

had to sleep in that room another night, I should go mad!"

He came and sat by my side.

"My dear child," he said gravely, "you can't do that—for our sakes."

"But I must—I must indeed!" I cried piteously. "You don't know, you can't tell what I suffered when I felt her arm creeping up to my throat, and thought I was going to be killed—I did indeed! And then I thought the stuff on the handkerchief was poison. She says it is only something to make you sleep. Is it true, Mr. Rayner? Here is the handkerchief." And I pulled it from my pocket and gave it to him.

"Quite true," said he; but I saw him frown. "It is chloroform, which she got out of my medicine-chest; I missed the bottle this morning. No, that wouldn't have hurt you child; I don't suppose for a moment she meant to hurt you. But it was a cruel trick, all the same. Do you know?"—and he looked at me searchingly—"what she did it for?"

"Oh, yes, she told me! She wanted to get a letter—from a— a friend, which I wore round my neck." I felt myself blushing violently, knowing from what I had overheard Sarah say to him on the previous night that he knew all about that foolish pendant. "She wanted to read it, and she couldn't get it without stupefying me, because I was holding it. But I have forgiven her, and promised I would ask you to let her stay. I told her it wouldn't matter what I said; but she made me promise."

"And what made you think what you said wouldn't matter?" asked he gently.

"There is no reason why it should," said I. "But I couldn't have promised to ask you to let her stay if I had not been going away myself. Mr. Rayner, you must let me go."

"I will let you go if you wish it, though healders would seem more like a tomb than ever without you, child, now, that we have got used to seeing your pretty little face and hearing your sweet little voice about the place," said he sadly, almost tenderly; and the tears came to my eyes. "But you cannot go to-day. Think what people would say of us if it got rumoured about that our child's governess was so cruelly treated under our roof that she went away without a day's warning; for every one counts upon you at the school-treat, and I believe that our young friend Laurence—don't blush, child—would go off his head, and accuse us of murdering you outright, if he were to hear you were gone. And you would find it difficult, believe me, child, to get another situation, if you left your first so quickly, no matter for what reason. No; you shall have a different room, or Jane shall sleep in your room for a week or so, until your very natural nervousness has gone off; and then, if, at the end of the three months, you still wish to go, why, we won't keep you, child, though I think some of us will never get over it if you leave us too suddenly."

He spoke so sweetly, so kindly, and yet with such authority of superior wisdom, that I had to give way. Then, bound by my promise, I had even to ask again that Sarah should stay, and he agreed that she should at once; and then I, not at all elated at the success of my intercession, begged him to let Jane do as much as possible for me just at first.

But later in the day it was not pleasant to see Sarah's acid smile as she said, when she heard I was going to stay—

"I told you, miss."

And when I said to her, "I kept my promise, and asked Mr. Rayner for you to stay, Sarah," she answered, "Then I am to stay, of course, miss!" in the same tone. And I was reluctantly obliged to admit that she was.

And, as I looked at her face, which could never seem to me again to look anything but evil, a sudden horror seized me at the thought that I had pledged myself to stay for five whole weeks more in the same house with this woman.

CHAPTER XIV.

I took advantage of the rest of my day's holiday to work very hard at the text I was doing for the church. I thought that Mr. Reade might call for it that day, but he did not. And the next day, which was Thursday, I finished it and rolled it up in paper ready for sending away; but still he did not come to fetch it. Haides and I did not go out far that morning—a long walk tires her now; but in the afternoon, when lesson

were over, I sauntered out into the garden, with a book in my hand, and went to my "nest," which I had neglected to visit on the day before—a most unusual occurrence; but Mr. Rayner had forbidden me to go outside the house on that day, as I was rather feverish from the effects of the preceding night's excitement.

I found Mona sitting among the reeds close to the pond, not far from my "nest," crooning to herself and playing with some sticks and bits of paper. At sight of me she slid along the bank and let herself down into the mud below, as if to hide from me. When the child suddenly disappeared from my sight like that, I felt frightened lest she should fall into the water, or sink into the soft slime at the edge which she had chosen to retire into, and not be able to climb the slippery bank again. So I walked daintily through the reedy swamp which was her favorite haunt, and looked over the bank. She was busily hurrying in the mud, with the help of two little sticks the bits of paper she had been playing with; and, when I bent down to speak to her, she threw herself upon her back, with her head almost in the water, and began to scream and kick. This uncalculated demonstration made me think that she knew she was in mischief; and, leaving her for a moment to enjoy herself in her own way, I stooped and picked up one or two of the pieces of paper which formed her toys. There was writing on them in a hand I knew, and I had not made out a dozen words before I was sure that Mona had somehow got hold of a note from Mr. Laurence Reade to me.

