

as just written to me from Washington that he has procured my admission to West Point, and I am to set off at once, so as to be there at the beginning of next week."

"But is it your own wish, Charles? I thought you had marked out a different course for yourself."

"It is my wish to keep to my promise, whatever it may cost me."

"Agnes, dear, don't put on that doleful face. I shall not be honoured with a chance of being shot for years yet;" but seeing her bright eyes dimmed with tears she was struggling to suppress, he added in a more gentle tone, "we will not talk about it now, but make the most of the little time we have left. Let us go down to the river-side; and bring your portfolio; I want to show you how to finish that sketch we began."

She walked slowly and sadly away, and soon appeared with portfolio and pencils, and Charles begged for Mr. Beaufort's camp stool, in case the grass should be damp.

"He is a noble-looking fellow," said I, as they walked off together.

"He is more than noble-looking," Mr. B. replied: "he has a noble nature. Did you see how his eyes flashed when I asked him if he wished to be a soldier? He does not, I know, for his tastes are refined and intellectual, and ill suited to the rough and hardening duties of a military life. But it may do him good. The very struggle necessary to subdue the will and natural inclinations to a high sense of duty, gives more real strength to the character than an easy development of it under more kindly influences. Agnes loves him like a brother; she has taken him to her heart in place of those brothers who were so soon taken from her."

"Will not this affect your plans concerning her? she will be more lonely than ever now."

"Yes, and solitude is not good for young people. I believe I must send her to school, where the contact and association of other minds more nearly on a level with her own, may bring out many fine qualities which mere precept and example fail to excite. I would have her not merely accomplished and well-informed, but possessing strength of character, and a self-sacrificing spirit. If she remains here with me, as my pleasure consists in promoting her own, she will grow selfish—yet the thought of separating is terrible to us both."

I suggested that he should go with her to the city, and remain there until she was old

enough to leave school, when, if he still preferred a retired life, he might return to it with a companion who would long enliven and cheer his solitude—a plan which he finally decided to adopt.

Charles staid but a little while, and after Agnes had in some degree recovered from her sorrow at parting from him, her father informed her of his determination. She was greatly distressed at the thought of leaving home to go among strangers, but she did not attempt to resist his wishes. In the course of a few weeks the white house was again deserted, and Agnes had changed her solitary home for the companionship of twenty girls who were under the care of a widow lady, well qualified by nature and education for her important task.

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Five years passed away before I again saw Agnes Beaufort. Her eighteenth summer had opened brightly upon her when she welcomed me to that same lovely home. These five years had formed the transition period of which her father had spoken so anxiously, and the perfect unfolding of the flower now showed how judiciously the tender buds of thought and feeling had been nurtured. The child had changed into the refined and elegant woman; her manners at once graceful and dignified, had lost that freedom and careless gaiety which are fascinating in a little girl, but yielded to the modest reserve of more thoughtful woman, and her voice 'ever gentle, soft and low,' gave utterance to the thoughts of a mind which, by assiduous cultivation, had become

"A mansion for all lovely forms,
A dwelling place for all sweet sounds and harmonies."

But, above all, what most delighted me, was the devoted affection to her father which animated every action of her daily life; accomplishments which would have called forth the applause of crowds, were displayed only to him; and her eye glisened as brightly when a smile from him thanked her for some sweet melody, as if his happiness were her best inspiration. In vain had Mr. Beaufort urged her to accompany some friends on a long journey among our lovely northern scenery. He needed quiet and repose, for his health now was very delicate, and nothing could tempt her from his side. This was, however, but a slight matter; while I was with them her filial feeling was sorely tried.

I had taken a long ride with her, and, as each familiar scene recalled some pleasant association of her happy childhood, I said to her,