erious in my life," he said briefly.

"I suppose some people are happy here -my sister and her husband, for instance," said Geraldine slowly. "Perhaps with a home and friends, and pursuits and interests like theirs, one might be happy even in the country."

A sudden glow lighted up his face as he turned quieth towards her.

"Ah, Ger Adine-" "It's my birday; me shall have some valentines to-morrow," interrupted irrepressible Mollie, "and auntie won't-she telled me so. Nobody won't send her

none." Mr. Scarsdale caught Mollie round the

waist and lifted her up.
"How do you know, Miss Spoilt? Did she tell you that valentines were only for children ?"

"No; auntie telled me nobody would send her none. Poor auntie! Will 'oo send her one and me too," added Mollie insinustingly—roses and snow and ice and ickle boys wis wings blowing trumpets like Freddy's? Please do, Mr. Scarsdale!"
"Very well, Mollie; you shall have one
all roses and snow and Cupids. What

must auntie's be like?" he asked, smiling down at Mollie. "I know," said Mollie shaking her head

very wisely-"a nice big boy like 'oo,

"Don't be tiresome, Mollie!" interrupted Geraldine crossly. "Mr. Scarsdale, you quite spoil her. As to valentines, I think they get more objectionable and vulgar every year."

"Nevertheless it is a good old institution, and we will do it all honor The roses and Cupids and spangles please the little ones; don't they, Mollie? Good-bye, Miss Sport," he said, putting her down.—
"You shall have your valentine. And now, Miss Cameron, I will wish you good evening."

"Good-bye, Mr. Scarsdale," was the brief reply, as for a moment she suffered him to take her hand.

Though the words were so coldly spoken, Geraldine got up after he had left the room and went to the window. She watched the dark figure walking away in the gathering gloom till the dense masses of the shrubbery hid it from sight. What did he mean? Why had he uttered her name and then broken off suddenly?-Why did that half-smile cross his lips at her stiff "good-bye"? Above all, what did his doings or sayings signify to her?

She stood listening to the dreary plash of the rain-drops against the window and the wild moan of the wind as it tossed the branches to and fro. She shivered as she looked into the blank dimness, and detest-ed the country and all it contained more "No," she thought discontentedly; "not

for worlds would I drag on an existence in the dismal monotonous country. How Alice and Harry contrive to exist here I don't know. With nothing to do, nothing to think of, nobody to see, and every day exactly like the one before it, it is horri-Nothing should induce me to live such a life!"

nch a life!"

Notwithstanding these conclusions Geraldine had a dim conception she was wrong, a secret conviction that the whirl of gayety in which she lived was all glit-

and quite convinced that auntie Gera's was not a letter at all but "an ugly penny valentine!"

"Was not Arthur Scarsdale here last night?" asked Sir Henry presently. "I met him at the gate as I came in.

"No," said Lady Netherby. "Tes," corrected G raldine. "He stayed only a short time, Alice, and would not let me call you. I forgot to tell you after-

Sir Henry gave a sharp glance at his sister-in-law; but the quiet proud face

baffled his scrutiny.

After a time Geraldine made her escape to her own room; and a few bitter remorseful tears rose to her eyes as she opened her letter and read what Arthur Scarsdale had to say. The note was quite short, but it took her a long time to read. His wife! Yes; and in her heart she felt that the love of which he told so quietly was tender and true. His wife! She folded the letter and stayed a long long time looking dreamily out of the window over to where Branscombe Woods stood out dark against the sky. At last she roused herself, turned away from the fair prospect, and opened her writing-desk.

"I could not do it," she said. The mo notonous life would kill me."

They she thought of her brilliant butter-fly existence in London, and its everchanging round of pleasure, its luxury, sparkle and flattery, and all the other glories and, as she thought, necessaries of her life. Not even for Arthur Scarsdale's love could she give them up.

"After all, I do not care for him; it only grieves me to give him pain. No, no, I dare not risk it. But I wish I had never come here, never seen him. I am sorry for his sake!"

