's watch on his bosom, and binding his head with a cold, wet towel.

Dr. Browne persuaded the breath to return to Mrs. Sherwood's bruised body, and prior to washing her hurt face in homœopathic arnica, he gave her an allopathic dose of brandy and morphine. The Doctor was greatly inclined towards homœopathy; nevertheless, he resorted to the treatment that he thought would be safest for all parties. Having thus disposed of Mrs. Sherwood, he returned to Fred, who was asleep and breathing stertorously.

Mr. Brandon took Caroline home, and so ended this day, disastrously for Dr. Browne.

As soon as Jerry had learned the facts, he took a large pin from one coat-cuff and put it on the other. When Mr. Brandon left the sick-room to seek his daughter, Jerry followed him. Closing the door very carefully, he said, tremulously, 'I must speak to you, Mr. Brandon," and he put his finger on the pin.

"Certainly," said the good man, kindly, and he waited to hear.

Jerry was too much agitated to speak at once, and not until tears came to his relief could he unburden his heart. At last he stammered forth from behind his red bandana, "You knows the good of praying, sir?"

"I Trust I do," said Mr. Brandon. "Do you wish to ask an interest in my prayers, Jerry?"

"Can't say I do," said the new believer very honestly.

"What do you mean, then?"

"Well, I don't mean to say nothin' agin your prayers. You have been a kind friend to me, and I think you do well for your own—your wife and family, and the Church, and sich like; but when there's a hard job on hand, I wants to be sure and sartin that I have somebody to ask the Good God, that He can't say no to. I take it you prayed that Bess might not go blind; but she did, and so I thinks you aint sure and sartin. Now Miss Minnie prayed for me, and she saved me. I haint had the spells sence she took my case in hand. I take it that prayers that can save me, right here in the jaws of the Old One, are sure and sartin. Now, I went over to get her to pray for Mr. Frederick, and she promised me she'd 'tend to it; and considerin' how bad a case 'tis, and how he is aggravated, I think she has done pretty well. He was as good as a lamb the night she begun. But it is a hard case, Mr. Brandon, and what I want to speak to you about is this: I wants you to tell Miss Minnie how bad Mr. Frederick is, and ask her to pray extra for us to-night. I would not take it amiss if you would help her, but I must be honest, and tell you I don't reckon on you as I do on her. You won't take no offence, but you will please to lay the case afore Miss Minnie as soon as ever you git home."

"I will certainly ask my daughter to pray for all here; and my own poor petitions shall be united with hers," said Mr. Brandon.

The tears trembled in his eyes, and he took Jerry's hand as a man and a brother, and Jerry was comforted and encouraged. He returned to Fred, and found him sleeping more quietly than he had expected.

"He will be better soon," said Jerry, confidently. He had the "faith of assurance" in the prayers of his friend. Why should any mock at such faith as this? Who does not pray when sorrow overwhelms the spirit?

Why should millions on millions believe in prayer if it has no beneficence? and why have whole people placed faith in relics and objects blessed by pontifical and other hands—in handkerchiefs and aprons carried from a holy apostle to the sick and afflicted, if there be no virtue in such things? Is

human faith and consciousness one wide-spread and utter mistake? Or does prayer take hold on strength, on the sympathy and love of those in a higher and better state, and on the love and care of our guardian angels and "Our Father who is in Heaven?"

Does not life flow into the famished and prayerful spirit, through kindred ones in the earth and in heaven, from the living God, the all-pervading love? And are we not all blessed according to our love for man who is our brother, and God who is our Father?

CHAPTER XX.

A WOMAN'S LOT.

The sun had not yet risen, and the light was "hodden grey," when Dr. Browne entered the gate of Mrs. Sherwood's yard. That lady was "stirring." She had slept a good deal under the influence of the Doctor's soothing medicine. She awoke with a bad headache and a bruised sensation across the shoulders, a very lame arm, a lame back, a sense of "all goneness," as she expressed it, at her stomach. Her eyelids seemed numb, her eyeballs ached. She had a pain in her side, a weak and tremulous state of the extremities, a dry mouth and tongue, a flutter at the heart, and she was very thirsty. Her dreams had been oppressive; and though she had dreamed of falling into the well, she had not succeeded in allaying her thirst at all.

She awoke in a great deal of mental confusion. She was troubled about Fred, and she was troubled about Caroline Brandon, and the property question troubled her terribly, and she was troubled for fear Dr. Browne might be "led away" by the young folks. All this seemed trouble enough; but the long habit of carefulness in ruling, and providing for her realm, asserted its sway, and she rose as quickly as possible, under the circumstances, and invested herself in her black bombazette dress. She had bought many yards of that material many years before. She was always to be dressed in

mourning; so she laid in a stock of cheap black woollen and of "mourning calico" years ago.

The Doctor came in at the gate. The thin, trembling, weird woman was making her way toward that unsightly, unhealthy, and miserable abomination, the stye, or hog-house and yard, with a great pail of swill in her hand. It was with exceeding difficulty that she staggered along under her load, when Dr. Browne came up, saying—"Bless my soul, my dear madam, I thought you were my patient. What can you mean by being so cruel to my friend Mrs. Sherwood?" He took the pail from her, and she came near falling when relieved of the weight. He carried it to the spout, and poured it in, and a half dozen hogs of different sizes came to take their morning repast, or rather the first slight instalment of it, for many more buckets must be carried before they would be satisfied and relax the shrill music with which the farm-house was constantly entertained.

It was really sad to contemplate life in the aching body and worse than aimless soul of Mrs. Sherwood. There was a sort of external goodness in everything Dr. Browne did or said. He seemed to be sent to the people in Easton—to the nervous, the drunken, the overworked, and tormented ones—like the one anciently, who was desired to dip his finger in water and cool the tongue of one who was burning in those mystical flames that have been actualised by literal Christians. Dr. Browne came to many, who lifted up their eyes, being in torment. Mrs. Sherwood felt a great friendliness toward him when he had taken her pail, and also she felt a reliance on him for the future. She led him to the kitchen. This was her home.

"Doctor," said she, in a voice that trembled pathetically in the kind man's ears, "will you tell me what Fred has done, or was trying to do, yesterday? You know how I have slaved" —and her apron was raised to wipe away her tears.

"Mrs. Sherwood," said the Doctor, "you know I have to humour my patients like so many children, especially when they are a little—*a little out*."

"Yes, Doctor."

"Well, Mr. Frederick insisted yesterday that I should make his will, and give his part of the property to Caroline Brandon."

"His part of the property is all of it as soon as I am gone," cried Mrs. Sherwood in a rage.

"My dear madam, do not make earnest out of children's play. Of course I humoured Mr. Frederick Sherwood. I made a will. I have it here in my pocket. You can take it and burn it."

"What was Mr. Brandon here for, Doctor?"

"As a neighbour and friend he happened to be here, and your son insisted that he should hear the will read, and I read it to him, but not to Caroline."

"Where is the will?" exclaimed Mrs. Sherwood; "let me burn it."

"Certainly, certainly," said Dr. Browne, taking some papers from his pocket with alacrity, but then he paused, as if considering, while the old woman held out her trembling hand for the document.

"Had I not better retain the paper lest Mr. Frederick should recollect it and inquire for it. It is not worth a rush, for, of course, it is not recorded. You can trust your interests with *me*, can't you Mrs. Sherwood?" said the Doctor, blandly.

"Yes, I am sure of it," blubbered the miserable woman. "You are the only friend I have in the world, and if you will make my will to-day, you shall know how I feel to you. I have not slaved and saved for Caroline Brandon."

"Caroline has money enough of her own, Mrs. Sherwood; and in case of her death, your son will be her heir, if he marries her."

"I don't care for that. I only want my own, what I have saved by the hardest—Doctor, you don't know how savin' I have been. This is the third winter on this ere gown. I never had but two black silk aprons in my life, and the strings of the first is good on the one I have got now, and the corner piece of the first is on my neck now. But what is the use, if she is to come here and rule and reign, and put my hard airnins into furbelows and flounces? Sure enough, what's the use of savin' for such as them, for Fred aint no better than she is about wastin."

The Doctor would have echoed this sentiment if he had thought it altogether prudent; as it was, he only said, sententiously—

"Mrs. Sherwood, *trust me*."

"I have no one else to trust," said she, thinking how miserably ill she felt, and how much she needed the Doctor's healing skill. If she had felt a full and distinct conscious-

ness for each separate ache and misery that possessed her meagre body, she would have rivalled Prometheus, or the agony of Laocoon, or of Dives.

What a lot was hers for a woman, and one who had wealth and experience, living in a "free country," "a Christian land," and having lived all her days under the benign influence of civilisation and Christianity.

When Dr. Browne had concluded his diplomatic conference with Mrs. Sherwood, he went up to Frederick's room to "manage him." Jerry was at the door, and the joyful expression of his face assured the Doctor that his patient was better.

"Sure and sartin he's saved, Doctor," said Jerry, rubbing his great hands, and then laying one with an expression of perfect trust on his left vest pocket where the watch reposed, and then, reverently looking upward, he said, "He's saved, and I'll allus believe in prayers and watches arter this. He's sleepin' like a baby yet, and has been sence nine o'clock last night. Now, Doctor, I did not tell you about the watch, but I must, for goodness knows I would not take any credit to myself that did not belong to me; I have done my part like a man, because I have been strengthened to do it; but the long and the short on't is, that if it had not been for Miss Minnie's watch that I have here in my pocket," and he took it out and laid it on his left hand, and caressed it with his right—"if it had not been for this ere watch and Miss Minnie's prayers, I couldn't 'a done my duty, and if it had not been for my doin' my duty, and Fred's havin' the watch as well as me, and Miss Minnie's prayin' extra, we never should 'a got him safe through right in among the spells."

"Jerry, you have been a faithful friend and nurse," said Dr. Browne.

"But it's just as true as that you are a kind man, and profess to be a good Christian, and that you are tryin' to keep in on both sides, that I never could 'a been that if I had not had the prayers of that ere angel."

There was the slightest possible lowering of the Doctor's brows as he brushed past Jerry into his patient's room.

"Hallo! Dr. Browne," cried Fred cheerfully, "I am myself again—quite ready for the bit, and the halter, and the altar!"

CHAPTER XXI.

"PAST PRAYING FOR."

Mr. Brandon had not spoken to his wife of the scenes he had witnessed at Mrs. Sherwood's. He had told her that he was going—that Caroline's marriage was inevitable, and that they must be resigned, and do all that was required of them in the premises.

"It is a terrible trial to me to see Caroline married to this man; but this marriage may be the very discipline that Providence designs to use to humble her proud spirit. She will love you better, dear, when she is away from you and realises how good you have been to her."

"But I haint been good to her, Mr. Brandon. I have always let her have her own way. I have jest killed her with kindness—that is, I have killed the good out of her, I'm afraid."

"You should not reproach yourself, Susan, dear. You have meant well, and good intentions are worth a great deal."

"I have hearn tell that there's a dreadful place that's paved with good intentions. But I must give my Carrie up." Mrs. Brandon wept bitterly, but she added, "What can't be cured must be endured."

When Mr. Brandon returned from the abortive attempt at marriage, he only told his wife that young Sherwood was so ill that the wedding was indefinitely postponed. She felt as if she had a reprieve from some dreadful punishment.

"My Carrie may be saved yet," she said exultingly.

Meanwhile Jerry and Dr. Browne were doing a great deal for Fred, and most successfully, the results of which we have already seen. And one morning Minnie was surprised to see Jerry at home. He was walking slowly backward and forward in front of the stable that contained the blind beauty, Bess Bite.

Minnie called to him, and he came tardily toward her.

"How is Frederick?" said she.

"He's past prayin' for, Miss Minnie. Fred is noosed. It was a queer notion of his to go to a Justice and git married the first time he rode out, but he did it. I knowed it jest as well as could be, when he got home, and set his foot on the door step, and said to Miss Carline, 'You'll come early to-morrow.

"She pouted and said, 'I may not come to-morrow.'

"Fred turned quick upon her, and sich a fire blazed in his eyes that she concluded she could not manage him that way till he got well, and so she said, very sweetly, 'You know I'll come early—don't be a simpleton.'

"Says I to myself, I know it all, Miss. You have got the halter on, and Fred will make you take in the bit. He'll break you to harness, as he does all his critters, or my name aint Jeremiah Jerald Fitzgerald, or 'tother way I believe 'tis."

"When did this marriage take place?" said Minnie. "Do you know certainly they are married?"

"They was married sure and sartain at three o'clock yesterday afternoon, in Squire Jones's parlour. Dick Jones telled me he seed the knot tied."

"And is Fred well enough to spare you, Jerry?"

"Miss Minnie," said Jerry, with much determination, "if Miss Carline thinks she is a goin' to stay here to home, and play lady, and have me take her place beside Fred, she's mistaken—that's all. Fred is well enough to take his own part now, and sick enough to call the lightnin' up into his eyes whenever he wants to scare her. I aint a bit afraid of his dyin' now, thanks to prayers and watches, and Miss Carline is welcome to be nurse, cook, and carpenter; and she may get Dr. Browne to help her, if she pleases. I haint nothin' agin it, nohow."

"And you will not help them any more, Jerry?"

"I don't say that, Miss Minnie. You knows that I went right into the house along with the old one, and dared the spells, and nursed Fred all for the love of him. If Dr. Browne can lay his hand on his heart and say that he's done what he's done for love and nothin' else, and if Miss Carline can say she's married for love and nothin' else, then I'm a leetle out in my cal'lations. But Dr. Browne is kind, and has give me credit for a deal more than some folks would, and he can drive a team of stronger critters than anybody else I've seen. He'd think nothing of harnessing a sheep, and a goat, and a pole cat, and a fox, and a goose altogether, and he'd make 'em go too. He's got winnin' ways of his own, and he gives all his medicines in sugar. What they'd do without him, I can't give the least bit of a guess."

"He's an excellent physician and a very agreeable man," said Minnie.

"Yes, that's all true, but I've done with him till next time, and now I'm thinking, Miss Minnie, what's to come of Jerry."

"You are to have very good fortune yet," said Minnie, and she believed what she said. She trusted Jerry implicitly, and she believed that he was wiser than he knew. She had faith that his flickering intellect would yet burn with a steadier flame. She recalled his progress since he had been in the family. Three months before, he was drunk at every chance, and shaking with "the spells" much of the time when he was sober. Now, he had been able to take care of Fred Sherwood through his dangerous illness, with brandy as free as water to those who came in, or those who served, and Jerry had not wet his lips with it.

Minnie's hope rose high for Jerry. It was shared by her father, who had equally as much faith in him as his daughter. This confidence is of great value to Jerry. He feels that he is trusted, and he said to himself, "I am trusted, and the man aint born, and never will be, that can call me a traitor."

"Miss Minnie," said Jerry, "you just keep on prayin' for me, and the Good God will answer the question what's to come of Jerry. And now, here's your watch. There never was a watch that did so much, besides keepin' time; and I have been thinkin', Miss Minnie, if you'll jest take my jack-knife and hold it in your hands a little while, and breathe on to it, it may do me jest as much good as the watch."

Minnie took the jack-knife and held it between her soft palms, and then she breathed upon it, and gave it to Jerry.

"Thank you now, Miss Minnie, and you'll keep on praying for me."

"Indeed I will, Jerry."

Neither Minnie nor Mr. Brandon wished to pain Mrs. Brandon by telling her the unwelcome news. A pall seemed over the whole family; and when George Graham came home at night, he supposed that Sherwood must be dead; and when he saw Jerry he was confirmed in this opinion.

"You have lost your poor friend," said he to Minnie.

She burst into tears. "I have lost my sister," said she. "Sherwood is able to go out, and yesterday they were married, but we don't speak of it yet to mamma. Let them tell her, as they have done it, clandestinely."

Presently Caroline came home. She felt that this must be her last night at home; and even now she could not have been

allowed to leave, but that Fred was again prostrated, and wished for Jerry. Caroline explained the case to Jerry, and he returned quickly to his post. But first he returned to Minnie.

"Fred's down again," said he. "I think it's only for a little, but I have got to stay with him to-night. He must be pretty bad or he would not let her come away; so, Miss Minnie, if you'll let me have the watch once more."

Minnie gave it, and Jerry ministered to Fred with such success that Fred declared himself able to leave town the next day.

Caroline told her mother that she was married, and that they were going for a short trip.

Fred said to his mother just as he was leaving—"Now, mother, Green the upholsterer is coming to put things straight in a part of the house for me and Carrie when we come back, for we are married. See that you don't stand in his way, and now good morning to you."

Fred had persuaded Jerry, much against his will, to be driver and valet for him on his little trip, for he was afraid to leave home without him.

"I'll ask leave, said Jerry, "but Mr. Brandon had better not let me go, for I aint used to makin' a show, and I'd a great deal rather stay in a good barn than in a house."

But he went.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW POETRY IS MADE.

Mr. Brandon's family were sad, as if death had invaded their home.

"If I had only buried her when she was a little innocent, before I had learned to love her, and before she was braided like a bright thread into twenty years of my best life," said Mrs. Brandon as she wiped her tears on her apron.

Mr. Brandon took out his tablets and made a note of that bright thread, and that day he wrote a poem entitled "The braided dark and bright," which was considered one of his finest effusions.

When Mr. Brandon had made the note, he comforted his wife and strove to awaken her hope.

"But my own heart is dead," sobbed the poor woman: "I don't love her as I did, and I am afraid I never shall. It is an awful thing, Mr. Brandon, to have a dead heart in one's innards."

Mr. Brandon made another note about a dead or dying heart, but whether he used it afterwards I am unable to say. As he had never loved Caroline, he found himself more easily comforted than he expected, but after all it was a very sad household.

Mrs. Sherwood's trouble was of a much more demonstrative kind. She wept, and drank brandy, and talked to Tim.

"I haint never been so put about," said she, "not even when his poor father died; that was what I expected, and then he was out of my way, but this is coming into my way as I never expected—and she so stuck up and hateful. If Fred had married anybody that would not look down on him and his poor old mother, and she no better than a——." Mrs. Sherwood paused; the fear of Fred was before her eyes, though he was some miles away. She dared not say anything of Caroline's birth, but the consciousness that her son had married an illegitimate child, rankled so bitterly in her heart that she went to the liquor closet at an illegitimate hour, and the consequence was that Tim heard no more of her eloquence for that day. He was made aware by the excessive squealing of the hogs, that they had not had their dinner, and he concluded therefrom that Mrs. Sherwood was unable to give him or the swine their mid-day allowance of food. So Tim found his way to the drunken woman's pocket, and took the key of the brandy closet, and with a pint of brandy indemnified himself for the loss of his dinner; and having laid himself down on the haymow he fell asleep to the music of the hungry porkers. The life of a great many persons is very prosaic, and that of Mrs. Sherwood and Tim could not even be called homely. There certainly was nothing homelike in a drunken sleep in the house or on the haymow.

The upholsterer came while all was peaceful, and he had cleared the rooms indicated by Fred, had loaded up and carried off the old furniture, and had nearly finished putting in the new when Mrs. Sherwood awoke. She heard the hogs first, and having fed them she became aware of a noise in the

house. She appeared before Mr. Green, certainly not on hospitable thoughts intent, but when she saw the spoliation of her rooms it would not be possible to give a description of her feelings or expressions. "Where is my furniture?" said she.

"Mr. Sherwood sold me the furniture of these three rooms ma'am, and bought new to supply its place. He told me that I was not to trouble you about it, indeed he said I must not exchange a word with you on the subject. I must refer you to him. Will you be so kind as to allow me," bringing his carpet across by the door so that Mrs. Sherwood was excluded. He turned the key and heard the muttered indignation outside, but this was the last room; he had brought several hands to make quick work, and because Mrs. Sherwood's temper was no secret in the neighbourhood, and he was very glad that he had finished and locked the other rooms according to Fred's direction. When all was arranged in this room, which was the parlour, he locked it, put the key in his pocket and escaped, not without fear of scalding water, such were the traditions of the times respecting Mrs. Sherwood.

I cannot find it in my heart to chronicle Mrs. Sherwood's distress or her drams during the week that Fred was absent. They may be imagined, but I think ought not to be described.

The winter was wearing away, we may say hurrying away, as far as George Graham was concerned. He had not troubled Charles Mayo with letters, but now he had determined on a profession, he thought proper to write to Mr. Mayo, and through him to his family. His father, an imbecile mother, and Mrs. Mayo were all who were of his blood in the city.

His letter must explain his purpose, and Mr. Mayo's answer will tell my readers how it was received by his relations.

"Dear Charlie,—It is time that I tell you what I wish to do in the world and for the world, and you can read my decision to my father and Cornelia. I have determined to become a teacher, not for a few years, but an educator for my working lifetime, as a man becomes doctor, lawyer, or minister.

"I look about in society and I see no true education. Here is a man all muscle from the workshop or the ring, and there is a pale and puny scholar who knows nothing but books, and who is nothing but an excited and overworked brain and nervous system, that often would ill serve a sick woman. And this

man is to battle for fame and fortune in one of the professions. Perhaps his business is to win souls to a higher good than the world's every-day game of greed and self-indulgence. I tremble for the Church when such are her defenders. I tremble for the world when such are to convert men to a true life here, and to be the means of their salvation hereafter.

"Our women, ladies as it is the fashion to call them, are a thousand times worse educated as regards health than men. They have a superficial knowledge of a great many things that will never make home happy or enhance their husband's love for them, or his happiness with them, and they are not taught to make themselves or their children healthy, though all agree that health is the basis of happiness.

"What lady's seminary has a professor of domestic economy? What girl knows how to make bread, pies, or even fritters, when she leaves school? What physical culture or robustness do the daughters of our land acquire, studying in close rooms and in cramped positions six hours in a day, and often getting lessons out of school, while they perhaps take a walk once a-day in a garden, or around a square in the city; while their dormitories are so close and unhealthy as at times to breed typhus.

"When young ladies come out of such schools as these into society, they may be learned, but they are not educated; they are not useful daughters, and they cannot be as healthy and happy wives as if they had been educated—head, heart, and hands.

"I want to see a school for the young of both sexes, where good, healthful food, pure air, and varied exercises shall secure the basis of sound health and a vigorous constitution. For this, we must have properly constructed buildings, school-rooms, and dormitories, where foul air would be impossible. I would have such ample facilities for bathing, that there could be no excuse for a lack of cleanliness. And as exercise may be useful as well as amusing, I would provide for both in manual labour and sportive games.

"To establish such a school as I would like to see, there must be two or three hundred acres of land, of a varied character, with woodland, pastures, cultivated fields, orchards, vineyards, and gardens, or a place where these could gradually be made. There should be also the workshops for all the necessary labours of such a seminary.

"Now imagine, my brother, from fifty to one hundred young persons, from ten years of age to twenty-five, learning to live; developing all the powers of body and mind; practising the useful as well as the ornamental arts, and you can imagine a school of life, real, earnest, and of more practical use than any university I have ever heard of.

"Of course, such a school must have wise direction, and competent teachers in its various departments; but of them I do not despair; and those who were educated in this model school would be fitted to establish others, until our whole country would be filled with thoroughly educated men and women; with parents knowing so well how to live, and how to bring up their children, that every family will be a school.

"But how, you will ask, do I hope to see the organisation of an institution which will require a considerable capital? I shall lay my plan before the people and solicit their aid. If they appreciate its importance, surely they will contribute to its realisation. At all events, my own duty seems clear, and sooner or later, I shall do my best to accomplish a work that seems to me so good and so greatly needed.

"George Graham."

Here is Mr. Mayo's answer:—

"My Dear George,—I believe I am one of the good-natured sort. Everybody says so, and what everybody says must be true; and yet with all my patience and equanimity you have nearly put me out of temper. I do not say quite, for you are my Cornelia's brother, and you are a well-meaning fellow besides. But, George Graham, what am I to think of a young man with your advantages turning dreamer and enthusiast? —I shall not say fool, but the world will. It would be bad enough if some poor parson had started your scheme. We expect all sorts of notions among the black sheep of the clergy now-a-days. In old times they used to be settled and mind their business to the end of time—that is, to the end of their time—but now they blaze and burn in eloquent fireworks, like the Rev. Ernest Loftus, who has just gone up like a sky-rocket in our midst, and come down like a stick. He has been called to a village in Massachusetts. We will see whether he will set the woods on fire there. Poor Cornelia! she had hardly finished dealing with his follies when her own brother submits a cart-load of crotchets to her, and that,

too, when he will not accept hint, advice, or decision from her.

"What are we to think of a young man's sense or sanity, who is heir to half a-million, if he proves himself able to take care of it, and who in the teeth of a zealous watchfulness to see whether he is really demented, presents such proof as you are preparing—a subscription paper to build a workhouse for the aristocracy of the land, and proposes himself for principal preceptor of the concern. Pale and languid as is your poor sister, kept alive almost wholly by her magnetiser, she flushed crimson when I read her your letter, and its proposal of a public exposé. 'A Graham to do such a thing!' said she. But she does not waste her strength in words. I cannot tell you how your father received your proposal. He said something which he requested me not to repeat, and then he asked for your address. I told him it would be useless to write, as you would be so soon at home. One thing is certain—he will require of you entire silence as respects this scheme of yours, or he will not receive you as his son.

"I warn you that Cornelia will withdraw her respect from you unless you keep silence about what you call ideas, though you know that she will always be the same kind sister. As to me, I shall be your friend and brother, whether you get up a workhouse, or go to an insane hospital. You can divide my home and my purse with me—you can make me very sorrowful, but I shall always be to you, your only brother,

"Charlie Mayo."

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOMETHING INTERESTING.

It is not to be supposed that an enthusiast like George Graham had spent months under Mr. Brandon's roof without discussing his darling schemes. Indeed, Graham considered it as much of a special Providence as any he believed in, that he had been an inmate of this family, and had had the privilege of confiding his plans, hopes, and wishes to such judicious friends. The Providence must be considered all the greater,

inasmuch as Minnie was always contradictory, and often contemptuous, when George Graham spoke of his school.

"I should like to know," said she, "who is going to trust boys and girls to you, who are only a boy yourself!—just out of a jacket and into a coat, without even a mother to take care of you, and help you to take care of them. Let me see. You want first a modest little farm of three hundred acres. I would like to know who you will find to take all these acres on his back, even if you had a deed of them now—acres of wheat, acres of corn and potatoes, and acres of other things. Then orchards of fruit have to be grown, and gardens have to be planted and the weeds pulled—I think we will put you in generalissimo of the weeds. Alas! for your poor back, Master George. You must engage a blacksmith beforehand for your spinal complaints brought on by the weeds. If you were an Emperor, and had an army of cultivators in all departments of culture, from a potato patch to a peach orchard, from a hollyhock to a conservatory, I might have some hope of you."

"You forget," said Graham, "that successful enterprises grow from small beginnings, like the large oak from the little acorn."

"But you are not an acorn; you are only an egg full of dreams. Somebody will crush you, and then——"

"I will accept my fate," said George, "whatever it may be, though I may not accept you as the prophet of it; but you may be sure I shall work as I can, taking another's way when I can't have my own. But I shall propose my plan first."

"That is sensible," said Minnie. "You really are not demented, George. When I hear a man speak of giving up his own way, I have hope of him——"

"You are very kind, Miss Brandon," said Graham, a little stiffly.

Minnie did not notice this, but went on.

"I should like to see a dozen children here in papa's garden home, and I would willingly do my part in teaching them as a family ought to be taught; and I would like to see papa have them in the garden in the summer, and to see you have them in the gymnasium in winter."

"That's precisely what Mr. Brandon and I want to begin with—just a family school, which might grow ultimately as large as my plan, if we can add the requisite number of acres to your father's fine farm."

"Now you begin to be practical," said Minnie, soberly.

"Or, rather, you begin to see that I am so. I have *never* contemplated an institution like Jonah's gourd, that grew and perished at once."

"But has my father consented to help you keep school?" said Minnie, intent on belittling her enthusiastic friend, "or is he dreaming, making romances, and creating utopias? Now don't go away sulky, Master George; papa is a poet, and you are a tolerable schoolmaster, but you could not keep children's faces clean, or their shoes tied up. You will need me, so don't quarrel with me—you can't afford it."

"But you are so—impracticable," said George, laughing. He had intended to say "cross and critical, and determined to run counter to all my plans." He softened his saying before it was said, and added, "You would never help us, except to find faults and flaws, and pull to pieces faster than we could construct."

"Thank you for your compliment," said Minnie, merrily.

She terminated very abruptly a conversation that Graham had hoped would be so sober, so exhaustive of argument, and so convincing in its character, that it would secure Minnie as his ally forever. He was mortified and pained. He had started, from simple benevolence—a desire to improve his fellows, that they might be happier. He had thought little of making them better, having a confused notion that people would be good enough if they knew enough. Strange as it may seem, he had this winter begun his Christian experience with poor Jerry. Jerry was his Sunday-school scholar ostensibly; but it would be difficult to determine which influenced the other most. Graham said that Jerry was not being improved by teaching but by influence. It was not Jerry's head that made him leave drinking hot stuff and black strap, it was his heart.

As George was reflecting on Minnie's humiliating conduct towards himself and his plans, he encountered Jerry.

"Well, Jerry," said he, "the best friends must part. In a few days, you and I will have finished our lessons together."

"I'm sorry, sure and sartin," said Jerry, "not that I have learned much, for it will take a better than the best to teach me; but I've had sich good fortune since you've been here, Master George, that I wish I could divide with you."

Jerry was very respectful in saying Master George. He

said it because Graham was the master, and because Minnie had called him so, and she designated him in this manner on purpose to be disréspectful, and to remind George of his youth —at least, to let him know that she considered him very young for a philosopher.

"You know, Master George, that I've got to be a believer since I came here, and you haint been no use to me no how about that, though you have been a good master to me in the class; but what you had not got, you could not give away. I see plain enough that you had not got no faith, and so I learned my verses as well as I could, and let you do the thinkin', for what's the use of them's undertaking to think that was not made to do it. But, Master George, all of us can pray, though some can do it better than others; and the best one that ever I see for that sort of work is Miss Minnie. Now, before you go away, I advise you to get her to tend to your case, and you'll be a believer, sure and sartin, and then nobody can put a spell on you, or chase you with evil sperrits, or make you drink hot stuff, or do anything that will railly hurt you in this world or another. You must not think that I aint your friend, because I tell you this. The fact is, I am your friend, sure and sartin, and this is the way I shows it. Haint I had the spells?" and Jerry shuddered; and speaking in a low and scared whisper, he said, "what if a poor soul should have 'em to all etarnity?"

This was Jerry's concluding argument. He could not say anything worse, or, in his opinion, better calculated to induce George Graham to become a believer.

Graham had changed much during the months he had taught in Easton. He had added to his motives for action what was of the highest importance to his own character, and which must, of course, influence others in kind, if not in degree, as he was himself influenced.

"It is not enough to teach men; they must be drawn to good by the love of goodness; they must serve God that they may escape evil and misery in all worlds, and they must influence others to a like devotion and destiny."

This was the conclusion that George Graham had come to after four months' residence with true Christians.

Mr. Brandon was a humble, self-sacrificing man, to whom Providence had given much more of happiness than he would have chosen for himself; and Minnie was so humble and

tender and loving in her heart, that her criticism and contempt and contradiction of Graham was a perpetual marvel to her father, and, indeed, to herself. She did not understand why she was so severe with him. She had a sad and uncomfortable feeling about his going away, and when George said—

"You will write me, Minnie?—you will allow me to write to you?"

She said, "I am papa's secretary, and, of course, I shall write; for he will send you an epic, and you will send him a principia."

"Will you never be serious, Minnie?"

"And will you always quarrel with poor me?" said Minnie, in mock distress.

George Graham walked out into the mud and mist of an April day. In one week he was to return to New York. He loved Minnie Brandon, and she tormented him. He was sure she was heart-whole, and he was afraid he could never make her love him. Then he was full of feverish ideas of duty. He wished to do good now for God's sake; he had come to that heartily. He wanted men to be better and happier for all time, and for eternity—not because their condition here would be bettered individually, but he wished to cultivate a goodness that makes all better and, of course, happier for ever during existence. So far George was a Christian. He could consent to do anything for God and man; but, alas! there was a higher lesson that he had not learned, which was to consent to forego his own schemes, and do *nothing* for God or man, trusting that if Providence hindered, it was that something better and wiser should in the end be done, than he could do. The first step—the doing for God—young Graham could cheerfully take, and that through great sacrifice. Would he learn the harder lesson, to be content with *not* doing, with sacrificing even his love as well as his work? *We shall see.*

This plan of work was so fair in his own eyes, and Minnie would be such a helper. An influence that seemed heavenly to the lover, and which was of a sublimely Christian character radiated even from the spirit of Minnie Brandon. She was the sun, and moon, and stars to her father, his very light of life as far as this world was concerned. She comforted her mother for Caroline's loss, for it was even so; Mrs. Brandon had lost her selfish child. What Minnie had been to Jerry his improved appearance told eloquently enough. Indeed to all

with whom she had any relations she was a blessing and a joy except to George Graham. She was piquant and droll, but never ungentle even in her seeming, except to the only man, save her father, for whom she had ever felt unwonted tenderness. Girls are sometimes very unreasonable and not to be accounted for.

"Papa," said Minnie, "why do you and George Graham make a mystery with me? Why can't you let me know where he came from, and who he is, and all about him? You say his character is above reproach, and I believe it; but I am very much dissatisfied that I am to be kept in the dark about a friend, and treated like a child. Why can't you play the play out, and let us know whether he is a prince or a peasant?"

"You should love your friends for their own sakes," said Mr. Brandon.

"So I do when they behave well, and when they trust me," said Minnie, "but I will never answer a letter from George Graham, or treat him well even, till he trusts me."

"You will not treat him well!" said Mr. Brandon looking up surprised.

"I mean," said Minnie, blushing scarlet, "I mean what he calls well," and then she thought she did not know what she meant and she ran away.

We left George Graham walking very romantically in the very unromantic mud and mist of an April day.

"I must leave for home in a week," said George mentally. "Home!" he repeated bitterly. "What a home this place would be if Minnie Brandon could but love me! It is plain she cannot."

And yet no such thing was plain to Graham. He would have been very miserable if it had been plain to him.

"I must talk with her to-night and know my fate," thought George.

As if a man had but one fate, and this only one had met him at the very threshold of existence and experience! But so think the young. After the heart has been broken by a hundred disappointments, the tough old article has been known to form a true and tender love which lasts as many years as the pulse continues to beat, and the broken heart to serve all the purposes of a sound one.

Ah! George Graham, this goddess of your idolatry might become the much prized wife of another, either your very good

friend, or your very indifferent acquaintance. She might have six children who would neither of them be a winged or unwinged cherub to you; and to crown all she may become as dumpy and devoted as Mrs. Susan, and you may be quite as indifferent to all these goods and graces as you are in the mother's case. You don't believe any such thing. You think you can sigh, and be sad and sorry for her loss as her father is for the loss of his "Lenore;" but dreamer as you are, George Graham, you are not a poet, and can never embalm your misery for future delectation. You are a practical man despite your crotchets, and if one girl will not consent to make your life happy you have only to wait. Don't get up a brain fever and marry your nurse, and don't marry some New York beauty or heiress to spite poor Minnie, but be really patient till your heart has fairly broken and got mended again, and then look about you. Mrs. Susan will tell you there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught, though she really believes that her husband is the greatest and best man ever born.

Graham came in out of the dreary April drizzle and said bravely and desperately to Minnie, "Can you give me half-an-hour to-night? I have something that I wish particularly to say to you."

Minnie thought he will trust me, and tell me who he is, and she looked up pleasantly and said, "Certainly, I like people to tell me something particular. I shall be alone in papa's study, for he is going to spend the evening away, and I shall be writing; so you can tell me all the particulars, and I will suspend the sword of Nemesis half way, and let it fall on the unoffending paper when you have finished talking," alluding to her papa's poem.

She spoke so lightly that George was anything but pleased. He did not remonstrate, but went true to his appointment to the library after Mr. Brandon had gone. Minnie suspended copying her father's poem, "The Nemesis," and Graham sat down beside her.

Though she had consented to hear him it seemed impossible for him to speak. He was silent, and Minnie waited with undissembled impatience for him to begin. At length he said, "I *must* speak to you, Minnie."

"I think it is time you did speak," said she as he hesitated. "I have waited long enough and too long."

Graham looked at her in wonder; was he to be encouraged in this strange unmaidenly manner! He did not speak however, and Minnie went on.

"I am sure if I am worthy to be your friend I am worthy to know who you are. You have thought me very ungentle and even severe at times; just think how you have treated me. And then you persuaded papa not to trust me—my dear good papa who always tells all his heart except——" and she hesitated and then said, "that youthful sorrow which he says is too sacred to be put in common words. You have never shown the least disposition to trust me till now."

George's heart-beats were stilled. The duty next him seemed very common-place. "Pardon me," said he, "I have been very wrong, but it really did not seem of any consequence to me who my parents were, and I did not think you cared to know."

"It was your confidence I cared for," said Minnie. "I love to have my friends trust me, and I told papa to-day that I would never write you or treat you well till you trusted me."

"Dear Minnie," said George, "you shall never again complain of my want of trust. You must know that my father is Richard Graham, of the firm of Graham, Mayo, & Co., New York city. We reckon our descent from Sir Angus Graham who settled in New York a good while ago. Our ancestors bought real estate and were industrious, and thrifty, and the consequence is, the same thrift being continued and only stopping before it reached me, my father is a millionaire. He hates new things and notions, and wishes me to study a profession or be a merchant—you know how likely I am to do either. He has but one child beside myself, but he is quite capable of disposing his property so that I can't waste it. I do not care for that, if I am right, for I can earn my living."

Minnie looked at him with tender respect beaming in her eyes. "Can't you please your father and earn your living too?" said she. "Both seem very desirable to me. Are you quite sure that you have been as dutiful a child as you ought to have been? If I should lose my father it would be a bitter thought that I had causelessly displeased him. Dear George, said she earnestly, promise me that you will do all you rightly can to make your father happy."

George felt that he could promise her anything now.

"And forgive me that I have been so brusque and bad to you."

"You have been a darling always," said George, and he drew his seat close to hers and took her hand.

"Minnie," said he, "I love you better than all the world."

Minnie burst into tears, and buried her face in her hands, "O! I don't deserve that you should love me at all."

Here was the proud mentor so humbled that Graham hardly recognised her as the same person. "You deserve every thing good and a thousand times more than I can ever give you," said he. "Do you know that I have loved you ever since I saw you at Saratoga?"

Minnie was silent for a little time and then she said with noble frankness, "I have so wanted you to love me, and I thought you never could."

He put his arm around her, and she laid her head on his shoulder, and their great happiness might have been sealed and celebrated with a kiss, but Mr. Brandon came just at this particular moment and indefinitely postponed farther demonstration. Minnie kissed her father with tearful eyes and left him and Graham to settle their future relationship as father and son.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AN ENTHUSIAST ADVISED.

During the weeks that succeeded Frederick Sherwood's marriage he had devoted himself to his wife and his horses. He had drunk but little brandy, and Dr. Browne congratulated him on his improved prospect of health.

Caroline Sherwood had achieved an honourable and legitimate name. She was proud of the elegance with which her husband surrounded her, and pleased and proud that she was able to keep him from drinking to excess. Mrs. Sherwood the elder, and Caroline, preserved toward each other a sort of armed neutrality, but Fred treated his mother with studied kindness and consideration.

He said to Dr. Browne, "I intend to be extra good to the old one. If she finds fault with my Carrie it shall be no fault of mine, but a product of the natural depravity of human nature."

"Your mother's health seems to have failed since the shock she had when you were hurt," said Dr. Browne, thus adroitly covering his calls and the old lady's consultations with him about her many troubles since Fred's marriage.

The Doctor was obliged "to keep in on both sides," as Jerry expressed it, and yet he wished in some way to excuse himself. But Fred was not suspicious, and besides he was agreeably occupied showing off his handsome wife and horses, and buying everything that he thought would please Caroline.

"It is hard enough for her to live with the old one while we build such a house as she wants, and I'll try to please her with her gew-gaws and nick-nacks, and everything else, and let her know that I have not any stingy bones in my skin," said Fred to himself and Doctor Browne.

Mrs. Sherwood and Caroline never spoke to each other when they could possibly avoid it, and Caroline and Dr. Browne instinctively shunned each other, because they felt sure that the old lady would think they were plotting against her if they conversed upon any subject.

Caroline called on her mother, as a rule, once a-week, but there was no heart in these visits to her old home. She gave Minnie the piano because Frederick had bought her a new one, and Minnie was happy to be promoted to an excellent instrument from an old one. She expressed her satisfaction to her mother that "Min's pauper schcolmaster" was going soon. Mrs. Susan answered, "I don't know whether George Graham is poor or not, but I think it's a deal better to have a man without money than money without a man. Of course, I mean a man that his wife can respect, and that she's never ashamed nor afraid of."

Caroline's eyes flashed, but she did not answer. She soon after took her leave and went to her home, which seemed peopled with incubi.

The days that intervened between George Graham's departure and the scene in Mr. Brandon's study passed like a sweet dream to the lovers. When the last evening came, and they sat alone together to take their leave of each other, as they thought, only for a month at the very longest, Minnie said, "Now, dearest George, I have a great favour to ask of you."

"And you will never scold again if I grant it?"

"I promise never again to set up for mentor, at least not for tormentor, if you agree to do just as I ask you to."

"Well, let us hear your request."

"But you are to promise without knowing."

"Without knowing, you most unreasonable girl!"

"Yes, open your mouth and shut your eyes, and I will give you something to make you wise."

"And do you think that I will really promise till you tell me what you desire?

"Yes, of course you will."

"So much confidence in me ought to be rewarded, therefore I promise," said George, laughing. "Now, am I to bring you a new book or a new bonnet when I come?"

"Listen to me," said Minnie, very gravely, and with all her own tenderness. "You are to postpone all your darling plans —your life-schemes as you call them; if they are good they will not spoil by keeping, and you may grow better and wiser by waiting. I do not counsel you to give up any portion of your plan as wrong or as a failure, but I want you to be willing to wait. There is an old proverb, that 'God is never in a hurry;' and the blessed Lord once said to his disciples, 'My time is not yet come, but yours is always ready.' I want you to be kind, gentle, and submissive to your father."

"And turn merchant, or read for a profession," said Graham, querulously.

"Yes, read for a profession if he desires it. What better can you do than to learn all the conditions on which health and disease depend, if you are to be entrusted with the care of youth? It is not needful that you go into practice because you take out a diploma, though even that might have its advantages, and I believe fully that twenty years of mature life might be better in founding a school, such as you wish to see, than forty of a crude youth without information or experience. I want to see some Nestor, or Solon, or St. Paul united to your enterprise, and I want to see you a submissive son and a better educated man before you begin a work that deserves success, but which may find it difficult of achievement. Much is wanted besides youth and enthusiasm."

"Your father has experience," said Graham.

"Yes, of a certain sort. He is a lover of children, and he loves our mother Earth, and is wise in his garden and amongst his fruit-trees, but, after all, he is a dreamer; his happiness and his misery are more in dreams or reveries, in poems and pretty prose, than in the realities of life; still he would do the

young hearts of our land good, and they would do him perhaps a greater good. But promise me to postpone all this to the pleasure of your father. Promise me to do your best to please him for a year or two at the very least, and see what the event will be."

"I promise," said Graham, "though a month since, no mortal could have wrung such a promise from me."

"You are growing wiser and better," said Minnie, softly, and she held his hand gratefully. "I am so thankful," said she, "and so proud of my influence."

"Which, after all, is the influence of the right," said Graham, humbly.

"Don't be too good," said Minnie, "or you will die young, which will be too great a misfortune to everybody, and me besides. And now, Georgie, dear, you will go home and disappoint and delight your father, and your friends altogether —that is our bargain, is it not?"

"Just that, dearest," said Graham, very cheerfully. And then they said good night, as lovers say the parting words; and Graham insisted that she should not rise at five o'clock to see him off, but that she should put a cold breakfast on the table and remain in her warm bed. Nevertheless, a warm breakfast room and warmer breakfast greeted Graham when he came down in the morning, and Minnie presided over it with tender grace.

The parting moment came, the first that ever cost Minnie a pang, and the first that had held the honied sweetness of young love in its brief moments.

"Good-bye, darling, we shall meet again soon," said Graham.

"Good-bye, dearest; we shall meet when God pleases," said Minnie, her woman's instinct or presentiment, or whatever the prescience may be, revealing a time of separation of which her lover had not the least idea.

He left her happy in his hope, and she remained happy in her resignation. Ah! what were human life without the natural good of hope and the supernatural grace of resignation.

CHAPTER XXV.

MEETING A FATHER.

The junior partner of the firm of Graham, Mayo, & Co., sat in his counting-room. He was old enough to be the father of his eldest child, Cornelia Graham Mayo, who had lost all her children but her youngest, who was now five years old, and who was born just after her mother was "turned of forty." Mrs. Mayo looked full ten years younger than she was, and as most good-natured people made the mistake of thinking her thirty-five-or-six years old, she could not be expected to correct an error so widely spread, especially when it was entirely harmless, and uncontradicted by marriageable daughters.

Mr. Graham had married late in life. He had lost all of a large family of children but the oldest and youngest, who were widely separated as to years. He sat in his counting-room on a sunny April morning, his pen behind his ear, busily looking over bills of lading, and seeming the presiding genius of commerce. His coal-black hair and whiskers grew fast to head and face, and looked youthful, though a few days' absence (I don't know how many) of appliances of art, classically denominated renovators, vulgarly called dye-stuffs, would have bleached his raven plumage to patriarchal whiteness. There was a harsh contrast between the face and the hair and whiskers that was very unpleasant. His fine black suit was relieved by a silver-grey vest, on which rested the black ribbon that secured his gold framed eye-glass. He looked hard and harsh, but withal a gentleman of a very uncertain age. With young people he might have passed for fifty years old, but he was seventy-seven this bright April morning, when his son George came into his counting-room. The happy young man was rejoiced to see his father, and to see him looking so well, and I have no doubt his kindly sentiments were fully reciprocated; but the father was busy, and he was a man of routine. He said, "How d'ye do, George," and held out two fingers, while the others grasped the pen.

"We dine at five—will see you then. Now go and call on Cornelia."

George had no alternative but to see himself out, while his

father filed a bill and forgot his call. He met Charlie Mayo somewhere in the busy mart, and *he* found time to go up home with him, and to talk on the way.

"I have determined to collapse," said George, "so don't begin to preach. I withdraw all plans and propositions, and will take my father's commands to Liverpool to-morrow, or go into a doctor's office next Monday."

"Ah, George, you always were *my* boy," said Mr. Mayo. "I breathe freely for Cornelia's sake, and your father's, and your own. You will hear your sister sing again. The exertion of talking always unfits her for singing. Oh, if she had strength she would cultivate the arts divinely. How much power is wasted that she would use for poetry, and music, and painting; if I could only give her my rude health." And the reverent and adoring husband entertained George with his wife's perfections and his own happiness in his brother's good resolutions till they reached Union Square.

The meeting between George and his queenly sister was not quite satisfactory to either. Mrs. Mayo liked to be a lady patroness. George was not yet enough of a man to be amused by attempts to patronise him. He was annoyed by them.

Mrs. Mayo, on her part, never quite knew when her brother was ironical and when he was in earnest. She wished a person of his taste and culture to approve and appreciate her. She was never quite certain that he did either, even when he uttered words of commendation.

George expected to see his sister reclining in elegant languor on the sofa, unable to rise, or to converse much. She was playing this role when he went away, and he inferred that she continued it, from her husband's letters and lamentations. He was surprised to find her looking very well, and very energetic, and her manner was by no means that of an invalid.

She had hardly welcomed George before she said, "I am so glad you have come, brother dear. I have such treasures of science for you. Just see how well I am looking. I have just finished a miniature of my benefactor; and I have a piece of music of my own to play you, and I have strength to play it. Just think what an amount of work I have done, and all in one month, for I have only begun to work, and dear Charlie is so careful of me that he only allows me two hours' hard work in a day. Now, look at this painting," and she put a

miniature in his hand, exceedingly well executed on ivory. It was of a wild looking individual, very foppish, and somewhat peculiar in dress, and with a marked intensity in the gaze of his eyes.

"That is my Doctor, my benefactor," said the lady, earnestly, "and such a scientific man!"

"I did not know you ever painted anything, but to colour the portraits in the engraved book of beauty," said George.

"Of course you think I have no ability, because I have been such an invalid," said the lady, in an aggrieved tone. "Shall I play for you, and the verses my own?" She added in a half whisper.

"I want to hear you play, and see if you have really kept in practice," said George.

She opened the piano and played a pretty song, singing the words quite charmingly.

"Bravo, sister mine," said George. "That is good and well played. You deserve praise; where *did* you get the words?"

"Where I got the music," said she with a very pretty blush.

"Well then I must say that you excel in painting, poetry, and music, and that you are a very tolerable performer."

"I told you, you were not acquainted with your sister," said the proud and pleased husband.

"I am to ride horseback this summer, and get back my youth," said the lady, "and next winter Charlie has promised to let me study German."

"I object," said George. "One person should not know everything, as one hand should not do all things. Leave something for somebody else to conquer."

George began to tire of his sister's energetic attempts to overwhelm him with her accomplishments and achievements. He begged to see his young niece, who had been always the greatest favourite with him. Between nurse and governess the child was essentially out of her mother's way. She had been called "the baby" till it was a most palpable misnomer. Her mother was very proud of her, but she was such an *enfant terrible* that Mrs. Mayo was obliged to keep her more in the background than she wished. She was always discovering some additional braid of hair, or some dental mystery, and she was sure to publish her discoveries at the most

inopportune times. She came joyfully to see her uncle, and after climbing over him like a squirrel, and expressing a joy so simple, and so great, that she filled his heart with tenderness and his eyes with tears, she began to look about for something to show him. She hit at once upon the miniature of the Doctor. "Here, Uncle George, is that bad man's picture that Mr. Victor gave to mamma."

"Mr. Victor did not give it to mamma," said Mrs. Mayo, flushing with anger.

"I saw him give it you, and he said he had done it his best he could."

