

THE INFIDEL AND HIS DAUGHTER.

[Suggested by reading a newspaper paragraph describing the scene between the brave old Ethan Allen and his daughter on the eve of her death, when she asked the stern infidel in whose faith he would have her to die—his or her mother's.]

"The damps of death are coming fast,
My father, o'er my brow;
The past with all its scenes has fled,
And I must turn me now
To that dim future which in vain
My feeble eyes descry;
Tell me, my father, in this hour,
In whose stern faith to die.

"I think I've watched the scornful smile,
And heard thy withering tone,
Whene'er the Christian's humble hope
Was placed above thine own;
I've heard thee speak of coming death
Without a shade of gloom,
And laugh at all the childish fears
That cluster round the tomb.

"Or is it in my mother's faith?
How fondly do I trace,
Through many a weary year long past,
That calm and saintly face!
How often do I call to mind,
Now she is 'neath the sod,
The place, the hour, in which she drew
My early thoughts to God!

My father, shall I look above,
Amid this gathering gloom,
To Him whose promises of love
Extend beyond the tomb?
Or curse the Being who hath blessed
This chequered path of mine?
And promises eternal rest!
Or die, my sire, in thine!"

The frown upon that warrior brow
Passed like a cloud away,
And tears coursed down the rugged cheek
That flowed not till that day;
"Not, not in mine," with choking voice
The septic made reply—
"But in thy mother's holy faith,
My daughter, may'st thou die!"
—British Workman.

HOW IT ALL CAME ROUND.

(L. T. Meade, in "Sunday Magazine.")

CHAPTER X.—JOHN AND JASPER HARMAN.

Jasper Harman was sixty years old at this time, but the days of his pilgrimage had passed lightly over him, neither impairing his frame nor his vigor. At sixty years of age he could think as clearly, sleep as comfortably, eat as well—nay, even walk as far as he did thirty years ago. His life in the Antipodes seemed to have agreed with him. It is true his hair was turning gray, and his shrewd face had many wrinkles on it, but these seemed more the effect of climate than of years. He looked like a man whom no heart-trouble had ever touched, and in this doubtless lay the secret of his perpetual youth. His affections were not his strong point. Most decidedly his intellect over-balanced his heart. But without an undue preponderance of heart he was good-natured; he would pat a chubby little cheek, if he passed it in the street, and he would talk in a genial and hearty way to those beneath him in life. In business matters he was considered very shrewd and hard, but those who had no such dealings with him pronounced him a kindly soul. His smile was genial; his manner frank and pleasant. He had one trick, however, which no servant could bear—his step was as soft as a cat's; he must be on your heels before you had the faintest clue to his approach.

In this stealthy way he now left his niece's room, stole down the thickly carpeted stairs, crept across a tiled hall, and entered the apartment where his elder brother waited for him.

John Harman was only one year Jasper's senior, but there looked a much greater difference between them. Jasper was young for his years; John was old; nay, more—he was very old. In youth he must have been a handsome man; in age, for every one spoke of him as aged, he was handsome still. He was tall, over six feet; his hair was silver-white; his eyes very deep set, very dark. Their expression was penetrating, kind, but sad. His mouth was firm, but had some lines round it which puzzled you. His smile, which was rare and seldom seen, was

a wintery one. You would rather John Harman did not smile at you; you felt miserable afterwards. All who knew him said instinctively that John Harman had known some great trouble. Most people attributed it to the death of his wife, but, as this happened twenty years ago, others shook their heads and felt puzzled. Whatever the sorrow, however, which so perpetually clouded the fine old face, the nature of the man was so essentially noble that he was universally loved and respected.

John Harman was writing a letter when his brother entered. He pushed aside his writing materials, however, and raised his head with a sigh of relief. In Jasper's presence there was always one element of comfort. He need cover over no anxieties; his old face looked almost sharp as he wheeled his chair round to the fire.

"No, you are not interrupting me," he began. "This letter can keep; it is not a business one. I never transact business at home." Then he added, as Jasper sank into the opposite arm-chair, "You have been having a long chat with the child. I am glad she is getting fond of you."

"She is a fine girl," said Jasper; "a fine generous girl. I like her even though she does dabble in literature; and I like Hinton too. When are they to be married, John?"

"When Hinton gets his first brief—not before," answered John Harman.

"Well, well, he's a clever chap; I don't see why you should wait for that—let's see to get on. If I were you, I'd like to see my girl comfortably settled. One can never tell what may happen!"

