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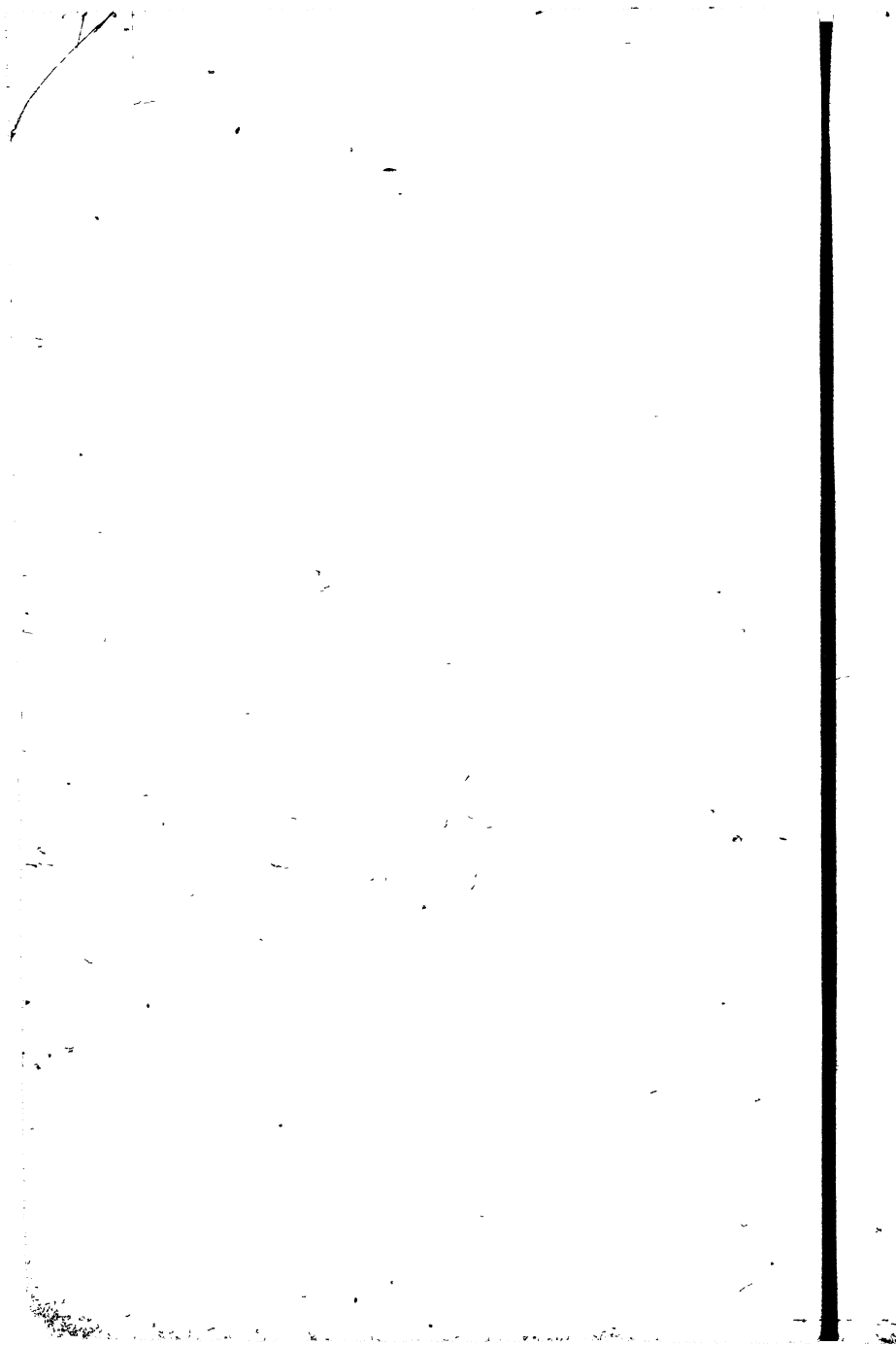
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LOVE'S
DIVINE ALCHEMY

BY

E. A. McLENNAN



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LOVE'S DIVINE ALCHEMY.

CHAPTER I.

“ Old friends to talk !—
Ay, bring those chosen few,
The wise, the courtly, and the true,
So rarely found.”

—*Robert Messenger.*

THE long September day is gradually drawing to a close, as two travelers on horseback slowly wend their way along an unfrequented path, one of the many leading across lots from the main road, about seven miles from the city of Beaufort, in the State of North Carolina, in the year eighteen hundred and fifty-two, before the pestilential breath of war has passed over this fair land. As they draw rein upon the brow of a hill along which runs a tall hedge completely barring their farther progress, we will take a good look at them, for truly they are goodly to look upon. The one, a gentleman in the prime of life, tall, and of rather slight build, with large dark eyes, deep set and earnest-looking, a gleam of white teeth beneath his heavy black moustache, with a world of pent-up energy in his every movement. He raises his hat to cool his brow which is white as snow, while his hair is already slightly sprinkled with gray. He looks as he is,

—a king among men. He turns to his companion with a quizzical, half puzzled look upon his face and laughter in his eyes. The face upturned to meet his gaze is that of a girl of perhaps thirteen summers. She answers his glance with one of roguish enthusiasm, and exclaims :

“ Papa, I do believe we are lost. But could there be found a more delightful place in which to lose one's way ? ”

Waving her hand in the direction of the outspread landscape and raising herself on one foot in the stirrup, she sways as light and graceful as a fairy, opening a pair of large blue eyes rather far apart beneath a broad, low brow. A wealth of flaxen hair is floating over her shoulders, her color coming and going, showing the beauty of her complexion. A small, well-shaped head, ears as tiny as ears can be, pink as sea-shells and nearly as transparent, one tiny gaiter showing beneath the neat blue serge dress, she looks very womanly, and is often called by this loving papa his “ child-woman,” she is such a companion and such a good traveler. Reaching out her hand, she gathers a handful of rose-leaves, and crushing them inhales their fragrance. The tall hedge barring their progress claims our attention. An intermingling of magnolia trees (rising tall and stately, with wide-spreading branches loaded with its large broad leaves of that pale green tint so restful to the eye, glistening amid the leaves half hidden and half revealed are its huge snow-ball blossoms. Seeming to vie with these giant-trees, as well in height as in beauty, are innumerable wistarias with their rope-like stems and pale heliotrope blossoms, making a very bower of beauty as they rear their tall heads everywhere amid their branches. Climbing roses of various hues com-

pletely cover the trunks and lower limbs, loaded with buds and blossoms flinging their fragrance far and wide. As far as eye can reach may be seen great fields of sugar-cane with long ribbon-like leaves gently swayed by the evening breeze like pennons gaily fluttering. Farther to the right are broad fields of cotton, its white wealth showing everywhere amid the green of its leaves, as though impatient for the harvest. As the breeze sighs among its swaying stalks and the little click of its bursting covering is heard, a feeling of weirdness steals over one ; they seem to beckon slyly, and with many little nods and winks say : " I will replenish your jewel case ; it is I that will paint the old buildings, and care for the poor and helpless ;" and thus one might easily imagine them a people whispering together, and exulting in their wealth ; and when the stalks bend beneath their weight, they are like an army, bubbling with laughter which they are barely able to suppress. All along the hedges and among the trees are strewn flowers of the most gorgeous hues, those which denizens of colder climes find it hard to cultivate, except in hot-houses ; scattered everywhere over all the landscape are clumps of lemon and orange trees, the gold of their fruit gleaming amid their small, glossy leaves of darkest green. As our travelers are lost in admiration of this wonderful scene, they make a movement as if to return the way they have come. " I am perfectly mystified. I remember the last time I was here I came by this very path, and drew rein just here, to admire the scene. The house was plainly visible around that hill, showing white amid the surrounding trees."

" And yet, papa, we were told in Beaufort that Mr. Montgomery still lived here."

"Yes, else I should not have set out."

At this juncture they are startled by a voice seemingly from beneath the horse's feet. Turning, they behold a youth of perhaps fifteen years of age, a tall, graceful boy, with little rings of hair as black as ebony curling tightly around a high, white forehead on which is stamped the impress of intellect; eyes large and dark, deep as wells, with a tinge of sadness in their depths, as though the seriousness of manhood were already encroaching upon the domain which childhood alone should occupy; with cheeks like roses; dressed in white, which, in the morning, had been spotless, but now showing many a mark of this long, happy day, climbing fruit trees, or lying idly beneath hedges, from which last position he has seen the strangers, and been a listener to all that has transpired, not feeling any interest until he hears the name of Montgomery, when, springing from his covert, holding a Panama hat, rather the worse for wear, in his hand, he looks what he is, a little gentleman from the top of his curly head to the tip of his worn patent-leather gaiter. Coming swiftly forward, he extends his hand with such an air of good-fellowship that he immediately wins both their hearts, as with a grave inclination of the head he says:

"I am sure you are papa's friend from up North."

"You have hit the truth, my little man; and, if I mistake not, you are none other than the son of Edward Montgomery?"

"The same, sir; and I see you are about to make us a visit."

"A short one. Allow me: this is my daughter, Angelica Colcord. I hope you will be good friends."

"It will be no fault of mine if we are not." Stepping nimbly around, and grasping the extended hand, adding with a naive, unembarrassed air: "I am very happy to make your acquaintance. You are right," turning to the gentleman; "this was the right way long ago, but there is a shorter one; and this was closed some years ago. I think we can use it for once though, to save time, if I can open the gate. Some of the people made it surreptitiously; they grieve so to give up old ways. I suppose you know next to nothing about them?" turning to the travelers, all the time hard at work wrenching away the vines, sending showers of rose leaves in all directions, and bringing to view a rude gate which swings easily upon its hinges of wood.

"You had better dismount, else the vines may entangle you," and suiting the action to the word, he assists Angelica to the ground, and throwing the bridle rein over his arm he walks by her side; and so they pass on, all unconscious of the scowling, vindictive looks that follow their every movement from beneath the hedge, where lies the twin brother of Harry. So much alike are they in form and feature, that no one, excepting the mother, is able to distinguish the one from the other, and even she has a few times been at fault; but here ends the resemblance. In disposition they are the exact opposite: Harry, as we have seen, all truth and gentleness, beaming with glad boyishness and affection; Harold, cold, calculating, stubborn, morose, unthankful, but well he understands the art of masking his face in the smiles which are a part of Harry's speaking countenance; he has sometimes thereby

secured a double share of pocket money, or Harry's part of some tid-bit saved specially for the boys, and when discovered, instead of being punished, as he deserved, for his duplicity, he was laughed at : it was considered a good joke by these loving, indulgent parents. This one incident of Harry's hastening to the rescue of the strangers entirely forgetful of self, while his brother remains an idle spectator, well illustrates the disposition of both. After a while, he crawls from his place of concealment ; shaking himself free from grass and leaves, he proceeds, muttering, across lots to the cabin of an old nurse, who delights in spoiling him. As they make their way around the brow of the hill, they pause for another view of the surrounding country. Judge Colcord, turning to meet the young people, smiling one of those rare smiles which light up his whole face, says : " I understand how it is now ; the trees have grown so that they hide the house from view ; but otherwise it is little changed. It must be—yes it is—very near sixteen years since I was last here."

CHAPTER II.

" An exquisite incompleteness, blossom foreshadowing fruit ;
A sketch faint in its beauty, with promise of future worth ;
A plant with some leaves unfolded, and the rest asleep at its
root

To deck with future sweetness the fairest thing on the earth."

—*ANON.*

THIS home of the Montgomerys deserves more than a passing glance. A long, low, rambling building, with many added wings reaching out like arms to grasp and retain the numerous choice vines and climbing roses which adorn its walls. It is surrounded on every side by a broad verandah, furnished with soft, low easy-chairs, small light tables, with here and there a hassock of softest velvet. As they near the place, every door, window and post seem instinct with life, for here the servants are taking their ease in the cool of the evening ; as they fly in every direction, with their gay colors and flying ribbons, they may be likened to a flock of birds hastily disturbed by a sportsman. Finding seats for the new comers, Harry dispatches one servant in search of his papa, another for refreshments, with injunctions to bring a pitcher of milk and anything else they can lay hands on. Three or four of the servants are jostling each other to be the first to execute his commands, as well as to get a nearer view of the strangers. Becoming impatient, Harry starts out, after excusing himself, and quickly returns, leading his papa by the hand, anxious to see if the old friends will recognise each other. He is not long left in

doubt ; in spite of years of separation, they clasp hands as though parted but yesterday, and Mr. Montgomery with a beaming smile exclaims :

“ Now, I consider this kind, Colcord, that you should come to hunt us up. Thrice welcome, dear friend.”

And two servants appearing with each a tray of cake, strawberries and cream, oranges and plums of darkest hue, they are soon in pleasant converse and happy laughter as they recall bygone hours. Angelica draws the attention of Harry to the many houses to be seen in the distance, in long rows, small, rough, white-washed, not unlike farm out-buildings in the North.

“ Those ! oh those are the quarters for the field hands. Is this your first experience of plantation life ? ”

“ My very first. I read Uncle Tom's cabin ; do you think he really was whipped to death ? Do you ever whip yours ? ”

She stops suddenly, feeling herself on dangerous ground, but is quickly reassured by hearing from her companion a gay, ringing laugh.

“ I plainly see, I shall have to take you around, that you may see for yourself this suffering, ill-used people. So sorry mamma is away, else we would keep you for a long visit.”

“ We could not remain ; we are on the way to Florida, where I shall remain all winter with mamma, or until she is strong. We left her resting at the hotel in Beaufort, as we resume our journey in the morning. We learned before we left that your mamma was away in Washington, is she not ? ”

"Yes, making a long promised visit to Aunt Helene, mamma's only sister. And now for the quarters. You are sure you will like to go?"

"Oh, above all things."

He hurries her along, talking at random, as happy people do.

"I hope you are teachable. What may I call you?"

"I am called Angel at home; but that is so absurd, fancy being called Angel fifty times a day."

"Let me be absurd. I think I rather like it."

At the first cabin visited, a negress is standing in the door in her surprise, completely barring the entrance, so huge is she. Angel thinks she must have been fed upon all the dainties the land can produce, and in abundance too. Rolling her eyes until only the whites are visible, she exclaims, in a high-pitched, shrill voice: "Laws, Mars Hal, where you done got this booful gal?" at the same time reaching out, and letting the long, fair hair fall through her fingers; raising her voice until it wakes the echoes, she screams: "Here you niggers, Luce! Dick! Josh! Ben! where is ye? Come hyar quicks you can. Mars Hal gone and brought angel, hair like corn-silk."

Pushing past, and entering the cabin, Harry with a dignified air exclaims:

"Auntie! I am ashamed for you; where are your manners?" At the same time, turning eyes brimming with laughter upon his companion: "No more doubt, now, about your name;" adding aloud with mock gravity: "This is Miss Colcord, the daughter of papa's old friend from up North."

They pass on from cabin to cabin, each spotlessly clean, although rough and nearly destitute of furniture, with the exception of here and there a broken easy-chair propped up, and their comfortable beds. In all directions, negroes of all sizes are lying about, sometimes on rude benches, but more often stretched at full length upon the grass; all friendly, pressing them to partake of sweets. Angel is all curiosity, thinking it a scene to remember a lifetime. At each cabin something has been presented to her: a nut from some curious tree, a shell from the bed of the ocean, a pressed flower from some far distant clime, a lily that only blooms once in a century, in full bloom now; and, in some cases, a fan of fragrant wood, or a choice piece of jewelry, for Angel has bestowed her smiles right and left; her gentle heart is touched by so much kindness to a stranger. She is both surprised and delighted at seeing such friendly relations existing between master and man. As they retrace their steps, they are positively laden with all they can carry. As they step upon the verandah, Angel with a rueful look exclaims: "How shall we ever manage all this on horseback?"

The gentlemen coming forward start back with the words: "What have we here?" They are assured they are all very nice things which have been given Angel at the quarters. Just then Harry feels himself drawn to one side, and in a whisper which resembles the rumbling of distant thunder, an old negro, bowed with age, asks: "Mars Hal, you's sure they isn't spying?" Being greeted by a look of scorn from Harry and a shout of laughter from the rest of the party, he hobbles away, muttering as he goes.

Angel, drawing close to the side of her papa, looking up eagerly in his face, says : " I am so glad we came, papa. Such kind hearts ! ' And kind hearts are more than coronets, and simple faith than Norman blood.' Only see, some of these have been treasured for years." As she speaks, she holds up a coral pin : " This is real ; there is no imitation about this."

They hasten their preparations for departure. The gentlemen standing together, Mr. Montgomery remarks : " There is no veneer about the coloured race ; remember that, Colcord. They are a wonderful people."

" I am not likely to forget it, neither shall I ever forget this visit."

" No more will they ; it will be something for them to talk about for months. Have you never noticed that the narrower a person's sphere is, the more they manage to crowd into it and keep it in memory ?"

" Yes, and I have also noticed that those who cannot read or write are more observing ; they have only the sense of outward things,—what they see."

" Yes, that is very true ; but a great many of them can read, a few can write."

" You surprise me. How are they taught ?"

" My wife taught a few, and they teach each other. Some of them are really intelligent, and a more industrious people it would be hard to find."

" I think they are also affectionate, are they not ?"

" Most affectionate, constant, cheerful, but very improvident."

" That's easily accounted for, for the system subjects

them to such dependence. Do you really think it ever was, or ever will be, a blessing to anyone, this system of owning humanity? "

"You are right; it is a ball of fire that one dare not touch, this question of slavery. Older heads than ours and wiser, too, have puzzled over it; but there it remains, and there it will remain."

"Not necessarily; you owners are the ones to co-operate if you are assured it is a curse."

"A curse? Of course, I am assured of it, so are hundreds of others in my position; but how many would go with me heart and hand against it? Not one."

"Well, it is a vexed question. Yours seem happy, though; I never saw people more merry."

"Yes, ours and a few others; but sometimes they are sold, and parted; it breaks their hearts, and they often die."

Harry now tells the gentlemen that he has ordered Letty and the phaeton for their benefit, and he will ride the judge's cob, with Angel. The presents are safely packed (with an elegant little workbox, that is his own special gift) in a good strong box, and placed in the phaeton, all declaring Harry a perfect general for planning. As the phaeton disappears around a bend in the road, they mount leisurely, and for one moment the horses' heads are turned in the direction of the quarters. Hearing a deep sigh from his companion, Harry turns quickly and exclaims, "Why so sad?"

"It is a sad thing to think of."

"I do not understand in the least what you refer to."

"Why, that I have met and spoken to all those people,

and never, for one moment, remembered to point them to Heaven or mention the Master's name. Can we not return?"

"I am afraid not, we shall be late as it is. Do not feel so sad about it; some of them already know the way to that land of pure delight, as they call it. They are praying loudly for you by this."

"But, only think, I accepted their presents and utterly forgot the message."

"Well, I am sure you can send a message by me, and they will like it all the better that you remembered them."

"Can I? so I can; but that I should forget! Are we not wonderful?"

"You may be, but there is nothing very wonderful about me."

"You know very well that I do not mean ourselves; I mean the human race."

As their laughter is borne upon the evening air, mingled with the thud of the horses' feet upon the hard road, we are inclined to think that they puzzle their heads little about the abstruse questions which are uppermost in the minds of their elders. After a little gallop the horses come down to a walk. Angel is the first to speak. "I wonder what the message will be? And shall I write it or will you tell it to them?"

"I cannot tell as yet; we will leave it for further consideration. I am sure, though, that it will be far more effective than anything that could have been said in the hurry and excitement of the moment."

"Do you think they would understand the one in the

fourteenth chapter of John, second verse: 'In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.' I would love to send that, as it is the first one I ever learned with my heart."

"Had you learned others before with your head, or your brain?"

"There, you are just right; I had, but I never put it like that before."

"They know it, nearly all of them, and a great many more. You should hear them on Sunday. They have their preacher, and pray and sing, and, really, their services are very interesting—so hearty. I often went out with mamma to listen to them."

"You surprise me. It really is wonderful."

"Then sometimes, when work is nearly done for the day, they will commence and sing one of their stirring hymns from beginning to end, and some of them have really good voices. How does it happen you are so anxious? Why do you not talk to me?"

"I hope there is no need of that; I think you already know and love our Heavenly Father."

"We are but children; why, you are not more than fourteen, are you?"

"I am nearly fourteen. I am capable of loving my earthly papa, surely I can as easily love my Heavenly Father; and, when we love one, is it not easy to do that one's bidding—but I am so forgetful."

"Has he bid you tell these people?"

"Why, yes; what could be more explicit than the

second verse of the tenth chapter of Luke: 'Therefore, said He unto them, the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest,' and a great many more."

"Tell me one, and I will find it for myself."

"In one place he says that 'For the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,' and how can that be unless we all work. The first Sunday I ever went to school I had no book, and mamma gave me a tiny testament of papa's—his mamma had given it to him when he went to college, all black and gold—it was years ago, as much as six, I think; I had often seen it on his book-shelf, but I had it for my very own, and the teacher seemed to be just interwoven with the lesson, so earnest and reverent, and with that irresistible fascination which holds one's attention in spite of one; and all at once it came to my heart with such force, you know how dreadfully one feels when one has been very disobedient, done very wrong, that it seems—well, I can hardly explain," with a little gesture of despair. Her companion bowing gravely she proceeds, "And I thought had I not loved papa any better or thought of him any more often than I had of this gracious, kind, Heavenly Father, how badly he would feel; then, after I got home I read all about it, and here was a mansion prepared for me. It might be I should want it in a month, or a week, or a year, and all at once a great flood of love rushed into my heart, as you sometimes see the sunlight fill a room when the blinds are unclosed. Well, I made up my mind to hunt the book all

through and find out everything He wishes me to do, and then run to obey. Love does make such willing feet."

"You were very fortunate to settle the question that easily."

"But it was not easy at all. I was tormented and plagued by the thought that I was but a child. Then I went to mamma, she was so comforting to me, and found all the nice verses that I did not know about, where He says: 'Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not.' And again in the ninth chapter of Mark, 'And He took a child and set him in the midst of them, and when He had taken him in His arms, He said unto them: Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me receiveth not me but, Him that sent me.' It means any one. And Samuel, when he heard God's voice calling him, was not as old as I am."

"Pardon me, but have you learned the whole book? because, if you have, it will be very discouraging as an example for me."

"Who said you were to take me for an example? I am sure I never thought of such a thing. I will tell you no more. The whole book, indeed!"

"Why, I consider that a regular compliment. What did you find next?" But she is away like the wind, with tightly closed lips, and as he overtakes her, trying to make his peace with her, he sees that she actually has tears in her eyes. But he is not easily put off; and she is brimming with her subject, and so after a little gay banter they come around on the old ground, and she, leaning slightly forward

so that he cannot see her face, goes on almost as though she were alone :

“ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”

“ Where are the words ; can you remember ? ”

“ In the sixth chapter of Ephesians. Have you not seen oxen working, what heavy loads they draw, and how easily and patiently they do their work ? ”

“ Are you going to liken us to oxen ? ”

“ Far from it ; we are not as patient, as unwearied. Only think for a moment how they would work with a light harness on ; it would draw this way and that, and fret them. They are made for the yoke, and the yoke is made for them. Just so is the armour made for us ; if we do not put it on we are useless. But here we are at our destination. Who would imagine we have ridden seven miles ? ”

“ I should say you have put the time in very well. Here we are at the hotel, and papa awaiting us.”

They are already well acquainted ; and when told that they are to remain for the night, as Mr. Montgomery has decided to see the last of the travelers in the morning, they are much pleased.

CHAPTER III.

“Up! time will tell the morning bell
 Its service song has chimed well;
 The aged crone keeps house alone,
 The reapers to the field have gone.
 Lose not these hours, so cool, so gay,
 Lo while thou sleep'st they haste away.”

—*Joanna Baillie.*

THE morning finds our heroine early astir, and as she waits for a moment at the foot of the stairs, Harry comes flying down to meet her. After a hearty exchange of good mornings, Angel does not wait long before she asks:

“Do you know of what I was thinking last night?”

“Unfortunately, I have not the gift of reading the thoughts of the absent.”

“Well, after our talk, and I had bidden mamma good night, I could not sleep until I had settled the question about the message; and I thought I would buy The Book, and then we could mark the texts; but I suppose the stores will not open for hours yet, and we leave at nine-thirty. How do you think it will do? Why do you not speak? I see, you do not like it.”

“On the contrary, I like it very much. I was thinking I will go to Jenkins' house and bring him out to open the store.”

“That is a capital idea. I will ask mamma if I may accompany you, and bring my hat, then we can select it together.”

They are soon on their way-back with a fairly well bound copy of the Bible, the book of books. Reaching the house they receive a summons to breakfast, to which they are quite ready to respond, after their early walk. Breakfast over, they all adjourn to the verandah for a final chat, where the marking of the texts is gone on with, after frequent consultations and references to the small Book before alluded to. After patiently waiting until all are finished, Harry extends his hand for the Book, saying:

"You are to make me your ambassador. I am to keep the Book and read it to them."

Reaching out her hand, she places it upon his arm:

"Not my ambassador, surely. I will mark one for your own self." Quickly turning the leaves, she places a mark on the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of Malachi; Daniel, chapter twelve, verse third. "How mamma would like you. When she was in Raleigh, on a visit last winter, she told me of a little girl who interested her greatly. She took mamma to her room and showed her a box of choice things which had been given her; she said the box was just full, bringing to her mind that there was no room for any worthless thing, and she said that was the way a person's mind should be stored with treasures."

"Do you know what the girl's name was?"

"It was Flora McNeil for a given name after some grandmother by marriage."

"I wonder when, or where, we shall meet again."

"The world is wide; perhaps never."

'You have told me nothing about your Northern home. Are you not lonely on those short winter days and long

dark evenings? I suppose you are never or very seldom really warm!"

"What an idea! We are never cold. You will be asking me if I like the taste of oil, mistaking us for Esquimaux. Our winters are just delightful. Every season is hailed with delight, but more especially winter. It comes so gradually. Each day gets a little colder; you have no idea of the comfort of it—the huge fires, the curtains closely drawn, floods of light everywhere, long evenings with music, books and conversation, the storm raging outside, great gusts of wind and snow coming against the windows, making all within so cosy and pleasant by contrast. Then the delight of returning spring, doors and windows thrown wide open, to admit the sunshine and the balmy breeze laden with the scent of apple blossoms and hawthorn from the hedges. The crocus, violet and primrose lift their modest heads before the snow is fairly gone. There is something beautiful about our climate. Later on the scent of the wild roses growing everywhere fills the air, and honeysuckle not as fine as you have here but very sweet."

"I believe it. You made me feel the blast against the window. I positively shivered; but you thawed me when spring came. Do you remain long in Florida?"

"I cannot tell, it all rests with how it agrees with mamma."

"Have you many birds singing in the trees? How I would love to see your land!"

"I am sure we would be most happy to see you at any time. Yes, the birds are very numerous in the spring

and summer, but when it becomes cold in autumn they migrate South."

"Only think, some of them may fly over your head this winter, right from home."

"I shall always think of it. They really might."

Word is brought that it is time to start; they are soon in readiness, and reaching the depot they are just in time to board the long train. After many hand shakes and last good-byes the train moves slowly out, and is seen in the distance, following its serpentine course, and with one last look they turn the horse's head towards home, and father and son are once more alone on their homeward way.

CHAPTER IV.

“ We live in deeds, not years ; in thoughts, not breaths ;
 In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
 We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
 Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best ”

—*Philip J. Bailey.*

THE travelers are fairly launched upon their journey. All night the train rumbles along over hill and dale with its precious freight. Everything possible is done for the comfort of the invalid. Each one is vying with the other to do something for her happiness, to make the tedious hours as little wearisome as possible. Morning dawns bright and clear, like a large part of the mornings in this Southern clime ; the lightest kind of a breeze is blowing, but later in the day man and beast will be glad of shade and rest.

Just as the heat is becoming a little oppressive, and the journey is getting to be very wearisome indeed, the long line of cars rolls beneath the grateful shade of the awning of the general depot at Tallahassee ; the long line of carriages drawn up awaiting the arrival of the train, all looking equally comfortable, make it very easy to choose, and very soon they are all seated to their satisfaction, bowling along the broad, smooth road toward what is to be their home for the next few months. A drive of an hour brings them so near that they catch glimpses of the house, showing purely white through the trees, with its many windows gleaming in the sunshine. It sparkles like a diamond

surrounded by emeralds. On getting a nearer view, Mrs. Colcord remarks that "the verandah covers as much ground as does the house," surrounding it on every side, her husband laughingly observes that she will most likely find it quite as useful as the house. And so it seems to be, furnished, as they see at a glance, with numberless screens, easy-chairs, invalids' chairs, and tables round, tables square, tables oblong, and tables, with dragon's claws for legs, having the appearance of some huge animal with a board across its back, and on each, little baskets of work, over-flowing with bright colored wools and silks, looking very picturesque; but what most pleases Angel are three kittens, looking like tiny balls of white fur with precious stones for eyes, the mother standing guard with a "this is my family" air about her. As they are shown their rooms, everything is spotlessly clean, paint of purest white, without spot or stain; the walls slightly pink-tinted, like sunlight upon snow; the carpet of that soft creamy white, upon which the delicate green leaves show so daintily. The judge, seating his wife in a large easy-chair upholstered in white velvet, places a hassock beneath her feet, and throwing himself into another, the exact counterpart, exclaims:

"This is the most lovely view we have seen yet. How fortunate you are! Such beautiful surroundings!"

Angel is busying herself removing her mamma's bonnet and giving her hair sundry little pats here and there, as much as to say: "There, you will do finely."

He continues speaking with that cheerful tone that is too cheerful to be anything but forced:

"I know that you will be very happy here ; you cannot help it."

"Happy without you, and you will be all alone ?"

"I ; oh ! I shall do finely, and here you have Puss with you."

"Yes ; I am very grateful that I have Angel. I expect we shall get on finely ; but being happy is out of the question."

Turning to Angel, she smiles a glad motherly smile, and adds : "That is if you do not tire of an invalid, and wish yourself away home."

"Not I ! why, I just love the place already. We are going to enjoy it. If only papa were to remain," with a little sad droop of the mouth.

"You will find a basket containing some of that new embroidery you so much admired, and all the material for working it in that long black valise."

