

don't dream of gold rings, or any such nonsense; you are bothered enough in the day with them."

The next day, Fan said she had concluded to put the ring aside, and say and do nothing about it. Perhaps Ernest would never return; if he did, it was time enough then to let him see she would not keep it."

A few weeks passed, and Ernest, or at least his ring, was apparently forgotten. We heard he was not to return, and no further trouble seemed likely to arise from it; when one day, a friend, who had been visiting Ernest's mother, called in to see us. She brought with her a letter to Fan; and as she gave it to her, either her significant look, or the hand writing, called the tell-tale blood into her cheek and brow.

"That augurs well for the poor fellow, Miss Fanny," said the lady. "I trust you will not reject his heart, for it is an honest and true one. He hardly dared write to you; but his sister saw he was unhappy, won his confidence, and advised him to this course, as the only one that could put him out of suspense."

Fanny took the letter, and returned to her own room. I waited some time anxiously for her reappearance, but in vain. I then sought, and found her, on the couch, sobbing as if her heart would break. The half-open letter was in her hand.

"Why, Fanny, what is the matter, with you now, child? I am ashamed of you. What has Ernest said to wound you so?"

"I am wounded, dear Lizzie, that I should have been the cause of pain to so good a heart. Read it, dear, and see how confidingly, and yet fearfully, Ernest writes. How shall I answer him? how can I tell him I do not love him? It is too bad to throw back so good a heart."

"He has, undoubtedly, mistaken your kindness of manner for encouragement and affection: it is a severe, but a good lesson to you, and you will profit by it."

I took the letter, and was charmed with its sweet simplicity, its trusting confidence, it laid the whole wealth of a guileless heart at the shrine of the young girl who had become to it its world. She was all to him, and I looked pityingly upon her, for it was no easy task to reply to such a letter.

As soon as she could gain courage for it, Fan went down to the parlor, and there she was forced to hear from her garrulous friend how ill Ernest had been; he could neither eat nor sleep till he came to the resolution to write. Fan quivered and paled, and coloured, under the infliction, but still tried to laugh it off, but right glad was she when the lady took her departure.

In the evening Fan seated herself at the desk to reply to the letter; note after note did she write and tear up, it was in vain; wearied at length, she went to bed, determined in the morning to consult with her father. She had wished to keep it from him, indeed from every one, but she found it so impossible to say what she should, for even feminine instinct failed her, that she felt she needed advice.

Long was the consultation the next day she had with her kind parent, and many were the words of judicious counsel he dropped into her open heart. Good seed to bring forth and bear fruit. Yielding to her solicitation, he penned for her a few words of kind yet firm refusal of the affection lavished upon her.

Fan copied it, enclosed the ring, and it was safely sent, and thus ended "Cousin Fan's first offer."

Three or four years afterwards, she was reading some newspapers, when I was aroused from a deep reverie by an exclamation of delight:

"Oh, Lizzie! is not this good:—'At Bonneville, Mr. Ernest Morin, to Gertrude, daughter of Jams Gerardho, Esq.' Then I did not break his heart after all, notwithstanding I had so many lectures about it."

THE AUTUMN LEAF.

Poor autumn leaf! down floating
Upon the blustering gales;
Torn from thy bough,
Where goest thou,
Withered, and shrunk, and pale?

"I go, thou sad inquirer,
As list the winds to blow,
Scar, sapless, lost,
And tempest-tost,
I go where all things go.

"The rude winds bear me onward
As suiteth them, not me,
O'er dale, o'er hill,
Through good, through ill,
As destiny bears thee.

"What though for me one summer,
And threescore for thy breath—
I live my span,
Thou thine, poor man!
And then adown to death?

"And thus we go together;
For lofty as thy lot,
And lowly mine,
My fate is thine,
To die and be forgot!"