

A HOLIDAY.

BY E. D. RICE.

One day we left our cares behind,
And trimmed our sails at early morn;
And by the willing western wind
Far o'er the sea were borne.

We left behind the city's din;
We found a world new-made from night:—
At every sense there entered in
Some subtle, fresh delight.

The west wind rocked us as we lay
Within the boat, and idly scanned
The dim horizon far away
For some fair, unknown land.

And on and on we drifted thus,
Not caring whither we might roam;—
For all the world, that day, to us
Was Paradise, was home.

And as we sailed, a sweet surprise
Of comfort in the present, grew;—
We saw old things with clearer eyes,
We dreaded less the new.

The past and future seemed to blend;
Remembrance missed her shadow, grief;
Anticipation was a friend,
And hope became belief.

The strangeness vanished out of life;
Affliction dropped its stern disguise;
And suffering, weariness and strife
Were changed before our eyes.

So, but more clear, from hills of God,
Our life on earth one day shall show;
And the dim path that here we trod
With purest light shall glow.

Too quickly sped the hours away;—
The evening brought us home again;
And after that brief holiday
Came toil, and care, and pain.

Yet like a peaceful dream, that long
Will steal into the waking thought,
Or like a well-remembered song,
That happy tears has brought,—

That bright, brief summer holiday,
The willing wind, the sea, the sky,
Gave gifts no winter takes away,
And hopes that cannot die.

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PUBLICANS and SINNERS

A LIFE PICTURE.

BY MISS M. E. BRADDON,

Author of "Lady Audley's Secret," "To The Bitter End," "The Outcasts," &c., &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VIII.

LUCIUS INCLINES TO SUSPICION.

Towards morning self-indulgent habits triumphed over anxious love. After tossing all night in feverish unrest, M. Hossack slept soundly until noon; but not a commonplace slumber, for the visions of his head upon his bed were made beautiful to him by the image of his beloved. She was with him in that dream-world where all is smooth and fair as the wide bosom of Danube or Rhine when no storm-wind ruffles his waters; a world where there were neither sick children nor concerts—nothing but happiness and love.

He awakened himself reluctantly from so sweet a delusion, dressed and breakfasted hurriedly, and went straight to the little draper's shop at the far end of Stillington. After Mrs. Bertram's gentler manner last night, he felt as if he might venture to approach her. Sorrow had brought them nearer to each other; she who had so sternly repulsed his love had not rejected his sympathy. She had thanked him, even, for his proffered aid, in that thrilling voice which in speech as in song went straight to his heart.

The young woman was behind the counter when he went in, reading a number of a penny magazine in pensive solitude.

"How is the little girl this morning?" he asked eagerly.

"O, sir, I'm sorry to say she's not so well. She was light-headed last night, and her poor mother sat up, and look! as pale as a ghost to-day, and the doctor seems more serious like. But as mother tells Mrs. Bertram, it's only scarlatina; it isn't as if it was scarlet fever, you know."

The little door of communication between the shop and the staircase opened at this moment, and Jane Bertram's pale face appeared—how pale and wan! He could not have thought one night's suffering would have worked such a change.

"She is worse," she said, looking at the girl with haggard eyes that hardly seemed to have

sight in them. "For God's sake, run for the doctor."

"She can't be so bad as all that. Come, bear up, Mrs. Bertram, that's a dear," answered the girl, kindly. "You're so nervous, and you're not used to illness. I'll run and fetch Mr. Vincent if you like, but I daresay there's no need."

She shuffled on her bonnet as she spoke.

"I don't know," Mrs. Bertram said helplessly; "I don't know what I ought to do; she was never so ill before."

She went up-stairs, Geoffrey following, emboldened by pity. He stood by the open door of the little bedroom—commonly furnished, but neat and spotless in its pure drapery of white dimity, its well-scrubbed floor, and freshly-papered wall. The sick child lay with her golden hair spread loosely on the pillow, her blue eyes bright with fever. The landlady sat by the bed, sharing the mother's watch.

