EDITH YORKE.

CHAPTER XI.—*Continued.*

POLEMICS AND THE WEATHER.

So Edith stood surrounded by a guard of devoted hearts, between the church and harm.

The physical and mental growth of this girl was fair to see. It was like the slow, sweet unfolding of a rose from the bud, with its baby lips pushed through the green to the rich and gracious beauty of the bursting flower. That morning look which belongs to the eyes of ingenuous youth still shed its calm, clear lustre over hers; her hair had darkened in tint, so as to be no longer a shadowed gold, but a gilded shadow; and she shut up like a young palm tree, slender, but with the rounded, vigorous strength of an Atalanta. She had that perfect health which makes mere existence a delight, and she was perfectly happy, for all her wants were satisfied, and all her wishes were winged with hope. Friends she took as a matter of course. She did not think much about them, but loved them quietly, as people do who never wanted for friends. It is need or the fear of losing which develops intensity to affection.

What she did think of was: How does the wind blow and the sun shine? What are the names of those worlds in the sky, and how do they move? Where do the birds go when they disappear in winter, and *how do* they know when to return? How does the snow-flake gather itself into a star-shape, and what shapes and colors the rainbow?

Her interest took in also another subject kindred to these: What distant people live on the earth? What do their eyes see? How do they live? How do they speak? Her mother's native land having been far away, made all far-away lands seem far to her; and customs and speech different from those she had known did not repel, but attracted.

By some happy providence in her nature or her education, or in both, the girl's *curiosity* and love of the marvellous and beautiful took this direction, and therefore her delights did not wither like weeds when childhood passed: they grew for ever.

But what was best in Edith Yorke's growth was that she began to perceive the glories of the church of God, and, as her knowledge touched here and there at remote points, to guess at the grandeur, the symmetry, and the perfect finish of the whole structure. She had been ashamed of her religion, even while she clung to it, because all the professors of it whom she knew were poor and ignorant, and because she had seen it mocked by a higher class. She soon learned that all Catholics were not like those she saw, and that some of the noblest of earth, persons excelling in rank, wealth, learning and virtue, had been devoted children of the Church. It was a mean reason for being better satisfied with it, but it was better than no reason, and it led upward. What was it that these people found to love and reverence? She looked to see, and, seeing, she also loved and reverenced, not because the great did, not because any one else did, but because what she saw was worthy of such homage. Once attaining this elevation, it was easy for a nature like hers to be entirely and enthusiastic on the side of God, and to find a beauty and delight in the fact that had before repelled her, to rejoice that the poor and the ignorant, as well as the rich and the learned, had a place in the arms of this bountiful Mother, and that, while human science built a laborious track on which to crawl toward the heart of God, simple human love flew straight there, as the bird flies to its nest.

Father Basle instructed her thoroughly, particularly in controversy. She must be able not only to defend herself when attacked, but to attack, if necessary. As yet, of either attack or defence she had had no need to think. That there was strife in the world, she almost *forgot*. The memory of all that had been miserable in her past life became as a dream, or was only real enough to keep fresh her love and gratitude toward her early friends, and to bar all intercourse between her and the village people. She saw them only when they came to her uncle's house.

Her life was simple—books, music, and drawing, a little gardening, and a good deal of riding on horseback. Major Cleaveland had given her a beautiful saddle-horse, and Carl was her teacher and constant companion in these rides. Mrs. Yorke, gentle soul! would have fainted with terror had she seen the reckless manner in which these two flew over the ground when they were out of her sight.

"You have had no exercise till your cheeks grow red," Carl would say; and at the challenge Edith would chirrup to her prancing Thistledown, and they were off on the wings of the wind. Thus cloistered and fostered, she grew up strong, sweet and happy, and with the glance of her clear eyes kept back yet a while many a shaft that would have been aimed at the Church.

One marksman, however, was not dazzled by her. Mr. Conway cried aloud, sparing not. Denunciation was this man's forte, and he improved the occasion. It was about this time that Miss Clara Yorke commented on the astringent qualities of the gentleman's character.