She hastens away, and is soon deep in the mystery of stitch and shades, until they are told lunch is on the table. They find it spread upon one of those wonderful tables beneath the trees. The table is a picture in itself amid its lovely surroundings : the daintiest of napery, a low centre-piece of flowers of rarest perfume. As Angel inhales their fragrance, she asks the little dark maid in attendance if they are grown in the open air ; she is answered by a look of surprise, and "They grow all over the hill, Mees ; they are wild." A large dish of solid silver graces one end of the table, heaped high with luscious ripe peaches, while at the other end is a handsome hand-painted platter filled with cold fowl, a silver pitcher filled with thick cream—a golden

yellow, small china dishes of quaint shapes filled with strawberries; here and there scattered up and down on each side the table cakes as light as thistle-down, china as transparent as egg-shells. With a little delighted laugh, Angel declares to papa he may expect them home in two months, mamma completely cured, and for herself, in that length of time, she shall be a confirmed tea drinker. The happiest and the saddest day alike must close, and this is no exception. The last sad good-nights are repeated, for with tomorrow's sun Judge Colcord starts on his homeward way alone.

CHAPTER V.

“Nor could the bright green world around
A joy to her impart,
For still she missed the eyes that made
The summer of her heart.”

— *A. C. Botta.*

THE morning dawns bright and cloudless, ushering in another day of sunshine and gentle breezes. All nature is singing in unison,—birds, bees, and even the flowers have that idle, drowsy sound of wind whispering among their leaves, as though of some great secret, which would startle the world out of all placidity were it but understood. Angel coming downstairs declares she has never before seen such a place for sleeping, that she has not heard a sound since she went to sleep last night until awakened by the little maid, saying breakfast waits. After the early breakfast, which is hardly more than a form, although the coffee is like amber, the rusks done to a turn, and everything of the most tempting description, yet sad hearts do not conduce to good appetite, for this is nearly the hour of parting. When those who sit so quietly around the board shall meet again, no one can tell; it is a matter for conjecture. They step out beneath the trees for a moment. At a bend in the road the cab is seen nearing the house. We will pass over the last farewell—each is apt to bear up on account of the other; and, as Judge Colcord turns for one last, long look at the house, he sees a white handkerchief flutter for a moment from the verandah, then the house is lost to view. Being little given to repining, he is soon in deep

thought ; for here we see a worker, one who is leaving the impress of his life (as we all must, for good or evil) upon his day and generation. Pursuing his homeward way he has the satisfaction of thinking he has left everything as comfortable as could be possible for the benefit of his dearly loved ones, even making arrangements for a gentle pony and carriage for their use should they wish to drive. The journey would be very lonely and monotonous but for the pleasant, genial spirit that soon makes him such a favorite among his fellow-passengers ; and thus we will leave him to return and see how those who are left are faring this first day among strangers. The first day is always a busy one : unpacking, shaking out and putting away articles of wearing apparel in bureaus, wardrobes, and upon shelves very daintily trimmed for special articles ; books are disposed in racks, work to be arranged in baskets ; and this wonderful box from North Carolina to be unpacked, and all the details of that visit to be gone over. Each article, as it is taken from the box, is duly examined and admired. All the little accessories of the toilet are disposed to the best advantage for the pleasure and comfort of the invalid. At last, Angel succeeds in beguiling her out for a walk ; they gather fresh flowers for the vases, and amid a tangle of ferns they find a rosebush, literally loaded with large, yellow flowers fragrant and creamy. Aprons are called into requisition. On reaching the house a large china bowl is unearthed from among the treasures, and occupies the place of honour upon the centre-table.

And so there is little room for sadness between the novelty of their surroundings, preparations for a length-

ened stay and their earnest wish to sustain each other. After an early dinner, of which each has partaken with more relish than either believed possible, Angel has the satisfaction of seeing her dear one installed in her favourite easy chair by the western window, surrounded by the prettiest cushions, with the faintest tinge of colour in her pale cheeks ; she folds her hands with a little sigh of satisfaction, declaring that it seems quite home-like, now that everything is settled to her entire satisfaction. The invalid smiles with her eyes half closed in a restful manner and answers : " That shows, my child, how wonderfully we are constituted ; we set up our lares and penates in any place, perhaps in the wilderness, and make home of it."

" There, mamma, that was just what I asked Harry : ' if we were not wonderful ? ' I could not express it as you do, but I meant the very same."

" Well, you will be able to express it far better than I do when you grow older, or I am much mistaken." And thus they while away the hours.

There is barely breeze enough to rustle the vines shading the window. The sun is setting gorgeously until it is gradually lost to their view—gone to illumine some other part of our globe. After a chapter read, with that deep solemnity sometimes met with even in children, whose love and veneration for everything holy is beautiful to see, a short prayer is offered. With hands reverently folded she commends to God's care these dearly loved parents ; and, after a few minutes of quiet thought, she bows her head a little lower and asks God's blessing on the

coloured race, and may God hasten the day when your prayer may be answered is the reverent answer of her listener ; and with a good night kiss they separate each to their peaceful health-giving repose, and there we will leave them.

CHAPTER VI.

“O for boyhood’s painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor’s rules,
Knowledge never learned in schools.”

—Whittier.

As father and son pursue their homeward way, the phaeton rolls along the smooth road, the horse needs no urging, they give themselves up to delicious reverie. There is something so restful as well as inspiring in these morning hours. They soon cover the distance of seven miles. A very delightful drive it has been ; the hedges all along the way are a mass of vivid bloom, redolent with perfume and teeming with the songs of birds. As they near the house, Harry bethinks himself of his brother, although he is not one whit to blame for all that has happened, as one thing has led on to another, and, giving utterance to his thoughts, says :

“ I hope, papa, that Harold will not be angry, and make things disagreeable.”

The elder gentleman thus addressed rouses himself from his abstraction, and turning a keen look upon the speaker says : “ Angry ! Why should he be angry ? I had forgotten him ; why did he not come with us ? ”

“ I do not know. I have not seen him since we were beneath the hedge together.”

“ But where did he go ? ”

“ I think he stayed there, at least I did not see him go

away ; we were on the north side ,” and he goes on to detail the meeting with the travelers with which we are already acquainted.

“ Ah ! there he is now ; and evidently not in the best of humours either.”

“ Well, Harold, my son, had you a lonely time ? What a pity you were not with us.”

“ Father, I stayed all by myself, and did not give you up until nearly midnight.”

“ And you remained all alone ; I am more than sorry.”

“ It does not signify, papa, I slept like a trooper.”

“ It was rather late, and we concluded to stay and see the last of the party.”

They while away the long summer day in the shade of the trees, voting it slow, almost longing to return to school merely for the sake of change. The longed-for change is very near at hand ; papa is coming up the path holding a letter in his hand, smiling and bowing to the boys. Soon all is excitement. The news seems too good to be true. Mamma, taking pity on their loneliness, is returning, bringing with her no other than Aunt Helene. Now, if there is one thing on earth that the boys delight in more than another it is a visit from this same aunt. When her trunk is packed, ready to return home, there will be numberless little bunches of beautiful grasses, a little shell, or a beautiful china dish. The boys retire for the night, and, although they are generally asleep in ten minutes at the most, to-night they think it is one thing to put one's head upon the pillow and another to sleep. But at last all is quiet ; one lonely figure still nestles in

the depths of a large easy chair in the library, when upon the graveled drive is heard the sound of wheels. A moment later he is outside in dressing-gown and slippers, being smothered with kisses. For a moment he is dazed ; he laughingly observes :

“ If you are burglars you had better come inside.”

And as laughingly he is answered :

“ We could not wait. We started a day sooner than we expected. Charles came a day's journey with us, as he said he would have to go soon, and so took this time.”

“ I am not at all particular what brought you, as long as you are here. It is just grand.”

“ How are the boys ? Are they lonely ? ”

“ I heard them talking for an hour, I thought they were not going to sleep at all. I was almost sorry I gave them your letter, but I could not keep it.”

A significant look is passed between the ladies, then taking a small lamp they proceed to the room, where lay the two dark heads side by side upon the snowy pillow. Do you think they could sleep without that sight ; not they. They press a kiss upon each warm, moist cheek ; and the mother's tears fall silently. Perhaps she is thinking of the time when these feet will wander away from the old home roof, and there will be no heads upon the pillow. A pair of sleepy eyes are raised for a moment, but tired nature yields and they soon close. But in the morning they laugh and chatter as they dress ; and Harry exclaims :

“ Oh what a nice dream I did have. I dreamt that mamma and auntie came in here and kissed me and you, and I opened my eyes and saw them standing right here.”

"I should not wonder but that they have come, for I felt someone kiss me and then a drop fell on my face. I got my eyes open at last and all was dark, but I tasted it and I am sure it was a tear. I meant to go out and see, but I could not awaken I was so sleepy."

They rush down the stairs two at a time, and are clasped in fondest embrace by these loving women. Mamma bestows little pats upon them, and presses each in turn to her heart and looks in their faces and smiles that delightful love-light in her eyes, for well are these sons beloved, almost idolized. She tries not to have any preference, but her eyes turn oftenest to Harold, and she loves him best for the very reason of his being the more wayward. Of all the long summer days this is the happiest. Sometimes a little shade creeps over the mother's sunny brow as she remembers how many long days must pass before her eyes will be gladdened by a sight of them, for they are soon to leave for school. She decides on making the rest of their holidays as pleasant as possible by taking them for a trip, which the rest of the day is spent in planning. Early is the start made on the following day in order to take advantage of the cool hours of the morning. The large family carriage is brought out. They are to visit some old friends in the vicinity of Wilmington, a drive of about seventy miles, taking the journey by easy stages, mamma and auntie occupying the back seat, while papa and one of the boys sit opposite, sometimes one, and sometimes the other, as they take a turn about at assisting the driver. With a well-filled hamper stowed away in the capacious depths of the vehicle it is with light hearts and happy

laughter they proceed on their way. Finding themselves tired and hungry, with no prospect of an inn for some time, the animals are tied in the shade and a fire lighted. They are soon enjoying a cup of fragrant tea and the other good things with which they have come provided. Sitting beneath the wide-spreading branches of the large pines which line the roadside, enjoying their resinous odors, they all pronounce it the most enjoyable trip they have ever made. As they pursue their way, it is perfectly wonderful how often they manage to get hungry; and just the last thing at night they beg to light the fire and have one more cup of tea and one more quiet chat; and being told to do as they like, as they are masters of ceremony for to-day, the fire is soon lighted, the horses quietly grazing by the roadside, where grows here and there little bunches of sweet grass. So that, when the hotel is reached in the early part of the evening, they have only to spend the hours as they will until they all retire for the night. Dawn finds the boys astir busy dressing, indeed they can hardly manage to dress without a light, but at last all is complete. They steal out on tiptoe, and are just in season for a cup of coffee, and in half an hour they are on the road, walking at a swinging pace, stopping now and again to admire the view. I venture to say that, as the sun rises in all its splendour, far away in the distance, they catch a glimpse of the mighty Atlantic with its everlasting boom upon the rocks and cliffs, that no travelers by land or sea ever more thoroughly enjoyed a morning than do these two. Just as the road begins to seem a little rough, to their delight they hear the sound of wheels upon the road and are

soon overtaken by their own carriage. Instead of getting in as they expect, the others get out upon the road. All are to have breakfast together in the same primitive manner as yesterday, the mother adding :

" You must need it, you dear boys ; you have walked fully five miles, and only a sandwich and a cup of coffee. Had you called us we would all have started together."

" We enjoyed the walk and saw the sun rise , we heard the boom of the ocean quite plainly."

Harry looking in his mamma's face adds : " This is a mere nothing to what I shall do while I am in college."

At which they all laugh. Every one is in such good humour, the boys' delight is boundless ; they declare such a meal is fit for a king ; they even stray away while Ham, the old coloured driver, is preparing it, and gather a bunch of flowers to put beside each plate. As they proceed on their way, high noon finds it very warm. Although it is the very last days of September, the boys beg for an hour in the shade. The horses are again tethered, and, after a hasty lunch, the elders sit or lie upon the carriage rugs, while the boys range around over the hills in search of stones, mosses and flowers.

At last they are finishing their journey. It is wearing on towards the close of the day. As they turn in on the broad, smooth way leading to the main entrance they are received with many assurances of welcome and kindly inquiries of their trip. As they sit beneath the hospitable roof, Harry declares 'the evening a fitting frame for the picture they have been making in the last two days, to hang in memory's gallery when they shall be far away amid strange faces and scenes.

CHAPTER VII.

“ I hae seen great ones and sat in great ha’s,
 Mang lords and fine ladies a’ covered wi’ braws,
 At feasts made for princes wi’ princes I’ve been,
 When the grand shine o’ splendour ha’e dazzled my’ een ;
 But a sight sae delightful I trow I ne’er spied
 As the bonny blithe blink o’ my an fireside.”

—*Elizabeth Hamilton.*

It is early morning in Florida, and, although nearly two months have elapsed since that first quiet day, each day the invalid has slowly and surely gained strength, and with it her usual bounding health, until she can no longer with justice be called an invalid. They have won all hearts by their uniform kindness to high and low. Very peaceful and even happy days have succeeded each other. The embroidery has been a success. Music has enlivened many an hour ; long health-giving walks through shady dells ; frequent drives, sometimes through the streets of the city, noting the many fine buildings for which it is so justly noted, or by unfrequented roads where the pony is given his head to go where he will, or sitting in the shade as on this November day, Angel lets her work slide to the ground, and tossing back her hair exclaims : “ How I would love to go home, mamma. Are you not quite well now ? ”

“ Why, I thought you felt so much at home here, I expected to have to use all manner of artifices to woo you away home.”

"Artifices ! you, mamma ? Why, you are as transparent as crystal. I do like this sunny land ; but sometimes I do so long to hear the wind roar through the trees and down the chimney, the sleet and rain beating against the windows, Delia purring on the mat by the fire as it sends forth its steady glow, and you, with rosy cheeks, in the low chair."

"Well, here comes a letter. I can perhaps answer your question better after reading it."

"Do read it quick, I positively cannot wait."

"Yes, it is from papa, saying he will meet us at New York on the second. We must start to-mórow, that is, he adds, if I feel strong enough. He has heard such good accounts of my health, and is himself so lonely. Oh, you are artful, and never told me what you were so anxious about."

"You do feel equal to it, do you not, mamma ? I will make you so comfortable," and forthwith she commences preparations for to-morrow's journey, never stopping until all is complete—the disused traveling rugs shaken and folded, the large trunks strapped. Early morning finds her making a few final preparations for the long journey before them. Some people are born travelers, some are made so by long journeys. Angel must be of the former, for this is her first experience, except in only the very shortest ones occupying a few hours at the most. She makes the rounds of the place, bidding every one good-bye, from the tiniest kitten of the lot to the gentle, noble-hearted mistress of the house, whom, through loss of friends and home, necessity compels to take a few boarders in order to eke out the living for the little family. Seldom

has she parted with any with so much regret as with these two, for in all probability they will never meet again in this world. They part with many kind wishes for the future, hoping to meet in a better land where parting is unknown. The homeward journey is without incident excepting those natural to any long journey. Happy is the meeting between these three who are so closely bound together by every tie of love and home.

As the long train moves into the general depot at New York, he is the first to come on board, a glad light in his eyes, a pleasant smile upon his lips; he is never tired waiting and looking for this partner of his joys and sorrows. As they near home he observes a tear steal down her cheek; she smiles back to him:

"There is no place like home; my heart is so full of gratitude that I am so well and able to return."

It is a God-given instinct, this love of home, shared alike by the prince and the peasant. It matters not how far we may roam, or how poor or barren is the place, our footsteps always turn with joy toward "Home, sweet home."

"It is most wonderful, is it not, papa, that a person can turn with joy to a poor place because it happens to be home?"

"Yet it is so beyond all dispute; I have seen it myself. It is the one spot to which the heart turns with strongest yearning. Though seas may roll between, we may roam beneath the sunny skies of other lands, 'mid all the splendor which foreign courts can bestow, or the highest honours be conferred, the heart is always ready to vibrate

at the thought of native land. We are not able to explain it, and it is very hard to understand; perhaps it is an earnest of that joy which shall be ours in a future state, which the Apostle John has so beautifully described in Revelations. 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things have passed away.'"

"Papa, when you do quote Scripture (which is not often) I feel like taking off my hat."

They all laugh, although there is a suspicion of tears in the eyes of all three.

The steamer is nearing the wharf, and they are fairly home. The evening bells are borne upon the breeze—they all with one voice declare them to be more sweet than the Bells of Shandon.

As they are seated in the carriage, the Judge raises his hat, and putting back his hair from his forehead, with a gesture altogether his own, he draws a deep breath, and leaning back, exclaims: "I think I know how Scott felt when he said:—

"Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood."

CHAPTER VIII.

Ah! happy hills, ah! pleasing shade!
 Ah! fields beloved in vain!
 Where once my careless childhood strayed
 A stranger yet to pain!
 I feel the gales that from ye blow
 A momentary bliss bestow.

—Grey.

It is autumn at South Carolina College, in the city of Columbia. It is very quiet early morning, but few are astir. The river sweeps past at its right; grand old buildings are these; the grounds one blaze of light and color. One sits alone in one of the studios, commanding a fine view of the city, river and grounds, but he heeds it not. Deeply engaged in thought, and although time has added a deeper shade of thoughtfulness to his brow and many inches to his size, we recognize in a moment Harry Montgomery. When last we saw him, taking his tea around the camp-fire and enjoying the hospitality of his friends, it was not decided where he should be educated; later on, arrangements were made that both brothers should receive the same advantages; and here we find them together at the end of two years. They have the best of teachers, and find ample scope for all their faculties. Harry has risen earlier than usual that he may write a letter, and, looking over, we may, perhaps, get a better insight into the affairs and character of both than we otherwise could.

Columbia, S.C., Nov. 4, 1854.
South Carolina College.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I received yours in due season, and very glad to hear of your enjoying your visit so much at the seaside. How much I should have enjoyed being with you goes without saying. I want you very much to come and see us. We have had no end of bother, and it seems there can be no end to it. Harold has twice drawn my allowance, and it leaves me rather in a box. It is terrible when a fellow has not a cent to bless himself with. I have never mentioned it, it would not do. I have no boots, and, if Harold had not given me some collars and ties, I should be shabby. I asked him how he could do so, and he denies it point blank. I will not tell the Faculty, neither can I borrow from the boys. I am so sorry to trouble you. I would like to have the shoes and things I left at home; they looked too old to bring, but they would look good to me now. I owe no end of bills for washing, but the woman is good, she mends for me and never asks for a cent. Love to papa, and do not tell him, he would blame me. Something must be done; perhaps you will know what. I remember what you said that last day: that what hurts one of a family touches all the rest. Mamma, I almost think you had a premonition of what might occur. I am going to post this myself. I shall return just in season for breakfast. Remember me to all the people.

I remain,

Your loving son,

HARRY MONTGOMERY.

THE ANSWER.

Sunnivale Plantation,
Beauport, N.C., Nov. 11, 1854-

MY DEAR SON,

Yours of Nov. 4 received. I am very sorry to hear of your no end of trouble. How very sad, but I am very glad you wrote. Although I lost a night's sleep, yet it is better to have it settled. I was obliged to show the letter to your father, as he received one from Harold almost identical with yours. He is of the opinion that one of you has contracted some expensive habit, which calls for more money than you really need. He is in doubt as to which it is. I am not, my son. I send you a box together of all you will require. Yours are all marked with your full name.

You will do well to use it hereafter on all occasions. You will find at the new firm of Stubs & Turner your allowance ; nothing will ever be paid to either of you excepting you go together and both sign a receipt. Signing H. is a lazy careless way of doing business. We are all well. Bless you, dear boy, for your thoughtfulness. Write soon again. All the people wish to be remembered. Papa sends love. I hope you will make him proud of you.

Your loving mother,

LAURA MONTGOMERY.

CHAPTER IX.

“ Small service is true while it lasts ;
Of humblest friends, bright creature ! scorn not one.
The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the sun.”

— *Wordsworth.*

WE WILL return to that Northern home, where last we left the travelers after their long journey. Although far less pretentious than the home described in a former chapter, it is replete with every comfort ; joy, hospitality, happiness are all felt and extended to a large circle of friends. It is the home of fathers' fathers, embowered in green vines shaded by wide-spreading oaks and chestnuts, nestling amid the green hills of New England, a mile from the town of Richmond in the State of Maine. Its front, as it faces towards the East, commands a fine view of the surrounding country, long lines of shrubs, bushes of lilac, roses and syringa, vines with large clusters of grapes showing amid their green leaves, the smoke curling gracefully skyward, the grounds gradually sloping until its borders are kissed by the waters of the blue swiftly flowing Kennebec River as it glides onward to its mouth, where it is lost in the bosom of the broad Atlantic Ocean. Nature is looking her loveliest, the forests are decked in their gayest colours, the fields and hedges are literally blazing with crimson and gold when seen in the light of the setting sun ; harvests are being gathered, everywhere is seen the golden grain in huge loads drawn either by

prancing horses or patient oxen ; the fruit is heaped in great golden piles or in large baskets among the trees in the many orchards ; all combined, make it a very beautiful scene. As we are somewhat interested in the inmates of this peaceful abode, we will take a peep inside. The mother sits in a low rocker by the fire, with a basket of work on the small table by her side, an open book upon her lap, paying little attention to either book or work, but intent upon watching for someone's coming. The door opens to admit one whom we have seen before, a tall slight figure in a long gray cloak, a hat of the same shade, with a scarlet wing ; the abundant flaxen hair is coiled low at the back with many a little fluffy curl, but the same light is in the wide-open blue eyes, the head is held high with the same graceful poise,—in fact, this young lady once seen is sure to be remembered. As she comes forward with a swift, gliding motion, she drops into a low chair near the elder lady, who immediately commences to serve a cup of tea for the late comer.

“ I see you are tired, my dear. Why do you attempt so much in one day ? One would imagine there are to be a scarcity of days, and here you are just at the beginning of vacation.”

“ Have I missed papa ? ” (consulting her watch). “ I had no idea it was past four o'clock. Vacation days will fly all too soon.”

“ Yes, papa has already gone back to the office after a hasty cup of tea.”

“ The time just flew to-day, what with the calls we to make, and the long walk we wished to take, and the

Misses McMaster are such walkers, and I made a long call there on my return home—such a delightful family—that the day was waning before I thought of returning. We have excursions planned for every day; the days will be few enough.”

Leaning her head back and sipping her tea with that delightful sense of rest that comes to one at the close of a long, fatiguing day, she goes on :

“Mamma, when I come in sight of the house and see the smoke curling upward, and know what awaits me,—such love, such comfort,—I feel my heart glow with thankfulness. It reminds me of that other home and of that other door, and how sad would be the sound of those words, ‘Too late, ye cannot enter now.’”

“Then we must work while it is yet day, because in the grave there is no more work.”

As night settles down the curtains are drawn, billows of scarlet and lace flowing over the carpet, lights are brought, dinner is upon the table. Papa is soon in his place, and as the business of eating is gone on with, each thinks of some happy incident to relate. One day is very like another in this quiet home. Morning dawns with unusual bustle, preparations are going forward, for Thanksgiving day is near at hand. Rows of turkeys and chickens awaiting their turn to be cooked, tables filled with pies, pumpkin as brown as a berry, mince white and flaky, with that delicious aroma, just being taken ~~from~~ the huge oven of brick that has all day been receiving them in a crude state, and turning them out, done to a turn. Angel, standing by to watch the process, declares “it is like going to

the bank with a check that seems but a piece of paper, and bringing away the gold because the bank has honored it." Plates heaped with cakes, some already frosted until they show white amid all the surrounding ones, because will there not be uncles, aunts and cousins innumerable, and last but not least, grandpapa and grandmamma, to gather around this festive board?

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CHAPTER X.

- “ Ah ! on Thanksgiving Day, when from East and from West,
 From North and from South come the pilgrim and guest ;
 When the grey-haired New-Englander sees round his board
 The old broken links of affection restored ;
 • When the care-wearied man seeks his mother once more,
 And the worn matron smiles where the girl smiled before ;
 • What moistens the lip and what brightens the eye,
 What calls back the past like the rich pumpkin-pie ? ”

— *Whittier.*

THE long-looked for day has come at last ; it is bright and clear. Many are the happy greetings, warm handshakes and loving embraces. The guests have been arriving for the last week, excepting those who live in the immediate vicinity, so that all are assembled, awaiting the summons to church. At the first sound of the joyful bells, there is a hurrying of feet, some walking, among whom is Angel, others driving, but all taking their way toward the sacred edifice, there to render thanks to God for all His loving care over them and for peace and plenty. It is the scene of many such gatherings, for within its time-honoured walls many of those assembled have been christened and wedded. As they listen to the words that fall from the lips of their beloved pastor, they join heart and tongue in the fervent prayers that are ascending to the throne of grace. As the anthem rises, “ We thank Thee, O Lord, for thy bountiful supply of our

wants," many a tear is seen in eyes unaccustomed to weep. Slowly and reverently they file out to the strains of that burst of thanksgiving praise; very quiet, almost hushed, are the greetings. They wend their way homeward, to sit once more together around the hospitable board, a happy, united family. As all are seated to their satisfaction, for I think each aunt and uncle has a favourite that must be seated by his or her side, although the company is so numerous, from the hoary-headed grandsire to the toddling child, yet the table has been laid with a view to plenty of room for all. After grace has been said, the elderly gentleman by the side of Angel helps her to the choicest bits, and, looking at her with loving eyes, thinks of the long journey those feet must tread, for this is his favourite grand-child. The table is a picture; many artificial have been the processes to keep the flowers in bloom, for Angel thinks since her visit to the land of flowers that a table is not complete without them: the low dishes with long vines trailing upon the snowy damask, the shaking jelly in curiously shaped glasses clear as crystal, and all the old odd pieces of silver containing those wonderful cakes and doughnuts which have been in process of construction for the last week; the transparent china with many an old quaint piece, one cup and saucer which is given to grandma with a smile, for it is one of a set belonging to her wedding outfit. She looks across the table to where grandpa is sitting with love-light in her eyes, for it seems to her but last year, or at the most a decade, that saw her a bonny bride. She thinks of many who are gone before, for, in the language of the poet:

“ There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there !
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair ! ”

A picture is she to look upon, carrying her threescore years with such an infinite grace, her dark eyes seemingly undimmed by age, her snow-white hair banded back beneath a cap of dainty lace with strings of soft shiny ribbon tied loosely beneath her chin, a collar of costly, filmy lace falling over the neck of her black silk dress, her small white hands that have smoothed so many aching brows. After dinner is over they gather about her, begging for a story, not only the youthful portion of the company, but the elders, all anxious for a share of the reminiscences with which they are usually regaled. After much quiet happiness and some that is not so quiet, a little music and laughing banter, they separate for the night with many a backward look, for may not some one of the number be missing before the return of another Thanksgiving day? Rarely are ever two such meetings in succession, so many families are represented, some even coming from neighbouring States as well as cities. We will hope that the light of prosperity and happiness may shine upon them, wheresoever they roam.

: CHAPTER XI.

“Heap on more wood!—the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.”

—*Sir Walter Scott.*

Two more years have passed away,—uneventful years, and when we say that, we mean happy years. School life is uneventful, college life is pretty much the same thing, from day to day. But now books are put away, vacation days have come; the very sound of the word has a pleasant ring to it after the drudgery and plodding, the sound of the bell calling, whether one feels like responding or not. In the home where last Thanksgiving day was kept, even greater preparations are going forward, for in a few days Christmas will be here with its merry chimes and happy greetings. A young lady stands by the drawing-room window. We have no difficulty in recognizing Angel: the same light in the roguish blue eyes; the fair braids coiled around the shapely head; taller than when last we saw her. She nods and smiles, and turning in haste opens the door to admit someone. Her papa comes towards the fire, extending his hands to feel its warmth. Taking the easy-chair that is in waiting for him, he looks steadily at Angel, and all the time he is being served with a cup of tea he hardly removes his eyes from her face until she returns his look with one of surprise. At last he slowly takes a letter from his pocket and reaches it toward her. Sipping his

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tea, he still watches her as she reads. "Why, of course, papa, we shall be only too glad! How delightful! I hope he will be as nice as when we last saw him. He was nice, papa." "Undoubtedly," drily, "too glad or not, he is on his way. Let me see—the seventeenth, yes, he will be here to-morrow." Who is coming to-morrow is very easy to tell, for the letter is written from South Carolina College. Harry has never forgotten his friends, and takes this opportunity of renewing their acquaintance, after gaining the permission of his parents. The next day, as the steamer ploughs her way up the river, a young gentleman stands on deck in the forward part. Although much changed he is easily recognised. As the steamer nears the town, a number of people are waiting to receive their friends. He only sees two ladies standing side by side. The sunlight falls upon the piquant face, giving it, as it were, an added splendour in his eyes. The same kindly look; excepting for the height, for she is gloriously tall, he thinks her little changed. As the gang-plank is thrown out, he is one of the first to go ashore, and warm is the welcome he receives from both mother and daughter. "So kind of you to come so far to see us, and just in season for Christmas, too."

"I thought of that myself. I am anxious to see a real northern Christmas."

By the time he is seated in the phaeton he feels very much at home; a feeling of rest and happiness comes to him. The short autumn day is in its zenith; no cloud is to be seen; sunshine and that gloriously exhilarating air that towards evening will become sharp with frost. The trees and hedges are bare and leafless, but a few black-

birds and katydids are still piping in the meadows,—it is a farewell song to summer, but a very joyous one. As they bowl along the road he sees everything, and remarks :

“I do not wonder you spoke in glowing terms of your home, if this is a specimen of your autumns. I think I must have been mistaken, but I fully expected to see the ground covered with snow.”

“As a usual thing it is, but this is an exceptional year.”

“And the river is not frozen. I came very near coming by train, thinking navigation would be suspended. I should have been very sorry, the trip was delightful.”

“If you think it delightful now, you should come up the river in June or July when all Nature is at her loveliest. It takes very cold weather to cause ice to form in this swiftly flowing river, but most likely before many weeks, instead of seeing the steamers coming, it will be a highway for teams and skaters.”

“How I should love to see the skaters !”

“I dare say you will, and also be one of their number.”

“Me ! I never had a pair of skates on.”

“That is no sign you never should. You would easily learn. I will teach you. We can go to the lake ; it is already frozen.”

