Huron Signal.

WEEKLY EDITION.

W. T. COX, Editor and Proprietor.] The Greatest Possible Good to the Greatest Possible Number."

$1.50 PER ANN. IN ADVANCE] GODERICH, C. W., THURSDAY, AUG. 24, 1865. [VOL. XVIII.—NO 30

Business Directory.

Dr. P. A. McDougall,
WILL BE AT HOME FOR CONSULtation up to 11 o'clock, a. m., every day. Will visit patients at any hour afterwards, night or day.

G. C. Shannon, M.D.,
PHYSICIAN, SURGEON, &c.,&c., GODERICH, C.W. 13:40-1y

DR. McLEAN,
PHYSICIAN, SURGEON, CORONER &c Office and Residence third door east of Central School

Dr. Cole,
LATE OF STANLEY—CLINTON, HURON Road. (Mr. Thwaites's former Store July 1, '62.

DR. A. WORTHINGTON,
PHYSICIAN, SURGEON, &c., will attend, particularly, to diseases of and surgical operations upon the eye.
HOWICK VILLAGE, Dec. 15, 1862. [w47-1y

Ira Lewis,
BARRISTER AND ATTORNEY-AT-Law, and Solicitor-in-Chancery, County Crown Attorney, Goderich, Canada West. Office n Court House. v14n40

M. C. Cameron,
BARRISTER, ATTORNEY, CONVEYANCER, &c., Kingston street, Goderich, C.W.

Sinclair & Walker,
BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, CONVEYANCER, &c. Office, over the Store of J. V. Detlor & Son, Goderich.

Henry McDermot,
BARRISTER, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW Notaries Public, &c., West Street, Goderich. 10:1

John Davison,
BARRISTER, ATTORNEY, SOLICITOR in Chancery, &c Office, Market Square, Corner of Kingston Street, Goderich. 9:42

Lefroy & Patterson,
BARRISTERS, ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW, Notaries, Conveyancers, &c. Office Mc Kay's corner, West Street, Goderich. 9:42

John B. Gordon,
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, SOLICITOR IN Chancery, Notary Public, Conveyancer, &c., &c., Goderich, Canada West. Office—on the South side of West Street, third door from the Court-House Square.

William T Hays,
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, SOLICITOR IN Chancery, Notary Public, Conveyancer, &c., Goderich, C.W.—Office, over H. Gardiner & Co's Hardware Store. v15n29

Money to Lend on Real Property.

Shade & Gooding,
ATTORNEY, SOLICITOR, &c., GODERICH, C. W.—OFFICE: Up Stairs Watson's Block, West St.; entrance First Door west of Glasgow House.

Toms & Moore,
ATTORNIES, SOLICITORS, &c., Goderich, C. W. Office—CRABB'S NEW BLOCK
ISAAC F. TOMS. LEWIS C. MOORE.
Goderich, August 27th, 1864. sw103w31

B. L. Doyle,
ATTORNEY, SOLICITOR &c. OFFICE Crabb's New Block, Goderich, C. W. v15swn5ly

S. P. YEOMANS,
SOLICITOR IN CHANCERY, ATTORNEY, NOTARY, CONVEYANCER, &c.—Office over the new Post Office, Goderich. sw18

J. F. CASSADY, M. D., C. M.,
(Graduate of McGill College, Montreal)
PHYSICIAN, SURGEON AND ACCOUCHEUR. Office—At the Division Court Office, Dungannon, C. W. w17

J. Y. Elwood,
BARRISTER, ATTORNEY, CONVEYancer, &c., Clinton.
Office—a few doors north of the Post Office.
MONEY TO LEND.

William Fraser,
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, SOLICITOR IN Chancery, Conveyancer, &c. Walkerton, Co. of Bruce. v16n15yly

D. Wilson Ross, B. A.,
BARRISTER, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, Solicitor-in-Chancery, Notary Public, General Land Agent, &c., &c., Kincardine, County Bruce. v18 w12-1y

Frederick Proudfoot,
BARRISTER, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, Conveyancer, NOTARY PUBLIC, &c. Southampton, Co. Bruce. [w12-6m*

Thomas Weatherald,
CIVIL ENGINEER AND PROVINCIAL Land Surveyor. Toronto Street, Goderich. v15n3

A. Bay,
PROVINCIAL LAND SURVEYOR AND Civil Engineer, Clinton. July 1, '61.

L. B. Hamlin,
CIVIL ENGINEER AND SURVEYOR Land Agent and Conveyancer, Kincardine 11:

JAMES SMAILL,
ARCHITECT,
PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS of Buildings, &c., got up in a neat and correct style. Office at the Huron Auction Mart, Market Square, Goderich. [sw v1n7lyly

G. M. TRUEMAN
LAND AGENT,
Market Square, Goderich.
To the CLINTON every Wednesday, from 11 a.m to 4 p. m. 81:10

DENTISTRY.

