

the country, her heart grew soft and warm again, and the cold band that had encircled it as in an iron grasp, melted away. All the resentment with which Lydia Stapleton had formerly inspired her, vanished. A scale seemed to fall from her eyes, and the thought of Beau suffering, Beau still ill, Beau sitting in his little room day after day, pining and unhappy, a prey to wretched, remorseful thoughts, appealed forcibly not only to her woman's love, but also to her woman's compassion. A voice within her cried, "He wants me, he wants me. Now that he is in trouble, instead of forsaking him as I have done, I should comfort and console him. Ah! make haste to do so."

Pride and anger had dictated her conduct. Now their selfishness and worthlessness became apparent. Freed from their base shackles, her spirit soared on high, and her better nature re-asserted itself. Exquisite was the joy of that moment.

Sir Hector stood and watched the smiles rippling over her tender face.

"Dolly, darling," he said, "follow the promptings of your own heart. I am growing old, and henceforth, to see you happy and contented is all I ask from life. If you still love Captain Dornay, I will not stand in your way."

"Papa, papa!" she murmured, "my own dear father, how good you are to me! If Beau has done wrong, he repents of his sin, and we have all of us something to be sorry for in this world."

Sir Hector kissed her by way of reply. What she said was true. Had he not been near sinning against his own daughter, and, influenced by the counsels of a shallow, narrow-minded woman of the world, plotted against her happiness? He, too, had been on the brink of committing a grievous fault.

"Yes, Dolly," he said gravely, "you are right. There is no such thing as perfection to be found in human nature, and only by judging each other charitably can we hope for forgiveness ourselves. If your Aunt Parkinson has taught us nothing else, she has taught us to despise the frivolities of fashion, and to seek after a purer, better life. Come, my child, pack up your things. We will go home this afternoon. I, like you, am weary of social struggles after petty, unworthy objects."

And so they went. Back to the green fields, the fresh