"Why, mamma," Hester Cleaveland said, "he had even the impudence to come to my house, and exhort me, and to say that we were all in danger from the influence of Father Basle and Edith. I got up at that, and said that, since he had taken the liberty to speak to me in such a manner of my own family, I should not scruple to excuse myself from any further conversation with him then or in future. And I made him one of my most splendid bows, and left him alone; didn't I, you beautiful creature?"

This question was addressed to a lovely, gray eyed infant that lay in the speaker's lap, and was followed by a long and interesting conversation between the two, the young mother furnishing both questions and answers, and in that delightful intercourse quite forgetting Mr. Conway and his impudence. What were all the crabbed old ministers in the world in comparison to mamma's own baby? Nothing at all! "Come, Melicent, and see how intelligent his expression is when I speak to him. He looks right in my face."

"I do not see how he could well help it, if he looks anywhere, since your face is within an inch of his nose," remarks Melicent dryly.

Hester had at this time been a year married, and was triumphantly, we must own, a little selfishly happy. There was not in her nature a particle of malice, but she lacked that sensitive and delicate regard for the feelings of others less favored than herself, which makes unselfish persons cautious not to display too much their own superior advantages. As her father had predicted, Major Cleaveland was to her the most wonderful man in the world, and as to Major Cleaveland's youngest son, words could not express his perfections. Their house was, in some occult way, finer than any other house whatever, their furniture had a charm of its own, their horses had peculiar qualities which rendered them more valuable than you would think, their very bread and butter had an uncommon flavor which distinguished it from the bread and butter of less fortunate mortals.

The Cleavelands remained in Seaton the first winter after this baby's birth, greatly to the joy of Hester's family. The winters passed rather heavily for them, and it was a pleasant break in their daily life to see Hester's horses turn into the avenue, with a great jingling of sleighbells, and Hester's pretty face smiling out from her furs behind them. Even Clara, absorbed as she was in the glorious work of putting the last finishing touches to her first novel—a novel actually accepted by a publisher, and to be brought out in the spring—even this inspired person would start up at that cheery sound, and run down stairs to chat with her sister, and embrace her nephew, if he were of the party.

But there were times when no one could come to them, and they could not go out, but were as close prisoners as though walls of stone had been built up around them. One might as well have been in the Bastile as in a solitary country house in one of those old fashioned, down east snow storms. One could see them gather on winter days in a steady purple bank about the horizon, waiting there with leaden patience for a day or two, perhaps, till all their *forces* should *come up*, or till the air should moderate enough for a fall. There would be no visible clouds, but a gradual thickening of the air, the blue losing its brilliancy under the gray film, a flake sidling down now and then in so reluctant a manner that it seemed every moment on the point of going up again. Another follows, and another, they coquette with the earth, seem to take the matter over in the air, finally, with a good deal of hesitation, one after another settles, and presently the storm comes on steadily, and what was a fairy star of whiteness becomes a thin white veil, then an inch deep of swan's down, then a pile that clogs the feet of men and beasts, and the wheels or runners of carriages, then an alabaster prison.

It is possible to be in a state of desolation under such circumstances, and it is possible not to be: that depends on the people, and on the mood they are in. Some groan over the trial; some, scarcely less agreeable, sit down and endure it with a most depressing patience; some shut the world out, and invent expedients to forget what sort of *world it is*; others, wider of mind and heart and clearer of sight, take the storm as it comes, and see all the enchantment of it. In that vast lily-flower that has curled down over them, and shut them in for a time, they find a honey that sparkles like wine. Lean out and catch a flake as it falls; it is a star, a flower, a fairy dumb-bell, a cross, a globe, always a wonder. Think, then, of the lavish millions of them!

One whom nature holds close to her heart has sung the snow-storm:

> "Every pine, and fir, and hemlock,
> Wore ermine too dear for an earl;
> And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
> Was ridged inch-deep with pearl."

One such snow in Seaton fell all day quietly, and all night, with a rising wind, and the next morning they woke in choas. There was no up and down out of doors, but only a roundabout. There was a whirl, and a whiteness that dimmed off into grayness; there were no fences nor posts; a ghost of a pyramid stood where the barn had been; what had been trees were white giants coming toward them, apparently. They opened thier windows to brush away the snow that piled up on the sill, and were blinded and baffled; they opened their *doors to go out*, and a solid Parian barrier was laid across the step, knee-high; they tried to shovel a path, and an angry wind and a myriad of little hands filled it in again. Patrick and Carl made a desperate effort to reach the village, and, after struggling as far as the avenue gate, were glad to get to back to the house without being suf*focated*. At the door they found Edith catching snow flakes to look at the shapes of them, and watching with wonder and delight certain thin, sharp drifts that a breath would have shaken from their airy poise, but which the wild wind never stirred even to a tremor.

