THE VILLAGE ANGEL Or Agatha's Recompense

CHAPTER LVIII .- Continued. Certainly the young daughter of the Capulets could not have looked fairer than this beautiful young daughter of the Penriths on the the night of her birthday ball. The dress of white satin, with its vesture of pearle, suited her to admiration; she had never looked so well; but the greatest charm of all was the wonderful brightness and beauty of her face, the tenderness of the bright eyes, the love that seemed to lie in smbush round the sweet, curved lips, the passion and poetry that had never been so apparent as now. Lord Kelso's eyes followed her in adm.ra

tion. "I thought I had woed a child," he said : "and I have now the passionate heart of a beautiful woman."

He was astonished, but kept his surprise wisely to himselt.

Well might Beatrice Penrith look happy on her birthday. She had everything that heaven and earth could give her. She had youth, beauty, wealth and love; a beautiful past, and a more beautiful future. She had not a care or a trouble, and on the dawn of that birthday she was certainly the happiest girl under the sun. Letters and presents came from all her friends, but she valued most that which Lord Kelso gave her-3 superb diamond ring, and the happiest hour of her birthday was the one she spent with him, when he placed it on her finger, and whispered to her of another ring he hoped to place there soon. The world was all light to her after that; she seemed to tread on air. It is pitiful to ee the waste of true love in this world.

Never had Penrith castle looked so perfect as on that day. The grand old hall, which had been used as a barquet. ing hall when kings visited the old castle, was used as a ball room, instead of the modera room built for the purpose. It was of enormous length, lofty, and beautifully decorated; no pains had been spent in its decoration, tiers upon tiers of magnificent blossoms rose round the walls, tall palm trees stood in solitary grandeur, fountains of fragrant waters gave a musical ripple, the lights were brilliant—hundreds of colored lamps, some suspen led from the lefty ceiling, others hidden among the green leaves.
"It is like a fairy-land," laughed Beatrico. "There never was such a birthday

Mamma, could we not dispense with dinner, and begin at orce?" Lord Kelso Luched. "I do not think your programme would be appreciated Beatrice," he said. "You will and dinner a very important event in the

or such a ball. I wish it were time to begin.

lives of most people." "I sliguld be as happy without. I would sooner have a dance than a dinner.'

As he looked at her, he wondered how long she would be so happy-how long she would wear the brightness on her beautiful face-the same youth in her heart.

It was a mornlit night, and the roll of carriagen was something wonderful to hear. The castle was a blaze of light, the servants all in heliday attire. The ceremony of dining had been attempted but none of the young people could eat, even though it was a birthday dinner. The important hour had arrived when the ladies of the household had gone to dress.

There was a murmur of admiration when the beautiful young Juliet appeared. Agatha had been in the dressing room. Beatrice would not be satisfied unless she was there. The girl looked as beautiful as a dream, her lovely face slightly flushed with the consciousness of her own loveliness.

Just as the last finishing touch was given to the dress, there came a rap at the dressing. Thick, cold drops of anguish rose to her whom he had lost—then he loves me and reroom door. A maid with a bouquet from the earl-but such a bouquet as seemed to come straight from fairy-land-and with it golden bouquet holder, set with finest pearls. Agatha smiled when the girl bent her beautiful head and kissed the flowers. "He is a princely wooer," she said to her-

" Now my happiness is complete,' said Beatrice. "Miss Brooke, have you seen a perfectly happy human being before?"

"No," replied Agatha.
"Then look at me now," she continued. "I am perfectly happy. Every flower in this bouquet -every leaf in this flower tells me tho same story—my earl loves me, and only me. On, beautiful life, and beautiful love! I wish I could always be nineteen, and just going to a fancy pull! You have promised to come to the gallery, Miss Brooke !" "Yes; I shall be sure to come."

Just as she was leaving the dressing-room she turned a laughing face to Agatha.

"Mamma is always so careful and thought-ul," she said, "It occurred to her that there might possibly be a mistake over the costumes-there often is on these occasions—and she ordered a box of costumes from London; they are in the red room. If you should change your mind and be tempted to come, you will find something to please you. I shall look up in the gallery

She floated away in her beauty and magnificence. Agatha went to her room; she did not feel inclined to go even to the gallery, but after a little the sound of the music reached her, then it seemed to pass into her veins. She must go. The gallery ran round the hall. Surely behind some of the pillars or the statues she could find a place where she could see without being seen.

