

OUR ANSWER.

AIR—"Paddles Evermore."

You say our land grows rich and strong; You say she plies her... That wealth and comfort dwell among Her homes from shore to shore.

You kept black rind while you might Upon our stricken land; Our sorrowing people's wearied sight To you was sweet and grand.

No lapse of time, as on it rolls, Shall make these hopes decay; The light that cheered our father's souls Shines full on us to-day.

Yes, we shall see this land of ours What it was meant to be; With all its honors, rights, and powers, A nation proud and free.

No thanks for that to you. T. D. S.

DORA.

By JULIA KAVANAGH

Author of "Nathalie, Adele, Queen Mat, &c."

CHAPTER LIII.—CONTINUED.

"And how dare you forget that the child is mine?" asked Dora, with a quivering lip. "On the day he married me he gave her to me. I asked him for her, and I got her. He gave himself too on that day, but if he has withdrawn one gift," she added, in a falling voice, "as I dare say you know, Florence, he has not yet taken back the other," she said, pointing to the little low bed.

"For once Mrs. Logan was affected: for once Dora had found the way to her heart. Paul Courtenay's name brought the tears to her eyes. She had not loved him very much; but such as it was, this love of her youth had been the only disinterested affection of her life. It had not stood the test of poverty, but money had not helped his birth. And Paul Courtenay had loved very faithfully. No second love had offered her image there, and she knew it."

"Poor Paul!" she said, taking out her handkerchief—"Poor Paul! I was very sorry for him, and it made Mr. Logan in such a way with me. But then you know, Dora, it is me—Mrs. Logan did not care much for grammar—and not you, whom Mr. Templemore should have married. You will acknowledge that, I am sure."

"She never liked him—never," thought Dora, looking at her in wonder, "or she could not stand there talking to me, his wife."

But she did not think it needful to answer Mrs. Logan's strange remark. She had sat down by Eva's cot, and she was looking at the child. Eva's dark eyes glittered with fever, but she did not recognize her former governess.

And how you can take the frightful responsibility you are now taking with Eva is more than I can imagine, pettishly resumed Florence; "besides, you really have behaved abominably to Doctor Petit. I am quite certain Mr. Templemore will be angry." she added, raising her eyebrows, to give her words more emphasis.

Still Dora was silent. She was thinking what a difference Nature had placed between her and this woman. How one was made to float down the stream of grief, which nearly submerged the other. She would never have let her husband go, if it broke her heart that he should leave her; she could never have left his house; however much his indifference had stung her. If her folly led her into trouble, it would at least have saved her from such calamity as had fallen to Dora's lot.

"On one thing, however, I am determined," resumed Mrs. Logan, getting angry at Dora's silence, "that Miss Moore shall have the medical attendant she prefers, and that Mr. Templemore shall know the truth."

"You are very welcome," replied Dora, with such evident weariness of this conversation that Mrs. Logan became scarlet, and giving her an indignant glance, darted out of the room.

CHAPTER LIV.

This door had scarcely closed on Mrs. Logan, when Doctor Leroux was announced, and shown in by Jacques. Dora's face lit on seeing him. It was a relief to escape from the bitter thoughts Florence had left after her. She went up to him and said eagerly: "Eva is ill again; but Doctor Petit, who was attending upon her—"

"Then why did you send for me?" sharply interrupted Doctor Leroux. "Because I know Mr. Templemore has no faith in him, and every faith in you; he has left me affronted, but I cannot help that; and where the child's life may be the cost, I cannot mind courtesy—nor will you, I trust, mind professional etiquette."

She spoke with some uneasiness, but it was causeless. Doctor Leroux was a rich man, and for etiquette of any kind he cared naught. His wealth placed him above the suspicion of wishing to secure a patient by unworthy means; and as he entertained a profound contempt for Doctor Petit's skill, and a high respect for his own, he made no scruple of taking a patient from him in the hour of peril. So without further parley he approached Eva's bed, and looked at the child. Dora read his face anxiously, and its gravity filled her with concern.

"Well?" she said at length. "Well, it will be a miracle if we save her," replied Doctor Leroux, "with some bitterness; and internally he added, 'Petit's mark is upon her.'"