• If he is pleased with the day and the drive, he is more than pleased as the horse stops before a rustic gate, which swings upon its hinges as if by magic, but really by the hand of a small tow-headed boy, who is general chore-boy. As they stop in front of the low verandah, and the door opens, and he is made welcome, it is like the realisation of some long forgotten dream. Many inquiries are made, and

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especially about the people. He laughingly declares: "The book ought to be worn out, it has been so much read, and every time I have been home Mamie Sula asks what I dun gone ~~cut~~ with that northern gal, hair like cornsilk?" at which they all laugh heartily. "She is very much surprised on being told I have not seen her since."

The days pass merrily. Christmas is here at last, clear and cold. After an exchange of kindly greetings, Angel takes something from beneath her plate; wondering what it can be, she turns it from side to side in a puzzled way, until she is asked: "Why do you not open it, and see the inside?" "Why. I really forgot I could." Unloosening the wrapper, a large ivory card is brought to view, and beneath the brilliantly illuminated letters, "Merry Christmas, eighteen fifty-six," is a lovely landscape with a tall hedge in the fore-ground and one figure representing herself sitting the pony, as she rode from Beaufort so long ago. For a moment she is spell-bound; she sits silently gazing on it, taking in every detail. Looking quickly towards where Harry has seated himself at the opposite corner of the table, she asks so very quietly, "Whose work is this? It is very beautifully done."

"Thank you, it is my own. I began it over a year ago. I worked at it at odd times."

"And do you pretend to say you carried the picture in memory all that long time—three years?"

He blushes crimson, and can hardly speak, as he says: "I made a sketch at the time that long day after you left."

It is passed around that everyone may have a peep at it, for the house is full to overflowing; every nook and

corner has been utilised for a bedroom, one cousin declaring he slept in the meal chest. They recall many an incident of that far-away time, which causes much merriment among their listeners. It is not long before the bells are pealing forth their chimes, "Peace on earth, good-will to men." They go out by twos and threes, taking their way towards the church to send up their prayers and hymns of praise to the great Maker and Ruler of the universe, for all His loving kindness to them in the year that is past. They look a happy party as they pursue their homeward way, for nearly all are here which we met at that long ago Thanksgiving dinner; none are absent excepting two, who are abroad. They are all ready to respond to the summons to dinner, which hardly needs a description. I think it is about the same wherever it is observed, the regulation plum-pudding and turkey, with all the other good things that go to make up a *ménu*; it is more in the good cheer, the happy laughter, the whiling away the hour with jest and song, the holly showing the red of its berries amid the brightness of its leaves, garlanding statues and pictures, little nooks and corners shaded by evergreens, making fairy bowers. Each uncle, aunt and cousin claims some share of Harry's attention; he is already a favourite with all; he answers question after question about the coloured race and his home. So courteous to all, and more particularly to grandpapa and grandmamma—it is she who leans upon his arm as they walk around the garden, saying to him:

• Let the elders keep close to the fire, we will go out for a breath of fresh air." At which they all laugh heartily.

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They never think of making a stranger of him. After his walk he enters into the games with the children, delighting them with some new ones. Then he contributes his quota to the music, playing and singing some rattling Southern songs, and also singing some duetts for he has a fine tenor voice well cultivated. As they separate for the night, taking his candle in his hand he stands for a moment, and walking to where stands his hostess he extends his hand, saying: "I have to thank you for the happiest day I ever spent." And with a cordial "good-night" to all, they separate, and day is done, evening has drawn the curtains of the night.

CHAPTER XII.

"I grew assured before I asked
That she'd be mine without reserve,
And in her unclaimed graces basked
At leisure, till the time should serve"

—*Patmore*

THE happiest, gladdest days pass all too soon. No lagging of those rosy hours by field and stream ; the days are one joyous revel. Everyone is sorry to part with him, all the surrounding country has made his acquaintance. He has been fêted and feasted to his heart's content. Nothing surprises him, he is one of them, heart and soul. All the young people whose acquaintance he has made are at the depot to bid him good-bye, for the river is long since given over to skaters, of which he has been one of the swiftest. Angel feels very sad, and makes no secret of it ; she has not the remotest idea that he came purposely to see her,—it is for the trip and the novelty. With many regrets she parts with him, bemoaning so genial a companion, but her vacation will be ended in a few days, for which she is not sorry. It is with a sad heart Harry turns his back upon Richmond, with many promises to return next year. He did think when he first came North that he would change to some other College, knowing very well that he has not a fair chance at Columbia, for Harold has taken many a mean advantage of him in things almost too small to mention, and yet, taken as a whole, make him very un-

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comfortable. Receiving a letter from his mother, who had divined his motive, urging him to return, telling him that all would be well and he would be sorry that he had not been more steadfast, he is on his way back. But of one thing he is very certain, and that is that by no word of his shall the friends he has left ever know of the existence of his "double," as he is dubbed among the students. Speeding on towards Alma Mater, he gives himself up to pleasant recollections of the past four weeks. One cousin after another has stayed to be his companion, all genial, social, never in the way. It had been a most enjoyable time, days long to be remembered with many a heart thrill. As he nears his destination he makes up his mind, to go steadily onward, and soon he enters upon a new term, taking up his studies with avidity, feeling an added responsibility,—for is he not a senior. It is evening, his sanctum has been invaded by half a dozen comrades, all anxious to interview him as to where his holidays were passed, but not one word does he drop in order to give them a clew, until, tired out at last, Harold takes up the ball.

"I tell you, old fellow, we are all dying of curiosity, six weeks, and never one of us ran across you or heard from you. It is simply outrageous. What wonderful scenes have you viewed? You should contribute your quota to the evening's entertainment."

"Haven't a thing to contribute. I simply spent my vacation as pleased me best; enjoyed every moment."

"Well, since you are so reticent, we shall put our own construction upon it."

"Put anything you like upon it by all means; I shall not mind in the least."

Harry, turning quickly toward two young men who are talking in undertones, surprised a look on one of the faces he never forgot. Seeing his look of surprise and questioning, Fred. Carfield leans over, nearly whispering in Harry's ear :

"It gives me a turn when I see you two so much alike ; your voices are identical. Do you ever expect anyone to be able to tell you apart, and never mistake ? "

"Mamma can tell us," Harry answers with a grave look stealing across his face.

"Not always, Hal," observes his brother ; "she has been mistaken, although I grant not often."

"Were you not brothers, and your interests, therefore, more or less identical, I should wonder what would be the outcome of this wonderful resemblance."

"Since we have no more interesting subject than our two selves, I propose we adjourn this meeting," observes Harold.

"I second the proposition, and expect the outcome will be that we shall go out in the world, hang a shingle out in some quiet place, work like beavers, meeting once a year."

"And we each and all hope you will both succeed beyond your most sanguine expectations."

With good-nights said and good-nights sung, they separate ; and may that balmy sleep which "knits up the raveled threads of care" be a guest at every pillow.

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CHAPTER XIII.

“ ’Twas that friends, the beloved of my bosom, were near,
Who made every dear scene of enchantment more dear,
And who felt how the best charms of nature improve,
When we see them reflected from looks that we love.”

—*Thomas Moore.*

ANOTHER year is numbered with those already passed ; on every falling leaf is written that sad word,—decay. In this quiet Northern home there is little change, only such as time always brings, emancipation from school, an added womanliness to the one in whom we are most interested. Although the idol of many hearts, none more humble than she ; as lenient and charitable to others as she is stern to self ; a welcome guest in every circle , beloved by the young for her mirth and high spirits, the aged for her sympathy ; the sick and poor are her special care. She has been a long distance to see an aged woman who is decrepit and nearly blind. Very tired is she as she nears home, seeing the river run so dark and sluggish at the foot of the grounds ; the long branches of the trees waving in the wind without leaf or flower, with that dismal, sighing sound which the wind sometimes makes when the ground is soggy and soaked by a long rain, and the air is heavy with mist, but as she nears the house her step grows light, she springs up the steps and opens the door. Her heart is gladdened as she sees the brightness of everything within,—the fire giving out a

genial warmth, which is so grateful after a cold, fatiguing walk, as she leans her head back upon the chair, and laughingly observes :

“ This hardly leaves one anything to desire.”

Springing up, she gives a little shake to her head, and crossing the floor kisses her mamma on the forehead.

“ Why are you looking so sadly at me, mamma ? ”

“ You should not take such long walks with the air so heavy and the ground so wet.”

“ You should not have taught me the sweetness of charity, then, you dear, fault-finding mother. I am all right. Why, I would not have missed this visit to auntie Grahame for anything, she was so delighted to see me, sitting there all day in that poor little place. She took my face between her hands, trying to see me and see how much I have grown ; the tears actually came in her eyes. I am sure I amused her greatly telling her about school life and the acquaintances I had made. I was consoling her about not being able to read ; you should have seen her face, it literally shone. She says sometimes God blesses people by opening the eyes of their understanding when they cannot see the things of this world. Is not that beautiful ? And she looked so sweet and peaceful, I believe He has hers. Surely no one could be so happy as she without very strong faith. I opened the Bible to read her a chapter, and what do you think ? it opened at that beautiful verse, right at the top of the page : ‘ Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these, ye have done it unto me.’ She asked with her sweet voice and manner : ‘ Did you select that one, my dear ? ’ ‘ No ; the book just opened

there. Is it a favourite of yours?' 'I have not seen it in years nor heard it. That is for you. All I can do for them is to be patient, and cheerful.' And, mamma, I believe it was for me, I was mean and selfish this morning, I wanted to stay here with you all day, I thought of so many nice things I could do. Satan is so alluring, is he not? And just when I had my things on, and had put the selfishness away down under my feet, the Comforter came, and I remembered He had left His mother when He was but twelve years of age, and when she chided Him, that His answer had been 'Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' All the languor falls away from her, she is her own blithe self as she goes on to tell how 'Sally, the stupid little grand-daughter who lives with her, had gone to the town to get supplies, "and I gathered sticks, and made the fire blaze out brightly, and from the little parcel of tea which I had taken in my basket made a beautiful strong cup, and even turned up my sleeves and made some of those delicious beaten biscuits that tasted so nice; and with the cold chicken and the jelly which you sent, we feasted right royally."

Many are the visits made in the short winter afternoons. Youth and health are grand possessions; they make the darkest day bright with sunshine and time fly on golden wings. One visit deserves mention. The whole family spent the month of February in New York. The Dewards have always been their closest friends, dating back from the school-days of the mothers. At a large party one evening, they make the acquaintance of Mrs. Montague from Washington. She hovers near them, and looks so closely at Angel until, see-

ing herself observed, she answers, with charming *naïveté*:

"I hope you will pardon my rudeness; but I have an idea I have met you before."

"I do not know that I am aware of ever having met you before, although I am very happy to have done so now;" and in the course of conversation, it falls out that she (Mrs. Montague) is Aunt Helena. They leave for home in the morning, so they do not meet again. It seems she recognised her from having seen the little picture which Harry had sketched so long ago.

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CHAPTER XIV.

“Yet ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise.”

—*Gray.*

A LITTLE over a year has passed since they sang their last good nights and gulped down their disappointment at not being able to fathom Harry's secret. Everything has gone on steadily and merrily within the classic shades of Alma Mater. Each day is full to overflowing of good wholesome duties; only three more months remain to them, when they will leave this quiet retreat, to mingle with the busy throng and act their part in the great drama of life. Suddenly, Harry is called to a private conference. He enters the library, to which none are ever called except for reprimand, as approval is always given in public. He looks as he enters not unlike a culprit, with his head held high, the color mounting to his very brow. Sometimes perhaps in your life, reader, you have felt as though you were walking straight against a brick wall; all the bricks look exactly alike; you know that by removing one an entrance may be effected. But which one? Just so does Harry feel as he stands with his hands behind him, waiting for Professor Long to speak. It seems to him an hour, in reality it is two minutes; but the words are ominous.

"May I ask where you were last night at twelve o'clock?"

"I cannot tell."

"Very well. I suppose you know the penalty attached to gambling?"

"Yes, sir. I believe it is suspension."

"Suspension! it ought to be expulsion. You richly deserve it; but as Harold has interceded in your behalf, and the term is so near its close, we have concluded to allow you to graduate."

He is completely stunned; he makes one single remonstrance.

"But, sir. I did not go there to play at cards; I do not gamble."

"We have heard all that before. I will advise you that the less you say the better it will be for you; saying does not go for much within these walls,—it is doing. We believe in deeds: not words. One more question: I believe you gave out, some two months ago, that you never touched a card. Will you tell me your object? It was entirely uncalled for."

"I did not mean making it public; I was asked, and said I *did* not, just simply because I *do* not."

"*That* will do; you can go."

He goes out with white set lips and head as erect as when he came in.

Two months more have passed away without incident, only routine and hard work in prospect of the coming examination. Harry is longing for the days to pass, a heavy weight seems to rest upon his spirits; he finds it

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hard work to buckle to his studies. He watches the passage of the birds as they fly North, and longs earnestly to follow their example. Sitting dallying with his pen, he is told by a servant that "Professor Long desires his presence in the library." Again that ominous sound; he steels his heart for the interview. He dreads the biting sarcasm of this strict, old disciplinarian more than he is aware of. He hastens to obey. As he goes along the corridor, he sees Harold hat in hand, as if waiting for him; they clasp hands for one moment, and Harold acts as though he were about to detain him. With a look of strangely subdued sorrow upon his face he passes on. As he enters, he stands half-way between the door and the desk, at which sits the questioner.

"Ahem! I believe you gave out, some two months ago, that you had lost a valuable gold watch. You are the young gentleman, are you not?"

"I am, sir. I did lose one."

"How long ago was it? How was it lost?"

"A little over two months. I never knew how I lost it. I just missed it."

"Come with me and we may find it. A present, was it not?"

"Yes, sir. From my aunt, Helena Montague."

"Is it marked; would you know it?"

"Oh yes, sir, it is marked with my monogram on the outside, among the chased work."

"It is barely visible with the naked eye, is it at so?"

"Yes, sir."

As they go rapidly along, they turn up one street and down another, until they reach a shop in a back street,

with three gilt balls over the door which they enter. The old Jew behind the counter gives them a look of intense cunning, being addressed with the words :

"Is this the young man who pawned a watch here the twentieth of February?"

"Why, does he say he isn't? Certainly he is the one. Come, my fine young fellow, cheer up, it is only a mishap that it has got out, for I'm sure I never told," with a whimpering manner seeming to shrink as he speaks into a bundle of old clothes and nothingness.

"No, I venture to say you did not tell; it's too good a bargain for you. Come, lay it out here on the counter." Turning to Harry with a gesture towards his right vest pocket. "Give me the ticket."

Putting his fingers in the pocket designated, he draws forth the ticket, with the date and ten dollars to pay on it. At the same time the Jew lays the watch on the counter.

"Is this yours? Do you recognise it?"

"Yes, sir, it is mine." He acts like one in a dream; he does not commit himself by one word; he is like a machine, doing just what is expected of him.

"Have you the ten dollars to pay?"

"No, sir, but my allowance is due on the thirtieth; I can redeem it then."

"Here is the money for you now" (laying it on the counter). "I will trust to your honor to pay me" (smiling sarcastically). "Take the watch and wait for me in the library."

The Professor knows he has been the recipient of much sympathy from his comrades, and many are the con-

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gratulations he is obliged to listen to on its recovery. Once'or twice the Professor was within hearing when it was alluded to, but no word of how it was recovered or of the interview was ever heard outside the door of that closed room. Another month has passed away ; all is bustle and preparation. The day has come at last when the students who have so long been together are to graduate. It is commencement day. Friends are coming and going, from dawn till dark. Nearly every graduate has friends from home, who have come to witness his success or failure. Among the exceptions are the brothers from North Carolina. Every window is filled with people, chatting and laughing, anticipating the exercises of the day and the grand concert in the evening, parties walking hither and thither among the trees with which the grounds are ornamented, and many a sail is seen upon the river in the early morning. It is a day to charm the fancy, clear and warm, without a sign of a cloud or the shaking of a leaf by the breeze. The hour has arrived : ten o'clock. The spacious edifice is packed to its fullest capacity ; fans wave, eyes look their brightest, smiles are exchanged, every face beams with happiness. The exercises of the day are gone on with, until the name of Harry Montgomery, Beaufort, North Carolina, is called. Stepping forward, and feeling so many eyes upon him, he waits for a moment to steady himself and to say to his heart that he is not afraid ; he knows he has thoroughly mastered his subject, which is " Our homes and our laws." And well he handles his theme. He seems to glow with enthusiasm. he forgets the crowd. his voice rings out like a

clarion : he is a born orator. Not a sound is heard in that vast assembly. Going on from point to point, the words flow from his lips with that wonderfully easy fascination that holds his audience spellbound ; and when he closes, with a glowing tribute to our many homes scattered over the length and breadth of this fair land, his voice sinks almost to a whisper, but distinctly heard in every part of the house. Standing one moment to gaze upon the crowd of faces, he retires amid the most vociferous applause. They will not be satisfied until he again makes his appearance, bowing low, when all rise in their seats, handkerchiefs are waved, bouquet after bouquet is thrown to him ; the wildest enthusiasm prevails. Gathering the flowers, he bows low, waving his hand, and is seen no more. After a few others, in which we are not interested, make their bow before the public, the name of Harold Beaufort, North Carolina, is called. Many rise to their feet, thinking it must be the same. They are not long left in doubt. His subject is " Our Ancestors." There is not much that is original or of any moment to the audience, delivered in a passive, schoolboy style. But at the close, his beauty and wonderful resemblance to this other orator to whom they have listened, win for him a storm of applause, to which he bows smilingly, and retires. After one other is called, who is valedictorian, the crowd find themselves filing slowly outside, and the class of fifty-seven belong to the alumni.

Harry, now that he sees the wide world before him, longs to once more see the inmates of that Northern home. He says to himself that he longs to see how roses and sunny

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skies will become that cold clime, as he has only seen it when the trees were leafless, or nearly so, but in reality there is only one flower he longs to see. He packs his portemanteau, telling Harold he is going for a trip to the country, and bids farewell to all those tender ties and associations of five long years' duration. The brothers with many kind wishes separate and go their opposite ways : Harold's takes him home, to be petted and made much of by the mother, her fond heart brimming with pride in him.

CHAPTER XV.

“ O tell her, brief is life, but love is long,
 And brief the sun of summer in the North,
 And brief the moon of beauty in the South.
 O swallow, flying from the golden woods,
 Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, make her mine,
 And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee.”

—*Alfred Tennyson.*

HE waits to send no missive, no courier in advance; he goes unheralded. As the steamer speeds on her way up the river, he gazes with delight upon the tasteful lawns and vine-clad homes, decked in their gayest hues: all Nature is jubilant in this the month of roses. He walks the deck to curb his impatience; he knows that in one of the loveliest of these lovely homes a welcome awaits him. As the steamer swings around to her moorings he is not long in making his way on shore. Walking down the old familiar path at a swinging pace, one might imagine him trying his speed. Inside the gate, which he does not stop to open, but vaults lightly over, he crosses the lawn at a bound, and springs up the steps. An impatient ring of the bell brings a maid to say that “the ladies are out. Will he come in and wait?” He declines with thanks, the last place he wants to go is indoors when all nature is wooing him outside. Taking a turn around the garden he stands wondering which way he had best go. At that moment he catches sight of the ladies coming up the path at a leisurely pace; it is evident they are not aware

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of his presence. He stands for one brief second, not a muscle of his face moves ; he is like a statue. There is no doubt about his welcome as she raises her eyes and sees him standing before her. They take one step forward, and with a little bend of the head Angel reaches out both hands, which are quickly clasped in both his. They utter not one syllable,—there are some emotions too deep for words. They stand thus for half a minute. Angel is the first to gain her composure ; she makes a great effort to control her countenance, and with woman's ready wit withdraws her hands and steps back, with ah ! such a light in her eyes, a rosy blush mantling cheek and brow, saying beneath her breath. "How you do startle one ! Did you drop from the clouds ?"

"I do not see any. I came by steamer."

No other word is spoken, only a kindly word of welcome from the mother as she leads the way up the steps and indoors.

The luncheon is just on the table, and how homelike it seems. The windows are open, to admit the rosy air. After lunch is over, his luggage is sent for, and he is installed in the guest chamber, sweet with honeysuckle and climbing roses. Two cousins from Trenton, New Jersey, a brother and sister, are expected to-morrow, with whom Harry is already acquainted. They arrive in due season, and a more merry party it would be hard to find, as Charles and Ella Healy are already great favourites of Harry's. Days never flew more swiftly, with walks in shady lanes, drives to all the picturesque places within reach, picnics with large companies, or small, as the case may be, hours

on the river, early morning rides on horseback, with joyous laugh and playful badinage. At breakfast on this particular morning the letters are brought, Harry begs permission to read his on the lawn. He soon returns jubilant. He approaches Angel, hoiding this one particular letter; which he has singled out from all the rest, towards her.

"I wonder if by any stretch of the imagination you can guess its contents, or its author?"

"By your face I should say it was a favourable answer to a very important proposal, but I am not a diviner of secrets."

"You are pretty near it, for it means about that. It is from Aunt Helena, saying she wishes to defray the expenses of a continental trip to last a year; that for her part she does not see why she should wait until after she is dead to make people happy. I shall study in Germany."

"Is she not just grand! I am so glad. It makes me quite happy seeing you look so happy."

"You do seem delighted to have me go; I thought you perhaps would feel sorry."

"I never supposed we would keep you long in this quiet place. I am longing to try my own wings, and fly to some distant isle of the sea, now school days are over; but I dare say I shall do very well with my music and painting. You must send me sketches of all the loveliest places you see."

"I will with pleasure, and we will have an hour in the studio every morning during my stay."

And with mornings with favourite authors beneath the trees and evenings devoted to music, the hours are magical.

High up on the face of the hill, commanding a fine view of the surrounding country and the neighbouring towns, with the river winding like a thread of silver between its banks of tall grass or drooping willows, is a shady covert, one of Nature's master-pieces; rocks in the form of chairs, looking as if from the hand of a sculptor, and over all a carpet of pale green moss, making a bower fit for a fairy queen. Hitherto a merry party have scaled the height, and whiled away the hours in happy idleness. But on this last sad day—for to-morrow Harry bids farewell to all these well-beloved scenes—these two are alone. They never can tell how it came about, but Harry finds himself repeating the old yet ever new story. He paints in glowing colours the future, promising to bring all the laurels he can win and lay them at her feet, when this one short year shall have passed away. She thinks long afterwards that perhaps she was too easily won, but the words were so sweet, and she has no talent for subterfuge. and so he almost knows his answer before she speaks. As they are nearing home, she, leaning on his arm, suddenly exclaims: "My glove, my new primrose kid. I must return for it."

"Nothing of the kind. I saw it as it fell, your dress swept it down in a crevice of the rock. I fully intended picking it up, but it slipped from my memory. We will leave it."

Taking her two hands in his, he stands face to face with her.

"It shall be our Mizpah! For he said, 'The Lord watch between me and thee.' You keep its fellow, and I will bring it when I come again, and we will mate them."

She has not a word to say in return, and so it falls out that the one little primrose kid is laid away by itself, in a bit of paper, among her choicest treasures. Often she takes it from its secret repository in after days ; a fragrance seems to exhale from it of that last happy hour. With the sanction of parents, which is not hard to win, for they already love him as a son, it is settled that on his return she shall be ready to go with him as his bride. As the months have worn on until it is now September, it will bring them to another autumn. With many last parting words he is borne away upon the bosom of the noble river. May the fickle goddess Fortune treat him as kindly as he deserves.

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CHAPTER XVI.

I think of thee when morning dawns
Across the eastern sky ;
And when the shades of evening fall,
I wish that thou wert nigh.

ALL the journey across the broad Atlantic, one there is who walks the deck, and, watching sunrise and sunset, sees in imagination one home on which its beams fall. His book lies unheeded, he views the pictures hung in memory's hall, lives over again the hours that no hours can ever surpass. The voyage is uneventful, like all other ocean voyages that are favoured with fairwinds and calm seas. He is pleasant and genial to all with whom he comes in contact, exchanging kind words with his fellow-passengers, playing with the children. As they embark at Calais, no lighter step or gayer-hearted young creature puts foot on terra firma. Everything has conspired to fill his life—full of all that makes life worth living. His every wish is gratified ; he has longed for this year abroad with an intensity unknown even to himself until he finds it gratified. He feels within himself that he has talent, and here is the way opened for him to cultivate it. We will not attempt to follow him in all his wanderings, a year is but a year at most. Taking a month in which to see a little of this land of his dreams, he falls in with a party of German students out for a holiday, and with knapsack on his back, alpine stock in hand, he makes the as-

cent of Mont Blanc, bringing away many a little bit of the lovely scenery for future labours, oftimes keeping the party waiting while he makes a hasty sketch. In one which he designs for one special room in that home which he expects to make, he has a sketch that fairly takes his breath away. The mountain is covered with perpetual snow, but where the sun strikes it lower down its sides, causing the water to run, it is one mass of flowers, different coloured cacti, and all those brilliant coloured flowers which grow in high latitudes. Very small are they, but when mingled make a glorious whole. He goes yachting up the Rhine for a week. Earth, sky and sea unite with his own happy heart to bring him pleasure. He no sooner expresses a wish to himself, than presto ! he finds it at his hand. Returning from his yachting expedition, he gathers together his belongings, and settles upon Berlin as his future place of residence. While he shall remain on the continent, he has no intention of entering any university, he merely wishes to perfect himself in music, painting and German, all of which he has been steadily laying a foundation during his school and college days. He secures masters, and every moment is filled. Very few days pass in which he does not write letters to gladden the hearts of those whom he has left. Many laughable incidents he relates ; he is in the gayest of spirits, therefore in bounding health,—the two are very nearly inseparable. He delights in visiting the Reichstag, listening to the oratory and becoming acquainted with the politics of the land. He takes exercise in the open air, rowing and walking, both of which he is very fond. He delights in roaming or sitting beneath

the tree with which the avenues are lined, but always with book or pencil in hand, making sketches for future labours in his studio, often in the midnight hours.

CHAPTER XVII.

"In faith and hope the world will disagree,
But all mankind's concern is charity."

—*Pope.*

THE morning is far advanced, in fact, it is nearly noon, as a horse attached to a low phaeton rounds the corner and stops at the gate. An elderly gentleman alights, and ties his horse to the most ornamental shrub tree on the lawn,—he cannot be bothered with posts, probably he does not know there is one; his very air of haste and decision proclaims him a physician. The lady of the house comes out upon the verandah, and stands quietly waiting, wondering what is bringing Dr. Simpson at this hour of the day, generally his busiest time. She is not left long in doubt. Coming up the steps with the air of one who pays little heed to ceremony, he abruptly asks, after seating himself on the top step:

"Where is Angel?"

"She has gone for a walk. Nothing has happened to her, has there?"

"Not that I know of. Why, I believe I sent terror to your heart, just because I am a doctor. O, you mothers! Which way did she take?"

"I think the Thron road."

"Will she be back soon?"

"I think not, she has some calls to make."

"Humph!"

"Can I do any good? What is it?"

"My dear woman, I am afraid none of us can do any good, it is nothing to us, I suppose, but I felt as though I wanted to tell Angel. she is so sympathetic and brimming with resources. I cannot help concerning myself, no more can she."

'What a compliment to me' You think it is of no use telling me, then?"

"Why, did I not tell you? Well, bless my heart, it is easily told Dorothy Williams is ill again. They had to call me at midnight. I do not count on her lasting through the winter, unless she can go South and get rid of the cold weather. I see no chance whatever for that. At least tell Angel not to mention it, for I suppose she will go to see her; a disappointment would hurry her right off. She is a fine girl, but they are so shiftless, and then the poor old mother to be left alone. Well, tell her when she comes that I will put a twenty dollar piece on the table for a nucleus. Perhaps she can do something, but for the life of me I cannot tell what. What are you laughing at? Well, you are sympathetic."

"Doctor, do not go away cross" (for he is gone). "I was thinking what a pity that your purse is not as bulky as your heart."

He goes away muttering, never looking to the right or left. The next morning he drives up at even an earlier hour, ties his horse in the same place, takes even longer strides than on the preceding day, tugging at his gray moustache as though in deep thought. He is met half way up the path by the mistress of the house, who does

not wait for him to speak. but in a voice of deep emotion says : " Did you not hear that she had gone ? "

" Who is gone ? "

" Why, Angel, of course . there was no one else to go . "

" You talk in riddles , where has she gone ? "

" She is in Boston hours ago . "

" Whatever has she gone for ? Did you tell her about Dotty ? "

" Oh, that was why she went . "

" Bless my heart ! you did not let that child go off alone ? "

" Come in, and I will tell you all about it . "

He throws himself down on the step and motions for her to go on .

" She came in almost directly after you had gone . I told her , she ate her lunch, and hardly spoke one word, but put on her hat and went to Mrs. Williams. She was not gone above an hour , coming in she went to her room and stayed nearly an hour , then she asked me - ' Would I go to Boston with her ? ' I then had only two hours, but I said ' yes . ' I made up my mind in a moment I would go . "

" And yet you are here . Well, you are an enigma . I suppose you will tell me you went in a minute . "

" Doctor, how impatient you are ! Your wife must be a long-suffering woman . Well, when we got down to the Steamer, Captain Austin's wife was on board, and declared she was delighted to have her just for the sake of company, and promised to bring her safely back whenever she is ready to come . "

“ But I fail to see what good her going to Boston can do ”

“ She took some of her paintings to sell, and left this message for you , when I was coming away, she says ‘ Tell the doctor, mamma, that I have laid the case before a Higher than ourselves. tell him to read second chapter and eighth verse of the book of Haggai, also tell him to read Matthew twenty-first chapter and twenty-second verse.’ I have not the least idea what it is. Bring the Bible until we see ”

He opens it at both places. and as he does so a little slip of paper falls out. Mrs. Colcord picking it up says, giving it to him

“ It is for you, doctor. ‘ What we want is silver and gold. If He sees fit to give it to Dorothy she can go. I have faith He will, she is so capable , there are great possibilities in her for the future. If He does not, we will not be troubled.’ ”

He shuts the book with a sigh and goes away down the path without one word, and there is a suspicion of tears in his eyes.

