

said Dr. Ashford, gravely; and he closed the door and went down stairs to Vera with his usual calm face and tender smile.

"How is he?" the girl asked, eagerly, as she came up and kissed him.

"Much better. He is coming down stairs presently. He is anxious to see you, and thank you for your bravery. Oh, my dear! my dear! I tremble even now at the thought of it. If help had not come!"

"Why trouble yourself about possibilities, father?" said Vera, gently. "Help did come, and there is no need to tremble. Your child is safe here, and likely to plague you a good while longer."

The old man smiled lovingly at the bright, beautiful face.

"May Heaven send all fathers such plagues!" he said, tenderly. "What happy homes there would be, my darling!"

"You will make me vain with so much praise," she said, merrily. "Come along and have breakfast. I had better send some up for the invalid, I suppose?"

"Indeed, no, Miss Ashford; the invalid is here to answer for himself."

At the sound of the voice she turned, the sunlight wavering over her delicate face, the look of startled wonder and of glad surprise still lighting her soft shy eyes. They looked at each other.

As their eyes met—as their hands touched—as their lips opened in the old trite world-worn greeting which we use to strangers as to friends, so surely something deeper awoke in each heart—something sweeter spoke in each glance. Then their hands loosed their clasp; but the feelings, startled into sudden life, never loosed their fast, sure links, riveted in that one brief moment, that one lingering look.

"So you have found a sweetheart?"

Vera was standing by the corner of a little brown shallow brook, fringed with tall bull-rushes and waving willow stems. She started as the words fell on her ear, and looked round at the speaker. The old man whom she had met in the poppy fields some three weeks before, "the miser of the Glebe," as the villagers all called him, was standing a short distance off, leaning on his stick, and scanning her with malicious eyes and a sneering smile.

The girl's face flushed slightly beneath his scrutiny.

"What do you mean?" she asked him.

"You are still happy, are you not?"

She lifted her eyes to his with a dreamy wistful regard.

"I am very happy."

"And who is the handsome stranger who is always by your side now? I heard of your folly in nearly sacrificing your life for his. Of course, woman-like, you will complete it by giving that life to him hereafter, to guard or wreck as he pleases."

She flashed on him a look of such startled pain, such speechless anger, as made the mockery of his own eyes fade.

"You have nothing to do with my actions," she said, haughtily. "I scarcely think you mean to insult me, but your words are, to say the least of them, unwarrantable and incomprehensible."

He laughed.

"I thought nothing in the way of admiration was incomprehensible to women. I scarcely suppose your new friend has been with you so constantly, and left you unaware of your own attractions. You must know that you are beautiful."

The proud eyes swept over his face in calm surprise.

"You are the first person who ever told me so."

"Is your lover so cold, then—or so blind?"

"How dare you use such words to me!" she said, with sudden anger in her voice, and a certain shame in her pained young heart. "You have no right—"

"Save my experience and your ignorance."

She shrank away with a movement of aversion.

"You need not remind me of that. If experience turns all fair and holy things to bitterness and contempt, I pray I may never exchange my ignorance for it!"

The keen eyes of the old man sparkled with malignant mirth. He liked to rouse the gentleness and calm of this girl's spirit to something more akin to wrath and bitterness than she herself was aware of.

"Keep that ignorance, then, my dear," he said, ironically, as she moved away with a slight bow of farewell. "Keep it with its twin sister—content. When you part with them, your life's happiness goes too."

She made no answer, but turned away, hurt and pained, and left him by the brook-side in the evening shadows.

But as she went homeward she could not forget his words. They had stirred her heart from its rest; they had left her with memories whose innocent shame tortured her as nothing in all her bright glad life had ever done before. Hitherto her heart had leaped to the gladness of youth, the mere sense of living and enjoying the simple innocent life she had known. Now a new element had arisen in that life, and through the golden haze of pure faiths, and trustful hopes, and fairy dreams, another face looked back to hers, another future met and paused beside her own.

The old man's words had shown her this, and left her disturbed and saddened all at once. This stranger whose life she had saved, whose presence had haunted her for these few short

weeks, had grown unaccountably dear, though no word of love or glance of passion had lived in his speech or look.

