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JANE REDGRAVE.*

A VILLAGE STORY.

BY MRS. MOODIE.

CHAPTER IX.

Oh, love! thou hast betrayed my trusting heart,
In spring's fresh morning, when the flush of joy
Kindled the red rose on my conscious cheek—
The rose is withered by the blight of care,
Its bright leaves mildewed with the scalding tears
Of hope too long deferred.

"Ah! my child," said Mrs. Sternfield, as she patted the pale cheek of Rosamond, who was reclining upon the sofa in her boudoir; "this is the manner in which pleasure repays her votaries."

"I am no lover of pleasure, grandmamma. My spirits become depressed, instead of exhilarated amid scenes of gaiety. If the world was made for the young and thoughtless, I feel that I was not made for the world. I have seen enough of it, and with your permission, I will leave London for a while, and visit my Aunt Dunstanville. The air of Bramby will revive my drooping heart."

"And is there no tie, Rosamond, to bind you to London?" said the old lady with a searching look. Rosamond blushed and looked down, then grew suddenly paler than before.

"You are unhappy, my child?"

Rosamond's lip quivered, and large tears filled her eyes.

"This should not be in the first days of love, when that love is bestowed upon a worthy object. Beware of jealousy. It is a fiend that will destroy the very passion that gave it birth—a changeling, too often mistaken for love, but its bitterest enemy."

"I am not jealous of him, grandmamma. Oh! no—he is too good, too generous to give me pain; but I doubt myself. I feel too painfully my own inferiority; feel that I was not brought up a lady, that I am not worthy of him. Last night I angered him, I know not how, and I have not seen him since." Here the tears that had been hanging in her long dark lashes overflowed her cheeks, and the young girl turned away and wept bitterly.

The old lady saw that something was wrong, and she determined to see her nephew, and demand an explanation; she would then bring him to Rosamond, and feel the joy of producing a reconciliation between the lovers. Her surprise was great on learning from Marianne that he had quitted the house without bidding her farewell. A cold ceremonial note contained a written apology for his extraordinary conduct; and Marianne said, that she had just sent up to Rosamond a letter, which he had charged her to deliver.

"Rosamond has, I fear, lost her lover," she said with an air of indifference. "Men of his warm temperament are not to be trifled with; and she would dance and flirt with Captain Doyle, although she saw that it annoyed the Major. A girl so fond of admiration, and with such little prudence, deserves to be punished. I for one don't pity her—did she care for her lover, she would avoid wounding his feelings. She will not meet with such a man as Dunstanville Sternfield every day.

"Poor Rosamond!" sighed the old lady—"he was not worthy of thee. If he has deserted thee, his conduct is both cruel and contemptible.

*Continued from page 356.

But perhaps I wrong him—Marianne is no peacemaker. His letter to Rosamond may give a more satisfactory explanation of his motive for leaving us."

On entering her grand-daughter's apartment, she found her still seated upon the sofa by the table. Her eye was fixed on vacancy, a wild, unmeaning smile played upon her lips, and she held an open letter convulsively clutched in her right hand.

"Rosamond!—my child!"

"Yes—he is gone—gone for ever!" said Rosamond, with an hysterical laugh. "Gone, without one kind, forgiving word—one brief farewell. Grandmamma—I have not deserved this."

The old lady took the letter from her hand.

"Yes, read it! But first look at the seal. Ah, that was cruel, an aggravation of cruelty, to use that seal. I knew all the sorrow that that letter brought, when I looked at the seal." It was a broken chain, the motto. "Light when divided."

"The letter was as follows:

"Miss Sternfield will doubtless feel surprised at my departure, after the solemn engagement which I entered into yesterday; but to remain, and fulfil that engagement, when I had ceased to regard the object of it with affection and respect, would be to the injury of both parties. I need not explain to Miss Sternfield the cause of this separation, as I feel confident that she knows it but too well. A young lady, engaged to be the wife of one man, and who can yet write love letters to, and encourage the addresses of, another, is not the wife for

"D. STERNFIELD."

"Rosamond, you are the victim of some base calumny. Who is the person he refers to, in this unkind letter?"

"Grandmamma, I am as ignorant as you are. He has inflicted a wound on my heart, too deep almost for tears, and so keenly do I suffer from his unmerited scorn that I no longer wish him to be undeceived. After reading that letter, dearly as I love him—I could not—I would not be his wife."

She rose from her seat, her eye brightened, and something like indignant scorn curled her beautiful lip. "Yes, I have been betrayed, and by those whom I considered my best friends; but God who has laid upon me this burthen, will give me fortitude to bear it. Dunstanville Sternfield, you are free—and for ever!"

At this moment Marianne entered the room, and hiding the obnoxious letter in her bosom, Rosamond, without speaking to her, sought the solitude of her own chamber. Marianne had ex-

pected tears and lamentations from her gentle cousin; she was not prepared for a proud reserve, a silence more tantalizing than reproachful words.

Rosamond felt that her grief was of a private nature, and delicacy forbade her to expose it to the prying eyes of others. She suffered the annihilation of her first hopes acutely, but from that hour she betrayed not, either by look or sign, the secret anguish she hoarded in her breast. But there was one that watched that pale cheek and languid eye, with intense anxiety, and shared in all her untold sorrow. With a brother's zealous care, and more than a brother's love, did Arthur Walbrook seek to alleviate his gentle cousin's grief. His sympathy was made known not in words, but by a thousand little acts of kindness, and the esteem which Rosamond entertained for him was daily strengthened into a lasting friendship.

"Ah!" thought Rosamond; "he feels for me—he pities me—he knows the state of my heart, and can enter into all its sorrows. If Heaven has deprived me of my lover, it has bestowed upon me a true and faithful friend."

Arthur daily visited the abode of the sick and unfortunate; the children of poverty were the dearest objects of his care. The wealth he needed not, was constantly expended in the alleviation of their wants. His presence cheered the gloomy darkness of the condemned cell, and shed comfort and hope around the dying bed. To feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to teach the ignorant, and strengthen the virtuous efforts of the industrious operative, were to him labors of love, from which he derived the most exquisite enjoyment. In the sorrows of others, he found the best antidote to heal his own. Observing Rosamond looking unusually pale, he proposed to her visiting with him some poor families in whom he felt peculiarly interested.

"You are no child, Rosamond, of luxurious ease, and the sight of these poor pensioners on the bounty of Providence, will make you feel how much you owe to the care of that Divine Being, who has saved you from so much actual misery. The cries of famishing children, and starving querulous age, you have never known; and when you witness what these poor creatures suffer, your own grief will appear a trifle when compared with theirs."

Rosamond accepted his offer, glad to escape from herself, and from the cold and prying eyes of Marianne, whom she could no longer trust, and whom she more than suspected, as the author of her wrongs.

"We shall not need the carriage," said Arthur.

"I never insult my poor friends with a display of magnificence."

Then giving his arm to Rose, he carefully threaded his way through the moving crowds of the vast metropolis, until they reached a narrow alley running back from the broad thoroughfare of Oxford street. Enclosed on either side with high dingy-looking houses, the rays of the broad sun scarcely found their way into the depths of the gloomy close alley, which seemed to rest in deep shadow, as if anxious to conceal the misery congregated in these abodes of filth and wretchedness.

"What a dark, frightful place," said Rosamond, clinging to her protector. "How different from the gay, open squares, we have just left."

"Aye, as different as the fortunes of the possessors. Night and day are not more opposite than the abodes of wealth and poverty. Yet do these noisome dens contain many a noble and faithful heart, sore wounded by the world, yet daring to be poor, and submitting with heroic resignation to the bitter lot assigned to them by the Divine Ruler."

As he ceased speaking, he entered an open door, and ascending several flights of decayed and rickety steps, gently rapped at another door, and was requested in a female voice to walk in.

The cousins entered a wide and desolate apartment, feebly lighted by two or three broken panes of glass, all that remained unstopped of two casements of the usual dimensions, and these in admitting the light, gave free passage to the rain and wind whenever they chose to blow and beat in through the open space. An old worm-eaten table occupied the centre of the dusty floor, at which a woman of thirty years of age, or thereabouts, was seated, plying her needle with a precision that looked like mechanism. She had been pretty at an earlier period of life, but her high brow was furrowed with care, and sallow with confinement and disease. A young girl was lying upon an old mat at her feet, asleep, and a little girl of five years of age was winding thread diligently upon a piece of paste-board; a boy of nine years of age was kneeling beside the window for the benefit of the light, arranging quills from a pile upon the floor, and tying them into bundles. Two beds occupied the far corners of the room; both were upon the floor, and were merely straw mattresses, with a blanket very old and worn, thrown over them. On one of these beds a man was sleeping, but from his swollen features and perpetual tossings, and the crimson glow that burnt upon his cheek, he appeared the victim of fever, while his thin hands and haggard features, told a tale of woe and starvation.

The woman rose from the bench upon which she was seated, and dusting it with the work she held in her hand, begged the lady to sit down. Rose said that she preferred standing, and Arthur asked if the shirts he had sent to her the preceding week were made.

"Yes, Sir, they are ready for you," returned she, and lifting the lid of an old trunk, she produced two linen shirts very neatly folded, and placed them on the table.

"My little Ned would have run up with them this evening, but the poor fellow slipped last night upon the stones and sprained his ankle, and Annie was too young to trust in the street; but if your honor will just have patience, I will carry them up myself after dark."

"I will spare you the trouble, Mrs. Carey, and take them myself," said Arthur, putting them into the pocket of his overcoat as he spoke. "How is the baby?"

"He is better, thank you kindly, Sir, and I am glad of it, as his cries would sorely have annoyed the poor sick creature yonder."

"Who is this person?" said Arthur, approaching the bed, and looking earnestly upon the sleeper; "is he relation or friend?"

"He is a stranger to me," returned the woman. "I do not know him even by name. Three nights ago, I found him lying upon the door step in a weak and feeble condition. He asked me, for God's sake, to give him something to eat, as he had just returned from America after an absence of many years, and had been shipwrecked and lost all his money. At first, I doubted his tale, but there was something so piteous in his accents, and so truthful in his manner, that poor as I am, I could not refuse to shelter him. Thanks to your honor's goodness, I had been able to earn bread for my little family, and how could I prove my gratitude to one who had helped me, I thought, in a better manner, than by helping one worse off than myself? I bade him come up stairs with me, but he was so ill and weak that I had to lead him up the stairs like a child. I gave him some bread and a cup of tea, and he has lain there ever since. He was very bad last night; but the fever took a favorable turn, and he has been sleeping for the last hour."

"He is still very ill," said Arthur, laying his hand upon the sick man's pulse. "Medical aid will be necessary. I will send my young friend Ritson to look at him, as I return; in the meanwhile, Mrs. Carey, do not let him, want for any comfort that money can procure," and he put three sovereigns into her hand. "This will purchase necessaries, and pay you for the trouble of nursing him, until I see you again."

Just then the sick man unclosed his eyes, and faintly gasped: "Drink, drink!" Rosamond, who was standing gazing intently upon the sufferer, lifted the cup of water that stood beside the mattress, from the ground, and stooping over him, held it to his lips to drink.

The blood-shot eye of the man rested for a moment upon her face, then starting up with a wild shriek, he exclaimed:

"Ellen! my wife! is that you, or are you come from the grave to reproach me for the past?" Rosamond shrank back terrified from the bed, while the delirious creature shook his head, muttering to himself: "No, no, I did but dream. The dead sleep soundly. Oh! that I slept with them, the long, dark, forgetful sleep that knows no morning, no awakening to fresh toil and sorrow."

"You speak of the rest of the body," said Arthur solemnly. "The soul never sleeps."

"Say not so," returned the sick man wildly, "or of all men I am the most miserable."

"And who are you that court the oblivion of the grave, and yet fear to die?"

"I have no name. I lost all right and title to my name long ago. I am a sinner—a great sinner,—and the horrible thought that memory may survive the grave, and prove my perpetual tormentor, makes the thought of death terrible. Oh! that I could forget—could indeed cease to be." He sighed deeply, and turned upon his pillow, with such a look of hopeless grief, that Rosamond could no longer restrain her tears. One bright drop fell upon the hot brow of the wretched man; and again he turned his eyes upon her face, and a darker shade of red flushed over his feverish countenance.

"My God!" he said; "do not look so like *her*, or I shall doubt the evidence of my senses. Angel of goodness! tell me who you are, who can shed such bitter tears for a fallen wretch like me?"

"A sinner like yourself," murmured Rosamond. "A poor, weak, erring child of clay, who, having known many sorrows, can feel for the sufferings of another."

"Like me—oh, no! there are few, very few, so bad as me," returned the stranger mournfully. "Yet I would be better—would repent, if it were possible. I loathe the guilt which made me an alien and a wanderer, and would return to virtue and to God; but it is too late—too late! This memory—this tormenting fiend, stands between me and God. When I would pray, a thousand mocking voices whisper to me of the past, and my agonized soul sinks back into the hell of self,

and stubborn pride hardens my heart to meet and dare the worst."

"Your mind is in a miserable state," said Arthur; "but let the Spirit of God move on this chaos, and light shall spring up among the darkness, and you shall yet live to acknowledge the power and the goodness of the Lord. Throw yourself upon his mercy, as a hungry child seeks food of its parent; and He who feeds the birds of the air when they call upon Him, will have compassion upon you."

"Upon the betrayer of innocence?"

"There is but one sin that the Saviour has pronounced unforgivable."

"The shedder of blood?"

"David's soul was stained with the blood of Uriah, and though he suffered a heavy punishment for his guilt, his tears and repentance were not rejected by his God."

"Oh! that I could gather hope from your words; but all is dark here," laying his hand upon his breast. "A darkness that can be felt."

"You are fatigued," said Arthur, observing the perspiration breaking out in thick drops over his brow. "We will talk over these matters to-morrow."

"And will you come again to-morrow?"

Arthur nodded assent,

"And her?"

"I will come and see you, if my presence can afford you any consolation," said Rosamond.

"Consolation!—the sight of you awakens a thousand agonies, and yet I could gaze upon your mild, pale face, for ever. You are so like *her*—the poor trusting, heart-broken girl I deserted in her sorrow! God knows if she be yet living, or her child. The latter would have been just your age."

Rosamond gazed earnestly upon the prostrate form, that lay so crushed and helpless at her feet, and a strange interest was awakened within her, for the unhappy man. His dress was old and worn, even to rags, but in spite of the ravages of disease, and the gaunt hand of want, which appeared to have pressed him sore, there was a superiority of intellect, in his expression, and a trace of better days in the fine outline of his haggard face, which did not escape her observation. He appeared between forty and fifty years of age, for the redundant masses of dark chestnut hair that were scattered over his pillow, were mingled with grey. She felt an intense curiosity to know more of his history, and he formed the theme of her conversation with her cousin, all the way home.

"His face is familiar to me," she said; "but where I have seen it before, I cannot imagine."

"I have seen some one very like him," said Arthur, "and from his language and manner, I am certain that he has moved in a very different situation in life, to the one in which he now is. Ah! my dear Rosamond! how true are the words of the Apostle; 'The wages of sin is death.' This man trembles on the brink of eternal ruin, and nothing but the arm of God can rescue him from the fangs of his own conscience, that terrible accuser of the guilty—man's best friend, and the most uncompromising witness against him. Happy is that man who bears an unblemished conscience, void of offence, for he shall stand undismayed in the presence of his Creator."

"And who is the poor woman, dear Arthur, whom we went to see—who appears such a good Samaritan to this unhappy man?"

She is the widow of a journeyman shoemaker, who died this spring of consumption. The poor creature was left not only destitute, at her husband's death, but deeply in debt for necessaries and medicines procured during his sickness. I hired that room for her, and she makes up linen and boys' clothes at a cheap rate. She is an excellent creature, and has already worked herself out of debt. The kindness she has shewn to this unfortunate stranger, proves how worthy she was of the little charity bestowed upon her. Rosamond, there is a blessing in doing good, for the benevolent infuse a portion of their own spirit into the hearts of those to whom they have extended their sympathy."

CHAPTER X.

Oh! never doubt the truth of her you love!
A cloud may float along the azure heavens,
Hiding awhile the glories of the sun;
The fresh'ning breeze shall chase the envious cloud,
And leave no trace upon the stainless blue.

WHEN Rosamond entered the drawing-room, Captain Doyle rose to meet her.

"My charming cousin, what ails you? Has the air of London blanched the red rose white? You must try if the fresh breezes of green Erin will restore the bud of beauty to its delicate bloom."

"I have been ill," faltered Rosamond, sinking into the easy chair he proffered her, "and am fatigued with a long walk. My grandmother has promised me a visit to Bramby. The good nursing of my dear Aunt, and the salubrious air of the country, will soon restore me to health."

"Can it be true, what Miss Morton has just told me, that Major Dunstanville Sternfield, has taken his leave, and out of a jealous pique to me?

Love, they say, is blind, but he must have had sharp eyes to have discovered our secret, sweet Rose."

"What secret! Captain Doyle?" said Rosamond rising, and bending on her admirer a searching glance; "I know of none."

"Nay—that is going a little too far."

"You speak in riddles. I cannot comprehend you."

"Such riddles are easily read," said the Captain, vexed and irritated in his turn, as, taking a highly perfumed billet from his pocket book, he proffered it to his astonished companion.

"Your sentiments are changed towards me, Miss Sternfield, since you wrote this letter—this blessed letter, which made me the happiest of men. To retract your promise now, when my rival has abandoned the field, would condemn me to despair!"

"Cousin Maurice!—Captain Doyle!" exclaimed Rosamond, gasping for breath: "You have been basely imposed upon. I never wrote that letter—never penned a line to you in my life!"

"On my faith as a soldier, either you, or the devil must have written it, for 'tis in your hand, and sealed with your own seal—the little gold seal which you are wearing at this moment around your neck—the motto: 'Dearer for absence.'"

"It looks like my hand, and it is my seal," said Rosamond, taking up the letter, and gazing upon it with a frightened and bewildered glance; "but I never wrote it. What are the contents?"

"Yes, yes," returned Doyle, with a bitter laugh; "plead ignorance, continue the farce, and try to make me believe that 'tis all a hoax. You may have changed your mind, but you cannot persuade me that you are not the author of that letter."

Rosamond heard him not—still, as she read, the pallor that came over her face took a darker and more deadly hue, and before she concluded the vile forgery, she had fallen back insensible in her chair.

Captain Doyle sprang forward to ring the bell for assistance, when Miss Morton entered the room:

"What is the matter?" she cried, while the fatal letter, which Rose still grasped in her cold hand, explained the mystery. "My cousin fainting, and Captain Doyle in heroics. What does it all mean?"

"I can scarcely tell. That letter, I thought I received from Miss Sternfield; she denies the fact, and I suppose I am bound to believe her. But——"

"I saw her write that letter," said Marianne; "but, hush—she is coming to herself. These little figments are common in love," and without being observed by either of her companions, who were

too much absorbed by their own emotions to remember the unfortunate letter, Marianne contrived to secrete it upon her person, and left the room in search of restoratives.

After a few minutes, Rosamond recovered from her swoon. Putting aside the supporting arm of Maurice Doyle, she rose from her seat, and wiping the tears, that still lingered on her pale face, slowly away, she turned to him and said with a look of solemn entreaty:

"Cousin Doyle, if I had been the author of that indelicate, unfeminine letter, it could not have produced upon me the effect which you have just witnessed. The letter is false, the person who wrote it, did so in malice—in the hope of ruining my happiness. The vile plot against my peace has been successful; and the sight of that letter fully explains to me, Major Sternfield's hitherto inexplicable conduct. It now rests with you, if you are my friend—the man of honor I would fain believe you—to go to Major Sternfield, and assure him that I am not the author of that infamous scrawl."

"Miss Sternfield asks of me impossibilities. Can she expect me to humble myself to a rival, and restore him to happiness by destroying my own? Maurice Doyle is no such fool."

"Then our friendship is at an end for ever. We part hereto meet no more," said Rosamond, hardly able to conceal her contempt. "Your present ungenerous conduct is not likely to ensure either my esteem or love, and without the former the latter cannot exist." She left the room without offering her hand, or even glancing at her companion, and her place was instantly supplied by Marianne.

"Rosamond has left in anger. A lover's quarrel, I suppose?"

"Faith! there seems little of love in the business," said Maurice, trying to laugh off his chagrin. "She first writes me, or some one else does in her name, a most flattering letter, in which she promises to elope with me, the first opportunity, and then, not only denies the fact, but has the conscience to ask me to go to her angry, jealous lover, and tell him that 'tis all a mistake—that she never sent the letter. Good God! is the girl mad?"

"All people in love are mad, Maurice Doyle. You are not very tame yourself, or you would not fret after this inanimate piece of still life. But have a little patience—bear with the folly of the present hour, and I promise you that in spite of all her affected indifference, Rosamond Sternfield shall yet be your wife."

"Did she write that letter?"

"You are a fool to doubt it."

"Will you swear that she did?"

"No—I never would demean myself so far to one who dares to question my word."

"Forgive me, Miss Morton—I must—I will believe you. But what advantage is that now to me?"

"Much every way, if you will but put confidence in yourself and me. I know this strange girl better than you do. Persons like her, who have been born and educated among the low and vicious, are too apt to imitate their bad example. To such, truth is no obligation, and falsehood no crime. You must excuse the poor girl; she is more to be pitied than blamed."

This was spoken with a strong sneer, but Maurice Doyle was too much interested in the success of his fortune-hunting speculation, to notice it. After a long conversation with Miss Morton, she persuaded him that he was not indifferent to Rosamond; and that he had only to persevere, to gain her, fortune and all.

Major Sternfield had left Miss Morton his address, requesting her, as a friend, to inform him how Rosamond bore their final separation, and that evening she wrote to him enclosing the letter she had sent to Captain Doyle in Rosamond's name; and informed him of the manner in which it had come into her possession.

Dunstanville could no longer doubt the evidence of her guilt, and in spite of his rage and indignation, he felt an indescribable regret that he had been deceived; that the gentle country girl was not the simple hearted, innocent being he had respected and loved. This was the commencement of a correspondence between him and Miss Morton, and as the latter was an elegant writer, and possessed no small degree of wit and genius, Dunstanville was delighted with her letters, which, together with the beauty of her person, soon converted admiration into passion. On pretence of visiting a friend, or calling at her milliner's, seldom a day passed without a meeting, and while Rosamond's tears still flowed for the loss of her lover, that lover was the betrothed of the very woman who had belied and injured her.

The distress of mind occasioned by her interview with Captain Doyle, was so apparent in the ingenuous countenance of Rosamond, that it could not escape the observation of Arthur Walbrook. He enquired the cause and soon learned the whole truth.

"Marianne is the author of this act of treachery," he said. "It is too like her general character. But forgive her, my best, dearest cousin, the evil she meditates shall ultimately terminate in good. The day is not far distant, when you will view this separation from Major Sternfield,

however painful to you now, as the best thing that ever happened to you."

Rosamond sighed deeply; she did not feel convinced, and she could not admit the truth of his assertion. Arthur did not continue a subject which he saw was most distressing to her, but he immediately formed the resolution of waiting upon the Major, and exculpating Rosamond. Finding the Major's address in Harley street, he lost no time in calling at the house, and on sending up his card, was instantly admitted.

Dunstanville was writing at a table, his fine face clouded with thought, and raising his head as Arthur approached, he said:

"So Mr. Walbrook, you are the first to congratulate me upon the loss of my suit. That is very kind, very like an affectionate relative. Tell Miss Sternfield I wish her joy of her fifteen thousand a year. Thank God, I am not so poor but that I can live without it."

