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THE STORY OF A CITY ARAB.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOUGHTON GRANGE."

CHAPTER LIII.—Continued.

Thoughts more solemn and sad supervened. I thought where it said that covetousness is idolatry, and that the covetous cannot enter the kingdom of God and of heaven. I thought of this aged relative of mine going to the grave, but not as 'a shock of corn fully ripe,' but rather as a bundle of stubble fit for nothing but destruction. I thought of the Lord's emphatic question, 'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' I thought of the apostle's fearful warning, 'Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.' I thought of all this till it was too painful for me. And then I turned my thoughts to the poor boy in my old garret at Whiskers' Rents: poor in this world—oh how poor!—but rich in faith, and an heir to the kingdom which God has prepared for those who love him; and as he lay dying, resting on a Saviour's promises, and trusting in a Saviour's love; and then I thought of the words of another apostle, 'Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, and as to visitors, I was the first she had ever worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal

weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.'

CHAPTER LIV.

MY COUSIN POLLY—AND MY GRANDFATHER'S
CROTCHET.

I HAVE said that I was a week in my grandfather's neighbourhood. I might have said, under his roof and his guest; for on the second day, when I returned from Fairtown, my cousin insisted on my remaining at the farm, and my grandfather acquiesced. If any inducement was needed, it was supplied by my cousin, who promised me that I should sleep in my mother's—'poor aunt Nelly's'—own little room. I loved my cousin with a brotherly sort of love from this time, and could have embraced her with gratitude for the proffered indulgence.

Not that I should not have slept better and sounder in any room than that. It was not only the same room, but it had the same paper on the walls—coarse, blotchy, damp, discoloured, and tattered now, on the scarcely discernible pattern of which, while I lay sleepless in bed in the early morning I could dimly trace fantastic figures of old men's heads, on which my mother's eyes had once been fixed. The bedstead, too, old-fashioned, lumbering, worm-eaten; and the scanty furniture of the room, which had never been meddled with or changed—so my cousin told me—since my mother last slept in it, nor had the room been used. Why should it have been? There were more rooms in the large old farmhouse than were needed by its usual inmates, said my cousin.

I occupied the room, then, night after night; but thoughts of my mother kept me awake.

My cousin was an enigma to me. Coarse and rough by habit, constant associations, and daily occupations, she had yet a delicacy of perception that might have shamed and put to the blush many I have since known with high pretensions to good breeding and politeness. Ignorant of feminine accomplishments, and of all but the least and lowest acquirements of education (meaning by education, school learning), she had good sense enough to compensate for much of this deficiency. Brought up in a school of avarice, and herself exacting and sharp, there was room for generous feelings in her bosom. Even her daily exposure to unfeminine toil had not destroyed her natural comeliness—it seemed but to have ripened and enriched it; and I may add that, coarse and strange and inappropriate as her costume was, there was a certain grace with which it was worn, which destroyed, or at least qualified, its grotesque effect. Perhaps I am prejudiced, however, in these remembrances, for after being at first puzzled by my cousin's countenance and the interest I felt stealing over me, I suddenly discovered how like she was—and yet how unlike!—to my mother's portrait—to my mother herself, I have no doubt, before cruelty and sorrow had marred her loveliness.

Day after day I sat with my aged and helpless relative, listening to his complaints of neglect and tyranny, varied occasionally, however, with praises of Polly Randell's good management and industry, and to his regretful reminiscences of days gone by when he would not have turned his back on any man at a day's work—not he.' I induced him, too, though he was