

As I walked my horse through the village my fancy called up her image before me. Her stature might have been about five feet and a half or less,—for it is a difficult matter to judge of a woman's height—and the symmetry of her figure was matchless. It was one of the so rarely to be met with, exactly following the old Grecian mode of classic female beauty. The deeply hollowed back, the swelling chest and bosom, and high round neck,—the long lower limb, with its full upper development and short, much-arched foot, all combined to make it perfect. Her waist was not slender,—the word light would apply to it rather, for here no means of unnatural compression had ever been practiced, and it looked free and unconstrained as she stepped along, having a sort of instinctive undulatory motion, like a swan's neck, graceful exceedingly. Her face was beautiful, the nose had just a trace of the Roman curve, while the small pump-mouth looked redder than the richest tint linner ever selected wherewithal to touch the lip of his ideal. Her eyes were of a deep, dark, almost indigo blue, large and rolling, at times most spirited in their glances, at other times softened into an expression of such melting sweetness, that you could not look upon them without feeling an involuntary sigh stealing from your bosom, just as would be called up by a strain of music familiar to your childhood. Her hair was of a bright yellow, curling naturally, and glistening with a lustre almost faintly metallic, like tarnished gold wire. Add to these a skin, not snow-white certainly, but of a clear living white, clouded by a flush of health on either round cheek,—a high spotless forehead, small thin ear, pierced by a slender ring of gold,—and a hand, whose beauty the labor of a factory could not deform; and if you have anything of an active fancy, you may form in your mind a likeness of fair Cheeny Granton.

But it was not in her personal excellence alone she stood out among her mates. She was a very clever girl, and her page on the library roll-book bore testimony both to the extent and nature of her reading. An ardent love of the poetry of Byron, Burns, and Moore, was, strangely enough its distinguishing characteristic, and the continued perusal of this kind of writing must have had no little effect in bringing about the events of this narrative. Her moral character was unexceptionable, her disposition amiable, though about her lip there lurked the trace of a haughty smile, and about her voice a slight tone of condescension, which, however, those who were habituated to her did not perceive. It was possible, too, occasionally to detect in her mind evidence of a deep, all-potent enthusiasm, similar to that of her mother, which seemed only to require an object to be called into vigorous life and light. But it was certainly not religious; for, though she loved her mother with an engrossing affection, she followed her tenets with what seemed respectful filial acquiescence, not faith. Such a being as this could hardly exist in any place without exciting around her the passions of admiration, love, envy, and hatred, in their most violent forms. She was a marked girl about Westwater.—Some were extravagantly fond and proud of her, others hated her bitterly, taking every opportunity of evincing this feeling, by word and deed. She thought herself a lady, they said, and would take the shortest way to become one. But all of these insinuations Jane took with a quiet smile, as things that were to be expected.

Lovers she had in abundance; indeed

every young man in the place had some pretension to this character. For some of them she appeared to entertain very friendly feelings, though, when their attentions became more urgent, she could not conceal her annoyance. There was one, however, evidently more favoured than the rest. This was a young man of the name of Williams, who, for two years or more, had held the situation of teacher at Westwater. He was a pale, studious, anxious-looking young person, of some talent. He had been connected, in an inferior way, with a newspaper-office, in the large city I first alluded to, and from that situation had been transferred to the one he held. But his crowning advantage was, that he professed ardently, and I believe sincerely, the same views of religion as Mrs. Granton, and they used to spend hours together of evenings in the performance of their peculiar rites of worship. With her he was all in all, and her daughter certainly had a very great regard for him. But still I thought I could see that this regard was not what I myself would have been content with in similar circumstances. I was particularly struck with this thought a few days after my arrival.

