

Henry!
BEFORE DEATH.
How much would I care for it, could I know,
That when I am under the grass and snow,
The ravelling garment of life's brief day
Folded and quietly laid away?
The light in those eyes from mortal bars,
And somewhere away from the world's care,
How much do you think it would matter
If I were dead?
What else was I lavished upon me, when
Whisper might be its state or store,
If there would help or harm me more?
If I could but know, could I but know,
That when I am under the grass and snow,
The ravelling garment of life's brief day
Folded and quietly laid away?
The light in those eyes from mortal bars,
And somewhere away from the world's care,
How much do you think it would matter
If I were dead?
What else was I lavished upon me, when
Whisper might be its state or store,
If there would help or harm me more?

Literature.
Wronged and Righted.
CHAPTER XXIX.
THE TWO FRIENDS.
Leaving Pearl plodding along in her
wearisome duties, we must turn our
attention elsewhere for a little while.
On that fatal wedding day, when it
seemed to Richard Byrholm as if the
brightest had departed from the
heaven, and the earth was a dreary
place, he remained at Ashton Manor only
long enough to see his enemy depart, and
to become convinced that Pearl had in-
deed flown from him; then he left the
place and returned to his desolate
home—desolate in spite of its beauty and
luxury, for the bright presence which he
had expected to bring to it, he believed
could never dwell there now; and there
was a solemn stillness in every hall and
room, as if death had been there and re-
bored them of all life.
He sought his room and shut himself in
from the sight of every human eye, save
that of his maid, and for nearly a week
yielded to the misery and pain that al-
most crushed him.
His trust in humanity was well nigh
destroyed, for he had unlimited confidence
in the friend of his school-days, and now
to discover such cold-blooded treachery,
such malice and vindictiveness, in one
whom he had so trusted, was like renou-
ncing some strong foundation from his life,
while the loss of the fair girl whom he had
literally worshipped, well-nigh destroyed
his reason.
The whole country was ringing with the
scandal of the strange marriage and the
flight of the bride, and for nearly a week
when at length he tried to face his
desolate condition, felt that it would be
impossible for him to remain longer in
Linden Grange, where every article in the
house had been arranged with some ten-
der thought of his promised bride, and
was now a continual reminder of his mis-
ery.
I must go away somewhere and hide
from it all. My Pearl has flown, she is
lost to me forever, and I do not care what
becomes of me now; only let me go where
I am not known—where no sound of this
deserted thing can reach me, no curious
eyes gaze upon me with their pitiful stare,
he cried one morning, with a sort of
despairing energy, when it seemed as if
his aching heart must break beneath its
weight of misery.
Acting upon the impulse of the moment
he packed a few articles of wearing ap-
parel in his portmanteau, and, without
telling even his valet of his intention,
took the first train for London that he
could catch.
Here for weeks he wandered hither and
thither, fluctuating between his club and
the hotel, growing more and more rest-
less and unhappy, and, without know-
ing it, he was being hunted by the
ruthless fate that had blasted all his
hopes.
At length he decided to go still farther
away, and strive to lose himself in the
excitement of visiting new scenes. Accord-
ingly he returned to Linden Grange, shut
up the house, dismissing all the servants
save one to remain with the horses in the
stable and the gardener, then, turning his
back upon his beautiful home once more,
became a wanderer for many months.
But this did not ease his pain. Wherever
he went, whatever he did, one fair, beau-
tiful face haunted him continually—one
sweet, loved voice forever rang in his ears,
tormenting him with that last, mournful
farewell which had nearly broken his
heart. "My love, my love—for such you
will be to me—good-by forever."
When he lay down to sleep at night he
seemed to hear Pearl's despairing tones
repeating it; it haunted his dreams, tor-
menting him all his waking hours. When he
arose in the morning, it greeted him like
a knell for the dead, until his brain was
nearly turned, and he was driven almost
to the verge of insanity.
He crossed the broad Atlantic and tra-
versed America's strange shores; he wan-
dered through the forests and the changing
regions of Maine, Minnesota, the great
lakes, and called the length of our great
"Father of Waters;" he crossed the wide-
stretching prairies, climbed the Rocky
Mountains, lost himself among the won-
ders of the far-famed Yosemite, and lounge-
d among the orange groves of Florida and
the far south-west. But all to no pur-
pose; he could not forget; his aching
heart constantly cried out with bitter
longing.
"Pearl—my fair, lost Pearl—where
are you? I must go back and find you.
Let me break the hated bonds that bind
you, and then I shall know something of
peace once more."
Thus, a year passed, and wearied and
worn with his restless wanderings and
with the ceaseless pain and struggle with
him, he at last returned to England, a faint
hope animating him that Pearl might be
able to return to her brother at Ashton
Manor, and would perhaps, upon con-
sent to a divorce, if one could be obtained.
It was a dismal, rainy night when he
reached London; but, notwithstanding
something of a comfortable, homelike
feeling pervaded his heart as he traversed
the familiar streets, and realized that he
was upon his native soil once more.
He turned his face toward St. James'
Square, longing to go to the home which
he had so longed for, and which he had
been his since leaving England. On and
on he went, with great force, which sent
him spinning against the wall of a build-
ing and hurled the stranger to the ground.
A deep groan escaped the latter as he
struck the pavement, after which he lay
slight and motionless, as if stunned by the
force of the fall.
Richard Byrholm almost immediately
recovered himself; but, notwithstanding
something of a comfortable, homelike
feeling pervaded his heart as he traversed
the familiar streets, and realized that he
was upon his native soil once more.

