

to an unlucky vessel, fairly caught among the coral reefs, like a fly in a cobweb, not far from the North Reef. The wrecker, as he was called, having boarded the bewildered ship, said to the master,

"What will you give me, now, to get you out of this place?"

"Oh, any thing you like—name your sum."

"Five hundred dollars?"

"Agreed! agreed!" cried the other. Upon which this treacherous pilot kept his promise truly to the ear, but broke it to the hope, by taking the vessel out of an abominably bad place, only to fix her in one a great deal more intricate and perilous.

"Now," said the wrecker to the perplexed and doubly-cheated stranger "there never was a vessel in this scrape, that was known to get out again; and, indeed, there is but one man alive who knows the passage, or could, by any possibility, extricate you—and that's me!"

"I suppose," drily remarked the captain, "that for a consideration you would be the man to do me that good service. What say you to another five hundred dollars to put me into clear water, beyond your infernal reefs?"

This hard bargain was soon made; and a winding passage, unseen before, being found, just wide enough, and barely deep enough, for the vessel to pass through, with only six inches to spare under her keel, in half an hour she was once more in blue water, out of soundings, and out of danger.

"Now, master rascallion of a wrecker," cried the disentangled mariner, "tit for tat is fair play all the world over; and, unless you hand me back again my thousand dollars, I'll cut the tow rope of your lifevish-looking boat, and then, instead of returning evil for evil, as I ought by rights to do, I'll be more of a Christian, and do you a very great service, by carrying you away from one of the most infamous places in the world, to the finest country imaginable—I mean America. And as you seem to have a certain touch of black blood in your veins, I may chance to get good interest for my loan of these thousand dollars, by selling you as a slave in the Charleston negro market! What say you, my gay Mudian?"

THE MECHANIC'S CHOICE.

"The gay bells of fashion may boast of excelling
In waltz or cotillon—at whist or quadrille,
And each admiration by vauntingly telling
Of drawing, and painting, and musical skill;
But give me the fair one of country or city,
Whose home and its duties are dear to her heart,
Who cheerfully warbles some rustical ditty,
While plying the needle with exquisite art."

A short distance from the little village of Robbinsville there lived a poor, but pious family by the name of Ellins. They had an only daughter Emeline, who at the time of which we speak, was just entering her seventeenth year.—She was a good girl, and the pride of her aged parents, to whom she was every thing. By her unceasing industry she

maintained them in their declining years, and with her cheerfulness and buoyancy of spirits, she preserved them from melancholy and discontent. A happier family than this was no where to be found. They had a small garden in front of the little cottage, where they raised a few vegetables, which were planted and nurtured by Emeline herself,—for she would not suffer her aged father to do the least work whatever. The old man, she thought, was too feeble to labour, for more than ninety summers had rolled over his head. As you passed by on a fine summer's morning, you might have seen this happy family, seated in the garden, under the shade of the trees, the old man leaning on his staff, with his aged partner at his side, both laughing heartily at the playfulness of the lovely Emeline—who would be sitting near them, sewing.

A few miles from the cottage there lived a wealthy gentleman, who had retired from business, having amassed gold and silver sufficient to render him what the world calls independent. He had a large family of children, but they had all died, save his youngest daughter, Amanda Morrison—for such was her name—had received her education in the city of New-York. Perhaps it is unnecessary for us to say that she had been taught every thing calculated to render the daughter of a wealthy man accomplished,—Music, dancing, waltzing, painting, drawing, &c. Withal, she was not only 'accomplished' but exceedingly beautiful: her disposition would have been good, had it not been that she was so accustomed to having her own way.

She was indulged in every thing, and had been from a child. Her ears were eternally saluted with commendations on her beauty, her qualifications, &c., which also conspired to render her proud, haughty, vain, insolent, crabbed, and, finally, coquettish. She became so lofty, at last, that she supposed there was nobody in the world like herself.—Nobody so rich, or so beautiful, or so accomplished!—She looked with contempt on Emeline Ellins, of the cottage.

In the village of Robbinsville there dwelt a young man named Edwin Summers, an industrious and worthy mechanic. He possessed a large share of talent, and was held in high esteem by all who knew him. He was received into all society, and welcomed to the houses of the rich and respectable. He became intimate with Mr. Morrison. Edwin was about 21 or 22 years of age at this time. He was remarkable for beauty, admired for his talents, and respected for his many virtues; and such was the universal esteem in which he was held that not a few of the wealthy inhabitants of Robbinsville, contemplated offering him their daughter's hand and fortune. Among these was Mr. Morrison.—Amanda indeed, had more than once intimated to her father that she would not object to such a proposal. Finally, after a lapse of some months, during which time Edwin had been a frequent visitor at Mr. Morrison's—the thing was actually proposed. It

was so sudden, so unexpected by the young man, that he was struck with astonishment and could hardly believe his own senses. The idea of his marrying a girl possessing an immense fortune, never entered his mind. He gave no definite answer; but promised to consider the subject. Soon after he mounted his horse, and bent his steps homeward. It was a beautiful moon light evening,—every thing around looked smiling and cheerful. The moon shed her beams over hill and dale, orchards, meadows, fields of wheat, rye and corn. The evening dews glistened upon the high grass that waved gently in the breeze, on each side of the road that Edwin travelled. As his horse leisurely walked on, choosing his own pace, the youth soliloquized:—

"I shall be independant if I consent. And she is a beautiful girl! Why should I linger out my days in moving the Jack-plane—acringing servant? When Saturday night comes I must wait on my employer to get the pitiful amount of my hard earning, as though I was a poor contemptible negro slave! If I marry this girl, I shall be wealthy, honourable, grand: people will court my favour—I shall ride in my carriage—shall have my guns, and hounds and horses; I can go where I please, when I please, how I please. Money will be at my command—my name may be spread throughout the civilized world—great men will court my favour, and—"

"Yet thou mayst be unhappy!" said a person who stood at a neat little white gate that opened in front of a small cottage on our hero's left hand. The fact was, that Edwin had been carried away by the thoughts of greatness, &c., that had risen up before him, and which had completely gained an ascendancy over him. He had forgotten every thing but Amanda Morrison, and her fortune; and his horse, who knew he was accustomed always to stop at the little cottage when passing that way, had actually walked up to the gate, and stopped, without the rider's notice. Emeline had gone out to receive him, and had heard the few last words he uttered. He looked fondly at her, and jumping from his horse, and placing his arm around her, said,

"Dear Emeline, I am a fool; and your presence just at this moment has made me sensible of it! You will forgive my folly, will you not?"

He then told her all that had happened, and concluded by saying that he would rather have the pretty little Emeline Ellins for his wife than all the heiresses in the world. She laughed heartily at him for his folly, and often afterward plagued him about the "rich Miss Morrison." Soon after, with the consent of all parties, Emeline and Edwin were married, and the young man has often said that he is sure he enjoyed more real happiness with her in one hour than he would have done in his whole life with Amanda Morrison. Indeed, a happier couple than Edwin and Emeline Summers I have seldom seen; though she of them, even now, rallies him about the rich heiress.