"Is the suit decided?"

"Are you ignorant of it?"

"You cannot doubt my sincerity!"

"I have learned to doubt the sincerity of every one," said the Major bitterly. "But you are no flatterer. It is possible that you may form an exception to my experience. Yes, Rosamond is acknowledged as the legal heir to my uncle's property."

"And she will care the least about it. Dear, generous child, she wished you to win the suit. So little does self mingle in her thoughts."

"Your statement might have deceived me once, Mr. Walbrook. My opinion with regard to that person is greatly changed. But will you favor me with the object of your visit? I cannot speak about her."

"It is to speak of her that I am here. You harbour against her, most unjust and cruel suspicions, and upon the evidence of a conversation between two servants, you throw from you an angel of goodness, who not only loved you, but was willing to share with you a splendid fortune, and this too without attempting to unravel the mystery, or seek the least explanation from the noble being you injured. Do not think that I come to entreat you to fulfill your engagement with Rosamond; nothing would give me greater pain, for I no longer consider you worthy of being her husband. But I could not let this foul stain remain upon her honor, without attempting to vindicate her character, and I assure you, upon the word of a gentleman, and a man of honor, that Rosamond never wrote to Captain Doyle in her life."

"Nor to Edgar Hartland?" said Dunstanville with a sneer.

"I don't know the person to whom you allude."

"But I do, and so does Rosamond. I feel no resentment against you, Mr. Walbrook, for espousing my cousin's cause. I know you esteem her highly, that you are incapable of falsehood or deceit, but you must grant me the liberty of judging for myself in a matter which so nearly concerns my peace. If honor were not dearer to me than gold, I should overlook the affront offered to me by this heartless flirt, for the sake of her fortune. When I marry, it must be to a woman who can concentrate her affections in one object. I hate all partnerships, especially in hearts."

"You will grieve over your rash conduct when it is too late," said Arthur. "To attempt to justify my cousin to one so prejudiced against her, will only increase the evil I hoped to remove. Time, which unveils the most hidden mysteries, will prove Rosamond's innocence; I leave her cause to God, and would stake my life upon the result."

"Like all good men, you are too credulous, Mr. Walbrook. The proofs I possess are too positive to be easily contradicted. And now farewell; I wish you all the happiness that fate has denied to me."

"What a pity," thought Arthur, as he descended the stairs, "that a man so courteous and gentlemanly, can so easily be made the tool of others. Oh! Marianne, Marianne, this villainy is thine. But exult not in thy malice; the hand of God, will overtake and punish thee yet."

On his return to Grosvenor square, he had a long conversation with Marianne, in which he taxed her with being the author of the letter, and the cause of Rosamond's separation from her lover. She treated his accusation with scorn, begged him to point out her motives for such conduct, or in what she could be the gainer by making her cousin miserable. Her defence was so plausible, that even Arthur was at a loss what to think, but not for one moment could he believe Rosamond guilty of the least duplicity. Whilst he was sitting, lost in thought, by the table where Marianne had left him, a light hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a soft voice whispered in his ear:

"Arthur, we have forgotten the poor sick man. Shall we go and see him this morning?"

"Certainly."

Rosamond disappeared, and in a few minutes returned with her hat and shawl, and they sought in silence Mrs. Carey's humble apartment.

They found the invalid better. The young surgeon had been to visit him, and had administered medicine, which had greatly reduced the

violence of the fever. He looked pale and feeble, but was in a much calmer frame of mind, and greeted the return of his kind visitors with pleasure.

"You have been instrumental in saving my life," he said, raising himself with difficulty in his bed; "and should I ever regain health and strength, I would wish to dedicate it to your service."

"We will talk of that, my good friend, when you are able to work. You are yet far from well, or even out of danger," said Arthur, adjusting his humble pillow. "In the meanwhile, tell me who you are, and how you came in this miserable condition?"

"You must excuse me," returned the invalid with a deep sigh. "I renounced my name and connections long ago, when I proved myself unworthy of it and them. I would forget the past, and live for the future."

"Mystery is always suspicious, returned Arthur. "Such an account of yourself would hardly satisfy those who might be inclined to serve you."

"I know it well; but you are unlike the generality of mankind. You will trust me, and you will not be deceived. I have been guilty of great crimes; they were not premeditated, but the result of violent impulses, produced by violent passions, and committed in the rash hot blood of youth. I have suffered—God knows how deeply, how acutely I have suffered—for the transgressions of early manhood; but I never was a petty villain, or defiled my soul with intoxicating draughts, till I became lower than the beasts that perish. One false step, one bold bad act, produced my ruin, and brought me to this low estate. Had it been men I injured, I could have forgiven the treachery, for the heart of man is strong, and can bear much,—and he is often himself, yea the very best, those whose characters stand fairest to the world, are transgressors; but it was a lonely, unprotected, forlorn woman, who fell a victim to my cruel lust; and a fair, confiding, loving wife and child I abandoned for that woman's sake. Their fate I know not, never shall know—and this cruel uncertainty adds to the torments of remorse. There is something here," he continued, placing his hand upon his heart—"that tells me, that my poor wife, perhaps my child also, is dead; but *she* lives and pursues me like an avenging spirit. To shun her, for her frantic love had worn me to satiety, I abandoned my country forever, as I then thought, and for sixteen years I toiled as a pioneer in the far western wilderness. And another wife and other children grew by my side, and though that wife was

of Indian blood, and my children were dark as their red ancestors, I loved them, and thought myself a happy man; but the small pox came, and left my home desolate; not one of those active young creatures, who climbed my knees, and sported around my rude hut, was left to me. The eye that beamed upon me with love, and the arms that fondly embraced me, for they were in ignorance of my guilt, were closed for ever, and lay lifeless in one common grave. I felt that it was the hand of God—that my punishment was just. But with grief and solitude came all the horrors of remorse. Visions of my absent wife and child, and of her whom I had left in the strong agony of despair, were constantly haunting me, and I could no longer rest in my lonely home. Some demon perpetually urged me to return, and in an evil hour, I sold my farm, and small stock of cattle and implements, and travelled to New York, and from thence embarked for England. The ship was wrecked in sight of port, and I lost my all; I was among the few saved out of the vessel, and I cursed the evil chance that had rescued me from the waves. At Plymouth I received assistance, and a suit of old clothes, from some good Quakers, and begged my way to London. Here sickness overtook me, and, destitute of means, I crawled from the public thoroughfare, and lay down in this obscure alley to die. But rest was denied me—even the rest of the grave. The curse of Cain was upon my brow; and, like that unhappy wanderer, I am still doomed to live and bear my punishment."

He turned upon his pillow, and lay towards the wall, covering his face with his trembling hands; but deep convulsive sobs heaved his breast and seemed to threaten the extinction of the feeble life within.

"Calm yourself," said Arthur, kneeling beside the bed, and raising the exhausted man in his arms. "God has spared your life, in mercy to yourself and others. Trust in Him, and I will be your friend. This young lady needs a servant, in lieu of one who is about to leave his place. When you are able to be removed, you shall serve her. It is an easy situation. You will keep her apartments in order—tend her flowers and birds, and accompany her when she walks or rides in public. She is kind and good, and the secret of your life is safe in her keeping. The sick man heard him not—he had fainted.

"His long conversation has exhausted him," said Rose, applying her smelling bottle to his nostrils, while Mrs. Carey bathed his temples with water. "I know not why I feel such a deep interest in his fate. But I would give half my fortune to preserve his life.

The stranger at length recovered, and endeavoured to apologize for the trouble he had occasioned, but his voice faltered, and he continued to gaze upon Rosamond with such a long, wistful look, so full of sorrowful tenderness, that Arthur thought it best to leave him. He was about to withdraw, but the sick man caught his arm and said in a hurried manner: "You will not forget your promise, that I am to be *her* servant. Oh! bless you for that thought. I could serve you on my knees. To be near her and you, will make me a wiser and a better man."

"And by what name shall I call you?"

"By the one I bore in America, which was supposed to belong to an honest, worthy man—Henry Arnold."

"Well, you must mend as fast as you can, and take all the nourishing things Mrs. Carey prepares for you," said Arthur; "and we shall soon be able to test your good qualities." Then stooping over the bed, he whispered a few words in Arnold's ear, which brought the crimson flush into his face.

"For God's sake do not betray me!"

"Your secret is safe. The rest depends upon yourself;" then, turning to Rosamond, who was giving some directions to Mrs. Carey, he said: "Come, my dear Rose, our presence agitates Mr. Arnold too much. We will come and see him another day."

Rosamond was agreeably surprised on finding Mr. Bradshaws conversing with her grandmamma in the drawing-room.

"I wish you joy of your good fortune, little girl," he said, rising to meet her. "We have won your suit, and you must go down to take possession of Westholme. Come now, I must have a kiss for my news, and your Aunt Dunstanville commissioned me to give you one for her."

"And you shall have one for yourself, my dear old friend," said Rose, kissing his cheek with charming frankness. "I am so glad to see you, that I could have given you a dozen on my own account."

"Oh! that I was but a young man."

"Then you would not have got the kiss."

"Ah, ha! little Miss Prude, but I would have taken it."

"By force? that would not have been legal, you know, and I would have prosecuted you for a trespass."

"And gained a farthing damages," said the lawyer, laughing. "Why, even then I should have been the gainer. But where is the bridegroom that is to be?—our handsome defendant, who has lost his cause to gain both the fortune and the

lady. I suppose my services will be required to draw the marriage settlements?"

Rosamond turned away, and left the room in tears.

"Why, what the deuce is the matter? Is the match broken off?"

"It is," said Arthur Walbrook; "and I believe the breach to be irremediable."

"Sorry for it—very sorry. Major Dunstanville is a handsome, gentlemanly man. They would have made a fine couple. What caused the rupture?"

"Some misunderstanding on the Major's part. These East Indians are hot-headed fellows. I do not think that Dunstanville acted exactly like a man of honor in deserting Rose. She loved him too well."

"Foolish young people," said Mr. Bradshawe. "I pity them both. Rose must return with me to the country. The close air of London is killing her, and her aunt is dying with impatience to see her again."

"I am going to spend the summer at Westholme," said Mrs. Sternfield, "and we will take Bramby in our route. It will be a painful visit to me, for I have not been at Westholme since the fearful accident that robbed me of my son. With Rosamond and Arthur to cheer me with their presence, I hope to bear the trial with fortitude."

"How delighted little Rose will be with the beautiful old place," continued Mr. Bradshawe. "I love the child as if she were my own. Had she lost the suit and the fortune, I was determined to adopt her for my heir."

"Rose needed not such a proof of your friendship for her," said Arthur. "She loves you, and always calls you Uncle Bradshawe."

"Bless her! I hope she is destined to make some good man happy. Poor young Hartland is breaking his heart about her, and he cannot tell his grief. It is a thousand pities such a glorious fellow, made in God's image, should be deaf and dumb. You do not know Edgar Hartland, Mr. Walbrook?"

"No, I have not that pleasure."

"Well, I shall be happy to introduce you. He is the most popular man in our county, and the one that has done the most good. Every one loves and esteems Edgar Hartland. I did hope that our pretty Rosamond would have overlooked his infirmities, and consented to become his wife."

"But the sacrifice, my dear Sir! Consider, the dreadful sacrifice!"

"Not so great as you would imagine. A manly, graceful person, a highly cultivated and intelligent mind, and the master of a splendid and unencum-

bered property. I think our little heiress might have made a worse choice. For my own part, I should rejoice to see her the mistress of Oak Hall, and you cannot doubt the interest I feel for her."

"The want of speech is such a dreadful want," said Arthur. "So much of real enjoyment depends upon the eloquence of spoken thought. A silent angel would be to me a dull companion."

"You don't know my friend Edgar, or you would form a different opinion. The very difficulty of conversing with him increases the interest you feel for him. He is a delightful correspondent, and his descriptions of nature never tire. Ah! you must know him to form the least idea of what he is."

The next day, Rosamond heard with delight, her grandmother give the necessary orders for her journey to the country, and she almost forgot her recent disappointment in the joy she felt at once more visiting Bramby.

"And dear, dear Jane Redgrave, I shall see you once more," she cried. "Dark, hateful London! when once I am my own mistress, I will never enter your dingy streets again."

"And I do not mean to leave them yet awhile," said Marianne. "Old lady Dacre is in need of a companion and confidential friend. She has made me a very liberal offer, which I have accepted; and so, my pretty coz, you will not be troubled with my company. Are you very sorry?"

"No," said Rosamond. "We do not suit each other; and minds that cannot feel the sweet ties of affinity are better apart."

"That is honest. Well, to tell you the truth, Miss Sternfield, the dislike is mutual. I never could entertain the least affection for you, and I perceive that we thoroughly understand each other."

"I wish I could think that you had not injured me," said Rosamond, "and then we could part in peace."

"You may think what you please, Miss Sternfield; it is a matter of perfect indifference to me, whether you love or hate. I could have been your friend. It is in my power to be a bitter enemy."

"You have done your worst," said Rose, sadly. "Neither the workings of malice, nor the slanderous tongue of envy, can do me a deeper wrong than that which you have already inflicted."

Marianne cast upon her cousin a sarcastic sidelong glance as she left her, which but too plainly revealed the triumph of successful wickedness. Looks often tell more than words, for they express that which words dare not utter; and Rosamond gathered from that glance of concentrated hatred

all that she had suspected, and more, much more than her benevolent heart would ever before admit to be true.

"Yes, she is the incendiary, and poor Dunstanville has been made the dupe of her contrivances. Shall I write to him, and tell him all that is in my heart? Ah! no—he will but despise me, and think my candor and forbearance a fresh artifice to deceive him. Would Edgar Hartland have believed me capable of such conduct? No—for the pure in heart believe others pure; and the man who could give ear to the falsehoods of Marianne Morton, deserves to be her mate."

"And will be, in spite of Rosamond Sternfield, and her exalted virtue, her pretty face, and that which is more powerful far—her great fortune," whispered a calm, malignant voice, in her ear, for Rosamond had unconsciously uttered her thoughts aloud; and Marianne glided past her into her dressing-room, leaving her victim doubly annoyed at the betrayal of her own feelings, and the advantage which it gave her enemy.

(To be continued.)

THE SOUL'S PLANET.

BY THOMAS WADE.

Oh, Planet ever tranquil, ever fair!

Engirded by the star-clouds of my thought,
Still art thou shining in my being's air.

Although the stranger's eye beholds thee not,
Thou cam'st, a light upon my night of mind;

Showing me lovely things unseen till then,
And have Life's common spell to all-unbind

And move enfranchised from the chains of men.

Wild lightning-lights and beams of earthly fire

Too oft have flamed between my dreams and thee.

But still-recurring hopes to thee aspire;

And in all tranquil hours thou gladden'st me

With rays of solace, and a soul-seen light;

Without which sun and day are cloud and night.

FAREWELL.

BY E. K.

FAREWELL! 'tis the last time "the stranger" shall walk
By thy banks, lov'd Catarqui, a wanderer's lyre;
But oft through the night, beneath the tropics, shall break
The sigh of his harp, while he pines for thy bower.

For memory, still flinging her light o'er the past,
Each moment, some instance of bliss shall recall,
Which, oh! while Affection will love to contrast
That hour, with the present, must sadden it all.

But then, there is something, 'though lonely, divine
In the thought, that a green grave will deck his repose,
That there, in that verdant, that sweet sunny clime
Round the willow may still bloom the jessamine and rose.

A NIGHT AMONG "THE THOUSAND ISLANDS."

A CALM quiet starlit night,—when the blue depths of the bespangled sky seem really measureless, and the slight breeze which steals across the bosom of the spring clad earth, is as soft and fragrant as the breath of an infant,—is lovely, entrancingly lovely, on mountain or plain, in city or hamlet; but never has its enchantment as deeply stirred our hearts, as when, in the hey-day of our youth, we gazed upon it from that verdant spotted sheet of water, which forms the eastern extremity of Ontario. To this well known and often described spot, by us so dearly loved, and affectionately remembered, our thoughts ever return, when some chance circumstance recalls to us the sports of years gone by, when we were as free from restraint or care, as the breeze which rocks the forests of our dear native Canada, and when our empire over the creatures which are ever the prey of man, was as secure, and as ruthlessly, and constantly exerted, as that of the eagle over the leveret, or the wolf over the deer. Now, the cares of manhood fetter us, and if it were not so, we perhaps have lost even the inclination for the miles of stealthy walking, "*still hunting*" the deer; the hours of patient watching for a shot at some grim, gaunt, corn destroying bear, or the mad excitement, and desperate exertion of a snow-shoe race with the leader of the herd, which ten years ago were to us the greatest of all terrestrial enjoyments. Still we have our pleasures, many and great, and we are thankful for them, and one of them is to recall and go over, in imagination, some joyous, bright, breezy, autumnal day, in the mountains of the Ottawa, when the echoes round the still lakes reverberated to the unwonted sound of our double barrel, or some still, dark night, among the Thousand Islands, when the barbs of our deadly spear were tinged with the blood of innumerable denizens of the deep.

On such a night as this, not a breath of wind stirring, a night too in the beginning of June, when the air is soft and balmy, did we, and our dear and steady friend, Charley Stanton, commence our preparations for a fishing excursion among the Thousand Islands. The sun had just set, as we strolled together down to old Stannington's cottage, by the lake side. Gleefully we walked—and never had we better reason for our joyous anticipations of sport, than we had that night. The surface of the lake was as unruffled

and calm as the sky, and no clouds showed us cause to fear that any envious ripple on the water would come to the rescue of the hundreds we had destined to die by our hands that night.

Old Stannington, or as we profanely called him, "Stanny," was sitting near the open door of his "shanty," smoking his darling pipe, and looking with a well pleased countenance, upon the smooth lake and clear sky. The old fellow was (alas! like many of our ancient friends, he is no more,) one of those characters, which Cooper would have delighted to paint; and weak as our pen is, he shall have a special introduction. Picture to yourself a tall handsome man, standing about six feet two, and very powerfully built, with a harmonious roundness of figure, without being fat, which we never observed in any one else—his head, partially bald, and his forehead naturally lofty, appearing to extend and rise to the crown of his head, with long iron grey hair hanging down over his shoulders and back—his features fine and regular, his carriage perfectly upright, almost majestic, and with all this a quiet simplicity and dignity of manner, impressing you with the idea of a great man, who was perfectly unconscious of his own greatness,—and you have before your mind's eye, our old steersman Stannington. His dress consisted of a coarse white woollen shirt, open at the throat, a grey jacket, grey trousers, reaching about half way down the leg below the knee, and coarse shoes. Hat, he wore none, and as to cravats and stockings, Stanny disdained them. Taciturn to an extraordinary degree, Stanny never spoke three consecutive words except upon two subjects, sporting and mormonism; and upon these he was loquacious and enthusiastic in the extreme, especially when his "boys," as he called us, were his audience. His disquisitions upon his two hobbies were sometimes exceedingly ridiculous, as in his excitement, on our fishing excursions, the praises of the Prophet sometimes became strangely intermingled with execrations on some vigilant pike, or ridicule of some clumsy sucker, or awkward punt.

By the side of this, our right hand man, smouldered a fire, and over it hung about fifty eels blackened with smoke, which Stanny was curing for his winter's provision.

"Hurrah! for the boat, Stanny," said Charley, "is the pine all in,—prog stowed away?"

Stanny appeared to think an answer to such questions quite superfluous, for he merely continued his gaze at the sky and the lake, and did not take the slightest notice of us.

"Come, old Maskinongé, turn out," said we; "we mustn't lose a minute of this weather!"

"Fine, ain't it?" said old Stanny. "There was a night jest like this four year ago, and Bill and I killed——"

"Come Stanny, tell us after we start," said Charley.

Stanny looked at us for the first time.

"In a hurry, be you?" said he. "Why, you're five minutes too soon yet for Hemlock Point." So saying, old Stanny recommenced his story, and we were compelled to listen for the full five minutes to the account of the slaughter that night four years. When this was over, Stanny took off his shoes, and chucked them into the shanty, shouldered his paddle, and strode down to the beach without saying a word. There lay our boat, and a snug craft she was, light, but not crank, broad, but yet swift, she could do anything, that boat. Sailing or rowing was the same to her, and many a cargo of fish had we brought home in the little "Pike." In her bow, instead of a bowaprit was an iron grating, supported upon a stout crooked staff, about six feet above the water. Our long spears were stowed one on each side, with the points under Stanny's seat, and the long taper handles poking themselves before us into the darkness. In a little locker in the bow of the boat was stowed a *tin tea kettle* full of beer, and a small canvass bag containing three or four pounds of biscuit, with a small flask of whiskey for Stanny's especial benefit. Behind the second thwart from the bow was a pile of pitch pine, split and broken into small pieces, and between this pine and the bow, stood we, the two spearmen. As we floated on towards the islands, propelled by old Stanny's paddle, the night grew darker and darker, and while Charley piled up the pine in the grating ready for kindling, we sat ourselves down, and looking into the deep water, almost fancied that we were suspended between two skies, so still and mirror-like was the surface over which we passed. The channel between the islands soon lay within a few hundred yards of us, and the point on the left was Hemlock Point. Already, we perceived the fresh musky smell of the marsh on the left, where Stanny made the great flying cast at a pike, and the black shadow of the over-hanging trees on Hemlock Point, seemed some dark gulf in which we were about to disappear, when old Stanny said quietly:

"Put a spark into that, Mr. Charley!" Charley

touched the pine with a lighted lucifer, and almost in an instant, a tall brilliant flame arose spirally towards the skies, six feet above our heads, making the stars look pale, and all without a circle of twenty or thirty feet around us, seemed shrouded in utter darkness; while the trees over our heads appeared to wave and flutter in the unsteady light; and the birds started from off their perches with a frightened chirp, dashing themselves against the branches as they attempted to escape; and from every little nook in the shore, the wild ducks and their young fluttered and splashed, quacking and screaming into the quiet lake. Then began the absorbing excitement of the night, for there we were in fifteen feet water, and every insect that crept upon the slimy bottom of the lake, was discovered to us as clearly as if it were upon the surface. Stanny impelled us forward with his paddle without the slightest sound or apparent motion, at the rate of about two miles an hour, so steadily and noiselessly that it seemed to us as if we were stationary, and the huge rocks, the lake, and the tall overhanging trees and lofty precipices on the island, were gliding noiselessly past us as we stood. When we spoke it was in as low a tone as possible, and the slightest jar of the boat with our feet or spears was carefully avoided. Charley guarded the side next the point, we, the other, and as we glided along with the glittering tines of the spears within six inches of the water, and the shafts out of sight in the heavens, we watched with the most intense eagerness for the glimpse of the first fin.

"Mr. Charley," growled old Stanny, "abake the grate, and look out. I guess there'll be a bass on your side jest now."

"Gad! there he is!" whispered we; "steady Charley, he's awake."

Charley's spear entered the water in an instant, and, apparently without any exertion on his part, it slipped gently through his hands till it was within five feet of the bass. There he was, a five-pounder at the very least, lying snugly at the side of a "mullet heap," just moving his fins and tail sufficiently to shew us that he was ready to be off at a moment's notice. We were within fifteen feet of him, when he, leaning back a little, then throwing the whole weight of his body into the stroke, darted his long spear at the doomed fish. The shaft flew threw his hands like lightning, but without escaping from the grasp of his left hand, and as he jerked the handle into the air, the noble bass rose to the surface, transfixed through the middle of his back with the centre tine of the spear,—so unerring had been the aim.

"Good shot," said old Stanny; "there's more of them here, and there's generally a pike behind

that rock to the right. Shoot a little a-head of him if you kin, Mr. Ned, for they're great to swim."

