

could only look up to love. The feeble and timid nature of him who shrunk from the blasts of fortune, and sought to hide himself from the conflicts of life, was ill calculated to excite that reverential feeling which is so necessary to perfect woman's affection. There was too much of feminine softness in his character, and all his fine, intellectual gifts could not make amends for a want of decision and manliness which ever commands the respect of the weaker sex. Like some richly wrought casket, the very delicacy of its workmanship, while it enhanced its value, has diminished its usefulness, and the fine gold, which might have stood the wear of this work-day world, has been chiselled away, until all strength is gone, and there remains only the beauty which fits it to be the ornament of a boudoir.

What Wilfred actually suffered from this last disappointment, was never known, but when it was rumoured that he had determined to join a band of hardy travellers, who were about setting forth to explore the ruins of antiquity in the grey old world, beyond the limits of modern civilization, it was shrewdly conjectured that only some powerful motive could have awakened the spirit of adventure in his bosom. Charles, without the slightest suspicion of the true impulse which had given rise to this strange purpose, on the part of his brother, yet warmly advocated it, as a means of giving vigor and stability to his character.— But Amy, whose perceptions had been quickened by her own awakened passions, knew too well what had banished the heart-sick man from his home; although his lips never breathed the tale of love and sorrow in the ear of her whom he now regarded as the bride of his brother. Yet she was of too joyous a temper to understand the full power of a grief which, to a nature like Wilfred's could only end with life. For her, everything wore the rose-tint which first love ever diffuses, and when the sad brow of her hopeless lover no longer gloomed before her, she felt that there was not a single shadow in her path of life. In less than six weeks after the departure of Wilfred Thornton, a merry wedding enlivened the village, and then the glad face of Amy Ellersie was seen to wear the troubled joy of her who turns from the pure pleasures of maidenhood, to welcome the high duties and earnest devotion of a woman's lot.

But Amy had now to learn how closely life's brightest happiness is bordered by its sorrow. Hitherto she had trodden a flower-enamelled path, but now she had entered the more rug-

ged plain, where grow the fruits of life, only to be plucked with toil and care. She was now to taste the bitter waters, which ever flow near the sweet fountain of earthly affection, that the lip which bends to quaff the freshness of the one, is sure to imbibe some drops from the distasteful wave of the other. Never had Amy looked so lovely as she now appeared in the quiet gentleness of her new duties and emotions. Perhaps no expression is so elevating to the human countenance, as that beaming of heartfelt happiness, which is rarely seen, because the feeling which inspires it is so rarely experienced in our unstable life. It is the look which our first parents might have worn in their days of innocence, and which sometimes, even in this dark world, radiates from the hearts of those who find a second Paradise in mutual and satisfied affection.

Amy's first grief rose from the necessity of her husband's absence. Captain Thornton could not resign a career so well suited to his adventurous character, even when tempted by the joys of home and tenderness. A few brief months were given to impassioned happiness, and then the hardy sailor turned from his gentle bride to brave again the perils of the great deep. Amy had never before shed such bitter tears as now dimmed her sweet eyes. It was the earliest, and, as she then believed, the most terrible sorrow which could await her. She was surprised, nay, almost terrified, at the violence of her own emotions, for the unbroken quiet of her happy life had hitherto offered no opportunity for discerning the intensity of her own feelings. Her gayety had heretofore seemed a proof of her thoughtlessness, even as the luxuriant growth of the wind-flower, beautiful as are its blossoms, discloses the shallowness of the soil on which the hand of zephyr has flung the seed. But now she was to learn that the brightest flowers may glow above the deep caverns where are hid the fiercest volcanic fires; and that the cheerfulness, which had been the product of an untilled heart, might be supplanted by those delicate passion-flowers whose fragrance is so delicious to the senses, but whose fruit is so poisonous to the taste.

Immediately after her marriage, Amy had taken up her abode with the aged mother of her husband, and she now devoted herself to the strict performance of every duty which could aione while away the dreary hours of absence. Mrs. Thornton had arrived at that period of life when "the grasshopper is a burden," and to smooth the pillow of declining age, to bear with the irritability of infirmity,