

grossing as to make them oblivious of even the charms of the old ancestral port of rare vintage which Lord Chetwynde had produced to do honor to his guest. Nor is this to be wondered at. Friends of boyhood and early manhood, sharers long ago in each other's hopes and aspirations, they had parted last when youth and ambition were both at their height. Now, after the lapse of years, wayworn and weary from the strife, they had met again to recount how those hopes had been fulfilled.

The two men were of distinguished appearance. Lord Chetwynde was of about the medium size, with slight figure, and pale, aristocratic face. His hair was silver-white, his features were delicately chiseled, but wore habitually a sad and anxious expression. His whole physique betokened a nature of extreme refinement and sensibility, rather than force or strength of character. His companion, General Pomeroy, was a man of different stamp. He was tall, with a high receding brow, hair longer than is common with soldiers; thin lips, which spoke of resolution, around which, however, there always dwelt as he spoke a smile of inexpressible sweetness. He had a long nose, and large eyes that lighted up with every varying feeling. There was in his face both resolution and kindness, each in extreme, as though he could remorselessly take vengeance on an enemy or lay down his life for a friend.

As long as the servants were present the conversation, animated though it was, referred to topics of a general character; but as soon as they had left the room the two friends began to refer more confidentially to the past.

"You have lived so very secluded a life," said General Pomeroy, "that it is only at rare intervals that I have heard any thing of you, and that was hardly more than the fact that you were alive. You were always rather reserved and secluded, you know; you hated, like Horace, the *profanum vulgus*, and held yourself aloof from them, and so I suppose you would not go into political life. Well, I don't know but that, after all, you were right."

"My dear Pomeroy," said Lord Chetwynde, leaning back in his chair, "my circumstances have been such that entrance into political life has scarcely ever depended on my own choice. My position has been so peculiar that it has hardly ever been possible for me to obtain advancement in the common ways, even if I had desired it. I dare say, if I had been inordinately ambitious, I might have done something; but, as it was, I have done nothing. You see me just about where I was when we parted, I don't know how many years ago."

"Well, at any rate," said the General, "you have been spared the trouble of a career of ambition. You have lived here quietly on your own place, and I dare say you have had far more real happiness than you would otherwise have had."

"Happiness!" repeated Lord Chetwynde, in a mournful tone. He leaned his head on his hand for a few moments, and said nothing. At last he looked up and said, with a bitter smile: "The story of my life is soon told. Two words will embody it all—disappointment and failure."

General Pomeroy regarded his friend earnestly

for a few moments, and then looked away without speaking.

"My troubles began from the very first," continued Lord Chetwynde, in a musing tone, which seemed more like a soliloquy than any thing else. "There was the estate, saddled with debt handed down from my grandfather to my father. It would have required years of economy and good management to free it from encumbrance. But my father's motto was always *Dum vivimus vivamus*, and his only idea was to get what money he could for himself, and let his heirs look out for themselves. In consequence, heavier mortgages were added. He lived in Paris, enjoying himself, and left Chetwynde in charge of a factor, whose chief idea was to feather his own nest. So he let every thing go to decay, and oppressed the tenants in order to collect money for my father, and prevent his coming home to see the ruin that was going on. You may not have known this before. I did not until after our separation, when it all came upon me at once. My father wanted me to join him in breaking the entail. Overwhelmed by such a calamity, and indignant with him, I refused to comply with his wishes. We quarreled. He went back to Paris, and I never saw him again.

"After his death my only idea was to clear away the debt, improve the condition of the tenants, and restore Chetwynde to its former condition. How that hope has been realized you have only to look around you and see. But at that time my hope was strong. I went up to London, where my name and the influence of my friends enabled me to enter into public life. You were somewhere in England then, and I often used to wonder why I never saw you. You must have been in London. I once saw your name in an army list among the officers of a regiment stationed there. At any rate I worked hard, and at first all my prospects were bright, and I felt confident in my future.

"Well, about that time I got married, trusting to my prospects. She was of as good a family as mine, but had no money."

Lord Chetwynde's tone as he spoke about his marriage had suddenly changed. It seemed as though he spoke with an effort. He stopped for a time, and slowly drank a glass of wine.

"She married me," he continued, in an icy tone, "for my prospects. Sometimes you know it is very safe to marry on prospects. A rising young statesman is often a far better match than a dissipated man of fortune. Some mothers know this; my wife's mother thought me a good match, and my wife thought so too. I loved her very dearly, or I would not have married—though I don't know, either: people often marry in a whim."

General Pomeroy had thus far been gazing fixedly at the opposite wall, but now he looked earnestly at his friend, whose eyes were downcast while he spoke, and showed a deeper attention.

"My office," said Lord Chetwynde, "was a lucrative one, so that I was able to surround my bride with every comfort; and the bright prospects which lay before me made me certain about my future. After a time, however, difficulties arose. You are aware that the chief point in my religion is Honor. It is my nature, and was taught me by my mother. Our family