

was intensely painful to me, and already I bitterly regretted the ill-considered act that had brought it about. Greater sorrow was, however, in store for me. Henry, my eldest son, was carried off by a sudden and violent illness contracted whilst out shooting over the moors, and as he left no children, Neville became the sole direct heir. Then, for the first time since months past, I spoke of the necessity of his marrying and perpetuating his ancient name and race. Firmly but determinedly he answered, "This subject you will oblige me, mother, by avoiding now and henceforth, for no representations or prayers will move me. In all probability I will never marry, at least not unless I meet some woman who can teach me to forget the past."

How severely was I punished! If, as a younger son, he could have married well, how much greater were his chances now, heir to one of the finest estates in the county; but my lips were sealed, and I was doomed to the mortification of seeing advances that secretly filled me with exultation repulsed or completely ignored by the hero of my object. Then came news from abroad. Gertrude Ellis had died in Switzerland of rapid decline, the result of a neglected cold. She had always seemed dull and low-spirited since leaving England, added the writer who communicated the intelligence to Mrs. Crosswell, and had shown no interest in sight-seeing and scenery that would have been so natural to her. For a day and night after the receipt of this news, Neville, who happened to be at Atherton Park at the moment, shut himself up in his room and saw not a soul. Then he briefly informed me he had determined on exchanging into a regiment under immediate orders for India, and would start as soon as possible. A day or two in London would be long enough to procure his outfit.

"Ah, when that brief announcement fell on my ear, an anguished cry went up to Heaven from my tortured heart, asking inwardly was not my punishment greater than my offence; but there was that in my son's determined, grief-stricken face, indicating the dryer or remorse would prove alike vain.

"More than ten years did he dwell in that terrible country, passing through jungle and malaria fever, cholera, and the fatal yellow fever, which decimated our troops so frightfully for a time, writing home at regular intervals, affectionately enough, though without a shadow of the loving familiarity and frank confidence of olden days.

"Then came a break in the correspondence, a long, long silence, followed by a letter announcing that he had been ill to death, and was recommended his natural air by physicians as his only chance of recovery. You may judge how this news moved me; I, who had lived since his departure in the most perfect seclusion, sorrowing with a bitterness that knew no softening nor alleviation. It was at the time of his departure I had added the costly toilets I used to wear, and allowed the sceptre of my household sovereignty to pass into the hands of Mrs. Fennel, who has retained it ever since.

"Neville arrived, with shattered health, prostrated spirits; but what cannot a mother's devotion accomplish? A joy, a luxury it was to me to spend days and nights by his sick bed, watching, tending him with a love whose intensity almost terrified myself. Finally he rallied. Then, one quiet afternoon, when I was sitting beside him, his thin and shadowy hand clasped in mine, he spoke of the long-expected past. With tears of anguish and remorse I recounted all, and tenderly he whispered:

"Dearest mother, what error would not have been blotted out by the loving care and solicitude with which you have surrounded my bed of sickness! The past is forgotten, and we will ignore it as completely as we have heretofore done. I have only one request to make. It is that you will never mention marriage, or impatience me in any manner on the subject."

"The prohibition was a painful one, for my anxiety to see him settled in life was stronger than ever, now that domestic happiness and repose were so necessary to him; whilst I was growing perceptibly weaker day by day. Unhesitatingly, however, I promised compliance in the faintest accents of that disappointment in the perfect affection and confidence that henceforth related between us. Yes, Neville loves me now as he did in the long past days of his boyhood, before his earnest, fervent nature had known another love. Yet oh! how I mourn in secret, and how I grieve when I picture to myself the loneliness of this old place when I shall have been laid to rest, and he will drag on the weary tenor of a desolate, aimless life. You can understand now, Miss Tremaine, why I long so eagerly that your sister should be found, for hope tells me that she has excited a deeper interest in my heart than any woman has ever done since Gertrude Ellis reigned there supreme. I remember well the afternoon on which he entered the house with a brighter, more interested look than I had seen him wear for many a long day, and asked me if I knew a family of the name of Tremaine. Of course, I answered in the affirmative, informing him that there existed a distant relationship between ourselves and them, though social intercourse between the families had almost ceased some time previous to the death of Mrs. Tremaine. After that event, Mr. Tremaine had gone on the Continent and resided there for several years, but since his return had lived in the strictest seclusion. I had also to add, my dear Margaret, that the presence of the odious woman who ruled so tyrannically in Tremaine Court rendered it impossible for what make any attempt at friendship with the daughters of the house, who we knew had attained the age of womanhood.