"Oh, I know what you mean now. Victor Vinton took my painting to retouch the background, and you saw him give it me. You are always making blunders, and telling stories."

The little one was aggrieved. Her little heart swelled and her eyes filled with tears. The mother saw that she had injured herself by her hasty anger, and had perhaps given George reason to suspect the genuineness of her pretensions as an artist. It was a great oversight of which she had been guilty. She called the child to her and soothed her distress, and told her she might go to walk in the Square with Uncle George, and sent her away to get ready.

It is probable that Mrs. Mayo and George parted with a sense of mutual relief. There is an old saying that "what God knows, the people know," and surely one of the strongest tests of truth or falsehood is the instinctive consciousness of the human heart even when unaided by evidence. George's consciousness was never at peace with his sister. He distrusted where he wished to trust; he felt dislike or indifference where he wished to love; and he went home to see a mother who had no more knowledge of him than a babe three weeks old, and who pained him so much by her utter imbecility, that he seldom saw her when he was at home. And yet he went into her innocent presence now, with much more peace and happiness than he felt with his sister.

But George Graham was unjust to Mrs. Mayo. No character is unmixed good or evil. Cornelia Mayo had ambition that she served at the expense of truth, but she was a kind and serviceable friend, and had merits and talents that George gave her no credit for, because she assumed to have those she had not. It would be hard to tell which was the most

uneasy and uncomfortable, the brother or the sister, after their meeting.

"I will send him away," said Mrs. Mayo, mentally, when her husband told her of George's good dispositions.

"My dear," said Mrs. Mayo, "don't you think it might be well for George to go abroad? I heard you say yesterday, that you must send an agent to England, and some other places beyond sea. Why not send George? He is such a trustworthy person."

"You always say the right thing," said Mr. Mayo; and then he confided certain matters to his wife that men generally tell their partners, and no more confide to their wives than to their babes. The end was, that George Graham ate a dull dinner of many courses with his carefully made-up papa that afternoon, and satisfied him that he was a dutiful son, and the next Monday he sailed for Havre in an ocean steamer, the confidential agent of the firm of Graham, Mayo, & Co.

Mrs. Mayo was very much more at ease when he was gone. Minnie was not disappointed when she got his letter that he was going.

"In six months, dearest, I shall see you again. Meanwhile, I am fulfilling my promise to you, and you will be glad that you have had power over me to make me leave you; and still I am with you, always with you in spirit. What long letters I shall write you will see, and how I shall keep you in my heart of hearts you will know by the way you cherish my memory all the moments. See that your dear papa, and your good mamma, do not cease to love me; always say kind words to them from me, even though I forget to mention them in my absorbing love and care for you."

CHAPTER XXVI.

MINNIE IN NEW YORK.

Months passed. Mr. Brandon's garden flourished, his peaches bloomed and ripened, and were of the sweetest and sunniest sort, his pears were kings among their kind, and his apples

were emperors; his grapes were the noblest of all nobility, and all the works of his hands prospered. He was a happy and fortunate man out of his poetry, and beautifully, delightfully miserable in it. Since the day when he first set his misery to music, the world has delighted to honour him, fortune has smiled on him, his daughter has grown a sensible and useful fairy by his side, and his wife has cooked for him the most delicate dinners and made him the finest shirts. Though she has sometimes told him that he could not have a silk purse made of the ear of a certain quadruped, and though he is well aware of the fact, he still has a tender and true regard for her, and would not fail in his duty towards her. He is a loyal husband, a happy father, a charming poet, and a delectably miserable man.

Mr. Brandon is going to the city for the holidays, to read the proof of his new book, and to show his daughter the lions of New York, not exactly expecting to be himself one of the noblest of that kingly race.

Mr. Brandon domiciliated himself and his daughter at the Astor House, and Minnie took a carriage and called on Mrs. Mayo the day after her arrival. The lady was out, and she left her card, writing on the back of it, that she and her papa were staying at the Astor.

The next morning, Mrs. Mayo said to her husband,—"My dear, your old friend Brandon and his daughter are at the Astor. We must pay them some attention."

"With all my heart. Brandon is a man of mark now, and what is better, I always liked him. I will take care of him, and you can manage for the daughter. Is she presentable?"

"The girls are pretty and ladylike. George said one of them was married. I have almost forgotten them, but I will call and brush up my acquaintance. You must give a dinner to Mr. Brandon, and I will give a party."

"Can't you ask them to stay here?" said Mr. Mayo.

"I might ask the young lady, if——well, if she pleases me, but by this time Mr. Brandon has unpacked his books and manuscripts, and of course he could not be moved."

"Well, you must manage it, Cornelia, dear. Put me down for anything you like, and I'll pay up."

The next day Mrs. Mayo's handsome carriage took her handsome self to call on Mr. and Miss Brandon. It was a fact that Mrs. Mayo could not conceal from herself, however

well disposed she might be to do so, that she was past forty. She got up well. She understood "pearl white" and "Persian bloom," and the mystery of making straggling grey hairs hide themselves in decent brown—not glossy like Minnie's, but still passably well looking under pomade and French head-dresses. The worst thing about Mrs. Mayo's face in her own estimation, was a coarse grain to her skin, which nothing filled up, and no art would hide by daylight. Thus, alas! her age would reveal itself.

Now, Mr. Brandon was younger than Mrs. Mayo, and his life of rural felicity and poetical misery had agreed with him admirably. He looked as delicate as a man who lives in-doors instead of spending much time with his fruit-trees and his flowers. His dark transparent skin, his glossy dark hair, and his tall and elegant form, all looked young, younger than he was, and as gentlemanly as possible. He was at ease in his position. He felt himself an acknowledged aristocrat. He conferred a favour when he noticed anybody. This had gone on for so many years that in a kingdom or empire Mr. Brandon might have been mistaken for a peer of the realm, if he had left Mrs. Brandon at home and had his lovely daughter by his side.

When Mrs. Mayo sent up her card, Mr. Brandon said he would not go down, but Minnie teased him, and he went. The lady was very polite, but she was a little embarrassed—yes, she was decidedly fluttered. Mr. Brandon ignored the fussiness, and Minnie fairly patronised the lady, a thing unknown before to Mrs. Cornelia Mayo *née* Graham. The process seemed pleasing and even salutary to the great lady, and she then and there determined to have Minnie Brandon at her house for as long a period as was possible. A girl who could patronise her and put her at her ease, must be a treasure in her family and in society. So Mrs. Mayo became very warm and tender toward Minnie, and did her best to charm her, and her best was no mean or common thing. To crown all, she spoke of George, her "*only* brother," her "heart's darling," "the finest fellow in all the world," "the idol of his father, the cherished friend of Mr. Mayo, and *such* a *thinker*."

"If George should become scientific," said she, "he would rival Dr. Legrand Fitznoodle himself. O, Miss Brandon, you will see my physician, the man to whom I owe all my health. He is a wonderful man, dear, and so scientific! But you must

not be out of health, for he would want to cure you for my sake and your own, and he has not a minute to spare; absolutely that man reckons all the minutes in the day, and portions them out, so many to one and so many to another. I had a good deal of his company last winter, and now he has just come from Paris, where he went in the spring to meet the savans of the Academy. I expect I shall be snubbed this winter, he is such a lion; but, of course, he will come to us to meet your father. Everybody will want to meet Mr. Brandon. Who would have thought of such a modest, bashful man as your father making himself celebrated so that everybody is dying to get a sight of him."

"Not quite everybody," said Minnie, laughing. "Not many drops of this great human flood that pours through Broadway have any notion of my papa," said she, looking lovingly and laughingly at the handsome poet.

"Oh, you don't know, my dear; I shall have to offend so many on account of the dinner that my husband is to give for your father. So many will want to come, and we can only have the very cream of our set, and our table only holds twenty guests. We are not grand, you know. Only twenty; but then, *my* father is a Graham, and *your* father is a Brandon."

So far Mrs. Mayo had talked *at* Mr. Brandon; somehow she could not talk to him. Once she had been the goddess, and he a poor shepherd boy. Now he was a king, or some high mightiness, who wore the ermine, and she was not even a young lady. Her grandeur hardly passed current in the court of Parnassus, and if it did, it was by kind courtesy, and at a discount. Mrs. Mayo looked at the poet; she wanted to put up her eye-glass. He might not have looked so very handsome and brilliant and unwrinkled if she had. As it was, he looked a very Adonis, and young Apollo, and Alcibiades and Count D'Orsay combined, to the lady with the coarse-grained skin, that would no more have made a silk purse than the ear quoted by Mrs. Susan. Mr. Brandon looked at her, and then at his daughter, and then he thought of his wife, and of an agony of his that seemed now a thousand years old, and inasmuch as Mrs. Susan was Minnie's mother, it is my opinion that Mr. Brandon thought her much prettier than Mrs. Mayo, though she wiped her face on her apron and never wiped away pearl powder or Persian bloom, and though twenty years ago

he had worshipped the great lady and had been trying ever since to be an apostate.

I don't believe that Mr. Brandon could have written four lines of poetry

To the Idol of the Past,

after he had promised to be at the dinner party, and the party, and to go to the opera and the theatre, and to let Minnie go to Mrs. Mayo for "a little, just a little of the time."

"You shall not find me cruel, Mr. Brandon; I know she is the light of your eyes and the joy of your heart, and I don't intend to rob you, but you must have a little compassion on me. Remember I have learned that she is dear George's friend, and you must let her come to me a little while."

Mr. Brandon and Minnie were quite uncertain whether or not Mrs. Cornelia knew of the engagement of George and Minnie, but both of them distrusted her too much to confide in her by word or look; and the lady took her leave as unconscious of the true state of affairs as when she came. She was a little less embarrassed toward Mr. Brandon when she left. He had graciously granted all her requests, but he had not melted his icy politeness in the least. He had continued to give audience under purple, or ermine, or some such distinguished collaterals, all the time Mrs. Mayo was favoured with his company, and the lady went home crestfallen. Mrs. Susan would have said "chop-fallen," or "down in the mouth." The lady hardly appreciated her own feelings. She knew she was not exhilarated by the promise of a lion as she usually was; and such a lion—one without reproach—which was a speciality with her as a Graham.

She was lady patroness of genius and talent, but they must have, or appear to have, the highest respectability. She had never tried magnetism till it was decided to be aristocratic in London. It was true that pretension sometimes passed its counterfeit self off upon Mrs. Mayo, but she did her best to secure metal without alloy and diamonds of the purest water.

Mrs. Mayo went home unhappy, and compared her stout red-faced, grey, and good-natured husband with the elegant Mr. Brandon. The comparison was not favourable. He was not poetical looking, certainly, and he had not what people call ideas, and he was gouty sometimes. He was good natured and droll at those times instead of swearing and being cross, but Mrs. Mayo did not reckon her blessings.

"You have seen Brandon," said he. "I'll go to-night, talk him over, and see if there is any of old times in him. You said that the daughter was a red-faced milkmaid, with large hands, I believe. I conclude she looked dainty beside you."

"Mr. Mayo," said Mrs. Cornelia, amazed, "Miss Brandon is a most ladylike and delicate beauty. I shall have her here all I can."

"And I may love her," said her little girl, coming from a corner where she had been cutting a doll to pieces with her father's knife.

"I'll bet she milks the cows and has large hands," said Mr. Mayo, laughing.

"Mamma, may I love the young lady with the hands?"

"Surely, my dear; and I shall persuade her to stay with us, and love us all. I wonder George did not lose his heart to her. He had too many crochets in his head to fall in love."

"I'll fall in love with her," said the little one. "I have not got any—what did you call it, mamma, that Uncle George has in his head? Oh, I wish he would come home and help me fall in love with the lady. Papa says he will very soon come home."

Just then there was a great ring at the bell. Mrs. Mayo knew that ring instinctively. It increased her depression. She rang for the nurse and sent away the child just as George Graham entered the room, and took her to his heart as a brother ought, to the great delight of the ever-appreciative Charlie Mayo.

"I am so glad to see you again—to see dear old New York—to live and breathe at home. How is my father? I see you are well, and how is my little niece?"

"All are well," said Mr. Mayo, thankfully; "and we owe you so much. Your father accords you high praise, and any praise from him, you know, is great praise. George, you are a made man," said Mr. Mayo, again shaking him warmly by the hand.

After a while George said—"I must go up stairs and take a bath and make myself at home for dinner."

Mrs. Mayo facilitated his wish, and when he was gone she said to her husband—"Say nothing of the Brandons till I tell him. I want to know if he is taken there at all."

Mr. Mayo promised. What would he not have promised to please his incomparable wife?

CHAPTER XXVII.

MRS. MAYO IN HER HOME.

When George came down, his sister was lovingly lying in wait for him where no one could hear her sweet words but himself.

"I know you will be running away, as soon as you have dined, to see father, who will be *so* rejoiced, and I want you and dear papa to dine with us on to-morrow," said Mrs. Mayo, in her balmiest way.

"I must go to Easton to-morrow," said George, bravely.

Mrs. Mayo sank her voice to a tender whisper—"Mr. Brandon and his daughter are at the Astor; I shall have them here all to ourselves to-morrow to dine with you, and next Thursday Mr. Mayo is to give a grand dinner to Mr. Brandon; so, now, you will promise me to be here."

"Of course I shall be with the Brandons wherever they are. Home first, and then my best friends."

"Such a love of a girl you never saw, Georgie, as that Miss Brandon. I wonder you did not fall in love with her," said the sister, suggestively.

"Miss Brandon and I understand each other perfectly," said George, somewhat stiffly, and he made his sister feel that she did not understand either of them, and had no open sesame by which she could get the knowledge she was so desirous to obtain. She had not decided whether or not to favour the match provided George had determined on it, but she had no motive for opposing it. Minnie was beautiful, talented, accomplished. She had the prestige of her father's position, and Mr. Brandon was something more and better than wealthy. Mrs. Mayo had never seen Mrs. Susan—a fact that Mr. Brandon did not regret.

At dinner Mrs. Mayo spoke again of Miss Brandon, and the little Nellie, who was installed by the side of her Uncle George, listened attentively.

"I don't believe in that girl," said Mr. Mayo. "My wife raves about her beauty. I will bet four to one that she is a milkmaid girl, with hands large enough to carry off a fortune. I told Cornelia so when she came home, full of her perfections."

"You are positively barbarous," Mr. Mayo, said the lady,

and she glanced at George. No word or look rewarded her scrutiny. She could not read the signs on a face so calm and self-controlled as his.

George Graham knew the fortunate hour to meet his father, and all hours were alike to his child-mother. When Mr. Graham, senior, had dined, when he had sipped temperately of rich old wine, when, in dressing gown and slippers, he read the evening paper in his library, then was the fortunate hour to come into his presence. He welcomed George warmly; he spoke warmly of his successes; and if fatherly pride and fatherly affection would have sufficed to make the young man happy, he had been happy with his father this evening. But George remarked with pain that his honoured parent repeated items of news several times in the course of half an hour, and then, when he came to ask questions, he repeated the same in like manner. Nor was he in the least conscious of this infirmity.

When George came into the library, he said, after the first greetings, "When did you arrive?" and then he said, "Have you dined?" It was painful to George to answer both these questions as many as six times to the half-hour. And when his father grew sleepy, and bowed him away without rising from his chair, he was relieved and oppressed at the same time.

Though George felt sure that Mr. Brandon and Minnie had gone out for the evening, he nevertheless hurried to the Astor as fast as possible. It was nine o'clock when he ascended the steps, quite decided that he should not see his friends, and yet in five minutes more he found himself in Mr. Brandon's study with that gentleman sitting one side of him and Minnie the other, each holding one of his hands. After a little time, Mr. Brandon insisted that Minnie and George should have an hour to themselves, but they both refused peremptorily, and so the group sat together till it was very late; in fact, till it was a very poetical bed-time, and George spent the night under the same roof with his best loved ones.

The next day Mrs. Mayo essayed to have Mr. Brandon and his daughter to dinner, but she only succeeded in having Minnie. Mr. Brandon was not persuadable. He was too busy; time was too precious; and the lady was content, though she professed to be very unhappy under the privation.

When Mrs. Mayo returned at an early hour with her prize, she found Mr. Mayo, George, and the little Cornelia, whom they all called Nellie, awaiting her arrival. Mrs. Mayo proudly introduced Miss Brandon to Mr. Mayo, and then she said, "Nellie, this is the young lady you wanted to love." The little girl walked up to Minnie, and perused her face, form, and dress, with great interest. But most she dwelt on her hands. She took up one, and then the other.

"Papa said you had great red hands, because you milked the cows," said she, "and he said he uncluded——"

"Concluded," said Minnie, smilingly, regarding the little talker.

"What do you mean, Nellie?" said Mrs. Mayo. "I shall ring for nurse."

"Now, mamma, don't send me away, for the pretty lady has little hands, and is just as pretty as you said; and papa told a story—yes, papa, you was naughty, and told a story." They all laughed, but Nellie took refuge with Uncle George.

He took her to his heart without any reproof, and she said—

"Uncle, dear, is it naughty to have great hands? Why should not I talk about great hands? I wish I was big, and had big hands like Norah nurse; her hands are so nice, because they is big, and so are her feet; and she is very big, and I am very little. I love Norah all, but she is bigger than me," and the tears dimmed the bright eyes.

"Little simpleton," said George, kissing her, "you will grow large enough in time, and wiser than to tell everything you hear. Let me tell you, little miss, ladies don't like to have large hands and feet; and you should never tell things to people that are unpleasant."

"That is what mamma says; but papa says it is our duty to tell unpleasant things sometimes."

George laughed.

"Was it your duty, little minx, to tell Miss Brandon that papa said she had great hands?"

The child was mystified. Her education had begun with various teachers more or less worldly.

"You are not angry with Nellie?" was her issue out of the puzzling subject.

"No, darling Nellie, Uncle George is not angry," and he kissed the wet face. He drew a scented handkerchief from

his pocket, very delicate, for George was at heart a dandy, pressed it on the tear-wet eyes, and whispered, "What is the new doll's name?" thus seeking kindly to change the current of sad thought.

Mrs. Mayo took away Miss Brandon for a very important matter.

"My father and my physician are to dine with us to-day. Now just let me wrap you in a dressing-gown, while Kitty, my sempstress, shall remodel this beautiful dress of yours. It is just a little odd, being high in the neck. She will cut it down, and trim it with lace in a very little time."

"I shall get a sore throat," said Minnie, "if I uncover my neck at this time of year."

"All girls do," said Mrs. Mayo.

"Uncover the neck, or get a sore throat, or both?" said Minnie, laughing.

Mrs. Mayo smiled patronisingly, as if the change were inevitable, and said, "You know I am to introduce you to some persons worth knowing."

"Don't condemn.me to the alternative of a blanket-shawl, or the croup," said Minnie, with such pleasant authority, that Mrs. Mayo yielded. It was settled that a change in the sleeves, which should bring into requisition some rich lace and some gossamer under-sleeves, and accomplish floating drapery about the arms, that should compel the service of a waiter at table for every movement, as if one were pinioned, should be the only change in the dress.

Miss Brandon remained with the dressmaker, while Mrs. Mayo went out in her carriage, for a headache ostensibly, but in reality to secure Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle for the dinner.

At six o'clock Minnie was ready for dinner, and had done two things very difficult for many, and one of them impossible for her fine lady patroness. She had achieved the peculiar style and *tournure* and trimmings, that would make her pass for a resident of the Fifth Avenue without baring neck or shoulders, and she had gained the confidence of the Irish sempstress. She thought more of this girl, who was buried from month to month in Mrs. Mayo's sewing-room, and of the pain in her side, than of the important persons she was to meet at dinner.

When Kitty had hooked Miss Brandon's dress, and smoothed the rich lace, and looked admiringly at her rosy face, her

bright eyes and independent bearing, she indulged in a mental thanksgiving that she had found one real friend in America, for she was as sure of the fact as if she had known Minnie many years.

Mr. Graham, senior, was the principal feature at the dinner, Dr. Fitznoodle not being attainable, though he had graciously promised himself for the dinner to the poet.

"I am always delighted to honour genius, my dear Mrs. Mayo, and Mr. Brandon is one of my early and much-prized friends."

A very apocryphal statement, but true in a certain way, for the Doctor considered all the poets as his friends.

Minnie's first thought when she saw her prospective parent-in-law was, "How young he looks; how black his hair; how white his teeth; how handsome his vest!" but when she was introduced, and he honoured her with some particular attention and conversation, she discovered that his hair was too black, and his teeth too white and regular.

After the first few polite phrases, he said, "May I ask your name, Miss? I like to know to whom I am speaking."

"I am Miss Brandon, sir. I believe you knew my father many years since."

"Ah, I recollect—smart young man. He is here—ah! yes, he is here. The weather is very severe to-day," and then, lowering his voice to a confidential whisper, he said, "Miss Brandon, my dear, does he want to get into the Board of Brokers; and is that why my Cornelia is giving the dinner? Ah! I must help; I must use my influence. What may I call your name, Miss? I like to know to whom I am speaking."

"I am Miss Brandon, sir. You knew my father, Henry Brandon."

"Ah! smart young man—went away sick, and would not return—spoiled his prospects. A fine prospect his was—very foolish of him. We all liked him. Cornelia was as kind to him as such a queenly girl could be to one in his position. My dear Miss, will you allow me to ask your name? I always like to know to whom I am speaking."

"I am Miss Brandon, sir."

"Ah, the Board of Brokers, and a dinner. Cornelia always knew how to do things. You never saw the equal of my Cornelia, Miss."

A movement was made now for dinner, and Mr. Graham, senior, got somehow an idea that he was to address the Board of Brokers, on behalf of a smart young man, with whom he had every reason to be satisfied, but who had become too ambitious to remain in his employment.

Charlie Mayo had his hands and heart full in regulating the movements and words of his honoured father-in-law, but the dinner-table assisted him. The old gentleman fell into the usual routine, uttered the usual common-places for a time, and then fell asleep over his well-filled plate. When Charlie Mayo aroused him to take wine, he again felt the hand of custom upon him, and he sipped his glass and comported himself in an orthodox and approved manner for a few moments; then he seemed to become confused, put his hand to his head, and abruptly asked for his carriage to return home.

All were troubled at this change in a man, who for so many years had seemed made of iron, and incapable of failure.

"I am glad you are at home, George," said Mr. Mayo.

His wife remarked, that "the greatest must submit to the common lot, which was decay and death."

George said nothing; he felt too much.

Minnie whispered him when she had opportunity, "You will always be glad that you have tried to please your father in his last days."

And George said, "He may be thankful to you; I do not deserve the blessing of his gratitude."

Minnie smiled, and said—

"You are not nearly as bad as you pretend to be; and I am not nearly as good as you think I am."

"I wish your father had been here to-day," said George. "Any link with the past seems to steady and brighten my father so much; he remembers old times so much better than things of yesterday, and likes so much better to talk of them."

"My father is to come to Thursday's dinner, you know, and the great Doctor also."

George gave Minnie a look that contained an unutterable contempt for his sister's great man, but he said nothing.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DINNER WITH THE LIONS.

The principal persons at the dinner given in honour of Mr. Brandon were the poet himself, Mr. Graham, senior, Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle, and a little old man, in a claret-coloured coat and white handkerchief, who coughed a good deal. Mrs. Mayo presided with great dignity. Her orange silk dress shone through black lace, and diamonds glittered on her arms and bosom. Her white shoulders were displayed as if she were in the torrid zone, instead of screening her face from a fire of glowing anthracite, and listening to the whistling of a December gale. She looked, beside Miss Brandon in her ash rose silk, trimmed with black lace, like a golden butterfly beside an exquisite little brown moth.

Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle was a great celebrity. He was a sort of *omnium gatherum*. He was Doctor by assumption, or courtesy, or both. He seemed a sort of mental scrap-bag, holding shreds and patches of every hue and shade, and therefore adapted to everybody's torn robe or mantle.

He was a homœopathist whenever the strongest part of his public leaned to the infinitessimals. He was an electrician, and galvanised or electrified as he found subjects. He was a famous magnetiser, and made free with all ladies having headaches. He was a phrenologist, and could therefore lay hands on the remaining healthy moiety of ladydom. To-day he made it his especial business to flatter Mr. Brandon.

Mr. Brandon was delighted to find a man who had followed him in his poetical career from his first youthful sonnets; who could repeat choice verses of his from every year of his poetical life; who inquired into the motive of this or that effusion, with an interest such as no one had ever manifested. Truly this evening held rare delights for more than one.

It is pleasant to think that all Mr. Brandon's delight cost the great Doctor only one visit to the Mercantile Library, and some judicious copying and careful memorising the day previous. At how small expense the happiness of a sentimental poet may be greatly enhanced!

George had determined to be polite to his sister's doctor, who had won the confidence of his father and Mr. Mayo. Mr.

Graham, senior, had recently been trying the Doctor's prescriptions, inasmuch as for a year past his family physician had failed to do him much good; but with all George Graham's care to maintain a dignified and polite indifference of manner towards Fitznoodle, a careful observer might have detected a slight quiver and curl of his upper lip, and an evanescent though decided corrugation of the brow, as Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle laid his hand deferentially upon the coronal region of Mrs. Mayo's head for a little time, and then sat himself down before her, and took her two thumbs in his hands, carefully placing the balls of his own thumbs facing the balls of hers.

"The faces of the thumbs are powerful magnetic centres," said the scientific gentleman. "Let us cross hands, and put our palms together," said he. Then turning to the company, he said, "I can demonstrate to the company that this manipulation is on strictly scientific principles."

The balance inclined in favour of the science of the Professor. In the first place, the company had dined delightfully; next, the host and hostess, and the merchant prince, Mr. Graham, senior, looked with great favour upon his science.

George Graham was the only one who seemed at all impatient. Mr. Brandon and Mr. Graham, senior, were engaged in talking of old times. Mr. Mayo was entertaining others. The little old man, in the claret-coloured coat, sat as if asleep. Minnie was amused, till the man of science turned his dark, restless eyes on herself. He was a thin, sallow man, with his hair turned back after the manner of girls, which gave all the appearance of a high forehead that was possible to him. He came up gracefully and deferentially to Minnie, and began to pass his hand over the phrenological developments of the young lady, like one specially privileged. Mrs. Mayo came and stood by his side, begging him to make a revelation of Miss Brandon's mental characteristics.

Minnie did not like to be rude to Mrs. Mayo, and yet she was determined to escape the touch of the Professor's hand. Looking up, she caught George's eye fixed upon her. The almost imperceptible curl of his lip encouraged her invincible repugnance to allowing this man's hand to rest for the smallest appreciable time upon her head. She bowed from beneath his touch, saying—

"Excuse me, sir, I dare not risk your revelations."

He still insisted, and laid his hand again upon her head. She drew herself away, and said, with her native dignity—

"I pray you, wait, sir, till I employ you professionally." There was a decision in her eye, and the tone of her voice, that awed Fitznoodle. She detected at a glance that Mrs. Mayo was offended, and George well pleased.

Graham went immediately into the next parlour, and ran over the keys of the piano, and then he came back, and addressing the diminutive old man with all the deference of a subject towards a king, he led him to the instrument. The company gathered into the room as the first notes of the pianoforte sounded, Dr. Fitznoodle standing nearest to the old musician.

Oh, those exquisite silvery notes! Like the harmony in the heaven we dream of, and hope for, and feel in the soul, at rare and most beautiful moments! George fixed his eyes upon the face of the slight old man, whose hair was white as frosted silver, and who, when not playing, seemed seventy or eighty years of age; but as his long attenuated fingers struck the keys, his eyes burned in their deep jet, his pale face shone, his full lips seemed set as marble, and his whole form was rejuvenated. For a little time he appeared to be improvising and watching the notes as they leaped rejoicingly from the instrument. Then he seemed to lose himself within himself, and, closing his eyes, he played the variations on a duet from "Don Giovanni." His perfect appreciation of the work, his entire mastery of his instrument, made those reverent who knew much of music. Those who were present had taste and love, if not profound knowledge, and the old master was sustained by their affectionate recognition as they stood wrapped in the exceeding beauty of the wonderful performance.

As the last notes died away, Mrs. Mayo glided to the back of the musician, and passed her white hand gracefully over his forehead, putting back some stray locks of silvery brightness—

"My dear old Porpoza," she murmured, with her flute-like voice, and the heart of the aged lover of music thrilled with delight at her touch and her tones.

The whole scene would have been spoiled—indeed, she never would have enacted it had she called him by his true designation, viz., "Solomon Smith, Teacher of the Harp and

Pianoforte." Many a man of true genius passes through life unaccredited, except by a favoured few, who have themselves won no recognition. A queen might not have more truly appreciated the master than Mrs. Mayo, and a queen might not have had a tithe of her gracious kindness, or half so sweet a voice. She *had* a sweet voice, and she played prettily; and she was his pupil, or had been, and now she was his friend and patroness, and the tones of her voice sounded in his ear, and the touch of her soft hands thrilled his heart in many a late and lonely hour months after this delicious night had burnt its fever out in the slight form of the old master.

Mr. Mayo looked at his wife with an admiration and homage not to be described, as she stood over the old musician; and Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle began a learned discussion of the merits of Sebastian Bach, and Mozart. He had purposely read up for the occasion in "The Cicilian Gift," an annual that he had that day dipped into, after having learned from Mrs. Mayo that the old master was to be at the dinner.

He was interrupted by the fairy vision of little Nellie, who had got leave to come into the company to kiss her grandpa and her special friends. After accomplishing her sweet mission, she lingered on the fair cheek of her elegant mamma, till that lady said—

"Have you no kiss for my excellent friend, Dr. Fitznoodle?"

Nellie paused and looked at him earnestly.

"Is he your friend, mamma?"

"Yes; he is my very good friend."

"Then you may kiss him, or he may kiss *hisself*, for I do not like him," and she went modestly up to the old master and said, "Will you play for me?"

The old man improvised something beautiful for the little one, and then she said—

"Mr. Smith, may I kiss you?"

"Certainly my beautiful darling," said he.

"On your bright eyes?" said the child.

"Yes, darling."

"And on your pretty fingers that God loves, because they make the sweet music?"

Tears trembled in the eyes of the master; the child's praise was sweeter than that of the mother.

Appreciation, approbation, acceptance, reverence, and love

make an incense that is delightfully intoxicating to the spirit. All these seemed united in the circle where the master sat, and all was intuitive in the child, who came so simply and lovingly to kiss his eyes and his fingers.

Intuitively the innocent little one rejected the sham man, and sought the reality in the old musician. Her appreciation was more precious, because all knew that her expression was not fashionable formality, but a true and vital thing.

Tears filled up the master's eyes, when Mrs. Mayo was frowning, and others were smiling at Nellie's want of *politeness* to the Doctor. How are the pure intuitions of childhood profaned and destroyed by our deceitful customs, which are misnamed civility and politeness!

Mr. Brandon was not forgotten as lion of the evening, though others played so conspicuous a part. Mrs. Mayo led all to think of Mr. Brandon as the "sweet poet," and to feel awed or honoured according to their station or disposition. Mrs. Mayo never forgot the solid position of her world—bank-directors and presidents, heavy brokers and merchants, and their sometimes heavier feminine halves—in her ardent lion-hunting, It was novel and interesting to see the sallow face and shaggy beard of a Kossuth beside the smooth-shaved, rosy, and rotund representative of a solid bank, or a successful railway, or the diminitively graceful Sivori, the robust and overmastering De Meyer, or the bewitching Jenny Lind, in a circle whose appreciation was a matter of fashion, and five dollars for a seat at concert or opera.

There was a luxurious sphere, a combination of taste and comfort in Mrs. Mayo's home. In winter, the foot sunk in a carpet like soft moss; there were soft couches and downy cushions and easy chairs with pretty names; one was "Porpora's Own;" another was "Moss Bank;" then there was "Sleepy Hollow;" and surpassing all the rest in ease and beauty, there was one with a wonderful Chinese name, signifying "the repose of heavenly music."

Mrs. Mayo ministered to Epicurean tastes in food and drink. She had chocolate more intoxicating than the chiboque, golden tea, rare fruits for the Platonist, and ham sandwiches for those who live with their senses; fragrant flowers in winter, music on the harp and piano, with musical lions for performers—all this, and much more, made Mrs. Mayo's home very charming to very different classes of people.

The first day and night that Miss Brandon spent at Mrs. Mayo's, she found everything rose colour, except her unlucky antipathy to Dr. Fitznoodle. She went to her room for the night altogether pleased but for this. The room had a southern exposure. A fire glowed in the grate, and a climbing plant, with broad, shining green leaves, was growing in a white marble vase, and was trained over the windows as if the room had been a conservatory. Some roses and heliotropes occupied a shelf before the window in full bloom. The luxurious vines, the soft atmosphere, the delicate fragrance, all tempered by perfect ventilation, made a fragrant summer. Minnie sunk into a chair, a counterpart of "Porpora's Own."

"The beautiful lady! How perfect is her taste! How charming she is!—and yet I have offended her. I am so sorry."

Just as these thoughts passed through Minnie's mind, there came a soft knock at the door, and Mrs. Mayo glided in and took Minnie's face between her two hands. She looked lovingly and admiringly on her young friend, and said—

"My dear, I could not sleep till I had said 'Good night' to you. I am so happy with you."

"And yet I displeased you on account of your friend," said Minnie.

"Nonsense, my dear child; I was really very glad. I don't like the Doctor to think himself irresistible. But is not he delightful—and dear old Porpoza? Have you not had a pleasant evening? and how do you like papa? Is he not magnificent for an old man?—just breaking a little, you know, but so handsome. Oh, I dote on papa; and I admire Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle; and I have had such a beautiful day, all owing to you, my dear. I feel as if I could never let you go out of my sight again; and Nellie loves you so. Now kiss me, and say you have had a pleasant time. I am so pleased at what you did to the Doctor. Our old George likes it, too. Good night, dear," and the beautiful one vanished, leaving Minnie more at ease, but still with a weight on her heart.

Somewhat sadly she began to perform those weighty duties that the prettiest girl without a lady's maid has to do. She brushed and coiled and wired the multitudinous curls that charmed everybody. She might resemble a grey moth, or a gray mocking-bird, but her plumage was wonderfully pretty. Somewhat sadly she rolled and tucked away her wealth of

curls, and then her fevered cheek rested on the snowy pillow, and a great congregation of different people floated across the background of her excited fancy. The dignified matron, the tasteful patroness of art, the beautiful and bewitching woman of the world, the beloved wife, the wise and careful and tender mother, and the devoted friend—all seemed combined in Mrs. Mayo. Yet she attracted, repelled, and puzzled Minnie.

The splendid ruin presented by Mr. Graham, senior, seemed, to her dozing mentality, presently to be clothed with ivy that had climbed from his feet to the crown of his head; there was the Fitznoodle, with his shallow accomplishments, his multiform skill and pretence, and his real ability also; the old master, with his silvery locks and burning eyes, and wonderful fingers; there was George Graham, with the grace and effeminacy of a New York dandy, and with a stern resolve and manly beauty, that contrasted strangely with it: In his sister's parlours he was made of contradictions. There were others seen more or less distinctly, and they all thronged through the busy brain that rested half-sleeping, half-waking on the downy pillow. But she did not sink to sleep. Wakefulness came instead of her usual dreamless slumber. Who could wonder that sleep came not to the inexperienced girl, and that her fevered cheek kept changing its place on the pillow.

All who have not been trained in the arena of society know the intoxication of a first meeting with the magnetic elements of a refined and elegant circle. There was a leaping of the heart, a fulness of the brain, and strange thrilling thoughts, and unformed hopes and prayers, that kept Minnie awake long after the family were wrapped in quiet slumber. Good night to the gentle girl, who has yet enough of firm resolve. Happy for her that she cannot read the hearts of those around her—indeed, we may say, happy for us all. If Providence had provided windows through which we could all look, and read the inmost secrets of our fellows, I confess I am not prophet enough to predict the result.

Minnie had begun life in New York. George Graham said to her, "You will stay with the Mayo's this winter, I trust, Minnie, dear. I must be with my father, and if you are with Cornelia it will be a perfect blessing to me. I shall have company to the opera, and a charm for my evenings, instead of being condemned to my profession at once."

"But papa can't go home without me, and mamma is already very lonely. Caroline is no company to any one but Frederick, and I am afraid she is not enough to him to keep him from evil ways. Oh, George! I am so sad about poor Fred. He was made for a better fate."

"And Caroline?" said George, inquiringly.

"She married with her eyes open. Papa and mamma both warned her. I am sorry for her, but—— Well, I can't explain to myself why I should take so much more interest in Fred and Jerry than in my own sister. Jerry is becoming more sane, more like a sensible human being every day. I have hope of him, and that, perhaps, accounts for my interest, while I am utterly hopeless of poor Fred. For a while he seemed proud of Carry, and she evidently controlled him very much. I fear it is not so now. My duty must be at home now, George, much as I would be delighted to stay with your charming sister."

George frowned. He always felt miserable when any one was charmed with Cornelia, though he never said a word of her that was not entirely respectful.

"I shall speak to your father about your remaining," said he. "I want you to take lessons of Mr. Smith, and I want you to get acquainted with Miss Deane, so that you can practise with her. She can help you a great deal in your music, and you can help her in other things."

"You can speak to papa, George, but you will see that he will agree with me, and take me home with him in spite of your entreaties and your sister's united."

"We shall see," said George; "meanwhile, we must go and call on the old master, and maybe we shall see somebody else."

Mrs. Mayo had been beseeching George to use all his art and influence with Mr. Brandon to gain Minnie for the winter.

"If you only felt her worth as I do, George. If you were only a person who could be charmed! I am out of all patience with you that you cannot, or will not, fall in love with so much perfection. But you were always contrary and impracticable; but do try and persuade Mr. Brandon to let her stay."

"I'll try to talk him over in part payment for my own refractory ways," said George, laughing; "meanwhile, you may make love to the young lady."

CHAPTER XXIX.

TWO DENS.

"We will call on young Vincent when we have seen the old master," said George Graham to Minnie. "I want you to know him. He is a very remarkable young man. I like him heartily, and never find but one fault in him."

"And what is that?" said Minnie. "I should like to know a young man who had but one fault, unless that were a bad one."

"Well, he allows himself to be patronised. His conscience seems an easy going one. He helps Cornelia, I believe, more than he ought in her artistic affairs. I suppose she has told you of her music, and paintings, and poetry."

"Not much; but I have heard her play, and she certainly has great beauty of execution, and she lives and moves artistically, and *is* a poem in herself."

George bit his lip. His mental reflection was, Minnie is taken in with the rest. It is of no use to try to undeceive her. I must wait. In a month she will produce an exquisite miniature of Miss Brandon by Mrs. Mayo, as apocryphal as the last discovered work of Shakespeare.

He did not utter one of his thoughts. He did not like to think his sister a clever charletan, and he did not like to think that Minnie could be charmed and deceived altogether. But there was nothing that he could do in the premises with propriety, and so he kept silence. They reached the La Farge Building, and began to ascend the stairs, when they encountered a woman to whom George addressed himself in an inquiry for the old master.

"He is just middlin', sir," said the woman, "and I am exceedingly pleased that you have called;" and she raised herself from her occupation of scrubbing the stairs and stood with brush in hand prepared for as long a conversation as her auditors would allow. "I gave him my opinion this mornin', sir, that there's a providence that rules over us."

George and Minnie were on the stairs to the principal entrance to the La Farge Building, Broadway, seeking the dens of the old master and Victor Vincent. Nancy was scrubbing the stairs as usual. There was a sort of traditional

feeling with every one who went often up those stairs that Nancy was always scrubbing them, just as we have the feeling in a long rain storm, that it has never been fair weather and never will be, but that the earth has always been soaked with rain, since the Flood, and always will be.

Nancy was a curiosity. She was so curious a specimen that she set every one wondering and thinking who could stop to wonder and think, which comparatively few in New York can do. She was bundled rather than clad in rusty black garments; a small shawl, overtopping the bundle, was crossed on her bosom and tied at her back. She had a rusty black hood on her head, and from under it peeped brilliant black eyes—almost too brilliant were Nancy's black eyes; and then her face was nearly the same dingy colour as her rusty dress and hood, a fact without excuse in New York, where the Croton flows through all thoroughfares, and anthracite coal is the fuel. Dirty hands and faces in Pittsburg and Cincinnati, where bituminous coal dispenses its tiny plumes of lamp black upon everything and everybody, are most excusable. As the Laplander presents snow to the freezing nose of the friend he meets, so the denizen of Pittsburg or Cincinnati makes his first salutation to a friend, and adds instantly, "Excuse me, but there is a black spot on your nose," and the other adds in the merest social equity, "and on yours;" and then a handkerchief of a leaden white, if it has just come from the laundry, is put in requisition.

Nancy had no excuse for the mask she wore, except her manifold occupations.

"Yes," continued she, addressing George Graham, as if she were a school ma'am and he a small boy, "I tell him there's a Providence. How much better that the rheumatism should attack his neck than his fingers, for he would die if he could not play the harp and the piano."

Nancy's disquisition on Providence was cut short by George Graham dropping a quarter dollar into her hand and hurrying Minnie up the wet stairs. She was glad of the gift, which was always repeated by George, as if she kept the entrance, and that were the toll. But she was more gratified by the liberty of speech she had with him and the opportunity of expressing her opinion of Providence.

Notwithstanding the traditional belief that she was always washing the stairs, she had that morning "done up" the den

that was Porpora's own, in this manner:—She had carried a mattress, on which the old man slept, into a dark closet that once did duty as a bedroom, and now held great piles of music: Handel and Haydn, Mozart and the Bachs, and a hundred more, beside the voluminous compositions of the Old Master, alias "Solomon Smith, Teacher of the Harp and Piano." Into this closet the rolled mattress, confined by a cord, was put for the day, and it rested on the piles of imprisoned harmony, the hopes, prayers, aspirations, and life-long achievments of the old master and the old masters. Then his iron bedstead was carried to Nancy's room in the corner, that little room where she took the little rest that fell to her weary lot. Then she had arranged the furniture and made the dingy room decent for the musician's pupils during the hours devoted to lessons. Then she had dusted everything, harp and piano included, most carefully. She never dared touch the heaps of music to arrange them, but contented herself with going over them with her feather brush very lightly and reverently, for she worshipped music. When she had done all this, beside kindling the fire and removing the ashes, for the wonderful fingers of the master were never allowed to touch anything that would militate against their delicate use, she had a tea-kettle boiled, a cup of black tea made, a French loaf lying on the white cloth, and a single boiled egg resting in an egg-cup, a minute pat of butter with a funny stamp of a Cupid and a bow, and an Indian pearl shell with salt, completed the breakfast. It was always supposed that the master went to walk while Nancy was attending to these duties, but if he sat buried in his easy chair (a gift from Mrs. Mayo) with his white handkerchief over his face, Nancy never appeared to know it. This was, indeed, the perfection of training, for to talk was heaven's first, last, best gift to Nancy. How Mr. Solomon Smith had obtained this immunity from the exercise and infliction of Nancy's gift and passion, tradition saith not. One thing is certain, it extended not beyond the breakfast time. After that, the talker talked to the master as if he were a man, and though she had several other rooms to attend to, no occupant except Mr. Smith, obtained immunity from her tongue at any time. When Minnie Brandon came into the old master's room she felt herself in a calm and soothing presence. She sat by the venerable man, and he took her hand, first when he said good morning, and

again to examine its physiognomy and determine the amount of her musical talent.

"I think," said the master, "that I have somewhere seen you before." And he looked inquiringly from one to the other.

"Mr. Graham and Miss Brandon," said George; "you met us at Mr. Mayo's."

The old master remembered all that pertained to his art; a whole opera dwelt in his memory as a name does in ours, and no one could confound the facts in the history of music and its professors without being instantly set right. But of recent days and years and their events he had confused ideas, like the noise from Broadway sounding through his room, made up of the rumble of wheels of many kinds—the omnibus, the carriage, the truck, the light tread of youth, and the trembling step of age; the dull footfall of the fearful, sad, and sorrowing, and the bounding flight of the hurrying hopeful ones.

"Graham! Graham!" said the old master. "I remember. You came from New Rochelle. No; it was Harlem. You are the son of Colonel Evans, who lived in the last farmhouse —no, not the last, the third from that, and who used to drive the cream-coloured horses. No, white horses; it was Mr. Belden who had the cream-coloured horses. No; it was another man altogether, I remember now."

"No matter," said Minnie, gently. "I met you at Mrs. Mayo's the other evening."

"And she wants lessons," said George, quickly.

"Ah! I remember," said the old master, smoothing her hair as she sat on a low chair beside him. Minnie looked rebukingly at George as he went on.

"This young lady wants to be your favoured pupil for the winter."

"Ah! that is pleasant," said the master, who knew that he lived by giving lessons, besides being very happy in the work.

Just now Nancy came to usher in Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle and a lady. The lady was the Miss Deane whom Graham had been anxious to introduce to Miss Brandon.

Nancy did not look quite amiable at the Doctor, though she held a half dollar in her hand that he had given her as he came up the stairs.

Miss Deane seemed embarrassed, and a shade of trouble

was over her fine face, though she met the cordial advances of George Graham pleasantly, and seemed pleased to be introduced to Miss Brandon. George asked kindly after her health, for she seemed, if not ill, to be ill at ease.

"You ask Miss Deane," said Dr. Fitznoodle in a deep sonorous voice, "if she is well. Are not the birds in good health? Are the squirrels delicate and complaining? I assure you, sir, that Miss Deane has learned from me the true art of hygiene. She is electrified in the morning, she is magnetised in the evening, and she takes infinitessimal doses of arsenicum and veratrum on alternate days."

"Do the birds and squirrels have such admirable hygienic means at their command?" said Graham, mischievously.

The Doctor found it convenient to be inquiring after Mrs. Mayo of Miss Brandon just then, with an admiring interest for the present and the absent, and then he turned to the old master saying—"My dear sir, I have brought you a pupil of such ability as you have never seen equalled," and then he presented the blushing Miss Deane,—"I give you to a master who is worthy of you; he is the equal of the greatest composers, although the world is too hurried and too foolish to find out the fact. But *I* tell you, he might have written Bach's Armada or Donizetti's opera of the Marriage of Figaro."

These terrific blunders brought the old master to his feet with fierce and fiery eyes, but he was silent, and soon subsided, saying, in a whisper to Minnie, "Poor fellow, he don't know Gluck from Bach, and he attributes Mozart's opera to Donizetti. Nothing can be done for him; he must be humored like a crazy man."

George put some gold into the old master's hand. "I must fasten you for our pupil," said he, and they took their leave, the musician insisting that both the young ladies should begin their lessons the next day.

"What did you mean," said Minnie to George, "by engaging and paying for lessons for me?"

"I followed your father's directions," said George. "I saw him this morning, and he said he thought you must stay the winter for music and other advantages."

"Dear papa, and he is willing to give me up! But I have not consented yet."

They came now to Vincent's studio. He met them at the door in a drab-coloured box-coat, like a hackman's, with great

bone buttons, huge pockets, and a red flannel lining. His pantaloons were plaided blue and green, and his vest was of heavy green plush, what Fred Sherwood would have called a "stunner." He had a cap on his head, made of a coon's skin, with nose, eyes, and ears for the frontispiece, and he did not hasten to remove it when his visitors entered.

"Just my comfort to set eyes on you, Graham, I thought you were at the world's end; somebody told me so, when I came from the Rocky Mountains. Such sport as I have had, bagging buffaloes. Come in; I'll lock the door, and we will have a quiet chat."

"Miss Brandon, allow me to introduce Mr. Vincent."

"Ah, how d'ye do—one of us? eh, Graham."

"Yes, she is one of us, Vic," said Graham, laughing. "I may as well give you leave to be yourself, or you will take it. What have you been about?"

"Why, I have been about the buffaloes, with a coon occasionally for change. Don't you see my cap?"

"Any paintings to show us, Vic?"

"Well, yes; I have water-colour buffaloes on a large scale, and a baby on ivory on a small scale. Here they are."

And he showed some contrasts that were astonishing for greatness and minuteness—for truth and cleverness, and delicate beauty.

"What a fellow you are!" said Graham, "You have been among the brutes."

"Yes; look at my cap—is not it a beauty? Shot the chap between the eyes—made the cap myself."

"Have you any new poems?"

"Yes; two or three—*Under the Lilies*, for a poor girl that was drowned; *Too much Pudding*, for a numbhead at school; but then I have been idling out west—recuperating, rejuvenating. I am going into the *Daily Double Face* this winter. I am set up by my summer rambles. I'll be a whole team and a dog under the waggon."

"Well, have you made a profitable season during my absence?" said Graham.

"I have not exactly taken an account of stock. Health counts up a tall figure you know; and then I have got some secret service money for some pictures, a few poems, and a sprinkling of music. Nothing fair and above board since I came back, though I am likely to sell my water-colour buffaloes. There's

a fellow up town who wants them, and if he will come down decently, I shall part with them, and take the real skins over there in the corner, to keep me from being lonesome. If this fellow only wanted to pass them off as his own, I would make him bleed. But he is honest, and I must suffer, though I forgive him, because he really likes the beautiful brutes.

"Now, Graham, help me to admire them," and he held the picture up, addressing Graham, and feeling a little shy before Miss Brandon. Still he rattled on, because there was no help for it. He was obliged to be himself, as a brook is obliged to run down hill. He admired his horrid buffaloes—well executed to be sure, but the more faithfully they were painted, the worse looking they were—more than his delicate miniatures, of which Saunders might have been proud. He loved his pathetic and beautiful verses "Under the Lilies," which seemed a veritable inspiration to Graham and Minnie, but I think "Too much Pudding" was more a favourite with him.

"Look here, Graham," said he, opening a cupboard, "I have something rich in the secret service line, and as you are in my Lodge some, (not altogether though, for nobody is that; I am to be trusted by decent people, that's a fact), but as you are partly in the Lodge, I am going to show you something rich."

He took out what appeared to be a massive silver cup, with a harp on one side, and a wreath of oak leaves and acorns on the other, surrounding a space for an inscription.

"This is for the Old Master," said he.

"Ah, we have just been to see him. Miss Brandon is to take lessons from him."

Victor's eyes brightened.

