

AFTERWARD

the seed, and watched and nourished it, until it became a tree bearing white roses. From slips of that tree the garden has been garlanded with roses. I do not wish it changed, until you have put the last earthly rose in my cold hands."

"Dear mother! Dear mother!"

They talked over these incidents until Gerard returned; and then as they took some slight refreshment together fell into speculations concerning the past and present Bowling Green. Gerard was sympathetic with its past, but enthusiastic as to its future. And when Mrs. Bloommaert spoke feelingly of the dignified men who in early days had been the familiar figures on its pleasant sidewalks, Gerard answered:

"Dear auntie, these dignified old merchants in breeches and beavers and fine lawn ruffles have most worthy successors in the clean-shaved men of to-day, sensibly clothed from their soft hats to their comfortably low-cut shoes. Would it not be delightful to show some of these old, dignified merchants over the new Bowling Green? Take them through Nassau Street and way up Broadway? I think they would need all the training they have been having since they died to bear it."

"You ought not to speak so lightly of the future life, Gerard."

"Auntie, your pardon! But do you think that only the incarnated improve? May not the de-incarnated be progressing also?"