

right or left—without a thought as to whence he came or whither he bent his steps. the wretched and miserable man quickened his already rapid pace, and fled!

The only idea that seemed clearly traced upon his mind was the necessity of shunning all places where he was likely to be met by man, and when the night came, and consciousness returned, he found himself in the forest-cave, alone in its silent depths, with the evidences of his own guilt and that of his associates scattered round him.

Fearfully he wandered from heap to heap, selecting whatever was least burdensome and most valuable, determined to leave his home and country, and seek impunity in a foreign land, in which, before steps could be taken to prevent him, he trusted he would have safely arrived.

CHAPTER V.

THE PARTING.

THE reader, if his interest has been awakened by our story, will have felt some curiosity as to the errand which brought the younger Craighton to his father's house on the night of the Willinton robbery. We must explain:

Richard Craighton was at the time we speak of, about the age of twenty-three. His youth had been well cared for. The example of his father's energy of character and power of mind, had not been lost upon him. His mother's gentleness and piety, also, had had a salutary effect in the formation of his character. When launched upon the world as a student-at-law, he was well fortified with sound principles and habits of industry. His natural talents were respectable, and they had been assiduously cultivated. His success at the Bar, when the time for his examination came, was confidently anticipated by his friends. And their anticipations were in a fair way of being realized. When scarcely a year released from probation, he by a fortunate chance became favorably known, and business began to grow upon him. He seemed established in a course of practice which would yield him a comfortable income, a hope in which he rejoiced, for he was already an accepted lover. It was to seek his father's sanction and his mother's blessing that he had sought the home of his youth on the occasion referred to. It is needless to say that his father had not learned the object of his hurried visit.

Richard Craighton sat in his solitary chamber, or paced it with hurried and uneven steps. Thoughts crowded upon his mind—thoughts to which he had hitherto been a stranger. No

presentiment of evil—no thought of the misfortune which had overtaken him—had ever clouded the pure atmosphere in which, until now, he had lived and moved. The fall was dreadful. Till now, he had walked with the erect and stately bearing of a man—henceforth, he felt, he must crawl through life, only too happy if he could pass unnoticed and unmarked.

The hopes too in which he had indulged—hopes, which till now, no fear had ever darkened—were crushed to the earth—beaten down and trampled on. What to him was honor or honest fame! The father to whom he owed his being—him whom he had looked to as a model upon which to form his character—was a felon, and but for circumstances which he could not control, might have been a murderer—a murderer from the basest of all the motives by which man is actuated. What deeper misery than this could be heaped upon him!

His love too, and it *was* love—for he was of a sanguine and an enthusiastic temperament—was withered in the bud; and she for whom the sacrifice of his life would have been gladly made, was, through him, to be wounded to the heart. The whole of his misery stared him in the face, and he could not—he did not try—to mitigate or to stifle it. A hundred times he resolved to see her—to tell her all—to ask her to forget him, and his shame. But he could not do it. The effort was beyond his strength. He could not tell her of his parent's guilt, and he could not make her a sharer in his infamy.

What remained for him to do? To desert her without a word of explanation—without asking her pity and forgiveness. This also was a course he dared not think of. She was so associated with his every hope, that he felt it would be like losing the anchor of his soul to cast her sympathy away.

On every side he was beset. There was no path by which he could escape. But he resolved to see her—what his purpose was he did not know, and could not tell. He hoped nothing—expected nothing. Still, to see her was necessary to her peace—his peace! No—no—not that. He had done with peace. He did not hope ever again on earth to know the meaning of the word. But it was something—a craving of his spirit, which he could neither explain nor control—and he resolved, let the result be what it would, that he would once more—only once—listen to her gentle and loving voice, and then—leave her forever.

Agnes Gardner sat in her own favorite room. She was reading, or at all events she held in her hand a book. If her thoughts wandered from her