

strive not to think of them. You have heard, Leora, of your mother—she is in Florence, and came to me to-night wishing to see you. Whatever you decide upon shall be done—do you wish to see her?”

Leora was fearfully agitated, she strove to rise in the bed, but Everard prevented her; hot tears ran down her pale face, while in accents of bitter sorrow she exclaimed—

“Oh! father, how can you mock me?—Do I wish to see that faithless mother and false wife? How can you ask me such a question? Is not the curse of her guilt upon me? Is not her memory my shame? Why should she wish to look upon one to whom she has been cause of such bitter grief?”

There was a noise of some one falling heavily, and all was still. Leora was too much absorbed in her own feelings to notice it, but Everard motioning to Mrs. Castlemore to take his place, immediately left the chamber. Aline had fainted, she had fallen upon the ground, from which he raised her, and carried her in his arms to the library; he placed her in a large arm chair, bathing with his own hand the marble and rigid brow. The ghastly and wasted features before him had something very awful in their semblance to death, and Everard shuddered as he looked—and then her hair changed to the colour of extreme age—was this Aline? The young wife that had lain in his bosom. What a rush of strong and agonized emotions came over the heart of the wronged husband—and through all the bitterness and pain there stole a faint ray of mercy for that erring and miserable woman. She recovered slowly; as returning consciousness came, Everard stepped back, watching her in silence; Aline moved not her position for many moments; when she did, her glance was upward, and Everard heard distinctly the low and broken accents that murmured, “My God, thou has dealt justly with me.” The power of that deep repentance awed even Luis Everard, he dared neither to mock nor reproach; but Aline grew sensible of her situation, she rose, and saw Everard leaning with folded arms against a pillar; she looked a moment at him, and a strange, wild smile played round her bloodless lips, as she said—

“You are bitterly avenged! Ay, if it afford you pleasure, I have drained to the dregs the cup of earthly suffering. She was the sole idol of this broken heart. Lo, it is shivered to pieces! but it needed not this last and bitter pang—it is long since I have laid my head in the dust, a humbled and repentant woman. Remember you of a time long past, when we stood side by side before God’s altar—when the mockery of a marriage was said, which pronounced me your wife when my heart was given to another? And you Luis Everard knew it—you knew I loved another, when you bore me a bride to your home—did that knowledge make you gentle, forbearing, and patient, to one so sorely tried? If it had, we might never have parted. Harsh and stern to me, you were ever. Man, man, was it for you to teach my child to hate me.

She was gone ere Everard had fully recovered from the effect of her words.

(To be continued.)

AWAY FROM THE REVEL.

Away from the revel! the night-star is up;
Away, come away, there is strife in the cup!
There is shouting of song, there is wine in the bowl;
But listen and drink, they will madden thy soul!

The foam of the goblet is sparkling and bright,
Rising like gems in the torches’ red light;
But the glance of thine eye, if it lingers there,
Will change its mild gleam for the maniac’s glare!

The pearl-studded chalice, displaying in pride,
May challenge thy lip to the purple draught’s tide;
But the pearl of the dew-drop, the voice of the breeze,
Are dearer, and calmer, more blessed than these.

Oh! come, it is twilight; the night-star is up;
Its ray is more bright than the silver-brimm’d cup;
The boat gently dances; the snowy sail fills,
We’ll glide o’er the waters, or rove on the hills.

We’ll kneel on the mountain, beneath the dark pine;
Our hearts’ prayer the incense, and nature the shrine;
Back on the festal we’ll look from the wave,
As the eye of the free on the chains of the slave.

Oh! come, it is twilight; the moon is awake;
The breath of the vesper-chime rides o’er the lake;
There is peace all around us, and health in the breeze,
And what can be dearer, more blessed than these?

SCRAPS FROM MASTER HUMPHREY’S CLOCK.

A PROPOSAL.

Nell shrunk timidly from all the dwarf’s advances towards conversation and fled from the very sound of his voice, nor were the lawyer’s smiles less terrible to her than Quilp’s grimaces. She lived in such continual dread and apprehension of meeting one or other of them upon the stairs or in the passages if she stirred from

her grandfather’s chamber, that she seldom left it for a moment until late at night, when the silence encouraged her to venture forth and breathe the purer air of some empty room.