CHAPTER XVIII

“Up and on the building goes :
 Every fair thing finds its place.
 Every hard thing lends a grace,
 Every hard may make or mar ”

—*Susan Coolidge.*

A WHOLE day and night pass without bringing any news. Captain Austin is interviewed, but he is strangely reticent. His wife had taken Angel home with her, when she had remained until Miss Thayer had come and taken her away, since when they had neither seen nor heard from her. It is the same on the second day, no news at all ; but on the third, as he brings the steamer around to her moorings, and sees the anxious watchers on the wharf, he holds high a letter. It is soon taken possession of by this loving, anxious mother, and the doctor, sitting in the phaeton, impatiently tugging at the reins, is quite as anxious. We will take the privilege of looking over as they read, driving slowly along the road

BOSTON. Oct. 29th, 1857.

DEAREST MAMMA,

I will begin at the beginning, as the children say. We had a most lovely trip. Miss Thayer came for me about eleven o'clock that morning. I felt a strange disinclination to leave, yet was afraid I was trespassing on the kindness of my hostess, for I thought she might have other plans than

staying at home for me ; but just as I thought I must go,— I had no excuse for any longer delay,—a woman came in a cab, and I waited and was introduced to her. A most unheard-of thing, for I am sure I should have gone, as I was ready, but I simply could not. Have patience. I tell you this that you may understand. The woman was Mrs. Reynolds from Nantucket, and directly she heard my name, looking keenly at me, she asked "Are you the young lady who spent a winter in Florida?" On being told I was the same, she asked me to stop, she was so glad to have met me, and where had we stayed, and was it expensive, and ended by saying she wished she had some quiet young body to go with her just for company. And then I told her about Dorothy, and she said she had made up her mind to go, but would consult her husband and let me know next day. And sure enough she came to tell me that she had decided to take her. I told her she would not be able to work at all. Why, she did not want any one to work, if the case came in hand she could wait on her, she was not going for her health, only to shun the cold winter, as the captain her husband was running to Pensacola, and would be as much there as in New York. I am so glad she can read and write. You will go to see her, and I need not tell you to comfort her mother, for I know you will. And give her my sea-side basket to put her things in, and do not let her take many,—no clothes, in fact, for they would not be suitable; such a fit-out as I have for her. I felt I must go out and buy her a cloak and a few things. I forgot to say that I sold the pictures at a price never dreamed of by me, and not for charity's

sake either. I put them on exhibition, and Kate Deward saw them; she has seen the Schaffhausen, and pronounced it most true, as well as lovely. They came to see me, and were so surprised they were mine. Well, as I was going to make my purchases, Mrs. Thayer asked Ethel if she thought there was anything I could utilize in the wing (I thought she meant a bird's wing—it was the lumber room), such lovely things piled on chairs and strung on a line. I found a lovely cloak of that rich brocade material, all drawn up by going through the salt water at Newport, I pressed it and cleaned it; we made a trip to the apothecary's for alcohol (it is fine stuff, could we only limit it to cleaning purposes), and with the help of mademoiselle, the things are lovely. When the Deward girls inquired, and were told we were engaged, they would not go away, but pushed their way right in by the maid, they went and brought oh! such lovely silk underwear, which will be so easily laundried, and takes up so little room, and a little travelling cap. And in the evening as the children talked it over, they found a lovely little satchel with a strap; our alcohol made it like new, and you should see how they furnished it with their pocket money, penknife, brushes and combs; and as I sat by the side of the trunk on the floor, putting lace in the neck of a lovely pale blue cashmere for morning, little Willie came and put a box of bon-bons down in one corner. I thought if the Lord wanted Dorothy to have bonbons they must be good for her. Is that sacrilegious, mamma? I could not help it. And Mr. Thayer brought for his share an elegant pale blue knit shawl, then I remembered how essential we had found them, and I was

sobered. for I had not thought of it. Tell Doctor Simpson that for his part he is to put her on board the steamer *without fail*, for that *a packet is being held for her a day at Nantucket*. And it is so, mamma. Captain Reynolds is waiting for her. Do not fail to send her Mrs Austin is on board. With fondest love to papa.

I remain,

Your loving daughter,

A. COLCORD.

P.S.—I shall go home next trip I long to see you.

A. C.

P P.S.—Should you ever come to want, Angel can turn mantle-maker, she has the *entrée* to our *wing*.

E. T.

CHAPTER XIX

“ No spot he may roam like the land of his birth—
 The dearest, the fairest, the favored on earth :
 It may be a palace, it may be a cot,
 'Tis home, happy home, and 'twill ne'er be forgot ”

THE year is drawing to a close, as years are apt to do, be they dark days or bright. August is fast making way for the long mellow days of September. Harry moves as in a delicious dream, he is too happy to be termed merry, his senses seem steeped in the gentle languor of a dream. His work has prospered wonderfully, as industry and sobriety are apt to prosper. He has studied hard and faithfully, accomplishing all he promised himself. As he sits in the sunshine, his mail arrives. Taking a seat beneath the trees where he can enjoy it undisturbed, he first opens the letter post-marked Richmond, not that he needs a post-mark in order to identify the dainty missive, with its rare subtle perfume and elegant chirography. It is rich in fancy, light and flowing in measure, over-flowing with fondest affection, veiled with native delicacy and graceful badinage. Many a laughing incident is related as to the progress of the trousseau, allusions to past happy hours, anticipations of his speedy return. He folds it with a sigh of satisfaction, a smile hovering on his lips and opens one post-marked Beaufort. All his letters from this dearly beloved mother are brimming with affection and solicitude for his welfare, but

this is peculiarly touching, in the fondness and deep mother-love breathing through every syllable. She begs her dear boy to return home when his year of study is completed, that it nearly broke her heart that he did not do so after his graduation, ending with the magic words "We expect aunt Helena at the beginning of next month." He decides to go on the spur of the moment, he loses all relish for study, saying it is only a few days at most. As the wedding is set for the twenty-eighth of October he will have ample time for the proposed visit. Then and there he finds he is longing for a sight of home. With him to will is to do, and knowing his mother will be anxious while he is on the ocean, he only answers one letter. And so it happens that the letter to that Northern home is read at the same time in which he reaches his own Southern sunny home. The journey has been very pleasant, the homeward way is always a glad way, be the absence long or short; any little differences are forgotten, and so is it with our traveller. Arriving unannounced, he is made much of, always a general favorite, each one is trying to outdo the other in showing him attention. He begs for a drive with his mother the next day after his return. As they drive slowly along a shady lane, turning quickly toward her he asks, with his heart in his eyes,—he thinks how greedy he has been, keeping all his happiness to himself

"Mamma, how would you like a daughter?"

Not taking in his meaning in the least, she says. "Oh! I would like it above everything. It was always a grief to us that we had none. Sons are very good, but a daughter wakes the home so bright."

He leans closer to her, with the sunlight of a rare smile lighting his face, for dearly she is beloved in spite of his long absence, and she, looking closely at him, bethinking herself that the question is odd, to say the least, waits. Almost in a whisper he adds :

"Well, you are going to have one I am going to give you the long-wished for boon, on the twenty-eighth of this month."

She sits as if stunned

"Have you not one word of congratulation for me?"

"Is it Miss Colcord?" (faintly).

"None other. *mère mine*. Now, how could you think of her?"

"I wish you all the happiness and length of days that fall to the lot of man."

"Thank you." And he goes down in his pocket, bringing out that last letter which he desires her to read. "But how did you happen to think of her?"

"Helena met her in New York last winter; they were staying at Senator Deward's. Your name was mentioned, and your aunt thought she looked conscious. She was very indifferent to all the attention she received, cordial to all but tender to none. It seems too good to be true. She is all we could wish. Why have you kept it so secret?"

"Nothing, only pure selfishness on my part."

"I can hardly credit it. It is not at all like you to be selfish."

"Well, call it a fad if you like. But read the letter; I give you *carte blanche* to do so."

As she goes on with its perusal, she laughs outright, in which she is heartily joined by Harry, until the tears are rolling down their cheeks, and this is an extract. "The building of the grey velvet for travelling is being gone on with. I gave it to Madame de Gendron in Washington Street. She almost refused to have anything to do with it, such an *outré* combination, scarlet and grey, and I could hardly induce her, even when I told her I had an artist at my back. She went on with her pretty foreign accent 'At your back, indeed' He had better stay at your back, for, surely, he will be ashamed to show his face. If you have an artist at your back I shall need two to sanction it when it is finished, else my reputation will suffer.' I assured her she should have two (I mean our two selves) I also assured her you had seen one in Berlin with a Russian princess inside it. She was pacified. It promises to be unique, to say the least." And so she goes on with her pretty air of proprietorship, worshipful affection and *bonne camaraderie* combined. It captivates the mother's heart as nothing else could. They reach home, and as he hands her out of the phaeton, she turns to him with a look of deep melancholy in her eyes, and he notices she is unusually pale. Bending low, he asks

"What is it? I thought you were pleased"

"So I am, but I am so sorry you did not let us know before. I could have done so much for you, and now the time is so short."

"Never mind, mamma, I am doing very well for myself, my things are already packed in my room. It is a wonder you did not notice parcels arriving."

She goes on into her private sitting-room, sinking down upon a low seat near the door, with a deep sigh, thinking she is alone. All at once Harold raises his long length from a sofa beneath the window ; advancing towards her he removes her bonnet, smoothing her hair much as a girl might. "What is to pay, mother mine?"

Raising her dark eyes to his, he sees them filled with tears.

"Do not tell me that you are about to be married, for I have all I can bear to-night. Do you know why Harry's engagement has been kept so secret?"

"Not I, not worth bothering about anyhow. I suppose he wishes to be quit of all the bother of publicity."

"He might have told us. Were you told not to tell?"

"Well, that is rich, seeing that I have never been told at all."

"I cannot understand it. I am sure I have not deserved it."

"No more have you. Never has a sweeter, nicer mother ever lived than you. Think no more about it. I would not let a little thing like that worry me."

"A little thing! you call that a little thing! Why, it is by far the *most* important action of his *whole* life. I should so have enjoyed doing things for him and getting his clothes ready."

"Believe me, he has done splendidly for himself. His portmanteau came home last night, silver plate with monogram."

"Always monogram! Why does he not have his name upon it, but, then, it cannot signify."

"His sleeves lined with white satin, and suits for yachting, and rugs, and shoes, he is no end of a swell, and two elegant top-coats; there is no lack of funds, I assure you. He is one of the favored few."

"Neither should there be any lack of funds. Miss Colcord will be very wealthy; we were talking about them not a week ago, papa and I. They have prospered beyond everything one ever expected."

At dinner it is the theme of conversation. Mr. Montgomery wishes to send an item to the daily in the morning. Harry begs him to wait until he sees fit to do it himself, for which he can find no reason even to satisfy his own heart. Arrangements are made for a trip to the city early on the morrow, to find something pretty for the bride-elect, and a few last things for the brothers. As Harold leaves on the following day for a year in Rome. With a few last words they separate for the night. Returning, late in the afternoon, Mrs. Montgomery brings with her a strong leather case, on opening it, a string of pearls is brought to view, resting upon a bed of pale blue silk velvet. "These will suit our daughter well," looking fondly at Harry as she places them in his hands. "Tell her that with this gift we give her a place in our hearts that has never before been occupied—a daughter's place;—from papa and myself."

At the same time, slipping a tiny box into Harold's hand and as he presses the spring an elegant pearl brooch is disclosed to view, one of those light, perishable affairs, but which had not been got for a trifle, as you can tell by the shimmering of the light upon its surface. He extends it

to Harry, saying: "With brother's love and best wishes for your future happiness."

"I thank you all very much, I am sure. Had you searched half the globe you could have found nothing lovelier."

"I am glad you are pleased. They are exquisite."

"Yes. that is the advantage of a seaport. one can nearly always pick up something out of the usual."

As they say good-night, they linger a few moments, for this is the last night they will all sleep beneath the old home roof for how long a time no one can tell, perhaps never. Early morning sees Harold on his way, saying

"Good-bye, darling mother. It is time I tried my wings." and with a wave of the hand he is gone. Harry remains three more days, which will leave him ample time to visit an old colleague about ten miles across the line into Virginia. Gaily the hours pass, he finds much pleasure in ranging around, visiting old scenes and friends. He is never tired ringing the praises of his betrothed. In his mother he has a delighted listener, they roam arm in arm, or sit in the shade of the trees on the lawn, never tired of talking. He describes the merry Christmas he spent in that far away Northern home, and tells her many an incident of his life abroad. One last look is taken, and the pearls are placed in a small knapsack to be slung across his shoulder. They take a peep into the portmanteau, which only waits to be locked; everything is perfect. His check-book is in his pocket. He steals away from the house in the early morning. Standing on the lawn, he takes a last long look at the house. He cannot bid them good-bye; he

has put a little card beneath his mother's door, with the words *au revoir* upon it. The house is very quiet on this first long day. They will not be sad, these two who are left. They delight in the brilliant prospects of Harry. He has been very industrious, they hear splendid accounts of him. He has brought home many little gems, exquisitely painted, of places which have particularly taken his fancy, two of which he has hung in his mother's own room. upon two stags heads, not over two inches in diameter, which he has himself carved. As her eye lights upon them, the mother's heart is warmly stirred for her absent boy. She walks back and forth, recalling each hour that has so quickly flown. Each day she paces it seems miles up and down the garden walks or across the plantation. she is so deeply engrossed in thought that they find it hard to rouse her; in reality she is trying to curb her impatience. so anxious is she for news regarding the absent ones.

CHAPTER XX.

“Then all the sweet speech I had fashioned took flight,
But I'll love him more, more
Than e'er wife loved before,
Be the days dark or bright.”

—*Jean Ingelow.*

It is midnight October twentieth. One more short week, and the home nest will lack the one who has made sunshine and brightness for twenty years. The last stitch has been taken in the trousseau, everything lies in the dressing-room, leading into the guest chamber. Extended upon a sofa is a shimmering pile of white satin in the shape of a dress, over it is thrown the long veil of finest lace, not lacking a long spiral wreath of orange-blossoms, so fine an imitation of the real that one fancies them heavy with perfume. On a chair stands a pair of tiny white satin shoes, while over its back hang the white silk stockings with a pair of long gloves of the same delicate hue; piles of lace-trimmed garments everywhere, that a princess might not scorn to wear. In an open drawer reposes the grey velvet referred to in the last letter. Very artistic it is, of that wonderful shade of grey more nearly resembling fur than cloth; the vest of soft thick silk in vivid scarlet; the jaunty cutaway coat, displaying lining of the same vivid hue as the vest. A pale blue teagown of silk and cashmere combined, embellished with billows of lace, piles of laces, and

all the little accessories of the toilet. The large travelling trunk, with its lid up, its long straps lying idly by its side, as though patiently waiting to receive its elegant contents. But where is the owner of this dainty trousseau? The adjoining room is occupied, the light is just now extinguished. Someone is walking up the path, and enters the house by the side door; it is very dark and bitter cold. Who can be abroad at this late hour? The silence of death prevails. Presently a rustling sound is heard in the dressing-room. The guest is none other than the absent betrothed, who has returned a day sooner than he is expected. He bends all his faculties to listen; the marauder, whoever it may be, moves with alacrity; he hears the unmistakable swish of silk and garments moving, oh so swiftly—very little real noise, yet enough combined with the hour to make him thoroughly wide awake. At one moment he thinks of alarming the house; the next he thinks it must be some maid who is wakeful, and he concludes to wait. He has barely settled this question in his mind, when the door swings noiselessly upon its hinges. Amazement holds him dumb, he can hardly breathe; the perspiration gathers on his brow, and no wonder, for a vision greets his sight to freeze the blood in the veins of the stoutest hearted. The bride-elect walks forth toward the tall mirror, holding high in her hand a large lamp, making a picture to delight the eye of an artist: the wide open blue eyes staring straight before her, the little rings of hair like burnished gold showing beneath the veil, the train of the dress extending far out over the carpet, and the veil itself enveloping her like a cloud. The tall, stately figure was never

shown to better advantage. The throat can vie in whiteness with the satin, and over all the weirdness of the hour. After taking a good look at herself, she turns leisurely, and with head held high, moves toward the door, closing it as she goes, and descends the stairs with that deftness of movement which always characterizes her. He hears the swish of the satin until she has crossed the hall ; she never stops until she stands inside the room where sleep her parents. The glare of the light wakes them. The mother takes in the situation at a glance, and springing to her side, relieves her of the lamp, at the same time making a swift motion to her husband, when between them they place her on a lounge, and the mother, kneeling by her side, commences to disrobe the passive form. A chill goes to her very heart as she removes the veil and wreath, the gloves, boots,—no article has been forgotten, even to the tiny lace handkerchief tucked between the buttons of her bodice. She remembers, with a sigh, that she has been very careful never to try them all on at one time, as there has been a superstition in the family that were the bride fully attired in her wedding garments, she would never wear them at the altar. Too well they know those eyes are unseeing ; as a child she has sometimes walked in her sleep, and making a friend (who is an invalid) a farewell visit, was induced to remain for the night, almost against her wishes. And some occult, mysterious influence has brought her home, as we have seen. Tenderly covering her, placing a pillow beneath her head with gentlest touch, she sleeps that profound, undreaming slumber which is almost too deep to be refreshing. I need hardly add she is the only sleeper.

The guest watches the daylight steal across the floor, and fancies it is brightest in the path where the trail of the silk has been.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,
And therefore is winged cupid painted blind."

—*Shakespeare.*

THE sun is high in the heavens on the following morning before the heavy slumber is broken, and she opens her eyes to the light of day. No light penetrates this darkened room, and yet she knows it must be day. Peering around, she soon sees where she has been sleeping, and giving a start she stumbles to her feet. At that moment she observes a figure. It is her own dear mamma sitting in the shadow, waiting for her to waken, with hands idly folded, going back to other hours, when she watched by her infant couch.

"Has anything happened, mamma? Did you send for me?"

"No, my dear; you came without being sent for."

"Oh!" And pale and trembling she sinks upon the floor at her mother's feet, burying her head in her lap, adding:

"I have walked home in the night! What will Carrie think when she finds me gone?"

"There is not the least harm done; I sent Jenkins hours before you could have been missed."

"Mamma! I dreamed such a queer dream," looking

around with bright, unwinking eyes, after a little hesitation.

"I did not put on my wedding things, did I?" (going on without waiting for an answer) for all signs of that midnight toilet have been removed. "I dreamed oh! such a horrid dream," covering her face with both hands, and shuddering; "that I saw Harry lying wounded, and dying, in oh! such a lonely wayside place."

"Never mind what you dreamed; dreams go by contraries, you must remember. I have a great surprise for you."

"Have you a letter? If you have, bring it quick? I cannot wait. You cannot imagine how I feel,—so nervous, so upset. What is it? Do tell me."

"Can you think? Here, take a swallow of tea, you will soon be yourself; then put this on," holding up a dainty blue cashmere dress that has come home only last night.

"Not that, mamma; give me the old one I took off; it will do nicely."

"No, no; I put the old one away; this will suit the occasion better. Who was coming to-morrow?"

"He has come this morning, he is already here. Give me the dress, quick."

"No, he came last night."

"And you never sent for me. No wonder I came home. I had more sense asleep than you all had awake. How could you do so, mamma?"

"Not quite so fast. It was after nine when he arrived, I knew it would be midnight before you could get home, and we all concluded to give you a good night's sleep."

"Which I got with a vengeance! I hope I did not disturb him?"

"I think not, he has not mentioned it; he is waiting on the front verandah for you."

Without waiting any second bidding, she trips over the floor; her feet hardly seem to touch it, they are as though she were treading on air. He opens the door, and meets her on the threshold. Taking her in his arms, he kisses her not once but many times in succession. He trembles from head to foot; she is the calmest of the two, and more astonished than she ever was before. She draws back quickly, taking a deep breath, as one might who is drowning. It is very seldom he has kissed her before. She reaches one arm out, placing it around his neck, running her fingers through his dark, curly hair. The very weight of her hand upon his head is a caress in itself. She is too happy to think of anything, excepting that the dreams of the night are vanished, they are but vapor, giving place to fondest love, brightest hope. Putting her hand upon his arm they pace up and down the garden path; the warmth of the sun has dispelled the chill of the night. Very quiet, they are hardly exchanging a word, until a summons comes to her for breakfast. Very reluctantly she goes, declaring she cannot eat a morsel, for it is long past the usual breakfast hour. The day passes quietly, the pearls are brought out and duly admired; the many messages of love are given to this future daughter-in-law. They wander beneath the trees, sometimes arm in arm, but more often she is slightly in advance talking back to him, and turning quickly to look in his eyes. On one such

occasion "Why so distraught!" she exclaims. "Were I to say just what I think, I should say you were just the least bit bored."

"That is exactly what I was thinking about you, and you visit your short-comings on me. But a pensive mood becomes you; I think you are doing it for effect."

"Effect, indeed! what an idea. Where is your conceit? Why, do you not think I am too happy to talk and laugh." For formerly this pensive couple have run races and pelted each other with flowers, and been, as onlookers thought, too gay for lovers, flying hither and thither the live-long day.

"Come in and we will try what music will do to while away the hours."

"Willingly, if you will play. I am a delightful listener."

"We will play together those duets we loved so much." And humming a gay snatch of some favorite song she seats herself at the piano, making place for him.

"I hardly think I can play. I got two of my fingers shut in the cab-door, and they are no end of a bother."

She starts off gaily enough with a little French melody, but soon tires. Turning to him, she exclaims:

"We will try the muses. You shall read to me."

The day passes, and night comes down. Gathered around the pleasant fireside, they are a strangely silent party. The parents are bracing themselves against the time when they will sit alone, with no bright head bending over her work or book in the opposite corner. The lovers are thinking,—of what? They separate for the night. As Mrs. Colcord goes to her room she fairly stumbles over Angel sitting on low stool in the darkness.

"Why, whatever are you doing here? I thought you went to your room."

"So I did, but I came back." Sinking her voice to a whisper, "Did you notice any difference in Harry?" she asks.

"Me! no; nothing more than a year and travel and being abroad would make. I think he has changed as little as it is possible for one to. What did you think the change consisted in? not in looks, he has not changed a day."

"I can hardly tell myself, much less explain it."

"Then I would not try, my dear. I hope you are not going to be fanciful. Think no more about it."

Exchanging good nights, they separate.

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CHAPTER XXII.

“Than strength of nerve or sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favourite seat be feeble woman’s breast.”

— *Wordsworth.*

THE sun is high in the heavens ere either of the lovers open their eyes to the light of another day. All nature is rejoicing ; it is a pleasure simply to exist on such a day, and breathe the glorious autumn air, the sunshine falling upon the gorgeous hues with which Nature is decking each leaf and vine, from faintest tint of gold to brightest scarlet. The day passes much like the preceding one, only varied by a drive in the afternoon. They make a few calls on intimate friends, whose acquaintance Harry has made on former visits. One is upon an invalid, who takes possession of him, declaring she will have him all to herself, asking him questions about Germany and his trip, and has he taken any notes ? and will he let her see any he has made ? let her use his eyes to see this foreign land ? On being answered in the negative that he has none, but had he, she would be quite welcome, assuring her that he made no notes, not even bank notes, at which they all laugh amusedly.

“ And how did you like Paris ? ”

“ I did not see it ; that is left for a future trip,” with a glance in Angel’s direction.

"What is life in Berlin like?"

"Very much like life in Richmond or any other place : we rise, we eat, we work, study, visit ; by and by we sleep again ; and presto ! a day is gone."

He answers easily, pleasantly, allowing himself to be made much of, until they exclaim with one voice :

"Angel, what is the matter?" (for she is pale to the very lips, and watching Harry with wide-open eyes from which all softness and gladness have fled). "I do believe she is jealous!" (with an arch glance at her.)

"I jealous! What an idea!"

They laugh it off.

"Do you not notice a great improvement in Angel this last year? especially her painting?"

Getting no answer except a little nod, she goes on :

"Have you two painted any yet? That was such a little gem you gave me!"

"We have not even visited the studio ; I only arrived night before last. late at that."

"Of course, you have so much to say to each other."

Making their adieux on their way home, he puts on a quizzical look (as she has seen him do so many times), and says : "Rather slow, is it not? I am not fond of visiting."

"Slow! why, you used to be so fond of Miss Gayfield ; she is so interesting and bright."

"Granted, so I am now, but she asked so many questions."

"Well, since you did not go on and tell her as you used, she had no other alternative."

After dinner she goes to the piano, dashing off into a

gay fantasia, Harry turning the leaves; she puts up her hand with a motion for him to stop, and with smiling lips, she sings a verse of a duet they often sang together. Running her fingers lightly over the keys, playing the interlude, she nods her head for him to take the answer. He commences and sings one line, bending close to see the words; when suddenly he stops short, declares he has forgotten it, does not feel in a singing mood. She leaves the instrument, and sits in a shady corner by the fire, and there is an end to music for the evening. One day nearer the great event for which such wonderful preparations have been made and are not yet completed. Soon quiet reigns; but before retiring Angel again finds her way to her mother's room, and sitting on the low stool is buried in deep thought, when Mrs. Colcord, entering with a light, exclaims:

"Why, Angel! I should think you were on the stool of repentance."

"I am almost, mamma. I am sure you cannot say you have seen nothing strange about"—(hesitating) "Harry to-day?"

"I really have seen nothing unusual; if you would tell me what to look for I might then see something, perhaps."

"Did you not see he did not sing that little simple duet which we have sung so many times?"

"I heard him say he had forgotten it, which was very natural; a year is a long time, and it is nearly fourteen months since he left here, and then having so many things to occupy one's mind."

"He has never been to the studio, neither mentioned my painting that I thought he would be so proud of. I have

worked so hard. In his last letter he said he had two little gems he had painted on purpose for me ; I should so prize them. Had I better ask him about them? or would it seem like begging?"

"I certainly should, were I in your place ; perhaps he feels too modest to bring them out as they are his own work. And then think of the advantages he has had : perhaps your efforts look poor to him."

"All the more reason why he should see mine ; he might give me ideas. I am so disappointed."

"Perhaps he is tired of it. I know nothing about it. Why do you not say all this to him, that you have been saying to me? He has most likely made long strides ahead of you."

"Well, I prefer him as he was, before he ever went away ; he is poor company, to say the least, since becoming so traveled and cultivated."

"I begin to think you are spoilt. I was often told you would be. Here you are with a beautiful devoted lover, an elegant trousseau waiting for your use, jewels lying in their caskets for your acceptance and use ; and you picking flaws about trivial things, making yourself more unhappy than I ever remember having seen you before."

"Forgive me, darling mamma, and good night ; I will not annoy you any more;" (adding beneath her breath) "I will take my trivial things to God. He will show me the way."

"Good night, love" (imprinting a kiss upon her brow). "God bless you and keep you, dearest. Do not mention this to papa, he would be dreadfully disturbed. You have too much to make you happy ; this will all pass off. We will forget it."

At last the house is quiet, and darkness reigns supreme.

It is nearing the hour of noon on the day following. Angel has betaken herself, with her doubts unsolved, her fears possessing her, to a summer-house at the farther side of the lawn ; and here she sits looking sad and weary ; the air is quite chilly but the place is quiet and sheltered. In her heart she is praying that God may open the eyes of her understanding and set her fears at rest forever ; she wants what is best for herself in life. Hearing a step on the graveled walk outside she sees it is Harry with an open letter in his hand, his hair tossed, his cheeks flushed. It is from Aunt Helena. As he holds it towards her she sees his hands tremble so he can hardly hold the paper. We will take a peep, glancing over her shoulder as she reads :

WASHINGTON, D.C., October, 1558.

My dear nephew,

I received yours of September 12th, also the pictures you so kindly sent. I am very glad to hear of your happiness. Give my fondest love to Miss Colcord. I am not a stranger to her ; I was prevented making the promised visit at the last moment by the illness of your uncle. He is well now. Never mind, we will meet next summer ; I will go to see you wherever you settle. I prize the scenes more as your work, and I have cause to feel proud of you. They are very much admired. I have them hung in the east drawing-room, between the oriel window and the side entrance,—a splendid light. There was a young artist here, who is considered authority,—saying he expects to hear from you again—and he said it was good work. You will find by express a token of our love for you both ;

and that you may see many years of happiness is our sincere wish. I congratulate you most heartily, joined by your uncle.

I remain,
Your loving aunt,

HELENA.

The last doubt vanishes as she folds the letter and returns it to him.

"Shall we drive or walk?"

"Walk, by all means; just the day for a walk. I will be ready in a moment. I long to know what it is. Have you any idea?"

"Not I! We shall soon know."

Her eyes rest on him, filled with the light of love; her heart is light as she trips by his side. They reach the office, pay and receipt the bill. He places the box in her hands; they conclude the contents will keep until they are at home. When they open it, they find another small box inside, of fragrant Russian leather; pressing the little spring, it opens with a click, and on a bed of pale blue satin, rest a pair of bracelets, composed of large limpid-looking pearls, so rare to find and yet so beautiful, each one attached to the other, which is set in dead gold, by little beaten gold bars, as elastic as cloth, to fasten around the arm.

"What a perfect match for the necklace! I shall be loaded with pearls" (putting them on her wrists), which lose nothing by comparison with the pearls, fully as white, beautifully rounded and dimpled. Looking at her as she admires them, he says:

"If the pearls become you, you certainly become the pearls."

They pass the rest of the day wandering about, he telling her about Aunt Helena and his own darling mother, that they must have compared notes and agreed on the pearls, —one the necklace, the other the bracelets. The next day dawns with a little drizzle of rain, just enough to keep every one in doors with the exception of those who are obliged to go out. The day passes without incident, excepting that time hangs heavily, which is a very unusual thing in this busy household. All day the rain pours, no interest is manifested by either in the many pursuits in which they have formerly been so much interested, and which have filled every moment. The day drags its slow length to a close, and is numbered with all those that have passed. The house is quiet, all are supposed to be sleeping; one there is who finds sleep hard to woo. Throwing a shawl around her shoulders, she sits by the window; the rain has ceased, but a dreary sound is heard of the wind sighing through the branches of the trees. As she sits, thinking of nothing in particular, she sees a spark of light moving to and fro beneath the trees, like some restless spirit. At last it dawns upon her that it is the light from a cigar; then, if a cigar, there must be a man at one end of it; but who is the man walking on their lawn at this hour of the night,—fully eleven o'clock? Harry never smoked. She is not long left in doubt; the cigar is flung high in air, and she sees it a moment as it smokes among the wet grass, then all is dark; but directly she hears the door open and close, softest footsteps mount the stairs one by one, until they reach the room occupied by the only guest the house contains. For a moment her heart stands still. Why this

secrecy? The next she laughs softly to herself, thinking how simple ; of course everyone smokes in Germany ; why, it is a land of pipes. He must have taken it up, and hugging this last and most pleasant proposition to her heart, sleep comes, an ever welcome guest to tired Nature.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

“ In dewy damps my limbs were chilled ;
My blood with gentle horrors thrilled ;
My feeble pulse forgot to play—
I fainted, sunk, and died away.”