Four years passed away before Geraldine Cameron saw Silverlands again .-Then she came down on a long visit to her sister's home to recruit after a season of unusual gaiety.
It was a dull February evening, misty

and chill outside, bright with firelight within. Geraldine was seated on her old favorite couch near the fire. Mr. Scars dale stood opposite to her so much in the same attitude, and with so much of the grave quiet manner, that but four minutes, instead of four years, might have passed since the twilight evening so long

"Was it all a dream?" thought Geraldine, noting the quiet composure of his face. It was just as determined-looking as ever, with no added lines telling of re gret or sorrow; his eyes were as steady in meeting hers as if no past lay between them. Only in one thing was he changed He saw in her simply a lady to be treated with all deference and courtesy, nothing

They knew nothing of each other's thoughts, these two once so nearly close together. Between them now was but stiff politeness, the elaborate courtesy of mere acquaintances, which was worse by many degrees than downright rudeness. as there was nothing to hope for or resent in it. "A quarrel would be such a relief!"

thought Geraldine, as she answered quietly his easy unconcerned remarks. 411

Lady Netherby unfurled her delicate

ivory fan in dismay.
"Harry," she called out to her husband, there's Gera at the last minute refusing to go! What is to be done?

Sir Henry came in.
"Why, what's the matter, Gera?"

"Nothing! Don't tease me; I'm tired of dissipation. You must let me off this "Let you off! Nonsense, Gera!"

She raised her eyes appealingly to him "You were always good to me, Harry," she said. "Don't make me go; I am so

Sir Henry gave a sharp glance at her, and uttered an emphatic "Hem!" "What a capricious girl you are! Come

along, Alice," he said offering his arm to his wife to lead her to the carriage. "Scarsdale, we can give you a lift to Branscombe." "No, thanks; I shall walk, replied Mr.

Scarsdale, moving from his place by the fire. "But I promised Mollie to go and see the new school-room this evening. Is she up there?" "Yes," said Lady Netherby, "and will

be only too delighted at any interruption to her lessons. Gera, I think you will have a fit of repentance in five minutes' time," she added as she left the room. A grave "Good-night" and the most

formal of bows from Mr. Scarsdale, and he was gone also. Had he seen the pained wistful look on the fair face before him, he might not made his farewell either so brief or so cold. So Geraldine was left alone with her own

thoughts, which were not very profitable She sat on in her low seat by the ones. fire, looking with sad yearning eyes into the past. What had those four years of luxurious gaiety, of brilliant success done for her-tour years of the great world? Were they not all a confused medley of driving, dancing, dining, of rushing from house to house, from soiree to coversazions, from fate to ball, from scientific reunions to five-o'clock kettle-drums—a weary toil of slight shams and social delusions? And now what was left her? A dreary loneliness, a longing for rest, a passionate wish that she could stay forever where she was, and never go back to the whirl of excitement, the memory of which made her brain ache and throb.

But it was her own fault, her own choice Four years ago she had put her chance on happiness away from her—she would none of it; and now nobody wanted her, nobody was the better or happier for her exist ence. She had bartered the true love of a good man for the fascinations and glitter of her world and they turned to dust and

"No, he does not care—he does not even she sobbed. "Too late-too late! I did love him; but I loved myself

After a while she brushed aside the tears with an impatient gesture, and ris-ing moved about the room, taking up now a book, now an ornament, and replacing it mechanically. At the piano she stopped, and then sat down and began to play low dreamy melodies, at last breaking into the accompaniment of a seng. Presently she began to sing the words softly.

A door behind her was partly open,

the shadow of a man, fantastic and un-

"Only for a while; then I knew," she said mechanically as a child answers questions.

He smiled again.

"Were you afraid of your life with me?" She hesitated for a few moments. To answer that would be virtually to own herself wrong, and be a confession of her pride and her foolishness. She glanced again at him; but his grave face showed no sign of relenting. At last her better self conquered.

"No-only the manner of it," she said humbly.

He put out his hand took hers, drew her close to him, and bent down and kissed her lips.

"Do you fear it now, Geraldine?" "No-oh, no!" she murmured, resting her head on his snoulder. "Arthur will you forgive me?"

