

ture was plain, and of the cheapest kind; but every thing was neat and well arranged. A small tallow candle gave light to the room. There was the white pine table, covered with a clean cloth, on which rested a bible; the well-scoured floor, and the neat bed—straw to be sure—but covered with spotless white though coarse sheets, and a plain counterpane. A few smoking embers burnt on the hearth. The physician had but a moment to view the unexpected appearance of the room, as the girl threw off her bonnet and cloak, and knelt by the bedside, displaying in the act a form of perfect symmetry—not the less attractive for being arrayed in garments of the cheapest material.

"Mother, dear mother, the doctor has come to see you!" whispered the kneeling one, in a voice exceedingly sweet and tender.

"Out of my sight, girl! Why follow me forever, like a curse, with your perpetual cry for bread—bread! Drink tears, as I do, and let them satisfy you!" and the sick woman raised her arms impatiently about.

The physician drew near, while the daughter buried her face in the clothes, sobbing with irrepressible emotion:

"My poor mother!—who never before looked unkindly on me, now drives me from her like a hated thing!"

"Ha! ha! hear the hypocrite!" said the sick woman, in a tone of withering scorn—"sir, beware!" and she partly raised herself in bed, and pointed her emaciated arm towards the weeping girl—"she will prove a bitter curse to you!" "I gave her the last mouthful—robbed myself of the sole remaining crust—for what?—to feed a viper. May you never be cursed with an ungrateful child!" and she fell back exhausted on the pillow.

"Oh, sir, she raves," said the daughter, deprecatingly; "for two days I have heard only reproaches from one who never before opened her lips but in kindness!"

"You must not heed them, miss," said the doctor, who had been closely examining the patient; "they are the effects of disease. Your mother is labouring under a high fever—her senses are disordered, and it is customary for persons in her situation to fancy those their enemies and persecutors, who are most beloved in their lucid state. Be not troubled, therefore,—when restored to her right mind, her affections will be unchanged."

"But will her senses be restored?—is there hope?" said the girl in an anxious tone.

"Your mother is a very sick woman—very—but her case is far from desperate. With proper treatment she may recover, and my services shall not be wanted."

The daughter thanked him—not with words—but in a more expressive language—that of her heart, which the physician read in her glowing face and sparkling eyes.

We presume we need not inform the reader that the sick one was Mrs. Lemand. In assisting Ellen to accomplish some work which she had been unexpectedly called upon to perform, she had overtaken her feeble strength and exposed herself. A severe cold ensued, which terminated in a fever. Ellen would immediately have called in a physician, but her mother treated her sickness as a slight matter, preferring rather to suffer than to exhaust their miserable pittance in paying for medical advice. But Mrs. L. grew worse.—Indeed, so rapid was the disease, Ellen dared not leave her. Twice she dispatched a child of a neighbour for a physician, as she found that her mother's senses began to wander.—But, "good Samaritans" are scarce in a large city, and the calls of a ragged urchin rarely receive that attention, or are answered with that alacrity, as the calls of those whose appearance holds out a fee in prospective. Ellen however, had, like the young in general, a better opinion of human nature. Always ready at the call of suffering, she imagined that others were like herself, and when the boy returned with the physician's answer—"Will be there directly"—she waited impatiently and listened to catch every footstep. But she waited in vain. No physician came. Her mother grew hourly worse. Ellen would have gone herself to get advice, but she was fearful of leaving her mother's bedside. The delirium increased, and required all her care and watchfulness. To add to her affliction, the delirium began to assume that peculiar type which we have described, and the already burthened heart of the poor girl received a new pang in the dislike her mother began to show towards her. For two days she was exposed to this new trial. On the evening of the second day, her feelings were wound up to such a pitch, that she determined to go in person in search of a physician. She got an occupant of another part of the house to attend to her mother, while she went forth. It was a night of storms, as we have described. Inquiring of the few passengers she met, she received hasty directions, and applied to one and another of the medical profession. The first one to whom she applied, hardly allowing her to state her wants, pleaded a prior engagement; and from the second she turned with almost a bursting heart as she received a flat refusal. It was now getting late—the shops began to be closed, and the storm to beat more furiously. Wet, chilled, and almost in a state of despair, she sought still another—with what success the reader is already acquainted. She was fortunate in her choice, for Dr. Herbert, though young, was eminently qualified for his business.