"I am glad," said he; "music is a blessed thing to take into the world with you, or out of it. I love that old man. He is one of the 'unaccredited angels' that Carlyle, or somebody, talks about. They brighten up our rusty life here, and get very small appreciation for what they do for us, and go elsewhere for their reward. But you must know that Dr. Fitznoodle is getting up a 'Testimonial' that shall repay the Old Master for a lifetime's endurance of what the Doctor calls 'base ingratitude,'" and Victor smiled a very hard sneer.

"Do you know that man?" said Minnie, shuddering.

"I flatter myself I do," said Victor, shrugging his shoulders, "rather better than his landlord or his lady-love knows him."

"Why don't you expose him, then?" said Minnie, who was very much troubled to have seen George's friend, Miss Deane, on terms of intimacy with him.

"What do you know of him?" said Victor. "Beyond certain anachronisms, which are his speciality, for he never knows what he thinks he does, and his unlimited pretence I'll wager 'the Smith Testimonial' that you don't know anything against him. But, possibly, I am too fast. Have you made the acquaintance of our unitary care-taker, Nancy?"

"I have only seen Nancy this morning," said Miss Brandon.

"And heard her testimony about Providence?"

"That is all."

"Then please, Miss——, will you tell me why you ask for this exposition of our learned Dr. Fitznoodle?"

"I feel sure he is a quack and an impostor, sir."

"Hard words, Miss—I never hear anybody's name when I am introduced—timid, you know."

"Brandon," said Minnie.

"Hard words, Miss Brandon. This gentleman always relieves Mrs. Mayo's headache, and I believe he cured her of something dreadful—did not he, George? And I have heard of other extraordinary cures of his. Now I think of it, on somebody's shoulders grew an arm, under his magnetism, after the first arm that grew had been cut off. When such perfect ladies as Mrs. Mayo and Miss Deane give their friendship to a man and a physician, Nancy and I may as well keep dark."

"What becomes of your complaint, Miss Brandon?" said Graham, laughing. "I do not doubt you are of the same opinion still, and so I may be also, but I reflect that Fitznoodle is part of a system. Children test everything by the sense of taste, and our immature American public tastes all the quacks. It is our system of inquiry."

"Well, he passes understanding by a long jump," said Victor. "He possesses the rare gift of being informed on all subjects. He is at home with Mesmer and Mozart, Reichenbach, and the other Bachs; Fourierism and Communism, and Noodleism generally; and here is a young lady who, on the strength of her intuition, demands the indictment and conviction of this universal philosopher and philanthropist. Now look at this magnificent goblet; a wreath of oak leaves and

acorns—sort of American laurel, you know—will surround an original poetical inscription from the giver, Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle. It is to be delicately set forth, that the Doctor presents this testimonial in the name of the lovers of Art, to Solomon Smith, the second Beethoven. All this is to be done when Miss Deane has taken lessons enough to appear in a concert, under the patronage of 'Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle, the distinguished musical amateur,' and other great names to be added to the list of patrons and patronesses. I believe Mrs. Mayo's name is on the list."

"I doubt it," said Graham, sharply.

"Now my office of poet and engraver," said Victor, "is likely to be rendered nugatory, pitched into pie, and completely upset, by an unforeseen difficulty. The cup is a genuine electroplate, quite too thin for engraving, and as a copper centre to the letters is no part of the plan of the testimonial, the Doctor may relinquish it yet, and sell his cup for two dollars and fifty cents, its true value."

At this juncture there was a knock at the artist's door. He put away the cup, and turned the key, and admitted the Doctor and Miss Deane, who came to be introduced to the Doctor's excellent friend, Victor Vincent, ex-hunter, artist, poet, &c., &c.

"Now positively you must kneel to each other," said the Doctor, after he had presented the gentleman to the lady; "two persons of such genius never before met in my presence —the finest female singer, and the best living artist in the world."

"What *do* you mean, Doctor?" said Miss Deane, in very real astonishment.

"Just what I say, Miss Deane. I may be enthusiastic, I may be a poor judge, but I have seen the world; I have seen artists, and I have heard singers in Europe and America."

Dr. Fitznoodle now withdrew Victor to the farthest corner of the room, where they conversed in a low tone, and examined the goblet. There was an unlucky mark across the bottom that appeared to have been intentionally made with a fork, or some other weapon, and the copper shone forth unmistakeably.

"Of course, you do me the justice to believe that this is no work of mine," said Vincent. "It is a cheat, the thing can't be engraved."

"Not very lightly?" said the Doctor.

"Not at all," said the artist. "The cup is not worth five dollars."

"And I gave forty-five for it," said the Doctor.

"Then you have only to return it, and claim your money."

"No," said the Doctor, shaking his head despairingly, "it has been changed; some enemy has done this."

"Do you think the change has been effected since I have had it?" said Victor, with enforced calmness.

"I *think* not," said the Doctor; "I think I can trace it. Of course, *you* are not to be blamed. I know you, Vincent. Are the verses finished?" said he in a profound whisper.

"They are."

"Then you make a drawing of the testimonial, with the inscription, and I will have a goblet made to order in an accredited house; and then I will keep this one in memory of a dexterous cheat. I admire skill, Mr. Vincent, even the skill of a defrauder or robber."

"I dare say you do," said Vincent, with a merry twinkle of the eyes, and then they returned from their little aside, the goblet having resumed its place in the cupboard to be drawn.

Miss Deane was making the acquaintance of the artist's guitar, and, at the united request of all, she was induced to sing and play. She went far in charming her auditors, though the Doctor's claims for her had well nigh made her seem ridiculous before she sang. Graham and Minnie remained after Miss Deane and the Doctor had left, and then Victor said—

"Where has that scamp picked up that little stray angel?"

"I want to tell you about her," said George. "Her father was a merchant, and she was reared in affluence and well educated. But when she was fifteen her father died insolvent. The only fortune of this young girl was her musical talent. At first, friends assisted, but at length it came to a lonely struggle for a young girl to win support for herself and her mother. For three years she has given music lessons, and for the last year, she has sung in St. ——'s Church."

"But how comes she with that scamp?" said Victor.

"He is a patron of artists. I should think you knew by this time," said Graham. "Poor girl! I can see that she has a hard time. Her mother is weak-minded and extravagant. The poor child is threadbare herself; but I warrant you her mother has everything she needs, and a deal more. I know

from Mrs. Mayo that Dr. Fitznoodle obtained an introduction through her to Mrs. Deane; so Miss Deane has come honestly by his acquaintance. I presume the fellow has his good side. We are apt to be too uncharitable."

"I'll cultivate that girl's acquaintance," said Victor, confidently.

"And charm her with that cap of yours. You should have seen how startled she was when I called her attention to it."

"Where is it?" said Victor. He picked it up, dashed it on the floor, and said, "I'll cut the cap." He opened his cupboard, threw it on a top-shelf that held a small babel of things. "There, you won't see that again."

"Did you notice how well dressed the Doctor was?" said Graham. "I imagine Miss Deane is partial to a fashionable suit."

"Never fear; I'll get a new rig as soon as my buffaloes are sold; and if I don't sell them, I'll have one made of the shaggy beauties in the corner over there. At any rate, I'll make Miss Deane's acquaintance.

CHAPTER XXX.

MRS. MAYO AN ARTIST.

Mr. Brandon graciously granted his consent to Mrs. Mayo that Minnie should spend the winter in New York. It was a great sacrifice. He knew, or thought he knew, how lonely he should be without her, and how much her mother would miss her, and yet he advised her to stay. He wished her to take music lessons, and he wished her to know the world better than he did, and he felt a great sympathy for young Graham in resigning himself to a kindly, though hopeless, care of his father. And so Mr. Brandon went home without his darling.

Minnie was happy to be in New York, but she sadly missed her father. Her life did not seem anchored as at home. She seemed to herself to be among quicksands, and yet she could not tell how it was. She wanted to begin her lessons, but Mrs Mayo had so many plans, and so many places to take her to, that she could not get to the master. Then she felt a

great desire to see more of Miss Deane, and to separate her from one whom she could not but consider a dangerous friend. After she had been taken about to a great many places, and had been daguerreotyped in all sorts of lights, shades, and positions, she settled it that her lessons *must* begin. Of course, Mrs. Mayo gave way before her earnest resolution.

"Oh, yes, there is nothing like dear old Porpora's lessons," said Mrs. Mayo; "and I have been so selfish. Now I shall take you there. I want to hear him play my last little piece."

"And you are a composer?" said Minnie, reverently.

"Oh, I do nothing worth anything, only dear old Porpora is so partial to me. He loves my follies even, just as my dear good husband does; so when I've made some verses in love or sorrow, and set them to some simple music, I take them to him, and he corrects my silly work, and I play my pieces over to him, and then I play them to my husband and my friends, and sometimes they get stolen and published, and then I am always ashamed of them, they fall so far below my ideal. But I must show you some of my labour of love that I am rather proud of."

She unlocked a little cabinet, and took out two exquisite miniatures—one of her husband, the other of her child.

"Are they not pretty?" said she, "and I did them at odd times, mostly from daguerreotypes, for Mr. Mayo never has time to sit, and Nellie sits as quietly as the wind."

"They are exquisite," said Minnie, looking at them with great admiration, but somehow her heart sunk. She thought of the miniature she had seen at Vincent's room; she thought of the "secret service" money, and the hints that George had given her, and she was sorrowful over an exquisite work of art.

"What would I not give to believe they were her work," thought Minnie.

"I shall paint you before winter is gone," said the lady, affectionately.

"I am not worth so much trouble," said Minnie.

"You have no idea how much you are worth to me," said Mrs. Mayo. "But we must go to that music lesson."

Then she ordered the carriage, and it was beautiful to see how kindly thoughtful she was of the master. A hamper was put in the carriage with everything that his need could

demand or his fancy desire. A baked turkey, some fresh eggs, wine that had been round the world, fresh fruits and preserved fruits, the sweetest butter, and the whitest bread made in her own kitchen, and many other necessaries and dainties.

"He says he loves to eat anything that my musical fingers have touched," said Mrs. Mayo.

A long flannel night-gown was the crowning comfort of her thoughtfulness, and then she looked in her purse to see if she had money for the master."

"I don't go as often as I ought," said she; "and when I do go, I try to be good. Poor, dear, old Porpora! We can't have him very long at the longest. We must see another artist there to-day," said she. "He is a queer outlandish fellow, but he has some talent, young Vincent."

"I saw him the other day," said Minnie. "He is very odd."

"I think worse than odd, he is outré," said Mrs. Mayo. "I never dare to ask him when I have company, and yet he has gifts."

By a mere accident Minnie discovered that the ample stores apparently destined for the old master were parted between him and Victor Vincent. The coachman made the division skilfully as directed, and Mrs. Mayo supposed that Vincent's good fortune was unknown to Miss Brandon.

Minnie saw the old master inspired by the presence of his beloved patroness. She heard him play the piece of music, with emendations that were like giving a poetical glory to plain prose, and she saw him happy with all sorts of material comforts, and she saw Miss Deane. There was a strange sort of unsubstantial happiness in it all to the honest hearted Minnie. Miss Deane she found to be a conscientious girl, lonely, imaginative, sensitive, and proud, with a great burden upon her. Minnie learned and divined all this in the two hours they spent together at the master's, and in their ride home, for Mrs. Mayo had sent back the carriage, and she had set Miss Deane down at her own home. It was a glad moment when Minnie returned, for she found a letter from her father. We give it entire, premising that Mr. Brandon forgot to be poetical:—

"My Dear Child,—We find it inexpressibly lonely without you. I shall tell you all about it, not that we wish you to

come home. We are willing to bear our loneliness for your good—though, but for your weekly letter and journal of events, I should come to New York to look at you, if I left again the same hour. It is not best for you to come home till you come to remain, for I am persuaded we should not let you return. We could not. I am not able to write at all without you, but there are a great many things needing attention that will be done while you are away.

"Jerry is very strange. When I returned home without you, we lost him for a day and a night. I have not inquired, but I think he went to Frederick Sherwood with the idea that his home would be unendurable without you. I fancy he found it unpleasant there, for the next morning he returned. He brought me five dollars which he said had been given to him at different times, and asked me to keep them.

"'I don't want money about me when Miss Minnie's gone,' said he, 'and by and by I shall need it.'

"'Do you want anything now?' said I.

"'Well—yes, I do, Mr. Brandon,' said Jerry; 'I want you to take charge of a whole raft of clothes that Fred Sherwood has given me. I want you to get a tailor to do the handsome thing in fitting me out with 'em.

"'Jerry,' said I, 'you are growing particular in your old age,' but I had the clothes made over, and you would hardly know Jerry in his new suit.

"'Now,' says Jerry, 'I want to know if I have been a faithful hand since I got over the spells and able to work?'

"I assured him that I had been satisfied with his fidelity and usefulness for months.

"'Then,' said Jerry, 'will you be willing to give me ten cents a-day for the last six months?'

"I had never thought of giving him wages, for I supposed he would have a home with us for an indefinite period. Still I said I would be happy to give him what he asked. I was surprised when he reckoned the sum correctly, and asked me to put it with the five dollars for safe keeping, 'I shall want it when my new clothes are done,' said he. The new clothes are finished, but Jerry has not demanded his money yet. 'I have thoughts in my heart that I can't tell you yet, Mr. Brandon. When you writes to Miss Minnie you will please to thank her for the kind word she sent me and her own silk hencheker, and tell her not to give over prayin' for me. Tell her I have

forgot all my writin' or I'd put it all in a letter and send it to her, instead of asking you to be to the trouble.'

"I have nothing new to tell you of Frederick and Caroline, but I fear too much that is old. I feel distressed for them both, but your mother's affliction is much greater than mine. She often says, 'I must give my Carrie up,' but she never does it, while I resigned in the first place, what I saw never was really mine, and never could be. Caroline has had a fearful inheritance of selfishness, and it will bear its own bitter fruit for her. We must pity her and help her if we ever can.

"I think much of your happiness this winter, my dear. You will accept a great quantity of love from you mamma and me, and give much to George Graham.

"Remember me very kindly to Mr. and Mrs. Mayo, and to the learned Doctor I met at their house. I have seldom seen a man so truly sympathetic.

"Everything in the greenhouse is prospering. Your lilies are doing delightfully, and your roses make me weep every morning that you can't see their beauties and be delighted with their fragrance. One would think that you had gone to the other side of the world, I miss you so sadly. But courage, my darling, Spring will come, and you will be its greatest delight to your loving parents. Your own old Papa,

"HENRY BRANDON."

Minnie folded her letter, and held it in both her hands, with a fervent prayer for her loved ones and poor Jerry. She wondered at this late passion for money, and she was pleased that he had chosen to be well dressed. "Good, faithful Jerry! There must be something for you in this world," said she, mentally.

CHAPTER XXXI.

VICTOR VINCENT IN LUCK.

"POOR Ettie Deane!" said George to Minnie; "she is so lonely. Work cannot always fill the heart. She believes the Doctor

to be a single man. I doubt whether we can get proof to the contrary. But even if unmarried, he is not the man she should trust herself with."

"Women are so cruel to each other," said Minnie. "If I could only induce your sister to help me cordially, we could save Miss Deane from this charlatan; but Mrs. Mayo seems to dislike her on account of the attention this man pays her.

"My sister has fine qualities," said George. "I may as well be a little frank with you. She is always generous when she can gain much or lose nothing by it. She will maintain respectability at almost any cost. She will never be compromised, but she loves to see people happy when it is no possible loss to her. Miss Deane is an excellent, warm-hearted girl, with much talent and considerable culture. She is in her first love fit. Heaven help her! I am afraid we cannot, but we must try. If Vincent were half civilised, I should think he might help us; but he will offend her taste, while the Doctor will dress tastefully, behave like a gentleman, and talk piety, and purity, and swindle the poor girl altogether. We may have to consult Nancy; she evidently knows all about the Doctor's antecedents."

"Mrs. Mayo," said Minnie, "loves to please me. I can see it in many things. Now, I want her to invite Miss Deane to her party, and she seems so unwilling—indeed, she told me she could only consent to ask her with the music."

"Very well," said George, "let her ask her with the music; then she will have to pay her, and Ettie will make a good thing of it, and we shall have her company all the same. The old master is asked for the music, but no one is so honoured and distinguished and petted as he is. Cornelia loves him, and I forgive her a great deal, because she loves him. Maybe she will invite Victor Vincent with the music," said George, sneeringly. "I wish Vic were more scrupulous and dignified, and I wish Cornelia manufactured all her gifts and graces as really as she does her complexion. She is always getting help, and I never know when a thing is her own. Now the murder is out, Minnie. You have seen that I distrusted my sister, and I shall feel better to trust you entirely."

"Shall I ask Mrs. Mayo to invite Miss Deane with the music?" said Minnie, willing to divert the conversation from one painful theme to another.

"Yes, require it of her; she will not displease you; she

has set her heart on making a match between you and me, and she will make sacrifices to please us both. She is not in love with me, and she is afraid of my penetration, but she finds it convenient to bear with me for various reasons, the chief of which is—I am her brother. As for you, her show-people, those whom she specially affects, will never attract you. You will never come in collision with her claims, and you will attract a good many to her soirees, and thus more than pay your way in the current coin of society." George drawled the last word, as if he hated and despised the thing he named in about equal proportions.

"And now I will go and find Victor Vincent and plot for the saving of my friend," said George. He found Vincent in his studio retouching the buffaloes.

"The beauties are not sold," said Victor, dolorously.

"I have come purposely to buy them," said George.

Vincent jumped to his feet and seized George by the hand.

"Hurrah for you, old fellow! You will have them framed handsomely and hang them up in your room."

"Why don't you ask what I will give and not where I will hang the picture?"

"But hang it, I want it hung; I never was hung decently in my life—never got on the line—always was stuck in a corner or on the door, or behind the door, and I am ambitious. Tell me you will frame the beauties handsomely, as you rig yourself, and let me hang them in whatever room they are to occupy, and you may name your own price."

"What are they really worth, Victor, if somebody had painted them who was moderately famous?"

"No matter about that; there the brutes are to show for themselves; they are likenesses; and there, see the tone and feeling of the picture—that big, burly fellow is scratching the other's head as gently as if he were a Cupid. They are worth one hundred and fifty dollars, but I will be glad of a hundred for them."

Graham had written a check for one hundred and fifty for them, and he was glad his price and the artist's agreed.

"Here is your money, Victor," said he.

"I said a hundred to you, Graham."

"And I said a hundred and fifty or nothing," said George; "and now I want to talk with you."

"Let me call my bison of a landlord first; he wanted to

hook me out this morning. Said I ought to go South and teach, and not sponge on decent hard-working people any longer, and I thought so too, only I had that prospect of the *Daily Double Face*, and besides, I could not live out of New York in winter. I can live and have nothing to eat but bread with raw oysters occasionally, but I must live in New York."

He ran off to the landlord. Presently he came back with some notes in his hand.

"Just you reckon it up for me, Graham. I owed him five months, ten dollars a month; then I was gone four months, and he let my traps stay here at half price. Some scalawag used the room part of the time. Now, it is one of my misfortunes that I can't reckon. I always look important, and trust to Providence that it will be all right, because when I go back, thinking I am cheated, I find myself mistaken. Now, five months at ten dollars, and four months at five, how much is it?"

"Just seventy dollars," said George, laughing.

"Well, I have got eighty dollars here. Is that right?"

"Exactly."

"Thank you. I like to know I am all right. I got home with seven cents in my pocket and my bed-clothes for winter. If I could have brought the meat as well as the skins, I might have lived. As it is——"

"How have you lived, Victor?" said George, kindly. "Why did not you tell me?"

"I did tell you. I have lived on the secret service money. It goes against the grain sometimes, but a fellow must live, even though Dr. Johnson don't see the necessity. I have done some little things, and a good fairy has fed me—the same one who let me have the money for my hunting expedition."

"Now, Victor, have you debts?"

"Yes, to my shame be it said. I owe six shillings for raw oysters, taken six at a time, never more abundantly unless I have ready money. Then I owe a dollar to my washerwoman, and no end of good will, and some change to Nancy. Here she comes, scuffing through the hall. I'll attend to her case. Here, Nancy—you take this five dollar bill and pay that laundress of mine, and give yourself a dollar, and bring me the other three when you have have nothing to do."

Nancy took the money with an undertoned remark that

there was a Providence. It is just possible that her faith in her favourite dogma was more tried by the artist than anybody else.

"Now, are you all right?" said George.

Vic looked down upon his habiliments, and shrugged his shoulders to the top of his head.

"Do I look all right?" said he. "I could not get the ghost of a chance with the girls in this stunning rig. I don't see how I ever fancied it."

"Will you go with me to my tailor?" said Graham.

Victor shook his head. "Too tall for me. I must go over to the Bowery."

"Nonsense; a good thing is better than a cheap thing. The best clothes are best and cheapest. Come along, Victor. I want to see you metamorphosed, and then I will talk with you."

"Just so. I can't talk about anything but buffaloes in these clothes."

George did not leave Vincent till he was perfectly and properly dressed, and when this change was accomplished, he said to him—"Do you know that Mrs. Mayo gives a party next Tuesday?"

"Yes; I have arranged some music for her, and am getting up an arch for the performers."

"Are you going?"

"That depends——. If Mrs. Mayo sees me before Tuesday in this dress I shall have an invitation. If not—*not.*"

"Will you go with me and call on her?"

"Certainly. Nothing would please me better, provided you will make another call with me afterward."

"Anything you like, now you are dressed," said George.

"But won't somebody mistake me for a minister, or member of Congress, and ask me to subscribe to something, or to put somebody into office?"

"We will go along and see what the results will be," said Graham.

Mrs. Mayo was greatly surprised when the full-dressed vision of Vincent burst upon her. She was gracious as possible.

"You see I am in luck," said Victor. "Sold the brutes and got into everybody's good graces."

"Who bought them, and at what price?" whispered the lady.

"Fellow up town—one hundred and fifty dollars. He frames, and I hang them for him. Splendid run of luck. I'll get into the *Daily Double Face* now, and no mistake," said he, looking down at his clothes. "I sent 'Under the Lilies' to the *Knickerbocker*. I'll bet they will take it now just to make my luck uniform."

"You must have gloves for my party next week," said Mrs. Mayo, as if his coming were a matter of course. "Lavender, you know, for you will turn over my new piece for me at the piano, and you must not disgrace me, or my music," said the lady, sweetly.

"The gloves shall be forthcoming; but you must ask Miss Deane to play if I come. I make it a condition."

"Of course," said the lady, "you and Miss Deane in the duet. I shall give her a good deal to do, though she is by no means what she has the credit of being as a musician, but when people make an idol, all must bow to it; and Dr. Fitznoodle makes himself very silly about her. I never could have believed that *he* could be so mistaken; but the wisest have their weak side. I am nursing dear old Porpora, to get him very strong for my evening. Now, remember the gloves, Mr. Vincent."

Victor and George felt themselves at liberty to leave on the second mention of the gloves, though Minnie had not seen the humanised appearance of Vincent.

"All is well now," said Victor, when they were in the street. "You see I am invited, and Miss Deane is to come."

"And you are to turn over the new music," said Graham."

"Yes, that is a high honour," said Vincent, very gravely, quite too gravely for his purpose of concealing the secret service from George.

"Now for Miss Deane. You promised, Graham——"

"But you did not mention Miss Deane."

"You said you would go anywhere."

They found Miss Deane nursing a bad throat, but hoping to get well for the party. She seemed very much surprised at the altered appearance of Vincent.

"Miss Deane," said Vic, rather stammeringly, "Graham said you were afraid of my cap."

"That was not *quite* true," said Miss Deane, smiling; "I was not charmed with its countenance, but I was not frightened."

"Well, Miss—I have cut that cap. I always like to please people of taste. I liked that thing out West, where it was in keeping; but when I got back, I found myself all out of tone, and I have been toning down ever since."

"I congratulate you on your success," said Miss Deane, looking at him with interest.

When Graham and Vincent were again in the street, the latter said—

"You see I made her look at me. Now, that was a great gain, for you know, properly dressed, I am not a bad-looking fellow; and then I as good as told her I had cut the cap for her sake. Don't you think I have made a beginning?"

"I hope so," said George, sincerely.

CHAPTER XXXII.

FITZNOODLEISM.

"My spirit bride! my beautiful one! my eternal conjugial partner!" said the eloquent Dr. Fitznoodle, as he sat holding Miss Deane's hands, and looking into her honest, earnest eyes. "Do you not feel that you are forever mine—that nothing in time or eternity can sever us?"

"Oh, I have strange misgivings," said the pure-hearted girl.

"Doubts of yourself or me?" said the Doctor, blandly. "Have you prejudices against a widower?"

"I think," said Miss Deane, "that I cannot make anything plain to you, for nothing is clear to myself. Certainly, I do not love you less, that you have been bereaved of one who was so true a friend, and so saintly a woman, as you tell me your wife was. But why do you continually object to being seen in public with me?"

"Is it possible, my love, that you can think that I object to being seen anywhere and everywhere with you? Have I not been at church and in society with you?"

"That was sometime since; you have excused yourself so much of late that I really thought you had objections."

"Not the least, darling; but a man of science cannot be a gallant. I have to study hard—to burn the midnight oil."

"Did you not go to the theatre the other evening with Miss Greene, and have you not spent three evenings with her this week?"

A cloud passed over the face of the Doctor. How did Miss Deane know where he had been? Still he answered blandly, "My dear, I have been at Mr. Greene's in the evening, but my business was with Mr. Greene, and connected with science. I attended his daughter to the theatre at his request. He wished her to be under my magnetic influence, as she is my patient. You know, love, that I count the moments when I am away from you."

"Have you an invitation to Mrs. Mayo's party?" said Ettie.

"I have not," said he.

"Strange," said she; "I have had mine three days, and she spoke of having invited my patron."

"It is of no consequence," said he, "that I did not receive the invitation, for it would be impossible for me to go on the evening of the 23rd instant."

"Then you knew of the party?"

He blushed, and said he had heard of it.

"I wish you to act in entire freedom," said he. "Man can only be regenerated in freedom, as says our wise Teacher. Do you wish to go to this party?"

"I am invited with the music. I have to earn my bread; besides, some friends whom I very much prize will be there."

"Who are they, my dear? I ought to know your friends."

Miss Deane blushed, but she escaped tolerably by answering—

"Mr. Smith and Miss Brandon."

"Then you have formed a friendship with Miss Brandon. She did not impress me favourably. I wish I could believe that my company, on the evening of the party, could be any compensation to you for remaining at home. You know your throat is far from well."

"I thought you said it would be impossible for you to go," said Miss Deane.

"It will be impossible for me to spend my time at a party, though I might find an hour or two for you, a little late perhaps; but your mother may allow me to call a little later than usual. I have two good reasons why you should not be at this party. For the sake of your throat, I do not wish you to sing."

"I might only play," said Miss Deane.

"You will be persuaded to sing."

"Not if I promise not to."

"Then I cannot bear that you who will ere long bear my name, and visit Mrs. Mayo as an equal, should go there as a paid musician, sitting below the salt."

"Do you not earn your living, and is there anything dishonourable in my doing the same?" said Miss Deane.

"Nothing dishonourable, my dear. I have expressed my feeling as a man about this party, and, as your physician, I think it wrong for you to sing at present:"

"Well, I have six days to nurse my throat, and if it is not well, and you will give me two hours, I think I can give up the 'consideration,' which Mrs. Mayo promises for my music on the 23rd. But I really wish to go. Ordinarily, I have none but the music to speak to in such a company, but here I shall have friends."

"We will talk further on the subject before the eventful evening," said the Doctor, as he took his leave very tenderly, but not in a manner to restore her failing trust.

Alone, she gave way to her heart sinking and her tears. The long evening was before her, and she could not rouse herself to anything. Her mother was in bed like an infant, and when she was up and about her home, she was little more society for her daughter. In the midst of her weeping, Ettie heard the door-bell, and wondered who could be her visitors. She wiped away her tears to welcome George and Minnie.

"Is your throat better?" anxiously inquired George.

"Better, but not well. I am afraid I shall lose my music and my friends for Tuesday night."

"I am coming to nurse you all the time, and never once lose sight of you, rather than miss you at the party," said Minnie.

"You are so kind," said Miss Deane, feeling gratefully that Miss Brandon was a real friend—feeling that her loneliness was not complete, and that she did not owe everything to the man who wished to style himself her only friend. Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle had set himself to keep Miss Deane away from Mrs. Mayo's party. Why, we shall see presently. He would make any sacrifice of truth to keep her at home, but he could not give her his company to compass his ends, for he was bargaining that away, while Minnie and George

were persuading and beseeching Miss Deane to promise them, sick or well, to be at the party.

"I will do my best to come," said the bewildered girl, and that was all the promise they obtained; but they made her feel that friends and equals asked her company as a favour. This was very pleasant to the sad-hearted girl. Many times she had said in lonely misery this winter, "Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle is my only friend." She felt now that this time of famine was past.

Dr. Fitznoodle had gone directly from Miss Deane's home, which was the neat and pretty second story of a house in Barrow Street, to the aristocratic home of Miss Greene, in the Fifth Avenue. As the lady's physician, and having the confidence of her father (her mother was deceased), he was admitted to the most unreserved intimacy with the young lady, who was the head of her father's house.

"Have you really done with that odious Miss Deane?" said Arabella Matilda Greene, as the Doctor held her fat hand, and admired her diamond ring, though he looked entirely guiltless of so much worldliness.

"I have never really begun with her in any sense, except as a patron to a girl with fine musical gifts."

"Oh, pshaw! now. People say you are in love with her."

"People say what pleases them; but you are too sensible and too good to believe slanderous stories. I have felt it my duty to patronise a good artist. If I am to be married to all the ladies whom I benefit, I shall have a pretty bevy of wives. I shall be equal to Brigham Young. Now, I believe in one eternal conjugial love, and I cannot be patient with such scandal."

"Have you never been married?" said Arabella.

"I have never been so happy as to find my other half, or, if so, she does not recognise me as her own," and he looked tenderly at the fat daughter of a millionaire.

"I want to go to Mrs. Mayo's party," said Arabella. "Can't you get me invited? You are always as thick as hops with them Mayos. I don't like to live in the Fifth Avenue, and never get invited nowhere. I hate that stuck-up Miss Deane; and I want to go with you and make her jealous. I love to make a muss with some folks."

"I don't believe Miss Deane will be there. If Mrs. Mayo had thought of inviting her, I should have known it. I looked

over her list yesterday, and asked her to put down your name as my particular friend, and she said I must ask you to come as a favour to me."

"Oh, you are a trump, and a duck, and all that sort of thing. Don't I like you first rate? Now, I mean to give you my ring, that you always look so lovingly at, and tell pa' I lost it."

"We must not speak falsely," said the gentleman, gravely.

"Well, I'll tell him I don't know where 'tis; but, then, you must promise not to go near that hateful Miss Deane again."

"I am Miss Deane's mother's physician, and I have sometimes prescribed for the daughter; and then I am an amateur in music. You do not know what you ask, my darling friend, when you require me to give up my profession, and my interest in art."

"Well, promise me not to care anything about her."

"One thing you may be sure of. I shall be faithful to the one who is the sweet complement of my life—my other half."

"Well, who's that? I don't want to give my ring to a partnership."

"Do you not know where my heart is—in whose keeping are my dearest affections?" said the Doctor, looking languishingly at the ring. "But are my love and adoration reciprocated?"

"If you mean me, I think I can give you a hint that I don't dislike you," said the lady, taking the cluster of diamonds from her fingers, and slipping it upon the Doctor's little finger. "Now, don't let pa' see it; I'm fond of pa', and I want him to like you."

"He is very friendly to me," said the Doctor.

"Oh, yes, he's friendly, and likes you for a doctor, but I want him to like you for something nearer home. Mind you wear that ring to that party. I want Mrs. Mayo and Miss Deane to see it."

"Oh, I shall give it back to you before the party."

"I shan't ever take it back till I take you along with it."

"My dear Arabella——" began the Doctor.

"Call me Mattie," said Miss Arabella Matilda, pulling his ear.

"I want to say something to you in the sacredness of confidence."

"Oh do tell me—I love secrets of all things."

The Doctor stammered, "But this is something very trying for me to tell you."

"Oh, never mind—aint I your Mattie?"

The Doctor sunk on his knees.

"I am very poor," said he, "and if I take your beautiful gift, I have nothing worthy of you to offer in return."

"That's pretty talk," said she, jerking up her head, "as if I give gifts to get something back. I guess pa is rich enough, so that I need not be that mean. Besides, I got my quarterly allowance to-day. I don't believe there's a dozen girls in New York gets an allowance. They go and run up bills at Stuart's and Arnold's and Lord & Taylor's, but I don't. I have my own money, besides having all I can save from the housekeeping."

The Doctor could not forbear asking in a low tone, "How much does it take, dearest, to furnish all the elegance that clothes you?"

"Oh, I lay up. I don't spend half my allowance. Pa' gives me a hundred dollars a-month for myself, and then I have money for the house, and I *manage*. If you are poor you can have some of my money. I have got money in bank and money in my pocket." She pulled a roll of notes from her pocket—"Here, you take this and get up off your knees. You will be as tired as a minister."

The Doctor rose and took a seat by the lady. He bowed over the hand as he took the money. He was very grateful, for he was in sad straits this night, the cause of which we will relate presently.

"Now you be careful. Don't tell tales out of school; don't pawn my ring, and don't be sweet on Miss Deane. I can bear anything better than that. I feel troubled about you and pa'. I am fond of pa', and he would make a muss, I know, if he thought you were anything but my doctor. You be careful, and I'll *manage*. I've managed pa' oftener than he knows for."

"My dearest Mattie," said the grateful Doctor, "I can never express my gratitude. May you never know such trouble as you have saved me from this night. My life must tell you how dear you are to me. I know many languages, but not enough to express my love, my gratitude, my admiration."

"There, that will do," said Arabella Matilda, who had nothing romantic about her but her name. "Now you may go. It is eleven o'clock, and I am a sleepy head. Good night."

Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle was relieved; as he stepped into the street from the aristocratic mansion of his lady-love he seemed to tread on air. All his manifold occupations had gone badly of late. His lectures did not pay; his examinations of heads brought him too many "dead heads;" his private practice, in its many varieties, was irregular, often volunteered to some influential persons, and he could not send in bills. He was therefore greatly relieved when this benefaction from Miss Greene came into his hand.

My readers must not mistake the character of this remarkable doctor. He was a useful man, for he bought good lectures, and kept the soul and body of some needy writer together by what he paid. He gave these lectures eloquently. He was kind, and often gave money to the poor and good advice to the sick. His sins were that he was a universal lover, and an equally universal liar. He got himself into all sorts of scrapes, and lied, or attempted to lie, himself out of them.

We would be glad to say *requiescat in pace* of the Doctor, but he is the representative of a class that will never die. So long as the public demands imposition, it will be forthcoming.

As stagnant water furnishes the conditions of an abundant musketo population, so ignorance and credulity are the conditions of a pervading noodleism. The way of the transgressor is hard. The Doctor was fast enmeshing himself in a web of his own falsehoods, and he felt it. Wherever he turned he met some humilation of his own creating. For a little time past the mortification and misery of debt had swallowed all other trouble. He owed his agent, or man of all work, for a month's service, and the man had a family in the country dependent on his earnings. He owed a hundred dollars at his hotel, and of late he had not dared to ring for coals or to ask for any service, for the servants were perfectly clairvoyant as to the state of his pockets.

Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, the Doctor rung for his bill after having discovered the joyful fact that he had three hundred dollars. He also rung for supper and a bottle of wine, and feed the waiter, and retired at last very happy.

He waked his agent and gave him forty dollars, and advised him to send part of it to his wife;—good advice, but very unnecessary.

When the pecuniary pressure was removed, the Doctor began to think of other troubles. He was really charmed with Esther Deane. He did not make love to her—it was rather spontaneous, but he was bound very fast to Miss Greene. He was obliged to invite his Mattie to the party. He had begged an invitation for her as a personal favour, and he knew he should be obliged to pay her three hundred dollars worth of attention, besides the value of the ring, which was a heavy sum. He could not deny or ignore the lady who had paid his board bill, but how could he be seen by Ettie Deane with this fat horror on his arm. The thought made him wild. Somehow Miss Deane must be hindered from going to the party, even if he gave her a sleeping draught after she was dressed. But how could he escape from Miss Greene, with whom he was to dine on the evening of the party, and then bear her company in her carriage to Mrs. Mayo's? He bethought him that he would get excused for an imperative call on a patient at eight o'clock, and then he would return to the fair Arabella after he had made sure that Miss Deane should not go. With this end in view, he gave in to Miss Deane's intense desire to go to the party. He encouraged her, magnetised her throat, and told her he thought she might be able to go, and he waived his objections.

"I will come at eight and give you an exhilarating powder, and accompany you there," said he, "though I cannot remain."

"You are very kind," said Ettie; "you humour me like a child."

"You are a precious child of genius," said the Doctor.

"I am so relieved that I have your full and free consent to go," said Miss Deane, who had secretly begun to entertain an idea of the possibility of going without it.

The evening of the 22nd the Doctor spent with Miss Deane, and treated her going to the party as a matter of course.

On the morning of the 23rd Mrs. Mayo, thinking that whatever was worth doing at all was worth doing gracefully, said to Minnie, "Now, darling, you take the carriage and bring Miss Deane here for the day. She will look over her music,

and you can arrange everything with her, and you may help her in the matter of dress."

Mrs. Mayo could never tolerate an ill-dressed person in her vicinity.

Minnie embraced the lady in lively gratitude. "Don't say you love me unless you can love my dear old George," whispered Mrs. Mayo, kissing Minnie very tenderly.

"That is another affair," said Minnie, laughing. "Suppose I fall in love with him and he won't accept my devotion."

"You are always so *nonchalant* about George, I see there is no hope. You like each other too well ever to get in love. 'Tis too bad; all my cherished schemes must come to nothing," said Mrs. Mayo, sadly. And Minnie said, mischievously, "Why don't you go to George about such an important matter? I could almost promise to marry him, if he will have me, in gratitude for your kindness," and she ran away to get ready to go for Miss Deane.

Miss Deane was so delighted to see Minnie and go with her, that she well nigh forgot the Doctor's escort and his exhilarating powder, and as it was likely to be stormy, she was very willing to forego both for a carriage and companionship for some hours.

Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle felicitated himself during the day on a clever little scheme and a delicate little powder, which was to send Miss Deane to her couch in sweet forgetfulness at eight o'clock in the evening. Still he was troubled. Somehow he began to fear that his position was not altogether safe with Mrs. Mayo. All her friends had to be without reproach, or they must seem to be if they were not. She decapitated all who failed in securing the suffrages of her public without the slightest favour or remorse. If a person were *discovered* to be minus in any of the moralities, or had made a *public* infraction of the social proprieties, no talent, no genius, no clique could support his lame steps into Mrs. Mayo's society. No matter how worthless the character while it was endorsed. Innate character was no passport to Mrs. Mayo's set. It was a *sine qua non* with her that her friends should have a good reputation. What their real character was she cared not, so that they interested and entertained her—so that they were kind, reverent, and worshipful to her, without coveting what she wanted.

Very beautiful and charming was Mrs. Mayo, very popular and careful, and an exemplary leader in her set.

Dr. Fitznoodle's intuitions were not altogether at fault respecting Mrs. Mayo. George had said to her—"Why do you have Fitznoodle at your party? It is rumoured that he is no true knight, at anyrate not a Templar."

"Are you one to repeat rumours?" said Mrs. Mayo with gentleness.

"Yes, when it can be of use to do so. I can be a grand gossip upon occasions. Seriously, Cornelia, you had better ask Vincent about this fellow, Fitznoodle."

"Fellow!" said Mrs. Mayo, inexpressibly shocked.

"Yes—fellow; for Vic told me that you had invited a *fellow* to your party who might have an old house on his head in a week. But you must cut him gently, I take it."

"And Miss Deane also?" said Mrs. Mayo.

"No—decidedly not. Miss Brandon and I are forming a Deane party. That girl is worth a colony of such folks as that Doctor."

"You and Miss Brandon could do any thing you chose in New York society," said Mrs. Mayo, thinking to see if there was any possibility that George would get in love with Minnie.

"You think so?"

"I am sure of it."

"I think Miss Brandon and I understand each other very well, but really I am of opinion we shall never undertake the management of New York society."

"Gifted and impracticable as ever," said Mrs. Mayo. "Dear papa will soon leave us. I have hurried my party on that account. And you will never sustain the honour of our name. I am grieved, inexpressibly grieved, George, that you will not listen to reason."

"Don't despair of me," said he. "Your troubles will be too heavy if you do," and he turned from her with a well-concealed contempt.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PARTY.

No one ever risked taking cold at one of Mrs. Mayo's parties. Summer was most exquisitely imitated. Among the roses, heliotropes, pinks, and flowering shrubs, scattered in Mrs. Mayo's parlours, no breath cooler than the tropics was allowed to come.

Miss Brandon and Miss Deane arrayed themselves in simple white muslin dresses just alike, and without ornament, save the white flowers in their hair.

"You are both entirely charming," said Mrs. Mayo, as she threw a pearl necklace around the throat of each. "My nightingale must wear this for my sake," whispered Mrs. Mayo (she had determined on joining the Deane party), "now and always." Then she fastened the pearls on Minnie's neck, and said, "My white dove!—my sister spirit!"

Minnie looked admiringly at Mrs. Mayo. "You are more magnificently beautiful than any one I ever saw or thought of," said she, overcome by her enthusiasm. The lady was resplendent. She had made up and rejuvenated till the beauty of her youth seemed to have come back to her.

"Magnificent!" cried both girls at once.

"Then you really think I am decent," said the lady, calmly enjoying their honest admiration.

Mr. Solomon Smith was to come early, but owing to some mistake, Mr. Mayo's coachman went for him late. The old man took small note of time, and was satisfied that Mrs. Mayo would send for him at just the proper moment.

Nancy had arranged the master's white cravat, and had put his diamond breast-pin in his bosom, had attended to shoes and hose, and had brushed the claret coat with proper care. His white vest and steel-grey pantaloons, his delicate hands and silvery hair, all seemed to become him equally. He had been seated in his easy chair in one of the parlours, by the careful attention of George Graham, before Minnie knew of his arrival. The dear old man had had a fainting fit the morning of the day previous, and Minnie had heard of it from Miss Deane, and had not any hope of seeing him. She had not told Mrs. Mayo her sad certainty about the

enforced absence of the master, because she would not pain her so much. She had not seen him for a week, he had been ill, and she had exaggerated his danger, thinking his fainting fit an apoplectic attack. She had become very much attached to him, as did all who nearly approached him. When she learned that he was well enough to come out, and that he was even now seated in the middle parlour, she made her way through the crowd that separated her from the master, and without a thought of what she was doing, she went to him, and kneeling beside him, she took his hand in both hers, and said—"My dear master, I hope you are well again."

The old man laid his hand upon her head. He had seemed to himself to be in fairy-land, or heaven, before she came. Now a white-robed angel, or fairy, was kneeling before him, and he laid his hand upon her head, saying—"Heaven bless you, my dear child; I am almost myself again, but you will turn my head, I am afraid."

Mrs. Mayo was standing by the master, her hand resting on his chair. She took Minnie's hand and raised her, and drawing her arm through her own, she passed onward through the throng of guests with an inexpressible pleasure and pride. Minnie not only looked "the right thing," but she always managed to do *just* "the right thing." As soon as she could, Mrs. Mayo said in a low voice, "That was the most effective thing I ever saw in a party."

Minnie looked wonderingly at her, and said, "What do you mean, Mrs. Mayo?"

"I did not know you were going to do that."

"What?" said Minnie.

"To kneel for dear old Porpora's blessing."

"Nor did I," said Minnie, "till it was done. I was frightened enough when I found myself on my knees to the old gentleman."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Mayo, who could not doubt her truthfulness; and then, after a moment's silence, she said, "My dear, I would give my diamonds to have done that with the grace and success with which you did it. Minnie," she added, in an earnest whisper, "you *must be* my sister!"

Dr. Fitznoodle had escaped from Miss Greene at eight o'clock, and had gone directly to Miss Deane's with his powder in his pocket. He learned that she had been out all day and had not yet returned, but the girl did not know where she was.

He waited as long as possible, and then returned and accompanied Miss Greene to the party.

He felt as if the floor were giving way under his feet when he first entered the house, but when he saw Miss Deane surrounded by Graham and Minnie, Victor Vincent, and Mr. and Mrs. Mayo, and a half dozen of her musical friends and appreciators, and felt that it would be impossible for him to approach her in her hour of triumph, even if he were disencumbered of his fat inamorata for a sufficient space of time, his condition was to be compassionated. He positively trembled with terror.

"What makes you so shaky on your pins to-night?" said Miss Greene. "One would think there was some of the detectives here, and that you thought pa' had sent 'em. Never you fear, I'll manage pa'." Thus encouraged, the poor Doctor looked at the paradise where Mrs. Mayo presided, but that lady did not see him after his first reception for an ominously long time. There he was with Arabella Matilda on his arm. She was past thirty, and weighed one hundred and seventy pounds. She had a rosy face, a snub nose, and insinuations of a beard, and straggling hairs on her chin which she had prejudices against removing, saying if she pulled out one six more would come to the funeral. She was dressed—but Victor Vincent's criticism will express it.

"Is not she a *stunner?*" said he to Graham. "She's got the silk, and the lace, and the jewels of a whole pawnbroker's shop. I would sooner take one of my buffaloes in tow. Is not Fitznoodle paying up to-night for all his sins?"

Miss Greene quizzed people through her glass with the most perfect coolness, while her cavalier prayed for deliverance, and his prayer was granted in a very dreadful way to be sure.

At a late hour, as Miss Greene was using her quizzing-glass in all directions, she saw a servant in ludicrous distress trying to draw George Graham's attention. She succeeded after a time, and when he was in the hall, she said, "Oh, Mr. Graham, there's a murtherin woman below. Will ye just go and speak till her?"

George proceeded to the dining-room. There he found a little thin woman, with thin lips, a sharp nose, and a faded complexion. She was clad in a rusty brown dress, a dim old red shawl, and a poor crumpled bonnet, with an old yellowish green vail tied in the form of a half handkerchief over it. Her

eyes were black, and seemed to pierce one. She had a worn, miserable expression, as if she had not rested for a dozen years. She looked as though she had been out of money, out of health, out of patience, and out of decent clothes for full that length of time. She had with her two boys, evidently twins, about ten years of age.

"I came here after my husband, Dr. Fitznoodle. Is he here?" said she.

"I *think* he is here," said George. "I will ascertain."

He went up and asked the Doctor to go down stairs as a *person* wished to see him.

George went down with him from motives of humanity. He really wished to protect him.

It would have been a pitiable sight—that meanly clad, weak, wearied woman, had she not struck fire the moment she saw her pale, trembling, and miserable husband.

"*That woman!*" said he, as if the end had come. "You here, Kitty?" he stammered forth.

"Yes, I am here, and your children are here. A pretty father of a family you are! You are a fine man to be galivanting about till your own children don't know you."

"O yes, we know father," said the boys, going up to him and taking hold of his hands.

The Doctor disengaged himself and drew George into the hall, closing the door behind him resolutely.

"Will you do me a favour, sir?" said he.

"I will serve you in any way I can," said Graham.

"Will you see Miss Greene, the lady I came with, and say to her that a great misfortune has happened to me, and that I shall never forget her goodness. Say to her that I leave New York at once. Do not tell her anything more if you can avoid it. Tell her this, and see her into her carriage, and I will be obliged to you always.

"I will do as you request," said Graham, and immediately the Doctor led his wife and his twins out of the basement door into the sloppy streets. The rain fell fast, but his wife's reproaches rained faster. He was in thin shoes and an otherwise appropriate evening dress, and the late hour made it impossible to get an omnibus, and he was a mile from his hotel. Compassionating my readers, I will not follow this *happy family*, but return to the party.

George Graham delivered the Doctor's message *verbatim* to

Miss Greene. Poor girl! her distress was dreadful. She prepared to go at once, and when she was in the hall, she said to Graham—

"Will you go to —— Hotel with me?"

"It is not best for you to go there," said he.

"Oh! I must," said she, shaken with emotion, "I am sure he is in debt, and I want to help him."

"It is not that," said George; but she drew him into her carriage, with the intention to go to the Doctor.

Graham saw that he *must* tell her.

"His wife has come," said he.

"The viper!" said Miss Greene, with sudden reaction from her grief, "he told me he never had any wife."

"He probably meant that he never was spirituallymarried," said Graham.

"Fiddlestick!" said the lady; "he lied out and out, and I am glad I am quit of him. A liar, a scamp, a humbug—I am well rid of him. I am obliged to *you*, sir."

George sorrowfully left the poor girl, for she was grieved as well as angry. She said "Home," and he returned to the company. He whispered the news to Vincent. A few minutes after he saw Ettie Deane, pale as marble, standing by Victor.

"She knows," thought he; "I wish I had not told that blunt fellow."

In a few words George gave Mrs. Mayo and Minnie the facts.

"I am glad," said Mrs. Mayo, "that we had no scene. We will let the Doctor drop very quietly, and few in our set will ever know anything about him, and those who do will soon forget. I shall be especially ignorant." And then she attended to all in her own charming way, and more than all to "dear old Porpora." The old man surpassed himself, and was sent home at midnight, wrapped up like a baby, with Victor Vincent beside him.

Poor Miss Greene cried herself to sleep this sad night. To her the Doctor was beautiful, wise, learned, and fascinating. She had never been so fond of any one before, not even her pa'. It was too bad to pay such a price for a lover, and then to have him spirited away before she had had any comfort of her purchase. She was not grieved for her money. She could save more, and buy other diamonds. They had never looked half as brilliant or charming as on the Doctor's finger. She

cried—she did not weep—she cried dreadfully. She was ignorant, jealous, and spiteful; but she was kind-hearted, generous, and affectionate. She will doubtless marry some rich tallow-chandler, or poor minister. Well, I understand her good points, and pity her misfortunes, if no one else is ever able to do either.

How the Doctor escaped from his wife, I am not able to say. It is certain that they left the city together the next morning after the party. It is also certain that the gentleman was heard of afterwards in several cities lecturing, magnetising, and "practising" generally, and also as being engaged to several ladies at the same time. His wife followed him, very relentlessly, deranging matrimonial and other prospects.