"He listened attentively to all I had to tell, much of which had been retailed to me by Mrs. Fennel in her gossiping moods, and then recounted how, and under what circumstances, he had made the acquaintance of your sister Lillian, drawing a charming picture of her perfect beauty, and of her rarely fascinating manners and converse. Later, he asked me to call at Tremaine Court, which I willingly did, but we could not obtain admittance. Then, when we heard of Mr. Tremaine's decease, I wrote you the letter which has procured me the happiness, my dearest Margaret, of having you with me, a happiness, I hope, which may long be mine. You will not be forced to such a thing, however, by anything like necessity, for our family lawyer, taking your permission for such a step as granted, gives hope that you will soon be mistress of an income that will render you perfectly independent of friend or relative. The property left by your grandmother, Mrs. O'Mallonee, to your poor mother, though in a wretched condition, owing to long years of neglect and mismanagement, will in the end prove valuable. Meantime, you will permit me to be your cashier, as you will soon be able to reimburse me."

Margaret softly expressed her thanks, as well as her satisfaction at the brighter prospects opening before her, adding a pleasant promise that her sister, who had shared her day's probation and suffering, might soon be permitted to participate in the sunshine that had so suddenly illumined her path.

"Yes, my Margaret, let us pray that it may

be so, for if she is a sister to you, she would be as a daughter to me. Ah! how joyfully would I welcome her to this old pile as its mistress, blessing, reverencing her as the precious link that would bind my hollowed soul again to life and happiness. And now, my dear young friend, that I have recounted to you this long episode in my life with its past sorrows and present hopes, I will send you to rest, for you have a journey before you to-morrow that will require all your strength."

CHAPTER XVIII.  
AN EVENTFUL NIGHT AT TREMAINE COURT.

The following morning set in with a down-pour of rain so heavy and steady that Mrs. Atherton determinedly negated the idea of Margaret's intended journey, at least for that day, much to the girl's chagrin, as well as that of Colonel Atherton, who secretly chafed at every obstacle that retarded a search in which his heart was so deeply interested.

In the afternoon, however, the watery clouds cleared off, and were replaced by sunshine. Mrs. Atherton no longer opposed her young guest's departure; and as the latter stepped into the phaeton, in which the Colonel had already placed cloak and shawl to guard against a possible return of the rain, earnest though silent prayers went up from all hearts for her success.

The early part of the drive passed unobtrusively enough, but later, dark clouds commenced to gather on the far-off horizon, and just as the carriage turned into the narrow, ill-kept road that led past Tremaine Court, a loud peal of thunder broke suddenly over their heads. Another and another clap followed in quick succession, accompanied by blinding flashes of lightning.

The high mettled horses commenced to plunge and rear with violence, and despite the skilful handling of the coachman, swerved to the side of the road with such force that the carriage came in contact with the trunk of a large tree, injuring the axle. The man sprang out, and while he tightly held the terrified animals by the bridles, Margaret, pale and trembling, succeeded in alighting.

"You had best step into Tremaine Court, Miss," he respectfully suggested. "The damage is considerable, and it will take time to set all things right again."

"I had rather not stop there, Watkins, but proceed on foot, if possible."