CHAPTER LIX.

HE HAD SLAIN HER, BUT SHE LOVED HIM." Agatha had seen something during her stay in Paris and Switzerland, but nothing like this. It was as though the whole glory of the Penrith family cul-minated in this magnificent entertainment. The gallery, which ran round the whole length of the room, was almost hidden from the view of those below by a small forest of evergreen; and camellias. For the first few minutes that Agatha was in the gallery, the whole scene was so novel and brilliant, that she was bewildered. She found a seat near one of the great twisted pillars that rose from the gallery to the groined roof—so near it she was almost hidden, yet she had a perfect view of all that was going on below. There were several people in the gallery—the steward's wife, the wives of some of the principal tenants on the cetate, who had begged permission to see the magnificent sight; many of the household servents, with their friends; so that Agatha was not alone,

After a little her eyes became accustomed to the brilliancy and novelty of the scene. Lord Penrith, in the dress of Henry VIII , was the first she recognized : then Lady Penrith, looking very beautiful as Marie Stuart; and after a time she saw Juliet, in the sheen of white satin and pearls, looking levely as a dream, a vision of fair youth and loveliness, the queen of the brilliant fête. She was dancing with some one who were a Venetian costume—black with a mask. Agatha's eyes dwelt long and delightfully on that face; she | the beautiful young fiances? never tired of watching it-its beauty, its! Now, let her calm her trembling nerves,

pression. And now, said Agatha to herself, with a

smile, "now I shall see the earl."

She smiled again as she recalled the pretty fashion in which Beatrice always said "my earl." However long she might live, thought Agatha, she could never be happier than that hight, with the love-light on her face and her flying feet keeping time to the music.

She looked up and down the vast hall, but she did not see Romeo; she knew that his dress was costly and handsome in the extreme; Beatrice had spoken of it, the doublet of pale velvet, slashed with white satin, the cuffs and frills of finest point lace, with a gleam of diamonds half hidden, but she saw no such dress.

She wondered then that she had not been a little more curious over his cutward appearance; she had never asked if he were tall or stout, or anything about him. She saw some of the most curious combinations that history could tell. Amy Robsart, a lovely blonde of eighteen, was talking to Queen Elizabeth, Lady Jane Grey and the Queen of Scotland were on most intimate terms, peasants danced with kings, queens with friars—it was a motley, charming group. Ah, there was a gleam of pale blue velvet; a tall, stately figure carried the dress with royal case and elegance—a figure that had some strange charm for her. He was standing-this tall, handsome earl, with the stately manner-before a young girl dressed as "Snowdrop," and certainly one of the loveliest girls in the room, her face dainty and delicate as her costume. The stately head was bent before her. Agatha could see that

that came from his lips. " He is flirting with her," thought Agatha. " What would Beatrice say?"

the girl hang almost entranced on every word

She looked to see whore Beatrice was, and when she gazed once more at the end of the hall, where the figure in the blue doublet had stood, the earl and the Snowdrop had dis-

appeared. In vain she searched again; the gleam of rich dresses, the light of rare jewels, the magnificent costumes of the gentlemen, the rich, fantastic dresses of the ladies were bewildering, but she did not see the blue doublet of the earl.

Ah, there was Snowdrop, so that he was not with her, and again Agatha, without knowing why, felt some little sensation of relief.

"Why should I be so interested?" she asked herself, wonderingly. "I suppose it is because I love Beatrice so much."

There was Beatrice leading a quadrille dance; opposite her stood a Venetian lady in a superb dress of black and gold, in the same square stood pretty Rose Aylmer, a brunette, in a pale rose colored dress to re-

present sunrise.
Agatha was charmed with the bright, thought, the best in the room and the music | years and no one should take it from her. beautiful, it crept like wine Was BO through her veins, and made her long to go down and join the dancers. She could hear the murmur of admiration from the people in in the gallery, and the light laughter and voices from below, mingled with the music, and made one.

