

really hungry, scarcely tasted the food in the basket at their feet. Robert was the first to break silence :

"Well, dear mother, it's all over now," he said, affectionately kissing her pale cheek. "For your sake, I am glad that it is over. While we continued to live in this fine house, we could never convince ourselves that it had ceased to belong to us, and that we were poor and destitute. We know it now, and my mind is braced to bear it. The only thing which remains to trouble us is this large mirror. I almost wish that it had been sold with the rest."

"And so do I," said William; "but 'tis a whim of mamma's, and we must try to please her. Mr. Sylvester has sent a large case to pack it up in. You will find it in the next room."

"Well boys, you laugh at my venture," said Mrs. Harden; "but I trust, with the blessing of God, it may be the means of obtaining for us the necessities of life in the strange land in which we are destined to sojourn."

"We will be very careful in packing it up, then," said William, with a sly glance at his brother; "for you seem, mamma, to think that it contains as many magical properties as Aladdin's far-famed lamp."

"We will wrap it up in the carpet first; it will protect it from injury," returned Robert, springing to the task.

It took the mother and sons about an hour to pack up the beautiful mirror to their own satisfaction, and when this important affair was adjusted to their mutual liking, it was carefully deposited in the lizard-barrow, which the old Quaker had provided for the occasion, and, after many fears for its safety, and much fussing, conveyed to uncle William's lodgings, preparatory to being sent on ship board.

Uncle William was not a bad man, nor a hard-hearted man, but he was a commonplace, matter of fact man of business, and of the world. He was never known to do a wilfully unkind action; but he never attempted to put himself out of the way to do a kind one. He was a blunt man; that is, a man who loved contradiction for its own dear sake; who said and did rude things, to shew his own superior wit and sagacity, without reflecting what the effect might be which such conduct generally produces upon others. Blunt people are always great egotists, and not always sincere. Their aim is to appear clever at the expense of their neighbours; and the wanton disregard which they shew for wounding their feelings, betrays the selfishness and insensibility of their own.

"Well, Anne," said Mr. William Harden, regarding the huge package which contained the

poor widow's worldly treasures, with no very friendly eye, "that's what I call a useless package. You had better have sold it at the auction, and laid the money out in necessary articles for yourself and the lads, than encumbered us with it on the voyage. But silly women are hard to be persuaded. I am very sure that it will be smashed to pieces in the hold of the ship."

"Not a bit of it, uncle," said his namesake, William. "It is well packed, I assure you."

"Well, we shall see," said Mr. Harden, "who is the true prophet," and secretly in his heart he wished it might be broken, that his words might prove true; not that he really wished any ill to befall his poor widowed sister, but because he had said that it would be so, and his sagacity and powers of forethought were involved in the fulfilment of the prediction.

The mirror was safely got on board, and the emigrants, after breathing their last sighs and prayers for the dear land they were leaving, found themselves one morning steering their course across the wide Atlantic, under full sail, and driven onward by a spanking breeze.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT BEFELL THE MIRROR AND ITS OWNERS.

For the first three weeks of their voyage, the whole party felt too much indisposed, from the effects of their trip to sea, to indulge in speculations for the future. The present was sufficiently burdensome, without anticipating remote contingencies; and often, amidst the paroxysms of that most painful, but least compassionate of all aquatic ills, sea-sickness, they wished themselves at the bottom of the ocean, as the only means of terminating their sufferings. But, as this would not have been considered a legal method of curing the evil of which they bitterly complained, they were told by the initiated to take patience, in the shape of plenty of brandy and water, and to eat as much as they could, and the disorder would soon cure itself. The temperance pledge was not then in fashion, for the events of our tale really occurred in the year of our Lord 1817, and the improvement in morals and manners has greatly progressed since that remote period, or the suffocating smell of this universal panacea would have overcome the widow's scruples, and made her a teetotaller for life. But sea-sickness, like all other miseries, has an end; and Mrs. Harden and her sons, no sooner found themselves able to look upon the waves without changing colour, than they began to speculate upon the future.

"We shall obtain, through your uncle's interest with the governor's private secretary, a grant of