Dr. PHELPS,
SURGICAL & MECHANICAL DENTIST, (successor to T. B. Montgomery,) Goderich, C. W.
Rooms over Mr. F. Jordan's Drug Store
January 13th, 1865. sw38-yly

D. McDougall,
LICENSED AUCTIONEER, BAYFIELD, County of Huron. Sales in village or country punctually attended to. wb-1yr go

Alex. Findley,
LICENSED AUCTIONEER for HURON and BRUCE. Sales punctually attended to. Address, Bodwin P.O. wb6-1yr go

John Campbell,
GENERAL COMMISSION AGENT Commissioner in Queen's Bench, for taking affidavits, Conveyancer, &c., &c. Office on Broad way, Village of Kincardine, C.W. 9:9

FOR SALE.

LOTS 8 and 9, range B, in the township of Stanley, $30 per acre; south 90 acres of lot 29, Lake Shore, Ashfield, $6 per acre; East 25 acres of south easterly quarter of lot 2 in the 9th con., W. D., Ashfield, $4 per acre; and 20 Town Lots in Goderich, price $30.00 each and upwards. Apply to
THOS. WEATHERALD,
w3-1 Goderich.

Business Directory.

North British and Mercantile Insurance Co.,
Office in Mr. Gordon's Law Chambers.
JOHN HALDAN, Jr., Agent.
Goderich, October 13, 1863. sw12-1yr

JOHN BRETT,
Tin, Sheet-Iron, and Copper Smith,
EGMONDVILLE, C. W.
Stoves, Cultivators, &c., for Sale.
Repairing Done at Short Notice.

MARINE INSURANCE.
British American Insurance Co
OF TORONTO,
Marine Department.
GEORGE RUMBALL, Agent.
Goderich, April 25th, 1865 w13tf

British American Assurance Co.
FIRE & MARINE.
JOHN ESSON Agent.
Bayfield, C. W., April 16, 1865. w12

MAITLAND HOTEL, GODERICH
E. HOSKER, PROPRIETOR. THE above is most pleasantly situated on an eminence 120 feet high, overlooking the Harbor and Lake Huron;—good Orchards, Gardens and Rural Walks attached. Board $1 per day; single Meals or Beds, 25 cents. v15n10rly

HOTEL NOTICE.
JOHN DONOGH takes this means of informing the public that he has entered into the Hotel business in the stand formerly known as the Fulton House, where he will be happy to receive old friends and customers
Goderich, June 6th 1865. w19

JAYS' HOTEL,
WROXETER
IS situated on the Gravel Road running from Seaforth to Southampton, one mile north of where it leads off to Wroxeter, and anyone travelling to
Belmore, Walkerton, Southampton,
or any place in that direction, will find accommodation such as he only expects to find at first class city hotels, in all respects.
ICE ALWAYS ON HAND
FOR HIS
Trout-Fishing Friends!
THE BUILDINGS COVER A LENGTH OF
A HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET
CHARLES DAYS,
w46-1. Proprietor.

Commercial Hotel Mitchell C.W
JOHN HICKS, Proprietor. This is the largest and best Country Hotel in Western Canada, and charges as moderate as any House in Mitchell. Stage Proprietor. Good stabling for 100 Horses. Horses and Carriages for Hire, on the Shortest Notice 14-7

Peter M'Rae,
FORWARDER AND COMMISSION Merchant, INVERHURON, C.W. Notes and Accounts collected. Business of any kind entrusted to him will receive prompt attention. w40-1y SOSX

HARDWARE AND GROCERIES
At H. GARDINER & Co's
Market Square, Goderich.
May 13th, 1864. w13

MONEY TO LEND
AT
EIGHT PER CENT
IN SUMS OF
One Hundred Dollars and upwards.
Apply to
TOMS & MOORE, Solicitors.
CRABB'S NEW BLOCK.
Goderich, Sept. 8th, 1864. w33 tf

LAND SALE.
UNDER POWER OF SALE IN MORTGAGE.
BY virtue of a Power of Sale contained in a Mortgage made by Thomas B. Van-Every and George Rumball, both of the town of Goderich in the county of Huron, and province of Canada, Forwarders, of the first part, Margaret VanEvery and Helen M. Rumball, wives of the said parties of the first part, of the second part (default having been made in the due payment thereof), will be sold on Friday, the first day of September, A. D., 1865, at twelve of the clock, noon, at the Auction Mart of George M. Trueman, in the town of Goderich, the following property, that is to say: Lot number one hundred and sixty seven (running number) in the town of Goderich, aforesaid. Deed under Power of Sale.
M. C. CAMERON,
sw95td Solicitor for Mortgagee.

Business Directory.