"Ah, merciful Heaven ! what was that?" She fell back on her seat, white, trembling, with the pain of death in heart. What was

The quadrille was finished; white and blue, rose-color, gold and black, seemed all to mingle for one moment, then float away. She saw the doublet of blue velvet by the side of Beatrice; she saw Beatrice turn with a bright smile to welcome her lover; she saw him bend his stately head and whisper words that brought the loveliest bloom to her the locket. I remember the day he cut it off and placed it there. My hair, though the condition of the cold is discussed to the co She saw the doublet of blue velvet by the side and she saw the face of Vane Carlyon.

brow; it was as though a hand of cold iron had seized her heart and held it still.

Then, when the chill and the pallor of death had gone from her, she looked again. He had taken Beatrice half way down the room, and they were sitting together in a pretty little alcove formed by a group of large camelias. With difficulty she repressed the cry that arose to her lips ; she left her seat, and clung with trembling hands to the rail. ing of the gallery.
"I am mad!" she said to herself-"I am

mad! My eyes have played me false; they have deceived me. That cannot be Vanc, my lover, who is, before Heaven, my husband; it could not of her or recognize her. Her heart beat fast white with anguish, her eyes full of terrified wonder, her whole frame trembling like a leaf in the wind. Oh, Heaven, be pitiful to me!" she cried: "let me see aright; take the veil from my eyes-let me see!"

It was Vare's face. Could she ever forget the proud, patrician beauty-the charm of the dark, straight brows-the fire, passion, and tenderness of the eyes? Could she ever forget the beauty of the mouth that could utter words at once so sweet and so false?

She knew the very attitude. How many thousand times had he bent over her with the same air of deference and homage-with that same courteous grace and tenderness?

A bitter sense of desolation and anguish swept over her. Ah. Vane, so well beloved ! ah, beautiful young lover, who had wooed her with such passionate wooing! She could have stretched out her hands to him with a great, bitter cry. He had slain her—
the loving heart, the pure conscience,
the angelic innocence, the fair name
that had been held in repute as the name of a saint. He had destroyed all that—he had slain her; but she was a woman, and she loved him. Her heart rose to her lips in a long, low moan, drowned by the clash of music.

"Vane!" she could not help the cry, but no one heard it; that brilliant ball-room was not the place for a tragedy. "Vane!" and this time the word came like a wail from her lips. The last time she saw him he had held her in his arms, clasped her to his heart, he had kissed her a hundred times, he had whispered sweetest words to her, and nowthe same looks, the same words were for another-and yet not the same. The Vane who had looked in her face and kissed her as he murmured sweetest words to her had no shadow in his eyes, no deep lines of care on his brow as this Vane had-no shadow in the brightness of his smile. This Vane was handsome, brilliant, courteous; but he did not look happy, even with that lovely young

girl by his side-not happy. Ah no; there were lines of pain on his face, there were deep shadows in his eyes, he was not the Vane who carried the light of fresh young morning in his face in the bonnic woods of Whitecroft; he was changed, and she saw that some great sorrow had changed "It cannot be Vane!" How idly she nim. was dreaming !—it could but be a striking resemblance. She had often read of such. How could Vane Carlyon be the Earl of admire a beautiful woman whether she shuns threw all such thoughts away—of what use

Kelso? "My carl!" The words seemed to beat against her brain, to rush with the rush of a mighty river through her ears. "My earl!" Great Heaven! whose was he, the handsome kingly man sitting there by the side of

radiant happiness, its constant change of ex and still the throbbing pulse and the madly her, they would say nothing; they would be beating heart; she could not think while she only too pleased to find her there. wasin that fever of agitation; she sat down again and tried to think-tried to drive the mist from her eyes.
"Help me, oh, Heaven, to see clearly!"

she cried again-" take the mist from my eyes." The music seemed to sound from afar off,

the lights grew dim, a sense of intolerable anguish and faintness came over her, from which, with difficulty, she roused herself. Then by degrees a great crim came to her

-there was so much at stake. Not lifesomething dearer than life. Her senses grew calm and clear; still her eyes never left for one moment the proud face of the handsome earl. He had slain the best part of her, he had blighted her life, he had spoiled this world, and had almost closed the gates of Heaven against her-for that she must hate him; but she nad given her heart to him; she could recall his love, his caresses, his passionate worship of herself-and for that she must love him. She remembered how sweet his whispered words were, how sweet his caresses. Life had never held anything sweeter than his love.