Fearful, indeed, is this power over life which the ignorant and unskillful possess, as well as the learned and the gifted, all the more fearful that the guilty man is generally unconscious of his guilt."

Doctor Petit, whatever may be his name or his country—whether he command a ship, a forlorn hope, a company, or rule by a sick-bed, is our greatest enemy, if we but knew it. Ask the soldiers whose bones bleach on the battlefield, the sailors who have gone down with a despairing cry, the men and women whose homes are ruined, the mourners whose hearts are broken by the death of a loved one—ask them how they have fared through their trust in him, and he is warned. The thief, the murderer, even, are less dangerous than the man whose claims to knowledge you cannot control, and whose ignorance you can only learn at your bitter cost.

At first Dora felt stunned; but rallying at length, she said: "It is impossible! You cannot mean to say that the child must die, Doctor Leroux?" "Not that she must, but that she may," he replied, somewhat sharply. Dora looked at Eva. It was not and it could not be mother's love she felt for that poor little sufferer, and therefore hers was not a mother's bitter agony. But the knowledge that this little creature, motherless and for the time, too, fatherless, was dying, pierced her heart. She had loved the child, and the child, too, had loved her. Eva had been a tie between her and her husband. She had brought Dora back to his home when nothing else, it seemed to her, could have done it—and now that gentle and tender bond must soon be broken. They would stand apart without that loving link, and they could not even meet by Eva's grave.

"He would not believe my grief," thought Dora; "and he shall not see it to do that. When Eva is dead—if she must die, indeed—I shall leave this house again, and this time all will be surely over forever!" But must the child die? It seemed so hard. Doctor Leroux was gone, and Dora sat by Eva's cot, holding Eva's little wasted hand in her own, and she could not believe it. Oh! if there were but power in love to keep those loved beings who go away from us so surely, whether their leave-taking be swift or slow! Stay with me, Dora longed to say—stay with me, my darling! I never can tell you my trouble, but still you will comfort it. There is more consolation in a child's loving kiss than in all men and women can say! To prove that one ought not to mourn. Oh! if I could but keep you—if I but could! And then to think that this tender little being must really die and be put in the cold damp earth, to moulder away, with all his dearest prematurely destroyed, and the sweet promise of youth forever unfulfilled! The thought filled Dora's heart with pity as well as with sorrow. Every crumb she had received from the child—every fond, endearing word which had been exchanged between them in those hours when Dora was no longer governess and Eva pupil, came back and inflicted its pang upon her. "I never could have left this house if she had been in it!" she thought—"never! Then came the thought of what it would be when the child was all gone—how empty, how silent, how cold! And so vivid were these images—so painfully real did imagination make them—that Dora gasped. Eva's hand till the child opened her heavy eyes and looked wonderingly at her step-mother. She had no knowledge of death, and no fear of the destroyer. He might come and steal her away, and she would yield to him with the meek unconsciousness of her years. She would never suspect or know that there was a power stronger by far than that of the kind hand which now held hers.

"Cousin Dora," she said, with a suddenness that startled Dora, "when is Doctor Petit coming back?" "What do you want him for, Eva?" "I don't like Doctor Leroux."

But the words were spoken faintly, and she fell back into her old languor. "The very child is against me," thought Dora. Her heart sickened within her as remembering the strife she had already gone through, she foresaw another trial more cruel still. What if, seeing matters through the bitterness of his altered feelings, Mr. Templemore should lay the death of his child to her door? He might not say it, indeed, but she would read it in his eyes, and would not that he had indeed! "Since Doctor Leroux cannot promise to save the child," she thought, "would it not be better for me that I had never come here, or had left her to the other man's care? He said he could save her; and who knows—oh! who knows, perhaps he could!—perhaps it is true I am killing her!"

The thought was so exquisitely painful, that Dora dropped Eva's hand and left the side of the little cot. She went to the window, leaned against the glass-pane, and cried as if her heart would break. Two thoughts were with her, and either was very hard to bear. One, that there was little or no hope of saving Eva; the other, that believing her to be dead, Mrs. Logan and her husband had indulged in hopes, felt or spoken—it mattered not—which her return must needs dispel.