"Some day perhaps. Ah, lady mine you have kept me waiting long; but I knew you would be true to yourself at last; and I could afford to wait for my wife!"____ THE TOWN

Old Nicholas.

Old Nicholas, who for some time has been quiet, in consequence probably of the fact that he has been attending a divorce suit, having instituted proceed-

ings, arose the other day and said:
"Mr. Speechmaker, my mouf has been shet fur some time, but now, sah, I 'poses ter open my mouf. dis legislature is gwine ter adjourn widout makin me a 'propriation. I is in need ob money. Dar is a mortgage on my farm an' lessen de state comes ter my aid, blamed of I knows what I'se gwine ter do.

"Don't use profanity," said the speaker. "I have borne with you during this entire session, sir, and am getting tired of your foolishness, consequently the session of the quently I desire now to say that unless you confine yourself to the language of strictest respectability, I'll introduce you to an exertion that you have probably not hitherto known."

bly not hitherto known."
"Dat's de way I likes fur a man ter
talk," replied Nicholas. "I neber was
a advocate ob beatin' Mr. Satan aroun'
advocate ob beatin' Mr. Satan aroun' de stump. De session is closin' now an' it's gittin' time fur de gen'leman ter plant dar corn. Now, l's perfeckly willin' ter plant corn but I doan want ter leave heah till all de business hab been settled. Now, it is de right, uner a civil rights bill, fur de colered members to vote darselves a propriation. Dis, as I understans de law, is denied de white folks, 'case da ain't 'titled ter de cibil rights; so, Mr. Speechmaker, I moves dat I be voted three hundred dol-

"You have drawn six dollars per day
in payment," replied the speaker.
"Yes, I knows dat, but yer see, de

extra 'propriation is an account ob de cibil rights. De white members can't get none ob dis money, 'ease de white men ain't been slabes. Now, sah, is yer willin' ter sanction a bill fur a yer willin' ter sanction a bill fur a 'pro-priation grantin' me three hundred dol-"No," exclaimed the speaker.

"Den yer ain't in fabor ob state's rights. an' den, let me say, I can whup yer, jes git down outen dat chair. Jes come offen dat platform. I'll make yer think dat de dinner horn is out ob order. I'll make yer blow yer nose in

the Diamond Dyes. They never fail. The black is far superior to logwood. And color In cents.



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fancy article easily and perfectly colored to any

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GOLD and SILVER PAINT. Bronze Paint. Artists' Black.

"Good-bye, Mr. Scarsdale," was the brief Then she came down on a long visit to her eply, as for a moment she suffered him

to take her hand. Though the words were so coldly spoken, Geraldine got up after he had left the room and went to the window. She watched the dark figure walking away in the gathering gloom till the dense masses of the shrubbery hid it from sight. What did he mean? Why had he uttered her name and then broken off suddenly?-Why did that half-smile cross his lips at her stiff "good-bye"? Above all, what did his doings or sayings signify to her?

She stood listening to the dreary plash of the rain-drops against the window and the wild moan of the wind as it tossed the branches to and fro. She shivered as she looked into the blank dimness, and detested the country and all it contained more bitterly than ever.

"No," she thought discontentedly; "not for worlds would I drag on an existence in the dismal monotonous country. How Alice and Harry contrive to exist here I don't know. With nothing to do, nothing to think of, nobody to see, and every day exactly like the one before it, it is horrible! Nothing should induce me to live such a life!"

Notwithstanding these conclusions, Geraldine had a dim conception she was wrong, a secret conviction that the whirl of gayety in which she lived was all glitter and emptiness. But, knowing it, she had no wish to remedy it or turn her back on the fascinations of her pleasant frivolous life, which hitherto had been all-sufficient for her. She had no desire for anything higher or better than the ease and luxury, the small social successes and triumphs which seemed irresistible in their

fresh variety. Presently her sister and Sir Henry Netherby came down. Dinner followed, which was a slight break in the monotony of the quiet evening, but not enough to dissipate Geraldine's weariness and discontent. At the earliest possible moment she went to bed, and dreamt an unsatisfactory dream. She thought she dwelt in a moated grange surrounded by a vast forest; from the huge weird branches of the trees dropped perpetually streams of tiny rain-drops, and in each window of the house was an Æolian harp, which moaned

to every gust of the wild wind. In the morning the sun shone brilliantly, the great shrouding curtain of fog had lifted, and the blue sky was flecked with white cloudlets. It was all very fair, she allowed; but what of that? To-morrow the rain and the mist might come again, and dulness and melancholy reign su-