DRUGS, DRUGS!
F. JORDAN,
(Successor to R. B. Reynolds)
Medical Hall,
Court-House Square, Goderich,
DISPENSING CHEMIST & DRUGGIST
Dealer in, and Importer of
GENUINE DRUGS
Chemicals, Perfumery,
Hair Tooth, and Nail Brushes!
PAINTS, OILS, COLORS, DYESTUFFS,
HORSE & CATTLE MEDICINES
GARDEN SEEDS, &C., &C.
Orders from Medical men punctually attended to at *Lowest Trade Prices.*
N.B.—Physician's Prescriptions carefully dispensed.
Goderich, Jan. 10, 1858. 49

LIGHT! LIGHT LIGHT!
ROCK & COAL OILS.
Burning Fluid, Lamp Oils.
For Sale by
F. JORDAN.
Goderich, Jan. 17, 1859. 50

THE LIVERPOOL & LONDON
FIRE & LIFE INSURANCE CO.
Capital, £2,000,000, Stg.; *Accumulated Fund*, $5,671,728.
Brittania Life Assurance Co. of London.
THE undersigned having been appointed Agents for the above highly respectable Companies, is prepared to accept both Fire and Life risks, at moderate rates of premium.
A. M. ROSS, Agent.
Goderich, July 1st, 1859 v12n21

ROYAL
Insurance Comp'ny
FIRE AND LIFE.
CAPITAL—TWO MILLION DOLLARS.
Accumulated Funds on hand, $5,000,000.
Annual Income Exceeds $2,500,000.
FIRE Insurances effected at the *LOWEST RATES* consistent with safety.
Life Insurance—Ample Security.
LARGE BONUS AND RATES LOWER THAN MOST ENGLISH OFFICES.
Losses Promptly Settled Without Referenc to a Board of Directors
CHARLES FLETCHER,
Agent.
Goderich, May, 1864. w15

The Closed Chamber.

In these days of adventure and progress a journey by rail, even if it carry us from the Land's End to John o' Groats, is with most of us only one of those mere every day occurrences scarcely worth reporting; but to Marian Eden, unsophisticated country maiden as she was, a flight of one hundred miles from the maternal nest, and a visit to the metropolis, were really events of great importance.

Many had been the invitations forwarded to her from the first month after John—the eldest of the family, the son whom Mrs. Eden always named so proudly as "my boy, who is under Government"—had taken his young wife home to that nince little house in Camden Town, so often described in Sophy's letters to her bosom friend and sister-in-law, that Marian knew all its belonings by heart. But she was the only daughter in a large family. Mrs Eden had been in delicate health ever since the sudden demise of her husband, and there were a thousand and one things to attend to in the dairy, the kitchen, and the wardrobes of the lads, that fell to the lot of blithe, busy little Marian; and let her sigh as she would, it was too evident that the same answer must always be returned, "she cannot be spared."

At last the Fates smiled propitiously. A maiden sister of Mrs. Eden's—a good-natured, unselfish woman, who had not learned to forget her own youth—came to Brook Farm on a visit, and had no sooner heard that a refusal had just been sent off, in reply to one of Sophy's earnest entreaties for her little sister-in-law's company, if only for a week, than she cheerfully offered to assume all Marian's duties and responsibilities for a fortnight; and pertinaciously overruling the many objections of the querulous invalid, so cleverly managed the affair, that on the next morning but one the delighted girl found herself on her way to London, in the care of an old neighbour who was going to attend the markets, with her brothers' hearty kisses on her glowing cheeks, her mother's blessings and cautions still ringing in her ears, and a five pound note in her pocket to make good any imperfections the more experienced Sophy might detect in her wardrobe.

When Marian, with her enormous hamper of country produce she had been so strictly charged not to lose sight of, was safely extricated from the bewildering confusion at the Paddington terminus, and consigned to the care of a cabman, her glee began to give way to fears that, now Farmer Hodson was no longer near to protect her with his stalwart arm, some dreadful mischance or other would occur to prevent her reaching Camden Town and John's residence in safety. As the cab rattled on, she began to wonder if the surly looking driver, with nought of his face visible between the collar of his coat and the brim of his hat but the end of a purple nose, would convey her thither, or to some remoter region: for it seemed scarcely possible that any one could thoroughly understand the pilotage of such a labyrinth of streets; and then the dreadful possibility darted into her mind that John and Sophy might have removed—they had once talked of doing so,—and how was she, a stanger and an unexpected guest, to discover their new abode?

But all fears vanished when, as the vehicle stopped at the door of a pleasant little domicile quite on the outskirts of the town, and rejoicing in a small plot of ground, trim with grass, newly laid gravel, and a few ever greens, the bright face of Sophy peered at her between the muslin curtains of the parlour window, and the next moment she was clasped in her arms, kissing and being kissed, and asking and answering fifty questions in a breath.

"And I am not going to make a single apology for darting in upon you without announcing my coming," said Marian, at the end of an animated recital of Aunt Jane's kindly arrangements to enable her to enjoy this long-locked-for excursion. "I shall not apologise, for I know I am welcome, am I not?"