"If one could only see the shapes of the wind!" she said. "Or is it, Carl, that the shape of the snow is the shape of the wind?"

Clara shook the snow from her brother's coat, and slyly dropped a snowball down his back; even Melicent forgot her dignity so far as to sit down in a bank, which enthroned her very prettily. Carl thereupon called her Mrs. Odin, and Melicent smiled involuntarily at the idea of being Mrs. Anybody. The mother and father, standing side by side, watched them smilingly from the window, and remembered how they used to play in the snow when they were children, and felt *young again for a brief moment.*

"But the spectres of rheumatism and sore-throat stand between me and all that folderol now," Mr. Yorke says, with a half-sigh.

"Yes, dear; but it is pretty to look at," says the wife cheerfully. "And we elders have the fire, which is more beautiful yet."

They pile wood on the fire. It blazes up, and reddens all the dusky room, and presently Mrs. Yorke wraps a scarlet mantle about her, and goes with a little shiver, almost to the *door*, and *calls out* in the sweetest little bird-call: "Come in, children, come in! You'll take cold."

"Mother looks and sounds like an oriole in there," says Carl. "Come, girls."

They all come in with very red cheeks and bright eyes, Edith running to show her aunt a large starflake before it melts. Mrs. Yorke, bending to examine it, breathes on it, and it changes instantly to a spot of water on Edith's dark-blue sleeve.

The two young Pattens, who have developed into clever scapegraces, are pushing each other into drifts at the back door, and pretending not to hear Betsey's stern calls to them to come to their work. When she appears at the door with her hands all ready to administer summary chastisement, they elude her with the skill of practised gymnasts or of children used to dodging blows, run under her very elbows into the kitchen, and are busily and gravely employed by the time she has turned about and come back. Patrick sets his face resolutely toward the barn, where are certain quadrupeds to be cared for, and flounders as if he were himself a quadruped, and becomes a lessening speck, only the head visible, and finally, when they begin to think that he is lost, triumphantly pushes the barn-door open, and is greeted by a neigh from the horse, a shake of the head from the cow, and a welcoming cackle from the hens.

That evening they had music, Melicent played brilliantly, and Clara sang them an e fish old song:

> "'Who patters sae late at our gyle-window?'
> 'Mither, it's the cauld sleet.'
> 'Come in, come in,' quoth the canny gude-wife.
> 'An' warm thae frozen fee.'"

When it came time for prayers, Mr. Yorke read that exquisite chapter in Job wherein God speaks of the incomprehensible mysteries of power and wisdom hidden in the things that he has made.

Carl, finding himself bored, leaned back in his chair, and clasped his hands over the top of his head. The leaning back brought within his range of vision the fold of a dark-blue gown, the toe of a small shoe, and a pair of lovely folded hands. He turned his face a little, and looked at Edith, who had drawn her chair near his, and as he looked his face softened, and he unconsciously changed his careless position to one more respectful. He saw her profile, with the lustrous eyes steady as she listened, and so uplifted as to show their full size. The firelight played over her quiet face, and made shine a curve or two of the large braid of hair wound round her head.

When Mr. Yorke read: *Hast thou entered into the store-house of the snow, or hast thou beheld the treasures of the hail?* etc., she glanced at Carl, and smiled. She had known that he was looking at her, and was pleased that he should. Carl had a particularly pleasant way of looking at his cousin which she felt as a flower may feel the sun. It was as though they were talking together without words, and he knew her thoughts without the trouble of speech.

When the reading was over Edith said good-night to each one, kissed her aunt on both cheeks, and went up to her chamber. The last good-night was to Carl, who opened the door for her.

"He has beautiful manners," she said to herself as she went up-stairs. "He says so much without speaking a word. He seemed to say good-night, but he did not speak. I think that, when we go to heaven, we shall all talk in that silent way. How odd that Carl and I should begin now!"

