

employ herself as at the first. Then to the former one, and then to the second again. Occasionally the figure would pause a moment, and stand back a little, and look steadfastly down upon the graves, as if to see whether her work were done well. Thrice I saw her walk with a tottering gait, and stand midway between the two, and look alternately at each. Then she would go to one and arrange something, and come back to the midway place, and gaze first on the right and then on the left, as before.

Curious to know what was the woman's employment, I undid the simple fastenings of the gate, and walked over the rank wet grass toward her. As I came near, I recognised her for an old, a very old inmate of the poor-house, named Delaree. Stopping a moment, while I was yet several yards from her, and before she saw me, I tried to cull to recollection certain particulars of her history which I had heard a great while past. She was a native of one of the West India Islands, and, before I who gazed at her was born, had with her husband come hither to settle and gain a livelihood. They were poor, probably met much to discourage them. They kept up their spirits, however, until at last their fortunes became desperate. Famine and want laid iron fingers upon them. They had no acquaintance; and to beg they were ashamed.—Both were taken ill; then the charity that had been so slack came to their destitute abode, but came too late. Delaree died, the victim of poverty. The woman recovered, after a while; but for many months was quite an invalid, and was sent to the almshouse, where she had ever since remained.

This was the story of the aged creature before me; aged with the weight of seventy winters. I walked up to her. By her feet stood a large rude basket, in which I beheld leaves and luds. The two graves which I had seen her passing between so often were covered with flowers—the earliest but sweetest flowers of the season. They were fresh, and wet, and very fragrant—those delicate soul-offerings. Strange! Flowers, frail and passing, grasped by the hand of age, and scattered upon a tomb! White hairs, and pale blossoms, and stone tablets of Death!

She had been rather agitated at my intrusion, and her powers flickered for a moment. They were soon steady again; and, perhaps, gratified with my interest in her affairs, she gave me in a few brief sentences the solution of the mystery. When her husband's death occurred, she was herself confined to a sick bed, which she did not leave for a long while after he was buried. Still longer days had elapsed before she had permission, or even strength, to go into the open air. When she did, her first efforts were essayed to reach Gilbert's grave. What a pang sunk to her heart when she found it could not be pointed out to her! With the careless indifference which is shown to outcasts, poor Delaree had been thrown into a hastily dug hole, without any one noting it, or remembering which it was. Subsequently, several other paupers were buried in the same spot; and the sexton could only show two graves to the disconsolate woman, and tell her that her husband's was positively one of the twain. During the latter stages of her recovery, she had looked forward to the consolation of coming to his tomb as to a shrine, and wiping her tears there; and it was bitter that such could not be. Determined in her soul that at least the remnant of her hopes and intentions should not

be given up,—every Sunday morning, in the mild season, she went forth early, and gathered fresh flowers, and dressed both the graves. So she knew that the right one was cared for, even if another shared that care. And lest she should possibly bestow the most of this testimony of love on him whom she knew not, but whose spirit might be looking down invisible in the air, and smiling upon her, she was ever careful to have each tomb adorned in an exactly similar manner. In a strange land, and among a strange race, she said, it was like communion with her own people to visit that burial-mound.

'If I could only know which to bend over when my heart feels heavy,' thus finished the sorrowing being as she rose to depart, 'then it would be a happiness. But perhaps I am blind to my mercies. God in his great wisdom may have sent that I should not know which grave was his, lest grief over it should become too common a luxury for me.'

What a wondrous thing is affection. Oh Thou whose most mighty attribute is the Incarnation of Love, I bless Thee that Thou didst make this fair disposition in the human heart, and didst root it there so deeply that it is stronger than all else, and can never be torn out! Here is this aged wayfarer, a woman of trials and griefs, decrepit, sore, and steeped in poverty; the most forlorn of her kind; and yet through all the storm of misfortune, and the dark clouds years settling upon her, the Memory of her Love hovers like a beautiful spirit amid the gloom; and never deserts her, but abides with her while life abides.

If there be any sufficiently interested in the fate of the aged woman, for those I will add, that ere long her affection was transferred to a Region where it might receive the reward of its constancy and purity. Her last desire—and was complied with—was that she should be placed midway between the two graves.

DOMESTIC RULE.—Domestic rule is founded upon truth and love. If it have not both of these it is nothing better than a despotism. It requires the perpetual exercise of love in its most extended form. You have to learn the disposition of those under you, and to teach them to understand yours. In order to do this you must sympathise with them, and convince them of your doing so; for your sympathy will often depend their truthfulness. You must persuade a child to place confidence in you, if you wish to form an open upright character. You cannot rify it into the habits of truth. On the contrary, are not the earliest falsehoods caused by fear, much oftener than from wish to obtain any of its little ends by deceit? But often the complaint is heard from those in domestic authority—that they are not confided in? But they forget how hard it is for an inferior to confide in a superior, and he will scarcely venture to do so without the hope of sympathy on the part of the latter, and the more so, as our confidences are about our follies, or what we deem—*Essays in the Intervals of Business.*

What is that which is above all human imperfections, yet shelters the weakest and the wisest, as well as the meekest of all mankind? A Hat.

The first folly of fools is to esteem themselves wiser next to tell others so.