Sophy started, as if some remembrance troubled her; but her tones were unmistakably sincere as she replied, "Very welcome indeed, Marian dear. John will be as pleased and surprised as I was, and we will do all in our power to make your stay a happy one. Excuse me one moment, while I hurry our dinner, and then you shall have some lunch eon, and tell me all the news from home."

The consultation in the kitchen between Mrs. Eden, junior, and the middle-aged female who acted as general servant seemed so unconsciously long, that Marian was at last disposed to interrupt it, and had opened the door to merrily inquire if some extraordinary dish was in the course of concoction to astonish her country tastes, when Sophy appeared, and made such ample amends for her long absence, by her attentions and evident enjoyment of the presence of her visitor, that the circumstance was soon forgotten.

"And now," said Marian, starting up as the clock struck the hour of five, "I have told you all I can think of that is worth telling, and will go and make myself presentable before John arrives. Can I find the room I am to call mine?"

"I am very sorry," replied Sophy; as she prepared to lead the way, "very sorry indeed, dear, that I shall be obliged to put you at the top of the house."

"That is a polite way of naming the garrets, or attics, that John used to give such descriptions of when he first came to London, is it not, Sophy?" asked her sister, with a laugh.

"Well, yes, it is," replied Sophy; "our house, as you perceive, is small; but we have always contrived to keep a room for a guest until this week, when we—we—"

"Have let it, I presume?" said Marian, secretly thinking it a little touch of foolish pride to be ashamed of acknowledging to a lodger.

"Let it," said Sophy; "oh, no, no; we have only—lent it for a few days; a friend—that is, a person John knew wanted to put some things out of the way for a little while—and—this is the despised attic. Marian dear, I am so sorry, you cannot think; it does very well for one of the boys when they come up at Christmas, but to have to put you here troubles me."

"But it does not trouble me," replied Marian, surveying the neatly-ordered chamber with looks of satisfaction. "You forget that I am used to unpapered walls and dimity curtains at home. Why, I like this far better than the thick hangings and darkened windows below; I shall breathe more freely here. Go away, do, you foolish Sophy, or I shall not be dressed by the time John comes, and I am longing to see his dear old face ag in."

Marian's toilet was so speedily arranged that she was down stairs, and had turned over all the books on the centre table, before the well-known quick, firm tread, resounding on the pavement, gave token of the approach of her brother. Sophy flew to the door; and if Marian lingered behind, it was only for the pleasure of hearing his exclamation of delight at her coming. But could it be that her ears deceived her? Surely his reply to Sophy's hurried "Marian is here," was, "Is it possible—how unfortunate!" But ere the startled girl could analyse her sensation, she was hugged with such thoroughly fraternal good-will—held at a distance to admire, squeezed again and saluted with such hirsute roughness till she cried for mercy—that, whatever meaning John's words might be intended to convey, it did not seem probable that he regretted the visit of his sister; and as he sat after dinner enjoying some of the walnuts which Marian had brought, he pronounced them unsurpassable, because gathered from the old walnut tree at the farm, and took an almost boyish interest in the fates and fortunes of the old folks at home. Marian felt quite angry with herself for fancying such a thing, and frankly confessed to the momentary pang the half heard words had given her.

Sophy crimsoned painfully and glanced at her husband, who bit his lip and hemmed before he replied, "I believe I did say so, Trotty; but I did not intend you to hear me, nor did I mean that I wished you away; you ought to know me better than to think I should ask you here times out of number, if we were not really anxious to have you with us; but I certainly do wish that your visit had taken place a little earlier, or later, as circumstances will not let me enjoy your sweet society quite as freely as I should like to do. Now you understand why I called your appearance at this particular moment unfortunate, don't you? and you'll promise to bear my occasional absences with resignation, won't you? Sophy must take you to see all the lions, and make amends—to the best of her limited abilities—for the loss you will both sustain in me."

"But you don't do Government business in the evening, John, do you?" said Marian.

"No, miss, I do not lay Her Majesty under such obligations to me," replied John; "but I have private affairs to transact sometimes."

"But isn't that working too hard?" asked Marian, anxiously. "Mother is so afraid you will do too much, and injure your health."

"Ah!" said John, demurely, "you will write to her in the morning, and tell her I am looking delicate, will you? and that the physician has prescribed roast pork and apple sauce; so that she had better let Joe buy in a few more store pigs at Raylea Market; don't forget."

"But, seriously, John——" began Marian.

"But, seriously, Trotty, I'm not making a martyr of myself," said John. "So be quiet, and let us decide upon your plans for to-morrow. Which is to be first—the House of Lords, or the Tower of London? You dear little girl! I will have a holiday in the afternoon, and take you to the polytechnic. I do want to see your looks of astonishment at some of its wonders. I haven't had the exquisite delight of astonishing you since the time I persuaded you that the young owls in their nest in the ivy were the offspring of Squire Jones' old mastiff. Do you remember how awed you were when you peeped in, and saw three or four pair of great eyes staring at you?"