"Are you badly hurt?" he asked, as
the man leaped heavily against him and
groaned again.
"No," he said, "I am not hurt, but I
think my right ankle is either broken or badly
sprained," was the reply, in tones which
sounded so familiar to Richard that he
felt the fog was so dense, and the street-
lamp at such a distance, that he could not
distinguish the man's features.
"I will help you to that flight of steps
and then I will call a cab for you," he said
and supporting him to some steps in front
of a house, he seated him there and he went
for a carriage with all possible speed.
In less than ten minutes he returned
with a cab, and with the assistance of the
driver, succeeded in getting the injured
man into it, although every movement
caused a scorching pain.
"If you will allow me, I will see you
safely home, since I have been instru-
mental in causing the accident," Richard
said, when he was seated, and his leg had
propped upon the cushions.
"Thanky, but I do not like to trouble
you," replied the stranger, suppressing a
sigh of pain.
"It will be no trouble. Where shall I
take you to?" Richard said, with a heavy
sigh, and he determined to see the
sufferer home.
"By Hyde Park Corner," was the re-
ply, and Richard knew that this new
acquaintance must belong to the higher
class of the nobility to live in that quarter
of the city.
The ride was a short though very painful
one to the injured man, and when they
reached the destination, a couple of ser-
vants were called to assist in conveying
him to his room.
Richard was impressed with the evi-
dence of wealth and luxury on every hand
as he entered the grand house, and when
at last the stranger was laid upon his bed,
he turned his face for the first time, a
startling revelation was made to him.
"By Jove! Sir Harold Chenevix-Trotter,
I find in the very heart of London, after so
many years!" he exclaimed in tones of
astonishment.
Sir Harold smiled in spite of his pain,
and opening his eyes, searched the eager
surprised face of his visitor.
"Richard Byrholm!" he said, himself
astonished, and holding out his hand cor-
dially. "Surely," he added, "my ac-
cident has proved a blessing in disguise,
since it has sent you to me. How are you
my boy?"
Richard was only too glad to do as he
was requested.
Sir Harold was a dozen years older than
himself, but he was, nevertheless, one of
the most robust and energetic of men,
and while Richard was in his teens, the
baronet had rendered some valuable ser-
vice to the boy's father, and thus an in-
timacy was established between the two
families.
Sir Harold visited at Byrholm Lodge a
great deal in his youth, and, notwithstanding
the difference in their ages, a strong
affection grew up between the two, for
Richard was a manly little fellow, and
very devoted to the handsome young baronet.
It was many years since they had met,
and it seemed a singular fact that they
had thus at last thrown their arms
around each other.
A physician was called to examine the
injured limb, and he said that the ankle
dislocated, a matter which he hoped a few
days of rest would mend, if Richard
did not make a worse matter of it.
During this time Richard spent a por-
tion of every day with his newly dis-
covered friend, and their intimacy was thus
renewed and strengthened.
"What are you doing with yourself
nowadays?" Sir Harold asked one day,
after they had been talking over old times
together.
"He had noticed the settled sadness
about his face, and he wondered at it, and
one young and with such bright pros-
pects as he knew were his."
"Nothing save to kill time as rapidly
as possible," he answered, moodily.
"How is this Richard?" Sir Harold
asked, searching his face. "Young men
like you do not waste their time in killing
it off at your age. What is amiss with
you, my friend?"
"Life is a blank to me, and the sooner
I live out my days and drop into oblivion
the better. I shall be satisfied when I
am no more," he said, with a reckless re-
sponse.
"Oblivion? Do you mean just that,
Richard? Do you believe that oblivion
comes with the end of life?" the baronet
asked very gravely.
"Do not you?" Richard returned eva-
sively, and fearing that he had inadver-
sely touched a sore subject.
"No," Sir Harold replied, his face as-
suming an unwonted earnestness, and his
eyes flashing with some deep inward
feeling, as he added: "I need to be as
careless as you are regarding the future of
man; I am willing to believe anything
rather than the truth."
"What do you mean by the truth?" Sir
Harold questioned, feeling some curiosity
about the strange attitude of his young
friend.
"That God made us all responsible
beings, I mean, and that we are all re-
sponsible to him, and to his law, and to
the good in this world, and so it is natu-
ral for him to expect of us, and we are
willing to believe anything rather than the
truth."
"And do you believe that punishment
will be eternal?" Sir Harold asked.
"I believe it, if happiness is to be eter-
nal for all those who comply with God's
requirements, why should not the reverse
be true to those who scorn and neglect
his commands? I believe that the soul
that is not at rest after death; how, then,
can we expect the unholy to repent, when
they die, and then rise again to be re-
sponsible to him who has forgiven them?
What do you formerly believe?" Rich-
ard asked, as his friend paused.
He had been in the habit of arguing
such close questions as these, and he
felt at all easy at the turn of the conver-
sation had taken, and so asked others to
consider themselves as well as himself.
"I used to say to myself," Sir Harold
continued, "I am not responsible for my
past; God created me arbitrarily; I am
not, therefore, responsible for my future.
I did not call to exist, I would prefer
not to have existed, to suffer all the trouble
and sorrow that have come upon me since
my life, but more than all, to be made
answerable for the everlasting safety of
my soul, and to be held responsible for the
welfare of the world." The words came
rebelled continually at the very thought
of things. I tried to believe in an
immortal soul, but reason revolted against
the idea. I then tried to believe in the
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