She longed with the passionate longing of woman's heart to hear his voice once more, to be near him, to feel the clasp of his hands, the touch of his lips.
And then she remembered it had all been false, he had deceived her; his love for her had been a mock love, his marriage a mock marriage. The young, beautiful, high born girl by his side was to be his wife, not she, and again from her white lips came a low moan that was drawned in the sweet, clashing music.

CHAPTER LX.

AS THOUGH SOME GREAT WEIGHT WERE ON HIS MIND."

They were gone, the earl and Beatrice Agatha had closed her eyes for one moment to keep back the hot, smarting tears, and when she opened them again the alcove was empty; they were gone, and the vast hall was filled with the "long drawn-out sweetness" of long drawn-out sweetness" of a dreamy German waltz, so sweet, yet so sad, it seemed that one must dance with tears. She bent over the carved rail, and then saw them. They were waltzing together, the handsomest pair in that room-he so tall and stately, and she so fair and gracefulthe blue velvet and the white satir, the dark head and fair face presenting such a contrast -a contrast that was yet all beautiful har-

mony A fierce pain stabled the gentle heart; she had borne much, tut she could not bear to see his arms round Beatrice-to see his eyes bent on her with admiring love-to see his face touching her hair. She had talked of jealousy-she knew not what it was. That was her placehad been her place-had been her place for

" Vane, Vane!" But the sweet, sad music drowned the

sweet, sad cry.

Then slowly and by degrees the thought of it all came over her. How could she stand by in silence and see this innocent, loving hearted girl sacrificed how could she allow this marriage to go on ? If there was any truth, any justice, he was her husband; and if he were not, then he was so stained and shamed by his sin, he was unworthy the love of a pure-minded girl. As she sat there, watching the dancers, she thought of all she had heard of Lord Kelso, of all that Beatrice had told her.

and she saw the face of Vane Carlyon.

Oh, merciful Heaven! it could not be. the gold is dimmed now; and he said that he had lost something from his life. It was I -there can be no doubt, no more uncertainty -it is Vane, and I ought to have known it before; but how comes he to be Lord Kelso?"

She saw the earl and Beatrice crossing the hall, and the jealous pain deepened. "I must see him and speak to him," she said to herself, "or I shall die!"

Suddenly she remembered what Beatrico had said about the box of costumes from London, in the "red-room." She could put one on, and in the crowd no one would think She stood there, her beautiful face at the thought; no harm could come of it, for Lady Penrith had urged her to be there. she was: but she would say such words to him as would make him pause and think.

She hurried to the "red room." a large hedroom in the western wing of the castle. There Lady Penrith's thoughtful kindness had prepared everything requisite for the use hapless lady who might be disappointed by the non-arrival of her costume. There was powder for the face and hair, rouge, everything requisite for the toilet. The box of costumes had been unfastened, and some of them were laid, ready for use, on the bed. She took up the first that came to her hand, and then she saw that Lady Penrith had also left two or three black masks; many of the dancers had worn masks. Agatha was relieved when she saw them; there would not be the least fear now; she could speak to him and he would never know her.

Hastily, with burning hands and heating heart, she arrayed herself, despite the anguish, pain and dismay. Sine turned, like a true woman, to the turned. glass, and there she stood for a few minutes like one rooted to the ground. She saw in the mirror one of the most beautiful women in the world-a fair queenly blande. Of late years she had in a great messure forgotten her own beauty-the charm of it was gone; she had never thought of it except us a barrier to a good situation; she had ful, and she stood now looking into that the deep green woods beyond. mirror with the utmost wonder and surprise. The dress she had chosen without looking at it, was a Venetian costume, with ver, the trees stood out clear and disrich, hanging sleeves, and square cut neck. tinct. It was a picture to see the handrich, hanging sleeves, and square cut neck. It was made of rich dark-blue velvet, and covered with seed pearls. It fitted her to dark face and picturesque dress; he looked a perfection, and she looked so beautiful in it very Romeo as he leaned over the crimeo that she dare not go down stairs-her white fuchsias and watched the rush of the river, neck and white arms, with their rare perfection of shape and color, must, she knew, attract attention. If she had gone down as she was, she would have been by far the most beautiful woman present; Beatrice by her side would have been as a star before the sun.