Miss Deane had been somewhat prepared for the shock she suffered in regard to the Doctor. Her distress was less than might have been expected. She was constantly coming to the knowledge of some of his ways and doings, for which the word "tricks" seems generic. Vincent showed her the cup still in his possession.

Nancy told her facts of other days, and one of the present time, somewhat mortifying. It was that the quarter's tuition, which she thought she saw the Doctor pay to the master for her, was a present of five dollars, which the Doctor said he felt bound to make to the dear old master, the public was so ungrateful to him.

How to pay for her lessons, and at the same time excuse herself for not paying in advance, was a hard problem to solve for poor Ettie. Her mother dropped her earnings in a bottomless pit continually. Mrs. Mayo had given her pearls instead of money at the party. The problem was to be solved for her by Miss Brandon, who had also learned the facts from Nancy.

"Ettie, dear," said she, "I must devote more time to music. Mr. Smith is not able to give me the instruction I need. Now you must give me lessons, and then I will pay him for your lessons, and thus pay you for the time you spend with me."

The next day Minnie said to the master—

"Ettie and I have been careless about paying for our lessons. Did you ever have two pupils before for half a quarter who were so remiss?"

"I am sure your brother, George Graham, paid me for both," said the master, who could not see through the mist

that was over his brain, and who had got the idea that both girls were sisters to Graham.

"I think you are mistaken," said Minnie, "but I will ask him."

When she came again, she said—

"I learned that only half our tuition is paid, and here is the other twenty-five dollars, and a receipt that you may sign. I want your autograph."

The master signed the receipt, and Minnie gave it to Miss Deane.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MUCH MISERY.

MRS. DEANE was drawing near to the valley of the shadow of death. Since her husband's decease, she has been a very miserable invalid. She was one of those pretty baby women who had especially charmed her husband by her helplessness. She had been as beautiful to him as a wax doll is to a child, and he never once thought of leaving her poor, lonely, and unprotected, save in the care and companionship of her daughter. Mrs. Deane was now only forty-five years old, but she had no life left. She had always been a form without substance—a beautiful form for a few years of girlhood, and also for a time when she became a wife, with the charms of elegant dress and surroundings. She faded gracefully; but when she lost her husband, she became utterly weak and miserable, and devoted to tea, snuff, and morphine. Ettie had cared for her, nursed, and sustained her with a true filial devotion. For a long time they have occupied the little home in Barrow Street. They have two rooms in the second storey, a basement-room, and a bed-room for their servant. The back-chamber is a sunny south-side, overlooking a yard, with grass plot, roses, and a grape vine. Ettie had given this room to her mother, and she occupied the front room looking into the street. She has a lounge that is a sofa by day and bed by night. She has her pianoforte and some choice books. She has a rose-bush, a heliotrope, and a few other plants. She has tried to be happy with all these, and her duty to her mother. The trial has proved that "happiness was born a twin."

To love and to be beloved was always the hungering prayer of Ettie's heart. She had loved her mother as an infant—she had borne with her weakness, her wayward, fretful temper, and her self-inflicted suffering, with sublime patience. Her time for years had been absorbed in work and weariness, and yet she never complained. Her singing in church paid the rent and her servant, the rest she had to make by lessons, and occasional employment at parties. She often felt that she could not long sustain her great burden, and yet it was terrible to think now that her mother must die. She had just begun to be happy in the society of Miss Brandon and Mrs. Mayo. Then George Graham, Victor Vincent, and the old master were *very* pleasant to her.

It is said that troubles never come singly. Just as Miss Deane became aware that her mother was much more seriously ill than usual, she was also aware of a great coldness towards her on the part of Miss Brandon and Mrs. Mayo. What it all meant was past her comprehension. She and Minnie had taken their lessons with the master in the morning, to leave Ettie free to attend to her own lessons in the afternoon. When she arrived at the La Farge, Nancy told her that Miss Brandon was coming after this in the afternoon. No little note full of kindness from Minnie informed Miss Deane of this change.

"Well," said she to herself, "I shall know to-morrow when I go to give her lessons." So she waited with a sinking heart till the morrow came. When she rang at Mrs. Mayo's, she was told by the servant that the ladies were out, but that Miss Brandon had left word that she could not take her lessons for a week or ten days. No note; only a message by a servant.

Ettie went on her way in utter misery. But she was not the only one, though so much had been done to make all parties happy. George Graham had devoted himself to bringing Miss Deane to a favourable opinion of Vincent, and just as he thought he had succeeded, he found Victor in lugubrious plight, shut up in his room, and encased in the old plaid pantaloons, the frightful coat, and the shaggy green vest.

"It is no use," said Vic, "I might as well crawl under my buffalo skins, and hibernate this winter. I never mean to wear decent clothes again. If I had not some money left, I believe I would go and jump into the dock."

"What is the trouble, Victor?" said George, really concerned for his usually light-hearted friend.

"Well, I may as well tell you. I went last night to call on Miss Deane. She had shunned me since the party, and I thought I would know the reason why. I could not get in. The servant said her mother was not as well as usual. You see it is all day with me there. Then that *Daily Double Face*, after keeping me on a string, and using my things for a month, has shipped me without a cent, and took on Rogers, because he wrote that greased-lightning story. The only decent thing that has happened since I sold my buffaloes is, that Old Knick has taken my 'Under the Lilies,' and I have five dollars for it. I tell you what, Graham, I never can wear those clothes again. Just think of me in lavender gloves. What a deuced fool I was! I can't bear to think of it. And now she won't see me. I tell you what, I'll put on my cap, and this rig, and stand on the stairs when she goes up to her lessons. But Nancy says she has not been for two days. I would like to have her see that I don't care for her approval or her taste, or anything of the sort. I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll go to the opera with Miss Brandon and Mrs. Mayo. That Minnie Brandon has got a heart; Mrs. Mayo invited me, and I'll go. All the real comfort I have is up at Mrs. Mayo's."

"Will you go in that cap?" said Graham.

"No; I'll dress up within an inch of killing me—lavender gloves and all."

George had hardly seen Minnie for a week—his father had engrossed his time and care—and when he called the ladies were out. He could not go to Mr. Mayo's now, for his father could not spare him, only for the call on Victor. He went back, and watched till eight o'clock in the evening. For a week he had no more recognition from Minnie Brandon than from Miss Deane. She could not have missed him or she would have sent him a note, or in some way have expressed a wish to see him.

At eight o'clock, he got leave of absence from his father, and went directly to Mr. Mayo's. The servant said the ladies had gone with Mr. Vincent to the opera. George turned away with a sense of misery that he had never known before in connection with Minnie. He had never doubted her love a minute before this. Now he did not doubt it, but it was clear that Vincent saw her often, and he had said all the comfort he had was at Mrs. Mayo's, while George was in sorrow,

and watching night and day, and Minnie had not seen him or written to him for a week.

Next day Mrs. Mayo called to see her father.

"Where is Miss Brandon?" said George, stiffly.

"She has a headache and could not come. We were out last night. Oh, George, what a fool you are. If you could love that girl as I do, she would make you the happiest man in the world. To think of your allowing that bear of a Vincent to win the most beautiful and gifted girl I ever saw, right under your eyes. I am heart-broken about it. I thought you were trying to persuade that gilded Miss Deane to fancy Victor. To think of your taking such a girl yourself is too dreadful. Papa's sickness is nothing when compared to it."

George Graham was angry; and yet the possibility that Minnie might take the same view of the subject that Mrs. Mayo did, never entered his mind. He stood by Cornelia in haughty silence, and she took her leave with real tears in her eyes.

If George could have heard her last week's conversations with Miss Brandon, he would have bribed the physician to take his place by his father while he went to Minnie.

"I am heart-broken about George," she had said to Minnie more than once. "He will marry Miss Deane," said Mrs. Mayo, when she returned from her visit to her father. "He is there continually, and we see nothing of him. Even Victor begins to see why he is not acceptable there. George excuses himself from coming here because papa is so ill. Papa told me to-day that he left him alone almost the whole time. He wished me to come and stay with him because of George's neglect. There never was a Graham who could endure a hired nurse."

"I will go and stay with your father," said Minnie, the tears bursting from her eyes.

"You are such a darling," said Mrs. Mayo, "I could find it in my heart to poison that miserable Miss Deane, with her pretended talents, and her pretence of all sorts."

Minnie was miserable, and she knew not what to do. It seemed undignified to go to Graham for an explanation. It was evident that Mrs. Mayo believed what she said; and she took Minnie with her everywhere, because she was unhappy, and Minnie went because she was too wretched to resist.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Deane grew worse, and during the ensuing night she died. She died when Vincent was enduring the time at the theatre with Mrs. Mayo and Minnie. Minnie's aching head and aching heart were there, because Mrs. Mayo had taken her; and George was more miserable than ever in his life with his father.

Ettie had not expected her mother to die so suddenly. Happily, the doctor, a most humane man, was with her. The poor woman had died at last of an overdose of morphine, which she had taken herself. The doctor sent a nurse to stay the night with Ettie, and she determined to send for Vincent in the morning. Her heart, with unerring instinct, turned to a heart-friend in this time of trial. Victor was awakened by Nancy at an early hour.

"Here's a note for you," said she, at the door, "and I know what's in it, for the girl told me; so be as quick as you can, and you'll know there's a Providence before you are much older."

"Push it under the door," said Victor.

It was written in a trembling hand in the first abandonment of grief. It said:—

"My Dear Friend,—Will you come to me in my great sorrow? My mother is dead, and my heart turns to you as to my only friend. Oh, do come!

"Esther Deane."

Victor was never so happy before. He dressed in an inconceivably short space of time, and he dressed decently; and when he met Miss Deane, he seemed like one who had come to a house of feasting, rather than to a house of mourning.

A good while afterwards he said to Graham, "I never was so glad in my life, as I was when that old woman died, except *once*."

CHAPTER XXXV.

A COACHMAN AND A LIVERY.

Mrs. Mayo was in trouble, not alone because of her father's bad health, for that she had got used to. He might live for years in this way, and George could and did take care of him, though Mr. Graham had the hallucination that George was absent almost all the time. If he sat all day with him, he complained that he had not seen him at all.

Mrs. Mayo had lost her coachman; this was the trouble that weighed upon her now. The man had served her for years, but now he had inherited a fortune, and had gone home to England, leaving the Mayo livery—blue, trimmed with yellow—for some less fortunate person—just at a time when she wanted the carriage constantly for Miss Brandon's sake and her own, the man left. The first applicant for the situation had "a shocking bad hat," and the lady did not think he would ever make himself decent. The next had a bad breath, and seemed still more unavailable. So all day she had received applications, and had not been out. In the evening she thought George or Vincent would come in, but neither came. Vincent was with Miss Deane, and George, who fully intended to come, was kept hour after hour with his father till it was too late.

In this posture of affairs, a strange arrival greeted Minnie in the morning. She had risen early, and was looking out of the window, when she saw the tall form of Jerry alight from a carriage, and look wonderingly up at the house.

Jerry was very erect for him, and his clothes looked well, only a little short in the neighbourhood of wrists and ankles. They seemed to intimate that they had shrunk some, or that Jerry had grown some since they were made. Jerry had a new carpet bag in his hand, and after looking at the house, as if he were set to count the windows, he rung the bell. Where he had got the notion that he was to pull the bell-handle and not knock, she could not guess. She afterwards learned that his instruction was due to a bright thought of Fred Sherwood's. Minnie's heart sunk as Jerry rang the bell. She thought, What on earth can I do with him? In a moment the answer came—He knows all about horses; he is an

excellent driver; and the empty livery just the colours Jerry loved, rose before her.

She ran down stairs and reached the hall-door before any one else came. A little plan matured itself in her mind, as she went over the stairs.

There is no describing Jerry's joy, so I shall not attempt the indescribable. Minnie took Jerry into a little reception room, and welcomed him very kindly.

"All well at home, Jerry?"

"All well."

"What word did they send me?"

"Not a word, miss, for nobody knows where I am but Mr. Frederick. I could not live without the light o' life, and that's one's friend, you know. I tried to learn back my writin', but I could not, so as to write you anything worth while; and so the long and the short of it is—I'm here."

"The lady here, Mrs. Mayo, wants a coachman," said Minnie.

"Well, Fred Sherwood said they would want a porter, or a cartman, or something, and he give me a recommend; said he know'd the man that you live with, and here 'tis."

Minnie glanced over it.

"You shall try for the place without letting them know that you know me," said Minnie. "You will then make your trial on your own merits. If they don't like to take you, it will be time enough for me to speak; and, if all goes wrong, I think I shall go home with you, Jerry," said Minnie, tired of her misery about George.

"All right," said Jerry, "I likes to go on my own merits."

"Now, Jerry," said Minnie, "You must be careful and not bring me out before the lady as your friend."

"Sure and sartin," said Jerry, "I'll be keerful."

When Jerry had breakfasted, and Minnie had asked a world of questions about home, Mrs. Mayo came down. Minnie went to her and said—

"There is an odd person here from the country. He comes well recommended from a gentleman who knows your husband. He wants a coachman's place."

"Do you think him a proper person, my dear? I expect all sorts of trials in my search for a proper person."

"I think he knows all about horses; but you must see him and his letter."

"I must go out to-day," said Mrs. Mayo.

She went with Minnie to see Jerry. He rose from his seat, and drew his tall form erect before Mrs. Mayo.

"I hear, ma'am," said he, fingering his hat all around the brim, "that you are in want of a driver."

"I want to employ a coachman," said the lady. "Are you used to the situation?"

"I've never seen many coaches till to-day," said Jerry, "but if you'll give me a trial, I'll see if I can't learn all about one."

Mrs. Mayo was favourably impressed with the strange man. She was disposed to employ him.

"What wages do you require?" said she.

"Just what I earn, ma'am."

"Who is to judge what you earn?" said the lady.

"*You*, ma'am. I never wants a better or a beautifuller judge. I'm a poor fellow from the country, and I had a friend that come to the city, and I pined so that I finally concluded to come too and seek my fortin, and so be where I could sometimes see my friend."

Mrs. Mayo called the chambermaid, and told her to bring the livery for the coachman.

She came and laid the blue clothes with the golden trimming, and the great-coat with many capes upon a chair.

"That is my coachman's livery," said Mrs. Mayo, proudly.

"They are very handsome clothes," said Jerry. "Do you mean me to wear 'em?"

"Yes, if you take the place," said the lady.

Jerry seemed choking for a minute, and then he said, "I am afeerd I would never git Jeremiah Gerald Fitzgerald to wear them ere clothes."

"I suppose that is your name," said Mrs. Mayo; "but why not wear the livery?"

"Well," said Jerry, "I have more'n one reason agin it. The wust one is, I have heern tell, that them liverys come from a king, and aint fit for freemen, and I am a freeman and a believer, and so I can't wear them clothes that I think is handsome. Another thing, I never wears another man's clothes, unless he's my friend, sure and sartin, and I loves him well enough to take care on him in sickness and in health, and to pray for him myself, and git my friends to pray for him. That's the long and the short on't, ma'am. I'll work without

wages, if you'll give in about the clothes, seein' I am a freeman and a believer, and a prayin' man, and comes well recommended."

Mrs. Mayo considered. She liked the strange man. She was greatly in want of a coachman. She began to think that it was unbecoming to a free people to ape the fashions of a foreign aristocracy. She even began to think in the space of three minutes that she ought to set an example of simplicity, and rebuke the spirit of flunkeyism, and make a sensation as she had when she adopted a livery which was a novelty in her set. Mrs. Mayo had at times great decision of character. She turned hastily to Jerry and said—

"I agree with you about these trappings. You shall be at liberty to dress as becomes a citizen of a free country. If you satisfy me, you shall have no occasion to complain with regard to wages."

"Money can never come between a freeman and a believer, and the beautifulest angel that I ever see, except one," said Jerry gallantly, and most sincerely. He could not help turning his eyes to Minnie, when he made the exception.

Mrs. Mayo was delighted with the compliment, and she immediately gave orders that Jerry should be installed in her service.

Jerry learned all about the coach without the slightest difficulty, and he drove Minnie and Mrs. Mayo a long drive in a most satisfactory manner.

Minnie was almost distracted that she did not see George Graham, and yet she dared not ask Mrs. Mayo to call at her father's, and for some reason she did not call. When they were again at home, Mrs. Mayo said—

"I shall punish George for a day or two by not going to see my father. I have engaged the doctor to call and tell me if there is any change in dear papa. He does not know me any more, so really it is of no use for me to go."

Two more miserable days, and then Vincent called to tell them of Mrs. Deane's death. Fortunately, Minnie saw Vincent alone.

"The old lady is dead and buried," said he, and the poor girl is a real mourner. She wants to see you, Miss Brandon; but she says she is sure you have something against her. I was sure it could not be so, and I offered to come directly and ask you, for I never will be miserable if I can find my way

out of it. She said I must not come. That is the way with women; they are never direct—never fair and above board. Now I love Miss Deane, and she loves me—though very likely she would not thank me for telling you, but if you have any trouble with the dearest girl in the world, I want to know it, for I think you are a couple of twin stars, and I can't bear that the light of either should be dimmed."

Minnie was deeply mortified. She assured Victor that she had no fault to find with Miss Deane. She was too much ashamed of her foolish jealousy to confess it. Indeed, she wished to forget it once and forever.

"Come for me at eight o'clock this evening, Victor," said she, kindly, "and I will go and assure Miss Deane of my love."

Vincent went away very happy; and Minnie took a resolve very suddenly. It was already dark, and the dinner hour was at hand. Notwithstanding, she dressed for the street, and went for Jerry.

"Jerry," said she, "I want you to go with me to see a friend."

They went directly to Mr. Graham's house. George was surprised to see Jerry, but gave him a very warm welcome, and then he asked Minnie to see his father, but very stiffly. There was evidently something wrong. Mr. Graham roused himself to speak to Minnie, asked who she was several times, and complained that George left him all the time, and then fell into a dose.

"I wish Jerry to remain with your father while I speak to you," said Minnie.

Mr. Graham occupied a back parlour, for he would not be persuaded that he was ill. He was only staying in doors for a few days. This was one of the few subjects which he kept in his memory.

George went with Minnie into the next parlour. She did not say, like a veritable woman, "Why are you so cold to me? Why do you not come to me, or write to me?" No, she came up to him like a brave girl, and said—

"George, I have treated you very badly. I have been jealous of you. I thought you loved Miss Deane, and I heard you spent your time with her, instead of staying with your poor father, and I was mean enough to believe it. But now I know the truth, and I have come to confess my sin."

George was overwhelmed. His first thought was anger against Mrs. Mayo.

"Cornelia told you this," said he.

"But your father told her that you left him all the time, and he just told me the same. Vincent was jealous of you, and told Mrs. Mayo that you spent your time with Miss Deane, because, I suppose, you went there to plead Vincent's cause; and if it had not been for poor Mrs. Deane's death, I tremble to think how much longer we might have suffered."

George caught Minnie to his heart.

"My true-hearted, noble girl! I too have been jealous. Cornelia almost drove me distracted; but I did not come to you as you have come to me. So that poor woman is gone, and Esther is left alone."

"Not alone, for she has found a friend in Victor, who will never forsake her."

"And can you ever forgive my mean jealousy?" said George. "Oh, my darling! I would not suffer another ten days as I have the last for a kingdom. Can you ever forgive, me, Minnie?"

"We are exactly alike in our badness," said Minnie. "We must exchange confessions and forgiveness. I am so sorry, dearest."

"And I am so sorry, darling dearest, as if I ever could think of loving any one as I love you."

"And as if I could ever endure Victor Vincent, except as a friend. I know he is good, but he always reminds me of Fred Sherwood when he gets in earnest—when he talks what he calls slang. Poor Fred! I don't like even to be reminded of him. Now, dearest, I am sure Jerry can take care of your father this evening, while you go with me to see Miss Deane."

"But I have not dined," said Graham.

"Nor I," said Minnie.

"Then we will have our dinner together; how delightful!"

"Jerry will be a godsend, I am sure," said Minnie. "He is an excellent driver, and your sister is pleased with him; and then he can relieve you by spending his odd hours and his evenings with your father."

"Everything seems beautiful now;" said Graham; "but an hour ago—oh, I can't talk about it."

"I believe I should have been on a sick-bed in fearful earnest in another week," said Minnie.

When they had dined, Minnie gave Jerry some advice and direction about the care of Mr. Graham.

"I'll do it all first rate, Miss Minnie. When did I ever fail when you was about, to pray for Jerry? And then I has a special likin' for anybody that's sick. I may'nt care a pewter sixpence for 'em when they're well; but let 'em git sick, and I'd give 'em my heart's blood. Now you go, both on you, and enjoy yourselves, and trust to Jerry. Aint he where he can see the light of his eyes once agin?"

At eight o'clock Minnie and George met Vincent on the steps of Mr. Mayo's house, and Minnie left word with the servant for Mrs. Mayo, that Mrs. Deane had gone to her last resting-place; and that she and Mr. Graham were going to see Miss Deane.

"Maybe she will be comforted, if she knows I am gone with you," said Minnie to George.

"I am by no means certain that Cornelia would be any better satisfied if she knew our true relation. If she thought she had made us lovers, she might be satisfied, but I think not otherwise."

Miss Deane was rejoiced to see her friends, and very willing to believe that she had been entirely mistaken, though Minnie felt herself very mean in allowing Ettie to think so.

"I am so foolishly sensitive," said Ettie; "I have had so few friends in my life—and, then, dear mamma was so ill."

"I shall never forgive myself for my neglect of you," said Minnie. "I have not been myself these two weeks; I have had dreadful headaches;" but she did *not* say, "I have been jealous of you and George; I have been more foolish and miserable than I ever was in my life."

Good as was Minnie Brandon, and brave, she could not tell the truth to Ettie. "I have made one confession," thought she, "I can't do any more."

Not so Victor. He burst out, "I have had more happiness, and more misery the last two weeks than I ever had in my life before. I have hated George Graham, because I thought he wanted to get Ettie away from me. I vowed in my heart that I never would wear my decent suit again, because he helped me to it; and I used to think my oysters would choke me, because they were bought with his money. I am not sure that I did not want to choke him; but I am well dis-

posed now, and shall let him live a century if he will, and love him like a girl all that time."

"And I felt just as spiteful toward you," said Graham, sententiously, looking at Minnie.

"Oh, I take," said Vincent; "I'll die if I ever thought of that before. Wish you joy, old fellow."

Minnie blushed, but how much deeper would have been her embarrassment, if she had been obliged to be as candid as her friends.

Miss Deane was comforted. She had not thought that she could ever bear her loss as she was bearing it. She had never been conscious, and never would be, how little her poor mother really was to her. How much of duty and careful tenderness, and how little of love she had felt for her mother. Truly a great misfortune, but not a fault.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ABOUT JERRY.

MINNIE was very desirous to hear more of home than she could hear from Jerry, amid the wonderment that overwhelmed him. She could not talk to him at Mr. Mayo's, as she wished to keep her acquaintance with him secret. In the street Jerry was like a child, full of wonder and delight.

"I must see Jerry," said Minnie to George, "where I can talk with him quietly. I want to know all the unwritten news from home."

"To-morrow night," said Graham, "an old and favourite clerk of my father's, is to spend the evening with him. We can make another visit to Miss Deane if she will allow, and bring Jerry with us."

"Oh, I will be so thankful," said Ettie.

The next evening Minnie said to Mrs. Mayo, "I am going with George again to-night."

"I believe he is coming to his senses," said Mrs. Mayo. "Oh, if he would only hear to reason, we might all be so happy; for, you know, you are to marry George when he asks you, just to be my sister. How happy we shall be!"

"Don't be too sure," said Minnie, laughing, "George may refuse to enact the hero of your romance after all your hopes. As for me, I promise to be your sister when I get a good opportunity," and she ran lightly away, leaving Mrs. Mayo still in a mist of uncertainty as to what George's intentions really were.

A curious little company assembled that evening in Miss Deane's room. Jerry had the post of honour, which was, shall we confess it, a little, stuffed, easy chair, made from a barrel sawed into the proper shape, cushioned throughout with hair and canvas, and covered with an ancient brocade that Mrs. Deane had once been specially vain of.

Jerry sat in the low chair, his long limbs disposed the required distance, his hands laid upon his knees, for he felt so entirely at home that he even knew what to do with his great hands, or rather he forgot all about them and himself, and looked about the room as pleased as a child, and examined the pianoforte as wonderingly as if he had never seen one, for it was of a novel form to him.

"Would ye play for a body a little?" said Jerry to Miss Deane, and she sat down to the instrument as readily as if he had been a king.

"What shall I play?"

Jerry suggested "Old Hundred" and "Yankee Doodle," and seemed equally pleased with both.

When Jerry was quiet, Minnie said, "Now, I want you to tell me about home. I have had no opportunity to talk with you, and there are so many things that papa can't write."

Jerry rubbed his hands with happiness at the prospect of obliging Minnie.

"I count it a great wonder that I am to home here with all of ye, just as much as with the one that's been the blessin' of my life. I think these others here never knowed my afflictions and how I had the spells."

Minnie here explained to Jerry that Miss Deane and Victor Vincent knew his history. Though it had been very briefly explained to them, they felt interested in Jerry.

"Well, then, they know how I was killed and cured, how the spells was put on me, and how I suffered, and how prayin' took 'em off, and how I come to be a believer. How I took to the water like a duck, inside and out, and how I give up hot stuff, and got some strength in my back, and lost my

fears of the spells, and the Old One, and Rawson, and sich like. I sometimes thinks my life ortee be writ, it's so full of changes, and all for the better, of late times."

Minnie knew that Jerry must go on his own way, or she would not learn anything about home, and so she gave him her attention.

"I have wondered a deal in my day," said Jerry; "but I'm a believer now, though I could not tell 'zacly what I believe, over and above prayin' and bein' prayed for. But, then, it's a comfort to believe, and not try to understand when the wisest can't make out what this world of sin and misery was made for. I allus gits lost when I tries by sairchin' to find out God, and I only wish I could be content to be a believer and not try to understand. And now about home, over there to Easton, Miss Minnie. Every one has their troubles, and goodness knows I've had mine. What with the spells, and my shaky limbs, and my achin' back, and a head that knowed so little, that I might as well not knowed nothin', and then Bess goin' blind; but at last Mr. Frederick got hurt, and I got prayed for, and I have got quit of the spells, and I've growed some," said Jerry, stretching forth his arms and legs, and smiling at the shortness of his garments, "or else Mr. Frederick was not so long limbed as I am. Over there to home, at Mr. Brandon's, the wust of it is, that the light of their eyes is away this winter. Mr. Brandon works out doors a good deal more than is common for him. Mrs. Susan does the same things over every day, and has her basket of sewing every night, and it has made the tears come in my eyes many a time to see her try over and over agin to thread her needle. Two galls, says I to myself, with bright eyes that she's tended so many years, and now there aint one of 'em beside her to be eyes for her."

Minnie's lip quivered and her eyes overflowed. She buried her face in her handkerchief, and Jerry went on. "But I can't say I was sorry to have Miss Carline gone. But I wanted Miss Minnie back to her mother and no mistake, and then I thought may be she will git merried and never come back, and then I made up my mind to bring my long legs and arms and awkward ways to New York, and see if I could not git somethin' to do to keep me where I could see the light of my eyes once a-week or so. And now, to think I've got a place where I sees her every day, and work that I knows all about,

and sich friends, I am e'en most afraid that my wits won't serve me, I am so overjoyed, sure and sartin."

"Jerry," said Minnie, to help him along, "how is my sister, and her husband, and Mrs. Sherwood?"

"You know," said Jerry, "that I never likes to tell what you would not like to hear, and I allus try to say nothing when I can't say no good of a body. But I'll try to tell you a little, and I'd begin at the wust, if I knowed which was the wust. But Miss Carline and the old one is six of one and half dozen of 'tother. I don't like to say this of your sister," said Jerry, "but there's a heap of relations in this world that aint no relation to one another."

It was evident Jerry did not know but Caroline and Minnie were sisters. Minnie was very glad, for she saw that nothing would be kept back from his friends.

"Miss Carline is cravin', and the old one is cravin', but it sorter seems to me, that the one that's worked and airned has the best right. Now, there was the belleflower graft apple tree, that had jest two bushels on it, and every apple was as big as a baby's head. Well, the old one put 'em in the sullur, and locked 'em up. It was mean of her to be sure, but she had grafted the tree, and watched 'em grow, and they were hern, I suppose, though she did not make the sun that shined on 'em, nor the dew that fell on 'em o' nights, nor the rain that rained on 'em o' days, nor the airth that bore up the tree, but they was hern I suppose. Well, Miss Carline thought of the deed and the will, and also that she owned Mr. Frederick, and so she picked the lock, and took the most part of the apples and locked them up in her arch.

"The old one found it out, and she filled a basket most full of potatoes, and picked Miss Carline's lock, and finished fillin' the basket with the big apples, and took the rest on 'em home. Then she put the basket of great red potatoes and great apples at the head of the garret stairs, cause Miss Carline put things up there. Then she tied a string to the door, and 'tother end of it to one of the handles of the basket. The door opened towards a body, and so she set the trap. Miss Carline allus opens a door spiteful, and she pulled open the garret door her own way, and the apples and potatoes come down on her like a thousand of brick, and she got a black eye, and got hurt beside, and she felt anything but nat'ral affection for her mother-in-law. Miss Carline is a prisoner in her

chamber a great deal of the time, for she seems to be in as much dread of meetin' the old un, as I was before I got to be a believer. She plots with Dr. Browne, and he cries peace where there aint none, and then the old one plots with him, and cries, and wishes herself in Paradise, and he does his best to quiet her; and between 'em both he figures up a long bill, and if he don't airn his money, then I aint no judge of the worth of work. Let alone the wear and tear of his conscience, he's bothered half to death I should think. He has to go night and day; if Fred has took too much hot stuff and got in a mess himself, or if he's plagued his wife, or made her angry, or scared her into highstrikes, the Doctor has to go. I don't believe Mr. Frederick ever gits a brick in his hat but what Miss Carline sends for Dr. Browne. One would think she'd be too proud, but she seems to make it a sort of silent fault findin' with him cause he wanted her to marry Mr. Frederick, and sort of brought it about.

"I heered Tim say that Miss Carline had cured the old one of gittin' drunk. The first time she found her with no sense at all, she put a blister all over the back of her neck, and sent for Dr. Browne. This was jest arter the fall of the apples and potatoes—and this was part payment.

"The long and the short of sich things is, that they are allus on the look out for one another, and Miss Carline has enough to do without buildin' or improvin'. And then Mr. Frederick gits wuss every day. I am afraid he'll spend his money, and break his neck, and then the old one will git the farm, for the will and the deed was made when he was crazy a good deal of the time; and his mother knows it, and can prove it."

Minnie was distressed that she had brought Jerry's narrative upon herself in presence of her friends, but there was no help for it, and she submitted with the best grace she could.

"Have you nothing pleasant to tell us?" said she.

"Yes," said Jerry. "The gold robins' nests hang in the great elm, and the robin red breasts' nests are all in a row in the shed, and they will all be full of young folks next spring, and then Miss Minnie is to be at home. Then there was five sorts o' roses in the greenhouse in full blow when I come away. There was a great white rose bush that looked like a snow drift, and I longed to bring my hat full to you. Then there was red roses a-blushin' for us bad folks; and there was

lots of other beauties and sweetness; and your father and mother was as good as the flowers; and Bess was as well as could be expected without eyes. And now I've told ye the pleasant and the onpleasant, and I wish you'd rest me and yourselves a-playin' "Yankee Doodle." That's one of the liveliest tunes I know. And I'm happy and thankful. It's good to hev friends, and not to hev the spells, and 'tis best of all to be a believer."

"I believe I shall not ask for any more home news in a long time," said Minnie, laughing, and yet embarrassed.

"I give ye the news," said Jerry, "as the Good God gives us our life, bad and good, put up in one lot. I thinks the sweets' a good deal more than the bitter, or will be, when we gits our music."

Jerry was conscious that Minnie was troubled, but so certain was he of the fact that Miss Deane and Vincent were real friends, that he did not sympathise with her mortification in having the faults of her family exposed; he only pitied her because Caroline and her husband were no more worthy of their relationship to his idol, and he verily thought the best comfort just now for a hard trouble was for Miss Deane to play "Yankee Doodle." And she played it with such a fantasia of variations and decorations that Jerry exclaimed—"You have sairved that tune, Miss, jest as poor Jerry will be sairved when he gits to heaven. He'll be so glorified that his best friends won't know him, I'm a thinkin', without they stop to consider. After awhile they'll say, 'Thanks to the Good God, that's Jerry—*but it's Jerry in Heaven.*'"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

NANCY AND THE MASTER.

"I TOLD him there was a Providence as long as he could hear me, but I am sometimes afraid he never believed in anything but music, and now he don't seem to know a word that I am saying to him, and the Doctor says it is very doubtful if he is ever himself again. If he should die without ever know-

ing anything again, what a hard Providence it would be," and Nancy burst into a flood of tears.

"How long since he had this fit, Nancy?" said Miss Deane.

"Well, it was yesterday morning that I found him a-lying in his bed, with no more sense than a sleeping baby. I went right off to Mrs. Mayo, but she had one of her headaches, and the girl did not dare to disturb her. I told her that I come on account of sickness, but she would not go then. I asked for Miss Brandon, but she was gone out. I went right off for the Doctor. He did not get there much before noon, and my heart was like to break all the time. I did not do up nobody's room, and when they complained, I give 'em all notice that I was going to quit."

"And have you been alone with him for twenty hours, Nancy?"

"Except that the Doctor has been in several times, and he has done something besides write Latin on a scrip of paper. He has put mustard into hot water, and has helped me rub the poor old limbs by the hour together. That Doctor's a Providence whether he does any good or not."

"You will let me see him, Nancy, and then I will go and tell Mrs. Mayo."

"Well, I wanted her to know in the first of it, but when that girl sent me off, I changed my mind, and said she might find out as she could, for all me."

"But Miss Brandon will wish to see the master, Nancy."

"Well, she's a good Providence anyhow. Now we will go in, but as light as thistle down, for if his sense has come back he don't like a noise."

The master opened his eyes as Miss Deane stood over him, and it seemed to her that there was a gleam of intelligence in them.

Just then the Doctor entered.

"Ah! there is a change for the better," said he. "Earnest work, Nancy, brings its own reward. The nurse deserves more credit than the doctor this time."

"Oh, don't say so," said Nancy, her eyes overflowing with tears. "It was such a Providence that I found you. And it was such a Providence that *she* had the headache," muttered Nancy, "or *her* doctor would have come."

"Miss Deane drew the doctor away to ask his opinion of the case.

"I think he will get over this," said the physician; "but, then, if he resumes his labours in this place, where he never can rest, another stroke will destroy him very soon."

"What can be done?" said Miss Deane, thoughtfully.

"If he has any friends who can remove him to a quiet home," said the doctor, "he will probably live some time longer."

"But he could not be removed at present?"

"This evening will determine how soon," said the physician.

"I will see Mrs. Mayo at once, and we will be guided by her," said Miss Deane.

Mrs. Mayo was shocked and grieved when she learned the facts about her dear master.

"Oh, Miss Deane," said she, "I am so thankful that you came directly to me. I will send my physician and go myself."

"Nancy has got a physician who is doing exceedingly well," said Miss Deane, "and it might hurt her feelings to have him displaced, and he is very much interested in the case, and has been watching and working devotedly. He thinks that he ought to be removed from that public building to the house of some friend."

"How I wish I could have him here," said Mrs. Mayo; "but Nancy will never leave him, and I can't abide her in my house; she is such a horrid old thing, and yet she belongs to a good family. Miss Deane, can't you take him? Of course we will arrange all about the expense."

"I was thinking he could have dear mamma's room. And I am never troubled with Nancy."

"Well, then, it is all settled. I think the carriage is ready. My poor dear master! I hope we shall find him better."

They found the master reviving, and the doctor said there was good reason to hope. He did not know Mrs. Mayo, but his mind was evidently awaking, and even making an effort to recognise those about him. Mrs. Mayo said, "Now Nancy, dear, I am so thankful you are with my dear master. I feel so safe about him. I should carry you both home with me, if the doctor would allow, only that Miss Deane is so lonely. I must let her have you both, though I don't know how to give up my duties and my comforts to her, but when I think what a good mother you will be to her, and how much she needs one, I feel more willing to sacrifice my own feelings,

and have you and the dear master go to her nice little home, though you know, Nancy, how pleasant you would both be to me, and what a sacrifice I make."

"I think he will get better and leave me to my duties here," said Nancy.

"They have a black man in your place already," said Mrs. Mayo, "and then, you know, you would never have come to the La Farge if it had not been for the master."

"It is true, I liked to wash the places where he had set his feet," said Nancy," and then I was paid with the music; and if Providence takes him away, I hope it will take me too." And Nancy wept.

"Surely you shall never be separated from the master," said Mrs. Mayo in her own bland way, and Nancy was comforted.

The master continued to revive, and the next day he knew his friends. Miss Deane wished to arrange with Nancy to come with the master to her home, in a way to raise Nancy's self-respect, though not to put herself in her care as a mother. Miss Deane saw that Nancy was somewhat strange—not crazed, but *queer*,—and she felt sure that some shock or sorrow had reduced her to scrub stairs, and build fires, and be woman of all work at the La Farge. She saw, through the lowliness of her condition, the remains of sense and dignity, which ill accorded with her present way of life. Before consenting to Mrs. Mayo's proposition to take home the master and his self-constituted nurse, Miss Deane saw some persons who had known Nancy for many years. Her judgment was justified. Some troubles, not necessary here to recount, had shaken Nancy's mind for a time from its balance, and had left her what people call *queer*. The facts in her case determined Miss Deane to take her to her home with the master.

"You shall have my house, Nancy," said she, "and I will board with you. The landlord will let me have another bed room, rather than lose me as a tenant, at the same rent I pay now. I will pay the rent and the servant for my own home with you, and for the good care you will take of me, and with the care of the master, and perhaps another boarder, you can pay your way."

"It will be a great responsibility," said Nancy, "but there's a Providence, and I shall take your offer. Mrs. Mayo said she would allow me eight dollars a-week if I took the master

to your house for taking care of him, but I shall never take it while he and I has savings of our own. I don't know what he has, but I know I have worked seven years in the La Farge, and I have laid up a thousand and fifty dollars, and while that lasts the master shan't want. I think maybe he's got as much, but I don't know anything about it."

It was curious to consider Nancy in her strange bundle of clothes, and under her dirty face, and think of her as having money. Though we must do her the justice to say that her face was always clean in the morning when she got the master's breakfast, and since his illness it had been clean all the time, and the rusty bundle of clothes had given place to one of a trifle better quality.

Miss Deane inquired into the state of Nancy's wardrobe.

"You must have some clothes," said she. "I can't board with you unless you are careful of your dress."

"Just you come with me," said Nancy. Miss Deane went with her to her room, where was a very large hair-covered trunk. Nancy unlocked it. One after another, she took out twelve good dresses. "I always air 'em and keep 'em right," said Nancy; "but who'd wear out decent clothes a scrubbin' stairs and buildin' fires, I'd like to know?"

Miss Deane selected a suit from inside to outside, and suggested liberal ablutions, and that then the decent garments should be put on, and that the old La Farge clothing should be given away instantly. Nancy was amenable to advice and direction, and when her outward appearance was redeemed, few would have known her for "the woman that washed the stairs."

In due time the master was removed to Miss Deane's. Nancy and Biddy the servant fraternised, for a wonder. Two rooms were added to those already occupied by Miss Deane, who said that Nancy rose with the responsibilities of her position.

"I have a friend that I have promised to take to board," said Nancy, "and he will give me a lift with the master whenever I need it, and besides I want a man in my part of the house, so that I shan't be afraid. And then this one is a Providence, and I like him a good deal as if he was my own. I did not speak to you about him, because if I really take the house as you told me, then it must be my business, you know."

"Who is this person?" said Miss Deane, beginning to suspect.

"It's Mr. Victor Vincent," said Nancy; "as good a young man as ever broke bread."

Miss Deane blushed, but considering herself fairly caught, she said nothing. She had hardly seen Victor of late, she had been so occupied with the master.

The night after this conversation (the master and Nancy were to be installed in their new home the next day) Victor and Graham and Minnie paid a visit to Miss Deane. Victor burst in with a glad impulse.

"I have something to tell you that is first-rate and a-half," said he. "Podgers could not be editor, and scissors, and poet, and devil, on the strength of one funny story. So they have stripped him at the *Daily Double Face*, and I am installed. But I made them pay up arrears, and also they had to sign a contract to give me a thousand dollars a-year. Now, they can't back out. I give them six hours a-day, and so, you see, I can do some over-work. Paint a picture now and then, or something. I have cut the secret service; since you think it is not straight, I begin to think it is crooked. At anyrate, I give up to the judgment of my betters, and I shall do all the better for my humility, I doubt not. Now, Miss Ettie, what do you say to my being a fellow-boarder with you? Nancy takes me for five dollars a-week, and washes for me in the bargain so that I can lay up my money. Is not she a trump and a brick, &c.?"

"I think," said Ettie, "we will consent to have you come on trial. If you don't behave well, you must leave, or I shall——"

"See if we don't both stay," said Victor, "*for ever!*"

"We seem all to be relieved of some burden just now," said Graham. "Jerry is worth a small fortune to me. I told him to come over here to-night, as Mr. Strong, my father's favourite clerk, was coming to stay with him. Jerry had to go down town first; he has a prejudice against omnibuses, so I am afraid he will lose his visit."

"Oh, he is in the kitchen with Nancy," said Miss Deane. "I heard him telling her about his dislike of the omnibus, and I promised him some music."

In due time Jerry progressed to Miss Deane's room to claim her promise.

"What is the trouble with the omnibus, Jerry?" said Minnie; "I hear you don't like to ride in it."

"Miss Minnie," said Jerry, respectfully, "I aint above ridin' in the omnibus, but things is mixed enough in this New York world now. We has to stay with them that pays us wages, and be sort o' owned by 'em. Now, when I drives Mrs. Mayo, I'm in my place and doin' my duty; and she's a nice person, and one to be proud of, and the little Nellie is an angel, and you all knows my opinion of Miss Minnie. My place is a good place, and my duty is pleasant to do; but as to bein' to home over to Mrs. Mayo's, I can't say I be. I feel to home in the street, and here to Miss Deane's when *our family* is together, and nowhere else. I go along the streets, and I feel as much alone as ef I was in the woods, and the stream of people kinder affects me as ef I had taken a leetle hot stuff—only jest a *leetle*. But taint so when I git in an omnibus. I'm like as not to set by some fine lady who tucks up her silks that they mayn't hit Jerry. And many a one looks at me as though I belonged to the man Barnum, that lives down to the museum. And so I likes to be on my own feet, or on Mrs. Mayo's carriage, and then I sorter belongs to myself; and ef I am a poor piece of property, I'll rather belong to myself than to hev anybody else own me."

"But we don't any of us belong to ourselves, Jerry," said Minnie; "we all belong to the good God."

"I am glad He aint the poorer for what he owns, Miss Minnie, like folks in this world. It *has* seemed to me that He must be bad off, if He had many sich worlds as this, and let 'em git on as bad as this does. But I had these hard thoughts of Him before I was a believer; since I have been a believer, I have been sure and sartin the good God is as good and kind as everybody's father orter be, and that He will make the best of everything yet, seein' as how He's as almighty as He is good."

No one attempted to amend Jerry's theology, and he went back to his answer about the omnibus.

"As to ridin' in the omnibus," said he, "I would do it if I was in a hurry, and could not walk faster than the horses can go, but I always can, so there's no need."

The old master remained feeble, but he often lighted up with a wondrous beauty. Nancy was faithful to him and to Miss Deane, and devout in her trust in Providence, and since

her promotion to be a housekeeper, she had indulged in a clean face and decent clothing, carefully wearing the poorest that Miss Deane would tolerate however. She was benevolently interested in Jerry, and they often compared their ideas upon theology.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE DENBY FAMILY.

Mrs. Mayo began to be dissatisfied with what she termed the vulgarity of things in the Church that she attended. The Evangelical party amongst Episcopalians did not suit her. It did not build elegant dwellings, with chapels included, amongst family accommodations, and a chaplain added to the retinue of servants. No *prie dieu* was placed in an elegant oratory —no embroidered chairs were wrought with crosses—no Prayer-books were emblazoned with a class of devices that left you at a loss to know whether you were in England or in Rome, or amongst the *elité* of New York. Mrs. Mayo felt these wants as afflictions, and especially the sad fact that, at her church, they had not any little boys in long clothes to assist the service. Formerly she had decided against all these things, but "a change came o'er the spirit of her dream." She had made some new friends the past year. "Very aristocratic, *High Church*, and all that sort of thing," were the Denby family.

The Misses Denby and their mamma were so elegant—they had such massive crosses and crucifixes, such "delicious Prayer-books" and hassocks, I believe they call those lovely cushions, stuffed with eider down or air, or something besides the hard stones of Jerusalem, or the steps and side-walk in Barclay-street, before St. Peter's. It was beautiful to Mrs. Mayo to see poverty or antiquity imitated in the rude and unfinished, and barn-like aspect of the interior of the Church. It was beautiful to humbly kneel upon a cushion of cloth of gold; it was charming to have a Prayer-book superbly decorated with crosses and much gilding. These were the charms of the church, the beautiful chord that bound Mrs. Mayo to her pious friends, the Denby's.

When it was the fashion to wear a chatelaine, Mrs. Mayo had never been more earnest in the collection of charms than now. That chatelaine, with its long bill of particulars, used to be the pendant to her "love of a Geneva watch." I remember an anchor, a heart, a cross, a gun, a dog, a key, a tiny locket, a seal, a bit of mosaic, a golden book, a knife that would not open, and a fan that would not shut—all this was Mrs. Mayo's chatelaine, but it was superseded now. The bare walls of the church were "so Presbyterian," the lady said. The worn woman of the world wanted a new sensation.

Mrs. Mayo had never been a partizan. She never argued for or against an opinion, or a person. If called upon to make a decision, she decided with dignity as became a judge of the law of good society, but she never descended to be an advocate.

A week after Dr. Fitznoodle had held her head and her hands, and had magnetised and phrenologised, or psychologised the lady, in a very familiar way, some one said to her, "that Dr. Fitznoodle is a great scoundrel;" she merely remarked, in the most indifferent way—

"I saw him; my husband begged me to see if his method would not relieve my head. You know the dreadful distress I suffer after I have been painting or composing my music."

"Well, did he do you any good?" asked the speaker.

"I believe I imagined I was helped, I was so anxious to relieve my husband's anxiety. But I never expect to get rid of an effect permanently till I give up the cause, and I could not live without the solace of art."

A double-minded person might have assented to the truth of this remark, but the questioner took what the lady said in good faith, and thus ended the catechism about the Fitznoodle.

The Denby family was constructed on the most approved principles—a pious and exemplary mother, two daughters, and a son. The father was too busy to be seen much with his family, or to see much of them. He seemed to "live, move, and have his being" for the purpose of paying bills for his family. Whether he grudged the money for the world of style and luxury in which they lived was not known, but it was known that he had enough of it, not to grudge it, for the rents of the tumble-down tenements that he owned, and which

were let in separate rooms, rent paid weekly in advance, amounted to thirty thousand dollars a-year. Then he had a distillery somewhere between Sixtieth and One Hundredth Streets; and he kept cows, and manufactured milk and whisky, the milk to kill little babies, and the whisky to besot, demoralise, and destroy the fathers and mothers of these little babies. Mr. Denby bought grain on speculation, and kept it from the honest poor, who choose grain rather than whisky, and distilled it for the degraded and diseased, who choose whisky at any price rather than grain. From day to day, and from week to week, he watched and collected his gains. He watched to see that his distillery did not burn down, for he could not afford to insure it, and he slaved to collect his rents weekly in advance of the poor wretches who bought his milk and his whisky. It might have been a profitable investment to have added an undertaker's business to his other callings, but I believe he had a prejudice against coffins and funerals—some disagreeable association, perhaps, —some hint that he would have to die, and be buried one of these days; perhaps, also, a suggestion that he could not carry on his varied callings in the other world, and that the gain he most prized did not exist there. He had no authentic statistics of business profits there, and he did not like uncertainty. In this world he was a certain man—certain to buy cheap and sell dear; certain to ask and get the highest rents, and drive the most economical business; to be always at church on Sunday, in all kinds of weather, and to make the responses audibly; certain to read the service at home regularly, whether the house were full of friends, or had only his own family.

Such was Mr. Denby, and from such a source came all moneys that sustained the Denbys, with all their goods and graces, their piety and position in society.

Mrs. Mayo began to be quietly transformed. She had a ring made of small diamonds in the form of a cross. She pinned her bonnet-strings with a diamond cross. Her brooch was a large diamond cross. She was furnished and embellished in this way, and the old scandal about the rosary was revived. The Evangelicals were disgusted. The sweetness of their piety made the bitterness of their resentment. They scented Rome, and saw scarlet everywhere, especially after the little boys went into the chancel in long clothes, in open

day, in the church. "They will have scarlet long clothes next thing," said they. Their opposition, anger, and disgust drew Mrs. Mayo near to her friends, the Denbys.

Mrs. Denby was an honest and devoted woman. She had found the insufficiency of money to make people happy. She had brought her husband the foundation of his large wealth. People thought Mr. Denby loved nothing but money. He was a hard man, and made whisky and distillery milk, but he had the germ of goodness, for in his own way he loved his wife and family.

Mrs. Denby never thought how their money came. She only knew that money did not make her happy—that it did not elevate her husband to be her companion—that it had not saved the lives of those dear children who had gone into early graves. She saw that the rich and the poor were alike unhappy, and she came to the conclusion that the Church was the ark of safety. She wanted to do good, to get good, to achieve happiness, and she saw no way but in great conformity to the requirements of her Church. Her pastor was about a hair's breadth from being a Catholic in the eyes of the Evangelical party. Of course, he was very zealous to keep himself and his people the *right* side of the hair line of demarcation.

Mrs. Denby gave money to the Church and the Tract Society, and the Soup Society. She went to see the poor eat soup, and took her friends in her carriage that they might pity the poor, little thinking that this very pity was debasing the last remnant of humanity in many a one.

