

everybody knows and deplores everybody else's failings and inconsistencies. Some years after our call there, a young lady came with her mother to establish, if they could, a millinery business. They belonged to us, and before they arrived a sister of the elder lady called upon us, to announce their intention, and to prepare us for the reception of new members. She told us quite a melancholy story of losses and misfortunes: and, amongst other things, that of the amputation of Miss Wigley's leg. You know my husband is not an unfeeling man; but he had had a very fatiguing sabbath the day before, and his spirits were in that state of reaction which made him inclined to laugh at anything, and he so completely puzzled poor Mrs. James with allusions to Miss Kilmansegg and the merchant of Rotterdam, that the worthy old lady began seriously to recapitulate their pedigree, to prove there was no connection between their families, unless it were on Mr. Wigley's side. For a long time we called Mary Wigley Miss Kilmansegg, when talking to each other. She was a pretty sweet-looking girl, and so long as she sat still she looked unusually attractive; but when she walked, and you saw her obvious limp, or heard the stump of her wooden leg, you no longer wondered that she was unmarried, for she was poor as well, and very far above her present situation. She was altogether unsuited for the business they had commenced, for she had lived in a kind of elegant seclusion until her father's death; indeed he impoverished himself to surround her with recreations and luxuries, to prevent her feeling her deprivation. Excepting that she had quite an artistic appreciation of the harmonies and contrasts of colours, which enabled her to arrange the windows and showrooms with great skill, she had not a single qualification for her work. I have noticed her face flush painfully at the too openly expressed pity of their customers; and their whims and caprices in dress used to surprise and annoy her. Mrs. Wigley, however, was a thorough, clever business woman. She had been a tradesman's daughter, and the fluctuations and anxieties of business were like a game of chance to her. She soon estab-

lished herself in the good graces of the ladies of our town; and, though my husband preached a very powerful sermon on dress (which I made him put off for some months, lest it should injure the strangers), it had no chance against Mrs. Wigley's taste, and the pews in our chapel looked like the gorgeous flowerbeds in a summer garden.

"Mary Wigley soon became one of my dearest friends; she knew a great deal more than I did, and was very accomplished in music and painting, and it really was an incongruity to think of her sitting behind a counter all her life. I remember her coming to sit with me one evening after my little Mary was born, when my husband had an appointment at a missionary meeting. I suppose we were in an unusually happy frame of mind that evening, for my husband was glad to see me up again, and he paid me some of those quiet tender attentions which we who are married, understand so well, and being few and far between, prize so highly. We made no stranger of Mary, and she sat smiling at our affectionate expressions to one another. But when he was gone, and I returned to the study after seeing the children in bed, I found her burying her face in her hands, and crying. Of course I insisted on knowing the cause, and among other things she said, I distinctly remember this:

"If any human influence would make me great or good as a woman, it would be the guardianship of a child of my own—a woman's nature is only half developed till she is a mother."

"What a beautiful remark, and so true," interrupted Mrs. Turner, with tears in her eyes. (She was notorious for neglecting her children.)

"I said it was true," resumed our minister's wife, "and I told her that all my powers of mind and body were doubled by it. 'My husband's love,' I said, 'and my children's dependence make me precious to myself.'"

"And you ask me why I cry," she answered, "when I feel how I could rejoice in these domestic ties, and know I shall never have them. Life is very mono-