"He believes me to be dead, and he will find me to be living," thought Dora. "He hopes to marry Florence, and he will learn that he is still bound to me. I am the bitterness and the clog of his life." The dark cloud, which ever comes between the sun of happiness and him! As this secret voice spoke to her in such bitter language, Dora asked herself, with something like passion, why she was tried so cruelly. Why was her life a double burden—to herself first, then to him? And she felt so strong, so free from disease, so full of vitality! It seemed to her as if she could live forever. "I dare say I shall survive them both," she thought; "they will die, and I shall live on into dreary old age, forgotten by death, as I have been forgotten by love."

Bitter, indeed, was the thought, and nothing came to soften its bitterness. Eva was worse the next morning, and Doctor Petit pronounced Miss Moore out of danger. His verdict, indeed, might have been doubtful, but she asked to see Dora, and her appearance fully confirmed her medical attendant's assertion.

"Mrs. Templemore," said Miss Moore, with some energy, "what do you mean by tampering so with my niece—what do you mean?" Dora did not answer at once. She looked from the sick lady in her bed to Florence, who had taken out her handkerchief, and was weeping behind it, and she tried to say calmly: "I did all for the best, Miss Moore—I followed, as I believed, Mr. Templemore's wishes."

"But it was to me Mr. Templemore left my niece," argued Miss Moore; "and you take advantage of me and my illness to get hold of her, Miss Courtenay?" "Mrs. Templemore," corrected Dora. "Yes, I know you are his wife; impatiently retorted Miss Moore; "you need not taunt me with it."

"I mean no taunt, Miss Moore; but it is because I am his wife that I have a right over his child!" Miss Moore looked helplessly at Mrs. Logan, who had withdrawn her handkerchief, and was tapping her foot impatiently. Dora read that look very easily—it meant, "I have done my best, you see, but I cannot help myself." Indeed, Miss Moore's next remark was to that purpose. "Well, Mrs. Templemore," she said, "I am not able to save poor Eva from you and that Doctor Leroux; but, remember," she added, weeping, "remember, that if I lose my sister's child, I shall hold you guilty."

"I cannot accept that guilt, Miss Moore; life and death are not in my power, and I have still hope that Eva may be saved." Miss Moore tossed restlessly in her bed; Mrs. Logan looked indignant, and, after a brief pause, Dora withdrew and went back to Eva. She had left Josephine with the child, and she found the girl inclined to remain and be communicative, especially on the subject of Fanny.

"Madame may believe me," she said, confidently, "but I never believed in the demoielle with her blue eyes. I always told Jacques she was deceitful; and when she came back and said Madame Courtenay was dead, and took away all madame's letters and things, I said to Jacques, 'I do not like that; and I do not believe madame sent that Mademoiselle Fanny back.' Jacques will not grant it now, but I said it; and I never believed madame was really dead, for, you see, Monsieur never went into mourning, nor never said a word. Only Madame Logan's maid said it to Jacques, who told me; but no one told Monsieur, who went about looking so grave and so stern; but servants must be careful, as madame knows, and not repeat every word they hear. And I have always been discreet," continued Josephine, dressing with an abrupt transition, "I can make dresses too, and trim caps quite prettily. Mademoiselle Fanny took many a hint from me. For being English, you know, she had not the right knack which we French have."

"Josephine wants to be my maid," thought Dora, with a sigh; "poor girl, she does not know my reign is over. I am still queen, of course, but where is my kingdom? And who and what shall I be in this house if poor little Eva dies?" "She is thinking over it," conjectured Josephine, watching Dora's pensive face; "I did well to tell her about trimming caps. Madame Courtenay always was particular about her caps."

And Dora, whose thoughts were far away, saw a sad image of herself going back alone to the poor house where Mrs. Courtenay was waiting; whilst Eva slept in her little grave, and Mr. Templemore brooded over grief in Les Roches.

CHAPTER LV.