Down I jumped in a moment, caring no more for the mud, into which I sank to my ankles, than Mona herself. I dug up the bits she had buried, and took from her very gently those she was still clutching, though my fingers tingled to slap her. I hope it was not revenge that made me carry her indoors to be washed. Then I searched the ground where I had found her, and discovered more little bits, and under the seat of my "nest" a torn envelope addressed to "Miss Christie." I ran in, and up to my room, with my mangled treasure, carefully cleaned the fragments, and, after much labor, at last fitted them into a pretty coherent whole. The note ran, as well as I could make out—

"Dear Miss Christie,—I am so anxious about you that I must write. Is it true that—here there was a piece missing—"an accident, that you are ill, hurt? If you are safe and well, you will pass the park to-morrow, that I may see you and know that you"—another piece missing. "I shall put this on the seat near the pond, where I know you go every evening."

Yours very sincerely,

"LAURENCE READE."

It was dated "Wednesday," and this was Thursday afternoon; so that it was this morning's walk that he had meant. Oh if I had only come out here last night and found the letter! I would go past the park to-morrow; but perhaps it would be too late, and he would not expect me then—he would think I was too ill to come out.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

How Astor Became Rich.

A late writer, speaking of the late John Jacob Astor, thus speaks of the mode by which he acquired his great wealth: "It was neither furs nor teas that gave him his \$20,000,000. When he arrived in New York it contained only 25,000 inhabitants. In 1809, when he began to have money to invest, the city had begun to double in population, and had advanced nearly a mile up the island. Astor foresaw the future growth, and bought all the land, and lots just beyond, on the verge of the city, that he could get. One little anecdote will show the wisdom of this proceeding. He sold a lot in the vicinity of Wall street, in 1810, for \$8,000, which was supposed to be somewhat under its value. The purchaser, after the papers were signed, seemed to chuckle over his bargain. 'Why, Mr. Astor, said he, 'this lot will be worth \$12,000.' 'Very true,' said Mr. Astor, 'but now you shall see what I will do with this money. With eight thousand dollars I will buy eighty lots above Canal street. By the time your lot is worth \$12,000 my eighty lots will be worth \$80,000—which proved to be the fact. In the course of time the island was dotted all over with Astor lands, to such an extent that the whole income from his estate for fifty years could be invested in new houses, without buying any more land."

Earthquake Phenomena.

The causes of earthquakes have long been the subject of many conjectures. The numerous investigations of later years have contributed much to define their characters; and several data recently acquired tend further to make their mechanism clear. It is known that the shocks are by no means distributed at haphazard over the surface of the globe. The countries where the strata have preserved their original horizontal position, like the north of France, a part of Belgium, and the west of Russia, are privileged with tranquillity. Violent commotions are manifested, particularly in regions that have suffered considerable mechanical accidents, and have acquired their last relief at a recent epoch, like the region of the Alps, Italy, and Sicily.

The tracts that are simultaneously disturbed by the same shock most frequently comprise areas of from 5 to 15 degrees, or from 300 to 1,500 kilometers. They rarely include a much more considerable fraction of the globe; although the celebrated earthquake at Lisbon on the 1st of November, 1755, extended over some 17 or 18 degrees into Africa and the two Americas, or over a surface equal to about four times that of Europe.

The detailed examination of many earthquakes has enabled us to determine the centre of the shocks as well as the contours of the disturbed areas. From the manner in which the latter surfaces agree with the lines of pre-existing dislocations, several of the most distinguished geologists, including Mr. Dana, M. Suess, and Albert Heim, have considered the shocks in question as connected with the formation of chains of mountains, of which they may be a kind of continuation.

In fact the crust of the earth everywhere shows the enormous effects exercised by the lateral pressures that have been in operation at all epochs. The strata, bent over and over again many times through thousands of metres of thickness, as well as the great fractures that traverse them, are the eloquent witnesses of these mechanical actions. Notwithstanding the apparent tranquillity now reigning on the surface of the globe, equilibrium does not exist in the earth, and commotions have not been arrested in its depths. The proof of this is found, not only in earthquakes, but also in the slow movements of the soil, of elevation and depression—a kind of warping, which has continued to manifest itself within historical times in all parts of the globe.—*Popular Science Monthly for February.*

A Sketch in the Congo.