"Out of the question, Miss! You couldn't walk so far. This settles the matter," he added, as the dark clouds that now covered the whole sky suddenly poured down their contents. "Indeed, Miss, not only you must seek shelter yonder, but myself and the cattle, too; for Colonel Atherton's awful perticker about his horses and he'd be making them stand for hours under a pelting storm like this. Please walk on quick, Miss, or you'll be soaked through; and I'll follow on as soon as I get the carriage shoved under shelter of them beeches, and the apron up."

Nothing but urgent necessity could have induced Margaret to re-enter her early home whilst Mrs. Stukely was still its inmate, especially as she had heard of Christopher Stukely's return, and with steps whose tardiness even the pitiless pelting of the storm could not induce her to hasten, she proceeded up the weed-grown, neglected avenue leading to the house.

The housekeeper opened the door in person, and the icy coldness with which she received her visitor was far from encouraging. Margaret found it necessary to sustain her courage through the ordeal by mentally repeating more than once that she was in reality owner and mistress of Tremaine Court, and that the woman who listened with such repellent frigidity to her gently worded request for shelter till the storm passed over remained in it only on sufferance.

"You'll have to step down to the kitchen to dry yourself," she ungraciously remarked. "There's no fire elsewhere."

Margaret thanked her and took her way thither, followed by her unwilling hostess.

"That wet dress must come off you. Here, put on this morning gown of mine," and she took a calico dress from a recess and handed it to her.

Margaret hesitated and glanced uneasily around. "Mr. Stukely might come in," she at length said.

"With a dark frown the woman replied: "You need not fear that. He lives principally at the Prince's Feather, as is well known to every one in Brompton."

Thus reassured, the guest changed her outer garments and spread them to dry before the fire, whilst her companion, becoming gradually more reconciled to the position of things, and remembering that on the whole it was more prudent to prophitiate, at least to a certain degree, her guest, proceeded after a while to prepare a cup of tea for the latter.

The coachman soon arrived, bearing Margaret's shawl, which was also extended to dry, and with a stern grimace of aspect that impressed the sturdy retainer with secret consternation, Mrs. Stukely indicated to him from the door-step the part of the stables which still remained inhabitable.

After Margaret, with many apologies for the trouble she was giving her, had partaken of the light refreshment set before her, she rose and went to the window; but any hopes of speedy departure that she might have entertained were put to flight by sight of the torrents of rain that still poured down from a sky of leaden gloom.

"It does not look like changing to fair," was Mrs. Stukely's remark. "You had better step into the sitting-room, as that loutish servant will probably be wanting to dry himself in here," and the speaker looked as much aggrieved as if a caravan of travellers had suddenly thrust themselves upon her hospitality.

Silently the young girl obeyed, and as she sat down on the old dingy couch, co-oval with her earliest recollections of life, and looked around at objects familiar to her for so many long years, memories of the past thronged thickly upon her, dim, far-off reminiscences of a time when the curtains were less faded, the furniture less dingy and time-worn, and when a fair young mother had occupied the high-backed easy chair between the windows; and she, a lisping child, had sat on a low footstool at her feet. There came memories far less pleasant; recollections of a gloomy childhood; her father's unloving severity, Mrs. Stukely's tyranny, and, cruellest thought of all, that of the unaccountable disappearance of that beloved companion, of her few pleasures and many sorrows, her beautiful sister.

Deeply pre-occupied, she scarcely noted time's flight, and when the housekeeper entered the room later, abruptly exclaiming: "Provoking, horrible weather!" she became conscious for the first time that twilight shadows were mingling with the gloom caused by the still heavily falling rain.

"I suppose you'll have to pass the night here?" exclaimed the maid, the aggrieved look on her face intensified.

"I fear I will," replied Margaret, with unconscious frankness. "I am sorry to give you so much trouble."

"The trouble will not be much. Your bedroom is still as you left it, but I cannot promise you anything of the sumptuous fare and well-trained attendance to which you must have

become accustomed since your residence in Atherton Park."