One night she had stolen to her usual window and was sitting there very sorrowfully, for the old man had been worse that day, when she thought she heard her name pronounced by a voice in the street, and looking down, recognized Kit, whose endeavours to attract her attention had roused her from her sad reflections.

“Miss Nell!” said the boy in a low voice.
“Yes,” replied the child, doubtful whether she ought to hold any communication with the supposed culprit, but inclining to her old favourite still, “what do you want?”

“I have wanted to say a word to you for a long time,” the boy replied, “but the people below have driven me away and wouldn’t let me see you. You don’t believe—I hope you don’t really believe—that I deserve to be cast off as I have been, do you Miss?”

“I must believe it,” returned the child. “Or why would grandfather have been so angry with you?”

“I don’t know,” replied Kit. “I’m sure I never deserved it from him, no, nor from you. I can say that with a true and honest heart, any way. And then to be driven from the door, when I only came to ask how old master was—!”

“They never told me that,” said the child. “I didn’t know it indeed. I wouldn’t have had them do it for the world.”

“Thankee Miss,” returned Kit, “it’s comfortable to hear you say that. I said I never would believe that it was your doing.”

“That was right,” said the child eagerly.

“Miss Nell,” cried the boy coming under the window and speaking in a lower tone, “there are new masters down stairs. It’s a change for you.”

“It is indeed,” replied the child.
“And so it will be for him when he gets better,” said the boy pointing towards the sick room.

“—If he ever does,” added the child, unable to restrain her tears.
“Oh, he’ll do that, he’ll do that,” said Kit, “I’m sure he will. You mustn’t be cast down, Miss Nell. Now don’t be, pray.”

These words of encouragement and consolation were few and roughly said, but they affected the child and made her for the moment weep the more.

“He’ll be sure to get better now,” said the boy anxiously, “if you don’t give way to low spirits and turn ill yourself, which would make him worse and throw him back just as he was recovering. When he does, say a good word—say a kind word for me, Miss Nell.”

“They tell me I must not even mention your name to him for a long, long time,” rejoined the child, “I dare not; and even if I might, what good would a kind word do you, Kit? We shall be very poor. We shall scarcely have bread to eat.”

“It’s not that I may be taken back,” said the boy, “that I ask the favour of you. It isn’t for the sake of food and wages that I’ve been waiting about so long in hopes to see you. Don’t think that I’d come in a time of trouble to talk of such things as them.”

The child looked gratefully and kindly at him, but waited that he might speak again.

“No, it’s not that,” said Kit hesitating, “it’s something very different from that. I haven’t got much sense I know, but if he could be brought to believe that I’d been a faithful servant to him, doing the best I could, and never meaning harm, perhaps he mightn’t—”

Here Kit faltered so long that the child entreated him to speak out, and quickly, for it was very late, and time to shut the window.

“Perhaps he mightn’t think it over venturesome of me to say—well then, to say this—cried Kit with sudden boldness. “This home is gone from you and him. Mother and I have got a poor one, but that’s better than this with all these people here, and why not come there, till he’ll have time to look about and find a better!”

The child did not speak. Kit, in the relief of having made his proposition, found his tongue loosened, and spoke out in its favour with his utmost eloquence.

“You think,” said the boy, “that it’s very small and inconvenient. So it is, but it’s very clean. Perhaps you think it would be noisy, but there’s not a quieter court than ours in all the town. Don’t be afraid of the children, the baby hardly ever cries, and the other one is very good—besides, I’d mind em. They wouldn’t vex you much I’m sure. Do try, Miss Nell, do try. The little front room up stairs is very pleasant. You can see a piece of the church clock through the chimneys, and almost tell the time; mother says it would be just the thing for you, and so it would, and you’d have her to wait upon you both and me to run of errands. We don’t mean money, bless you; you’re not to think of that. Will you try him Miss Nell? Only say you’ll try him. Do try to make old master come, and ask him first what I have done—will you promise that, Miss Nell?”

Before the child could reply to this earnest solicitation, the street door opened, and Mr. Brass thrusting out his night-capped head called in a surly voice, “Who’s there?” Kit immediately glided away, and Nell closing the window softly, drew back into the room.