She dare not go. She had seen enough of the world to know that men will follow and then, with a toss of his handsome head, he them or not. Then she bethought herselfthat she might cover the white neck and arms, fold a black lace shawl in picturesque fashion over them, which she did, and fixing a mask, such as the dancers wore, over her face, she made her way to the ball-room.

Her heart beat, yet she knew she had noth-

"I must see him! I must speak to him, or I shall die!" she said to herself, In after days it seemed to her like a dream. She grossed the hall, and went to the alcove. where she had seen the earl and Beatrice. It was a quiet spot that no one would be likely to invade. No one gave much attention to the dark figure, and she, with her whole soul in her eyes, watched for the pair. There was Beatrice seated near a pretty fountain, and the handsome earl standing by her side. He had just brought her an ice, and, with an amused smile, he stood by her side while she

ate it.

Near the alcove were seated two young lovers, and they were compelled to raise their voices because the music drowned most other sounds. Agatha was compelled to hear what they said.

"Look at that picture by the fountain!" said the boy lover. "How beautiful Beatrice Penrith is !"

"The earl is handsome, in his fashion, said the lady; then they laughed.
"How he loves her!" continued the hoy

lover; his face brightens when he looks at "How she loves him!" laughed the lady.

"If ever a girl carried her heart in her eyes, it is Bestrice Penrith." Ah, jealous horrible pain that seemed

to tear her heart! What did they know of him? Why should they discuss him? If they wanted to know what real love was, they should have seen him with her. She could not bear it. Of course she knew that he would marry Beatrice—Beatrice was to be his wife; but that was no reason why she should sit there and hear them discussed. She rose from her seat and walked away.

"Who is that?" asked the boy-lover. "I do not know," answered the lady. "She looks very proud and very haughty, but her dress is not much."

And Agatha thought to herself that it was very possible to look both proud and haughty with a sword piercing an aching heart.

She went over to that part of the hall where the lovers were; some strange, subtle fascination drew her near him. The group round the fountain was a large one now : she could form one of it without attracting any

At last she was near him, so near that if she had held out her arm she must have touched him. She forgot Beatrice, she forgot the whole world-she only remembered him, the dear, familiar presence. In her heart she cried aloud to him to turn once and look at her, to speak a word to her,

and let her die. " How weak, how foolish, how wicked am !" she said to herself. "Why should I

care ? He deceived and betrayed me !" The dear, familiar face, and she was so near it. She remembered how she used to smooth those dark eyebrows with her fingers, and he declared that the very action sent him to sleep; the cluster of dark hair on his brow: the clear brown tint of the handsome face; the half-laughing, half-mocking smile that curled the beautiful mouth-a smile for which she always scolded him, telling him it meant nothing, it had no character. She thought of this now as she stood near him. but he had no eyes, no thought save for

Beatrice. Once more the notes of a beautiful, inspiriting waltz were heard, and the group dispersed. Some one came to claim Beatrice. and Agatha saw that the earl was unwilling to let her go. She drew back to some little distance-not that she feared he would recognize her, but that it was retter to be on the safe side. He stood alone for a few minutes-he never even saw the dark figure; but Agatha noticed that when he was alone his face changed, the light went out of it, an expression of deep melanchely came over it.

"He is not happy," thought Agatha, as he watched him. "That is not the face of a she watched him. happy man."

He sighed deeply, as though some great weight were on his mind, and then two or three gentlemen came up to where he was standing.
"Alone!" cried one.

"What a success the ball is!" said another; "but how melancholy you look-more like a rejected than an accepted lover." "I know what is the matter with me,"

said Lord Kelso; "I want a cigar."
"Well," said one of his friends, "I would not leave the ball-room with so many pretty faces in it for all the cigars in Europe.

"I would," said the earl. How well she remembered. He had always cared so much about his cigar; he told her once that neither hall, party, opera, nor anything else pleased him when She would go, she would speak he could not smoke his cigar. She knew to him words of solemn warning. He should not recognize her, he should never know who evening for five or ten minutes. for according to his theory, the only place in which one could smoke to perfection was in the open

> Her heart gave one great beat. If he went now, she could follow him-speak to him-wern him-and he would find out who it was. So she watched him steadily, and at last, when he thought himself unnoticed, she stole out quietly, and she knew that he had gone hoping for ten minutes' happiness with a good cigar.

