

his just debt, all claim to the miser's property would have been immediately renounced by him in favour of the legal heirs.

"At the period of his death, I was, as you recollect, in the West Indies, and not till my return home, eight months since, had I any knowledge of the transaction, when the document was placed in my hands by the administrators upon the estate, together with an explanatory letter from my father, in which he said that the fear of paralyzing those energies, the exercise of which he deemed necessary to the full and vigorous development of a manly character, had induced him to remain silent on the subject of my expectations from my uncle."

"And now, my dear brother, is it your purpose to resign this rich request of uncounted thousands?" asked Mrs. Calthorpe, doubtingly.

"I no longer look upon it as mine to resign, Alice. My father accepted the bond in the firm belief that Harry Dorival had died in boyhood, in which case my mother became the heir to her brother's property; but well aware of his capricious temper, she felt no certainty that he would not eventually will it to a stranger, and approved, therefore, of my father's securing it, in this manner, to her son. Of course, I shall feel justified only, at the death of our strange relative, in receiving the original loan, granted to him by my father; and far greater than the enjoyment which I might have derived from the miser's hoarded wealth, will be my happiness in seeing it possessed by that lovely and virtuous girl, who has been so long and unjustly deprived of that which her parentage entitled her to claim, as a birth-right."

"My own dear brother always," said Mrs. Calthorpe, leaning, as his arm encircled her, upon his bosom, and raising her soft eyes filled with tears to his face; "I expected only this from you, of whom it never could be said:

'You know the right, and yet the wrong pursue;' but it is not every one, who, with so strong a temptation cast in his way, would have moral strength to resist it."

"I trust, for the honour of human nature, there are few, who under similar circumstances, would yield to it, dear Alice," he replied; "legally, doubtless, the bequest might be retained—but only by the sacrifice of that inward peace and self-respect, which is more precious to the honest and upright mind, than would be the gathered treasures of the world."

"You are right, dear Edward—ever right;—and may she, whose place shall be upon this generous breast, prove worthy of the noble heart that throbs within it."

"Hope not too much for me, dear Alice," he said, tenderly caressing her; "I must look forward to trials with a firm heart, for though no earthly

lot is unchequered by them, something whispers me that mine are destined to be neither few nor small. But I would not be 'o'er anxious to cast the fashion of uncertain ills;' so let us now speak of what more immediately interests us. These new-found relatives of ours—are we not bound to seek them out as speedily as possible, and draw them from that den of misery and want?"

"Doubtless we are,—and yet I dread encountering the old miser, of whom report speaks as the very incarnation of misanthropy and ill-nature."

"True—he wishes to claim kindred with none of the great family of man, and scoffs, as I am told, at the ties of blood—therefore we shall be wise to shun the rude repulse which our advances would be sure to meet. But our dislike or dread of him, must not furnish an excuse for leaving this young girl and her mother any longer unsought; and to avoid, as far as possible, the painful embarrassment which the exposure of their melancholy home may occasion them, would it not be better, dear Alice, that you made your introductory visit to them alone?"

"Perhaps so, Edward; but I fear I cannot go today—Sydney seems so seriously indisposed, that I no not care to leave him, especially as Dr. Moreland has left directions which I wish to see fulfilled. But tomorrow, should nothing occur to prevent, I will endeavour to pay them a visit at an early hour; and in the meantime you must restrain your impatience as best you can. Go to Lucia and make your peace with her, for doubtless she will be waiting, all radiant with smiles, to accord your forgiveness this evening."

"She will wait in vain," said Beaufort, coldly, "for I have letters to write which will occupy me at home."

He, however, threw aside his half finished letters at an early hour, and walked abroad, but did not, as usual, direct his steps to Bowdoin Square. He sought a less fashionable quarter of the city, and for an hour or more might have been seen traversing the narrow and broken pavement beneath the old fence, that screened the miser's low and ancient dwelling. The very aspect of the place, steeped as it was in gloom and loneliness, filled him with sadness; no cheering ray gleamed from its narrow casements, nor did any sign of life around it, give token of its being inhabited; and his thoughts assumed a hue of deeper melancholy, as, scarcely conscious why he lingered there, he continued to pace slowly to and fro beneath the shattered fence.

Earnestly he longed to enter, and cheer the hearts of the lonely dwellers beneath that inhospitable roof, with words of kindly greeting, gladdening them with tidings that there were those in this cold world, who claimed kindred with themselves, and waited impatiently to embrace them in the arms of sympathy and affection. But delicacy forbade him, at so unseasonable an hour, to intrude upon