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ZOE;
OR, SOME DAY.

A NOVEL.

BY MAY LEONARD.

AUTHORESS OF "TRIXIE'S INHERITANCE ; OR, WHICH SHALL WIN."

PRICE 50 CENTS.

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A NOVEL.

BY MAY LEONARD.

AUTHRESS OF "TRIXIE'S INHERITANCE ; OR, WHICH SHALL WIN."

SAINT JOHN, N. B. :

PRINTED BY GEO. W. DAY, COR. PRINCESS AND PRINCE WM. STS.

1888.

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
CHAPTER I.—AN INVITATION,	7
II.—“I SHALL SNUB HER,”	10
III.—A YACHTING PARTY,	12
IV.—A STRANGER,	15
V.—FORTUNE TELLING,	18
VI.—“YOUR SISTER, DOLORES,”	22
VII.—AT NICE,	25
VIII.—YOU NEVER CAN TELL,	29
IX.—“SHALL WE NOT BE FRIENDS?”	34
X.—“I WONDER WHO SHE CAN BE?”	40
XI.—TROUBLE OVERTAKES THE BEST OF MEN,	44
XII.—TOO CONFIDING. “YES, IT IS MY HUSBAND,”	48
XIII.—THE CONVENT OF ST. MARGUERITE,	50
XIV.—TRYING TO BE ECONOMICAL,	54
XV.—AN ACCIDENT. A WILD HOPE,	58
XVI.—“TRULY, VENGEANCE IS MINE,”	61
XVII.—BLONDINE GAINS THE VICTORY,	66
XVIII.—“A WOMAN ONE DOES NOT MEET EVERY DAY,”	69
XIX.—A REVELATION,	73
XX.—REA’S ATONEMENT. THE NEW MOTHER SUPERIOR,	75
XXI.—NED CRANE. “THE ONE AND THE SAME,”	78
XXII.—LORD STREATHMERE’S SUIT. SIR BARRY’S HEART’S DESIRE,	82
XXIII.—ZOE’S SOME DAY,	85

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PREFACE.

JUST a few words to my readers, with regard to the book before them. The story of a girl's ambition; a novel certainly, but containing many incidents that have lately happened. It is most certainly very difficult to attempt to please every one, when there are so many different tastes to please. The many readers of my first novel, "Trixie's Inheritance; or, Which shall Win?" were kind enough to remember that the story had not come from the pen of a woman who had lived to realize the many changes that happen during years of personal experience, but that it had all been composed and written by a girl sixteen years old. They pardoned, overlooked the many flaws and mistakes, and remembered that we are not to be condemned for our first efforts. It was a very pleasant remembrance for me of my first book, that Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, on receipt of a copy, sent me the following recognition for my letter and book:

"General Sir Henry T. Ponsonby is commanded by the Queen to thank Miss May Leonard for her letter of the 20th March, and for the book she sends."

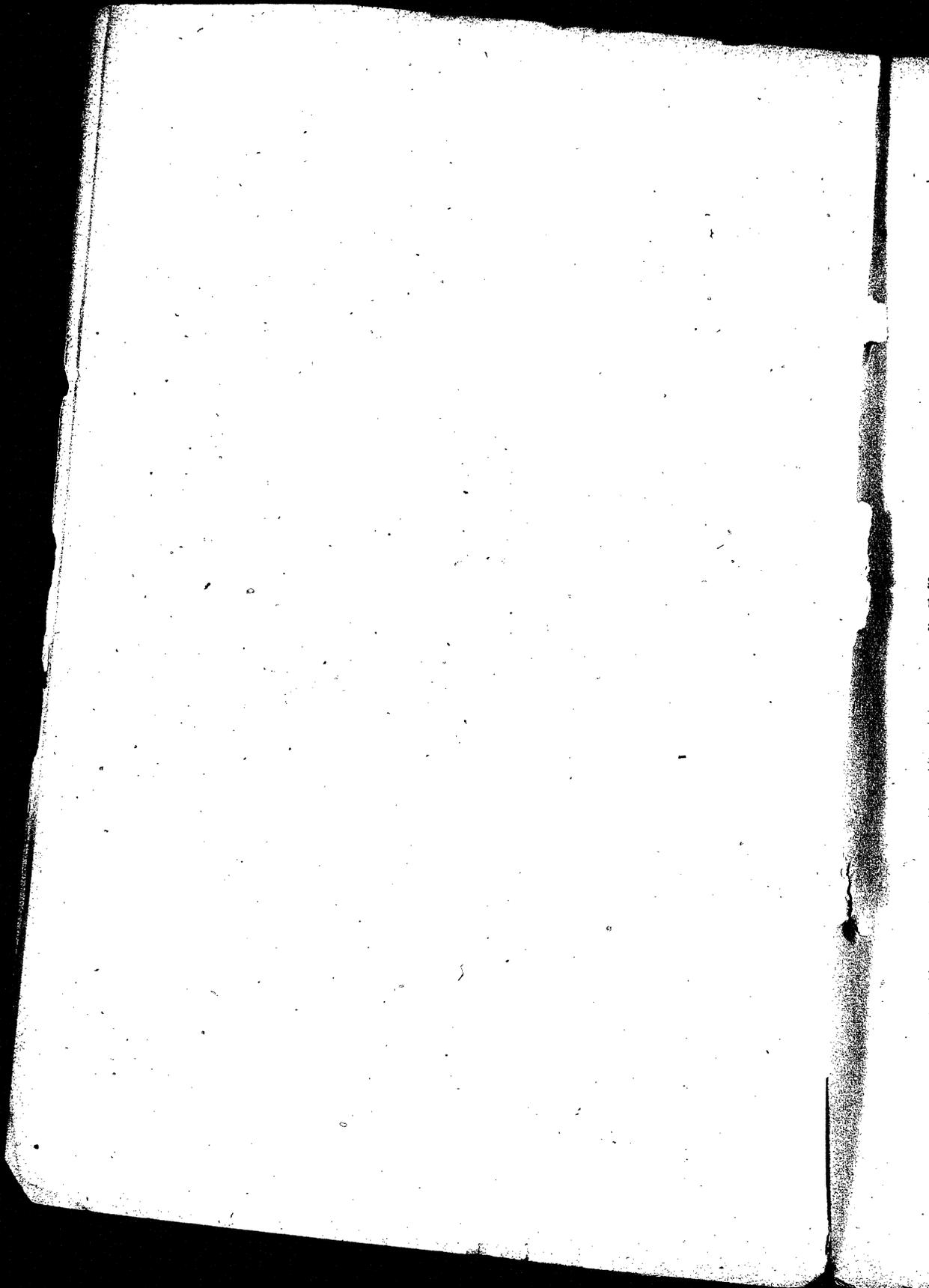
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18th May, 1887.

A copy was sent to Lord Lansdowne, Governor General of Canada, who also sent a pleasant note of thanks.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the many ladies and gentlemen who so heartily, willingly and kindly have assisted me in making this, my second book, so successful.

MAY LEONARD.



ZOE ; OR, SOME DAY.



CHAPTER I.

AN INVITATION.

“Dark is her hair, her hand is white,
Her voice is exquisitely tender ;
Her eyes are full of a liquid light,
I never saw a waist so slender.”—PRAED.

“Dolores, will he ever come?”

The hammock, slung between the two sturdy old apple trees, swings gently to and fro, the scorching rays of an August sun beat fiercely down, the bees hum lazily in the dense heat, the flowers droop their pretty heads, as if inviting a refreshing shower to brighten their fainting spirits.

“Dolores, I believe you are asleep. Do you think he will soon be here?”

“Who?” comes the lazy enquiry from the young lady of the hammock.

“Why, the postman, of course. How stupid of you not to remember. I never saw any one so indifferent in my life.”

Zoe’s red lips form themselves into as near a pout as her ever ready smiling mouth will allow.

“Who could be anything else than indifferent on a day such as this?” is the half sleepy reply.

“Dolores, like my own sweet sister, sit up and talk to me.”

The bees hum on, the butterflies light here and there, now on this flower, now on that. Then sweet, gentle, pretty Dolores Litchfield stretches her white arms over her pretty head, yawns, and slips from the hammock.

“Now Zoe, you little worry, what is the trouble?”

Dropping into a garden chair, Dolores folds her white hands, to await further developments from her wilful, impulsive, harum-scarum sister Zoe.

“How handsome you are, Dolores. Do you think I shall ever be as beautiful as you, do you, Dolores?” the girl cries eagerly.

Dolores brushes a fly off her white dress and laughs softly.

“Ah, Zoe, what a little flatterer. One of those days I will be no comparison to my little sister ; you will eclipse me in every respect.” And Miss Litchfield smiles fondly at the troubled, eager face before her.

“Oh, I could never be like you, Dolores. I have a wicked temper, and a quick tongue ; were I not to speak out what I think, why I should choke

to death. I may have a pretty face and nice figure, but I can never be good, unselfish, forgiving, like you, never."

The girl shakes her head; she feels herself far from perfect. Since Dolores has come home from her foreign tour she has been her sister's ideal of all women.

"How I do wish he would come," the youngest Miss Litchfield says impatiently. "He is like the policemen in town, never around when they are wanted. Well," defiantly, "I don't care a snap of my finger if he comes or stays."

Dolores smiled in her lazy fashion; she is too much accustomed to Zoe's "ways," to say anything.

"Dolores, talk to me; tell me a story, anything to put in the time, something you saw on your visit abroad; it must be an Italian story; dear, beautiful, sunny Italy! Oh, Dolores! what would I not give to be there? What pictures I could paint! I did not for one moment begrudge your going, but if I could have had the chance, I would have painted pictures which would have made me famous. Oh, Dolores, think what it is to be famous. Some day, it may be far off or it may be near, but the time will surely come, when you will be proud to own me as your sister. I want—my ambition is—to be great, grand, noble."

Dolores laughs. "And good, my sister; that is better than all," she says, smiling. "My ambitious little one, do not be too eager, you have all your life before you yet; fame will not be caught easily; she demands much chasing, and those who pursue her have many slips and tumbles before they achieve their end, so be patient. And now for the story."

"Well, once upon a time there was a castle in Italy, a beautiful, costly, grand structure. The lord of the castle was a brave, generous gentleman, honorable and true. His lady was lovely, proud, and intensely jealous of her very charming husband; she had a gentle serving maid, Christina, a girl as pure in thought and deed as the lily; they had grown up as play-fellows. The Countess was very fond of her, for she was not like her other friends. The Countess would quarrel with any and every one, on account of her fiery temper; with Christina she never quarreled. The maid was fond of solitude, and passed her spare time in wandering alone among a grove of beautiful trees, her white dress could often be seen as she paced back and forth among the dark trees, and gained for her, among the people, the name of the White Lady. The Countess' room was costly and elegant, the toilet table was of massive silver, covered with a profusion of everything handsome. Her chair was placed in front of the glass, and one day, so the legend runs, she was sitting there, while Christina was combing her mistress's golden hair; the Count was called away on urgent business, and as he passed through the door she saw, as she believed, a smile, a

glance at parting, given and answered, that turned her heart almost to stone. That night, ere the moon was up, Christina was led forth; no instrument of death was used, not one hair of her head was harmed. In all the full glow of life and health, fair, gentle, good Christina was walled up within the castle walls, in a vault under the chapel. And now, every night, at the same hour, a figure stands, with eyes uplifted, and hands clasped in prayer, then it vanishes, and the hunter meets her on his hunting track, and the shepherd on the heath starts and exclaims, 'It is the White Lady!'

Dolores' voice sinks to a whisper; there are tears in her dusky eyes. Surely one would think the sad story of poor Christina awakened more than a passing feeling of sadness for her in Dolores' kind heart. Zoe was too much interested to notice her sister's silence.

"And you really walked in the Countess' own room, saw the grove where Christina walked and spent her lonely hours of solitude, and the vault which she never came out of?"

"Yes, dear, it was all very lovely, sad and beautiful," the eldest Miss Litchfield replies. "But look! your patience is rewarded; there comes the postman in at the gate."

Zoe darts off in quest of the daily post. Before many minutes she is back again, her face wreathed in smiles, for there actually was a letter addressed to Miss Zoe Litchfield, from an affectionate girl friend; and soon Zoe is deep in its contents. Dolores languidly scans the handwriting on the large square envelope addressed to herself, then breaks the seal, and reads; and as she reads a gleam of satisfaction, quickly followed by one of sorrow, passes over her ever changing face.

"What's in yours, Dolores?" Zoe asks, putting her own epistle in the pocket of her white frilled apron.

"There is to be a yachting party, and I have been invited to join it," Dolores answers, absently gazing at a rose bush stirred by the breeze.

"Oh!" Zoe ejaculates. "Will you go? Who asked you? Won't it be sublime?"

Zoe's eyes dilate, and a wish, not altogether unnatural in a girl fifteen years old, arises in her mind, to be Dolores. Now, however, Dolores smiles faintly, and says slowly,

"I shall think it over. The Hon. Jeremiah Hopkins sent the invitation, and as to its being sublime, I suppose so."

Then Dolores arises and goes across the lawn towards the house, with her white dress trailing over the green grass behind her. Pretty, graceful, sweet Dolores. What was the reason no one cared to be seen talking to her? And in crowded parlors or assemblies, if her name happened to be mentioned, why did virtuous mammas look at the person who spoke her name with such a shocked expression? Surely gentle Dolores could not

have wronged any one by word or deed. A gentleman once said, speaking of Miss Litchfield, "That if ever a true, pure woman lived, a woman on whom any man might stake his life and honor, it was a woman like Dolores Litchfield whom he might trust." And it is quite safe to say, that this praise did not make Dolores any more of a favourite with the roomful of ladies of all ages, where the remark was made.

CHAPTER II.

I SHALL SNUB HER.

"A favourite has no friends."—GRAY.

"And just for that one simple reason you refuse this invitation; which you have been craving for so long a time? Well, my dear, stranger every day grow the works and ways of this troublesome world. Of course you certainly know your own reasons best; it is nothing to me if you act foolish." Mrs. St. James shrugs her pretty shoulders as she looks with astonishment at her young visitor, charming Rea Severn, who, as she stands before the cosy fire, tapping her small foot impatiently on the brightly polished fender, looks the original of injured dignity.

"No, but Ariel, just think yourself, how more than provoking it is. What do you think possessed Jerry to invite the girl? Oh dear, the men are so green sometimes; there is no accounting for their tastes in some matters."

Mrs. St. James smiles, and twists the heavy gold bracelet about on her white arm as she replies:

"Be reasonable, Rea; of the two, I have more reason to dread the meeting than you." Bitterly, "I owe her a debt, and she—I wonder if she has forgotten what she owes me?"

After a considerable pause, with some more impatient tapping of the little high-heeled boots on the fender, Rea decided that upon second thought, perhaps it would not do any good to any one, and beside be a great punishment to herself, to remain away from this entertainment. It had been so extremely nice of Jerry Hopkins, (the Honorable Jeremiah, but dubbed "Jerry" by his intimates), to give this yachting party to his friends. The gentlemen all declared it would be just the thing, and the ladies, why they were charmed. Then, above all, on their trip they were to visit one of H. M. steamships. The officers, who were all well known to the Hon. Jerry's guests, had invited them to a dance on board the war ship, lunch afterward, and then row by moonlight back to the yacht.

Rea Severn was delighted; but when she heard that pretty Dolores, the

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eldest daughter of Edward Litchfield, Esq., the genial and portly ship-builder, was one of the invited guests, she was so angry that on the impulse of the moment, in a burst of temper, she had flown to her bosom friend, wealthy Ariel St. James, and declares her determination to refuse to go.

"And another thing, Rea," Mrs. St. James goes on in her soft, smooth tones, "you have surely heard of the arrival of Lady Streathmere and her son. To be sure I remember distinctly when I went to school with him, what a perfectly horrid little boy he was. Such a coward; beat all the little boys and girls smaller than himself, and run when one of his own age and size approached. But for appearance sake, and the hope that he has improved with his years, we must be civil. Then it must be remembered, a match like he would be, with I forget how much income a year, is not to be picked up every day for the asking. Perhaps if you are favored by Fate, and try hard enough, you might make an impression."

Rea was prevented from a replying by the door being opened and a servant announcing Mr. Gordon Aubrey. Mrs. St. James arises to welcome him, and Rea's pouting lips become radiant with smiles. Mr. Aubrey was tall, slight and fair. He had a great habit of continually looking at you through an eye-glass, which to some of his friends proved decidedly embarrassing. When the eye-attachment proved wearisome he took to stroking a slight moustache, of which he was extremely proud, which was a very good thing, because no one else considered it worth noticing. They talked about the approaching yachting cruise, last night's concert, the theatre of last week, the people in town, the merits of the latest novel, and the last new song. Then Rea happened to glance toward the window, to behold the rain pouring in torrents. Mrs. St. James presses her to remain, but she declares it is impossible, that mamma will wonder what has happened her. So Gordon Aubrey jumps up to offer Miss Severn a seat in his covered carriage waiting at the door; and Rea, thinking of her thin shoes and the probable fate of the costly suit she is wearing, is not inclined to refuse to be driven home in Mr. Aubrey's or any one else's carriage. She likes him quite well, and so smilingly consents to go with nice looking but fickle Gordon Aubrey, who falls in love with every pretty new face he meets.

"And you will not refuse Jerry's invitation?" Mrs. St. James says, in a whisper; and Rea, as she stands in the hall, draws her tall figure to its fullest height, replies:

"No; I shall not refuse Jerry. As for Dolores Litchfield, I will snub her."

"My dear child," Mrs. St. James says quickly, "as I told you before, her going should not influence you, and why worry about imaginary evils; it is quite time enough when they appear, so be sensible; it is not your nature to despond."

As Rea turns to say good bye, she cries impulsively, "Oh, Ariel! what would become of me without you? I should get discouraged and give up altogether."

Gordon Aubrey calls out that he will have no more whispering, for who can tell but what it might be something about him. Then Rea takes her place in the large roomy carriage, while the footman climbs up in his seat beside the coachman, where in a united way they call down devout blessings on their master's head for his extreme thoughtlessness in letting the horses stay out in the rain for a good half hour. Such were the woes of Gordon Aubrey's Jehu.

CHAPTER III.

A YACHTING PARTY.

"Broken friendship may be soldered, but never made sound."

—GERMAN PROVERB.

Out over the clear blue waters come floating sweetly the music of the band on board of Her Majesty's flag ship, the "Keepsake." Since five o'clock the war ship's dainty boats had been plying to and fro between the shore and the steamer, laden with gaily attired guests, for there was a dance being given on board by the officers. The little luxurious yacht, belonging to the Hon. Jeremiah Hopkins, anchored not many yards from the steamer, was left to itself, save for the crew and servants, for the Hon. Jeremiah and his guests were all over attending the gorgeous entertainment provided by the "Keepsake." A bright-hued awning covered the deck where dancing was enjoyed. The whole vessel had a gay holiday appearance; then everything was so spotlessly clean, why one could eat one's dinner off the very decks.

Mrs. St. James is here, looking superb. Her husband never accompanies his clever wife; she was much younger than he. Another thing, he was too much engrossed with his busy business life to care for gaieties; so he left her to go her own way, enjoy herself after her own fashion, nor ever complained if his dream of having a cosy home, with a bright pleasant companion to discuss his affairs with, and be his household fairy, had vanished. It certainly was nonsense to fancy such a life for Ariel. Why, she was a mere child when he married her; she was of the world worldly. So Mr. St. James kept his own counsel, his temper and his tongue. She is now standing by the railing, watching the little waves lapping against the ship's side. She is laughing too, in that lazy fashion so peculiarly her own, while the pretty boyish looking fellow at her side thinks that if ever he had

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a friend in the world, to whom he would confide his secrets, that woman is Mrs. St. James. No one knew exactly who Ned Crane was; he had no friends or relatives; at least no one knew if he had any. He was a young bank clerk. Mrs. St. James was very proud of him, made a pet of him, while Mr. St. James liked the boy, and said "the lad would make a fine man if he lived." Every one liked him, for he was a jolly good fellow, beloved by one and all, as all sunny-dispositioned persons are, welcomed everywhere for the pleasant brightness their presence throws around.

"Do introduce me, Mrs. St. James. I will do any thing for you if you will. Come, before the next band."

Mrs. St. James does not reply, but the lazy smile leaves her perfect face, as she looks into the boy's dark, earnest eyes. Ariel has good places in her character. She pities the young man at her side; it will not be without an effort, to save him further pain, that she refuses to do as he asks.

"Look here, Ned," she says gently, "why do you wish to know this Miss Litchfield? There are lots of the girls here whom you know; it is more than probable were you to ask for a dance she would refuse you, on the ground that all her dances are promised; so it would only be another case of the 'moth and the candle.' See, there is Florrie Silverstone just over there, waiting for you to ask her. Ah! Gordon, you promised to show me over the vessel; shall we go?" and Mrs. St. James places her dainty hand on Gordon Aubrey's arm, calls Rea to join them, and turns away.

"Well! of all the cool acts I ever heard of, that was done the neatest." Ned looks after the retreating trio with a comical mixture of amusement and vexation. Then he sees Jerry Hopkins, and when Mrs. St. James returns to dance her promised waltz with a lieutenant of the flagship, who had gone down without a struggle before her charms, she glances across the deck, while a look—is it displeasure, or what?—crosses her face, for what she sees is Ned Crane pacing to and fro, and beside him, in a marvel of a white lace dress, is Dolores Litchfield. She has removed her white lace and satin hat, and Ned, looking too utterly happy for anything, is carefully holding a huge white lace parasol above her pretty dark head. Ariel St. James never loses her temper at trifles; if Ned will be so headstrong, to get himself into scrapes, he will have to get out again the best way he can. However, she goes over, with her prettiest smile, and taps Dolores on the shoulder with her fan.

"Can it be possible, Miss Litchfield, that you have forgotten me?"

Dolores starts, turns pale, then a hot, burning blush dyes her smooth young cheek. It is very evident Mrs. St. James and Miss Litchfield are not entire strangers to each other. Ned Crane, standing there, never remembers having felt so guilty ever in his life before; not that there was any reason for feeling so, but it was decidedly annoying to have Mrs. St.

Jamas lift her large blue eyes to his face, with a look that said so plainly, "You know her in spite of me, don't you?" Then the pink flush leaves Dolores' pretty face, and she looks Arial straight in the eyes.

"Yes, Mrs. St. James, I remember you perfectly. Our past knowledge of each other could scarcely allow of my forgetting you. As for your recognizing me, to be candid, I never dreamed you would do so."

For once Mrs. St. James almost loses her presence of mind. She looks as if it would do her good to shake the girl standing before her, looking so beautiful and defiant.

"Why should I not recognise you, Dolores? You will allow me to call you so still, will you not?"

Dolores' heart beats under the pretty lace dress almost to suffocation, the deeply hidden fiery blood inherited from her Southern mother, up to this moment had slumbered; now it broke forth.

"Mrs. St. James, I allow no one, only my friends, to call me by my Christian name. If you consider yourself my friend, I think otherwise. Had I treated you as basely as you have done me, who never harmed you knowingly, would you consider me other than the deadliest enemy? No! you shall not call me Dolores, never, never again."

Dolores stamps her little slippered foot with decision; she is trembling with passion. Surely something has touched quiet, lazy, languid, sweet Dolores very deeply, to arouse such a tirade of passion and feeling. Mrs. St. James laughs lightly.

