

very ill. I did what I could, but that was little, to help to support the family, and the furniture we had managed to collect, went piece by piece to pay the rent, for the owner of the dwelling, though a lady, was very hard with us; the very day the rent was due it must be paid or we be liable to be turned out of doors."

"But, perhaps, she was unacquainted with your circumstances," said Edward.

"Ah, no, for I called on her to beg a little longer time, and explained every thing, but was refused. She said, she was always punctual in matters of business herself, and expected others to be so. It was her rule never to allow her tenants to overstep the day, and she would make no exceptions, so I had to return as I went, for Mrs. Mayo was inexorable."

"Mrs. Mayo," interrupted Edward, in a tone of astonishment. "Can it be the woman that called on you that evening, Emily?" "Where did she live?" he asked, turning to the woman.

"In — street, No. 26," was the reply.

"It is indeed the very same," said Emily.

"Go on with your story, my poor woman."

"I fear I shall weary you; however, we struggled on in this manner for some months, but when times grew better, and my husband might have obtained work, he was too weak to do it. He wasted slowly away in consumption, and six weeks ago to-day, he died." The woman was silent for a few moments, and then continued. "I made up my mind then, to return to my native town, if I could only obtain sufficient means, for though my parents were dead I should, at least, be among friends and neighbours, which would be better than living among strangers. I intended to remain in L. for a time, and, by taking in washing, hoped to gain a little money, so that we should be able to return to O. in the summer, but when the next rent day came round, for we hired the place by the month, Mrs. Mayo sent word that I should have to find some other lodging, for she had obtained a better tenant. In the midst of my labour I received this notice, for I remember well sitting down and weeping bitterly. I looked at my children, and wondered what I should do, where should I go to? I had no friends, at least none to whom I could apply for help, for they were all poor like myself. I again resolved to go

to Mrs. Mayo. She was a widow, and this circumstance, I thought, might have some weight, for she would be better able to sympathise with one similarly situated, but all the indulgence I obtained was permission to remain three days longer, so that I could look out for a new abode. I could not forbear weeping as I returned home, for my heart was heavy. Like the Patriarch I was ready to exclaim, "All these things are against me." I tried to stop the tears, for I did not wish to be observed, but they seemed but to flow the faster, when I was accosted by a very pale but handsome young gentleman, who was slowly walking along. His kind inquiries drew from me a recital of my history, and when I mentioned Mrs. Mayo's name he seemed as astonished as you did, sir. He asked me a good many questions respecting her, and then, putting into my hand five gold pieces, said,—

"My good woman, I advise you to lose no time in returning to your friends, if you think you can do better among them. Here is a little money to support you on your journey, and keep you till you can obtain employment. I am going away early to-morrow morning, to a sea-port, for the benefit of my health, or I might be able to do something for you, but should you ever return, or be in need of assistance, here is my address, apply to me, and I will give you what help I can." The woman, as she said this, untied her bundle, and taking from it a card, which had been carefully preserved, handed it to the Doctor, observing that she "could not read, but would like to know the name of her benefactor."

Edward glanced first at the card, and then at Emily, and after a moment's hesitation read aloud,—

"Charles Percy."

The warm blood suffused Emily's cheek, her eyes filled with tears, and she turned aside her head to conceal her emotion, while the woman, without observing it, continued, "I trust that I shall have some future opportunity of thanking the gentleman, for he vanished so quickly from my sight that I had not time, and, indeed, my heart was so full from astonishment and gratitude, that I could not utter a word."

"But, then, if the gentleman gave you means, how did you come to be so destitute?"