

most painful course; and to recede was always painful to Dr. Kenn. He made up his mind that he must advise Maggie to go away from St. Ogg's for a time; and he performed that difficult task with as much delicacy as he could, only stating in vague terms that he found his attempt to countenance her stay was a source of discord between himself and his parishioners, that was likely to obstruct his usefulness as a clergyman. He begged her to allow him to write to a clerical friend of his, who might possibly take her into his own family as governess; and, if not, would probably know of some other available position for a young woman in whose welfare Dr. Kenn felt a strong interest.

Poor Maggie listened with a trembling lip; she could say nothing but a faint "Thank you, I shall be grateful"; and she walked back to her lodgings, through the driving rain, with a new sense of desolation. She must be a lonely wanderer; she must go out among fresh faces, that would look at her wonderingly, because the days did not seem joyful to her; she must begin a new life, in which she would have to rouse herself to receive new impressions; and she was so unspeakably, sickeningly weary! There was no home, no help for the erring; even those who pitied were constrained to hardness. But ought she to complain? Ought she to shrink in this way from the long penance of life, which was all the possibility she had of lightening the load to some other sufferers, and so changing that passionate error into a new force of unselfish human love? All the next day she sat in her lonely room, with a window darkened by the cloud and the driving rain, thinking of that future, and wrestling for patience; for what repose could poor Maggie ever win except by wrestling?

And on the third day—this day of which she had just sat out the close—the letter had come which was lying on the table before her.

The letter was from Stephen. He was come back from Holland; he was at Mudport again, unknown to any of his friends, and had written to her from that place, enclosing the letter to a person whom he trusted in St. Ogg's. From beginning to end it was a passionate cry of reproach; an appeal