

bread than receive at his hands the donation of a guinea."

As he said this, he tore the draft and scattered its shreds on the table before the astonished lawyer. Poor Lucy was still in tears, yet one look assured her husband that she felt with him. He added in a gentler tone, "Mr. Perkins accept my acknowledgments for your courtesy;" and offering his arm to Lucy, turned to leave the room.

CHAPTER III.

Containing some further account of Colonel and Mrs. Brandon, and of the Education of their son Reginald.

WHILE the scene described in the last chapter was passing in the lawyer's study, stormy and severe was the struggle going on in the breast of the listening father: more than once he had been on the point of rushing into the room to fold his child in his arms; but that obstinate pride, which causes in life so many bitter hours of regret, prevented him, and checked the natural impulse of affection: still, as she turned with her husband to leave the room, he unconsciously opened the door, on the lock of which his hand rested, as he endeavoured to get one last look at a face which he had so long loved and caressed. The door being thus partially opened, a very diminutive and favourite spaniel, that accompanied him wherever he went, escaped through the aperture, and, recognizing Lucy, barked and jumped upon her in an ecstacy of delight.

"Heavens!" cried she, "it is—it must be Fan!" At another time she would have fondly caressed it, but one only thought now occupied her; trembling on her husband's arm, she whispered, "George, papa *must* be here." At that moment her eye caught the partially-opened door, which the agitated Squire still held, and, breaking from her husband, she flew as if by instinct into the adjacent room, and fell at her father's feet.

Poor Mr. Perkins was now grievously disconcerted, and calling out, "This way, madam, this way; that is not the right door," was about to follow, when George Brandon, laying his hand upon the lawyer's arm, said impressively,

"Stay, sir; that room is sacred!" and led him back to his chair. His quick mind had seized in a moment the correctness of Lucy's conjecture, and his good feeling taught him that no third person, not even he, should intrude upon the father and the child.

The old squire could not make a long resistance when the gush of his once-loved Lucy's tears trickled upon his hand, and while her half-choked voice sobbed for his pardon and his blessing; it was in vain that he summoned all his pride, all his strength, all his anger; Nature would assert her rights; and in another minute his child's head was on his bosom, and he whispered over her, "I forgive you Lucy; may God bless you, as I do!"

For some time after this was the interview prolonged, and Lucy seemed to be pleading for some boon which she could not obtain; nevertheless her tears, her old familiar childish caresses, had regained something of their former

dominion over the choleric, but warm-hearted Squire; and in a voice of joy that thrilled even through the quiet man of law, she cried, "George! George, come in!" he leaped from his seat, and in a moment was at the feet of her father. There as he knelt by Lucy's side, the old Squire put one hand upon the head of each, saying, "My children, all that you have ever done to offend me is forgotten; continue to love and to cherish each other, and may God prosper you with every blessing!" George Brandon's heart was full; he could not speak, but straining his wife affectionately to his bosom, and kissing her father's hand, he withdrew into a corner of the room, and for some minutes remained oppressed by emotions too strong to find relief in expressions.

We need not detail at length the consequences of this happy and unexpected reconciliation. The check was re-written, was doubled, and was accepted. George still persevered in his wish to accompany his friend to Virginia; where Ethelston assured him that, with his £20,000 prudently managed, he might easily acquire a sufficient fortune for himself and his family.

How mighty is the power of circumstance: and upon what small pivots does Providence sometimes allow the wheels of human fortune to be turned! Here, in the instance just related, the blessing or unappeased wrath of a father, the joy or despair of a daughter, the peace or discord of a family, all, all were dependent upon the bark and cares of a spaniel! For that stern old man had made his determination, and would have adhered to it, if Lucy had not thus been made aware of his presence, and by her grief aiding the voice of Nature, overthrown all the defences of his pride.

It happened that the young Squire was at this time in Paris, his father having sent him thither to see the world and learn to squire; a letter was, however, written by Lucy, announcing to him the happy reconciliation, and on-treating him to participate in their common happiness.

The arrangements for the voyage were soon completed; the cabin of a large vessel being engaged to convey the whole party to Norfolk in Virginia. The Old Squire offered no opposition, considering that George Brandon was too old to begin a profession in England, and that he might employ his time and abilities advantageously in the New World.

We may pass over many of the ensuing years, the events of which have little influence on our narrative, merely informing the reader that the investment of Brandon's money, made by the advice of Ethelston, was prosperous in the extreme. In the course of a year or two, Mrs. Brandon presented her lord with a little girl, who was named after herself. In the following year, Mrs. Ethelston had also a daughter: the third confinement was not so fortunate, and she died in childbirth, leaving to Ethelston, Edward, then about nine, and little Evelyn, a twelvemonth old.

It was on this sad occasion that he persuaded his sister to come out from England to reside with him, and take care of his motherless children: a task that she undertook and fulfilled with the love and devotion of the most affectionate mother.

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