

happy man of a year before, that Edna truly pitied him. Mr. Clifford, the Major, Ernest, and Capt. Ainslie were mourners, while Lionel and Frank Austin were among the pall-bearers. Very large was the gathering of young and old, to follow Charlie to the grave; universal sympathy was felt for the bereaved ones, and the whole city seemed to mourn for the kind-hearted boy, so well known among them,—beloved, as he had ever been, by rich and poor. But little could even the most sympathizing among them know of the sorrow which bowed the father's head, as he walked feebly behind the hearse, supported by Ernest; or of the anguish of the two, who, with clasped hands and streaming eyes, were watching, through closed blinds, the melancholy procession move off. When it was out of sight, Jessie buried her face on Edna's shoulder, sobbing forth her sorrow:

"Oh Edna, Edna!" she moaned, "how shall I ever live without him! I think if I could but have his poor body with me, I should not grieve so much; but to think of it lying in that cold vault, all, all, alone!"

"But, dear Jessie," answered Edna, looking down through her blinding tears on the pale sad face upturned to hers, "what you really love is not there. Charlie, our darling Charlie, is in heaven; always think of him as being happy with his Saviour, not in the dreary coffin; he is not there, darling: he is in perfect happiness, safe from the sufferings, the trials, he must have had if he had lived; he was taken from the evil to come. And soon, Jessie, you will join him, and never be parted again; look forward to that, Jessie dear, and the separation now will not seem so hard."

Edna's words were often broken by sobs, yet they comforted Jessie; and when she left her that night to go to her dreary home, she told Edna she would try and do as she had said, and that already her words had comforted her.

Margaret, with loving consideration, had removed everything from Jessie's room

which might remind her of the sad change her life had undergone, and unpacking all her clothing which had been ready for the bride's departure from her home, she put everything in its accustomed place.

Jessie saw, on entering her chamber, that loving fingers had been at work there, and she felt that all that tender sympathy and affection could do, would be done to alleviate her sorrow. But deep and lasting was the wound made; and though the Good Physician with His healing, soothing hand, poured in the oil and wine of heavenly comfort into that lacerated heart, and healed its wounds; yet through life the scar remained, and it was many a month, even year, ere Jessie Wyndgate's merry laugh resounded from the walls of the old Rectory, and even then it had not in it the joyous ring of former days.

After Charlie's death, Edna saw little of Ernest; she supposed all his time was spent at the Rectory: but one day, shortly before his departure, he had come to the house, wishing to see Mr. Clifford on some business matter, Lionel accompanying him. Edna's door was partly open, and, as they were standing near the register in the hall waiting for her father, she overheard Lionel say:

"I say, Leighton, why don't you come up and see us? I believe you have only been once at the Rectory since you came."

"Well, you see what little time I have I ought to spend with my mother and Winnifred," replied Ernest; "I so seldom come to town, that they think while I am here I ought to be with them."

"Well, but surely you could run up occasionally; come to tea to-night?"

"I cannot indeed, thank you," was Ernest's quiet reply; "I promised mother I would be back. But here comes Mr. Clifford." They followed Mr. Clifford into the study, and Edna heard no more; she mused long over Ernest's words.

"Is it not strange," she thought, "if Ernest is engaged to Margaret, or even wishing to pay her attention, that he should go so seldom to the house?"