And it must be confessed, that over this letter, her cousin and his bride enjoyed a very hearty and innocent laugh.

Mary Earnshaw was no beauty. She was scarcely even pretty. But she was sweet, modest, sensible, and as simple-minded and unsophisticated a girl as one would be likely to find in—well, say in Belgravia—perhaps even a trifle more so.

She loved her husband with a very devoted and unselfish affection, and set herself earnestly to become a good notable housewife, and to make his home happy. In both endeavours she thoroughly succeeded. They lived for ten years in peace and contentment, and during that time three fine children were born to them. John Earnshaw continued in his position at the chemical works, and, as neither he nor Mary was ambitious, nor greedy after riches, he found his salary sufficient for their wants.

But a heavy shadow of misfortune darkened their lives. Literally a shadow that blotted out the external sunshine from John Earnshaw, and, for a season, quenched the rays of hope and cheerfulness within him. He became blind.

The affliction fell upon him gradually, and at first its dreadful extent was not suspected. But a time of agonising suspense followed, when husband and wife went through alternations of hope and despair that racked them almost beyond endurance. At last the final sentence was pronounced. Total and hopeless blindness for life.

And now, John Earnshaw, even in the first fulness of his affliction, perceived how great a blessing God had given him in the brave faithful loving woman who he had taken to his bosom. Of all John Earnshaw's relations, his brother Philip alone had abstained from expressing any violent disapprobation of his marriage. He acknowledged John's right to choose for himself, and having made acquaintance with his pleasant sister-in-law during a flying visit on business to the north, became evermore his staunch friend. Mary Earnshaw's simple heart overflowed with gratitude to her husband's brother. She had looked forward to his visit with awe and trepidation. Philip was a very great personage in the estimation of his brother's household, and when he came, and, instead of a dry stern pedantic man of science, such as she had pictured to herself, she found a handsome, genial, courteous gentleman, who behaved to her with a mixture of tenderness and deference such as one might show to a younger sister, her delight and gratitude knew no bounds, and she enshrined Philip in her heart from that time forth as one to be only less beloved and honoured than her husband.

When the calamity of blindness fell upon John Earnshaw, Philip was newly married. He had made a love-match after living a bachelor until middle life, and had taken to wife a charmingly pretty young creature, the portionless daughter of a country curate. His scientific reputation had not been productive of much pecuniary gain, and he was not without money-troubles. He felt his brother's great affliction very sorely, the more so that he himself was powerless to give him any substantial help. John was, of course, obliged to resign his situation at the chemical works. His employers were kind in words, and, for a time, in deeds. They sent him to London at their own expense to consult a famous oculist, and they continued to pay his salary for some time after he had ceased to earn it. But at last all that came to an end, and it seemed as though absolute beggary stared him and his family in the face.

Mary Earnshaw then rose up with a brave undaunted heart, to help her husband and her children.

"She was determined," she said, "to return to her old profession."

No opposition would have availed to dissuade her from this step, and, indeed, what better prospect had the helpless family? So Mary Earnshaw resumed her maiden name—out of deference to the highly sensitive feelings of her husband's family in the Orkney Islands and elsewhere—and, calling herself Mrs. Walton, returned to the stage.

For years her struggle was a very hard one; but, as she said God was good to her, and she preserved her health and strength through all the fatigues and vicissitudes of a very laborious life.

By-and-by her children began to contribute something to the weekly earnings. Her eldest girl—about eight years older than Mabel—adopted her mother's calling, and they generally succeeded in getting an engagement together in the same theatre. When this could not be managed, Polly's salary had to be relinquished, for neither father nor mother could bear the thought of parting with their child. And indeed "let us keep together" was the device of the family, and the object of their constant endeavours. The only son, Polly's junior by a year or two, showed some ability as an artist, and was able to turn his talent to account and to contribute to the weekly income by scene-painting. In short, the worst times of poverty and struggle were over for Mrs. Walton (as she was now always called) before the death of Mabel's father. This took place when Mabel was nearly six years old, and she and her mother were left totally unprovided for.

The reader knows that Mrs. Earnshaw became the humble companion and dependent of an old lady residing at the Welsh watering-place where she met her second husband. In this position her child was a burden on her, and the difficulties of placing her in any suitable home, within reach of the widow's slender means, were almost insuperable.

But Mary Walton, mindful of her own affection for Philip, held out her honest helpful hand to her widowed sister-in-law, and took the little fatherless Mabel to her own home.

"What keeps five of us will keep six," said the little woman to her husband, cheerfully; "and I do believe your brother would have done as much for any of our children."

