

ing eyes, and the youth and grace that made a sort of atmosphere of light around her?

"My own little True!" murmured the fond father, as he looked at her.

"I think it is quite time that we call her Gertrude, Mr. Austwicke," said the lady of the Hall, petulantly. "I dislike nick-names; they're, to my thinking, very vulgar."

"Oh, mother dear!" said Allan, "pet-names and nick-names are two very different things. True she is, and True she must be—and no pun intended, I assure you—to the end of the chapter."

"Bravo, Allan, that's a good motto, my boy," cried Mr. Austwicke. "True she is, and True she must be."

Miss Austwicke seemed to shiver.

"As to true, if you really have any grand moral meaning in your words, Allan," interposed Mrs. Austwicke, tartly, "there's no great merit in people being that which it would be disgraceful not to be."

Again a thrill ran through Miss Austwicke, though she felt it incumbent on her to say—

"Certainly—you are quite right."

"When you keep talking of me so, Allan, I feel quite savage," said Gertrude. "I should like to be Dr. Johnson."

"You—you little goose! and why, pray, that wise wish?"

"Why, then I might say something as severe as he said to Boswell: 'You've only two subjects: yourself and myself, and I'm heartily sick of both.'"

"He was a very sensible man, I think," said Mrs. Austwicke.

Her husband coughed drily, and rejoined, "He was, rather, my dear."

When the dinner was over, and the ladies were going to the drawing-room, Mr. Austwicke said—

"We'll take tea in the library this evening. There's something there, Honor, that you must look at; and you, Allan, and Gertrude; I want you all to see it."

"Excuse me, papa," said Gertrude, hardly conscious why she spoke, and certainly unable, if she had been asked, to give a reason for declining to go.

"Certainly not, dear. You are quite an interested party in this—this unpleasant matter."

"Unpleasant?" said Miss Austwicke, inquiringly.

"Yes, very much so. Everything that makes a family talked about is unpleasant. Rumour is at once a contemptible and yet a dangerous thing: families suffer by it."

"I should think, in our case, the family honour," began Miss Austwicke, in her old way—but she stopped of herself, even before Mrs. Austwicke, with a derisive laugh, said—

"Spare us any Austwicke glorifications; I'm too tired, indeed, for them to-night. You're always the family Honor, you know."

Pleased with this smartness, which, as in many other instances, prevents rather than aids its possessor having any insight into what is going on around, the three ladies walked at once to the library.

CHAPTER XLVII. THE RELICS.

"There have been doings dark as night,
And close as death: which the clear eyes of day
Has seen not.
Night's ear hath many counsels of the dark;
She hears the whispers of the self-reproached,
And blacker grows." ANONYMOUS.

The two elder ladies maintained an anxious silence. Gertrude, agitated by vague fears, tried to tranquillise herself over a book, when Allan and Mr. Austwicke joined them.

There was a strong new oak box on a side-table, with a padlock on it, towards which the looks of three of the party were soon directed. Not a word was spoken until the servant and the tea-things had departed; then Mr. Austwicke brought the small box to the centre table and, placing it under a tall lamp, unlocked it. He took out a child's coral necklace, finished with a very handsome fastening, and two clasps of the same workmanship mounted in gold; a stick of coral, ornamented with gold bells; a tattered old Testament, and a common tin tobacco-box.

These latter he had scarcely laid on the table, when Miss Austwicke, who had put on her spectacles and was leaning over the first-named articles, hastily turned the clasps, and exclaimed—

"Why, these are the necklace and clasps which I gave to you, Gertrude, as a christening gift! See, here's your name on the back of the clasps—" Gertrude Austwicke, from her Aunt Honoria."

"Of course they are," said Mrs. Austwicke, "the very same; and you know how annoyed I was that by the carelessness or dishonesty of the servants, they were lost while I was at Madeira."

"Yes, I remember your writing to me about it. I never thought you would have left the child's trinkets with that poor old, infirm Scotch nurse of yours."

"Liza Ross was as faithful a creature as ever lived," said Mrs. Austwicke, decidedly. "She nursed me, and I know, whoever was to blame, she was not."

"But you told me she became blind, sister."

"Yes; she couldn't, of course, help that."

"And this coral; was this Gertrude's? and lost at the same time?" asked Allan, wishing to interrupt the rising anger.

"I gave that to her," said Mr. Austwicke; adding, "but what puzzles me most is this." He took up a bit of wool out of the mildewed ravel of a silk purse, in which it had been wrapped, and displayed an antique plain gold ring, with a motto inside, and a date, 1672, remarking, "This was found too."

Miss Austwicke reached out her hand, and no sooner looked at the ring than she started to her feet with a faint cry.

"It's Maud Austwicke's marriage-ring! It was given as an old family relic to my mother, and then—"

"Aye; and then, what then?" inquired her brother, anxiously. "Why do you look like that, Honor? the ring won't harm you."

