

THE CROSS OF PRIDE.

BY MRS. J. V. NOEL,

Of Kingston, Canada West, author of the "Abbey of Rathmore," etc.

[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER IX.

The departure of Captain Travers for India spread a gloom over his sister's heart and home. Mrs. Carleton severely felt the want of his cheerful companionship, and often expressed her grief in tears and lamentations. Ellinor's sorrow was quieter—deeper pent up in the recesses of her own heart, only to be indulged in secret. Outwardly she was calm, faithfully performing every duty; seeking in constant employment to banish wild regret. But when alone, its bitter waters were allowed to roll in upon her spirit, and for a time she yielded to the anguish she could only conceal—not subdue. Two years before, had she been content to share the humble fortunes of Travers, how different would have been her fate; how much suffering would have been spared her! Now, through the rest of her blighted life, she must be content to endure the evil consequences of her sinful ambition. Yet one thought there was, which could dart a gleam of consolation across these crushing reminiscences. She had sacrificed happiness on the altar of virtue. She had given up earthly love, life's greatest blessing, in obedience to the dictates of conscience.

One year passed away sadly, as years do pass, when the stricken heart is weary of suffering—aye, weary of life itself. Another followed; and now, an event took place strange as unexpected, which produced a sudden change in the monotonous life of Ellinor.

One day a noble-looking stranger, whose handsome bronzed features told of a long residence in an Eastern clime, called at Mrs. Carleton's and asked to see Miss Harcourt. He brought letters from Captain Travers which explained the cause of his visit, and filled the mind of Ellinor with mingled feelings of surprise and pleasure.

Sometime, after Gerald's arrival in India, he became acquainted with a retired officer, at whose splendid residence on the Hoogly he spent much of his time. There was something in the countenance of General Davenport which insensibly attracted Gerald—an indescribable likeness to Ellinor, for which he could not account. He saw it in the sudden flash of the old officer's eye, when angry or impatient; in the scornful curl of his moustached lip; even in the tones of his voice. He mentioned the resemblance one day to General Davenport and showed him Ellinor's likeness, the one he had pilfered on the night of the election ball at B—, some few years previously.—The General admired it very much; and carelessly inquired the beautiful girl's name.

'Ellinor Harcourt.'

The General started and a sudden flush colored his bronzed features.

'Where does she live?'

'In Ireland, at present near Dublin; but formerly at B—, in a remote part of the Emerald Isle.'

'Who? or what was her father?'

The voice was now trembling, and the tones very eager.

'Colonel Harcourt, of the —th regiment.'

'Myself! Good Heavens! and her mother was Charlotte Morgan.'

An explanation ensued. General Davenport was Ellinor's father. Shortly after he left B— he came into the possession of considerable property, left him by a maiden aunt, on consideration that he would take her name. He then exchanged into another regiment, and went to India; so that all trace of him was lost to his deserted wife. In the course of some years he married the daughter of an Indigo planter, and retired from the army. His second wife had died lately, leaving him immense wealth, and as he had no family and earnestly desired an heir, his happiness at hearing that he was not childless, was very great.

Immediate preparations were made for his return to Ireland. Every day seemed an age to the impatient old man, until he should claim his beautiful daughter.

After some deliberation Captain Travers thought it best to confide to him the sad tale of Ellinor's married life. His indignation at hearing she was divorced, was expressed in his usual stormy manner; for his long residence in the East, among obsequious slaves, had not contributed to improve his temper, which was naturally overhearing and irascible.

'Divorced! he exclaimed, with angry vehemence; 'dishonored! she, in whose veins

flows the blood of the Harcourts and Davenports! But the case shall not be suffered to rest on such a decision. By George! that proud infernal Countess shall be made to speak the truth; her villainy shall be published to the world, and her perjured accomplice punished, with the utmost rigor of the law. Easy enough to get a divorce, when no one appeared for the defence! Poor, and friendless, what could my unfortunate daughter do, but submit to the infamy her heartless husband chose to pour upon her innocent head? But now the case will be different. A high position and untold wealth will not be without effect in a court of justice.'

'My dear General, you forget that there is no proof of your daughter's innocence; no witness to swear that she is guiltless; and without that, neither rank nor wealth can avail in an English court of justice?'

Captain Travers spoke with sad earnestness, for he had considered the matter well; even consulted an eminent lawyer in Dublin, and he saw that the case could not be amended; that Ellinor's cause was hopeless.

'I tell you, you are mistaken sir; some witness can be, aye, must be found, to testify to Lady Esdaile's wickedness and remove the stain of dishonor that sullies the name of a Davenport.' And the General paced the room with angry strides, muttering curses, deep not loud, on the noble Countess of Esdaile.