It was natural enough that her short and unfinished dialogue with Kit should leave a strong impression on her mind, and influence her dreams that night, and her reflections for a long, long

time. Surrounded by unfeeling creditors, and mercenary attendants upon the sick, and meeting in the height of her anxiety and sorrow with little regard or sympathy even from the women about her, it is not surprising that the affectionate heart of the child should have been touched to the quick by one kind and generous spirit, however uncouth the temple in which it dwelt. Thank heaven that the temples of such spirits are not made with hands, and that they may be more worthily hung with patchwork than with purple and fine linen.

CHILDISHNESS.

All that day and all the next, the old man remained in this state. He wandered up and down the house and into and out of the various rooms, as if with some vague intent of bidding them adieu, but he referred neither by direct allusions nor in any other manner to the interview of the morning or the necessity of finding some other shelter. An indistinct idea he had that the child was desolate and in want of help, for he often drew her to his bosom and bade her be of good cheer, saying that they would not desert each other; but he seemed unable to contemplate their real position more distinctly, and was still the listless, passionless creature, that suffering of mind and body had left him.

We call this a state of childishness, but it is the same poor hollow mockery of it, that death is of sleep. Where, in the dull eyes of doating men, are the laughing light and life of childhood, the gaiety that has known no check, the frankness that has felt no chill, the hope that has never withered, the joys that fade in blossoming? Where, in the sharp lineaments of rigid and unsightly death, is the calm beauty of slumber, telling of rest for the waking hours that are past, and gentle hopes, and loves for those which are to come? Lay death and sleep down, side by side, and say who shall find the two akin. Send forth the child and childish man together, and blush for the pride that rebels our own old happy state, and gives its title to an ugly and distorted image.

Thursday arrived, and there was no alteration in the old man. But a change came upon him that evening, as he and the child sat silently together.

In a small yard below his window there was a tree—green and flourishing enough for such a place—and as the air stirred among its leaves, it threw a rippling shadow on the white wall. The old man sat watching the shadows as they trembled in this patch of light until the sun went down, and when it was night, and the moon was slowly rising, he still sat in the same spot.

To one who had been tossing on a restless bed so long, even these few green leaves and this tranquil light, although it languished among chimneys and house tops, were pleasant things. They suggested quiet places afar off, and rest, and peace.

The child thought more than once that he was moved, and had forborne to speak. But now he shed tears—tears that it lightened her aching heart to see—and making as though he would fall upon his knees, besought her to forgive him.

“Forgive you—what?” said Nell, interposing to prevent his purpose. “Oh grandfather, what should I forgive?”

“All that is past, all that has come upon thee Nell, all that was done in that uneasy dream,” returned the old man.

“Do not talk so,” said the child. “Pray do not. Let us speak of something else.”

“Yes, yes, we will,” he rejoined. “And it shall be of what we talked of long ago—many months—months is it, or weeks, or days? which is it, Nell?”

“I do not understand you,” said the child.

“It has come back upon me to-day, it has all come back since we have been sitting here. I bless thee for it Nell!”

“For what, dear grandfather?”

“For what you said when we were first made beggars, Nell. Let us speak softly. Hush! for if they knew our purpose down stairs, they would cry that I was mad and take thee from me. We will not stop here another day. We will go far away from here.”

“Yes, let us go,” said the child earnestly. “Let us begone from this place, and never turn back or think of it again. Let us wander barefoot through the world, rather than linger here.”

“We will”—answered the old man, “we will travel afoot through fields and woods, and by the sides of rivers, and trust ourselves to God in the places where He dwells. It is far better to lie down at night beneath an open sky like that yonder—see how bright it is—than to rest in close rooms which are always full of care and weary dreams. Thou and I together, Nell, may be cheerful and happy yet, and learn to forget this time, as it had never been.

“We will be happy,” cried the child. “We never can be here.”

“No, we never can again—never again—that’s truly said,” rejoined the old man. “Let us steal away to-morrow morning—early and softly that we may not be seen or heard—and leave no trace or track for them to follow by. Poor Nell, thy cheek is pale and thy eyes are heavy with watching and weeping for me—I know—for me; but thou wilt be well again, and merry too, when we are far away. To-morrow morning, dear, we’ll turn our faces from this scene of sorrows, and be as free and happy as the birds.”

And then the old man clasped his hands above her head, and said in a few broken words that from that time they would wander up and down together, and never part more until Death took one or other of the twain.

The child’s heart beat high with hope and confidence. She had no thought of hunger or cold, or thirst, or suffering. She saw in this, but a return of the simple pleasures they had once enjoyed, a