Margaret would not notice the sneer implied in this speech, and merely answered that at Atherton Park, as in Tremaine Court, she waited on herself.

Mrs. Stukely then brought in lights, together with a tray containing a cup of the weakest possible tea and a plate of stale bread and butter.

That astute diplomatist had no intention of inducing her guest to prolong her stay, or renew her visit by providing her with superfluously dainty fare. Margaret did her best, however, to partake of the meagre meal placed before her, and then pleading a headache—no imaginary ailment, for that feeble frame suffered from every vicissitude of weather or from any unusual fatigue, however slight—begged leave to retire at once to her room. First, however, she hazarded an inquiry as to the fate of the coachman, and learned that supper had been given him in the kitchen, but that he had been informed his chances of a night's rest lay between sleeping in clean straw in the hay-loft, or returning through rain and mire to Atherton Park, as there were no spare beds in Tremaine Court.

"And what did he say?" interrogated Margaret, fearing that the horses so much prized by Colonel Atherton might, in consequence of the scant ceremony shown their ordinary protector, be deprived, at least for that night, of his valuable services.

"Just nothing. He stared at me like an owl for a full minute without winking, and then left the kitchen, having scarcely eaten a morsel."

Margaret, thinking Watkins would by this time have ceased to wonder at her unwillingness to test the hospitality of Tremaine Court, wished her hostess good night and retired.

How heavy her heart felt as she entered that room, shrouded for so many years with her absent sister, and filled so often with her gay, joyous smile and the sunshine of her girlish delight. "Pleading the candlestick on the table, she looked around, whilst large tears silently coursed down her cheeks. Everything was unaltered, and everything she spoke eloquently of the absent Lillian. The dainty baskets made of moss and the cones of the pine-trees, by her skilful fingers, the ferns she had transplanted and tended, drooping now, it is true, but not sufficiently withered yet to be unsightly; her books, writing and sewing implements.

How inexpressibly gloomy was that large, empty house, with its echoing passages and hollow sounding floors, its darkness and stillness, peopled by thoughts and shadows of the dead or those that were as such.

Drip, drip, pattered the rain, beating against the casements outside, whilst over and anon the branches of the oak growing on the terrace beneath struck against the panes, rustling, tapping in a strange mysterious manner, that seemed almost like a human entreaty for admittance.

Margaret felt there would be little sleep for her that night, for her delicate nervous organization had been strained to an unusual degree and her head was aching with painful intensity.

As her glance rested on her bed rarely turned down for use, an unaccountable feeling of aversion took possession of her, and she resolved to rest, for awhile at least, in a low chair beside the window. Hour after hour passed on, bringing no sounds save the pushing of the rain, the whining of the wind, the restless murmuring of the trees, and finally, mid that many voiced dirge, she fell asleep. Then it seemed to her that her father, in the ghastly habiliments of the grave, stood before her, and whispering: "Come with me to Lillian," laid on her hand his own, which was cold with the marble coldness of the grave. Uttering a faint cry she awoke. But what was this? The ice-chill grasp still lay on hers, chilling the very marrow in her bones with fear. The candle was flickering in the socket, and it suddenly emitted a bright flash, revealing that she was perfectly alone, and that one of the hands, whose cramped position had arrested the circulation of the blood, lay across the other, thus giving rise to her painful dream.

Her heart still tumultuously throbbing, she rose to her feet as her candle gave its last flash, and looked from the window. The rain had ceased, and the moon, wading through masses of watery clouds, shone forth ever and anon with a faint, glimmering light, most welcome to the pale, fragile girl, that stood there alone in that dark room, trembling with cold and nervous agitation.

"Thank God!" she whispered, "for that blessed light!"