From the Greek of Sappho,

—*By Ambrose Phillips.*

MORNING dawns cold and chill, a sheen of gold is in the air ; each leaf glitters like silver in the sun, holding its measure of last night's rain. Raising her sash and looking away over the hills, a new life pulses through her veins ; the vagaries of the last three days are put away, Angel says to herself she will accept “ the goods the gods have brought her,” and leave the ill. As she trips down the stairs she notices the door of a disused room standing ajar ; stopping to close it, her eye is attracted towards some object lying just inside the room upon the floor, as though flung there in haste. Stooping to pick it up, without any thought whatever, she turns it over in her hand. It is an old worn-out cigar case. Taking it to the light, she sees, inter-woven among the faded delicate flowers with which it is embroidered, the monogram H.M. It is so badly worn that it is hard to tell the original color or material of which it is made. Throwing it back she hastily closes the door, saying “ Go, lie there ; I wish I had never seen you ! ” For the thought comes to her that one year would never

wear an article as that is worn, and only last year, one short year ago, Harry had said casually one day when walking with her in the garden that he had never learned to smoke. How well she remembers the day, the hour, adding that he could not see any good purpose it could serve; and why should he have told her that, surely smoking was no crime. She passes on into the breakfast room, but she has left her appetite in that disused room, on the floor at the top of the back stairs. Reader, have you ever been divided between hope and despair? if so, it needs no explanation: one moment up in the clouds, the next prone upon terra firma. Leaving the room as soon as she can possibly get away, she indites a telegram, saying to herself, "Ella will help me. Strange, I did not think of it before." And this is a fac-simile:

RICHMOND, Oct. 25.

To Miss Ella Healy,

Come without delay, and *sub rosa*.

A. C.

Going down the back stairs she finds Jenkins, and despatches him, with a charge to keep it a secret, and waits. No eyes were ever more watchful than hers; she tries to read the heart of the one who sits before her, but the heart is hard to reach, the face is there that seems to mirror every thought. They walk about the lawn sometimes arm in arm, but more often far apart, until Angel steals away in the middle of the afternoon, and going to her room, sends word, wishing to be excused, as she has a headache, not coming down again until the next morning; she is looking really ill, for she has not been able to sleep.

They wear the time out until one o'clock, when Angel asks Harry if he would like to take a walk in the direction of Richmond with her. Mrs. Colcord proposes to accompany them; of course they both urge her to come, but it upsets all Angel's plans. Half a mile from the house they meet a cab, Ella immediately jumps down, shaking hands with each in turn. Turning, they follow the cab to the house. For the rest of the day there is no lack of laughter and gay banter, as Ella was always a favorite with Harry. Retiring for the night Ella makes her way to her cousin's room, and standing before her says: "Well, Angel, what is it?"

"What is what?"

"Why, this secret manner of sending for me all the way to New Jersey. I sent a despatch home directly that you were all well; mother was so alarmed; it did not reach us as secretly as it left here."

"Do you see any difference in Harry?"

"Yes, I think him handsomer and more *debonaire* than formerly; travel has greatly improved him. You are a lucky girl."

"Well, you know him so little, I suppose that accounts for it."

"Accounts for what? Why, I was six weeks here with him constantly last summer, or rather a year ago last summer, although it seems but yesterday. Do you think him so much changed?"

"I can hardly express it to you, for I am so disappointed; I thought you would see as I do. Why, he might be a stranger for all I care about him."

"Angel, beware! I shall say as Festus said unto Paul, only with a change of one word, 'much' happiness 'doth make thee mad.'"

"With just as much sense and reason."

"Well, good night and pleasant dreams;" and she is gone.

Angel throws herself into a low seat, and laughs immoderately,—the idea of pleasant dreams. And through the air and before her eyes floats the one word *Mizpah*; and as she sits with folded hands, something seems to say to her: you have the key in your own hands. A shudder runs through her frame, she turns deathly pale, and whispers to herself: What if it fails! A look of resolution passes over that gentle face very unusual to it; a hard, cold glitter is in the blue eyes; they shine like polished steel. She rises, and as she makes her toilet for the night, she murmurs to herself: "I am no child to shrink from pain; I will take this affair into my own hands. No, thrice no;" with hands tightly clasped, and moving up and down before her as if propelled by machinery: "Father, lead me wheresoe'er thou wilt; I will not shrink, into Thy gracious hands I place my destiny. Show me the path, and be it thorny or smooth, I will follow it." Her only thought is, as her head presses the pillow, that all these days have passed in close companionship, and not one word of this solemn compact which has been made between them and sealed with the word *Mizpah*. The next morning she walks the house and grounds until her courage is up to the point, and then there is Ella who is very fond of horseback riding, for this is what she is

determined upon, a horseback ride with him all to herself. She asks Ella to buy her a few things in town which have been forgotten, and when Harry offers to accompany her, she comes out boldly and asks him to stay ; she wants him herself. When Mrs. Colcord offers to go, everything seems to fall out just as she wishes. The phaeton is no sooner lost to view than she advances her proposition for a ride on horseback. The roads are hard from the late rain, no dust, just the breeze to put life and spirit into one. As he assists her to mount, he holds the tiny foot a moment longer than seems necessary, for if the blood of a hundred earls coursed through the veins of this dainty equestrian, she could not be prouder. As she is seated, the very spirit of mischief enters into him, and with his raised whip he gives her horse a stinging blow upon his flank. He flies high in the air, for very seldom has this fleet Arabian ever felt the weight of the whip. Gentle as a dog, as fleet as the wind, he has never needed it. She bites her lip hard to keep back the angry torrent of words, and works with all her might to keep her seat. He thinks, as she gradually brings him under subjection with little gentle pats, that he has never seen her look so lovely, the Lincoln green habit fitting the elegant form so perfectly, the long trailing feather of the same shade adds a new lustre to the beauty that so charms him, and then that angry light in her eyes. With one final pat of the long mane they are away upon the road.

“ I should say to look at you that you were angry. It is well worth your anger to see your nerve. I thought you would get flung sure. I was ready to catch you. Who would have thought the brute had such spirit? ”

She smiles disdainfully.

"He has never been struck before since he has been owned by us."

"You don't say so. I wonder what he would do were I to strike him again?"

"You had better not try it; I assure you I will not answer for the consequences. There is no need; I have only to tighten the rein and he will do his best."

"I have not the least idea of striking him again. No harm done, I hope. Do not look so—I do not know what to call it. What has come to you these last few days?"

The frown is cleared away, and over hill and through dale they go, followed by many pairs of admiring eyes. Returning, as they near the cross roads leading by a narrow pathway up to the face of the hill, turning her head slightly away she asks:

"Do you remember our first ride to Beaufort that night so long ago?"

Receiving no answer, she turns to look at him, and sees he is white to the lips, and looking in each other's eyes, for the horses have come down to a walk, he sees the trim figure sway for a moment in the saddle, and noting the deadly pallor of her face, he thinks to himself it is the fairness of her complexion against the dark green of her habit, and the long dark feather that touches her shoulder. If she has hesitated, she resolves to hesitate no longer. Recovering himself with a laugh he asks:

"What were you saying? do I remember? there are some things one never forgets," with emphasis.

They just reach the last point when the path diverges about a quarter of a mile from the house; she brings her horse down upon his haunches right across his path with so quick a movement, that, good horse-woman as she is, he thinks she will lose her seat. Recovering herself, she is face to face with him; she comes even nearer.

"Then if you never forget, why do you not bring the glove?"

No pen can portray the manner in which she asks the question. She seems an avenging angel; her eyes are dark with suppressed emotion; her cry is one of a soul in deepest agony; she leans over until their faces nearly touch. He is too dumb-founded to speak; it has all been so sudden. It is as though he had been attacked by an unseen foe; his very look betrays him. He feels he must say something, but his lips refuse their office.

"You coward!" comes from her white lips. "You know nothing about it; your very looks admit it; there is no need of words," with a gesture of despair.

He recovers himself with a strong effort.

"You do take one so by surprise! Give me time."

"Time! I should say you have had time. I give you ten minutes. Will you bring it now while I wait?"

He moves not a muscle of his face, nor answers one word.

"Admit you do not know which way to turn for it? Ah! it is a sealed page to you; you admit it without any words. Dear God! grant that I may retain my reason and mind," and with a wail that might pierce a heart of stone, she exclaims: "Where is Harry? Where, oh where is my darling?"

And with the forgetfulness of despair she brings her gloved hand down upon the horse ; he flies in the direction of the house. He sits still where she has left him and follows her with his eyes, expecting every moment to see her lose her seat ; she sways from side to side, she is drunken with anguish. As she nears the door she slides down from the horse , she staggers and stumbles and gropes her way like one blind as she goes up the steps, with head held low, as though beaten by the storm, never stopping until she is inside her own room, as " a wounded deer seeks the shady covert in which to die." The mother, seeing the riderless horse pass the window on his way to the stable, and hearing footsteps in the hall, looks out, asking :

"What is the matter? Has anything happened to Angel?"

"She is out of sorts about some old glove she lost when I was here,—I forget about it ; and she will insist upon my bringing it."

She waits to hear no more, but calls back.

"Do not fret ; it will come all right. I think she is not well."

Knocking at the door, and receiving no answer, she turns the knob and goes in. To the day she dies she will never forget the scene that greets her eyes. Angel tumbled in the middle of the bed, just as she came in, her hands gloved, her hat awry, the hue of death upon her face,—no life, nor motion. Calling loudly for help, she brings the maid, and dispatching a man for the doctor, they remove her things, doing what they can to restore

her, but their efforts are unsuccessful,—neither breath, nor pulse. At last she breathes faintly, just as the doctor, coming up the stairs two at a time, exclaims, taking her hands, “Bless my heart! what is ‘his?’” calling for this and that, all the time chafing the hands he still holds. She opens her eyes at last, and seeing them all standing by her realizes where she is and what has happened. She wrings her hands, and her grief breaks out into words.

“Oh! my darling is lying dying in that lonely place, and nothing being done to save him!”

Shriek after shriek breaks from her lips, until she again loses consciousness. The mother turns to the doctor with her heart in her eyes.

“What can it be? What shall I do? and oh, Doctor, so short a time before the wedding!”

“Never mind the wedding now,” working with might and main to bring life back to the inanimate form. “She has had some severe shock that has nearly driven her mad; let us hope that it has not quite. Have you any clue as to what the nature of it is?”

“Well, doctor, she has been very strange ever since Harry’s return.” Going on, gasping for breath, and nearly fainting herself, she tells him of the many strange questions she has asked and how unhappy she has been, and Ella comes forward with the telegram she received, and describes their conversation that first night of her arrival.

“Well, the gist of all this is, that she thinks the man is not Harry Montgomery?”

“That is just what she does think, doctor; but of course

it is; it must be." He favors her with an indulgent smile.

"Of course it is. Why, isn't he known by half the county? This is simply an hallucination, but, mind you, one that must be humored."

Towards morning he slips out on the landing to get a breath of air, for all through the long hours of the night he has fought the terrible symptoms, bringing love and patience as well as his skill to the task. He comes across Harry, looking the very picture of dejection, as he crosses the hall to meet him, and is saying in his kind but abrupt way—

"I am so sorry for you."

A shriek comes ringing out from the room he has left, turning hastily, he retraces his steps, but she is beyond all control. Waving her hands as if to drive away some demon or evil spirit, she cries, "Take him away! Do not let him come near me!" and shivering in keenest agony, she strikes out with the palms of her two feverish hands, and with the strength of despair brings them together, until the tender flesh is cut and bruised. "I tell you to send that man away, unless you want me to die before the light of another day dawns." And looking full in the face of the old physician who has been her staunch friend from the hour of her birth, while her eyes are lighted by the light of reason, exclaims in a high-pitched, shrill voice, very unlike her usual gentle accents: "If I hear his step again I cannot answer for the consequences. He is nothing to me; he has the appearance of a murderer in my eyes. Before God I believe his hands are stained with innocent

blood. Oh! my darling, in what lonely place are you lying, perhaps dying far away to lie uncoffined and unknown!" She murmurs softly to herself, and drifts out into what seems like the vast unknown, and the struggle goes on: one moment she seems as rational as one could wish—the light of intellect shines within her eyes; the next she remembers; and day after day the silence of death reigns within and around the house. Harry with his portmanteau steals out of the house in the gray of the early morning, taking up his quarters at the nearest hotel. He waits day after day, hoping against hope, saying each night he will leave in the early morning, and put the ocean between them. And still this hand-to-hand fight with the grim monster we call Death goes on. You who have sat by the bedside of loved ones need no description. Your mind travels back to the time when you were as a frail bark riding on the billows,—one moment rising high on the wave called hope; the next, dashed down into the trough of the sea, which is dark despair.

One morning as the doctor comes out on the landing after his usual early morning visit, he stands for a moment at the top of the stairs in deep thought. The judge is at the end of the hall looking out of the window, seeing nothing, for his eyes are brimming with unshed tears. He comes forward, hearing a step.

"Doctor, is there any hope? Anything is better than this suspense. I cannot bear it."

For three weeks have passed, and they have waited with bated breath. The bell is muffled, that ominous sight, and those who come with sad hearts to inquire,—and they are

many,—step inside, and receive the sad news—just the same, no better.

“My dear friend, in your case most anything is better than certainty. ‘While there is life there is hope,’ is old and true! I have done all I can do. I dare not administer any stronger opiates; and unless sleep can be induced, she cannot last much longer. I have to go to see another patient, but I will return as soon as possible. I hope for the best. God help you.”

While he is speaking, the father removes his coat. It happens he has on one of those soft flannel shirts; he takes the sleeves in his fingers and tries its quality, crushing it as one does silk. Passing on into the room, he gathers the restless head, shorn of all its golden wealth, within his arms, with the small soft pillow on which it rests. Passing his right hand carelessly over her brow, and through her hair, two, three, four times, smiling lovingly into her eyes, he murmurs in fondest tones:

“Does papa’s little girl want to sleep?” Repeating nearly under his breath. “Papa’s darling, sleep now. Bless papa’s little girl.”

She raises her eyes for one moment; the next the white lids close, the long fringed lashes lie on her cheeks, and in ten minutes she is fast asleep. A gentle perspiration breaks out upon her forehead, the muscles of her face relax, she presses her head more closely to the pillow, and sleeps as might a tired child. Not a sound disturbs the stillness of that darkened room. One hour passes, two hours, three hours; and the father, half standing, half kneeling, moves not an eyelid. Another hour passes. The

doctor returns. and seeing the sleeper, takes the pillow by force of strength, and eases it down upon the bed. Turning, he assists the judge out. and not a moment too soon, for, strong man as he is, fatigue and emotion have overcome him, and he is on the verge of fainting. The man speaks now,—it was the father speaking before. Bringing water, the doctor gently forces him to take a little. and wetting his fingers he applies them to his brow. Taking out his watch :

“As I live, four hours’ Who would think it? You were not the best oar at Cambridge for nothing, that is sure. I can pronounce her safe, if nothing occurs.”

The strong man sobs like a child

“Here, here. We shall have to put you to bed next and put a mustard plaster on your head and leeches on your toes. No more of that now.”

And so it falls out that after another hour Angel wakens, and glancing up sees a strange face bending over her pillow ; the nurse quickly draws back. and the mother, taking her place, says softly : “You are to be very quiet now, and drink this,” holding a cup to her lips. She essays to rise up, but all in vain ; she looks at her hand lying upon the counterpane, it is nearly transparent. and too heavy for her to raise. Again her eyes close, and sleep presses them with her health giving fingers. And so day after day she lies, lost to all anxiety as to her surroundings ; she might be an inmate of a castle or a hovel, it is all the same to her ; a dull lethargy has seized upon her ; she is hardly sensible of pain, very obedient. taking whatever is given her, answering any questions that are asked, but

never asking one in return ; for the first time in her life avoiding the eye of her dear mother, who would give the wealth of the Indies, were it hers to give, to see the hue of health upon her cheek and the light of happiness in her eye. But to this papa, who hangs over her to catch a word, or obey her lightest wish, she looks with fondest love. One morning, when she is sufficiently recovered to be removed to a chair, she looks up at him with such a world of wistfulness in her face, "Papa, is there no letter for me? No news from Harry?" She hesitates and blushes, after receiving a grave shake of the head: "Papa, where—when did that man go? He is not staying on, is he?"

"No, my dear, he stayed two weeks at the hotel; then he went to the continent, I think to France."

"I suppose, papa, you and the doctor and everyone think it was Harry? I know mamma does."

"It does not matter, daughter, what anyone thinks. I am sure we are glad to keep you. I never knew how we prized you until I thought we would lose you. You are not to think of it, else you may get ill again."

"No, dear papa, I will not get ill again. I am going right now to get well for your sake. I am going to fight down this terrible languor, and get strong. I will go downstairs Christmas day."

"Well, you will have to hurry up then, for it is only a little over a week; but you must not hurry, because you will only get put back. When one has been so very ill it takes a long time to recuperate."

Another morning she says to him: "Papa, it is a very

bad business altogether, is it not? What did you tell people when you put the wedding off?"

"Bless your heart, never mind; you will make yourself ill."

"But I do mind. Tell me right now."

"We sent notes to a few friends: 'Indefinitely postponed on account of severe illness.' It soon spread among all the invited guests. No one came."

"Papa, you are hiding something from me; your eyes are shifty. Give me that letter out of your pocket. I know it is from Beaufort."

He puts his hand over the pocket, with a quick gesture.

"It is not for you: it will only pain you" (biting his lips that he has said so much). He is running away. Her old wilfulness returns which delights his heart.

"Give me that letter, quick, or I will run right down stairs."

As he surrenders it up, she puts her arms around his neck: "You dear, delightful, transparent old humbug."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
 In every fragment multiplies, and makes
 A thousand images of one that was
 The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
 And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
 Living in shattered guise, and still, and cold,
 And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
 Yet withers on till all without is old,
 Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold

—*Lord Byron.*

OPENING the letter tremblingly, she reads, and we will read too, until the very end is reached, with her.

SUNNIVALE PLANTATION,
 BEAUFORT, N. C., Nov. 19th, 1858.

My Dear Friends,

We received Harry's intelligence with much grief. I hope at next accounts your daughter will have recovered her usual health and spirits. Should you hear anything of the whereabouts of our son, you will greatly oblige us by communicating with us immediately. I am deeply grieved at the turn affairs have taken. Of course no blame can be attached to anyone, but it is a great pity for all our sakes, and more especially for my son, that Miss Colcord did not find out her own mind sooner. He blamed no one in the letter I received, only in its air of deep melancholy. And knowing how he idolized her, we fear the worst for him.

In his college days, he acquired a very bad habit, that of gambling. He always strenuously denied it, but now his going to France, and saying we need not expect to hear from him until he has mastered his grief and disappointment, points to but one conclusion. Thinking his marriage would put a bar upon his passion for gaming, he is better supplied with means than he otherwise would have been. You ask what disposal we wish made of the presents? Should you not care to retain them, you can place them in some bank, subject to my husband's order,—any one most convenient to you.

I remain,

Yours with most sincere regrets,

LAURA MONTGOMERY.

“Mamma Colcord, to think that a mother would write a letter of that kind about her only son. He did not know how to play at cards at all. I asked him one day if we should play that evening; his answer was he had never learned. He said the boys of his class learned just before he had time, he was very busy with his lessons, and this is the way he expressed himself. ‘A crazier set I never saw in my life than they were. They had a game in the morning, two at noon, and half the night they sat and knitted their brows and bet money, and neglected their studies, and were cross the next day, and before I got ready I made up my mind I would not learn.’ I remember just what he said, that he took with redoubled zeal to his music and painting, and he found he had spent less hours and less money than they had; when he had a nice picture, that he could get a good price for, should he wish

to sell it, and could entertain them with his music. So that they ceased to ask him to take a hand, and he played for them by the hour, which kept him in good practice." She stops, literally out of breath. "I see you do not believe him, mamma. Why do you turn your head away?"

"I have no right to dispute his word; but, my dear, you do not know the world. When one has something to hide, one nearly always talks in that high and mighty manner, knowing you to be so credulous."

"I am not so simple. I can tell when one talks with their eyes and their whole soul, the very impress of truth is stamped upon every word. Mamma, why has no one called? Even Edith McMaster nor Alice Winchester have not come to see me. They must know I am down stairs by this."

"They have all called every day to inquire after you. You owe a thousand calls."

"And I am not going to pay one. You know the reason they do not come, and you are afraid to tell me. You need not be; for too well I know what you all think. How can I rectify it? Mamma, do you think I am queer in my head? Now, tell me true."

This loving mother, who has been drilled not to mention it, and has been so silent, afraid of saying too much, until a wall has been built between these two, who were formerly such friends and companions, for answer draws the head with its little golden rings of hair upon her breast, and wets it with her tears. She looks up into the sorrowful face, and exclaims:

"Dearest mamma, I never meant to grieve you so. I

see you do, and so I am sure must everyone. I deserve it. I worshipped the creature more than the Creator. I have been proud. I see now all that last year he was in Germany, and we were engaged. I bowed down to an idol."

"How can you talk so. I am sure you always loved God, and tried to do His will, and when I spent money for you, it would have suited you far better to spend it in charity."

"Would it please you, mamma, were I to go to Mrs. Herminway's party?"

"Immensely."

"Then I will go, and wear my new opera dress I had made in New York, it will be quite fashionable."

Before they have finished speaking, as they glance from the window, three ladies are coming up the steps, in full view; they have not time to make a motion. Mrs. Colcord knows she still has upon her cheeks the traces of tears; she is almost too faint to stand. But she need have no fear, for nothing could exceed the grace and sweetness with which they are received by the younger lady. After congratulating her on her recovery, they are found the most comfortable seats, and placed entirely at their ease. Conversation flows on smoothly, little ripples of laughter are heard, and this call that looked so formidable to one, at least, of the group, ten minutes before, differs in no way from any other. At last, as they are about leaving, one of the young ladies,—for it is a mother and her daughters,—with a sweet smile in Angel's direction:

"I wonder if we will ever play together again the lovely little gems from Martha we practised so hard upon."

"There is no time like the present, if you feel inclined.

"The present moment is our ain ; the neist we never know."

For with her delicate perceptions, she knows in one moment this is a challenge, but not an eyelid moves or a wave of color crosses her face. She selects a sheet, knowing that those firm, supple fingers do not soon forget their cunning after so many years of study. Soon the room is filled with melody. As they are about to finish, Judge Colcord, coming in, shakes hands quietly with the ease and grace for which he is distinguished. As their music dies away, with a tender cadence, he applauds gently, saying, "Bravo."

"I suppose we shall hardly see you at the party to-morrow evening?"

"I think so ; we were just deciding to go as you came in."

"That will be charming. I am sure we shall all be very glad."

With many polite adieux they take leave. The door is hardly closed, when he asks :

"Are you really going to the party? Do you feel equal to it?"

"Yes, we must go ; we both wish to go. You will come?"

"I suppose so. There is no must about it, unless you wish it. I cannot believe you wish to go."

"We have decided to go, papa. It is time I went out."

When the evening arrives, both ladies are elegantly attired. Angel in particular never looked lovelier : her dress

of pale blue silk velvet with finest of mechlin lace around the basque, neck and sleeves, the front sewn with seed pearls, one long spray reaching from neck to waist.

In the course of the evening, seeing a little bower screened by a curtain of lace filled with roses, holding just a small divan, she steps inside in order to be by herself for a few moments. She has no sooner seated herself than she is joined by Herbert Ashland, he not observing her, as she sits in the semi-darkness, and thinking to spend a quiet moment. As he stands before her, Agnes and Hattie Carlon, two sisters, stop directly in front of the curtain, and talking in undertones (they hear every word); she can touch them by the slightest movement of her hand, instead she motions him to be quiet.

"I think Angel Colcord is making herself appear in a most ridiculous light."

"I agree with you for once, especially after *indefinitely postponed*, and not a word since."

"They say she is mad; and no wonder, so much petted and indulged as she has been, and so exclusive. I just believe that if she wanted to go to France to-morrow she would go; they are so soft about her."

They have other listeners, two tall slender young ladies standing near, whom we have seen before—Edith McMaster and Alice Winchester. It is Alice who takes up the cudgel in defence of her friend, speaking sharply, but very low: "It ill becomes you to stab a friend in the back. It is not so long since you were glad to have her old dolls renovated for your pleasure" (for these are *nouveau riches*).

Alice knows she is on solid ground, for she is of those who are used to the purple, noble-hearted and generous, never lacking plenty of friends.

"I think it downright mean of you to mention the dolls. I wonder if the dress she is wearing belongs to the trousseau? She will have no lack of fine feathers for the season" (with a very ill-concealed sneer).

"The dress belongs to the wearer without doubt, if that is your meaning; but it was bought and made in New York last winter for the opera."

The sisters move on; they are getting the worst of it.

And Alice, turning her back to her companion, lets a great tear roll down her cheek, and taking Edith's arm, dropping her proud head, says shyly, tremblingly, as though afraid to trust herself to speak:

"Poor darling! let us go in search of her, and hold her right between us, that the venom of their poisoned tongues may not reach her."

They move away. Angel lays her hand lightly upon the arm of her companion, pressing it as they take a round-about way through the conservatory with an upward look, speaking serenely as though it were some other person whose concern it is.

"It is worth a little pain to know one's friends."

After making the circuit of the broad verandah, Herbert still holds her hand upon his arm; a dull pain is tugging at his heart: they have been school-mates, class-mates, the best of friends. He feels fierce towards himself that he was not able to shield her or close his own ears. They are soon surrounded by her champions, crowding closely

around her : one wishing her to come to the conservatory to see the night-blooming cereus, Alice declaring she is to go to the library to see the new picture. She raises her eyes to Herbert's, his anger is all dispelled, and the girls little dream she reads between the lines. In after years it cements their hearts as nothing else could do.

After breakfast is over on the following morning, Angel, leaning over the back of her father's chair, toying with his hair, asks :

"Papa, can I go to France if I want to for the winter?"

"Why, I suppose so. Nothing is impossible."

"Well, papa, I do not wish to go to France, but oh I would so love to go to Germany. I could have a companion; there are a great many who would like to go for pay and the trip."

"I know one who would go without pay. There is your mother now, for her to go would do her good; it will do you both untold good."

"But, papa, how can we leave you all alone?"

"I shall get along famously. I will get your cousins and auntie to come and make the place home-like. I shall be happy if I know you are. Will you be?"

"I cannot promise to be happy any where, papa; but I will try."

"That is my good girl. How soon can you be ready?"

"I can start to-morrow, if mamma can be ready."

"I suppose I am to be disposed of, without having a voice in the matter, just as though I were a bale of merchandise."

"Hoity toity! Do you not wish to go?"

"I cannot say that I care very much to go, and leave

you alone ; only think of the distance, the time it takes should anything happen you."

"Then I will go myself and leave you. How will that do?"

"It will not do at all. I could not stay here alone."

"Well then, go with a good grace. I venture to say you will enjoy it. I will take a run over and bring you back in the spring. I shall love the trip."

"Oh, papa! you are the dearest, dearest. These words fail to describe you."

"Why! what is the matter with me that you cannot find words to fit me. Well, I must be going. Get everything ready. When can you start, mother?"

But he is not going to get away so easily. Here has Angel been hugging the delusion to her heart all night. That it was of no use to ask, and now they are to prepare. Joy beaming in every feature, she goes out and down the path with him, arm in arm. At the gate she puts her arms around his neck, and whispers "you dear, darling, comforting old daddy." She stands to watch him as he goes on out of sight, then goes slowly back to the house.

CHAPTER XXV.

“ Ha ! like a kind hand on my brow,
Comes this fresh breeze,
Cooling its dull and feverish glow—
The breath of a new life,—the nealing of the seas ! ”

Two days in which to prepare for the journey, and for leaving the house for an indefinite length of time. We are all acquainted, more or less, with the process of locking away treasures, sorting clothes, packing useful articles, saying farewell to a few intimates, sending cards to numberless dear friends one is leaving. The day following, as the long train of cars moves out, the family are on board, looking with eyes that are sad, despite a great effort to be cheerful, on the last of home, until spires and landscape are lost in the distance.

No happy flying visits are made either in Boston or New York, only the inevitable cards with P.P.C. in the corner. It happens to fall on the day the steamer sails, in which they reach New York, giving no time for visits should they wish it, which they do not. Very tender is the parting between these loved ones. And after purchasing their tickets for them and seeing them safely on board, the judge with one on each arm promenades the deck with them, giving them many last instructions, that they are to roam around until they find a place which suits them per-

fectly, and if there is anything they require they are to send over the sea to this dear loving husband and father. At last the passengers are warned by the bell that the last good-byes must be said. With a final wave of the hand, they are standing out to sea, and with eyes strained towards the land they catch one last glimpse of the tall, majestic figure, standing hat in hand, as though he was silently calling a benediction down upon their heads. It is well they cannot see the look of deep pain which has settled in the kindly eyes, for sad is that noble heart, bitter is his disappointment as he turns his face towards that lonely fireside, alone to stem the tide of public opinion. Prouder than most men, the iron has entered his very soul. It seems to him such a *fiasco*; nothing to explain. And well he knows that, however faithful servants are, nothing can compensate for the love of those who are wont to smile their welcome into our eyes.

The travellers mingle with others of their class. All strangers, not a familiar face,—and often it is better so,—we almost feel as though we had entered a new world, and then the novelty. There is no cure for a mind diseased like mother Nature; she takes her weary children in her arms, and without question or doubt lulls them to peacefulness upon her soft, maternal bosom. They receive much attention and kindness, the comely, refined-looking matron, with her bright, lustrous eyes and charming manners; the youthful, delicate face of the younger lady, with a world of subdued sadness in the depths of her azure eyes.