The happiness of General Davenport on meeting his daughter, was embittered by the thought that the stigma of a divorced wife rested on her fame. To remove this the proud man would have willingly given half his wealth. However, there was consolation in the assurance of Mrs. Carleton, that as Ellinor was a stranger to the fashionable world, she would not be recognized in her present altered position. Even the few who had formerly known her as Lady Vivyan would hardly suppose that Miss Davenport, the daughter and heiress of a nabob, could be the same person. Besides, a great change had passed over Ellinor physically, as well as mentally. Sorrow had done its work, and dimmed her brilliant beauty.—Her hair, from having been cut off during her paroxysms of insanity, had changed to a darker hue. The expression of her countenance, too, was altogether different. The spiritual nature recently developed within her, had given a new character to her beauty; and the haughty and resentful flashes of her dark eyes had given place to a light not of earth—gentle, humble, heavenly.

In a noble mansion, in London, at the head of a princely establishment, surrounded by all the luxury that wealth could supply, Ellinor soon found herself domiciled, with her fond father. The London winter was partly over, when this new star suddenly rose upon the world of fashion. It was at the Opera she made her debut, dressed in a style of Oriental splendor to gratify a whim of the General. All the 'lorgnettes' in the house, were soon directed towards the distinguished-looking strangers. Who are they? does any one know them? were whispered in every box. Apparently unmindful of the great sensation she produced, Ellinor sat quietly listening to the music. And yet she was not unmoved. Beneath that calm demeanor, was hidden a heart trembling with emotion. It was some time before she could summon resolution to look round the house, lest she should encounter Sir Reginald Vivyan's look of recognition; or meet Lady Esdaile's cold scrutinizing gaze. That the Baronet was in town she knew, for she had seen his name mentioned in the Court Journal, and she supposed he would, as a matter of course, attend the Opera.

She was not mistaken. Sir Reginald was seated in a box directly opposite. He was one of the first whose attention had been attracted by the appearance of the strangers. As his eye rested on the queenly form of the lady, a sudden start betrayed his surprise. What a singular likeness! Could she be Ellinor? But no; the idea was absurd!

As if fascinated, the Baronet continued to gaze at the lady who bore so striking a resemblance to his divorced wife. Every moment he became more and more bewildered, for a closer scrutiny caused doubts to arise in his mind. Though singularly like Ellinor, in some respects she looked altogether different. She had not her dazzling beauty; her hair was darker and the expression of her face so sweet, nay, angelic, was so very different.

The mesmeric influence of Sir Reginald's eye, was felt by Ellinor. She knew he was gazing at her. Involuntarily she looked up, and met his earnest eyes expressive of mingled emotions. Her heart throbbed painfully; but Sir Reginald saw no recognition in her glance. She turned carelessly away,

and, with a self-possessed manner surveyed the boxes. The Baronet was puzzled; he felt convinced she could not be the 'c-devant' Lady Vivyan; yet the likeness was indeed wonderful; but such resemblances between persons, strangers to each other, are sometimes seen.

On leaving the Opera, the crush was very great. Ellinor clung to her father's arm, fearful of being separated from him. Near her, stood Sir Reginald Vivyan; secretly desirous of learning the strangers' name, when their carriage was announced; but ostensibly endeavoring to keep off the pressure of the crowd from Ellinor. The General smiled, and bowed his acknowledgments. Ellinor studiously avoided meeting the Baronet's eye, which she felt was riveted on her.

'General Davenport's carriage stops the way?' was at length shouted from the entrance door; and the General and his daughter moved forward through the crowd, Sir Reginald officiously pioneering the way for them.

'That is a very polite gentleman, and very handsome too,' remarked the General, as they drove off, followed immediately by Sir Reginald, in his brougham. Who is he Ellinor? But I suppose you do not know; you are as great a stranger in the fashionable world as I am.'

'But I do know him,' said Ellinor, in faltering accents; 'he is Sir Reginald Vivyan.'

The name jarred on the General's ear; and a muttered curse broke from him. By George! if I had known that I would have been more sparing of my smiles. The villain knew you I suppose?'

'I think he did; indeed it could hardly be otherwise. And yet there are doubts in his mind—the likeness strikes him forcibly; but the change of circumstances, my altered position are unaccountable. His brougham followed our carriage; he will use every means in his power to elucidate an affair that seems so singular.'

Ellinor spoke as if she was giving utterance to her own thoughts rather than replying to her father's question.

She was not mistaken. The very next day Sir Reginald sent a confidential servant to Dublin, to inquire if Lady Vivyan was still in the Lunatic Asylum, in which she had been immured. The information gained, was, that she had been removed by a friend, three years before, and nothing had since been heard of her.

This intelligence threw little light on the mystery which so occupied the Baronet. As none of his acquaintances in London knew anything of General Davenport, he could get no information concerning him, except what he learned at the bank in which the General had placed a very large amount of money; that he was a nabob, lately returned from India, with his daughter, and possessed of great wealth. The Baronet's next step was to write to a cadet, a young friend of his, in Calcutta, begging him to make inquiries about General Davenport. But as some time must elapse before an answer could be received, he must for the present endure his suspense, and bear his curiosity ungratified.

