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CLARA LESLIE.

A TALE OF OUR OWN TIMES.

CHAPTER XVII.—Continued.

'Miss Leslie,' said Morris, more earnestly still, 'do not daily with conviction; hesitate not; God's grace cannot, must not, be trifled with. Do not fear what the world can do or say.'

travagance and love of notoriety, were it not for the system of deception you have been carrying on.' 'As to the deception, Douglas,' replied Clara, 'you yourself have forced it upon me. God knows I have hated it enough. God knows I was loth enough to begin it.'

was soon absorbed; while Catherine walked to the window to contemplate the medallion. She read as follows:— 'My dearest Child,—I was very sorry to hear of the new troubles that are come upon you; but you have been long prepared for a discovery of this sort.'

ed at rest, and she stooped and kissed Clara, with a low whisper that went to Clara's heart. 'There is but one way, dearest Clara,—prayer will settle it. Pray to be guided aright and, like the wise men from the East, you will be guided to where the young Child lay with Mary His Mother, to adore in grateful, ardent love.'

soon again; had another talk with Mrs. Selwyn as she passed the drawing-room; and then left the house. Mrs. Selwyn was to remain a few weeks longer in London; but a new circumstance brought things to a crisis, and hastened her departure. The Eve of the Purification came; the watch over Clara's movements had been a little relaxed, as she had not had any occasion for transgressing orders.