"Ah, you have not forgiven me yet? Well you know, dear," she goes on, not heeding Dolores' averted face, "you know, dear, what I said was true. I meant you no harm when I spoke of your mother's nationality. You would not listen to any explana—"

But Dolores interrupted her.

"You called my mother a negress. You said a man in my father's position was worse than a fool to marry a penniless negress. Some one said you were mistaken, that Mr. Litchfield's wife was a Creole; and I heard you, with my own ears, say there was not a shadow of difference; one was the same as the other. But," and Dolores comes down from her towering rage to a wonderfully quiet tone, "I forgive you for all the pain you may have caused me—you know for whose sake, and the reason why I do forgive, even though I shall never forget. Will you shake hands with me?"

Of course no human mortal could bear to refuse to take the girl's outstretched hand. But Ned Crane was perfectly dumbfounded to see proud, haughty Arial St. James eagerly clasp Dolores' hand in both her own, and, can it be possible? yes, there are tears in the large blue eyes that people say look as if the owner had no feeling.

"Ah, Dolores, you are and have been an angel. My pride makes me

forget sometimes ; but I should never quarrel with you, should I, Dolores, should I?" Mrs. St. James passes her white handkerchief across her eyes.

"We won't talk about it any more," the eldest Miss Litchfield replies. "Pray don't make yourself miserable; your secret is safe with me."

Then Dolores turns to Ned with a grave, earnest look in her pretty dark eyes. "I trust you will pardon my unhappy interview with the lady who has just left us."

And Ned declares that of course he never thought anything about it; then immediately condemned himself by saying Mrs. St. James was a fiend. Dolores laughs softly.

"You should never take up the cudgels for other people, Mr. Crane. I did the same thing myself one time, and found it would not work."

The gong sounds for luncheon, and Gordon Aubrey comes up hurriedly.

"You promised I should take you down, Miss Litchfield. I hope you have not forgotten."

Gordon forgets, in the excitement of the moment, to adjust the gold eyeglass, to stare at Mr. Crane as he reluctantly furled Dolores' white parasol and placed it carefully in her hand.

The dance was a grand success; the officers did all that lay in their power to make it so; and as the party from the yacht took their departure, floating dreamily across the smooth moonlit waters, all felt perfectly contented with the day's pleasure. All but pretty, restless Rea Severn; her peace of mind was sadly disturbed, and why? Well, perhaps Dolores Litchfield, sitting there, leaning over the side of the pretty little row-boat, idly trailing her white fingers in the cool water, with Gordon Aubrey apparently utterly unconscious of everything else, sitting beside her, trying to be as entertaining as possible. Perhaps that had something to do with Rea's coldness to Jerry Hopkins, who is talking to her now, and who, chatty people say, is not indifferent to Miss Severn's good looks, or her forty thousand pounds.

CHAPTER IV.

A STRANGER.

"He lived at peace with all mankind,
In friendship he was true;
His coat had pocket holes behind,
His pantaloons were blue."

—A. G. GREENE.

"Zoe, come in out of the hot sun, child; do you hear? Sitting out there in the full glare, bless my soul, without even a hat on your head."

Miss Adeline Litchfield, the proprietress of the Litchfield establishment, stands in the pretty front porch, overhung with fragrant blossoming honey-

suckle and sweet climbing roses. She looks with wrathful eyes upon her niece, curled up on a chair on the veranda, her book on the top railing, with her elbows beside it, her head buried in her two hands. Zoe was lost to the objects around and the world in general. She was far off, taking a far deeper interest in the pleasures and trials of her friends in the book spread out before her, than in the everyday employments or household duties in which "auntie" wished her to excel.

"Zoe! do you hear me? Come in directly."

"Let me alone, Auntie; I am all right. I just have two chapters more, and then I'll come."

Miss Litchfield retires discomfitted, but not conquered. After a few moments she again appears, bearing a large white sun hat, daintily trimmed with muslin, and a small oval basket. Going over to the guilty party, she quietly shuts the book up and puts it under her arm.

"Zoe, put on your hat; I want you to go an errand for me, down to Mrs. Haley's. Tell her I was so well pleased with the rolls of fresh butter she sent, that I will take two more."

Zoe's eyes blazed; it was on the tip of her quick tongue to say, "I won't;" but an inward sense of politeness forbade her to do so; for though "Auntie" had a sharp tongue and a strong sense of right, which made her, at times hard to get on with, still for all that her two nieces, to whom she had been mother, counsellor and friend since their own mother left them, were wrapped up in quick-tempered but kind meaning aunt Adeline.

People were not sure if Mrs. Litchfield was dead or not. Rumors had been afloat that she had left her husband. No one dared question either Mr. Litchfield nor his sister; every one knew it to be an understood fact that the family desired the public to consider her dead. "Auntie" had always been all-in-all to her brother and his children.

Now Auntie hurries in to the kitchen, to see that the beautiful brown loaves of bread, baking in the oven, are not burning. Zoe departs on her mission; she walks down the road slowly; it is awfully warm. Goodness! she never felt the heat so intense, with such a trot way down ever so far. Ah! here is a brilliant chance for saving herself the weary walk to Mrs. Haley's. Coming down behind is a cart, filled with hay, and sitting on top are three little boys in white pinafores, chattering to the old man who holds the reins, and every little while flicks a fly off the horses' backs with the whip he idly dangles.

"Have a ride?" comes in chorus from the load of hay. Without a second invitation, throwing the basket up ahead, Zoe climbs nimbly up; with the able assistance of the three small pinafores gentlemen, she is pulled triumphantly aloft. The heat is great, but it has no visible effect on the three younger members of the party. After tumbling about at the imminent

peril of being minutely precipitated over the side, they propose to bury Zoe alive. This takes some time to accomplish to every one's satisfaction, so long, in fact, that presently Mrs. Haley's white mite of a cottage appears in view. Zoe suggests that perhaps she had better alight before she gets quite to the door. So the horses are stopped by a tremendous "whoa!" and Zoe proceeds to descend as gracefully as it is possible to do so. She is going down famously, thinking how more than fortunate it is that she got this ride on such a melting day. She happens to glance up the road; oh, horrors! coming leisurely down, with his hands thrust carelessly in the pockets of a little dark blue shooting coat, and a cigar between his lips, is a man—a young man too—and, yes, he is looking at her. She misses her balance, her foot slips, and, throwing her arms wildly upward, arrives in the arms of mother earth, in any but a dignified descent.

The "horrid brute" came quickly to see if he could assist the young lady to arise; he takes her arm, and Zoe stands up, her face as red as the scarlet passion flower tucked in her belt.

"You are very kind," she stammers. "I should not have got up there; it was very unfortunate."

The gentleman, finding she is unharmed, lifts his hat and proceeds on his way.

Zoe hurries into Mrs. Haley's. Oh how silly she feels; oh heart! what would auntie say if she knew the disgrace which had fallen upon her niece? She wondered, with a sickening at her heart, if he had seen her feet. Oh, dear! if he had would it not be dreadful? She looked at her pretty slippered feet inquiringly. Of course they were nothing to be ashamed of, but oh dear! And now come to think of it, "Auntie" had strictly forbidden her riding on top of hay carts, ever since she had read in the papers how some one had fell and broke their arm. Oh, she hoped and prayed Auntie would never find out this wretched morning's work.

Zoe did her errand, and returned home, taking special care to "walk." And the "horrid man," sitting on the veranda, talking so comfortably with aunt Adeline, on being presented to "my youngest niece," bows, and seems as unconscious of ever having laid eyes on the youngest Miss Litchfield before, or knew what a pretty sight a young lady could make of herself, coming to the ground in a diagonal line from half way down a cart of hay. Yes, coming quickly around the corner, and running right up the steps, she was astonished at finding this stranger conversing with her aunt. Miss Litchfield rocked to and fro in the little wicker chair, and Zoe, as she stands there holding the little basket with the rolls of fragrant, sweet butter, covered with cool green leaves, concludes in her own mind, this young man must be something of a favourite, or auntie would not be so willing to be interrupted in her morning's work.

"Zoe, how hot you are, child ; your face is perfectly scarlet. What is the matter with your skirt, child ? a great rent in one side, a frill torn beyond all mending, and the dress a brand new muslin, just made last week. Where have you been, or what have you been about, to, literally speaking, come home in such a ragamuffin fashion ?"

Zoe looks at her dress in dismay. Not for one instant had she remembered to notice if her tumble had proved destructive to the pretty new suit she had felt so proud of. Auntie was waiting for an answer to her question. The young gentleman was busy looking at the fuscha climbing up the pillar near which he sat. Perhaps he turned to look at the flower, perhaps it was to hide the smile of amusement which would curl the corners of his handsome mouth.

"Put your hair off your forehead, do, child. The person who invented the fashion of wearing one's hair all over their eyes should have been banished from all civilized lands. The only thing that will keep your father out of Heaven, Zoe Litchfield, is your persistent act of wearing bangs, for it is the only fault in you that makes him angry."

Just then the visitor turns around and deliberately surveys the pretty culprit.

"Nothing wrong in keeping along with the times, Miss Litchfield," he says pleasantly ; and Zoe casts him a grateful glance from the pretty blue eyes, whose color no one can tell the exact shade. Any one who will defend her pet bang is Zoe's friend.

"I will tell you some other time how this wretched dress got torn. Surely you will trust me enough to know I will tell you the truth, and the exact truth about it." And Zoe turns to walk into the house, her head thrown proudly up, with the torn frill of her white gown trailing after her.

CHAPTER V.

FORTUNE TELLING.

"Lady, cross the Gipsy's hand with gold,
She will to you the future unfold."—MÆE.

"What a beautiful spot ! how lovely if we could go on shore and investigate."

"Yes, Miss Litchfield, that is an excellent idea of yours. I will order the boats out, and if the company are willing we will row over and land."

The Hon. Jerry goes rapidly away to give the order. Dolores is sitting in a camp chair on the deck of the Hon. Jerry's yacht, a scarlet shawl thrown lightly over her pretty shoulders. The yacht has glided into one

of the most charming inlets of beautiful scenery Dolores' eyes have seen since her return from abroad.

"Are we to really go on shore?" demands Rea Severn, lifting for a moment her eyes from the crazy cushion she is engaged in making. She has been industriously at work, with her eyes fixed most devoutly on the silks and crewels, but her ears have heard every word Dolores and the Hon. Jerry have spoken for the last twenty minutes.

"I believe so," Dolores answers absently. She is busy gazing dreamily across the deep, blue, shining, sparkling, rippling waters.

"Come, ladies, let us be up and doing; the boats are ready."

Gordon Aubrey flings overboard the cigar he has been smoking, and a general move is made. Rea Severn hastily tosses aside her work, and puts on the hat her maid has brought. Rea, Dolores, Mrs. St. James, Gordon Aubrey, the Hon. Jerry, Ned Crane, and Florrie Silverstone depart. The other members of the party are either too lazy, or have something to do more pleasing to their minds than going to explore a place which would in all probability be "abounding in snakes, bugs, and other venomous reptiles," as old Lady Strathmere observed when she was told of the intended expedition. Lord Strathmere would have gone too, and been only too happy, especially as Dolores went, for poor Lord Strathmere was very severely smitten with pretty, gentle Dolores; but unfortunately for him he had gone on the tug boat to view a wrecked steamer some five or six miles away.

Ned Crane whispered, as he took his accustomed place by Dolores' side, "that he was just as glad Strathmere could not come, as there was no room for him in the boat." Mrs. St. James smiles languidly, endeavoring now and then to stem the current of squabbling going on between Florrie Silverstone and Gordon Aubrey. They never agree; so at last Ariel gives the attempt up in despair, and turns her attention to Ned and Dolores. When at length the boat grates on the beach, three little children, with bare feet, are building castles in the sand. They are well dressed children, probably boarding here for the summer months. They gaze in wide eyed wonder at the boat and her occupants; evidently they are not accustomed to have their sandy domains intruded upon by strangers. The eldest, a girl of eight or nine, accosted Gordon Aubrey.

"Have you come to have your fortune told?" she asked sharply.

"Will you do me the honor to tell me mine?" he answered with all due respect to the oracle. She looked him over critically, from the toe of his trim shoe to the top of his jaunty sailor hat.

"People like you, with only one eye, and the other one glass, can't have much to be told, I know," the tiny maid replies, looking at him from under her big shady hat.

"Who tells fortunes on this fairy island? won't you tell me, little one?" Mrs. St. James touches the child's dark curly head caressingly.

"Molly will; but you have to give her gold, or she won't." This information was supplied by one of the other children.

"What a joke if we could find some one who could tell us," Rea Severn cries.

Jerry Hopkins shows the girl a bright silver dollar, and says if she will show them where "Molly" is to be found she may consider herself the happy possessor of the aforesaid dollar.

"Certainly, I will take you to Molly's tent, but mamma never allows us to take money from strangers," the tiny maiden replies, as she sat down in the sand to put on her stockings and slippers. Then she led the way to the Gipsy's camp. Jerry Hopkins put the rejected offering in his pocket, thinking that some children are wiser than people twice their age.

"Here's her tent, and there's Molly. See Molly," she cries, "I brought you some people that want you to tell them their fortune. Will you tell them, Molly? Will you?"

"Ah, little Miss, you never forget old Molly, do you dearie? Tell them to come in." Dolores feels a shiver go over her; a nasty, creepy, crawley sensation always seizes her at the mention of either Gipsy or Indian. Auntie always had such a horror of all such travelling companies. It may have been hearing her talk of them with so much repulsion that made Dolores, who is generally so fearless, feel nervous now.

"You are not frightened?" Ned Crane has watched Dolores pretty pink colour die slowly out of her face and lips.

"Let the others go in; we will stand out here by the door to take in all that is going on inside."

When she finds she is not expected to go inside the miserable hut, Dolores brightens up, and the pink comes back to her cheeks. So they station themselves in the doorway. Contrary to most people of their or her profession, the Gipsy allows them all to remain; so, as each is being warned of that which is in store for them, good, bad or indifferent, every one hears what every one else is told.

"She seems pretty well up in the arts," Ned whispers; Dolores nods; she is listening intently. Mrs. St. James has shuffled and cut the cards, she has also wished in obedience to the rule.

"Your path has once been more rugged than that which you now tread, my lady. There is a dark spot in your past, on which you pray, the light of knowledge may never shine. There is one here present, who can betray you if she chooses."

Mrs. St. James glances toward the door; the gipsy's eyes also take the same direction. Dolores stands there, placidly, calmly; she meets the eyes

turned on her with cool indifference; her pocket-handkerchief drops to the ground; she stoops to pick it up, and the gipsy goes on:

"There is a dark gentleman here whom you will have some trouble with. There is a disappointment for you; but you will get your wish even if it does turn out differently from what you think. You will get some money, and there is a pleasant conversation with a light man. He has a good heart for you; will tell you some pleasant news. You will receive a letter within a day or two. Your life will be full of ups and downs, the same as most of us."

"Now, pretty lady, will you cross the gipsy's palm?" She has turned to Rea Severn. "You are anxious about the doings of a fair man; but my pretty one, put no faith in him; the men are fickle, the best of them. You will be a little sick, not much, but brought on by your own foolishness. Let me advise you to drop the habit you have contracted. If you do not kill it, it will kill you; so be guided."

Rea shivers; she begins to feel a little frightened; she is glad the others are behind her; it would not answer for them to see the expression of fear on her face. Then each of the others had their turn. Dolores refused to have anything to do with cards; she despised the very sight of them. She told Ned they sent a cold chill over her, and Ned believed it.

"How silly! What ails you, Dolores? You are generally one of the last to back down when any fun is going on," Florrie Silverstone says petulently. There have been some facts told Florrie, by the gipsy, which have made her a little cross. But Dolores is busy, and does not answer. She has taken some tall golden-eyed daisies from the hedge row.

"It is a much pleasanter way to tell one's own fortune, you know," she tells Ned, the ever attentive; and of course Ned agrees—he always does to what pretty Dolores says.

"He loves me, he loves me not; he loves me, how nice," Dolores laughs softly, as she flings the petalless flower in the water.

"Will it be a soldier smart, who will storm and take me?
Or will a sailor break my heart, his figure-head to make me?
Will it be a man to preach, Even-song and Matin?
Or shall I go to school again, with Jack to teach me Latin?
Will it be a coach and four? Will it be a carriage?
Or will a cart be at the door, to take me to my marriage?"

Sings Jerry blithely.

"Why, Jerry, old fellow, have you just woke up?" cries Gordon Aubrey.

"Jerry has such a sweet, fine, sympathetic voice; almost think it was a chime of bells," Florrie Silverstone says saucily.

Now this is rather hard on the Hon. Jerry, his voice, on the contrary, having once been compared favourably with a bass drum. But it being

his favourite cousin, Florrie, who made the remark, it was, considering the person who expressed the implied sarcasm, overlooked.

"There is Lord Streathmere waving his hat to us from the deck," cries Rea. "We must not for the world say we have had our fortunes told, before Lady Streathmere, for she would be shocked. Now remember, not a word." Mrs. St. James holds up a warning finger, and she expects all to obey.

"Well, my dears, you must be very tired, I dare say you tramped all over that island this morning, and what reward did you get for your pains?"

The party are all on deck enjoying the beautiful sunset. Tea has been over for some time, the wind is blowing softly over the deep blue and green patches of water, and makes the yacht rock gently from side to side.

"Do you not consider having one's fortune told a sufficient reward?" Dolores' lazy tones inquire.

Now it so happened that Dolores, if she did hear Ariel's command, had by now forgotten all about it. Gordon Aubrey coughed frantically; there seemed every reason to believe that he would strangle to death. Florrie giggled, they all did their best to cover up the effects of Dolores' unfortunate words. However, it was Florrie who saved them all from disgrace.

Lady Streathmere adjusted her gold eye-glasses firmly and cautiously upon her aquiline nose. "You seem to be prone to a cold, my dear; do you take any remedy for it? Now something hot would, I know, be most beneficial." And Florrie, in a voice choking with laughter, said she thought she must.

"Now I know just how you came by your wretched cold. Quite likely the grass was wet on the island this morning, and your feet have got damp, and last night you stayed out here quite late, and you know the night air is bad for any one with a weak throat. Now if you young people won't mind, I think I would be more comfortable where the fire is," and the poor unsuspecting lady arose, and, escorted by Jerry to the saloon door, disappeared.

CHAPTER VI.

YOUR SISTER DOLORES.

"Give your tongue more holiday than your hands or eyes."

—RABBI BEN AZAI.

"This is a splendid photo of your father, and this, yes this must be—"

Zoe, sketching busily away at a little landscape she is copying, answers "Yes," vacantly. She is devoted to her work, and after giving Mr. Glen the three large family photograph albums to look at, sincerely wishes he will look at them quietly, and not disturb her. But the spirit moves the

young man in an opposite direction. He suddenly becomes intensely interested in the members of the Litchfield family, past, present and absent. She does not notice the stop he makes now.

"And this lady in the white dress. Who is she?"

"With a big white hat?" Zoo enquires, looking up for a moment.

"That is my sister."

"Your sister! So this is the peerless Dolores. Well, I will own she is beautiful enough to command all your admiration." He studies the picture before him intently.

"How angry Dolores would be if she heard you say that."

Mr. Glen looked up, inquiring so innocently, "Why?" that Zoe's heart smote her with remorse.

"She rather objects to having strangers call her by her Christian name, of course," the youngest Miss Litchfield goes on cautiously. "Perhaps she would not mind your admiring her picture. I am sure there was nothing but perfect truth in what you said, was there?"

Mr. Glen gazes across from his seat in the bay window, and regards Zoe thoughtfully.

"I suppose your sister, Miss Litchfield, has told you many pleasant stories regarding her trip abroad," he enquires, with strong emphasis on the Miss Litchfield.

"Oh yes! Sometimes I almost think I am in the various places she has been, Dolores describes persons and places so graphically."

Mr. Glen rather winces. In the enthusiasm of speaking of Dolores, Zoe's work is for the time forgotten.

"Yes, she is more than clever in almost everything; she has certain magnetic powers not possessed by us all."

Zoe looks at him in amazement. Had a bombshell suddenly gone off at her feet in the pretty sitting room, her eyes would not have fairly popped out of her head as they did now.

"Why, do you know my sister? You can't; at least she never mentioned your name."

Mr. Glen laughs, toys with his watch chain, and, does his face become just a trifle red?

"I am judging from the picture, my dear little girl."

Zoe resents being called his "dear little girl," so she says, "Oh, indeed," very stiffly. She goes on with her sketching, but its charm has gone. She has a strong, very strong impression that this young man and Dolores have met. But why has Dolores never told her? Perfect confidence has hitherto existed between them. Surely Dolores would not have any secrets from her. She would love to question Mr. Glen about it, but pride forbids. If there is anything to tell, Dolores will let her know when she thinks proper.

So Zoe works on, and Mr. Glen turns the leaves of the books over listlessly. It is evident his thoughts are far away from the pretty room he is in, and the young girl, who looks at him from time to time, as some one has said, "out of the corner of her eye."

Mr. Glen had been an inmate of Mr. Litchfield's household for a week now. Aunt Adeline was generally averse to having either small boys or big boys around her house, but here she was wonderfully taken. Mr. Glen was her ideal of all that a young gentleman should be. Mr. Litchfield discussed the topics of the day with him; there was no subject but what he was thoroughly versed in; a brilliant musician, with a fine tenor voice, a capital hand at whist, and if there was one thing that delighted Mr. Litchfield's heart more than another, it was to have some one to sympathise with him in this his favorite after-tea game. And Zoe? Well, he could paint, draw or sketch, and that with a true artist's eye for the beautiful. One of Zoe's drawings was quite another article after Mr. Glen had touched up and smoothed over the flaws. So in spite of their first unfortunate introduction, Zoe has accepted his being there as a thing to be tolerated. He lets her have her own way, and that is all Zoe cares about.

The soft warm breeze floats in at the open doors and windows, laden with the heavy perfume of flowers. The tall white and scarlet lilies in the garden nod and bob their stately heads. A bird, just outside in a tree, is pouring forth his joyous song of gladness; it is an ideal day in summer. Jet Glen, as he sits over there in the window, is "having it out" with his conscience. The reason he is here is to find out all he can, and as much more as possible. It was an anxious moment, when he got within thirty or forty miles of the place, how to proceed further; but fortune is good as well as fickle. He had greatly ventured, and all must do so who would greatly win. A former school mate was in the railway carriage; he was down with the blues. He had been invited to join a fishing party, with a number of other young friends. Suddenly, on the very day before they were to start, his mother, who was a woman of many minds, commanded him to give up his intended cruise and go down to the country to stop with her old school friend, Miss Adeline Litchfield. So, like an obedient son, he was on his way. This was just the chance for Jet's attaining his desired haven. Within less than an hour Jet Barry Traleigh was passing himself off as Jet Glen, the son of her school friend, and Miss Litchfield was delighted. And yet there was nothing, no, not a look, smile, gesture or tone of voice that recalled the remembrance of his mother. Poor deluded aunt Adeline, if you could see the real Jet Glen disporting himself with his holiday friends, what would you say?

They had all received him so cordially Jet's conscience pricked him most severely. But it was no use going back now; what he had done could not be undone.