The concierge in the Hotel Rue de Rivoli was leaning back in his chair, and looking pensively at a telegram which lay on the table before him. It had been lying there seven days, and had not been claimed as yet by Mr. Templemore. Was this a second edition of that gentleman's mysterious disappearance? The concierge thought so, and was rounding off a period, when again Mr. Templemore spoiled his story by suddenly coming forward. A clew to the truth which he had not ceased to seek had taken him suddenly from Les Roches to a place beyond Paris, but it had proved vain, and he was coming to the Hotel to spend the night there on his way home, when the concierge, recognizing him, rose, and said with much alacrity:

"We were afraid something had happened to monsieur. This dispatch has been lying here for monsieur no less than seven days."

Mr. Templemore's color fled as he heard him. Who could send a dispatch to this place, save Miss Moore, and what could she send it for but to give evil tidings of Eva? He tore the paper open with a trembling hand; but his heart sickened as he read it. The telegram was sent by Doctor Petit, and that gentleman informed him that Miss Moore and her niece were both ill of scarlatina; that he, Doctor Petit, was attending upon them; and that though there was no danger, he hoped to get them through.

Mr. Templemore stood with the paper in his hand, stammered with a grief so unexpected. That Eva should be ill was ever possible, but that she should fall into the hands he most dreaded had always seemed out of the question; and now this dreadful evil had come to pass, and for seven days his child had been in the power of Doctor Petit. All might be well, or all might be over by this. Mr. Templemore asked for a railway guide. The last train left for Rouen at seven, and it was half-past six now. There was no time to send a telegram to Les Roches and receive the answer before the departure of the train. He must go at once, go with the agony of that doubt upon him, or wait till the following day to save Eva from Dr. Petit's ruthless hands.

Within ten minutes to seven Mr. Templemore was in the waiting-room of the Havre station, and whilst his eager eyes sought the hand of the railway clock, and his heart sickened with impatience, very bitter were Mr. Templemore's thoughts. Yes, all might be over now. Eva might be dead by this. The disease which he had dreaded most of all for her might have robbed him of his last child, as it had of her two little sisters. The enemy had come while he was away seeking for one who had all but replaced his child in his heart. "If I had been with Eva I should at least have saved her from Petit!" he thought. "Oh! Dora! Dora! must you cost me so dear as this?"

There was a double agony in the feeling. Then swiftly other thoughts rushed through his mind. The mother whom he had given to his little girl had proved faithless. Alas! they had both been faithless, father and adopted mother too. Love and wrath had been fatal alike to Eva, and the innocent child's life must pay for a passion of which childhood has no conception.

Only a few people were waiting for the express-train, but amongst them was a young English matron with children, a nursery-maid, and a whole array of small baskets, and toys, and worrying parcels. Mr. Templemore walked to the other end of the waiting-room, in order not to see this happy group. That woman had four children, and he, who had but one, might soon be childless. There would be joy in her home for many years, while his might be hushed and silent. He was not envious, he wished her no evil, but he could not look on her happiness. The sight was one, however, which he could not escape. One of the children, a little girl, ran past him, to jump into the arms of a gentleman, who kissed her and joined the group. He was evidently the father and husband.

"Why did I not meet Dora years ago?" thought Mr. Templemore, in the bitterness of his heart. She would have been Eva's mother, and all would have been well! There never could have been unkindness between us with such a tie. And Dora would never have left her child's home as she left her husband's—never!"

These travellers made themselves at home, English fashion, and spoke loud and freely together. Tiny—such was the little girl's name—made daring attempts on one of the baskets holding biscuits. The nurse scolded, but Tiny, defiant sinner, only laughed, and throwing back her golden curls, got up on her smiling mother's knee and hugged her. The child was young and fair, wholly unlike the

dark-eyed Eva; but many a time Mr. Templemore had seen his little daughter thus in Dora's arms, caressing and fond, and now, looking at this strange mother and child, he also remembered something that had occurred during his hurried journey from Deenah to Les Roches with Dora. Conquered by fatigue, he had fallen asleep one night in the railway carriage. When he woke in the gray morning Dora was sleeping too, and he found that, unconsciously, he had laid his head upon her shoulder. Then, as the carriage still moved on, and he saw the deep purple plains in the faint light of dawn, the thought came to him how often his child's innocent head had rested where his now lay, and how often again, as he hoped, he should see her clasped to that kind heart. It had been one of his troubles to know that Eva would never love Florence, and now it was a joy to feel that he could hold these two, Dora and the child, in one love, undivided. He gently moved away, and Dora, awakening, asked what was the next station. He told her, but he did not say how this little incident seemed to have given his brief married life some of the sweetness which only comes with years; and how this girl, who had been his wife but a fortnight, was already to him as the mother of his child.