Immediate measures were taken to combat the disease. After a copious depletion and the administration of sedatives, Ellen had the satisfaction of seeing her mother sink into a slumber—the first she had enjoyed for a long time. The physician, after doing all that the circumstances of the case demanded, leaving directions, etc. for the night, made preparations to depart. Ellen left the bedside, and taking from the table drawer a purse, emptied its contents, consisting of a number of small silver pieces, with a few coppers, and tendered them to the doctor, remarking, with some trepidation, "I know not your charge, sir—if you will be so kind as to call to-morrow, should not this be a sufficient fee, I will endeavor to obtain the exact amount."

The physician stood for a moment regarding the speaker with an embarrassed air: then said, as he took the proffered change—"I shall certainly call to-morrow—your mother's case demands it. But—" and he hesitated, while a slight flush passed over his face—"but—I liked to have forgotten it—there is a recipe I wish to leave," and he seated himself at the table, while Ellen returned to adjust something about the bed.

"There is the recipe," said he, rising and pointing to a folded paper on the table. "You will recollect to give the powders I have left every two hours, and the drops immediately. Good evening, Miss Lemand—I trust your mother will be better in the morning," and he took his leave.

Ellen took the folded paper to put it in her purse—the sight of which caused her to sigh, for it was entirely empty—when she was induced to look at the recipe. She opened the paper—a bank note for a generous sum fell from its folds, and the astonished girl read, instead of a recipe—

"It is more blessed to give than to receive!"

#### CHAPTER III.

Truly is it more blessed to give than to receive, when the object of our charity is known to be deserving. Young Herbert felt it to be so on his return home. He knew that his patient was poor, for every thing he saw spoke of extreme poverty;—the humble dwelling—the scant furniture—the incoherent expressions of the sick woman, and if these were not enough, the purse with its few bits of copper and silver: and he knew she was worthy.—The neatness and order of the room—the demeanor of the daughter—every thing around and about them convinced him that his gift was well bestowed. What argument he found for this conclusion in the brilliant charms of Ellen—and they never shone so conspicuously as in her assiduous attention to her poor mother—is not for us to say. Suffice it, that when young Herbert laid his head on his pillow, he felt more satisfied with his evening's performance than if he had received a good fat fee from a purse-proud patient.

But how shall we describe the emotions of Ellen on learning the contents of the pretended recipe? It would be difficult to paint them in all their variations. How deep and intense was her delight at the unexpected treasure—coming in this, her sorest need: and then came other feelings. Should she accept this gift—from an entire stranger? Would it be proper? But had she a right to reject it? Was it not intended for her mother as well as herself? These and a thousand similar questions she put to herself, without, however, being able to solve them to her satisfaction. Never before did she so much desire her mother's counsel and advice. But when she thought over the situation in which she was placed, with no possibility of earning any thing by her own hands so long as her parent continued sick; when she thought of the extra expenses that must necessarily be incurred to provide articles for a sick room; and when she remembered, too, that she had not funds enough of her own to procure more than a week's provisions, small as were her wants—she decided at once to accept the gift.

We shall not attempt to analyze poor Ellen's feelings, as she sat that night by her mother's bedside watching her uneasy slumbers.—She thought—as it was natural that she should—much of her benefactor, but not in the light of a benefactor solely. There was an under-current of feeling, as she dwelt upon his personal appearance—his fine manly form—his expressive countenance, and his sympathetic tones, which she did not attempt to fathom. She suffered the stream to flow on in its seductive brightness, without questioning its source or destination. Thus she passed a sleepless, but not a wearisome night.

In the morning her mother's symptoms appeared much more favorable. Though wandering at times, she did not exhibit those distressing tokens which so alarmed Ellen on the evening previous. It was with no small anxiety that she now awaited the expected visit of the physician. She listened with a throbbing heart to every approaching footstep—fearing, yet desiring, his presence. How should she acknowledge his donation—how express her gratitude? Should she be silent respecting it, or should she represent to him the true state of the case, and tell him that she should consider his gift as a loan, until she should be able to repay it? This last thought struck her the most favorably, and she resolved to be governed by it. She had scarcely arrived at this conclusion, when a chaise rattled up to the door. Presently footsteps were heard on the stairs. She started, and the blood flushed her cheeks as some one rapped on the door. Ellen open-

ed it, and Charles Herbert entered. He, too, was slightly embarrassed. Hastily paying his respects, he approached the bed, and inquired after his patient.

