

legend, how she put her head on his shoulder and wept as if her heart would break. Surely she loved him; she must have loved him; but then—and he turns pale and trembles involuntarily. He glances at the fire, it is nearly out, and the wind is whistling outside in a drear and melancholy manner. But he is not cold; there is a burning within him which seems to be scorching his very heart; and still he recalls the past—that dreaded past which he hated so. He recalls to his mind his months of toil and labor in his new sphere, and how he feverishly waited for the arrival of Margaret Maltravers's letters, and how they came less regularly, until finally he received no reply to his, but waited weeks for its arrival. In its place was sent a London newspaper, and he remembered the eager haste with which he tore it open when he saw the postmark on it. He can see himself standing beside his table running his eye up and down its pages, and he again feels the painful jump his heart gave when he saw a notice of her wedding; and he again turns pale, and the agony becomes almost unbearable when he remembers reading the account of her marriage to Sir Reginald Talbot, an Englishman of wealth and rank. How he cursed her with the most bitter curses, and said he hated her.

But this feeling of hate gradually diminished and changed to one of agony, which he tried to drown by toil.

Then his mind wanders to the day he received a letter, and on the envelope he saw and recognized her handwriting. How this letter moved him, he himself only knew, for it awakened in him all his old love, and, false as she was, he still loved her with his whole soul. But what was she, the wife of an English nobleman, to him? Why should he be overcome by a letter from her, who, probably, regarded his love as the sentimental feelings of a school-boy? It was cowardly of him to be so weak. He remembers how, with trembling hand, he had dropped her letter unopened into the fire, which quickly devoured it and its secret message.

Bitterly, bitterly, had he repented his rash opinion, but this lessened not his misery and despair. His mind returns again to the letter in his hand, but as he reads its sorrowful message, his eyes are tearless, and he wonders how one could be so fair and false. Did she ever love him? The question causes him to remember the burning of her last letter, and to guess at its contents. But none can tell its dead message now, and as he thinks of this, Robert Arbutnot grows sick at heart. He rises up from his seat, and taking from one of his inner pockets a photograph in a golden case of the woman he once and still loves, he kneels down at the window and gazes at it in the dusky morning light. Surely there is nothing but faith and love in the pure eyes that he sees there.

* * * * *

When the clouds clear away, and the morning sun shines on the bells pealing out the Christmas chimes, he is still kneeling at the window, but he does not hear the joyous peal of the bell, nor feel the warm rays of the sun, but looks at the face of the woman he must always love, and will never forget.

SOMETHING ABOUT NOTHING.

NOTHING can be said which has not been said before. If "CHIPS" has a place with nothing on it, I would like to put "nothing" in the vacant spot. If we offer nothing, nothing, of course, will be expected, and nothing will offend no one if we stick to the topic. The reader may think I am making a good deal out of nothing; that is my intention. Many people prefer something as the theme of their discourse, but for the sake of variety, I insist on nothing. Nothing is nothing; it has no beginning, no existence, and no end, and yet is associated with almost everything. The globe is suspended upon nothing, and was called forth into existence out of nothing. The words of an old poem fit in here so well, that I cannot help but repeat them:—

The ancients have worked upon each thing in nature,
Described its variety, genius and feature;
They have exhausted all fancy could bring:
As nothing is left; of nothing we sing.

From nothing we came, and whatever our station,
To nothing we owe an immense obligation;
Whatever we gain, or whatever we learn,
In time we shall all unto nothing return.

This world came from nothing, at least, so says history;
Of course, about nothing there's something of mystery.
Man came from nothing, and by the same plan,
Woman was made from the rib of a man.

Since then a man thinks nothing of taking
A woman to join, and again his rib making,
As nothing can give so much joy to his life,
Since nothing's so sweet as a good-humor'd wife.

Some pass their time nothing beginning,
By nothing losing, and by nothing winning;
Nothing they buy, and nothing they sell,
Nothing they know, and nothing they tell.

That life is all nothing, is plainer and plainer;
So he who gets nothing is surely a gainer.
This much it is certain we prove pretty plain—
Take nothing from nothing, there'll nothing remain.
Thus with this nothing, the theme out were spinning,
Nothing will set many folks grinning.
Reader, believe it, while all this is true,
The reason I wrote it, I had nothing to do.

There was a certain English Bishop who had a text chosen for him by a king. When entering the pulpit, a slip of paper was handed to him, and upon unfolding it he found nothing written upon it. He paused for a moment, and then began:—"Here my brethren is nothing, and out of nothing the world was created," etc. I have heard sermons end in nothing, but this is the first time that I have ever heard of one beginning with nothing. Many things are poetically said to "end in smoke"; more may be said to end in nothing.

As I can think of nothing more, I will say nothing more on this subject, for there is nothing in it. B. M.