Mrs. Bertram bent over the child, kissed her with fond passionate kisses, and murmured roken words of love, then turned towards the door, surprised to see the intruder.

that he will come as quickly as an express train can bring him."

Her eyes brightened a little, and she gave him a look full of gratitude.

"How good of you to think of this?" she said. "O yes, pray, pray send for him. Such a man as that might save my darling, even if she were in danger, and the doctor here says there is no danger. Pray send for this good man. I am not very rich, but I will gladly pay any fee within my means, and be his debtor for further payment in the future."

"He will not want payment," answered Geoffrey, with a smile. "He is my friend, and would make a longer journey than between this and London to serve me. Rely upon it, he will be with you before this evening. Good-bye, Mrs. Bertram, and try to be hopeful. If I thought there were a better man in all London than the man I am going to summon, rely upon it I would have that better man."

He gave her his hand, which she did not refuse; at least, she let her feverish little hand rest in his for one brief delicious moment, perhaps unconsciously. But he felt that he had



"AUTUMN FLOWERS."

"You here!" she exclaimed, seeing Geoffrey, but with no anger in the sorrowful face.

"Yes, I want so much to be of use to you. Will you spare me two minutes in here?" he asked, pointing to the sitting-room, the door of which stood open. "The little girl is safe with our good friend."

"Yes," the mother answered piteously. "I can do nothing for her. Only God can help us—only He who pitied the sinful woman in her agony."

The words struck strangely on his ear, but he let them pass unnoticed as the wild cry of an almost despairing soul. What should she have to do with sin? she in whose countenance reigned purity and a proud innocence none could dare impeach.

"I spoke to you last night about getting farther advice," he said. "Mind, I don't suppose it's in the least degree necessary; your child's recovery is no doubt merely a question of time. These childish fevers must run their course. But I can see that you are unduly anxious. It might be a comfort to you to see another doctor, a man especially experienced in the treatment of children. I know just such a man—one who has been particularly successful with children; not an eminent man by any means, but one who has worked among the poor, whose heart is in his profession, whose work is really a labor of love. I can speak of him with perfect confidence, for he is my friend, and I know him to be true. Let me telegraph for him; I am sure

gained ground since that day in the garden. He had won the right to approach her.

He jumped into the first fly he met, told the man to drive his hardest to the railway station—it was before the days of postal telegraph offices—and dispatched his message, paying for both telegram and reply.

The message ran thus:

"From Geoffrey Hossack, Stillington, Warwickshire, to Lucius Davoren, 108 Shadrack Basin-road, London.

"Come here at once to see a sick child. No time to be lost. Your coming quickly will be the greatest favor you can do me. The patient's address is 15 Marlow-street, New-town, Stillington. Answer paid for."

The telegram handed over to the clerk, he began to speculate upon the probabilities of delay. After all, this telegraphic system, which would have seemed so miraculous to our ancestors, is not rapid enough for the impatience of Young England's impetuous spirit.

It seems a slow business at the best. Science has made the matter swift as light, but clerical sluggishness and slow-footed messengers clog electricity's wings, and a message which takes a hundred seconds for its actual transmission from the operator to the dial may not be delivered for a couple of hours.

Geoffrey went back to Marlow-street to hear the last tidings of the little patient. She was sleeping peacefully, and her mother seemed more hopeful. This lightened his heart a good

deal, and he went back to his hotel, smoked a cigar, played a game at pyramids with some officers from the Stillington Barracks, and thus beguiled the time until a waiter brought him the answer to his telegram. It was brief and decisive:

"I shall come to Stillington by the last train. Must see patients before leaving."

The last train! That meant considerable delay. It was now four o'clock, and the last train came into Stillington at eleven. How coolly these doctors take things! Geoffrey felt as if his friend ought to have abandoned all his other patients to their fates for the sake of this sick child. The last train! Was this the measure of friendship?

