

that pained me ; and it was this,—that when the miser's coffers were placed at her disposal, as according to the law of nature, they must shortly be, he should be the first to rejoice in her accession to wealth, which he was persuaded she would value far more, as a source of benefit to others, than as a means of ministering to any pride or self-indulgence of her own."

"And why should this remark of the good Doctor's have caused you pain, my dear Alice?"

"Can you ask, Edward, knowing as you do that disappointment must be the only portion of this poor girl and her mother, when at the decease of their unkind relative, they shall learn that you are entitled to claim all the property of which he dies possessed,—by a bond to that effect, given by him to our father, and which if I understand it rightly, is so expressed, as to render null and void all bequests which he may choose to make subsequent to the date of that instrument."

"And can you think, Alice, that when I find those in existence, who are the natural, and should be the legal heirs to the miser's ill-gotten wealth, that I would be so base as to avail myself of the circumstance, which singularly enough makes me the sole legatee, to strip them of their lawful inheritance? Never, believe me, never! The bond is from this moment nugatory in my eyes, and I would forthwith seek Mr. Dorival, relinquish my claim, and entreat him to make a will in favour of his nearer relatives, were I not assured from all I have learned of his very wayward and morose temper, that this course of proceeding on my part, would forever bar us all from a single peep even, at the hoards he is said to have amassed."

"But I had the impression, my dear brother, that the bond given by the miser, I must call him by his proper name, imposed on the recipient an obligation to hold untransferable the property, except in case of his death, to the next heir, and so on in a continuous succession."

"Not so, Alice—the circumstances under which our money-loving uncle pledged himself to bequeath to my father, and after him to me, the hoardings of his avarice, are briefly these: At a period of his life, when the sordid vice had not wholly enslaved him, he laboured under some commercial embarrassments, which threatened, unless he could obtain a loan of a considerable amount, to involve him in immediate ruin. He had never sought to make friends, and of course found none in the hour of need, ready to do him a favour, and after several unsuccessful applications to monied men, he entreated my father to advance the sum required by his urgent necessities, and named an early day for the repayment of the debt. This request was complied with, greatly to my father's inconvenience, but as he had shortly before married the sister of

Mr. Dorival, (but how unlike him was our sainted mother, Alice,) he wished to keep on good terms with his singular brother-in-law, and trusted to his solemn promise for a speedy re-imbursement of the loan. At last the day of payment came,—but the money came not with it—some paltry excuse was offered for the delay, and so from time to time it was postponed, till three whole years passed away, and the interest, added to the principal, rendered the whole amount somewhat formidable."

"My father was incensed by this dishonourable conduct, and the more so as it was well known, that Dorival had recently made several fortunate speculations, and was rapidly accumulating wealth. Finding, however, that appeals to his justice were of no avail, he menaced him with an instant execution, unless the loan was promptly repaid, when with that strange reluctance, which always characterized him, to yield up a particle of the gold which his greedy palm had clutched, he proposed, on condition "that he was not compelled to distress himself by parting with his small earnings," to give my father a bond, legally drawn up, and signed by himself and two witnesses in presence of a magistrate, wherein he promised to bequeath to him and his heirs, the whole amount of property, without any reservation, of which he should die possessed."

"The offer was a strange one, and personally, my father felt there was small probability of his benefiting by it, but on my account, as according to the will of the capricious donor, it was to descend undivided, in regular succession to the oldest heir, he was inclined to sacrifice present convenience to future advantage, by securing the entire reversion of his brother-in-law's rapidly increasing wealth. The few friends whom he consulted on the subject advised him to this course, to which, however, his nice sense of right would not have allowed him to yield, had not a rumour of Harry Dorival's death obtained general circulation, and been sanctioned by his father, who, whatever he might know to the contrary, always spoke of him as no more, nor ever let it be known that the young man survived for six years after this transaction."

"The paper was accordingly drawn up by a legal friend of my father's, and duly signed and witnessed, being expressed in such a manner as to render invalid any subsequent testament which the legator might feel inclined to make. The affair thus arranged, my father, who, during its negotiation had become completely disgusted by the grovelling and debased spirit exhibited by Mr. Dorival, removed to the South, and all intercourse from that time ceased between them, which must account for his having remained in ignorance of the circumstance, that Harry's widow and child were residing with the old man. Had he been aware of their existence, I am persuaded, that with the exception of