On reaching the breakfast-room she was greeted by Mollie's clamorous little voice. "Auntie, auntie, me got four-twenty valentines! And there's one for 'oo toopapa said so-auntie's valentine! Here!"

and the busy small fingers seized a letter lying on Geraldine's plate and gave it Sir Henry looked up from his letters.
"Good morning, Gera. I thought your

ladyship would not condescend to such frivolties as valentines?" "The valentine exists only in Mollie's imagination; it is a letter," she said qui-

With a pang of sorrow, shame, and anger she had guessed who had sent it, and what was in it. She quietly put it into her pocket, to Mollie's disgust, that astute little damsel being in a morbid state of surpass the glowing beauty of her own, to Mrs. Preston."

sister's home to recruit after a season of unusual gaiety.
It was a dull February evening, misty

and chill outside, bright with firelight within. Geraldine was seated on her old favorite couch near the fire. Mr. Scarsdale stood opposite to her so much in the same attitude, and with so much of the grave quiet manner, that but four mininstead of four years, might have passed since the twilight evening so long before.

"Was it all a dream?" thought Geraldine, noting the quiet composure of his face. It was just as determined-looking as ever, with no added lines telling of regret or sorrow; his eyes were as steady in meeting hers as if no past lay between them. Only in one thing was he changed. He saw in her simply a lady to be treated with all deference and courtesy, nothing

They knew nothing of each other's thoughts, these two once so nearly close together. Between them now was but stiff politeness, the elaborate courtesy of mere acquaintances, which was worse many degrees than downright rudeness, as there was nothing to hope for or resent

"A quarrel would be such a relief!" thought Geraldine, as she answered qui etly his easy unconcerned remarks. he would but be stern, bitter, or even angry, it would be better than this frigid civility.

Seemingly indifferent, Mr. Scarsdale went on talking. He was speaking of skating, which an unusually long frost had made a fashionable pastime, and in which she knew he excelled.

"We had quite a gathering at Silvermore yesterday, Miss Cameron. Do you not skate ?" . com direct

"No; I have never had an opportunity of learning."
"Really! You miss a great pleasure."

"So I suppose; it is one of those pleasures of which I have always been compelled to be a spectator, the natural conquence of living in London," she said rather bitterly, for the polite indifference

of his words stung her. """
"Hard lines, Miss Cameron," he returned lightly, but with a quick upward glance at her.
"Which?" she asked sharply. "Living

in London or not being able to skate?"
"Both, I should say."

"Ah, you were always devoted to the ountry "And you to town," he retorted They had stumbled upon an unlucky

ubject. His tone was suspiciously indifferent, his eyes looked determinedly at the fire, and the old restless trick of moving the ornaments seemed to have returned. "How different he is!" thought Geral-

dine in the sudden silence that followed the introduction of the dangerous topic.-I wish Alice would come

In a few moments the door opened, and Lady Netherby, in full evening dress came into the room. "Why, Geraldine, the carraige is ready.

and you are not dressed! Do you know how late it is?" she said. "I am not going, Alice. I hate dinner-parties!" was the pettish reply.

"Not going? But, Geraldine I can't "Oh, yes, Alice, you can, I know, I hate

dinner-parties and all belonging to them; ealousy for fear any valentine should but say, something pleasant in my behalf

rushing from house to house, from soiree to coversazions, from fac to ball, from scientific reunions to five-o'clock kettle drums-a weary toil of slight shams and social delusions? And now what was left her? A dreary loneliness, a longing for rest, a passionate wish that she could stay forever where she was and never go back to the whirl of excitement, the memory of which made her brain ache and throb.