Happily the latest report of the little girl was cheering. Doubtless all would be well. On the strength of this hope Geoffrey dined, and dined tolerably well, having asked the officers to share his meal. This hospitality prolonged the business of dining till after nine o'clock, when Geoffrey pleaded an engagement as an excuse for getting rid of his guests, and went for the third time that day to Marlow-street. He had drunk little or nothing at the social board, and had felt the exercise of hospitality somewhat irksome; but he was the kind of young man to whom dinner-giving is an absolute necessity.

The draper's shop in Marlow-street had closed its shutters, but the door stood open, and the damsel in ringlets was airing herself on the threshold after the labors of a day which had brought her about half a dozen customers.

To Geoffrey's question, which had become almost a formula, she answered hopefully. The child was better. She had sat up for a minute and had drunk a cup of milk, and had taken sundry spoonfuls of beef-tea, and had eaten three grapes, and had spoken "quite lively and sensible-like. Children are so soon down, and so soon up again," said the damsel. "It's no good taking on about them, as I told Mrs. Bertram this morning."

"She is happier now, I suppose?" said Geoffrey.

"O dear, yes, quite herself again."

"Will you ask her if I may see her for a minute or two? I want to tell her about the doctor I have sent for."

The girl went up-stairs, and returned speedily. "Mrs. Bertram will be happy to see you," she said, "if you will please to walk up."

If he would please to walk up! Would he please to enter paradise, did its gates stand open for him? To see her even in her grief was sweet as a foretaste of heaven.

She received him this evening with a smile.

"God has heard my prayer," she said; "my little darling is better. I really don't think I need have troubled your kind friend to come down. I begin to feel more confidence in Mr. Vincent, now that my treasure is better."

"I am rejoiced to hear it. But my friend will be here to-night. He is one of the best of men. He saved my life once under circumstances of much hardship and danger. We have faced death together. I should not be here to tell you this but for Lucius Davoren."

"Lucius Davoren!" She repeated the name with a wondering look, horror-stricken, her hand clutching the back of the chair from which she had risen. "Is your friend's name Lucius Davoren?"

"Yes. Can it be possible that you know him? That would be very strange."

"No," she said slowly; "I do not know this friend of yours. But his name is associated with a somewhat painful memory."

"Very painful, I fear, or you would hardly have grown so pale at the mention of his name," said Geoffrey, with a jealous horror of anything like a secret in his divinity's past life.

"I was foolish to be agitated by such a trifle. After all it's only a coincidence. I daresay there are a good many Davorens in the world," she answered carelessly.

"I doubt it. Davoren is not a common name."

"Has your friend, this Mr. Lucius Davoren, been successful in life?"

"I can hardly say that. As I told you when I first spoke of him, he is by no means distinguished. He is indeed almost at the beginning of his professional career. Yet were I racked with the most obscure of diseases, I should laugh all your specialists to scorn and cry, 'Send for Lucius Davoren!'"

"He is poor, I suppose?" she asked curiously.

"Very likely; in the sense of having no money for luxury, splendor, or pleasure—things which he holds in sovereign contempt. He can afford to give the best years of his youth to patient labor among the poor. That is the education he has chosen for himself, rather than a West-end practice and a single brougham; and I believe he will find it the shortest road to everlasting fame."

"I am glad you believe in him," she said warmly, "since he is such a great man."

"But you have not yet recovered from the shock his name caused you just now."

"Not quite. My darling's illness has made me nervous. If you think your friend will not be offended, I would rather avoid seeing him," she added, in a pleading tone. "I really don't feel well enough to see a stranger. I have passed through such alternations of hope and fear during the last few days. Will your friend forgive me if I leave Mrs. Grabbit to receive his instructions? She is a good soul, and will forget nothing he tells her."

"Do just as you like," replied Geoffrey, mystified, and somewhat disturbed in mind by this proposition; "of course you needn't see him unless you please. But he's a very good fellow, and my truest friend. I should like you to