Many kind words they receive casually, for when are people together for such a length of time without a

speaking acquaintance,—not on this continent surely. If they promenaded the deck, they are the cynosure of many friendly eyes, for well does the little, close cap, sitting so jauntily on its wealth of golden curls, become her, for a solid mass of little curls, like rings of gold, completely cover her shapely head. They while away the time with books and work, until, as they embark at Ostend, one would hardly recognize either lady, so much has the voyage improved them in appearance; both needed change.—the one from so severe an illness, the other from the fatigue of watching and the agony of suspense. Long after the voyage is over, she is singled out as the proud, cold lady with the golden curls. Once more they are on board the long train with its puffing, restless engine. As they cross the—to them—strange land, they decide upon Leipsic as their future place of residence, after many interesting little trips and much delay, promising themselves a long trip among the hills on the arrival of spring, which will not be so long, for they are at the end of January. They are entranced by the clear, cold air and azure skies, never tired of their novel surroundings, and especially the miles upon miles of paintings by all the old masters. In deciding upon the Linden town, they find themselves shoulder to shoulder with artists of every nation. They chance upon a few quiet apartments in *die Laudhouse Strasse*, and with a good strong fraulein, as general servant and factotum, they settle down to home life. If the younger lady takes up her duties and studies with an energy and avidity entirely unexpected, the elder is not idle. After a few weeks, in which she has picked now and again a word, she joins

her daughter in the study of German, adding much to the pleasure and interest of both. And for want of other employment, she soon finds herself each day spending a certain time at the piano, having been a player since she can remember and a great lover of music as well. She even picks up the brush sometimes and dabbles away unconsciously, until one morning, on entering the studio, she finds an extra easel in a fine light, behind a portiere, mounted with a small canvas, and a coaxing voice sounds in her ear :

“ Now, dear mamma, do just try this little bit. I shall be by you, and will be delighted to give you any little help I can. Come, now ; try it to please me.”

For with the very gesture a child would use, she has placed her hands tightly clasped behind her back, and only answers by shaking her head. It certainly is a very negative answer, but after a little persuasion and sundry pats, for which this willful young lady has ever been famous, she playfully seats herself.

“ I declare there is something in the very atmosphere that leads a person on to be a student in this land of art.”

And so they sit together, and work, or walk, or drive. She draws the line at skating, remarking :

“ There should be a line, I suppose. even in this land.”

At which they both laugh heartily.

The winter is passing, and one heart beats with a gladder refrain,—that of the patient mother, for she knows the spring will bring her loved one. Watching, day by day, she sees no sign of the malady that was supposed to have settled upon the mind of their darling. She has never broached

the subject by as much as one word, or made one sign, so the thought never occurs to her but that she will be quite ready to return, after their sight-seeing, with papa. It is true she has been very much averse to going into society, declaring she could get plenty of that at home, therefore it is seldom they mingle much with their kind: which leaves plenty of time for the improvement of the mind upon which Angel is so much bent.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“ Out of the day and night
 A joy has taken flight :
 Fresh spring, and summer, and winter hoar
 Move my faint heart with grief, but with delight
 No more—O nevermore ! ”

—*Shelley.*

JUDGE COLCORD is giving himself a holiday, he hears such a good account of the sojourners, and it is so many years since he threw dull care to the breeze and started out for pure enjoyment, and to bring back his loved ones, that it is with buoyant step he walks the deck of the good ship as she rides the waves of the Atlantic. He feels the benefit of the ocean breezes, and as he leaves the ship for his trip overland, he feels that life is very sweet,—a precious boon ; it carries him back to the days when he made his bow before the public, and took his first ocean voyage, before the joys and sorrows of life had pressed heavily upon him. Very tender are the greetings between this husband and wife, who have travelled the road of life for nearly a quarter of a century, and very seldom been separated ; and no less tender between father and daughter. Great is his surprise and pleasure at the change in her appearance. When last he looked upon her, wearing that look of apathy that is more pitiful to behold in the young than the most violent grief, and although not at all what

one can call robust, yet it is a great improvement on eight months ago ; and as they wish to see something of this wonderful land, they obtain a carriage that holds them all comfortably, and with sketch book and pencils, wraps for cold evenings, the little rooms are closed for the present, and with much bustle of preparation, a driver, guide and guide book. they are away upon their trip. They decide upon taking the old route that is 'looked upon yearly by so many travellers from all lands. Reaching Coblentz they cross the bridge and visit Ebreubreitstein , long is one of the party standing to take in the view on the opposite bank, across the Rhine ; rich is the description she has heard of this very place ; and as she sees a yacht upon the river, she thinks to herself, with a sudden sharp pain at her heart, it may be the same in which he sailed. On reaching Berlin she lingers so long that they beg her to return to her seat. She is loath to leave the streets ; she thinks it was here he walked and talked, and seeing a seat beneath the trees in a little square. she feels sure it is there he has sat. And so the trip is a sad one in some respects to one of the party, but a pleasant sadness. one she would be sorry to miss. It seems almost like home when, after six weeks of travel by train or carriage, they reach their little rooms. Use and long experience in suiting one's self to circumstances render them all very comfortable and happy. After a few more days of resting and working by turns the subject is mooted. They must put their things in readiness to move towards home. As Angel enters the breakfast room, papa, looking up to her, and speaking as though continuing a conversation long since begun : "I hardly

know how to pack your pictures to the best advantage. I expect they will be safest in cases. I think I had better get an expert, and have it rightly done. I suppose you wish to take them all?"

She regards him for a moment with her wide open eyes, which seem to dilate as she looks, and the swift color surges to her very brow. "I think, papa, we shall not need an expert. Mamma will only need to take her few she has finished, and I shall claim the one of the old place which is all I care for."

"You do not mean to say you are going to leave your pictures after working so hard at them, are you?"

"Papa, *do* you not, or *will* you not understand that I do not intend to go at all?" After a little pause: "I want to stay and finish the year. Let me see August; that will be five months."

"Not going! Why, my dear, why should you remain? You can study as well at home as here. Everyone expects you."

"Well, then, everyone will be disappointed,—in fact, it is all settled. Knowing you were coming for mamma, I spoke to fraulein Stotterfort, and they have a cosy little room for me. Oh, I shall do quite well, and how perfectly I can get to speak the language, being in the family!"

Her hearers are dumb-founded; they know of old how set she can be when once her mind is made up. As a last resort, Mrs. Colcord says:

"The loneliness at home! How can we leave you?"

A thing they have not the remotest idea of doing. The father, looking her tall length from head to foot, says:

"I suppose we could never carry you against your will."

Clinging to him fondly she answers :

"Do not urge me. I cannot cross the ocean. I believe a deadly sickness would come upon me. I can *live* here. I should merely be staying in any other place."

At last they argue about the expense, these two loving parents who have not a thought about money ; but she is all prepared for that,—in fact, she rises to the occasion.

"I can teach English, and pay all my expenses, if you are bothered about money."

"Do you expect to hear anything or find out anything, that you are so anxious to stay ?"

"There is nothing to hear, papa ; had there been, I should have heard it long ago. I think that when the heart is broken, we brokenly live on ; it is so small a part of our humanity. But we must choose the place and the manner."

They look at each other helplessly ; one promise they do exact, and that is that she will go more into society. They have formed a number of pleasant acquaintances, owing to the British Ambassador being an old friend of the family, whom they met in Berlin, and through him the American consul and family have called upon them. Everything has been done to make the homeward voyage a comfortable and pleasant one for the lonely traveller, for no persuasions can induce the mother to leave her child, especially after this last little pitiful appeal. Again they settle down to work,—the mother with a heavy heart, she longs for home ; her heart goes out to the one whom she feels is deeply disappointed.

So the days pass as usual, an occasional call from an

acquaintance, an evening at the opera or concert, until three more months have passed away. One there is who fain would bid farewell to this Eastern continent. Making a great effort, she will give the matter of going or staying one more trial. Entering the room used as studio and sitting-room combined, she finds it already has an occupant. Standing by her easel, brush in one hand, pallet in the other, showing its bright colors, waiting each its turn when it shall be used, she turns as the elder woman enters, and with hair brushed back, a coarse blue blouse of some washing material, the wide collar turned away over a ribbon of navy, exposing to view the round white throat, the blue serge skirt just clearing the ground, displaying a pair of strong walking shoes still wet with dew, for with the little maid in attendance she has already taken a long walk before the late breakfast. With a smiling "good-morning," turning her cheek to be kissed, she points to the clock standing on a small round table. "I declare, *mutter mein*, you are getting to be a great sleeper. Only see what I have already accomplished."

"And a walk as well, I see by your shoes. I did not sleep well until nearly morning."

Designating the canvas with the handle of her brush, she adds:

"This is to be a painting of that home in Florida from memory; I am so sorry you did not sleep well."

"Well, my dear, I was wishing to-day the year would soon be up. Do you not think you will be just as happy at home as here? I promise you that you shall not be bothered with visitors. We will take nice little trips and—"

"That is just exactly what I was wishing to talk about. I can see you are ill at ease, and no wonder ; with papa at home alone. I want you to go home. The Stanley-Humes leave on the ninth of next month. And you let me go and live with fraulein."

"Now, Angel, I want to ask you what you expect the end to be? Do you intend to spend your life here?"

"I do not expect anything, nor intend anything."

"I cannot leave you. Your father particularly urged it upon my mind not to do so, and I should only have to return, which would make a long journey for nothing."

"There is only One can tell the end, mamma ; but after long years have passed and I have perfected myself as nearly as I can in my studies, I can return. There will be a place open for me somewhere, there never was a person equipped for a position but that the niche will be vacant for him or her to step upon. I have the greatest reluctance to returning home ; my mind is filled here. I am doing no harm, only keeping you, which is altogether needless."

"Well, my dear, it is of no use our talking the matter over, for we shall never agree ; and a year more or less does not signify. I will write and ask Auntie Lizzie to spend a month with papa and cheer him up."

"You dear, darling *mutter* ; you are just too sweet. We will have lively times. We will go to the *Kaffa Klatshe* to-morrow afternoon at Mons. Leomeister's, and you shall look as though you were a picture, walking right out of a frame. I do believe you just talk in this way about going home to get me more into society, and I never see the point until it is too late."

Going behind her chair she bends her head, holding pallet and brush at arm's length, until she has kissed her on the cheek. In righting herself she knocks down a large white plaque done in water-lilies, upon a bed of their own smooth green leaves; happily it falls upon a tiger-skin, and so is uninjured. The room itself, where so many hours have been whiled away, is very home-like. Rather wide and low, its panelling dark with age, high windows with tiny panes of glass artistically draped with lemon-colored silk, just a tint removed from white; furnished half studio and half sitting-room; a piano with a scarf of the same pale hue, of plush, the ends painted in water-lilies. Basket chairs, with some very high-backed ones, of old dark polished wood. A sofa whose back is very nearly as high as are the backs of the chairs, while the carpet is like a piece of white uncut velvet, strewn with lilies and green leaves with their long leather-like stems intertwined in every direction. The walls and the tall mantel are literally covered with paintings and souvenirs gathered in their wanderings. In one corner where stands the easels, with three or four unfinished pictures, the carpet is covered by a good strong drugget of the same hue as the hangings.

In after years Angel often glances back to the quiet, unpretentious room as it looks to her on this day, seeming to contract as she stands among her pictures and flowers until it seems altogether too narrow. And yet everything is just as usual. And she knows it is owing to her mood.

CHAPTER XXVII.

“His heart in me keeps him and me in one ;
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides :
My true-love hath my heart and I have his ”

—*Sir Philip Sydney.*

A CARRIAGE is being driven slowly along Pennsylvania Avenue, in the city of Washington,—slowly, because of the order given by the sweet-faced woman reclining on the back seat. She is hoping to see a gentleman on one of the crossings, and is wishing for someone to talk to. At last she is rewarded ; raising his hat and waving his hand, he is soon beside her, and asking with that quick note in his voice, which denotes a foreign tongue, :

“Is little wife disappointed? Where are your guests?”

“Where?” with an opening out of the small hands that would seem to indicate all the world.

“Well, do not be disappointed, most likely they changed their minds at the last moment, and we shall find a telegram awaiting us.”

But no telegram, no word, comes to tell of the welfare of the travellers, who are none other than Mrs. Colcord and her daughter ; while the woman in the carriage is Dorothy Williams no longer, but Mme. Gerard Lavilien. When last we saw her she was on board the steamer, bound southward to spend the winter in the land of flowers and

balmy breezes. She returned in the middle of April in bounding health. It fell out that she remained in Boston, and never returned to the humble home she had left, for as the steamer comes in and friends meet nearly all the passengers, none come to meet her. Angel has been prevented by the illness of her mother, Mrs. Austin is out of town, and so before the steamer sails on the following day Mrs. Reynolds takes a cab, and together they go to the residence of Mr. Thayer, to leave her for the day, and some of the family may go down with her. The girls were delighted, they had not worked for Dorothy all those long days and evenings without being very much interested in her, and now when they have her in the house, they have no intention of letting her go—at least for some time. I think I never said much about Dorothy's appearance, and you would like to know how she looks. I wish I could make you see her as I do, but I am afraid I cannot. We always spoke of her, and thought of her, as a child, because she is so very *petite* and has been so simply brought up. She was twenty before she went to Florida. Her hair is very smooth and dark, excepting when the light strikes it, and then it shows little streaks of gold, as though it were woven cloth with rifts of gold thread running through it. Her complexion is rather pale, except a tint in the cheeks, that always reminds me of apple blossoms, hardly a pink, but just a shade removed from white. Seeing her casually, one would say she had sunny brown eyes; but when she is interested in anything, they seem to flame, and are nearly black, and very deep set, shaded by lashes so long and curling at the ends, that they are like jétty

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fringe lying on each cheek. A high forehead ; a thin, straight nose ; mouth not too wide yet not small, full of tiny short teeth as white as pearls. I am fearful I am flattering Dorothy so that you will think her handsome ; her lower face is too large and square for beauty, but denoting great strength of character and wonderful capabilities. And she is just Dorothy ; her sayings and doings would fill a book ; they are talked about among the young people to this day. So tiny are her hands and feet that they are a perfect marvel. Noticing this, the girls exchange meaning glances, for they call to mind the time when, preparing the articles for Dorothy's migration (as they call it), a pair of elegant shoes had been put in that were too small for either of them. Angel had laid them aside, with the remark that they would draw the line at shoes. They had supposed them too small at the time. She has come at the time when a large party is on the *tapis*. She sees the preparations, and in all her life she has never seen anything like them before ; she waits, hoping to learn what the great event is to be ; she does not like to ask. The long drawing-rooms are innocent of anything in the shape of furniture, excepting one or two small inlaid tables in alcoves. Even the grand piano is relegated to a back store-room, while white soft shining cloth covers every atom of the carpet, a beautifully smooth unbroken whiteness. As a dray backs up to the door and unloads large baskets of flowers, her curiosity knows no bounds, and seeing Miss Helen standing by one of the huge baskets, Dorothy, leaning over the other side to inhale their fragrance, asks in her pleasant, easy manner :

"Where are all the flowers to be put? I do not understand what all this is for," waving her hand towards the drawing-rooms.

"Why, we are giving a large party; the flowers are for decorating the rooms."

"I should think you would need the piano?"

"Oh, that does very well with the addition of a violin or two for a small informal affair; but for this we shall have Gilmore's band; and that," indicating a large alcove, "is where they will be stationed, with a flower-screen in front to completely hide them from view."

"Oh!" exclaims Dorothy, clasping her hands, "how I do long to see it! Will it not be lovely?"

"Lovely, did you say? Why, it will be the ugliest sight you ever saw,—in fact, hideous I call it. I am tired of it."

"Ugly! hideous! if so, why do you have it? I do not understand, and I wish to learn all I can, for I shall not be here long. Who is to do it?"

"Why, a decorator, and the man has not an original idea in his head. He bunches them all up together, one set wreath here, one dash of all colors there, and gets his money and goes away. And we are heartily glad when we can have them removed."

"But why do you not get someone who does know how?"

"You dear, unsophisticated creature! What does it matter what we like? No one will look at it. They will look at each other and themselves."

"But why have you flowers then? How the sick would delight in them!"

"Well, you see that would be shabby ; they will know that we have paid the money, our dear five hundred friends "

And no one can imagine with what disdain she gives the basket a little kick.

"How I should love to do it ! I do so love flowers !"

And Mrs. Thayer at that moment coming downstairs dressed for the street hears this wayward daughter of hers send up shout after shout of laughter. Stopping in amazement, for when a person who is little given to merriment is so convulsed with laughter, as to be unable to speak, we are apt to want to know what it is all about, that we may join in. After waiting a reasonable time, while Miss Helen is struggling to speak, she turns to Dorothy, who, by contrast, is looking as solemn as an owl.

"Dorothy, whatever is she laughing at ?"

"I know no more than yourself, Mrs. Thayer."

"But what did you say ?"

"I ? I think I said I would love to put up all the flowers, and make it look beautiful. Miss Helen says it will be ugly. Such a pity ! Flowers always should be beautiful."

By this Miss Helen finds her tongue. "Fancy, mamma, she wants to decorate. Dorothy, hold your hands out, please. Mamma, only look." Certainly the hands are as small as a child's, long taper fingers, pink in the palm, for all the world like an infant's.

"With those hands ? What makes you think of such a thing ?"

"I always did the altar in church, and do let me try. If

I have two maids I will be so quick. I will make it lovely."

"Well, if you like you can try. I will get two flower-girls, and should you fail, we can afterwards get the decorator: he can put on hands and finish it in a few hours."

"And will you bring me some fine wire and lemon-colored tissue paper?"

"Yes, anything you want. What is your idea?"

"To make the dining-room lemon-colored, and make lines of this," lifting out a spray of smilax, "and place them at equal distances, bringing the ends together over the table, and covering the joining with a shield of lemon-colored flowers. Bank the mantel with yellow roses and Parma violets."

Miss Helen dances away down the hall, waving her hand.

"I wish you joy; it sounds well."

Returning in three hours to take a peep, she sees a transformation scene. With the aid of the flower-girls a curtain is suspended in front of the alcove, of wreathed smilax, intermingled with lilies of the valley and forget-me-nots, at the bottom a row of calla-lilies as tassels. In one corner is a bower composed of palms and other choice exotics, making a bower of beauty both outside and in. Flowers twined around mirrors, so that they are doubled and tripled in looking. In fact, the whole lower part of the house was metamorphosed into a fairy palace. There was only one restriction put upon the family by the mistress herself, and that was that who the decorator was would never be told. They would keep it among themselves.

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On the evening in question, Dorothy wishes to remain with the children,—an almost unheard of thing, as Miss Thayer exclaims. And so Dorothy dons her white silk veiling, made high neck and long sleeves, and without ribbon or ornament of any kind, she goes out to see if she can assist the girls. She is taken by the arm and led directly to Mrs. Thayer's own room, where she is resting in a large easy-chair preparatory to dressing.

“See here, mamma, what shall we do with Dorothy; she is so plain?” Dorothy's eyes are open wide with astonishment, but as her hostess speaks in her kind, gentle tones, she feels almost as though she were one of the family. Opening a little paper, she displays a quantity of fine Mechlin lace and a pair of long white silk gloves. It seems to Dorothy that she must have been awaiting her coming. As she hangs the gloves over her lap, and taking needle, thread and scissors from her side:

“Would you mind very much, dear, if I shorten your sleeves, and open your dress in the neck? It will be more appropriate. You are my guest to night. I want to be proud of you.”

“If you think it proper I do not mind. I will return your lovely lace to-morrow. And oh! such exquisite gloves!”

“You need not. It is yours! Yes, the gloves are very natty.”

“I cannot have you give me so much. It must have cost a great deal.”

“And what have you given me to-day?”

"Why, nothing that I know of." Adding, with an air of naive perplexity: "I have nothing you would care for."

"My dear, you forget the flowers. How much do you think you have saved me? Not that I care for that; but because the girls are so much pleased, and it is all so beautiful. He never went away, that awful decorator, with less than two hundred dollars, with oh so many et-ceteras."

"I am very happy that you are pleased."

"And now I want to ask something more of you. I wish you to be as happy as though you really and truly belonged to us; feel just as much at home as my own girls. Will you try to?"

"Yes, Mrs. Thayer. I do feel very much at home. I did not like to indulge myself too much that way, but you are all so good. It is like a fairy tale. I hardly feel real."

By this, one would hardly know Dorothy's dress, not that it changes her very much, her very self. The sleeves are cut off at the elbow, and the lace frilled around, cut square in the neck, and filled in with the soft filmy folds, the long gloves fitting her hands and arms, showing to perfection their beautifully rounded shape. Miss Helen has brought a spray of stephanotis and placed it in the folds of the lace, and another in her hair.

The party is a great success. Everyone is "ohing" and "ahing" and wondering "who can be the decorator." As Dorothy is passing two young ladies, she overhears one of them say: "We will call her; she will tell us. Miss Williams! You are staying here, are you not?"

"Yes, Miss Forde."

"Then you will be able to tell us. Who is the decorator?"

Receiving no answer, she asks rather sharply :

" You know. I suppose you must. Will you not tell us ? "

" Excuse me, I am not at liberty to do so. "

" Is it to be kept a secret ? "

" I believe so. "

But as she passes on she is overtaken many times with the same question, always giving the same answer.

The evening passes. In all Dorothy's brief life she has never been so happy. The music, the flowers, the kind words and pleasant smiles make it fairyland to her. She sighs as she removes the flowers ; and thinks it will all soon come to an end, and she will find herself alone in the one little room preparing tea for her tired mother's home-coming, after a long hard day's work. As she talks about going home, they all fall in with her, and agree that she must go ; but the day following the party, a letter goes to Richmond to Mrs. Jerome Williams, telling her of the advantages of living in Boston, and how much they are all attached to Dorothy, and also that there is a large lodging-house just around the corner, and they will secure it for her, if she will come to-morrow. And so this loving mother, who is perishing for a sight of Dorothy, packs her few treasures—the package is pitifully small, after a life-time of hard labor—and bids farewell to all her loved ones, lying so quietly in their narrow homes. That same afternoon she is a passenger on board the steamer bound for Boston. The next morning they start early, in order to be on the quay when the boat arrives. They dare not go to the length of taking Dorothy, as they are not sure she will come. Very tender is the greeting when this long

parted mother and daughter meet. Not many days elapse before Mrs. Williams is installed in her new home ; and Dorothy has two homes. They claim her, these girls ; and as the mother is at work nearly all the day, they find one and another pretence for keeping her. And now when an invitation comes for an exclusive party, dinner, or tea, Miss Williams is always included, and as Dorothy is like a bee that has settled on a flower, a dress is laid aside for her of silver gauze, or of scarlet tissue, with an excuse that it takes so little to make her a dress, and she does become them so. One incident is worthy of mention. A titled foreigner is a frequent visiter at the house, and in all his visits he asks after Dorothy, until it is quite patent to all that he is very much interested ; whereupon it dawns upon this family that he should at least be told something about her position and prospects. He is announced, when all leave the room by opposite ways, with the exception of Miss Thayer and Miss Helen sitting at a far away window sewing. He asks directly :

“Where is Dorothy ? Is she in ? Can I see her ?”

“No, she is not in. I think she has gone out with her mother.”

“With her mother ? Has she a mother in town ? I thought she was staying with you ; was perhaps your father's ward.”

“No ; she does stay a good part of the time with us ; but her mother keeps a lodging-house just across the square.”

“Keeps a lodging-house ! Why was I not told of this before ? Do you not think such a state of affairs needed an explanation ?”

“Well, have you not got the explanation? There is nothing to tell. Dorothy's grandfather was one of the most wealthy of our pioneers,—in fact, helped to make the country as well as the laws; and as for Dorothy herself, she is capable of gracing any station,” with a little laugh, “we think the earth belongs to Dottie if she can get it.”

“But keeps a lodging-house, her mother! And you bringing her out into society with all the *éclat* of a high born heiress!”

“Well, as to birth on her mother's side she need bow to none; her mother was the idol of wealthy parents, but she married a reckless, dissolute man, who spent her fortune and broke her heart, and left her only Dorothy. It is as the wheel of fortune turns. Society is very well satisfied with her; she only lacks the fortune that has been squandered. No blame to her.”

“Then by your doctrine I had better be civil to the ragged urchin who holds my horse?”

“Exactly. He may occupy the highest place in the gift of the people.”

“Thank you. I understand. But I must say I do not like it,—in fact, I dislike it very much.”

“That is because you are at the top.”

A few evenings after the above conversation takes place, he meets Dorothy at a party. This titled aristocrat feels that he must say something to her; they who have been such friends, and yet, in his estimation, are so widely separated. Not that Dorothy has ever given it a second thought. And so Clarence Paxton standing for a few moments between the dances on the balcony, is an un-

willing listener for the time being; he is literally a prisoner. He calls at the home of the Thayers the following morning, as early as etiquette will allow, to tell the girls. As Dorothy is standing in the embrasure of the window she is joined by her friend, who, after a kindly greeting, commences:

“I was very much surprised to learn that you belong to what we call the middle class in society. I was always under the impression that you were born to the purple.”

“How very strange! I did not think that anyone could mistake,” looking at him with a cool, critical glance. “I am very proud to belong to the middle class. Do you know of what Americans are most fond?”

“You would be very much annoyed were I to tell you.”

“Me.” “Oh, not at all.”

“Then, I have always heard it is a title.”

“There you are wrong. It is pie,” and putting her two hands an inch apart. “This is the top crust,” designating the uppermost one, “and this is the bottom crust,” with a nod of the head towards the bottom one, but with emphasis. “It would not be a pie at all without the middle, it would be simply a cake, and a very poor one at that.”

“Then you think the middle class is what keeps society together.”

“Assuredly. What do the upper classes do for themselves? Nothing. They use their capital to employ others. Have you a coal mine or a gold mine, or shares in a railroad, or a farm, of what use would it be to you, unless you had men to work it? Have you money in the bank, who handles it and gives you the dividends?”

What do the lower orders do for themselves? Do they make models for engines? or build our houses in which we live so happily? Do they teach our children in the schools? Do they weave our cloth which keeps us warm and complete? Nothing of the kind. If they are ever uplifted, it will be the middle class that will do it.

"Upon my word, I never got such an insight into the labor question. If you want to find out the exact relations which capital and labor hold to each other, go to Miss Williams. He could not answer her, but said, 'Beg pardon, I have a partner engaged for next dance;' and Dorothy stood there so long that I thought I was barred out. But to my great relief someone came and took her away; and I came out. It would not keep, I had to come and tell you. Rich, was it not?"

"Very. It shall never go any further."

And it was always understood there after that Dorothy was quite capable of taking care of herself. But when the right one comes, for

"Two shall be born the whole wide world apart,
 And speak in different tongues, and have no thought
 Each of the other's being, and no heed;
 Yet these o'er unknown seas to unknown lands
 Shall cross; escaping wreck, defying death,
 And all unconsciously shape every act
 And bend each wandering step unto this end,
 That one day out of darkness they shall meet,
 And read life's meaning in each other's eyes,
 And this is Fate!"

Nearly the same scene is enacted at the home of the Thayers on this particular morning, as on a for-

mer occasion. Dorothy has gone across the square to see her mother. Monsieur Gerald Lavilien, the lion of society at present, of unbounded wealth, youthful, kind-hearted, polished, of gentle birth, is coming up the walk. They all leave by side doors and windows, until Mrs. Thayer has the room all to herself. As he approaches her, and after the usual greeting, asks :

“ Is Miss Williams in? Can I see her? ”

Mrs. Thayer, woman of the world as she is, feels her very heart stand still ; she feels much as one does to be obliged to demolish a card-house. It seems almost too pretty to be lost, and yet one knows it is just nothing, beautiful as bubbles and as perishable ; so little can we judge of the human heart from our earthly standpoint. She answers at last :

“ She has gone across the square to see her mother who keeps a lodging-house. As we have all taken such a fancy to Dorothy, she stays a great part of the time with us. ”

She goes on, never looking at him to see how he is carrying himself. Receiving no answer, she says hurriedly, excitedly :

“ The girls think the earth belongs to Dottie if she can get it. ”

He leans forward, and looking around that no one is by, he says below his breath :

“ And so we all agree for once ; she shall have all that I can ever win of it laid at her feet,—that is, if she will accept it. ”

And thus it falls out that we find Dorothy in a brown stone front, in one of the most fashionable streets in

Washington. The world has changed her little. She is just the same Dorothy ; and as she returns to this palatial home, it takes all her husband's powers of persuasion to convince her that nothing has happened to her friends ; that it is a common incident of travel to be delayed a day, or even two, or, "perhaps," he adds, "they did not sail. I will see the passenger list directly."

He returns to tell her she may rest easy, for neither their names nor the names of the Stanley-Humes are on the list. Concluding they have changed their minds at the last moment, they wait patiently, knowing the morrow will bring a letter. However, some days elapse before the letter arrives, and the news is simply stupendous. In one of the cosiest corners of the elegant drawing-room stands a capacious work-table. Books of travel and adventure are on a small shelf near it, many piles of wool of different colors are strewn about, for this is the special corner that mother occupies, a sweet-faced woman with a trim, dainty little figure, the hands once toil-worn are white as snow. There is no one in this city of wealth and culture more sought after—I might almost say celebrated—than is she. And this is how it came about. At first having so much time to herself, Dorothy was very much afraid it would hang heavy upon her hands, and so in every shopping expedition something must be found to bring her ; something easy in fancy work, or some book, not too large or too hard, until, finding so much material accumulating, she took to making stockings and mits for the poor. And as on all these shopping days a piece of gold or a new crisp banknote is laid upon the

table, she soon finds herself the possessor of a goodly sum of money in hand. Somehow the most luscious peaches find their way to the table in the sunshiny nook, and on going out for a walk, they are transferred to the little gem of a satchel by her side, and seeing a pale, delicate-looking child standing upon the corner, cleanly and simply dressed, she hardly likes to go to the length of giving her a peach, but one is dropped, rolling directly to her feet ; catching it, she runs, exclaiming :—

“ Madame, you have lost this lovely peach.”

“ Will you not keep it and eat it, my dear ? ”

“ Thank you, but I will take it home to sister if you do not mind ? ”

“ Well, here is one for yourself then. Is sister ill ? ”

“ Yes, madam, and so is Teddie Brewer next door. I will give him this one, if you are willing ? ”

“ Let me go with you, and we will see if we cannot do more for them than giving a peach.”