In the meantime, thoughts of Miss Davenport haunted him continually; he could not banish her image from his mind, nor resist the fascinating influence she possessed over him. His feelings towards her were very much akin to those with which Ellinor Harcourt had inspired him, the first moment he beheld her in the old Abbey at B—. The idea that she might be his divorced wife pained him exceedingly; he could not bear to associate the image of the haughty, resentful, dishonored Ellinor, with a being so pure, so lovely, so angelic as Miss Davenport. He cheated himself into the belief that, notwithstanding the singular resemblance, it was absurd to imagine they could be the same person.

In fact, Sir Reginald Vivyan was fast falling in love with the beautiful heiress, who was creating such a sensation in the fashionable world. He haunted her steps whenever she appeared in public. When her elegant barouche and splendid grey horses drove from the door of her noble mansion in — Square for a morning drive in the Park, the Baronet mounted on a spirited animal might be seen dashing after her in eager pursuit. At the theatre, the concert, the opera, he was her shadow. And yet, to his great chagrin, he had not been able to obtain an introduction to her; for, although the nabob's reputed wealth had procured for him a large circle of acquaintances in London, he and his beautiful daughter had not, yet, got within the exclusive circle in which the Baronet moved.

At length the earnestly desired opportu-

nity of being presented to Miss Davenport was afforded Sir Reginald. A ball was to be given at General Davenport's, and a young lancer, a friend of the Baronet, offered to give him an invitation.

'As I am a favorite with the nabob, he said carelessly, he has given me several invites to distribute among my friends; for he wishes to have his rooms well filled. You had better go Sir Reginald; it is worth while being introduced to the beautiful heiress.—She has immense wealth they say, and will enrich whoever is lucky enough to obtain her hand.'

'You will, yourself, be the fortunate fellow, Audley.'

'Me! by Jove no! no such luck in store for me. Indeed the lady seems in no hurry to get rid of her fortune and liberty. She understands nothing about coquetry; seems to despise an innocent flirtation, and is as frigid in the company of gentlemen as an ice-bog. You had better try your powers of fascination, Sir Reginald. The feigning of her manner may thaw beneath the sunshine of your smile. You know you are considered irresistible.'

'I hope it may prove true in this case, thought the Baronet, as he turned to pursue his ride, which the meeting with the young lancer had interrupted, his mind occupied with pleasing anticipations of his meeting with Miss Davenport.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A BOY AMONG ROBBERS.—How simply and beautifully has Abdel Kader, of Ghilon, impressed us with a love of truth in a story of his childhood! After stating the vision which made him entreat of his mother to go to Bagdad, and devote himself to God, he thus proceeds: I informed her of what I had seen, and she wept; then, taking out eighty dinars, she told me, as I had a brother, half of that was all my inheritance; and she made me swear, when she gave it to me, never to tell a lie, and afterward bade me farewell, exclaiming, 'Go, my son, I consign you to God; we shall not meet till the day of judgment.'

I went until I came near Hamadai, when our kafilah was plundered by sixty horsemen. One fellow asked me what I had got.

'Forty dinars,' said I, 'are sewed under my garments.'

The fellow laughed, thinking, no doubt, I was joking with him.

'What have you got?', said another.

I gave him the same answer. When they were dividing the spoil, I was called to an eminence where the chief stood.

'What property have you got, my little fellow?' said he.

'I have told two of your people already,' said I. 'I have forty dinars sewed in my garments.'

He ordered them to be ripped open, and found my money.

'And how came you,' said he in surprise, 'to declare so openly what had been so carefully concealed?'

'Because,' I replied, 'I will not be false to my mother, to whom I promised I never will tell a lie.'

'Child,' said the robber, 'hast thou such a sense of duty to thy mother, at thy years, and I am insensible at my age of the duty I owe to my God! Give me thy hand innocent boy, he continued, 'that I may swear repentance upon it.' He did so. His followers were alike struck with the scene.

'You have been our leader in guilt,' said they to their chief: 'be the same in the path to virtue.'

And they instantly, at his order, made restitution of the spoil, and vowed repentance on his hand.

CHILDHOOD AND MANHOOD.—However, if we love joy, and cannot have it pure in ourselves, it is something that we can sympathize with it as it exists in the sweet smiles and musical laughter of children. So the sight and thought becomes beautiful and instructive to us; it is delight and it is philosophy; it is a looking-glass to the mind—a moral looking-glass—a medicative looking-glass, helping to correct the deformities it reveals. It is a merciful and considerate wisdom that thus arranges our lot in life, mingling the mass of society, so that youth and manhood, childhood and old age, form one community, and thus are all sweetly dependent on each other; for the protection which maturity bestows on childhood, a return is made by childhood in the lessons which it teaches, and in the picturesque beauty of its moral character, which renders it so delightful an object to contemplate. So mutual dependence and obligation form the bond of society and the principle of morals, and dependence of all on the Supreme forms the basis of devout gratitude and the principle of religion. W. P. Scargill.