

young friend call her Marian; she has been a governess, or companion to the little lady."

"To Miss Austwicke, whom I saw to-day at the Doctor's?"

"The same. These Hopes, father and daughter, have both been teachers. I hear he is quite infirm."

"He is the kindest, best—both of them are," said Norman, in a husky voice, adding, "Mysie and I have reason to say so."

"Mysie! And pray who is she?"

"My sister—my twin sister, sir."

There was a pause of surprise on the Professor's part—of emotion on Norman's. Then came the words—

"Go, by all means."

As Norman was thanking the Professor, the latter interrupted him by saying, "Is it in accordance with your wishes that I mention this to Dr. Griesbach, or is it for a time to be confidential?"

"Until I find out the truth more fully, sir, it had better be confidential."

And so, with a perfect understanding, the master and pupil parted.

CHAPTER LVIII. RESTORED.

"Oh, love and life are mysteries—
Both blessing, and both blest;
And yet, how much they teach the heart
Of trial and unrest." L. E. L.

The next morning, by the first train, Norman reached town, and made his way to the court in Church Street.

Whether with the intention of evading him or not, Norman was unable to determine, but he suddenly encountered the old man as he was emerging from the dark entry. He looked by daylight still more wizened and anxious than he had on the previous night. Some misgiving that either too much or too little had been said was in his mind. His feet seemed entangling in a web of his own making. He wished himself well on board the good ship *Loch-na-Gar*, in which he had taken his passage. Australia, he argued, mentally, would give to him in the autumn of his life an Indian summer; he had ways of investing and employing his hoards there; besides, he would be at ease, and able to enjoy his gains. Hitherto a life of hardship and constant anxiety had been all, notwithstanding his craft, that he had attained. Packmen, he knew, had never been at rest, but always miserable. He refused to return to his room with the young man. Much of his ill-gotten gains were stowed away there, and he began to dread being deprived of them. But he had this morning, both the original torn marriage-lines of Norman's parents, and a copy he had made of them. He now opened a tattered pocket-book, and gave the copy to the young man, saying—

"I can produce the original in a few days; but if ye show that to Miss Austwicke, she'll recognise it—aye, that will she!"

The young man did not at once open the paper. He was content just then to let the old man go—satisfied that he himself should first of all go to Mr. Hope, and then be guided by him and Marian as to future proceedings. But his companion did not give Norman a chance to detain him. While in the Whitechapel Road, his strange associate suddenly slipped away down a turning, and was lost to the youth in that labyrinth of little courts and streets which flank the busy thoroughfare eastward. However, Norman knew where he lived, and so did not lose time by pursuing him. He was more anxious to open the paper in his hand. He walked on through the immense length of the leading thoroughfares until he reached the Strand, and turned to cross to the South Western Station. He paused on Waterloo Bridge, and leaning against that parapet which has been so often the last earthly resting-place of despair, he read the names, "Wilfred Austwicke—Isabel Grant." He scarcely noticed those of the witnesses. Austwicke! that, then, was his father's name. Austwicke! then that graceful creature, whose soft dark eyes, in all their appealing sweetness, had rested on him yesterday, was of the same name as his father—perhaps of near

kin to him and Mysie. Could she have wilfully sought to wrong him? It seemed impossible. One thing was certain, he must be cautious, lest by any of that rashness, which he knew to be his failing, he wronged or distressed her. For an instant he was tempted to go to Dr. Griesbach's, and again see the young lady. He longed, if, indeed, he had a right to an honourable station, that Ella should know it. A latent sense of triumph made itself felt amid all his anxieties; but he restrained himself, and pursued his plan of seeking Mr. Hope, obtaining his forgiveness for the past, and procuring his advice as to the future. He took the train, but was so absorbed with his thoughts, and so intent in his frequent perusal of the paper, as if the mere names could be made to reveal the whole mystery, that the train passed many stations and he did not look out; but, stopping at Basingstoke, he was startled out of his reverie by hearing a voice in an adjoining carriage say—

"Why, Austwicke! what brings you here?"

Norman looked out of the window at once, and saw from the next first-class carriage, a young man hailing a gentleman on the platform, who, throwing in a valise to secure a place in the carriage from which he had been called, turned to two ladies, who might be a mother and daughter, near him, from whom he was parting. The ladies' heads were turned in a contrary direction to Norman, yet he observed with a sort of freemasonry of feeling, that the tall, slender girl, who was a step in rear of the elder lady, allowed her hand to linger a moment in the young man's clasp. Then, as the whistle sounded, and he got into the carriage, she turned her face, as the train moved off, and Norman heard the familiar words, "love to Marian," and saw, to his amazement, radiant with health and beauty, a taller, handsomer Mysie than of yore; but yet the same that had been the playmate of his childhood, and was, as he believed, the only relative he had ever known—his sister!