Again Mr. Templemore felt he could not look on, and he turned his head away. He could not help loving Dora, whatever happened; but if Eva died, grief, remorse, and a child's grave would be between him and Dora, ay, even though she never left his side again. Could he forget that if he had not been within call in the hour of danger, she was the cause; could he forget that some strange woman, and not his wife, was now with his sick and dying child?

At last the wooden barrier was opened, and the travellers hastened to the row of carriages with the loud impatient hissing engine at the head. Five minutes more and they were in motion, first panting, then flying through the country. The suburbs melted away into a green landscape. The Seine gleamed, then disappeared, then came again to sight, villages were seen, then towns, then fields and orchards. Then towns once more in the autumn sunset, and still they went on, and Mr. Templemore thought they would never reach their goal. At length the hills which surrounded Rouen came in view, then the spires of the old Gothic city rose in the darkness of the night, and Mr. Templemore felt he must prepare for the worst.

There were two ways of reaching Les Roches. Mr. Templemore chose the shortest. A carriage took him up a steeper path than the winding road which led to the chateau and being unable to proceed any further, left him within fifty yards of the wooden door in the boundary wall. Mr. Templemore paid and dismissed the cabman without a word. The man looked after him curiously. He saw him take out a key, and heard him open the door and enter, locking the door after him.

"They have their troubles too," he thought, making his horses turn. "They have trees and gardens, and houses, but they have their troubles too."

Swiftly, yet with the fear of death at his heart, Mr. Templemore went on through the dark paths. At length the house stood before him. It looked strangely quiet and solemn. Not a light burned in the windows, not one human being was visible. He stood for a moment waiting for some token of life, but none came from that silent dwelling. Suddenly, and as Mr. Templemore was walking quickly through the flower-garden, Jacques appeared with a lantern in his hand. In a moment Mr. Templemore stood by the man.

"Well?" he said. He could utter no more. His lips were parched and dry, and fever-sickened his very heart. Jacques was slightly startled at his master's unexpected appearance, and there was just a moment's pause, an eternity of torment and doubt, ere he answered: "Mademoiselle Eva is very low."

Mr. Templemore had tried to prepare himself for a worse reply than this, but by the agony it gave him he could test the vanity of all such preparation. "Doctor Petit thought she was getting better," resumed Jacques, "and he cured Mademoiselle Moore; but that was in the beginning, and Mademoiselle Eva is not so well now."

Mr. Templemore was standing perfectly still, like one incapable of sense or motion; but his eyes flashed when he heard Doctor Petit's fatal name, he started, as if that name had stung him back from torpor into life. "My God!" he cried, "who brought that man—who brought him?"

There was something so desperate in his look and tone, that Jacques stepped back, and forgot his partisanship for Doctor Petit, which he shared with the whole household, in personal uneasiness. So hastily evading Mr. Templemore's question, he answered: "Doctor Petit cured Mademoiselle Moore, and attended Mademoiselle Eva at first; but Doctor Leroux has the care of her now."

"When has he been here?" "He left five minutes ago."

Mr. Templemore put no further questions, but walked on. The fatal thought, "Petit has murdered her, and Leroux himself cannot save her—I have come too late!" rang through his brain and again like a knell. He entered the house, turned into the school-room, thence into Dora's sitting-room, and went up the private staircase which led to the apartment Eva had once shared with her governess.

He pushed the door of the child's room open very softly. He did not wish her to be startled by his sudden appearance. The night lamp shed a dull faint light on the sick-room, a low wood fire smouldered on the hearth, but Mr. Templemore could see Eva's little white cot at the other end of the apartment. He approached it gently. A calm, regular breathing told him the child was sleeping. He bent over her very cautiously. Long, keen, and attentive was the look. Suddenly Eva's eyes opened. Mr. Templemore remained perfectly still. She looked at him with a half-wondering gaze, in which sleep contended; then her lids fluttered and fell, her eyes closed, and she was sleeping soundly. With a relieved sigh Mr. Templemore turned away. Eva was saved, and he knew it.

