

soil once more that I disposed of my property and set out for home, so here I am and have told you my history; what do you think of it?"

There was no answer save the sound of heavy breathing; Uncle Joshua had probably got to sleep "all over." The cessation of his brother's voice awoke him, and rubbing his eyes he said, "Yes, yes, Ashton, had the ship fever. I hope he can't give it now, for I'm mortal feared on't."

Ashton assured him there was no danger, and then, turning to William, said, "Have you ever heard from Inez?"

"Yes," said Mr. Middleton. "About a year after her marriage, I heard of the birth of a daughter, whom she called Inez Middleton. I have heard from them once or twice since, but not recently."

After a moment's silence, Ashton, with some hesitation, said, "If I mistake not, I know Inez Effingham well."

"You know Inez, my Inez,—where,—how,—tell me all," said Mr. Middleton, grasping Ashton's hand as if a new link were suddenly added to the chain of friendship, which already bound them together.

"You probably remember," said Ashton, "that when I left you so suddenly, there was an American vessel in port. I was anxious to return home, but fancied you would oppose it, so I left you without a word, and went on board the ship. During the voyage, I found that one of the crew was from my own native town. I eagerly inquired after my parents and the little sister Nellie, whom you so often heard me mention; judge of my feelings when told that they were all dead. In the agony of the moment I attempted to throw myself overboard, but was prevented. From that time all desire to return was gone, and when at last we stopped at one of the ports in England, I left the vessel, determining to try my fortune in the mother country."

"But Inez," said Mr. Middleton, "What of Inez?"

"I will tell you," answered Ashton. "After remaining in England some years, I became acquainted with her father, Sir Arthur Effingham, who lived about forty miles from London. He invited me to visit his house, and there I first saw Inez and her mother. To know Inez was to love her, but I could not hope to win the haughty Englishman's daughter, and besides she was so young that I did not believe I had made any impression upon her. But encouraged by Lady Effingham, I at length ventured to ask Inez of her father. I did not wish to marry her then, as she was only fourteen, but her father spurned me with contempt, and bade me never again enter his house. I obeyed, but tried many times to procure an interview with Inez. I succeeded, and told her I was about to leave England for America, but should never forget her. I would not suffer her to bind herself to me by any promise, but expressed my belief that at some future time she would be mine. It is three years since we parted. I came immediately to America, but I could not bear to return to my old home and see it occupied by others, so I wandered this way, and at last settled in Frankfort as a merchant."

Here he stopped, and Mr. Middleton said, "You have not told me of the mother. Does she still live?"

Ashton answered, "She was living when I left England, but Inez has since written me of her death."

"That will do, Ashton; that will do. I do not wish to hear any more now," said William.

While Mr. Middleton and Ashton were relating their adventures, Aunt Katy was busily engaged in superintending the arrangement of "Marster William's" sleeping room. Mrs. Middleton had bidden Judy to see that every thing was put in order, but Aunt Katy seemed to think nothing would be done right unless she had an oversight of it. So she was walking back and forth, consulting with Judy a little, and ordering her a good deal.

"Now, Judy," said she, "hain't you no more ideos of illegance than to push the bedstead smack up agin the clarbuds; jest pull it out a foot or two, as old Miss used to do."

Judy complied with her request, and she continued; "Lordy sakes,—don't Miss Nancy know no better than to put Marster William to sleep in sich coarse sheets," at the same time casting a rueful glance at the linen which Judy had put upon the bed. "You set down, Judy," said Aunt Katy, "and I'll tend to the bed myself."

So saying she hobbled off to her cabin, and opening her "old red chist," drew from it a pair of half worn, but very fine linen sheets. These she shook most lustily in order to free them from the rose leaves, lavender sprigs, and tobacco, which she had placed between their folds. With the former she thought to perfume them, while the latter was put there for the purpose of keeping out moths. The old creature had heard that tobacco was good to keep moths from woollen, and she knew of no reason why it would not answer every purpose for linen.

"Thar," said she, on returning to the house, "these begins to look a leetle like Marster William. They was gin to me by old marster, jest afore he died. They 'longed to old miss, and if any one on us could read, I reckon we should find her name on 'em somewhar writ in brawdery."

When the bed and room were adjusted to her satisfaction, she went down to the kitchen and took a seat there. Here Aunt Judy found her about ten o'clock that night.

"What on airth you sittin' here for?" said she.

"Oh, I's only waitin' till Marster William gets a little used to his room, afore I axes him how he likes it, and does he want any thing."

Accordingly not long after Aunt Katy stole up stairs and opening the door, called out. "Ho, Marster William, does you want any thing, and is you got enough kiver?"

But "Marster William's" senses were too soundly locked in sleep to heed the faithful creature, and after standing still a moment, she said to herself, "I'm mighty feared he'll catch cold."

So back she went to her cabin, and from the same "red chist" took a many colored patch-work quilt. This she carried to the house and spread carefully over Mr. Middleton, saying, "He won't be none too comfortable, and in the mornin' he'll see it, and I'll tell him how I done pieced it and quilted it my own self."

The consequence of this extra covering was, that Mr. Middleton awoke in the night, with the impression that he was being suffocated in the