

At the mention of this lady's name, Langdon placed his hand somewhere near the region of his heart, and, looking at Markham, sighed: then, in mock heroic tones continued,—

"Does Laura still retain her beautiful cream coloured complexion, her large, dark, slumberous eyes, and tresses black as the raven's wing? Ah! me: the tender grace of those days will never come back; and, no matter how much one may decry sentiment, the recollections of old times, when the feelings were fresh and susceptible, will, at certain intervals, moisten the eyes with tears."

Markham sat with his large grey eyes, apparently wandering to some scenes in his own joyous youth: or else his mind was dwelling in sadness on his own broken hopes and ruined aspirations, for his face wore a painful expression of despondency and gloom. He seemed as he mused to be utterly regardless of Langdon's presence, and had evidently paid little attention to the latter's interrogations or joyous happy mood.

"Come, come," said Langdon, "cheer up my friend! Do not allow this loss you've sustained—which, I admit, is very great—to sadden your heart, or paralyze your energies.—Remember that life is new to you, and a brave heart and determined, will overcomes many difficulties."

"I am not desponding," said Markham,— "but on the contrary, hopeful and reliant; but the thought occurred to my mind, in this fit of abstraction which sometimes comes over me, that I ought to go and see the vessel; besides I have not seen the Captain yet to learn the extent of the loss."

"What is the Captain's name?" said Langdon. "It is very strange, since all the crew at the time of the wreck were saved, that he has not written to you. I was told the men were safely landed, and as the vessel lies stranded on the shore, some few miles from the city, I would advise you to visit the place without delay. I have no doubt a considerable part of the cargo could be saved, and, while I remain in the city, you may command my services to any extent you please, as I shall be only too happy to assist you in the execution of any business connected with the ship."

He spoke with great earnestness, and with unusual sincerity and warmth of manner, not often to be observed in one who, for a long time, sacrificed all noble feelings and cherished sentiments of virtue, for selfish aims, pursuits and follies.

Markham thanked him for his kindness and consideration, and the interest he manifested in his behalf, remarking, that he intended to pay a visit to an old and esteemed friend on the morrow, and politely requested him to accompany him. They could also visit the ship on the same day.

He then related to him the circumstances connected with the contemplated visit—the note he had received,—when, at the mention of Norwich, Langdon went wild with delight, stat-

ing that he was at one time intimately acquainted with Mr. Gibson, and also that at Norwich he had spent some of the happiest hours of his life. After his father's death, and the successful completion of his college course, he had seen Mr. Gibson but seldom; while the reckless associates with whom he spent most of his time, and the habits of dissipation, tended to estrange him altogether from society, and, in the end, drove him forth as an outcast from his home.

"I shall accompany you with pleasure," he replied; "for I long to see the dear old place again: and Venetia, too—how stupid in me to forget her! Is she much changed, or does she still retain the same beauty as of old, and that good-sense gentleness and modesty, which so much enhances personal loveliness? O Markham! how much we long in after years for that freshness of feeling, simplicity and guilelessness, and that freedom from anxiety and care which we lose with youth. The shadows also deepen, as we descend life's gloomy valley; but the golden sunrise of youth gild its fragrant mountain tops."

He reiterated again and again the pleasure this visit would afford him, and dwelt with eloquence and pathos on the memory of their early days—the associations and delights of childhood—the friendly contests and rivalries of youth.

"I regret to state," Markham replied, in answer to the many repeated questions of Langdon, which, from his wild and exuberant manner of asking, often provoked a conflict of railery, intermingled with laughter and wit, "that I have seen Mr. Gibson but once since we left college. Business and its duties have so much occupied my mind, and attracted attention, that I had quite forgotten him, until the note which I received this evening, and his generous offers of assistance in my present fallen state of fortune, brought my mind back to the associations of the past, and gave me fresh courage and hope to dwell upon the future."

"Well, I am glad you have one good friend you can look to in the hour of need. I shall call at your office in the morning, and we can start in the first train for Norwich. It was my intention on first arriving here to start immediately for home; and had I not seen you to-night, hearing as I did of your loss, I concluded upon calling at your office before leaving the city. Let us renew again," he said tenderly, "the bond of that association which links the heart to the noble aspirations and unsullied dreams of youth! I am sick when I look back upon the barren past—of the life I have been leading for the last ten years—and, unless I find some business to engage my mind and banish reflection, I shall sink into a miserable sophist, cynic, or recluse!"

"I have better hopes of you than that, for you are now arriving at that period of life when reason triumphs over passion. But it is time I was starting," said Markham, looking at his watch. "I expected to hear from you an account of your visit to Germany, but this plea-