Miss Austwicke, trembling in every limb, sat down, she would have fallen if she had not, and gasped out—

"It was left to Wilfred."

"Left to him? But was it ever given to him?"

"I—I don't know," faltered Miss Austwicke.

"Oh, but I do know that," interposed Mrs. Austwicke; "I saw him wear it on his watch-chain, and I once told him he used a family relic badly in so doing. Yes, he had it when he visited at Dunoon, before Gertrude was born."

"Indeed, had he?—but," gasped Miss Austwicke, "I can't talk of poor Wilfred."

She leant back, and covered her face.

They had all been too intently occupied to hear a single knock, which had been twice repeated, at the door. It opened, and Ruth, with a shambling curtsy, entered.

"What do you want?" said Mr. Austwicke.

"Please, sir, it rains, and the bay window is not fastened."

"Go round that way, then," said Mrs. Austwicke, indicating, as she spoke, that Ruth should pass behind a low screen, in the rear of the table, to the bay window, which was at the end of the room.

Gertrude fancied that Ruth was rather anxious to show her that she had come home early. Meanwhile the woman, taking the direction indicated, had to mount some steps at the window to close an open pane. She did her work quickly, and was descending, when, turning her head an instant, she saw, by the light of the lamp which fell full upon them, the necklace, clasps, and coral. The latter lay by itself very conspicuously. No one noticed her, and, after a wild stare of dumb surprise, she descended, and, with the creeping step of one fearful of notice, tottered out of the room. Yes, tottered. Allan turned his head, and observed her gait with something more than surprise, but he said nothing. Could it be possible, he was asking himself, that Ruth (who had, he knew, been so attentive to his sister, and was a valued servant) had been drinking? He feared so; the woman, he was sure, actually staggered. However, there were other things just then to think of, and his attention was recalled by Gertrude's remark—

"It is fortunate these things are found, papa."

"H—em! my dear—ye—s. But there's this unpleasantness—don't be shocked—the remains of two people, a child and a woman, were found with them."

"So we read, papa, in a newspaper Mr. Hope sent us. That is very dreadful."

"If that was the thief's skeleton, she met her deserts," said Allan, with rashness.

"But the little child?" cried Gertrude.

"The unfortunate woman, Allan," said Mrs. Austwicke, solemnly, "met more than her deserts poor wretch! she must have fallen down the old shaft. I hear that it was very slightly, if at all protected. Some planks of wood put over it, that had rotted away; and, what made it worse, a growth of weeds and grass had gathered about and hid it."

"I wonder a place was so left," said Allan, indignantly.

"You would not wonder if you had ever been in Cornwall. They often leave shafts of exhausted mines there quite unprotected."

"Angus Dunoon had once an estate in Cornwall. He had to sell it, and it now belongs to the Pentreals," remarked Mrs. Austwicke.

The Testament and tobacco-box were then looked at. There was the name of "Niel Glossop" in the one, and the initials, "N. G.," roughly scratched on the other.

"Well, but, mamma, when had Gertrude these things? and what servants had you in Scotland?"

Mrs. Austwicke was just about to speak, when they were startled by cries and voices, and a great confusion in the house. Just as Mr. Austwicke's hand was on the bell, a man-servant entered in haste, saying—

"Please, sir, Ruth's down in a fit. She's desperate bad."

(To be continued.)

JAMES BARRY, R.A.

JAMES Barry was born in the city of Cork, Ireland, October 11, 1741. His father was employed, during the early portion of his life, as a coasting trader between Ireland and England. Young Barry made some trips when a boy; but the occupation was very distasteful to him, and consequently he had to be allowed to follow the bent of his own genius. It is said that he painted his first picture when only seventeen: at about twenty years of age he had made such rapid progress as to venture on a visit to Dublin, with one of his productions, which he exhibited in one of the rooms of the Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. The subject he chose was St. Patrick on the shore of Cashel; who, in conferring the rite of baptism on the monarch of that district, has unconsciously planted the sharp end of his crozier through the foot of the royal convert. One of the guards is uplifting his battle-axe to revenge the injury, but is restrained by another, who is pointing to the unchanged aspect and pious demeanour of his royal master, as an evident proof that he will not suffer his pious feelings to be interrupted by the pain.

Burke, on seeing this painting, at once perceived the merits and defects of his young and aspiring countryman. He immediately gave his advice, and what was more his assistance, and it was chiefly through his aid that Barry was enabled to visit Italy.

After remaining in Rome for about five years, he left, in the spring of 1770, and passing leisurely through the various cities in the north of Italy, so rich in the treasures of art, he arrived in England early in the following year. In London he attracted considerable attention by a picture of Venus. This was followed by many others, which all tended to confirm his already established reputation.

His next productions of any note, were his grand series of pictures in the great room of the Society of Arts at the Adelphi. These are six in number, and represent severally the following subjects; The Story of Orpheus; A Greek Harvest Home; The Crowning of the Victors at Olympia; Navigation, or the Triumph of the Thames; The Distribution of Premiums by the