

mourn and weep, I rejoice to see the rock smitten, and the waters of repentance gushing out."

"You cannot see my heart," said Charlotte. "You cannot know the dark and desperate thoughts that are brooding there. Papa and you deceive yourselves, when you think me progressing in piety. I believe that Mildred Rosier is both holier and better than me, simply, because she is happy, and I, of all creatures, am the most miserable."

"One great good has already resulted from the change which you have experienced," said Mrs. Stainer. "One for which you cannot be too thankful. Your father informs me that you have at last promised to give up young Chatworth; your obstinate resistance to his will has occasioned the colonel no small uneasiness."

"I am glad papa is satisfied with the sacrifice," said Charlotte, the tears gushing from her eyes. "As for me, I feel that I shall never be happy again; and now that the matter is decided, I must beg that the subject be dropped forever."

Mrs. Stainer took the hint, and instantly turned the conversation. "We expect a friend of mine to officiate at our prayer meeting tonight," she said; "a man of great talent and decided piety. I am sure your father will be delighted with the Rev. Ebenezer Strong."

"Is he a married man?" asked Charlotte, carelessly, without feeling at all interested in Mrs. Stainer's reply.

"He has not entered into the marriage relation," returned the lady. "Happy will that woman be who obtains such a guide to lead her to heaven."

In spite of her step-mother's eulogium, Charlotte set Mr. Strong down as a very disagreeable person, and she retired to her own room to anticipate the arrival of Mildred Rosier as an epoch in her existence.

But this visit, so eagerly anticipated by Charlotte Stainer, was regarded by Mildred as a decided bore, and she saw the carriage drive up to the Brook Farm, with feelings of disgust and aversion.

"It rains so hard, mamma, I am sure we cannot go," she said; "such a dreary ride upon such a dull day, is enough to give one the horrors. Pray send the carriage away, and say that we cannot come."

"Mildred, I shall do no such thing," was the reply. "What is the rain to us—we shall be comfortably protected from it. I mean to go, so you may run up stairs and make yourself ready as quick as you can."

"Oh, how I dread this dull visit!" returned Mildred, as she still loitered at the door. "What

shall I put on, mamma? I have not a single dress fit to be seen."

"Your brown silk will do."

"That old thing! made out of Aunt Jane's turned gown! Had I not better wear the blue one, it is not quite so shabby as that?"

"It is too fine," returned Mrs. Rosier, shaking her head. "Mrs. Stainer would be sure to read you a lecture on the impropriety of your dress. The brown gown will suit you better; and you look well enough in it."

"The blue is the most becoming," said Mildred, unconsciously twisting her fingers in her long fair curls. "Let her scold; I do not mean to look a shabby fright to please her. How do you know, mamma, but that I may win the heart of the Methodist parson?" she added with a laugh. "It would be good fun to bring the saint to his knees."

And away ran Mildred to array her lovely person with as much taste as her scanty wardrobe would allow.

"Now do stand still, my darling, while I fasten your frock neatly," said old Abigail, as she stood upon a footstool (for she was very short), peering through her spectacles at her young lady's back. "Why, my dear, you hu' grown so fat since this here gown was made that my old fingers will never be able to drag it too."

"Mildred! Mildred! are you ready?" called Mrs. Rosier, at the foot of the stairs.

"Presently, mamma. I'll away, old lady, and don't be afraid of hurting me."

"Lord bless me! there a' goes all together! Dear, dear! what shall we do?"

"Run and fetch the old brown gown—ty, ty, ty! There's the last of my best frock. Well, mamma was right, after all."

"Mildred, be quick!" called Mrs. Rosier, her patience nearly exhausted, "or I must go without you."

"I wish you would," thought Mildred, as she hurried on her shawl. "I know it will be a hateful visit."

A tall, serious looking footman opened the entrance door, and closing it after the ladies, with a very solemn air, called out to the coachman—"To progress."

"Surely he does not take us for pilgrims," said Mildred, highly delighted with this piece of grave affectation. "What fools there are in this world! I suppose this man with his long hypocritical face is Mrs. Stainer's heavenly-minded footman."

"He seems a very nice young man," said Mrs. Rosier.

"Nice!" returned Mildred; "what a perversion of that word! We talk of nice cakes, nice fruit, nice sweetmeats, and even—but not very