Stanny's warnings were never disregarded or valueless; he was born and brought up on the lake, and he often said he thought he was "more of a musk-rat than a human;" so we kept a bright look out. The boat approached the rock, but no pike was visible to our eager eyes.

"I see his tail," said old Stanny, "jest behind the shelf."

As he spoke the pike became alarmed, and without the slightest previous notice, he darted down towards the deep waters of the lake like an arrow, but the steel was swifter than he. The spear had already entered the water when he darted from the rock, and as we bent our body to the very surface of the lake, the long ash-shaft sped, quivering with its impetus, into the dark water, and disappeared.

"Guess you hit him," said Stanny; "con-sarned near it any way: here he comes."

The spear-handle rose at his side as he spoke; he gave it a sharp twitch towards us. We caught it, and sure enough, the pike was struggling on the tines, and was soon beside the bass in the bottom of the boat.

"Capital shot that, Ned," said Charley; "he must have been thirty feet off when you hit him."

"Good thirty-five," said Stanny; "but look out boys; plenty of pickerel here, and maybe some eels."

The bottom we were now passing over was sloping. On one side of the boat it was stony, but on the other, the mud had encroached upon the stone, and the bottom was soft and slimy. This was a favorite spot of old Stanny's, for here at this time of the year, the mullet and pickerel were spawning on the rocky shoal while the eels came up from their beds in the mud to feed upon the eggs of the scale fish. There was thus frequently in the same place a variety of fish, and eels old Stanny was especially fond of. As we slid quietly along we came upon a shoal of pickerel and eels thus mingled together. Charley deliberately singled out and speared the largest fish among the pickerel, and, frightened by the splash and the noise we made, the remainder of the terrified creatures dashed distractedly hither and thither in all directions, but cool and sportsmanlike was Charley's demeanour, as fixing his eye upon one at a time, he watched his arrow like flight till it brought him within his reach, and then the spear flew like lightning through the water, and the pickerel, transfixed by the glittering tines, was soon beside his fellows in the boat. The eels scuttled off in one direction under

the boat, so that we got beautiful flying shots at them as they sought the deep water, and before we left the shoal our killed numbered something more than five-and-twenty. Scarcely a word was spoken by either of us, but those only who are kindred souls can appreciate and understand the excitement and delight of such a scene. Stanny only was apparently cool and unconcerned, but we who knew him well, could detect the complacency of his tone as we pinned some writhing monster of an eel to the bottom with our spear and held him there "squirming," as Stanny called it, till he had coiled his nervous length round the spear-handle, when we would haul him into the boat and disengage him by a twitch against the sternmost thwart, depositing him at the old fellow's feet. There the snake-like, slimy creature, would twist and crawl about, encircling his bare ankles with its clammy coils and poking its cold pointed head in every direction in vain endeavors to escape; sometimes, with others of its kind, entwining itself about the old man's legs until they were fairly fettered together, and then he would stop and "untie the critters, 'cause if we was to cant over it wo'd be awkward swimming with such garters as them," chuckling all the while with intense delight as he worked among the slimy folds with his bare hands to release himself.

By the time we had coasted round Hemlock Point, and over two adjacent shoals, our pine was about half exhausted. The victims of our prowess were floating in the boat, in the water we brought into it with them, and the eels were making such attacks upon us, as old Stanny had been enjoying so much, but which we were far from appreciating as he thought they deserved. The water was over our shoes, and we put ashore to rearrange our pine, so as to keep the fish at their proper distance, and to bale out the boat. When this had been effected, and we were again under way, we set off for Sturgeon Bay, where we had hopes of finding, in one of those giants of the fresh water, a quarry worthy of our spears. As Stanny paddled us swiftly on, he administered to our mental wants by giving us an accurate account of the method of "shining deer," and we took care of our corporeal ones by discussing the biscuits and beer.

Reader, did you ever drink a sherry cobbler on a hot dusty afternoon in August? Of course you say "yes." If I were to ask you whether you have ever tossed off half a tumbler of claret, after running fifty with the best bat on the ground at a cricket match in July, or iced champagne punch after a gallop with a fast partner, you would very likely answer that

both these things you have also done, and that you considered the said tippie on those occasions superior to that which old Saturn's progeny quaffed on Olympus; but if you have never stood with your face twelve inches from a fierce, roaring, crackling flame, for three hours, with the sparks flying every instant upon your cap, and compelling you to dip it in the lake to prevent it from blazing also, the fat black smoke every now and then filling your mouth and nostrils, and while you are thus half burnt and half suffocated, engrossed so completely by the sport before you that you are unconscious of both; if, we say, you have not gone through all this, and afterwards have not applied the white iron spout of a kettle to your parched lips, and thereupon allowed an uninterrupted stream of cool "swipes" to glide down your feverish throat, you are yet in your infancy of enjoyment, and when you talk of the good things of this life, are almost as ignorant of the subject as the pen with which we are now exposing this lamentable neglect in your education.

This long disquisition upon the art of drinking beer to perfection, or the time we took on that memorable night to discuss our prog, brought us to Sturgeon Bay, but when we arrived there, our prospects of sport were rather disheartening. The sturgeon had, no doubt, been feeding there, and were, no doubt, there at that moment, but their movements had so stirred up the muddy bottom of the bay, that we could not see more than three or four feet into the water, and were consequently obliged to rest satisfied with the smaller fish that could be picked up about the shoals.

Old Stanny too must have his half hour of laughing at the Quakers, as he called the pouts which frequented the marshes about Hay Island. It was amusing to see the enjoyment of the old fellow, when one of the awkward bull-headed pouts was transfixed by our spear, and if we frightened one, and perhaps hurt him a little, by striking him near the tail, so that he escaped by passing between the tines, the old man would almost go into convulsions of laughter, as the creature scuttled off, certainly in the most absurd manner, towards the nearest clump of reeds. Fish were Stanny's associates; he knew their habits thoroughly, and looked upon each species as possessing an individual character. Thus he would expatiate on the grace, activity and intelligence of a pike, the stupidity and sluggishness of a sucker, just as we in ordinary conversation would talk of Dickens' pathos, or poor Hood's drollery, and admire the one and laugh at the other, as if the animals were his fellow men. The pouts

were Stanny's great abhorrence, and he was never satisfied when on a fishing excursion, without having been in at the death of some twenty or thirty of them. By the time we had made the circuit of Hay Island marsh, our pine was very near exhausted, and a very faint tinge of the clouds in the East, showed that but little of the night was left us, so we shaped our course towards home. There was but one spot now where we could hope to see a fish, and it was so circumscribed in extent that we could not expect to find more than two or three, so Charley stowed away his spear, and stretching himself across a thwart, he lay with his head over the side, dipping his fingers in the cool water as we glided along, discussing the sport of the night, and guessing at the number of the slain.

"Here's Green Island, Charley," said we; "come, take your spear, we may get a brace of maskinongé, who knows?"

"Maskinongé, indeed," said Charley; "a brace of herring more likely. But I'm looking down on the deep side, and if I see any, I'll let you know, and you can spear them yourself." So saying, Charley looked down into the clear water, and sprinkled his face with it, and wondered how far down he would find himself, if the boat were suddenly to sink, and, how, if such a thing should happen, Aunt Mary would miss the bass we promised her.

"Steady, Stanny," said we; "the fire's not bright enough yet, and we're close upon the shoal."

Two turns of Stanny's paddle stopped the boat, and we lay perfectly still for about half a minute, within ten yards of the island. We could see the bottom from where we stood, but on our side it was quite smooth, and there was no appearance of any living thing upon it. We looked down upon Charley, who was in the act of enquiring whether there was any more beer or no, when he stopped suddenly in the middle of his question, and in a low tone said:

"Any logs here, Stanny?"

"Logs!" said Stanny, "not a log within twenty rods."

"Ned," said Charley, in a hoarse, agitated whisper, "look to the left, about ten feet in front of the boat."

"Sturgeon!" growled Stanny.

We looked, and nearly under our bows was a huge mullet heap. The water around it must have been at least twenty feet deep, and we drew a long breath, and set our teeth firmly together, as we saw about three or four feet from the bottom a monster of a fish, with his head apparently groping about the mullet heap, and his huge spreading tail waving lazily from side to side, to

keep him in his position. Charley contracted himself within the boat, with only his eyes over the side, his limbs becoming rigid, and his hands clenched upon the handle of his spear as it lay beside him, as the tines of our spear slowly and silently entered the water.

"Keep cool," said old Stanny; "give it him between the shoulders, Master Ned." Down slowly glided the spear, our nerves like rocks—for we would have scorned ourselves for ever, had a fibre quivered on such occasion—till only about six feet of the handle of the spear remained out of the water. Still the huge fish lay almost motionless, and quite unconscious of our proximity, and Stanny, by a slight turn of his paddle brought us within a few feet of the spot under which he lay, so that the only difficulty in the stroke, was to give the spear sufficient impetus to kill him at such a depth. Then the monster upheaved his head from the heap, and one instant more would have carried him far beyond our reach, when grasping the extreme end of the taper shaft of our spear with our right hand, we plunged it, throwing the whole weight of our body into the stroke, into his back. The aim was as true as a rifle ball, for the spear entered the very middle of his back, about a foot from the junction of the head and body.

"Let go!" shouted Stanny, but before he spoke, the handle of the spear disappeared beneath the water. The mighty sturgeon darted into the deep with the velocity of lightning, apparently esteeming the eighteen foot ash shaft which he carried with him in his career, as nothing. With a bound and a yell of excitement and delight, Charley stood on the thwart of the boat, his spear in one hand, and his cap in the other, and never did cap make such an aerial excursion, as did his after that stroke.

"North! Stanny, he headed north!" shouted we, and our boat darted north like an arrow. About ten yards from the mullet heap, the spear handle first appeared, rising about three feet out of the water, and then again sunk.

"Look out! he's turned!" said Stanny, and in another instant, the spear handle rose within three feet of where we stood.

"Use him kindly, *consarn* him" said Stanny. "We've got him now." We caught the end of the spear shaft as he spoke, and never was tip of lady's white kid glove more delicately touched of bashful beau, than that bit of tough ash. We yielded to every motion of the sturgeon, for had we offered the least resistance to any of his plunges, the spear would have been torn from his back, and we should probably have committed suicide in despair on the spot. Again and again

were we obliged to let go the spear, and trusting to its barbs, allow the tortured sturgeon to carry it off with him; while we waited, holding our breath with excitement, the buoyancy of the shaft, and the course of the fish brought it again to the surface, and we saw by its motions that the steel was still true; and as often did we regain our hold, and endeavour to bring the quarry sufficiently near, to strike another spear with certainty into his body. But after about ten minutes ineffectual struggling, the noble fish became exhausted, and then was the most critical moment of the sport. Slowly and cautiously did we "coax" him up towards the surface, and when within a few feet of it, Ned struck his spear also into the doomed fish. Another violent plunge was the consequence, but this time we held him, and again the monster was drawn up towards the boat. We then for the first time fully understood the extent of our conquest, as the huge fish lay within two feet of the surface making slight sickly struggles to escape. We held a consultation as to the best means of getting him on board, and decided that while we held him with the spears, Stanny should tie him by the head to the boat, with a piece of rope and that we should then unite our strength, to haul him in over the side. In a few minutes, notwithstanding some desperate struggles, we succeeded in this, and in stowing him under the thwarts, and then we had leisure to examine our prey. The brute was about ten feet in length, and Stanny estimated his weight at eighty pounds.

Panting with excitement and our exertions, we gazed with triumphant eyes at the shining pile of fish, whose silver scales gleamed in the light of our dying fire, and at the regal monster which had last succumbed to our skill and strength, and as we glided slowly towards the shore, propelled by Stanny's paddle, the old man swore by the brass tablets of the Interpreter Prophet, that the slaughter that night had been greater than Trikins the leader of the tribes, had made of the sons of Shirkal at the hill Zo i.

How we bound old Stanny over to inviolable secrecy for six hours, about the sturgeon—how, after mystifying our friends, and being heartily pitied for our ill success, in being out all night and getting nothing,—we marched to our quarters about twelve o'clock, with it slung on a pole between us, and Stanny bringing up the rear staggering under the weight of the choicest of the fish for distribution among our friends—how they envied us—how Kate danced oftener with us than any one else that night—and how Stanny revelled in skinning and smoking his darling eels, we may tell on some future occasion, but with the death of the sturgeon, ended "the Night among the Thousand Islands."

NED CALDWELL.

IDA BERESFORD; OR, THE CHILD OF FASHION.*

BY R. E. M.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE evening of Lady Athol's visit, the body of Lady Stanhope, the last of her name, was committed with all suitable pomp and splendour, to the final resting place of her proud ancestors. About an hour after the interment, as Ida, clothed in her flowing mourning robes, was seated, sad and depressed, in her dressing room, the agent whom her deceased Ladyship had employed, begged a few moments' audience. He entered, and accosting her with all the deference and respect which an object so sacred in his eyes as a wealthy, independent heiress exacted, requested to know what course he was to pursue, and what new steps he was to take in the management of the estate. Ida, who, of course, was ignorant as a child in such matters, and who besides, retained all her early unconquerable aversion to anything in the shape of business, replied:

"That she must first consult Dr. Vernon; till then she could decide on nothing."

"Then I may hope, Madam, that I am still retained in your service?" was the deferential enquiry.

"Certainly," she said, raising her eyes in wonder at the question. "If Lady Stanhope found you competent and trustworthy, far be it from me to think of rejecting her choice."

The agent bowed profoundly, but as he turned away, Ida exclaimed:

"Stay, Mr. Smith," Brown was his name, but he did not cavil at the mistake; "I have but one wish to express on the subject, and that is, that no change whatever be made, at least for the present, in Lady Stanhope's past arrangements, and that any of her Ladyship's old, trustworthy followers, whom she may have forgotten in her will, may be amply provided for. I repose full confidence in you, and believe me, whatever steps you may take will meet with my full approbation."

Nor was Ida's confidence misplaced, for as she well knew, he had managed Lady Stanhope's estate from the period of her marriage, with the most praiseworthy prudence, as well as honesty. Mr. Brown then took his leave, already half-

bewitched by the beauty and fascinating manners of his young mistress, and secretly wondering at the winning affability of the young lady, who had been considered in the servant's hall, as well as in every other department of Lady Stanhope's household, as being poor but proud and overbearing as Lucifer.

Ere five minutes had elapsed after the agent had left the room, the lawyer demanded admittance on urgent business. With a heavy sigh Ida consented, and suppressing her first movement of impatience, she politely received him, answered his enquiries as she had done those of his predecessor, assured him of her sincere desire to retain him in her service, and then dismissed him; inwardly avowing that she was as good as she was beautiful. But she was resolved that her patience should be put to no further tests, and she gave strict orders to admit no one whatever, as she required repose and quiet.

The following morning Ida left Elm Grove. Gladly did her heart beat as with the closing evening, her splendid carriage stopped before the humble mansion of Dr. Vernon. Quickly she alighted, but no one was there to meet, to welcome her.

"I have deserved it," she murmured, as she dashed aside the scalding tears that rushed to her eyes; "I have estranged them all, but they must not see that I perceive, much less feel, their indifference," and pale, but collected, she entered the drawing-room unannounced. They were all there, save Mrs. Vernon, and the doctor started up in surprise.

"What! you, dear Ida—so soon! And no one prepared to welcome you!" She was instantly clasped in Lucy's arms, whilst Claude, having addressed a few words to her with his usual calm courtesy, resumed the letter he was writing.

"Believe me, my poor child," said Dr. Vernon, when the surprise her entrance had excited, subsided, "you would not have been thus neglected had it been possible to do otherwise; but unfortunately, a day previous to Lady Stanhope's death, which I believe was only learned here from rumour, as you had not written them, pressing business compelled myself and Claude, to

go up to London, from which we have only just returned. I was waiting for some refreshment, intending to start after an hour's repose, for Elm Grove, to bring you back. Poor Mrs. Vernon has been ill, and Lucy of course could not leave her."

"Mrs. Vernon ill!" exclaimed Ida with an anxious start. "Not seriously?" The doctor was about to reply, but Claude, evidently to prevent him, rejoined:

"No! 'Tis but some passing weakness or depression of spirits; she is already somewhat better."

Ida rose quickly, but Dr. Vernon, divining her intention, gently took her hand, saying; "Not now, my dear child. She has been two whole nights without one moment's repose, and I have just administered her some sleeping drops. Rest, total quiet, is absolutely necessary to her at the present moment, and her greatest annoyance was the knowledge that you were left alone to contend with the suffering and agitation you have had to undergo."

Ida murmured her thanks, and a long pause followed. In deference to her feelings, which it was easy to perceive were not yet restored to their usual tone, Lady Stanhope was but briefly alluded to, during the evening. Sincerely did they seem to sympathize with her, and yet, Ida thought that there must be some other cause for the sadness that rested on every brow. The general tone of depression, of melancholy, that reigned throughout their conversation, the total absence of anything like cheerfulness, or even ease, seemed to tell of some nearer grief than the death of Lady Stanhope. The countenance of Claude too wore a thoughtful, sombre look, totally foreign to its usual bright expression. Yet, no explanatory word or hint dropped from any one, and whatever might have been their private sorrow, they deemed her own late grief too sacred to be yet intruded on by recounting it. The evening passed heavily over, and all felt it a relief when the hour of rest arrived. Claude immediately rose, and saying to Lucy:

"Come with me for a few moments," they left the room together. Ida still lingered, and at length she murmured: "Could I not see Mrs. Vernon even for an instant?" The good doctor knew that her young heart longed for sympathy, and unwillingly indeed, he rejoined:

"No, I dare not agitate her to-night; but, my dear Ida," and he drew her gently towards him, and seated her on the couch, "I will endeavour, at least for an hour, to supply her place towards you. Unskilled as I am in the art of imparting

consolation, still you will not reject the good will and affection I offer you."

She burst into tears.

"Weep on!" he gently continued; "'twill relieve your oppressed feelings. Would I could console you, but I need consolation myself. Oh! Ida; we have all our sorrows. Yes! yes!" he passionately added as he started up and traversed the room with agitated steps. "You are grieved; but what is your grief to mine, to that of the mother, whose heart it has well nigh broken! Ere another week shall have elapsed, my poor boy will have left us, in all probability, for ever."

"Heavens! What do you mean?" asked his agitated companion.

"In three days he sails for India," said the poor father, with a convulsive effort at self control; "but, my God! Ida!" he hastily ejaculated as the young girl turned pale as death, and grasped the arm of the couch for support. "You are very ill, your strength has been overtaken." Hastily he snatched a glass of water from the table, and approached it to her pale lips. The draught seemed to revive her, and after a few moments, in reply to his anxious enquiries, she murmured:

"I am better. For India!" she repeated, half unconsciously; "for India!" and a convulsive shudder ran through her frame. "Oh! why, why must this be?"

"Necessity," he rejoined. "Alas! Ida, we are far from affluent, and he must make his own fortune. Instead of murmuring, ingrate that I am, I should rejoice at the rich appointment he has received. It was that brought us to London, and we succeeded indeed beyond our hopes. Some high friend of my dear wife's, whom she had known in earlier days, exerted his influence, and obtained the post for him. 'Tis Claude's own wish—still, still, I cannot but feel depressed and sad. But, Ida my child! how selfish is sorrow! Here am I, keeping you from your rest, which your pale cheek and icy hand tell me you require so urgently. Go—go; your frame has been already overtaken, and you may yet feel the consequences severely."

"No! suffer me to remain; I am much better now," she whispered. "I feel so sad and unhappy, I could not think of sleep."

"As you will," he kindly rejoined, and lifting a heavy shawl from the arm of the couch, he wrapped it around her. "I am but too happy to have you with me, if only for a few minutes longer, for I too feel very sad. Claude and poor Lucy are indulging in the sad pleasure of a quiet hour together—talking over his plans, building air castles, and consoling each other."

Oh! what bitterness filled poor Ida's heart at those words. *She* was totally, entirely excluded from that gentle intercourse, denied the envied privilege of sharing Lucy's task.

"And but for my own unworthiness," she thought, "I too would be with him now, advising, consoling with the familiarity of a sister, as necessary, as dear to him as even Lucy is. But I must be patient. My retribution, I fear, is but commencing."

She sighed heavily, and turning to Doctor Vernon, asked him some question about Claude's prospects. The poor father, glad to find a listener, immediately entered on the many hopes and fears, the plans and expectations, he entertained for his son; whilst the once fastidious Ida, who had ever held in such inexpressible horror anything approaching to prosiness, hung with intense interest on every sentence, tedious and oft repeated as each was, which fell from his lips. At length when he rose to dismiss his still unwearied listener, he found on glancing at his time piece, that hours not minutes had elapsed. Truly grateful, and at the same time inwardly wondering at the unusual patience displayed by his young companion, of whose real motive he entertained not the faintest suspicion, he pressed a father's kiss of fondness, perhaps for the first time in reality, on her brow, and bade her good night, little dreaming that her proud heart was filled with grief, deeper, bitterer far than his own. In passing to her own apartment, she saw Lucy issuing from Mrs. Vernon's room.

"Why, Ida!" exclaimed the latter, starting in surprise. "I thought you had long since retired to rest. I have been talking with poor Claude, till a few minutes since, when I went to see if mamma required anything."

"Is she awake now?" was the eager inquiry.

"Yes, she is much better, and her first question was for you; but I told her you were asleep hours ago."

"May I see her then?"

"Certainly," said Lucy; "but, dear Ida," and she glanced compassionately upon her, "do not remain up long, for you look fearfully pale and exhausted."

Ida bent her head in assent, and passed into Mrs. Vernon's room. The latter was sitting up, propped by pillows, and looked indeed ill, both in body and mind. What a relief it was for Ida to fling herself into her arms, and sob on the breast of the only being who knew or even divined the cause of the hopeless sorrow that was preying on her heart. Her deathlike pallour, her despairing sorrow, excited no surprise in Mrs. Vernon, and she felt that she must rise superior

to her own grief, to support and console her who, despite her youth and hopefulness, would, she much feared, fall beneath the stroke. A few long moments passed in silence, and at length Mrs. Vernon stooped down and murmured: "My poor Ida! Call up your fortitude. For my sake, for your own, be resigned."

"I will," returned the young girl, as she raised her head, a look of calm, stern resolve on her pale features. "I will fatigue you no more, my too indulgent friend, by my weak repining. 'Tis for you to murmur, who have no fault with which to reproach yourself, not for one like myself, whose own folly has brought down upon my head all this sorrow."

Seating herself at Mrs. Vernon's feet, she pressed her hand to her lips, saying.

"Henceforth you shall hear no further childish expressions of grief. It is I who will now console and solace you, as you have so long done to me."

And she was true to her resolve. From that hour Mrs. Vernon never saw tears dim her dark eyes, nor heard one syllable of repining escape her lips. Great, however, as was the relief, the happiness Mrs. Vernon experienced in the converse of one who, had she possessed no other claim upon her affections, would yet be immeasurably dear to her, devoted as Ida was to her son, she soon dismissed her, convinced that she required rest, even more than herself. Ida's last whisper, when Mrs. Vernon kissed her, was

Oh! guard—faithfully guard my secret."

A fond pressure of the hand was her only reply, and she immediately sought her own apartment. On entering, she found Lucy extended on a sofa, in her dressing gown.

"I have been waiting for you," she said, with a sad smile; "but you owe me no gratitude for it, for I felt it would have been vain to court sleep."

Ida made no reply, but threw herself with a weary sigh into an arm chair. For a moment Lucy looked at her in silence, and then exclaimed:

"You know of course, Ida, the cause of the sad cloud that seems to hang over us all."