"Thank God!" he said, half aloud—"thank God!" He walked towards the fireplace, then stood still. A flickering ray of the firelight shot up from the hearth; and pale, worn, and altered though she was, he saw and knew her. This was his wife who stood before him! For a moment his heart seemed to cease to beat. For a moment he stood, pale as death, and as silent. For a moment she too, was mute and still, looking at him as he looked at her. But she had been expecting him days, and she recovered first. She raised a warning hand. "Do not waken her," she said in the lowest whisper—but low though it was, her voice shook; "she is saved—she will live!"

Great joys come to us like great sorrows. Mr. Templemore could neither move nor speak—he felt stunned. He had got them both back—the wife and the child, and for a while he could only look at his lost Dora's face. "My wife!—my dear wife!" he said at length.

He took her in his arms. The word "wife" was a sesame. No term of endearment had ever sounded half so sweet as this, when he had spoken it, in the past; and as he uttered it now her whole heart seemed to go forth to meet him. When he opened his arms to receive her, she threw her arms around his neck, and all was forgiven and forgotten forever between these two.

"Then you are glad I am not dead," she said, smiling through her happy tears; "you never had that cruel 'Dora Courtenay' put on poor aunt's grave?—you never wished to marry Mrs. Logan? You need not tell me so. I know it—I know it!"

Yes, this was truly Dora—Dora jealous and fond, and Dora joyous and light-hearted. Dora who had fled from him in hasty resentment, and had come back on the first token of the child's peril. But great joy is incredulous. The cruel fear of Eva's danger was but a few hours old. It had not taken upon him the hard grasp of reality. He could bid it begone like an evil nightmare; but the doubts, the fears, the anguish he had gone through in seeking the woman whose voice he heard, whose hand he held, all came back to him now, and seemed to say, "Do not be too sure—you may be dreaming, and when you waken she may be gone."

"I cannot believe it!" he exclaimed vehemently—"I cannot believe I have got you back!" "And yet I am no ghost," she answered joyously. "Ah! but how pale and worn she looked! She had been watching many nights, surely?" "Four," she answered simply. "I did not dare to leave Eva for fear they should bring back Doctor Petit."

"You brought Leroux, then?" "I did. I had a hard battle, but I won." "And Petit would have killed her. She is now your child, indeed!" "There are some sweet drops in this bitter cup of life, as the poets call it." "I am sure of him now," thought Dora—"I am sure."

Eva moved slightly. At once Dora was by her side; but Eva was only dreaming. Dora raised the curtain and bent over the sleeping child to make sure of her slumber; and Mr. Templemore looked at them both, and never forgot that picture—the poor little head on its white pillow, and the faithful tender face above it.

CHAPTER LVI.

MR. TEMPLEMORE had sent Dora to her room to rest and sleep, and Dora had obeyed him. It was sweet to go and rest after fatigue, and to sleep after watching, and sweeter than all to know she was doing both in her husband's house, and under her husband's care.

She looked round her with a delicious sense of home. How pleasant to sit down in that large arm-chair, and rest a while, and think of her husband, surrounded as she was with tokens of her husband's affection! How pleasant, after the vexing storms of the past, to rejoice in the sweet peace of the present! The same sense of repose followed her when she lay length laid her head on the pillow, and composed herself to sleep.

"Adieu to care," she thought. "If our love has survived such bitter trials, surely we need not fear for it. We are mortal, and, therefore, may suffer again, for we cannot conquer sickness and death; but for all that, adieu to care! Now I can fall asleep and not dread waking. And to-morrow I can waken, and not feel in my heart, 'Another bitter day lies before me.' I know that Eva will live—I know that she sits with her thinking of me—I know that the delightful days are all coming back like spring after winter."