She wrapped a shawl about her, and stood before her crucifix, looking at it, and recollecting herself before saying her prayers. "When I am going to speak to Carl or to Dick, or to any one, I think of him. If I were going to speak to a king, I should think of nothing else, and my heart would beat quickly. I am going to speak to the One who makes kings."

She bowed her head with a calm reverence. But that was not what she wanted. Her heart craved emotion. "I am going to speak to the Son of God. He was poor, He was despised and rejected. When I was the poorest, I had my little attic to sleep in, but He had not where to lay His head. O dear Lord! it was pitiful. I will never, never turn you out in the cold"

When Melicent softly entered her room, next to Edith's, and stopped a moment, hesitating whether to speak to her cousin, she heard her breathe out as she laid her head upon the pillow, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I lie down to sleep!"

Melicent stole noiselessly away from the door. She could not address any trivial word, even any word of common affection, to one who had just lain down to sleep in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. It made sleep seem awful and sacred as well as sweet. It made guardian angels seem possible, even necessary. "How beautiful the Catholic religion is in some of its forms!" she thought, and, after a moment, knelt, and said a short prayer that she also might be guarded during the night, and that the Lord would not refuse to let her also rest in his name. She felt a sense of safety in having her cousin near, and the door of Edith's chamber seemed to her like the door of a shrine.

The next morning when they waked, the windows were all of a glitter with sunshine, and wrought over by the artisans of frostland with samples of every landscape under the sun—cliffs with climbing spruce trees, silvery-sanded deserts with palms, an infinite variety. The sky was a dazzling clearness. The earth was like a stormy sea that had suddenly been enchanted into a motionless and ineffable whiteness; the wave curled over, with the spray all ready to slide down its back; the hollows were arrested in their sinking, the ripples frozen in their dimpling.

Then when evening came there was a grand display of northern lights, that pitched their tents of shifting rose and gold, with flags flying, and armies marching, and stained the snow with airy blood.

Carl stood in the cupola, with Edith and Clara clinging to him, both a little uneasy, and told them stories of Thor, Odin, the Bifrost bridge and Valhalla. What they saw was the Scandinavian gods carousing, *he said*; or, no, it was a repetition of that fierce battle of olden time, when, at night, spectators saw the dead arise from the field, float up into the air, and fight their battle over again in the sky, that wild legend that Kaulbach painted on canvas.

"Carl," Edith said hesitatingly, "I think that the truth is more beautiful than any legend."

"But we do not know the truth about northern lights," he replied, taking a scientific view of the matter.

She hesitated a moment. She was not used to speaking of what came nearest to her heart. But Father Basle had given her a charge: "Whenever you have a chance to say anything beautiful about God, say it. That is your duty."

"We know that God made them," she faltered.

"Oh! that spoils the poetry of it!" Carl exclaimed involuntarily. "Pardon me! but to speak of God is to remind me of long, sanctimonious faces and disagreeable ways, and of a frowning on everything graceful and grand and beautiful."

"It isn't right," she said eagerly, forgetting herself; "for it is God who has made everything grand and beautiful and graceful. When you see a fine picture, or a piece of statuary, or read a good book, you think of the artist, and admire him. Reading a play, the other day, you said, 'What a soul Shakespeare had!' and I heard you say once that Michael Angelo was a god; and last night, when Melicent played a sonata you liked, you exclaimed, 'That glorious Beethoven!' Why not say, 'That great God!' when you see the northern lights? Besides God made Beethoven and Michael Angelo, and Shakespeare, and taught them everything they knew. I do really think, Carl, that the truth is more beautiful than any legend. Why isn't it as fine to say, '*The God of glory thundereth*' as to talk about ove throwing thunderbolts? I don't see anything very admirable in Jove. And why isn't it as sublime for the sun to hang and shine, and the world to go whirling about it, because God told them to, as for Phœbus to drive the chariot of the sun up the East?"

She turned her face, rosy with earnestness and northern lights, and looked at him with her shining eyes.

"Why, Edith," he said, "you're going to be a poet!"

She shook her head, and hung it a little bashfully. "No, I am not. But King David was a poet."