Her companion passed her hand across her face, and then tranquilly rejoined:

"Yes! Doctor Vernon told me."

"And though you have never loved, never even tolerated Claude, do you not still sorrow with us, now that we are on the point of losing him?"

Ida had bent to raise something from the carpet. After a moment, she leisurely replied:

"Yes! I do indeed regret Mr. Vernon's de-

parture, both for your sake, and poor Mrs. Vernon's——."

"But not for his own! Ah! Ida," and Lucy passionately clasped her hands, stung by her apparently cruel indifference. "How much you have ever wronged my noble brother! And will you not yet do him justice? Even before you had ever seen him, how prejudiced you were against his very name. I know, and he also is aware of it, he has ever been an object of aversion to you. Why is this?"

"Hatred begets hatred, Lucy," she bitterly rejoined; "and if he is an object of dislike to me, our feelings are at least reciprocal."

"But, Ida, even if he does not regard you with the friendly feelings he should, whose fault is it? Forgive me, I speak perhaps too openly, but in the hour of sorrow our feelings will sometimes burst the bonds we would impose on them. If Claude does dislike you now, did he do so when you were first acquainted, when you regarded him not only with distaste, but contempt? Believe me you were much to blame. Oh! how many bitter words, how many cruel slights you heaped upon him, ere his generous heart resented it. Is it not so? Look at me, Ida, and say if it is otherwise."

But Ida's head was averted, her gaze apparently fixed on the darkened window.

"You do not deem me worthy of an answer," said Lucy, and for once her gentle tones were tinged with bitterness. "But still I will not be disheartened. I only ask of you—bear with my frankness, Ida—I only ask of you, will you still display, to the last, the same unforgiving, unrelenting spirit that you have hitherto done?"

"What would you have me to do?" at length asked her companion, in a cold tone, her head still averted.

"Lay aside at the last hour all your unkind feelings, your differences with Claude. It will be but a slight tax on your patience, for ere three suns have set, you will have parted, never to meet again. The first slight approaches he made to you, Ida, on your departure for Elm Grove, how coldly did you receive them! I witnessed it all—your haughty bow, your chilling reserve. Be it now your turn—speak kindly, gently to him. Make at least some advances."

"Never!" interrupted Ida, as she started up, and rapidly walked towards the window. "Long as you have lived with your brother, you do not know him yet. Lucy, where I have been repulsed once, I never stoop again; I would indeed do much to part in good fellowship, for I am not what I was when Claude Vernon first knew me; but to humble myself, to make approaches he

may repulse, advances he may scorn! Never—never!"

Lucy sought not to reply, for she saw further reasoning or entreaty would prove alike vain, but she could not help thinking, as she silently rose from the couch, that Ida was not so changed, at least in one particular, as her last sentence seemed to imply. She knew not the hidden feelings in Ida's heart, that had prompted that conduct; she divined not how fearful had been the internal struggle which had enabled her to wear, whilst her heart was bursting with grief, the cold, unmoved demeanour, which she inwardly stigmatized as the type of an unrelenting egotism; and, like others, Lucy too misjudged her.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ensuing morning, whilst the family were at breakfast, Doctor Vernon received a letter from Mr. Brown, the agent of the Stanhope estate, informing him of the particulars of the deceased lady's will, at the same time asking, "If he should wait on him at his own mansion, or would Doctor Vernon, to whom Miss Beresford had referred him for an answer on all points, find it equally convenient to call at Elm Grove?"

The speechless amazement of the Doctor, no words can express, and he read and re-read the letter, finding it almost impossible to believe its contents. At length, suddenly raising his head, he looked round on his family, exclaiming:

"Where is Ida?"

"She has not risen yet," returned Lucy. "Her journey has completely worn her out, and she was awake long hours after I fell asleep."

"Well! never mind! but, Mary," and he turned to his wife, who, though still very weak, had found herself sufficiently recovered to leave her room; "is it possible she has not as yet spoken to you on the subject?"

"On what subject?" was the wondering rejoinder.

"Why! Ida Beresford, the poor orphan whom we adopted, is now the wealthy heiress of the Stanhopes; mistress of an estate whose yearly rental exceeds the value of everything we possess in the world."

The countenances of Mrs. Vernon and Lucy immediately became radiant with the joy they really felt, but Claude alone expressed neither pleasure nor surprise. A slight start was the only token of emotion he betrayed, and for once his mother almost taxed her idolized son with selfishness. Ere the general astonishment had subsided, Ida, unconscious of the topic of their conversation, entered. Doctor Vernon imme-

diately rose, and taking her hand, congratulated her on her good fortune; "A fortune you have well deserved, my dear child," he added, "by your noble generosity in flying so quickly, in the hour of sorrow and sickness, to one whom you shunned in the day of her prosperity."

Lucy embraced her almost timidly, but Ida, who read her thoughts, gently said, with a smile, which had more of sadness in it than gaiety:

"Nay, Lucy, the simple heiress of Lady Stanhope may feel at any time honoured by the advances of the future marchioness of Pemberton."

The warm crimson flooded Lucy's soft cheek, and springing into her arms, she hid her confusion on her shoulder. Involuntarily Ida's eyes now turned on him, who alone of those assembled had as yet uttered no word of gratulation or interest. Claude met that glance. He felt he must say something, and he accordingly exclaimed:

"If my humble congratulations can afford Miss Beresford any satisfaction, she may be assured they are at least sincere."

Was it the bitter consciousness of his own vast inferiority in point of wealth and station to her he addressed, or was it the determination to shew that this change in her fortunes could make no change in him, that imparted so great a coldness to his manner? Certain it is, there was an icy reserve in his accents, his whole bearing, which they perhaps had never possessed before, even under the bitterest provocation. Hurt, wounded beyond measure, Ida replied only by a slight bow, and turned away. Dr. Vernon, in compliance with the request contained in the letter, immediately set out for Elm Grove. Questioning Ida on business topics, was useless. She had but one direction to give—to do whatever seemed to him best. All she required was to be permitted to dwell beneath his roof in tranquillity as before; for alas! she thought, "I no longer have need of Lady Athol's hospitality. The cause will soon be removed."

After some time Mrs. Vernon, who felt far from well, retired to her room, whither Ida followed her, and the latter saw no more of Claude and Lucy, who had been absorbed in all the mysteries of packing up, till they met at the evening repast. When they were about rising from table, a letter, directed in a strange hand, was given to Claude. He immediately opened it. It contained a draft for a thousand pounds, with the simple words:

"From a friend."

The unbounded surprise this excited may be

easily imagined, and Mrs. Vernon, after forming a hundred conjectures, each separately rejected as soon as formed, at last decided it must be some benevolent but eccentric friend, who, hearing of her son's approaching departure, had taken this means to furnish him with his outfit for India. Claude, who had been perfectly silent for a few moments, at length expressed his concurrence, as Lucy had already done, in his mother's opinion. Both mother and daughter, it is true, at the first moment, connecting this unexpected gift with Ida's sudden accession of fortune, had involuntarily turned their thoughts upon her, but her air of calm, cold self-possession, the expression of complete indifference that sat on her beautiful brow, instantly dispelled their suspicions. The total silence, too, that she preserved throughout—a silence which she ever maintained when Claude, or anything appertaining to his affairs, was discussed—was additional proof. Till the hour of rest arrived, this circumstance afforded ample matter for conversation, and when they separated for the night, their thoughts were still constantly recurring to their unknown benefactor and his generous gift. The thought of sleep was but a mockery to the sorrowing heart of Mrs. Vernon, and long after the family had retired to rest, she wandered from room to room, with all the restlessness of grief. At length she returned to the solitary drawing room, but for a moment she paused on the threshold. There was something inexpressibly touching to her in that quiet, tranquil scene. The moonlight streamed brightly in through the disordered draperies of the windows, and fell in radiant masses on the floor, table, ottomans, imparting to their disorder a look of strange, holy repose. What countless memories that scene evoked! What dreams of domestic happiness, of quiet felicity; now, alas! to be so rudely dispelled. Not one simple article in that apartment, but had its cherished reminiscences, its endearing remembrances. There stood the rosewood work-table, which her fond husband had presented her the day he pressed his first-born in his arms, and there, in the low, yet pleasant easy chair, had she daily sat for many years, as she had rocked to sleep in her arms that idolized son. And now he was about to leave her for a foreign land, a land of sickness and disease. A separation scarcely less certain than death was to take place between them. She clasped her hands over her heart, and for a moment leaned against the door for support. But that weakness soon passed over, and she at length entered. A half-finished drawing of Ida's, lying on a stand near, attracted her attention.

"My poor, poor, Ida!" and the tears gushed

to her eyes. "Who shall comfort thee? Who shall speak hope or solace to thy breaking heart? Was it not enough that I should have to mourn, but thy bright youth must be darkened too, by sorrow!"

She turned away, and approached the couch, where Claude usually sat. A book, elegantly bound, lay upon it. She looked at the title page. How well she knew the careless, yet graceful characters. "To my beloved mother, from her devoted and affectionate Claude." This then was his parting gift. Mrs. Vernon's calmness fled, and falling on her knees, she passionately exclaimed:

"Oh! this trial is too heavy—'tis more than I can bear."

All the love she had ever felt for that worshipped son, seemed concentrated in that one burst of wild idolatry; death then would not have been more painful than separation. Mrs. Vernon's feelings rarely rebelled against her control; she seldom, if ever, lost the placid calmness, which had been through life her distinguishing quality, but in that moment of agonized sorrow all barriers were broken down, and the passionate, vehement Ida herself could not have yielded more utterly, more hopelessly, to despair. Suddenly the door unclosed, and Claude silently and slowly entered. He started, and his glance fell on the kneeling figure of his mother, and tears dimmed for a moment the large brilliant eyes that had never known since childhood such a guest. But he quickly dashed them away, and with a soft step approached.

"My own dear mother," he whispered, as he gently pressed her hand; "why do you sorrow as one without hope?"

Her only answer was to fling herself into his arms, and sob on his breast. For a long time he held her in that warm embrace, and though his own heart was heavy enough, he spoke of future hope and happiness, and dwelt on the bright prospects of fame and wealth, thus opening before him; but ambition had no place then in the mother's heart, and she replied with a bursting sob:

"Speak not of rank or riches, Claude! Can they compensate to me for your love, for the sunshine of your presence? Oh! my son, there is a dark presentiment hanging over me, that if you leave for India, you will never return."

A cloud, sombre as night, passed over his countenance, as he involuntarily murmured:

"And I, too, have the same presentiment; but it does not sadden me much; for I know that if I ever do revisit the shore of England, it will

be when spirits, health and youth, have fled forever."

These were sad words for the bright and happy spirit of Claude Vernon to utter; but that hour was one of gloom, and it may have given its colouring to his thoughts. At length Mrs. Vernon's vehement sorrow exhausted itself, and, complying with her son's entreaties, she suffered him to place her on the couch, and adjust the cushions around her. Gradually she yielded to the glowing pictures he painted of the high station he would attain, the honours that should be his.

"But, ah! Claude," was her mournful reply, "how many long and weary years will it take to effect all this! How endless a period of exile from your native land."

"But for you, my mother," murmured the young man, as he pressed his lips upon her hand, "I would never care much to return to it. I must now prepare for manhood's toils and trials, and the happiness, the tranquil felicity, that have marked the course of my youth and boyhood, must be to me, for the future, as a bright but evanescent dream. From henceforth India must be my home, my resting place, the theatre of my toils and sorrows, as of my joys."

"And oh! may you be happy, my beloved child!" returned Mrs. Vernon, as she clasped her hands. "May you never have cause to regret the home you have left, and may you find a compensation for a mother's tenderness, a sister's love, in the nearer and dearer ties which you will sooner or later form."

"No! mother," was the quick rejoinder; "such ties I will never form. You will ever be, as you are now, the first, the only idol of my heart."

There was something strange, forced in his accents, and Mrs. Vernon cast a wondering glance upon him. The moonlight shone full on his high, polished brow, which had something stern in its marble beauty, and the same expression lurked in the corners of the faultlessly chiselled lips, but the dark meaning eyes that encountered her own, seemed to pour forth very floods of tenderness upon her, and Mrs. Vernon felt that blessed indeed would be the lot of her who should be the chosen one of her noble, gifted son. She thought of Ida at the moment; the wayward but high-minded Ida; she who beneath her cold, reserved exterior—her apparent icy egotism—concealed so deep a mine of woman's tenderness and devotion; and the words almost rose to her lips, "that she, indeed, notwithstanding her many faults and foibles, was well worthy of him." But her promise sealed her

lips, and she suffered Claude to change the subject, which he quickly did. Hours, long hours, were passed by that mother and son in sad, yet gentle intercourse, and they parted not till the first rays of that sun that was to witness their separation, streamed in upon them. Meanwhile poor Ida, who had passed but a feverish, restless night, rose from her couch, contrary to her usual wont, with the first rays of the sun. Her head was aching violently, and hoping that the cool morning air might serve to revive her, she dressed herself, and stole softly from the room to avoid awakening Lucy, who was in a deep sleep. Directing her steps to the garden, she took two or three turns through its shady walks, and then, greatly fatigued, sought the arbour, and threw herself on its mossy seat. As she did so, the thought of the conversation she had overheard in that very spot, and the agony it had inflicted on her, rose upon her memory. But she questioned herself was there not greater suffering still in store for her? How easily was that question solved! At that moment a shadow suddenly darkened the entrance of the arbour; she looked hastily up, and beheld Claude.

"Miss Beresford! So early!" he ejaculated, in tones of surprise. "This is indeed unexpected good fortune, for I have desired much to see you alone; but may I enter?"

Ida, who was too much taken by surprise, even to frame a reply, bowed her head in token of assent. He advanced a few steps, and leaning against the porch, exclaimed with some degree of embarrassment:

"I fear 'tis an ungracious task I have to perform; but I shall at least solicit your forgiveness before entering upon it. 'Tis but a simple question I have to propose. May I proceed?"

Ida's heart was throbbing so violently, that she dared not trust her voice, and her only rejoinder was a slight inclination of her head.

"Then, Miss Beresford, are you not the secret benefactor, to whose liberality I owe yesterday's princely donation?"

His companion became fearfully pale; she actually trembled. The shame of discovery; the dread of Claude's anger, or, still worse, his suspecting the sentiments which had prompted her generosity, completely overpowered her, whilst he, amazed beyond measure at these signs of feminine weakness in one whom he had supposed incapable of such feelings, paused a moment, and then resumed in lower and less firm accents:

"Will you not answer me, Miss Beresford? and yet, farther reply is almost unnecessary. The very first instant of its reception, unworthy as I knew myself to be of your generosity, surprising

and unaccountable as such a gift to me was, the conviction flashed upon me with overwhelming force, that you, and you alone, were the donor, though to avert from you suspicions you were evidently desirous to evade, I appeared to coincide in my mother's opinion. Say, is it not so? I know you are incapable of deceiving me."

The vivid scarlet that suddenly flushed Ida's neck and brow was even more explicit than her silence.

"Thank you," he exclaimed, after a moment's silence. "I am answered. I have only to express my deep gratitude for a gift which was as undeserved, as it was generously bestowed."

"Talk not of generosity," murmured Ida, speaking for the first time. "That paltry offering would not half redeem the debt I owe your family, and 'tis but just I should at least make some return for all that I have received."

"Seek not to deceive yourself, Miss Beresford. You may indeed owe something to my parents, and even Lucy, for she has been a fond friend; but to me you can owe nothing. Permit me then to return your princely gift, for which I shall ever feel myself your debtor, even though I cannot retain it."

"You dare not, surely, Mr. Vernon, insult me, by returning that money?" rejoined Ida, fixing her dark eyes full on his face.

"And I dare not retain it, Miss Beresford," was the reply. "My self-respect forbids the thought."

"I understand you. The thought of being under obligation to me; and yet I scrupled not to solicit your assistance when I required it, as in the case of my letter to the Marquis of Pemberton, when I did not even hesitate to apply to you."

"True, but in reality it was not for yourself you solicited that aid; it was to benefit another, and that very act laid on me a debt of gratitude which I fear I shall never have the opportunity of repaying."

"Then will you not consent, Mr. Vernon, to retain it as the gift of a friend?" she asked.

He hesitated whilst his heightening colour, and perplexed look, plainly betokened his embarrassment; at length he rejoined with averted glance, for he felt most unwilling indeed to hurt her feelings:

"Forgive me, but not even in that light, Miss Beresford; you must take back your gift."

"Then be it as you wish," she retorted, and snatching the paper from his extended hand, she tore it into fifty shreds, and threw the fragments at his feet. "And now, Mr. Vernon," she added, fixing her sparkling eyes upon his face. "Now, you may retire, secure in the proud consciousness

that you have preserved your own dignity inviolate, even at the trifling cost of insulting and trampling on the feelings of another."

There was something in the action itself, in her whole bearing, very like the *Ida Beresford* of earlier days, and yet *Claude*, as he looked upon her erect form, and the air of lofty indignation that rested on her faultless features, thought she had never looked more beautiful. Without waiting for further reply, she proudly inclined her head, and left the *arbour*, whilst he, embarrassed, annoyed, almost angry with himself for his obstinate firmness, left it also, but in another direction. Half determining to make some apology, or concession to her, *Claude* passed into the house, just as the breakfast bell was ringing. On entering the room, however, he saw none but his mother and sister. Really disappointed, he seated himself, wondering whether she would yet come. He dared not ask, for so unusual a circumstance would have surprised his companions indeed; but fortunately for his perplexity *Mrs. Vernon*, after glancing round the table, exclaimed:

"Where is *Ida*?"

"In her room," returned *Lucy*. "She was up early this morning, and it has given her so severe a headache, she had to lie down again."

"Poor *Ida*!" said *Mrs. Vernon*, "her health and strength seem failing fast. I would she had never gone to *Elm Grove*. The fatigue and agitation of those few days have injured her, I fear, irreparably."

Claude cast a quick, covert glance at his mother, in which surprise, trouble, doubt, were strangely blended, but his eyes were instantly withdrawn, and fixed upon his plate. During the course of the day, *Doctor Vernon*, fatigued and exhausted, returned from *Elm Grove*. He had scarcely entered, when his wife hastened to inform him of the mysterious gift and letter her son had received.

He was even more amazed than she had been.

"The only source I can even think of, is *Ida*," he said, after some minutes reflection. "She is certainly generous enough to be capable of such an act, but yet, I have cause to know with certainty, that she is not the giver, for her agent mentioned casually to me, yesterday, that *Mias Beresford* must soon require money, as he had as yet given her none, and *Lady Stanhope* had left but fifty pounds ready money in her purse, which lay still untouched on the table, where her ladyship had left it. Whilst he was speaking, *Claude* and *Lucy* entered the apartment together. "Well, my son," said the doctor, addressing the for-

mer; "so some beneficent fairy has been showering her gifts upon you. Let me see this famous note, and assure myself that it is not, like most fairy gifts, an illusion."

Claude colored to the very tips of his ears, as he carelessly replied: "I cannot shew it now. 'Tis already disposed of."

"Well my dear boy, we'll enquire no farther; it came in a mysterious manner, and in a mysterious manner should go. But where is *Ida*? I have a letter for her from her agent."

"She is ill," replied *Lucy*, "and begs you will excuse her; but where is the letter? I shall give it to her myself." *Lucy* accordingly did so, and she wondered strangely at the restless impatience with which the young girl tossed the unopened epistle aside, and threw herself again on her couch, with a look of such weary unhappiness. *Ida* left not her room that evening; but alone in her apartment, extended on a couch, without light or fire, she passed the dreary hours, indulging in the luxury of giving unrestrained vent to her deep sorrow. Nor did her lonely chamber, though wrapped in gloom, the dull rain beating against the windows, afford a more sad or cheerless aspect than the rest of the house. The hall, the passages, filled with trunks and preparations for *Claude's* departure—his own room and study, the doors of which were ajar, disclosing nought but empty shelves, and book-cases,—and the drawing-room, with its silent, sad occupants, perhaps the most cheerless of all. *Mrs. Vernon*, pale and motionless, was sitting near a table, her head leaning on her hand, occasionally wiping away the burning tears, that despite her utmost efforts she could not restrain. *Lucy* buried amid the cushions of the sofa, was sobbing passionately, whilst *Claude* himself, pale as marble, his lips contracted, as if to restrain his emotion, stood at the window, apparently looking at the storm raging without, but in reality absorbed in thoughts of grief and bitterness. *Doctor Vernon* made no effort to promote anything like cheerfulness; he felt how unavailing it would be, and leaning back in his arm chair, his face shaded by his hand, he freely indulged in his own sadness. Supper was announced, partaken of in silence, and after another long, dreary hour, they rose to retire to rest. But despite her own cares, even in that hour, *Lucy* could think of others, and with a noiseless step, shading the light with her hand, she stole into the apartment, divining from the total darkness and silence that *Ida* was asleep. On glancing at the bed, she saw that it was empty; somewhat alarmed, she quickly turned, and perceived *Ida* lying on the couch, at the farthest end of the room. Apparently worn out by pain and

grief, she had fallen asleep. Her long, dark hair, falling in dishevelled masses, swept the floor around her, whilst tears yet glittered on the drooping silken lashes, and sparkled on the cheek, which for its cold and colourless beauty, might have been that of a marble statue. Long Lucy looked at her in silence, watching the blue veins so clearly defined in the white temples, the transparent delicacy of the fragile hands, and the sudden bright flushes that so often mantled on the pale cheek of the sleeper, and she thought with mingled grief and pain, of the prophetic words Mrs. Vernon had uttered that morning. She could not disguise from herself that Ida was greatly changed, and like a sudden pang of agony came the conviction that she might lose her too, that there might be a yet more eternal separation from Ida, than the one so soon to take place between her and Claude. Such a thought was agony, and rejecting it instantly, she knelt down, raised Ida in her arms, and gently gathered up her long tresses. The latter awoke with a start, and looking round, murmured:

"Tis you, Lucy. Oh! how ill I feel!" and as she spoke a shudder ran through her frame. Ere many minutes had elapsed, with her companion's assistance, she was in bed, and soon the heavy slumber she had late enjoyed again sealed her lids. About an hour after the door opened, and the figure of Mrs. Vernon glided in. She approached Ida's bed, surveyed her some moments in silence, with tearful eyes, then murmuring:

"Thank God! she sleeps at last," bent down and fondly kissed her. She then approached Lucy, and after imprinting a kiss on her soft, bright cheek, stole from the room as noiselessly as she had entered.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NOTWITHSTANDING her deep refreshing sleep, of the preceding night, when all were assembled the following morning in the breakfast room to bid Claude farewell, Ida was absent.

"Where is Ida?" said the Doctor, his kind eyes for once filled with anger. "Is she too ill or too indifferent to make her appearance for an instant, to bid farewell to one, who if he has no other claims upon her regard, has at least dwelt beneath the same roof, sat at the same table with her for months."

"She is ill, very ill," returned Lucy colouring, for she felt that in her desire to palliate her friend, she was slightly deviating from the truth. The latter, though suffering indeed, was yet sitting up in her own room, and might consequently

have overcome her weakness sufficiently to descend for a few moments, had she wished it. The truth was, that Ida felt unequal to the trying task of bidding Claude farewell. She feared her feelings would burst the bonds she had imposed upon them, turn traitor to her will, and betray her secret. Death was almost preferable to that, and rather than run the risk, she determined to bear every imputation of selfishness, egotism or ingratitude, that could be heaped upon her.