The chief here, at this village of Embe, had a most unusual crop of hair. The Bayansi are indeed remarkable for the abundance and glossiness of their "chevelure." In the next village (the eastern bank of the river has become a continuous series of hamlets) I saw a woman with an even more magnificent head of hair. Her locks were combed out in a sort of "aureole" round her well-shaped head. The race of the Bayansi, and indeed all other highly-developed types of Bantu peoples, remind me so much, with their high-bridged noses and bushy hair, of the Papuans, as one may judge of them from the descriptions and photographs of Wallace and other travellers. The banks on the Congo are here, and for some distance further back, strewn with great masses of rock, seemingly of igneous origin. Interspersed among these craggy blocks are patches of silvery sand, and the natives run along the bank, jumping from rock to rock to try and keep up with the boat. Some of them, generally women carrying babies, will get far ahead and station themselves on some little promontory, thence hailing our approach with deafening screams and laughter. The villages are very prettily situated amid majestic groves of oil palms and bright-green bananas, with a background of deep purple forest. The neatly-made houses, often quite yellow in color from the sun-burnt grass of which they are constructed, overhang the river on the edge of a slight plateau, and form a pretty contrast against the dark green vegetation. Numbers of gray parrots are here, and they seem to rather seek than avoid the society of man, for in every village they flock to the oil palms, where they squawk and whistle all day long.

Now the Congo begins to open out into truly splendid breadth. Right before us is a clear horizon of water and sky broken only by one wooded islet that stands right in the middle of the stream. The river is as

broad as broader here than Stanley Pool at its greatest breadth. A traveller viewing the Congo from this direction, and knowing nothing of what was before him, might well believe he was entering upon some great lake or inland sea.

The Reminiscences of a War Correspondent.

I have seen Napoleon III. at the pinnacle of his hollow splendor. From the German piquet line on the 2nd August, 1870, I heard the distant cheering on the Spicherenberg that greeted him and the lad whom he had brought from Metz to receive that day his "baptism of fire." Again I saw him on the morning after Sedan, as the broken man—broken in power, in prestige, in health, in spirits—sat with Bismarck on the grass plot in front of the weaver's cottage on the Donchery road. Next morning I witnessed his departure into his Wilhelmshöhe captivity. I have seen him doddling about Brighton and strolling under the beech trees that encircle Chislehurst Common. And for the last time of all I saw that stolid, careworn face, as it lay on the raised pillow of the bier in the broad corridor of Camden Place; and when the face was no more visible I witnessed the coffin laid down in the little chapel among the Chislehurst elm trees. I knew the boy of the Empire when the shackles of the Empire had fallen from his limbs, and he was no longer a buxram creature, but a lively, natural lad. My acquaintance endured into his manhood. When the twilight was falling on the rolling veldt of Zululand, and his day's work in the staff tent was done, he liked, as it seemed to me, to gossip with one who knew the other side of the picture, about the early days of the French-German war—a war that had wrought at once his ruin and his emancipation. And finally, poor, gallant lad I saw dimly through tears the very last of him, as he lay there dead on the blood-stained sward by the Ityotyosi River, with a calm, proud smile on his face, and his body pierced by countless assegai stabs. Men have called his death ignoble. Petty as was the quarrel, wretched as was the desertion that wrought his fate, I call him rather happy in the opportunity of his death. Had he lived what of artificiality, what of hollow unrealism, might there not have been in store for him! As it was, he had moved in the world a live ghost. Better than this, surely, to be a dead hero—to end the Napoleonic comedy with his young face gallantly to his assailants, and his life-blood drawn by the cold steel!—*Archibald Forbes, in the English Illustrated Magazine.*

New Chinese War Ships.

A Berlin telegram to the London Times says: Another ironclad corvette, built for the Chinese government, has just been launched at Kiel, though with less pomp and circumstance than attended the baptism of its sister vessels at Stettin. The new war ship, which is the second of the kind that has been built at Kiel (three, I think, have been constructed at Stettin), rejoices in the name of the Nan Shuin, or "Blessing of the South," as its twin sister from the same stocks is called the Nan Thin, or "Ornament of the South." Its water-line length is 77 meters (total ditto being 84), its greatest breadth 11.5 meters, depth of hold 7.125, displacement 2,200 tons, and draught 5.5 meters.

The ship in all its parts has been made of German steel, according to the rules of the German Lloyd's, rigged as a bark, and armed with two Armstrong guns of 21 centimeter, and eight of 12 centimeter calibre. It is also provided with several mitrailleuses to ward off torpedo-boats, while on deck it carries eight boats, including one torpedo-boat and two launches driven by two horizontal compound engines. It has an indicated horse-power of 2,400, and is expected to make from 14½ to 16 knots. Both the Blessing and the Ornament of the South must be completely ready by the middle of March, though what is to be done with them and their Stettin sisters, after that heaven only knows. By some it is shrewdly suspected that in the matter of ironclads the Chinese government is like the hale old lady who had an insuperable weakness for bargains of all kinds, and could not resist the purchase of a wooden leg if she got it cheap.

Even genius itself is but fine observation strengthened by fixity of purpose.