The sun suddenly flashes full upon Zoe's work ; she rubs her eyes, and wonders if Mr. Glen has gone to sleep, or why in the world is he sitting there, staring so idiotically at a photo of herself and Dolores when they were quite small children ? But in all probability he is inwardly dying of laughter, commenting on the two thin little pairs of legs dangling from the high chair, in which they are seated, and criticising the braided pig-tails under the little round straw hats. How many times Dolores and herself have laughed over the closely shut lips, and demurely folded hands and short frocks. But for this young man to commit a like action was justly unpardonable. Then she thinks she is playing the part of hostess rather lamely.

"Say, Mr. Glen," Zoe pushes her chair back, and proceeds briskly to gather up her working implements. "Shall we go finish the game of tennis we were playing yesterday?"

Mr. Glen starts, shuts the album, and assents.

"The sun looks like playing tennis, or any thing else ; you both stop just where you are, I am not anxious to have two cases of sun-stroke on my hands, with all my other household cares. Another thing, you both know the old maxim of "idle hands," so I have provided you with some useful employment."

Aunt Adeline sinks on a lounge, unties, and takes off the large yellow sun-bonnet, and fans herself energetically with a huge palm leaf. The useful employment consists of a bushel basket nearly full of green peas to be shelled for dinner. Jet laughingly declares he is ready to do anything to escape the two evils, sun-stroke, and the fate of the "Idle men and boys who were found."

And aunt Adeline replied admiringly, "Jet Glen, how much that sounds like your mother."

Jet looks thoughtfully on the floor, his conscience giving an unusually sharp twinge. This was rather much for him to make any reply. How easily we poor, frail mortals in this world are deceived.

CHAPTER VII.

AT NICE.

"We know nothing of to-morrow ; our business is to be good and happy to-day."—SIDNEY SMITH.

A day in December, two years previous to the beginning of my story.

"Dolores, uncle Dick is going into the town ; do you care to go?"

Dolores is reading a long home letter from Zoe, full to the very edges, beside being crossed and recrossed with all the latest sayings, doings, and

prospective to be done, ending up with the ardent wish and longing to be with her darling Dolores, in beautiful, bright, sunny Italy.

"I am so sorry, Blondine, but I must write to father this morning; so, you see, to go would be impossible."

Beautiful Blondine Gray, a distant cousin of the Litchfields, opens her brown eyes in horrified astonishment.

"Why, my dear, bury yourself in the house to write a letter on such a day as this! Come, don't talk so nonsensical; get your largest umbrella, for the sun is scorching. You can write this afternoon."

But no persuasions, either on the part of Blondine or uncle Dick, can move her, and they leave her in disgust. She watches them go down the road. Blondine walks with the ease, grace and quietness of a born native of Tyrol. Dolores admires Blondine's style of walking very much; it is a pleasure just to watch her movements; so different from uncle Dick's roll. A regular sailor's swing and roll of a walk did uncle Dick Gray possess. He was major in the army, and of course very portly, as majors are somehow, generally. But he had retired some years since with high honors. Blondine, his brother's child, being left an orphan, he considered it his duty to provide her a home; so before settling down to house-keeping, a trip abroad was considered just the nicest idea. Blondine was sick of school, so uncle Dick sent for Dolores to go with them on their journey.

After reading Zoe's letter over twice, to make sure there was nothing skipped, Dolores takes her pen, ink and paper out on the piazza. The day is like June; the waves, dancing and sparkling in the sunlight, are as blue as the heavens above them. The little boats rock from side to side as they float, now in, now out, from their moorings, and far out a white sail glitters in the glimmering sunlight. On shore children, dark eyed, red lipped little rascals, are selling flowers—roses and orange blossoms, with quantities of violets. Little groups are sitting or loitering about, their chief object seemingly to see who can produce the largest and gayest parasol. Dolores takes in all the details of the surroundings. Probably uncle Dick and Blondine are having some fun in town; they will sit on the promenade, after they have made their purchases, and rest themselves. They would be back by afternoon sometime; then Dolores would go with them to the Casino, see the people and hear the band. Suddenly her attention is attracted by a child, somewhere near, crying. There was never an animal or child yet that Dolores failed to sympathise with; now she looked about for the object of her awakened feelings.

"Don't go, mamma; don't go an' leave Roy alone."

A carriage is standing at the door, and a tall, handsome woman is getting in, a woman with a proud, cold face. A tiny boy, in a white frilled dress,

is vainly trying to get away from the nurse girl, who is in her turn vainly trying to keep him out of sight, until his mother gets away.

"Take the child away, Hester, and do try to stop that terrible crying. Gracious! what a pest some children are." This is addressed to the young lady who comes down the broad steps to take her place by her friend's side. Mrs. St. James, with Rea Severn, are going to spend the day at Villefranche, and no foolish whim of a child's was going to interfere with their pleasure.

The carriage goes off, and Dolores tries her charms on the little man left behind. She goes over and talks to him; he is instantly fascinated by the lovely lady, consents to sit on her lap, listens to the ticking of her watch, and finally falls asleep, with his dark curly head pillowed on the train of Dolores' dress. She wrote her home letter, and did not forget to mention her latest gentleman admirer.

Walking back and forth, in one of the garden avenues opposite, there is a gentleman who has been a witness of all that has taken place; a tall fair man, broad shouldered, and with a noble face—a face possessed of everything good, kind and generous—a thorough gentleman. There are a great many "men" in the world, some great, some small, but the "gentlemen," of them it is to be regretted there are too few. Sir Barry Traleigh was here at Nice on business. He was very wealthy, but he was always employed by his business affairs. He believed in a man, whether rich or poor, having something with which to occupy his mind. Not an idle life did Sir Barry, the genial owner of Castle Racquette, beside many broad acres of land, lead. Castle Racquette was one of the finest estates in all Glengarry, Scotland, and very pardonable was the pride which Sir Barry entertained for his ancient, luxurious home. Now as the sun steals slyly under the large Panama hat and turns his short pointed beard, worn after the style of a Venetian, to a golden shade, Sir Barry is a very fine specimen of a nineteenth century Scotchman. From his promenade he watches Dolores; and Dolores, did she know who was watching her? Why, certainly not. Well then, how was it a few minutes afterward, as Sir Barry came past the piazza, Dolores looked up, and their eyes met, Sir Barry's full of respectful admiration; why did Dolores blush and droop her eyes? It is truly wonderful how much can be said in a look. The next instant Dolores is ready to call herself a silly simpleton. What does she know of this man, that she should care to know who he was? Probably she would never lay eyes on him again. And yet Dolores could not help acknowledging, rather reluctantly to her own conscience, that a handsomer man she had never seen.

Presently little Roy wakes up, and Dolores and he have dinner brought up to Dolores' charming parlor, and all his mother's unkind neglect is forgotten. They have a right royal feast; and when Hester comes to

take him, Roy goes, with the promise of again taking luncheon with his pretty Dolly. To all his nurse's entreaties to call Miss Litchfield by her proper name he refused; to him she was his pretty, kind Dolly; so Dolores, with a kiss, tells him laughingly he shall call her whatever he pleases, and the child goes for his walk perfectly satisfied.

"Come girls, come, don't be all day fixing yourselves; come on. Hello! there is that—no, it can't be—Traleigh!"

Uncle Dick, issuing forth on the way to the Casino, adjusts his gold eye-glass quickly, and forgets for the moment his anger at Dolores and Blondine, who hurry after him, secretly praying that their veils are on all right, for of all the fussy men in the world uncle Dick is the fussiest.

"Yes, but it is Traleigh in the flesh, and more than delighted to see Major Gray."

Dolores' handsome man of the morning is shaking uncle Dick's hand heartily. And uncle Dick, delighted to see his friend, turns and calls in his usual quick, blustering fashion—

"Say, girls, this is Traleigh, that I have told you so much about. Traleigh, those are the girls who have been toting me around from pillar to post for the last year or more. We are going to the Casino, so come on, and go with us. But there is a fellow over there I must speak to; you all go on, and I will catch up with you."

Uncle Dick dives through the crowd of people, leaving Sir Barry to make himself agreeable to the ladies. It is evident he has heard of them before, as each girl was called by her proper name. Dolores remembers this morning, and hopes he did not see her make a fool of herself over little Roy. Sir Barry is pleased to know the young lady whose looks he admired so much. As for Blondine—well, Blondine was always pleased to make herself pleasant to no matter whom she was with, from the humblest to the highest; it was always the same with her. She rather resents Dolores' cold, commonplace answers, and secretly wonders what has come over gentle, merry Dolores. Well, when they get back to the hotel she will give Miss Litchfield a bit of her mind.

The Promenade des Anglais is visited, and Blondine goes in raptures over the magnificent horses, the jaunty equipages, and elegant toilettes. The Casino is packed; they espy uncle Dick frantically indicating with his arm that, as the crush is so great, he cannot get to them now, but will get in their vicinity as soon as it is possible. Sir Barry does his best to do his duty toward the two ladies thrown upon his tender mercies. He and Blondine talk, while Dolores listens to the music of the band, for music in Italy is worth listening to.

"Dolores, for Heaven's sake let us walk."

Blondine has nudged Miss Litchfield several times, but no notice being

paid to her efforts, she has been obliged to speak. Blondine declares something ails her foot, a cramp, or asleep, or something, she cannot just decide which. Sir Barry clears the way, and they go, to be presently met by uncle Dick and two ladies. Sir Barry lifts his hat courteously as uncle Dick presents Mrs. St. James and Miss Severn. Mrs. St. James says they were caught in a shower on the way to Villafranche, and when they had hurried back found the sun shining most gloriously. Blondine bows and smiles—when does Blondine not smile?—and Dolores? Dolores deliberately turns her back; of course it is most unpardonably rude. Uncle Dick never notices anything wrong, he never does, poor deluded man, but goes on talking about one thing, then another. Blondine is shocked; the warm blood surges up in her face, covering her ears and throat. It is the first time she has ever had cause to feel ashamed of pretty, gentle Dolores. Poor Blondine ponders and worries; what has come over Dolores? she must certainly be ill to act so strangely. Sir Barry looks surprised as well as pained, but does his best to make things pass off as smoothly as possible. The walk back to the hotel was anything but pleasant. If there had been no gentlemen present Rea Severn would have been sullen or sulky; her manner now, however, was something betwixt and between the two. Mrs. St. James received the “direct cut” from Miss Litchfield with cool self-possession and indifference. If she noticed the insult offered to her she made no sign. A clever nineteenth century woman was Arial St. James.

CHAPTER VIII.

YOU NEVER CAN TELL.

With every pleasing, every prudent part,
Say what does Chloe want?
She wants a heart.—POPE.

“No one could expect anything better from a person of Miss Litchfield’s position. Of course you could not help noticing her manner yesterday; the girl’s bringing up must account for her actions. Any man, a gentleman, who would marry a negress, could not but expect some flaw in his family.”

Sir Barry Traleigh turns sharply from contemplating the reflection of his own face in the mirror opposite.

“Do you say Miss Litchfield’s mother was a negress?”

Mrs. St. James takes up a scarlet ball of silk from her work basket.

“Oh, well,” she answers with sarcasm, “I consider Creoles and negroes the same. As I said before, the girl is not to blame, considering everything. Then her mother ran away; why, surely you heard the story. She disappeared; no one knows if she is dead or living. The deepest sympathy was

felt for Mr. Litchfield, who, I understand, is a very worthy man. His sister took charge of his home and children. Miss Litchfield has a younger sister home; they were quite young at the time of the trouble, and I believe they think their mother dead."

Mrs. St. James has waited patiently to hear Sir Barry reply, but reply in the way she wished him to; Mrs. St. James gets disappointed.

Sir Barry is thunderstruck. It cannot be possible that Dolores can be connected with any one but those whom any honest man would be willing to take by the hand. There must be some good reason for Dolores' mother leaving her home and family; and to find that reason out will be Sir Barry's future aim. Mrs. St. James goes on in soft, smooth tones.

"You see it places the family in a very perplexing and awkward position. Outside of the friends of the family, I believe no one makes anything of them." Mrs. St. James thinks Sir Barry will appreciate her defence of Miss Litchfield. "Of course the girls are not to blame for their mother's strange behaviour, but you know what the world is."

Yes, Sir Barry, in his wanderings about among persons and places, knew the world, and felt at this moment a fierce desire to punch every head in the world who dared to cast a slur on Dolores, or any one belonging to her. A very great interest he takes in this girl, whom he has not seen over half a dozen times, and who takes special pains to snub him at every opportunity. Mrs. St. James knits on the scarlet wool, contrasting vividly with her marble face and hands. The sunbeams, peeping coyly in through the half closed shutters, catches her diamond rings, and throws around them a hundred glimmering, glistening, sparkling rays. Some one, who has been sitting outside the open window, gets up to go. Sir Barry glances lazily out. He meets Dolores' eyes fixed full upon him—Dolores' pretty, gentle face no longer. Until he dies Sir Barry will remember that agonized, broken-hearted look on Dolores' face. As he turns to Mrs. St. James, he sees—can it be—a satisfied smile on her perfect lips? When he looks again, Dolores is gone.

"Did you see who just passed the window, and of course heard our conversation?" breaks sternly from between Sir Barry's clinched teeth.

"No. Who was it?"

But this is too much for any man to swallow. He knew the lady sitting right by the window had led the conversation to the topic they had been discussing, knowing perfectly well who was sitting outside, and would hear, whether she wished or not, what was said.

"Oh it's all right; good morning." And Sir Barry takes his hat and is gone. Mrs. St. James bites her scarlet lips in vexation, and hopes Sir Barry has gone to thoroughly digest what was said. And Dolores—poor Dolores—she is in her room, sobbing her heart out. Who can realize what

her feelings are, to be thus rudely awakened to the knowledge that there hung over their family a dark cloud, some dreadful story about the beloved mother whom Zoe and she had so often mourned as dead?

To be sure no tombstone marked her grave in the pretty shady cemetery at home. Aunt Adeline said their mother was dead, and that, to their minds, was proof enough, for was Auntie ever known to tell them a falsehood? Since she had grown up, the desire to have her mother, like the other girls around, had often possessed her. But to hear this woman tell Sir Barry that her mother had gone away and left her home and family! Believe it indeed! No! Certainly she could never look on the sweet, grave pictured face hanging in its massive frame of gilt, over the drawing room mantle at home, and believe that the original could commit any act that would make her children blush when they heard the name of their mother.

Probably had Arial St. James known how deeply her words had wounded Delores, she would have been very sorry. Not a bad woman at heart, but she spoke without thinking. Another thing, she had but repeated to Sir Barry the story which every one knew at the time it happened. A guilty conscience needs no accusing," as has often been said before. When Dolores turned her back on being presented to Mrs. St. James, it was because she could not bring herself to treat with any show of civility a woman who could treat her child so unkindly. Mrs. St. James attributed it to a wholly different cause. Two years ago she and her husband had come to Italy. Arial was charmed with the place, and when Mr. St. James proposed returning home, his wife declined to go. So he, as usual, let her have her own way, and left her and Roy, then an uninteresting, sickly little infant of only a few months old. Arial was not much of a person to write letters, so Mr. St. James, working away among his law books, heard very seldom from his wife, and knew very little of the way she employed her time. Sometimes the thought would flash across his busy brain that he would like to see his son. But Arial never mentioned the child's name, and Mr. St. James, thinking women were queer fish, came to the conclusion that the baby must have died in its infancy, and as perhaps it might hurt his wife's feelings, he never mentioned the child's name to her. But contrary to his ideas the baby did live, grew strong and flourishing, and little Roy was the favorite of all in the large crowded hotel. But in spite of his beautiful dresses, sashes, white kid slippers, dainty feathered hats, and little lace bonnets, still, for all these desirable things, the poor Italian peasant women followed the pretty dark, curly headed lad, with deep pity in their dark lustrous eyes—for the Italians love their children with a deep passionate devotion almost amounting to idolatry. But the little white frocked, blue sashed English boy, Roy, had no loving mother to caress and

love him. Mrs. St. James considered it time wasted to make a fuss over children. She never talked to her little son, nor played with him; she was proud of his beautiful face, and was not ashamed to call him her son. She considered she was doing her duty by him in providing a suitable nurse; he had everything he wanted, what more was required? And yet night after night he has cried himself to sleep, because his mother has passed his nursery door, and never "come to kiss Roy good night." Every one knew in the respect of affection she did her son a great wrong.

This was the conclusion Mrs. St. James came to—somebody had told Dolores that she neglected her child; and, be it said, Ariel respected this girl, who dared to show her feelings. A good many older people than Dolores did not approve of Mrs. St. James' actions, but they held their tongues, made much of the lively English lady, and Ariel enjoyed her power in her far Italian home.

Out on the beach, romping among the dancing waves, and having a good time generally, are Dolores and little Roy; much to Blondine's amusement; she is too lazy to take any part in the programme; all Blondine can do is to sit on a high boulder and laugh gaily at the two sea nymphs disporting themselves to their evident satisfaction. Roy and his "Dolly" are fast, firm friends; he cannot enjoy anything unless Dolores is present. Mrs. St. James, as long as the child keeps out of her way, does not take the bother to care who he is with. So many pleasant hours are spent in each other's company. Blondine says "Dolores cannot say she never had one staunch champion," and Roy declares he is going to marry his pretty Dolly as soon as ever he gets to be a "big man."

Coming along the sands, with his dog at his heels, is Sir Barry. He greets the ladies, and sends the dog in the water, to Roy's delight. When he appears Dolores immediately freezes. It is a never ending source of wonder to Blondine, what in the name of sense has Sir Barry ever done that Dolores treats him as she does.

"They are arranging a party to go and spend a couple of days or so at Monaco. Are any of you going?" Sir Barry asks, in his cheery voice.

"How delightful!" cries Blondine, starting up from her seat and brushing the sand off her blue flannel dress. Very bewitching she is looking in her blue gown and scarlet cap; and Blondine has the gift to know she looks pretty. "I do wonder if uncle Dick will go? I hope, oh how I hope he will; I am dying to go."

Dolores throws sticks in the water, to see the dog bring them out.

"Dolores, don't you hope uncle Dick will go? Did you hear what Sir Barry says?"

Dolores does not answer; perhaps the breeze carries Blondine's voice in an opposite direction, perhaps Roy's childish talk proves more agreeable.

Presently Hester comes to take Roy away, and Dolores saunters idly back to Sir Barry and his fair companion. Blondine is highly delighted; Sir Barry has seen and asked uncle Dick if he would join the party, and of course uncle Dick had said yes. Any affair Traleigh approved was in uncle Dick's mind commendable.

"Will it not be splendid! Dolores, are you not pleased?"

And Sir Barry laughs lightly at Dolores' answer.

"Blondine, you would think it splendid if a shower of rain should descend this moment and drench us."

Blondine is watching the white clouds float across the azure sky, and wishing the sun may shine as brightly for the next couple of days. Sir Barry looks at the massive gold watch in his pocket, and says by the time they lunch and get ready it will be time to start. So Blondine unfurls her large white cotton umbrella, tucks Dolores' unwilling hand under her arm, and laments the smallness of the parasol's compass. If it was possible she would offer a part to Sir Barry; as it is she advises him to pull his hat well over his face, for freckles on a man's face is something Miss Gray detests.

"But some people consider them a mark of beauty; that is the reason I am trying to cultivate some," Sir Barry says solemnly.

Dolores gives one swift side glance at the handsome face of the man walking the other side of Blondine. He happens, at the same instant, to be looking at her. Dolores is angry at the blush she feels rising to her face. The idea of his watching her that way; it is too bad he cannot find some one else to gaze at all the time.

"I do wish you would hold the umbrella a little on my side," she says coldly to Blondine.

Sir Barry bites his moustache savagely; he has never been so persistently snubbed in all his twenty-eight years.

Ten minutes later Dolores, sitting at her parlor window, happens to glance out, to see Sir Barry strolling leisurely down the garden, with Rea Severn at his side, in all the glory of a fresh effort of Worth's—a dress which every girl in the hotel would give anything to possess. It was made so marvelously, no one could tell just how—and so Miss Severn feared no imitation. Dolores watches them pace up and down, to and fro. Her heart is throbbing with an angry, passionate feeling against Sir Barry. He was very anxious to get Blondine and her back to the hotel, so he could walk and talk with Rea Severn. She wished uncle Dick would take Blondine and her home, away, far away from the place where Sir Barry Traleigh is, and all belonging to him. And yet if such had been the case that uncle Dick should leave Nice, probably Dolores would feel most sincerely loath to go. Rea has a cluster of magnificent pink and white roses in her hand.

Dolores sees her select one and give it to Sir Barry. He takes it, and Dolores waits to see him fasten it in his coat. But Sir Barry seems to forget how much more effective it would have looked there, but carries the frail blossom between his gloved fingers. Dolores wonders what they are talking about? Probably the intended trip; no doubt they are planning numberless blissful moments together. Rea talks on, and Sir Barry listens, and ponders if Miss Litchfield will allow him to drive her in his stylish dogcart and span of fine horses. The others are all going in those jaunty little donkey carts which are so plentiful in Nice. Probably Rea is not only very much interested in Sir Barry on account of his good looks, but also has an inward longing for an invitation to a seat beside the owner of the handsome bays.

CHAPTER IX.

SHAL WE NOT BE FRIENDS?

"The time I've lost in wooing,
In watching and pursuing,
The light that lies
In woman's eyes,
Has been my heart's undoing."—MOORE.

"Miss Litchfield regrets that she must refuse Sir Barry Traleigh's kind invitation to attend the excursion this afternoon."

Sir Barry feels very much hurt and disappointed. He had done nothing to merit Miss Litchfield's displeasure, and yet to his pleasantly worded offer of a seat in his dogcart, she has sent him back those few coldly formal words of refusal.

In Dolores' parlor Blondine and Dolores are having what is approaching the most serious unfriendly words that have ever been exchanged between them. Blondine, who has at first laughed, then pleaded and coaxed, and scolded, finally sits down and cries. Dolores pays no attention to her cousin's entreaties. She had said she would not go to Monaco that afternoon, and she meant to keep her word, no matter what any one may say to the contrary.

"You had much better get ready, and be in time," Dolores says quietly.

"I never saw any one change so in my life as you have done lately. Whatever has got possession of you? We were going to have such a charming time," sobs Blondine, who is utterly cast down at the prospect of not having Dolores go and enjoy the beauties of the place with her.

Now any one may coax, scold, plead or pray, and Dolores is immovable; but when tears are called into operation Dolores is lost. So she takes Blondine's pretty dark head in her lap and pats it soothingly.

"Never mind, dear; do not spoil your pretty eyes with crying over me, but when I tell you that I would not enjoy myself, that I should be wretchedly unhappy, were I to go to-day; and that for you and uncle Dick to go and leave me behind, would render me a kindness more than anything else, then you will believe me, dear, will you not?"

Blondine is silent for a moment.

"I wonder if Mrs. St. James is going?" she asks presently.

"Why no, certainly not; little Roy has been so very ill lately, I should think it would be the last thing to leave him with none but that little nurse maid," Dolores answers decidedly.

Blondine thinks differently. As she came up the stairs she heard Mrs. St. James tell Sir Barry that she hoped there would not be many hills to go down, or they would certainly be dumped out of those funny little carts.