And so the matter dropped. But Edith had spoken her word for God, and may be it had not been entirely lost.

Perhaps we may be allowed here to say a word in defence of the weather as a subject of conversation.

The assertion that Americans, and especially New Englanders, commence all acquaintanceships and all social conversations with an atmospheric *exordium*, has become classical, and to mention that on any given occasion the weather was the subject of conversation is to intend to be facetious. But let us question the good sense of this mockery. Are not the countless phases of the many-sided weather as noble, as beautiful, as profitable, and as harmless topics of conversation as ninety-nine out of a hundred things which people do talk about? Is a dull or a wicked speech, a dull or a wicked book, a fashion, a horse, your neighbor's character, a caucus, a candidate, even a song, or a bit of weather on canvas, a finer topic?

Ah, the weather!—skies of infinite changes, inexhaustible palette in which the painter's imagination dips its brush; calms, nature holding her breath; winds, the nearest to spirit of any created thing—clouds, the aerial chemists of light; showers, overflowing spray from fountains suspended in the air; rains, the asperges of the skies; fogs, filmy veils which all the king's men cannot tear aside; droughts, continents in a fever; cold, the horror of nature, at which the small streams stifle and die, the mountains whiten to ghosts, and even iron shrinks; heat, nature's angel of the resurrection, blowing through the *golden* sunshine, and calling the flowers out of their graves, and bringing the birds from afar—would that all the bad, the uncharitable, the silly, the cold, the complaining talk that on this earth vexes the ear of heaven could be changed to sweet and harmless talk of the infinitely-varying weather, and of Him who planned its variety!

After this protest and apiration, it can be said of the Yorkes, without any intention of reflecting on their intelligence, that the weather had a good deal to do with their entertainment, from the spring round through the circle of flowers and snow, till beside the melting drift they found the first May-flowers making their rosy act of faith in the coming summer.

CHAPTER XII.

CARL SEES HIMSELF IN A GLASS DARKLY.

The summer we are thinking of was 1851 and in the June of it Edith had her sixteenth birthday duly celebrated by the family, and Clara published her first *book*, an event *of* still greater consequence to them.

In the June of this year, also, the Hon. Mr. Blank came down to delight and instruct the voters of Seaton. Mr. Yorke was highly pleased by this announcement. He had known the gentleman in Boston, and thought him eloquent. It would be pleasant to see and hear a man of note once more. "Come to think of it, Amy," he said, "we have been buried here four years, seeing nobody outside of the town. It will be truly refreshing. We must have him here to dinner or tea, and we must all go to hear the address. It is to be in a tent on the fair grounds."

Mr. Yorke was quite bright and interested. He had been living in seclusion long enough to appreciate the value of a little excitement. He called on Mr. Blank at his hotel the evening of his arrival, and had a very cordial and agreeable half hour, talking chiefly of personal matters and old friends. Two or three other gentlemen who were paying their respects to the senator withdrew after a few minutes, to Mr. Yorke's satisfaction. They were persons whom he did not at all like.

"I am worn out," Mr. Blank said, leaning back in his chair, and poising his heels on the back of another chair. "I have made forty speeches in thirty days. But it pays. The excitement is immense."

Mr. Yorke was rather ashamed to ask what particular issue created this excitement and palaver. The truth was, he was a little behind the times. His four years had been years of vegetation, and he scarcely knew what his old friends were about. He had been so much engaged in filling up the maw of his avenues, coaxing exotics to bloom for the first time in his gardens, and reading novels—actually reading novels—that he was politically in the position of a man who had had a few years' sleep. He was mortified and astonished to realize at this moment that he had been *going over the* Waverley *novels* again, when he should have been reading the papers and keeping the state of the nation in view.

His embarrassment was relieved by a loud shout that rose from a crowd collected in front of the hotel. The gentleman for whom this applause was intended took no notice of it, except by an impatient shake of the head. He sipped a little from a tumbler at his elbow, and calmly lighted a cigar.

The shouting ceased, and the Seaton band—not the cast-iron band this time—broke out in their finest style.

"Confound them!" ejaculated the senator. "*Do* they think I want to hear their noise? I am tired of Dodworth's and the Germanians; but this! Why, it's all trombones."

