

low, sad and timid tone, weeping the while. John was vera anxious to keep him awhile langer at the schule. I wish noo I hadna crossed his wishes sae muckle; but this is a generous proposal o' yours, Mr. Blair. May God reward you for your goodness."

"Well, my woman," said the kindly old man, "I intend to let him go to school for half the day, so that he may learn to read and write and cast accounts, and, if he is spared and behave himself, he may be my book-keeper, yet."

I need not say that this unexpected deliverance relieved my own mind of much anxiety. We read a chapter and joined in prayer. The chapter I selected was the 30th Psalm, and every verse seemed an arrow shot direct from heaven into the heart of the afflicted woman. When I read the last part of the 5th verse, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," I heard a low, half-suppressed sigh—the passionate "Amen" of an agonized and bleeding heart. When we rose from our knees, I thought I perceived a brightness in her face such as I had never seen since the cloud fell upon her, and wondered if it was the light shining from beyond the cloud—a beam of the glory of the upper sanctuary.

After this interview, as I learn from my diary, I remained in Glasgow a year and some months, yet, during all this period, John Gerry was never heard of. His wife received no word from or about him, and did not know whether he was dead or alive. Sometimes she thought he had enlisted as a soldier, sometimes she fancied he had taken ship and gone abroad to some distant country, and sometimes a dark and terrible suspicion crossed her mind that he had desperately put an end to his existence. The last suspicion was the one which seemed to me most consistent with his general character, for he was generous, affectionate, and noble in disposition, and imbued with a high sense of moral duty. How could such a man act the part of a profligate, and leave his wife and children to the cold charity of the world?

My visits to the house were frequent and regular, the benevolent old gentleman faithfully kept his promise, and the family seemed never to want the necessaries of life. Tammy had been taken out of the Tobacco Factory, was living with his father's uncle, attending school half the day and running errands the other half. He came down to see his mother every Sabbath afternoon, the old gentleman sometimes accompanying him, and, being neatly and genteely clad, he seemed already like a new creature. I observed when Mrs. Gerry glanced at his nice apparel and clean rosy face and well-combed hair, and then looked at her other children, that a shade of sorrow seemed to pass over her countenance. "You winna forget mammy, Tam, will ye, when you grow to be a man?" "No, ma—nor yet Dad, nor yet Mary, nor

Maggie, nor Aislie," he replied, naming them all one by one. His mother wiped her eyes and patted him kindly on the head.

But, ah! that was a mournful year to poor Nelly Gerry! The old woman had returned to her own dwelling, the wife, or widow, was left with her children in her lonely and loveless home to weep and sigh in secret, and to wander amid the shadows of darkened memories. The days and weeks passed slowly away, and the nights were very long and dreary. Before three months from the time John Gerry disappeared, Nelly was visibly an altered woman. She was a round-made, ruddy-cheeked creature when I saw her first, with a pair of hazel eyes full of light, I had almost said lightning, and the spring of her foot as she tripped through the house betokened glowing health and elastic spirits. She was only about 28 years of age. I was afraid now that she was slowly sinking into a decline. The roses had faded in her cheeks, her eye had lost its wonted lustre, and *rested* on you, when you spoke to her, with a quiet and dreamy expression, and all her motions were languid and lifeless. Yet she complained of nothing but loss of appetite. It was evident that the vampire, care, was sucking her blood, and that her days of gladness were gone for ever. I was struck particularly with one thing. She attended the Parish Kirk with unflinching regularity, carrying the child in her arms, and bringing the other two girls along with her, and sat in that pew, in the gallery near the door, where John so often, during the former year, appeared without her. Whatever she thought would please him, now that he was gone, she carefully performed.

One night I called at the house, about four months after John's departure, and, as the door was slightly ajar, I thoughtlessly entered without knocking. Nelly was standing in the middle of the floor, staring towards the door with a fixed and intense expression of countenance, as if she were a statue of marble. Next moment a stream of crimson ran over her whole face and neck; another moment, and the sudden billow of emotion subsided, and left the tenement as pale as clay. She trembled from head to foot like an aspen leaf. "I thoct it was John, sir," she feebly ejaculated. Ah! Hope, thou beautiful angel, thou art ever the last to forsake us in this world. Beauty, strength, and health may depart, riches may take wings and flee away, and friends may forsake, but thou still walkest by our side shooting beams of light into the dark future, from thy starry eyes, and re-awakening the dead pulses of the heart. When earth becomes a desert to the blighted spirit, and the weary pilgrim is ready to faint amid the dry sand, thou touchest the waste with thy divining rod, and springs of water gush at his feet, and the wilderness blossoms into beauty. When all the voices and sounds of the world become