How little she foresaw that a few hours later she would repeat that exclamation of thanksgiving with far greater cause and fervor. Then as her thoughts reverted to her late dream, she passionately exclaimed:

"Oh, would to heaven, father, that you would come and lead me to my sister! Even though flesh and blood should quail, even though I should die with terror in the attempt, still would I follow. Lillian, my darling, where are you to-night?"

Again the hot tears gushed forth, and shuddering as the cold, damp air, penetrating through the ill-fitting window, struck upon her frame, she drew her shawl more closely around her, and removed her chair to some distance from the enlacement.

Suddenly a bright line of light showed itself beneath the door, ill-fitting like the window. Opening it only a sufficient width to permit of her glancing through the aperture. The sight that met her gaze was strange and alarming enough.

(To be continued.)

WEARY OF LIFE.  
BY ANNIE KEELY.

(One of the claimants to the authorship of "Beautiful Snow.")

"I am become miserable, and bowed down even to the end; I go sorrowful all the day long."—Psalms iii: v. 6.

Weary of life and weary of sin,  
The ceaseless strife and worldly din,  
Struggling ever to get a part,  
Veiling my soul and shrouding my heart,  
Lifting the world and longing to be  
Alone, at rest, untrammelled and free,  
Struggling ever in endless strife—  
Father in Heaven, I'm weary of life.

Weary of life that once was fair,  
That precious gem, that jewel rare;  
Life, with its changing sunny hours,  
Its golden smiles and wealth of flowers;  
Life of y. infant, childish years,  
With its rippling smiles and sparkling tears;  
Years that knew naught of anger and strife—  
Father in Heaven, I'm weary of life.

Weary of life that once was so bright,  
With its rainbow hues of dazzling light,  
The light of my girlhood's early days,  
With the gorgeous glare of its noon-day blaze,  
Ah! deeming my life but one endless day,  
Nor counting the hours that passed away,  
Hours with joy and pleasure once rife—  
Yet, Father in Heaven, I'm weary of life.

Weary of life, its sin and its crime,  
Its poisoned breath and its noxious fume,  
Oh, sin! oh, crime! how bitter to taste  
The tempting fruit of the desert waste!  
That fruit so fair and bright to the eye  
On the lips will fade, and in ashes die,  
Filling the heart with woe and strife.  
Till, Father in Heaven, we weary of life.

Weary of life that has grown so dark,  
Pining away in this prisoned ark,  
Weary, dear Lord, as the captive dove,  
Longing to soar to the light above,  
Seeking some spot where my feet may rest  
From the deluge of sin in the human breast,  
Battling ever in ceaseless strife—  
Father in Heaven, I'm weary of life.

Weary of life, shall one so lost,  
So tempest-driven, so wildly tossed,  
Dare to weep as a Magdalen wept,  
When in lowly sorrow, a sinner she crept,  
And knelt at Thy feet, in tears and sighs,  
And sought but a glance from Thy sacred eyes,  
The glance that dispelled all sin and strife,  
When her heart was weary and sick of life.

Weary of life, but oh! in Thy love  
I look for a truer life above,  
That life that takes not our passes away,  
The dawn of sin of eternal day,  
The morning that breaks o'er the tempest wave,  
And shines through the gloom of the yawning  
grave,  
Cheering us on through woe and strife,  
With the lasting joys of a brighter life.

Weary of life, and weary of sin,  
This worldly strife and worldly din,  
Looking in hope for the promised land,  
Watching the veil on its golden strand,  
Watching that veil so misty and bright,  
Shrouding its shores from my yearning sight,  
Watching the land that shall send it away,  
Giving me life and endless day.  
—Morning Star. New Orleans.

them and share the pleasures of the day. They could be no pleasures to him. That was out of the question. But he would go among the noise and riot, and eating and drinking, and hold his own with the merriest, and let the world see that he was Dick Redmayne still, as good a man as he had been six years ago, before he sailed across the world to redeem his fortune.