The music ceased, and the shout went up again.

"They will have me out," groaned the hero of the hour. "I've a great mind to be taken sick. Couldn't you go out and say I'm sick?"

"No, sir," Mr. Yorke said decisively, "I could not.

"Well, couldn't you go out and make a speech for me? You'r about my build. It's easy. I could say it in *my sleep. Honored*—free and intelligent people—your beautiful town—glorious cause, etc. Fill it in as you like."

Mr. Yorke laughed. "I'm about half your build, and my voice is as much like yours as a crow's is like a nightingale's. Go along. When you've embarked in this sort of thing, you must take the consequences."

As another and still more imperative call came up, the honorable gentleman rose with a yawn, and the two stepped out in the balcony.

"My dear friends," began the speaker in silvery tones, "words fail me to express the feelings which move my heart when I listen to this generous welcome." (Applause.)

"Well for you that they do," parenthesized Mr. Yorke.

"Your approval honors you more than it does me," resumed the senator. "For what am I but the mouthpiece by which you speak, as the thunder-cloud speaks by the lightning? The mass of the people gather the truth, and it is their fire which informs the leader, and incites him to utter it forth. They are the—" (Immense applause.)

"The idiots!" exclaimed the orator. "They have broken into my best paragraph where it can't be mended. I must wind up."

"The fame of your town has reached me," he went on. "I have heard of it as a place where freedom is *not only* loved, but adored, where oppression is not only hated, but trampled on; and to-day, when I drove over the distant hills, and saw the white spires of your churches rising out of the forests, they seem to me like warning fingers pointing heavenward, as though the genius of the place bade me remember that the angelic hosts were witnessing if I and if you were faithful to the sacred trust placed in our keeping." (Tempests of applause).

"That always takes," remarked the senator to his companion. "Spires are trumps."

"*My friends, to-night I* am but a voice to you, but to-morrow we shall meet face to face. Let not a man be missing. Seaton expects every voter to do his duty. Again I thank you for your kind welcome, and wish you one and all good-night."

"What do they think a man is made of when they call him out to speak in a fog thick enough to slice and butter?" grumbled the orator, getting into his chamber again, and dropping the curtain between him and a second burst of music from the band.

Mr. Yorke raised his eyebrows slightly, and pursed out his underlip. "What glorious things have you heard of Seaton, and where?" he inquired. "I was not aware that it was famous."

The senator finished the contents of his tumbler, and wiped his mustache carefully. "I have heard that it is an infernally rowdyish little hole," he answered. "I don't care about coming here, but it was in my stumping programme."

Mr. Yorke took leave, and went homeward very slowly. He was disappointed and depressed, and nature seemed to sympathise with his mood. The road was muddy, and in the thick fog and darkness he could scarcely see the path at the side of it. When he turned into the private way that led to his own house, the trees crowded about, dripping, uncomfortable, and threatening, as if they had met to impeach the clerk of the weather, and concert measures for the putting down of this Scotch mist that was persuming to befog a tree, enlightened New England forest. When he reached the gate, Mr. Yorke leaned on it a moment. "Oh! for the laws of the Locrians!" he exclaimed.

"Charles, is that you?" asked a soft voice near.

"Why, Amy!" returned the gentleman, starting.

"I was looking for you," Mrs. Yorke explained, taking her husband's arm. "I hate to have you come up this road alone."

Her thin dress was damp, her hands cold, her heart fluttering. She had been walking up and down the avenue for the last hour, listening for her husband's step. How did she know what might happen to him? The people were violent, and he was uncompromising and bold. Oh! why had she consented to return to that place where her *youth had been blighted? No good* had ever come to her there, nothing but sorrow.

"O woman, woman! how you do torment yourself!" Mr. Yorke ejaculated. "You will have it that we are in danger. You will have it that we are being hanged, drawn, and quartered, if we are ten minutes beyond the time.'

"Would you rather we should care nothing about you?" his wife asked tremulously.

"No dear," he answered; "for I know that your fears are in proportion to your loving.'