"Nay, leave her," said Claude, bitterly, in answer to his sister's last words. "She never lavished much friendship on me. Why should she affect it now?"

"She cannot be so ill as that," said his father warmly. "It must be pretence, and yet I could not have believed it of her."

"Aye!" rejoined Claude, in the same bitter tone. "Even in the eleventh hour, she is still unrelenting, unforgiving; but it matters not. My journey will not be the less prosperous, I trust, uncheered by her good wishes; but where is my portfolio?" he added, as if desirous to waive the subject; "I must have left it in the library. No, Lucy," he continued, as his sister rose, "I will seek it myself," and springing up stairs with a rapid step, as if to dispel the painful thoughts that crowded upon him, he quickly entered the small sitting room, adjoining the library. But he started back, for Ida was standing at the window, and his first impulse was to turn, as if he had not seen her. Murmuring however, "'Tis for the last time," he advanced, and extended his hand with generous frankness, exclaiming:

"I thought your indisposition would have precluded our saying farewell, Miss Beresford;" but the words died on his lips, for she slowly turned, and that countenance, so deadly pale, so full of intense, concentrated suffering, startled him beyond control.

"Good Heavens!" he hurriedly exclaimed. "You are indeed truly ill. How much I have wronged you; but my departure must atone for my injustice. Yes, I am leaving you now. We shall probably never meet again, but if we have not lived, let us at least separate, in friendship and good feeling. Let the past, with our mutual follies and unkindnesses, be forgotten, and we will think of each other when apart, as we should have done when together, with forbearance and kindness. Will you not say farewell, Miss Beresford, and bestow on me one kind wish for my voyage?"

He again extended his hand as he spoke. Mechanically Ida placed hers in his. It was cold as ice. Twice she opened her lips, as if to speak, but no sounds issued forth. Miscon-

struing her silence, Claude continued, more in sadness than in anger: "Then be it so. I fear you are still unrelenting, and I must submit, but I could have wished it had been otherwise; I could have wished that our last meeting had been undarkened by pride or unkindness. But, it may be, that in your thoughts I have sinned too deeply against you to be pardoned. If so, I again entreat your forgiveness for every act or word of mine, which may have ever hurt or annoyed you; I only wish I could recall them all, and believe me, no unkind feelings or remembrances connected with you, will for the future find place in the breast of Claude Vernon. Farewell!" and again pressing her hand, he hastily left the apartment. But as he crossed the threshold, a slight noise caused him to turn. He looked hastily round, and saw with alarm that Ida had fainted. The bow had been too tightly strung; it had relaxed. Springing forward, he raised her from the ground, and placed her on the couch. She was perfectly inanimate, and for a moment, as he felt the touch of her icy brow and fingers, a wild fear shot through his heart, that she was dead. But dismissing the idle terror, he snatched some water from the table, and sprinkled it over her corpse-like features. For a moment Claude arrested his hand, fancying she had stirred, and contemplated her in silence. Some peculiar thought evidently passed through his imagination, for a deep flush overspread his cheek, and he exclaimed aloud:

"Can it be? but no! I am a vain fool to indulge even a moment in such a fancy; she has been ill long since." And with gentle care, he continued to fan her brow. It was the first office of kindness or attention that he had ever shewn to Ida, and he certainly performed it with a deep solicitude, which would have delighted indeed the heart of the unconscious object, had she but witnessed it. After a time the faint glow that began to replace her former death-like pallour, and the convulsive quivering of her eyelids, betokened returning animation. Claude immediately rose, adjusted her in an easy position, and turned away, murmuring:

"She must not see me again;" but as he approached the door, the thought struck him, he should at least remain to see her recovered, or nearly so.

"I will wait here," he inwardly said; "she cannot see me." It was strange, how completely his countenance had altered in the last few minutes; how quickly the expression of gentle interest and solicitude had passed away, and been replaced by an air of stern calmness. After ano-

ther moment Ida opened her eyes, but she closed them again, and passed her hand across her brow as if to collect her thoughts. Suddenly the remembrance of all that had taken place in the last half hour, the farewell, the departure, flashed upon her, and with a burst of wild passionate grief she exclaimed, as her head fell on her clasped hands: "He is gone, gone forever! without one thought of pity, of regret, for her whose happiness he has blighted, whose heart he has broken. He is gone, and I have not asked his forgiveness for all the wrongs I have done him, or uttered one kind conciliating word. Oh! Claude! Claude! your vengeance has been bitter, beyond earth's bitterness."

"Ida! mine own Ida!" exclaimed a voice near her, whose rich musical accents thrilled through every fibre of her frame. "Have I heard you indeed aright, or is this, all only an illusion?"

With a startled cry she raised her head. Claude was beside her. One glance was sufficient. It filled her heart with happiness unspeakable; but that sudden transition from agony and despair, to hope and joy, was too much for her already overtaken frame, and she relapsed into insensibility. But how different was that waking to her former one!—yet it was not till her companion had again and again whispered his vows of affection in her ear, that she could believe the extent, the certainty of her happiness.

"But, tell me, Claude," she at length murmured, "have you forgiven, forgotten all?"

"We have both much to forgive and forget, dear Ida," was his earnest reply; "but let the past be buried in oblivion, and our future shall be as bright, as blissful, as we can desire. If you were at first perhaps in fault, how much more culpable have I been. Haughty, obstinate, unkind towards you, unjust to your merits; but you have overlooked it all, and we shall speak of that no more. Brighter topics are before us."

"But, Claude!" said the young girl, clasping her hands, whilst the warm glow faded from her cheek. "Are you not deceiving me? Moved by generous compassion, by gentle pity, are you not deceiving yourself? Whence is this sudden change? But an hour ago, you would have parted from me in coldness and ceremony, without one thought, one feeling of regret."

"Even as you would have parted from me. And yet, am I less dear to you!—I, like you, was acting a part. Yes, carefully as I disguised it from every heart, save my own, I have loved you long since, in secret, Ida."

"Ah! but those fearful words you once uttered, Claude. That your early aversion had subsided into indifference, that I myself had put

it out of your power ever to entertain even a feeling of friendship for me. How indelibly they are stamped upon my memory! You said too, that, 'the woman would be what the girl foretold.'

"But I said falsely, Ida, for it is not so. Had it been, I would not now be at your feet. I will confess to you, in the earlier days of our acquaintance, when I felt and resented with such boyish impetuosity, your childish provocations, I learned to dislike, to shun you; nor was that feeling removed, when you returned from London. In my unjust and prejudiced view, you had but added the vices of worldly wisdom, of selfish policy, to your former girlish foibles, and for a length of time, I persisted, with a wayward perverseness which I cannot comprehend, in misjudging your every word and action; but gradually the mist of prejudice cleared away, and I may date with certainty the commencement of kindlier feelings from that very conversation with my mother, in which I used the unworthy expressions you mention—expressions I blush now to think of. Even at the moment I uttered them, my heart misgave me. Something seemed to whisper that the time might come when I would think differently. And it did, and quickly too. From that hour, though I would not breathe it, even to my most secret soul, my feelings insensibly but gradually changed towards you. I could not be blind to the admirable change daily taking place in your character. Think you, I saw not each unamiable characteristic disappearing, whilst daily some trait appeared of the many noble qualities which even the pernicious flattery that had surrounded you from your cradle, could not destroy. Ida! I saw it all, and it was adding fearfully to the power you had already insensibly acquired over me. I trembled lest that influence should grow too strong for mastery. I saw all the folly, the madness, of the poor student dreaming of the gifted, favored beauty of the London circles, of entering the lists with wealth and rank. And I feared, pardon me dearest, for I knew not then the heroic devotedness of which your nature is capable, its superiority to the vanity and folly, that surrounded it; I feared that, educated as you had been in an atmosphere of luxury and fashion, such accessories were wanting to your very existence. Yes, at that moment, had your hand been at my disposal, I would not have dared to accept the gift, lest I should but seal your misery and my own."

"But, you judge me more truly now?" asked Ida, as she raised her dark eyes earnestly to his face.

"Yes, and I judged you truly, when you left your home to attend the dying couch of a woman whose claims upon you were few, if any. In that hour I acknowledged openly to my proud heart for the first time that you were dear, most dear to me; but the coldness with which you met my advances, a coldness I richly deserved, proved to me, the necessity of keeping that feeling concealed from you, more than from all others. Even to the mother who had shared the confidence of my youth and boyhood, I carefully closed my heart."

"But, tell me, Claude, why then, if your feelings were so changed, why did you display such cruel coldness when I returned? Surely the sufferings, the trials I had so lately undergone, might have moved you to gentler thoughts."

"You returned not as you went. You left as a sister, and an equal—you came back an alliance fit only for some proud scion of the aristocracy. The heiress of Lady Stanhope and the Ida Beresford of old were two beings as different in their relations to Claude Vernon, as day is to night. But both equally dear, my own Ida," he added as he marked the troubled expression his words had called into her deep, lustrous eyes, "both equally dear; but in my sudden, unpremeditated farewell, I forgot your new position; I saw only the beautiful, but wayward companion of my boyhood, and I spoke to you as such. Confess, Ida, I bore your apparent frigid unkindness with patience."

"Claude! Claude!" she exclaimed, turning pale as she spoke. "You can never conceive what I suffered in those few short moments. All the sorrows, the trials I have ever had, were as nothing to their agony; and the fearful struggle too, to preserve my coldness, my self-possession, to the last, that my secret might be ever unknown. Oh! I wonder that my heart did not break—it was near it!"

"And this was all for my sake, dearest," rejoined her companion, in accents trembling with deep feeling. "But I may hope to repay it yet, by a life devoted to your wishes. Yes, Ida, I swear to you, that whatever clouds may arise to dim the horizon of that future which now seems so bright, whatever cause you may hereafter give me of dissension or of anger that hour shall never be forgotten, and its remembrance will prove sufficient to teach me to bear all with patience, to return everything with love and devotion."

Ida's brilliant eyes filled with tears, but a smile of happiness, intense, perfect, such as had never perhaps from childhood irradiated her beautiful brow, now shone upon it, as she murmured:

"A thousand thanks, dear Claude, but may I never put your forbearance to the test. May you never need to call up the remembrance of that hour, at least to quiet unkind or angry feelings."

"Heyday! What is all this?" exclaimed the voice of the astonished Doctor Vernon, who, wondering at Claude's long absence, had followed him up stairs, and entered the room unperceived. And then, as the truth dawned upon him, he added with a merry smile: "What! two people who could never speak civilly to each other, during the years they have lived under the same roof, vowing and speechifying together, now that they are on the point of parting forever. But I must run down, and tell the news. Ah! what a deceitful pair you are!" and he hurried off to put his threat in execution, whilst Ida made a rapid exit by the opposite door. After a moment's reflection, Claude resolved to brave the raillery, which he expected would be showered upon him, and with a happy, though somewhat embarrassed air, he entered the drawing room; but his patience was not put to the test, for the joy of Lucy and Mrs. Vernon was too deep, too heartfelt, to admit of jesting. As his mother pressed him to her heart, she murmured; "Thank God for this!" with a look of such inexpressible gratitude and joy, that Claude, who was unconscious of her having been long since in possession of Ida's secret, almost wondered at it. After a few moments silence, during which a grave, though happy look had stolen over each face, Doctor Vernon exclaimed: "What, Mary! You will not let the young hypocrite off so easily? He really deserves a lesson."

"We will reserve it for another time," said the mother, with a gentle smile. "As it is too late to think of starting to-day, will you take this sewing, dear Claude, up to the sitting room for me; I shall want it this morning."

Truly appreciating his mother's delicate kindness, Claude, glad to be released, took the work. He instantly repaired to the sitting room, hoping to find Ida there, but she was still in her own apartment. Somewhat disappointed he withdrew to his own study, and a full hour elapsed ere he issued forth. When he did so, there was a gravity, almost amounting to sadness, tempering the happiness of his former expression. In passing through the passage, one of the trunks obstructed his way, and he bent to remove it.

"You will not need it now, Claude," said a well known voice at his side. "May I help you to unpack, though you excluded me from the privilege of assisting you to pack up?"

He turned a look of deep, yet grave tenderness on the speaker, as he rejoined:

"Do not deceive yourself, dear Ida. To India I must go; but I will not remain long there."

"'Tis cruel, cruel to jest with me thus," she quickly exclaimed, as the colour forsook her cheek.

"I am not jesting, my beloved Ida. It must be so. Ere I can think of uniting your fate to mine, I must at least have something to offer in return for all your gifts. But I will not be long absent, dearest. Nerved by the thought of the bright reward awaiting me, I will spare no pains, no efforts, toil both night and day; and then when I have won a name, and independence, I shall return to claim you for my own."

What thought suddenly caused the cheek of Claude Vernon to blanch? He remembered that the bright prize he thus rashly delayed to accept might be won from him during his absence, and that Ida, young, beautiful, admired, might find consolation during their separation, from other sources than the remembrance of himself. But to one of Claude's lofty nature, this thought but served to strengthen his resolution, and when Ida imploringly said—

"Have I not enough for both, dear Claude, or do you still disdain to receive aught at my hands? Oh! you have wounded me once already by an unkind refusal!"

He firmly, though gently replied:

"'Tis not that, my beloved; I know well your noble generosity, but my pride, my very manhood, rebels against the thought of receiving everything where I have nought to offer in return."

"Oh! speak not of pride," interrupted his companion, with a quivering lip, "when I, proud, haughty, as I have been, have so utterly subdued every trace of such a feeling. But if you think I have not humbled myself sufficiently, I will bend still lower, and entreat, implore of you to accept me, and the paltry gifts I bring."

There was a slight tinge of reproach in her accents, which touched him beyond measure.

"Nay, my own Ida!" he gently commenced.

"Claude! Claude!" she passionately interrupted, as she burst into tears, "I have suffered much, much, for you already. Have pity upon me, and try me no farther."

The deep flushes that so rapidly passed over the expressive countenance of her companion, leaving it pale as marble, betokened the fierceness of the struggle within; but her last words, her tears, were irresistible. After a moment's silence, he bent over her, and whispered:

"Ida, you have conquered. I consent to owe all, everything to your love alone."

* * * * *

One year and a half from the period of the events detailed in the last chapter, two bridal parties entered the village church adjoining Dr. Vernon's mansion. The splendour and magnificence of the procession, the beauty and elegance of the two brides, formed a striking contrast to the groups of humble villagers, who with delighted eyes, feasted on a spectacle, the like of which had never been witnessed before in their humble birth place. The first who advanced to the altar, was a young and gentle looking girl, who as yet was but a child in her timid sensitiveness, her sweet, girlish beauty, and many honest eyes filled with tears as they looked upon the pride, the ministering angel of the village:

"Dear little Miss Lucy!"

Another moment, she turned from the altar, Marchioness of Pemberton, wife of one with whose family the proudest of England's aristocracy, deemed it an honour to mingle. Her place was soon filled by another, whose high, queenlike brow, nature seemed to have formed for a coronet; but who, rejecting all the dignities that had been laid at her feet, had deemed herself but too happy in being the chosen one of the untitled, undistinguished commoner, who stood at her side. Nor was her choice to be wondered at, for Claude Vernon, with his glorious intellect, his princely beauty, was indeed one of nature's aristocracy, and one beside whom even the high born Marquis of Pemberton, dwindled into insignificance. Ida was deathly pale, far more so than Lucy, but never had she looked lovelier, for the imperious haughtiness which had once marred her beauty, had vanished, and was now replaced by an air of gentle thoughtfulness, of deep, but agitated feeling, that imparted to her a fascination she had never possessed in her earlier girlhood. Well might Claude Vernon's eye flash with proud, exulting happiness, as, the ceremony concluded, he pressed to his heart that noble being, who, despite all her faults, was yet so well worthy of his love. Ferrent, heartfelt, was the vow he inwardly registered at that moment, that whatever provocation he might hereafter receive, he would be ever gentleness and tenderness to her who had so nobly disdained rank, wealth and titles, for his sake, and who, despite the coldness, the disdain with which he had so long treated her, had so generously bestowed on him her princely fortune, and the devotion of a heart, which had never known another impression save his own. The happiness of the fond father, the gentle mother, who looked on with hearts swelling with gratitude, no words can express. At times it almost exceeded

their belief, and they involuntarily asked themselves what had they done that they should be so blessed! The answer was easily read, when the children whom they had brought up with such watchful affection, thanked them for their care, when the young and beautiful being whom they had rescued from poverty and sorrow, as from a life of glittering folly, knelt at their feet, and poured forth her gratitude, reminding them of the hour when they had taken her, a poor outcast, to the bosom of their family, and thus taught her young and misguided heart, the first glorious lesson of divine Charity. Even as they had sowed, had they reaped, and He who is the stay of the widow and the orphan, had recompensed them an hundred fold, for their obedience to his highest and holiest precept. Nor was the sad drawback which so often accompanies what the world styles "great matches," theirs, which, elevating those who form them, to a higher, but not happier sphere, separates them almost entirely from the beloved friends, the cherished relatives of their youth. No! the Vernons had the happiness, till the last moment of their sojourn on earth, of dwelling amidst their children; and when at length, full of age and honours, they passed to a happier world, they were still surrounded by their love and tenderness. It was on Ida's bosom that Mrs. Vernon breathed her last, and none, not even her worshipped Claude, sorrowed more long and deeply for her, than the child of her adoption. But ere that sad event happened to cloud the universal happiness, many long years of earthly felicity, of unclouded sunshine, were their portion. Ida and Claude passed most of their time at Elm Grove, the splendid country seat of Lady Stanhope, which of course with all her other possession's had devolved on her heiress; whilst Lucy and her husband inhabited Pemberton Lodge, which was but the distance of an hour's drive from their friends. The London season, as it is termed, they usually spent in town, where their sojourn was ever attended with the greatest *éclat*. The consternation which the intelligence of this double marriage caused in the London coteries, could not be even conceived by those who had unwittingly excited it. The infatuation of the Marquis of Pemberton had driven half the chaperones, and eligible young ladies of the season, to the bounds of distraction. That he should ever have thought of marrying the poor, though fashionable, Miss Beresford, had certainly been sufficiently disgraceful; but to dare to wed a country doctor's daughter, a little nameless rustic, "It was enough," as one old Dowager, with four unengaged young ladies, all brought out, energetically said: "It was enough

to make one turn atheist, and deny such a thing as a Providence." The climax to these disgraceful facts was the circumstance of Ida, who was one of themselves, whom they had invested with the dignity of *belle* of the season, proving false to her colours, and at the time when an alliance with her was a thing to be desired, when it was policy to retain her in their ranks, committing precisely the same unpardonable folly which had drawn down their indignation on the devoted head of the heir of the house of Pemberton. Lady Athol, whose matrimonial project had been thus disagreeably and abruptly brought to a close, publicly avowed her determination to call on neither of the brides, but her motion was but feebly seconded, for the Marchioness of Pemberton, and the heiress of Lady Stanhope, were certainly personages of even more importance than Lady Athol, and the discriminating London public, however heartily they might agree with her in denouncing the offenders, had the magnanimity to sacrifice pride and all resentful feelings, on the shrine of the splendid entertainments and fêtes with which the guilty parties astonished London. The sensation, indeed, that their arrival in the metropolis created, was immense, and would have gratified even the most sanguine expectations of poor Lady Stanhope, had she but survived to witness it; in fact, it would almost have induced her to overlook the heinous folly of Ida, in allying herself to aught save a coronet. Cards, compliments, invitations, rained in upon them, before they had been one day in town, and strange enough, the first they accepted was a card for a large ball at the Duchess of Hamilton's, where Ida had made her *debut* on her former arrival in London. It was their first appearance in public, and numerous were the subterfuges, immense the interest, exerted to obtain invitations by all. Excitement and curiosity were at the highest pitch, and certainly none were disappointed in the high expectations they had formed. Party spirit ran high, as to which of the two brides deserved the palm; some contending for the girlish loveliness, the timid grace of the fair Marchioness, whilst others as eagerly advocated the majestic beauty of young Mrs. Vernon; but as to Claude himself, the interloper, who had carried off the heiress, but one opinion existed from the instant he entered the drawing rooms of her Grace of Hamilton, with his beautiful wife—namely, that he was most undeniably, insolently handsome, and elegant looking. As Ida, leaning on his arm, swept past, acknowledging with a stately bow her former intimates, many were the comments passed upon her, and her handsome husband.

"She is not changed one single degree," exclaimed her quondam suitor, Lord Athol, who, surrounded by a group of choice spirits, nearly all former admirers of Ida, were eagerly scrutinising the new comers.

"As confoundedly proud and haughty as ever," said another. "They are well matched, for her lord is as elegantly insolent as herself. How coolly he returns the advances of every one save his witty brother in law, who looks so inexpressibly enraptured with that pretty little wife of his."

"Vernon is deucedly handsome though," interrupted a young baronet, whom Ida had rejected the preceding season. "I do not wonder at his eclipsing you, Athol."

"Thank you," said Athol, with an ill dissembled sneer. "I never entered the lists with you, Stormont, or the rest. Even the Stanhope estate, vast as it is, could not induce me to incur the penalty. That poor fellow, Vernon, whom I pity from my heart and soul, of course took her for her fortune, but he has obtained it at a dear rate."

A universal burst of merry laughter was his answer.

"Come, come, Athol, we are not so simple as all that. True, none of us had Allerton estates to free from mortgage as you had, and yet, not one here present would have refused her. Let us be severe but just."

The young Earl bit his lip, for the Countess' matrimonial expedition was well known, and silence was his only resource.

"But really," said another, after a moment's pause; "Athol after all, is partly right. Though she is a little more affable and dignified now, she was proud as Lucifer, and her pride was only equalled by her ill temper and heartlessness."

"No, no," exclaimed a young nobleman who had been listening in silence to the conversation. "She is certainly reserved, proud if you will, but that may be all her manner; and beneath that exterior she may conceal a noble generous heart. I also was her admirer, and I do not blush to confess, a rejected one; for," and he humourously smiled as he glanced round the circle, "I have many companions in misfortune."

"You say she is not haughty," said Athol. "Look at her now," and tell me if that imperious glance, that haughty brow, could conceal one gentle feeling, one kind or soft emotion."

Every eye was instantly turned upon her, and certainly her appearance at the moment seemed to justify the words which had just been uttered. She was speaking to a nobleman who had been one of the most *empresses* of

her admirers during her first season, but who, as Ida well knew, had never possessed more serious intentions than amusing himself on the *Stormont principle*. She had ever despised him, and now, as formerly, she made no secret of it. It was therefore indeed with an air of frigid haughtiness she listened to his words of gratulation and respect. But suddenly her husband, on whose arm she leaned, turned and addressed a few words to her. How magical was the change that simple circumstance effected! As if a dark cloud had rested a moment on some beautiful picture, and then vanishing, been replaced by a flood of glorious sunshine, so the coldness, the impassibility, fled, whilst a radiant expression of affection, of girlish playfulness, such as her admirers had never yet beheld her wear, lit up her whole countenance.

"Heavens! but she is beautiful!" was the involuntary exclamation of all, whilst the young nobleman who had so warmly defended her previously, exclaimed:

"Tell me not, Athol, that creature is heartless. As noble, devoted a spirit as ever beat in woman's breast, beams in her speaking eyes." He turned hastily away, leaving his companions silent, as well as convinced. And as Ida appeared that night, so was she always—stately, proud, to those who knew her not, but to those who had obtained the key of her heart, a creature of devotion and tenderness. The arrogance, the impetuosity of her early youth, had fled for ever, and it was as rare to see a frown on the brow of Claude Vernon's wife, as on that of the gentle Lucy Pemberton. And slight cause indeed had the latter for frowns or sadness, for though, like all earth's children, she was not exempt from earth's sorrows, she found a solace for her trials in the affection of the Marquis, who, ever good humoured and indulgent, ever satisfied and proud of his sweet wife, was the most irreproachable of husbands. He certainly enjoyed a happiness with the gentle, trusting Lucy, which he could never have known with the ardent, high spirited being to whom he had first addressed his homage.