At two the party start, and Dolores sits up stairs, listening to the merry talk and laughter going on below. She will not so much as look out the window to see who are going. No one but herself knows just how much she wants to go; but she crushes the longing that arises in her heart; she will not give in now, she will keep her word. Uncle Dick has accepted her decision with strange quietness; the usually fussy uncle Dick had laughed softly, and, rubbing his hands together remarked,

"Well, my girl, if you choose to be left behind, it will not be uncle Dick who will force you to go anywhere against your will."

Then at the last moment, just before starting, Blondine had ran up to say good bye, and actually Blondine was laughing as if she had never regretted leaving her dear but rebellious Dolores behind.

After they had gone Dolores does some fancy work; she plays a melancholy tune on the handsome Steinway piano, and sings an absurdly sentimental little ballad. She reads a little, and passes the afternoon. After tea, in the evening, she throws a white fleecy shawl around her shoulders, and strolls down stairs and out in the garden, the sweet, flower-scented garden. The pretty stars twinkled brightly in the clear evening sky, and the fair young moon, just rising, casts a silver lustre over the whole scene. The trees bend and whisper to one another; the sound of voices comes dimly to Dolores' ears, and a strange wave of home-sickness sweeps over and almost overwhelms her. It is such a new, strange feeling that Dolores does not quite know what to do with herself. If Zoe were only here, with her bright words of cheering, if she were only here to talk, perhaps that strange lonely feeling would pass away.

"Pardon me, Miss Litchfield, but what have I ever done to offend you? Why do you avoid me? You might have gone this afternoon in perfect safety; you see I did not go."

Dolores is so surprised to find Sir Barry here at her side, her heart, in

spite of her, gives a glad throb. But of course she would not acknowledge it, even to herself, that it was his presence which made it do so. Now she looks at Sir Barry with a most bewitching smile curving her pretty red lips, and Sir Barry goes down before that pretty, piquant face without a struggle.

"Why, Sir Barry, I am sure you are rather visionary. I hope, if I have hurt your feelings, you will forget, and forgive me."

Dolores gives her hand to Sir Barry with a sweet impulsive gesture not to be resisted.

"And you will not 'cut' me any more, no matter how your temper runs?"

And Dolores, with a relieved feeling at her heart, consents.

"We shall be friends, Dolores, for the future?"

Any other time Dolores would have been shocked that a young man should dare to call her "Dolores." But then she had heard so much lately about Sir Barry, and she has been so much in his thoughts, that neither notice how naturally the name slips out. It is so nice to have some one to talk to, Dolores thinks, as she and Sir Barry walk around and around the sweet old garden, with everything bathed in the bewitching moonbeams. Some one is singing in the hotel, and the song floats out on the clear night air, and comes down to the ears of the young couple walking there. The words were sweetly pathetic, and stirred Sir Barry's heart with a wild impulse to end all further nonsense, and ask Dolores then and there to marry him.

"Never to know it, never,
Never to know, ah never;
Never to know the heart that's aching
All for our sake, and almost breaking;
Never to know, never to know,
The heart that we love is aching, aching, breaking."

The song ends in a piteous wail that makes Dolores shiver.

"How dreadful that song, 'Never to know,' ends," she says, never thinking what an excellent opportunity she is giving the man at her side to declare himself. But Dolores never thinks of this, however; and anyway, all further confidences are over, for suddenly a little figure appears before their astounded gaze.

"Oh, Miss Litchfield, would you please come in and quiet master Roy? His mamma has gone away, and he is so ill, Miss, I don't know what I shall do."

The little figure wrings her hands and looks piteously to Dolores for help.

"Surely Mrs. St. James did not go and leave that sick child with a little thing like you?" Sir Barry says sternly.

Goodness knows what would have been said, but for this timely interruption, and Sir Barry feels annoyed to find his opportunity gone. But

instantly Dolores returns to see what can be done for her suffering little friend.

"You will come out again?" Sir Barry asks, as Hester is seen whisking in the door.

"If I can leave," Dolores answers, and Sir Barry gives the little hand resting on the balcony rail, a gentle pat, and Dolores, with a very red face, hurries in doors.

Poor little Roy, he is sitting bolt upright in his little iron bedstead; the sweet pretty face is flushed and burning in a high fever; his eyes are dull and heavy; but he holds out his arms when he sees Dolores.

"Dress an' take Roy away from here, Dolly; take and carry Roy down where the sun shines," he says; and poor Dolores is terribly frightened; little Roy is very ill. She tells him he will go to sleep now, as it is dark, but in the morning they will go and see the sunshine dancing on the water. She sends Hester for the doctor, but Sir Barry, who is watching, meets her and says to go back and remain with Miss Litchfield, and he will go for the physician.

All night, and all the next day, and the next, Dolores sits by the little iron bed; she never leaves the child's side. Not for a single moment will he allow his Dolly out of his sight. The case was very serious.

"I should think, if his mother wants to see him again alive, she had better be here to-day.

Mrs. St. James loves her child after her own fashion, but she loved pleasure and her own comfort more.

"He is surely not so very ill," Dolores says, regarding the doctor's face in alarm.

"Miss Litchfield, the child is dying; I can do nothing more for him."

Dolores is shocked. What will she do? Dear, gay, merry little Roy dying! Oh! it cannot be possible! What can his mother be thinking of to leave him so cruelly alone? But he never once mentioned his mother's name. "Dolly" was there, and that was sufficient. It was useless to try to send for Mrs. St. James; it was doubtful if they could find her if they did; anyway, they would be back within a day or so. So it was in Dolores' arms he died. Dolores closed the white lids over the tired eyes, folded the tiny waxen hands upon the little breast, and bitter tears fell upon the still peaceful baby face of her little lost friend. Then when all was over, Dolores waited with bitter feelings for his mother to come.

She came the next day, in the afternoon. They were a merry party, and much pleased with their trip. Mrs. St. James, on going up to her rooms, finds Hester, her eyes red and swollen with weeping, every blind and shutter closed, and the child—where was he? Then she heard her boy was

dead; she would not believe it; nothing, until she stood beside the little silent form, would convince her.

"Oh, Miss Litchfield, can I ever forgive myself, can I ever forget that you did for him while his own mother left him? Surely now, in my deep trouble and sorrow, you will believe me when I say I am sorry for those careless words you heard me speak about your mother."

Dolores is sitting beside the little white casket, and on the floor, clasping Dolores' hands, is the child's mother. Dolores wonders if her sorrow is real, or is she so polished that she can deceive people? Sometimes the awful suspicion does actually flash through Dolores' mind. Yes, it is to Dolores she goes in her trouble, nor is it in Dolores' nature to refuse any one her sympathy.

"Will you have a dispatch sent his father, Mrs. St. James? We would have sent before, but did not know the address."

"No, no?" Mrs. St. James answers hurriedly. "I shall have him buried here."

Dolores opens her pretty eyes in shocked astonishment. Then Mrs. St. James rises from her kneeling posture, draws the black shawl over her handsome shoulders, and paces the long room hurriedly; then stops in front of Dolores, and says, with a half smile:

"Miss Litchfield, if I entreat you to silence, and entrust to you a secret, will you help me, for my dead boy's sake, to keep it?" She draws an easy chair beside Dolores, and goes on. "Yes, yes, you will promise, for the child's sake, will you not, Dolores? will you not?" and Dolores, with tears in her eyes, promises.

"You may have wondered why the child never spoke of his father, and I suppose, when I tell you his father believed him dead three years ago, you will be still more surprised. I was jealous of my husband's love for Roy. I never have been to Canada since we came here, three years ago. At that time the child was sick, and after Mr. St. James went home I never mentioned Roy's name, for my letters were not very frequent. Of course he considered the boy had died. If he had had the slightest fancy the infant lived he would have had him home, and I would hold but a secondary place in my husband's heart; that would never do. I know it is selfish in me, but I must have all the love of my husband; it cannot be divided, not even with my own child. Now he must never be any the wiser about the child having died, for if he should find out I have deceived him so long, I should never be forgiven. I do not profess to love my husband passionately; I never could love any one or any thing very much; it is all owing, I suppose, to my selfish disposition. There is not the slightest doubt but that I am wholly beloved by my husband. I do not deserve so much goodness; I am utterly unworthy of him. Promise me, Dolores, that if ever

we meet again—Heaven only knows if we ever shall—but if we do, never breathe of what has taken place here. Your face tells me I have merited your disapproval, but try and pity me, for I never had any one to teach me better, or instil good principles in my mind. When you judge me, remember a spoilt child, brought up by nurses and teachers, has not had the benefit of home discipline.”

Dolores does not know what to say, she has heard such a cruel story. Contempt and pity struggle together in her heart. She buries her pretty face in her pocket handkerchief and weeps—weeps for the little child lying there, who has no fond mother's heart to mourn over him, and for the far off father who will never see his little son now, and whose heart would no doubt be well nigh broken if he knew no parent's face was present to catch the last glimpse of the fast dimming baby eyes. And seeing Dolores cry, Mrs. St. James does likewise; probably she is more touched than she has ever been before in her life.

Mrs. St. James, I have promised,” Dolores says presently, “and no matter what my feelings are, I shall not go back on my word.”

She takes no heed of her companion's words of gratitude, neither does she accept or notice the outstretched hand, but hurries from the room, to find Sir Barry in the parlor opposite.

“My dear little friend, how wretchedly tired you must be, and then bothering with that woman. Why can she not humbug someone else beside you?” he says, hurrying forward and taking her hands in his. Probably Sir Barry was rather cross at not having seen Dolores more often during the past few days; and Dolores, despite her independent spirit, is very thankful for his thought for her.

“I have done all I can,” she replies sadly, and Sir Barry, terribly afraid the next thing she will do will be to cry, goes on quickly.

“Did you know Major Gray was talking of leaving here very soon?”

Now those are the very words Dolores has been dreading to hear. She knows perfectly well things cannot go on forever as they have been lately, and now her heart goes down into her boots, if such a feeling is possible.

“I must go immediately and ask about the arrangements,” she says faintly.

“And there is something I want to say to you. Can I see you this evening?” and Sir Barry waits for her answer.

Dolores' pretty face flushes; she looks past Sir Barry, down the long hall, and out to the blue sky beyond.

“Not to-night; some other time,” she answers gently. Then, before Sir Barry can plead more, she leaves him. But he is far from unhappy, as he strolls down to the hotel office to smoke a sociable cigar with the Major.

CHAPTER X.

I WONDER WHO SHE CAN BE?

"The woman who deliberates is lost."—ADDISON.

"I wonder who that pretty girl is Sir Barry Traleigh is talking with so earnestly down by the gate?" Blondine saunters into Dolores' pretty room to wait for her cousin to go down to tea.

"Any one you know?" asks Dolores, from the mirror where she is busy twisting her back hair up and sticking silver pins here and there through it.

"They have just hailed a carriage, and are driving off," Miss Gray says excitedly, from the window where she has seen Sir Barry and his pretty companion disappear.

"I suppose he has the liberty to go driving with, or talk to whom he chooses," Dolores retorts crossly.

She wonders who this fair unknown can be, and wonders still more why Sir Barry should be so interested in her—for interested he must be, if he would leave his tea. Still she is relieved to know she will not have to meet him again to-day anyway. She would like to tell Blondine that she and Sir Barry were good friends; but a feeling comes that Blondine will only laugh triumphantly at her and say "I knew it would be so." She is wakened from any further wonderment by Blondine.

"Hurry, Dolores, uncle Dick won't wait all the evening for you to get that bang of yours just fixed without a hair out of place, so come quick. I am as hungry as, as—who was the hungriest person you ever heard or read of, Dolores?"

"I am afraid I cannot say, dear. You plunge too deep for me to follow you," is Dolores' quiet answer.

The second tea gong sounds; they hurry down, to find uncle Dick emerging from the gentlemen's parlor, and just in time to hear his loud jovial voice remark to his companion—"I wonder, in the name of Olympus if my girls intend to come to their supper to-night?"

It is morning—a bright, deliciously warm morning—with light yellowish white clouds floating in the sky, and a soft, light wind coming in, bringing the scent of the salt waves to heal the diseases, and warm or thaw out the cold English tourists who are here seeking the heat of a warmer climate than their own. Dolores and Blondine are sitting on the pretty green bank, in sight of the remains of what the peasants call the "Bath of the Fairies, a Roman amphitheatre. Blondine is supposed to be sketching this picturesque spot; at least it is for that purpose that they have walked two long miles to Cimella this delightful morning. But the sketching is not progressing very rapidly; Blondine loses herself in a day dream. Sitting there under the old elm tree, resting her dark head against its friendly trunk, Blondine forgets the Abbey, likewise all other things worldly. The

white lids droop lower and lower over the dark eyes, the breeze whispers a soft, gentle lullaby, all is stillness around. Dolores looks up from her book to ask how the abbey is progressing under Blondine's skilled fingers; but Dolores may save herself the trouble of speaking, for Miss Blondine is asleep. Then a wandering fit seizes Dolores; she wonders what is down yonder; perhaps some pretty cottage hidden from view by those jealous hedges of hawthorn; she will go and see. On and on, over the narrow beaten track goes Dolores, charmed onward by she knew not what; up little hills and down little paths she goes, and yet the ideal cottage she is hunting for fails to present itself.

Suddenly voices make her pause to listen. She is startled, for surely the tones are familiar. Only a hedge of cedar divides her from them, and unintentionally she is forced to listen to a conversation not intended for her ears, or else betray her presence, and Dolores would sooner do anything than stir.

"Do go back, Jantie, do for my sake; you will never regret it. Do make up your mind, for you cannot think how you worry me. I promise you faithfully I will publish the marriage in all the leading journals as soon as I can do so discreetly. Now, dear, you will go back to Scotland, to please me, won't you?" Sir Barry Traleigh's voice is full of tender pleading.

"Never again shall the finger of scorn be pointed toward me. No! I refuse to return home until I am an acknowledged wife. I say no! I shall never be despised for a sin of which I am innocent."

The girl's clear voice is raised in a passionate flow of rage and sorrow. They pass out of hearing, leaving Dolores pale and trembling.

Sir Barry here; and of course it is the girl Blondine had seen with him the previous afternoon; his wife, of whom he was ashamed. Of course she is his wife, and he is persuading her to go home, and promises to acknowledge her before the world some day. Ah! some day! And meanwhile he has been winning her—Dolores—heart; he, the husband of another woman. May Heaven forgive him; she never can. The sun dazzles her eyes, the day has lost its charm; she gets back somehow, to find Blondine awake, and wondering what had happened to her. Blondine's careless laugh is hushed at sight of the utterly wretched, hopeless look on Dolores' face.

"My dear! what is it?" she cries, springing to her feet, and taking Dolores' cold hands in both her warm ones. But Dolores turns her miserable face away from Blondine's enquiring glance.

"Oh, Blondine, Blondine; would to Heaven we had never seen this place. If I were only home—home, where there is no treachery or deception. Oh, Blondine, Blondine!"

Nothing can be more perplexed than Blondine's mind, as she has often

thought there was no accounting for Dolores' conduct lately. Blondine hurries her sketch book into the little willow basket.

"I suppose we had better get back," she says as calmly as her confused feelings will allow, and Dolores wearily assents. Certainly the bright day which promised so much pleasure is falling most woefully short of its fulfillment.

"Tell me what ails you, dear; are you ill? Come, tell me all about it, won't you, Dolores." But Dolores shakes her pretty head; she does not seem inclined to tell any one anything. Blondine gives her up in despair. She is beginning to think herself, perhaps it would have been better not to have come here; and yet what was there, here in bright, pleasant, sunny Nice, that the most fastidious could object to? Poor Blondine gives this second problem up as hopeless as the first.

"I suppose you are pretty well packed. You know we start by the five-fifteen coach this afternoon; so look lively, my dears."

Uncle Dick's pompous figure is standing in the gateway, and uncle Dick's merry grey eyes look enquiringly at Dolores' pale face.

"What's up now? Too much high jinks seems to use you up soon, young lady."

Major Gray goes in for pink cheeks and red lips, like blooming Blondine's, for instance. He admires Dolores immensely, but she might have been a marble statue now, for all the pink there is in her face; she looks positively 'chalky.'

"Uncle Dick, we are surely not off so soon?" Blondine exclaims.

"Yes, my dear, but we are; we have been gone a good round year now. See, we have done Marseilles, Naples, Cannes, Monaco, Mentone, San Remo, Pegli, Genoa, Spezia, Lucca, Pisa, Leghorn, Serrento, Capri and Nice, and I feel as if I should enjoy the sight of home faces again. So hurry now, so we won't be late."

Uncle Dick rolls off down street at a dashing pace, full of glee at having got over the question of departure. He had expected to be assailed by an avalanche of refusals at leaving Italy for a long while yet. It has all been gotten over with so smoothly, that Major Gray could at this moment have shaken hands with his greatest enemy—if such a being existed, which was doubtful—and said "hope you're well," with genuine warmth.

Passing through the hall Blondine sees Mrs. St. James seated in her parlor, the doors open, with dear Florrie, dear Bessie, dear Nattie, and all the other dears, sitting about consoling the bereaved lady. Arial looks exceedingly handsome in her dress of deep crape. An interesting looking woman at all times, just now she is doubly so, receiving the sympathy of endless numbers of friends over her recent loss. Blondine steps in the room to tell Mrs. St. James of their going, and to say farewell. Not so Dolores; she

hurries to her rooms, gives her maid all due instructions concerning luggage, and then speeds away to the pretty burying ground, to pause beside a tiny grave; a broken pillar of granite, with the simple words "My son Roy," marking the resting place of her little lost friend.

Dolores gathers a few forget-me-nots from around the mound—flowers that in after years will remind her of this tiny grave in Italy. Here her resolution is taken to forgive—she cannot forget—two persons whom she firmly believes are at war against her; then with a long, last, lingering glance around, she goes.

Blondine hails the sight of Dolores with joy. Will she just lend a hand for a minute, to see if all is ready? Poor Blondine would never get over the world with doing her own packing is very evident, from the sight that meets Dolores' eyes. Things always contrived to get mixed up so queerly; her best bonnets and boots, the desk with the ink and mucilage bottles, generally reposed calmly upon her most dainty pair of gloves. Now she cannot find her pearl-handled knife, the ivory opera glasses, or her silver nut crackers. Dolores searches around with the eyes of a professional detective, and at length discovers the missing articles in the pocket of Blondine's riding habit; the knife was found in the window sash, where it had been put to keep it from rattling the night before when the wind blew.

The last trunk is strapped, the hasty search around for farewell words to friends (of which there are shoals); the coach is at the door; they are off, going by the famous Cornice route for the last time. Its many scenic beauties will scarcely ever fade from Blondine's admiring eyes; her memory will never fail on that score. Much disgusted is uncle Dick at not having seen "that boy Traleigh," and wonders if he will "turn up," ere they leave; but Traleigh fails to "turn up," greatly to Dolores satisfaction.

Uncle Dick is in high glee, to find that a steamer sails the following morning, and Blondine turns pale when some one suggests to Major Gray that they may look forward to a pretty "tumbly" voyage, as gales seem the proper thing during the past week.

Dolores cheers up at the mention of home, becomes absorbed in purchasing numerous foreign trifles for Zoe, talks learnedly on the wretchedness of foreign cooking, and altogether appears the cheerful, but not gushing Dolores of old.

The passage across was, as predicted, rather inclined to be "tumbly," indeed, at times most uncomfortably so. Blondine declares if Heaven will ever spare her to get on land once more, never would human persuasion entice her across old Atlantic again. Uncle Dick was delighted with the pitch and toss and knock down of the angry waters, and Dolores laughingly declares, "uncle Dick you were born for a sailor but became spoilt in the drilling."

CHAPTER XI.

TROUBLES OVERTAKE THE BEST OF MEN.

"He is miserable once who feels it,
But twice who fears it before it comes."

—EASTERN PROVERB.

"Well, Edward, what in the world are you going to do? Why, I never heard of such actions in all my forty years of life. A man of your honorable principles to be in league with such men as you have just described; why it just takes my breath away with astonishment, it certainly does."

Aunt Adeline gives the white head-dress on top of her head such an excited rap that its position lent to her face a peculiarly fierce expression quite foreign to her general air of amiability.

"Perhaps some means may present itself that will tide us over safely, but it is very dark looking just now, very dark indeed."

"Well, they cannot do anything with you, can they?" aunt Adeline inquires excitedly.

"No, my dear sister; only to have an old firm like ours go down seems a pity. And, Adeline, I hope you will not be very much displeased at what I did to-day." Mr. Litchfield speaks nervously.

"Now Edward, what have you been about again? You know how many imprudent actions you commit. Tell me what is the thing now you think I won't approve of?"

"This morning young Fanchon asked me to sign his note for three months." Aunt Adeline stiffens visibly in her chair.

"What was the amount?" she asks coldly.

"Only three hundred dollars; and he said it would oblige him, as at the end of three months he would get some money owing him. Of course it will be all right you know," replied her brother in an off-hand tone, which he is far from feeling, for the man Fanchon has long been losing ground in public favor; and rumor said, if it were not for the senior partner, Litchfield, the business would be done.

Miss Litchfield looks out the window, as she says slowly:

"You may be sorry, some day, that you did not take my advice. You know I warned you about your marriage; you scorned my advice then; you know now how it has turned out. All I can say is, it will be your own fault either way, good or otherwise.

Mr. Litchfield gets up from his seat at the table.

"Adeline,"—his face is very pale as he stands before his sister—"let what has passed rest. You have been a most faithful, affectionate sister to me, and aunt to my girls, but from you, nor no one else living, shall I take a word of disrespect about my wife." Then Miss Adeline hears the door close, and she is alone.

"Well," she says, smoothing out an imaginary wrinkle in her apron, "I am terribly afraid Edward is getting a softness in the head; any man that could feel no reproach against a woman who has wronged any one, as Estelle Litchfield has wronged my poor brother, beats me more than words can express."

The white curtains flap idly in and out at the windows; a white and yellow butterfly comes in to light among the pink roses and white lilies in the glass dish on the table. Zoe's voice comes from somewhere in the garden, scolding her pet kitten for disgracing himself by persisting in chasing imaginary flies over the flower beds. Jet Glen is whistling "The girl I left behind me," somewhere near. Aunt Adeline hears the happy young voices and sighs. Her brother's business has not gone altogether straight lately; she does her best to keep his spirits up, but sometimes her own heart nearly fails with anxious forebodings for the future.

"Edward seems to lose the use of all his faculties," Miss Litchfield soliloquises. "There was that wealthy Mrs.—I won't say her name—but any one could see with half an eye—was only waiting to change her name to ours. Her money would have done wonders for Edward, but no one knew what had become of Estelle, and so for the sake of her my poor brother must needs lose all the chances that appear, and lose his health worrying over his business affairs, seems too bad entirely."

An enquiring fly lights on the tip of Miss Litchfield's aristocratic Roman nose. Now this is something appalling; never does she allow a single poor stray fly to remain in those cool, shady rooms. The next half hour is spent in ousting the enemy, and after that length of time the viper is finally vanquished.

"Auntie, do you notice how very pale father looks?"

The dim shadows lie in long dark lines across the quaint old room. Zoe, curled up by the window, is trying to catch the last faint rays of daylight; but the dim light grows dimmer, and the words on the page are no longer discernable.