The next day Mr. Yorke and his daughters went to hear the address. Edith remained at home with her aunt who never went into a crowd The road, the tent, and all about it were full of people. The enthusiasm was immense. When the speaker appeared, the audience stood up, the men shouting, the women waving their handkerchiefs—what for it would be hard to say Probably they did not know themselves, unless they meant to expres thus their admiration for success. For this man was the very embodiment of worldly success. Wealth and honors had come to him, not unsought, but without toil, and with little deserving. Success showed forth from his smooth, handsome face with its bright eyes and ready smile, even from the plump white hand, at whose wave thousands of voters said yea or nay. *His* expression was one of pleasant excitement and self-complacency, such as a man like him may naturally feel in such *circumstances.* He was a fluent speaker, had a musical voice, and a graceful manner.

Mr. Yorke listened to his exordium with great and anxious interest, and, as from generalities the orator gradually became more specific, his face darkened. It was, in fact, nothing more than a Knownothing tirade, with the usual appeal to the passions instead of the reason, and the old hackneyed abuse of the clergy

Mr. Yorke rose like a tiger, "Come, girls," he said quite audibly. "I can't listen to any more of this trash."

His daughters followed him quietly; but, their seats being prominent, they could not get out without exciting attention, and the first to see them was the speaker. He faltered a little in his speech, and a faint color rose to his face; but he recovered himself immediately, and waved his hand to stop the hisses that were beginning to rise. *But* he felt the defection. He knew well that he was a politician, not a statesman, and he would rather have had Mr. Yorke's countenance than that of any ten other men present.

Mr. Yorke did not dine with the senator that day as he had promised to. "When I made the engagement, I did not know that you had become a wire puller," he wrote briefly, in making his excuse.

Mr. *Blank's* face paled slightly as he read the note, but he crushed it carelessly the moment after. "Charles Yorke was always a hunker,' he remarked.

"Carl, I want you to print a leader from me, this week," Mr. Yorke said to his son that evening.

We have not said that Carl, having finished his law studies, instead of practising, had undertaken the editorship of the Seaton *Herald*.

"I am afraid, sir," the young man replied, "that, if you print your leaders in the *Herald*, you will have to pay the expenses of the paper, and insure the office against fire and mobs. At present the circulation is very small, and I dare not say a word against the party in power."

This paper was not, indeed, a very prosperous sheet; for the editor could not lower himself to the majority of the people, and they could not raise themselves to him. His politics were too little violent, his tone too gentlemanly, his literary items and extracts too pure and high in tone.

Major Cleaveland and Hester were taking tea at the homestead, and, when after tea Edith went up-stairs to read a letter she had just received from Dick Rowan, there was quite a warm discussion of the events of the day.

"After all, Mr. Blank is a strong speaker," Major Cleaveland said.

"A strong speaker!" exclaimed his father-in-law. "He is rank, sh!"

The ladies interposed a little.

"I'm not a Know-Nothing," Hester's husband said; "but neither do I condemn them. Their charges are not all false. The Catholic party proclaim their theory, which is very fine, and say nothing about the abuses which *creep into their practices*; their enemies denounce the abuses, and give them no credit for their principles. I think that the gist of the trouble is this: neither party will distinguish between the church and the clergy. When the body of Catholics will check their priests the minute they step out of their province or abuse their power, and when non-Catholics learn not to condemn a religion for the sin of individual professors, then we shall have peace."

The ladies and Carl went out into the garden, and left the two gentlemen to their discussion.

"I often wonder, Carl, that you express no opinion on these subjects," his mother said. "You must have opinions. I almost wish, sometimes, that you would argue."

"Which side do you wish me to prove?" he inquired listlessly. "I can prove eithe

She sighed. "How you do need rousing

He put his arm around her as they walk up and down the piazza. "My opinion little mother," he said, "that opinions are bore. Who wants to be always listening what other people think on subjects? N one thought in a milliard is worth putting i to words. I am sick of words, of gabble, inanities."

"Yes, my son," she said gently. "But o expects a man to give his opinion once for a on religious questions."

"It is not a religious question, mothe it is a question of religions," the young ma replied with a sort of impatience. "The is no greater bore than that same question Why does not each person believe what sui him, and hold his tongue about it, and le every other do the same?'

"But truth! but truth!" said the mother.

Carl shrugged his shoulders. "Everybody thinks he has it shut up in his cranium."