With her aunt's family, therefore, Mabel continued to live, up to the time of her mother's second marriage. She went with them whithersoever the vicissitudes or necessities of their profession carried them. And whatever else she learnt in her aunt's household, this lesson, at least, was taught her by hourly example; that family affection and confidence, unselfish care for others, and cheerful industry, can rob poverty of its grimness, and cast a ray of bright enchantment over the most prosaic details of a hard and precarious life. When Mrs. Earnshaw accepted Benjamin Saxelby, she was obliged to confide to him, with much nervous terror and many tears (for she knew his opinions and modes of thought well enough to dread the disclosure), what manner of people the relatives were, with whom her little girl had been and was living. Mr. Saxelby was duly and conscientiously shocked by the confession.

"Of course, my dear," he said, "we must have your daughter—our daughter—away at once. And if it be possible to make this person whom she is with, and who seems to have behaved very kindly to the child, any pecuniary remuneration, I will do what I can. But it must be a *sine qua non* that Mabel shall hold no further communication with these people. I feel it to be my imperative duty to insist upon this."

So Mabel was taken away from the warm-hearted family who had learned to love her very dearly, and was forbidden to speak of them more.

Her aunt, unselfish as ever, encouraged Mabel in all good feeling towards Mr. Saxelby, telling her that it was a good thing for her mother and herself to find an honest kind protector who would do his duty by them. She uttered no work of complaint to the child of the harsh cold letter in which money-payment was offered her in exchange for her motherly care and affection, and in which she was civilly informed that, according to Mr. Saxelby's most conscientious judgment, she and her family had entered very far on the broad way that leadeth to destruction. Nevertheless, she shed some of the bitterest tears over that letter that she had shed for years.

"I think," she said to her husband, whose indignation knew no bounds, and who was for sending an angry and cutting reply; "I think Mrs. Philip might have spared me this. But perhaps Mrs. Philip cannot help it. She never was famous for having a will of her own; and, after all, the man is to be her husband, and I suppose he thinks he is doing right. But John dear, isn't it very strange that he *should* think so?"

During a year or two after Mabel's removal from her aunt and uncle, letters arrived for her at intervals from one or other of the family but she was not allowed to answer them. Her mother now and then sent a brief note to the effect that Mabel was well, which brief note was always submitted to Mr. Saxelby's inspection before being despatched. At last came a letter to Mrs. Saxelby, signed Mary Walton Earnshaw, saying that she and her huband had felt for some time that Mr. and Mrs. Saxelby desired to put an end to communication between the two families, and that, though they should never cease to love their dear brother Philip's daughter, they would send her no more unwelcome letters.

From that time forward, no mention was ever made to Mabel of her father's relatives, and they dropped completely out of her life. But she cherished a loving memory of them in her faithful heart.

To be continued.

EMMET'S INSURRECTION.

IN 1803, the year after the discovery of Colonel Despard's conspiracy in England, Robert Emmet, the son of a Dublin physician, an impulsive young enthusiast, who had been for some years in voluntary exile in France, returned to Ireland with the purpose of initiating a second insurrection. Robert's elder brother, Thomas, a barrister, also an exile, and also eager for Irish independence, had met him at Amsterdam, and filled him with delusive hopes.

"If I get ten counties to rise," the dreamer said to a friend, "ought I go on?"

"You ought if you get five, and you will succeed," was the answer.

Emmet was a handsome, sanguine, high-spirited young man, of fine talents, great energy, and chivalrous courage; but led away by impetuous passions to a belief in a palpable impossibility. He had entered the Dublin University at sixteen, and had even then been notorious for his wild republicanism. Moore the poet mentions him as his colleague at a juvenile debating-club, and even then in great repute, not only for his learning and eloquence, but for the purity of his life and the grave suavity of his manner. The dangerous subjects propounded by these hot-headed young politicians were such as "whether an aristocracy or democracy is more favourable to the advancement of science and literature;" and whether a soldier was bound on all occasions to obey his commanding officer." The object of these strippling conspirators was to praise the French republic, and to denounce England by innuendo or open sedition. The students were fired by recollections of Plutarch's heroes and Plato's Utopia, there were often real wrongs enacting before their eyes, their own fathers and brothers had been slain or hung, looking across the water, they could see French sympathisers stretching out their hands with promises of aid. The conclusion of one of Emmet's boyish speeches shows how much of the William Tell there was even then in his heart:

"When a people advancing rapidly in knowledge and power," said the debating club orator, "perceive at last how far their government is lagging behind them, what then, I ask, is to be done in such a case? *Why, pull the government up to the people.*"

Next day Emmet was struck off the college roll, and the plotting publicans and farmers were glad of a gentleman leader.

From a portrait of Emmet in later life, we can picture him in '98 with his tall ascetic figure