A host of conjectures, of which the most ready was that Mysie had been restored to her family; how else should she be on such intimate terms with this young man Austwicke? Was he kinsman or lover? One thing was apparent, Mysie was well cared for, and improved in every particular. He looked down a little dubiously at his own attire, contrasting himself unfavourably in his well-worn and never very well-cut garb, with the fine young man in the next carriage. Hitherto, Norman had been too much engrossed with the hard business of life, and was thrown among people too peculiar to care much for outward adornment: but what young person was ever wholly indifferent to such considerations, and at a new era in his life?

A consciousness that perhaps he presented himself at a disadvantage would cross Norman's mind, and was not removed when, on the train stopping at the station which he had taken his ticket for, he found himself brusquely passed by the porter, who bustling up to the young man Norman had heard called Austwicke, and who was indeed our friend Allan, began touching his hat to him, and was so officiously attentive to his parcels that the other passengers, women and men, were left to shift for themselves. Norman noticed that a groom was waiting with a dog-cart, drawn by a very fine horse, for the young man, and just as Allan had driven off, he learned, to his chagrin, that it would be two hours before the bus started for Austwicke. However, seven miles' walk, even on a muddy road, was not a matter to make a trouble of; so Norman inquired the way and started off at a good round pace. He had been told that by leaving the high road, after five miles, and crossing some fields, he would come to a little foot-bridge over the river, and save a mile in reaching the village of Austwicke. He had meant at the station to ask for Mr. Hope's residence; but his heart was just then too full. The sight of Mysie, and the business he was on, so deeply moved him, that at the end of his journey, he needed both the exercise and the solitude to gather up his faculties and compose his mind. In about an hour and a half he saw from a sloping field-path the winding stream, the wide, green Chace, and the little straggling village. A group of young

country boys passed him. He inquired of them if they knew where Mr. Hope lived.

"We be just come from him. He has a class o' Thursdays," was their answer, as they pointed out a little green nook across the stream, to the right of the bridge.

Norman saw the tiny roof among the trees and a blessing swelled his heart as he looked at the peaceful spot. If he had ever grieved the kind old man, now in the silence of the fields and calmness of the afternoon he keenly repented it, even to the extent of dreading to disturb the peaceful scene. Humbly, and with a beating heart, he drew near to the spot indicated, went down the sheltered path to the wicket-gate that shut in the little hermitage, and felt glad that the shrubs were so luxuriant as to conceal his approach. The gate was on the latch, and he was under the eaves of the house. A clematis nearly shrouded the whole of the window. Stepping under its pensile boughs, he drew close to the wall and looked in. There was Marian, at her work-table; and on the other side, in his easy chair, her father, reading aloud to her. Norman could scarcely see them from the mist that gathered in his eyes. He thought they must hear the loud throbbing of his heart. Dear, true friends, how ungratefully had he left them! Could they forgive him? did they love him still? He removed from the spot just as he heard Marian, startled, say, "What was that, father?" He entered the rustic porch, and stood at the parlour door, as Marian opened it to look out. There they stood, face to face, a moment in silence; she gazing up wonderingly at the tall, dark stranger, who said, "Marian, don't you know me?"

"It's my boy—it's Norry," cried Mr. Hope, rising from his chair, and throwing over the work-table in his eagerness—"he's come home; I knew he would."

A single stride of Norman's across that tiny room brought his open arms around the aged man, who fell on his neck and kissed him.

CHAPTER LIX. GERTRUDE'S GRIEF.

"Kind hearts are here, yet would the tenderest one
Have limits to its mercy: God has none,
And man's forgiveness may be true and sweet;
And yet he stoops to give it. All complete
Is love that lays forgiveness at thy feet,
And pleads with thee to raise it. Only Heaven
Means crowned, not vanquished, when it says,
'Forgiven.'"

ANON.

WHILE the bonds of love, that had been sorely ravelled—not destroyed—by wilfulness and absence, were being reknit at the cottage, and Mr. Hope and Marian were explaining their position and prospects, and listening with no small wonder to Norman's account of how he had passed the time of his estrangement from them; and then hearing, with mingled apprehension and incredulity, of the strange statement, so deeply involving the Austwicke name—feeling each moment a vague conviction that there must be some mistake, or that Norman was the dupe of the old man's (Burke's) falsehoods—while this was transpiring at Mr. Hope's, the railway was bringing Gertrude and Mr. Austwicke down to Chace by the next train after that by which Norman had travelled.

To Gertrude, the night which had followed her interview with him she could call by no other name than father, was one of deep sorrow. A sense, not merely of desolation, but of disgrace, clung to her—of orphanage of the worst kind; and, just now she valued at its very highest an unblemished name and lineage, for the sake of one, dearer than she liked to own; now to find she had been an impostor for years!—to have been substituted, by frightful neglect and crime, in a family cruelly bereaved and wronged. Oh! it was an unendurable anguish.

She thought of Mrs. Austwicke's proud glance, and shrank mentally from it, as she would from flashing lightning. "She must hate me—always hate me." That she had never loved her, seemed now to have been both natural and right. Yet the mere fact that, through many years, she had called her by the dearest name given to woman, made Gertrude's heart fill with yearning towards her. Still, her feelings were very diffe-