"What! you renounce religion?" she exclaimed.

"Not at all," he said. "They are so man spiritual gymnasiums where people exercis their souls. They are pretty and amiable fo women, and for men who need them but there are those who do not need them."

"Carl, you break my heart!" his mothe cried out, gazing through tears into her son' face. The boyish look had gone out of it There weariness and sadness in it, and hardness, too.

Carl was in a bitter mood that day, but h tried to sooth the pain he had given. "I'l do anything," he said laughingly. "I'll tur Catholic. I'll go to hear John Conway. "I'l read the *Dairyman's Daughter*. I'll teach a Sunday school class."

Edith came smiling out through the door, "Such a nice letter from Dick!" she said, giving it to her aunt. "And see, Carl, here is a little handful of sand from the Sahara, and here is an orange blossom from Sorrento. It looks quite fresh."

Dick Rowan had that delightful way which so few letter writing travellers know of mak ing their descriptions more vivid by sending some illustrations of them. Writing from the south, he would say, "While you are i the midst of snow, there is a rose tree in bloom outside my window. Here is one o the buds." He had emancipated himsel from the letter writers, and succeeded perfectly in his own way.

The next afternoon Mrs. Yorke sent fo Mr. Griffeth, and saw him alone. "Wha have you done to Carl?" she exclaimed "Are you making an infidel of him?"

The minister, confounded, tried to excus Carl and defend himself.

The interview was not a pleasant one, an Mr. Griffeth was glad when it was over. H went out into the sitting-room where Meli cent and Clara sat; but their constraine manners did not encourage him to sta long. They suspected the subject of the conversation he had been holding with the mother.

Edith sat on the piazza outside, studying Her person was not in sight as he looke from the window, but the flutter of drapo on the breeze betrayed her presence. M Griffeth merely bowed to the sisters in pa ing, and went out on to the piazza. Edi sat in a low chair with a book of Germ ballads on her knees. By her side were grammar and dictionary. She was transla ing, watching thought after thought emer *from that imperfectly known language,* stars emerge from the mists of heaven.

She glanced at the minister with a smi that was less for him than for the stanza s had just completed.

"Salve!" he exclaimed, bowing lowly.

"I am translating a song from the Ge man," Edith said. "Is not translating d lightful? It is like digging for gold, a finding it. I have just got a thought o whole."

The song was that beautiful one of Goeth which has been rendered:

> "The fight is done; and, far away,
> The thundering noise of battle dies;
> While homeward glad I wend my way,
> To meet the sunlight of her eyes."

Edith was looking very lovely. The vi curtaining the end of the piazza where she shut her into a green nook, to which only t finest sprinkle of sunshine could penetra The light, moving shadows flecked her wh gown, and all the floor of the piazza ab her,

> "Making a quiet image of disquiet,"

and a flickering in her hair. Carl, who w always dressing her out in some fanciful w had fastened a drooping bunch of white lil in her braids, and the petals, lying agai her neck and cheek, showed the differen between silver-white and rose-white. H beaming face made a light in the place.

Mr. Griffeth, stooping to see the poem, l his hand on the book she held, and she leased it so suddenly that it had nearly fal to the floor.

"It is beautiful," he said, reading it alou "Can you not fancy yourself that gold haired lady, and that some warrior is comi home to lay his honors at your feet and cl his reward?"

Edith looked away quickly, and let the take the brightness of her face. He ga steadily at her, and wondered for whom brightness was, or if it were only a gi vague romance.

"I like soldiers," she said after a mome and, though quiet, there seemed a sli stateliness in her manner. "My grandfat was a soldier all his life, and was as used a sword as I am to a fan. Mamma said t one of his Polish mottoes was, 'Never rec the forces of an enemy till after the victo It was written in one of her letters to pa If I were a man, I should wish to be a s dier."

"I also am a soldier; I fight the devil," minister said, with a slight, bitter laugh.

"Do you conquer him?" she asked sim but with the faintest little mocking smile

Mr. Griffith ignored the question. " have golden hair, like the lady of the so he said hastily. "If I were a soldier, Ed and came home to you from battle, would welcome me as that lady did her lover?" touched her hair with his hand as he spo

(To be Continued.)

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