

# THE INSTRUCTOR.

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## LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

### STORY OF AN HEIRESS,

(Founded on a recent occurrence.)

#### CHAP. II.

I left church, my imagination full of the young divine. I longed much to meet him in society, and find whether his manners and conversation would dissolve the spell which his genius had cast upon me. My wish was soon gratified, for his society was much courted; and never, among the pretenders to exclusive grace and fashion, did I meet a person of such captivating demeanour and endearing modesty, of mental curiosity so charmingly veiled, as Stephen Trevor. Long after our acquaintance, I expressed my hearty admiration of him with the frankness natural to my disposition. I could perceive that my doing so arrayed against him the envious jealousy of my admirers, and in especial of Lord E—. They needed not to fear, so long as I could speak of him so unreservedly. The dignity of Trevor's character inspired me with such profound awe, that I could never summon courage to offer him a single compliment; but my bearing towards him was more courteous and respectful than it had ever been to any other man of his years. He, however, had little in common with the circle of which I formed a part; he was sometimes among, but never of us: his selected friends and companions were of a different stamp, and my acquaintance with him was consequently limited to brief and occasional interchanges of conventional courtesy. He knew little of me, but I had perused and re-perused his lovely character, and learned from the perusal how to solve the sage's question of "What is virtue?" The Sabbath was now my day of rest, and peace, and joy. I looked forward to it with the rapture of a child who anticipates a holiday. But it was not the Creator whom I thus joyed to worship: it was before his

glorious creature that I bent in almost prostrate idolatry. Yes, the flattered, adored, and haughty heiress—she who had trifled with human hearts as with the baubles of an hour, was now pouring out her first affections an unregarded tribute—she was won by him who alone had never wooed her favour—to whom her boasted beauty and her boundless wealth were valueless as dust and ashes, and in whose regard the lowliest and homeliest Christian maiden was of more esteem than she. Yes, imagination, passion, sensibility, long dormant, now awoke—to what a world of suffering! But if suffering, it was also life—life, whose sharpest pangs were worthy and ennobling. Why should I blush to own, and shrink from describing, the heavenliest feeling of my nature? Why not glory that my spirit turned coldly away from the frivolous and base, and bowed in reverent homage at the shrine of worth, and wisdom, and holiness, and genius? Yes, it was through my admiration of these great qualities, that love won its impeded way into the far recesses of my soul. Blessed be nature, that gave me strong sympathies, able to struggle up through the trammels of a false and feeble education! Blessed be love—aye, even its very thorns—for by it I was first led into the sweet and quiet world of literature, and felt the infinitely growing joys of knowledge, and learned to gaze delightedly upon the changing and immortal face of nature.

At first I had not thought Trevor beautiful. This I remember distinctly, or I could not now believe it; for, so soon as I had marked the mystic intelligence between the outward aspect and the inward heart, his face became to me even as the face of an angel. His soft dark hair flowed meekly away on either side a forehead where mental power and moral grandeur sat fully enthroned—his eyes shone serenely lustrous with the soul's own holy light; and O the warm benevolence of his bright smile! While he preached, the light from a richly stained oriel window streamed upon his figure,