She did not know—how could she!—the conflict that he waged each day, each hour, that found him in her presence. She could not guess how hard it was to restrain every look and every word that might betray his own secret. She did not know that being in his own sight a nameless, obscure, toiling son of fortune, he therefore deemed it dishonorable to awaken either interest or regard for himself in the girl's fancies, knowing that to take—or seek to take—her from the safety and innocence of her sheltered life, and ask her to battle with him through the stern and sordid ordeal which his own future represented, was a thing utterly impossible to his generous impulses and his chivalrous love. Therefore he guarded himself so closely, and betrayed by no word or sign the weakness that at times she unconsciously tempted almost beyond endurance. Therefore it was that he said to himself as he wrestled with a love that every day but strengthened and increased, "I will leave her unwooed. So best!"

Perhaps some vague hope of a future when he might win her arose at times in his heart—some vision of a fame he might touch, a fortune he might secure. Then, he told himself he might speak. Now it looked to him unmanly to do so.

"She will never know," he thought; "she is but a child still."

But do what he might, he could not forget her—he could not care for her less. With one look she had shattered the serenity of his whole previous life, and left to him a memory that was precious and painful both in one, and had given him along with its preciousness a weary self-content that brought but little hope of peace, but little care for victory. For he loved her too well to forget, and between them lay a barrier that it would take years to overthrow, the foe of many a youthful love—poverty.

He had grown accustomed to shifts and straits for himself; to go without meals; to deny himself all but bare necessities; to live from hand to mouth, toiling, working, struggling, fighting single-handed in a great city's warfare; but to ask her to share such a life, or risk such straits, with only his arm to lean on, his love to recompense, was what he had no courage to do.

He was her debtor. Could he ask her to take such recompense as this? Could he repay thus the noble heroism that had risked life in his service without a thought of consequence?

All the manhood in him rebelled against the thought. He crushed down the impotent desires that stung him to madness—the passionate longings which strove ever and always to tear aside the mask of impressiveness he wore—the regrets that no power of his own could lull to rest.

"I must leave her," he told himself. "I can not, dare not, stay here longer. With each day my strength grows less."

Even as the words were on his lips he met her face to face.

She was coming home with the old man's taunts still fresh in her memory—with the shame his words had awakened still burning in her innocent heart.

As she saw him the color flushed from brow to throat. Her eyes drooped. The usual welcome died on her lips unspoken.

"I am glad I have met you," he said, with his usual courteous gentleness. "I was about to call at the cottage to say farewell. I leave to-morrow."

She started slightly. Had he but looked at her, he would have seen the sudden pallor of the sweet face, the flash of pain in the wistful eyes. But he was looking far beyond, to where the sunrays touched the river's quiet breast with slanting bars of gold.

"It is sudden, is it not?" she said at length. Her voice seemed cold because of its hard-won firmness, her cheek flushed back to warmth with sudden pride.

"Yes," he answered, looking at her face now, but unable to meet the eyes she steadfastly averted. "It is sudden. I am grieved to go. I have been so happy here. I shall never forget this place, or you."

A few moments later she stood there alone, her eyes on a retreating figure, her hands clasped tight on her fast-trembling heart.

With all her pain a thrill of gladness mingled. "The cloud has a silver lining," she said, softly. "He said he would return."

And with the music of those words in her memory, she passed across the yellow corn fields and took the pathway home.

"I am sorry young Brandon has gone," said the old doctor that evening, as, leaning on Vera's arm he paced up and down the little garden. "I shall miss him very much."

Vera was silent.

"I wish I could have learned more of his history," resumed her father. "He goes by his mother's name. She never would tell him his father's. She had been cruelly wronged, and driven from his roof with her infant son, and only the charity of strangers stood between her and starvation. From what Keith says, she must have been a noble woman."

"And she is dead now?"

"Yes, my child, dead—with her honor tarnished by a cruel lie, and her son's life darkened by an unmerited shame. It is very sad, very sad."

"How clever he is! He has such great gifts!" sighed the girl, with unconscious pathos.

"Yes, he is both gifted and noble. But he

is so poor, and in the world genius always suffers in the grasp of poverty—it is a mortal foe. The man who can dower genius with success lives in a palace; the man who owns it, in a hovel. The one who buys it is great; the one who creates may want bread, or be thankful for a beggar's crust. Yes, it is strange, but true."