She finds not only two, but ten sick children in close, damp, dark rooms. On meeting her son-in-law at dinner, she asks :

“ Gerald, what would be the cost of chartering a steamer for two days to go up the river ? ”

For not many days before they have been on an excursion up the river.

“ Why, mother, are you so in love with the excursions that you are going to charter a steamer ? I hope you will invite me. I really have not the remotest idea.”

“ Why, I thought you often chartered them.”

“ So we do, but I never took notice. What can you want to know for ? ”

"Never mind ; no more banter now, I am in earnest."

"Well, I can soon tell you."

He returns with all the needed information. She finds it quite within her means, and carries out the project without a single break. Plenty of fruit, bread and milk, hammocks for those who are too sick to sit up, a few friends to look on. Can you, by any stretch of the imagination, think what it is like, to be taken from a close, dark room, and swung in a hammock for two days on the Delaware river, with all nature smiling her warmest, most beaming smile? On the evening after their return Dorothy surprises her in tears.

"Why, mamma, I thought you were so delighted, it was such a success."

She tries to recover herself, and between her sobs say :

"It is because I can do so little."

"You have done what no one ever attempted before, you ought to be elated."

"Dorothy, do you remember the time you went to Florida?"

"What a question ! As though I ever can forget."

"Well, when I saw you lying there so weak and ill, and knew what the cold would bring to us, and Doctor Simpson came and looked at you, and shook his head and went away ; then Angel came, and said, you would be all right, only to keep up a good heart ; and I looked after her as she left, and thought were she in your place how quickly she would be taken to some sunny clime ; and she showed so little sympathy, I am almost afraid I hated the rich, and to think all the time they were

working for you. When Mrs. Colcord came there that day, and put her arm across my shoulder, and told me you were to go, I broke down entirely. She thought it was parting with you; it was a lesson I never forgot,—not to *judge hastily*. And when I was turning over in my mind how few and shabby your clothes were, she gave me the message, in her quiet, hesitating way, that the clothes were all ready for you. It entered right into my heart that you were one of 'the lilies.' Dorothy, never forget the poor."

"I never will, mamma. I am chartering a steamer for a week. Think of that, and smile."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

“Our souls sit close and silently within,
And their own web from their own entrails spin ;
And when eyes meet far off, our sense is such,
That, spider-like, we feel the tenderest touch.”

—Dryden.

THE day is all that could be desired ; the air of just that quality giving a pleasurable sensation hard to describe—a lightness of heart, a feeling that a race with the breeze would be just the thing to those who are warmly clad. Although not cold, yet fires are very comfortable, and are still kept in the broad deep grate, with its burnished fender, and tiled, highly polished hearth. There is always something delightfully entrancing about the ingleside ; the heart never outlives its remembrance. The pony attached to the gray-lined phaeton is standing at the door. As they come out together, mother and daughter—for this is the afternoon of the *Kaffee Klatshe* at Mons. Leomeister's, and as their home is in the suburbs, they find it necessary to drive—the elder lady is the first to be seated. Angel, standing with one foot poised upon the lower step, exclaims :—

“What a pity that I should spoil so lovely a picture ; it is a symphony in gray.”

And really looking at it with her artist's eyes, it is not unlike a picture. The gray satin of the dress and mantle,

trimmed with feather-trimming, in contact with the lining of the phaeton, just a shade removed from it ; a bonnet of the same delicate hue, with one large knot of pale pink silk velvet surmounting the smoothly banded hair, forming so elegant a contrast ; a clear steady light in the dark grey eyes.

“ What nonsense you do talk ! Give me the lines.”

As she stands there with the afternoon sun glinting through the meshes of her golden hair, she does not look as though she would mar any picture. She reminds one of one of the Greek goddesses throwing down the gauntlet to fate. Her very look, her every gesture is full of a latent power. The delicate hands seem to twist and entwine themselves together, as though they were sufficient for each other, or one might imagine her a bird of gayest plumage, dressed in vivid scarlet as she is from head to foot, the elegant cutaway jacket lined with gray fur just allowed to peep out over the edge, and giving the requisite fullness to a figure otherwise almost too slight. The scarlet cap with its nodding ostrich tips of gray sits jauntily upon the golden hair, now gathered up and coiled low at the back. Taking her seat, she certainly detracts nothing from the picture. And judging by the admiring glances which follow them as they drive slowly down the street, many persons are of the same mind. Fitting her long gray gloves a little more closely to her hands, she reaches for the lines, and leaning back in a comfortable position, speaks slowly :

“ Everyone is full of the idea that we are here simply for the purpose of study in this city of books.”

Many and varied are the thoughts that flit across the minds of these two, as they sit side by side, so much to each other, and yet in reality so far apart. There are no secrets between them, and the elder in sympathizing with, and interesting herself in, the pursuits of the younger, has kept her youth in a remarkable degree. It often seems that she, the mother, is the younger of the two, that she must have found and bathed in that fountain of perennial youth, while the younger, in being the constant companion of one with so wide an experience, has gained soberness and steadiness of mind and character beyond her years. And sitting thus as they drive along, no one would suspect their relationship. They might easily be taken for sisters. Their talk is all of the time and place, they very seldom venture upon any one of the paths they often tread in memory. Angel seems really pettish, as though her nerves were strung to their highest tension. At last she breaks out with :

“ I declare, I never wished to go to see all these people, with whom we have little or no acquaintance, and wish I had less.”

“ How unlike you, Angel ! I am sure this is not my daughter speaking, it is some evil spirit. So kind of them to invite us, too ; I expect it will be very enjoyable. It is no more than a kettle-drum at home.”

“ I know, mamma, I am very naughty and ungrateful. I deserve to be taken back home and shut up in a dark closet for the rest of the day.”

“ I believe you would prefer it. Now, honestly, would you? ”

“Undoubtedly.”

“What a compliment to me and your friends!” at which they laugh good-humoredly.

“I feel very strangely, mamma, as though I were walking in a mist and could not see ahead, but I can hear almost too plainly; I hear a wailing voice in the air.”

“Well, my dear, the more you talk and think about self, the more whimsical you will get. If we stay at home so closely and never go out, we shall feel an awkwardness when we do go hard to overcome. The truest grace is unconsciousness of self. Where is your strong faith, your noble trust in the great divine plan of the universe? You were always so calm and self-possessed. I often felt you were one to lean upon.”

“Mamma, I think I am down in the trough of the sea to-day. I am almost afraid to ride up on the next billow, for fear I shall go down still deeper.”

“Cheer up. It is not as though we had not a great High Priest, who was subject to like temptations as we are, and yet without sin.”

“Yes, I remember, He knows all our sorrows. When I see the sun setting in the west, and note the exceeding brilliancy of its hues, I often think it may be He has left the mark of the trail of His garments as He ascended. Was ever anything more lovely than His messages: ‘I will come unto him and make my abode with him.’ Who so loving, so sympathetic to abide?”

“Who, indeed! It all rests with ourselves. He gives us our choice to enjoy Him or slight Him.”

“You talk like my good girl now. I think the evil spirit is exorcised.”

"If I could see any good to anyone from all these people meeting. I know how it will be, when we have gone once we shall be invited again, and we shall go."

"Never mind where we are, Angel, but remember wherever we are, 'Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.' What a beautiful idea!"

As they drive in beneath the trees, and enter the wide hospitable door, the kind, gentle voice of the hostess places them at their ease, with her pleasant, cheery welcome. All is bustle and pleasant sounds, rattling of *kaffee* cups, ripples of laughter, snatches of conversation. It is a spacious room, here in the midst of fatherland. It seems not more than a few minutes to Mrs. Colcord, in the midst of a number of ladies all bent upon enjoyment, it may have been half an hour, when, looking toward the west side of the apartment, she sees Angel alone with her back nearly towards the room, lost to all outward surroundings. She is trying to appear unconscious, and wondering what excuse she can make for going to her; she feels she must, else she will become more and more absorbed in the outside world, ignoring all claims of society upon her. At that moment her attention is drawn towards two gentlemen who are entering through the conservatory, which is upon the south side of the house. The one who is ahead walks straight on towards the mistress of the house, and bowing pleasantly right and left, shaking hands with any friends in his immediate vicinity, and bending his head, speaking in a low tone of voice, says: "I have brought a friend, auntie; allow me," and turn-

ing quickly, thinking his friend is upon his heels, exclaims : " Well, this is a how d'ye do ! What in creation became of him ? " Going to the door, there is no trace of him, and I think Mrs. Colcord is the only person in the room who can account for his disappearance ; and she remains silent. What she saw was the figure of Harry Montgomery as he stood upon the threshold, and for one moment he seemed to stagger, and lean against the lintel for support ; the next he walked directly to where sits the young lady clad in scarlet, straight and slim, utterly oblivious to the crowd and the room. She sees his eyes light up, he opens them wide as does one who is partially blinded by a too strong light. Bending eagerly forward, he takes in every detail of that motionless figure. He draws himself up to his fullest height, a heavy sigh escapes him, so heavy that a gentleman standing near gives him a sharp, penetrating look. He heeds it not. He only sees that one bright spot in this panorama of human life. All else is to him a gray background, to throw into relief this one form, which in his heart he likens to a great scarlet rose. Standing close by her chair, as near in front as he can get, he puts his hand in an inside pocket, and bending slightly forward, so that she has to throw her head well back to look in his face, he lays in her lap a small parcel wrapped in tissue silk. Without speaking, she rises. An onlooker would think it a *gage d'amour*, and placing her hand upon his arm they walk away. She is in a dream, and looking for a solution of the mystery in his eyes, she knows it is all solved, that this is really and truly the *bona fide* Harry. Seeing the phaeton standing there, she steps in, and the pony goes

whithersoever he will. Never was more indulgent driver, all the paths of the world are alike to them. They are together. The mother's heart is singing for joy. Amid all the pleasant talk and happy laughter a voice seems shouting in her ear, "we can go home," and interpreting her look as they go out together, I expect he has found the glove. She has come to her senses at last. Oh happy me! now I can go home. I am so thankful, and all for an old glove. I would have bought her oh! so many; but nothing but that old one would do. After sitting so long that darkness is beginning to come down, she feels she is left. Some friends just then leaving promise to set her down at her own door: and a very happy home-going it is. No one can tell how the good house-wife has longed for home and native land.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"It's we two, it's we two, for aye.

All the world, and we two, and heaven be our stay !

Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride !

All the world was Adam's once, with Eve by his side."

—*Jean Ingelow.*

SILENCE reigns between them. It is enough that they are here, the sunlight floating around them. She raises her eyes to his swimming in happy tears, and shaking the little parcel she still holds tightly clasped in her hands, out falls the little primrose kid, stained and crumpled, bearing little resemblance to the dainty shining thing it was when last she saw it. She touches it reverently, and low and agitated is her voice as she says :

"But for this, we cannot tell what might have been. We might never have been sitting here to-day." A shudder runs through her frame. "But oh ! how long you were in coming ! I lost heart of hope. Had it not been for my strong faith, of which the corner-stone was laid in childhood. There, we will not look backward ; this is too dizzy a height from which to look back. We will look up."

He goes on to tell her the circumstances with which we are so well acquainted ; his only fault seems to have been the keeping of his twin-brother's existence a secret. She is too happy to condemn him for aught that has occurred.

Looking upon him, she sees a great change in him, as though he had suffered deeply in body as well as in mind. A great love and a divine pity shines in her eyes. Looking steadfastly at her and speaking slowly :

"What a wonder you are not his wife! Whenever he took the trouble to personate me, he could deceive anyone, even mother."

"It is very strange your mother never thought of this?"

"Not at all. She knew hardly anything about our trouble, and as he had started for Rome, he sent his letters to mother through his friend, and had them mailed there. Of course they could not expect him to be in more than one place at a time."

"How did you learn?"

"I met Fred Carfield. He thought it very strange; asked me if it did any harm?"

"What did you say?"

"Oh I said it was only a lark. I was not going to create a sensation at this late day. The first moment after I laid eyes on him at home I doubted him."

"The very same feeling took possession of me, and I never rested until I had proved him. Dear little Mizpah," smoothing it out upon her lap; "mother Nature had been very kind to it, covering it from the gaze of the curious; as well as from frost and dew, by the moss and over-hanging rocks. I will bless the good God while I have breath that he put it into our hearts to leave it there."

"Now, tell me how you found him out. I am dying of curiosity. I suffered tortures until I knew you were free. He is so deep."

“There is nothing much to tell. He had my letters and picture, and brought the presents from your parents. Your aunt sent hers to him with a nice letter. No one could see the least difference in him from you. Looking back now I can see it all so plainly. It looked to me like a huge farce, in which people were making me think that they expected me to marry him. And just when I did not know what to do, he stood his ground. I could not unmask him to anybody's satisfaction excepting my own. God took the responsibility all off my shoulders. I knew nothing for days. I do not know how it came about, but he left, and all my friends think I am queer here,” tapping her forehead. “I remember nothing more, until he was gone; and life all at once seemed so dull and unprofitable. I often felt I was dead, only I breathed, I did not live. This is living,” taking a long breath. “Everything was so different from what I had anticipated. I felt I could not stay at home. Every moment I was reminded of you. Papa was just lovely. He smoothed the way for me to come here, and with two such Fathers who could but live. My dear heavenly one, you see, showed the earthly one the way to save me from all annoyance. I have lived I think with profit to myself, if to no one else. But when one is so broken and crushed, it is something to have lived it down.”

“We should indeed be very thankful to our dear heavenly Father. I do not hold any hard feelings against Harold. The worst I think of him is that he meant to detain me until after he had secured the prize. Then, judging the future by the past, he thought I would go away and keep quiet.”

"I cannot understand how your mother could write so severe a letter to us."

"What did she say?"

"You shall read it; I have it at home."

"Haroid, you see, was mother's favorite; and if anything ever did come to her ears, she was more likely to think I was in the wrong than Harold. Mothers' hearts sometimes break through a son's ill-doings, so I always shielded him."

"How noble of you!"

"He drew all the money he could lay hands on, in my name, and he thought with an heiress for a wife he could still keep drawing. Although I never cared a rap for your money, I suppose you will have a good sum. I think mamma must have told him. Well, as I was riding across an old disused plantation in the north of Virginia, for I was on my way to Norfolk to take the steamer, going leisurely along, thinking he was miles away, he came behind me and struck me. God help me, it cuts me to the heart to tell you," turning away his head; "but as I fell I reeled over, and came face to face with him. He started as though he had been stung. That is the last I knew until I found myself in a cabin deep in the heart of the forest, lying on a rough cot. An old negro woman, who had been given her freedom, and had bought her husband, had found me, and with herbs and lotions had cured my body, and I had sat there and eaten, drank and slept, for nearly a year. I had some money in a belt, which they found, and it had kept us all. When I came to myself and had asked what day of the month it was, and was told twenty-ninth of September, and looking at my hands, seeing

LOVE'S DIVINE ALCHEMY.

how changed they were, how thin, and that my clothes were worn to patching, I was never so frightened in my life. I thought I was going mad, whereas reason was just tottering back to her throne. They were entirely ignorant of my name; of course I was not missed, but the money was just giving out. Well, when I had my clothes made, I had a small secret pocket put inside of the sleeve, and sewed over. I took the coat off, as they begged me to tell them where they could get money for me; 'twould never do to trust to possum: I put my fingers in, and breaking away the stitches pulled out the money, three one-hundred's, and gave it to her. Noticing how ragged was the bottom of the sleeves, I asked her what year it was. Looking at each other as if in doubt what answer to make, and then with that mournful look in her eyes, she said: 'Never mind, massa, we's 'll take care o' ye.' I got angry. I cried: 'Have I been here a year? Is it fifty-eight?' 'Yes, massa; very near a year.' I lost what little sense I had gained. It was the last I knew. The shock was too much for me in my then weak state. I lost - all consciousness. The next thing I remember was hearing a terrible weeping, and moaning, and shuffling of feet, and someone trying to take my coat off. I looked up, and I suppose old auntie saw the light of intellect in my eyes, for she shouted; 'Thank God, massa come to, and tell these gemmens how good we's used ye. My old man has baffed ye, and rubbed ye with spirits, and we dun gin ye the last bit o' possum we had. Tell 'em, honey, we's never robbed ye.'

"I sat up and saw that the intruders were constables.

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The large bills which they had been obliged to get changed had attracted the attention of the police, and they had been followed home. No one thought an old colored woman could come honestly by a hundred dollar bill. I sometimes think Harold might have gone back, and tried to trace me. They were so persistent. But for my regaining my senses, they would have taken us all before the nearest magistrate. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, I saw it all, and everything looked so clear; like this: 'Now, you must keep yourself clear of all this, keep yourself free, and keep the secret of your identity.' It was exactly as though I were taking orders from a superior, and they were being impressed upon my mind: *not to make a false move*. I seemed to see my mother bending the light of her tender eyes upon me, and in accents that penetrated my inmost soul, breathe the words: 'My son, use care; see where you step. Family honor is in the balance.' Taking off the worn, shabby thing that could hardly be designated by the name of a coat, I thrust my fingers in the secret pocket, turning it out, at the same time looking the spokesman down, asking: 'Why do you not believe the woman's statement? It is as she says. I was set upon by robbers, and left to die by the roadside, but in the Providence of God this old couple found me, and have cared for me. I gave her the money. I had put a few bills in here in case of accident.' 'But,' he asked, 'what is your name and why the secret pocket?' 'My name is George Wilkins; and miners often have secret pockets!' 'So then you are a miner; why did you not say so before?' 'Why did I not say so before?'

I am very thankful you have got it through your head now. I am on my way to Montana.' I knew that I would be held to appear in court, and perhaps it would be weeks before I should be at liberty to go, and I longed with an intensity you can hardly imagine to get away, to settle or realize my fears. And then it was just possible my identity might be established, which was the last thing I wish for in any case. They left very reluctantly. I put on my coat, and stepping outside, I found old auntie praying by the side of the wood-pile. I never found out whether she was praying for me, because I had told such a falsehood,—for well they knew I was no miner,—or whether it was because of our wonderful deliverance. She went down into her shoe at once, and with an air of great mystery brought to light one more bill ; it was a treasure. I never before appreciated the worth of money. I decided on a bold stroke. We were twenty-seven miles from civilization. I hired two mules, and with my dusky host started for Norfolk. I wired to my banker, and presto ! all was changed. My allowance had not been drawn for six months. After due consideration, for I was terribly in the dark, and could see no ray of light, I started for Maine. Never were cars or steamers so slow ; they seemed to me to crawl. Then as I reached my destination I found I must put a curb on my feelings if I would succeed. As all journeys must come to an end, so did this, and I walked up to the office eighteen months after the day I was due. I was told Mr. Colcord was in New York, and I could not get your address. I dared not ask many questions, for positively I did not know what to ask. Everyone who met me spoke to me as

usual. I went to our tryst and got the glove. That was such a comfort ; it gave me courage to go to the house. A strange girl came to the door, and politely informed me ' no one at home.' I said : ' I will go in and rest ; I am a friend.' She must have seen me before, for she asked immediately : ' It is Mr. Montgomery, is it not ? ' Then she asked if I had seen you, and added : ' Then you have not seen her since the day you rode out on horseback ? ' Then by degrees I got the story, and all she could tell me was that you were in Germany. Well, now, you can imagine that sounded rather vague to me, as Germany is rather a goodish-sized place. I knew then that you had found him out, and I made bold to ask if you were married yet. She said no, and told me about your papa going all across the ocean after you, and you could not be induced to return."

" Poor papa and mamma ; they will both be very happy."

" She was very much puzzled to know what had brought me there, but that did not trouble me much, as I had learned all I wished. It is well she was not observing, for as I was leaving she said perhaps I had come after the suit I had left, and she would bring it. I kept my own counsel, and, would you believe it, she brought my wedding suit ; he had locked the drawer and left it. I took it, and rewarded her for all her care of it. I would like to have given her a bar of gold, her little gossip had made me so happy. I wired to your father for your address, he had left for Washington. I tried that city, he had not arrived. I went to your bankers, but I think they had orders, and said as much as that you were not to be annoyed. Then I went blindly on ; I thought fate could not be so unkind as to

separate us much longer. I have been to Brussels, Cologne, Frankfort and to Coblenz. Now it shall all rest with you whether we expose Harold, or you bear the obloquy of being queer, as you call it, or fickle, as others will term it."

Words fail to express a tithe of the pride and delight shining in his eyes, and the worshipful tenderness of his manner, as he repeats these few commonplace words. They have no idea themselves of the influence they will have upon their future lives. She answers with a pretty hesitation:

"For my part, I am hardly capable of rational thought, I am so happy in looking at you, hearing your voice. I have been so hungry for just a glimpse of you, or one word, one syllable. Of course it would please you to let it rest in oblivion; you have suffered so much for the honor of the family, and the mother's heart. I am willing to bury it forever. We two understand each other. I suppose there are very few people here who know us at all, or care for us in any way?"

"But there are a number. I met one of our classmates at Coblenz, Bert Heywood; he asked all manner of questions, wanted to know whether it really was me or Harry he had seen last May at Ostend. I told him not to talk such nonsense, and I can assure you I did not enlighten him much."

As it is getting too dark to see well, the pony takes his way home. They enter the quiet home, and as Mrs. Colcord rises to welcome him she drops her work; he quickly stoops to restore it, and with a laugh declares that

it seems but yesterday he picked it up across the ocean in the old home. Mrs. Colcord, with a look of love shining in her fine eyes, asks :

“ Have we come to our senses at last ? ”

“ We are always to celebrate this anniversary with a *Kaffee Klatsche*. We never went away from our senses, mamma. But if you mean, are we all to go home? it is yes. How did you get home? We forgot you entirely.”

“ I should say you had;” pointing to the clock, which is just striking the hour of eight. “ The Stanley-Humes set me down here.” Turning, she gives Harry an arch look. “ I expect you found that old glove at last ! Is it not so ? ”

“ It is just so,” with a quizzical look she cannot understand.

Harry determines he will not leave the house until all the preliminaries are settled for an early consummation of his hopes. He has the whole evening before him. The battle is more easily fought than he expected, because the mother is on his side. She longs for home. A few fragments of conversation are floated upon the air towards us. Harry asks with a meaning glance :

“ When do the Stanley-Humes sail ? ”

“ Next Wednesday.”

“ And this is Thursday. I think we can arrange for the wedding at the Embassy on Monday.”

“ Now, Harry, how strange that would sound. I propose we go home, and be married there, and then papa will be so glad.”

“ What ! cross the Atlantic to be married ! Not the least occasion for it. Let your mother go with the Stanley.”

Humes, and we will take a year strolling around, and see Rome and Paris."

"But how can a bride be a bride without a trousseau?"

And remembering that other one laid away in boxes and drawers, she shudders as though she were struck by a cold blast. Harry keeps to the point.

"Oh, for that matter we can get a bonnet and dress and gloves and boots I suppose here, and when we are in Paris you can get a regular stock of everything."

He carries his point. The morning dawns in royal splendor. And certainly the sun never shone upon a happier pair. The wedding is very quiet, only a few intimates; but many are the admiring glances that follow them as they drive away to catch the noon express. As Mrs. Colcord leaves on Wednesday, they are to meet her at Ostend. They have decided to leave the rooms as they are, so that whenever they are tired of travel they can fly to the quiet ingleside. As the party reach Ostend, they are delighted to meet the travellers. Loving and tender is the parting between these two, and with many kindly expressions and last words, the two who are joined together for weal or woe are left together standing arm in arm, straining their eyes to get one last sight of the one whose heart is singing pæans of joy to the tune of Home, Sweet Home!

CHAPTER XXX.

"The thorns which I have reaped are of the tree
I planted—they have torn me, and I bleed ;
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed "
—Byron, *Childe Harold*, canto 4.

As they are turning to leave, seeing nothing but the blue waters of the bay meeting the blue of the sky, a cab draws up, driven with such speed that as it stops the horses are nearly thrown upon their haunches. A gentleman throws himself out, and hastening to where they are standing, exclaims, extending his hand :

"What a scare I got! I thought you had sailed. I was told at the hotel you had gone home."

"Well, you see, I have my home here with me. I am married."

He stops for no congratulations, but drawing Harry to one side, goes on as though he had not spoken :

"Put your wife in and send her back to the hotel, we have just time to board the ten-twenty express."

"I will not move until you tell me what it is. It is Harold?"

"Yes. We cannot stop for explanations."

"Is it Monaco?"

"Yes. No place for you wife; I will tell you all when we are aboard. I am pretty much done up."

The speaker is Fred Carfield, looking very much dis-

heveled as though from a night's journey. Turning, his listener looks in the eyes of his wife, and says :

"You hear what he says? I suppose I must leave you."

"I will not be left. Ah! how wise you were; how glad I am to be your wife, that I may go with you. If it is a good place for you to go to, I surely may go with you."

"But, my dear wife, do listen to reason. It is not a good place for anyone. You cannot go under any conditions. He may be wounded, dying among strangers," glancing in Fred's direction, whose only answer is a grave nod in the affirmative.

"Let me go, Harry; I am prepared for the worst; all the more need that I should go. When you were so anxious for the wedding in such haste, I think you must have had a premonition."

"Only by my apprenticeship in grief and anguish of mind and body."

He feels his purpose to leave her growing weaker, but he uses one more argument:—

"Supposing anything should happen to me, you would be all alone there?"

"You have voiced my thought exactly. If it is a desoy, I shall be by your side."

By this time they are boarding the train, and very glad are they of the privacy which a compartment gives them. There is very little of the festive look of a bridal party about them. It matters little where they go so long as they are together, and all prepared as they are for the journey, being about to start for Paris. A gloom has settled down upon them. The journey is long and tedi-

ous. Anyone who has crossed the frontier without stopping can remember the awful monotony; the only break in the day or night is snatching a bit of food or having passports examined. At last they are at their journey's end. Taking a cab, they are whirled towards Hôtel Carnavalet. Stepping inside, they are met by two others whom we have met before, Will Rennie, who has just returned from Leipsic, and George Mansfield from Hamburg. Shaking hands, for they were his classmates, they exclaim:

"What a chase we had! We were determined to catch you. It is positively necessary that Harold should see you. It is all his theme that you are dead; of course it is an hallucination, effects of delirium the doctor says."

"Is there any hope?"

"We fear not. At least the doctor says it is only a matter of a few hours now."

A soft-stepping nurse in white cap and apron beckons them down the long narrow corridor. Stopping just outside a door, she asks, with a pretty French accent:

"Will madame remain outside? Methinks the scene is not fitting for her to witness."

Leaning back against the wall, she signifies to them that she will wait. Opening the door softly, they enter, the nurse slightly in advance. To the latest day of his life, Harry never forgets the scene that greets his eyes. The man lying in the half light of the room, with head slightly elevated, great black rings around his eyes, which are rolling from side to side, the unquiet hands moving restlessly over the clothes which cover him, the hue of death already upon his brow. Another nurse stands in the shadow,

with her finger upon her lips, denoting silence. He stands gazing upon the prostrate figure, on which the excesses of the last year and a half have made such fearful ravages. All at once a groan bursts from his pale lips, and with a shriek he tries to rise.

"I cannot believe I am a murderer. I want to go over that place again. I never meant to kill you, beautiful, darling brother. Oh! what love you gave me, and how I repaid you!" Scanning his hands closely, he goes on hoarsely, "I wonder if the blood is on them that will not wash off."

He makes a motion as though he would speak to him, but is hindered by the nurse drawing him away, saying:

"It would be folly to disturb him. Of course you are the brother to whom he alludes. The resemblance is very striking. This is the turn delirium often takes. Sometimes in the last twenty-four hours it has taken the united strength of four to hold him, and we expected every hour would be his last."

But well knowing his mind must be set at rest at any cost, he moves forward, and taking the hot, restless hands in his cool ones, he bends above him, and with the light of a great love, a divine forgiveness, in his eyes, tenderly caressing the fevered brow, he says:

"Brother Harold, will you not open your eyes? See, it is Harry. Look up."

He goes wild with agony, exclaiming in most terrible fear:

"I am already dead; he has come to torture me."

Harry still perseveres; he knows it is not a delusion born of fancy, as all suppose, but a reality that must be

met and conquered. And so asking that the room be lighted, he once more bends above him, standing where a strong light falls upon him; he smiles down upon him, saying tenderly:

"It is I, brother; alive and well."

Joy does not kill, else the wounded man lying there so hopeless and helpless had never breathed again. The tears which have so seldom flowed from those eagle eyes flow now in torrents, they weep together,—the one from sheer weakness and joy, the other for this wasted life. As soon as he masters his emotion sufficiently to speak, he asks in a low, broken, hesitating voice:

"Where have you been all these months? I went back to find you, but could get no trace, no word of you. I was wild. I dared not go home. A terrible remorse came over me, when it was too late. How you must hate and despise me! I have wrought you such grief."

"On the contrary, brother, I love you dearly, and with that love is mingled a great pity. I think I feel mother's grief, and my own too."

At the mention of the mother's name a terrible groan escapes his lips.

"Ah, if mother could only be spared this news. I am known," drawing him closely, and whispering in his ear, "as Dudley Harrison here. I dare not look in your face. But thanks be to God—if I dare to take His name upon my lips—that I am not a murderer."

Wringing the hands he holds, he exclaims:

"Clasp them close, brother; they are not stained. I hated them because they had done such a deed."

He closes his eyes for a moment, then looking up, eagerly asks :

“Did you find the glove? Ah, she is pure gold. I might possibly have won her but for the glove. What a providence was over us that I did not! Then I should not have won the love of my Sybil. You will love her. I feel a new life in my veins. God helping me I will make amends, as far as in me lies, for all the grief I have caused you. The way looks bright.”

“Yes, I found the glove, and I found my wife too; she is waiting now to come and see you, and smooth your pillow.”

“See me! Smooth my pillow! Why, man, she hates me. I came pretty near killing her.”

“Do not talk. She is here to speak for herself.”

Motioning towards the door, she takes one step forward, and moves around to the opposite side of the bed. Taking his hand in hers, she gazes upon him with oh! such a look of pity in her eyes. She tries to command her voice that she may speak one word to him; in vain, the tears stand in her eyes. At last he exclaims :

“How you must hate me! Have you come to mock me with your happiness? You think I am a murderer in heart, if not in deed; but I only meant to detain him.”

