

in her power to make for their better accommodation, and though she could not furnish plenty for their board, she endeavoured to make somewhat more habitable, the little dark apartment which they were grudgingly permitted to occupy. Ascending to the attic, she drew forth from a mass of broken furniture, which the miser had not been able to turn to any account, several articles which she exerted her ingenuity to repair,—and then transported them to Mrs. Dorival's room, and so disposed them, as to impart to it an air of more cheerfulness and comfort than could have been thought possible by such means.

But Phebe in vain endeavoured to elicit some word or look of approbation, from her she sought to please. Absorbed by the misery of her desolate condition, Mrs. Dorival bestowed not a thought upon the poor old woman's efforts; or, if her attention was called to notice any improvement in the appearance of things, she regarded it only to contrast the meagreness of her present accommodations, with the luxury of those to which she had been accustomed in her early home, where every appliance which art could devise was furnished for her enjoyment, while groves of oranges and limes, filled with the glittering birds of the Indian isles, stretched far away from the airy windows at which she had loved to sit, looking beyond their verdant boundaries, to the blue ocean that heaved and sparkled in the distance. And so, day after day she sat in sad and listless inaction, looking back with weak and vain regret to the past, and forward without hope, or plan, or purpose for the future.

There were times when the scowling and morose look of the old man, and the evident reluctance with which he permitted her to share his meagre viands, moved her to the determination of going forth and seeking elsewhere for a shelter. But then the question rose, of whither could she go?—A stranger in a strange land, to whom should she apply for aid?—And how, nurtured as she had been, in luxury, could she endure the scorn and contumely of the world, and expose her infant to want and cold, more pinching, it might be, than that they now endured? And then, too, Phebe loved the child, and supplied to her the place of nurse and servant, which she could not now afford to hire. With the spring, some brighter prospect might open upon her, and for pressing wants, she had still a small sum remaining, which, if necessity required, she could add to, by the sale of some, now useless, jewels. At all events, it was better to endure the annoyances and deprivations of her present home for a while, than go forth at that inclement season, in the uncertain search for another.

And thus reasoning, she lingered on through the long months of that dreary winter, resigned to, if not content with her lot. But her health suffered from the want of nourishing food, and from the

severity of the climate, against which she was not protected by a sufficient degree of artificial warmth; her constitutional indolence increased, and her temper, naturally sweet and passive, became fretful and embittered by the solitude and suffering, to which she was condemned. After the first day of her arrival, her father-in-law seldom addressed any observation to her, but, by every look and gesture, he plainly indicated that he considered her an unwelcome interloper. He was not, however, sparing of his hints relative to ungrateful sons, who rebelled against their parents, and then sent home a tribe of beggars to be supported at their expense; and he always muttered these remarks with a scowl of such withering hate, that her timid spirit quailed beneath it, and deeply as she was wounded by the cruel allusions to her husband, she dared not breathe a thought, of all the many with which her heart was bursting, to disarm his anger and injustice.

He, however, spent most of his time abroad, exercising his petty trade of barter and exchange, in every low and obscure corner of the city, where he could best turn the necessities of his fellow creatures to his own advantage. He was supposed, in this way, to have amassed immense wealth; but, except some moderate investments in buildings, for which he exacted exorbitant rents, it was not known where he had concealed the bulk of his treasure. His personal appearance denoted the extreme of poverty,—his clothes were threadbare, and mended in various places with fresher material, by the unskilful hands of Phebe. The same old red handkerchief had for years encircled his neck, and his hat, which was always rusty and misshapen, he was in the well known habit of frequently exchanging, with idle loungers about the market-place, for one a little worse in degree, himself receiving a trifling sum to make the bargain even. No one, accustomed to study human character, could remark his poorly clad, and stooping figure, his slow and cautious gait, his sharp features, with their cynical expression, his pale small eye, glancing with restless suspicion from beneath his grey and overhanging brows, his low forehead, and bald head, displaying two immense organs of acquisitiveness, without reading, at whose low and sordid shrine, he rendered the slavish worship of his grovelling and degraded soul.

The dislike which he evinced for Mrs. Dorival seemed perfectly insurmountable—even the little Madelaine, for her mother's sake, was unnoticed, and it was long before she won a beam of kindness from his eye; but not even the miser's callous heart could always resist her beauty, and her innocent and witching wiles; stern and forbidding as was his aspect, the child seemed not repelled by it, but she would wind her dimpled arms around his knees, and look up in his face with smiles and lisping accents of such angel sweetness and entreaty, that, though at first he