"Yes, child, of course I've noticed it; who would not? and what the end of it will be is more than my knowledge of the future can penetrate; I have not the least idea."

Dolores' pretty grey kitten jumps up in Miss Adeline's lap.

"Get down, you nuisance," she says crossly.

"Come here, Moody, you dear, pretty thing, to Zoe."

Moody obediently goes sedately, with a look of injured dignity; she rubs her glossy head against Zoe's arm, and plays with the tassels on the window curtains.

"I will have to marry old Mr. Vacine after all, and his money bags will restore the house of Litchfield to its former glory."

Miss Adeline is quick to take offence when one of her old friends are being spoken lightly of.

Mr. Vacine is too old for a child like you to jest about. Youth should always respect old age," she says severely.

"Well, I never could see any sense in him living up there all alone in that great gloomy mansion, when other people—any quantity of them—would be willing to share the goods the gods have given him."

The little silver and marble clock on the bracket ticks the minutes hastily away.

"I am glad to hear that; would you, my dear little friend, be 'one' of the 'any quantity' you just spoke of?"

Both Zoe and Aunt Adeline are startled by the grave voice behind them. Mr. Blois Vacine, past sixty years of age, and owner of the finest properties in the town, seldom leaves his home of gloomy grandeur; and Zoe mentally calculates, as Miss Litchfield goes forward to greet the visitor, that something more wonderful than usual is about to take place after this.

"Father home?" Mr. Vacine inquires, coming over to the window where Zoe is standing. Evidently the power of speech has deserted the ever ready-tongued young lady.

"No sir; yes—that is—I don't know," she stammers. She feels horribly ashamed of herself for having spoken as she had done; and yet it was in her own house, and if people can't say what they wish in their own house, pray where would they? and another thing, it was decidedly mean to come into a house without first ringing the bell to announce one's coming.

"Oh well, probably he will not be gone long, and meanwhile you and I can have a little friendly chat," Mr. Vacine says cheerfully.

Zoe politely asks if he will not take the easy chair aunt Adeline has just vacated.

"And so you don't believe in people being mean and stingy with their worldly gifts. But even wealth, after a time, grows monotonous; we very seldom find the pleasure we expect, even in the success of our highest ambitions. I am a lonely old man, my dear; once I had a dear nephew, of whom I was too fond; I said something passionate; he took offence at his old uncle, and left me. But never mind, I would be only too glad if you would look upon my house and grounds as your own, to come and go in at your pleasure."

Zoe's eyes dance, and her heart beats with delightful anticipation. The dream of her life has been to be allowed to pass beyond the heavy iron gates, with their fantastic guardians of lions' heads, and wander at will in the dim, unknown depths of the paradise of flowers beyond; and the house, the dear old rambling castle of which she has heard so much. Poor Zoe, for some minutes she is unable to speak.

"Ah, you have thought differently since you first spoke. Well, it is all right ; there is not so much to interest one, perhaps, as I imagine." There is a ring of disappointment in the old man's voice, and Zoe hastens to say,

"My dear Mr. Vacine, believe me, I am not ungrateful to you for your goodness, and will take much pleasure in your kind offer," the girl says, with a choking in her throat.

Aunt Adeline comes in with lights, saying Mr. Litchfield was feeling so unwell, that he had retired. So Zoe accompanies Mr. Vacine to the door, watches him walk down the little path to the gate with a step as firm and elastic as a boy of twenty.

"Well little one, is this the latest victim your charming self has brought down?" Jet Glen's tall figure stands before her, and Jet's brown eyes are full of lazy laughter, as he stands and watches Zoe straighten her slim figure in virtuous indignation.

"You are like a toad, Mr. Glen, always cropping up when least expected," she says, with what is intended to be withering sarcasm.

"Allow me to offer a thousand thanks for your kind sentiments on my appearance, Miss Litchfield." The young man doffs his white straw hat gallantly.

"No need for thanks ; it is the simple, unvarnished truth ; it is nothing to me if you get offended." The little foot, clad in its dainty wigwam slipper, taps the door step impatiently.

"Never mind, dear, don't get angry ; you and I should understand each other by now. You are such a little wildfire, I like to see you get excited. But come, tell me what the old gentleman said."

Zoe's anger is never very long lived ; now, under Jet's conciliatory tones, it vanishes and fades like the mist in the morn.

"Of course I'll tell you, you old goose," Zoe exclaims, coming down toward him.

"Well, let us walk around the paths, and we can talk better," suggests the 'old goose,' persuasively.

"He asked me over so nicely, to come and go in his beautiful house and grounds, and make myself at home there. Ah, I felt like hugging the old dear." Mr. Glen pokes the grass thoughtfully with his cane.

"Indeed," he says drily. "It is a pity you could not expend your surplus affection on a younger man."

Zoe stops short in her walk. "You are very impolite, to say the very least ; in fact I am rather surprised at you," the youngest Miss Litchfield says loftily. The wind blows in chilly gusts, suggestive of rain ; it is very cold for a night in August.

"Shall I run in and fetch a shawl for you?" Jet asks in a protective sort of way.

"No thanks, I shall never accept any service from your hands sir, or in fact from any one who would dare speak disrespectfully of my friends."

But Zoe forgot the old but true proverb about "pride having a fall." Suddenly the young lady seems to be seized with a panic of despair.

"Oh! oh! oh!" she cries, in frantic tones.

"What in the name of the stars is the matter now?" inquires the young man, looking about him to the right and left.

"Oh, kill it; kill it, quick." White dresses are a great magnetiser for June bugs; caught in the lace of her sleeve is an immense—as Zoe calls it—'horny bug.'

"He's dead; come look at him," Jet adds; but Zoe retreats to the front door in haste.

"Come in, come in, quick, till I shut the door; surely the wretches won't chase us in the house."

The door shuts to with a defiant bang, while the agitated young lady once more recovers her tranquility of mind.

CHAPTER XII.

TOO CONFIDING. "YES, IT IS MY HUSBAND."

"I never judge from manners, for I once had my pocket picked by the civillest gentleman I ever met with."—LORD BYRON.

The bright sun-light played coyly through the half-closed shutter, and fell across the table, brightening up the dusty old books, slates, and every other article which helped to make up the furnishing of the private office of Fanchon, Litchfield & Co.

"The note falls due to-morrow at the bank, for the three hundred you accommodated me with; but no matter, that will be all right; you go and transact the business abroad for the firm, and I will attend to lifting your note."

Mr. Litchfield looks steadily at the young man sitting opposite, and says quietly, "I shall be thankful, yes, more than thankful, when it is lifted, for never again will I put my name on any man's paper. However, some one will have to go, and I had better be the one."

Cyrel Fanchon laughed lightly. "Every business firm is obliged to run on paper; why feel worried that ours should do the same?"

The little alarm clock on the shelf struck two. Mr. Litchfield pushes back his chair.

"It will be nearly three weeks before I can return, so you can write me if anything new arises," he says, taking his hat from the peg.

Cyrel Fanchon takes a slip of paper from the desk, writes a few lines to

a leading daily paper, and slips it in his coat pocket. If Edward Litchfield could have seen those few words, so hastily written, he would not have gone home to prepare for his journey on the morrow with so much freedom from coming care. The next day found Mr. Litchfield still in his office, a paper in his hand, his face like ashes. Before him is a notice from the Bank, to lift a note, bearing his signature, for thirty thousand dollars—money he had never had. Where was Fanchon? He would of course explain the meaning of this strange business. To be sure he never thought to notice the amount when he hastily signed his name to the note, for he had no glasses with him at the time, but trusted to Fanchon's honesty when he said three hundred. Of course it would be all right, but his sister's warning words come back to him with double distinctness, that does not help to relieve his feelings. Adeline could always discern further than he. If he had only heeded her words this trouble would not have to be faced. But Fanchon was nowhere to be found; he told some one he intended going away for a few days. What was to be done? He dared not stay; he could, but would not, borrow money, to repay those with whom he had never had any dealings. He would leave the country, his home and family, of whom he was so fond. The drops of agony stood deep on his face. Cyril Fanchon had deceived his old friend, the man who had put him in the position he held to-day, and in return had ruined him. Yes, he would go to-night, and to-morrow the city would ring with the news of the sudden departure of him, whom all respected and trusted. Oh, it was bitter to think of, but more bitter to remain. "Ah, Estelle, Estelle, thank Heaven you are not here to-day to share my disgrace." Edward Litchfield bowed his head and wept bitter tears of self-reproach. He went, and no one knew but Aunt Adeline, and the blow almost broke her heart.

The boat had just come in; the passengers crossing the ferry hurried ashore. A girl, lonely and tired looking, came slowly, feebly up the floats. She was neatly dressed, and had a look of refinement, that prevented the men lounging along the railing from passing the usual slang remarks so common to their idle profession. Well may she look tired and weary, for many a mile has she travelled over land and sea.

"Can you tell me where I can get a night's lodging?" she asked of a neat old woman who kept a tidy little grocery store at the corner. The woman was kind hearted; she pitied the girl's desolate look, and kept her for the night. The old woman questioned her with motherly solicitude. Was she married? "Yes, there was the ring on her finger." "Was she a widow?" "No," the girl said; "she was searching for her husband." The woman saw her go the next day, with a lunch and a blessing. All day she walked up one street, down another, looking keenly at each passer by, but always

with the same hopeful look. Toward nightfall, when she was again seeking a place to lay her weary head, a mist, almost rain, began to fall. She turned her lagging steps up a street lined by beautiful, costly houses. One especially caught her fancy. The windows were open, lights streamed out on the dreary wet road. She crept up and looked in. She saw a room with everything lovely and costly; a lady sat at the table, two pretty children at her side.

"Here comes papa to kiss us good night, mamma," the eldest girl cried.

A gentleman came in, and hastily kissing the children, turned to the lady.

"My dear wife, what nonsense; no one could be looking in the window; you are whimsical. A woman's face! what next will you see?" Then he goes out smiling and down the road. He sees not the strange, wild figure flying after him, nor hears the faint voice calling his name.

"Cyril! Cyril Fanchon! Ah me! Husband! speak to me, your wife—your Jantie!"

The wind sweeps down the street in chilly gusts; the woman wraps her jacket around her; she stumbles on, on, blindly. A railing, enclosing a dark, grim building, comes in sight and looms up in the darkness; she struggles with the weakness that overtakes her; she falls, but she is conscious, only unable to move. All her weary journey has ended here; to find the man she believes to be her husband, with a wife and family. She loves him too well to expose his crime; for the gentle looking wife's sake she will give him up; she will lie here and die, and he will never know of the sacrifice she made. Ah yes, she has only her poor old mother, and by now she no doubt would think her better off if she were dead. Then a deadly faintness takes possession of her; she must be dying; then all is blank. A policeman, passing, does not notice the figure lying almost at his very feet. He buttons his waterproof coat up tighter and shivers, as he thinks of his comfortable home, and pities all who are so unfortunate as himself, to be out in the cold.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CONVENT OF ST. MARGUERITE.

"Paradise is always where love dwells."—RICHTER.

Tingle, tingle, tingle, chimes the tiny silver bell, and down the pretty newly swept gravel path file the pupils, two and two; the plain black dresses, and black hoods looking strangely quaint on the smiling faces of the girls going to early service. The sisters, with folded hands and devout downcast eyes, follow. Suddenly a moan or gasping sound makes sister

Christine pause in her silent march behind the others. She looks about, then her eyes take a startled, anxious expression; she steps hurriedly forward to kneel beside a woman lying among the fragrant mignonette. With sister Christine to think is to act. She felt the faintly beating pulse; her first anxiety is over; the woman has but fainted. At first the sister, glancing at the set, white face, feared she could render no assistance on earth to this creature flung on her path. A tiny silver whistle hangs at her side; lifting it to her lips she blows a shrill toot; a mulatto boy, in a coat bright with silver buttons, runs down to her.

"Oh massey," exclaims this little black diamond, standing off, with his mouth open so wide that sister Christine fears he will have the lock-jaw.

"Woolly, run quickly to the house and ask the Mother Superior to come here to me. Now hurry; and Woolly! shut your mouth." There was a sudden scamper, a vision of bright shining buttons, and Woolly was gone.

A few minutes later the still unconscious figure was borne into the house, tenderly attended by the mother and good sisters.

The first face Jantie Mackeith saw when she awoke was the tender, pitiful face of Mother St. Marguerite.

"Where am I? Who are you? Ah, yes, I remember, they told me this was a convent, where there was rest for all who were weary. I crept in by the gate, to ask if I might stay here—stay where my heart would find peace; then I grew dizzy, everything seemed black; I tried to call some one, then all was dark. May I stay here—may I?"

Mother St. Marguerite's eyes are full of tears; she takes the pretty small white hand, stretched out so imploringly, into hers. Sister Christine, just entering, has never seen the mother so moved before.

"Yes, poor lamb, stay—stay; no questions will be asked you. If evil has come, no doubt punishment has followed; if you are wronged, Heaven will give you a free, light conscience to know that you are doing what your God would approve. Heaven bless you! We are all weak, erring sheep."

The school was dull that bright, cheery morning; rumors have got afloat about the strange lady; the pupils wanted to know all about it. The sisters' lips were sealed; the only speakable person on the premises was Woolly. He was bribed by every imaginable luxury, all the way from a bright yellow handkerchief—the color which was dear to Woolly's eyes—to a lump of barley candy—dear to the lad's mouth. He drove enough bargains that morning, during recreation, to last a boy of his age a whole year. Meanwhile the patient up stairs, in sister Christine's room, was improving. As was promised, she was asked no questions, and she gave no information. The name Sister Jean was given her. No one ever regretted the care bestowed upon the stranger, so eagerly did she strive to please. The school was large; many pupils occupied the attention of the sisters.

sister Jean was given charge of the smaller girls, and right loyally did they love the pale, quiet, gentle teacher. Mother St. Marguerite, a wonderful woman herself, took a particular interest in the new found sister. The sick were visited, the poor watched over, by the mother's watchful eye and helpful hand. Many homes learned to bless the good, angelic work of sister Jean.

Over a month after sister Jean's admission into the convent of St. Marguerite, a note was received by Sir Barry Traleigh, at Castle Racquette, Scotland.

"I have given up ambition for the future. Do not try to find me; I am leading a peaceful, useful, happy life. My heart, though broken, is as peaceful as is possible again in this world. JANTIE."

But in her haste she forgot the name of the convent was stamped on the paper. However, Sir Barry's mind was set at rest by those few words; he knew the more than headstrong, pretty daughter of one of his tenants was safe. Pretty, foolish Jantie Mackeith had been persuaded into a secret marriage with a young man, a stranger to Scotland—Cyril Fanchon. He was a nice, gentlemanly looking fellow; and Jantie—silly child—her head was turned by his attentions. However, the deed was done, and a week later Cyril Fanchon suddenly left Scotland, without a word of leave-taking. In a fit of remorse the girl confessed her marriage to Sir Barry, and Sir Barry, who had teased and petted the pretty child since she was out of her baby frocks, was shocked and surprised.

"You should not have done it, Jantie; you know anything secret is bad, child. What will your mother say?"

Sir Barry feels almost a paternal interest in this girl, and her own father, were he alive, could feel no deeper pity for her than he does now.

"Oh sir, mother must never know. You, who know her, can see it would be madness to say anything to her about it. I expect he grew tired of me, and yet he used to tell me he would never tire of his pretty Jantie. Oh yes, my punishment has quickly fallen."

The girl, standing by Sir Barry, folds her white hands behind her back, and the honest, truthful brown eyes look vacantly into the distance. The warm breeze lifts the curly locks from her low white forehead; the sunbeams kiss the cheeks once so blooming, now pale with anxiety.

"But, Sir Barry, mark what I say. I shall move all creation but what I shall find him. Stay here and be talked to death by mother, and mocked by all? No, I won't! Heaven help me to make him endure just the anguish that is tormenting me to death. Can you blame me, Sir Barry, can you?" And Sir Barry, leaning against the arched gateway, looking at the pale, drooping face, from out of which all the pretty rose bloom has fled, cannot blame Jantie for what she says.

Mrs. Mackeith loved this, her only daughter, passionately—the only one she had to love; mother and daughter were inseparable. As passionately as she loved, so could she hate; if her love turned to displeasure it was bitter as death. Her own husband, to whom she was devotedly attached, displeased her by selling a farm without her consent. He took cold one morning, while swimming across a swollen ford where the bridge had been swept away; she took excellent care of him, did all in her power to save his life, and failed; he died; but she never forgave him. Sir Barry knew, and so did Jantie, only too well, that her mother's reproaches would be more bitter than anything else to bear. So Mrs. Mackeith never knew what had taken place. She wondered, even grieved with motherly anxiety, over Jantie's pale face and strange freaks of listlessness. But one morning it all broke upon her unawares. Without a word of farewell, Jantie left her safe, quiet home among the Scottish hills, to seek for him who had left her so basely. Cyril Fanchon had gone; Jantie was gone. Mrs. Mackeith put two and two together, and it slowly but surely dawned upon her mind that Jantie—her Jantie, of whom she was so proud—had ran away with that fellow Fanchon. The neighbors thought it a just judgment upon her, for her hard words to her husband on his death bed. But they offered their consolation with warm, hearty sympathy. Every one was fond of cheerful Jantie, whose pretty lips always had a pleasant word and smile for everybody. Her daughter's conduct, to all outward appearances, seemed to make no difference whatever to the tall, bony, hardy Scotch woman. Her step was just as elastic, her eye as keen, as though no trouble had crossed her path in life. She went about her daily duties the same as when Jantie blithely sang and cheerfully worked about the house. Mrs. Mackeith showed herself to be a woman of well-controlled feelings; she told her sorrow to none, and none knew how nearly broken her faithful, loving heart was.

Had Sir Barry been home, things might have been different; she trusted him implicitly; why would she not? She had known the lad all his life; had she not nursed him in her arms when he was a tiny infant, and watched the little bonnie laddie grow up to be the fine, good, generous gentleman she was proud to see he had become? Ah, no; there were few men who could come as near perfection in Mrs. Mackeith's eyes as brave Sir Barry Traleigh.

CHAPTER XIV.

TRYING TO BE ECONOMICAL.

"Check your passions, learn philosophy. When the wife of the great Socrates threw a teapot at his erudite head, he was as cool as a cucumber."—NEWELL.

"Where is father? Is he sick?" It is breakfast hour, and the head of the house was not in his usual seat at the head of the table. To Zoe's knowledge this is the first morning she has failed to see the familiar form sitting in his big chair, glasses on, reading the morning papers.

"Your father was called away suddenly on business," was the short reply from aunt Adeline, who looks as if she had not closed her eyes all night. Jet Glen, lazily reading down the columns of the paper, almost springs from his seat, as his eye rests on a certain paragraph.

"Lend me the paper a moment, please." Zoe's voice awakens him from his trance of surprise.

"In one minute," coolly taking the scissors from the window sill. "A trifle here I want to cut out." Zoe looks curious.

"Let me see, won't you?" she persists.

"Really, Miss Curiosity, it would do you no good, and I am not going to give you my reasons for everything I do," is the playful reply, as he goes out the low French window.

"What is the trouble with this house anyway? Everything seems upside down. Tell me, aunt Adeline, where has father gone?"

Miss Litchfield hesitates for a moment, then she says quickly,

"Perhaps, child, I had better tell you than strangers. There has been some trouble about your father's business, and—and he has been obliged to go." Aunt Adeline bows her head on her folded arms and weeps.

"Go where? I don't understand why that should make every one in the house so horrid," Zoe says snappishly.

"Child," she cries, lifting her wretched face, "don't you hear what I say? Your father is ruined, but not disgraced, thank Heaven. Though he has gone, yet he deserves no blame; always keep that in your mind. Your father never committed an action that would make us ashamed of him."

Zoe is utterly confounded; surely aunt Adeline is certainly losing her senses. Then it all dawns upon the girl's mind. Her father—her dear father—had been obliged, through the deceit of another, not his own fault—she must always remember that—to leave them all, all whom he loved on earth. She sipped her coffee thoughtfully, and stared absently through the clear, thin china saucer. Jet had seen the account of her father's absence in the paper, and tried, by cutting it out, to spare her feelings. She had heard that people in reverses of fortune had the very roof sold over their heads. She looked around the pretty, quaint oak dining room, open-

ing into the very charming conservatory, and wonders if it will be the case with them. Ah, she hopes not, for the memories of the pretty, cosy home were very dear.

"I wish Dolores were here," she says gravely.

"Tut, child, Lady Strathmere has taken Dolores home with her; let the child enjoy herself while she can."

Aunt Adeline has had her fit of low-spiritedness, now her own energetic self asserts itself. She bustles around, and when Jet puts his head in at the door to ask Zoe if she will ride over to the mill with him, aunt Adeline insists upon her going. And never a word is mentioned about what each knew the other to be thinking of. Down the shady lane the two horses slowly walk; the wind blows soft and pleasant in the faces of the riders, and tosses the manes helter skelter over the horses' pretty arched necks.

"I am off to-morrow, little one." Jet Glen settles the fore-and-aft cap on his head, and surveys the deep blue sky above, as if he is doubting the settled state of the elements. Zoe takes her foot out of the stirrup, then puts it in again, settles the folds in the skirt of her riding habit, and says slowly,

"Are you?" She is not paying particular attention to anything going on around; she is wondering what is to be done, in fact is learning that life is not all sunshine, but full of a great many shadows. She wonders vaguely if her friends will "cut" her, as she read last week in a story. Well, it did not matter if they did; there were none she cared enough for to regret, if they were civil or otherwise.

"You will be sure to know I will do all that lies in my power to sift this—this dreadful matter."

This is sufficient to arouse the wandering Zoe to what he is talking about.

"Thanks; you are very kind, I am sure," she says stiffly, and wonders if this is what any one else in her position would have said.

"I am sure there is something behind it all, the young man goes on. "I blame him for going; he should have remained, and made the man confess to his guilt." Zoe blazes.

"How dare you speak so of him?" Then extending her pretty gauntleted hand towards him, says gently, "Forgive me; I know you meant kindly when you spoke, but I cannot bear to hear him spoken harshly of."

Jet takes the proffered hand, and gives it a gentle squeeze. He admires Zoe all the more for the faith she sustains in her father. The old mill comes in sight, with the sound of rushing water and whizzing of machinery. An old woman comes to the door of one of the cottages. Zoe talks to her while Mr. Glen rides on to speak to some man. The villagers whisper among themselves what a fine looking couple Miss Zoe, bless her dear heart, and the strange, handsome young gentleman make.

Some two or three days later Mr. Glén goes away, with the promise to search for good news to send back to them; and Miss Adeline is perfectly confident if there is any way to manage, Jet will be the one to arrange everything. Zoe has accepted the position of organist at the pretty little Episcopal church; to be sure the salary is small, but as aunt Adeline said, every little helped, so she took it. Rather dubious at first was her attempt, not being accustomed to an organ, but a splendid piano player. Mr. Vacine said there were two organs up at the house, and no one touched them from one year's end to the other; so the largest and best was sent down and placed in the corner of the cheery sitting room at Mr. Litchfield's, where Zoe practiced to her heart's content. Very kind and thoughtful was Mr. Vacine in those days. Not a single day passed but what he sent over fruits, or game, or some choice vegetables; and aunt Adeline fully appreciated his kindly goodness.