"What may happen!" repeated the elder Harman. "Do you allude now to the doctor's verdict on myself. I do not wish Charlotte acquainted with it."

"Pooh! my dear fellow, there's nothing to alarm our girl in that quarter. I'd lay my own life you have many long years before you. No, Charlotte knows you are not well, and that is all she need ever know. I was not alluding to your health, but to the fact that that fine young woman upstairs is just, to use a vulgar phrase, eating her own head off for want of something better to do. She is dabbling in print. Of course, her book must fail. She is full of all kinds of chimerical expedients. Why, this very evening she was propounding the most preposterous scheme to me, as generous as it was nonsensical. No, no, my dear fellow, even to you I won't betray confidence. The girl is an enthusiast. No enthusiasts are always morbid and unhappy unless they can find vent for their energies. Why don't you give her the natural and healthy vents supplied by wifehood and motherhood? Why do you wait for Hinton's first brief to make them happy? You have money enough to make them happy at once."

"Yes, yes, Jasper—it is not that. It is just that I want the young man not to be altogether dependent on his wife. I am fonder of Hinton than of any other creature in the world except my own child. For his sake I ask for this short delay to their marriage. On the day he brings me news of that brief I take the first steps to settle on Charlotte a thousand a year during my lifetime. I make arrangements that her eldest son inherits the business, and I make further provision for any other children she may have."

"Well, my dear fellow, all that sounds very nice; and if Hinton was not quite the man he is I should say, 'Wait for the brief.' But I believe that having a wife will only make him seek that said brief all the harder. I see success before that future son-in-law of yours."

"And you are a shrewd observer of character, Jasper," answered his brother.

Neither of the men spoke for some time after this, and presently Jasper rose to go. He had all but reached the door when he turned back.

"You will be in good time in the City to-morrow, John."

"Yes, of course. Not that there is anything very special going on. Why do you ask?"

"Only that we must give an answer to that question of the trusteeship to the Rutherford orphans. I know you object to the charge, as it seems a pity for the sake of a sentiment."

Instantly John Harman, who had been crouching over the fire, rose to his full height. His deep-set eyes flashed, his

voice trembled with some hardly suppressed anguish.

"Jasper!" he said suddenly and sharply; then he added, "you have but one answer to that question from me—never, never, as long as I live, shall our firm become trustees for even sixpence worth. You know my feelings on that point Jasper, and they shall never change."

"You are a fool for your pains, then," muttered Jasper, but he closed the door rather hastily behind him.

CHAPTER XI.—"A PET DAY."

At breakfast the next morning Charlotte Harman was in almost wild spirits. Her movements were generally rather sedate, as befitting one so tall, so finely proportioned, so dignified. To day her step seemed set to some hidden rhythmic measure; her eyes laughed; her gracious, kindly mouth was wreathed in perpetual smiles. Her father, on the contrary, looked more bent, more careworn, more aged even than usual. Looking, however, into her eyes for light, his own brightened. As he ate his frugal breakfast of coffee and dry toast he spoke.

"Charlotte, your Uncle Jasper came to me last night with a proposal on your behalf."

"Yes, father," answered Charlotte. She looked up expectantly. She thought of Mrs. Home. Her uncle had told the tale after all, and her father, her dear and generous father, would refuse her nothing. She should have the great joy of giving three thousand pounds to that poor mother for the use of her little children.

The next words, however, uttered by Mr. Harman caused these dreams to be dispelled by others more golden. The most generous woman must at times think first of herself. Charlotte was very generous; but her father's next words brought dimples into very prominent play in each cheek.

"My darling, Jasper thinks me very cruel to postpone your marriage. I will not postpone it. You and Hinton may fix the day. I will take that brief of his on trust."

No woman likes an indefit; its engagement, and Charlotte was not the exception to prove this rule.

"Dearest father," she said, "I am very happy at this. I will tell John. He is coming over this morning. But you know my conditions! No wedding day for me unless my father agrees to live with me afterward."

"Settle it as you please, dear child. I don't think there would be much sunshine left for me if you were away from me. And now I suppose you will be very busy. You have carte blanche for the trousseau, but your book! will you have time to write it, Charlotte! And that young woman whom I saw in your room yesterday, is she the amanuensis whom you told me about?"

"She is the lady whom I hoped to have secured, father, but she is not coming."

"Not coming! I rather liked her look, she seemed quite a lady. Did you offer her too small remuneration? not that that would be your way, but you do not perhaps know what such labor is worth."