No! it was only one gifted, superior, like Claude Vernon, who could win or retain the love of that proud heart, which could cling to nought inferior to itself. And amply too did he gratify her every aspiration. Universally revered for his lofty devotion, his high souled integrity, in the conflicts of the legislative arena of his country, on which he entered with brilliant earnestness of success, such as few possess; famed for his impassioned eloquence, his gifted mind, his glorious talents; flattered, courted by all parties, Claude Vernon speedily became one whose smile was honour,

whose friendship was fame. It was not wonderful indeed that Ida, who sympathised so deeply in his labours, exulted so proudly in his brilliant success, felt each day that her lot was doubly blessed, whilst Claude's love deepened almost into worship for the wife in whom he daily discovered some new trait of noble devotion or generosity. Never once had he cause to remember the vow he had so solemnly made, to *bear and forbear*. Ida had displayed all her failings in their worst form, during the days of her girlhood, and her virtues alone remained. An indulgent mistress, a faithful friend, a fond, devoted wife; irreproachable in all the domestic relations of life, and truly, deeply religious, in action as well as principles, no traces now remained in her, of the many faults and follies that had marred the early career of the CHILD OF FASHION.

(Concluded.)

ALL'S FOR THE BEST.

BY MARTIN FARQUEAR TUPPER.

All's for the best! be sanguine and cheerful,
 Trouble and sorrow are friends in disguise.
 Nothing but folly goes faithless and fearful,
 Courage forever is happy and wise:
 All's for the best—if a man would but know it,
 Providence wishes us all to be blest;
 This is no dream of the pundit or poet,
 Heaven is gracious, and all's for the best!

All's for the best! set this on your standard.
 Soldier of sadness, or pilgrim of love,
 Who to the shores of despair may have wandered
 A way-wearied swallow, or heart-stricken dove:
 All's for the best!—be a man but confiding,
 Providence tenderly governs the rest,
 And the frail bark of His creature is guiding
 Wisely and warily, all for the best.

All's for the best! then fling away terrors,
 Meet all your fears and your foes in the van,
 And in the midst of your dangers or errors
 Trust like a child, while you strive like a man:
 All's for the best! unbiassed, unbounded,
 Providence reigns from the East to the West;
 And, by both wisdom and mercy surrounded,
 Hope and be happy that All's for the best!

VIRTUE.

Oh! inborn excellence, secure,
 'Twill brave the storm, and still endure;
 Time's self subduing arm defy,
 And live when nature's self shall die.
 Shall stand unhurt amid the blast;
 And longer than the world shall last.

MAIDEN TOWER.*

A TRADITION OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

BY M. A. S.

An undefinable sadness crept over the Countess, as the echo of Geraldine's parting words still lingered on her ear, and with a heavy heart, she drew near a window which commanded a view of the road for some distance. Geraldine was nearly out of sight, but as the Countess turned her eyes towards a rustic pavilion which stood a little apart from the road, just within the park gate, she beheld her bending over a large dog which, notwithstanding its singular ugliness had been an especial favorite of Albert's, and the constant companion of his rambles. Now this animal was to all others exceedingly fierce, and up to the period of Albert's departure, not even Geraldine herself had ever been able to ingratiate herself into his favor. Strange to say he had latterly received her caresses, and even returned them in his own surly manner, so that Geraldine seemed to have succeeded Albert in his good graces. As she now stooped once more, ere she sent him back to the castle, to stroke his shaggy back with a fondness which even her own Fidèle, her pretty favorite of former days, had never called forth, the huge animal all the while frisking around her in many a clumsy gambol, the Countess could not refrain from shedding tears. Geraldine at length passed on, and from that hour poor Palmo, as the dog was ever after endearingly called, became an object of attachment to the Countess herself (albeit no lover of his race in general)—alas! he was the last object which she saw Geraldine caress, and his claim on the affection of all the family was by fate rendered solemnly endearing—that uncouth and ungainly dog!

As the Countess still gazed through her fast-falling tears on the receding form of Geraldine, the latter suddenly turned and by some undefined association, cast a rapid glance along the windows of the castle, now bright with the reflected sun-beam. One was open, and her eye instantly caught leaning pensively against its side the venerable form of Albert's mother. For a few seconds they stood gazing on each other, then Geraldine raised her hand to her heart and to her lips, as token of her feelings, and drawing her long cloak around her she disappeared in the

gloom of a neighbouring thicket, through which lay a short cut to her watch-tower.

* * * * *

It was the sultry noon of the late summer-day when Geraldine ascended for the last time the winding steps of her tower. Whether it was that the gloomy visions of the night had left their impress on her mind, so as to obscure the dreamy hopes of the preceding day, or whether it was that undefined sense of coming ill which has sometimes oppressed the soul of the fore-doomed, we know not—it might be that both together had produced the effect, but certain it is that as Geraldine threw herself heavily and listlessly on her couch, there was over her spirit a darkness as that of death. She looked out upon the sea—it lay still and calm in the bright light of noon,—no breeze disturbed its glossy surface, whereon the cloudless sky was reflected in mirrored truth—she looked to the land—far along the winding shore stretched the pebbly beach, fringing at unequal depths the rich verdure of the pasture-land, while here and there rose a dark cluster of trees, whose massive trunks and thickly-interwoven branches spoke of ages long past, for at the period in question Ireland retained much and many of her original forests. The kine stood in lazy cogitation either within the verge of the watery element which cooled their burning feet, or gathered into groups in the shade of the thickets. The hour was full of the sleepy beauty which characterizes "the fervid noon," but Geraldine felt it not? Not in that calm, untroubled sea—in that clear, cerulean sky, nor on that richly-varied earth, did the spirit of hope dwell—it had departed, and with it the glorious charm which had on the preceding day invested all things with enchantment. Who can pierce the deep heart of love, and reveal the strange, and to others uncountable imaginings which there find a home, colouring all the earth with their own hues, whether of brightness or of gloom—now sailing along on the radiant wing of a seraph, now lying prostrate in all the darkness of doubt and despair? And Geraldine shuddered as she remarked this change—not hers the power to control her own heart—its emotions, its affections

had long run wild, unpruned and untrained in their rich luxuriance; and now they were not hers to command. Hopelessly and without an effort, then, she gave herself up to the unfounded melancholy—more than melancholy—which possessed her. “Albert is dead!” she would say to herself a thousand times over, until she took a strange pleasure in repeating the doleful words, and ever as she sighed them forth, they seemed to breathe their mournful spirit on the air, until the bright meridian sun himself became as it were dim and lustreless, and the music of the great sea was changed to harshest discord on Geraldine’s dulled ear. Many a time and oft during that long, long day, were her wildest hopes excited by the sight of some vessel, which seen afar off looked like the tall and light bark which had borne Albert over the sea. A momentary glow would enkindle on the fair yet care-worn cheek—with straining eyes and a bounding heart she would follow the advancing course of the ship, until sweeping up at length within bow-shot of her lonely tower, it would pass on without a moment’s delay, leaving a still deeper darkness in Geraldine’s sad soul. Refreshments had been sent from the castle, and in order to get rid of their scrutinizing presence she had desired the servants to leave it and withdraw, yet she thought of it no more when once the attendants had retired. Yet she felt weak—weak as a new-born infant—for the extreme emotions, the sudden transitions of feeling which had so long careered through her heart, added to the tedious watching of more than twelve months, had all too surely done their work, and her health was rapidly declining. It seemed as though a raging fever throbbed in her veins, and its wild fantasies floated mistily through her mind, so that the powers of reason were much obscured, and reflection altogether impracticable, even had she desired it. But Geraldine had never been of a thoughtful disposition—feeling and imagination had ruled her young life, and now was not the time for calm meditation. She had hearkened to the foreboding voice of her wild fancy until she had become convinced that Albert was dead, and in that one conviction all sense, all feeling was absorbed. Once she arose from her recumbent posture and suddenly flung herself upon her knees—she raised her hands wildly to heaven, as though about to petition for some grace—quickly she started to her feet and shook off the momentary confidence in God which had brought her to prostrate herself before him—“What boots it that I pray!” she cried aloud—“can prayer recall the dead to life? if perchance he be living, will my prayers, unworthy as I am,

hasten the moment of his coming—if he be dead as I well believe—wherefore pray? Supplication is for the hopeful—I have no longer hope—I need not pray!” And thus the unhappy girl cast off by an act of her own will her last chance for preservation—the deadly snares of the evil one were gathering faster and thicker around her, and her guardian angel “*shrieked farewell*,” as she thus defied his gentle inspiration, and stepped into the gloomy regions of despair.

* * * * *

On that same evening, it was about the hour when the overpowering splendour of the great sun begins to assume a somewhat softer radiance, that his slanting beams fell upon the snow-white sails of a French bark, as she scudded along with a fair wind, over the glittering waters of the Irish sea. Gallantly rode the fair vessel,—cheerily sang the gladsome mariners, as they strained at the groaning cordage—and joyously bounded the heart of a young Crusader, who watched them as they pursued their lightsome toil. Alone he stood on the taffrail, his war-cloak (marked with a large white cross, which belonged of right to his order,) hanging carelessly from his left shoulder, while the light morion which should have shaded his brow, dangled from his right hand, having been probably taken off to admit the cool, fresh air of the evening ocean, to fan the hot cheek of the knight. But, surely we have seen him before, that Knight of the Cross! Is not that the dark hazel eye which, at day-dawn on the beach, looked tearfully and tenderly on our watcher of the Tower, and is not that young cheek (albeit that Eastern suns have darkened its former delicacy of hue) the same that was wont to flush and pale with the changing spirit of Geraldine? Yes—surely, it is Albert—war and weather-bronzed, though he be, there is no mistaking the frank and cheerful expression of his countenance—the thickly clustering curls of raven hue which hang around his low, broad brow, and the light which shines in his merry eye. Yes! it is Albert! and joy—joy for Geraldine—be comes unchanged in heart; the lustrous beauty of the Eastern maidens has had no power to estrange his heart from his own distant love—and Geraldine is still the lady of his heart. How eagerly doth he look towards the yet unseen coast—how impatiently doth he glance upwards to the swelling sails, as though urging them to woo yet a stronger breeze!—Alas! how very different were the moods which the ardent yearning of parted love awoke in the minds of Albert and Geraldine! His was all light, and hope, and glad anticipation, throwing its halo over all it looked upon, and making the declining

sun and the undulating sea wear the radiant glory which we dream of heaven—while (ah! wo for Geraldine!) the fiery ardor of her own wild hopes had long since changed to the ebon hue of despair,—hers was no longer the brightness of love—to her morbidly gloomy mind, it had become the origin and author of all unhappiness.

Not one cloud was visible on the summer heaven, and equally cloudless was Albert's hopeful and trusting love as the "*sea-beaten shore*" of Erin arose once more before his eye on the far horizon. He had cast his gaze, for a moment, on the rippling wave, over which the bark glided so smoothly, yet so rapidly, and was just trying to imagine the first look of rapture which Geraldine's face would wear. "My father too, and mine own dear, dear mother!" he internally exclaimed: "I shall soon see ye all—beloved guides of my childhood! and thee who were its sole playmate—its dearest joy, and now the hope and promise of maturer years—Oh, Geraldine! dost thou feel, dearest one, that thine Albert is so near?"

"Land—ho!" shouted a hoarse voice from the mast head, and "Land—ho!" was echoed from every corner of the vessel, and the glad sound struck upon the ear, the heart of Albert, recalling his thoughts from the world of visions to the bright reality of the hour.

"Land, sayest thou?" he inquired of a sailor, who stood near, coiling a rope around a huge wooden pin, beneath the bulwark.

"Ay, land, Sir Knight! the land of Erin—see yonder where it hangs like a grey cloud on the horizon,—now it becomes more distinct;" and the man went on with his work, as though he had announced nothing extraordinary.

"Poor man!" thought Albert compassionately, "he has no Geraldine to welcome him—perchance no father nor mother!—thank heaven, I have all—oh! how much!" and his eye flashed out with a brighter lustre as it sought the now approaching coast.

How dear is the first glimpse of his "native land," to him who returns after an absence of many long months—with what delight does he note each opening of the well-known coast, and with how tender a pride does he exclaim, in the fulness of his heart, if not in the words, at least in the spirit of the Caledonian bard:

"This is my own—my native land!"

But if, in addition to these feelings, there be the consciousness that on the bosom of that approaching land there are many hearts—loving hearts, that are awaiting his return with passionate eagerness, and eyes that will resume at his approach the smiles which, in absence, they had never worn; oh, then! how much more fervent is

his rejoicing—how doubly welcome is the blue curving line on the verge of sea and sky which denotes the presence of his native mountains!—Such were the joyous emotions which glowed in Albert's bosom, and flushed his cheek with a crimson hue, as the vessel at length swept along almost close to the shore, and he saw for the first time *the Watch-Tower*—the observatory where his Geraldine must have kept many a lonely vigil. "What a host of doubts and fears and uncertainties may, nay must, have by turns possessed her soul during all this long—long year! Dear—dearest Geraldine! they are almost ended!" So they were—the period of Geraldine's fears and hopes was nearer even than he imagined.

From the moment that Albert's eye rested on the tower, naught else was deemed worthy a regard, nor did its want of architectural adornment detract in aught from its charms. It was then a dark building of hewn stone, rising as it now does bare and gaunt from the sandy beach, yet, when Albert looked upon it from a distance, as it stood in the sloping sunbeams, it appeared to his enamoured heart as the very emblem of hope, shedding a light and a glory on the surrounding scene. Suddenly, a thought struck him—he remembered his promise made to Geraldine, and was about to request that his roseate flag might be speedily hoisted to the mast-head, when some evil demon whispered:

"May not Geraldine have changed in thine absence?—how knowest thou that her heart is still devoted to thee?"

"Right! right!" thought Albert, responsively; "she is but woman after all, and I will try her truth—methinks it will but give her a more exquisite pleasure when she finds her mistake—that is if she be still the same Geraldine!"

Whereupon he gave orders that a sable flag should be thrown out upon the breeze. Yet, it was strange that as he saw the gloomy folds fluttering above, he was seized with a deadly sense of fear, a faintness crept over his very heart, and had he not been caught by an officer who stood near, he must have fallen to the ground. As it was, he found himself utterly unable to stand, and was obliged to consent to go below. In the meantime, the gay bark floated on and on, with her cheerless flag saddening the evening sunshine, and by the time Albert was able to come again on deck, they were almost under the walls of the tower. He went forward for the purpose of requesting that a boat might be lowered in order to land him there, when his attention was arrested by a conversation going on amongst the sailors.

"May our Lady, and all the saints, cast me

off for ever," cried one, "but I would rather hear the wildest and fiercest roar of the storm at his height, than list that same shriek—oh! holy saints! but it makes me shudder still—and then to see the white form come flying from the top of that grim-looking tower, and plunging in the dark wave—Oh, Lord!—Oh, Lord!" and the man covered his eyes as if to shut out the fearful vision, while a dead silence fell on his comrades, who appeared to the full as much shocked as he was.

"Of what tower do ye speak, my men?" asked Albert, and, strange to say, not one fear,—one shadow of suspicion crossed the bright serenity of his mind. The sailors fell back respectfully, and the man who had already spoken, replied:

"Why, of that ill-favored tower, Sir Knight, that stands yonder in the curve of the beach. Methought every soul on board had heard that shriek, even if they saw not the fearful sight!" If a flaming thunderbolt had fallen at Albert's feet, he could not have been more shocked—the very blood in his veins seemed on the instant frozen into ice, beneath the deadly touch of fear. He grasped the sailor's arm, and with a sort of convulsive energy borrowed from despair.

"Man!—man!" he shrieked, "what hast thou seen—what hast thou heard?" and he bent forward, and looked into his eyes, as though they could tell the secret. Alarmed by the unaccountable change of manner, as well as by the wildness of his looks, the hardy mariner quailed for a moment.

"Sir Knight of the Cross!" he returned in a soothing voice—"it is a strange story, though a brief one. As we passed a little while since, yonder gloomy pile, and just after you had gone below, we heard all of a sudden a shriek so loud and wild, that one would have thought it came from one of the accursed in the pit below; we, all who were on deck, raised our eyes to the walls of the tower, whence it seemed to issue, and that I may die the death of a sluggish landsman, Sir Crusader! there came the figure of a woman in a white garment, headlong from the very top.—We were all struck dumb with amazement, and still more so, when on looking carefully round in every direction, there was no trace of her to be seen on the water, and your worship knows, if she had been mortal woman, she would have risen—ay, to the third time! Why, what hath bewitched the good knight?" he suddenly added, addressing his fellows, on seeing that Albert had not waited for the concluding words, but was already addressing the Captain, who stood at some distance, and his gestures spoke any thing rather than sa-

nity. The Captain was not slow in catching the contagion.

"Here you, Fitzmaurice!" he cried, to the sailor, who had unwittingly given rise to Albert's strange alarm—"lose not a moment in lowering the lightest boat we have—haste! I say, ye lagging slaves! haste—every instant is precious—obey Lord Albert here—he will direct ye."

Scarcely did the sailor wait to return an answer in the affirmative; the boat was quickly unloosed from her fastenings, and just as she touched the water, Albert, bounding over the ship's side, threw himself into the stern, and seizing one of the oars, beckoned to one of the two sailors who accompanied him, to take the other, whereupon they rowed with might and main towards the tower. The little boat floated lightly and rapidly over the smooth sea, every stroke of the oars sending him far in advance, but Albert still cried: "Faster, my merry men! faster still!" and onwards they dashed, pausing not—resting not, till the keel of the boat ground harshly on the beach, when with one spring Albert leapt ashore, and a few steps brought him to the low doorway, which formed the sole entrance to Geraldine's tower. Without a moment's consideration he hastened up the narrow and spiral staircase—the top was gained—one glance sufficed to shew him that she whom he sought was not there—another confirmed his direst apprehensions—*on the table, by the couch, lay her hat and cloak*—strength and consciousness gave way together, and Albert sank insensible on the couch which had lately held the beauteous form of his hapless Geraldine. There he was found soon after by the sailors, who had followed as closely as they could, after having secured their boat.

"What the devil are we to do now?" they said one to the other—"why, hoist a signal to be sure that the Captain may send us assistance—a curse upon all wrong headed knights-errant, I say, for we are now in a rare dilemma, with this same crusader."

Tying their pocket handkerchiefs, then, together, they fastened their flag to one of the oars, and waved it aloft, as high as the arm of the tallest could reach. Another boat was soon seen in motion, having the Captain himself on board, who, surmising that all was not right, thought it necessary to go to the spot in person. On learning how matters stood, he despatched one of his men to the nearest dwelling for some vehicle, whereon to convey the young knight to his father's castle, which he knew was not far distant, and then having sent back one of the boats to the ship, he kept two of the men with the other. By

this time a neighbouring fisherman had arrived, with a sort of flat car, (then, and for long after, in use amongst the peasantry,) and on this was Lord Albert placed, the friendly Captain walking by the side of the vehicle. Thus then did he return to the lordly halls he had left but a year before, in all the buoyancy of hope, and with his soul wrapt up in dreams of brightest hue. Pale, death-like, and utterly void of motion, lying on an humble cart, and surrounded by strange and rude men, he again met the eyes of his aged parents, just, too, when they hourly expected to have seen him—oh! how different from what he was!

When Albert awoke to consciousness, he found himself laid on his own couch, in the same room which he had been wont to occupy. By his side knelt the Countess, his mother, her venerable countenance upraised in fervent prayer, while the tears coursed each other, over her worn cheeks, and her hand grasped that of her son, whom she believed dead. At a little distance the Earl stood gazing on the scene with folded arms—not one line of his face was moved from its usual grave character, but in the deep dark eyes so intently riveted on the inanimate features before him, there was a sorrow all too deep for words. Ever and anon his eye was raised from the face of his son, to cast a glance of tenderest pity and affection on the aged partner of his life. With a long, low sigh, Albert unclosed his eyes, and faintly spoke. "Mother!" Oh! never did mother hail with more rapturous delight, the first low cry of her first-born, than did the Countess this one fond word. Throwing herself on his neck, she embraced him in a tumult of joy, and was still clinging around him, as though she would never again permit him to leave the safe inclosure of her maternal arms, when the Earl, whose joy was tempered with discretion, came forward, and gently disengaged that fast embrace.

"Softly—softly—mine own Joan—softly!—methinks in the fulness of thy rejoicing, thou dost forget that a very little emotion may cause the same swoon, from which our Albert has just awoke!—rather let us return thanks where they are due—to God above—who has restored him to us! Albert, my dear son!" and he tenderly pressed his hand: "Praises be to the Lord, who hath given thee once more to our heart-wrung sighs and prayers!" Then suddenly he stopped, for he felt that there was in the eyes which were fixed upon him, any thing but joy or gratitude. "May God give us all the strength which we require," he quickly added, changing his tone to one of deep solemnity—"for verily this is a world of incessant trial and tribulation, where

the joys are few and brief, and the sorrows long and frequent. My son—my son! would that I could comfort thee, in this thy heavy woe."

Albert slowly arose from his recumbent posture. He was pale—pale as death, and was obliged to lean against the back of the couch for support

"Ay! now thou speakest to some purpose, my father!" he at length said, though with difficulty, and as he spoke, his face became death-lie still; "it is consolation we require—all of us—but I—I—more than all. Oh, father!—oh, mother! where should I find consolation, and finding it—could I—dare I accept it? Answer me!"

"My son—my dear son!" exclaimed his mother wreathing her arm caressingly around his neck; "why should'st thou not seek and find it, too, where alone it can be had? Too well, alas! do we know, and feel the weight of thy calamity—it is ours, too, my son! but remember, that to ask is to receive."

"Mother! mother!" cried her son, and his eyes suddenly assumed a wild and startled look, that struck terror to the hearts of his parents—"Mother! you know not what you say!—it was I who killed *her*—yes, mother! I it was, who by my vain and criminal levity, and misplaced suspicion, caused her death. We had agreed that if I were living when that same vessel returned hither, there would be a gay flag floating from the mast. I, in order to try her forsooth, must have a sable flag displayed, and so—and so—I lost my peerless Geraldine—my own true and faithful love. Yes! I have murdered her—talk not then of consolation—why should I be consoled? I deserve it not!—Oh! Geraldine!—love of mine earliest days! what now to me is that renown which my humble name has gained—what to me is the favor of those whose smiles confer distinction? For thee it was, and to gratify thy noble ambition, that I sought these goods—all puerile and baseless now! Oh! Geraldine! my first—last—only love! would that I might have died for, and with thee!"

"But, Albert!" interposed his father, who had not heard unmoved the cause of the calamity which had struck them all. "But, Albert!—bethink thee of the almighty Providence that rules the world—knowest thou not that in its wise economy, all human evils—all mortal sufferings are regulated? that not a sparrow falleth to the ground without the knowledge of him who created it, as well as the huge behemoth? Knowest thou not, Albert, that we are not masters of our own lives, that we might throw them away at pleasure?"

