

visited the Grosvenor Gallery with her she became gloomy and dejected.

"If I had risked a little," she said, "I might have been a better painter than any of these. I might have had a position in the world and money and interests."

"Is it too late?" I asked.

She only looked at me.

Yes, it was too late. The very power of application had gone from her.

When she was about twenty (Sophia having that year made a better match than her eldest sister) there came to reside in the neighbourhood a family of the name of Gallett. The father had been a shopkeeper, but he had made a great deal of money; he had married a woman of refined mind and a better social position than himself, and their two children, a son and a daughter, had had every advantage of education. The father had now retired from business and bought an estate; the son was at Cambridge, and the daughter Violet had just returned from Dresden, where she was studying music. She was pretty, well-dressed, and had nice manners, and people were disposed to be kind to her; but there were some who were doubtful whether they would visit the parents, some quite determined not to do so. Among these were the Longthornes. To have made money in trade was in their estimation more reprehensible than to have been idle and lived on money someone else had made in trade; and Mrs. Longthorne, after seeing Violet at the clergyman's house, felt that as she could not possibly allow herself to be connected with such people, and as her eldest son was at an impressionable age, the less she had to do with them the better. So she did not call on Mrs. Gallett, and she would not allow her daughter to meet Violet if she could avoid it. The Longthornes being rather important people in their own little world, their example was followed by others, and though eventually they made their way, the Galletts were in danger of being cut by the county.

Lydia had taken a fancy to Violet and was sorry that they might not be friends, but she trusted to time, and, on the few occasions when they did meet, the girls usually talked to one another.

One day at the house of Mrs. Trefusis, the wife of the clergyman of Lydia's parish, she was introduced by Violet to her brother.

The attraction was mutual. Gallett thought he had never met any one so good-looking, so clever, or so charming. For the first time his heart was touched. She, having had a larger experience of men than he of women, was less superlative in her admiration, but she was in a fair way to falling in love. During the long vacation they met again and again. He began to talk of Lydia to his sister.

"Lydia is very nice," said Violet, "but the parents are narrow-minded and old-fashioned. They will not visit us because father kept a shop.

You shall not be patronised by them. Don't get too fond of Lydia, there's a good boy."

Nevertheless, whenever he and Lydia met they talked to each other more than to anyone else present. And before long people noticed them and began to make remarks. One of Lydia's married sisters heard of it. She took upon herself to speak to Lydia.

"How can you let your name be coupled with that man's?" she said, "and his father a shopkeeper! You know you would never be allowed to marry him. Of course he would like the connection, but it would be hateful for us who have never had anything to do with trade. You could not expect us to visit you."

Then this sister told the other, and she also spoke to Lydia.

"What can you be thinking of? You are letting yourself be talked about. And you who were always so particular, so proud of being a lady, associating with shopkeepers! Mr. Gallett happens to have made money, but what do you think the relations are like? Dreadfully vulgar people, I expect. You could have nothing in common with them. And, as Mary says, you could never expect our husbands to know yours if you married him. But of course you won't be so silly."

And then the sisters told the mother and the mother told the father, and Lydia was forbidden to speak to the Galletts.

Lydia answered them all with spirit, but their arguments had weight with her; the vulgar relations (who did not exist, for both Mr. Gallett and his wife were orphans and only children), the being cut off from her own family (which, when I knew her, would have been rather a relief to her than otherwise), and her own pride in half a dozen generations of country gentlemen, all this took sides against her growing love for Mr. Gallett.

The next time she saw him she was with her mother. He smiled brightly when his eyes met hers and took a step towards her. Lydia knew she was being watched. She hesitated, then bowed coldly.

The remembrance of that minute in her life was anguish in time to come.

Even yet hope was not at an end. A meeting, an explanation, a little encouragement might have changed all. But he was sensitive and proud, and his sister was indignant, and they avoided the Longthornes. Then he went back to Cambridge. And when he came home at Christmas, Lydia was in London with her aunt. And before the next long vacation Mr. Gallett, senior, died suddenly, and the place was sold again, and Mrs. and Miss Gallett went abroad, and the son began to read for the Bar.

And now, as everybody knows, Sir Conrad Gallett is a Q.C. and M.P., and his sister married a clergyman who is in a fair way to be made a bishop. Sir Conrad's wife is a far grander lady than poor Lydia Longthorne, and

would probably not think her worth including in her visiting list, because she rather prides herself on only knowing people who are in some way remarkable.

And often when Lydia is reading the *Morning Post* to her deaf old mother, she comes across the name of the man she might have married. But she never mentions it if she can avoid it. And all the sympathy her family ever gave her was to say, when he was knighted, that, after all, it was a pity Lydia had looked down upon him.

And Lydia has never loved since she learnt her own heart—too late.

When she was about four-and-thirty she had another chance in her life.

She was staying at the time with some friends in London, and she went with them to a large missionary meeting. I have heard Dr. Somerton myself and know how he can speak to people's hearts. He told of his experiences in a far-off land, and he begged any who had money or leisure or influence, to do what they could for the cause of Christ. And he asked, were there no women who would go out to their heathen sisters? If there were none young and strong and happy, were there none lonely and weary and disappointed who knew the emptiness of world-service? Were there none who had failed and would be glad to begin anew? Were there none whose powers had not scope? None who yearned to give more than was asked of them in their present life? God would accept even these.

And Lydia walked back silent, with glowing cheeks and bright eyes, looking younger and prettier than she had done for years. That night she told her friend she had a call.

But before she spoke to Dr. Somerton she went home. She broached the matter to her family. It was met with horror. What new craze was this? Lydia turn missionary! Some laughed, some argued. Lydia's commonsense was appealed to. It began to speak to her. No longer had she before her the earnest, spiritual face of the colonial bishop, nor the rapt looks of other listeners, nor the atmosphere of prayer. And she began to look at this and at that, and to argue, and to wonder if it was a call after all.

And Dr. Somerton went back with his devoted little band of workers, but Lydia Longthorne was not one of them.

But I happened to see Lydia the day after the news of his martyrdom reached England. I knew her well by that time, and I believed her when she told me with a white face that she felt when she read the account of his death and that of two ladies, as if she saw the gate of heaven closed behind them and she was shut out of glory.

And so I tell you I feel sorry for Lydia Longthorne. She has private means, she is good-looking, she is respected, but she begins, I think, to look a little bit discontented.

DICK HARTWELL'S FORTUNE.

By SARAH DOUDNEY.

CHAPTER II.

THE Braces lived in a little modern red brick house which was the prettiest in the whole terrace. When Dick opened the gate he entered at once into a small bower of greenery. The evening primrose had unfolded its yellow blossoms in the cool light, and a bright star kept watch in the heavens. The sill of the bay-window was decorated with a row of richly-coloured geraniums; a

Virginia creeper draped the entire front with masses of graceful foliage, and a low hedge of laurel shielded the house from the foot-path. Tom Brace answered Dick's knock, and told him that Minnie was in the back garden.

"You're late, aren't you?" the young fellow said.

"Well, perhaps I am," admitted Dick. "Time seems to melt away somehow in this hot weather."

Minnie was sitting in the back garden with

some light work in her lap, and no one could have denied that she looked really lovely. She knew just how to pose herself. That fluffy golden head of hers came out admirably against a background of purple clematis. Her big blue eyes were raised languidly to give her lover a greeting.

"I've been sitting here for ages, Dick, wondering what had become of you!" she said in a plaintive voice.

"Well, I meant to come earlier, dear," he