“Not another word, Harold. I only see a brother. ‘Let the dead past bury its dead.’ I thank our dear Heavenly Father that out of chaos He has brought order. I stand by this bedside as your sister. That was the reason I could not endure to turn you away; I unknowingly gave you a sister’s love. Ah, we of the cold North

know how to love ; yes, and how to forgive. I am Harry's wife. I will stand by you and make you strong with a sister's love."

"Ah, I have a sister for you. What a pair you will make. If you with your human nature can forgive, I think I feel the Saviour's hand upon my brow saying : 'Go and sin no more.' I mean to work for Him. I have almost defied that great divine power that rules the universe. Would that instead I had bowed the knee in adoration. Do you think it is presumptuous to expect forgiveness now ; but ah, I will work as one whose years are not his own."

"He forgives you freely, I am sure. We wound Him every day by our careless looks and words ; but do you not remember what He said of his murderers, when on the cross : 'Father, forgive them ; they know not what they do.' So is He interceding for us now. Take heart of hope, Harold ; send a prayer right up from your heart. 'Ask and ye shall receive.'"

Drawing Harry more closely to him, he whispers :

"It was I, brother, who pawned the watch that time, and lured you to that gambling house. Can you forgive that?"

"Yes, Harold. I will not only forgive, we will forget it bury it deep. My heart is full of thankfulness that mother never knew it."

"How kind you were that you kept it secret. The day I stood in the hall when you went to the private conference, do you remember ? And then I conquered myself by thinking it should be the last time I would ever injure

you, and I felt it would be far more disgrace to us if I confessed at that late day ; because you were so well up I knew they would look upon you leniently. And this last, most dreadful"—a shudder convulses him from head to foot. The death-damp is heavy on his brow. "Does she know? Have you written?"

"No, brother, we concluded to bury it ; the worst they can say of Angel is that she is fickle, and that will soon pass away when once they know her. All for love of you and mother. You know, Harold, you are best beloved."

"Harry, I would give my life to wipe out the stain of the last ten years. How fruitless. Neglected opportunities."

"Darling brother," caressing him as a woman might, "perhaps God will take all your mistakes and cast them behind your back."

"Would that He might ; it is a huge bundle. But, brother, I did not draw your allowance for the last six months. I would have starved first. I thought, as I could find no trace of you, that you might possibly be alive, and that the money might save your life and the family honor."

"You did well, brother ; it did just that."

"But how did you succeed in hiding your identity ; I was so anxious that I put the police on your track?"

"I thought so. I told them I was a miner crossing to Montana, and got robbed. I do not think a lie is justifiable under any circumstances, but it seemed to me like this : that hunting me up at that late day was like opening a wound that is nearly healed to see how it is progressing ; it was equivalent to telling them I had no wound."

"The bundle is being cast back to me. It contains almost crimes."

Angel, leaning over as if to shield him, repeats "Rock of Ages cleft for me."

He repeats it slowly and painfully, and looking up laughing, exclaims: "I am hiding in the cleft of the rock."

We will draw the curtain over the closing scene. As the first streak of dawn steals through the eastern window, Harry supports his wife from the room. She leans heavily upon him, as they pass on towards a room at the far end of the corridor. As for a moment she raises her eyes to his, the tears are silently flowing; but in an impressive manner she speaks:

"A sad ending for so much promise. We will trust he is one of those who are saved as by fire." Adding: "Poor boy, I am so sorry for you; but remember: 'Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.'"

Alone together, hand clasped in hand, looking in each other's eyes, he tells Harry of all his wanderings, of his sore need of money, the great temptation it was for him to cheat at cards (making it so easy owing to his expertness), his detection and the unlucky shot. He has not the remotest idea that he is drifting out over the bar into the great untried. His wound has ceased to pain him. His cheek is flushed, his eye is bright with excitement. He goes on in a voice that seems strong:

"When I commenced to follow you I meant to detain you for a week, and when I could not bring you back to consciousness, I went for help. I would have given the world, had it been mine, to see you well and strong. When

I got back with a doctor, you were gone. Oh, the agony of that hour! I have travelled miles and wandered the world over to get away from myself. I was glad I was wounded—I hoped—fatally. But now everything is so different, I am so glad to get well. Ah, with what delight I shall leave here never to return!”

His mind wanders after a few moments' quiet, and he babbles of home and mother, laughingly exclaiming, “Tell papa to see that the horses are tethered strong,” for he's again by the camp-fire, on some picnic or excursion. Harry tries to rouse him, he remembers they do not know who Sybil is, but all too late. As the god of day mounts his chariot, he breathes his last in a foreign land, but not alone. Harry has always been rather careless about money, rather inclined to undervalue it. He finds it now to be a blessing. If one wants privacy, it is the golden key that not only locks the door but keeps watch and ward that it stays fast locked. It is the open sesame to a speedy quiet removal, with passports and all needed papers. The wound is sealed with costliest preparations for that purpose. and with sad hearts they turn their faces towards Paris, thinking and pondering in his mind what would be for the best in years to come; he selects Paris as the most likely to be unobserved or commented upon. Suppressing everything excepting the simple record of his sudden death, he is left to his long, last repose in the *Cimetière Montmartre*. Crossing the *Chemin Troyon*, near and a little at the right of a handsome recumbent figure in bronze by Millet, which marks the place where *Baudin ses concitoyens* sleeps, is a tall, slender column of finest carrara

marked with the single word *Montgomery* in quaint old English letters. And beneath it rests all that was mortal of the one who gave so much promise of long life and happiness. He has held a place in hearts that are warm with fondest affection in spite of his waywardness and misdeeds. As they stand together by the silent spot Angel asks,—

“Why were you so anxious to lay him here?”

“That mother will always know where to find the place; it will never be moved while time lasts. It will be easy for her to come.”

“Did you remember Sybil's name?”

“I did not learn it. I never thought to ask until too late. In his effects I found a small parcel beautifully inscribed to dear Sybil, with Harold's love. I have advertised in all the daily papers. Most likely I shall soon hear.”

“I hope so. I know a little how she feels.”

“How wonderful the likeness between you after he was dead; it was as though all his faults and shortcomings had fallen away from him; there is something so grand in death. It is a purifier.”

“Yes, if one meets it rightly.”

The sad news is speeding across the ocean, following close upon the news of Harry's marriage. As they turn from the silent spot, where sleeps the one who came so near making shipwreck of their lives, they heave a deep sigh, as they remember the household that is so soon to be plunged into deepest sorrow. Harry observes :

“I do not feel as though I could face them yet; I never

was good at dissembling, and there will be so many questions to answer."

"I am sure we are much the safest to remain abroad. We can write and give little sketches and accounts of what we wish them to know ; and when we go back, the keen edge of their grief will have worn off."

"Well, I have got a comforter ; I thought you would certainly be wishing to return after this sad experience."

"No, Harry ; it is too sad. I only want you with me."

And they turn their steps towards the ingleside so lately left, in which to spend a few quiet days before starting on their tour.

CHAPTER XXXI.

“As aromatic plants bestow
No spicy fragrance while they grow;
But crushed and trodden to the ground,
Diffuse their balmy sweets around.”

—*Goldsmith.*

WE will not attempt to describe the sorrow in that far away Southern home. No light footsteps are heard within the hall; no gay, laughing banter rings through the silent rooms. The mother sits through all the long, sunshiny days with folded hands. Letters are frequent from the wanderers, filled with loving messages to cheer the hearts of those so sadly bereft. The young couple left to themselves follow their own sweet wills. The balmy Spring days are speeding, and soon upon the threshold will be sitting the bewitching goddess Summer. Each day takes them to some place of interest, oftentimes to places they did not intend visiting; sometimes near and sometimes far away, but all the same to them. After this one year they mean to settle down to house-keeping in good earnest. They make a trip to the Hanse towns, and sail up the Elbe. They loiter a whole week at Heidelberg. There is something so entrancing to both in the scenery, the bustle—but such a strange bustle, no one hurrying yet all moving; the number of students sitting beneath the trees. They take a run into Switzerland, and stand where the spray from the Schaffhausen falls upon them, and, viewing it

from every point, talk of the picture that was painted so long ago, and sold in Boston. They each make a sketch of the Stauback, near Lauterbrunnen, where they spend four whole days. Ascending Mont Blanc they are lost in admiration of the scenery so picturesque, embracing as it does waterfalls, valleys, glaciers of ice on which the sun's rays fall, lighting them with a brilliancy—that is simply dazzling; then the snow-capped peaks in the distance. If you wish to feel more deeply the power and might of the great Omnipotent, go and stand upon the lofty heights of Mont Blanc. At last they turn their footsteps towards France, neither, if they were asked, could tell for what reason; but both are of the same mind. They establish themselves in comfortable quarters in the *Grand Hotel Du Louvre, Rue de Rivoli*, opposite the north side of the Louvre, adjoining the *Palais-Royal*. They fairly revel among the old masters, never tiring of art, especially the historical pictures for which France is noted. They even succeed in gaining access to some private picture-galleries, spending hours sitting quietly side by side, with now and then a day in the forest of Fontainebleau, strolling through its pleasant walks, admiring its wonderful rock formation, magnificent trees, and deep, inaccessible gorges. They ascend the height upon which sits *Fort de l'Empereur*, gaining a fine view of the town of Melun and often of Paris when the day is clear. They take a day at Rouen with its *Musée de Peinture*. They stand upon the height, and view the pilgrimage-church of *Bon Secours*, lost in contemplation of the beauty of the scene spread out before them. The river winding at their feet, and in

the distance are plainly visible the rich and varied scenery of the luxuriant pastures of Normandy. A hand is placed upon his shoulder, and turning he finds an old friend, M. Henri de Rocquefort, Minister from Spain, whose acquaintance he made in the old long ago days at Berlin, who is accompanied by his wife. The ladies are soon in close conversation, and as the day is not far advanced, they propose an excursion by water to the little town of *La Bouille*, about ten miles below Rouen, when from the ancient Chateau *de Robert le Diable*—which is fast becoming but a tradition, but from its lofty height a charming view may be obtained of the valley of the Seine, with its white chalk hills, and Rouen in the distance, with its grand old Cathedral—they sit and build castles in the air, and clothe the walls of the stately ruin with wildest romance. Returning to Paris, they are claimed as guests for the following day, adding that they have a box at the *Comédie Française*, and will they come prepared to attend. Having remained so long by themselves, and thinking that nearly eight months have elapsed since the occurrence of the tragedy which has cast such a shadow over their hearts, and then presenting that wonderful panacea to each other that “we are among strangers,” they decide upon going. As they are seated in the box, after admiring the fine statues, and more especially the ceiling representing La Belle France distributing laurels to her three great dramatists, Molière, Corneille and Racine, they turn their attention to the house. A lady is entering the box exactly opposite their own. So regally beautiful is she that in looking at her once one feels constrained to look

again. Of queenly mien, excessively tall, but with delightful plumpness of figure that proclaims her a daughter of the sunny South ; eyes so large, dark and brilliant that they seem to take in the house at a glance, as she sweeps it with her glass, until it rests upon their own box, when it falls to the floor with a crash, her clasped hands are extended towards them for one moment, the next there is nothing to be seen except a shimmering pile of snowy satin glittering with gems. An elderly gentleman, presumably French, who has turned to speak with someone who is entering the box, turns, and with a quick gesture draws the curtains. They rather feel than hear that she is being carried out. They clasp hands instinctively, and leaning towards him he hears his wife, as though in a dream, speak slowly in an undertone :

“ It is Sybil, Harry. She looks just as I thought she would. Poor dear ! Can we not go to her ? ”

He finds voice to answer :

“ Yes, it is she. I never saw her before. She evidently takes me for Harold. Are we never to be done with mystery ? ”

He is deadly white, a terrible pain is tugging at his heart-strings. What, if she will not be convinced ? He tries to put the thought away, to be himself. But the darkness of midnight seems to envelop him. He cannot pierce through it. He is not long in suspense : the same gentleman whom he has seen in the opposite box makes his appearance at the door. Entering, as it is between the acts, he extends his hand, saying :

“ And so we meet again, Montgomery ? How d'ye do ? ”

Harry bending toward him, with a look of determination in his eyes, which meet his steadily :

"You have the advantage. I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance."

"Are you not Mons. Montgomery from North Carolina?"

"I am, sir. But my name is Harry."

"I only hope you will be able to satisfy my daughter of that fact," extending his card, which Harry reading observes the name :

M. Renouf de l'Estrange,

Chateau Rue Chasseloup Laubat,

adding, "You will come with me? I am afraid if you do not her patience will be too sorely taxed."

"Most assuredly. I am ready now. I suppose I may take my wife?"

"Your wife is it?" His words are those of one who wishes to be polite, but his voice says, "That is why you do not know me."

Speaking a few parting words to his host, with his wife's fur cloak thrown over his arm, they are conducted to a carriage in waiting, and whirled away in the direction of the Chateau. Not a word is spoken. The footman throws open the door; they ascend the broad marble steps, and stepping inside, a door is opened at the right. Harry is signed to enter. The old marquis beckons Angel to a seat upon a fauteuil near the door, while he stands by her side. As Harry enters the room, which is brilliantly lighted, his eyes are dazzled; in a second he is himself. But he sees only one silent figure standing in the middle of the room. She reminds him of doom, so silent, so immovable;

but as he advances towards her, she extends her two hands, and clasps his closely, standing so near him that he can feel her breath upon his cheek. It seems to him it is an hour in which she holds him with her eyes, it is fully five minutes. Reaching up one hand, it rests for a moment upon his hair with lightest touch; stepping back, she brightens; she is as though what looked like a simple piece of glass is struck by the light. It is a diamond. Faucets of light flash from her eyes, her lips curve in a smile, all the agony drops away from her, she draws a deep breath, and with a nonchalance that is surprising exclaims:

"Ah! how like you are! It is no wonder I was deceived."

Turning with all her old vivacity, for which she is unequalled, she adds:

"I think our part of the play has been the most interesting. Perhaps someone will introduce us? Did I not bring down the house? Who are you? Why do you not speak?"

"I am Harry Montgomery, at your service."

"Ah, then you are a relative; you must be, you are so alike. Are you a relative of Harold's?"

"He was my twin-brother. We were called the—"

She brings her hands together, and with a shriek that rings in his ears for many a day, exclaims:

"*Was* and *were*! Why do you not say we are brothers?" Raising her voice, she cries: "Papa, come here!"

But at that moment Angel flies past him, and kneeling by her side, and putting her arms around her, says in that sweet, winning, pitying voice of hers:

"Sybil, let me comfort you. Let us talk no more to-night. You have already borne enough; to-morrow we will tell you all. You are taxing your strength too far."

"Sybil! you said. Who are you that you should call me Sybil? Ah! I remember; you are the happy wife I saw in the box opposite ours. What know you of grief that you try to comfort me? You need have no fear for me; tell me all. I have sounded the whole gamut of sorrow during the past year. There's not a note of woe that I am not familiar with its every cadence."

Harry bends towards his wife, and speaking in undertones goes quietly out. And then Angel in gentlest accents with many tears (more for the living than the dead), tells her of that last cry of Sybil in that silent death-chamber, and of the sacred mound in *Cimetière Montmartre*.

"Why did you not come and let me know sooner?"

"We had no clue by which to find you. He never thought his end was near, until it was too late; he could not speak. We had a little notice inserted in all the dailies, for we felt your place of residence was Paris. I want to be your sister. He gave you to us as a sister. Will you let me love you?"

"I never had sister or brother. I shall have to get used to it. I cannot love you in a minute."

At this moment Harry enters with the little parcel which was found among his effects, marked for dear Sybil with Harold's fondest love, and also the daily with the personal: "A small parcel, also intelligence of H. M., is awaiting Sybil at number nineteen Avenue de St. Cloud."

She reads it through and totters to her feet, clasping the

parcel, the paper falling with a rustling sound upon the carpet. She looks ghastly; the superb loveliness is quenched in the blackness of midnight. Harry assists her to the door. Turning, she clasps his hands for a moment, no tear dimming her eye—

“Will you not remain here? It is my wish that you should. I accept the relationship. I claim you from to-night as brother and sister.”

“We certainly will if you wish it. All places are alike to us.”

This first night of bitter sorrow, no eye but God's beholds her. She only waits for dawn, and as the light of another day is breaking in the eastern horizon, a silent figure clad all in black steals out at the side entrance to the Chateau, and after walking a short distance finds a cab in waiting, and is driven to the entrance of *Cimetière Montmartre*. The sun has mounted high in the heavens ere she turns upon her homeward way. A light of gladness has gone out of her life. The difference in her bearing is very great; no proud *hauteur* is in her step and mien, but instead a sweet submission shines in every lineament of her exquisite features. Later on in the day she shows them what the parcel contains. It is Harold's pictured face painted on ivory inlaid with gold, a border of lilies of the valley on emeralds, pearls and diamonds, in the shape of a heart, as a brooch. Harry pressing a tiny spring among the jewels, the back opens, disclosing a curl of hair, so like his own. For the first time she bursts into tears, and leaning her head upon his shoulder, she gives her grief full vent. It is the last time they see her shed tears for many

years. The gentlemen have had a long talk. The father tells him that for five years she was the queen of society. Coronets were laid at her feet, but she cared for none. The world called her proud and heartless. Then she met Harold, and at the age of twenty-five she lavished upon him all the wealth of her warm Southern heart. What wonder the love was mutual? Who could resist such charms? Her estates are boundless, nearly all at her own disposal, having been inherited from her mother, who died in giving her birth. And so it happened that between the father's dissatisfaction and Harold's pride and inward remorse, he took a year, in which to try the strength of her love, to try and retrieve his shattered fortune. All those days in which the personal ran through the daily papers, they were travelling with a party in Switzerland; whenever the papers were received they were glanced over and left. Her love for Angel is unbounded, she bestows upon her all the wealth of her lonely aching heart. Walking one evening beneath the trees with arms entwined, she turns to her, and looking and talking absently, says :

"Was I not very rude to you that first evening? I did not think you were a mortal woman. I felt I dared not trust you. I thought you were such a sprite as lured Hero to her doom. I was fairly afraid of you; and especially your calling me Sybil. I do not know how I shall feel when you are gone. I shut my eyes to it. I do not know where I shall go."

"I do. We have it all arranged; you are to go home with us. Do you think we would leave you? I can bespeak for you a welcome that will satisfy even you."

And Harry coming up behind them joins his pleadings with hers, adding :

“Harold was ever mamma’s favorite. You will be the light of her eyes ; and we will take her by surprise.”

“When you look at each other like that I know what you think. There is no need of much talk between you two, you understand each other so well.”

“I must say you are a very dangerous person to be with, since you can intercept them and read.”

“Well, now, if you will speak truly, I know you were thinking that I would soon forget and form other ties, and you would like then to see me now. Put the thought away. I shall never forget.”

And she is true to her word. Many and grand are the offers she receives, but she is deaf alike to all.

He laughs and colors to the temples. She goes on :

“I think in years to come I shall be quite happy. Had he proved false, I should have died, but dying with my name upon his lips, I will live and do him honor, as far as in me lies. That first deadly stab I got when I saw you lean towards your wife with a little tender gesture, which told me she was wife, and not only in name but in soul. I do not see why it is they paint Cupid blind, he seems to me to have Argus eyes.”

Instead of two crossing the ocean there are three ; and as they make their way towards the quay in New York, plainly discernible among the waiting crowd of friends are Judge and Mrs. Colcord. Time and absence have only deepened their love ; and very kindly is the greeting they give this widow by brevet, for a letter has gone across the

ocean saying that Harry had lost a brother who had been studying in Rome. They all pursue the journey southward together, spending a couple of days in Philadelphia with the Laviliens, enjoying the society of their old friend Dorothy, who has become a staid matron with a *petite* M. Lavilien, who bids fair to rule the house. The long train moves into Beaufort, and one is waiting. The mother sits at home, but fond and loving is her embrace as she holds to her heart the one who has crossed the ocean to meet them. She accepts them both in all good faith; they find a warm place in the mother's heart. Nothing can ever take the place of the one who is gone. A void never to be filled is left in the home circle. No line can measure the depths of a mother's love. Grandchildren may play around her hearth-stone and climb around her chair, they only remind her of the clinging fingers, crossed so silently in that far away foreign land, where wreathed in immortelles the gentle breezes whisper above the sacred mound. One little incident is worthy of notice. A few friends drop in a day or two after their arrival, and stay until the cool of the evening. Of the party is a young girl fast verging towards womanhood, who has always as a child been a great friend and playmate of the brothers. As playful as a kitten and twice as lively, she had always declared she liked Harold best, could she only tell which was Harold, which had always raised a laugh at her way of putting it, for of course she meant that when she had him by himself and knew it to be he, she liked him immensely. Mrs. Montgomery, leaning towards her, asks: "Amy, have you ever seen their pictures which they had painted on their twenty-first birthday for me?"

"No, Mrs. Montgomery. The last timē I was here I did not like to ask ; and when I came and you were away I did not like to intrude."

"Well, I am sure you might have come in and seen them without intruding. Come now, and perhaps the others would like to come?"

Sybil has stood before them for an hour to-day ; she alone remains. Angel is the last to enter the long drawing-room where the picture, life-size, hangs between the windows, brilliantly lighted, but the only object which attracts her attention is her mother, she sees her sway and reach out her hands as if for support. She is by her side in a moment, and between them they succeed in getting her to her room. She sinks down upon a sofa, and with all the sal volatile cordial and fresh air she can hardly get her breath. At last she beckons Angel close to her, asking, "Did you see him abroad?"

"Yes, I stayed by his bedside until just before he died."

"Did he confess and repent? I hope you forgave him."

"Mamma, it is a subject that is tabooed between us ; we agreed to keep it between ourselves."

"Can I not tell Doctor Simpson and papa?"

"Never. Let it rest. For I think papa knows. He looked at me yesterday so strangely as he came out of the room."

"And to think I misjudged you so ; all that whole year I watched you and worried about you."

"Never mind, you darling mother ; you were just as sweet as you could be, and as for papa, why, I am the greatest heiress in the universe with such kind loving parents and

so noble a husband. Make yourself easy, mamma, we do not make or mar our destiny by the least jot or tittle by all the worrying or manœuvring possible. It is to teach us to rely implicitly upon the strong arm and the hand that holds the world in place."

"Yes, my dear; I often think that we make plans and they all go awry. Not at any time can we look ahead and say what we will do to-morrow. I expect it is to teach us our own nothingness."

After a few days the young couple leave for a short trip into Virginia to visit some old acquaintances of Harry's. They all have the idea it is some of his old classmates. Even his wife, as they leave the train at Petersburg, asks with no little curiosity—

"Are the people whom we are to visit very old friends?"

"Very, and tried and true."

As the distance is not more than eight miles, they conclude to ride, and early morning finds them on their way well mounted. A ride of an hour or a little more brings them in front of a modest looking cottage, with numberless vines and small shrubs shading its windows, which shine in the light of the sun like molten silver. As they dismount and open the gate, a middle-aged negress comes out upon the top step, when, espying the travellers, she flies down the walk, exclaiming, her face literally beaming with delight:

"Now, Massa Harry, de Lord be praised, but is dis you?"

"Me and no other, auntie, well and happy."

"And is dis de Angel ye talked about?"

"The identical Angel. But how did you learn my name?"

"Oh, we knew yer name all de time. Come in."

The house is spotlessly clean, new paint, a sideboard filled with many dishes of different colors and shapes, no end of glassware, and finding chairs for them, she calls aloud, "Jacob," when from some fastness at the back of the yard the old man makes his bow to the lady, but to the gentleman he grasps his two hands and fairly wrings them, saying in a voice nearly inaudible from emotion:

"To think you made all that work for us two old people," waving his hand around the house and grounds.

Turning to her, Harry asks:

"Now, tell me how you learned my name and why you never told me?"

She disappears into another room, when returning she holds out to him his own little card-case, holding all his cards, and an old battered, wrinkled envelope addressed to himself, and says in her sweet comforting voice:

"We found you didn't want nuffin known, so we jist didn't know nuffin?"

He looks at his wife a moment, then he bends towards her and nearly whispers:

"Such disinterestedness. It is to them we owe all our happiness."

"Now, Missis, don't you b'lieve all he says. We owe all we got to him. Only think, we had a letter that we could have a thousand dollars sent. Well, well, it shows his great heart; we's might want it, who knows."

It has long ago dawned upon this wife, who sits between these two, that these are his preservers,—those who cared for him through all his long sickness. In her heart she thinks as he does, that no money can ever repay such love and care.

As they bid good-bye to the old couple and leave them standing in the door, and as they are just vanishing from sight, they both wave hands, and he turns to his wife with the words upon his lips—

“I thought you would like to see them.”

“Life would not have been complete without it. I am glad you have made them so comfortable.”

“A mere bagatelle to us. I bought that unreclaimed and had the house built ; they have made it to blossom like the rose.”

“They have made it very nice ; they seem industrious.”

“They are. Some might think it careless, leaving a thousand dollars at their disposal.”

“No, indeed ; money can never repay them.”

“That is just what I think. They have a daughter down in Georgia, she is buying her freedom. I am going to send my man after her when we get home, and have her sent to her mother.”

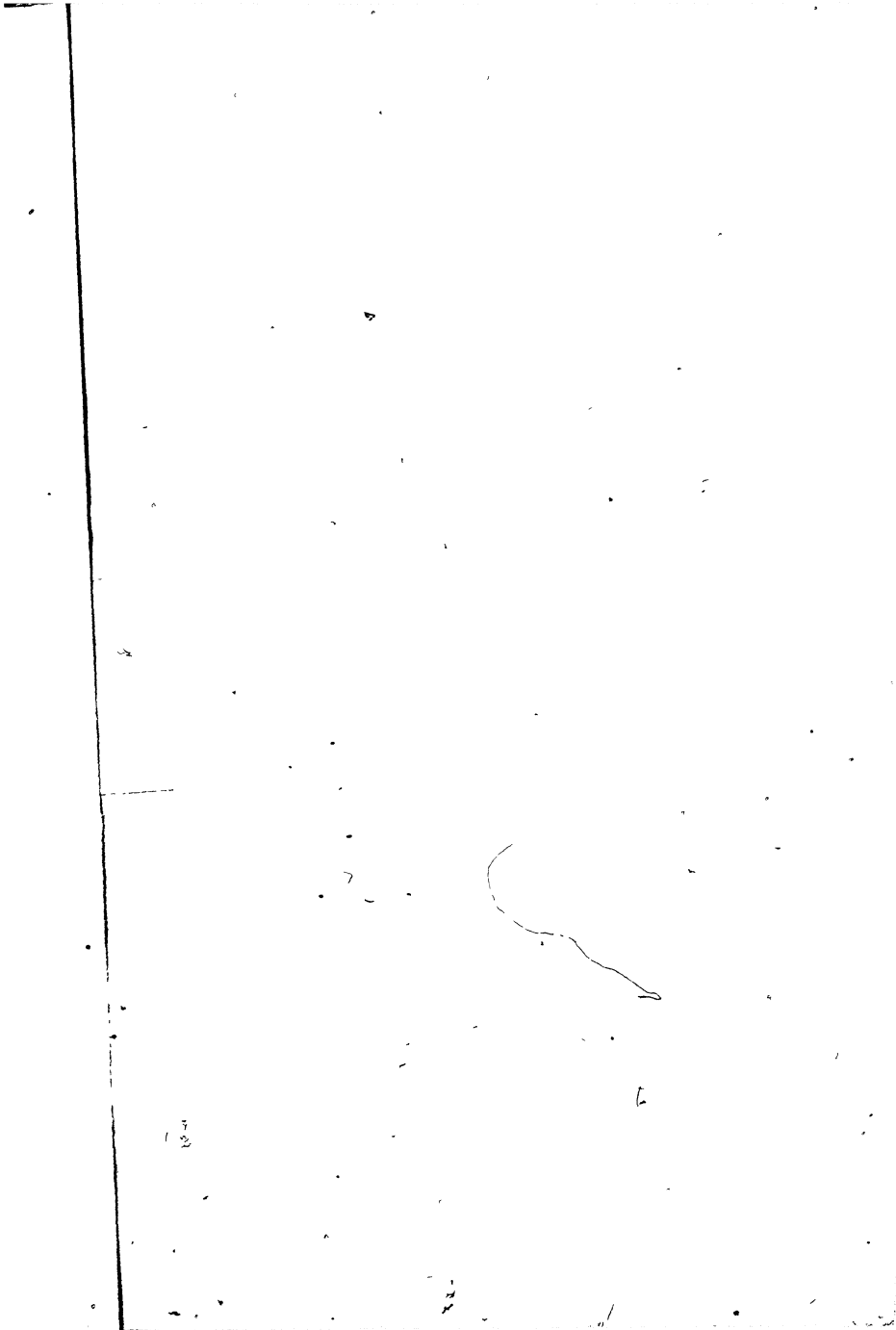
“What a capital idea ! Mothers' hearts are about the same the world over.”

When the spring with its balmy breezes visits this France of America, a cheerful, pleasant party wend their way northward, even Mr. Montgomery accompanying them. There is a break in the party, on reaching New York. Two women cross the ocean. A visit is made to the long deserted chateau in Paris. M. de l'Estrange is in Constantinople, on official business. They spend many peaceful, quiet days together. No day passes, be it storm or sunshine, in which they do not stand by that tall marble shaft, bearing the name Montgomery. Much of their time is spent in

succoring the distressed. A new world is opened to the elder lady. Each day sees some good deed performed. Every hour has its duties, for soon they will take their home-ward way across the ocean. Many such voyages are made; sometimes one, sometimes another is her companion, but always one is Sybil. No year passes in which they do not gather for a few weeks or months, as the case may be, beneath one of the four roofs. Harry has made Washington his place of residence. The circle is never complete without Sybil. Her open sesame to all their hearts is her deep abiding love for each and all of the family. Aunt Helena has long ago made her promised visit, as they have moved to New York, making just a pleasant trip for a visit. May each added year bring prosperity, health and peace of mind.

EPILOGUE.

Should any be inclined to think we have presented slavery in too fair a guise, let him or her bear this in mind: that one family can hardly be considered a criterion. Although it has its bright side as well as its dark, thanks be to our great, supreme All-Father, it is no more a blot upon the escutcheon of our Southern chivalry.



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