"If Marian is to do all this sight-seeing," interposed Sophy, "it is time she went to rest; she looks pale and weary."

"But where will she sleep?" cried John, looking much more concerned than the question seemed to warrant.

"That is all arranged," replied Sophy, with a significant nod; and her husband, with a relieved "Oh, indeed!" sank back into his former easy attitude.

So Marian went to bed, and despite the unusual noises, and the fact of being away from home for the first time since her birth, slept soundly and long, and was able to enter into the lionising of the next and two or three succeeding days with a zest and appreciation that quite amused her more sophisticated companions; indeed, they had passed so little time in the house, that it was almost a relief when a heavy shower of rain compelled them to spend an evening quietly in-doors: for John had a letter or two to write, and Sophy was desirous of learning a new stitch in knitting, which Marian volunteered to teach, and ran lightly up to her room to fetch a reel of cotton, purchased for that purpose.

It was nearly dusk; and Marian was descending with the reel in her hand, when it slipped from the fingers that were engaged in groping their way down the dark stairs, and rolled to the landing, where it was dimly perceptible on the mat at the door of the guest-chamber; that carefully closed and locked apartment Marian had never been invited to enter, although she had twice accidentally encountered the servant coming from it, and the visits of John and Sophy were many and frequent. As she stood, carelessly rewinding the tangled thread, a sigh, or rather a sob, the half choking sob of some one in an agony of grief, sounded close to her ear, and with one terrified glance into the darkness, she swiftly fled down the remaining stairs, appearing in the room below with so pale and scared a countenance that her relatives sprang up in alarm.

Marian's recital was no sooner ended than John went up stairs, returning almost immediately with the cat in his arms. He held her up, and said with a smile, "I did not think you were such a goose, Trotty; I have been all over the house, and can assure you that there is nothing more ghostly in it than ourselves."

"But indeed, indeed, it was not my fancy!" cried his sister, earnestly; "I was standing perfectly motionless at the moment, and distinctly heard the long-drawn sigh of some human being in distress."

"Pooh, pooh!" said John, trying to make pussy jump over his arms.

"And it seemed to come from that room you keep locked up," said Marian; "there must have been some one concealed there."

"I have been into that room as well as the others," replied John, carelessly, "and can assure you that there is nothing in it to alarm us. So you may banish all your fears, child, and for the future; if you want anything from above, the servant will fetch it for you"

Marian was hurt and annoyed at his indifference of manner, and the remainder of the evening passed so silently, that no one was sorry when it was time to go to rest.

As Marian left the room, after saying "Good night" to her brother, she heard Sophy, who had lingered behind, ask her husband in an undertone whether it would not be better to tell her all; but his reply was, "Decidedly not;" and ashamed to be caught eavesdropping, she proceeded slowly up stairs, more than ever inclined to believe that the mysterious chamber had a tenant, but whether male or female, or what could be the reason of this strange seclusion, it was impossible to conjecture.

While they were breakfasting on the following morning the postman stopped at the door to deliver two letters—one for Marian, her first from home; and the other, bearing a foreign post-mark, for John. He tore it open so eagerly, that an inclosure fell from it unperceived either by him or Sophy, who, at his joyful exclamation, "He has written! it is all well!" had run to peep over his shoulder.

Marian stooped for the fallen papers, and saw with astonishment that they were cheques on the London and Westminister Bank for some hundreds. Who could be sending such a large sum of money to her brother? Perhaps it was the result of a fortunate speculation; anyhow, tears of joy were in Sophy's eyes, and she murmured, "I am so thankful" and kissed her husband's forhead, as she stood leaning on his shoulder. So Marian put the cheques into his hand, and waited for an explanation, but none came. With a cursory glance at them, he ran up stairs and locked himself in the closet chamber, from whence he did not emerge until Sophy had twice expressed her fears that he would be late at the office, but not a syllable did she utter relating to the cause of his delay, and Marian had too much pride and delicacy to ask the meaning of what was evidently purposely withheld.

A long and pleasant day at the British Museum, followed by a cheerful reunion at the house of some musical friends, sent both Marian and Sophy to their pillows tolerably weary. John had not accompanied them on their visit, for he had important business to attend to, and his wife did not seem at all surprised to find him still absent when they returned home, although the hour verged on midnight.

Marian had been lying for some time in a dozy, dreary condition, with an operatic air running in her memory, when she suddenly started up in bed, with an expression of vexation at her own carelessness. The following day was the anniversary of John's birth, so, with a little assistance from Sophy, she purchased a beautifully bound edition of Dr. Livingstone's travels, a work he had been heard to wish for, and it was to be presented to him as soon as a suitable inscription had been written on the fly leaf; but, in the hurry of dressing for the party, she had wholly forgotten that the book was left on the centre table in the sitting room, where it would be sure to catch her brother's eye as soon as he entered the room, and thus half the pleasure of presenting it would be destroyed.