CHAPTER XLI. A SOLEMN WARNING.

There was never a scene more dramatic. The night was warm, the air full of perfume; there was a great hush over the trees and flowers, the sky was blue and studded with golden stars, the moon shone brightly, and threw strange shadows on the grass. A long white terrace rose along the whole front of the house, marble steps led to a second terrace, a white marble balustrade went the whole length of it, and that balustrade was, in summer, covered with passion flowers and roses; even now, warm September, aunerb fuchsias hung their beautiful heads over the white marble, and made the fairest picture ever seen. Leaning over the balustrade, crushing the purple and crimson blossoms, one had a lovely view of the landscape lived so long away from the gay world of the gardens, with their countiess variety of that she had forgotton she was beauti blooms, of the bruad, beautiful river, and of

To night the moon shone over allthe river was like a broad band of silsome earl with the moon shining on his the blue rings of smoke rising from his cigar His dark handsome face was thoughtful and sad-who shall say what voices came to him in the silence of the night? - what cries he heard in the river ?-what reproaches were written for him in the moonlight skies?

An uneasy thought came to him the; had wished he could live his life over again; A shadow falls over the grass, a tall, dark

figure creeps noiselessly up to him, a woman whose dress of dark looks black in the moonbeen living, would have had a claim on me; light, and who is hidden with the fanciful

She goes up to him, and the sound of her ing to fear. It Lady Penrith or Beatrice saw footstep is not heard. She stops for one

moment to look at the bending figure and the dark, handsome tace that looks so sad in the moulight; then, going up to him with gleet it."

swift, noiseless tread, she takes auddenly from her dress a lace handkerchief and "Of course, if you forbid me, I cannot rethrows it round his eyes, catching it in a move this handkerchief, but I should like to knot behind. Before he has time to speak or | do so-may I ?" look round, it is done,

"Ah, Beatrice, be says, "I know that is you, but you need not blindfold my eyes; can see you even when they are shut.

voice. "It is a stranger."

He started and raised his hand to remove the handkerchief, but she, quick as lightning,

restrained him. restrained him.

"No," she said; "you are taken fairly frightened; it was surely no εarthly visitant, captive; you are bound in honor to stand there—blind—until I have spoken, then I she gone?—she who know so much about him;

will restore your sight."
"A masquerade," he cried, laughingly; remember. I am Romeo.' 'You are a caricature of Romeo-he had

but one love." "This is a game of forfeits," he said

How many have I?" "You know best," said the sad, quiet voice ; " you have never been constant to any one yet. I am not Beatrice, but I know her, and I know you. I know that she ie young and beautiful, and worthy of a bet-ter fate than to be tied for life to a man who thinks so lightly of all women, and who be-

lieves in none." "This is getting serious," said the earl. and his light laughter died away on the night

air.
"I am speaking seriously," she said "This is the kind of night on which a man's heart lies open before God. I ask you, is yours a fit life to be one with the life of that pure, invocent girl, who thinks you a hero.'

"Perhaps not," he answered.
"Perhaps not," she repeated. "You know it is not. Some men are content if they take the life of the body; you and such as you take the life of a soul. How many lost souls owe their ruin to you? -- and how many women owe to you a broken heart and a rained home? How shall you sum up the woe and misery you have caused just because Heaven created you with a handsome face. If good deeds bear men to heaven, where will bad deeds lead you ?"

"This is a strange entertainment for a new ball," he cried. "Who are you who fancy ball," he cried.

seem to know so much about me?" "That does not matter. I have been watching that young girl's face to night until my heart grew hot with indignation, know-

ing what I know of you."
Who are you?" he repeated. "Of course, as you have bandaged my eyer, and you are a lady, I must not attempt to see. Are you some one who has ever been kind enough to care just a little about me ?"

"I am one who knows and admires Beatrice Penrith, and who knows you, and I think that to make her innocent life one with yours, stained with sin, is a prime-a foul and shameful deed. I warn you You do not love her, you know you do not-

"That is going too far, my dear incognita," he said, laughingly. " No, it is not; it is perfectly true. For bad man, you have wonderfully good teste; you like simple and incocent girls-they are

so easily deceived." "You know me well enough," he said "that is certain."