I approach Henry Denby's character with something like reverence. He was an only son of very rich parents, but he was not selfish or worldly. He was very young and very enthusiastic, but his enthusiasm was chastened into what he considered serving Religion. The Evangelicals said he tried to serve the Church, technically speaking, and therefore thought himself religious. Henry Denby had not many thoughts, but he had aspirations and prayers. He had a sweet poetical spirit and perception of quiet beauty. He loved the gentle, not the forcible; and he dreamed of a cottage with roses around it, in the midst of a quiet landscape, with trees and flowers and a happy cow; and he dreamed of a dear girl who should marry him, and live in this cottage; and somehow in this dream the form of Miss Brandon always rose on his men-

tal vision. She was as sure to be the presiding genius of his cottage with the roses, as the happy cow was to stand out in the landscape quietly chewing her cud.

The Denby girls were very good girls, considering that they had a great deal to spoil them. Matilda was very affectionate and pious, and had a great love for the Church, to which she added an alarming love for the saints. She had a special admiration for St. Teresa, and her family were secretly in great trouble for fear she would go over to Rome.

Mrs. Denby was an excellent mother. She wanted her children settled in life, but she disapproved of worldly marriages. She wanted her children to marry for love, and not for money. She wanted them to have Christian partners. She could give them the means to start in life, and she wished them to find something better than she had found. She was grieved for her eldest daughter. Why, the superficial observer would be at a loss to divine, for Mattie was a good child, devoted to her mother and her duties; but the horror was that Mattie was inclined toward Rome. Her family knew the sad secret if others did not; indeed, they concealed it from others as they would have concealed a deformity or a crime. She had her pockets full of saints—that is, of medals of them, and a picture of St. Teresa was put up in her room. She had not any more crosses or crucifixes than her mother and sister, but there was some hidden and ominous meaning in them, that made mother and brother and sister tremble.

Mrs. Mayo had formed a very delightful friendship with Henry Denby. She was just twice his age, and her mature beauty, wisdom, and experience, and Puseyistic piety were all charming to the young man. He read poetry in a very pleasing way; and he was a handsome cavalier, and he made lovely presents, and, altogether, Mrs. Mayo was delighted with him, and would have painted his miniature if Victor Vincent had not cut the secret service. As it was she got some of her old music copied, and gave him a piece dedicated to himself, with a pretty poem, which Henry reverenced Mrs. Mayo very much for having composed, and all for him, a youth who had so little to recommend him to the notice of such a gifted woman. The fresh, pure homage of the young man was very pleasant to Mrs. Mayo. She contrasted it with her brother's cold, independent, and satirical manner toward her, and she determined to desert George, and marry Minnie to Henry Denby.

"She will be a great deal more my sister than if she marries my own brother," said Mrs. Mayo to herself. "She will have nearly as large a fortune, and a much pleasanter husband. Now, I will let George know my power."

And she settled it, that she, the Queen of Society, should give her lovely maid of honour, Minnie Brandon, to her own young and noble admirer, Henry Denby. Then she managed a *tetê-a-tetê* for the young people, for which Henry Denby was exceedingly thankful.

"What a sad thing," said Henry, in one of these interviews, "if my sister, Matilda, should go over to Rome."

He wanted to know before it was too late what Miss Brandon's proclivities might be. Minnie was mischievous, and she said—

"I am told that Rome is more delightful than Florence to some Americans, and all Italy would be charming to me."

"You don't understand me," said Henry, sighing; "I am afraid my sister will turn Roman Catholic."

"Is not your sister, Matilda, a good girl?" said Minnie, gravely. She did not sympathise with Mattie in her love of symbols, and she did not sympathise with Henry in his fears about her.

"My sister is a most devoted and excellent girl," said Henry, "and that is one reason why I am so sad for her. I would not have Rome pluck our fairest jewel from our crown. I cannot think of my sister worshipping images."

"Do you worship that head of Dante on the cameo in your bosom, or the pretty faces on your sleeve buttons?" said Minnie, "because you wear them and like them?"

"Oh, that is quite another thing, Miss Brandon. These are not images of dead saints."

"Have you not pictures of some of your deceased friends that you are fond of? Don't you love the miniatures of your little brother and sisters who have gone before you to the better land? These are images, Mr. Denby, as much as the St. Teresa, or the St. John, or the St. Anybody, that your sister loves. Poor Mattie! she wants something to love. Why should she not have a little hero-worship, or saint-worship, as well as to love parrots and poodles, as some girls do?"

"Miss Brandon, is it possible that you seek to justify Rome and the worship of images?" said Henry, turning pale.

"How much love or respect, or longing to have something, or somebody to love, does it take to make worship, Mr. Denby? Let us come to the common sense of the matter, and not be frightened with words. Must I keep my heart cold to heroes and saints, for fear I shall be accused of worshipping them? Just when and where do love and admiration end in guilty worship? Mr. Denby, your sister is a very affectionate girl. She finds little satisfaction in the society in which she moves; her own family distrust her while they love her. If I could not be allowed to love heroes and saints, and worthy people generally, without being accused of a crime, I think I should emigrate to Rome too, if I were sure of more liberty. Not that I think she will be likely to be more at peace, or have any more real freedom, but this everlasting criticism of names, not things—this fright at meaningless words, when humanity's deep wants are around us, and within us, seems very pitiful to me. A quarrel about whether men love a picture or an image, or what it represents; and whether their love is guilty worship or not, is very foolish to me, when I see we have all too little love and worship for anything worthy."

Henry was rebuked, not answered—not convinced. To his sorrow for his sister, he added grief for Miss Brandon, who seemed to him either too Presbyterian or too Catholic, he could not tell which. At any rate, she did not appreciate the *juste milieu* which was so important to him. He had allowed himself to dream of the pretty landscape with the cottage, the roses, the lovely wife, and the happy cow, though it would probably have been merged in the Fifth Avenue, a palatial residence, a chapel, and amateur service, if no more. But from all this Miss Brandon had rudely awakened him. She was very cruel—whether intentionally or not, I am not able to say.

There was a sinking at Henry's heart after this conversation. He did not relish poetry as well; his visions and day-dreams were disturbed. As the smooth water is broken into a hundred ripples by a pebble thrown from a careless hand, so was Henry Denby's mind disturbed.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SUNDRIES.

The winter was coming to a close, and everybody in our story seemed to have entered on a state of permanency, at least for a considerable time—like the ice in the river above Newberg, all looked solid and in no fear of a spring thaw. No change appeared imminent, and there seemed no cause for fear, except that poor Mattie's fever for saints and things should become chronic, or that Mrs. Mayo should pack up her charms and go over to Rome. But I opine that Henry Denby's troubles are without sufficient cause. The fashion of this world passes away, and no one is more willing that it should—more willing to have "a new season" come in, with new scenery, machinery, and decorations—than Mrs. Mayo. She is not seeking her present paltry things as a permanence; and for aught I know, "Rational Religion," which she now calls "Infidelity in gown and band," may secure her homage in her next metamorphosis. Then she will hang on the lips of some second Priestley, as he finds some beautiful mystic meaning in the form of a cross, and remarks that it is pleasant to have ideality and reverence satisfied at the same time, and rejoices that chains and crosses have become ornaments in the Church instead of dread realities; while Minnie—whose piety the *unco guid* distrust, and whom Mrs. Mayo will not even honour by a suspicion that she is going over to Rome—will believe as she does now, that chains and crosses are realities to the spirit; that the true life is still crucified in the varied relations of life, as surely as when the Cross was erected on an eminence, and the Victim nailed upon it for a comparatively light suffering, because of the speedy release.

As for Mattie, she may dream of a convent and a sisterhood now, and a regularity of labour that shall save all her time, as the maelstrom of fashion now engulfs it, swallowing remorselessly even the hours that Nature demands for sleep, but I think it more than likely that she will take a new devotion into her kind, little heart—a devotion for a live Puseyite priest, instead of a dead saint, and that the "happy man" will preach in an air-tight, gothic barn away up town, over by the East River, and that it will be "quite a missionary field," and as

such will satisfy Mrs. Denby—who will be a faithful grandmother to Mattie's numerous children—though now the devoted girl is all but convinced that a celibate clergy can mind the Master's business much better than a man with a group of olive branches, that get measles and scarlatina and croup, and other miseries for the promotion of home duty and industry. But this speculation is all wrong, because, if it is true, it only anticipates the story; and, if not true, it is an impertinent interruption of the same.

Minnie looked about, and everybody seemed settled—Mrs. Mayo, in her new forms of piety; Miss Deane, with her new family and a great many lessons; the old master, with his gentle, quiet debility; Nancy, with her earnest devotion, her clean clothes and clean face; Victor Vincent—bating severe temptations to "the secret service," just to oblige one who has obliged him in dismal days—is settled in the *Daily Double Face*, and does what is required, whether it be to puff a quack medicine, or a quack actor or author—to write an essay on the immoralities of the theatre or the opera, or to contradict it, when his principal is paid to do so. His poetry has the ring of the true metal, but he handles base coin enough in a week's lucubrations to condemn a dozen persons in the court of conscience, who should have a more scrupulous moral sense.

Mr. Graham has forgotten that he is staying home for a few days just to rest and recruit, and is put in a spacious chamber for a permanency. He has forgotten that he is the owner of ships at sea, or that his hair and whiskers were ever renovated. He has forgotten that Cornelia Mayo and George Graham are his children, though he still prefers that George or Jerry should minister to his wants, which are constant and imperative, though not of varied character. His regular meals are of great importance to him, and wine and biscuit every hour are of still more moment. Then his dressing-gown has to be removed and a coat substituted, and then the dressing-gown resumed about six times an hour. He eats and drinks and changes his clothes, and stirs the fire and calls for coals; and then he does the same things over again, and he bids fair to go on in this way for many years. Meanwhile, an active and earnest young man is imprisoned with him voluntarily, but still there is a dreadful sense of privation existing with the sense of duty.

Minnie said to herself, Why do I stay in New York? The old master could no more teach her, and she did not practise with Miss Deane, as she knew she ought. She seemed to herself to be only waiting for George Graham to escape from his prison. Her heart clung to him in his watching and wearying, and besides she said If I leave, Jerry will go too. In this state of things she received a letter from Caroline, an event in itself. It was as follows:—

"Dear Min',—I am not much in the habit of writing letters, but I feel it my duty to write to you. Your parents are very lonely, deserted as they are by their children; and mother slaves herself half to death without any help. I am not able to see them often, for Frederick has never been himself since his injury just before our marriage. My own health is very poor, and I might hint that you might be a help to me, if you were at home, if I did not see that father and mother need you a great deal more than I do. As it is with all of us, it is my opinion that it is your duty to come home, and help your friends bear their burdens, instead of amusing yourself and doing nothing.

"Frederick sends his love, and says he considers himself your guardian, and also that he has no better opinion of Graham than formerly.

"Father is a great comfort to me. He calls every week, and reads something to me. Mrs. Sherwood is the same as she used to be, only that she grows worse. I hope that you will come home soon, and I am sure you will, if you have any sense of duty left,—Your affectionate sister,

"Caroline Sherwood."

We may be sure that no small amount of selfish want dictated Caroline's letter to her sister. The six months of her married life have been filled to the brim with a succession of miseries, from the simply disagreeable to the painful and horrible. She found her pride and coldness of no avail with Frederick. He was always under the influence of ardent spirits, either in its action or reaction. He was impatient and irrascible to the last degree. Caroline feared him as if he had been a lunatic just escaped from Bedlam. They had not been two weeks married, when, in a fit of drunken madness, he had seized his wife by the throat, and was only

hindered from choking her to death by the united exertions of Mrs. Sherwood and Tim. When he came to himself, and was told what he had done, he went up to Caroline with real sorrow, and yet with a lurking devil in his eye, and said—

"Well, I never hurt Vix or Smash when I have my senses, unless they deserve it; and I don't want to hurt you, Carrie. I had a dozen times rather have my own weasand squeezed; but—here's the *but*, madam," and he looked one of those determined, insane looks into her eyes, which are especially terrible, and then he said slowly, "You are not to provoke me, Carrie; you can't afford it. You were a proud girl, and had your own way before we were married; but I am master now. When a woman has a husband, she must give up, take in the bit, and know her driver. Them's my sentiments. Now, if you will take notice, and govern yourself accordingly, you and I may get along the old beaten track of matrimony first rate."

Caroline sulked; she could not help it. All her tact and calculation seemed to have left her.

"A little more advice to you, Mrs. Sherwood," said Fred, biting off a piece of tobacco, very spitefully.

"Don't chew that filthy tobacco," said Caroline. "I never saw you do such a thing before."

"One of the accomplishments of my married life," said Fred. "I need all the aid and comfort I can get now-a-days. I used to dislike tobacco, though I smoked occasionally, but now I like the raw material;" and he made as offensive a display of the weed and the juice he was extracting as possible. "If I had married somebody that liked to be kissed, I would have kept my mouth clean, but you know you hate kisses; you had rather sulk. And why should not I have something in my mouth that has some taste to it?"

Caroline did not reply, and he went away to the village to meet a parcel of "good fellows," and increase his unfortunate tendencies to apoplexy and insanity. If he would only die! the thought would come to Caroline. She could not help looking for relief in the death of her husband, and this was in the mind of a woman not two weeks married. But Frederick got better after this spell, and seemed very proud of her, and he drank less, and she was conscious that people gave her the credit of reforming her husband, and also that they envied her, some of them, and these were pleasant facts

to Caroline. But such slight happiness was bought at fearful cost. She never had any peace when Fred was out of her sight, and very little when he was in it. She was in poor health all the time. Mrs. Sherwood never spoke to her, or noticed her, and yet they sat at table together when Fred was at home. When he was gone, Caroline stayed in her own room.

Caroline's desire to build, and have a separate home, was overruled by Fred, till she dared not mention the subject.

"I like the old one's cookery," he said. "I am used to it. She makes better sausages and head cheese than anybody I know. I like to get my mouth hissing hot on her victuals, and cool it off with brandy and water. It is an agreeable operation. But what has come over the old one, I wonder! She's clean changed lately. First, she has left off drinking, and next she has bought a new silk dress, and other toggery to match, and has hired a seat in Rawson's pew. There's some deviltry going on, or she has designs on Paradise. Now, I'll bet a pound of rifle balls, and I would not care if they were in Rawson's bread basket, that there is some infernal plot between these two. Mrs. Caroline, it is my private opinion that you had better keep friends with your husband. You may want me in a hurry some night to go for Dr. Browne to bring along the heir to a certain property that I was once fool enough to will and deed to your ladyship."

There was a hard and unkind feeling in Frederick Sherwood toward his wife. There was sickness, mental misery, and terror in Caroline's lot, which was only alleviated by the visits of her father and Dr. Browne.

Caroline and Dr. Browne felt sure that the old lady's alliance with Rawson boded no good, but what it pointed to they could not tell.

Dr. Browne remarked, "The old lady is shy of me; indeed, I consider her positively unkind, but never mind, she will be sick by and by, and then I will get back into her good graces, and find out what this coalition means."

Dr. Browne felt that he had lost much of his influence with Caroline, and Fred treated him cavalierly. But he saw his prospective importance, and was comforted. How to recover his place with Mrs. Sherwood the elder, and what could be the cause of her agreement with Rawson, and the reform in her conduct and dress, were studies with Dr. Browne. His

small principality cost him a good deal of trouble; and though he had no active duty to perform for the Sherwood family, it was the most troublesome portion of his dependencies. He felt a sort of fatherly feeling toward Caroline, for he remembered the basket, and his early watch and ward over her. Then he had been one means of her dreadful marriage. The Doctor had no idea it would be so bad. He had the belief that Caroline would manage Fred, when once she was married to him. He had known many women who managed their husbands, and kept them in a semi-endurable state for years, and buried them with Christian services, or were buried by them at last. Why could not Caroline manage Fred? The kind Doctor was troubled; he was afraid he had been to blame. He was afraid of the old woman and Rawson, though he did not know why, and he was afraid Fred would go mad, and do some deed of violence. On the whole, Dr. Browne was not comfortable. He was too kind a man to be resigned to misery that he feared he had partially caused.

CHAPTER XL.

MATCH-MAKING.

"I MUST spare you for a week, dear—only for a week, you know," said Mrs. Mayo to Minnie, "for Mrs. Denby and those sweet girls can't take no for an answer."

"But what shall I do for a whole week?" said Minnie, in a sad prophecy of loneliness, for Mr. Graham had become unwilling within a day or two to suffer George out of his sight; indeed, he monopolised Jerry and George, and was very insane and intractable when either was away.

"What a prison poor George is in!" said Minnie. "I think I might lighten his burden a little, if I stay at home with you."

"O, I am sufficient for that, my dear. Papa does not exactly know me, but he knows I am some one that he loves, and he is always kind to me, and he delights in my diamonds, and loves my crucifix and prayer-book, like a baby. Now, I can go every day, and leave George a couple of hours to go

out, and then in the evening Jerry can do all, and George can get some amusement. He can come over and go with you and the Denby's to the opera and the theatre. You must see Burton in Toodle's. It is quite worth going across the ocean to see. And now I think of it, my dear, there is no way you can do my father, and my brother, and me, so great a kindness as to go to the Denby's for a week. I shall then be obliged to go out every day to see papa, and set George free, and it will do me a world of good; if you were here, I should be so happy in your company, and so lazy," said Mrs. Mayo, smiling, "that I should forget my duty to papa and George. Then some variety is good for papa. The more one gives up to him, and stays with him, the more he will exact. No one else will make him happy, or even contented. I shall break up his habit of having George by him every minute, and George and Jerry will rest."

On the whole, Mrs. Mayo demonstrated that it was a great moral duty for Minnie to go to the Denby's for a week. Minnie suffered herself to be persuaded, though she did not like it, and felt sure that somehow George would suffer by her going.

The day Minnie was to go had been left uncertain, to her great dissatisfaction, as she wished to see George and make some arrangement to see him occasionally during the week. Mrs. Mayo was quite determined to keep George and Minnie from meeting, and leave a fair field for Henry Denby; and though she knew just when Mrs. Denby's carriage was coming for Minnie, she kept the time to herself, and the poor girl went away, not having seen George for three days.

"I am very sorry not to have seen George," said Minnie to Mrs. Mayo. "I sympathise with him in being closed under hatches, and only wish I could go and help him."

"He is in a delightful prison," said Mrs. Mayo, "with all the new books and periodicals, and nothing to do but to pour out papa's wine, and hand him biscuits, or crackers, or some little thing to eat, and help him on and off with his dressing gown, and then they have Jerry to help a good deal of the time, and I have to take papa's coachman, when I don't want him. I think your sympathy is rather misplaced; George always wanted to read and dream, and he has enough of it now. And you know I have promised to stay with papa, and let him have his liberty every day, and his evenings will all be at his own disposal."

So Minnie went away, thinking, "I shall see George this evening," but not daring to say so, for she wished Mrs. Mayo to consider her and George as only very good friends.

Everything was planned at the Denby's to give Miss Brandon a week of happiness. Henry had recovered from the religious rebuff he had received from Minnie, and he was every day getting more poetically and romantically attached to his ideal, Miss Minnie Brandon. He had confided his hopes and fears to Mrs. Mayo, and she had helped him to plan the week's joys and amusements.

They were to have music, and no stinted supply of it, for Minnie luxuriated in music. She did not like the labour, the application, and the tribulation of music. But she did love the sweet, idle appreciation. She loved to be played to, and sung to, by wonderful amateurs, and she loved to hear professors in private, and the culmination of her musical happiness was at the opera, where there were charms for the eye as well as the ear. Minnie had always been tasteful and artistic in dress, but the time she had spent with Mrs. Mayo, and the general aspect of fashionable New York, had cultivated her love of dress, till Mrs. Mayo considered her a very precious acquisition in the court of fashion. Hence Mrs. Mayo had said to Henry Denby, "Let us go silk and lace hunting. No girl can resist such loves of laces, and such miracles of silks, as there are in New York. Buy each of your sisters a superb silk, with laces to match, and get one a little more exquisite for Miss Brandon, and let your mother present them all, and let them be made up for our Prima Donna's benefit, and then you can keep Minnie two weeks instead of one."

Those two weeks had been in Henry's mind as the one wish of his heart, for which he would have given a considerable quotation from his own life. Mrs. Mayo was his good angel. She thought his thoughts, she knew his desires, she appreciated his poetical readings. She would go shopping for him, and he would gallantly go with her and pay the bills.

The first days that Minnie spent with the Denby family Mrs. Mayo and Henry devoted to *dry goods*, in primitive English, drapery; and after spending a good deal of time and a good deal of money, the fair fabrics were found, bought, and paid for, and committed to Mrs. Denby, who was to present them to the three girls the day before Minnie was to return

to Mrs. Mayo's. Mattie was to have a dressmaker at hand, and the Prima Donna's benefit was to be duly honoured.

Mattie loved Miss Brandon dearly, because she defended her right to love the saints, and to fill her pockets with medals, crosses, and a rosary. Yes, Mattie had got to the pass of carrying what she defined as "a help to holy people of old, who could not read,"—in plain words, a rosary. Minnie asked her why she needed it, when she could read, and Mattie had answered, perhaps not with perfect ingenuousness, that it was a beautiful relic of the past, and as such, she had a good deal of veneration for it.

Minnie did not scold Mattie, and did not "tell" of her, though she secretly feared the poor child was going demented. She listened to her legends, too, with real interest, and Mattie thought, "O, if Henry would only fall in love with Miss Brandon, then I would have a sister, who would be always a comfort to me, and I should never be afraid to trust her with anything!" Mattie, therefore, entered heartily into the scheme to detain Minnie for another week.

The first evening after Miss Brandon's arrival was celebrated by a sort of an impromptu gathering of some of the best musicians. They dropped in quite accidentally, though Henry had been arranging the whole matter for a fortnight. They made delicious music, and charmed all ears, and Minnie only wished George were there.

Mrs. Mayo did not go to see her father for three days after Minnie left, so she could not therefore keep her promise to emancipate George, and send him to Mrs. Denby's for calls and the opera.

Constant confinement in a hot room, and under irksome conditions, began to have a very bad effect upon George Graham's health. His head ached a great deal; he became nervous and irritable, and had to hold himself under strong control to keep from speaking unpleasantly when his father made all sorts of unreasonable demands upon him in the circle of his entirely unreasonable wants. Jerry said, "You must not stay hived up in this room so; if you do, you will be a baby sure and sartin. I should go under, if I did not have my drive every day, and here you are, from week's end to week's end. Now you take a run in the square."

"I am so cold," said George shivering. "I can't go out."

"There 'tis, you are gittin to be a baby. I know'd it.

Take my advice, Mr. George, and run three times round the square, if you freeze as stiff as an eyesuckle."

This was three days after Minnie left. George put on his great coat, and ran up to Mr. Mayo's. Mrs. Mayo had gone out with Henry Denby. The servant, a new girl, only told him that the ladies were out. He started to return, and met Victor Vincent, who told him his cheeks were rosy as a girl's, that frost was good rouge, and the next evening he saw Minnie at Mr. Denby's, and told her that he met Graham, and thought he never saw him look so well or so handsome. Minnie was piqued and puzzled. Why did not George call on her. It was certain that he was not confined with his father, and that day she had a note from Mrs. Mayo, who disguised her shopping, by saying, "I can't call just yet, my beautiful one, because duty, you know, is always before pleasure with me. And if I should come to you, instead of going to see dear papa, I could not forgive myself."

It was all plain to Minnie. Mrs. Mayo was devoting herself to her father, and for some reason George would not come to Mr. Denby's to see her, and he would not even send her a note. Not made wiser in the least by former misunderstandings, Minnie went resolutely to work to be vexed with George, and to torment herself liberally.

George, on his side, suffered from a very severe attack of dignity, and another of headache, and he was so nervous that the rustle of the morning paper was as bad as rubbing rushes together, or sharpening a saw with a file, for his nerves, and he even seriously thought of giving up the reading of it to escape the rattle.

From Monday till Friday Minnie had been surfeited with delightful music. Monday night was the impromptu by Henry Denby's musical *friends*, who half of them had never seen him before, and who each went away ten dollars richer than he came.

Tuesday night was a musical party, with Miss Deane in it. Wednesday and Thursday were opera, and all were brightened by all the sunshine of friendship, love, and sweet attentions from a delightful family. Minnie could not help seeing that Henry Denby was a good young man; that he was a good son, a good brother, a pleasant friend, and that he would make a very devoted lover. She was as happy as she could be, and be on bad terms with Graham. On Saturday she

was to return to Mrs. Mayo's. "Then I shall know what he means by his provoking silence, not even sending me a note, and going everywhere but to call on me." Mrs. Mayo had not called yet. On Friday the momentous presents came. Mrs. Denby, with her own kind-hearted grace, overwhelmed the girls, and Henry told them of the Prima Donna's benefit, Friday night a week.

"*Could* the dresses be finished in season?" Henry wanted them all to go. He should invite Mrs. Mayo and Mr. George Graham, and the new dresses *must* be done, to surprise Mrs. Mayo—so Mattie said—who forgot her pious playthings in the glory of her new dress. Minnie was happy to see a diversion created in the child's mind, and then Mattie brought her dressmaker; and as Minnie was really mortal, she agreed to stay and help make the dresses. She had cunning fingers and useful fingers, and a great deal of taste. It was a wonder to the Denby girls that she could really help in a matter where they were powerless, but they were not less glad of her skill and industry.

All was to be done without Mrs. Mayo's cognizance, so as to surprise her with the dresses at the opera. The girls were the more anxious for this surprising elegance, because Mrs. Mayo's dressmaker was getting up a dress of wonderful beauty for Mrs. Mayo. So Minnie sent a little note to say she should remain a little longer at Mrs. Denby's than she at first proposed, and asking *en passant* how was Mr. Graham, senior, and George.

Mrs. Mayo returned for answer that she could not spare Minnie to anybody else in the world, and that she should certainly come for her on Monday, and also that her father was better, and that George was making himself a bear, and was always out when she called on her father, and that she had not set eyes on him since Minnie left.

The game of separating George and Minnie was being played, and yet neither saw it. Graham had made himself as stiff as a poker in his accession of dignity, and Minnie would have been miserable if it had not been for the wonderful dress. This is a painful confession about a girl intended for a heroine, but unfortunately heroines are obliged to be women. And our heroine wrought at the beautiful garment, and rejoiced in the miraculous lace, and calculated the effect of all when they should be finished, and especially in the effect on

Mrs. Mayo, who had a first-class devotion to laces that cost a fortune. And this dress of Minnie Brandon's, with its beautiful gossamer trimming, would support half-a-dozen poor families for a year in all the proverbial improvidence of poverty. But I do not consider this an argument against the dress, for the poor families are infinitely better off, to work and support themselves, than they would be if the dress were sold, and its full value given to them because they are poor.

On Monday Mrs. Mayo came, according to promise, to take Miss Brandon home. Minnie came down with her finger desperately pricked, and with an air of constraint about her that Mrs. Mayo well understood, and took no notice of.

"Do you know," said she, "I am dying to have you come home? I am so lonesome, but I will allow you to stay over to-morrow, because Mr. Mayo wants to carry me off for the day."

"How is your father?" said Minnie.

"He is better, I think, but George makes himself such a bear that I do not go as often as I wish to see papa. George is a very strange person. He is so unequal. I shall pity his wife, if he ever gets one. By the way, I shall never consent to his marrying you. His temper casts too dark a shadow for my bright darling. It is hard to say this of one's own and only brother, but if I felt sure he made poor papa happy, I should feel very differently from what I do. I heard him speak to papa in a most irritated manner the other day, as I went into the room, and all because the dear old gentleman wished to change his dressing gown for his coat. I must say I think George felt ashamed of himself, for he left the room by one door as I entered by the other. He did not return while I stayed. Jerry told me what the difficulty was, and excused George, because he said he had got to be a baby by staying in a warm room. I think there are sons who would be willing to stay in a warm room with every comfort, even without the prospect of half a million in a few months or years. But Minnie, dear, I have promised Jerry that he shall see you. I said I would tap on the window pane when you were ready to see him. I will go into the next parlour and see Mrs. Denby, and you must speak to Jerry or he will run away from us, I fear."

In a moment more Jerry was alone with "the light of his eyes."

"Oh, Miss Minnie," said he, "I wish we were all back in in Easton. I haint got but a minute, and that sorter confuses me." Here Jerry paused to consult three pins stuck on his coat sleeve. He put his finger on one. "Mr. George is gettin' the spells or somethin'. I can't make him out. I tell him it's stayin' in a warm room with his old father, who haint got no sense, and so he teazes and fusses till Mr. George goes out of his mind e'enamost like his father. He don't let it out, but I can see it. His face is as red as a blaze, and he aint good to nobody. Then," and Jerry put his finger on the other pin, "I want you to see Miss Deane purty soon. Nancy says how she believes in Providence, but I guess she wants to have a chance to right Providence a little. She said to me last night, 'Now, Jerry, there's a Providence that governs all our ways and doings. Did not Providence confound that evil man in his ways by sendin' his dreadful wife after him? Did not Providence save Miss Deane from his clutches? And did not Providence bring me out of a hard place to do what I've all my life longed to do—to take care of a dear young woman, and a beautiful, wonderful old man? These has been my ambitions, Jerry, and to think that I have got my prayers answered at last makes me thankful to Providence. But, Jerry, there's trouble here, and I wish Miss Brandon could know it and come over. It's between Mr. Victor and Miss Deane.' She did not tell me, because 'twas none o' my business, but I take it 'tis yourn. And now for t'other pin." This pin was apart from the rest, and of larger size. Jerry hesitated.

"Tell me," said Minnie, kindly.

"Well, Miss Minnie," said Jerry, taking a clean linen hankerchief from his pocket, which Minnie recognised as one she had given him, "I am lonesome sence you come over here, sure and sartain, and I thought maybe you'd take my handcheker in your hands, seein' it's span clean, and—and—maybe, Miss, you will breathe on to it."

Minnie took the handkerchief and held it a moment in her hands, and then she breathed on it.

"Now, Miss," said Jerry, as he pocketed his handkerchief, "maybe you won't mind holdin' my watch a minute. If you will, I'll git it under Mr. George's head to-night, and he shan't know it, and then you pray for him, and I'll pray for him, and we'll git the spells off of him, sure and sartin. But if

somethin' aint done, he'll go under and no mistake, and there will be another doctor's bill, while you and I will have to cure him."

Minnie did as Jerry desired, and fervently she prayed for her beloved, and though the wonderful dress waited for her up stairs, she wanted most of all things to go to George.

"Why does not Mr. George come to see me?" said Minnie.

"Well, Miss, I can't drive him out o' doors. He just reads and frets all the time."

"Will you ask him to come here this evening, Jerry?"

"Sure and sartin I'll ask him, and I hope he will come."

Just now Mrs. Mayo came, and with the sweetest adieus and a shower of kisses on Minnie's cheeks and eyes she took Jerry from the presence of his idol, saying, "Now be sure that you are ready on Wednesday, for I can't wait another hour."

Minnie gazed out at the window. There sat Jerry on the front seat, a most edifying spectacle, clad in brown greatcoat, black pants, and patent leather gaiters. His broad brimmed hat, his long nose, his long arms, his long figure altogether, and his long whip, made an imposing, and by no means a disagreeable spectacle.

Minnie thought 'If the scare-scrow that used to follow Rawson about, and shake in the presence of Mrs. Sherwood, that used to lie on the hay or in the gutter for hours at a time, stupified with drink, should rise before Jerry now, he would be as badly frightened as if he had never been that wretched being."

Mrs. Mayo took her leave of the Denby family and Minnie, and went directly to her father's. Ostensibly she went to see "dear papa," really to torment George, and make him abandon any incipient preference he had formed for Minnie, and also to so affect his temper as to make him unendurable to the bride she had mentally promised to Henry Denby.

Very sweetly and carefully Mrs. Mayo said to George, "You ought to go out, brother dear. You confine yourself too much. Exercise in the open air would be worth a great deal to you. Why can't you go over to Mr. Denby's? Minnie would be pleased to have you call. She is having a delightful time with the young people over there. She and Henry are luxuriating in music and poetry, and the girls and Mrs. Denby are so fond of Minnie! She has been there eight days, and

she only went for a week. I went over to-day to bring her home, but she was so happy I could not coax her away. She is so frank and child-like in her happiness, she makes me laugh. She says that Henry Denby is the most perfect person she ever saw. Perfect as a son, as a brother, and as a friend."

"All the perfections combined," said George, savagely. "It is hopeful she will stay the rest of the season with this paragon of perfection."

"Or the rest of her life," said Mrs. Mayo, as pleasantly as if she were speaking of the weather. "I am afraid the dear girl is fickle, but then her charming childishness accounts for that. I had hoped to win her love for myself and you, George, and she did seem to love me very much till I introduced her to the Denbys. She so loves luxury, and the Denbys are *so* luxurious. Henry presented his sisters with dresses last week that each cost a small fortune with the lace trimmings, and he gave Minnie one that cost a good deal more. Minnie was as delighted as a child with a new doll."

"Minnie Brandon take a present of a dress from Henry Denby!" thundered George Graham, entirely thrown off his balance.

Mrs. Mayo was prattling this pleasant piece of information into her brother's ears in her father's room. When young Graham's angry tones struck on the old man's ear, he started up.

"Put that fellow out of my room!" said he in a loud voice. "Twenty times a-day he storms at me in this manner. Put him out I say."

George instantly left the room, and Mrs. Mayo addressed herself to the task of quieting her father.

"Dear papa," said she, "I had no idea that George had such a violent temper. I am astonished. I think you certainly ought to come and live with me. Is he often so, dear papa?"

"All the time," said Mr. Graham in great anger. "He starves me, and freezes me, and storms at me. It is the merest chance that I have any fire now. Whole days I am not allowed to put coals on my fire."

"Dear papa, you should have told me this before. I am shocked! I am grieved! I am inexpressibly distressed! Why did you not tell me before?"

"I'll tell you the reason, madam," said the old man, assuming a dignified air. "I thought I might bear with this foreign fellow, just in the way of business, till my son George shall return from Europe. George Graham, madam, my son, is one of the finest fellows in the world; he managed that Haydock and Russell business so well, that I shall always be proud of him. I have only to wait till he returns, and I shall have crackers and coals whenever I wish for them, and this Prince Metternich will have to march—yes, I say *March*, and you need not look as cross as Jezebel about it. I see your game. You are in league with this foreign fellow. That's why you insult me to my face, and storm at me, and try to deprive me of food and fire. George, George," he screamed, "come and put this woman out of my room. She has been insulting me, storming at me, starving and freezing me, and trying to turn me against my own dear son—the finest young man in the world, who managed that Haydock and Russell business so that I shall always be proud of him. George," he screamed, "come and put her out."

George came quietly into the room.

"Father is crazy," said she, thoroughly frightened.

"You have found it out at last," said George, bitterly.

"He ought to be taken to an asylum," said Mrs. Mayo. "It is not safe to be where he is."

The old man clung to George, who put him in bed and soothed his whimperings as if he had been a little child.

"I am so glad you are at home, my noble boy," said he. "Now I can have crackers and coals."

Mrs. Mayo called Jerry and told him to procure the service of Mr. Skeggs for her carriage, and begged him to see to George and her father. She was frightened, and for a little while she realised that George must suffer severely with his father. But when she was at home, and had recovered from her alarm, she said, "One has only to be patient and pleasant with papa. Just humour him like a child, and he will be as good as a child. But dear brother George has such an unfortunate temper. He can't keep his patience under trying circumstances as I can. But then he is young. Perhaps I was fretful and impatient at his age. Ten years over his head will make him sober and patient as I am, I hope."

CHAPTER XLI.

FRED SHERWOOD'S WEDDED BLISS.

Mr. and Mrs. Brandon waited with what patience they could command for Minnie's return. The weekly letter and journal came duly to the almost idolatrous father, and much of it was read to Mrs. Susan, and every week Mr. Brandon wrote to his child, but his letters did not satisfy himself. His heart was too full for utterance, and often his letters were mere bulletins of the health of the family. This troubled Minnie. She longed for her father, and even at Mrs. Denby's, engaged on the wonderful dress, she longed to fly away, and be in her own simple home with her dear father and mother.

Mrs. Brandon grieved secretly for Caroline, though she seldom expressed her feelings or her fears.

"I don't like to trouble *him*, and what's the use of troublin' *him?*" said Mrs. Susan to herself, "'taint as if she was *his* baby. She allus seemed to be mine more'n my own, but then I couldn't never put her on to him."

Prior to Fred Sherwood's marriage he had been regarded as "a wild young man." If the truth must be told, there was much more charity toward his faults before his marriage than afterward. Lady mothers did not care to exaggerate, or even mention the demerits of a young man who might offer himself as a son-in-law, and who had a property large enough to make it a lucrative object to reform him. Before marriage, then, Fred Sherwood's faults were indiscretions. After this event they had no such mild designation. Formerly he was "a daring driver," now "he would break his worthless neck." Formerly he was "too convivial," now he was "sure to be a sot." Formerly his slang vocabulary was "very droll," or "exceedingly amusing," now his language was "very disgusting," or "ridiculous in the extreme."

Ladies, young and old, who envied Caroline Sherwood a few months ago, now expressed their pity in a lugubrious way. They feared for her, they compassionated her, and they had no idea what Frederick Sherwood would come to, and yet these very ladies would gladly have taken her chance of happiness or misery a few months since.

The state of public opinion respecting Fred Sherwood made

a sort of mental malarious atmosphere for Mr. and Mrs. Brandon. They were very unhappy; they could hardly tell why, for they did not know a tithe of the truth respecting Fred and Caroline. Caroline could not cure her condition, and so she had set herself resolutely to conceal it. She had written to her sister to come home, because she wanted some one in her prospective confinement whom she could trust. Minnie had answered her kindly, but the time for her return was fixed, and would not be changed, unless her parents desired a change. Caroline could not bear to tell her mother the truth, and ask her to send for Minnie. There was no hope of cure for Frederick in her heart; but to conceal this social and domestic cancer, even from her mother, was the ruling desire with Caroline. Her mother had opposed her marriage, had warned her, had seen from a distance the misery in which she was about to plunge, therefore she would conceal her lot from her mother as much as she could and as long as she could. But who could be trusted to come as a nurse into her house when her time of trial came? Who but Minnie could be relied upon to conceal what this unhappy woman so much wished to hide? This was a constant terror to Caroline, and yet it did not force her to confide in her parents and ask them to send for Minnie.

Poor Fred had no sympathy, not even Jerry's. Mr. Brandon pitied him and prayed for him, but they shunned each other instinctively, and if they met they never conversed beyond mutual inquiries about health, or remarks upon the weather.

Mrs. Susan's love for her daughter awed Fred away from her. He knew he did not make Caroline happy, and her mother seemed to him a sort of rightful judge and executioner, and he shunned her always.

Mrs. Sherwood the elder was "steady," and people supposed she was becoming pious in her old age. Rawson had induced her by some occult means to join "The Daughters of Temperance," and when she condescended to speak to Fred at all, it was to give him good advice.

"You can't say," said she, "that your mother is leadin' you to destruction. You know that I've took the pledge, and what's more, that I keep it, and I give you good advice. What more can a mother do?"

Fred sat with his hands clasped around his forehead; the

blood seemed ready to burst from every pore of his fiery, swollen face. "There is one thing, I wish to Jupiter, you had not given me," said he, "and then I should have no occasion for your good advice."

"And what is that?" asked his mother, in a shrill voice. She had an idea that all gifts and gains were of value, and not to be despised.

"What is it that I have given you that you don't want? I did not give you your fine, high flown lady, that never does nothing but sulk, and that don't speak from week's end to week's end if she can help it."

"You need not scold about Caroline, mother, for without your infernal gift I never should have had her."

"I'd like to know what my infernal gift was," said Mrs. Sherwood, beginning to be tormented by curiosity.

Fred hissed through his teeth, "My cursed existence. I have not a piece of brains as big as a mustard-seed that does not ache. I have not a nerve that is not skinned, and if I weigh a pound, I swear I weigh a thousand."

"The way of the transgressor is hard," said Mrs. Sherwood through her nose, for she took a great deal of snuff; "but if you feel so bad, you know how to pity me. I never feel well. And, then, why don't you get a doctor."

"It's no use," said Fred, "to go to a doctor. I have got poison enough aboard to sink my ship, and then Dr. Browne has taken to the sugar pills and the billionth part of nothing, and when I can stop Hudson river or Niagara with a shovel, I'll believe that the sixty billionth part of anything will cool down the fever that I am kindling and trying to put out every day with brandy and water. Water by courtesy—precious little gets into my brandy. I hate it as bad as you did when you brought me into this world, damned from the start."

Mrs. Sherwood began to cry. "I have been a good mother to you," said she, "and I would have saved you from all the trouble you have now, but you would not hear to me. You went crazy and deeded away my hard airnins, and now you are gettin' your pay for it."

"Mother," said Fred, rising, and his eyes flashing terribly, if you ever mention that deed again, I'll——

"What will you do? Strike your poor old mother?" said Mrs. Sherwood, lamentingly.

Fred sat down and held his head a moment, and then he said, calmly and solemnly, and without anger, "I'll never hurt any but myself when I have my senses, but if you and Carrie provoke me much farther, I'll just borrow Smash's halter, and I'll get rid of my damned self if it is to be done, and if it is not, I am not afraid of being worse helped than I am now. I have given you warning, old lady, and you may go and tell Rawson, and see what you can do about it."

I have reason to believe that Mrs. Caroline Sherwood received a like warning from her husband, for she engaged Tim to secretly look after him on all occasions, and she got the homœopathic remedy against drunkenness from Dr. Browne and put it in Fred's brandy bottle.

Why did she do this when his life so oppressed and tortured her?—when she listened for his step as if the executioners were coming to take her to the rack?—and when she felt that his death was her only means of deliverance? There is a humanity within us that makes us the guardian of our own life and that of others. There were fears that governed Caroline more than she knew. She had a conviction that Rawson and Mrs. Sherwood had united to injure her, that this was the secret of Mrs. Sherwood's reformation from drunkenness, and her church-going, and apparent piety.

Caroline could not tell what she feared, but she shrunk with terror in the presence of Mrs. Sherwood and Rawson, and she felt sure that while Frederick Sherwood lived, she was at least safe from them. Of late Fred had had very few lucid intervals. His old tenderness was gone entirely. He hated sickness, and his wife was always ailing. This provoked him of itself, by making a demand on his pity. Then he had lost confidence in Dr. Browne, who had changed his practice in compliance with the wishes of the majority of his patients, perhaps in accordance with his own convictions, but he had secured Fred Sherwood's unmitigated contempt by so doing. Fred could hardly be considered a responsible being, but several very responsible beings shared his contempt, and thus Dr. Browne's hardships were increased.

I have often wondered whether the Doctor had the comfort of being an entirely honest man, and whether a man can be entirely honest who, as Jerry expressed it, "tries to keep in on both sides." Certainly he was a benevolent man, and he sympathised heartily with Mrs. Susan, and felt a freedom in

conversing with her about her daughter. He was not afraid that somebody was listening with a devil in the heart when he was talking to Mrs. Susan.

"Frederick Sherwood will not live long," said he to Mrs. Brandon, "and then your daughter will be very rich, and can come back and live with you."

"Ah, Doctor," said the lady, wiping her eyes on her apron; how clean that apron always was, whether it was blue and white check, brown linen or white linen. Mrs. Susan was an earthly purity, clean pearled and clean clad. She was so sweet, and her house had such an odour of clean clothes, and sweet butter, and roses in summer, and rose leaves in winter, that Dr. Browne almost regretted that he had ever set up his bachelor home, and he almost wondered he did not think of the lady of the basket for a wife for himself. Many a man older than the Doctor had married as young and lovely a wife. But the Doctor had never thought of such a thing till this afternoon, when he sat pitying Mrs. Susan because her favourite daughter had made such a dreadful marriage.

"I can't help hoping," said he, "that you will have her back again, or else I hope Fred will reform."

"You might as well put out a burnin' mountain with a pail of water, Doctor; Fred can't do no better—'twas bred in the bone, and it must come out in the flesh."

"Well, Caroline will be well off," said the Doctor, "that's a comfort."

"Ah, Doctor," said Mrs. Susan, "what is got over the Devil's back is sure to go under his belly. I would not think strange if she came back to us with only clothes to cover her, for he'll squander hers as well as his own."

"She would be sure to be welcome," said the Doctor.

"Yes, if she brought a heart with her; but such a life as she lives is very hardenin', Doctor."

"I am troubled and puzzled," said Dr. Browne, "to think what Fred will do next. He seems set against me, and he is very violent towards his wife. I think, Mrs. Brandon, you ought to be prepared to receive her here at a moment's warning."

"We are always the same," said Mrs. Susan; "the best chamber is allus done up."

"I did not mean that," said the Doctor, "I meant that you ought to be prepared to have your child brought home to you under very painful circumstances."

"My heart can't any more'n break for her," said the kind mother.

Dr. Browne had performed a duty, and he felt better. For some time he had thought he ought to tell Mrs. Brandon that he feared violence. It was a difficult duty; it was done, and he was relieved.

"I have been thinking that Fred might be bad to me when his wife comes to be sick," said Mrs. Brandon. "Do you think he would allow Carrie to send for me?"

"That will be my business," said the Doctor; "but if ever a man were possessed of a half-dozen devils, that man is Fred Sherwood."

"And my Carrie left her mother and her home and married him, with her eyes open," said Mrs. Susan.

Whilst Dr. Browne was talking with Mrs. Susan, Caroline was putting into execution a long-cherished resolve.

Rawson called seldom on Mrs. Sherwood, and when he did call, they had their interview in the kitchen. There were two doors to the cheese-room, and a grating that opened into the kitchen. One of these doors opened to a back stairway that led up to Caroline's room, and she had noticed that on this stairway, with the door of the cheese-room towards the stairs, she could hear by means of the grating any ordinary conversation in the kitchen. She determined the next time Rawson called to hear their conversation. On this very day, when the good Doctor was talking to Mrs. Susan, Rawson called to plot with Mrs. Sherwood. Caroline went softly on to the staircase, and luckily found the cheese-room door ajar, so that all the conversation in the kitchen was distinctly audible. As this conversation led to terrible results, I cannot resist the temptation after the manner of sensation novels, to defer it to another chapter. My readers will excuse me, as this sort of merit, or demerit, is seldom found in this interesting, or uninteresting work—*Au revoir.*

CHAPTER XLII.

"OPINIONS OF THE PRESS."

"O, MINNIE," said Miss Deane, "Victor has no tact, and no literary taste or conscience."

"No literary taste, Ettie, when the best judges say his verses are as tasteful as Keats's? Surely you cannot mean what you say."

"I think I do not mean exactly what I say; but Victor offends me so by his want of taste, and tact, and conscience, that I am miserable. What sort of conscience can a man have who will consent to edit the *Daily Double Face*, and be hired to praise and defame, and make and unmake reputations, without the slightest reference to worth; and then to gild the whole foul thing with such poems as his?"

"But why did you not speak to him about it before he engaged with this paper, Ettie? It is hardly the time to lock the stable-door after the horse is stolen."

"Minnie, dear, I did not know at all what Victor had engaged to do, and I do not believe he knew; and now he takes it all as a matter of course, and mixes me up with items that positively make me sick."

"Mixes you up!—why, what concern has Victor with you in his paper?"

"You shall see," said Miss Deane, bringing forth a number of the daily in question. "Just look here."

She drew Minnie's attention to a column headed, "PERSONAL."

The first item was an extravagant puff of a Hungarian corn doctor, said to be of the nobility in his own land, "as if that would cure corns," said Victor, when he had written it. Then came an even more extravagant and startling story of a wonderful woolly horse, said to have been caught in the Rocky Mountains by Colonel Fremont. Victor said privately to his friends that he had tried his hand at a romance of Natural History in the account of this strangely interesting and entirely novel animal. "*Entre nous*," he added, "the queer beast has drawn an ash cart over on the East side three or four years." Then came—

"Miss Hester Deane.—This musical prodigy, who has been said to possess the finest soprano voice in the world, we are informed, has just been presented with a set of jewelled plate, made in the Russian Royal style, by her pupil, the Countess ——, who has thus expressed her sense of the splendid ability of her most gifted and accomplished teacher. We are also informed that the whole available interior of St. ——'s Church is crowded on Sunday, and the aisles packed like herrings in a box, to hear this wonderful singer. We went last Sunday to be an ear-witness of the performance, and though we were an hour before the time of service, we could not get so much as the tip of our nose inside the outer door. We came away in despair; but we congratulate those who, more fortunate than ourselves, had been in the church for three hours waiting the arrival of this *Peri* from paradise."

"Now, Minnie," said Miss Deane, "how can I show my face in St. ——'s again. I have wanted the earth to open and take me in out of sight ever since I saw those horrid items, and I have not spoken to Victor for a week. He is half distracted, and cries out like a mischievous child, 'What have I done?' He has written a half-dozen letters, the burden of all which is, that it was only a little harmless humbug—that when one is in Rome, he must do as the Romans do, &c., &c. If it were not for the dear master and Nancy, I would go to the land's end to get quit of it all. What shall I do? O! Minnie dear, what shall I do?"

"The most I can counsel, Ettie dear, is patience. Victor has no bad meaning."

"But I cannot be mortified in this manner," said Ettie, with flashing eyes.

"If it were not for the master I could counsel you. I should say, Go to Easton with me; but you are bound for the present, and Victor is bound to that paper, I suppose. I think, then, the only wise course for you, is to endure this horrid paragraph with as much patience as you can possibly command. Remember, that if a hundred thousand people read this paper, not one in ten thousand ever heard of you, or ever will. Not ten in a hundred thousand could tell the name of the lady who was praised; and all they would think or say of the matter would be, 'Some lady got a tremendous puff in the *Double Face* this morning.'

"I am so disgusted," said Ettie.

"The whole system is disgusting," said Minnie, "but Victor must live, and he is very likely to live by questionable ways till he is more completely under your influence, even if he were emancipated from this paper. I think you must cultivate patience, and cultivate him, and not kill him."

"He has no delicacy," said Ettie.