"There is not much happiness, then, in the world?" questioned the girl, to whom all knowledge of its miseries and sins and woes was alike unknown.

"My dear, there is happiness everywhere for those who seek it aright; but it is a word of many meanings, and the true meaning is only—there!"

He pointed up to the radiant heavens as they stretched in cloudless calm above his head. The girl's face looked awed and pale as she looked at him, then suddenly she drew his arms around her and laid her head upon his breast.

"You have made all my life's happiness for me," she said. "How good you are!—how good!"

"My love, none are that," he said, tenderly. "Being mortals, and being weak through sin within, and beset by sin without, how could it be otherwise?"

"Do you know anything of the old man at the Glebe?" asked Vera presently. "He speaks to me sometimes, but he is very hard and very bitter."

"I only know him by what the people here say," answered her father—"that he is miserly and eccentric, and lives quite alone, save for the witch-like woman who attends to his simple wants. I never exchanged words with him since I lived here."

"I feel so sorry for him," continued the girl, pityingly. "And he talks so strangely to me always. He seems to resent the mere fact of my being glad and light-hearted as an injury to himself. He warned me one day that every life had its shadow—its days of woe and darkness and grief—that mine would come too. If they do—Papa! papa! what is it?"

The awful agonized cry that left her lips was echoed by a groan of mortal agony. The old man's feeble form seemed to slip from her childish arms, and he lay on the grass at her feet like a felled log, in the grasp of that terrible foe—paralysis.

The girl's shrieks quickly brought the old woman-servant from the house, but their united strength was unequal to the task of carrying that helpless burden. Aid had to be procured from the village, and medical assistance summoned; but the old doctor's great age rendered science of no avail. He lived for a week, unconscious, then died in his child's arms.

Over her life the cloud and darkness of a great sorrow had indeed fallen.

(To be continued.)

HEARTH AND HOME.

LOVE.—Love must have expression, or it will die. It can be kept for ever beautiful and blessed as at first, by giving it constant utterance in word and act. The more it is allowed to flow out in delicate attentions and noble services, the stronger and more satisfying and more blessed it will be. The house becomes home only when love drops its heavenly manna in it fresh every day; and the true marriage vow is not made once for all at the altar, but by loving words, helpful services, and delicate attentions to the end.

TRUE AND BRAVE WOMEN.—To be able to look cheerfully and hopefully through clouds of poverty and distress is an accomplishment bestowed by nature upon every true and brave woman; and, no matter how poor or humble her home may be, the magic power of smiles can brighten its shadows and lighten its cares. Upon the troubled mind of a feeling husband a wife's smile falls like a sunbeam on a flower. And how much more beautiful it makes the face that wears it than a frown! When a wife and mother, forgetting sorrows and hardships, smiles away her tears, there is a loveliness in the act that speaks to a man's heart more eloquently than words.

TEMPERANCE AND SLEEP.—The one principle of health which may fairly be described as fundamental and universal is temperance—temperance in the pursuit of pleasure, in excitement, in speech, in thought, and, above all, in worry, which kills oftener and far more surely than work. Next to temperance comes sleep. Shakespeare and Young anticipated the conclusions of modern hygiene when they described sleep—the former as "the chief nourisher in life's feast," and the latter as "Nature's sweet restorer." Insufficient sleep is probably the most frequent cause of nervous failure; and certainly, when the failure has come, sleep opens the surest avenue to recovery. Then indeed too much sleep can hardly be taken; for as in infancy, the recuperative powers seem to work only during complete sleep.

WHAT A WOMAN CAN DO.—As a wife and mother she can make or mar the fortune and happiness of her husband and children. By her thrift, prudence, and good management, she can secure to her partner and herself a competency in old age. By her tender care she can often restore him to good health. By her counsel and her love she can win him from bad company, if temptation, in an evil hour, has led him astray. She can do as much as a man, perhaps even more, to degrade him, if she chooses

to do it. As a wife she can ruin her husband by extravagance and folly; by want of affection she can make an outcast of a man who might otherwise have become a good member of society. She can bring bickerings and strife into what has been a happy household. She can become an instrument of evil instead of an angel of good. As a mother her words and her ways should be kind, loving, and good. If she reproves, her language should be choice and refined. The true mother rules by the laws of kindness; and to her children the word "mother" is synonymous with everything pure, sweet, and beautiful.

