

been little trouble even on the score of religion. The boys, as a matter of course, "went with their father," as the phrase goes, while the girls were being brought up Catholics. For Alice was free as air in the way of practising her religion. George Barrington was one of the very large class of Protestants who believe that all religions are good, and that Catholics are about as good as any others, except in the matter of social position, in which they were certainly not up to the mark, and never would be, he supposed—the true reason, after all, why George insisted on his sons, at least, being Protestants. For the rest, he opined, Catholics were not half so bad as they were represented, and Alice and he had got along as well as most married couples.

But George Barrington, being mortal, died one day quite unexpectedly just when the tide of his affairs had led him on to fortune and his prospects were at their brightest. His family, therefore, were well provided for, and his widow spared the torturing anxiety attendant on straitened circumstances when a certain position has to be kept up. His mother and sisters, who lived in a town several miles distant, were most kind to Alice and her children; all the more so, probably, because they wanted nothing from them. Sharing the widow's grief for the dear departed one, their companionship was most consoling to her and her children, and it was with real sorrow she saw them depart for their distant home after a stay of several weeks. It is true they were not of her own faith, very far from it, and all the comfort they could give was merely human. They were narrower in their views than the lamented George had been, and were, indeed, what is called "earnest Christians,"—leaders at prayer-meeting and other religious gatherings, teachers in Sunday-School, and painfully strict in the matter of Sabbath observance. But they were soft-spoken and sympathetic,