

turned quite away from me, I should be only too thankful to release myself and her from a mistaken bond, and feel that I was free to realize the most glorious hope of happiness which has opened out for me this day."

"Then ask her yourself to-morrow, and you will be amply satisfied," said Laura, triumphantly; "you will find that her ambition is not to make one noble heart happy, as mine would be if I had a hundred lives, but to be known as a heroine of charity, like the lady-nurses in the Crimea. I should have thought you might have seen already that she wished to detach herself from you, if she could do so consistently with her desire to obey your father's wishes in all things, by the persistent manner in which she has avoided you, and the care she has taken to leave you alone with me, in the hope, no doubt, that you would come to prefer my society to hers."

"As I have done, most assuredly!" said Bertrand, with a rather bitter smile.

"Well then, till to-morrow I must leave you," said Lurline, turning round to him with a lovely, half-pathetic smile; "till then we can be no more to each other—at least, in outward appearance—than we have been, and after that, however it may be with you, for me it will be either perfect brightness or an endless gloom."

Then, bending her graceful figure towards the dangerous waters whence Bertrand had rescued her, she said, softly, "Good-bye, little lake! You very nearly were my resting-place to-day, and perhaps you will be soon."

"Lurline, no!" exclaimed Bertrand, almost angrily; "it is wicked to entertain such a thought for a moment!"

"I did not mean anything wrong, dear Bertrand," she said, looking up to him, pleadingly. "I was thinking of the dark waters of death. Do you think, Bertrand, after all that has passed to-day—I may say it—do you think it would be possible for me henceforward to live without you?"

Then, as if scared at her own words, she started from his side, and fled away through the trees, her beautiful white-robed form, with the floating hair streaming behind her as a shining veil, appearing and disappearing among the branches, while Bertrand stood watching her, entranced, till she vanished altogether from his sight like the fairy vision of a dream.

Now we must explain that the sole foundation for Laura's assertion that Mary Trevelyan contemplated going out as a lady-nurse or in some similar vocation of charity, was simply this: two or three weeks previously, at a time when Mary was already conscious, almost with despair, of the fascination Laura Wyndham was exercising over Bertrand Lisle, she heard Lurline, with a scornful laugh, read out to Mrs. Wyndham an advertisement she had found in the newspaper. It was to enquire for some lady who would voluntarily give her services for three months in an hospital for sick children, in order to allow the person permanently in charge there to obtain a season of relaxation and change of air. Laura had scoffed at the idea of any one born a lady being willing to undertake such a task, and said, contemptuously, that it would suit no one but an old woman out of the workhouse. Mary remained perfectly silent while these remarks were being made, but a little later she went up to Mrs. Wyndham, and asked her if she would allow her to cut that advertisement out of the paper. Mrs. Wyndham gave her leave with a silent look of surprise, but Laura, who had overheard her, came bounding forward, and said, eagerly, "What, Mary, are you

thinking of applying for such a delightful post?"

"Not now, certainly," she answered; "but if I have to seek a home for myself when I leave Chiverley, I should be glad to find one where I could make myself useful. I know nothing of this place, of course, and it would require much consideration before I even thought of it; but I think it is work I should like."

"I wish you joy of it!" said Laura, shrugging her shoulders, and there the matter dropped, and had never again been alluded to from that day till the moment when the Lorelei so deftly made use of it. She well knew how to weave every stray thread that could serve her purpose, into her intricate web.

*To be continued.*

#### THE WORLD'S CREED.

Returning to the city a few night's since, I found two young men seated behind me, whose conversation I was compelled to overhear, by snatches, as they did not attempt to soften their tones. Presently the elder of the two remarked, "I believe in the great Hereafter of some sort; but I see no other way for us but to do the best we can, and to leave the rest to the great Ruler above."

Shortly put, thought I to myself; but does it not sum the creed of about half the world around us? I could not help analyzing it, in order to see how safe a platform it would turn out to be.

