

His life, during the first year, was pleasant enough. Though he had to slave very hard to make both ends meet, he nevertheless found sufficient comfort at home to make him bear his troubles easily. His was one of those natures that demand obstacles to surmount and difficulties to vanquish. Once roused to the fight, no one more indomitably persevered till he had conquered, and thus after the first twelvemonth had passed, he saw an easier future opening up for him.

His greatest desire was to gain for his beloved Jane the station which, but for his father's stern refusal to acknowledge her, would have accrued to her at their marriage. For this end he toiled night and day, nowise sparing himself, and throwing his whole energies into the work. He must have succeeded ere long, if not in attaining wealth, in securing at least comfortable independence, when suddenly a blow fell upon him which completely paralysed and crushed him for a time.

His mother, whom he loved with the intense love of a great nature, died in the second year of his marriage, and George found himself deprived of his advocate with his father. But this was not the worst. Jane Varney, who, though penniless and an orphan, had all along possessed a most ambitious and scheming mind, finding that old Mr. Raymond remained immovable in his determination to disown his son, came out in her true colours, reproached her husband with having deceived her in regard to his affairs, and—oh triumph of falsehood!—having made her state more wretched than before. It must be remembered in order fully to appreciate this last sting—that George Raymond had taken her from a small school, in which she was the most miserable of pupil-teachers.

At this juncture, an old friend of Raymond's met him by chance in Piccadilly, linked his arm within George's, and after an evening most pleasantly spent together, won from him a promise to come down to Scotland.

Jane Varney had gained at school considerable influence on a rich, but weak-minded young lady, by name Ellen Mowbray, who, at about the same time as her governess, had married a very wealthy Manchester manufacturer. The correspondence between the two