

into her thoughts—the bare idea was desecration,—that her poverty had any thing to do with it. Harry Netherby was the same to her, and she to him, as they had ever been. This she knew—she felt it in her inmost soul, and cared not what cold and calculating men might say or think. But for all this, she was not to lose sight of maiden modesty, and came pertly forward with a declaration of her unrequited love, and lay it at the feet of him who was its object, to spurn or to accept as he might think it prudent; nor did she do so. No!—not by the most distant hint, or thought, embodied in a single word. She never alluded to Hellbeck Hall or Harry Netherby, until she saw, or thought she did, that the life of him, for whom alone she lived and breathed, would be endangered by her silence. Even then, except to her dear uncle, who had given her every reason to induce her to look on him as on a kind indulgent parent, her thoughts were all her own; though often on her lips, she yet did not betray the secret of her heart, though sorely tempted once to do so. When she saw the noble youth, her cousin, pass the court-yard gate that morn, to do her uncle's bidding, she yearned to say to him, but did not, one word of kind encouragement. But she said it to herself, and it consoled her much—far more than if her cousin had been there to hear it—"Ride on, my noble boy, and do your errand gallantly. I know you will, or you'll not see me in the saddle for a week to come!" the strongest inducement she could think of at the moment to excite his zeal. "A week, did I say?" the dread alternative occurring to her mind, that he might not succeed; "nay, years on years may drag their flagging length along, and dim your cousin's eye, and tinge her raven locks with grey, and fade the rosy tint upon her cheek; but will not see her out beyond the Forest gate again, till all of her that's left on earth be carried to the lone church-yard, and laid beside her sainted mother's grave!"

All this, or rather the feelings that gave rise to it, her uncle saw and knew as well as if her little heart had been laid bare before him. Yet something still there was behind the scene, which he could not discern—some hidden mystery which he could not penetrate. The poverty of his niece was still the theme on which he dwelt—the clue to guide him to the inmost labyrinth of his doubts. When, therefore, Mr. Grassenthwaite arrived and produced the document already mentioned, he was quite at fault. "Forest Hall, the Musgrave's mountain hold, shall now return to her again!" he exclaimed with reference to his own misgivings on the subject. "What can this mean! It is indeed, a noble, a generous act; and must," he thought, but did not say it, "be

preparatory to a step he means to take to make both it and her his own. And with my free and full consent he shall do both; malgre all the idle visions I had vainly dreamt of—and yet—but we shall see!

CHAPTER XIII.

When hope is children.

That fain of bliss would tell,
And love forbidden

In the heart to dwell,
When fettered by a viewless chain,
We turn and gaze, and turn again,
Oh! death were merry to the pain

Of those that bid farewell!

HEBEN.

THE all-important Monday no sooner saw the shadows of those towering fells lengthened out across the vale of Eden, than Harry Netherby was up and ready for his journey. He was determined to be at Forest Hall before the other guests, in hopes to obtain an interview with Alice, and this he would most certainly have accomplished, had he not been thwarted in his purpose by a trivial and untoward accident.

When he came down to breakfast, which, the night before, he'd ordered to be ready for him at an early hour, he enquired if Billy Stone had yet arrived. He was nervously anxious about the prisoner Hudson's state of health—afraid indeed that he would die, and cheat the gallows of its due—not from any feeling of malignant hate, or dire revenge; but from a fear lest he should make his exit, from the stage of his perfidiousness, without a full and frank confession of his guilt. Nothing less than this, he thought, could wipe away, or fasten in firmer and undying dyes, a fearful stain upon his father's memory. On leaving Appleby the day before, he therefore had directed Billy Stone to find out, from the jailer, at early dawn, how his prisoner had passed the night, and then to come to Hellbeck Hall, to let him know. Hence, his anxiety to ascertain if Billy Stone was there. Old John, the butler, to whom this enquiry was addressed, replied, in some confusion, that he had been seen about the kitchen. He was immediately told to send him in. This order he seemed in no great hurry to obey, busying himself with trifles, such as placing by the fire his master's boots,—dusting the old family elbow chair, which no one had ever occupied since his late master's death;—putting the fire irons to rights, &c. Then he left the room, apparently to do his bidding. After an absence prolonged somewhat beyond the length of his master's patience, he returned with some article to complete the little set out for the break-