

just the other day, and who was still her serious boy, never the one to get into mischief. The surprise was so overwhelming that it almost deadened her sense of pain; and then, before she could fully realize what had happened, the real importance of the event was still further confused by the fact, that instead of judging the culprit on his real demerits, she had to pray and plead with him to give up his mad resolution, to beg him not to throw his life away after his money. So urgent did this become that she gradually forgot all about the blame attaching to him, and could think of nothing but those terrible threats about Australia, which gradually became the central fact of the catastrophe. To do him justice, Frederick was perfectly sincere, and had no thought of the admirable effect to be produced by his obstinate determination. Where is the family that does not know such scenes? The result was that the carriage was "put down," the debts paid, Australia averted; and after a short time Mr. Frederick Eastwood gained, after a severe examination, his present appointment, and all again went merry as marriage-bells. I don't know whether the examination was in reality severe; but at least Mrs. Eastwood thought so, which pleased her, and did nobody any harm; and as time went on she found to her entire satisfaction that every thing had been for the best, and that Providence had brought good out of evil. In the first place, it was "noble" of Frederick, when he found he could not conscientiously enter the Church, to scorn all mercenary motives, and not to be tempted by the excellent living which he knew awaited him. And then what a comfort and blessing it was to have him at home, instead of away down in Somersetshire, and only paying his family a visit two or three times in a year! Thus the fault faded out of sight altogether by the crowding of the circumstances round it; and Frederick himself, in contemplating (for he was always serious) the providential way in which his life had been arranged for him in a new groove, forgot that the first step in this arrangement had been a very reprehensible one on his own part, and came to regard the "putting down" of the carriage as the rest did—as a tremendous and mysterious family event, calling forth an intense pride and melancholy, but no individual sense of guilt or responsibility so far as he was personally concerned. "I don't like to take you out in a fly, Nelly," Mrs. Eastwood would sometimes say, as she gave a last touch to Ellinor's ribbons, and breathed a soft little sigh. "As if I cared!" cried the girl: "and besides, you can say, like Lady Dobson, that you never take your horses out at night." Now Lady Dobson was very rich, and in trade, and a standing joke in the Eastwood circle; and the party went off very merry in the fly, with never another thought of the carriage which had been "put down."

Light-hearted folk! That sudden tempest of trouble and terror which had driven Frederick into the Sealing-Wax Office, and the