

the same paths his father had trodden before him; and according to the old saying that "money goes to money, and good fortune to good fortune," he had married a wife with money, not that she had anything very considerable, or that he had married her for it, only he had happened to fall right honestly in love with a woman who had money; and since his marriage, his finances and his worldly prospects had prospered continuously.

Basil Crawford had been "best man" at the wedding, and now since his return from Wales he had stood godfather to the third olive branch of the family. He constantly told Roderick Jamieson that he was more jealous of him than of any living man, and that he was almost sure he hated him, for having everything he desired in the world whilst he himself was left out in the cold with all his heart's desires.

He was more intimate with the Jamiesons than with any other friends he had; he was also a constant visitor at their house, and however dull and dejected he had felt on entering, he never quitted their hospitable door, which opened so readily to him, without feeling cheered and inspirited.

It was a pleasant comfortable house, but with not the least oppression of grandeur and show about it. Its chief individuality was a sense of pleasant easy prosperity which could not fail to make itself felt by any visitor. Every chair in the drawing-room was a cosy roomy one, as if rather inviting you to remain and be comfortable there than seeming to be desirous of getting rid of you, as some of one's acquaintances' chairs appear to express. Basil Crawford had never spent an hour which he had not enjoyed in that house, and he had never left it save with regret.

Mrs. Jamieson was a thoroughly charming little woman, a devoted wife and mother, a delightful hostess, and as true and staunch a friend as it was possible to find. Her pretty children were all that is winning and fascinating in childhood; and many a time, as Basil Crawford sat playing with the children as they gathered round the fire in the dusk, he had said to himself that this household was his *beau ideal* of a happy fireside and a perfect English home. Sometimes he wondered whether it would ever be his happiness to introduce Gwendoline to the Jamiesons, he felt so sure that she and Mrs. Jamieson would understand one another so well, and be such good friends. Now and again he would picture her as one of that happy group round the fireside; what evenings they would be when Gwendoline, brightest and fairest amongst them, would be there by his side, as his wife.

Even now she was no stranger at that hearth. Basil would tell them all about his visits to Ather-ton, and of his friends there, and Mrs. Jamieson had plied him with questions about his godfather's daughter until she had arrived at a fair inkling of the truth, and no one could have hoped more sincerely than she did, that all would "come right" in that direction.

Since his late return to London it had been plainly apparent that something had gone wrong; his manner was dull and heavy, and his usual buoyant spirits had evidently deserted him for the time being. She longed to know what had happened, but scarcely liked to enquire of him, she could but wait, believing that before long she would hear of it.

He had not been in once to spend the evening since the christening-day, and then Mrs. Jamieson suggested to her husband that he should go and desire his presence with an excuse which was partly made up for the occasion. Accordingly Basil Crawford received the visit which has been alluded to.

"My wife wants you to come in to-morrow evening," said Roderick Jamieson; "but you must be in time for the seven o'clock dinner, as she has a particular motive in asking you to come—she wants you to take especial notice of the parlour-maid."

"Of the parlour-maid!" and there was some astonishment in Basil Crawford's tones.

"Yes, she is a girl we all like, and sometimes she lends a helping hand in the nursery, and she plays with and amuses the children so capitally, we should be grieved if we had to part with her; her manners are usually pleasant and attentive that every one notices her; but lately there has been a most unpleasant mystery, and the girl is so changed that we do not know what to make of the

affair. To begin with, I must tell you my wife has missed some money. She had left five sovereigns in one of the small drawers of her dressing-table. It was of course a most absurd place to leave money, for these little trumpery drawers have no lock; but bless me! what is the use of speaking to women on these matters, they are so frightfully careless with money! She says she thought everybody was honest—a pretty thing to rely on! as the consequence has proved, for when she opened the drawer to look for them, three out of the five sovereigns were gone—clean gone."

"Dear me!" was all Basil Crawford could think of to remark; adding, however, after a short pause: "but is Mrs. Jamieson sure she did not put the three sovereigns somewhere else?"

"Sure, yes! positive, certain! And everybody else is certain they did not see them, and certain they did not take them; in fact everybody and everything is certain; but what is most certain of all is that the money is gone!"

"And what leads you to suspect this girl of taking them? You say you like her more than any of the other servants."

"Yes, and I would not have had this happen for worlds, but reason seems to point to her as the culprit. You see, the housemaid was away on three days' holiday, and this girl was doing her work as well as her own, and accordingly she was the only person who entered the room at all, or who had the slightest pretext whatever for going there on the morning that the money was missed. The girl's own manner too, tends to accuse herself, for she is utterly changed since this affair took place."

"Perhaps the mere fact of being suspected may be sufficient to upset her so much."

"Well, I would rather any one but she were proved guilty," said Roderick Jamieson; "And I want you to come and see the state of things, and help us with your advice. It only happened two days ago, and I should like to clear up the mystery amongst ourselves; but if you come to dinner to-morrow night Sophy will wait at table, and you will see the change in the girl; and I should like you to have a conversation with my coachman—he is a most respectable fellow, and has been with me about a year, and is thought to be rather smitten with Sophy. You should see how indignant he is at the bare suspicion that she can have anything to do with the losing of the money!"

