

remarks; pathetic merriment, contrasted with those thin, drawn features, and with the bareness of his belongings. His attic contained a broken table, crowded with inkstand and account-books; a chair, stool, rusty stove and bedstead.

Gerald Benston was twenty-seven. For the last decade he had known the uses of adversity. The restless grey eye, high forehead, wavy light hair seemed to betray the shallow character, did not the firm lines about the mouth betoken the man of sacrifice. As a matter of fact, Gerald devoted his whole energy to the welfare and happiness of a sister, Kathleen, some eighteen years his junior.

Gerald's father, once rich, had fallen into dissolute habits and at his death left his family all but penniless. Though young and equipped with only the smattering of knowledge the village-school afforded, Gerald left home to seek fortune in Chicago. To one of his inexperience and sanguine temperament, it seemed a small matter to get rich. Alas! how his bright dreams dissolved before the stern reality. Too proud to complain and too generous to grieve his mother, he accepted his lot, and, in his letters spoke only of his prospects. God alone knows what it cost him to scrape together the small sums he regularly remitted to his mother.

In two years, he was summoned home. His mother, broken-hearted and worn-out, was dying. With her last breath, she besought Gerald to care for Kathleen, then hardly three years old.

"She shall not know want" was Gerald's promise.

He kept his promise. Kathleen went to a convent-school. Her brother would visit her in faultless attire, for the hire of which he slaved and famished for days after.

The child's fondness for her brother was touching and she showed it in curiously artful ways. By-and-by, when she graduated, she would keep house for him she often declared; she often declared she would brighten his lonely fireside by her presence. "But you never take me home Miss Fleming does; and it is so enjoyable to go with her that I do not like to come back to my school."

"Ah, the house of a bachelor is too dreary for a little girl," Gerald would answer. And if a tear would glisten for a moment on her lashes soon disappeared as smiles returned to her features.

Miss Fleming was a governess giving some lessons in the convent, and Kathleen was one of her pupils. One day, Gerald met