

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AFTER THE STORM.

THE painful and unfortunate crisis of life often arise and darken like a thunder-storm, and seem for the moment perfectly terrific and overwhelming; but wait a little, and the cloud sweeps by, and the earth, which seemed about to be torn to pieces and destroyed, comes out as good as new. Not a bird is dead; not a flower killed: and the sun shines just as it did before. So it was with John's financial trouble. When it came to be investigated and looked into, it proved much less terrible than had been feared. It was not utter ruin. The high character which John bore for honor and probity, the general respect which was felt for him by all to whom he stood indebted, led to an arrangement by which the whole business was put into his hands, and time given him to work it through. His brother-in-law came to his aid, advancing money, and entering into the business with him. Our friend, Harry Endicott, was only too happy to prove his devotion to Rose by offers of financial assistance. In short, there seemed every reason to hope that, after a period of somewhat close sailing, the property might be brought into clear water again, and go on even better than before.

To say the truth, too, John was really relieved by that terrible burst of confidence to his sister. It is a curious fact, that giving full expression to bitterness of feeling or indignation against one we love seems to be such a relief, that it always brings a revulsion of kindness. John never loved his sister so much as when he heard her plead his wife's cause with him; for, though, in some bitter, impatient hour a man may feel, which John did, as if he would be glad to sunder all ties, and tear himself away from an uncongenial wife, yet a good man never can forget the woman that once he loved, and who is the mother of his children. Those sweet, sacred visions and illusions of first love will return again and again, even after disenchantment; and the better and the purer the man is, the more sacred is the appeal to him of woman's weakness. Because he is strong, and she is weak, he feels that it would be unmanly to desert her; and, if there ever was any thing for which John thanked his sister, it was when she went over and spent hours with his wife, patiently listening to her complainings, and soothing her as if she had been a petted child. All the circle of friends, in a like manner, bore with her for his sake.

Thanks to the intervention of Grace's husband and of Harry, John was not put to the trial and humiliation of being obliged to sell the