

pelled to leave his newly wedded wife. The disabled portion of the fleet was again ready for sea, and delay was impossible, but he left her surrounded by comforts, and he hoped that before his return, time would have softened the resentment of her guardian, and restored her again to his favour. He made arrangements to remit, for her use, the larger portion of his pay, and strove to cheer her by the promise of long letters, written to her by every homeward bound vessel that crossed their track.

And so he left her, before one little month of wedded bliss was past, and she felt as if with him, went all that made life lovely. But time passed on, and his letters were indeed frequent, and her heart was soled by the tone of deep and devoted tenderness which pervaded them. And then new hopes sprang up in her breast, and she looked forward with joy to the sweet tie which was shortly to bind her more closely than before, to him she loved, and when at length her little Madelaine was born, she marked with eager delight the lapse of every day which brought that moment nearer, when he would return, and she might cast herself, with this new treasure, on his breast.

Beguided by the tender cares of maternal affection, the hours passed on less wearily than before; the young wife's cheerfulness and contentment returned, and if Harry was still as ardently longed for as ever, yet his absence left her not so desolate as at first. Hitherto, his letters had been frequent and regular, but then came a long interval of silence, and she grew uneasy. Her nights were sleepless, or disturbed by frightful dreams of wrecks and ocean disasters. At last a letter came; it was sealed with black, and her heart sunk within her, when she beheld it,—yet with trembling eagerness to learn her fate, she tore it open, and its first lines announced the dissolution of her dearest hopes.

It was written by an officer on board the Sphinx, the sloop of war which Dorival had commanded, and conveyed the heart-rending intelligence that he was no more. A malignant fever had broken out in the fleet, and carried off several of their finest officers, and him among the rest. The unhappy wife was overwhelmed by this blow—she could not admit the thought that he, whom she loved, was gone—gone, never more to return,—without paroxysms of the wildest despair, which in turn were succeeded by the stupor of unutterable grief. Yet it was sadly true that she had been for more than three months a widow,—her child, from the day of its birth, fatherless.

The first bitter anguish of sorrow over, and thoughts and fears for the future pressed terribly upon her. She had no native energy of character, and her showy education had not tended to promote the growth of any vigorous quality or sentiment within her. Nurtured in the luxurious habits of a warm and enervating climate, she was too much the slave of indulgence, both physical and mental; to

rely, in this hour of bitter emergency upon any effort of her own,—neither had she that vital principle of faith, which would have led her to raise her upward gaze through the dark cloud that overshadowed her, to the cheering ray that emanates from the fountain of perfect love, to guide and enlighten the humblest child of sorrow.

Yet selfish as Mrs. Dorival naturally was, her anxiety for her infant, in this instance, superseded all concern for herself. She had drank the bitter cup of affliction to its dregs; but how could she bear to expose that darling child to penury and want? And what else awaited it—for whither could she go to seek for it subsistence and a home? Distracted by fears for this sole remaining object of her love, she resolved to appeal once more to her guardian, who, she hoped, might be moved by her utter desolation, to grant her forgiveness and aid, even if she were still refused admittance to his home. A letter was accordingly written and sent, but shortly returned to her unopened, accompanied by a note from the overseer of the estate, informing her that in consequence of his son's marriage to a French lady, Mr. St. Clair, had disposed of all his property in the island, and removed to France, where, with his children, he would henceforth continue to reside.

Her last hope was crushed by this intelligence. She had but a trifling sum in her possession, and that was rapidly wasting away. It was the small arrears of her husband's pay, due to him at the time of his death, and had been transmitted to her by the purser of the ship,—and when it should be gone, how was she to replace it? Her present expensive lodgings at all events must be abandoned, but for what other shelter? There was none open to her, and in this extremity the recollection of her husband's father occurred to her, and the resolution was instantly formed of going to him, and claiming the shelter and support, which it was his duty to afford her. She had heard Harry speak of his peculiarities; but she could not have formed any adequate idea of his true habits and character, or, friendless as she was, she would never have thrown herself on his protection.

Time, even with Harry Dorival, had cast a softening veil over his father's failings, and he frequently regretted having violated his filial obligations, by clandestinely deserting the paternal roof. But for several years after quitting it, the impression of the sufferings he had there endured, remained so vivid, as to make him shudder at the bare thought of again recrossing that cheerless threshold. And when, as time passed on, and these remembrances lost somewhat of their painful distinctness, it was constantly his purpose to return, and make his peace with his offended parent; but the duties of his profession had allowed him only brief intervals for rest on land, and then, always in parts of the country remote from the place of his birth. He had written several times in a