"It is not too late," said Marian, slipping out of bed, and groping for match-box and candle. "I will pop on my dressing-gown and fetch it. He cannot have come in yet, or I should surely have heard him."

So, with her slippers on, she cautiously descended, but stayed her steps, in half-fear-uncertainty, when she saw that the door of the mysterious chamber was ajar. At first she was disposed to retreat, but all was silent as the grave, although a light, glimmering through the keyhole of Sophy's apartment, showed that she was still a watcher for her absent husband.

"How ridiculous I am!" said Marian to herself, while she nimbly descended the lower flight of stairs. "If John only knew how my heart quakes every time I pass that chamber he would tease me to death."

As Marian threw open the door of the sitting-room a gust of air blew out her light and again she paused; but reconlecting the exact spot where the book lay, she stepped boldly forward to take it. As she moved further into the room, which was intensely dark save where a few embers still glimmered in the grate, a sudden conviction entered her mind that she was not alone, that some one breathed closely beside her. Shuddering and trembling with terror, she sought to fly from the room, forgetting her errand and everything else in the undefinable dread of the moment. The door was dimly discernible as Marian, with extended arms, turned towards it; but at that moment her hand fell on the cold fingers of another hand; and she shrieked and recoiled so violently, that her head came in contact with one of the carved pillars of Sophy's piano, and she fell on the floor, stunned and motionless.

When Marian opened her eyes she was extended on the sofa, with her brother and sister both bending over her, and anxiously watching the effects of the restoratives they had been administering. The first thoughts induced a wild glance around, and a confused inquiry as to who found her, and what it all meant.

"What brought you down stairs?" asked John, sternly. "Was it to pry into my actions?"

Poor Marian looked aghast at the charge, and pointing to the book, tearfully explained the cause of her unlucky nocturnal visit to the sitting-room.

"Dear little Trotty, pray forgive me," said John, kissing her affectionately; "I had no business to speak so harshly. Go to bed with Sophy, and try to sleep, or you will have a terrible headache in the morning."

"And you?" she asked, inquiringly, for he was dressed for a journey.

"He is going out again," whispered Sophy. "Don't question him to-night, my dear; he will tell you by and by whatever he thinks it right for you to know." But that "by and by" did not arrive.

When Marian arose the next morning, bearing her pale cheeks and heavy eyes the traces of unrefreshing slumber, the door of the guest chamber stood wide open, and Esther the maid, was employed within it, sweeping and cleaning in the most matter-of-fact manner imaginable. The only evidence of its having lately been occupied was a scrap of crumpled paper, which Esther tossed out of the table drawer into her dust pan, and this Marian stooped and secured, blushing, and feeling uncommonly guilty as she did so.

Sophy petted Marian all day, but carefully avoided the remotest allusion to the subject on which her sister-in-law was so anxious to enter; and John, though evidently desirous to make amends for his hasty speech by a more than commonly affectionate manner, was equally reticent. Indeed, it was not until at the expiration of Marian's holiday, and when she stood on the platform of the Paddington terminus, awaiting the arrival of the train which was to carry her back to Brook Farm, that her alarm was spoken of.

"I should not like to teach you deceit, Trotty," said her brother; "but really I wish you would not mention that unfortunate circumstance."

"Why?" asked his sister.

"Because, my dear, unless I could enter into explanations I think it best to withhold, your story would have a very romantic sound, and I should be pestered with inquiries I cannot answer"

"But why?" again asked Marian.

"Because the secret is not mine," he replied. "Yes, you are right; there was some one in our best bed-room, and it was his presence there that made me call your visit an unfortunate one, but who he was and why he came, I do not consider myself justified in telling you; at least, not at present."

"But you trusted Sophy," pouted Marian.

"I was obliged to do so, or else I should not," was the reply laughingly given, and certainly received with incredulity.

"Well," exclaimed Marian at last, "I will promise silence on one condition."

"And what is that, Trotty?" asked her brother.

"It is," she continued, "that at some future time you tell me all the particulars of this most puzzling affair. Will you agree to this?"

John assented, and the next moment the parting embrace was given, and Marian was quickly whirled back to the loving arms open to receive her at Brook Farm. In the comparative privacy of the railway carriage, she ventured for the first time, to examine the scrap of crumpled paper she had rescued from Esther's dust pan. It was a hastily executed but spirited sketch of herself, as she had stood, more than once, at the garden gate, looking out for John, and her name was scrawled in various places in the bold writing of a man. The soiled paper was carefully smoothed and consigned to the most secret corner of Marian's desk, until time had almost erased the deep impression it then made upon the excited imagination of the surprised and bewildered girl.

Years glided on before any event worth recording again broke upon the monotony of Marian's quiet country life. The boys grew up, and went into the world, while Marian expanded into a charming woman, and after exercising her privileges as a belle, and flirting with half a dozen would-be suitors, suddenly grew very sober, and accepted the proffered hand of Mr. Landsden, the grave, hard-working surgeon of the village, the young doctor whose skilful cure of Mrs. Eden's nervous sufferings had gone far to establish his well-merited character for ability and kind-heartedness.

