

## THE ONE-EYED CONDUCTOR.

He spoke lightly, but noticing that the ideas suggested were not very pleasant ones to me, he changed the subject, and I soon forgot the little feeling of discomfort his words had occasioned. The old lady did not travel with us far. She stopped at a way-station some twenty-five miles west of Lancaster, where she informed us she had a daughter living. Her own home she had already told us was in Lancaster, where she lived with a married daughter who kept a boarding house. She gave us one of her daughters cards, and Joseph promised if he ever had occasion to visit Lancaster he would try and find her out.

With mutual kind wishes and cheerful adieux we parted. The old lady was helped out of the train by her son, and we saw her a moment later upon the arm of another gentleman, whom we supposed to be her son-in-law, walking briskly up a little hill that led from the station to the heart of the village. Our own journey came to a conclusion in due time, and the last I saw of the one-eyed conductor was when he stood on the platform of the cars helping us with our baggage, which he had carried for us from where we had been sitting.

It is not my purpose to detain the reader with any details of my private history further than is necessary to give a just comprehension of what is to follow. Two years had elapsed before I was called upon to take the second journey, to the events of which what I have already narrated forms a necessary prelude. This time I journeyed alone from Harrisburg to Philadelphia, upon a visit to my parents, whom I had not seen since my marriage. I had been having a great deal of trouble, I was ill for some time after

my baby's birth, and before I had fully regained my strength my little boy was taken ill. He had the whooping-cough, and after I had nursed him through it the whole summer, he took a cold in the fall that brought it back upon him and finally killed him. I was so weak and miserable myself that I could not struggle with my grief as I should have done; I pined and moped and wasted away, until the doctor said that if I did not have a change of scene, or something, that he would not answer for my life.

I did not want to leave home and the dear remains of my lost baby; above all, I did not want to leave my husband, for, in my foolish despondency, I felt a foolish dread that he was to be taken from me. It was impossible, just now, for him to leave his business to go home with me; they were executing a heavy order at the foundry, which kept all hands working almost night and day. He promised that he would join me as soon as he could; but after what the doctor had said, he would not hear of my departure being delayed a minute longer than could be avoided; so he wrote to my father that I would be in Philadelphia on a certain day, in order that he might meet me at the depot; and having put me in the cars at Harrisburg, and seeing me safely started on my journey, he knew that there was very little doubt but that I should reach Philadelphia after a comfortable, uninterrupted half day's ride.

Ah! how different was the trip from the one I had taken two years before! How different was I—the wan-faced, hollow-eyed invalid, in my mourning robes—from the shy, blooming girl, in her bridal array, who found so much to amuse and interest her in that brief journey! Nothing interested me now, nothing amused me, all was wearisome and monotonous. I leaned from the car window so long as I could to catch the last glimpse of poor Joe, who, “with a smile on his face, and a tear in his eye,” stood upon the platform