"And yet he has great delicacy," said Minnie. "There is some perception of the proprieties lacking in Victor; but I am not sure that he has not an excess of some other good thing to compensate him for this want."

"What shall I do?" said Miss Deane.

"Why, cease to torment yourself; don't be so miserable about what is done, and can't be undone, but make up the quarrel with this Master Malapropos as soon as possible, or he will be in some other mischief. He is wild to see you, though he is patiently watching the master. Let me call him."

It was a full half-hour before Minnie prevailed, but prevail she did, and Victor was allowed to come into Miss Deane's room, while Minnie went for a little while and sat with the master.

The dear old man lay in his bed now all the time. He was almost as white as the snowy linen that was about him. He suffered very little except from debility, and was not demented, though his loss of memory was an inconvenience. He still knew and loved old friends, and he loved his new friends, and honoured them by calling them by the name of "dear ones," in the distant past. He retained a perfect recollection of Nancy, and even of her family, whom he had formerly known, but he was sure that Minnie was his young sister Amelia, who died full thirty years ago, at nearly the the same age that Minnie was now.

"I am very well and happy," said he, "Milly, dear, though I can't play the piano to you to-day; I am resting a little, and the music plays itself in my mind. Oh, I wish you could hear it as I do. There seems a whole band of seraphs, or singing angels, or some fair beings of another world, all around me. I don't talk to Nancy about these things, for she dins Providence into my ears, like a perpetual discord. I can't say, 'Softly, Nancy,' to her, and get her in tune, so I say nothing. But you may tell her, darling Milly, that the

harmonies of heaven are in my heart, and I thank *Our Father* that it is so, and that I shall soon go home to my God, who is a Saviour. Tell her, Milly dear—for I can see that she is unhappy about me—tell her I believe in Providence; but tell her never to grate my ears about it—I mean, do not say anything harsh to her, only coax her some way to hold her tongue. You know how it is done, Milly dear. You always could wheedle me, or anybody."

Minnie promised him that she would talk with Nancy, and the master seemed relieved, and also delighted with her society. He did not know how to spare her, when Victor came to call her. He held her hand long and tenderly, and then he said—

"*My* Milly, you must come soon again to see your poor, idle brother. I am going away soon, Milly, away where music is heavenly—where there is no more weakness; good bye, dear sister; come again soon;" and then he drew Minnie near to him and said, in a whisper, "I shall see *her* who laid her hand on my head and blessed me, many years ago, and said to me, 'My own darling son, you will be father and mother and brother to Amelia;' and have I not tried to do her bidding, my sweet sister? And now I shall see her soon. I feel her warm, soft hand on my head now. I feel her blessing in my heart, though it is long, very long since since they wrapped her in the pure white garments, and laid her in the silent earth. Sweet mother! sweet sister!" And he let Minnie go.

She came to Miss Deane and Victor. "Well!" said she, looking at them both, as they sat on the sofa, with their hands locked, in token of reconciliation and amity.

"She has forgiven me," said Victor; "but the pardon came after the execution. I would not be rowed up Salt River so far again for all the cribbings of the custom-house, where I have just got an appointment at fifteen hundred dollars a-year."

"Then you are doubly chained here," said Minnie, compassionately.

"I guess I could coax another fellow to put on the handcuffs for that salary," said Victor. "Now, if I could only make Ettie believe that I would not raise Cain, or turn up Jack, if she would take me for better or worse, I should be the happiest fellow in existence. Just think of my intolerable misery for this whole week. She says she can't sing in church

again. Where's the need? She sings for money—I'll pay her not to sing. Now, Miss Minnie, won't you ask her to marry me, and put me under bonds for good behaviour? I want to give myself as a hostage, that I will never puff another corn-doctor or musician, but I'll hire a hand to do all such mean jobs. There's many a fellow would do it for five dollars a-week, and less money. I'll agree to write a poem every week to pay the puffer, and I'll promise never to touch the bellows again for anything short of politics, and Ettie don't know anything of them, and so she can't be troubled at the complexion of mine. Now, Miss Minnie, won't you speak a good word for me? If you will, I'll put you in the *Double Face*, and make oath that you are seventeen feet high, and are engaged to be married to the Man in the Moon, and that you are going to Jupiter for the wedding-tour, and then that you are going to settle in the sun as the only suitable and satisfactory abiding-place for one of your beauty and brilliant abilities."

"You utterly incorrigible fellow!" said Ettie, half amused, and yet distressed, "who would ever wish to be responsible for you?"

"You refuse, then? I give you warning that I enter upon a perilous course of puffing and peccadilloes to-morrow. Now, will you save a fellow, or not?"

Minnie saw that Victor considered his cause won without any good word from her. He kissed the tips of Miss Deane's fingers, and went joyfully away.

"There is no other way," said Ettie. "I wished to be out of mourning before my marriage, but that fellow needs a guardian and care-taker as much as a child, and then we can be married quietly, and no one need be foolish enough to gossip about us."

"You and Victor may be very happy," said Minnie, looking as if she were very miserable.

"He will always trouble me by his strange ways," said Ettie; "but we must have some trials in this world; and Victor has a good heart. But will George and you go with us some day to the church, in the quietest possible way?"

Minnie turned away her face, and the tears chased each other down her cheek.

"I don't know," said she, and, without another word, she rose, kissed Ettie, and went away.

Miss Deane was astonished. "Is it possible," said she, mentally, "that George and Minnie have troubles as Victor and I do? I thought Minnie was too perfect."

If Minnie had made a clean breast to Ettie on a former occasion, she would have been more able to judge her friend justly now. Ettie thought Minnie a saint upon earth; but Minnie had no such opinion of herself. Indeed, it is a very noticeable fact, that the saints have been remarkable scamps and sad sinners in their own estimation. Either they were great sinners, or they have a very bad judgment of sanctity; we leave others to settle which, remarking sapiently, that no one is any better than he should be, whatever his credit may be with the community, or the number of private friends who are persuaded that he never did a naughty act in his life.

Minnie went back to Mrs. Denby's and the beautiful dresses. She did not care for them; she did not care for what Mrs. Mayo was going to have, even if it surpassed hers a hundred times. By the way, the only difference between Mrs. Mayo's dress and Minnie's, was a difference of colour—the material was exactly the same. But Minnie had done loving or admiring her dress—she had done longing for the opera. It was Thursday, and she was still at the Denby's, and had not seen or heard from George. She had put off going home on sundry pretexts, till the dresses should be finished. They were done. She had seen Ettie Deane, and she was to dine at Mrs. Mayo's this evening.

Henry Denby was very hopeful, and therefore very happy. He had been a constant visitor in the sewing-room, and had read charming poetry charmingly. Minnie had been pleased with him, and she had not tried to conceal her pleasure. Mrs. Denby was charmed that her son was likely to marry one so worthy of him, for she never once admitted a doubt that her Henry would be accepted. Mattie was jubilant with her new friend, her new dress, and her pious pretty things. Alice Denby was always pleased when others were. She was one of those loving girls who are said to have no mind of their own, and I have never discovered that they had any belonging to anybody else. But they are sweet souls in a family, or a party, and make lovely wall-flowers, and meek and gentle wives, and very worrying and unhappy mothers; but what the world would be without them, I could never have any idea.

Poor Minnie is very glad to leave this happy family, though

she does not allow them to think any such thought of her. She expresses much love, many thanks, and a lively hope that they shall meet at the opera the next evening. Really, she has but one thought, and one wish. Her thought is of George Graham, and her sole wish now is—to see him. She longs to ask Jerry how George is, but she knows she cannot till she has left the Denby's, and then she thinks she is foolish, and she will wait till she reaches Mr. Mayo's. But when the carriage came, she found that Mr. Graham's driver had come for her. How her heart sunk when she knew she could make no inquiry till she reached Mrs. Mayo. She threw herself into the carriage. She did not take loving, or hardly common care of the box that contained the wonderful dress. She shrunk into a corner of the carriage, and felt so miserable that she did not even weep. Tears would have been a comfort to her. She felt as though she should be afraid to ask Mrs. Mayo to tell her anything of George. She would willingly have given the new dress to have had Jerry driving her home. Then she could have known a great deal of George, for Jerry had an apprehension of the state of mind and body of those he called his family.

CHAPTER XLIII.

WOMAN'S AGONY.

A GOOD while ago. Dr. Browne had been the repository of certain papers, executed by Frederick Sherwood, for the advantage of the lady who became his wife. It will be recollected that Dr. Browne had induced the belief in Mrs. Sherwood that he could or would place these papers in her hands. Therefore she had asked the Doctor for the papers, and when she failed to get them, she came to the conclusion that the Doctor was her enemy; that he had joined with her son; that a real deed had been made in favour of Caroline. When Mrs. Sherwood became convinced of this fact, she seemed to lose all affection for Frederick. She saw in him the robber of his poor old mother for a girl she hated, and who she knew did not love her son. Dr. Browne she regarded as little better than Frederick or Caroline. He was at best an accomplice.

It is said that vultures scent a battle-field from a great distance. On this principle Rawson seemed to be drawn to Mrs. Sherwood. He came ostensibly as a temperance man who wanted to reform her habits. What passed between them no one knew, but some powerful motive must have been presented to Mrs. Sherwood, for she changed outwardly very much, and in a comparatively short space of time. She first reformed her dress by getting a Sunday suit, very respectable and becoming to a woman of her age and position in society. She went the astonishing length of having a bonnet made by a milliner, with what she called a cap-front inside of it, and her mourning dress was relieved by a nice linen collar and cuffs. After this amount of decency had been successfully accomplished, Mrs. Sherwood began the good work of making herself something beside a scarecrow for every-day life; and then kindred reforms followed as a matter of course. In order to keep decent, she must not make a stable woman of herself. A great amount of hard and dirty work was therefore delegated to Tim; and Mrs. Sherwood changed very much in the matter of economics. She seemed, for the first time in her life, to have discovered that money was made to be used, instead of being exclusively hoarded. This did not hinder her from making hard bargains. Indeed, people said that, if possible, Mrs. Sherwood was sharper at a trade than ever; and Tim said she watched him more zealously than of old, to see that he wasted no fodder, and that everything was right in the world of hogs, horses, and cattle.

Mrs. Sherwood was punctual in her attendance at religious meetings, and very partial to conversing about Paradise. She lamented that Frederick would not reform, and threw out dark hints that he had never been right in his mind, since his injury, just before his marriage.

Mrs. Sherwood frequented the meetings of the Dorcas Society, and gave some cloth, and cut out a great many garments. Her skill and oversight and energy were very useful, and she began to be popular in her old age, in a manner quite surprising, when one considered the isolated and miserly way in which she had lived for years. Rawson quoted her as a bright example of the triumphs of temperance, and the minister considered her as a brand plucked from the burning. Fred and Tim wondered how she could let the brandy bottle alone, and, for aught I know, Mrs. Sherwood wondered herself. Never-

theless, there was no cheat about it, Mrs. Sherwood was as "steady as a deacon," and for ends of her own that she perfectly understood. She shunned Dr. Browne, and felt very bitterly toward him, but she had the art to conceal her dislike, and to speak favourably of him, and to recommend him to some members of the Dorcas Society who were in poor health, and in doubt about the little sugar pills.

Dr. Browne heard often how friendly Mrs. Sherwood was to him, but he intuitively knew that she was far from friendly, and yet he wondered what the old woman could have against him. He encouraged Mrs. Caroline to find out if she possibly could what Rawson and Mrs. Sherwood were plotting about. They were so very careful, and met so seldom, and spoke so prudently when any one was within hearing, that Caroline almost despaired of making any discovery, till the day when she stationed herself on the stairs that led to the cheese-room.

"He will not do it," she heard Rawson say, "barking dogs never bite. He's much more likely to run away than to hang himself."

"I don't know," said Mrs. Sherwood, "he seemed dreadfully in airnest then. He never speaks to his poor old mother now, unless about something he means, and can't help speaking about."

"You are placed in a very trying situation," said Rawson. "I am afraid you will be robbed of everything in the end. Frederick can't outlive you, that's certain. You have a good constitution, and your habits are regular now; while his are as bad as they well can be. If he should die, you have great difficulties to contend with. His child——"

The old woman elevated her voice, as if she did not care if all the world heard her.

"She'll never have a living child, I tell you; I am as sure of it as that he struck her down yesterday, and that he grows worse and worse every day."

Caroline had heard enough, and too much. She retreated to her room as quickly as her weak and burdened state would allow. Only her pride hindered her from going directly to her father, and claiming his protection for herself and her unborn babe. But pride prevailed. She could not bring herself to do it. She laid herself down on her bed, as she believed, never to rise from it again. She heard Tim in the ante-cham-

ber, and she bade the girl who waited on her to send him for her mother and Dr. Browne. Frederick was gone, she knew not where, and she was glad of his absence.

When her mother came, she said nothing of the insane violence from which she had suffered the day before—indeed, she had thought little of it, till she heard Mrs. Sherwood's dreadful words, for she had not seemed to herself to be as much hurt as on several previous occasions. Frederick had left her soon after the occurrence, and had not returned since. He was often away at shooting matches for two or three days.

And now the hour of Caroline's keenest agony was come—that time of terrible trial when doctors often have to make up for the delinquency of drunken, good-for-nothing, or unloving husbands.

Well was it for Caroline that the miserable husband and father was away. Well was it that she was in the care of her kind mother, and of a firm and skilful physician. How much more bitter would have been these hours in the presence of a husband who inspired only terror and disgust.

What words can tell the agony of the proud woman with no love in her heart—with no support from her husband's sustaining affection and devotion—with worse than death-pangs upon her, and the fearful sentence ringing in her ears, "She will never have a living child."

The long night crept slowly away, and the dawn brought no relief; and then the day followed, and so slowly, in the same unutterable anguish. She prayed to die, but death comes not at call. Her mother watched and waited upon her with tenderest care, with an innate delicacy, never inquiring after her husband; and when in helping to change her garments she discovered a frightful bruise that would have been fatal to Caroline, had not another life intervened between her and destruction, she made no sign. Her alarm was great, but with praiseworthy firmness she concealed it from Caroline, and took an early opportunity to consult Dr. Browne.

"Doctor," said she, "I am sure Caroline is killed. That drunken wretch has been beatin' her to a pumice. She is black and blue as purple damsons, and I am sure she will die. She won't tell of him, and she thinks death tells no tales; but I can tell him that murder will out, and hide where he will, justice will find him."

"I do not think Caroline will die. The worst we have to

fear at present is a still-born infant. Poor girl! I wish she had died before she saw Fred Sherwood," said the Doctor.

"If wishes was hosses," Mrs. Brandon began, but she checked the proverb as irrelevant, and went back to the sufferer.

The day wore tediously away, and then another long night waned to the morning, and then the agony was over, and the prophecy fulfilled, "She will never have a living child." Her babe was born dead!

About midnight Frederick had returned. Tim had put up the horses, but he had shunned Sherwood; for, as he afterwards said, "he looked wild-like, and I was afraid of him." Fred did not come into the house, and no one thought much about him till Caroline was out of danger, and then Dr. Browne sent Tim to the barn to seek him. He came back too much frightened to speak coherently, and Dr. Browne went himself.

There was Frederick Sherwood suspended between his horses by a rope-halter fastened around his neck. His right hand was clutched fast in Vixen's mane, and he was quite dead. The Doctor satisfied himself of this fact, and then he returned to Caroline. He found Tim and Mrs. Susan standing in the hall outside of Caroline's door, talking of the terrible event. Tim had recovered the use of speech after the Doctor left him.

Dr. Browne decided that Caroline was not to be told at present; but his decision was vain. She had heard him tell her mother that Frederick had hung himself; she knew that she was a widow, and childless, but this was nevertheless the happiest hour in her life. She was free from pain— agony, for which there is no expression and no definition but the anguish itself.

The kind doctor was distressed for his patient and friend. He did not like to leave her in ignorance; he was afraid that some one might tell her less gently than himself. The poor, injured girl seemed to him to be his victim, though her marriage had surely been her own act. He sat down by her, and his eyes ran over with tears. Caroline languidly looked up at him. She wanted to sleep; her only desire seemed to herself to be, that she might sleep forever. She rejoiced that Fred could not disturb her, and torture her in his drunken madness and fury. She saw the Doctor's tears, and beckoned

him to her. He put his face near to hers, and she whispered very softly—

"Let me rest; I know that he is dead, but let me rest."

The Doctor pressed her hand. He was greatly relieved. She whispered again—

"Go away now; they will tell me when I wake. Don't be troubled, dear friend, *let me rest*," and she sunk to sleep before the Doctor was gone.

CHAPTER XLIV.

GEORGE GRAHAM OUT OF THE BATTLE.

As the carriage containing Minnie drew up at Mr. Mayo's, she saw Jerry standing by the steps. It is questionable whether Miss Brandon had ever been so glad to see any person during the period of her natural life. Jerry said to the driver—

"You'd better not git off the box, Mr. Skeggs, till I speak to Miss Minnie." And then he said to the lady, "You are wanted right away over to Mr. Graham's, for Mr. George is very sick. Now you jest tell Mr. Skeggs to drive there, and let me come into the carriage along with you, and I'll tell ye the long and the short on't."

Minnie gave the desired direction to the driver, and Jerry doubled his long self into the seat opposite her, and said—

"We was too late with the prayers, and the watch, Miss Minnie; but, then, as Nancy says, it is Providence to break him off of always bein' with his father in that ere hot room, to see if he did not want nothin'. There he was with his eyes bright enough to burn a hole into you, and his cheeks a flaming red, and he was a tostin' his arms like a windmill. I was scairt, tho' I'd expected it all along; and say I to myself, Jerry, you must tend to things sharp to now, and so I got some water and bathed his head and his stomach, and put a a wet cloth on his forehead; and then I sent Skeggs right off arter Mr. Strong, the old gentleman's favourite, and when he come, I felt easy about the one that don't know when he's well used, and I went back to Mr. George, and found that all

I'd done was about as much use as droppin' a drop of water into a big fire; and so I went after the Doctor. I know'd he was one o' the sort that don't do no hurt; and I did not know but there was some wonder work about his sugar pills, and that they did good like that ere watch did to Mr. Frederick; and, besides, I know'd I couldn't do nothin', not even to wash the poor soul, unless I had a doctor to back me; and so I went for the same one that tends to Mr. Graham—and he's a right down sensible man—and he gave Mr. George somethin' in a tumbler, and told me to give a spoonful of it every half hour; and then he said that a raal old-fashioned sweat would do him a sight of good. So I put a wet towel on his head, another round his waist, and loaded on blankets till he hated me, but as he was cold as well as hot, I coaxed him to stay till the sweat started, and then I got clean clothes out of the clothes pantry, between the rooms, and I washed him, and put everything clean on him, and round him, and that was the fust comfort he had; and then I got Mr. Strong to look to him, and told him I was comin' arter you. I run over to Mr. Mayo's, and they said you was comin' at five o'clock. I did not tell 'em that Mr. George was sick, cause too many cooks spile the broth, and I jest wanted you to come fust and git things straightened up. Now, that's the long and the short on't, Miss Minnie, and do you think I've done right?"

"I think you have done the best that was possible under the circumstances," said Minnie, "and I am very thankful to you."

"Now," said Jerry, "I want you to see Mr. George all alone by hisself; for I think you haint felt jest right to one another a long time back; and though Mrs. Mayo is a butiful woman, and a generous mistress, and a good friend, I can see that she's been more'n willin' to hev you and Mr. George git to loggerheads. She told me one day, she wished I'd tell you somethin' about Mr. George's temper. Well, miss, the long and the short o' that is, Mr. George is good natur'd when he's pleased, like other folks, onless he's hed to stay in a hot room, and then he aint good nohow. He's got a temper to knock a fellow down that was mean to him or to somebody he loved; but he haint got it in him to be mean hisself. He's one of the honorablest fellows that I ever see," said Jerry, "and he aint no more relation to his folks than he is to me. But here we are, Miss Minnie. You go right up stairs, and I'll tell the

housekeeper, for she thinks a world o' you, an' she'll be glad to hev you see to Mr. George, for she loves him like he was her own baby, and she had not a grain o' peace till I went arter you. He's in the front room, next storey," said Jerry.

Minnie ran up stairs, and into George's room, more impatient to see him than she had ever been to see any one in her life.

George caught her hands, and drew her to him, as the drowning man catches the rope or oar.

"Oh, Minnie, my darling!" said he, "do I see you once more?"

"And you have been very sick all this time, dearest George, and I have thought you were angry and would not come to me; and Jerry tells me you have been getting worse for days. But now I have come to nurse you, and we will have you well again shortly."

"I shall never be well again while I am doing nothing in this horrid city," said George, with the fierceness of fever.

"Remember, dearest, that this city is your home; and that you have been doing the work of a dutiful son."

"The work that any clod of a man or woman could do as well or better than I."

"Well, we must not talk of work now."

"Ah, I know," said George, calming himself, holding her hand, and trying to be happy in her love, but his fever flamed up, his head ached, and the soft hand was soon relinquished in restless tossings.

Minnie went for Jerry. She found him outside the chamber-door, waiting to be called.

"Ah, Jerry, you must doctor me," said George. "I have but one request—yes, two: let me have as much water as I can drink, and don't let anybody into my room, but you two and the doctor. If Cornelia comes, don't let her come in, Minnie," and, as Jerry passed into the closet for water, he said, "if you do, I'm afraid I shall strangle her." He said this fiercely, wildly, but a moment after he added, pleasantly, "I have been cultivating a fearful temper of late, Minnie, and Cornelia has been helping me."

He was cut short in his communication by Jerry, who said—

"Miss Minnie is to go down to dinner, and I'm to git you fixed fust rate while she is gone."

Minnie saw that her presence excited George. She feared she should be a bad nurse, and she went away, feeling that Jerry was the only perfect nurse in the world.

Mrs. Duncan, the housekeeper, welcomed Minnie, being sure that Mr. George would get better now she had come; but Minnie had no such confidence. The fierceness of the fever, and the mental excitement frightened her. She felt sure she should be of little use. She feared to stay, and all the world could not have made her leave George in this crisis.

When she returned to the sick-room, she found the patient swathed in wet towels, and quietly asleep.

"You see the medicine begins to operate," said Jerry. "He'll maybe sleep an hour, and he'll be all the quieter if you sits here beside of him."

Minnie sat, and wondered at the strange thing we call sickness. Here was a young man, in the first flush of manhood's full strength, struck down and made as helpless as a babe. Racking pains, fierce fever, icy chills, and almost delirium, were upon him. And why was all this? The wherefore of this change, this great suffering, occupied Minnie's thoughts. Nothing that is generally regarded as hardship had been laid upon George. True, he had stayed in a warm room, but his father had been for weeks confined in the same heat, and greater, for he always heaped fuel upon his fire when George or Jerry left him alone for a few moments.

Minnie came to the conclusion that George's illness was mainly caused by mental trouble and fretting. The wear and tear of mental excitement, the indefinite postponement of his usefulness; and within the last tend ays, she could not but admit to herself that Mrs. Mayo had said something to George about her that disturbed him.

Minnie had not been a long time with Mrs. Mayo without coming to a knowledge of her way of accomplishing her ends. But the lady was so beautiful, so charming, that Minnie was never willing to admit, even in her secret heart, that she was managing and insincere. Now, Minnie was grieved, for she was afraid that George had been *managed* by his sister. It was rather an intuition than a certainty, but it was destined to be confirmed now, for George awoke with a start, and looking wildly at her, he said—

"Did Henry Denby give you a dress?"

There was something fierce, insane, and terrible in young

Graham's look, and in the tones of his voice, as he asked this question, and, without waiting for an answer, he raised his voice still higher, and again asked—

"Did Henry Denby give you a dress?"

"He never did," said Minnie, mildly. "He never gave me anything but a copy of 'Herbert's Poems.'"

"That woman is a velvet fiend," said George; but Jerry was instantly at hand, and Minnie went away that he might bathe and quiet the patient.

When the Doctor came, Minnie waited impatiently for him to come down stairs, that she might learn his opinion.

"Simple case of typhoid fever, miss. He will be over the worst of it in a week—five weeks under the old practice, Miss. If the remedies are given carefully to-night, we shall see a decided change to-morrow. I am much pleased with the man who takes care of Mr. George; he is a character, Miss—a character, and no mistake. Good evening. I shall look in early to-morrow."

Minnie had a sleepless night. George's words were in her mind all the time. How could he know anything of her dress? It was close in the box where it was packed, in the room above his, where she was sleeping. Surely George was not clairvoyant. The only conclusion she could come to was, that Mrs. Mayo knew of her new dress, and that she had either told George, or hinted to him, that it was a present from Henry Denby. She was grieved and angry, for she felt sure that George had been made sick by suffering caused by this miserable tale.

Minnie arose early, neither rested nor refreshed. She found George a little better, but the change was not as great as she had hoped. She stayed with him but little when he was awake, because she found that her presence excited instead of soothing him. The Doctor was encouraged, and bade her be of good cheer. She tried to read, but could not. About noon Mrs. Mayo called. Her husband had sent a note from the store stating that George was down with fever. She supposed that Minnie was still at Mr. Denby's. Minnie was in the parlour when she came, and, seeing her from the window, she stopped her on her way upstairs to see her father, who was now on the same floor with George.

"You here, my dear?" said Mrs. Mayo, in real surprise.

"Yes; George sent for me yesterday, but I cannot stay in

the room with him. The Doctor does not allow him to see company."

"Of course not. Company is very bad in typhus; aud then the fever is contagious. It might be very dangerous for you to go in the room. I will see George, and take you home with me."

"I beg you will not go into George's room, Mrs. Mayo," said Minnie, gravely. "I want to speak with you."

Mrs. Mayo was all attention.

"Did you know that Mrs. Denby gave me a dress when I was there?" said Minnie.

"I did not," said Mrs. Mayo. "Why do you ask the question?"

"Because some one has told George that Henry Denby gave me a dress."

"I told him that Henry Denby had bought a beautiful dress for each of his sisters and one for you, which I knew to be a fact, for I selected the three dresses."

"But Mrs. Denby presented me my dress," said Minnie.

"Well, that was all very proper, my dear. Just like Henry Denby's delicacy. But what business is it to George who makes you a present? What a bear he is to be sure!"

Minnie looked full in Mrs. Mayo's eyes. "I am engaged to your brother," said she, "and he has a right to know if a gentleman pays me attentions or makes me presents. I should never have received a present from Henry Denby, unless it were a book, or some thing that he might have given to me as the most distant of his friends, and I am very sorry that George has been pained by thinking that I had been guilty of a great impropriety."

"You must remember, my dear," said Mrs. Mayo, coldly, "that a young lady who is clandestinely engaged to a young man has no protection from her engagement. As George's sister, I ought to have known of your engagement. I could have shielded you both from suffering. As it is, I cannot reproach myself. But I think I ought to see George."

At this moment the Doctor called, and Minnie glided into the hall and asked him if he thought it safe for George to see his sister.

"Mrs. Mayo can go up a moment with me," said the Doctor; but, going first into the room, he changed his mind, and sent Mrs. Mayo away, saying that he could not admit

any one but those who took care of his patient till there was a change for the better.

Mrs. Mayo was angry—angry with Minnie for being engaged without her consent or knowledge—angry that her plan with regard to Henry Denby should be defeated—angry that her clever little piece of gossip should come back to her; but she mastered her indignation on her way back to the parlour, as a polite woman should in a matter where anger can do no manner of good, and she insisted on taking her dear Minnie home with her, "as George will have every attention from the Doctor and Jerry;" but she soon found that Minnie was immovable. She said her place was by George.

"I can go in the room when he is asleep," said she, "and then the Doctor says this dreadful excitability will soon give way to a more quiet state, and then I can stay in the room, and wait upon him, and comfort him."

"I hope we shall find that his dreadful temper has been only a symptom of the approach of this fever," said Mrs. Mayo. "I can't bear to think that he has been responsible for the fits of anger I have seen him indulge in. If he has been really himself for some time past, Minnie, I would break an engagement with him if he were a king upon the throne."

Minnie did not speak, and Mrs. Mayo began to hope for Henry Denby; and in this hope, and with many sweet words, she took her leave.

Minnie was very cold and still for a time, and she thought, "I never want to go to Mrs. Mayo's home again. O that I could see my own dear father." The door bell rang, and Minnie's heart seemed to leap responsive to the sound. A moment after she heard her own dear father's voice in the hall. She almost fainted upon his bosom, and the happy father felt sure he had never been so happy before.

CHAPTER XLV.

DINNER AND DIPLOMACY.

When Mrs. Mayo had comforted herself about "poor, dear papa," she began to prepare for the opera. She had arranged

that Henry Denby and his sisters should dine with her, and then go to the opera. She was sadly troubled how to account for the absence of Miss Brandon. She would not for the world have Henry know that George was sick, and that Minnie was watching over him. Mrs. Mayo was a woman fertile in expedients. She began to dress and to think. She wanted a reason, and no reason would present itself. The old expedient of a headache would not do, for Mattie would insist on seeing Minnie. She thought of saying that her father had kept Minnie, but that would not do, for Henry would insist on going for her. She wrought at her toilet in diplomatic difficulties that would have puzzled Talleyrand. As the business of renovating her complexion went on, shadows and wrinkles deepened on the face of Mrs. Mayo.

It was so abominably stupid and unkind of George to monopolise Minnie on this night of all nights. She had so wanted to see the effect of Minnie's new dress, and above all, she wished to test the effect of contrast between Minnie's dress and her own. There had been collusion between Mrs. Mayo's dressmaker and Minnie's, and Mrs. Mayo had adopted Minnie's pattern, except that the matron chose to unveil her motherly charms, while the maid modestly concealed hers. The costly lace was of the same pattern, and the *tout ensemble* was intended to say, "these two ladies are an elder and a younger sister," or at the worst "a marvellously young mamma and her eldest daughter." Mrs. Mayo had intended to support the sisterly hypothesis by every argument in her power.

"What shall I tell the Denby's?" said Mrs. Mayo, mentally, as she observed the effect of pearl white on her queenly shoulders. She had already asked herself the question fifty times, and no satisfactory answer came.

When she had pencilled her eyebrows, and hid intrusive rays of silver, the question came again. As many as the hidden grey hairs beneath her shining bands were these ugly interrogatives. She added the needed warmth, as the artists say, to her cheeks, and the distressing cream colour of her face vanished beneath the touch of "Persian bloom," and still the answer came not to the ever-recurring question. The young people were to come at four o'clock. How could she amuse them for two mortal hours till the advent of dinner? Mrs. Mayo had got herself honourably, beautifully out of a great many perilous and unpleasant affairs. But she seemed to

have found her Pultowa, her Austerlitz, her Waterloo of defeat at last.

I wish Charles Mayo were here, thought she. Now Charlie was the most direct of men. He might advise me. Think of John Hodge advising Machiavelli! I must tell him not to know anything about Minnie if he calls at papa's as he comes home. And I must tell the Denby's that something has happened that I must not divulge. No; that will not do. I must tell them that a friend of Minnie's from Easton is in the city, and has sent for her, and that I lost the card of address, that it got thrown in the fire, but that the friend is a lady; and yet this seems so unsatisfactory. I never was so annoyed. Oh, there is Charles Mayo's step. The lady was relieved, she did not know why. She actually admitted her husband into the kingdom of cosmetics, and she burst forth—

"My dear, I never was so annoyed in my life. I am to go to the opera, you know, and Minnie was to go too, and the Denby young people are to dine here, and George insists on Minnie's staying with him. He is half crazed with a cold and headache, and Minnie is good-natured and silly enough to give up and stay, but I don't want these young people to know of her doing such a thing. It is so improper, you know. I think she and Henry Denby are already a little partial, and her miserable good nature to George may cost her a good husband."

"Cornelia, dear," said Mr. Mayo, soberly, "I have just come from father's. George is very bad with typhus fever. Mr. Brandon has come, and he and Minnie will watch with him. They are both very much alarmed about him. I really think you ought not to go to the opera."

Mrs. Mayo's eyes sparkled with delight. She had found the way out of her intolerable strait, but true to herself, she said to her husband, "You make me so happy by having such a real interest in poor, dear George. I would not go to the opera for the world, if you think I had better not." She rang the bell for her errand boy, and said, "James, run to Dr. Williams' as fast as ever you can, and ask him to call over here directly."

"Now, dear," said she, "I shall know exactly how George is, not from those nervous people, but from the Doctor. I shall tell the Denbys that Mr. Brandon has taken his daughter away for the night, and by some unaccountable inadvertency

I shall have no idea whether they are staying with friends or at a hotel. Mr. Brandon's poetical oddity—the eccentricity of genius you know," said she, laughing, "must cover the whole of it, and save Min. her beau. But are you really concerned about George, my love?"

"I don't know. He looks ugly, and hot, and red, and yellow; but I am no doctor. I only saw him for a moment when he was asleep, for Jerry guards him like a very dragon."

"I think one always looks badly when one is asleep in a hard cold," said Mrs. Mayo. "I was there at noon, and I judged it was only a cold—a very bad sort of influenza perhaps, and you know I am much more used to sickness than you. I think he will come out all right to-morrow. Did you see papa?—of course you did; and how is he?"

"Making sad havoc with crackers and coals, I think. He eats, and then puts on coals, and then he eats again, and varies by dressing, and undressing, and scolding poor Strong for starving and freezing him. It seems very strange to see him so. What a wreck he is to be sure. I wonder if I shall live to come to such a state? I hope not," said Mr. Mayo, shuddering.

"Oh, darling, you can never scold," said Mrs. Mayo, smiling. "That you can never come to. So you need give yourself no uneasiness."

"It is sad to think of the human mind sinking into such a dreadful imbecility," said Mr. Mayo.

"And yet one cannot help being amused at poor, dear papa," said Mrs. Mayo, "and then it is his fate, and we must not make ourselves miserable about it; but there is the bell—Dr. Williams has come, I think. Look at me, darling—am I decent?"

"Magnificent," said Mr. Mayo, admiringly. "Cornelia, will you never grow one day older? Do you know that you are forty?"

Mrs. Mayo playfully put her hand on his mouth.

"O those odious years; do not mention them. I thought I should die of grief when I was forty, and every year since I have been so miserable at my birthday."

"And yet you don't look thirty," said Mr. Mayo. "You are more beautiful than when we were married twenty—"

Again Mrs. Mayo's hand rested on her too frank husband's mouth.

The girl came to say that Dr. Williams waited, and Mrs. Mayo ran down stairs and asked after George with great tenderness.

"How is my darling brother, doctor?"

"He is doing well," said the doctor. "I shall bring him round in a very few days. Under the old practice the young man would be——"

"Then you think there is nothing alarming in his case, doctor," said Mrs. Mayo, interrupting him. "I suppose you consider the fever the result of a severe cold?"

"Undoubtedly. He had remained in the overheated atmosphere of his father's room, and——"

"That is just what I thought, doctor. I was sure you would say so—you always know at a glance what ails any of us. I was going to watch with brother to-night, but I have friends to dine, and could not go till late."

"Better not go, Mrs. Mayo," said the doctor. "He is much better with his nurse-man, Jerry, as they call him. That person is a character. I have not seen such a——"

"That is just what I think," said Mrs. Mayo. "Jerry is such a fine caretaker that I suppose any interruption would be really bad; but you know George is my only brother, our precious pride and crown, doctor. How can I stay from him?"

"There is nothing to be alarmed about, I assure you, Mrs. Mayo. I have often——"

"I am sure you must know, doctor. I have such confidence in you that I will not go over to-night. I will be advised, and give my time to my friends, with the feeling that dear George has the best doctor and the best caretaker in the city, and that I should be a mere impertinence if I went. But then it is so hard to make women behave sensibly when their affections are concerned, but you can influence them in the right direction if any one can. I am very sorry to have detained you so long, doctor; but you are so kind," and she bowed the physician out.

A plain, excellent man, for whom Mrs. Mayo had no respect, was Dr. Williams. She would not have interrupted Dr. Le Grand Fitznoodle in the time of his brief reign, but would have listened to him with reverent attention.

Mrs. Mayo went up stairs to put a few more finishing touches to her artistic elegance, and to tell her husband the result of her consultation with the doctor.

"Just as I thought, my dear. George has taken a severe cold. The doctor says he must be quiet for a day or two. He does not consider the attack of consequence enough for me to go and see him. I did not tell him I was there to-day, and that I shall certainly go to-morrow. I am glad it is no worse, for George's sake, and the Denby's. I do not like to break engagements, but I consider my first engagement in this world is to you, and if you want me, I am here, and shall go nowhere else to-night. But, my dear, you must go with us. Henry has taken a box for five, and Minnie is away. Now do favour us with your company, darling. We shall all be so happy."

Mr. Mayo consented kindly, as he always did when his wife asked anything of him. He was always happy to make his queenly wife happy.

Mrs. Mayo met her guests in all the radiant splendor of point lace and moire antique, her jewels flashing, like her eyes, with lambent light. Subdued into a proper state of regret, she exclaimed, with joy in her heart—

"O, I am so sorry—our dear Minnie! I really can't bear to tell you."

Henry was all attention; but Mattie cried out, "Where is she? I have been wanting to see her all day. Do tell me where to find her. I'll run to the top of the house, or the end of the street. Mrs. Mayo, where is she?"

"That is just what I can't tell you, my dear. I have not been as much disappointed in a year, but Miss Brandon's dear, odd father has come, and he has taken her away to spend the night with him. Is not it dreadful?"

"But where are they?" said Henry Denby.

"That's more than I can tell. Whether they are at a hotel, or with friends, I cannot tell. Mr. Brandon is so eccentric that I should never think of asking him where he was going to spend the night, with any expectation of his knowing unless he were in bed," said Mrs. Mayo, laughing. "But I am so distressed to have our dear Minnie clutched up and carried off just at the moment when we all want her to complete our happiness."

"Oh, I can't bear it," said Mattie. "I am so sorry."

"I am so sorry," echoed Alice.

"It is the meanest disappointment I have had in a year," said Henry, getting up a little courage.

"Really, a very mean disappointment," said Alice.

"I want to go and find her," said Mattie, impulsively.

"I wish we could go and find her," said Alice.

"It would be a hopeless quest," said Mrs. Mayo, "so we must give up the light on our landscape, and do the best we can with our sombre tints. I have persuaded Mr. Mayo to give us his company, and we must all be as cheerful as we can under the circumstances."

And Mrs. Mayo was cheerful, and happy, and brilliant, and she almost made her guests forget their sudden bereavement. But Henry could not so willingly resign his anticipated happiness as the rest of the company. He had paid "a magnificent price," "a tall figure," for the joy that was so unceremoniously plucked away from him. He felt an unpleasant foreboding. Minnie seemed to have relinquished her engagement all too readily. Why could she not persuade her father to spend the evening with Mr. Mayo. It was too cruel. It affected his appetite. He did not want any dinner, and Alice tried hard to imitate him, but she was genuinely hungry, and found her efforts unproductive.

Ah, Minnie! did you once think of Henry Denby, of the opera, or of the wonderful dress, that long evening, when you sat at your father's feet and laid your head in his lap, or when you glided in and out of George's room, to see how fared the sufferer? He saw Mr. Brandon; Jerry said he must. "I tell ye now," said Jerry, "it will do his heart good to look o' Mr. Brandon. He'll hev pleasant dreams arter it."

George was rejoiced; and after holding Mr. Brandon's hand for a few minutes, he sunk into a quiet sleep, and during the evening he seemed to rest as he had not done before.

"I told ye so," said Jerry. "It done his heart good to see a dear, old friend. You'll see him begin to look up, and be chipper to-morrow."

Minnie! Minnie! Will you ever think of Henry Denby again? That good young man who just now thinks of nothing but you. What will he do when he comes to know just how you regard him? Will he become a Puseyite clergyman, leaning toward celibacy, or will he make the whole journey to Rome, become a priest, and therefore never have any need of any special tenderness from you, or any of woman kind? Heaven help the poor fellow, when your engagement to George Graham transpires.

Henry made a wretched dinner. He had no idea that Mrs. Mayo could be uninteresting to him, but she was. She kept up against his sadness for a time, but Mrs. Mayo had the idea that, for the most part, she was born to be ministered to, rather than to minister; and when Henry did not respond to her cheerful sallies, she just left him to chew the cud of sweet or bitter fancy, and devoted herself in the sweetest possible way to her husband. Mr. Mayo was duly grateful.

"O, I never want to go anywhere without you, my dear husband. No one else can understand me, no one else can appreciate me, or sympathise with me. All the men are bears, dear, but you." Ordinarily, Mrs. Mayo used to say that Charles Mayo was the dearest fellow in the world, but that he could not understand her.

To-night the little party that was gathered in Henry Denby's box was the one point under the burning glass where the rays meet, and the fire kindles. So much feminine loveliness, so much exquisite lace, made every one look who could get half a sight, and the enjoyment with which Mrs. Mayo listened to the dulcet music of Donizetti was in strong contrast with the intense disappointment and aggravating misery of Henry Denby. He wished himself at home a dozen times. Doubtless if he had been there, he would have wished himself back again.

Mrs. Mayo was radiant with beauty and happiness, for her dress was the perfection of elegance, and its exceeding costliness seemed justified by its exceeding beauty, and she was well content to be admired by her husband, and everybody else who looked upon her. She went home from the opera with a new sensation. She bade Henry Denby good night with a sweet affectation of sympathy, but she had been so successful by reason of Mr. Brandon's coming, and all the admiration of the evening, that she could not grieve for the young man's first real disappointment.

As she entered her own door she was met by Victor Vincent—

"He is dying, Mrs. Mayo, the dear old master. You must go to him. He wants only you—nothing else earthly can satisfy him."

Mrs. Mayo turned to her husband. Tears streamed down her cheeks. (N.B.—"Persian Bloom" is indelible.) "I must go to him, dearest," she said, and again she entered

the carriage, without once thinking of her dress. She loved the master. Through all her worldliness the fire of his genius had melted its way, and the calm light of his beautiful soul was a heavenly light to her. She hoped that he would be spared to her a little longer, till she knelt beside him with the death dew and the death pallor on his face, and his breath faint and short, as an infant's. A vision of loveliness, she knelt before him, and held his hands, and laid her face upon his, while her tears rained upon him. He revived at once, as by a miracle. The loved presence was a potent spell.

"My beautiful one! Have you come."

She wiped the cold damp from his face, and kissed his forehead and his eyes.

"My master! O, my master!" she murmured, in an agony, "do not leave me! Oh! do not leave me."

"Beautiful angel of my life!" said the old man, "I must go, and you will come. What a friend, what a daughter you have been to me. Keep my harp till you come. I am at peace. I go to the orchestral harmonies. My freed spirit shall be with you till you come, and then you will be with me eternally. Give my love to your noble husband. Tell him I leave you to his best care and his holiest love. You have been the light of my life these last, best years. O, how I thank the Divine Being that He gave me your loving friendship."

There was again a sinking of the momentary energy,—again the failing breath and the death-sweat told the friend that the dear one was departing. He had bade them all farewell. He had spoken words of comfort to Nancy, and had sweetly allowed her to speak of Providence. He had given her his little savings of money; and to Miss Deane he had given his music, except some choice pieces which went with the harp to Mrs. Mayo. All this he had done before Mrs. Mayo came. Now his last moments were all given to her, and to his God. Next to God he loved his friend, who had been most kind to him, and he invested her with many imaginary charms and goodnesses, for to him she was always kind, loving, and appreciative. Mrs. Mayo had no real faith or trust in immortality—of an individual spiritual existence beyond the grave. She played with piety, but alas! she did not really believe, and she felt that when the master died she would *lose* him. Oh, the misery of loss! It is to be supposed

that, as a professed Christian, she had some faith, some hope, but she had no certainty. The other world might not have been *all* dark to her, but it was not a *real* world, like Europe or Asia, to her. And when she saw the last faint breath flicker and fail in the bosom of the master—when she could no longer feel his heart beat beneath the pressure of her hand—she turned away in a great grief, the grief of desolation and loss.

The faint breath had failed, the dim eye was darkened forever, the fluttering pulse was still, and the slight form was cold. The dear master was gone to the harmonies of another world, and Mrs. Mayo would not be comforted. She so clung to the bed of death that Victor went hastily for her husband. Not until Mr. Mayo came, and took her in his arms and whispered words of love and consolation, and assured her that her friend still lived—still loved her, and was with her a spiritual presence, did she cease her agonising sobs.

When the dear form was shrouded for the coffin, Mr. Mayo led her gently into the room to look once more upon the calm features of the dead. Again her grief burst forth—again her tears fell abundantly. She kissed the marble forehead of him whom she loved as a father, and with a tenderness that her own father had never awakened in her heart. And then her husband almost carried her to her carriage, and she went home with her deep sorrow.

Gradually she grew calm, and then she became interested in the funeral, and determined to dress in deep mourning, and the thought of the last resting place at Greenwood, and the beauty she would create around the spot where the hallowed dust should repose, gave her much comfort. For years Mrs. Mayo had wished to visit Europe, and especially Italy.

"Promise me, dearest," said she to her husband, "that you will go with me to Italy, that I may there, in that classic land, myself design a fitting monument for my master, and see that it is properly executed."

Mr. Mayo promised, and he thought also how the beautiful design would astonish the artists gathered from all the world, and Mrs. Mayo thought how charmingly she would entwine her name with that of some Canova, Thorwaldsen, or modern Michael Angelo, and also that of the dear master.

CHAPTER XLVI.

CAROLINE IS CONSOLED.

Death is always solemn and affecting, but death by suicide is doubly so. Frederick Sherwood had left his wife in an insane fit of anger, and she never saw him again. Terrible thoughts, sad feelings of remorse, crowded upon her when she came again to the consciousness of every-day life. She felt all the misery of having made a most unsuccessful mercenary marriage, for she could not but see that Mrs. Sherwood and Rawson would prove without difficulty that the will and deed made by Frederick in her favour, were made by an insane man. The use of one-third of Frederick Sherwood's real estate for her life time, was all the law would allow her. Poor girl! Would she have endured one hour of her great anguish, or one hour of the terror with which she had anticipated her husband's coming home in the night, for all she was likely to gain? No—not for all Frederick Sherwood owned, nor for the whole world added thereto. Poor girl! She was indeed awfully punished. Would sorrow subdue her selfishness? Would she become wiser and better through affliction?

Caroline's weakness and suffering were great, and likely to be long continued. Mrs. Brandon, in the devotion of her great love, had left her husband to the tender mercies of hired service, and she had not once left her daughter in a week. Caroline was grateful. In her weakness, she feared Mrs. Sherwood almost as much as she had feared her husband. She clung to her mother and Dr. Browne for protection. The self-accusing heart of the doctor turned tenderly toward the suffering one—suffering, as he continually felt, greatly through fault of his. He wished to atone, in some small measure, by his incessant and most kindly care.

Mrs. Sherwood had been in a state of strange and impassive stolidity since her son's death. She had stood over the corpse; she had looked her last look into his coffin without a tear. She followed the hearse to the grave in the same stony way, and returned to her home, and refrained from ardent spirits.

"She does not mean to play a losing game with my poor Caroline," said the doctor to himself. The minister came to comfort her, and felt that he had succeeded in his mission. Rawson came, and Tim said "she brightened up a lot arter she had talked with him a half an hour." She avoided Dr. Browne very carefully, but if by any chance she passed him, she gave him the coldest and most cutting recognition.

Caroline longed to be moved to her old home. That home seemed a sacred place to her now, and she was comforted that her own property was secure. "O mamma," said she, "let me go home once more, and I promise I will never, never leave you. How hard, and selfish, and unwise I was. I promise always to take your advice and dear papa's in future; only let me go home."

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Susan, wiping her eyes on her apron, "home is home, if it's ever so homely."

"My home was a dear, sweet home," said Caroline. "You were always kind to me, and, O mamma, what awful suffering I might have been spared if I had only listened to you."

"Yes, dear, two heads is better than one," said Mrs. Susan.

"When can I be moved *home?*" said Caroline, dwelling sweetly on the word.

"I hope soon, dear, but we must leave all to the doctor. What a man he is, to be sure! He watches you as if he was your own mother. It's well for the sick that he never had a family of his own, for he has to go here, and there, and everywhere all the time. Here he is, to be sure. Ah, doctor, talkin' of an angel, you are sure to see his wings," said Mrs. Susan. "My poor Carrie wants to know when she can be moved home."

"Just now," said the doctor. "I have had a hammock made on purpose. We shall put a feather bed in it, with Mrs. Caroline lying upon it, and wrap her up just like a baby. Two men will carry her straight to her own room, in your house, where Mr. Brandon has everything ready, and we will all have thanksgiving there to-night."

"Caroline only said, "Mamma, lock up my things, and put the keys in your pocket;" and then she looked at the doctor so gratefully, and with such a sweet confiding affection, that he felt that if she had ever blamed him, she did not blame him now. He was so happy and thankful for this

assurance, that he would not have cared for the good will of a hundred like Mrs. Sherwood.

Mrs. Sherwood seemed to have forgotten that Frederick was her son, after his marriage, and what she considered her great wrongs, and she was equally oblivious of the fact that Dr. Browne had ever been her doctor. If as inveterate a toper as Mrs. Sherwood had been could forget or overcome her love for strong drink, we may be sure she could forget natural or artificial affections.

The moment Caroline was out of the house, she sent for Rawson.

"Now," said she, "that come-by-chance is gone, and I want to know what I shall do?"

"You will support your character of a Christian by becoming moderation. You will not touch anything of her's."

"But her things shan't stay in my house," said the irate Mrs. Sherwood.

"The house is one-third hers as long as she lives, at the best turn things can take for you," said Rawson.

"Well, then, she may put her things in her third."

"But the house is not divided yet, Mrs. Sherwood, and neither you nor Mrs. Frederick can tell what belongs to you, and what don't. I advise you to keep quiet till she moves about the property, and then you can put her out of court very quick. But you must be very good, and not set people against you by doing any foolish thing. Keep your head clear; I'll see you through, if you will give me Vixen and Smash, and go straight."

"Well, as I said before, you shall have 'em, if they are worth a thousand dollars a-piece, if you will stand my friend clean through. I know they are the finest span of horses in this State; and there ain't many would say as I say, that you shall have 'em for a little neighbourly kindness."