Yes, she knew it, and when she ceased to know it—when thought folded her wings, and a gentle torpor crept over her—when fatigue and happiness both wrapped her in a delightful heaviness, and made her close her eyes—she felt it still. It was the last consciousness she carried with her into the world of sleep—it was the meaning of all her dreams, and her bright welcome when she woke.

Whilst Dora slept, Mr. Templemore sat up and watched in Eva's room. He had sat down in Dora's vacant chair by the fire-place, and looking at the red embers, he threw off the weary burden of the past, and indulged in some bright dreams. But suddenly the image of Florence, pale and reproachful—Florence, who had wronged him, but whom he had abetted too willingly, came back like an up-braiding. How completely he had given up the old love, and how eagerly he had turned to the new! Was not this vehement affection the justification of Mrs. Logan's jealousy? "Yes," he thought, with something like remorse, "she was right enough. I was always too fond of Dora. I always gave her too much, and now she has all, and she has a right to all. The folly of a silly woman and the guilt of a mad one have made it too late for repentance or regret. Then why perplex myself with what might have been, but never can be?—why grieve myself the happiness of what it is, when that 'is' happens to be a girl I love, and a young wife like Dora?"

Thus spoke Reason, and Conscience lent her a willing ear, and Remorse retreated discomfited, and in some disorder. An unexpected ally, moreover, came to Reason's aid, and made her mistress of the field.

Dora had not long been gone, for thought travels fast when the door through which she had left opened gently. Mr. Templemore looked quickly round. He had scarcely time to recognize Miss Moore's square figure, when he heard her lock the door, and take out the key; then, crossing the room swiftly, she went to another door and locked that too. He stared at her in silent amazement. But it was plain Miss Moore did not see him. She went to Eva's bed, peeped cautiously at the child, then walked away on tiptoe, took a large, old-fashioned arm-chair, shook the cushion upon it, wheeled it to Eva's cot, then sat down, with a gentle sigh of relief, took off her curls, filled in her pocket, brought out a white-furred night-cap and put it on. She was tying the strings, when, to her mingled terror and confusion, Mr. Templemore appeared before her. Miss Moore felt petrified, and so she did not scream; but when Mr. Templemore, who did not want to waken the child, made a sign that she was to rise, Miss Moore mechanically obeyed, and found strength to do so. He took a light, and she followed him to the neighboring room.

"Miss Moore," he inquired, when they were out of Eva's hearing, "may I ask the meaning of this?" "I—I want to sit up with Eva," stammered Miss Moore; "I thought she was alone."

"What made you think so?—did you see my wife leave?" "Yes—just so. I saw her leave, and I came to sit up with the child."

"Miss Moore, why did you lock the door?" "It is not possible," he said, rather bitterly, "that you meant to lock my wife?" "I—I don't know," was Miss Moore's pitiful reply. It was plain that such had been her intention; but Mr. Templemore did not think Miss Moore capable of originating so rebellious a scheme, and his eyes flashed with resentment, as he said: "Who advised this? Of course you would never have done it?"

Miss Moore turned traitor without remorse. "It was Mrs. Logan," she said. "Mrs. Logan! Good Heavens! what could be her motive? What could make her wish to insult my wife in her own house? And, Miss Moore, how could you abet her?" "I have a right over Eva," jealously replied Miss Moore; "she is my sister's child after all, and I have no faith in Doctor Leroux; and Doctor Petit cured me, Mr. Templemore."

Mr. Templemore felt too indignant to argue that point; but he said again: "But Mrs. Logan has no right—how dare she meddle?—how dare she advise you so, Miss Moore?" "I suppose it vexed her that Mrs. Templemore should be alive," composedly said Miss Moore; "you see, she thought that you were a widow, I suppose, when she came to mind Eva and me."

Mr. Templemore heard her with mingled anger and shame. Not a shadow of remorse or regret could remain in his heart after this. "And I have loved this small, silly, selfish creature," he thought, in mute indignation; "this ruthless little thing, who would have sacrificed my child's life as well as her own pride to indulge a moment's revenge!"

He could not speak at once, so bitter were his feelings; and that bitterness showed itself in the first words he uttered: "Miss Moore, Dora must never know this—never, mind you. She must never know that this insult was contemplated."