"I would have you to pause and think," she said. "This is a night on which a man may bare his beart before Heaven and his own sins. Ask yourself if you know of no reason why you should fear to mar this young and innocent life. How many oaths and vows have you made to others? How many lives lie between you and her?"

"I am no worse than other men," he said,

aullenly. "Shame on the other men." she said. "I should be sorry to think they were like

you. "What do you know of me that is so bad?" he asked, after a time.
"Ah, if I could tell you the pictures that in

my mind I see! Do you think a woman made homeless and friendless through you has never cursed you with her dying breath? Do you think that for love of you and hate of you mixed, no woman has never appealed to Heaven against you, and cried out for its judgment upon you?'

"Women do those things for triflis," he snecred.

" Men often give to crimes the name of triff:s," she replied. "But there comes a reckoning day, Lord Kelso-one will come for you. I would rather be a murderer, my hands recking hot with human blood, than you, with those lost souls on your hards. They will cry to Heaven for vengeance against you; when you want mercy for your solf, they will ask what mercy you showed them; when you stand at the bar of judg ment, they will cry out against you. Is yours a soul to mate with the white soul of an inno-

He shrank back trembling. Who, in the name of Heaven, are you," he asked, "that you dare say such things to

"Take warning, ' she said. "You will never know who I am; it does not matter. I could sooner see a white dove in the talons of an eagle, than a girl like Beatrice Penrith married to a man like you.' "I shall do my best to make her happy,"

"Happy!" she repeated, with scorn. " How can you either be happy or make any one else happy. You cannot have a good conscience.'

he said.

"You are a very plain spoken person, whoever you may be," said the earl; "perhaps you mean well. I have not been quite all that I should be-- I acknowledge it ; and, strange to say, I was thinking to night, as I stood watching the moon on the river, that it I had my life to live over again, I would do different-I would, indeed."

His voice startled hor ; hor heart seemed to leave her and cling to him. Great Heaven, how she loved him! She knew that he was wicked, yet she loved him, and could not help herself.

Do tell me one thing," he said. "Is it from interest in me, or in Beatrice, that you have sought me to tell me this?" "In Beatrice," she replied, faintly.

"Then be happy about Beatrice," he said. 'I will respect her youth and innoceuce; I will make her happy. She loves me, and she shall never hear one word of the past, which I own is not what it ought to have been. Does that promise coutent you?"

She made no answer, but after a few minutes she whispered to him: As you stand in the presence of Heaven, Lord Kelso, is there no other reason why you

should not marry Beatrice?" I know of none," he replied briefly. " Is there no one living who has a claim upon vou?' "No-no one living," he replied. "There

was one, but she is dead." "Dead?" she repeated.
"Yes, dead. It is evident to me that you have heard some of the many stories told of my past life. Some of tham are true, and some are false. There is one who, if she had

but she is dead." "He thinks I am dead," said Agatha to herself, "I will never undeceive him." "Baware !" she said, gently ; " the time

comes when the life of every-man ends. You have time to repent and atone-do not ne

There was no snewer.

"May 1?" repeated Lord Kelso.
Again no answer.

With a low, baffled cry, he tore it from can see you even when they are snut.

"It is not Beatrice." whispered a low, sad his face, and behold 1 she was gone—gone, and he had not even seen the color of her dress or caught one glimpse of her facegone, and he never heard her footsteps. For a few minutes he was scared and half

and what, he wondered, did she know? Sure ly it was not the old story about Lady Di-That was, of course, bad, but other men had done the same thing. She could not know anything about Agatha—that was the most crael blow, the worst story, but no one enew anything of it.

Suddenly he remembered the handkerchief. and laughed to himself with exultation.
"She has forgotten that," he said to him

self. "Now I shall find her out." He flung away his cigar with impatience, and looked at his prize. There was no mark of any kind upon it-it was a plain square of finest combric, with a deep border of fine lace. If he had but known it, it was one of many dozens that he had purchased for Aga tha herself.

"I may trace her by it," he said, as he placed it in the pocket of his doublet; "and if I find her-"

He did not finish the words, CHAPTER LXII.