"It was not that, dear father. I offered her what she herself considered a very handsome sum. It was not that. She is very poor, very, very poor; and she has three little children. I never saw such a hungry look in any eyes as she had, when she spoke of what money would be to her. But she gave me a reason—a reason which I am not at liberty to tell to you, which makes it impossible for her to come here."

Charlotte's cheeks were burning now, and something in her tone caused her father to gaze at her attentively. It was not his way, however, to press for any confidence not voluntarily offered. He rose from his seat with a slight sigh.

"Well, dear," he said, "you must look for some one else. We can talk over matters to-night. Ask Hinton to stay and dine. There; I must be off, I am very late as it is."

Mr. Harman kissed his daughter and she went out as usual to button on his great coat and see him down the street. She had performed this office for him ever since—a little mite of four years old—she had tried to take her dead mother's place. The child, the growing girl, the young woman, had all in turns stood on those steps, and watched that figure walking away. But never until to-day had she noticed how aged and bent it had grown. For the first time the possibility visited her heart that there

might be such a thing for her in the future as life without her father.

Uncle Jasper had said he was not well; no, he did not look well. Her eyes filled with tears as she closed the hall door and re-entered the house. But her own prospects were too golden just now to permit her to dwell as long, or as anxiously, as she otherwise would have done, on so gloomy an aspect of her father's case.

Charlotte Harman was twenty-five years of age; but, except when her mother died, death had never come near her young life. She could scarcely remember her mother, and, with this one exception, death and sickness were things unknown. She had heard of them of course; but the grim practical knowledge, the standing face to face with the foe, were not her experience. She was the kind of woman who could develop into the most tender nurse, into the wisest, best, and most helpful guide, through those same dark roads of sickness and death, but the training for this was all to come. No wonder that in her inexperience she should soon cease to dwell on her father's bent figure and drawn, white face. A reaction was over her, and she must yield to it.

As she returned to the comfortable breakfast-room, her eyes shone brighter through their momentary tears. She went over and stood by the hearth. She was a most industrious creature, having trained herself not to waste an instant; but to-day she must indulge in a happy reverie.

How dark had been those few hours after Mrs. Home had left her yesterday; how undefined, how dim, and yet how dark had been her suspicions! She did not know what to think, or whom to suspect; but she felt that, cost her what it might, she must fathom the truth, and that having once fathomed it, something might be revealed to her that would embitter and darken her whole life.

And behold! she had done so. She had bravely grasped the phantom in both hands, and it had vanished into thin air. What she dreamed was not. There was to disgrace anywhere. A morbid young woman had conjured up a possible tale of wrong. There was no wrong. She, Mrs. Home, was to be pitied, and Charlotte would help her; but beyond this no dark or evil thing had come into her life.

And now, what a great further good was in store for her! Her father had most unexpectedly withdrawn his opposition over the slight delay he had insisted upon to her marriage. Charlotte did not know until now how she had chafed at this delay; how she had longed to be the wife of the man she loved. She said, "Thank God!" under her breath, then ran up-stairs to her own room.

Charlotte's maid had the special care of this room. It was a sunny morning, and the warm spring air came in through the open window.

"Yes, leave it open," she said to the girl; "it seems as if spring had really come to-day."

"But it is winter still, madam, February is not yet over," replied the lady's maid. "Better let me shut it, Miss Harman, this is only a pet day."

"I will enjoy it then, Ward," answered Miss Harman. "And now leave me, for I am very busy."

The maid withdrew, and Charlotte seated herself by her writing table. She was engaged over a novel which Messrs. M—, of — Street, had pronounced really good; they would purchase the copyright, and they wanted the MS. by a given date. How eager she had felt about this yesterday; how determined not to let anything interfere with its completion! But to-day, she took up her pen as usual, read over the last page, she had written; then sat quiet, waiting for inspiration.

What was the matter with her? No thought came. As a rule thoughts flowed freely, proceeding fast from the brain to the pen, from the pen to the paper. But to-day? What ailed her to-day? The fact was, the most natural thing in the world had come to stop the flow of fiction. It was put out by a greater fire. The moon could shine brilliantly at night; but how sombre it looked beside the sun! The great sunshine of her own personal joy was flooding Charlotte's heart to-day, and the griefs and delights of the most attractive heroine in the world must sink into insignificance beside it. She sat waiting for about a quarter of an hour, then threw