

This stranger proved to be no other than Henry Clayton, who had been absent four years, and was about to return to receive his share of his father's estate. Henry recognized Mr. Walton when in the woods; but from his changed appearance, his uncle did not know him—neither did his daughter, until after spending an agreeable evening, they were to their great surprise informed, that he who had rescued them from the hands of thieves, was no other than he whom Mr. Walton had discarded from his home, for an imaginary crime. And he allowed himself to be prevailed upon to return home with them, where he received the allotted portion of his father's estate; and a year after, the fortune of his guardian, and the hand of his daughter in marriage. Mr. Walton survived this happy event but a year or two; leaving to Henry the sole disposal of his large property. Thus at last, rewarding the virtue of a young man, who really deserved his favors.

George Clayton, the persecutor of his brother, had long since squandered away his fortune, and no one knew whither he had gone or what had become of him.

From this tale it will be seen, the path of virtue in this world, if it is strewn here and there with thorns and troubles, leads to the mart of peace and self-satisfaction in the end. And as a virtuous man's life may, it cannot help but be pleasing. It is oftener the road to wealth in this world, than momentary pleasure with her showery but fading hopes, and than vice with all its assurance and riotous impunity. In virtue's temple, perennial bloom smiles upon you, fadeless as its eternal Giver. Truth and wisdom are her guides; and when the sable shades of destiny shall scowl upon the universe; when all else shall fall to nought, Virtue, the only good, the only true happiness to solitary mortals in their veiled pilgrimage below, will be as bright, as imperishable as the adamant throne of Him who alone reigns eternal and self-approving in the universal all.

C. M. D.

THE FAIR PENITENT.

It was evening. The last rays of the setting sun fell upon the richly painted windows of the Abbey, and threw a 'dim religious light' upon the marble floor beneath, and the fretted pillars that rose on all sides. A young female, dressed in white, advanced up the aisle, with slow and irregular steps, her eyes timidly bent upon the ground, and her lovely locks half shading a countenance in which health and innocence seemed to vie with each other, which should add most beauty to features, the form of which were beauty itself.

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She stopped for a moment as she reached the open portal of the chapel that formed a recess on the side of the aisle, and then turned

into the recess, entered a Confessional, and fell upon her knees.

What "ignorant sin" could this sweet one have committed that required absolution at the hands of her holy father confessor?

We shall see.

Having first pronounced her accustomed prayer with a timid voice, she seemed to gain confidence by this act, and proceeded to relate, first, her little acts of contumacy towards her school-mistress, (for though bordering on womanhood, she had not yet left Convent School,) then her little sins of actual commission; reserving the gravest to the last. At length, though she had evidently not concluded her confession she made a full stop, as if reluctant to proceed farther.

"Come, daughter," exclaimed the good priest, "proceed; you must not permit a false pride or delicacy to deter you from that full confession without which it absolutely were vain. Whatmore!"

"I am afraid to tell you, good father."

The priest said something to encourage her; but the pretty penitent still hesitated; and as she covered her sweet face with her two hands, as if ashamed to have it seen, the tears made their way between her pretty fingers.

"Come—come" said the holy father, this must not be. I must interrogate you. What is it that thus troubles you? Have you done any thing to injure or offend your good parents?"

"Worse, father."

"Have you been reading in wicked books?"

"I've not been reading at all father."

"Did you play or laugh, last Sunday, during service?"

"A great deal worse, father."

The good priest began seriously to be alarmed; yet he did not know how to frame his questions so as to avoid suggestions, which (if he should prove wrong in his suspicions) might render the remedy more mischievous than the disease.

At last, the young beauty, as if by a desperate effort, relieved him of his embarrassment.—"Father" said she with a trembling and half-suppressed voice, "I will tell you all, if Heaven will give me strength to speak. But, pray be indulgent, good father. It was the first time—and I'm sure I never thought that so much harm would come of it. Besides, it was not all my own fault—it was partly *his*. And he is so very handsome too"—(The good priest trembled.) "And so fond of me—he used to follow me about wherever I went—he seemed to think and care about nobody but me." (She paused a moment, then continued.)—"Well, father, one night, after I had retired to rest, I—would you believe it?—I found him in my chamber."—(The holy father groaned aloud.) "I never could tell