"But you could never sell them, they are so vicious; and you could never use them, for the same good reason. So you only give me what is of no value to you."

"Well, well, you shall have 'em if you stand my friend clean through," said Mrs. Sherwood contentedly.

"We must have Jerry back to prove Frederick's insanity, and Dr. Browne would swear to the same thing if he told the truth."

"I don't believe in him," said Mrs. Sherwood; "and as to Jerry, do you suppose they would allow him his oath?"

"I guess so," said Rawson. "He is a temperance man now, and that goes a great way in Easton. Your oath would hardly be allowed if you were to drink anything, and if it were, the lawyers would cross-question you, and cut you all to pieces."

"I have hearn tell how they make mince meat of anybody, them lawyers. But you need not be scared. I love my rights too well to throw 'em away for a little brandy. If I am a mind to drink when I have my own again, that's my business, and none of yourn, nor nobody else's."

"I think with your evidence and Jerry's we can prove our case, let alone Dr. Browne. But he may be made to tell the truth, who knows? You may be worth as much to him as the younger one. I would not mind hinting that you would make up with him, and do the fair thing besides, if he does as he ought in this affair."

"Well, I haint spoke to him only to pass the time o' day for one while," said Mrs. Sherwood, "and I don't think I shall."

"You had better be a little supple with him, or let me be," said Rawson.

"If you think we can't do without him, I might let you speak, but I hate him like pison."

"Never mind that; I can be loving to him, and save you all the trouble, only you must be ready to back whatever I think best to do, or you will be in the poor house, and Caroline Brandon will reign here, and have all your hard earnings."

The old lady was ready to promise anything at the close of this speech, and Rawson obtained full powers to manage the case, and everybody concerned in it, as he thought best.

"It shan't cost you more than half the worth of Vixen and Smash to bring the doctor right; if it does, I go on without him. Now, you keep cool, send a present to the minister, and make a donation to the Dorcas Society, and then leave everything to me. I'll manage it, and them, and no mistake."

When this conference was being held Caroline was resting at home, as no one can, who has always been happy there. Her father came, spoke kindly to her in low sweet tones, and then he read to her when she desired it, and she felt that she loved him as she had never loved him, and prized his fine gentle manliness. And Mr. Brandon's heart opened to

Caroline as never before. He said that she could be kind, and grateful, and loving. He began to think that the stain of her selfishness was not indelible. "I will try to lead her heart to the love of better things than this failing, fading earth life," said he to himself. He had never felt before that he could do this. How he sped we shall learn hereafter.

Dr. Browne set himself to do a great many long neglected duties. He had been always before the most punctual and attentive of men and of doctors. Now he felt that several poor nervous women, and as many rheumatic or gouty men, had good cause of complaint against him. They were prone to forgive him, for they had all been shocked by Sherwood's death, and all felt sympathy for poor Caroline. Somehow all Fred's atrocities were borne on the wings of every breeze, and the people pitied his widow, and were willing to spare the doctor to her for a reasonable time. It must be confessed their patience was getting thread-bare when the doctor found that he could safely leave Caroline to her father and mother, and make everybody happier, healthier, and in better humour with himself. It was surprising how rapidly he achieved all these good objects. He was the man of the people, "the right man in the right place," and as such they delighted to honour him.

Caroline gained slowly, and the doctor paid her constant and kind attention. Indeed, she could not tell which was most her father, Dr. Browne or Mr. Brandon. Caroline began to rejoice in the love, and care, and tenderness of those about her, and Dr. Browne wished he could adopt her, and have a daughter to love him and care for him when his active life should be past. He consulted with Mr. Brandon with regard to Sherwood's will and deed, and Mr. Brandon determined to go to New York for legal advice, and for what was of infinitely more importance to him, to see his daughter. He thought she would return with him, and he was very happy in the prospect.

We have seen how welcome Mr. Brandon was to Minnie, and how soothing and gladdening his presence was to George Graham. He only waited for George to be strong enough, when he was to return to Easton with Mr. Brandon and Minnie. Young Graham was sadly prostrated, and he did not gain strength as they hoped, and at the end of a week Mr. Graham died suddenly. They had no warning that he

was worse. Mr. Strong slept in the room with him, and attended to his wants. He was unusually peaceful during the night, and Strong found him dead in the morning. By some hidden sort of sympathy it seemed, before Mr. Graham was buried, his wife breathed her last, with no consciousness of life or death. George grew much worse under these afflicting circumstances, for death is a shock and a sorrow, whether it be of the infant of days or the infant of years. Mrs. Mayo secluded herself from all but her family, and begged her husband to take her to Europe. She had now several monuments to design. As Mr. Mayo could not go at present, she begged Minnie and George to come to her home till George was able to go to Easton, and there Mr. Brandon left Minnie to care for George and for Mrs. Mayo, promising to come and see the young people safe in Easton, when George should be able to go. Jerry said, "We'll come home in the right time sure and sartin, Mr. Brandon, and a glad day it will be for Jerry when he's to home with his family, though maybe he will leave some on 'em in the old Babel arter all. But there's a Providence, as Nancy says, and if we could only believe it, and try to fit ourselves to Providence instead of tryin' to fit it to us, we should do anuff sight better'n we do."

Still it is to be feared that Jerry had a personal consciousness of this misdemeanour against Providence, when he thought of leaving Nancy, and the music, and Miss Deane, or Mrs. Vincent. Yet Minnie would balance all, and he would leave all very cheerfully for her. Still he said, "I use to hear Mr. Brandon and Mr. George talking about a school, and work for scholars in the garden and other ways; and if they would only have it, and take Mr. Victor, and Mrs. Victor, and Nancy, would not we all make a happy family? I don't mean the kind the man has down to the museum, and yet I kinder think I do mean about that; for if we ain't as odd one from another as his critters, then I won't guess agin. But as Nancy says, there's a Providence, and I'm a believer," and Jerry was comforted.

CHAPTER XLVII.

A DIRGE AND A DISCOVERY.

"It is April now, and I have been strong enough for a month to go to the country and make my beginning for my work in this world," said George Graham to Victor Vincent, "but Cornelia will not consent to lose sight of Minnie or me for one hour. So many deaths of those she loved have almost unsettled her reason."

"I have been helping her about a dirge," said Victor. "I made some verses for her music; and if she did compose that music, she is equal to the old master. It is no use being mealy-mouthed with you, George, about your sister. You know she does not always do her own things; at any rate she gets help, as I used to with my Latin at school; but she told me with the tears streaming over her cheeks that she composed that dirge, and I ought to believe her, and it is equal to Beethoven."

George bit his lip till the blood almost started. "I have written to Mr. Brandon to come to the city, as he has some business here that should be attended to before I leave; and when he comes I shall return with him, and Cornelia will go to Europe as soon as she can get Charlie started. Mr. Brandon has already secured two hundred acres for me adjoining his own beautiful farm. It has a large building on it now, and my plans for further building and occupancy are all matured." (George did not say a word about the dirge.)

"I wish to heaven my plans were matured," said Victor. "I hate the city; I hate the Custom House; I hate temptation generally; but most of all I hate *The Daily Double Face*. There I am like a fellow dancing amongst eggs, and burned a little to make him lively; and if I break one that my master is not bribed to break, then my head is broken. I am allowed to write anything that nobody wants to read, to puff anything that is paid for, and abuse anything or anybody that 'the powers that be' wish to have abused. My own private opinion, and my own private conscience are no more consulted than are the Khan of Tartary's. I shall bolt, Graham. I can't go on so. I shall go to the country, get me an acre, and make garden and write poems for five

dollars each, and live on short commons rather than barter my taste, and judgment, and conscience,—all that really make a man, as I now do. I will sooner black my face, and sell myself to bodily service that won't go against the little principle I have left."

"I will tell you a better way," said George. "Minnie and I shall be married on May-day, and take possession of a portion of the building on my land. I still have my old plan in my head."

"What! that school—that college—where there are to be professors of staymaking and horticulture, peaches, pears, and griddle cakes," said Victor.

"Even so, my good friend. You can go as a pupil, and possibly pay your way in raising pears or making poetry, while your wife can teach music, and have a strawberry bed for herself and her pupils."

"And Nancy can be professor of griddle cakes," said Victor. "Capital! I shall take a vote at our house, and see if the majority will go. I'll abdicate my sceptre at the Custom House, and my quill and scissors at the *Double Face* any minute."

"You can have rooms in our building, and make the beginning with us," said George. "I think Mr. Brandon will be here this evening. If so, I shall leave with him and his daughter, and I feel sure I shall never live in the city again."

"I am not sure I can live anywhere else, but I can try," said Victor. "I want plenty to do, and plenty of the right sort of company; and with such conditions, I reckon I can manage to live. And then I shan't have anybody's affairs on my conscience. If I cheat, I'll cheat on my own hook, and have the discredit of it. I tell you, Graham, I am off, as the fly said when he got in the mustard, if I can get Ettie to consent."

"She said to Minnie yesterday, 'I shall certainly go if I can get Victor to consent to leave New York.'"

"She said that, did she?" said Victor, throwing up his cap, like a boy. "I wonder if I could wear my coon skin cap at Easton?"

"Yes, if you want to get the name of being a lunatic."

"Well, we must get up a billiard room, and a ball alley, and a gymnasium, and a company of Zouaves, and then I can

be a boy again. I want to do something odd,—to run off the track once in a while,—even if I get bruised a little."

"You shall be corporal, or ensign of the eccentric corps," said Graham, laughing. "I suppose a commission or captaincy would be too civilised to please you. Something savage alone will meet your want, eh?"

"Don't be too stilted, George. Guerillas are good troops, and there is the guerilla element in society, as well as the regular military. You must provide for both in your system of education."

"We will see if there are enough of you to form a class, or a company," said Graham.

"I'll raise a revolution among the old fogies, George. Like the Puritans, I emigrate for the chance of being honest, serving God my own way. And I am sure He has not made ninety-nine muscles in my body to do nothing, and be nothing, while six or eight occasionally take a walk in patent leathers and corns, or in corsets and crinoline. But I'll go now, and secure my majority at home."

That day Mr. Brandon came, and it was decided that he could get through his business, so that all should leave for Easton the next night.

"We must spend the evening with Victor and Ettie," said Minnie. Mrs. Mayo became distressed at the prospect of being left alone for the evening, as her husband was to be away; but Minnie begged her to play her new dirge to her father, thinking thus pleasantly to occupy her mind, and make her more cheerful. "It is beautiful, papa," said Minnie, "I wish I could listen to it every day—sometimes I think I could listen for ever," and then Minnie whispered to her father, "she is so sad; do stay a few minutes after we leave. It will comfort her."

Mrs. Mayo took her seat at the instrument, and sang and played the beautiful music, with Victor's charming verses.

Before the dirge was half-played through, Minnie saw the tears stealing down her father's cheeks, and when it was ended, his face was buried in his hands, and he sobbed aloud.

"She is, indeed, the peerless creature I once thought her," said Mr. Brandon, in his deep heart. "All life and happiness passed away from me with her."

Minnie stole to her father's side, and laid her hand upon his head. He saw her, felt her near him, and he knew that

dollars each, and live on short commons rather than barter my taste, and judgment, and conscience,—all that really make a man, as I now do. I will sooner black my face, and sell myself to bodily service that won't go against the little principle I have left."

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"Yes, if you want to get the name of being a lunatic."

"Well, we must get up a billiard room, and a ball alley, and a gymnasium, and a company of Zouaves, and then I can

world. Some time you must tell me of this Providential daughter of yours."

Mr. Brandon understood that Mrs. Mayo wished to be left to the solitude of her grief, and he went away. O fortitude, thy name is woman! Mrs. Mayo went to her room like one whose life depends on being alone. Her throbbing brain seemed bursting. She threw herself upon her face and writhed in her agony. She arose and walked the room.

"After all these years I know where that babe was carried. O, that I could know more; but I cannot ask now. Honour is dearer than life, dearer than my child!" thought the miserable woman. She felt the necessity of self-control, for her husband would soon be at home. She made a great effort. Her brain seemed full to madness, but a very unromantic fit of nose-bleed relieved her. She had just succeeded in stopping the hemorrhage when her husband came; several handkerchiefs and napkins were saturated with blood, and she lay on a couch exhausted with her emotion. Mr. Mayo was terribly alarmed.

"Cornelia! My dearest! My darling, you are dying," he exclaimed, in great distress. "What is it, darling? Tell me, Cornelia?"

"I have burst a blood vessel," said Mrs. Mayo, faintly. "I thought my lungs were affected, but you could not think so."

"I have been an idiot, not to see how ill you were," said Mr. Mayo. "Forgive me, dearest. How neglectful I have been—but you shall command me in future. I will think of nothing but you. You shall go to Italy."

"I should so love to die in that land of beauty," said Mrs. Mayo. "But do not let me talk now. You must send for Dr. Williams."

"And you have to think of that, too. Oh, how stupid I am. Forgive me, Cornelia."

"My darling, you never did anything to forgive. You have been the best, the kindest, the tenderest husband in the world."

"You will not die, my beloved! You will go with me to the world of beauty you have so longed to visit. Promise me, Cornelia, that you will live to go."

"I will, if I can," said Mrs. Mayo; and her husband rang the bell, and despatched a messenger for the doctor.

Dr. Williams felt the honour of being employed professionally by Mrs. Mayo to be a very high one. He examined the case with the determination to do what the lady might desire in the premises, for he saw and felt that it was no case of dangerous illness.

"Doctor," said she, "I assure you I am not ill; I have only had a slight hemorrhage, and my husband was so frightened, that I had him send for you, that you might tell him that a few spoonsful of blood——"

"Mrs. Mayo, my *dear!*" interrupted her husband. "I beg you not to make light of such a serious matter. Dr. Williams, two handkerchiefs, and several towels, were saturated with blood."

"But I have coughed scarcely any the last half hour."

"I am very glad to see Mrs. Mayo so brave," said the Doctor. "Fear, sir——"

"Is such a terribly depressing sentiment," said Mrs. Mayo. "I agree with you, Doctor. I do not mean to be frightened to death. I know what I need. I have had too much depression, too much misery, for my poor life to endure; and my lungs have given way. At present the mischief is not great. I do not want you to be too encouraging, Doctor; but will not change of scene, a sea voyage, a mild winter, and pleasant conditions quite restore me?"

"Mrs. Mayo," said the Doctor, "you take a wise view, a really professional view——"

"You see my dear Mr. Mayo, Dr. Williams and I always agree."

"But you are not sufficiently alarmed about yourself," said Mr. Mayo.

"My vinaigrette, dear," said Mrs. Mayo, and her husband looked about for it.

"I presume I left it on the couch in the parlour."

Mr. Mayo went to look for it.

"Doctor," said she, "I beg you to tell my husband that I am not dangerously ill—that only a sea voyage and rest are needed to make me well; and don't speak of the sea voyage now, but the next time you call."

Mr. Mayo returned with the missing article, and the Doctor made his prescriptions and took his leave. Mr. Mayo followed him down stairs.

"For Heaven's sake, tell me the truth, Doctor. Is she in a dangerous way?"

"These cases are always dangerous," said the Doctor; "but I can tell better to-morrow what we have to fear. She must not be allowed to exert herself."

"It is impossible to hinder her, unless she is so weak that she cannot move," said her husband.

"She will sleep to-night," said the Doctor, significantly.

"I am very glad if you have given her a sleeping-powder, for her mind is active night and day. It is running on some painting that she is making, or some design in sculpture, or some music that she is composing. If her body were only equal to her mind, Doctor."

"The world has many such examples," said the physician. "The mind seems all the more mighty for the weakness of the body often."

"I wish I could give Mrs. Mayo my rude health," said her husband.

"To-morrow will decide for us what we must do," said Dr. Williams, and he went away very well satisfied with his case; for, though he had no suspicion of the facts, he saw, or felt that there was no danger, only as there always is from the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs. There were no symtoms of depression, or of constitutional disturbance; the lady was brave and sensible, and took the proper view of the accident, as the Doctor regarded the rupture, as her pulse was not in the least affected.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A FEW PROVERBS.

There was joy in Easton when Mr. Brandon returned with Minnie and the schoolmaster. George Graham was common property for a few days, and he did not rest till the most distant, and the most stupid scholar was visited; and when his purpose to establish a school of a somewhat novel character was known in the town, there were many who augured success, albeit new things always have their share of criticism, blame, and evil prophecy.

Mrs Susan was more delighted than any words can tell.

"They say a bad penny always comes back," she exclaimed, "but my silver penny, my luck-piece, has come again to her poor old mother."

She did not notice Graham at all at first, and then she was troubled and afraid he would think he was not welcome.

"Oh, Mr. Graham," said she, "the sight of you is good for sore eyes," and then she remembered that Mr. Brandon objected to that proverb as being indelicate, and she added, "I mean, I'd give all my old shoes any day to have you back in Easton."

How delighted was Minnie! She ran up to see Caroline, and kissed her many times, and said sweet words to her; but she could not stop anywhere. She went to the greenhouse to see the flowers, she went to see Blind Bess, she ran into the dairy, and the cheese-room, and the pantry, where pies, cakes, and preserves were kept, and she was hardly willing to stay in one place to eat her dinner.

Jerry was in the same state of natural beatitude; but he was willing to stay in one place provided Bess Bite were there. She laid her small head on his shoulder. She followed at his call like a dog, and Jerry shed tears because she could not see him.

Mr. Brandon was too happy to think of being happier. The queenly woman, the sadly beautiful dirge, and the miserable memories that beset him at New York, were as if they had never been. His excellent wife, who was "a chaste keeper at home," and a housekeeper worthy of a king, who made dinners such as Mr. Brandon had never seen equalled—was beside him, as clean as possible, but as usual somewhat disorderly. The difference between a clean woman and a neat one was strikingly exemplified in Mrs. Susan. She said she "always needed to be put to rights," but everybody else said she was as sweet as new milk. She often told Mr. Brandon that flour was clean dirt, and that frowsled hair was not the worst of sins, and so he thought at last, and he did not seek to reform his wife in any particular.

"Heaven knows, Susan dear, you are too good for me," he said, when he thought how he had repined and rebelled against his lot—how he had writhed under proverbs and bad grammar, and yet how happy his home had been, and how beautiful and altogether lovely was his child.

Caroline was anxious, and miserable about the approach-

ing trial. If Mrs. Sherwood and Rawson succeeded, she would only have one-third of her husband's real estate during her life. She had loved money, and the position it gives, and the privilege of making a display with it, too long and too well to relinquish the baleful love at once. She had listened to her father; she had acknowledged the wisdom of his words when he had spoken of laying up treasures in heaven; but, after all, her heart was in this world. She could not help praying for treasures here. She was very unhappy in her present position, though, a few weeks ago, the peace she now enjoyed would have seemed heaven to her. So it is; the starving pray for bread, and the blackest morsel seems then a Godsend, but when they are filled, they complain that the whitest and lightest loaves are not given them.

Dr. Browne was in a very unpleasant position. By some he was regarded an accomplice with Caroline, in drawing Frederick Sherwood into marriage, and securing his property in such a strange and unusual way to his wife.

As the trial approached, Jerry became very uneasy—indeed, almost unhappy.

"Are you afraid to speak on the trial, Jerry?" said George.

"It aint that, Mr. George; I aint afraid to speak, or I guess I aint. At any rate jest now, I'm afraid I shan't git the chance; for Tim says they're goin' to prove I haint got sense enough to be a witness. Now I don't think I've got much sense, and I don't know how much it takes to be a witness. I just want you, Mr. George, and Miss Minnie, to tell me what you think about me. If I aint fit, I can bear to be told of it."

"What do you think is needed to make you fit for a witness?" said George.

"I'll consider," said Jerry. He pondered the subject for a moment, and then said, "As far as I can see, I orter remember well, and tell the truth."

"Exactly," said George. "You are all right, Jerry, and as good as the best of them."

"And do you think so, Miss Minnie?" said Jerry, timidly.

"Certainly I do," said Minnie, "I would trust your memory and your truth as soon as my own."

"That's the best thing the good God has done for me since I was a believer."

On the morning of the trial, Jerry came to George and Minnie, and said—

"I kinder feel the need of somethin' to stiddy my *nairves*, and stop the trip-hammer that's a beatin' at sich a rate under my jacket. O Miss Minnie, I don't like to be a witness."

Minnie spoke encouragingly to him, and gave him a handkerchief that she had held and perfumed.

"Now, Jerry," said George, "you have only to do the best you can. The best can do no better. Take time when you answer questions, and carefully speak the truth, whether it helps Rawson's side or Mrs. Caroline's."

"I'll consider," said Jerry, "and the good God shan't have no cause to find fault with me, if everybody else does;" and Jerry went as confidently into Court, as he had formerly gone to take care of Sherwood in his *delirium tremens*.

The question of Jerry's competency was raised at once. Mrs. Sherwood's lawyer first examined Dr. Browne that he might testify to Jerry's competency, and thus weaken Caroline's cause. The Doctor said, very honestly, that he had always considered Jerry *non compos mentis*—he had been positively insane about what he called "the spells," &c., &c.

The Doctor's evidence was accepted without a remark.

Mr. Brandon was then called. He testified that Jerry had a good memory, and he believed him always careful to speak the truth.

Jerry was next called.

"What is your name?"

"Jeremiah Jerald Fitzgerald, or Fitzgerald Gerald."

"How old are you?"

"The town record says I am thirty-five; but I can't remember when I was born," said Jerry.

"Do you know the nature of an oath?"

"Can't say I do; but I think it a very bad sort of a promise to tell the truth, jest as you wish you had when you are goin' to die, and go to the good God, who haint got no place a near him for liars."

"Do you understand the pains and penalties of perjury?"

"If perjury means not to tell the truth, then I don't know nothin' about the pains and penalties of not tellin' the truth, for I haint never been a liar," and Jerry drew himself to his full height."

"I mean," said the questioner, "do you know what the pains and penalties of perjury would be if you should swear falsely?"

"I guess," said Jerry, "I should git in a hotter place than I should want to stay in."

This was a more orthodox answer than might have been expected of Jerry, and he was allowed to testify.

"You are to tell all you can remember of Mr. Frederick Sherwood's illness, when the will and deed were executed, conveying his property to the lady who is now his widow."

Jerry considered.

"Well," he began, "Mr. Frederick upset on the Ferry Road, without the shadder of an excuse, onless Rice's brandy had strikenine in it, as he said it had. But whether he was drunk, or pisoned, I can't say, but he upset, and Rawson found him and brought him home."

"Do you know what you say to be true?"

Jerry considered.

"Well, now, I can't say I do, 'cause I did not see it all. I see Rawson with him in the slay, with Vix and Smash along, and I thought I knowed the rest, as well as I know the sun riz this morning; though I did not see him rise. What I do know is, that Mr. Frederick was very bad, and that I had a trial about goin' to take care of him, that turned out in my bein' a believer; but, I suppose you don't want to know nothin' about that, seein' you found I believed enough to be a witness. Well, the long and the short o't is, I took care of Mr. Frederick till he got merried. Some of the time he was crazy as a loon, and some of the time he was not. He did some things that was very crazy. He knocked down his mother, and struck Dr. Browne, and got merried to Miss Carline. Them seemed the craziest things he did, to me. As to his givin' his property to Miss Carline, he *meant it*. I knows that, if I knows anything."

"Was Mrs. Sherwood allowed to come into her son's room freely?"

"We never let her in arter Fred got so bad when she was round. It warn't safe nohow."

"It was safer to make a will and a deed without her, no doubt," said the lawyer sneeringly.

"That's sure and sartin," said Jerry, "for he liked to do that, and he did not like to hev her to stop him. He was hisself some of the time, as much as I ever see him."

"Do you think Mr. Sherwood was sane when he made that will and deed?"

Jerry considered. "Honour bright," said he, "I think he was not any more crazy when he got Dr. Browne to draw up that will and deed, and when he signed his name to 'em, than a'most any fellow would be that wanted to get married, and who was afraid his gal loved money better than him, and who had drinked a great deal too much good brandy, not to speak o' the pisoned sort, and who had been upset on the Ferry Road, and had had his head broke, and been picked up by Rawson and brought home."

The lawyer would not lose the effect of this speech, and he allowed Jerry to sit down at once.

Jerry wiped the sweat from his forehead and face on Minnie's perfumed handkerchief, and rejoiced that he had told the truth.

Caroline's counsel still thought something might be gained by cross-examining Jerry. His first question was—

"Were Mr. Sherwood's lucid intervals of frequent occurrence during his illness?"

Jerry considered. "I don't 'xacly know what you mean by them 'ere intervals; but if you mean to ask if he was some of the time crazy and some of the time not, that's jest the way he was. He'd be goin' on all right, sayin' somethin' pleasant to me—for him and me was friends—and the old—I mean his mother would come in, and Mr. Frederick would thunder and lighten as soon as he'd see her, and holler Jezebel, and Dr. Browne would have to coax her away, and sometimes we'd hev a time on't before we got him straight again."

"Did you think him insane, or angry at these times?"

"I tell ye he was mad and crazy when his mother was round. Some of the time when Miss Caroline was there he was crazy, but he was never mad at her till arter he was married."

"Do you believe he was in his right mind when the will and deed were made?"

"If you want me to answer that 'ere question over agin, I'll do it, but I haint got nothin' new to say. I believe he meant to give his property to Miss Caroline, to make her willin' to hev him. She got the will and the deed, and she got him, and if he was crazy about one he was crazy about tother. If the will and deed was not good for nothin', the

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merrige was not good for nothin', and yet every soul of you thinks that Miss Caroline was Mr. Frederick's wife."

Dr. Browne's testimony was now taken.

He declared that Frederick Sherwood's insanity was owing to cerebral excitement, that intermitted, and left him perfectly sane a considerable portion of the time; that he was entirely sane when the will and deed were executed, and also when he was married. The cross-examination did not shake the doctor's testimony. He knew that he spoke truth, and at the same time he felt sure that his testimony would avail nothing. The public opinion was formed, and a man who was considered an accomplice could give no testimony that would change it.

It was a hard thing for Dr. Browne to become unpopular in Easton. He did not know how to bear such a lot, but there was no alternative. The verdict was given against the validity of the will and deed, and Dr. Browne and Caroline were considered by many persons as defeated conspirators.

Jerry got a great deal of credit for his testimony. It cut both ways so completely that it satisfied all parties, and everybody thought him a very competent witness. Jerry had a consciousness that he had somehow made a good thing of being a witness. He did not exactly understand how, but he said,

"O, Mr. George and Miss Minnie, I begins to reap the fruits of bein' a believer. I never could 'a been a witness unless without gittin red o' the spells, and bein' a believer. I wonder what Tim will think now, about my havin' sense enough to be a witness. I'm afraid, Miss Minnie, I'm gittin' proud, and think you had better pray for me; for to be proud of sich sense as mine, is about as mean a consarn as there could be in this 'ere mean world, where Rawson and the old one beats Miss Caroline, and Dr. Browne aint believed when he tells the truth straight along, and that's what he don't allus do."

CHAPTER XLIX.

GOING TO EUROPE AND LEAVING LITTLE NELLIE.

It was not in Mrs. Mayo's role to be very feeble the day after the profuse hemorrhage of the lungs from which she had suffered. She had a good many of her father's private papers and memoranda by her. She had often acted as his amanuensis and private secretary, and now she examined and put these papers in order to leave. Mr. Graham had made no will, but he had left memoranda of legacies to different persons, and various other directions, and these were mostly in Mrs. Mayo's cabinet.

"My dear," said she to Mr. Mayo, "I must give my little strength to attending to papa's papers. I cannot go to see George married. If I were well I would never countenance such an impropriety. Think of a Graham being married in mourning. It is little more than four months since dear papa and mamma died, and George is to be married to-morrow."

"I hope you will not express disapprobation to George and Miss Brandon," said her husband.

"Have I ever given you reason to suppose that I would say disagreeable things to persons when there was no absolute necessity?"

"I beg pardon, dear," said Mr. Mayo, "I know you always do and say just what is proper."

"I trust I shall in this instance," said the lady. "I consider it of great importance that we keep on the best terms with George Graham. I shall approve his folly even; I shall patronise his school. Whatever a Graham does, should be done in the best possible manner. I shall therefore encourage George very decidedly; he shall have the benefit of my approval. My heart is breaking that I can't take our dear, little Cornelia with us."

"And is she not going?" said Mr. Mayo, in alarm.

"We should do her too much injustice to take her from home at her tender age," said Mrs. Mayo. "We might lose her, our lamb—our single white dove."

Mr. Mayo was distressed, but he always gave up to his wife.

"I shall leave her with George and Minnie. She will be

at home with them, and if I never return she must remain with them till she is educated."

Mrs. Mayo rang for the child, and when she came she could not control her tears. She loved little Nellie, and yet she loved the world, and its vain pursuits and its hollow successes better.

"Nellie dear," said she, "do you want to see aunt Minnie?"

"O yes, mamma," said Nellie. "I love aunty, only that her fingers are longer than mine, and she can make the beautiful music. When will my fingers grow very long, mamma?"

"Shall papa take you to see aunt Minnie, and leave you for a week, so that your fingers can make the beautiful music?"

"Oh yes, mamma. Then uncle George will teach me all about extronomy, and I shall have the book full of pictures that he showed me. It tells all about the stars, and Venus is morning and evening star, and the earth is a star, only it is not a star, but a planet—that is what I learned in extronomy."

"Astronomy," said Mrs. Mayo, laughing through her tears. "And now, darling, do you think you can be content not to see your mamma for many days?"

"Not to see my beautiful mamma," said Nellie, and the tears overflowed her eyes. I *will* see my mamma; I will not go away."

"Not if you can grow very big, and study, and have picture books, and long fingers, and make the pretty music?"

"And will you come very soon, dear, beautiful mamma?"

"As soon as ever I can, darling."

"And I shall grow very big like Norah?"

"Yes, very large, darling."

"Then you may go one little day, and I will grow, and study extronomy, and see the pictures, and have a bird in a tree by aunt Minnie's window, that shall sing to me all day."

"Yes, but you must say astronomy."

"I'll try to say it right, mamma, when I am gone, if you will promise to come soon." And thus the little one was comforted. Not so her father. He felt as if he should leave the half of his heart behind him.

Nellie was sent away, and Mrs. Mayo appeared much fatigued, but still she proceeded toward her one purpose.

"How soon can we leave, my dear?" said she to Mr. Mayo, I shall not believe you will go till we are really started."

Mr. Mayo sighed.

"If we could take Nellie," said he.

"Could you go any sooner for that?" said Mrs. Mayo smiling. "Surely nothing but the child's good decides me to leave her, and now we *must* look over dear papa's papers."

Mrs. Mayo produced a parcel, amongst which was a memorandum book, containing sundry bequests. These were originally mere pencilled memoranda, but Mrs. Mayo had carefully written over them with ink to preserve the writings. There were legacies to different persons, a handsome one to Mr. Strong, a diamond ring to Miss Brandon, and the following memorandum, which looked worn, and as though written a long time:—

"I wish my heirs to pay to my ward, Caroline Brandon Sherwood of Easton, on my decease, the sum of one hundred thousand dollars. This money to be paid, as all previous sums have been, through Messrs. Maltby and Aiken, without the lady being allowed to know the source from which the money comes."

"Did you know anything of this girl being my father's ward?" said Mrs. Mayo, in a surprised tone.

"I never heard a word of it before," said Mr. Mayo.

"I have heard them say she was left at Mr. Brandon's door when she was a baby. But what could papa have to do with such an affair as that? And why did he never tell me?" said Mrs. Mayo.

"Can this person have any claim on your father except for money?" said Mr. Mayo.

"Certainly not, dear, or he would have mentioned her to me. See how carefully he guards his honour by not even appearing as her guardian."

"You have seen her?" said Mr. Mayo.

"Yes, at Saratoga, a long time ago."

"Did she look"——

Mrs. Mayo put up her hand. "Charles Mayo!" said she, "my father was a man upon whom the slightest shade of reproach never fell. *He was a Graham!* And this girl, if I remember her at all well, is a very plebeian looking person. We have nothing to do with her but to pay the money."

"Poor Strong! won't he be delighted. And Minnie, to think that papa should leave her a ring. You must get her

a very choice one, my dear, and take it to her when you take Nellie."

"Then Nellie does not go with us?" said Mr. Mayo sorrowfully.

"I am sure you can make the sacrifice for her good, if I can."

Mr. Mayo tried to resign himself, but it was dreadful to him to go to Europe at all, and worse to leave the child; but his wife's will was his law, and his resignation was made, she never knew with how much suffering.

Mrs. Mayo hastened all her preparations, for she doubted being able to leave New York, unless, indeed, she should have a return of hæmorrhage, and then the doctor might forbid her going at present.

"I shall write to George with regard to Nellie before you go down with her, and I shall fully endorse his school scheme, and make him entirely happy about it. Because, as he will attempt the thing, I am determined he shall succeed."

Mr. Mayo had always been secretly in favour of young Graham's plan of education, and he was really rejoiced at his wife's late approval of it.

"Better late than never," said he to himself; "George will work with a good heart when he knows that he has Cornelia's approbation. What a head and what a heart she has!" And yet poor Mr. Mayo was almost broken-hearted at the decision of this wonderful woman, respecting their child. Still, like a good, obedient husband, he took little Nellie and a great trunk of clothes and toys, and pretty things, and familiar comforts, to Minnie, as soon as her letter was received, saying she was too happy to believe that her darling was coming to stay with her while her father and mother were away.

There was a curious scene at Easton when Mrs. Mayo's letter was received. There was one to George, and one to Minnie—or Mrs. Graham, I suppose, I ought to call her now. She was thinking a great deal about the child, and the very morning Mrs. Mayo's letter came, she had said to George—

"Now, dearest, I believe I am wicked, for I can't be happy at dear old Easton, with papa and mamma and *you*, without my dear, dear little Nellie." And George had pretended to take this information as a revelation of great unkindness.

When the mail came, he brought the letters, and Minnie

saw by his expression that his was very pleasant, as he held it in his hand.

"Read yours to me," said she, "and then I will read mine to you."

George read—

"My dear Brother,—On the eve of my departure for a distant land, from which I may never return, I cannot help reviewing my life with a good deal of severity. I feel sure, dear George, that I have erred in my opinion of the work you have planned. I was very candid with you formerly; I will be equally so now. I think, on a careful review of your scheme, that it is an admirably beneficent one. I want to do something to satisfy my penitence for my former unpleasant feeling about it. I, therefore, offer for your acceptance fifty thousand dollars, which shall be for founding perpetual scholarships in your school, to be called 'The Cornelia Scholarships.' Besides this, I shall beg you and Minnie to accept the care and guardianship of my darling Nellie, till I return from Europe. If I never return, I have begged Mr. Mayo to let her remain with you till her education is completed. Can I give better evidence of my approval of your beautiful life-purpose, or of my ardent desires for its complete success?

"I hope I shall take leave of all my foolish pride as I have of this very false notion of mine with regard to the most superior people engaging in the work of education. I now think that it should be entrusted to them alone.

"You must forgive all my follies, dear brother, and cherish my memory as tenderly as you can, if we never meet again.—Most affectionately, "Cornelia G. Mayo."

"Cornelia is a noble creature after all," said George. "I have wronged her always. These scholarships! and her own darling child! What a benefaction!" And George Graham began to nourish remorse in his heart.

Minnie read her letter now. It recommended the little Cornelia to her care most lovingly, and also begged her to be a most tender sister to Mr. Mayo, should he return without her. It was a model letter in every respect, and George and Minnie wept in a very exemplary manner during its perusal.

"She is very charming," said Minnie.

"And very sensible," said George.

"And very affectionate," said Minnie.

"And very generous," said George.

"I love her dearly," said Minnie.

"I am very proud of her," said George.

Neither of these excellent young persons could see with the diamond dust of Mrs. Mayo's precious patronage in their eyes, that her perfections might be comprehended in two words—*sublime selfishness!*

Graham and Minnie felt that their school was not only begun, but that it had reached a wonderful success, so full were their hearts of the love and prophecy of it, and now they had such an unlooked-for, such a wonderful endorsement.

Mrs. Mayo felicitated herself on having done George justice in restoring one-half the legacy, supposed to have been given to Caroline Sherwood by her father, and which would be paid out of the undivided estate. Mrs. Mayo had a great dislike of being dishonourable, especially about pecuniary affairs. She had paid George his money. She had placed her darling child in the best possible manner for the time of her absence, and she was very well satisfied with herself, and her friends were still better satisfied with her.

Little Nellie was destined to be happy. George and Minnie Graham, and Mr. and Mrs. Brandon, and Jerry would be very happy with her, and Mrs. Mayo would be much more comfortable without her. Only one person concerned was very unhappy, and that was Mr. Mayo. He felt as he said, like a fish out of water, going away from home, and especially that he could not take his family with him. Mrs. Mayo will have to exert her powers of pleasing, as she has not in a long time, for her husband's benefit, or he will be a dull companion, with decidedly American tastes and proclivities generally, most especially for daily absorbing employment in business. The Italian luxury of laziness will be inexpressibly disgusting to him. A brown stone house will have more charms for him than all the sculpture of the land of the sun, and all the paintings in the world will not compensate him for one sweet original—little Nellie.

CHAPTER L.

STAYING AWAY FROM A FETE IN ORDER TO DO JUSTICE TO A DESCRIPTION OF IT.

THREE days before George and Minnie were to be married, the following characteristic epistle was received from Victor Vincent:—

"MY DEAR GRAHAM,—I hoped, up to the last minute, that I should get off. We tried the vote at home, the women having the right of suffrage. Ettie wanted to go, and Nancy held up both hands—but, then, when we took the sober second thought, Ettie and I, we found it was 'no go.' We would not stir unless we could get an honourable discharge from *The Double Face*, and a good fellow who could be tempted to take my place in the Custom House. And, then, Ettie said it was too bad to pay two thousand five hundred dollars for the privilege of living in the country, and raising cabbages and raising a row, and a company of Zouaves, where as yet the material for the last two is not yet raised. Well, you see it is 'no go.' I went to the publisher who held my agreement. He said I was a fool, which was no news, and told me he would see me hammering stone for the State before he would let me off. However, he condescended to cotton to me a little; said I might have two months for the buffaloes next summer if I would write a weekly letter, (of 'current events,' I suppose,) and he promised to hire a fellow to do some of my drudgery. So you see July and August I'll spend with you and the cabbages, and write buffalo letters, or travels in Japan. We want to be at your wedding, of course, but I have so little time. I am afraid I can't do justice in my description of the May Day Festival, if I am there to attend it. Besides, one always sees a fire or a fuss of any kind better when twenty miles away; the eyes are shut, and the imagination lively. So, if we are not with you in person, remember it is because we are with you in spirit.

"Ettie and I have been calculating, and she says we shall have two thousand dollars to begin with, if we wait till next year. That will buy us a homestead, and, if it is Lilliputian, we shall be content. Everything here ends naturally next year, and Ettie is a great foe to violence and, I hear, to rea-

son this year, because I have somebody to say, 'No, you don't,' in such a sweet, pretty way as this, 'Are you quite sure, my dear, that what you propose is the best thing for us? Of course, if you have considered and are convinced, I can have nothing to say; but I want to do what you really think is best after proper deliberation,' &c. Of course, I say I have not considered, I never did consider, and never will consider, and never could consider. Now, Ettie, you consider, and let me know, and I will accept your consideration with all the thankfulness of an inconsiderate and inconsiderable sort of a nobody. That is the way government is administered in our union, and you see as long as this sort of thing lasts, there is no danger of disunion.

"Now, if I don't come, I'll do a pretty thing for *The Double Face* about the wedding, and as it will incidentally do the handsome thing for your school, you must 'surrender your individual feelings to the public good,' and all that sort of bosh, and next August we will do the buffaloes and some nice sketching, and rambles about Easton.

"Won't we have a glorious time those two months that I have humbugged old Hardscrabble out of? for I knew Ettie would not go till she had the two salaries in her pocket. Hurrah for me, and Ettie, and Hardscrabble, and *The Double Face*, and a few months of hard work; and then hurrah for you and your school, and humanity and some pleasant humbug, and the Zouaves, and anything else that you can command.

"Forgive me if I speak lightly of your plans. I always feel as if I were a humbug, and one can't help seeing oneself in one's neighbour. I assure you I don't mean anything half the time; I am only mean—that's all. But Ettie is of the true metal—not a bit of bogus.—Yours for humanity and humbug, and all the rest of 'em. "VICTOR."

George read the letter to Minnie and remarked—

"The fellow needs winnowing. There is wheat in good measure, though the chaff is plentiful."

"Think of his describing our May Day Festival, and our school children and the marriage, without being here and seeing for himself," said Minnie.

"Mr. Brandon will send him a programme and statistics," said George, smiling.

"Ah! I see," said Minnie. "The poets have a natural league—relationship of perception, taste, appreciation of beautiful things. Papa treasures up Victor's poems, and sends him his own. But you must write to Victor not to make us ridiculous."

"I think he will be careful. He knows that I can be offended, and he does not like to offend me. As he says, he will 'mind his p's and q's.'"

Mr. Brandon was enjoying the preparations for the Floral Festival, which should welcome his daughter home, and give her, a bride, to the man he most loved and respected, which should serve as a reunion for all George's pupils of the year before, and make May Day so beautiful, that it would be long remembered with pleasure by the people of Easton, as well as the immediate circle most concerned in its celebration. There was great delight among the friends of the family, and even Caroline, with all her former dislike of Graham, was softened into participating in the general joy. Besides, she had cause for happiness that few women ever have. The last legacy was promptly paid to her, as all her other moneys had been; and besides this, Rawson had made overtures to Dr. Browne to purchase her right of dower for Mrs. Sherwood. He consulted Caroline.

"Oh, Dr. Browne," said she, "I would be so glad to be quit of all that horrid business. I never want to think of the name of Sherwood again."

"Then you must marry," said the Doctor, "for your name is Sherwood."

"I know it, Doctor; and oh, how it troubles me! Do sell my dower, and then I will go to Europe, to France, to Italy, any where if I can only be Caroline Brandon again. Can't I go as Mrs. Brandon?"

"I do not yet know how you are going at all," said the Doctor. "My poor, pale child! I would not trust you out of my sight till your health is far better than it is now."

"But how can I ever get better here," said Caroline, "with all my terrible memories?"

"You must try to forget," said the Doctor. "Will you take ten thousand dollars for your right of dower?"

"Anything that you think is right, Doctor; I trust everything to you. You will not allow me to be wronged if you can help it. Of course, they will try to cheat me. Though

what interest Rawson can have in it, I cannot see. But, then, it is so natural for him to cheat, I suppose he wants to keep in practice, even if he does not gain by it."

Meanwhile Rawson was conferring with Mrs. Sherwood.

"I want my things to be my things," said the venerable woman. "I don't want anybody to meddle and make with what is mine."

"Then you must pay her the full value of her third," said Rawson. "She is good for a long life, and she has the Doctor to back her; and they are both as hard as flints. You can't have any peace with your property mixed up with them. The place is worth forty thousand dollars, free from incumbrance. You could not sell at all, as it is——"

"What would you advise me to do?" said Mrs. Sherwood.

"Give me leave to offer Caroline ten thousand dollars. I'll offer eight thousand dollars first, and she will say ten. I'll haggle, but I will give it after a while, and you will be a free woman; and, remember, I do all for the horses."

"And you will never drive 'em," said Mrs. Sherwood; "they will kill you as they did poor Fred."

"I'll take the risk," said Rawson, confidently. "If I can't drive them, I'll return them to you, and take two hundred dollars for everything I have done. If they spill me overboard, or break my neck, you may send my widow two hundred dollars, and take the horses."

As Rawson said this, Tim came into the room, and Mrs. Sherwood said—

"Tim, you may as well remember that, if Rawson sends home Vix and Smash, or if they come home arter they have tipped him over, I am to take 'em, and give him two hundred dollars."

"Just that," said Rawson; "but I shall hold the horses at a thousand dollars a-piece till they break my neck—then they are yours, Mrs. Sherwood, and you may pay the two hundred as agreed."

Rawson went away with his prize, and, to do them justice, they were very docile and obedient, and very glossy and handsome.

The next day Rawson reported progress to Mrs. Sherwood. The horses behaved finely, and Caroline Sherwood had agreed to sell for ten thousand dollars ready money, which Mrs. Sherwood, senior, very gladly gave.

Caroline was now a wealthy woman; though glad of her wealth, she was not happy or contented, or in any way at rest. She did not like Easton. It had been the scene of her great suffering, and also of her great mortification. She felt angry that any one could wish to rob her of Fred Sherwood's property when he had made her so terribly miserable. She felt a spite at Mrs. Sherwood, and everybody who sympathised with her. She had a good deal of friendship for Dr. Browne—he relieved her when she was suffering from pain and weakness, and she relied upon him in her business affairs; and then she hated mourning garments, and the Doctor had said he did not like to see her wear them—and, indeed, that he thought it a shame that she should, under the circumstances. Caroline did not believe that any one would take better care of her or her property than Dr. Browne. She determined to change the odious name of Sherwood for the sturdy name of Browne.

"Well," said Jerry to himself, the day before Minnie's marriage, "this aint the last weddin' we will have this year. Mr. George and Miss Minnie haint took one another in—their's is a love match, and no mistake, and taint a blazin' love-match that will burn out in a hurry, like pine shavin's, but it's like real oak coals, that will lay all night raked in the ashes, and be bright and ready to kindle in the mornin.' The old coals and the old love are gittin' out of fashion; there's new ways o' kindlin' and keepin' fire, but Jerry likes the old ways best. Miss Car'line has baited her hook agin, and she'll fish up the Doctor this time, and I haint nothin' agin it. She's had a hard time, and he'll be good to her, and her money will make up to him for the folks leavin' him high and dry with his little sugar pills, and his losin' the case. Somehow I'm sorry for him, for he's a kind man, and he gives a body credit for what they do. Sez he to me, 'Jerry,' sez he, 'I'd make a doctor of you, if I warn't afraid o' spilin' the best nurse in the world.' I thought then that was handsome, and I thinks so now, if he did try to keep in on both sides. Somehow it seems to be a doctor's business to be desateful and double dealin', and sich like, and I guess he had to tend to his business, and I guess that it's none of my business to find fault with him. I only wish she could hurry up her mournin' and git married, and go to Europe, where she wants to go. She thinks she'd be happy, and I think she might, if

she could only leave herself somewhere, and jest take along the Doctor. She never orto forgit that she haint got Fred to bruise her, nor the old woman to put upon her, nor Rawson to plot agin her. If she could only remember, she could be happy here; but it's hard to remember an empty stomach when a body has a full one. She's only jest like all the rest of the world. Heaven help us! we would be bad enough off, the best of us, if we was left to ourselves."

With this petition Jerry closed his soliloquy, left off whittling, and went to chopping wood.

Mrs. Susan was happy in making all the preparations that devolved on her for the wedding. She had the best servants that the country afforded, but still her own hands did a great deal too much, because, as she said—

"I can trust myself, and too many cooks spoil the broth. Let me be, Minnie, I am at home among the pies and cakes, as you are among the pinks and posies. You and your father may pick the whole greenhouse to pieces, if you won't meddle with my picking turkies and chickens."

"But, mamma dear, anybody can pick chickens."

"Yes, and tear their skins, and make 'em look fit for a hospital. I never shall forget settin' your father to pick a chicken when you was a baby. They say there's as good fish in the sea as ever was ketched; but I know better, for I have got the best that ever was, though he could never pick a chicken; there can't be another such; but your's will be as good to you as mine has been to me, I dare say, Minnie dear. And, then, you were both wise not to wait till your best days is gone. They say a good husband is worth waitin' for, and a bad one comes full soon; but I believe that husband and wife should spend their young bright years together. They git used to one another's ways then, and habit is second natur. I am glad you and Mr. Graham met before you got along in years, and set in your ways. I have everything to be thankful for, now Carrie's out of trouble. Poor Carrie! I hope she'll be the better of all she's undergone, and now she will always live with me. One girl I am sure of; but my little Minnie will always love her mother. Now, be off to your posies; every one to his trade, my child. I could not fill your father's place, nor yours; and you can't fill mine."

Minnie kissed her mother, and went to put the finishing touches to the modest dress Mrs. Brandon had allowed her hus-

band to buy for her to wear at her daughter's wedding. Lovingly she put the white ribbons and the delicate flowers in her cap, and she selected the prettiest collar from half a dozen, and she looked admiringly at the dark-green satin that her mother had chosen. She did not like the colour, but the material was beautiful, and it was no small gratification to Minnie to see her mother dressed like a lady.

Did Minnie ever say in her heart, "Oh that my mother were a lady!—oh that she was a fitting companion for my father, and that she could sympathise with me in something besides life's most common comforts." I have not the least guess such thoughts are, or were ever hers. One thing I know, she dearly loves her mother.

CHAPTER LI.

"OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT."

Henry Denby set himself to read the account of Minnie Brandon's marriage, from "our own correspondent, an eye and ear witness of the glowing beauties of nature and of art, and of the wonderful harmony of sweet sounds presented in the masterly music of Dodworth's band, and a company of trained vocalists and pianists, who were, separately and collectively, worthy of the palmiest days of Palmo's." After this index, pointing to the scene at which our friend, Vincent, had been present—in spirit—we may judge what would follow. Henry read it through, and closed his tear-wet eyes to see a vision of central and surpassing loveliness, clothed in white satin, and embellished with lace and orange flowers, whilst over all floated the misty marriage veil, heightening her loveliness, as the moss adds to the beauty of the rose it essays to conceal. A manly form was beside this central figure, in immaculate gloves and waistcoat, and well-fitting coat and unmentionables. Henry felt savage at all his elegance, but he was softened by the misty and mysterious charms of the bride, and it was long before he allowed the conjuror to bring before him six beautiful bridesmaids, in the characteristic and customary costume of such occasions. He turned from all their beauty,

no more disposed to choose a mate from them than from the young men in black dress-coats and white vests, who accompanied the girls as groomsmen.