Strange how lonely the house seemed to him that summer day, when Mrs. Bush and her Goodman had shut the door behind them, after much scolding to and fro and up and down at the last moment, in quest of forgotten trifles. It was not that he had ever affected Mrs. Bush's company, or that he had ever found her anything but an unmitigated bore. Yet no sooner was she departed than he sorely missed the clatter of her pattens, the cloop of her pails, the noise of her industrious broom sweeping assiduously in passages where there had been no footsteps to carry dirt. Dreary and empty beyond all measure seemed the old homestead, which had once been so blithe. He went in and out of the rooms, without purpose, into that lumber-ol of re-petability the b st parlour, where not so much as the position of a chair had been altered since his wedding day; where the ointz covers, which had been faded when he peered into the mystic chamber wondering, a baby in his mother's arms, were only a little paler and more feeble of tint to-day. Nothing could wear out in a room so seldom tenanted; it could only moulder imperceptibly with a gradual decay, like furniture in the scaled houses of some Jan-a-burist city.

To-day the pale presence of the dead, whereby these rooms were always more or less haunted, smote him with a keener anguish than he could bear. The empty house was insupportable with that ghostly company.

"And yet, if she could take a palpable form and come back and smile upon me, God knows that I would welcome her fondly, even though I knew she were dead. Why cannot our dead come back to us sometimes, if only for one sweet solemn hour? Is God so hard that He will not lend them to us? O, Gracey, to have you with me for ever so brief a span, to hear from your own lips that heaven is fair and you are happy among the angels, to tell you how I have missed you! But there only comes the dull shadow, the dreary thought; to dear face, no gentle loving eyes."

Many and many a time he had sat in the sunshine, in the moonlight, lost in a waking dream, and wondering if Heaven would ever vouchsafe him a vision, such as men saw of old, when angelic creatures and the spirits of the dead seemed nearer this earth than they are to-day. Many a time he had wished that the impalpable air would thicken and shape itself into the form he loved; but the vision never came. The rooms were haunted, but it was with bitter thoughts of the past; his sleep was broken, but only with confused patches of dreaming, in which the image of the beloved dead was entangled in some web of foolishness and bewilderment. Never had she appeared to him as he would have her come, serene and radiant with the radiance of a soul that wanders down from heaven to comfort an earthly mourner.

He went out into the garden and smoked a pipe under the cedar, but here too the solitude which had been the habit of his life lately seemed strangely intensified to-day. It might have been that sound of distant joy-bells, or the knowledge that all the little world within a twenty-mile radius was making merry so near him. It would be difficult to define the cause, but a sense of isolation crept into his mind. He smoked a second pipe, and drank a tumbler of spirits-and-water, that perennial restorer to which he had too frequent recourse of late; sat for an hour or more under the low-spreading branches which scarcely cleared his head when he stood upright, and then could endure this oppression of silence and loneliness as no longer, and resolved to go to the Clevedon festival.

"I needn't join their tomfoolery," he said to himself; "I can look on."

He went up to his room, and dressed himself in some of those clothes which had lain so long idle in his sea-chest. He was a handsome man even now, in spite of the gloomy look that had become his natural expression; a fine-looking man still, in spite of his bent shoulders; but he was only the wreck of that man he had been before his daughter's death: only the wreck of that man who sailed home from the distant world, fortunate and full of hope, coming back to his only child.

The dinners for the cottagers, farm-servants, gardeners, gamekeepers, and small fry of all kinds was to begin at half-past one; the dinner for the superior tenants, to which Mr. Redmayne was bidden, at three o'clock. He had plenty of time to walk to Clevedon before the banquet began, if he cared to take his place among the revellers, but he did not care about the ceremony of dining. He meant only to stroll about the park, take a distant view of rejoicings, and walk home again in the twilight. The Bushes did not expect to return till midnight, as the fireworks, which were the great feature of the entertainment, were only to begin at ten; but Richard Redmayne had no idea of staying toasters at many-coloured sky-rockets, or showers of falling stars, or catherine wheels, or roman candles.

