

concluded, "this will never do! There is a bow in every cloud, and I am quite sure there is one in yours, if you will but look upward and see it. The sun is sinking in the west, and the evening breeze is springing up; get your bonnet, and come with me for a walk."

Sadly and heavily Blanche closed the instrument, and with the habitual submission of the weaker to the stronger spirit, left the room in order to prepare herself.

"Gather some of those roses, and bring them with you, Blanche," said Edith, as her friend came forward to join her. It was months since her fragile form had bent over those rose-bushes, with whose fragrant clusters she had once delighted to wreath her golden curls; and now, while she mechanically obeyed, a tear dimmed her eye, and she pressed her hand upon her heart as if to keep down its swelling. Edith would not seem to notice this, but with a buoyant footstep passed on, while Blanche, drawing her veil with a trembling hand, followed her.

Wishing to discover by what means the young Edith purposed to shed sunlight upon the spirit of her friend, I quickened my own pace and followed them unobserved. They approached one of the cottages with which the neighbourhood abounds, a low thatched dwelling, and although wearing now a neglected appearance, the verandah, with its climbing roses and woodbine, and the arrangements of the little garden, indicated the presence of a refined spirit and delicate taste. As the young girls entered the open door, a low hectic cough was heard, followed by glad words of welcome. Upon a couch reclined a creature almost as fair as themselves, and in the first dawn of womanhood.

The hand of disease which was upon her had as yet left no disfiguring marks, but had rather given an ethereal appearance to features which Nature had evidently cast in a mould of classic beauty. In obedience to a whisper from Edith, who bore in her hands more substantial gifts, Blanche offered the clustering roses she had gathered. A flush of joy lighted up the invalid's pale face, and she exclaimed:—"Oh! thank you, ma'am. I do love flowers, and it is so long since I have seen any." Her voice sank into a faint murmur of music, as she repeat-

"Bring flowers to the captive's lonely cell,
They have tales of the joyous woods to tell,
Of the free blue streams, and the glowing sky,
And the bright world shut from his languid eye;
They will bear him a thought of his sunny hours,
And a dream of his youth: bring him flowers,
fresh flowers."

The countenance of Blanche brightened as she felt the joy of giving happiness to another, but was soon again clouded by a pang of self-reproach while she thought how many sweet roses had budded, and bloomed, and faded around her own pretty home, whose beauty and fragrance, all unheeded as they had been by herself, might have cheered the sick, and gladdened the weary-hearted.

They passed on to another lowly dwelling. From the open door proceeded a moaning sound, accompanied by the sobs of a child, and within the room lay the emaciated form of a woman whose spirit seemed just pluming its wings for its long, last flight. Beside the bed, and concealing his face in its covering, stood a boy of six or seven years old, whose rounded form and rich curls contrasted strangely with the worn features and faded locks of the mother.

"Elsie," whispered the soft voice of Edith, "is all peace?"

"Oh! ma'am," replied the woman, speaking with a strong Scotch accent, "I have but one sorrow—my bairn! my bairn! Who will care for him when I am gone?"

The convulsed sobbing of the boy gave way to an uncontrollable fit of weeping, and Edith exclaimed, "Dear Blanche, I cannot provide for him, but you are rich."

All the slumbering charity of Blanche's gentle nature was awakened by this appeal, and she exclaimed with energy, "Fear nothing for your child; he shall be mine. I will care for, and rear him with all a mother's love."

The parting spirit seemed only to have awaited this assurance, for, as the closing lips murmured, "Now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace," a deeper pallor, yet an expression of pure and holy joy, settled upon the pallid features.

I looked at the face of Blanche. A sacred awe, combined with the light of heaven-born charity, gave it an almost angelic expression, and I thought "Ah! the rich sunbeams which have burst from the bosom of that cloud have brought life and gladness to more than one heart."

Leaving these ministering angels to their work of mercy, I passed on and entered the crowded wards of a hospital. Sorrow and sighing, disease and death, surrounded me on all sides: the burning brow of fever; the staring, ghastly wound: the consumptive's attenuated form and sharpened features. Surgeons and physicians passed from couch to couch, giving such relief as their art afforded; but they could not stay the hand of death, or minister to the mind diseased. As I stood in the doorway gazing upon this painful scene, and thinking of the suffering with which the world is filled, a woman, dressed in the touching garb of a widow entered the room. At a single glance I saw the effect produced by her presence. Many an eye brightened, many a cheek flushed with pleasure at the sight of her sable dress and evidently familiar face, as she passed from the bedside of one patient to that of another, her low tones breathing of love, her wasted hand pointing upward, and her lips telling of a peace which the world can neither give nor take away. A sympathy which she had learned in sorrow's school seemed to shed its rich balm into every bosom, and the sunbeams she scattered around her waked into life and joy the hearts where so lately shadows had rested, and cheered the spirits pressed down by a weight of care and sorrow.

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Sunbeams! blessed sunbeams! with your golden light, who would not delight to impart such treasure to the worn and weary? Go, then; a kind look, a tone of sympathy, a word of tenderness, conjugal and filial love, brotherly and sisterly affection, Christian care and guidance, all these are given to lessen the darkness of this world, to alleviate the sorrows of a smitten race. But as the sunbeams come down to us from their glorious source above, even so, in order that our thoughts of love and deeds of mercy may accomplish their blessed purpose, both gentle words and kindly acts must spring from Christian faith, and charity divine.

Musk.—The enduring odour of musk is astonishing. When Justinian rebuilt what is now the mosque of St. Sophia, in 538, the mortar was mixed with musk, and to this day the atmosphere is charged with the odour.