"My mother rested exceedingly well last night," said Ellen, "and appears much better this morning—do you not think so, sir?"

"Why—yes—here is a surprising change!" said Herbert, as he felt Mrs. Lemand's pulse. "I could not desire a more favorable case. But she requires great care and attention. Have you no friend, Miss Lemand, to assist you in the arduous duties of the sick chamber?"

"I once had not, Mr. Herbert; for the poor—those who most need the blessing of friendship—are generally deprived of it. When we were in prosperity we reckoned friends; but when adversity came upon us, friendship took her departure."

"It is a bitter lesson we all must learn sooner or later," said Herbert, "I was early taught it. When I most desired friends, I found them not; but when I needed not their aid, then they crowded around me. You said you once had no friend; have you been so fortunate as to secure one, Miss Lemand?"

Ellen felt her cheeks glow at this question. She hesitated a moment before replying; then, with a throbbing heart, and a slightly trembling voice, she said—"He who remembers the widow in her affliction—who feels that *it is more blessed to give than to receive!*—has proved himself a friend, indeed!" and she fixed her gaze earnestly on the young physician.

He started at this delicate acknowledgment, and taking Ellen's hand, with some warmth replied, "Miss Lemand, I will not pretend to misunderstand you. I thank God, who has given me the power, as well as the will, to do an act of kindness. But the trifle I left last evening must not be alluded to. We must be better friends—become better acquainted.—You were not always as you now appear—you have seen better days. Am I too bold in thus seeking your confidence!"

Charles Herbert was a man of generous impulses. He walked through the world with a warmer heart, and had a more exalted opinion of human nature than most men. He was enthusiastic in his attachments. When once the fountain of feeling was stirred, it generally overflowed. Left in early life an orphan, he had struggled on unaided—buffeting the waves with a strong arm and determined heart. He entered on the study of medicine with barely a change of raiment—a poor student thirsting after knowledge. He overcame difficulties under which others would have sunk. He bore up against trials, which would have crushed a less determined man. The elements of greatness were implanted in his nature, and all the array of adverse circumstances could not subdue them. His career was upward and onward, as will be the course of all those who have fixed an eye on the goal, resolved to win it. He was now, at an early age, in the enjoyment of the confidence of a numerous and wealthy class, reaping the harvest of his early sufferings. He ranked high as a young physician, and every day was adding new strength to his claims.—Such was Charles Herbert; and, with this brief exposition of his character, the reader will not be surprised at his addresses to Ellen, and the sudden proffer of his friendship. With such a cast of mind, the barriers of restraint are soon broken down, and though Ellen shrunk with an instinctive delicacy from entering at once into a narration of her past history, she could not reject his friendly overture.

#### CHAPTER IV.

The winter months had passed away. Spring had come with her train of flowers and choir of singing birds, and nature was decked in her beautiful garments.

It was evening; and the streets of the city were thronged with a gay crowd, enjoying the delicious atmosphere and the rich splendor of night. Every moving thing seemed glad, and in keeping with the freshness and beauty of the season. But, let us step apart from the crowd, and enter this genteel looking house. The rooms, if not richly, are handsomely furnished. Every thing gives evidence of being arranged by the hand of taste. Its occupants consist of two females. One, a middle-aged lady, bearing the marks of recent illness, reclines on a sofa; the other, a beautiful girl of about nineteen, whose simple white dress sets off a form of exquisite proportions, is seated at a neat work-table, reading aloud in tones exceedingly rich and clear. The picture is one of pure, unadulterated comfort; and, were it not for the lines on the brow of the elder—those leger-lines of care and suffering—one would suppose that sorrow had never shaded so fair and bright a scene.

"It is a sad story, mother," said the young lady, as she finished and laid aside the book, "and it bears a painful similitude to our own dark history."

"Without its happy termination, Ellen," replied the mother. "Perhaps if there had been a good physician nigh, the story would not have closed so darkly," and Mrs. Lemand fixed her eyes with an arch meaning on her daughter. A smile and a sigh struggled on the lips of Ellen.

"Our obligations to Mr. Herbert are many and great," said she, while a faint blush stole over her features. "Had it not been for him we might still have been the occupants of a hovel, and de-