

Campion pressed a secret spring at the back of the crucifix; it flew open and displayed a small image of the dead body of the Saviour, wrapped as if for the tomb.

"'Twas a fancy 'of mine own,'" he said, as he showed it to Walter; "I would not be without a crucifix to console my brethren with, but for mine own the sight of this ever moves me to the strongest emotions. Yes," he continued, gazing at it, as if forgetting any one but himself heard him—"there is something heroic in suffering even on the cross; but 'death,' who shall tell its unutterable humiliation to Him, whose divine breath is the life of man; to leave His sacred limbs to the rude hands of the soldiery; His heart to be rent asunder by them! This is what upholds me when I am like to faint under the burden of temptation, when alluring hopes and fair ambitions would draw me away from His service. I go to kneel, not by His cross, but by His grave, and bury myself and my proud heart beneath the folds of those linen garments."

Walter's eyes were fixed on Campian with wonder and reverence. He saw the pale, wan face glowing, the deep-set eyes radiant with light and love, as he gazed on the image of his Master's suffering.

"Father," said Walter, suddenly, "I too will love Him best; I, too, will lay at His feet every hope and vision. I will die with Him; will lie down in the tomb with Him, and forsake all. Hear me, father; in your presence I vow it;" and Walter pressed with his lips the image of Christ which Campian held.

Silently the priest blessed him, and received the vow.

"I would hesitate at other times and in other cases," added he, "to witness such solemn words spoken in haste, but with you there is but one choice, and that to be made instantly—it is for life or death."

"I have chosen now," said Walter resolutely: "God helping me I will not falter: I will go and arrange with Sir John how I shall gain the coast, and with what speed I best may."

And the moon rose in her glory that night, and silvered with her beams the ocean that calmly rippled by as Walter de Lisle stood on the cliff of the coast of Kent, bidding a long farewell to his country.

But yesternight that same moon looked down on Apswell terrace, as the lovers plighted their passionate vows, and life in all its sunshine lay before the young baron; now all was past, and already the boat touched the beach that was to convey him forever from its brightness; and at this last moment the brave heart flinched not. In one day Walter had lived years. Last night he was the boy, full of light-heartedness and sanguine hopes; this night he was the man, entering his manhood by the gate of suffering and of endurance. He has made the sacrifice, has dashed aside the temptation; shall he endure until the end?

Note.—"Every person above the age of sixteen years, who shall not repair to some church, chapel, or usual place of common prayer, but forbear the same, shall forfeit to the queen's majesty for every month which he shall so forbear, £20; and, over and besides the said forfeitures, every person so forbearing, by the space of twelve months, shall, after certificate thereof, in writing made into the king's bench by the bishop of the diocese, or a justice of assize or a justice of the peace of the county where the offender shall dwell, be bound with two sureties, in £200 at least, to the good behavior, and so to continue bound until he conform himself and come to church; which said forfeitures shall be one third to the queen, for the relief of the poor in the parish where the offence shall be committed, to be delivered by warrant to the principal officers in the receipt of the exchequer, without further warrant, and one third to him who shall sue. And if such person shall not be able, or shall fail to pay the same within three months after judgment given, he shall be committed to prison till he have paid the same, or conform himself to go to church.

"A person who was sick for part of the time contained in an information upon this statute shall not be at all excused by reason of such sickness, if it be proved that he was a recusant both before and after; for it shall be intended that

he obstinately forbore during that time."—Burn's Ecclesiastical Law.

#### CHAPTER IX.

"The bridegroom's doors are opened wide,  
And I am next of kin;  
The guests are met, the feast is set,  
Mayst hear the merry din."  
—Coleridge.

Apswell Court is thronged with guests, and re-echoes again to the sounds of revelry. No expense or pomp is spared, parlours in gay trappings fill the court-yard, numberless servants are in all directions, while the tables groan beneath the weight of good cheer. Whence all this rejoicing and merriment in a house erewhile painted so dull? It is in honor of the marriage of the only daughter of the house of Beauville with the Duke of Bertram; you can see the Duke even now as he stands on the terrace in conversation with some of the guests. He is a man of middle age, and of goodly bearing and appearance. Kindness is written on his open Saxon face, which, though somewhat heavy, is now lighted up with smiles in answer to the congratulations which meet him on all sides. He may well be congratulated, for fortune has suddenly showered down on him all her gifts. As simple William Bertram, captain in her Majesty's Life Guards, he looked to no other way to distinction than through his sword. The sudden death of his cousin, the young Duke of Bertram, when on the very eve of marriage, placed him at once among the peers of Britain, with a far richer estate than many of them. Since then the sun of prosperity did not cease to shine. He grew in the queen's favor, and many noble houses would have gladly sought his alliance; but the Duke wished to marry to please himself, and let the years slip away before he made his choice. But the Christmas of 15—, he had accepted the invitation of the Earl of Beauville to join the gambols at Apswell Court, and for the first time beheld Lady Constance. He speedily made proposals for her hand, and they were accepted. The duke was by no means an ardent lover, and did not look for deep affection from his wife,—indeed, he liked full well the retiringness of the Lady Constance, and the quiet manner in which she received his protestations of admiration, while in company her gay laugh and lighthearted manner prevented any fears that might have arisen as to her willingness to be his bride.

And Lady Constance—is it possible the dream of last autumn can have so passed away, that we find her in early spring a happy and loving bride? Let us look in upon her in her retiring bower while they bedeck her for her bridal.

Very beautiful does she look in her mantle of cloth of silver and her stomacher of pearls, her garniture, likewise of pearls and diamonds; a collar of brilliants clasps her slender throat, and jewels gleam on her arms, while diamonds confine the rich veil of lace that half conceals her sunny hair. How beautiful she is, and how many envy her as they gaze! Her eyes are bright and her cheeks glow, and a ready smile is on her lips; and, truly, Constance was not an unwilling bride. She had loved Walter de Lisle with all the intensity of her nature, and the parting from him had been agony; but with it there was none of the hope deferred, none of the shivering of trust that so often breaks a woman's heart. Walter has sacrificed her to his God; even in her anguish she could honor him, could feel he was but the more worthy of her love. Then she knew he was gone without recall, she believed in the steadfastness of Walter's righteous resolves, she believes she should never see his face again. The world grew heavy to her, and her heart turned sick, her cheek grew pale, and her pillow wet with bitter tears, but woman's pride came to her assistance, and resolutely she struggled with her grief. The world should not say, unrequited love; so amidst the Christmas gambols, Constance bore her part, and the Duke of Bertram could not guess that her cheek was paler than its wont, or that there was a hollow tone in her laughter.

(To be continued.)

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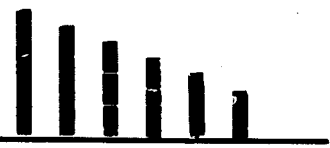
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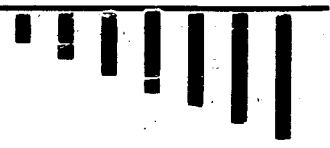
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