REARING CHILDREN.—A venerable lady now living, who has had ten children, all born in cities, and raised nine of them, all living at the present moment, having reached the adult age, never allowed any of them as children to eat anything between meals except dry bread, though she was wealthy and could just as easily have pampered every whim. Her constant reply was, when any of them demurred, "My dear, you are not hungry if you cannot eat bread." It is very certain that her children did not inherit remarkably robust constitutions; and, under the ordinary pampering of mothers, it is fair to suppose that many of them would have died or become puffy men or women. When a child knows by experience that he can have nothing but bread between meals, he will not ask for it unless he really needs, and then he will not take enough to destroy his keener appetite for the good things at the table, while, if he is allowed fruit and pastry, as so many children are, he will seldom come to his meals with a fine relish for food, and, taken without that relish, it fails to be rapidly assimilated, if indeed it does not enfeeble or derange the digestive function.

SOME LITTLE THINGS LEARNED BY EXPERIENCE.—If your coal-fire is low, throw on a tablespoonful of salt, and it will help it very much. A little ginger put into sausage-meat improves the flavour. In icing cakes, dip the knife frequently into cold water. In boiling meat for soup, use cold water to extract the juice. If the meat is wanted for itself alone, plunge in boiling water at once. You can get a bottle or barrel of oil off any carpet of woollen stuff by applying dry buckwheat plentifully and faithfully. Never put water to such grease spots, or liquid of any kind. Broil steak without salting. Salt draws the juices in cooking; it is desirable to keep these in if possible. Cook over a hot fire, turning frequently, searing on both sides. Place on a platter; salt and pepper to taste. Beef having a tendency to be tough can be made very palatable by stewing gently for two hours, with pepper and salt, taking out about a pint of the liquor when half done, and letting the rest boil into the meat. Brown the meat in the pot. After taking up, make a gravy of the pint of liquor saved. A small piece of charcoal in the pot with boiling cabbage removes the smell. Clean oil-cloth with milk and water; a brush and soap will ruin them. Tumblers that have had milk in them should never be put in hot water. A spoonful of stewed tomatoes in the gravy of either roasted or fried meats is an improvement. The skin of a boiled egg is the most efficacious remedy that can be applied to a burn. Peel it carefully, wet and apply it to the part affected. It will draw off the matter and relieve the soreness in a few hours.

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

EVERY lady who goes to the theatre has a perfect right to wear a high hat. The people behind her should have secured the seat in front. If they did not she is not to blame.

A Boston woman cut her dress from a pattern in a magazine dated 1873 before she discovered that it wasn't 1879, and it took three doctors to tide her over that long, lonely night.

The editor of the Fort Plain Register has his office and residence connected by telephone. On Monday Mr. Skidd of Little Falls, an old friend, called on the editor and expected to remain for dinner. The editor hurried to the telephone and shouted to his wife: "Mr. Skidd will be up with me to dinner; lay an extra plate." "Now," said the editor, "Mr. Skidd, you may converse with her." As the gentleman was about to approach the instrument these words were plainly heard: "You tell Mr. Skidd we don't keep a hotel on wash-day." Mr. Skidd excused himself for a few moments, and was next seen eating fried clams in the Rainbow saloon on the corner.

A YOUNG woman at Smyrna, New York, had a dream many years ago, of eight men standing in a row before her, with outstretched hands. She interpreted this to mean that she would have eight husbands. Her seventh husband died lately, and, although she is now 24, she is confident that the dream will be fulfilled.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?"
"I am going to the Annex, sir," she said.
"What do do there, my pretty maid?"
"I am going to be cultivated, sir," she said.
"What are your studies, my pretty maid?"
"Chinese and the Quarternions, sir," she said.
"Then whom will you marry, my pretty maid?"
"Cultured girls don't marry, sir," she said.

A CARD.

To all who are suffering from the errors and indiscretions of youth, nervous weakness, early decay, loss of manhood, &c., I will send a receipt that will cure you. FREE OF CHARGE. This great remedy was discovered by a missionary in South America. Send a self-addressed envelope to the Rev. JOSEPH T. INMAN, Station D, New York City.