"It was only right and proper," so Mrs. Eden said, and the family conclave assented, "that John, as eldest son, and representative of his dead father, should be consulted before his mother gave her definite consent to this match," and his reply to the communication was prompt and lenghty. It was full of affectionate anxiety on Marian's account, and expressed an earnest hope that she would hold herself free until Christmas, when he would make a point of coming to the farm, if only for a day or two. It was impossible to refuse a request so lovingly urged, although Marian, full of faith and pride in her intended husband, felt that these implied doubts wronged him sorely.

Mr. Lansden, however, seemed not only satisfied but pleased with John's brotherly interest in his sister's happiness; and thus relieved his pretty betrothed could look forward cheerfully to a visit which, from a variety of circumstances, had been so long deferred, that it was two or three years since John and Sophy had joined the circle clustering round the yule log at that festive season. They did not come alone now, for two brown-eyed, curlyheaded little ones—Aunt Marian's darlings—were their companions, and it was during the bustle of welcoming them, and showing the new baby to grandmamma, that his sister blushingly drew John aside to introduce her lover.

With one earnest look into each other's eyes, the young men shook hands, and walked away together, and it dreadfully distracted our poor little heroine, in the midst of her multifarious employments, to see them unheeding the intensity of the frost, pacing the garden walk to the fro, and to and fro again, until she rejoiced in the opportunity the dinner hour gave her to break in upon the long conference.

"I am not afraid to give her to you, Shirley Lansden," said John, putting her hand into Shirley's. "God bless you both," he added, and hastily left them.

"John speaks as familiarly already, as if he had known you for years," observed Marian, as they more leisurely returned to the house.

"We are not strangers, my dearest," was the reply; "I knew John before I come here,—he is the best friend I ever had in my life."

There was no time to put the many questions on Marian's lips, and in the bustle of the evening the unexpected speech was forgotton, until when the younger branches had gone to bed weary of fun, and the elders had drawn their closer to the hearth for a batch of story telling, that Shirley Lansden was called upon to quota to the general amusement. But he had been very moody in the midst of their merriment; his eyes often resting on his betrothed with such an air of sorrowful tenderness, that she had twice whispered an inquiry if he was ill; and now awakening from a reverie he declared himself unable to recollect anything sufficiently enlivening for a Christmas recital.

"Give us something horrible then," suggested Harry Eden, Marian's sailor brother, —"a ghost story."

"John has a story to tell," said Shirley, drawing back into the shadow,—"a story he has promised to tell. Bid him tell it now."

"Ah, yes," cried Marian, her eyes sparkling with delight "it is an old promise:—so fulfil it, Mr. John Eden, without more ado, and relate the story of the mysterious chamber."

"I do not know why this ungracious task should be forced upon me," said John, looking very grave, and appealing to the dark corner where Shirely Lansden had ensconced himself.

"It must be told John," was the positive reply. "You have promised both Marian and me that it shall be. It is only right for all to hear it."

His manner was so serious that silence fell upon the hitherto mirthful party, and Marian's cheek paled as she prepared to listen, for the hand that clasped her fingers was clammy and trembling.

"If I must be spokesman, then," said John, "the sooner I begin the better. But I tell my story under protest. Enough reparation has been made, without recurrence to the past. Well, well he added, as Shirley made a dissenting gesture, "I will proceed, and commence my true story from the time when I was first promoted to the situation I am now holding.

"My superior in the office was a widower, with one son; and I believe that he loved this son with as deep and earnest a love as parent ever lavished upon child, although a mistaken appreciation of his duties led him to appear both cold and stern. The young man, who was also in the office, was a thoughtless, excitable youth——"

"Say rather a selfisd scamp, who sacrificed everything to his love of dissipation," exclaimed Shirley, in his deepest tones.

"I'll thank you to let me tell my story my own way," said John, coolly. "Dissipated he was, for he was easily led, and there was one in our office who had the tongue of Mephistophiles himself; and to a light-hearted boy, who had no female society to make home seem homelike, the gay scenes to which he was introduced by his crafty companion had undoubted charms.

"Before the father had discovered the improper acquaintance his son had formed, he was sent abroad on a mission of trust; and his parting injunctions were so harshly worded,—publicly, too, which of course rendered them doubly galling,—that my countenance betrayed my disapprobation; and when we were left alone my superior angrily adverted to it. I defended myself, and in rather stronger terms than the occasion justified, condemned the system of coercion, honestly declaring, my opinion that it alienated the affections of the young, and frequently drove them into follies which otherwise they might have been taught to avoid.

"We parted in anger, and I went home, unpleasantly convinced that I had made myself an enemy, by impertinently interfering with what did not concern me; but I was very glad to find that my superior in office was also above my estimate of his good feelings, for he not only bade me a kindly adieu before he started, but hurriedly asked me to be a friend to his boy if he wanted one in his absence.

