

THE REDEEMED PROMISE.

BY MRS. R. B. EDSON.

"READ to me darling; I cannot see," came faintly from the pale lips of one whose eyes were fast closing upon earthly scenes, but whose spiritual vision shone clearer and brighter, as it was lifted above this plane of mortality. "Read this beautiful chapter, to strengthen me and to comfort you; I have read it until it seemed a part of myself. Still it has a power to awe my soul, and exalt it above the pains of this wasting mortality."

Effie Carlton took the little morocco Bible from its place under her mother's pillow, and turning to the desired place, read that beautiful description of the resurrection, until she came to the passage—"But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ," when the mother, joining her voice with Effie's, repeated it triumphantly. Then turning to Effie, while the light of immortality already shone upon her brow, she added:

"Oh! darling, it is very sweet to die. I never felt such a thrill of perfect bliss before." Observing the tears raining silently down the face of Effie, she motioned her nearer, and drawing her head down upon her breast—that breast which had been her shelter and covert for thirteen years, some bright with joy, others heavy with grief—she continued:

"Effie, I am going now. I know it. And while I am with you, I want you to promise me by that sacred book you hold, that it shall be the great purpose and aim of your life to seek out and redeem from the power of sin, to encourage and help, even as I would have done had God spared my life, him for whom I have wept and prayed—who in all his wanderings I never ceased to love, and who in this hour, seems dearer than ever before; whose heart is rich with precious gems, all covered over and stifled down by sin and neglect. Promise me, darling, that no thought of your own comfort or pleasure shall ever come between you and your father. And never despair in the darkest hour; never lose your faith in the redeeming power of love or your trust in an ever-present and all-sufficient Father, who helpeth all who put their trust in Him."

The child, who had sunk sobbing on her mother's bosom, arose, and placing one hand in her mother's and the other on the book she still held, she replied clearly:

"Mother I promise. With God's help I will faithfully obey your wishes."

"God bless and keep you, my child, and give you grace sufficient for the high and holy task of winning a loved parent from the tempter's power."

And these were the last words which Mrs. Carlton spoke on earth. In the gray light of the early dawn, she passed peacefully to the better land. All that kind neighbors could do, was done, and Effie was offered a home in more than one warm-hearted household. But Effie Carlton had a purpose in view; and the child, so suddenly grown to be a woman, scanned the future always in direct reference to the speediest and surest completion of that one central desire of her heart.

She mourned long and truly for her mother; but hers was not a nature to sit down with her grief. Reflective beyond her years, with a firm self-reliant will, and a large organ of hope, while underlying the whole was a deep-set religious principle, which, by both precept and example of her mother, had become so incorporated with her nature that she would as soon have thought of doubting her own existence, as the loving, watchful care of God, and the sure and certain triumph of right. Even when shadows gathered the thickest, she caught sight of the gleaming sunlight beyond.

But what of Henry Carlton, the father of Effie? What mean all these dark hints of temptation and sin, of desertion and neglect? The facts were simply these: Mr. Carlton had, like many others, entered largely into speculation. He bought extensively on credit, and the failure of those on whom he was depending for large sums, together with his own reckless expenditures, resulted, as needs must, in dishonor and ruin.

His moral integrity was not strong enough to bear up against the crisis; he was detected in an unsuccessful attempt at forgery; he fled, leaving a faithful, de-