

world called a good young man; that is, he was steady in his habits, substituting a godless morality for vital piety; and after endeavouring to convert him from the error of his ways, and finding him obstinately adhering to his own opinions, she gave him up, and denounced him as a heathen man and publican. Her opinion was all powerful with the colonel, who had surrendered his mind and the management of his affairs entirely to her guidance; and before Charlotte returned from school, Lewis found himself no longer a visitor at the house.

This was a severe blow to the young and susceptible Charlotte; and when enlisted upon by her father to give up all idea of becoming Lewis Chatworth's wife, she shewed an obstinacy of resistance, and a determination to have her own way, which greatly annoyed her stepmother, who, without meaning it, commenced a course of petty persecutions, which rendered the unhappy girl so miserable that it greatly impaired her intellect, and made her look upon the religion which her parents professed as a cruel system of tyranny; the very opposite to the merciful and gentle creed of Him whom they called their Lord and Master, and whose blessed example they professed to imitate and make the rule of their lives and actions. A sort of "antagonism" had thus unavoidably sprung up between Mrs. Stainer and her step-daughter; and the colonel, taking part with his wife, left the poor girl no other alternative than a sullen and silent dissent from their opinions, and a fixed determination never to bestow her hand on any man, but the one who, she considered, had been unjustly dismissed from her presence, and treated with a contempt which he did not deserve.

In spite of the prohibition, the lovers had contrived to meet, and, as might have been expected, had renewed their vows and protestations of eternal fidelity.

But as the rock, in time, is worn by the constant action of the wintry torrent until it cuts itself a channel through the solid stone, the oft-repeated lectures, long prayers, and severe denouncements of her parents began to operate, in spite of herself, upon the mind of Charlotte Stainer. She began to suspect that all was not right with her—that it was sinful to resist the commands of those whom God had placed in authority over her—that however her affections were, being at variance with their precepts, they must be right, and she must be wrong. A deep melancholy took possession of her mind. In the solitude of her own chamber she spent hours upon her knees. Her tears flowed continually, her appetite forsook her, sleep departed from her pillow, and she was but the shadow of herself.

While her parents hailed this lamentable state of non-resistance, as a sure token of their daughter's conversion, strangers gazed upon her with pity, and concluded that the young, drooping, tear-eyed being before them, was slowly sinking into the grave, a bruised and broken reed, that had bowed before the force of the gale. Things were in this state when Mrs. Stainer's visit to Dunwich seemed to recall the wandering mind of Charlotte back to the things of earth. The happy smiling countenance of Mildred Rosier was such a contrast to the sad, melancholy faces, which she saw daily around her, that it broke like a gleam of sunshine through the dark clouds of despondency which had gathered over her heart. Forbidden to mention the name of one whom she had been taught to love from childhood, and whom she still held dearer than aught in this world of woe, she hailed in Mildred Rosier a friend whom she might love without sin—into whose affectionate bosom she could pour out all her griefs; and receive in return those tender demonstrations of regard and sympathy for which she had so long pined in vain.

"Shall you send the carriage for Mrs. and Miss Rosier today, ma'am?" she asked of her step-mother, in a tremulous voice, as they sat together at work a few days after their return from the ruined city.

"Certainly," was Mrs. Stainer's reply. "It is a duty incumbent upon us to do all we can to promote the best interests of these strangers, and advance as far as we are able our Master's Kingdom. Nature has done much for the daughter; but I fear she is entirely ignorant of the power of religion. You, Charlotte, may do much to persuade her to renounce her present errors."

"I am a bad teacher," sighed Charlotte; "instead of my being the instructor, I need myself to be instructed. Miss Rosier appears happy at present. Surely where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

"Oh, Charlotte! Charlotte! how much of the world was in that speech!—how little of vital godliness exists in your heart! Are you ever to be told that friendship with the world is enmity to God. Yet you prefer the heathen state of this poor blinded girl to the glorious light of Gospel truth."

"Oh! that that light would indeed dawn upon my soul!" said Charlotte, mournfully. "All is dark, dark as Egyptian night! My soul cleaves to the dust; and those appear to me the most enviable who are ignorant, as I was a year ago, of the weakness and wickedness of their own fallen nature."

"Until you are brought to this state, Charlotte, your conversion is utterly hopeless. While you