The floral procession of young men and maidens and children charmed Henry in spite of his misery, and when he saw his pet, Nellie Mayo, at the head of it, he started up with, "Has Mrs. Mayo left Nellie with *them?*" He sank back into his seat, thinking, in spite of his spite, that it was very proper if she had, and then the pageant floated past him to the church, which was described as being "decorated as if another Christmas had come," and he tried to think it profane, and could not. He went through the service with wrapt and miserable attention. He saw in his vision, conveyed by "our own correspondent," his chosen one become the bride of another, and then he vowed a vow in his inmost heart. When he had made his vow, he felt a little relief, and he followed the party from the church, and through all the festivities of the day, and at last he dropped the paper from inability to hold it, or look at it any longer, and, lest somebody might come to the library, he went to his own room, and locked himself in, and wept for himself and prayed for Minnie, till his eyes were hot and dry, and his heart less heavy than he had deemed it possible it could become, in the time between luncheon and dinner.

It is a fact, that miserable people would do well to treasure, as they would a valuable receipt, that tears and prayers are a medicine good for the soul, in all seasons of life, and if we can add the conviction that God knows best what is best for us, we are sure of supernatural help in our distresses that no one can rob us of, and that is in itself the key of the highest happiness.

Mrs. Denby left her son and went to talk with Mattie, who was at present in love with the idea of an Episcopal convent.

"What does Henry say about the sisterhood, mamma? I never could bear to have him oppose me. I have suffered too much from his opposition already."

"He says you will have to wear a horrid poke bonnet, and a narrow black dress, which he thinks very ugly."

"But, mamma, who told him the sisters would wear ugly dresses and bonnets. I am sure I never thought of it."

"I suppose he thought you would dress like the deaconnesses at Kaiserworth."

"I am sure I could not endure an ugly costume, mamma. Do you think they will have any such thing?"

"Why do you not say, Do you think *we* shall have any such thing? If you are one of the first sisters, of course, you will help to make the fashion for your costume. What would you like, my dear?"

"Why everything that is not in fashion looks ugly, mamma. I know my first bonnet when I came out was cottage straw, trimmed with pink, and it was the most modest and beautiful thing in the world, everybody said; but that is just the bonnet that Henry would call a poke now. I can't see how we can have anything pretty, unless we dress in the fashion, mamma."

"But that would not do for a sisterhood. You know you are to be set apart for charity and celibacy, and you can't be fashionable ladies and deaconesses—you must submit to a costume. There are styles of dress that are always beautiful."

"I know, mamma, classic drapery, and all that, but we could not wear one garment and look as if we had been wet. I should like to see some of the Roman Catholic sisters' dresses."

"Hush, my dear, they are nuns."

"Well, they have habits made in the same fashion that they were made several hundred years ago, and I would like to see them. The Dominican nuns, I am told, dress in white, but that would not do for us, especially for the visiting sisters."

"How do you feel, Mattie, about the visiting sisters? What if you should take the small-pox!"

"Well, mamma, suppose I did. I might get well of it, or it might be my way of getting to heaven."

"It seems dreadful to me," said Mrs. Denby, "that you should belong to a sisterhood that would send members all about the city, to see the poor and sick, and run the risk of taking dreadful diseases, besides going to improper streets. You know I never allowed you to look down Church Street from Broadway, even when you were in the carriage."

"I know, mamma, but if we become deaconesses, we must do what our rule requires."

"Well, dear, we must speak to Mr. Singleton about the rule; he must not send the sisters into danger, and tempt

Providence. If you only took orphans, or devoted yourselves to teaching."

"But the poor and sick are our first duties, Mr. Singleton says," said Mattie, "and a priest is made for a director."

"My dear," said her mother, "has it never occurred to you that you ought to marry, and bring up children for usefulness?"

Mattie blushed.

"I might be willing to marry a clergyman; but if I cannot, I want to be a sister. You know Mr. Singleton thinks, or has thought, that the clergy ought to live in celibacy, though he said the other day, he thought there were *some* who had a vocation for marriage. O mamma!" said Mattie, and she burst into tears and put her arms round her mother's neck, and seemed much afflicted.

A new light broke on Mrs. Denby's mind. Somehow she lost all fear in an instant of Mattie being a deaconess, or going into improper streets in search of objects of charity, or of catching the small-pox or any other dreadful malady. And Mrs. Denby's fears of Rome were dissipated in the same summary manner.

"Mr. Singleton is a good man, a very devoted man," said she to Mattie, "but he is very young; he ought to take the advice of his Bishop."

"Who has six children," said Mattie. "It is not likely that he would favour celibacy."

"Why should he? Is it needful for a young man like Mr. Singleton to take advice of one who will be sure to agree with him? I think he may be wrong, and he ought to be willing to admit the possibility."

"Well, mamma," said Mattie, lowering her voice confidentially, "he has been to the Bishop on this very question of celibacy for the clergy, and the bishop struck his cane on the floor as hard as ever he could, and said, 'Get out with your Romish notions. I advise you to marry some rich girl, who is pretty and good, whose fortune can help you in your charities, and you can then have a family of children, and you can bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and they will be useful men and women in the Church and the world. Remember I hate all popish nonsense about celibacy and sisterhoods.' What could Adolphus say after this, mamma? He did not dare to make the Bishop any

more angry, and he asked him if he were willing he should have Sisters of Mercy in the Church, who should be young ladies of the highest respectability, and that they should have a rule, but that no one should know they were Sisters. The bishop said that was a very wise plan, and then Adolphus asked him about a rule, and he said, 'Let them read their prayers and lessons every day, and do all the good they can in a strictly feminine and unostentatious way, and mind,' said he, 'that no one shall know but you and the girls that they are Sisters of Mercy. I don't want any scandal. I have had enough of Rome dinned into my ears the few months past. I have trouble enough, Singleton, and I hope you won't add to it, but be a sensible and prudent clergyman, and mind never call yourself a priest unless you want me to strike my cane through the floor,' and he struck a very hard blow, Mr. Singleton said. Adolphus was frightened, mamma, for he does not want to afflict the Bishop, and I am sure he will be very prudent after this. He said to me, 'Dear Mattie!' (only think, mamma, of his calling me *dear Mattie*) he said, 'We can think as we please about a great many points, but we need not talk about them, and then we shan't offend our superiors.' I thought it so humble and beautiful of him to say that. Was not it saintly, mamma?"

"But is the sisterhood given up?" said Mrs. Denby.

"I think we shall certainly have the Sisters of Mercy, mamma, but Adolphus is coming to talk all these things over with me this afternoon; and I think, mamma—I think," said Mattie blushing, "O mamma, do you think it would be wrong for me to marry a priest?"

"A clergyman, you mean, my dear. Certainly not, for all our bishops are married. But do you think Mr. Singleton will ever marry, Mattie?"

"I think," said the blushing girl, "that it altogether depends on me whether he marries or remains single *for ever*. But when I have seen him, and talked with him once more, I will ask him to talk with you. I am so glad you think it right for a priest to marry, at least *sometimes*."

"A clergyman, my dear," said Mrs. Denby. "Henry don't like to have us say priest, and I think it is quite as well not to use the word unless we should come to see celibacy a duty for our clergy."

"I am sure I don't know about all these things," said

Mattie, "and so I am willing to take the advice of those who are set over us. I love to see humility. I am so glad dear Adolphus is willing to be advised. He might fall into schism, just as all the Roman Catholics have, if he was not so humble. I am sure he is a perfect saint in his humility."

Mrs. Denby had no more fears of Rome. Her good, kind heart was so much at rest that she felt almost willing to allow Mattie to look down Church Street, or go with her brother to see to some poor people who had "seen better days."

Henry Denby's plan of life had been rudely "knocked into pi." Mrs. Mayo was gone, and the blessing of her sympathy was consequently withdrawn. His landscape of life, the cottage in the country, the conservatory, the lawn, the grove, the happy cow, the beautiful chosen bride,—all were indefinitely postponed. He determined to ask his father to allow him to go to Europe. He would make the grand tour, and meet Mrs. Mayo amid the classic glories and beauties of Italy after he had explored the Holy Land. He would see Jerusalem and Rome.

CHAPTER LII.

IN LOVE.

The afternoon brought the Rev. Adolphus Singleton to see Mattie Denby. He was very much humbled in view of the opinions and counsels of his Bishop, and very willing to be advised, inasmuch as he had discovered treasures of goodness, and beauty, and wisdom in Miss Denby, that he had never dreamed had existence till within the last week.

It is said that a person under the influence of hashish sees everything through a magnifying and glorifying medium that makes poverty seem riches, that transforms ugliness into beauty, that makes weakness appear power, and that causes the dull, dead earth to bloom an immortal and all beauteous heaven. So it is with that fever fit of our spiritual life which we call love. How falsely we often thus name it, ten thousand miserable ones in our world's midst could testify, if they

dared; but pride and custom have set a seal upon their lips,—they keep silence, and "dwell in decencies for ever." The young are not enlightened or saved by their experience, and therefore they, too, go to join the innumerable company who are wise enough to keep very still about private and domestic affairs.

The Rev. Adolphus and Mattie had taken each their dose of spiritual hashish, and it was producing its glorifying effects. They were most delightfully deceived. Neither had ever seen anybody half so beautiful, half so saintly, or half so anything involving admiration and adoration. Poor little Mattie transfers her love for the saints all in a lump to the dear Rev. Adolphus, and all Mr. Singleton's desire for a sisterhood was concentrated on having one of the most desirable candidates for his own pretty private deaconess, who should serve him in singleness of heart and help him serve others. Each was seen by the other, enveloped in rose-coloured light; and while the gentleman became tall, and manly, and noble in the stereoscope of fancy, the lady became the sweet and gentle impersonation of all feminine loveliness.

Mr. Singleton was sure that when he had acted upon the Bishop's advice, and had taken the back track with his Puseyite friends, had eaten all his proud and foolish words about celibacy, and had obtained the consent of Mr. and Mrs. Denby to his marriage with Mattie, that life would henceforth be a garden in June to him; that he would live to bless his parish, and everybody else who would take his blessing, and that he would die, like the ancient patriarch, blessing his many descendants. And Mattie believed that her heart would be henceforth filled with love, that she should never hunger or thirst any more, and that no sorrow could ever cast the slightest shadow upon her whilst her Adolphus lived. If these worthy persons could have seen a letter written by Victor Vincent to George Graham soon after their engagement transpired, I think they would have considered it rather profane. He said, "*Entre nous*, Graham,—You remember my old friend Singleton, who began an artist's life in the same studio with me, and deserted to become a sort of a Puseyite clergyman. I have good news of him. The Rev. Dolly (I always called him Dolly when he was with me in the studio) has got himself engaged to my little friend Mattie Denby. Tell Minnie that Mattie won't turn Catholic. She

will "get married and have a husband," as Betsy Sykes did. The dear little goose will become the maternal ancestor of a whole brood of swans, and the excellent Dolly will be the tutor, and drawing master, and pastor, and father of his family. Hurrah for Dolly! I trust he will make Mattie a good husband, though he did use to have a temper of his own. I remember his throwing his palette at me once, in a towering rage, just as he had got it well set, and my white jacket had all the colours of the rainbow in a trice. I took out my cambric handkerchief, and wiped in carmine, lake, Prussian blue, yellow ochre, ivory black, burnt sienna, chrome green, and all the greens, Vandyke Brown, and all the browns, ultra marine, and all the marines. Was not I a beauty, for it went partly on my face, and all over my shirt bosom, white vest, and white jacket. 'O Dolly!' said I, as if I were going to cry.

"'You had better whine now,' said he, 'after aggravating a fellow's life away, laughing at everything he does and everything he says, and nicknaming him besides.'

"'Now Dolly,' said I, 'You never said a word against my pet name for you before. If you don't like a fellow to be familiar and affectionate, why can't you give him a hint, and not throw a rainbow at his white vest and shirt bosom. Just look at me, *my dear Dolly*.' I was so gentle, and peaceful under my variegated provocation, that the Rev. Dolly became very placable, and actually asked my pardon, and said I was a good fellow, and had a remarkably good temper, and he gave me leave to call him Dolly, though he said he hated a girl's nickname. I told him I would get some other pet name, as this hurt his feelings, and I promised him I would not offend him with this again. After this I always called him Fussy, and he bore it like a major. I don't believe he is bad, he is only easily riled,—what you scientific folks call irascible. Now, Mattie has the scrofula, I am sure, she is so pink and white. She will be sickly, and have sickly babies, and her beloved will have his temper tried before he is done with this life. He will be a dear Dolly Fussy to Mattie, no doubt, always, but I should wish to be out of the reach of his palette.

"Tell Minnie that her *ci devant* admirer, Henry Denby, is off to Europe. I expect my veritable description of the wedding festival struck to his stomach, and that he has gone abroad for the benefit of his digestion. He is a good fellow, and I

don't relish the idea of his coming to grief; at least, I don't like to have a part in it. But I remember poor Ettie was almost killed once with one of my articles, and then you know Byron said Keats was killed with an article. Articles are fatal things sometimes, and I mean to cut them as soon as my year is up. Won't I be on hand for the Zouaves, and cabbages, and poems, and all that, so soon as old Hard Scrabble has to open the door of my cage! I'll fly then. Meanwhile, I am yours in *articulo secula seculorum*. I used to get my Latin done, when I was a boy, and that is why I can't do it now. When my gifts were made up, the fates forgot a conscience, and Ettie is not always with me, and besides she don't know Latin. But such as I am, I am yours cordially,

"VICTOR."

CHAPTER LIII.

VIX AND SMASH, AND RAWSON AND JERRY.

EVERY one of our friends is busy at Easton. George Graham was building wings and verandahs and the large square building on his estate, and before six months are past, he will have a picturesque, commodious, and beautiful edifice for the beginning of his school.

Jerry had laid up money at New York. Mrs. Mayo had paid him liberally, and George had done the same, and when Jerry came back to Easton, he deposited two hundred and fifty dollars with Mr. Brandon.

"I shall have so much agin a rainy day, or a bright one," said Jerry. "Now, I haint only bright days, but the cloudy ones may come. If a body's a believer, all the days are good; but you'll take care of my money, Mr. Brandon, for, by and by, you may have to take care of me."

"Quite as likely you will care for me, in my old age, Jerry," said Mr. Brandon.

"Maybe we'll take turns bein' good to one another," said Jerry; "that's about the best thing we poor mortals can do, I reckon; but I've got my eye on somethin' that I believes I shall buy with that ere money yit. But I won't say nothin' till the time comes."

Jerry was what he called long-headed—that is, he had the gift of foresight, which may be, for aught I know, the calculation of chances or probabilities from past events. Whatever it may be, Jerry's prophecy was fulfilled in the pleasant summer time. One day in July Mr. Brandon sent Jerry with some message to Mrs. Sherwood. Jerry found the poor woman labouring under what he would formerly have called a "spell." She was sitting in the kitchen, pale as death, with drops of perspiration oozing from her forehead and face, and she had not sense or calmness enough to wipe them away with her apron.

"O Jerry!" she cried, "goodness be thanked, that you are here. There they are! Jest you look out and see 'em. O mercy, mercy, what a terrible thing it is to be sure!"

"What is it, Mrs. Sherwood?" said Jerry. "Don't take on so; but tell a body what it is."

"You have only to look and see 'em, stanin' right there, like two infernal lambs, their long tails a switchin', and the harnesses and fills hangin' to 'em."

Jerry looked out, and there stood Vixen and Smash, in the condition described.

"Well, what of it? What if they be out there?" said Jerry.

"Jest you think where Rawson is, Jerry. His neck or his back is broke, as sure as you are Jerry;" and Mrs. Sherwood trembled violently in her terror.

"Do you dare to put 'em in the stable?" said she.

"I das to do anything with 'em," said Jerry. "'Old Bose'" (the old dog), "would hurt me as quick as they would."

"Well, then, you take care of 'em, and then go and look up Rawson. He aint no better than he orto be, and I can't bear to have him killed without no warnin'."

Jerry put the horses in the stable, and then returned to say that he would like to ride the black poney in search of Rawson.

"Do, Jerry, and if you find him, take him home, and go for Dr. Browne. He knows more'n any of 'em, if he *is* a traitor."

"He aint a traitor," said Jerry; "he is only friendly to everybody. He is a kind man, and gives credit to them that deserves it."

Jerry hurried away, and as Mrs. Sherwood had predicted, he found Rawson by the road-side, and the remnants of his

waggon in the vicinity. Fortunately, he was near home, and Jerry got help, and bore the insensible man to his bed. He seemed dying, and yet he breathed, but he had evidently no consciousness. Jerry rode off for Dr. Browne.

"You must go to Rawson as quick as your horse will carry you," said Jerry. "His turn is come. The horses have upset him and run away; they are safe in Mrs. Sherwood's stables, and Rawson's laying half-dead in his own bed at home. The old one sent me arter you; so that you may know she's scairt."

Dr. Browne made haste to the injured man. It was a long time before he was restored to consciousness, and when he was, he obtained no use of his lower limbs. There was injury of the spine so serious that no locomotion would ever again be possible. Rawson's mind was clear and uninjured; he could turn his head, and use his hands, but never again could he bear his weight on his feet, or take a step in this world. At first his condition did not seem to affect him much, but by degrees the terrible nature of his punishment seemed to come to him. After a time he understood it fully. Then he sent for Jerry. Jerry came promptly.

"Where are my horses, Jerry?" said he.

"Vix and Smash went right home, as soon as they had done for you," said Jerry.

"Well, I want you to bring 'em back to me. Nobody else can handle them but you, now I am disabled, and I want you to come and take care of me and the horses. I'll give you good wages, and if I die I'll give you the horses. You are a good nurse, and I need one if ever anybody did."

"That's sure and sartin," said Jerry. "But Mrs. Sherwood said how the hosses was her'n, and Tim telled me he heard the bargain, and she has sent the money she owed you by me."

"Curse the old wretch!" said Rawson, grating his teeth.

"I think you hadn't better cuss her, nor nobody," said Jerry. "We all wants blessin' a sight more'n we does cussin'."

"Well, you will come and take care of me," said Rawson.

"If there was nobody else to take care of you, I'd do it, sure and sartin," said Jerry.. "But you have got a wife, and sons and daughters, and money, if you haint got Vix and Smash, and I think, taking all this into the count, I shan't come. But

I have got the money here that Mrs. Sherwood sent, and she said that if you could not sign a resate, that Dr. Browne would be a good witness that the money was paid, and the hosses was her'n; and as I see him a comin', I'll jest give him the money, and tell him what it's for."

"You don't know what it is for, you fool," said Rawson.

"Well, I can tell the Doctor what she tell'd me to."

Jerry met the Doctor, and asked him to go into the kitchen, where Mrs. Rawson was preparing some broth for her husband.

"Dr. Browne," said Jerry, "I have brought some money here for Mr. Rawson, from Mrs. Sherwood. She agreed to take the hosses back, if they cut up with Rawson, and pay him or his widow two hundred dollars. Now here's the money, and I want you for a witness that it is paid. Rawson wants the hosses back again, but——"

"They shall never come here again," cried the afflicted wife. "I always knew they would be the death of my poor husband. I am very glad of the money, for he won't let me have a dollar to help myself with, or to get him the things he needs."

"Dr. Browne, you'll please to count the money," said Jerry, producing a bag of gold and silver from under his arm. "Mr. Brandon said there was jest two hundred."

"I thought the money came from Mrs. Sherwood," said the Doctor.

"Yes, it's hur'n," said Jerry, "but that aint no reason why Mr. Brandon should not count it."

The Doctor counted the money, found just two hundred dollars, and handed the bag to Mrs. Rawson.

"Do you think he will be able to get up, and take it from me?" said the woman, hesitating.

"I am sure, he will never rise again from the bed where he now lies," said the Doctor, solemnly.

The woman took the money with a trembling hand, and put it away for use.

The Doctor went into Rawson's room, and Jerry followed him.

What about that money, Jerry?" said Rawson, fiercely.

"I gave it to Dr. Browne to count, and your wife took care of it."

"Tell her to bring it here," cried Rawson, his face turning purple.

"Mr. Rawson," said the Doctor, "you must be quiet, and not think of money now. Your spine is very much injured, and your brain is liable to injury, and you are liable to die suddenly, if you agitate yourself. I beg that you will be quiet if you wish to live."

"Be quiet while they are robbing me," said Rawson. "I don't want to live to see myself robbed and imposed upon. I should hate life on such conditions. Besides, you don't think I am going to die; if you did, you would not tell me so. You always conceal the truth in such cases. I am safe enough, and I'll get the use of my limbs in a few days, and then you shall all smart for this. Get away with the broth," he cried to his wife, "and bring me that money. You will be wasting it all in a week."

"Take your broth," said the Doctor, soothingly, "and believe that I have told you the truth."

"The truth!" said Rawson, "you never told the truth—doctors never do—it is not their business. It is likely you would begin by telling me the truth, and at this late day, too! Not you; I know you better. I say, bring me that money," said he to his wife, "or I'll get up and get it, and pitch you to where you belong."

The woman trembled. She could hardly believe that her husband was powerless—that he could not rise and put his threat in execution.

"What could you do with the money if you had it?" said she.

"I could count it," he cried.

"I beg of you to be quiet," said the Doctor. "I am quite in earnest when I tell you are in danger of sudden death."

"I'll live to bury you," said Rawson, "and to have that money, and to pay my wife for her wretched refusal."

He threw himself forward as he spoke, dragging the palsied lower half of his body after his shoulders, and wrenching the spine into a half-twisted condition. Instantly he dropped back without sense or motion.

"*It is done*," said the doctor.

"He is not dead!" screamed his wife.

The Doctor felt his pulse, and examined his countenance.

"He is dead," said he.

Jerry looked into his eyes, and laid his hand on his heart, and then on his wrists.

"He is dead as a door-nail," said Jerry.

The Doctor tried various means to revive the dead man, for the sake of satisfying the family, without effect, and then he went home. Jerry remained, and reverently prepared the clay for the coffin. He wept as he did this, and often said—"Oh, I wish he had been a believer and a decent man!"

Mrs. Rawson was very miserable in her husband's life, and she was very miserable now he was dead; but she had money for the funeral expenses, and that was a comfort to her.

"He is worth his thousands," said she, "but I never saw as much money before in my life. He never let me see him count his money. Well, I hope me and the children will have some good of what he's left."

She could hardly admit the possibility that he was really dead, and her sorrow and mourning for him were tempered by the fear that he would come to life again. She did not lose this fear till he was buried; then she and the children set themselves to have "some good out of what he had left," and, I believe, they compassed their end, and were better and happier for their loss. The two hundred dollars had been paid for the horses seasonably on account of a wise thought of Jerry's.

Jerry had wisely concluded that, when Mrs. Sherwood had got over her fright about Rawson, that she would dislike to pay him two hundred dollars "ready money," according to agreement, and so he went to Mr. Brandon, and consulted him about the propriety of offering to purchase Vixen and Smash with his savings. Mr. Brandon had highly approved the plan, and Jerry took two hundred dollars in gold and silver, and went over to Mrs. Sherwood.

"Mrs. Sherwood," said he, "Tim tell'd me you had agreed to pay Rawson two hundred dollars and take them hosses."

"Yes, I did," said Mrs. Sherwood, trembling as if she had an ague fit; "but I don't want 'em. They will bring death and destruction on everybody that has anything to do with 'em. My poor Fred lost his wits and his life by 'em, and now Rawson is worse than dead, and there they are in the stable;" and she shuddered again.

"I was thinkin'," said Jerry, "seeing how you don't like 'em, that maybe you'd let me pay Rawson the two hundred dollars, out of my own money, and then I would own the

hosses, and they wouldn't plague you any more, seein' how they are as good as two kittens with me."

"But have you got two hundred dollars, Jerry?"

"Yes, I have got it all in gold and silver in this ere bag under my arm, and, if you say so, I'll have Tim in for a witness, and then I'll take the money over to Rawson, or to his widow, if he aint alive."

"But you will give me somethin' more besides if I let you have 'em," said Mrs. Sherwood. "They are worth a great deal of money."

"Yes, to them that can handle 'em," said Jerry. "I wonder what you would do, if you had not me to take 'em. No; I tell you, Mrs Sherwood, I will never give no more than the two hundred dollars to Rawson, and if you do not sell 'em to me, you must pay me for takin' care of 'em."

"Call in Tim; I'll sell 'em," said Mrs. Sherwood.

Tim was called, and witnessed the bargain. Jerry carried the money, as we have seen. When he had shrouded Rawson for the grave, he returned to Mrs. Sherwood.

"How is Rawson?" said she.

"His widow has got the two hundred dollars," said Jerry, solemnly.

"You don't mean to say that Rawson is dead?"

"Yes, he is dead, and laid out, and I am sorry he was not a believer and a decent man, Mrs. Sherwood; and I hope you and I will do better than we ever have done, seein' we are alive, and have a chance to get fit for a better world, instead of gittin' fit for a wuss one. Rawson kept company with the mean, and the stingy, and the cruel men, and I'm afraid he's along with jest sich a set in 'tother world."

Mrs. Sherwood murmured, "As the tree falls so it lies, and as death leaves us, so judgment will find us."

"If you believe that, I think you had better start your trucks for a good life, Mrs. Sherwood," said Jerry. "For my part, I think it is a blessed good thing to be good, whether you are in this world or another, and I hope we shall try to be, for it won't be long at the longest before we shall go where so many millions has gone afore us."

Mrs. Sherwood shed tears, and then she said—

"I suppose you have come for them hosses; and I think, Jerry, you ought to give me somethin' more for 'em."

"Well, I'll give you in the care I have took of 'em since

door-nail," said Jerry.
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Rawson was hurt. I can't do any more; and as long as the bargain's made, and Tim is witness, I think you may as well let me take the critters in peace."

"I hope I'll never set eyes on 'em again," said Mrs. Sherwood.

"Good day to you, ma'am," said Jerry, and he went to the stable with a light step and an erect bearing.

The horses fondled him.

"I don't know which one is the lovinest," said Jerry, "but Vix is the wickedest, and so I like her the best. I wish the good God could only do so with his wicked children, and I suppose he does, but we can't be happy while we are bad—it's agin natur."

Jerry led out the horses, and took them to Mr. Brandon, pride and pleasure and thankfulness swelling his heart. When Mr. Brandon had admired them, Jerry took them over to George Graham's.

"There now, Mr. George and Miss Minnie, you see what it is to be a believer, and to have the good God for your friend, and other dear friends besides. Now, Miss Minnie, it's my candid opinion," said Jerry, "if you had not been a believer, and a prayin' one besides, that I should a been dead of the spells now; and 'stead o' that, I has good health, and good friends, and clo'es, and owns these two hosses, and, what's more, I can manage 'em. They are as kind as kittens and puppies to Jerry; and I've airned the money that I paid for 'em. Miss Minnie, you can see the difference between me now, and me when you begged your father to take me in."

"Yes, Jerry," said Minnie, "there is certainly a great change for the better."

"Thanks to the good God and you, Miss Minnie. Now, I can't help hopin' and prayin' that He'll set some of his good angels to work for Rawson, as He set you to work for me. I am thinkin' mavbe it was too hard a job to be done in this world, and so Rawson was took away, where there would be a better chance for him. Now, Miss Minnie, you will pray for him, won't you?"

Minnie hesitated, but it was only for a moment.

"I am willing to pray for all in all worlds; but I fear it will be no use in the case of many, Jerry," said she.

"Never you mind; the love that makes your prayers won't be lost," said Jerry, "and if you get discouraged, you jest think

what a drunken scarecrow Jerry used to be. If the good God could put sense and goodness and faith into Jerry, He can do it for other hard cases. I shan't give up prayin', and I am thankful I am a believer."

Jerry harnessed his horses, and took Graham and Minnie for a drive.

The beautiful forms and graceful motions of the horses, their instant and entire obedience, gave much happiness.

"You have made a great bargain, Jerry," said Graham. "I will give you two thousand dollars for the span, if you will agree to stay and manage them."

"That aint the way I want to trade," said Jerry. "I want to give Vix and Smash to Miss Minnie; and then I want her and the good God to own me in the bargain."

"Jerry," said Graham, laying his hand on his shoulder, as if he were a brother, "my wife and I will adopt you as our own, from this day."

"Yes, indeed, Jerry," said Minnie, "you shall be to us a child always."

"That's better than sellin' Vix and Smash for two thousand dollars," said Jerry, wiping his eyes on his red bandanna. "I belongs to you, and you belongs to me, and we all belong to the good God," said Jerry, reverently.

CHAPTER LIV.

A WEDDING.

Caroline Sherwood was rich and miserable. Her father tried his moral lessons in vain to comfort her. She had failed in the objects of her ambition. She was neither admired nor envied. People distrusted her, and disliked her, although the secret of her wealth had transpired.

"If Dr. Browne and Fred Sherwood's widow would marry, it would be better for their credit," said a gossipping old maid. "They see each other a great deal too much, though he is her doctor."

When this was once said, it was repeated, and Caroline heard it. She was angry and miserable.

"Oh, Doctor Browne," said she, "you cannot expect me ever to get well in Easton. I am so unhappy. I never had a name of my own till I took that wretched drunkard's name, and I hate it. And, then, the name of Brandon was only given me in charity. My disgraceful birth will always make me miserable."

Dr. Browne wished that he could tell Caroline what he knew of her birth, but it had always been a rule with him never voluntarily to trust a woman.

"Caroline, you have no right to consider your birth a disgrace. You may have been born in wedlock, and entitled to an honourable name. There are many reasons why you might have been sent away from your friends besides the one you are always grieving over."

"Let that go," said Caroline. "I must leave Easton; I must change the place if I keep the pain. It is six months since I was free. I have worn this horrid mourning long enough."

"I am tired of Easton too," said the Doctor; "but I cannot change—I am poor."

"You might go to Europe with me," said Caroline, "I have money enough."

"And ruin your reputation. People speak evil of us already," said the Doctor.

"I wish you were my father," said Caroline.

"I can't say that I wish that," said the Doctor; "but I do wish that you loved me well enough to give me a legal right to be your protector, and make you happy. I am poor, and old enough to be your father. I have nothing to recommend me but my love," said the kind man, and his eyes filled with tears.

"You have everything to recommend you," said Caroline, "and I love you better than anybody. As to your being poor, I have enough; but it does not make me happy."

"Will you marry me, retaining your property in your own hands?" said the Doctor.

"Yes, if you will take such a poor, sickly, unhappy creature," said Caroline. "O that you had asked me for yourself, instead of coming for Frederick Sherwood, when I was healthy and happy," and her tears fell fast.

The good Doctor kissed them away. He was very happy, and Caroline was very well satisfied.

"I want to be married, and go to Europe at once," said Caroline. "We can be married here, and go to New York the same day, and there I can prepare my wardrobe, and we will sail for some foreign port. I care very little where we go, so that I see Italy before I return. We will stay away till people forget my first marriage, and perhaps we will settle in New York when we return. I think I should like to live in a city."

"We must speak to your parents," said Dr. Browne.

"I don't like to tell mamma," said Caroline; "she believes that I will always live with her."

"I will tell her," said Dr. Browne, "if you will give me leave."

"I shall be so glad if you will speak to my father and my mother," said Caroline.

"When shall I say we are to be married?"

"To-morrow at one o'clock," said Caroline, with decision in her tones.

That evening Dr. Browne sat alone with Mrs. Brandon, as she plied her needle by the sewing-table.

"I am troubled about your daughter Caroline," said the Doctor, kindly. "She does not regain her health as I wish her to."

"She's miserable, Doctor; she grows worse instead of better, and I can't do her any good. I would give my heart's blood for her, but what can I do?"

"Don't you think she ought to have a change of scene, Mrs. Brandon?"

"That's easier said than done, Doctor. She can't go away from home, and how is she to have change here?"

"I think she ought to go to Europe," said the Doctor.

"But her father can't go with her—he's over head and ears in this school business of Mr. Graham's, and if he was not, he never would go without me, and I am no gadabout. I would give anything for Carrie to go over sea, but she can't go alone."

"Mrs. Brandon, I have offered to go with her," said Dr. Browne.

Mrs. Brandon raised her eyes quickly to his face, and she read there in a moment all he would say.

"Do you mean, Doctor, that you will marry my Carrie?" said she.

"That is what I have promised," said the Doctor.

Mrs. Brandon dropped her work, and caught hold of his hand.

"Heaven bless you," said she, "my poor child will take heart of hope again. I know you will make a good husband. I am very thankful that you will have my Carrie."

"And I am very thankful that you are willing that she should be my wife."

"It's no use crying for spilt milk," said Mrs. Susan, "but I wish you had thought of this before Fred Sherwood took a fancy to her. She would have been saved many a bitter day and night, Doctor."

"We can't change the past, my dear Mrs. Brandon."

"No; and we will let bygones be bygones, and do the best we can for the time to come. Now, Doctor, if you will take my advice, you'll marry my Carrie right off hand, without a bit of parade, and start for the world's end the same day. I can trust you to take her the world over, and she ought to get away as soon as possible."

"That is just my judgment, Mrs. Brandon. We shall go to the clergyman's house to-morrow at one o'clock, and be married, with only you and your husband, and Mr. and Mrs. Graham; at two o'clock, we shall take the New York train, and we shall remain in the city till Caroline can have her wardrobe prepared. Probably in ten days we shall sail for France or England, just which the dear girl may choose. The Easton people may read our marriage in the papers, and make their own comments. Now, Mrs. Brandon, will you break this matter to your husband, or shall I speak to him?"

"I'll tell him, Doctor. I know jest how. He would rather hear bad news from me than good from somebody else. He will be very thankful for our poor Carrie. Oh, Doctor, I always said that a man without money was a great deal better than money without a man."

Mr. Brandon was surprised, but by no means displeased at the communication, which Mrs. Susan made him.

"It is well," said Mr. Brandon, "Caroline is one of the children of this world, and she will seek her happiness here, till disappointment and misery shall drive her to lay up treasures for a better and a higher world."

"Poor thing! she has had a terrible portion. It seems to me my heart has never stopped bein' anxious for her, only to

ache, since she was left on our door-step. But Dr. Browne will be a good husband to her; and at last I am at peace about my Carrie."

"You have been a good mother, and I am thankful for your happiness," said her husband, feeling a great deal of remorse, that he had so little relationship to his wife and *her* Carrie, and so little ability to make their happiness.

"You are always praising me," said Mrs. Susan, "and the greatest of all praise was when you loved me, and took me for your wife; and how happy you have made me every minute since."

"And what a good wife you have been," said Mr. Brandon.

"I have often thought," said she, "what a good Providence it was that we got together, for I am sure nobody could ever have took care of you, to suit you, but me; and I never could have been happy with any one but you."

"Where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise."

Minnie rejoiced at her sister's marriage, with no troubles of pride or conscience that she had been only half-a-year a widow. The wonderful Denby dress, that had given Minnie so much pleasure and caused her so much pain, lay immaculate in the box, where it was placed when Minnie left her kind friends, to meet them at the opera the next evening. She had never seen them or the dress in the months that had intervened.

"I am to be married to-morrow," said Caroline, after she had told Minnie her unhappiness and her happiness, and her plans for the future, "and I have only my travelling dress."

"You have your point-lace veil," said Minnie, "and I have a dress that I have never worn that is trimmed with point-lace. We can make you as splendid as a princess, for I should dearly love to give you my dress. I was to have worn it on a grand occasion in New York, but George was taken with that terrible fever the day it was finished, and I never wore it. But you must be married earlier in the day, so as to have time to change your dress for the cars."

The sisters went for the dress, and the astonishment and pleasure of Caroline can hardly be told. Of course, she supposed that all this magnificence was a gift from Graham, or Mr. Mayo. The crowning puzzle was, how could Minnie give

it away? It was rich enough to be an heirloom in a family. "You don't mean to say that you will give this dress to me, Minnie?'

"Certainly, I do. It is a great pleasure to me to give it you."

"You are a dear, good sister, Min'," said Caroline, "and I have not been kind to you; and I have disliked Graham without any cause, and I hope you will forgive me."

"As if I had anything to forgive," said Minnie. "I am so glad you will be happy now, Carrie, dear; Dr. Browne is so good and so reliable."

"Too good for me," said Caroline. "You know, Minnie, I have never loved any one as you love Graham, or as mamma loves papa; I don't believe I ever could. Frederick was handsome and rich for Easton, and I wanted to get him away from our upstart Easton girls; but I think I never could have loved him as you love. And now, if I could have Dr. Browne for my real father, I would choose it much sooner than to be married to him. But he loves me dearly, and will take good care of me and my property, and I can go abroad and find some happiness, I hope."

At eleven o'clock the next day, Caroline Sherwood was married, in the church, in the presence of her family, and some of the personal friends of Dr. Browne.

Mrs. Susan had some marvellous wedding cake for the occasion, and when they were all together at home, it did not seem like a parting, for every one seemed either happy or satisfied.

Mrs. Brandon kissed Mrs. Browne very tenderly, and said, "Carrie, dear, I am glad you are going over sea, and I am sure you will know now, that it is better to be an old man's darling than a young man's slave."

It was a happy parting, for hope presided, and even Mrs. Susan did not love her Carrie as much as she thought she did.

CHAPTER LV.

"SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI."

When Mr. Mayo consented to go from New York to Havre, it was because he thought that he must in everything defer to

the critical condition of his wife's health; but when he found her every day on ship-board, growing stronger, he begged to be allowed to attend to business in Liverpool and London, Edinburgh and Dublin. The consequence was that they did not reach France and Italy till four months after they left New York. Here Mrs. Mayo's happiness began, for she had the good fortune to speak French. She delighted in Paris, but the field of her ambition was Italy, and she said she could never rest until she should have reached the "Eternal City."

Travelling was a great joy to Mrs. Mayo, and a great boon to her husband. For the first time in his life Mrs. Mayo failed to make her husband happy. At home, but few of his waking hours were spent with his wife. She had then the charm of perpetual newness. On their travels they were almost always together, and Mr. Mayo thought his wife's health must be fearfully shaken, her temper was so very bad. She was irritable, impatient, and exacting, and with all his love and admiration, Mr. Mayo longed for his home, and dear little Nellie—his counting-room, and the occupations and distractions of business. In France and Italy Mr. Mayo was especially plagued, because he spoke only English, Mrs. Mayo could make acquaintances, could purchase, order, and find fault in French, while her husband was helplessly enduring his ignorance. How the poor man longed to go home—how he longed for his darling Nellie, and yet how patiently he endured all for love of his beautiful, and charming, and admirable, and artistic wife; but with all his patience he thought of home, prayed for home, longed for home, and dreamed of home.

"I never knew what trouble was till I parted with little Nellie," said he to his wife, and he was comforted that she wept, and said—

"I wish she were with us; she would be so much company for you, and she would learn French."

"I hate the sound of any language but my own," said Mr. Mayo.

And then his wife said—"How very selfish you are. I never could abide selfishness!"

She used to say, "What a generous fellow you are!" but her patience was gone, and she had almost ceased to flatter her husband.

In Florence Mrs. Mayo had laid the ideal scene of her artistic triumphs. As a preliminary, she bought a statue of "Orpheus and his Harp" for dear old Porpora's tomb, and also a lovely statue of "Hope" leaning on an anchor for her father's, saying to her husband—

"If my health is not sufficient for designing, I shall have something beautiful for the city of the dead; and now dear, if I should not live, you must take home that darling Psyche that we saw yesterday to place over my ashes."

Mr. Mayo's tears flowed, notwithstanding his trials of patience, and he bought the three statues though they cost three thousand dollars.

In September, Henry Denby met Mr. and Mrs. Mayo in Rome, greatly to the delight of all three, and about the same time Dr. Browne and his young wife came with letters from George and Minnie to Mr. and Mrs. Mayo. They had spent some weeks in Paris, and Caroline was looking her best, and feeling very happy in having an educated, fine looking husband, to whom she was the first object under the sun.

Dr. Browne came first to see Mrs. Mayo, and brought the letters. He had heard so much of the lady's patrician pride, that he hesitated about introducing his wife with a probable stain on her birth, till he should see the effect of the letters.

Mrs. Mayo met him with a dignified and pleasant patronage that hardly satisfied the *exigeant* affection that he cherished for Caroline. Still he had no reason to complain, and he returned to his wife to say he had found a very pleasant lady.

"Minnie raved about her beauty," said Caroline. "Is she so remarkably handsome?"

Dr. Browne looked at his wife as she stood before him. He regarded her carefully from head to foot, and said—

"She *is* beautiful, and I never saw two women who looked more alike than you and Mrs. Mayo. She is taller a good deal, and more full and stately; but you might be her daughter if she were older, or her sister as it is."

"Am I as beautiful as she is?" said Caroline.

"You are younger, and more lovely, my dear; but at your age, she would probably have carried off the palm, even from my Carrie. She must have been a peerless beauty at your age. But you must see her."

"Who knows but I may be her sister?" said Caroline. "How old is she?"

"Anywhere from thirty to forty," said the Doctor.

He had seen Mrs. Mayo in a dim light, and dressed to be seen, and he had taken fifteen years from her age, and though his gallantry might have sunk some of them, he was actually deceived.

"You must go with me to see these people. There is a fine young man from New York with them, who may make you repent of having married an old man, and a poor man," said the Doctor.

Caroline pinched his ears, and told him not to be impertinent.

. . . . . .

Mrs. Mayo knew that she was to meet her child. Her heart leaped and died within her. She looked forward with joy and terror, and sorrow and shame, and utter sinking of all her energies, to that meeting. And yet she had appointed it, and must keep her appointment. Her hands trembled too much to make the requisite emendations in her complexion. She spoiled her eyes with real tears, she gave up half-a-dozen times, and thought she would send word that she was ill; but then she considered—

"This meeting must take place sooner or later. How I have longed for it—now, how I dread it. Oh, the tyranny of the world! If I could have married Henry Brandon and shared his fame, and achieved a splendid position for myself worthy of the genius that I feel might have been developed—if I had married congenially, how different my life would have been!"

Mrs. Mayo really gave herself credit for ability to do all she claimed to have done. She almost believed that she had painted, and poetised, and composed music. At all events, she was sure she should have done all this if she had married Henry Brandon in the days of their passionate adoration for each other.

Mrs. Mayo met Caroline Browne that evening. She met her with natural and artificial charms, and with a quietness of manner that was almost coldness. Dr. Browne mentally assured himself, that if she did not treat Caroline with sufficient cordiality, she should never meet her again.

He was quite satisfied before the close of the evening, for Mrs. Mayo got the opportunity to say to him unheard by any one else—

"What a charming creature your young wife is! Her beauty is splendid, and her style is perfect! I should think she had been educated in New York or Paris. How I wish I had such a sister. Dr. Browne, I believe I shall petition to adopt your wife for my sister. I can't be satisfied with one sister from the family, for this one far surpasses the other. Don't you think so, Doctor?"

"Of course," said the Doctor, laughing, "else she would hardly have been Mrs. Browne."

As he said this, his eye fell on Mrs. Mayo's hand, as it lay on the marble table beside them. Two unique and costly rings shone on her fingers; they were rare gems, that once seen must be always remembered, and Dr. Browne *knew* that he had seen them before. The shock of the sight turned him faint. The severest surgical operation could not have so much affected him. He mastered his emotion as well as he could, but complained of a headache, and went away earlier than pleased Caroline. She was delighted with the haughty and beautiful Mrs. Mayo.

"O, if she only were my sister!" said she.

"Do you know Mrs. Mayo said just the same of you," said the Doctor.

"We will settle in New York when we return," said Carrie; "it would be such a fine introduction into society to have Mrs. Mayo for a friend, and Min' is married to her own brother, and she never need know but that I am Minnie's sister. I would not have her know about me for the world. O dear! how hateful it is to have a skeleton in one's closet."

"There is a skeleton in every house, they say," said the Doctor, gravely.

"Surely I have one," said Caroline; "but papa and mamma have not any, nor Graham and Min'."

"Do you think your father and mother altogether congenial?" said the Doctor.

"I did not think of that; it was a very strange match, was not it? But Graham and Min' have not anything in the world to trouble them."

"And my Carrie need not have," said the Doctor, kindly.

"I cannot help it," said she, and the tears overflowed her fine eyes; and Jerry would have said that she did not leave herself behind.

With so many friends to make his wife happy, Mr. Mayo

began to nurse a plan in his secret heart that he dared not speak of. It was no other than to leave his wife in the care of the Doctor and Caroline, and Henry Denby, and go home and see his daughter, and see to his business, and then return. He did not know how to speak his heart's desire, but letters came, saying that he was greatly needed at home, and Mrs. Mayo begged of him to go and leave her.

"You can leave me, dearest, in the hands of a skilful physician, and his wife is a very worthy young woman, and Henry Denby will be very kind and attentive, and you can return to me in the spring, and take me to our dear home again. You know that to accomplish anything in Art, I must have time. It is really a Providence that you can leave me in such good hands; and I must insist that you go home and see Nellie, and see to everything, and then you must return."

This was all very pleasant to Mr. Mayo, for he was hungering and thirsting after his child and his home, and he was worn out with his wife's exactions, her ill-temper, and her selfishness, though now they had company, she was better; a day away from her would have rested him and restored his love, but he had had no day of rest, and he said—

"Cornelia dear, I will go home if you think it best—if you think you can be happy and comfortable without me."

"Happy I cannot be, of course, my dear; but I can be comfortable and do my work, and I will not be so selfish as to keep you here for my happiness."

And so it was settled, that Mr. Mayo should return to New York in October, and remain till April of the ensuing year, when he should return to Italy and accompany his wife home—

"Man proposes, God disposes."

Mrs. Mayo obtained introductions to the best society, and she and Caroline plunged into all the gaieties and show that their money and position could command. Mrs. Mayo did not forget Art, but painting and sculpture were not the arts she studied principally. She talked of designing and modelling; the first she certainly did, but not the last. Dr. Browne studied her carefully; her voice and her rings revealed her to him. He knew that she was the mother of Caroline, but the secret was safe, for Dr. Browne never trusted a woman.

In January, in the midst of Mrs. Mayo's most successful

cultivation of society, there came an alarming letter from New York—Mr. Mayo had been exposed to a storm on shipboard, and had taken a severe cold. This he had neglected, and now he was very ill of what Dr. Williams declared was "galloping consumption."

Dr. Williams and Minnie both wrote, urging Mrs. Mayo's immediate return, if she wished to arrive in season to receive her husband's last breath.

Mrs. Mayo was terribly afflicted. Dr. Browne and Caroline offered to return with her, and she took leave of Rome in haste and terror, leaving Henry Denby to a loneliness far greater than if he had not found friends on his first arrival.

When they had been a day at sea, they discovered the terrible fact, that their captain had small-pox. No disease had ever struck such terror into Mrs. Mayo's heart. To lose life was dreadful, but to lose her beauty was far more dreadful. She was the only one on board who took the disease. The day of awful trial was come to the woman of fashion and frivolity, of shams and limitless pretence. The malady was of the severest form, and death seemed to invade every fibre of her being, with pangs that she could neither endure nor escape. Remorse joined itself to the suffering of her body, till the lost spirits could hardly have wished to exchange their agonies for hers.

Dr. Browne devoted himself to her care, not even seeing his wife, lest she should take the disease. He saw her mental agony; he knew its cause. He would fain have relieved her, but he could not speak, unless she first trusted him.

"O Doctor!" said she, "I would give the universe to tell you what is in my heart before I die, but I cannot, my lips are sealed forever," and then her groans and sighs would have moved a heart of stone.

"Anything you can say to me will be safe forever."

"All men tell their wives," said Mrs. Mayo, and then she was silent, evidently determined to die and give no sign.

"That is not true," said Dr. Browne. "More than twenty years ago, I witnessed the birth of my wife, but she does not know the fact, and never will, unless her mother should ask me to tell her."

"Who was her mother?" said Mrs. Mayo, with fierce energy.

"You know, and I know, my dear lady, for though that un-

happy mother was imperviously veiled, she wore rings that I saw then, and have seen on the same hand many times this winter. But no hint has ever been given to my wife, or ever will be, unless you desire it."

"How much I owe you," murmured the miserable woman. "If I live, Doctor, I will pay you—so far as such a debt can be paid. If I die, say to my husband that for your care of me, all my jewels must be given to your wife. I would do more, but I dare not, I must leave the rest to him. He is truly generous."

"Give me a pencil and paper," said she; "I can write."

She wrote with the greatest difficulty—"For Dr. Browne's care of me, give his wife all my jewels." This she directed to her husband.

"Do not tell anything to your wife," said she. "She must never despise her mother; but say to Henry Brandon from me, that Caroline is my child—that her father is the only man I ever loved, and that, but for the pride of my heart, I might have been happy and good. Tell him to be a father to Caroline, to help her to be a Christian, and save her from being the miserable hypocrite that her mother has been."

This much of candid confession seemed greatly to relieve Mrs. Mayo. The Doctor did all he could. He read to her the prayers and the penitential psalms in her prayer-book, but delirium soon shut up her senses in darkness, and she died on the tenth day after she was brought to her bed. No vestige of her beauty remained. She had become a mass of corrupted flesh, that they hastened to hide in the great deep. —"*Sic transit, gloria mundi.*"

Mr. Mayo was living when Dr. Browne and his wife reached New York. When the sad intelligence was tenderly given him by Minnie, he only said, "I go to my beloved wife, and our child is henceforth your child." He died within a week.

Mrs. Mayo's jewels were given to Caroline; and Mr. and Mrs. Mayo's immense property descended to the little Cornelia. A legacy of five thousand dollars to Dr. Browne attested Mr. Mayo's sense of the value of his services to his idolised wife.

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Our story leaves Henry Denby in Rome. We may have news of him hereafter. The excellent Mattie is Mrs. Adolphus Singleton, and has life before her.

Victor Vincent, and Ettie, his good angel, went to join George Graham in his enterprise, which had already a prosperous beginning.

Jerry and Nancy exchange their theological views to their mutual comfort.

It is rumoured that Mrs. Sherwood is no longer a Daughter of Temperance.

Dr. Browne and Caroline have settled in New York.

The death of Mrs. Mayo and her husband seemed sadly to affect Mr. Brandon—we should say, that he became a more earnest, watchful, and tender Christian than ever, if this were possible. His prayers and his cares for Caroline are unremitted, but we fear she will remain one of the children of this world, determined, though not contented, to lay up treasures here.

The little Cornelia is the choicest gem in the crown of joy that Providence has placed on the heads of George and Minnie Graham—"They have been faithful over a few things, therefore they shall be made rulers over many."

THE END.