"You see there is more than we know what to do with," he said, when aunt Adeline expostulated with him for his generosity.

It was about this time that Mr. Vacine first awoke to the fact that Zoe was fond of pictures. He found her one morning standing before a picture in the gallery, lost in admiration; it was then that he declared she must take some lessons, if it was only to please him. So it happened that the youngest Miss Litchfield attended the classes held in the Art Gallery twice in the week, and Mr. Vacine smilingly footed the bills.

Zoe has gone down to the church this lovely afternoon, to practice over the hymns and chants for the services on Sunday. She opens the grand old organ and plays piece after piece, hymn after hymn; then the parson comes up the cool dim aisle; he shakes hands with the pretty young organist; he is very fond of Zoe, but still more so of her charming sister Dolores. A very romantic affair had happened last summer. A party had gone on a fishing excursion. Dolores somehow or other missed her footing and slipped into the water. The parson gallantly came to the rescue, while the other members stood spell-bound. Ever since they had kept it for a standing joke, and Dolores would laugh, and blush, but took all the banter in good part.

"When do you expect your sister home Miss Zoe?"

The sun comes in slanting rays through the stained glass of the chancel window, and fell in a myriad of colored shapes, lighting up the bright trimmings of reading desk and pulpit, and softening the sombre darkness of the heavily carved doors and window frames.

"We had a letter day before yesterday; she said they were invited to join another yachting party, but did not know if she would accept. But we never can tell anything about what she intends to do. Sometimes she comes home when we least expect her."

Zoe rolls up her music, and smiles as the parson says with poorly disguised unconcern :

"It would be very beneficial to me, if she would return. When one loses such an excellent voice as your sister's out of the choir, it makes the rest sound flat."

Mr. Wimbleton proceeds to close the organ, and Zoe goes on down the choir steps; she is obliged to turn away for fear the smile she cannot conceal will offend Mr. Wimbleton, and she is certainly far from wishing to commit an offence so great as that. Zoe goes home, and in the hall, three big trunks meet her surprised eyes; she hears a musical voice talking to Aunt Adeline in the dining-room.

"It must be, it is Dolores!" she exclaims delightedly.

Yes, Dolores has returned more beautiful than ever, with a quiet, grave look, befitting the trouble for which she thought it her duty to come home and share with Zoe and aunt Adeline. Dolores was deeply pained, she put so much confidence in her father; she thought his discernment incomparable, he always stood so high in her estimation, far beyond reproach.

"My poor darling, how you must have suffered, and I enjoying myself; how utterly selfish I am." There is a mingling of tenderness and reproach in Dolores' tones.

"You foolish child, how could you do differently, when you did not know how often we wished for you? Don't blame yourself child, we will all bear it together." Aunt Adeline hates to see the pretty faces of her darlings clouded by care, and she strives to bear all the cares on her own willing shoulders.

"I play the church organ," Zoe announces with well pleased promptness. "And I like it very much, and I am getting quite fond of Mr. Wimbleton; if he is a little bashful, I like him just the same," the youngest Miss Litchfield says between the bites of currant cake she is helping hungry Dolores make way with. Dolores raises her eyebrows, but says nothing and her sister rattles on.

"I suppose you will stay home now for the remainder of the summer, will you?" She thinks she might have a chance to visit around once in a while, and feels rather inclined to be crabby.

"Yes, dear; my finery is so far exhausted, I am afraid it will be necessary for me to refuse any more invitations. Have you heard from Blondine while I was away?"

Zoe puts the last bite of cake in her mouth before she replies.

"No, she never writes to me. Did you see my latest sketch Dolores?"

"Why, my dear, how you have improved. I am so glad." Dolores looks admiringly at the pretty drawing.

"Oh, yes, Jet Glen helped me fix my scenes up finely." Dolores never

bothers to inquire who "Jet Glen" is; someone probably Zoe has picked up, because he had a mania like herself for pictures. Zoe sees the peacock eating the buds off her pet fuschias out by the door, and she darts off to chase the offender. Dolores saunters through the hall, and into the pretty, cool, sitting-room. She looks around, at the things there, thinking how nice it is to be home again. "Ah, a strange picture; who are you, sir?" She takes the panel photo, in its green plush frame, from the table.

"Heavens! how like the eyes, features, all but the whiskers." The face looking at her so steadily from out the pretty frame, was the face of the man whom she loved better than her very life. Only a heavy moustache shaded the grave, tender mouth, but evidently he had shaved his beard. But how came his picture here in their own pretty room at home? Zoe finds her gazing intently at the photo.

"Where did you get Sir Barry Traleigh's picture?" she asks, and Zoe, with all the plainness, which was one of her chief characteristics, replies with a groan for her sister's ignorance. "Sir Barry Traleigh! your grandmother's ducks! that's Jet Glen, who I told you helped me with all my precious sketches, and who is the best and dearest fellow in the world."

CHAPTER XV.

AN ACCIDENT. A BEAUTIFUL FAMILIAR FACE.

"You never can make a crab walk straight."

—ARISTOPARUS.

Two years have rolled past since men in business circles had been called upon to lament the departure of Edward Litchfield and his ill gotten gains.

"What makes Nellie so restless? Is the harness on them all right?" Cyril Fanchon surveys his span of beautiful black horses rather anxiously.

"She's all right, sir, just a trick that of hers."

Fanchon gets in and slams too the door. Certainly he never remembers the horses to act so before; the carriage rocks wildly from side to side. Heavens! they are beyond the man's control, they are running away. Loud cries of "stop them, stop them," rings in his ears, there is a sudden plunge, a crash, and all is still. Fortunately there was a doctor on the spot, he orders the unconscious man to be taken into the convent just opposite. The sisters were good at nursing, it could have happened nowhere more desirable. The dead leaves lay thick and yellow on the ground around the convent of St. Marguarite, the cruel winds have lately robbed the trees of all their pretty green foliage, leaving them grim and leafless, tossing their gaunt limbs sadly with the autumn's blast. The air is chilly; there is a decided sense of frost in the atmosphere. Sister Jean hurries in at a

small side door; she is very tired, for she has been sitting up all night with a sick woman.

"Sister, there has been an accident; a man is hurt, he is here in room five; will you watch by him after you have rested?" says the Mother Superior, meeting her in the hall.

"Is he very bad?"

"Yes; but of course we cannot say just yet. We will do all we can; if it is useless the fault will not be laid at our door," answers mother St. Marguerite, selecting a certain key from a string hanging at her side.

Sister Jean hurries to her room, removes her long black cloak, and sits down for a moment to collect her tired senses. No, she will not rest now, there may be something she can do for the sufferer down stairs. She goes down, opens the door softly, and enters. The room is so dark, that for a minute or two nothing is discernable. Then mother St. Marguerite steps out from the shadows, and says in a whisper:

"Just sit by and watch for any movement." Then she and the doctor pass out, and Sister Jean approaches the bed where her patient lies.

"God help me," she cries, falling on her knees beside the bed. Dare I stay here? Can my strength sustain me, to remain? Oh! will it? Has Heaven indeed at last avenged me?"

The eyes of the sick man are upon her, she holds her breath, then the room seems to swim around, as the weak voice says distinctly:

"Jantie, is this my Jantie? The eyes close, and Cyril Fanchon is again unconscious. When five minutes later mother St. Marguerite enters, she finds the sister in a dead faint near the door.

Two months later, on a cold December afternoon, when the snow is piled up in high drifts around the convent of St. Marguerite, a man, muffled in furs, is walking up and down impatiently in the parlour or visitors' room at the convent. From the next room comes the music of a violin, it is evident one of the pupils is taking lessons. The door opens, he turns abruptly.

"Sir Barry Traleigh."

"Jantie!" sister Jean's hands are clasped warmly in the man's. "The same pretty Jantie of old, only a little paler. Why did you run away, little one, and leave us all?" Sir Barry asks playfully.

"Oh, Sir, I could not stay there after—"

Sir Barry gets up and walks hastily to the window, and, coming back, says gently:

"You will pardon me for asking you something painful?" Jantie raises her pale face.

"Oh, Sir, nothing hurts my feelings now; sometimes I forget I have any left." Sir Barry laughs.

"A girl like you talking such nonsense; why child, your life has scarcely begun." He feels so sorry, so unutterably sorry for her.

"Tell me Jantie, have you any idea where your—where Cyril Fanchon is?"

The fire in the grate crackles and snaps cheerily, Jantie looks at the glowing coals, then she asks:

"Why do you come here to ask me that, Sir Barry?"

"My dear, you may be sure it is not from idle curiosity. A very dear friend of mine has been almost ruined by his partner; his name was Fanchon, but he is here in this house, so ill he can neither confess his guilt, if he be guilty, nor defend himself if he is innocent. Tell me honestly, Jantie, do you know the man here sick?"

The falling snow outside comes in spiteful little flakes, and slaps against the heavily curtained window. Jantie shivers; surely she can trust the man beside her, who has always proved her friend.

"Sir Barry, he is my husband, the man for whom I left home and everything," bitterly. "But, Sir Barry, he wronged me; for when I found him he was already married. Yes, he had a wife and two children." The voice is low. Sir Barry looks incredulous.

"Impossible, the villain."

"Ah, but I saw them, I knew it was true, so I came here; I have long ago forgiven him, Sir Barry, and I want you to do the same."

The door opens, and mother St. Marguerite enters. Sir Barry starts to his feet. Good Heavens! who was this?

"Sister Jean, it is your hour to watch by your charge." The door closes, but Sir Barry's eyes seem fascinated. What makes him feel so strangely? Where had he seen that face before, where? Why, has it stirred the very depths of his heart?

"That was the Mother Superior, Sir Barry, the best and noblest woman in the world. She gave up home and friends to found this convent, and there is no need to say she has succeeded in doing Heaven's work among all who are in need or trouble. Every one blesses the name of mother St. Marguerite. But will you excuse me now, Sir Barry, I am sorry it is impossible to remain longer away from my patient."

Sister Jean has nursed the man most faithfully, who had so basely deceived her. She has spared neither time nor rest; she will do for him all she can.

Sir Barry takes his leave; he is haunted by that face; he is scarcely himself; it is imperative that he should act, or he will lose his senses. His ears are caught by a voice that sounds familiar. Just ahead are a lady and gentleman. The man, Sir Barry immediately decides he does not know.

"Just wait here for a moment and I will inquire," Sir Barry hears him say to his companion, as he darts into a store.

Surely Sir Barry knows that perfect figure with its pretty suit of velvet and fur.

The lady turns her head and sees him.

"Why, Sir Barry, is it really you?"

"Miss Grey, I was sure I knew you, the back of your head had such a well known look."

Yes, it is stately, pleasant Blondine Grey, every whit as charming as when Sir Barry saw her last in Italy.

"And Miss Litchfield, how or where is she?"

Blondine's pretty face clouds.

"Poor Dolores, they have had such a trying time; of course you have heard about the trouble, Sir Barry."

Sir Barry looked grave, and said he thought he had heard something about it.

"I am going to see Dolores, as soon as Uncle Dick settles up some affairs; there is a very nice place, quite near where they live, that I want Uncle Dick to buy, and erect a summer residence, or winter either, if we should like the place very much.

Sir Barry sees Miss Gray's escort looking daggers at him, so raises his hat, and bids Blondine good-bye. He is gone; and Blondine had so many questions to ask him, oh dear; she wishes she could call him back again, but the corner hid Sir Barry's retreating form from Blondine's wistful eyes.

Then the remembrance of the face in the convent comes back to Sir Barry Traleigh, and he remembers where he has seen that wonderful face before, knows why it has raised such a flood of remembrance in his heart, and almost set his brain on fire. His mind is fully made up, that he will lose no more time in beating around the bush, he will do according to the dictates of his heart. "Faint heart never won fair lady," and Sir Barry determines he will be no coward. He set himself a task, and now when he is about to succeed, is his pluck going to desert him? he thinks not.

CHAPTER XVI.

TRULY, VENGEANCE IS MINE.

"Sit down and dangle your legs, and you will see your revenge."

—ITALIAN PROVERB.

It is a broiling day, or has been, but toward evening the same dense, lurid heat reigns over everybody and everything. The Australian sunset is going down in all its fiery glory. The sandy wastes stretch out far and wide, looking in the glowing heat like beds of living ashes. The miners are all

out by their hut doors, vainly endeavoring to catch a reviving breath of fresh air, which seems very loth to lend its invigorating presence.

"Jim wants to see the American paper we got last night; here's a Canadian one, too." The man addressed took the pipe he was smoking out of his mouth.

"No, lad, there's nothing in the papers to interest me; lend it to some of the other chaps, there may be something to please them." He puts his pipe in his mouth and finishes his smoke. "May I see them a few moments, please?" asks the man whom no one dares approach with other than respect. He had come there and been very successful with his mine; the men said he was making money fast. He never drank, nor told long yarns with his fellow workers, and they at first feared, then grew to respect his solitude. Through the day no one worked harder than Ned Field, and it stood to reason that at night he was too tired to remain talking when sleep and rest were so much needed. He takes the paper in his own little cabin, spreads the sheet out on the table, and pores over the contents with eager eyes.

"SERIOUS AND SUPPOSEDLY FATAL ACCIDENT.—As Mr. Cyril Fanchon was being driven home from his office, the horses became startled, ran away, upsetting the carriage, and throwing him out immediately in front of the convent of St. Marguerite. The injured gentleman was carried into the convent, where he now lies in a critical condition. Mr. Fanchon is of the firm of Litchfield & Fanchon, whom the reader may remember as Litchfield being the defaulter for thirty thousand dollars, and who left the country with that amount. It is supposed Mr. Fanchon, who is well and favorably known, will die."

The paper lies unheeded on the table, the minutes and hours pass unheeded likewise, but the man sitting there in the little rudely constructed cabin never stirs. The clock strikes five and the man springs to his feet.

There is quite a surprise among the miners, when they start to work the next morning, to see their old chum departing with his few worldly goods for parts unknown. He took passage in the next steamer, and his heart rejoiced as each mile brought him nearer the completion of his hopes.

Sir Barry Traleigh has started out for a walk. All day he has been unsettled, anxious, worried; he cannot define the feeling which oppresses him, as he expresses it; he feels as if "something unusual was going to happen." Very tired and often very discouraged was Sir Barry during those two years. He had tried with untiring, unwearied patience to find Mr. Litchfield's whereabouts, no expense of time or money had he spared, and yet not a word of hope could he send to the anxious, waiting family. All he could do was to buoy them up with hopes, and those were almost failing him. He had written a letter to Miss Adeline, telling of his assumption of another name, and pleaded for her to forgive the deception

he had practised upon them, but saying she would be sure to forgive, when he could explain personally. All this he had written, and much more to the same effect. Dolores answered the letter for her aunt. A letter full of bitter reproaches, refusing to hear any explanation from him—words which stung Sir Barry's proud spirit to the quick. Any other man would have thrown up the whole business, but not so Sir Barry. He could not understand Dolores' strange actions. He sent a postal card saying he was going to see them, and named the day. But he received a curt note, saying they were not at home to strangers; so Sir Barry would not force himself where he was not wanted. He had certainly done wrong, but then Miss Adeline might have been a little more charitable. He was sure it must be Dolores who influenced Miss Adeline, and what he had ever done to be under the bane of Dolores' displeasure, was more than Sir Barry's keenest discernment could fathom. It entirely disheartened his efforts, this fruitless search, from day to day, week to week, and month to month, seeking among strange faces. The cabs and busses rattled along, up and down, in a ceaseless clatter of wheels and rumbles, that make him wonder if they tried to see how many scurrying foot passengers they could knock down in their progress along. He stands a minute to watch the whirling, pushing mass, then enters the station house, as the train is coming, in to watch who comes. And the first man he meets is the one man whom he would give the best thousand dollars he had to meet, just when and where he does. In spite of the heavy beard and deep sunburn, Sir Barry is not to be deceived; he recognizes immediately his old friend Edward Litchfield. Sir Barry rushes forward, extending his hands, and greeting him joyfully.

"Ah, Jet my boy, the first home face I have seen; it does my heart good to look at your face, lad." Edward Litchfield looks haggard and worried.

"How are things working?" are the first words he utters after the welcome is over, and they have taken a cab for Sir Barry's apartments.

"Of course Fanchon got the money, and used it; you disappeared, and of course he let you carry the blame with you; the business is going on with Fanchon at the head. It is the second rather steep affair for which he will be called to account. Of course I could do nothing, but now you are here, we will have a general sifting up of affairs," Sir Barry says with satisfaction.

"How is Fanchon getting? Poor fellow, I feel so sorry for him, but it is my duty to clear my own and my family's name from dishonor."

"We will go to the convent to-morrow, and see if he can say anything, clearly," Sir Barry says.

He is very anxious that all this miserable affair shall be cleared up as soon as possible.

The reports next day of the patient were much better; there was no question but that he would die, but as far as clearness of mind went, why

he was perfectly capable of settling any affairs he wished. Sir Barry secures the services of a prominent lawyer and an officer of the police force, and with the physician visited the convent the next day. They took down Fanchon's written confession. He had knowingly obtained the missing money, for purposes he did not state; he professed himself sorry for having wronged his partner, but seemed utterly unaware of what punishment he would be called upon to suffer for his crime. Then Sir Barry says clearly :

"It is an understood fact that Cyril Fanchon is accused and found guilty of default of trust, is that true gentlemen?" Sir Barry looks around the room inquiringly.

"The man's own words declare himself guilty," is the reply.

"And I accuse him of another crime, that of bigamy."

"Sir Barry you must surely be mistaken," interrupted Mr. Litchfield, gravely. The silence for a moment is almost unbearable.

"That man lying there went to Scotland, won the affections of a pure, innocent girl, the pretty daughter of one of my tenants. He married her when he was already married here. He left his little Scottish bride, and she left her home, followed him here and found him a married man with a wife and family. She gave up all worldly ambitions; she is here in this convent, the girl who has tended him so faithfully during his illness—Sister Jean, once Jantie Mackeith. Are you listening? Is it not so?"

If Cyril Fanchon were dying, Sir Barry could not help feeling that Jantie Mackeith's hour of triumph had come. From pale to red, from red to purple, turned the face of Cyril Fanchon.

"Is that true?" Mr. Litchfield's voice is stern and reproachful. "Can it be possible this young man can be guilty of so much dishonor? impossible."

The doctor gives Fanchon some brandy, and he says sullenly :

"Well, if I did, whose business is it but my own?"

"Scoundrel," comes from Sir Barry's clenched teeth.

"In those two cases my friend, you are in my charge." The police officer steps forward.

"Cannot arrangements be made to let him remain here? You see death is not far off." Mr. Litchfield feels so sorry to see his late partner reduced to such distressing circumstances.

"Pity does more harm than good to such men as him," Sir Barry declares. All inducements were unavailable, and Cyril Fanchon was removed to prison. His wife, utterly heart-broken, took her children and went home to her father, and Edward Litchfield was proclaimed a free man. Old friends gathered around, glad to find their friend had not been unworthy their esteem.

"Aunt Adeline, you had better go right in the kitchen, for Zoe is in the preserve kettle, and I am afraid your plums will be scarce if they are not looked after, by some one less fond of tasting them than she is."

Aunt Adeline is out in the garden gathering fruit: peaches, ripe and luscious, and pears, rich and mellow.

"There, give me the basket, and I will finish." Dolores daintily holds up her white skirt, and climbs up the stepping stones, the better to gather those aunt Adeline could not reach.

"Say, Dolores, please throw me down that big, ripe peach up there, just this side of your head. Oh dear!" Dolores does as requested.

"Zoe, child, what is it now?" she asks anxiously.

"I burnt my tongue, that's what's the matter, if you want to know. I wish I'd let the old preserves alone." She stands there leaning her pretty plump arms on the fence and watches her sister.

The train whistle blows shrilly, and is the only noise that disturbs the sweet drowsy stillness. Then the youngest Miss Litchfield saunters idly off, vainly trying to coax the burnt tongue with sundry ripe peaches and pears.

Dolores laughs and works on; and as the sunlight glances through the boughs of the trees, lingering with a loving touch on her pretty hair, and sparkles and glistens in the tiny diamond earstuds, which had been Blondine's last Christmas gift. Dolores loved these, her only valuable trinkets, and wore them constantly; she even slept in her pretty eardrops. The little gate in the vegetable garden clicks, but the young lady perched on the wall never heeds it. She goes on placidly gathering her pears and peaches. Occasionally a more tempting one than the others finds its doom in her pretty mouth, but then the picker is always privileged.

"My eldest daughter is, as usual, busy, and where is my other daughter?"

It seems so natural that she should hear that voice; and those very words have been repeated so often that Dolores laughs softly, then she gives herself a little pinch to make sure she is awake, and not dreaming, then she looks down.

"Father." Slipping down into his arms.

"Hurrah! Aunt Adeline, father's home." Shouts the brilliant Miss Zoe, rushing up to fling her long arms around that beloved neck. She has witnessed the arrival from the very highest limb of a sweet bough apple tree, and has come down as quickly as possible, to the utter destruction of her dress sleeve, which looked now utterly innocent of ever being dignified by the name of sleeve. Nevertheless, her greeting was just as sincere, for Mr. Litchfield loved this, his youngest daughter, fondly; in fact, considered her a queen among women, no matter how she looked in other people's eyes. The fatted calf was certainly killed that day, in honor of the master's

return. Aunt Adeline piled the tea-table with everything good, every imaginable luxury, to tempt her brother's appetite. And Zoe had a right royal feast, having three different kinds of preserves, and every variety of pie and cake, in which her longing heart delighted. It was a truly gala day.

CHAPTER XVII.

BLONDINE COMES OUT VICTORIOUS.

"He who builds according to every man's advice will have a crooked house."
—DANISH PROVERB.

"Now uncle Dick, you promised, you know you did, and I will be so disappointed if you don't." Blondine's pretty red lips are curled up in a naughty pout, and her red cheeks are two or three degrees redder than their wont.

"People have said I could find a nicer, prettier place, and, my dear, I intend to settle this matter myself," decidedly.

"All right, uncle Dick, if you do not you will be sorry, now mind."

Blondine takes her place at the foot of the long table, and makes much unnecessary clatter among the fragile cups and saucers. Uncle Dick goes on calmly eating his tapioca pudding; he enjoys exciting Blondine's anger, but this time he wants her to understand that he knows his own business best. He thinks that at his time of life he knows where to or where not to build a house for the summer. Blondine, during her visit to Dolores, had found the most delightful spot, to her mind, for them to settle on; but some one had told uncle Dick that the place was the dullest hole he ever had occasion to poke his nose into. And if there was anything uncle Dick hated, it was a place where there was not something always on the move, to enliven things up once in a while.

Blondine toys with her napkin ring; she is too cross to finish her dinner; sometimes uncle Dick tries to see just how horrid he can act.

"Sir Barry Traleigh is in the drawing-room, shall I show him in here sir?" the servant announces at Major Gray's elbow.

"To be sure, to be sure; fetch him in," and Blondine looks up to see Sir Barry's pleasant face entering the door.

"Now, Sir Barry, won't you try to induce uncle Dick to do as I say? You have been there, and is it not delightful?" Sir Barry strokes his silky moustache in his lazy way, and contemplates Miss Gray for a few moments in silence.

"Traleigh knows next to nothing about it at all, so how can he tell?" uncle Dick puts in hastily. He is afraid if Blondine secures Sir Barry for her side, the case will go rather hard against him.