He took the short cut to Clevedon, the path that skirted meadows and cornfields, by those tall hedgerows which had sheltered Grace and her lover in the fatal summer that was gone. Slowly and listlessly he went his way, stopping to lean against a stile and smoke a meditative pipe before his journey was half done; lingering to look at the ripened corn sometimes, with the critical eye of experience, but not with the keen interest of possession. Even if these acres had still been "in hand," it is doubtful whether he would have surveyed them with his old earnestness. The very key-stone of life's arch was gone. He had no motive for wishing to increase his store; hardly any motive for living, except that one undefined idea of a day of reckoning to come sooner or later between him and his child's destroyer.

To-day, dawdling in the sunshine, amidst that peaceful landscape, going on such a purposeless errand, hardly knowing why he went, there was surely nothing further from his thoughts than that the day of reckoning had come.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.  
"OF ALL MEN NONE I HAVE AVOIDED THEE."

Perhaps, if a man must throw his money away somehow or other, which appears to be almost

(REGISTERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COPYRIGHT ACT OF 1862.)

## TO THE BITTER END.

By Miss M. E. Braddon.

AUTHOR OF 'LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—(Continued.)

If the day had been wet, if a chill gray sky had lowered on Sir Francis Clevedon and all his preparations for a festival, if a drizzling incessant rain had foreboded the extinction of lamps and fireworks, Mr. Redmayne might have smoked his pipe by his desolate hearth in the old farmhouse kitchen, and laughed scornfully at the folly of his race, conjuring up a vision of sodden garments and disappointed faces, rain oozing slowly from the canvas roofs, the gay flag-bedecked tents transformed into gigantic shower-baths. But a misanthropic must have been of a very sour temper who could escape some touch of regret for his own lonely condition, some faint yearning for sympathy with his species, some feeble ghost-like renewal of old feelings, in such a golden noontide, and amidst so fair a landscape as that which lay around the home of Richard Redmayne. Several times had Mrs. Bush repented her remonstrances, with every variety of rustic eloquence and much amplitude of speech, but to no effect. Mr. Redmayne declared most decisively that he would have no share in that day's rejoicings.

"A pretty figure I should cut amongst a pack of fools dancing and capering," he cried contemptuously. "I should seem like a ghost come from the grave."

"Perhaps you might, if you went in that shabby old shooting-jacket as you wear Sundays and work-days, which is a disgrace to a gentleman as well to do as you are," replied the plain-spoken Mrs. Bush, who seemed to think that the inhabitants of the spirit world might suffer from a want of good clothing; "but not if you dressed yourself in some of the things you've got hoarded up in those two sea-chests of yours, or purpose for the moths, one 'ud think, to see the way you let 'em lie there."

Now, do smarten yourself up a bit, and trim your whiskers, and all that, Mr. Redmayne, and don't be the only person within twenty miles of Clevedon to hang back from going. It looks so pined. It looks almost as if you'd committed a murder, or something dreadful, and was afraid to face the light of day."

This last remark touched him a little, indifferent as he professed to be about the world's esteem. It was not of himself he thought even in this, but of that dead girl who had made his world. Was he quite true to her memory in holding himself thus utterly aloof from his kind? Might he not by that very act have given occasion for slanders, which might never have arisen but for that, or which, at any rate, might have been crushed by his putting a bold front on matters, and finding some answer for every question that could be asked about his lost girl?

"Good God!" he said to himself, strangely affected by this random shot of Mrs. Bush's, "I may have made people think that things were worse than they really were, by my conduct."

He brooded on this idea a good deal; but it was scarcely this which influenced him on Sir Francis Clevedon's birthday, when, about an hour and a half after the Bushes had departed, radiant in their Sunday clothes, and with faces varnished by the application of strong yellow soap, he suddenly made up his mind to follow