

torture; but they are all of the same stock, all of them men who crumble women's lives as a kind of spice to their own.

"Madam I cannot stay with you longer. I do not believe a wrong word of Ray. I do not fear to spend life with him. The good stand under the eye of God. He will give His angels charge concerning them."

And she went straight from the presence of madam into the presence of God. She left her anger and her fears in His sacred shrine; and though her soul dilated at the sound of doors that opened to the future, she rose from her knees full of peace and confidence. "The Hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble," had said a word to her, and she went back to her duty, softly singing:

"Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the strife and jar,
That there abides a peace of Thine
Man did not make, and cannot jar."

In less than two weeks the result of the summer's result had been, as far as possible, repaired, and never had the grim house looked so cheery and inviting, and Cassia had managed to give to the place an air of purity and cheerful unrestraint.

Then there followed many weeks and months of mingled joy and sorrow; days of almost perfect happiness, and days broken in two by little family disputes, mostly of Gloria's making, consequences of her perfect indifference to any one's pleasure unless it contributed to her own. Cassia did not believe that she really cared for her brother, and it troubled her to see John wasting on the foolish beauty all the affection of his true, good heart. She was also unhappy about her mother, who was quietly but surely passing away from a world in which everything was changed to her. She was like some flower that had outlived its season, and which the first rain or frost would scatter on the ground.

But before we go into another life many things occur to detach us from this one. The good becomes more gentle, tender, thoughtful, wise; their conversation is already in heaven, and the decaying physical system adapts itself to its end, till the ebbing life goes peacefully away. To Mrs. Preston the images of her early and lost loves returned and beckoned her heavenward. John and Cassia understood it. "Be patient with me only a little longer," she said, one night, to Raymund. "Spare Cassia as often as you can; before spring I shall have gone away forever." And, though Raymund had only answered the frail little lady by kissing her hand, he granted the request with an unstinted generosity. If Cassia wished to go every day to her mother, he was willing to go with her. Mrs. Preston had never quite accepted Raymund, but as the great change drew nearer all her small animosities died cut.