It was a beautiful evening, early in the summer, and I was taking a solitary walk up the bank of the stream to a place called the grove, about a mile or more above the factory, where there was a large reservoir, with an extensive system of locks and sluices. From its lonely and romantic character, this had always been my favorite walk and here I met the so-called lovers. They were moving along slowly, side by side, he walking quite close to her, his eyes fixed upon her face with an appearance of complete devotion, while she listened to his address with a look as if it required an effort to keep her attention to it. As I passed, I remarked upon the beauty of the evening. She answered me quietly and civilly; he said nothing, but blushed and appeared much embarrassed and confused. I often met them again, and always noticed them in the same demeanor. But a change had come over the course of events at Westwater. My father having become a partner in the firm, removed to the city, there to take charge of the counting-house business, and another manager came to reside at the factory.

His name was Edward Southern, and as he occupies a prominent place in my story, I will stay to describe him. Whose child he was no one knew. He had been brought up by a person formerly a gentleman's servant, and who received from some quarter unknown a regular payment for his maintenance. By this man, who kept a cigar-shop in London, he was tolerably educated, till about sixteen years of age. At this period, having been by chance present at an introductory lecture to a popular course of natural philosophy, the bent of his genius at once evinced itself, and he became devotedly fond of mechanical science. He studied this with so much success, that next season he obtained the situation of assistant to the lecturer, with a small salary, and the use of an apparatus-room and workshop. Here he made striking progress: his peculiar genius unfolded itself rapidly, and in a year or two he astonished the lecturer by showing him an article he had written in one of the leading journals. One step leads to another. He shortly commenced, in an infidel publication, a series of papers, the tendency of which was to run down everything, in government or religion, usually held established or sacred,—and which were remarkable for their original

character. For these, the extensive sale of the pestiferous periodical afforded him liberal remuneration. Another short-while passed, and he obtained the situation of lecturer on mechanics and chemistry, on the retirement of his former teacher. Another year saw issued from the press a work of his on a popular scientific subject, which ran speedily through two or three editions. His income, of which he was himself the sole creator, now amounted to several hundred pounds a-year, while his name was in the mouth of every one interested in popular science, especially as connected with manufactories.

To this person Messrs. H———H——— and Co. offered the situation of overseer of their works, with the prospect of a junior partnership. He was indeed a most singular individual; tall, and eminently handsome in person, with fine features, dark curling hair and whiskers, and eyes which, in their deep blackness, seemed to consist altogether of pupil. His manners again were most insinuating, though at times rendered all but offensive by an overweening pride of his own talent and success, which continually broke forth in his conversation, and a sneer constantly ready for every opinion differing from his own, and especially for every system in others of religious or moral feeling. The propriety of placing such a person as this over a factory employing several hundred young females may be questioned: but the owners only knew him as a scientific character, the inventor of several valuable improvements in spinning and weaving. But the result of his being placed in such a situation may be guessed by the reader, when I add to the above hints of his character that he was fond of styling himself by the phrase "a refined voluptuary," and was utterly devoid of all principle, believing and stating man's sole happiness to consist in the gratification of appetite. In further aid of his person and address he was possessed of a ready tongue, a talent for delicate flattery, a decided good taste, a ready knack of turning his hand to anything, and a consummate knowledge of the world.

Upon his arrival at his new charge, his first proceeding was to introduce an entire new system of discipline among the people, which, I must confess, proved to be considerably to the advantage of his employers. In personally setting this in operation, his eye lighted upon the widow's daughter, at work, in the silk-weaving department of the factory. I was with him.

The moment he saw her, he stood struck, bending upon her a gaze, before which the red blush flew to her face, while she appeared at the same time unable to turn her eyes from his. A second or two this lasted, when he abruptly passed on. He had been talking to me, with great volubility the moment before, but now he walked silently alone, and completed the survey.

The next encounter was in the walk up the stream I have before mentioned. Here he met her with Williams. He immediately addressed her, while Williams, knowing his place, dropped a little behind—his heart flooded on the instant with a new and bitter passion—jealousy.

Poor fellow! at once he saw his fond air-castle of love and hope dashed in fragments to the ground, and he walked behind them, watching his new rival whispering and exerting upon the girl all his many powers of fascination—his blood boiling with jealousy, hatred, and rage. For more than an hour, Southern continued to walk by her side, when suddenly turning round, and observing Williams, he calmly ordered him, to go