

fished in revealing your stronghold to the proper authorities. I would have saved you, but your violence has brought this destruction upon yourself."

He sprang down the cliff, and before the mortified smuggler recovered the effects of his stunning fall, was beyond pursuit."

CHAPTER XVI.

Repentance! 'Tis too late to pray,
When life is ebbing fast away;
And reason's lamp burns faint and low,
And conscience shrinks to meet the blow
That opens on the quivering eye,
Dread visions of eternity.

"Mr dear Mildred," said her mother, the day after her daughter's return from the Lodge. "There has been a strange, fantastic, old creature, several times up to the house, during your absence, enquiring for you. Who, or what she is, Abigail and I could not make out. She muttered something about relationship—said that she had expected better things of you, but that you were like all the rest of the world, too much wrapped up in self, to care for any grief but your own, and so she went off. And I was too much afraid of her to ask any questions."

"Poor old Rachel!" sighed Mildred. "I have indeed deserved your censure. But I will see you this very day; ask your forgiveness, and try to serve you for the future."

She then proceeded to inform her mother, all she knew of Rachel Lagon, and asked her permission to visit her.

"I will go with you, Mildred," said Mrs. Rosier, suddenly rising. "If this poor woman's story be true, we should do all in our power to help her, and render the latter days of her life more comfortable."

This was not exactly what Mildred wanted. She was afraid that the old woman, in her incoherent ravings, would betray her confidence, and in order to deter her mother from this unexpected visit, she raised a number of objections, all of which had no weight with her to whom they were addressed. During Mildred's absence at the Lodge, she had received some hints from Mrs. Burnham and Lucy, of the private meetings which had taken place between her daughter and the notorious smuggler, Christian; and without appearing to know anything of the matter, she determined to put a stop to her daughter's solitary rambles, or accompany her in them herself. She knew enough of Mildred's character, to be aware that anything like violent opposition to her wishes, or harsh upbraidings, would be the very means of bringing about the evil she had so much rea-

son to dread. She loved her child, and she not only pitied the situation in which she was placed, but she blamed herself for the careless manner in which she had suffered her to form such dangerous connexions.

"Come, let us go, Mildred," she cried, adjusting her hat and shawl. "I must see your poor friend and invite her to finish her days under my roof."

"It is very good of you, mamma; but, I am sure that she will not come."

"It is our duty to make the trial," returned her mother. "Besides, I have seen so little of Danwich, that I shall enjoy the walk."

Mildred felt that no good would come of this walk; and she gave her arm to her mother in silence. On their way they overtook old Gardner. He was in high spirits, and told them, he had been fortunate enough to discover among the ruins, an urn, containing the heart of Dame Alice Poyns, one of the ancient worthies of the ruined city.

"I wish you much joy of your prize," said Mildred. "An old woman's heart is seldom held in estimation by your sex, and with all your philosophy and learning, Mr. Gardner, you would find it difficult to describe the good and bad qualities of your new possession."

"The urn which contained this relic, for the heart itself is but a handful of dust," said the enthusiastic old man, "is a beautiful specimen of ancient pottery. You must oblige me by stepping up to my lodgings, Miss Rosier, and looking at it yourself; I am sure you cannot fail in being greatly interested."

"I will not promise," said Mildred, smiling. "The interest I feel, is in living, not in dead hearts. At all events, we cannot wait upon Dame Alice this morning, as I am going to introduce mamma to a curious living specimen of humanity, almost as ancient as the relic contained in your urn."

"Well, well, Miss Rosier, I will not detain you from your walk; but I will bring the urn up to the Brook Farm this evening, to show it you, before I send it off to the British Museum."

"Ah! do so, Mr. Gardner," exclaimed both the ladies, as they walked on. "We shall be glad to see you."

"As to Dame Alice," whispered Mildred, to her mother, "I should not care if her heart was buried in the sea. Look! there is Rachel's hut. Does it not stand in a wild desolate place? I feel a chill creep through me, when I approach this spot. God forgive me if I sometimes think that she is really a witch."

As she ceased speaking, a tame raven flew up from the door sill, to the roof of the cabin, utter-