1. First of all it struck me that the party who set it forth, did not have entire confidence in it; for they, in a single breath shifted the ground of their hope from the justice of God to His mercy. I could see how they might stand on one or the other; but not how they could begin with the one, and taper off on the other. It is a perilous voyage, thought I to myself, and I would not like to undertake it in a boat so clearly condemned by the underwriters.

2. It seemed to me that the province of mercy was so distinct from that of justice, that one would like to know whether the two jurisdictions were accurately adjusted. It did not occur to me that any of God's perfections were absolutely blind; and that, as in His character, so in His works, they must be all exactly co-ordinated. I could not trust in this mercy, which was only proposed to me as covering up the defect and the defeat of justice. The planks of the platform did not appear to be grooved and fitted into each other. What if the seams should open after awhile and leave awkward fissures, through which the sinner should fall into the boiling abyss below.

3. Then, the plea is absolutely cut off. Who that lives can venture to say that he does the best he can? Whence, then, all these fierce accusations of conscience, and these fearful forebodings of the wrath to come? For myself, I felt the plea to be a confession of judgment, and that I have not the nerve to go before God's bar with any such plea of justification upon my lip.

4. I could not help asking further, whether God had given any warrant for this plan of salvation. It has been the business of my life to study His word, not superficially, but carefully collating its testimonies, and I could not remember a single line in which God had ever proposed to us this method of reconciliation. It would be very awkward, I thought to myself, to find it disallowed at the last by Him, who alone has the authority and the right to decide; and to learn that I had risked my eternal interests upon a scheme which was purely one-sided and human.

5) Last of all, it was a serious objection that this platform made no provision for change of character and a meetness for heaven. The young stranger's religion did not have in it even the element of repentance. But I made allowance for the brevity of his words, and put it in gratia, and that is to say, I put in what the world calls repentance. Yes, it is not bad enough to be sinning and repenting, and casting ourselves upon a blind mercy, here upon earth, that it has to be done also in eternity? It is a poor salvation after all, that does not put a stop to this mournfulness. One wants to be made better; not by change of place, to keep the pain; and it is scarcely a salvation, if we are not re-cast into the image of God, so as to lie down in His bosom, and find rest from in.

So I concluded that I would not risk that platform, but would continue to stand upon the plan of the gospel which is safe, and that for several reasons:

1. It gives infinite scope to God's infinite compassion of grace. It had its birth in the divine love: "God so loved the world"—"We love Him because He first loved us."

2. Mercy is not seen wrangling with justice and covering it up from sight. Rather justice unites with mercy in laying down a complete satisfaction for sin, whereby "the law is magnified and made honorable;" and God can be "just whilst He justifies the ungodly." It was very sweet, in this connection, to whisper the words to myself, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It is a safe platform where justice lays the planks, and nails them down with its own spikes.

3. Then we have God's testimony that this is His plan. He proposes it, not we; and with Him the final decision must rest. "Come unto me all ye ends of the earth and be saved"—"him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

4. It provides for personal holiness—beginning with the new birth, continued in progressive sanctification, and culminating in glory everlasting.

Ah! reader, upon what platform do you stand? Look carefully at its under-pinnings, and be sure that it is safe; for the interests which you risk upon it are immense!

#### A PEACEFUL LIFE.

Unless the heart be kept peaceable, the life will not be happy. If calm does not reign over that inner lake within the soul, which feeds the rivers of our life, the rivers themselves will always be in storm. Our outward acts will always tell that they were born in tempests, by being tempestuous. The bright eye and the elastic foot are things of joy themselves. We all desire to lead a joyous life; which we each of us desire; to carry about a contented mind is that to which most men are continually aspiring. Let us remember that the only way to keep our life peaceful and happy, is to keep the heart at rest; for come poverty, come wealth, come honor, come shame, come plenty, or come scarcity, if the heart be quiet, there will be happiness everywhere. But whatever the sunshine and the brightness, if the heart be troubled, the whole life must be troubled too.

It is the absence of love to Christ, not its fulness, that makes us impatient of the weaknesses and inconsistencies of our Christian brethren.

Those who have passed under the fountain filled with blood are happier than the angels, for they know not the joy of being redeemed.