

THE GOOD-BYE.

"George—George?"

"Well, what's wanting now?"

The young husband turned back the door-knob, and there was impatience in his tone, and annoyance on his brow as he answered his wife's call.

"Nothing papa, only baby and I just want to kiss you good-bye," and she came up toward him, the little, graceful, sweet-voiced woman, with her baby in her arms, and held up the small soft face to his cheeks, and the little one crossed, and thrust up its dimpled heads, and clutched the short, thick locks triumphantly.

"Oh, baby, you rogue, you'd like to pull out a handful of papa's hair, wouldn't you now?" laughed the merchant, in a tone so unlike his former one, that you would not have recognized it, and he leaned down, and kissed the small fragrant lips over and over.

"Now it's my turn, papa," and Mrs. Reynolds smoothed away the ruffled hair, and kissed her husband's forehead; and as he went out of the house that morning, a new softness and peace had erased the troubled look from the man's face. And that day it was appointed to George Reynolds to pass through a sharp and fearful temptation. He was in the midst of a commercial crisis, and several of his heaviest debtors had failed that week, and now a payment of ten thousand dollars was due, and there was no way to raise this sum unless —

He held the pen irresolutely in his shaking hand, the veins were swollen into great blue cords on his forehead, and the breath came thick and fast betwixt his hot lips; a few scrawls of that pen, a solitary name at the bottom, and the young merchant could secure the ten thousand dollars, and his business credit would be safe. There was no sort of doubt, too, but he could raise the money within a few days, and thus secure himself from all discovery, and the pressing circumstances of the case certainly allowed some limits in financiering.

So whispered the tempter, as he walked up and down the soul of George Reynolds, always softening down the word forgery into some false name, which totally changed to his perceptions the moral complexion of the deed he was about to commit. The young merchant's eyes glared all around his office, but there was no one to see him; then, he dipped his pen, with a kind of desperate eagerness, into the tall porcelain ink-stand, and he

drew it along the paper, when suddenly his hand paused, struck by a thought—the memory of his wife's kiss that morning. He saw her as he saw her last, standing in the door, the baby in her arms, her sweet face full of motherly tenderness and wifely trust, as she lifted it to him at parting; the voice of the tempo passed away before that rush of holier emotion which blurred the man's eyes; he dashed down the pen. "Mary! Mary! you have saved your husband; sink or swim, I will not do this deed; I should blush for shame to meet your eyes and see our baby's together, if I carried the burning consciousness in my own soul, though no other man ever did or would. Mary, my little wife, you won't know it, but that good-bye kiss of yours this morning has saved your husband from this great sin."

George Reynolds did not sink. It was a hard struggle, but the storm passed by without falling on him as it did on many others, and Mary, his wife, never knew that she had saved her husband from a sin which in her eyes would have been worse than death.

The good which we have done, we shall know. "not here, but hereafter," and the best and truest lives are those which strew all the years with the sweet aroma of loving and self-sacrificing deeds. As the water lilies take root and grow silently amid the slime and mud in low waters, until in the midsummer they open their great creamy vases to the soft persuasions of the sunshine, and lie in snowy flotillas on the bosoms of streams, the glory and idealization of all flowers, so amid the lowlands of life, among its shadows and mists, have we also to sow day by day our small seed of all gentle and generous deeds, not knowing when they take root, or expecting to behold their unfolding into blossoms on the river of time.

Oh, ye who sigh to set your lives with the arabesques of great and noble deeds, who pant for broader horizons, and higher opportunities, *God has appointed you a work where you are.* Every day lifts up its white chalice out of the night, and is held down to you through all its solemn, silent-footed hours, for those small labors of love whose true significance and relations we shall only understand in eternity. And in this small daily labor lies much of woman's work, and her sweet home influences fall like the sunshine and the evening dew, upon the characters around her. She may little comprehend what a silent

force of healing, restraining, strengthening influence she is exerting, and periods of unrest and despondency may fill many hours with shadows, which would be illuminated with joy and thanksgiving, if she could only "know as she is known." But the pictures of all lives are locked up in the eternal galleries, and the angels hold the keys, and when God's voice speaks the word, the doors shall be opened, and when we go in we shall all "behold and understand."—*Home Magazine.*

NATURAL BEAUTY.

What an inconceivable wealth of beauty must reside in the mind which, without copy, first called forth these numberless hues and shades that relieve each other and melt into each other in the vast whole of Nature—which devised these countless forms of vegetable life, from the wayside flower that blooms to-day and withers to-morrow, to the forest giant which outlasts the rise and fall of nations and of empires—which meted out the heavens, measured the courses, and arranged the harmonies of the stars, spread the ocean, poured the river, torrent and waterfall! What an infinity of resources do we behold in the alternate phases of the outward universe, each of which seems too beautiful to be replaced by one of equal loveliness, and yet yields a fancied pre-eminence to its successor!

Thus, who can say which is the more replete with beauty—day, with its all-revealing light, or night, with its countless centres of fainter radiance;—spring, with its outgushing from every fountain of life, its promise half-hidden, half-disclosed, its fresh, thin field and forest drapery; summer, with its richer, deeper verdure, its gayer forms, and more festive aspect; autumn, with its harvest wealth, its party-colored foliage, and its piles of gold and crimson in the western sky; or hoary winter, in its simpler, purer robe, with its delicate forestwork and its icy stalactites? Go where you will, you escape not the reign of beauty. During the long polar night, the northern fires bathe heaven and earth in splendor more gorgeous than day. The torrid sand-waste still lies beneath a glorious sky, and is studded with oases rich in all the tokens of creative love. Wreaths and fillets of azure mist, belt the bare mountain crags, while about their summits the

Signs and wonders of the eternal
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise

—Man was made in the image of God
that he might understand Him.