"Oh, father! I know it—I know it too—too well; else, had I never looked upon thy face again, or that of my mother—all loved as ye are. Had not the dread decree of God, that we must not lay hands upon our own lives, restrained me, I had assuredly shared my Geraldine's watery grave, and the same means by which she gave up her life for my sake, would have given me too a release from the dread memory that will haunt me through life!" He suffered his head to fall upon his hands, and remained some moments motionless. Suddenly, he broke silence and started from his seat in an agony of grief: "O Geraldine! that horrid, horrid thought! had'st thou died a natural death—nay, even a death received from the hand of another, it seems to me that I could have taken comfort—but now—now—O God! that she should die the death of a reprobate, and I—I—the wretched, guilty cause!" And he smote his forehead violently with his clenched hand. For a moment, his parents stood silent and terrified, by this, the first outbreak of passion they had ever seen in their son; in their distress they naturally looked to each other for counsel, and no sooner had their glances met, than a sudden intelligence arose between them; each read the other's thought approvingly. They approached Albert on either side, and each taking an arm, gently drew him forward. The movement arrested the course of his passion.

"Whither would ye lead me?" he asked, in those softened and tender tones in which he ever addressed his venerated parents.

"Bear with us for a moment, dear son, and thou shalt know—only accompany us, and we promise thee a more tranquil mind!"

Albert shook his head despondingly, but he walked on in silence, until the Earl, throwing open the door of the chapel, invited his companions to enter in God's name. As if the very sight of God's chosen dwelling had produced a strengthening effect, Albert, without speaking, drew his mother's arm within his own, as in times past he was wont, and walked with a step tolerably firm up the aisle and through the sanctuary, till they knelt all three before the altar. For a considerable time no sound was heard, for the deep soul of grief was hushed into stillness by the place and hour. The latest shades of evening were falling around, giving a yet more solemn aspect to the small gothic chapel, and shedding their "dim, religious light" on many a sainted legend, which the painter's art had transferred to canvas. Over the altar hung a painting (a very good one for the time of which we write) of the Descent from

the Cross, and as Albert looked up at the pale, dead features of the Redeemer, bearing still the impress of their latest agony, he involuntarily exclaimed, in the fulness of his heart:

"Lord! for me, vile ingrate! was that thrice holy body rent and torn—for my unworthy sake did'st thou deign to humble thyself, 'even to the death of the cross!' Make me then obedient to thy will, even as thou thyself wert, to that of thy heavenly Father! Thou hast given me, it is true, a most bitter chalice to drink, but not so bitter as was thine; give me too strength to say, 'Lord, not my will be done, but thine!'—this grace I ask of thee, O Christ crucified! through the blood which I have shed in defence of thy Holy Sepulchre, and in consideration of all the many privations I have undergone in doing battle against those whose boast it is to blaspheme thy sacred name! O holy Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Ghost! hear the voice of my stricken heart, and deign to accept, in expiation of my sins, the anguish wherewith I am visited."

"Thy prayer will be heard, my son!" broke in the deep voice of the Earl; "thou suest to Him who invites the approach of all who are 'afflicted, or heavy laden'—thy prayer is the fervent offering of an humble and contrite heart, and such orisons are never, never unheard at the throne of mercy. Heavy, my own dear Albert, has been thy chastisement, but the greater will be the merit of the sacrifice, and the more available in the sight of God."

"Albert, my first-born! child of my young love!" whispered the subdued voice of his mother, "by all the love thou hast been wont to bear us, I now beseech thee to act as may become a Christian, and a son—here before the altar of God, and in sight of that Saviour, dead for our sins, I pray thee to bear up against this heavy stroke that thou mayest remain to be the prop and mainstay of our declining age!"

"Mother! I will do as thou and my father would have me, so may God give me strength, for much need have I of both. Now let us hence, that I may impart to ye both the desire of my heart, all widowed and desolate as it now is. Albeit that it hath no taint of levity or positive evil, yet would I not profane the sacred echoes of this holy place by other than the voice of prayer. Come, mother, let my arm support thee!" Having made their parting obeisance before the tabernacle of the New Law, our little party quitted the chapel, and took their way to the hall where supper was already served—the early supper of those days.

* * * *

Though Albert had through courtesy to his

parents assisted at the evening meal, yet he found it utterly impossible to taste a morsel of the many choice delicacies recommended by his mother, and he felt considerably relieved when the domestics withdrew, giving him an opportunity of speaking on the subject nearest his heart. The meal had been a gloomy one, as may well be imagined—how could it be otherwise?—and even the servants seemed awe-struck by the fearful calamity of the day. How then must Albert have felt? Alas! no words could describe the anguish which filled his soul even to bursting when he looked around upon the scene where Geraldine had moved in life and loveliness—now the ocean-wave rolled over that beauteous head—and for him she had died in the very spring-time of her days. He arose from his seat—he strode with impatient step to one of the windows, and throwing it open, leaned forth to catch upon his fevered brow the cool night-breeze as it fluttered by. The moon was above struggling “in clouded majesty,” through the many obstructions which ever and anon beset her path—her light fell at times with wondrous brilliancy on the reposing earth, but the beauty of earth or heaven called forth no joy in Albert’s soul—*there* darkness reigned, for it was filled with the double horror of grief and remorse, and he felt as though he could never again look with pleasure on the cheerful face of nature. Had he lived some centuries later he might have echoed Cowper’s plaintive lament:

“Oh! happy shades! to me unblest—
Friendly to peace but not to me;
How ill the scene that offers rest,
And heart that cannot rest, agree!”

But that was not the age of poetical quotations, and Albert only knew, only felt that he was wretched—entirely wretched—he knew not or cared not how others might or would have expressed similar feelings. Seeing at length that the attendants had withdrawn, he closed the casement, and returned to his seat beside the Countess. For a while he remained silent, with his head resting on his hand, and as the anxious watchers looked upon him in wordless expectation they saw a paler and paler hue overspreading his features, and a deeper, darker sadness gathering in the fixed and motionless eyes. Yet they spoke not, knowing that a sorrow too deep for utterance filled all the avenues of his soul.

“Mine honored parents!” he said at last,—“I have vowed before God’s holy altar that I will do all that in me lies to bring my rebellious heart into subjection to His divine will. I have promised to devote my life to your happiness, and these engagements I trust I shall be enabled to fulfil, but first of all I have before me a most

solemn duty. Need ye ask what it is? No, I see by your looks that ye understand me. Geraldine is dead—*dead!*” he repeated with a shudder; “she is dead *but not buried*. Shall I, or ought I, to sit down quietly to the execution of any purpose, however praiseworthy, until *she* is laid in the vault of her ancestors, or at least till I am assured that the sea refuses to give up its dead? Be it mine to watch every coming tide, for some days at least—she waited and watched for my return for many a weary month—(alas! when I came I brought death to her!) surely I may and will, so God be merciful unto me!—look out by night and day for her coming, until hope shall have fled—that sad—sad hope!” He arose as he spoke, and proceeded to cast around him the large war-cloak which he had worn through many a long night-watch in the far-off land of old Judea. Upon this both the Earl and Countess arose in alarm, and the former eagerly spoke while the latter caught the arm of her son in speechless affright:

“Nay, my son!” said the Earl with solemn earnestness, “thou wilt not think of watching alone on the beach through the gloomy hours of night! Visit the shore as early as thou wilt on the morrow, but for this night at least control thine impatience and tarry here with us—look at your mother—behold the tearless agony depicted on her aged face. Oh! Albert, as thou valuest our blessing, go not hence to-night!” Albert did look at his mother—he saw the anguish of her mind though she spoke not, yet was his purpose immovable, for he deemed it sacred.

“Father! mother! what is it ye fear?—I perceive, though ye say it not, that ye dread the effect of my lonely vigil—fear not for me—strong in my hopes of immortality, I shall not risk them by throwing life away—trusting in the power of the Crucified, for whom I have fought and bled, I shall not fear the spirits that walk in darkness, any more than the mid-day devil!” As he spoke his eyes sparkled with a bright light—the flame of Christian hope—and on his brow sat enthroned the undaunted courage that became a soldier of the cross, and his parents, if not convinced, were over-awed, and they spoke no more against his strange yet natural purpose.

Two nights, and as many days had Albert maintained his lonely watch, and on the second evening he reluctantly confessed to his own sad heart, that the envious sea was resolved to retain the precious body of his Geraldine, and that her place was to be for ever vacant in the stately mausoleum of her ancestors. It was again sunset and he prepared to return to the castle, but he

turned to take a parting look of the merciless ocean, which so cruelly mocked his hopes. He ascended the steps of that lonely tower, where Geraldine had so faithfully fulfilled her promise; long and fixedly did he gaze upon the treacherous sea, as it lay burnished in the sun's last beam. In fancy he pierced its unmeasured depths, and beheld the lovely form of his lost Geraldine stretched like some exquisite statue in the far recesses of the ocean, and to him her death lost in the moment half its horrors, for he saw bending above her in mourning, many a shadowy form of unearthly loveliness—he saw the dark tresses of her long hair, fanned by the motion of their wings, and his ear seemed to drink in the sweet sad dirge, with which the gentle spirits of the waters bewailed her early doom. Soothed, if not consoled by these poetic fancies, he calmly descended the spiral stairs, and returned to the castle to fulfil as well as might be, his solemnly registered vow—yet though he lived to close the eyes of both his parents, and for several years after their death, never did he quit, even for a day, his paternal castle, and never did another love banish, even for a moment, from his heart, the matchless devotion of his Geraldine; never did he enter a scene of festivity, lest it might tempt him to forget, even for a brief space, her dark and melancholy end.

Reader, forget what I have said in the opening of my tale—forget that I have professed myself sceptical as to the truth of this tradition, and the origin of Maiden Tower—still believe that it owes its erection to the love of Geraldine, and should it be your lot in after years to visit the loved and honoured land (loved and honoured by me at least) where stands that lone fabric—should you perchance mount, as I have done, its rugged staircase, and look forth upon the wide expanse of waters there visible, let no irreverent doubt break in upon your *rêverie*. Be the place—the tower—and the land—and the sea—sacred to the memory of the hapless Norman Lady, and the deathless constancy of the brave Crusader.

(Concluded.)

TRUE RICHES.

Riches, chance may take or give;
 Beauty lives a day, and dies;
 Honour lulls us while we live;
 Mirth's a cheat, and pleasure flies.
 Is then nothing worth our care;
 Time, and chance, and death our foes?
 If our joys so fleeting are,
 Are we only tied to woes?
 Let bright Virtue answer, No;
 Her eternal powers prevail,
 When honours, riches, cease to flow,
 And beauty, mirth and pleasure fail.

M O T H E R .

BY D. WYLLIE.

Dear mother, oft when night has spread
 Her mantle o'er the earth,
 My musing mind reverts with joy
 To our once happy hearth;
 And o'er life's sad realities
 My happy dream has broke,
 I see thee toil as was thy wont
 For thy small orphan flock.

And I can still remember well
 The heartfelt, holy strain,
 That from our fireside altar went
 With no earth-groveling stain;
 But pure as incense ever rose
 From man to God above,
 That He would teach thy little ones
 The lesson of His love.

Thine were no measured words of lore,
 Clothed in scholastic fire,
 No hidden thoughts were unexpressed,
 Of hatred or of ire.

But rather blessings sought for those
 Who wronged the fatherless—
 So simple, yet so full of love,
 And godly righteousness.

And as thy children round thee flocked,
 And tears flowed from thine eyes,
 Our sympathy to see thee thus
 Broke forth in feeble cries.

'Twas then thy fervent heart burst forth,
 In holy wrestlings there,
 That God would guard thy orphan ones
 In answer to thy prayer.

Thy little ones are scattered now—
 They've sought them other lands,
 And one sleeps 'neath the burning soil
 Where Burmah's temple stands;
 And age-flakes whiten now thy brow—
 Time-furrowed is thy cheek—
 Yet well I know thy heart is pure,
 Thy spirit still as meek.

And nobly hast thou borne thy load
 Through many darksome years,
 But lovelier still thou seem'st to me,
 As life's last day appears.

Oh! may thy children learn of thee
 To walk in holy love,
 The pathway of God's sainted ones
 To Zion's home above.

Now conscience-pangs vibrate my heart,
 When I think on the past,
 That stubborn act, or sinful word,
 Deep sorrow o'er thee cast.
 Oh! little knew I of the cares
 And struggles of thy lot,
 When death wed thee to widowhood,
 In our lone humble cot.

Now in my vision's fancy, oft
 I press thee for thy kiss,
 Then lay my head upon thy lap,
 That thou thy boy may'st bless,
 And then my arms around thy neck,
 With eager haste I place,
 And trace love in each lineament
 Of thy hope-speaking face.

Montreal, August, 1848.

NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

"Books, we know,
Are a substantial world, when pure and good.
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow."

BALLANTYNE'S "HUDSON BAY."*

BY EDMOND HUGOMONT.

THE TERRITORY occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company, embraces so large a portion of the British North American Provinces, that any publication purporting to afford further information as to the wide tracts of sea and land which constitute it, and its various inhabitants, man and brute, civilized and uncivilized, cannot fail to be of deep interest to the Canadian public. The volume now before us is from the pen of a young gentleman lately, and for aught we know, still, in the employment of the Honorable Company, and presents a graphic picture of every day life in those Hyperborean regions.

The following passage contains an *epitome* of such information as we have referred to, and will convey to many, a perfectly new impression of the vast and widely-extended territories of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Imagine an immense extent of country, many hundred miles broad, and many hundred miles long, covered with dense forests, expanded lakes, broad rivers, and mighty mountains; and all in the state of primeval simplicity—undefaced by the axe of civilized man, and untenanted by aught save a few roving hordes of Red Indians, and myriads of wild animals. Imagine, amid this wilderness, a number of small squares, each enclosing half-a-dozen wooden houses and about a dozen men, and, between each of these establishments, a space of forest varying from fifty to three hundred miles in length, and you will have a pretty correct idea of the Hudson's Bay Company's Territories, and of the number of, and distance between, their forts. The idea, however, may be still more correctly obtained, by imagining populous Great Britain converted into a wilderness and planted in the middle of Rupert's Land; the Company, in that case, would build *three* forts in it, one at the Land's-end, one in Wales, and one in the Highlands; so that in Britain there would be but three hamlets, with a population of some thirty men, half-a-dozen women, and a few children! The Company's posts extend, with these intervals between, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, and from within the Arctic Circle to the northern boundaries of the United States.

Throughout this immense country there are probably not more ladies than would suffice to form half-a-dozen quadrilles; and these, poor banished creatures! are

chiefly the wives of the principal gentlemen connected with the fur trade. The rest of the female population consist chiefly of half-breeds and Indians; the latter entirely devoid of education, and the former as much enlightened as can be expected from those whose life is spent in such a country. Even these are not very numerous, and yet, without them, the men would be in a sad condition, for they are the only tailors and washerwomen in the country, and make all the mittens, moccasins, fur caps, deer-skin coats, &c. &c., worn in the land.

There are one or two favoured spots, however, into which a missionary or two have penetrated; and in Red River Settlement, the only colony in the Company's territories, there are several churches and clergymen, both Protestant and Roman Catholic.

The country is divided into four large departments. The Northern department, which includes all the establishments in the far north and frozen regions; the Southern department, including those to the south and east of this, the posts at the head of James's Bay and along the shores of Lake Superior; the Montreal department, including the country in the neighbourhood of Montreal, up the Ottawa River, and along the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Esquimaux Bay; and the Columbia department, which comprehends an immense extent of country to the west of the Rocky Mountains, including the Oregon territory, which, although the Hudson's Bay Company still trade in it, now belongs, as every one is aware, to the Americans.

These departments are divided into a number of districts, each under the direction of an influential officer, and those again are subdivided into numerous establishments, forts, posts, and outposts.

The name of *fort*, as already remarked, is given to nearly all the posts in the country, but some of them certainly do not merit the name; indeed, few of them do. The only two in the country that are real, *bond fide* forts, are Fort Garry and the Stone Fort in the colony of Red River, which are surrounded by stone walls with bastions at the corners. The others are merely defended by wooden pickets or stockades; and a few, where the Indians are quiet and harmless, are entirely destitute of defence of any kind. Some of the chief posts have a complement of about thirty or forty men; but most of them have only ten, five, four, and even two, besides the gentleman in charge. As, in most instances, these posts are planted in a wilderness far from men, and the inhabitants have only the society of each other, some idea may be formed of the solitary life led by many of the Company's servants.

* HUDSON'S BAY; or Every Day Life in the Wilds of North America: by Robert M. Ballantyne. William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London; Armour and Ramsay, Montreal.

* * * * *

There are seven different grades in the service. First, the labourer, who is ready to turn his hand to any thing; to become a trapper, fisherman, or rough carpenter, at the shortest notice. He is generally employed in cutting firewood for the consumption of the establishment at which he is stationed, shovelling snow from before the doors, mending all sorts of damages to all sorts of things; and, during the summer months, in transporting furs and goods between his post and the nearest *dépôt*. Next in rank is the interpreter. He is, for the most part, an intelligent labourer, of pretty long standing in the service, who, having picked up a smattering of Indian, is consequently very useful in trading with the natives. After the interpreter comes the postmaster, usually a promoted labourer, who, for good behaviour or valuable services, has been put upon a footing with the gentlemen of the service, in the same manner that a private soldier in the army is sometimes raised to the rank of a commissioned officer. At whatever station a postmaster may happen to be placed, he is generally the most useful and active man there. He is often placed in charge of one of the many small stations, or outposts, throughout the country. Next are the apprentice clerks—raw lads, who come out fresh from school, with their mouths agape at the wonders they behold in Hudson's Bay. They generally, for the purpose of appearing manly, acquire all the bad habits of the country as quickly as possible, and are stuffed full of what they call fun, with a strong spice of mischief. They become more sensible and sedate before they get through the first five years of their apprenticeship, after which they attain to the rank of clerks. The clerk, after a number of years' service, (averaging from thirteen to twenty,) becomes a chief trader (or half-share holder,) and in a few years more he attains the highest rank to which any one can rise in the service, that of chief factor (or share-holder.)

It is a strange fact, that three-fourths of the Company's servants are Scotch Highlanders, and Orkney-men. There are very few Irishmen, and still fewer English. A great number, however, are half-breeds, and French Canadians, especially among the labourers and *voyageurs*.

From the great extent, and variety of feature, in the country occupied by the fur-traders, they subsist, as may be supposed, on widely different kinds of food. In the prairie, or plain countries, animal food is chiefly used, as there, thousands of deer and bison wander about, while the woods are stocked with game and wild-fowl. In other places, however, where deer are scarce, and game not so abundant, fish of various kinds are caught in the rivers and lakes; and in other parts of the country they live partly upon fish and partly upon animal food. Vegetables are very scarce in the more northern posts, owing to the severity of the winter, and consequent shortness of summer. As the Company's servants are liable, on the shortest notice, to be sent from one end of the continent to the other, they are quite accustomed to change of diet;—one year rejoicing in buffalo-humps and marrow-bones, in the prairies of the Saskatchewan, and the next devouring hung white-fish, and scarce venison, in the sterile regions of Mackenzie's River, or varying the meal with a little of that delectable substance often spoken of by Franklin, Back, and Richardson, as their only dish—namely, *tripe-de-roche*—a lichen or moss which grows on the most barren rocks, and is only used as food in the absence of all other provisions.

The scarcity of provisions during the winter is most deplorable, in districts where the game may happen to be scarce; not unfrequently, it would seem, driving the Indians to cannibalism, several horrid cases of which are mentioned by Mr. Ballantyne. When the season permits, and the game is sufficiently plentiful, the Indian makes up for his constrained fast, by luxuriating on fish, venison, partridges, bison-meat, fat beaver, and other delicacies. The author gives us the following routine, which may be taken as a fair sample of the "every-day life," of the Indian hunter.

Suppose yourself, gentle reader, standing at the gate of one of the forts in Hudson's Bay, watching a savage arranging his snow-shoes preparatory to entering the gloomy forest. Let us walk with this Indian on a visit to his traps.

The night is very dark, as the moon is hid by thick clouds, yet it occasionally breaks out sufficiently to illumine our path to Stemaw's wigwam, and to throw the shadows of the neighbouring trees upon the pale snow, which *crunches* under our feet as we advance, owing to the intense cold. No wind breaks the stillness of the night, or shakes the lumps of snow off the branches of the neighbouring pines or willows; and nothing is heard save the occasional crackling of the trees as the severe frost acts upon their branches. The tent, at which we soon arrive, is pitched at the foot of an immense tree, which stands in a little hollow where the willows and pines are luxuriant enough to afford a shelter from the north wind. Just in front, a small path leads to the river, of which an extensive view is had through the opening, showing the long fantastic shadows of huge blocks and mounds of ice cast upon the white snow by the flickering moonlight. A huge chasm, filled with fallen trees and mounds of snow, yawns on the left of the tent, and the ruddy sparks of fire which issue from a hole in its top, throw this and the surrounding forest into deep gloom. The effect of this wintry scene upon the mind is melancholy in the extreme—causing it to speed across the bleak and frozen plains, and visit again the warm fireside and happy faces in a far distant home; and yet there is a strange romantic attraction in the wild woods that gradually brings it back again, and makes us impatient to begin our walk with the Indian. Suddenly the deer-skin robe that covers the aperture of the wigwam is raised, and a bright stream of warm light gushes out, tipping the dark green points of the opposite trees, and mingling strangely with the paler light of the moon—and Stemaw stands erect in front of his solitary home, to gaze a few moments on the sky, and judge of the weather, as he intends to take a long walk before laying his head upon his capote for the night. He is in the usual costume of the Cree Indians: a large leathern coat, very much overlapped in front, and fastened round his waist with a scarlet belt, protects his body from the cold. A small rat-skin cap covers his head, and his legs are cased in the ordinary blue cloth leggins. Large moccasins, with two or three pair of blanket socks, clothe his feet, and fingerless mittens, made of deer-skin, complete his costume. After a few minutes passed in contemplation of the heavens, the Indian prepares himself for the walk. First he sticks a small axe in his belt, serving as a counterpoise to a large hunting-knife and fire-bag which depend from the other

side. He then slips his feet through the lines of his snow-shoes, and throws the line of a small hand-sledge over his shoulder. The hand-sledge is a thin flat slip, or plank of wood, from five to six feet long by one foot broad, and is turned up at one end. It is extremely light, and Indians invariably use it when visiting their traps, for the purpose of dragging home the animals or game they may have caught. Having attached this sledge to his back, he stoops to receive his gun from his faithful *aguaw*, who has been watching his operations through a hole in the tent; and throwing it on his shoulder, strides off, without uttering a word, across the moonlit space in front of the tent, turns into a narrow track that leads down the dark ravine, and disappears in the shades of the forest. Soon he reaches the termination of the track (made for the purpose of reaching some good dry trees for firewood), and, stepping into the deep snow with the long, regular, firm tread of one accustomed to snow-shoe walking, he winds his way rapidly through the thick stems of the surrounding trees, and turns aside the smaller branches of the bushes.

The forest is now almost dark, the foliage over-head having become so dense that the moon only penetrates through it in a few places, causing the spots on which it falls to shine with a strange phosphoric light, and rendering the surrounding masses darker by contrast. The faint outline of an old snow-shoe track, at first discernible, is now quite invisible; but still Stemaw moves forward with rapid noiseless step, as sure of his way as if a broad beaten track lay before him. In this manner he moves on for nearly two miles, sometimes stooping to examine closely the newly made track of some wild animal, and occasionally giving a glance at the sky through the openings in the leafy canopy above him, when a faint sound in the bushes ahead brings him to a full stop. He listens attentively, and a noise, like the rattling of a chain, is heard proceeding from the recesses of a dark wild-looking hollow a few paces in front. Another moment, and the rattle is again distinctly heard: a slight smile of satisfaction crosses Stemaw's dark visage, for one of his traps is set in that place, and he knows that something is caught. Quickly descending the slope, he enters the bushes whence the sound proceeds, and pauses when within a yard or two of his trap, to peer through the gloom. A cloud passes off the moon, and a faint ray reveals, it may be, a beautiful black fox caught in the snare. A slight blow on the snout from Stemaw's axe-handle kills the unfortunate animal; in ten minutes more it is tied to his sledge, the trap is re-set and again covered over with snow, so that it is almost impossible to tell that anything is there; and the Indian pursues his way.