"Excuse me, Major Gray, but I do know something about it, and if you will permit me to express my opinion, I should say you could not do better than acquiesce to Miss Gray's wishes." Blondine claps her hands.

"Now then, uncle Dick, what do you think of that?" she cries, delightedly.

"Two against one is not fair," uncle Dick says, in a tone intended to be argumentative.

"Say it shall be as I wish," Blondine demands, holding the Major's face between her hands.

"We will see; perhaps after I smoke my cigar, I will think it over," and Blondine knows that the victory is almost won.

"I had a long letter this morning from Dolores," Blondine says, as she and Sir Barry go out on the south balcony. "They are so glad their father has come home, and all that affair cleared up to every one's satisfaction."

Major Gray is off, down in the garden, wending his footsteps in and out among the late autumn flowers.

"Were you ever through the convent of St. Marguerite, Miss Gray?" Sir Barry asks, suddenly.

"No, I never have been, but Dolores, in her letter to me, spoke of one of the sisters there, who was treated disgracefully by the man Fanchon, who caused Mr. Litchfield so much trouble." Blondine is very much interested.

"You saw her, Sir Barry; is she very pretty?"

Sir Barry puts his hands in his pockets, and whistles. Blondine looks surprised.

"Will you go through with me next Thursday? I believe that is the visitor's day? Perhaps I can introduce you to Sister Jean; that is the girl's name Miss Litchfield referred to."

Blondine declares herself delighted to go. Then out there where the glimmering sunshine turns everything into a golden hue, with the flowers nodding their bright, cheerful heads, Sir Barry tells the girl by his side something, which causes Miss Gray to open her large brown eyes in bewildered astonishment.

"Why, I can scarcely credit it," Blondine says, when she has recovered the use of her tongue.

"If you agree with my impression, we will see what can be done. You are the only one I have said anything to about it."

Blondine would like to tell uncle Dick, but the dear old major could never, to save his life, keep a secret five minutes, so it was decided better not to tell him.

Thursday afternoon, Sir Barry and his pretty companion wend their steps toward the convent. One of the sisters, whose duty it was to show strangers around, informs them at once, that Sister Jean is well, but has

gone out to the prison, where she goes twice a week to sit with one of the prisoners. Sir Barry and Blondine exchange glances, they both understand who "the prisoner" is, whom forgiving Jantie goes to visit when everyone else has forsaken him.

"What pretty flowers," Blondine exclaims, going over to a space in the hall, divided off by a little wicker railing. Sir Barry slowly follows.

"Are they not arranged beautifully?" she asks, turning to Sir Barry.

Coming down the long corridor, on her way to the school-room, is Mother St. Marguerite; she smiles her gentle, pleasant smile, when she sees the visitors; she always welcomes everyone with that grave, tender glance.

"Merciful heavens! the very image; of course you were right; how very wonderful," gasps Blondine. Sir Barry looks pleased.

"Then you and I agree on that point?" he asks, bowing to the sister who politely conducts them to the outer door.

"Agree with you! why no one could have the least doubt. The features, why her movements, smile, all are the same." Blondine declares she has never been so worked up in all her life before as she has been this afternoon.

"I must certainly tell uncle Dick," she says, decidedly, and Sir Barry consents.

At the end of the month, Cyril Fanchon dies, a very remorseful death; business men were sorry he did not live to bear the punishment he so richly deserved. But he was bidden to answer before a more powerful Judge than any on earth. About six weeks previous to his death, Sister Jean had heard they could find no one to sit at night with him, so she begged Mother St. Marguerite to allow her to take the night-watch by Cyril Fanchon. The mother knew it could not be for long, so she consented. Now her mission was over at the jail; she had kept her watch faithfully, she had nothing to regret. The girl looks white and miserable, after her long night vigil. Surely she has had her revenge doubly. But revenge is the last thing the gentle, faithful woman thinks of; far be it from her desire to have her worst enemy suffer.

There has been an application at the convent for one of the sisters to go to the country to take charge of a sick child for a few weeks. Mother St. Marguerite determines that Sister Jean shall be the one to go.

"The country air will brace you up for your duties here, when you return," were the Mother Superior's parting words, as she kissed the sweet face, and bade her bear up.

The gas and pretty wax candles are lighted, throwing a pleasant, soft radiance over Major Gray's daintily furnished drawing-room. It was rather chilly, and near tea-time; Blondine has ordered a fire to be lit in the white marble fire-place.

"Well, well, to be sure; of course I never heard the full particulars of the story, but of course Traleigh may be mistaken after all, and then you would both feel pretty foolish; but what does he purpose doing?" Major Gray inquires, helplessly.

"Oh, uncle Dick, certainly Sir Barry knows what he is about. I had not the slightest doubt, nor have I now, as far as the likeness goes. And—and—why he will fix it up all right." Pretty, stately Blondine sinks in her low chair of plush and satin, with an air of perfect faith in Sir Barry's mode of unveiling this little mystery, which has caused so much excitement among those three persons. The Major gently rubs one slipped foot over the other, and watches Blondine thread her needle with yellow floss. It is very evident he has something to say, that he finds rather difficult to express.

"My dear," he says, toying with his spectacle case, "I had the papers drawn up this afternoon, and the architect engaged, and they intend commencing work on the new house immediately."

Blondine lays down her fancy work, and looks at Major Gray.

"Where?" she asks.

"I have Traleigh's word for it, that the place you spoke of could not answer better."

"You dear, you gem of a man, I knew you would change your mind and do as I asked you to."

"There, there, my dear, that will do," gasps uncle Dick, as two fond arms are twisted about his neck.

"Get me my shoes, my dear; I have to go to see a man about, about—ah, some business," the Major declares.

Blondine runs up-stairs, singing, to get a letter for uncle Dick to put in the post-office for—well, perhaps it would do no one any good to know to whom that dainty little letter was addressed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A WOMAN ONE DOES NOT MEET EVERY DAY.

"Gone—and I always loved that girl so well,
Gone—like the old proverbial fair gazelle;
Or like the piece of toast so broad and wide,
That always tumbles on the buttered side."

—ANON.

"Burpee, my dear son, be careful in your choice of a wife; it is an event in life which every young man should look into with all possible keenness of judgment; and, my dear boy, I beg of you to be very careful."

Lady Streathmere taps her silver-headed cane on the deep piled, plush carpet. She is very anxious about the person who is to be the future bride of her wayward son.

"Yes, mother, you are very good about giving your advice, but I hope I have sense enough to understand what I am doing. I know my own mind, too, although you seem to think I don't."

Lady Streathmere feels hurt; she looks past her son, out the window into the garden, where the pretty flowers have faded and died by the frost's bitter, chilly blast.

"'In buying horses and taking a wife, shut your eyes and commend yourself to God,' is an old Italian proverb, often quoted by your father; it contains all that is necessary, my son. I will leave your choice in hands higher and better than mine."

Burpee, Lord Streathmere, laughs gaily; he has become so accustomed to those little lectures from his mother that they go in one ear and out the other.

"Well really, mother, I actually believe my fate is sealed, at last; the girl I have selected, is a woman you don't meet every day."

The sweet perfume of mignonette and roses float through the long, handsome rooms, from the lovely vases fixed around in such sweet, artistic profusion. Lady Streathmere sighs. Whatever is she to do if Burpee brings home a wife whom she will blush to present to her friends?

"Who is she?" she asks, faintly, after a moment's reflection.

"She is a sister in the convent of St. Marguerite, one of the best and noblest of women. I know, when you know her goodness, you will say the same." Lord Streathmere leaves the mantel, where he has been standing, and goes over to the table, where his mother sits.

"Oh, my son, my son," she moans, "is it so bad as that? You surely are trying to jest with me."

"No, mother, not jesting. If she will have me I intend to marry her, although I have never spoken to her."

"Heaven grant you never may," groans Lady Streathmere. She is in an agony of doubt; it is even worse than she had expected.

"I was so sure you would take a fancy to Rea Severn. Such a nice, pretty girl; although there was none I should have liked better for a daughter than charming Dolores Litchfield. I think you are very cruel, Burpee, to treat your poor old mother so."

Burpee is busy selecting a fragrant rose to pin in his coat; it is more than probable he has not taken in all his mother has been saying.

"I never saw any girl looking so wretched as Rea Severn; I wonder what ails the girl?" asks Lady Streathmere.

"I should be very thankful, if I were you, that my son had enough dis-

cretion not to marry a girl who is killing herself by eating opium," Lord Streathmere says, deciding on a cream instead of a pink rose. "As for Dolores, she did me the honor to refuse me, but in such a nice way that, 'pon my word, I forgot to feel bad over it."

Burpee, Lord Streathmere, possesses a good, though rather effeminate face, and now, when lit up by enthusiasm, he looks the ideal of an easy, good-tempered fellow, of whom any mother might well be proud. Certainly Mrs. St. James must have exaggerated when she had described him as a "horrid, quarrelsome little boy"; for a better, nor a more peaceful young man never existed.

"Burpee, how dare you speak so unkindly of *Rea Severn*, who has always, to my knowledge, been beyond reproach," Lady Streathmere says, sternly. "Mrs. St. James is a friend of mine, and I am sure *Arial* never mentioned such a thing." To be sure, she had heard many people remark about *Rea's* complexion, her scarlet cheeks and the feverish looking sparkle in her eyes, but the girl was always in such high spirits, she never seemed ill, and Lady Streathmere always understood opium eaters were nervous; altogether it all seems very perplexing. Burpee strides over to the piano and fusses around among the music.

"Everyone knows it, and I dislike Mrs. St. James most heartily." Burpee dashes off into a breezy little ballad that used to be a favorite of Dolores, and Lady Streathmere leaves the room. She has no patience with the boy when he is in a mood like the present. Lord Streathmere dislikes being left alone, so he goes down town, and meets Sir Barry Traleigh.

"Look here, Sir Barry," he says, taking the Scotchman's arm, "Will you get me acquainted with Sister Jean? I am going to marry that girl, if she will have me. Day after day I have watched her go on her dreary visit to the jail to see Fanchon. Such devotion I never heard of. I want you to plead my cause for me, to my mother. Tell her the girl's story; you are more plausible about such things than I am." Sir Barry looks amused.

"What will Lady Streathmere say?" he asks.

"I want you to tell her, and get me acquainted as soon as you can; will you?" Sir Barry looks at his watch.

"I am afraid it will be no use Streathmere. Her first taste of married life has been so bitter, it is very doubtful if she would care to try it a second time." Lord Streathmere looks distressed, and Sir Barry goes on. "Of course I don't want to discourage you, but you will do well to be prepared for a refusal."

The pretty little Bijou Theatre is ablaze with lights, brilliant jewels and handsome women. And over there in a box sits Lady Streathmere, and leaning over her plush chair back stands handsome Sir Barry Traleigh. Many pairs of bright, eager eyes are levelled upon this society favorite.

But alas for them, Sir Barry is too deeply interested, by what he is saying, to be conscious of the flattering scrutiny. He is relating Jantie's sad love story to the high bred looking lady.

"What a brave, forgiving, sympathetic girl." There are tears in Lady Streathmere's kind eyes. She feels deeply interested in the story of this girl, whom Sir Barry Traleigh has been telling her about.

"She it is whom Burpee has decided to select for his wife." Sir Barry has been ordered by Lord Streathmere to tell his mother, and this is the way he tells her.

The music and acting go on, but Lady Streathmere, sitting there in her beautiful silk and lace dress, waving the feather fan she holds, pays no heed to anything but the words Sir Barry is uttering. No one could have told her better, for she had Sir Barry's word for it, that the woman who was to bear their old ancient name, was a woman faithful, honest, and true. So she thanked heaven Jantie was as good as Sir Barry said she was, and Lady Streathmere had to make up her mind to do the best she could with her future daughter-in-law.

"You will never have cause to feel ashamed of her, Lady Streathmere. Jantie is a lady in every sense of the word, but I feel rather certain that Burpee will find it a difficult matter to cage his pretty bird."

"Why?" Lady Streathmere asks, coldly. She is at a loss to see why anyone, let alone a poor, friendless girl like Miss Mackeith, should have the audacity to hesitate a moment when considering a match like Burpee, Lord Streathmere.

"Do not misunderstand me, Lady Streathmere. When you come to consider that the girl knows nothing of the honor in store for her, you will see there is some weight in my remark," he says, stiffly. He is not going to allow Lady Streathmere to snub him in that tone.

"Silly boy," she says playfully; going on earnestly, "you will pardon a mother's pride and anxiety. I did not wish to wound you, Sir Barry; you have told me very kindly, but I cannot help wishing that Burpee could have trusted his mother enough to have told me, what you have done, himself."

So when Burpee comes in later his mother greets him with a smiling look, and the faint-hearted lad knows Sir Barry has overcome all his difficulties for him, as far as Lady Streathmere's anger was concerned.

The next day, when Lord Streathmere, accompanied by Sir Barry, called at the convent of St. Marguerite, they heard that Sister Jean had been called away, to take charge of a person who was ill. Nothing could be learned about her farther. She had gone, and it was against the rules of the convent to give information to strangers concerning the habits or whereabouts of the inmates. Lord Streathmere was disconsolate. She was gone, and

he had loved her so well. Now what was to become of him? It required Sir Barry's deepest chaffing powers to be called into play, in order to keep the disappointed boy from falling into despair.

CHAPTER XIX.

A REVELATION.

"I am as I am, and so will I be,
But how that I am, none knoweth truly;
Be it ill, be it well, be I bond, be I free,
I am as I am, and so will I be."

—WYATT.

Sir Barry Traleigh's parlour, at his bachelor apartments, is lit only by the flickering firelight. It chases the dark shadows out of the dim corners, and throws a cheerful brightness over the pretty crimson and gold satin furniture. Sir Barry's little dog "pug" lies on the tiger skin rug in front of the cheerful blaze, keeping watch over his master's slippers. Mr. Litchfield and Dolores sitting there, awaiting Sir Barry's return, are not slow to enjoy the luxuries spread so lavishly about them. It is nearly five o'clock on a December afternoon, and the short day is almost gone. The woman in charge of the rooms had brought in lights, but Dolores had refused to have them lit, saying the fire light was so very pleasant. Sir Barry had sent to Mr. Litchfield to know where he could secure a good boarding place for a few weeks for sister Jean. She had a persisting, little, hacking cough, that worried Sir Barry, and made him persuade her to try a change of air. Aunt Adeline, in her goodness of heart, said the girl should come to them. And Dolores was sent with her father with a special invitation. They had gone to the hotel on their arrival, and afterward drove to see Sir Barry. He was out, but they awaited his return in his pretty fire-lit parlour. Dolores has slipped off her seal skin jacket and gloves, and is sitting on the rug patting the little grey coated, brown eared dog, when the door opens.

"Mr. Litchfield, why, this is a pleasant surprise; have you been waiting long?" Sir Barry says, coming forward. Then his eyes fall on the girl crouched there by the fire, with the dog in her lap. "Dolores, Miss Litchfield."

There is an eager, expectant look in Sir Barry's pleasant eyes, he has longed so to see the girl's face, to hear her musical voice; now she is here, here in the room where he can talk to and hear her talk. Dolores rises leisurely and puts the dog down.

"How do you do, Sir Barry Traleigh?" she says coldly, not offering even to shake hands with him. She does not, she can not yet trust herself

to look at the man standing before her, and Sir Barry turns to Mr. Litchfield.

"You got my letter; have you gained a place for my little friend yet?"

"My Sister sent us to take her home with us."

"Miss Adeline was always kind; I hope she has overlooked my deception ere this?"

Sir Barry glances across the room where Dolores stands beside a cabinet of rare old china, her blue velvet and silk dress making a pleasant rustle as she moves about the pretty room, admiring the pictures and the ornaments. Sir Barry lets her be, he will not force his company upon anyone.

"Oh yes, long ago, my lad; we laugh at your masquerade now as a fine joke. I explained away all the difficulties. Now when can we see this sister Jean? Mr. Litchfield's voice breaks in upon Sir Barry's meditation.

"We can go now; ah!"— The door is thrown open, and Blondine's pretty face, radiant with welcome, appears.

"I just thought I would come over; I got your telegram, uncle Edward, and as you were not at the hotel I came here. I hope you will pardon me, Sir Barry, for invading your room in such an unceremonious way. Dolores, my darling, how are you?"

"We are going to the convent, Miss Gray, will you come?" asks Sir Barry, as he assists Dolores on with her coat.

"Do, dear," Dolores says, drawing on her fur gloves. "I hate to go, yet I want to."

Blondine is always ready and willing to go anywhere for a change, so consents. Sir Barry had said he would arrange some plan for taking Mr. Litchfield to the convent; this must be the way, and Blondine begins to feel a great excitement creeping around her. They arrive and are admitted by a sister, who takes them upstairs to the Mother Superior's parlour, where a cosy fire burns in the polished grate.

"Will you see the mother St. Marguerite? as sister Jean has just come home and is too tired to see anyone to-night," asks the sister. This is just what Sir Barry wants, so he said if it were possible he would see mother St. Marguerite. Sir Barry is very restless; he walks up and down the pretty, homelike little room, until Blondine thinks she will go wild, if he does not sit down. Blondine's eyes are full of suppressed fire; she and Sir Barry are soon, any moment, to be either rewarded or mistaken in what they have long been patiently planning. There is a sound of approaching footsteps, Sir Barry wheels around his face in deep shadow; the door is opened softly, and mother St. Marguerite stands within the room.

"Estella, my wife? Thank God I have found you at last," Mr. Litchfield cries, springing forward.

"Edward," gasps mother St. Marguerite.

"Blondine, what does it all mean?" Dolores demands.

"It means that you have found your dear mother."

"Surely this is Dolores." Mother St. Marguerite takes the trembling girl in her arms. "And my little, spirited baby, my Zoe, she is well? Ah! the good God has preserved my dear ones until this happy day." Blondine's eyes are full of happy tears.

"Are you not glad, dear Sir Barry? Dolores will never be able to thank you enough. If it had not been for you, she would never have found her mother."

Sir Barry feels glad that so much happiness had been brought around for all hands concerned, but feels most woefully forlorn himself. It seems now they are all united, that he is left entirely out in the cold. Blondine's voice awakens him.

"Yes, I suppose so," he says, absently.

"Dolores is going to stop a few days with me; come in and see us any time, when you are lonely," Blondine says, cheerfully. She intends giving naughty Dolores a good scolding for her persistent coolness to Sir Barry. "And at one time I imagined they were getting so fond of each other," Miss Gray thinks, ruefully.

CHAPTER XX.

REA'S ATONEMENT. THE NEW MOTHER SUPERIOR.

"When little girls tell tiny fibs,
We turn all roary tory;
And tell how lions ate the child,
Who told one naughty story.
But when the girls adorn themselves,
With hair dye, paint and chignon;
They look so nice, that in a trice,
We alter our opinion."

—ANON.

The rain comes down in a dull, ceaseless pour, making the icy streets still more dangerous to walk safely on. A regular January thaw, after a freezing spell of bitterly cold weather. Rea Severn, sitting in a large invalid chair, looks out on the dreary scene. She is thinking long, and hard-ly, and bitterly on her past life. No one would recognize the bright vivacious Rea in the distressed looking creature sitting there, in her white dress, the dress no whiter than the wearer's face. Her eyes look as if she had cried all the brightness out of them. Rea has been very ill; at one time it was understood she could not recover. The habit of eating opium had taken full possession of her, and now she is but a skeleton of her former bright self. She had eaten only a little at first, because it put color in her

otherwise colorless face. It helped to brighten her eyes; made her high spirited. But after a time its deadly work began. She could no longer exist without a double portion of the deadly drug. The habit, of which she had been warned against by the Gipsy, during her visit to the Island, with the other members of the party which were on board the Hon. Jerry's yacht, was certainly doing its best to kill her, if she did not kill it. And Rea felt almost powerless to battle any longer. People said she most certainly must put something on her face, it was such a strangely, pinkish-creamy tint. Rea denied it to all but Arial St. James, and it was to be said to Arial's credit, that she was shocked when she discovered the girl had recourse to such means. She persuaded her to stop, but Rea persisted, and made Arial promise secrecy. During her spells of low-spiritedness, the only one who could sympathize with her was Mrs. St. James. During the past three years, no one but the girl herself knew how she had suffered; how many battles she had tried to fight against it; how many prayers she had offered up, but all seemed of no avail; and at last, when death had almost claimed her, she seemed ready to lay down the weapons at the enemy's feet and give up all further efforts in despair.

When Sister Jean came to take care of her, she it was who changed the whole current of Rea Severn's life. She offered to help her daily; she told of the quiet, peaceful convent life; of the good waiting to be done, if there were any to do it. She braced Rea's spirits up and brought her to see that there are more things in the world to live for beside one's-own selfishness. And the Heavenly hand she had almost begun to think had failed her, was stretched out to Rea to assist her future life, to guide her steps into a safer path than she had been treading. For the first time for many months and years her mind was calm and satisfied; she found a peaceful calm and quiet settle around her after hearing Sister Jean's gentle voice, telling her of the helpfulness to many of the convent sisters. The wind howls around the house dismally. Rea shivers and looks from the dreary outside to the cheerful fire roaring in the pretty room within. There is a peal of silvery laughter comes floating up-stairs, followed by Mrs. St. James' lovely self. She could not wait any longer for the storm to clear, but had taken a cab and come over to cheer up her invalid friend. She comes into the pretty room, smilingly serene as usual.

"Arial, how good of you to come to me, and on such a miserable day, too." Mrs. St. James takes the easy chair opposite Rea. She looks over toward the other window, with a very scornful smile on her very beautiful lips. She has no smile, no word of greeting for the other occupant of the room. It is quite foreign to her to take any notice of the charity sister, whom it has been Rea's fancy to make so friendly of. Most decidedly Mrs. St. James does not approve of Sister Jean. Does it ever enter the scornful

lady's mind that she may and would live to see the day when she would do anything reasonable or otherwise to be recognized by the girl over there in the window, who never raises her sweet, pale face from her sewing? Perhaps not, we do not know, in these days of possibilities, what is likely to happen within a short period.

"Have you heard about Gordon Aubrey, my dear? What will you say when I tell you? Prepare for a shock to your feelings." Rea smiles languidly.

"Poor Gordon, what has he been up to now?" she asks, indifferently. She has always been fond, very fond of Gordon. And Gordon? Well, the path he has marked out for himself now, goes to show how fond he was of charming Rea.

"He went somewhere with some friends, fishing; they came across some girl, and Gordon, of course, as usual, was immediately captivated with her pretty face; he only knew her a week, when, to use Whitehead's words,

'In short she blushed, she looked consent,
He grasped her hand, to church they went.'

And Gordon is lost to us all forever and aye." Ariel is hardly prepared to see Rea take her words so coolly.

"And so he has been and gone and done it? May every happiness follow him and his pretty wife, whoever she be," are Rea's gracious words.

"I should not like to be her; in a week he will tire of her. You know he is not one of the constant sort." Mrs. St. James shrugs those beautiful shoulders of hers. She is really quite disgusted at Gordon's lack of taste. A girl with no education whatever, and in those days, too, when every person has a chance to learn, if they so please. She hopes he will repent, and that bitterly, in the bargain.