But it was her own fault, her own choice Four years ago she had put her chance of happiness away from her—she would none of it; and now nobody wanted her, nobody was the better or happier for her exista good man for the fascinations and glitter of her world and they turned to dust and ashes in her mouth.

"No, he does not care—he does not even remember!" she sobbed. "Too late-too late! I did love him; but I loved myself

After a while she brushed aside the tears with an impatient gesture, and rising moved about the room, taking up now a book, now an ornament, and replacing it mechanically. At the piano she stopped, and then sat down and began to play low dreamy melodies, at last breaking into the accompaniment of a song. Presently she

began to sing the words softly. A door behind her was partly open, and the shadow of a man, fantastic and unshapely, fell upon the firelit wall; but she did not see it. In the quiet gloaming with nothing but the firelight shadows and silence in the room, she sang softly and sweetly the mournful refrain of the sad passionate song-

"How could I tell I should love thee to-day
Whom that day I held not deag?
How could I know I should love thee away
When I did not love thee anear?

Over and over again she sang these words, as if their mournful passion had some charm for her till at last her voice failed, and, with her eyes full of tears she turned again to the fire. She stood close in front of it, and rested her head against the chimney-piece, never noticing a tall figure standing in the deep shadow of the recess on the right-hand side. Presently the figure moved forward; the man's face

was grave and stern. "Geraldine!" She started and looked up. "Mr. Scarsdale!" she said in astonish-

"Yes, it is I. Do you remember this day four years ago?"

"Yes," she replied, avoiding his steady "Did you 'hold me dear' that day?" No answer came at first; but a vivid blush rose slowly to her cheeks and crept

over neck and brow.

cool persistence.

"I wait your answer. Did you hold me dear' that day?" he asked gravely. "Yes," she said simply. "Then why did you send me away?"

There was a long pause.

glanced at his face—it was inflexibly grave and stern. "Because-because," she faltered; then recovering herself-"I will not be ques-

tioned; you have no right to ask." "I take upon myself the right. Will you answer me?" "No," she said defiantly, roused by his

A slight smile crossed his face.
"I think you will," he said quietly. "You loved me, yet you sent me away. Did you think my love would fail you?" "No," she replied unwillingly, compelled

to answer by the authority of his manner.

"Did you doubt your own for me?"

'Dat's de way I likes fur a man ter talk," replied Nicholas. "I neber was a advocate ob beatin' Mr. Satan aroun'

strictest respectability, I'll introduce

you to an exertion that you have proba-

bly not hitherto known.

de stump. De session is closin' now an' it's gittin' time fur de gen'leman ter plant dar corn. Now, I's perfeckly willin' ter plant corn but I doan want ter leave heah till all de business hab been settled. Now, it is de right, mer been settled. Now, it is de right, uner a civil rights bill, fur de colered members to vote darselves a propriation. Dis, as I understans de law, is denied was the better or happier for her exist-ence. She had bartered the true love of de cibil rights; so, Mr. Speechmaker, I

moves dat I be voted three hundred dollars for my services."
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"No," exclaimed the speaker.
"Den yer ain't in fabor ob state's rights. an' den, let me say, I can whup yer, jes git down outen dat chair. Jes come offen dat platform. I'll make yer think dat de dinner horn is out ob or der. I'll make yer blow yer nose in de grief ob de spirit. No man can come dat game ober me. Come on, sah. I'll make yer fling up yer head in de wildness ob yer despair. I'll make yer rend yer garments in a joy ob exer-

The old man started for the speaker's chair, but the Sergeant-at-Arms knock-ed him down with his red spear. Great excitement prevailed and the President of the Senate went out and ate a ham sandwich.—Arkansaw Traveler.

The iron will of Prince Bismarck, is said, is rapidly breaking down. Not long ago, according to a report more or less apocryphal, he said with much bit-terness: "If it were not for me, the world would have seen three great wars less, and 80,000 men, who died in their bloom might have lived, and how many parents, brothers, sisters, widows would have been spared their grief and tears!

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