

men, of course—and yet he was not one bit afraid ; nor would he have been, it is my belief, if they had been a thousand.”

“ I should like to have seen Mr. Darall, if it were but to thank him for what he did for you, Gracie,” said her mother, after a pause ; “ but I suppose I never shall. They say all is for the best, and perhaps that is. I don’t think your papa would like it, you see, since nothing can possibly come of it after all. Don’t cry, Gracie ; don’t cry, my darling !” and with a dexterous movement of her chair, she brought it close to where Gracie sat at the window. The mother and child embraced without a word. Speech was unnecessary ; each knew what the other would have said, and the hopelessness of saying it.

“ See, there is Colonel Juxon coming across the square to have a chat with your father,” said Mrs. Ray, presently, in her cheerfulest tone. “ I wonder what brings him so much earlier than usual.”

“ He is come to talk about Mr. Landon and Ella,” said Gracie, simply.

“ Oh, dear, dear ! I hope he won’t say anything about her torn gown and things, and so set your papa thinking about yours, and wanting to see them, perhaps !”

“ It is not likely that Colonel Juxon will mention Ella’s gown, mamma ; it is not as if it was her only one, you know.”

“ That’s true, my dear ; I had forgotten. She has only to take another gown out of her wardrobe ; and if this Mr. Landon pleases her, and is agreeable, she can take him as easily. Life must be a fine thing to those that are rich—and can enjoy it,” added the invalid, in lower tones.

“ Dear Ella deserves all she has, mamma,” said Gracie, gravely, as if in apology for her friend’s prosperity. “ She is not spoilt by her riches, but is generous and gracious too.”

“ I don’t deny it, darling,” answered her mother, with a little sigh that had nothing of selfishness in it. She thought, maybe, if these things came by deserving, that her Gracie might have had her share of them also.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### TWO VETERANS.

“ You are come early for your ‘ crack ’ to-day, Juxon,” was the commissary’s greeting to his friend, as the colonel entered the low-roofed little parlour which did duty for dining-room in Officers Quarters, letter Z. He drew up the whole six feet two of him to meet his guest—as a sentry stands at attention to salute his passing superior—and thereby touched, not indeed the stars, but the whitewashed ceiling with his sub-