

'God bless my sweet Rose!' murmured the stranger. 'This was an errand of mercy indeed!' After a moment's pause he added, aloud, 'You need say no more, Daph,' and, as he spoke, he put out his hand to take that of the humble negress.

She did not notice the movement, for she had lowered her eyes as she dropped her modest curtesy, and relapsed into silence.

Diedrich Stuyvesant loved his daughter Rose as the apple of his eye, but he had thought her a little too enthusiastic in her desire to do good; and he trembled lest her warm feelings should lead her judgment astray.

When she had burst into his library that morning, her face flushed with excitement and unwonted exercise, he had met her with more than his usual calmness and consideration. The hasty outline of the story of her new charge seemed to him strange and improbable; but he could not resist the earnestness with which she besought him to hasten to the release of an innocent and injured woman. Rose felt a little relieved when she saw her father take his golden-headed cane and walk forth, with the deliberate air of one who has important business on hand. She would gladly have hurried his steps; but she knew that, though slow and cautious, whatever he undertook would be kindly and wisely done, and in this belief she forced herself to wait patiently for his long-delayed return.

Good Diedrich Stuyvesant did not go directly to the prison, as his daughter had advised. He first called on Dr. Bates, heard his pompous statement of the grounds of his suspicions, and received from him the troublesome gold chain, that was deemed of such importance.

Having agreed to meet the doctor at a certain hour, at the place of Daph's imprisonment, he proceeded to the red house with the blue shutters and enquired for Mrs. Ray. That personage was thrown into a fit of mortification to be found by so grand a gentleman in a deshabelle, plainly intimating her recent proximity to the wash-tub; and her curiosity alone prevented her absolutely refusing to be seen in such a plight.

It did not take Diedrich Stuyvesant long to fathom Mrs. Ray, and to give to her mean and idle curiosity the contempt that even she herself felt that it deserved. 'All accounted as she was,' she found herself obliged to accompany her new acquaintance to the prison, where she and Dr. Bates occupied a room near that in which Daph had been placed, while Diedrich Stuyvesant proceeded to converse with the prisoner. The time seemed long to the little doctor, for he had the full benefit of all abusive epithets in Mrs. Ray's vocabulary, which was by no means a limited one in that department. On him she vented all the dissatisfaction she felt on having been led 'into,' as she exclaimed, 'the worst, the very worst, piece of business I ever put my finger in.'

Daph had completed her story, and was standing silent and humble, when Diedrich Stuyvesant summoned Dr. Bates and Mrs. Ray.

The doctor, small in every respect, entered with an air of triumph; while Mrs. Ray followed; pity, self-reproach, and curiosity strangely blending in the expres-

sion with which she looked upon her old lodger.

Daph met their glance with quiet composure. In her heart she had been giving thanks to the merciful God who had raised up for her a new and powerful friend, and fresh from the presence of her Divine Master, she could look on those who had injured her without a taint of bitterness.

Diedrich Stuyvesant had spoken often in the councils of his country, and to his clear, calm voice none had failed to listen, for he spoke with the power of reason and truth. Now, he stood with the dignity of one accustomed to be heard, as he looked for a moment in silence on the accusers. Then, in a short, clear statement, he told the story of the humble negress, who listened with wonder, as he named with admiration and respect the acts which she had performed, guided by her own loving heart, and upheld by simple faith in 'the great Lord' of all.

Sternness and contempt struggled for mastery in the voice of Diedrich Stuyvesant, as in concluding, he turned towards Dr. Bates, and said, 'As for you, young man, look at that dark-skinned ignorant woman, from whom you would have lightly taken her only wealth—her good name—which is above all price!

'Think of your own fair skin, you deem so superior—of the education you rightly value—the Christian teaching that has all been sounded in your ears since childhood, and then say what good work you have done in this world! What have you to bring forward in comparison with the heroism and self-sacrifice of this poor woman, whom you despised? Young man, think twice, if you are capable of thought, before you again peril the good name of the industrious poor, who are under the especial care of the great Father in heaven! Explore the secrets of your profession, but honor the sanctity of every humble home, and pry not into those things which a lawful pride and an honorable delicacy would hide from the eye of a stranger. Know, young man, that you have this day broken the laws of this free country, where no honest citizen can be deprived of liberty on mere suspicion, and you yourself merit the punishment that you would have brought on the guiltless. But, go; I would do you no harm. Go, and be a wiser and a better man for what you have heard to-day!'

Dr. Bates, with a crestfallen air, turned in haste to leave the room, but his better feelings prevailed, and stepping back he said, 'I am young, foolish and conceited, I know, sir, and I hope I have learned a valuable lesson this day.' Then going up to Daph, he added, earnestly, 'I have wronged you, good woman, and from the bottom of my heart I am sorry for it. If it should ever be in my power to serve you, I should be glad to make amends for what I have done.'

'Now, don't, sir! don't, please!' said Daph, dropping curtesy after curtesy, and murmuring, 'The young genman meant no harm, I'se sure,' while Dr. Bates slowly left the room. As soon as the doctor was out of sight, Mrs. Ray took Daph by the hand, and humbly asked her forgiveness.

'Now, don't, Miss Ray, I do be 'shamed!' said Daph, in great confusion, her own tears for the first time beginning to flow. 'Don't speak so to a poor cretur like me.

We's all poor sinners; it's only the Lord Jesus, sweet Miss Rose says, that can make us clean.' The thought of having said so much in the presence of a 'real genman' now overcame Daph, and she suddenly relapsed into silence.

'Come, Daph,' said Diedrich Stuyvesant, 'it is time for you to be out of this place.'

'May I go free, sir?' said Daph with a wondering, joyous look.

'Free as air!' was the reply of Mr. Stuyvesant; 'there's no power in New York can keep an innocent woman in such a place as this.'

Daph poured forth her thanks to her deliverer, and Diedrich Stuyvesant walked forth, followed by the woman.

He was detained but for a moment in the doorway by the officers by whom Daph had been arrested, who pleaded that no action should be taken against them for their unwarrantable proceeding, and were glad to be assured that their fault, for this once, would be passed over.

(To be continued.)

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