"This I willingly promised, although I was powerless to check the wild career into which his crafty companions urged him, as soon as there was no watchful eye to observe their actions. But it came to an abrupt close sooner than was expected.

"One afternoon I was busily writing in the outer office, doing my work and a little of theirs too, for they were closeted in the inner room, when the sounds of angry voices and a violent scuffle made me rush in to see what was the matter. It appeared from their fierce recrimination, that the foolish youth had been persuaded to visit a gaming table, and that his losses were far beyond his ability to meet. The imp of Satan who decoyed him there had pretended to pay all these claims from his own purse, and from that time had been continually dunning his miserable victim, who had at last, been goaded into sighing his father's name to a cheque for the required amount."

"Why, that was forgery!" exclaimed Harry Eden. "Whew!"

"No sooner was the deed done than it was repented o," continued John; "and in an agony of shame and remorse he demanded the restoration of the paper, to which his crafty companion doggedly refused to accede.

"The result of their altercation was the struggle I heard, and the penitent youth pouring into my ears the whole history of his follies, and the crime he had nearly been led into committing. I am not ashamed to say that I helped him to obtain the document, and destroyed it, while he executed a little summary vengeance on the knavish cause of all his misery. And miserable he was; not so much from fears of the exposure with which he was threatened, as from an overwhelming horror of the act into which he had suffered himself to be led, and so great was his distress of mind that I at last persuaded him to return home with me.

"Ill both in mind and body, afraid to appear at the office lest his tempter should fulfil his threat of exposure, and expecting nothing less than a father's curse in reply to the full confession he insisted upon immediately forwarding, he remained for several days concealed at my house. It was his presence there, dear Marian, that induced me to call your visit an unfortunate one, and I dare say you will remember how a sigh from my voluntary prisoner startled you on the stair case.

"I suppose you are wondering why you were not admitted to our confidence. Had you been older, ugly, and less romantic, there would have been no reason why you should not have learned the whole particulars directly; but Sophy felt, and I could not but agree with her, that it would be dangerous to interest you in a very handsome young fellow; so we determined to keep his presence secret until the reply of his father to my captive's passionate appeal reached us. I am happy to say that it was much more leniently worded than I expected, and was enclosed in a note to me gratefully acknowledging my share in the transaction, and giving me the means of settling all just claims upon the young man.

"It was his father's wish that he should join him in Germany, and this he resolved to do immediately. 'I feel,' he observed, 'that it is only by prompt obedience that I can prove my regret for the past. Return to the office I cannot, but my plans for the future are arranged, and only await my father's sanction. I will qualify myself for a surgeon.'

"'You!' I exclaimed, 'you who are faint at the sight of blood?'

"'Yes, I,' he firmly replied. 'I have thought long and seriously over the matter, and can only come to the same determination. My days hitherto have been spent in vitiating my own life, and those of my fellow-creatures with whom I have come in contact; from this time I will try to make amends for the ill I have done, and as I have neither talent nor opportunity for healing the soul, I'll see what I can do for the body.'

"With this resolve he left me. Our farewell words were being said in my little sitting-room, and the cab which was to convey him to the Hamburg packet was at the end of the street, when a slippered foot in the hall made me motion my companion to be silent, and I puffed out our candle just as the draught from the hall-door, which had been left ajar for our egress, did the same for the night taper of the intruder.

"Knowing her to be a cowardly little puss, I neither moved nor spoke, imagining that she would instantly retreat; but her shriek of dismay and heavy fall when her hand unwittingly came in contact with Shirley Lansden's, compelled me to summon Sophy to attend to her, until the pleasant discovery that she was not seriously hurt enabled me to join my waiting companion, and see him safely off.

"From that time till to-day we have never met, but I have not been unmindful of him; I have known that he atoned for early disobedience by the tenderest attentions to his father during a protracted and trying illness; and I also know that in a long struggle with his own tastes and feelings, and the still more arduous task of winning the confidence of those who once knew him as unfit to be trusted, he has come off the conqueror. Laying aside all those comforts and luxuries his father's property would enable him to enjoy, he has taken upon himself the ill paid and only half-appreciated duties of a village doctor, and now he asks from us the fullest proof we can give of our faith in his lasting repentance;—he asks of us our pet lamb. At his bidding, I have laid bare the sins and follies of his boyhood; what his manhood is, you all know better than I can tell you. My story is nearly finished; it rests with you, my mother, and with Marian herself, to say how it shall end."

Marian—true-hearted Marian—had already laid her cheek on her lover's shoulder, and was clinging closely to his side; but with quivering lip the agitated man gently disengaged himself from her, and stepping across the room to where Mrs. Eden sat in her arm chair, her eyes shaded by her hand, he knelt down before her. She looked into his face, and gently putting back his hair, said, in low, broken tones, "Poor lad! poor lad! and thou hadst no mother!"

He bent his head upon her lap, and for a brief interval there was silence in