THE WHISPERING VOICE.

Puzzled and bewildered, the earl made his way buck to the ball-room; the cigar and the moonlight had lost their attraction for him Who could this be-this mysterious lady who seemed to know so much about him, who could speak to him of his past life with such clearness, who evidently knew all that had befallen him-his history, his folices? But who could she be? He would go back to the ball-room, and see if by the conscious lock of any lady there present he could make out which or who it was.

It had scared and startled him more than he cared to own. He had never thought of himself as a wicked man; he knew that he had been guilty of great follies, that were in themselves almost crimes; but then he had not meant them as such, nor had he in his own mind ever given them that name; but to find that some one else gave to his career a term that characterized it as criminal, to find that he was looked upon as a wicked man, and that there were people who rose in hot rebellion against the notion that he should link his life with the pure and spotless one of that young girl, struck him as nothing had ever done before. For the first time in his long life he began to think.

"After all," he said to himself, "I have done no worse than other men. I am sure that Crawford in the Guards, and Templeton, and half a dezen others whom I could name, have been and are worse than I; yet no one calls them wicked men-the world speaks of them as july fellows, who have sown their wild oats."

And he began to wonder if there were two ways of thinking, two kinds of judgment—one in the light of this world and one in the light of the next. If it were so, if he had to go through that-the keen, rigorous scrutiny of a judge -he did not know what would become of

him.
"These are not very pleasant thoughts for a fancy ball," he said to himself, trying to fling dull care away.

But when the voice of conscience is first

roused, it is not to easily silenced. Lord Keleo had lived a life of pleasure; he had never troubled nimself in least about religion or appearances—he never stopped to count the cost of and now he was told, in plain language, that these pleasures were so many ropes dragging him downward. The rich, clear music rose and fell, but far above it sounded that whispering voice, telling him that at the great bar of judgment he must meet those whom he bad injured.

Of course he flattered himself it was all nonsense; but, oh, Haven! if it were true-if he had to meet those to whom he had been pitiless, whom he had dragged down from happy homes, fair lives, into shameless ruin! What if lady D-, the beautiful woman who had given up husband, children, and everything life holds dear - what if she confronted him, and asked for justice! Fair young faces appealed to him. Great Heaven! if he could live over again this should never be. And one face, fairer than all others, sweet and tender, framed in golden hair that was like a halo round it, came to him from the depths of silent water—Agatha, whom he had loved best deceived most and most cruelly betrayed. Ah, well, he knew this -- so sure was he of her love-that she would never reproach him; others might, never Agaths. "Why did I not marry her?" he asked himself. "By this time she would have

made a good man of me." Then he came to the conclusion that he must shake off these thoughts. Of what avail to be a great earl, to have greater wealth than he know how to spend, to be handsome, and honored, and flattered, if conscience were allowed to sting, reproach, and torture him as it did an ordinary man? It was strange, but no thought of Bestrice came to him in that hour; and he, the brave earl, who had never faltered, stood for a few min-utes before the entrance to the hall room with a beating heart; actually heaitating whether he should go in or not, because some one in the room knew all about him, and could give the whole story of his

"It must be some woman whom I have flicted with, or, what is more provide, who has flirted with me."

He went in. It seemed like a dream : everything was just the same—the dancers, the music, the flowers. There was the same laughing, jection, and flirting, but nowhere did he see any one look-

ing at him with a conscious face. How bright and fair, and careless the faces of the women! Some looked at him with bright, some with carcless smiles, some with almiration, and some with a feeling that was even warmer; but nowhere did he see the tace of the woman likely to have spoken to him of the Great Day of Judgment. Was this a dream, and was that half-hour under the cold light of the moon, with the great boughs of fuchsia hanging round him, and that low voice in his car—was that a dream? Both could not be real; it was like going from this world to another. Ah, well, there was the pale beautiful "Snow drop," to whom he was engaged for the "Lancers," evidently looking out for him—a welcome distraction. Now he shoul, per

haps, forget those bitter words. He hastened to her. She looked up in his face and shrank back, half-frightened. "Are you ill, Lord Kelso?" she asked.

"You look as though you had seen a ghost." "I believe I have seen one," he replied.