

(ORIGINAL.)

THE MISER'S GRANDDAUGHTER.

BY E. L. C.

Continued from our last Number.

HEARTILY glad to escape from the disagreeable scene in which he had unwillingly played so conspicuous a part, Beaufort walked away with the haste of one bent on some important mission, though he took his direction without thought, and had in reality no definite object in view. He only felt as if, the more rapid his motion, the sooner would the painful impression which saddened his mind, and weighed down his heart like lead, be dispelled, and so he passed on, unheeding all he met, till in crossing the head of Hanover Street, a figure just before him, on the opposite side of the pavement, caught his listless eye, and arrested his onward step.

It was no other than that of Madelaine Dorival, whom Beaufort identified at once, by her graceful gait and figure, which, plain almost to meanness as her apparel was, still rendered her an object of attraction to the passers by. He had paused a moment to observe her, but now, with a sudden determination to overtake and address her, he resumed his quick pace and followed her down the street. She had, however, by this time gained so much upon him, and pursued her onward way with such rapidity, that he was baffled in his purpose, and again relaxed his speed, but still keeping her in view till she reached the old gate before the miser's dismal dwelling, through which she hastily passed.

When Beaufort, a minute or two after, stood before it, she had disappeared within the house; but in her haste she had left it unlatched, and he entered noiselessly, and passing through the courtyard, strewn now with the seared and yellow leaves fast falling from the sighing elm, he approached the house and knocked gently at the door. His summons remained unanswered, and after waiting in patient expectation for several minutes he repeated it. Still no sound came from within, and gently pushing against the door it yielded to his pressure, and flew open, admitting him to a low dark passage, at the extreme end of which, he discerned an apartment equally low, and still more gloomy and uninviting.

It was evidently tenantless, but as he had ventured so far, he resolved still to persevere, and accordingly entered it. A few common chairs, and an old oak table constituted all its furniture; and there reigned through it an air of cheerless desolation, quite in keeping with the dismal exterior of the dwelling. On the right, however, a small bedroom wearing a homelike and habitable aspect, was revealed through its partially unclosed door. A bed screened with

snow-white drapery occupied one corner. Before an ancient sofa, to which the hand of industry had restored an appearance of comfort, almost of luxury, stood a small table of black walnut, polished like a mirror, on which were strewn books and work, and among them a glass of flowers, that looked as though they were fading for want of air and light in the uncongenial gloom of that close apartment. Madelaine's hat and shawl, as if cast aside in haste, lay upon a stuffed arm-chair placed near the table, opposite to which hung the portrait of a naval officer, whom Beaufort could have no doubt, from the resemblance, was that of Madelaine's father.

He was irresistibly impelled to this hasty observation of the interior of the dwelling, he had entered so unceremoniously, by the deep interest he felt in its inmates; but not choosing to penetrate further thus clandestinely, he was about to make his presence known by a more audible evidence than he had yet given, when footsteps advancing through the passage, arrested his purpose, and the next moment Doctor Moreland appeared within the apartment. His astonishment at seeing Beaufort there was extreme, and with his usual jocularly he began to rally him on having taken forcible possession of the castle, and spirited away the young beauty that inhabited it. Beaufort checked him as soon as possible, by explaining how he came there, and that it was with the desire and determination of claiming kindred with Mrs. Dorival and her granddaughter, and of establishing an intercourse with them in defiance of their miserly relative's caprice, or opposition, should he be inclined to make any.

"You have come on your embassy at a fortunate moment, my young friend," said the Doctor; "for from the accounts I have received, the old wretch is about to take a last look at his money bags—in other words, he is lying very ill, and I am called in by his gentle granddaughter, from whom he did not merit such kindness, to prolong, if my art can do it, his miserable existence. From the desertion here, I imagine he is worse, and they must be all in his room. It lies off at that corner of the house, at the end of a little dark passage where day-light never enters. Come, I will take you with me, and you shall pass for my pupil till we can get a leisure moment, for explanation, with Mrs. Dorival and her daughter."

The Doctor led the way, and Beaufort, though half-doubting the propriety of yielding to his suggestion, followed, till they entered the dark passage leading