"I will come," was the answer.

"And come half an hour before dinner, so as to have a romp with the children before they go to bed or they will be disappointed," were Roderick Jamieson's last words.

The next morning a piece of business came to him with unexpected prospects of good things, and Basil Crawford determined that from thenceforth he would set down "Wednesday" in his calendar as a "happy day." In the evening, at the hour appointed, he found his way to Jamieson's house. He was in time for his half-hour's romp with the little ones, and even a few minutes more; for his good luck, and his anxiety to tell it to friends, whom he knew would give their ready sympathy to him, hastened him on his way.

Instead of Sophia, who usually opened the door to him, it was the housemaid who let him in. He lost no time in mounting to the drawing room. As he ascended the staircase he became aware of a considerable thumping and knocking, which was apparently taking place on the inner side of the drawing room door, and in some perplexity as to the cause of it, he cautiously turned the handle and immediately nearly tumbled over too very small people who were in a very eager excited state just inside the room. It was his host's small elder daughter, and her still smaller brother, who instantly clung round him, dancing and shouting their delighted welcome.

"Did you ever know such dreadful children!" said their mother, advancing; "they have been listening for your coming, and when they heard you ring, I was obliged to shut the door to keep them in, or they would have been headlong over one another down the stairs in their great anxiety to welcome you!"

"One cannot but appreciate a hearty welcome," was his laughing reply, "even when so much largeness of heart is exhibited by such small people." Roderick Jamieson had not yet returned, so he gave himself up to the imperative importunities of

the children. But in the course of his romps with them he gained some astonishing information from their mother.

"Yes, it was all too true, she told him; their suspicions had been correct; Sophy had, in a moment of temptation, taken the missing money. Indeed, all uncertainty in the matter was now at an end, for the girl herself had confessed what she had done the evening before. She had acknowledged herself too miserable to endure the state of things any longer, and with floods of tears had thrown herself on her mistress' mercy, and expressed herself willing to abide by her decision in the matter."

"I am sure I do not know what to do," concluded Mrs. Jamieson in a plaintive voice. It seems such a dreadful thing to turn a girl away without a character, particularly a girl like Sophy, who has been so much liked by us all, and who is such a treasure for playing with the children. And yet, I suppose it is wrong to keep the girl."

"What does Roderick think?"

"Roderick says he leaves it all to me—just what he always says when there is a vexed question. I think men are always glad to shift any little anxiety on to some other shoulders, and if they have a wife it is so easy. I am sorry for the girl in every way, for you know she was rather partial to John Symonds, and now he is so tremendously indignant at this proceeding of hers that he refuses to speak to her. I suppose one cannot wonder at it, he is such a very respectable man; but still one cannot help pitying her, and wondering what will become of her. Her distress is beyond conception; but since yesterday she has left off crying and is utterly stolid and silent."

"I should insist on Roderick giving an opinion one way or another," said Basil; "his opinion is always a good one to have, I have found many a time."

"Oh, you are quite right!" she answered, with a complaisant movement of her head and an appearance of her comfortable little double chin. "One may be certain his opinion is a right one, but—" and with a comical change of expression, she added, "but I really believe he does not himself know what to think or advise. The first moment when he heard that John Symonds had sent Sophy to Coventry, he said it was quite right, and only what could be expected; then a little while afterwards he said that John should have had an explanation first, if he really was in love with her."

"Well, he was not very far wrong in both his views," said Basil, energetically; "one cannot tell how strongly she may have been tempted; and you say no one can have been more contrite for wrongdoing that she has been; and, at all events, she confessed her misdeeds, so she deserves recommendation to mercy. We do not know the whole case yet. And I must say I always liked that girl."

(To be continued.)

THE RIVER JORDAN.

Jordan is about the color of a new slate—a slate with a greenish-gray cloud still covering its surface. Its waters are opaque, thickened with clay, but delicious in temperature and very refreshing to a pilgrim's palate. Is it a wonder that the river rushes like a mill-race? From its source to its mouth, one hundred and thirty-six miles in a bee-line, it descends three thousand feet. Its very name, "Yarden," in Hebrew, signifies descent. It twists and turns until it has trebled the natural course from fountain to sea. It rises in its might and covers the plains, and drives back the flocks and herds that pasture along its banks. You cannot bridge it; often you cannot ford it. Thrice was it miraculously parted in the old miraculous days that the prophets might pass over it dry shod.

—The eye of age looks into my heart! The voice of age echoes mournfully through it. The heavy head and palsied hand of age plead irresistibly for its sympathies; I venerate old age; and I love not the man who can look without emotion upon the sunset of life, when the dusk of evening begins to gather over the watery eye, and the shadows of twilight grow broader and deeper upon the understanding.