

but before she was aware an arm was thrown around her, a kiss was pressed upon her forehead, and the words "Dearest Constance, farewell!" were fondly murmured in her ear. Quickly she turned round, but he was gone; and as she sank upon the sofa, she heard the carriage drive off.

For a long time Constance sat with her face buried in her hands, indulging in violent grief. At length, summoning all her fortitude, she rose, and wiping the tears from her eyes, and smoothing her disordered tresses, she reasoned with herself: "I will indulge this idle grief no longer. I am all that is now left to my father, and I must go and comfort him, and try to make him forget the absence of Charles. And why should I be so selfish as to grieve, when it is for his benefit that Charles has left us? In a few months I will again behold him, and perhaps before many days have passed, I will receive a letter." Reasoning thus, Constance repaired to the dining-room, in which her father still sat, silent and dejected. With her own winning and irresistible manner she quickly drew him into conversation, and playfully challenging him to a game at chess, kept him occupied till it was time to retire to rest; and then sought her pillow, not to sleep, but to think of the absent one. The third day brought two letters from Charles, one for Captain Fitzgerald, and another for Constance.

Oh! ye good, regular correspondents, who with every post receive the sensible, gossiping missive from an absent friend, and reply duly in the same matter-of-fact strain! Oh! how ye would have smiled to see how the fingers of Constance trembled, and how she tried twice in vain before she succeeded in breaking the seal, and how, with eyes half blinded by emotion, she eagerly devoured every word *his* hand had traced. How, instead of beginning at the beginning as she undoubtedly should have done, she first turned over the leaf to see how long the letter was, and then turned over again to the beginning, and then back again to see with what words it concluded. And when her father had leisurely perused his epistle, and said, "Constance, Charles is well and happy, he tells me—what does he say to you?" Constance blushed and stammered, and at length replied, "Dear father, only wait till I read it once more, and I will tell you." Yes, truly you would have smiled at such a fuss about a mere letter.

But, dear reader! if you, looking back through the dark and chequered vista of by-gone years, can conjure up the feelings with which you received a first letter from a much-loved and far-distant one, you can sympathise with Constance, as the words "Dear Constance" were over and

over again perused. Instead of a smile, a sigh will express your feelings, as memory reviews the past, and a train of thought, which, mayhap, has lain dormant for years, steals over you, and with many a pleasing but melancholy recollection, you will exclaim—

"Oh! there's nothing half so sweet in life
As love's young dream."

But we will now, for a period, leave Ardmore and its peaceful inhabitants, to the even tenor of their way, and follow our young student to the city of E—, at which he has in safety arrived.

CHAPTER VIII.

"There stands the noble hostess, nor shall sink
With the three-thousandth curtsey

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Lord Henry and his lady were the hosts;
The party we have touched on were the guests."

Byron.

CHARLES O'DONNELL'S first care upon the morning after his arrival in the city, was to call, as Fitzgerald had directed him, upon an old and esteemed friend, who received him with great cordiality; and after enquiring whether he could be of any service, gave Charles a warm invitation to spend those hours which he could spare from study, at his house, where he would meet those whose conversation and society would both delight and improve him. After conversing for some time with Mr. Allison, Charles inquired whether he knew of any private residence in which he could take up his abode during the winter, and where he would find that quietness necessary to pursue the severe and rigid course of study upon which he had resolved.

"I do not know of any such at present," replied Mr. Allison, "but I will consult Mrs. Allison, and among her numerous acquaintances she will doubtless soon hear of such an abode as you require. In the meantime, I beg that you will make my house your home until we succeed in our search."

Charles accepted the hospitality of Mr. Allison, who would not listen to a refusal, and next day found him comfortably established there as one of the family.

Mr. Allison was a lawyer, who possessed the reputation of being highly talented, and, what was of more service to him, he enjoyed an extensive and lucrative business; with quiet, unobtrusive manners and much kindness of heart, he was universally esteemed, and his company greatly sought after. Mrs. Allison, on the contrary, to whom Charles was introduced, was a little, active,