

decrepit; but he was one of the wealthiest peers in France, and madly in love with Valerie's beautiful face.

'That explains why she did not interrupt our wedding, Agatha,' said the earl. 'Every moment I expected to see her.'

But Agatha, looking into his dark, handsome face, so full of love, only murmurs a few words of pity—nothing more. She knows that Madame la Duchess d'Albe will work out her own punishment in time.

It was not the least of Lady Kelso's pleasures to go to the Hospital of St. John, and make there a munificent return of all the charity that had been shown to her. And then the earl and countess returned home.

Lady Kelso never became a queen of fashion; she was never presented at court, and she never was queen of a London season; but no woman in England was more beloved or admired. She was famous for her charities; for her pious, gentle life; for her devotion to her husband and children; for her goodness to the poor. Everyone knew that there had been some story in her life; but no one ever suspected the truth.

Three years after their marriage, they heard good news from Beatrice Penrith. She had married Gerald Leigh, who was at the head of his profession.

When Lord Kelso read the news he sighed, then turned to his wife and kissed her sweet face. She held her little son in her arms, and he kissed the child softly.

Long years afterward he met Lady Leigh, a grave, beautiful woman, with a story in her face that he had written there. They were very silent when they met, each remembering the last parting. They said but little when they did speak, and Lady Leigh avoided meeting him, whenever it was possible, although she was now a happy wife and a happy mother.

'So the story ends; but there is a moral. Do not believe, you who read, that a man can do wrong with impunity—that he can lead an evil life, and then enjoy this life as though he had led a good one.

Agatha had not sinned—she had been foolishly credulous, but she had not done wrong wilfully. The innocent must suffer with the guilty. She was happy, but she could have been happier. She did her best to forget, but there were times when all these memories rushed over her, and then happier women could be found than the Countess of Kelso.