"Such a nice fellow young Lord Streathmere has become; they say his mother and he, accompanied by Sir Barry Traleigh, were at the ball last night. Sir Barry gets nicer every day; what a pity he does not marry."

Sister Jean's spool of thread falls on the floor; she stoops to pick it up and then glides from the room. This is the first time sister Jean heard of Lord Streathmere, but her heart beats with grateful affection at the mention of Sir Barry Traleigh.

"I cannot understand how you can have that girl here, Rea; she would give me the chills to have her gliding so noiselessly around. Another thing, you are nearly well now; I don't see why you need her any longer."

The clouds are breaking away, the storm is over, and a glimmer of sunlight, peeping from a rift in the sky, falls on Rea's pale face, and lights up the tired eyes.

"What makes you so prejudiced against her, Ariel?" she asks, looking at Mrs. St. James' cold, handsome face.

"I have no patience with that class of people; my advice to you is to get rid of her as soon as you can." Mrs. St. James feels she has not all the confidence of Rea. She used to tell her everything, but since sister Jean's arrival, Rea never has any confidence to make, and Arial feels she is gradually being rivalled, and by a charity sister. It is all very bitter for Arial to believe.

Some days later, the cosy library at Mrs. St. James is bright with light, and warmth.

"Something to interest you, my dear," Mr. St. James says, passing his wife the evening paper. Very quietly Arial looks up from her book. She takes the paper, and a red, deep crimson spot burns on both her perfect cheeks as she reads. It has come to pass what she has been dreading.

"It is to be regretted by all who have known her worth of goodness, that mother St. Marguerite, the sympathetic Mother Superior of the Convent of St. Marguerite, is about to give up the position she has begun and succeeded with so famously. Her place will be supplied by one whom we all hope may prove herself as worthy of esteem as her valuable predecessor. The new Mother Superior is a lady who lately adorned the most brilliant and fashionable society circles—Miss Rea Severn.

CHAPTER XXI.

NED CRANE. THE ONE AND THE SAME.

"Stolen sweets are always sweeter,
Stolen kisses much completer;
Stolen look are nice in Chapels,
Stolen, stolen be your apples."

—LEIGH HUNT.

It is Sunday morning, a bright, beautiful, peaceful Sabbath. The pretty church is warm and comfortable. The sunlight, creeping in through the gaily painted stained glass windows, tinge those sitting in its brilliant rays, with every vivid hue of the rainbow. The service has begun when Mr. Vacine enters, and with him a tall, pleasant looking young fellow, who, as he takes his seat, looks eagerly up to the choir. Dolores, sitting up there in her own special corner, starts and looks a second time at the stranger, who is regarding her fixedly.

"How in the name of sense has Ned Crane come here? And with Mr. Vacine, too—Mr. Vacine, who never entertains, from one year's end to the other." This is what Dolores is saying in her mind. "And then just just look at Mr. Vacine's face. How wonderfully happy he looks; surely something very unusual has happened that Mr. Vacine should wear such a very beatific expression." A little boy in the next seat dropped his cent on

the floor, then he looked at the elderly gentleman and by him in awe ; all the small children stood in great dread of old Mr. Vacine. The child expected either a stern look of disapproval, or else a poke from Mr. Vacine's gold-headed cane. Contrary to the youngster's expectations, he saw Mr. Vacine actually smiling at him—smiling after he had let his cent drop on the floor with such a click. The little boy was so astonished that he was quiet during the remainder of the service. Dolores has only arrived home this morning from her visit to Blondine. She had got ready as soon as she arrived, and gone to morning service, for the parson was anxious that she should take her place again in the choir. She has not seen Sister Jean yet, and Dolores is very anxious to do so. Zoe, from her high seat at the organ, is "taking in" the young man with Mr. Vacine. He is quite nice in Zoe's sight, and the youngest Miss Litchfield listens to the sermon and determines that she thinks she will like him very much. At the door, Mr. Vacine invites Zoe and her sister up to take dinner. Dolores demurs, but Zoe says promptly, "Of course they will ;" so Dolores goes. Over the prettily arranged dinner table Mr. Vacine tells the two astonished girls all about the dear nephew who had left his uncle's home in a passion, vowing never to return. But something happened that made him feel remorseful for having deserted the kind old uncle, who had always been as a father to him. So the prodigal had returned, and Mr. Vacine cannot disguise his gladness.

"I never imagined we should meet here, Ned," Dolores says, as they saunter through the warm, pleasant drawing-rooms.

Zoe has gone up stairs to play some hymns for Mr. Vacine; in the cosy music room.

"It is queer now, when you think of it, and, by jove, what an awfully pretty girl your sister is," Ned says. He has always admired Dolores immensely, but Zoe—Zoe was so entirely different. In fact Ned is sure he will grow to be awfully fond of Mr. Litchfield's pretty wilful daughter Zoe.

The sun shines brightly on the clear, white, glistening road, covered with snow ; the icicles glitter in the limbs of the leafless trees like crystal ; everything is bright, cold, and sparkling. The bells are ringing for Sunday-school, and the little and big children troop along in response to the bell's call.

"I was awfully glad you found your mother. How was it you did not know where she was before?" Ned asks, as they stand at the window, watching the passers by.

Dolores silently contemplates the gold fish swimming around and around in the huge glass globe.

"She said a feeling she could not resist, made her think it her duty to leave home and found a safe, calm retreat, by which much good could be done for the sick, poor or suffering, of a large city like Montreal. She

knew aunt Adeline would take excellent care of the house, and my sister and I, so she went. You know the rest, how she has instituted a convent, that all declare had done more good than any other institution of a like kind. Now she has consented to give up the name of Mother St. Marguerite, and come back to us all at home. You cannot fancy, Ned, how too good it seems, after all those years, to have my mother again. Just think of Rea Severn taking mother's place. What strange things happen."

"I guess she felt pretty cut up about Gordon Aubrey's marriage," Ned says, his heart beginning to beat, as light footsteps are heard running down stairs, and a clear girlish voice calling Dolores' name.

"We must really go, Dolores, I have brought your coat and hat," Zoe announces, dropping the articles on a chair, as she speaks.

"Mr. Crane, what a good time you must have, if you are fond of pictures; why this house is a paradise," says this precocious child, going over to one of the mirrors to put on her hat.

"Sir Barry Traleigh is a beautiful painter," announces the youngest Miss Litchfield proudly. It has occasioned her much pride to tell her girl acquaintances, how a real, live "Sir" had initiated her into the mysteries of painting.

Ned looks deeply amused, the girl is so original, so different from any other girl of her years. The corners of his mouth twitch in a highly suspicious way; he would enjoy vastly to laugh, but politeness forbids, and he turns to Dolores.

"When did you say this very beautiful cousin of yours, Miss Gray, was expected?"

Dolores laughs, her sweet, silvery tones filling the handsome old room with sweet music.

"It is doubtful what day. I shall expect you to fall in love with Blondine the first time you meet," she says archly.

"Perhaps," Ned answers, watching Zoe fastening up her roll of music.

"Have the girls gone?" asks Mr. Vacine, coming in from a brisk walk around the snow covered garden.

"No, but just going," Dolores says, smiling.

"Give my love to mother and father, and be good girls, both of you," and Mr. Vacine goes into the library and shuts the door. Ned puts on his overcoat and walks down with the girls to the gate. He offers to escort them home, but Dolores will not listen to such an arrangement, much to the youngest Miss Litchfield's disgust. It is a bitterly cold afternoon; the sun looks out sullenly from behind dull, grey clouds.

"The days are certainly very changable," Zoe declares as they hurry home, the snow creaking beneath their feet. "This morning has been so bright, and now just see how dull it has become."

Dolores removes her seal jacket and hat by the stove in the hall, and Zoe says she will carry them up-stairs, as she is going up. Dolores pushes open the drawing-room door and goes in. The cosy fire looks very cheerful and inviting. Drawing up an arm chair, Dolores sits down to enjoy the warmth. The folding doors are on a jar. Presently someone comes in.

"Ah, Sister Jean, you are reading yet? Your Bible chapter has been rather lengthy, if it is not yet finished," Mrs. Litchfield's pleasant voice says.

"I had finished reading some time ago, and was indulging in a day dream when you came," is the reply. Dolores sits upright in her chair. Surely she has heard that peculiar voice before.

"I have not seen your other daughter yet. I wonder if she will be very angry with me for asking her a question? Sir Barry Traleigh, the last words he spoke to me were to find out, if I could, why Miss Dolores treated him so unkindly. Sir Barry is very fond of your eldest daughter, and he feels her unkind conduct to him very keenly."

Dolores springs from her seat to the door and looks through the opening into the next room. Oh! Why was I so quick to jump to conclusions, might I not have known I could have trusted him? Sister Jean is, yes, the same girl I saw talking to him that wretched day in Italy. She looks again. Yes, she has snubbed Sir Barry all this time, and now will he, will he forgive her? Dolores is dreadfully put about. Sister Jean's next words almost finish her anguish of mind.

"I understand he proposes returning to his home in Scotland, almost immediately. He says there is no excuse for his remaining away any longer. If Miss Dolores would only consider what a wrong she is doing herself by throwing away the love of a good man like Sir Barry, she would be lifting a weight off more than one mind."

There is a silence for a space, then Mrs. Litchfield says, quietly:

"I am sure my Dolores would have told me if there had been any trouble. She certainly cannot know that he cares for her in the way you mean, or—"

The curtains are thrown unceremoniously aside.

"Mother, I did, I do know. What if he has gone before he knows differently? Will he ever forgive my coldness toward him? What shall I do? What am I to do?" Sister Jean's face is bright with gladness. At last she has done something for Sir Barry in return for all his goodness to her. She, or, at least, her words have done more to turn Dolores' wilful, yet loving heart, than anything else could do.

CHAPTER XXII.

LORD STREATHMERE'S SUIT. SIR BARRY'S CONQUEST.

"Mortgages and great relations,
And Indian bonds, and tithes and rents,
What are they to love's sensations?"

—PRAED.

"Oh mercy! A real, live Lord to be in town, and I declare if Sir Barry Traleigh is not here, too. Hurrah for our side!"

The breakfast room is cheerful with fire and sunlight. Zoe is reading the list of hotel arrivals.

"What is the child talking about? Zoe, I trust you are not growing profane. What is that you are saying about Lord?" Aunt Adeline is busy with the breakfast arrangements, and has only caught a stray word of Zoe's exclamation.

"Father," calls the youngest Miss Litchfield, at the top of her far from low voice, "Did you know Sir Barry was here? My dear old Jet, how glad I will be to see that man."

"Not so loud, my girl," her father says from the fire where he is warming his hands. "I saw them last night, and invited them here to dinner this evening."

Aunt Adeline sniffs in an ominous manner. The Litchfield household have got to look upon that sniff of aunt Adeline's as boding no good to any new project of which it is doubtful if she will approve.

"Chickens are eighty cents a pair in the market, are you aware of it, Edward?" she asks tartly. Mr. Litchfield laughs.

"Well, my dear sister, we need not encourage their heinous demands."

"Lords and Sirs always expect every luxury, whether reasonable or otherwise, but as you have already asked them, I will have to do the best I can." Miss Adeline stalks from the room with a stern look of disapproval on her face. "Lords and Sirs indeed," she mutters. "Pray is it not all owing to Sir Barry that is making her dear Dolores go around looking so disconsolate?" She never for a moment takes into consideration that it is all Dolores own wilfulness that has made Sir Barry stay away so long.

A telegram arrives during the forenoon from uncle Dick Gray, announcing their coming that very afternoon. Dolores drives over to the station with her span of grey ponies, to meet and bring them home.

At dinner Lord Streathmere is presented to Sister Jean. Blondine, merry Blondine, his right hand neighbor at dinner, is nearly beside herself with merriment, as she watches the covert looks of admiration he casts across the table at the convent sister. Sister Jean has improved wonderfully since her arrival; gay and charming, she is almost the pretty Jantie of old. Poor Burpee, Lord Streathmere, is very badly hit; more so, perhaps,

than he himself thinks. Dolores has a bad headache, and does not put in an appearance. Zoe is rather disappointed in Sir Barry, he seems so much changed since he left; not the same genial Jet who had petted and teased the youngest Miss Litchfield almost to distraction. He seemed to Zoe older and graver. After dinner Dolores comes down to the pretty drawing-room. She is looking most wonderfully sweet and gracious. Lord Streathmere is making great strides in his friendship with Sister Jean. He suddenly manifests a strong inclination about finding out the ways of life in a convent, and the wants of the poorer classes. To all this Sister Jean gives her patient attention and information.

Sir Barry is standing by the little Gipsy table, where Dolores is busy, daintily dealing out cream, and sugar, and coffee, in tiny shell-like cups. Dolores is very gracious this evening, so much so that Sir Barry is completely dazzled, and he can scarcely realize she can mean it all for his own benefit. She is wearing a dress this evening, the identical kind of a one she wore during the last tender interview they had held together in far off sunny Nice, when Dolores had strayed down to the clear moonlit garden, and Sir Barry had almost declared himself. Dolores talks on, her soft, pleasant laugh filling up the spaces, when Sir Barry forgets to answer. A marble jar standing near is laden with mignonette and candy tuft, filling the rooms with their sweetness, making Sir Barry almost positive that the present is a dream, and that he is back in the pretty Italian garden, surrounded by the old-fashioned sweet-smelling flowers, walking by Dolores side, and listening to her gay, young voice.

"Now stupid, try, do, to keep still until I can undo this tangle you have made," says the youngest Miss Litchfield to Ned, who sits most patiently, adoringly, by Zoe's side, assisting, or detaining, the young lady to wind a skein of wool.

In spite of all aunt Adeline's corrections, her niece very frequently falls into the error of raising her voice to what Miss Adeline considers a most unladylike pitch of clearness and highness. Staring at people was another grave offence that called forth all aunt Adeline's attempts to put down. Zoe would open those wonderful grey green eyes of hers and stare at you for, it would be impossible to say what length of time. Habit, of course, but a habit that aunt Adeline's gentle "Zoe, my dear, drop your eyes, dear," failed to mend.

"I see St. James is selling out, and going to live abroad. I wonder what he purposes doing?" asks Lord Streathmere.

"I believe this climate does not agree with Mrs. St. James' health," Blondine answers quickly.

Dolores looks across the room at Ned; he catches her eye, and smiles.

"Handsome woman, I have heard," Mr. Litchfield says, from the hall where he is walking up and down.

"Who do you mean? Ah yes, Mrs. St. James; a most peculiar woman," says Sir Barry, as he comes back, after giving Mrs. Litchfield her cup of coffee.

A very great favorite is Sir Barry of Mrs. Litchfield's; she is so grateful to him for all his past goodness, and, knowing Dolores tender secret, she looks forward to Sir Barry some day gaining his heart's desire. They are a very gay party; Blondine is greatly interested in Sister Jean. She has taken a great fancy to this girl, of whom she has heard so pitiful a history. This lovely morning Blondine and Sister Jean are driving into the town to do some shopping. Pretty Blondine is always needing "trash," as she calls the hundred and one odds and ends her fancy decrees. She has declared her intention of visiting the furrier's store this particular day.

"Why, Miss Gray, what do you want of another seal jacket when you have such a beauty already?" Sister Jean asks, as the man displays the goods before Blondine's critical eyes.

"My darling, I want it for you."

"For me?" Sister Jean's pretty lips ejaculate. Nothing that she could say would make imperious Blondine change her mind.

"To please me, dear, you will take it, won't you? I have so much money I do not know how to spend it. You will not feel insulted and refuse my gift, will you?" Blondine argues in her coaxing tones.

So the gift was accepted. Sister Jean is very happy, everyone is so good to her—to her, a poor charity sister. But as far as being intimately connected for the future with the convent, they will lose one of their most staunch and zealous workers. For Lord Streathmere had very humbly and in great trepidation, asked Sister Jean to marry him.

It all seemed very impossible, but true, nevertheless, and Sister Jean? well, she was so grateful to him, and then another thing, she had learned to be very fond of impetuous, handsome Lord Streathmere. So as there was no need for delay, one pleasant sunny morning in May, pretty Jantie MacKeith became Lady Streathmere. And Burpee's meaning was very tender as well as sincere, when he whispered in Jantie's dainty ear:

"Huntingtower is mine lassie,
Huntingtower is mine Jeanie;
Huntingtower an' a' Blairgower,
And a' that's mine is thine lassie.

No one among all the throng of invited fashionables knew the bride's origin. All they knew was that it was a purely love match, very unusual in those all-for-money-days. But the poor, sick and suffering, of the convent of St. Marguerite are losing a gentle, sympathetic friend. An anonymous gift of several hundred dollars, was received by the new Mother Superior, which went to show Jantie's influence had already begun. Lord Streath-

mere's mother was not present at the marriage; she was in the south of France, and she dared not risk her health in our clear, cold Canadian winter. The happy couple went away immediately on an extended European tour.

"I am off to-morrow, my dear, for far off Scottish home; will you not say farewell, Miss Litchfield?"

The sun is streaming in, in all its full, glorious tints through the stained glass windows of the pretty sitting room, and falls and lingers lovingly on Dolores' head, bent over the table writing. She starts as Sir Barry speaks.

"To-morrow?" she repeats, gazing at him as if his words were some foreign tongue, to her meaningless. She loves this man standing there, but her proud heart is too lofty to let such a feeling be fancied, let alone proved. And so she hides her feelings behind an icy exterior. And Sir Barry has given Dolores, his own Dolores—as he calls her passionately to himself—up almost in despair.

"Yes, it is a long time now since I have seen the dear old place, and I dare say they are requiring my presence there. I have done all I can do here, there is no need for my remaining longer, there will be no one to be sorry I am gone. Good bye, Miss Litchfield, I am sorry I have always seemed to displease you, very sorry, but when I am gone, then perhaps you may sometimes think of me kindly in my far off lonely home."

Sir Barry's voice breaks in a highly suspicious way. He is holding his hand out to Dolores; but Dolores' eyes are full of tears, she cannot see the outstretched hand. What makes her sit there, feeling so silly? What will Sir Barry think of her? She tries to throw off the strange feeling that is stealing over her senses, but Sir Barry's words were so pathetic they struck direct to Dolores' rebellious, loving heart. She drops her head on the table and weeps.

"Dolores, my darling, do you care so much that I am going?" He steps over to her side. "Is it go or stay, Dolores?" Sir Barry asks, with a peculiar catch in his clear, firm tone.

"Stay," comes the reply from the bowed head on the table, and Sir Barry stays.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ZOE'S SOME DAY.

"There's something undoubtedly in a fine air,
To know how to smile, and be able to stare;
High breeding is something, but well bred or not.
In the end the one question is, What have you got?"

—A. H. CLOUGH.

The sun is shining brightly, pleasantly, over all London, England, even penetrating into the dim, dirty alleys, and tenements: but is ~~also~~ shining, with all its wealth of golden, cheering gladness, into the long, handsome gallery of art at the great London exhibition. Pictures and pictures of endless variety and beauty are here displayed. There is one especially that fascinates the eyes of all the thousands of curious visitors. It is hanging in a perfect light, in a heavy gold frame. Offers to purchase it have been innumerable, but a little tag on the corner announces to the would-be purchaser that it is already sold. The scene is a beautiful Italian garden. Seated in a swaying chair, on the pretty terrace, is a lady whose face people rave over, as being the image of Dolores, Sir Barry Traleigh's beautiful wife. The lady is engaged in writing a letter. The trees almost immediately opposite the terrace, conceals the indistinct form of a man watching. By the lady's side, lying with his dark curly head resting on the train of the lady's white lace dress, is a little boy, in a white embroidered frock, sleeping. The Prince of Wales, who opened the exhibition, was so struck by the merits of the picture, that he desired an introduction to the fair young painter. And Zoe was duly presented to our future king, who shook the girl's hand warmly, and wished her all good success in the future. Surely Zoe's "Some Day" had come with a wealth of splendor and glory. It had been at Sir Barry's direction, that his sister-in-law painted it, and he had bought it at a princely price to hang in the exquisitely furnished drawing-room at Castle Racquette. As Zoe expresses it, "Everyone and his brother are here." Sir Barry and Lady Traleigh have run down from Castle Racquette to London, to be the proud witness of Zoe's triumph. Dolores is charmed with her beautiful Scottish home, and is loved by everyone, as she deserved so well to be.

Jantie. Lady Streathmere, is the pride and delight of the husband's life. She rules her elegant home with a firm, but gentle hand, and though Burpee, Lord Streathmere, is not her heart's first love, still she honors and respects him thoroughly. The dowager Lady Streathmere is very fond of Jantie; she was very agreeably disappointed in the girl, and now she speaks to her friends in loud terms of "my daughter Jantie's excellence." While they were in Paris, they met Mrs. St. James. She was very gracious to Jantie, and made much of Lord Streathmere's pretty, demure wife. But her overtures were not at all successful. Lord Streathmere never liked her,

and Jantie could not help remembering how coldly cynical Mrs. St. James had been to "Sister Jean." Gordon Aubrey and his pretty wife are living very happily, though not endowed very richly with this world's goods, still she has won her husband's love, and knows how to keep it, and Gordon has certainly not repented of his bargain, as Mrs. St. James had predicted. The Hon. Jerry Hopkins is still unmarried: he declares himself as "not a marrying man." People say he felt very badly at Rea Severn entering the convent. But sometimes people say a good deal that is not quite true. The convent of St. Marguerite is in a flourishing condition, everything works on serenely and calmly. Uncle Dick Gray has his new house completed and is charmed with its beauty. Blondine declares that he thinks more of the house than he does of her.

It is Winter again, a cold December afternoon, and Ned Crane has just "happened in," as he very often does now, to have a chat with Zoe, and to hear over and over again about her lovely visit abroad with Sir Barry and Dolores. Mr. Vacine is very anxious that Ned will marry Zoe, but like her sister, the youngest Miss Litchfield, is very refractory. She is really very fond indeed of gay, good-hearted, adoring Ned. But it is far from her to give him the satisfaction of knowing. She knows Ned intends asking her to marry him, and, perhaps, after a good many years from now, he will. Ned stops and talks so long that at last the pretty white and gold clock strikes five, and they hear Mrs. Litchfield and Aunt Adeline preparing tea in the dining hall.

"Say, Zoe, when are you going to say 'yes' to what I asked you the other day?" Ned says, as he pokes the fire in the brightly-polished grate.

"Nonsense," Miss Litchfield answers, crossly. She heartily wishes Ned would not allude to that "other day," when he had stirred up her feelings so remorselessly. She smiles grimly and clicks her knitting needles together viciously. She even goes so far as to give "Duff," the unoffending kitten, an angry poke with her toe.

"Won't you tell me when, dear?" Ned urges, tenderly. And Zoe throws the crimson and white smoking cap she is making on the sofa.

"I must go and see if the supper is nearly ready," she says, standing by Ned's side, in the red glow of the flickering fire-light.

Ned takes the pretty hand hanging by her side. "Say, Zoe, when will you marry me?"

With a clear, mocking laugh she twists her hand away. And the taunting words he has heard so often ring through the pretty cosy, fire-lit room, echoing wilful Zoe's words, as she floats out the door toward the dining hall, for she is most unromantically hungry for her tea. The answer to Ned's earnest question was one of Zoe's clear, sweet ripples of gay laughter, and the mocking words, "Some Day."