

was more than imagined, and we are apt to think that on such a person the smile of heaven would descend. But the sequel will show how erroneous is such an impression, and the full force of the lines

Yet, taught by these, confess the Almighty just;  
And, where you see a unworldly, learn to trust

In former years, by force of circumstances, Mackenzie and Laiton had been associated. There was however no community of feeling existing between them. They were not at all kindred spirits; but were at all times as mentally different, as now they were different in bodily appearance. Amiable, confiding, generous, and warm hearted, Mackenzie was respected by all who knew him. He had seen a *lulo* change; but only such as is incident to this transitory state of being. As travelling companion, he had embarked for India with a young Scottish Nobleman to whom he was sincerely attached, and with whom in fact he had from earliest childhood been associated. Their young hearts had beat with the same joyous emotions, as they spotted on the mountain sides among the tall red heather, or leaped with joyous glee the yawning gullies, that form in the mountainous regions a ready channel for the winter's torrent. But the ungenial climate of Bombay made rapid inroads upon the constitution of the young nobleman, and he sank at last under its destructive influence. To the last moments of his arduous career, Mackenzie gave the amplest evidence that the confidence reposed in him had not been misplaced. Day after day, he wept, and wept, and prayed by the bedside of his friend, until the vital spark had fled, and having performed the last kind office, he returned shortly afterwards to London, where as soon as his necessary arrangements had been completed, he engaged as butler in the family of Sir Benjamin Hooper, whose butler he had been discharged a few days previous for some trivial offence. Such was Mackenzie—would we could have said as much for Laiton. As a servant his manners were polished and insinuating, yet he was constantly suspected of conniving with one party or another. The one day he was revealing to his master the delinquencies of his fellow servants, and the next he would be making the servant's hall, ring with the short comings of his master. He was thus looked upon with suspicion by both parties, consequently his changes were frequent, and his "Farewell," left few moist eyes. But his last misfortune seemed to have steered his heart against even the simplest dictates of reason.

On the morning alluded to, he left the butler, seemingly with a grateful heart for the kind promise he had made, and for the very substantial expression of sympathy he had given; but as he turned from the house to get to the main road, he observed the baronet walking in the shrubbery, and a demon entered his soul. With an ingratitude, so base that it can scarcely be credited, he pulled from his pocket the bottle of wine which the generous Mackenzie had just given him, and holding it up in his right hand, said—see! here is a proof of the honesty of your servants.

"Get along sir!" said the baronet roughly, as he did not at first comprehend him.

But the insidious Laiton, was not thus to be repulsed. Very well my Lord, it is no business of mine; but I have just got this bottle of wine in your mansion, and I thought you ought to know how you can be cheated by those to whom you entrust your property,—however it makes no matter—good morning.

The seeming indifference of Laiton,—who had begun to move off, only tended to arouse the curiosity of the baronet, and with somewhat of determination in his tone, he said in a breath—  
Stand Sir,—What did you say about wine—  
Show me that bottle from whom did you get it?

The aim of the ingrate was now accomplished. He suddenly wheeled round, and replied that he had got the bottle from his Lordship's butler.

Impossible.

I can prove it if necessary.

"Come along with me said the baronet," I must see about this affair.

Reader! whatever feeling this part of the narrative may have produced upon thy mind; the effect it produced upon mine was that of horror and compassion commingled. I sighed for humanity, that such should be the return for a favour the most timely, and disinterested. It were of no use to disbelieve it, and say the writer has been only drawing upon his imagination to produce effect. It is not so. Despicable, and even fiendish as the conduct of Laiton may seem, it is a reality, and its effects were of the most melancholy description. But I must not anticipate.

Having closed the door upon the unfortunate sufferer, the affectionate Mackenzie retired to his own room, and began to muse on the vicissitudes of life, and the ill to which man is subject in his earthly abode. He knew well the unstable character with which he had sympathized, but he had no misgivings at the moment as to what he had done, his ingenuous heart could not comprehend the amazing depths of wretchedness to which vice or misfortune may reduce its victim, and he was tumbling on these beautiful lines of Moore,—

Ah! such is the fate of our life's early promise,  
So passing the spring tide of joy we have known;  
Each wave that we danced on at morning, ebbs from us,  
And leaves us, at eve, on the black shore alone.

when he was speedily roused from his reverie by the voice of his master, calling in rather a peremptory tone for Mackenzie. He immediately appeared in the hall, where to his astonishment Laiton was standing in a fawning attitude, and Sir Benjamin holding in his hand the bottle of wine which Laiton had but a short time previous received.

