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AS LONG AS SHE LIVED. *

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BOOK I.

"THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE NOBLE POOR."

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER THE SHOCK.

MABEL'S life was a restless dream to her for three days following the death of Adam Halfday. She saw nothing real or tangible; she remembered nothing; she believed that she was in America, that her grandfather was living, that she was a child at school, and fifty other vain beliefs born of the fever from which she suffered.

When she came back somewhat to herself, and to the fact that she was Mabel Westbrook, lying ill and weak in a capacious bed, and in a room that she had never seen before, it was early morning, and the birds were singing outside the window in their gladness at the dawn. Mabel lay still and tried to marshal her thinking forces into order, but the effort was far from successful, and the real world to which she had returned remained exceedingly confused. Still she

was Mabel Westbrook, she was certain; she had been ill, she was sure; her brain had been in a bad way, and something terrible had happened to reduce her to this pitiable extremity, but she was hardly certain what it was, and she did not wish to recollect too suddenly lest the knowledge should collapse her. She remembered dreaming of a long ride over a rough country to a white cottage, nestling in the shadow of the hills, and of an old man dying while she looked at him and assured him of the better times. That was an awful dream—if it were a dream; and if the grim and terrible reality, who was the old man to whom Fate had grudged prosperity so cruelly? Not Adam Halfday! not the man with the black gown and silver cross hanging on his heart! No, that was at the Hospital of Lazarus, and the Brotherhood of the Noble Poor, where she had found him in the twilight, and spoken to him, and——, and then all was confusion and a greater density, and she drifted into

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