

MEMORANDA.

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

Patter, patter, came the rain, steadily, heavily.

"O, dear, what a dreary day it is," said Lottie Maynard, as she looked up from her sewing, and gazed out of the window of the old farm house, where she resided.

"Dreary enough," replied mother in a cheery voice, although her spirits were evidently depressed by the gloom; "but I hope it may clear up before nightfall."

"I wonder where poor Charley is to-night!" said Lottie, sorrowfully.

"God only knows," replied the mother, drawing a deep sigh; "but I trust his sheltering arms are round him, wherever he may be. It is almost three years now since he went away."

"O, I remember it all so well," said Lottie; "you know, mother, he did not come down to his breakfast that morning, and you sent me up to his room to see if he was ill, for he never needed calling, and when I opened his door, he was nowhere to be seen."

"He was a thoughtless, wayward boy," said the mother, tears starting to her eyes, "but he was ever kind and affectionate toward his mother, and I am afraid your father was rather to stern with him."

"Do you think he will ever come back?" said Lottie, in an earnest voice. "O, how very glad we should all be to see him again; and I am sure father would rejoice at his return."

"I am always hoping and praying that he may return to be a blessing to us all yet," said Mrs. Maynard. "Often I lie awake a great part of the night thinking about him. Sometimes I fear the cruel sea has swallowed him up, and all the fond hopes that were centered in him. Then again, hope whispers he yet lives, and will gladden our hearts again with his presence. And o, what a sweet thought it is! I trust, this trial may be blessed to us all, for God's ways are not as our ways, you know. It looks very dark now, but light may dawn upon us and fill our hearts with joy."

"He is quite a young man now," said Lottie, meditatively.

"Yes," said the mother, "and age and experience often brings wisdom."

Silence reigned for awhile, for both mother