He had not time to form the slightest conjecture as to the way in which the baronet had got possession of the bottle. The thought flashed to his mind,—can it be that his lordship suspects the poor fellow of having stolen it; but this idea was speedily dispelled, when rather more than usually warm and animated he said, "How comes it Joseph, that you have been so lavish with my wine? I did not think I was feeding and supporting within my own house, one who would take the most open way of robbing me of my property."

Joseph stood motionless for a moment; but he had no wish to prevaricate. Unconscious still of the baseness of Laiton, he replied, in a calm, and unequivocal manner.

I have lived in your lordship's family now nearly two years, and have never been charged with falsehood nor equivocation,—neither will I at this time. My old acquaintance, who now stands before you, called upon me this morning in so dejected a state, and told me such a tale of woe, that the feelings of humanity rushed to my soul while the tear of pity trickled down my cheek. I endeavored to relieve so far the urgent wants of himself and children, and gave him this bottle of wine to his delicate wife, as the Dr. had ordered, what the poor man was unable to afford. I promised also to acquaint you with his destitution, and thought you might perhaps be able to do something for him.

"It is all very well," said the baronet, for you to soothe and gratify your feelings,—of humanity as you call it, by bestowing charity at my expense. When I have charity to bestow, I will myself be the almoner. I know not how many dozens may have gone a similar way,—besides other things which you have in your power.—No servant of mine shall ever be allowed to act so lavishly with my property, with impunity,—you shall leave my house this instant, and, remember!—you go without a character."

Then turning to the debased Laiton, the baronet said, "As I have some pressing business in

the city to-day, and cannot at present remain longer, be pleased to call upon me to-morrow at ten o'clock, and I will endeavor to reward you for your disinterested conduct."

This concluding sentence explained the whole mystery. The butler saw that he had been betrayed by Laiton who was now seemingly to be rewarded for his treachery. He lingered not however, to offer the slightest vindication, but with a slow and firm step retired to his own room. His conscience accused him not for performing the action for which he was so summarily discharged. He was not insensible to the hallowed ties which render private property sacred—and more especially so, when entrusted to one's care; but the powerful operations of a sympathetic heart whose genial streams of keenest sensibility to the woes of suffering humanity, constantly welled forth, and laved with its peaceful and pellucid wave his generous mind,—this profound sympathy for a suffering brother, overcame for the moment the stern dictates of justice, and he yielded to temptation. But still his failings were to virtue's side, and even when too late to be remedied he felt that what he had done was worthy of his master, and what he would have done with his own property had it been in his possession. I will not attempt in the slightest to palliate the offence of the butler. My duty is only to record the facts as they occurred; but this shows us that in certain circumstances even the most refined sensibilities of our nature are most apt to lead us from the strict path of rectitude. It is not the mean sordid mind that is likely to be entrapped in such a snare: but the mind which is keenly alive to the miseries of destitution, and fully nerved to do its utmost to alleviate another's woe.

Mackenzie had given to the treacherous Laiton all the silver in his purse at the moment,—a sum equivalent to the price of several bottles of wine, and had he had any more in his possession it would have been given. He however pleaded no excuse; but silently commenced to collect the various articles of clothing which were hanging about his room. He lifted from the mantelpiece his very tastefully morocco-bound bible—a relic of his dear departed friend. He opened it, but his eye refused to convey the truth, and closing the book which had imparted sweetest consolation in the feverish anxiety of many a fleeting hour, in a foreign land, he laid it quietly in his trunk. There was no bustle with him, no stir, no trace of sorrow, and no boisterous expressions of discontent, at the bare treatment which he had received. His companions surrounded him with sorrowing hearts as soon as they had ascertained the fact, but he alone was calm, and seemingly unimpressed; and with a forehead burning with the rush of feverish blood which now issued vigorously from his heart, he took a kind but an abrupt farewell.

His highland blood now circulated through his veins with a highly accelerated motion, and he hastened to an inn in the village, where, having sent a messenger to Rosehall for his trunks, he retired to a private room, and stretched himself upon a sofa. He closed his eyes and tried for the moment to forget the affair and all its associations in a gentle slumber; but there was no sleep in store for him. His mind began to wander, many strange and incoherent sentiments escaped from his lips, and his eyeballs rolled as if bathed in blood. His forehead burned intensely, a hectic flush mantled his noble countenance, and his nervous system became violently agitated.

The village physician came; but alas! he was too late to be of any service to the generous hearted butler,—the work was already accomplished—the shaft had struck—and warm hearted Mackenzie was now a poor madman.

"Something draughts were given but without effect." His aberration still increased, and for his own safety he was conveyed to a lunatic asylum in the neighbourhood. Here we leave him for a short time to the tender mercies of those