"Miss Moore was quite willing to vow that she would never tell Mr. Templemore's wife the little plot that had been concocted against her. And though she had been faithful to Mrs. Logan, she was strictly faithful to herself. Dora never did know it. She never knew why, when her husband spoke of Florence, which was but rarely, he spoke of her with such bitter emphasis and such resentful looks. She never knew why, when a year after this, Mr. Templemore heard of Mrs. Logan's marriage with a learned Judge, he uttered so serious and earnest a 'poor fellow!'"

"But you might have been that poor fellow," gaily said Dora. "Never," he rather sharply answered. "I have committed some mistakes, but they have never been fatal ones. Either reason resumed her sway at the critical moment, or," he added, smiling, "some good fairy came to the rescue when all seemed lost. So you see that I never could have been that 'poor fellow!'"

"I see," thought Dora; "there is something I have never known; but I am not Blue-Beard's wife—I can bear it." But all this was yet to come. When Dora entered Eva's room the next morning, so bright and joyous that Mr. Templemore told her she looked like the sunbeam whom the alchemist caught and imprisoned: "Then mind you lock me up, or I shall escape," replied Dora; "do not trust me—do not trust me!"

Alas! Mrs. Courtenay's worst presentations were being fulfilled. Mr. Templemore wanted to keep her, and Dora wanted to stay. "Yes," thought Mrs. Courtenay, as she sat alone and sad, and looked out at the village street, "I know how it would be."

"This time Mrs. Courtenay was not frowning. Dora's mother was weeping, gently, indeed, not with a bitter or passionate flow, but still with sorrow and heartache. Dora had been gone, oh! so long, and she was not returning. She wrote frequently, almost daily; but she did not come back. Mrs. Courtenay knew how ill Eva had been, and how well she was getting. She knew that Mr. Templemore had come back, and that Dora was, as she said, happier than ever; but when Dora would come to her, or if ever she would come, Mrs. Courtenay did not know. And thus, though the cards lay before her, though the favorite patience of his majesty Louis XVIII. had come out beautifully, Mrs. Courtenay was gloomy, and indulged in some reflections more philosophic than cheerful. "I have always read in history," sadly thought the poor lady, "that when two contending powers made peace, it was at the expense of a third, some poor little weak kingdom or dukedom, or republic, in which they either divided or sacrificed in some dreadful way or other. And that is how Dora and Mr. Templemore are now acting. Of course I cannot be divided, or made three pieces of, like poor Poland, but then I can be excluded from the confederation, as it were, and told to mind my own business, and let the mighty people settle their own affairs. Dora is a good daughter, and she loves me very dearly, but then she is crazy about her husband, and, of course, he is desperately fond of her, and they are making a new honeymoon of it. And, of course, too, I must be sacrificed. I always thought Doctor Richard looked like a jealous man, and I do believe he will lock her up rather than let her be out of his sight. And if he does, how can she help herself, poor dear!"

Yet it was a hard case, a very hard case, but it was of a piece with that carrying off of the Sabines which Mr. Templemore had emulated on his wedding. "It began then, and it is ending now," thought the poor lady. "I have lost my Dora!"

Mrs. Courtenay was sitting in the parlour, looking disconsolately at the sunburnt road through the green screen of vine-leaves which fringed her window, as she came to this lamentable conclusion. The cards lay before her, and a red glow from the west stole in and filled the plain room with warmth and light. Mrs. Courtenay was dazzled as well as miserable, and leaning back in her chair with a sigh, she closed her wearied eyes with the dismal reflection, "Where is the use of looking?"

"Mamma! mamma!" said a pleasant voice, which sounded in her ear. Mrs. Courtenay started and looked round. She was alone in the room. "I am here," said the voice again; and this time Mrs. Courtenay, turning in the direction whence the voice came, saw Dora's bright face looking at her laughingly through the vine-leaves. "You have been crying," said Dora, putting on a frown. "I see it. I am very angry!"

"Don't!" implored Mrs. Courtenay, deprecatingly. Dora shook her head, then vanished. The next moment she was in the room, and she stood before her mother with a grave face and a threatening frowning.

"I told you I would come back, but you did not believe it, and