The steel-trap used by the Indians is almost similar to the ordinary rat-trap of England, with this difference, that it is a little larger, is destitute of teeth, and has two springs in place of one. A chain is attached to one spring for the purpose of fixing a weight to the trap, so that the animal caught may not be able to drag it far from the place where it was set. The track in the snow enables the hunter to find his trap again. It is generally set so that the jaws, when spread out flat, are exactly on a level with the snow. The chain and weight are both hid, and a thin layer of snow spread on top of the trap. The bait (which generally consists of chips of a frozen partridge, rabbit, or fish) is then scattered around in every direction; and, with the exception of this, nothing distinguishes the spot. Foxes, beavers, wolves, lynxes, and other animals, are caught in this way, sometimes by a fore-leg, sometimes by a hind-leg, and sometimes by two legs at once, and occasionally by the

nose. Of all these ways the Indians prefer catching by two legs, as there is then not the slightest possibility of the animal escaping. When foxes are caught by one leg, they often eat it off close to the trap, and escape on the other three. I have frequently seen this happen; and I once saw a fox caught which had evidently escaped in this way, as one of its legs was gone, and the stump healed up and covered again with hair. When they are caught by the nose they are almost sure to escape, unless taken out of the trap very soon after being caught, as their snouts are so sharp or wedge-like that they can pull them from between the jaws of the trap with the greatest ease.

Having now described the way of using this machine we will rejoin Stemaw, whom we left on his way to the next trap. There he goes, moving swiftly over the snow, mile after mile, as if he could not feel fatigue, turning aside now and then to visit a trap, and giving a short grunt when nothing is in it, or killing the animal when caught, and tying it on the sledge. Towards midnight, however, he begins to walk more cautiously, examines the priming of his gun, and moves the axe in his belt as if he expected to meet some enemy suddenly. The fact is, that close to where he now stands are two traps which he set in the morning close to each other for the purpose of catching one of the formidable coast wolves. These animals are so sagacious that they will scrape all round a trap, let it be ever so well set, and, after eating all the bait, walk away unhurt. Indians consequently endeavour in every possible way to catch them, and, among others, by setting two traps close together; so that, while the wolf scrapes at one, he may perhaps put his foot in the other. It is in this way that Stemaw's traps are set; and he now advances cautiously towards them, his gun in the hollow of his left arm. Slowly he advances, peering through the bushes, but nothing is visible; suddenly a branch crashes under his snow-shoe, and with a savage growl a large wolf bounds towards him, landing almost at his feet. A single glance, however, shows the Indian that both traps are on his legs, and that the chains prevent his further advance. He places his gun against a tree, draws his axe from the belt, and advances to kill the animal. It is an undertaking, however, of some difficulty. The fierce brute, which is larger than a Newfoundland dog, strains every nerve and sinew to break its chains; while its eyes glisten in the uncertain light, and foam curls from its blood-red mouth. Now it retreats as the Indian advances, grinning horribly as it goes; and anon, as the chains check its farther retreat, it springs with a fearful growl towards Stemaw, who slightly wounds it with his axe as he jumps backward just in time to save himself from the infuriated animal, which catches in its fangs the flap of his leggin, and tears it from his limb. Again Stemaw advances, and the wolf, retreats and again springs on him, but without success. At last, as the wolf glances for a moment to one side—apparently to see if there is no way of escape—quick as lightning the axe flashes in the air, and descends with stunning violence on its head: another blow follows, and in five minutes more the animal is fastened to the sledge.

This, however, has turned out a more exhausting business than Stemaw expected; so he determines to encamp and rest for a few hours. Selecting a large pine, whose spreading branches cover a patch of ground free from underwood, he scrapes away the snow with his snow-shoe. Silently but busily he labours for a quarter of an hour; and then, having cleared a space seven or eight feet in diameter, and nearly four feet deep, he cuts down a number of small branches, which he strews at

the bottom of the hollow, till all the snow is covered. This done, he fells two or three of the nearest trees, cuts them up into lengths of about five feet long, and piles them at the root of the tree. A light is soon applied to the pile, and up glances the ruddy flame, crackling among the branches over-head, and sending thousands of bright sparks into the air. No one who has not seen it can have the least idea of the change that takes place in the appearance of the woods at night, when a large fire is suddenly lighted. Before, all was cold, silent, chilling, gloomy and desolate, and the pale snow looked unearthly in the dark. Now a bright ruddy glow falls upon the thick stem of the trees, and penetrates through the branches over-head, tipping those nearest the fire with a ruby tinge, the mere sight of which warms one. The white snow changes to a beautiful pink, whilst the stems of the trees, bright and clearly visible near at hand, become more and more indistinct in the distance, till they are lost in the black background. The darkness, however, need not be seen from the encampment, for, when the Indian lies down, he will be surrounded by the snow walls, which sparkle in the firelight as if set with diamonds. These do not melt, as might be expected. The frost is much too intense for that, and nothing melts except the snow quite close to the fire. Stemaw has now concluded his arrangements: a small piece of dried deer's meat warms before the blaze: and meanwhile, he spreads his green blanket on the ground, and fills a stone calumet (or pipe with a wooden stem) with tobacco, mixed with a kind of weed prepared by himself. The white smoke from this soon mingles with the thicker volumes from the fire, which curl up through the branches into the sky, now shrouding him in their wreaths, and then, as the bright flame obtains the mastery, leaving his dark face and coal-black eyes shining in the warm light. No one enjoys a pipe more than an Indian; and Stemaw's tranquil visage, wreathed in tobacco smoke, as he reclines at full length under the spreading branches of the pine, and allows the white vapour to pass slowly out of his mouth *and nose*, certainly gives one an excellent idea of savage enjoyment.

Leaving him here, then, to solace himself with a pipe, preparatory to resting his wearied limbs for the night, we will change the hour, and conduct the reader to a different scene.

It is now day. The upper edge of the sun has just risen, red and frosty-looking, in the east, and countless myriads of icy particles glitter on every tree and bush in its red rays, while the white tops of the snow-drifts, which dot the surface of the small lake, at which we have just arrived, are tipped with the same rosy hue. The lake is of considerable breadth, and the woods on its opposite shore are barely visible. An unbroken coat of pure white snow covers its entire surface, whilst here and there a small islet, covered with luxuriant evergreens, attracts the eye, and breaks the sameness of the scene. At the extreme left of the lake, where the points of a few bullrushes and sedgy plants appear above the snow, are seen a number of small earthy mounds, in the immediate vicinity of which the trees and bushes are cut, and barked in many places, while some of them are nearly cut down. This is a colony of beaver. In the warm months of summer and autumn, this spot is a lively stirring place, as the beavers are then employed nibbling down trees and bushes, for the purpose of repairing their dams, and supplying their storehouses with food. The bark of willows is their chief food, and all the bushes in the vicinity are more or less cut through by these persevering little animals. Their dams, however, (which

are made for the purpose of securing to themselves a constant sufficiency of water), are made with large trees, and stumps will be found, if you choose to look for them, as thick as a man's leg, which the beavers have entirely nibbled through, and dragged by their united efforts many yards from where they grew.

Now, however, no sign of animal life is to be seen, as the beavers keep within doors all winter; yet I venture to state that there are many now asleep under the snow before us. It is not, reader, merely for the purpose of showing you the outside of a beaver-lodge that I have brought you such a distance from human habitations. Be patient, and you shall soon see more. Do you observe that small black speck moving over the white surface of the lake, far away on the horizon? It looks like a crow, but the forward motion is much too steady and constant for that. As it approaches, it assumes the form of a man, and at last the figure of Stemaw, dragging his empty sleigh behind him, (for he has left his wolf and foxes in the last night's encampment, to be taken up when returning home) becomes clearly distinguishable through the dreamy haze of the cold, wintry morning. He arrives at the beaver-lodges, and, I warrant, will soon play havoc among the inmates.

His first proceeding is to cut down several stakes, which he points at the ends. These are driven, after he has cut away a good deal of ice from around the beaver-lodge, into the ground between it and the shore. This is to prevent the beaver from running along the passage they always have from their lodges to the shore, where their storehouse is kept, which would make it necessary to excavate the whole passage. The beaver, if there are any, being thus imprisoned in the lodge, the hunter next stakes up the opening into the storehouse on shore, and so imprisons those that may have fled there for shelter, on hearing the noise of his axe at the other house. Things being thus arranged to his entire satisfaction, he takes an instrument called an ice-chisel, which is a bit of steel about a foot long, by one inch broad, fastens to the end of a stout pole, wherewith he proceeds to dig through the lodge. This is by no means an easy operation; and although he covers the snow around him with great quantities of mud and sticks, yet his work is not half finished. At last, however, the interior of the hut is laid bare, and the Indian, stooping down, gives a great pull, when out comes a large, fat, sleepy beaver, which he flings sprawling on the snow. Being thus unceremoniously awakened from its winter nap, the shivering animal looks languidly around, and even goes the length of grinning at Stemaw, by way of shewing its teeth, for which it is rewarded with a blow on the head from the pole of the ice-chisel, which puts an end to it. In this way several more are killed, and packed on the sleigh. Stemaw then turns his face towards his encampment, where he collects the game left there; and away he goes at a tremendous pace, dashing the snow in clouds from his snow-shoes, as he hurries over the trackless wilderness to his forest home.

Near his tent he makes a detour to visit a marten trap; where, however, he finds nothing. This trap is of the simplest construction, being composed of two logs, the one of which is supported over the other by means of a small stick, in such a manner that when the marten creeps between the two and pulls the bait, the support is removed, and the upper log falls on, and crushes it to death.

In half-an-hour the Indian arrives at his tent, where the dark eyes of his wife are seen gazing through a chink in the covering, with an expression that denotes

immense joy at the prospect of gorging for many days on fat beaver, and having wherewithal to purchase beads and a variety of ornaments, from the white men, upon the occasion of her husband and herself visiting the posts of the fur-traders in the following spring.

The skill and perseverance of the Indian hunter, in pursuit of his game, has often been subject of remark, and has afforded the subject of many a chapter to the writers of "Indian Romances;" but we conceive that the passage we have quoted above, gives a more distinct notion of the actual proceedings of the hunter, than any we have previously met with. The chase in these wilds has its perils as well as its pleasures, as the following incident, narrated at "Norway House," by Mr. C——, an employée of the Hudson's Bay Company, will shew:

"It was about the middle of winter," said he, "that I set off on snow-shoes, accompanied by an Indian, to a small lake to fetch fish caught in the autumn, and which then lay frozen in a little house built of logs, to protect them for winter use. The lake was about ten miles off; and as the road was pretty level, and not much covered with underwood, we took a train of dogs with us, and set off before daybreak, intending to return again before dark; and as the day was clear and cold (the thermometer was 35° below zero), we went cheerily along without interruption, except an occasional fall when a branch caught our snow-shoes, or a stoppage to clear the traces when the dogs got entangled among the trees. We had proceeded about six miles, and the first grey streaks of day lit up the eastern horizon, when the Indian, who walked in advance, paused, and appeared to examine some foot-prints in the snow. After a few minutes of close observation, he rose and said, that a bear had passed not long before, and could not be far off, and asked permission to follow it. I told him he might do so, and said I would drive the dogs in his track, as the bear had gone in the direction of the fish house. The Indian threw his gun over his shoulder, and was soon lost in the forest. For a quarter of an hour I plodded on behind the dogs, now urging them along, as they flagged and panted in the deep snow, and occasionally listening for a shot from my Indian's gun. At last he fired, and almost immediately after fired again; for you must know that some Indians can load so fast that two shots from their single barrel sound almost like the discharge in succession of the two shots from a double-barrelled gun. Shortly after, I heard another shot; and then, as all became silent, I concluded he had killed the bear, and that I should soon find him cutting it up. Just as I thought this, a fierce growl alarmed me; so seizing a pistol which I always carried with me, I hastened forward. As I came nearer, I heard a man's voice mingled with the growls of a bear; and upon arriving at the foot of a small mound, my Indian's voice, apostrophising death, became distinctly audible, 'Come death!' said he, in a contemptuous tone; 'you have got me at last, but the Indian does not fear you!' A loud angry growl from the bear as he saw me rushing up the hill, stopped him; and the unfortunate man turned his eyes upon me with an imploring look. He was lying on his back, while the bear (a black one) stood over him, holding one of his arms in its mouth. In rushing up the mound I unfortunately stumbled, and filled my pistol with snow; so that when the bear left the Indian and rushed

towards me, it missed fire, and I had only left me the poor, almost hopeless chance of stunning the savage animal with a blow of the but end. Just as he was rearing on his hind legs, my eye fell upon the Indian's axe, which fortunately lay at my feet, and seizing it, I brought it down with all my strength on the bear's head, just at the moment that he fell upon me, and we rolled down the hill together. Upon recovering myself, I found that the blow of the axe had killed him instantly, and that I was uninjured. Not so the Indian: the whole calf of his left leg was bitten off, and his body lacerated dreadfully in various places. He was quite sensible, however, though very faint, and spoke to me when I stooped to examine his wounds. In a short time I had tied them up; and placing him on the sledge with part of the bear's carcase, which I intended to dine upon, we returned immediately to the fort. The poor Indian got better slowly, but he never recovered the perfect use of his leg, and now hobbles about the fort, cutting firewood, or paddling about the lake in search of ducks and geese in his bark canoe."

Despite the draw-backs inseparable from a life in the wilds, our author and his companions seem to have enjoyed many lively and inspiring scenes. Christmas dinners, and similar réunions, with occasionally even a ball, with copper-coloured squaws for partners, find a grateful record in this volume, and the notices of their pedestrian expeditions are not a few. Of the latter we give an instance:

The manner of dressing ourselves to resist the cold was curious. I will describe C—— as a type of the rest. After donning a pair of deer-skin trousers, he proceeded to put on three pair of blanket socks, and over these a pair of moose-skin moccasins. Then a pair of blue cloth leggins were hauled over his trousers, partly to keep the snow from sticking to them, and partly for warmth. After this he put on a leather capote edged with fur. This coat was very warm, being lined with flannel, and overlapped very much in front. It was fastened with a scarlet worsted belt round the waist, and with a loop at the throat. A pair of thick mittens made of deer-skin hung round his shoulders by a worsted cord, and his neck was wrapped in a huge shawl, above whose mighty folds his good-humoured visage beamed like the sun on the edge of a fog-bank. A fur cap with ear pieces, completed his costume. Having finished his toilet, and tucked a pair of snow-shoes, five feet long, under one arm, and a double-barrelled fowling piece under the other, C—— waxed extremely impatient, and proceeded systematically to aggravate the unfortunate skipper (who was always very slow, poor man, except on board ship), addressing sundry remarks to the stove upon the slowness of sea-faring men in general, and skippers in particular. In a few minutes the skipper appeared in a similar costume, with a monstrously long gun over his shoulder, and under his arm a pair of snow-shoes gaudily painted by himself; which snow-shoes he used to admire amazingly, and often gave it as his opinion that they were "slap-up, tossed-off-to-the-nines" snow shoes!

In this guise, then, we departed on our ramble. The sun shone brightly in the cold blue sky, giving a warm appearance to the scene, although no sensible warmth proceeded from it, so cold was the air. Countless millions of icy particles covered every bush and tree, glittering tremulously in its rays like diamonds—psah! that

hackneyed simile : diamonds of the purest water never shone like these evanescent little gems of nature. The air was biting cold, obliging us to walk briskly along to keep our blood in circulation; and the breath flew thick and white from our mouths and nostrils, like clouds of steam, and, condensing on our hair and the breasts of our coats, gave us the appearance of being powdered with fine snow. C——'s red countenance assumed a redder hue by contrast, and he cut a very comical figure when his bushy whiskers changed from their natural auburn hue to a pure white, under the influence of this icy covering. The skipper, who all this while had been floundering slowly among the deep snow, through which his short legs were but ill calculated to carry him, suddenly wheeled round, and presented to our view the phenomenon of a very red warm face, and an extremely livid cold nose thereunto affixed. We instantly apprised him of the fact that his nose was frozen, which he would scarcely believe for some time; however, he was soon convinced; and after a few minutes' hard rubbing, it was restored to its usual temperature.

We had hitherto been walking through the thick woods near the river's bank; but finding no white partridges there, we stretched out into the frozen swamps, which now presented large fields and plains of compact snow, studded here and there with clumps and thickets of willows. Among these we soon discovered fresh tracks of birds in the snow, whereat the skipper became excited (the sport being quite new to him), and expressed his belief, in a hoarse whisper, that they were not far off. He even went the length of endeavouring to walk on tiptoe, but being unable, from the weight of his snow-shoes, to accomplish this, he only tripped himself, and falling with a stunning crash through a large drip-up bush, buried his head, shoulders, and gun, in the snow. Whir-r-r! went the birds—crack! bang! went C——'s gun, and down came two partridges; while the unfortunate skipper, scarce taking time to clear his eyes from snow, in his anxiety to get a shot, started up, aimed at the birds, and blew the top of a willow, which stood a couple of feet before him, into a thousand atoms. The partridges were very tame, and only flew to a neighbouring clump of bushes, where they alighted. Meanwhile C—— picked up his birds, and while reloading his gun, complimented the skipper upon the beautiful manner in which he pointed. To this he answered not, but, raising his gun, let drive at a solitary bird, which either from fear or astonishment had remained behind the rest, and had escaped detection until now, owing to its resemblance to the surrounding snow. He fortunately succeeded in hitting this time, and bagged it with great exultation. Our next essay was even more successful. The skipper fired at one which he saw sitting near him, killed it, and also two more which he had not seen, but which had happened to be in a line with the shot, and C—— and I killed a brace each when they took wing.

* * * * *

During our walk the day had darkened, and the sky insensibly become overcast. Solitary flakes of snow fell here and there around us, and a low moaning sound, as of distant wind, came mournfully down through the sombre trees, and eddying round their trunks in little gusts, gently moved the branches, and died away in the distance. With an uneasy glance at these undoubted signs of an approaching storm, we hastened towards the fort as fast as our loads permitted us, but had little hope of reaching it before the first burst of the gale. Nature had laid aside her sparkling jewels, and was now dressed in her simple robe of white. Dark leaden clouds rose

on the northern horizon, and the distant howling of the cold, cold wind struck mournfully on our ears, as it rushed fresh and bitterly piercing from the Arctic seas, tearing madly over the frozen plains, and driving clouds of hail and snow before it. Whew! how it dashed along—scouring wildly over the ground, as if maddened by the slight resistance offered to it by the swaying bushes, and hurrying impetuously forward to seek a more worthy object on which to spend its bitter fury! Whew! how it curled around our limbs, catching up mountains of snow into the air, and dashing them into impalpable dust against our wretched faces. Oh! it was bitterly, bitterly cold. Notwithstanding our thick wrappings, we felt as if clothed in gauze; while our faces seemed to collapse and wrinkle up as we turned them from the wind and hid them in our mittens. One or two flocks of ptarmigan, scared by the storm, flew swiftly past us, and sought shelter in the neighbouring forest. We quickly followed their example, and, availing ourselves of the partial shelter of the trees, made the best of our way back to the fort, where we arrived just as it was getting dark, and entered the warm precincts of Bachelor's Hall, like three animated marble statues, so completely were we covered from head to foot with snow.

It was curious to observe the change that took place in the appearance of our guns, after we entered the warm room. The barrels, and every bit of metal upon them, instantly became white, like ground glass! This phenomenon was caused by the condensation and freezing of the moist atmosphere of the room upon the cold iron. Any piece of metal, when brought suddenly out of such intense cold, into a warm room, will in this way become covered with a pure white coating of hoarfrost. It does not remain long in this state, however, as the warmth of the room soon heats the metal, and melts the ice. Thus, in about ten minutes our guns assumed three different appearances; when we entered the house, they were clear, polished, and dry; in five minutes they were white as snow; and in five more, dripping wet!

During his sojourn within the limits of British North America, Mr. Ballantyne's quarters were often shifted, in pursuance of the instructions of his superiors. From the Red River to Tadousac he gained ample experience of the "every day life" of the various denizens of the country, and as his powers of observation appear to be keen and accurate, the time thus spent was not altogether lost, as the volume before us testifies. It has been our object to draw attention to the great variety of subjects, many of them comprising comparatively new ground, which are adverted to in these pages, as well as to the graphic simplicity with which the narrative is given. With this view we have thought it best to allow Mr. Ballantyne to speak principally for himself, and we have no doubt that many of our readers will be induced by these extracts to seek a further acquaintance with the volume itself.

Mr. Ballantyne, we have reason to believe, is still a very young man, and a production displaying the talent of that now under review—not only as an author but as an artist—gives bright promise for his maturer years. We wish him, cordially, every success.

THE GIPSY QUEEN.

WORDS BY W. J. MONCRIEFF—MUSIC BY S. NELSON.

ARRANGED FOR THE LITERARY GARLAND, BY W. H. WARREN, OF MONTREAL.

M. M.
♩ = 96.

*Allegretto
con
Spirito.*

for

The first system of music features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto con Spirito' with a metronome marking of 96. The piano part begins with a 'for' marking and includes an accent (>) over a note.

Oh! tis I am the Gip - sy Queen! And where is there queen like

pia

The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'Oh! tis I am the Gip - sy Queen! And where is there queen like'. The piano part includes a 'pia' (piano) marking.

me! That can re - vel up - on the green, In boundless li - ber -

cres. *for*

The third system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'me! That can re - vel up - on the green, In boundless li - ber -'. The piano part includes a 'cres.' (crescendo) marking and a 'for' marking.

ty? What though my cheek be brown, And wild my ra-ven

ff *mo*

p *cres.* *mf*

hair; A red cloth hood my crown, And my sceptre the wand I

p *p*

bear? A red cloth hood my crown, And my sceptre the wand I

cres. *dim.* *mf* *cres.* *Ritard.*

bear? Oh! 'tis I am the Gip-sy Queen! And where is the queen like

f *p*

THE GIPSY QUEEN.

me! That can re-vel up-on the green, In boundless li-ber-

cres. *p* *cres.* *mf*

This system contains the first two staves of music. The vocal line is on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piano accompaniment consists of two staves: a right-hand treble clef staff and a left-hand bass clef staff. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamic markings include *cres.*, *p*, *cres.*, and *mf*.

ty? In bound-less li-ber-ty.

f *ff*

This system contains the next two staves of music. The vocal line continues on the treble clef staff. The piano accompaniment continues on the two-staff system. Dynamic markings include *f* and *ff*.

8va *loco.*

cres. *ff* *ff*

This system contains the final two staves of music. The vocal line includes a trill marked *8va* and a section marked *loco.* The piano accompaniment features a more complex rhythmic pattern. Dynamic markings include *cres.*, *ff*, and *ff*.



OUR TABLE.

A CHRONOLOGICAL VIEW OF THE WORLD.

THERE is perhaps no subject in the knowledge of which men of the highest general information, are so deficient as Chronology—scarcely any upon which information is attained with so much labor and research—and none to which the attention of historians has been so little directed. By many of our most authentic and profound writers, dates are almost entirely omitted; the stream of their narrative flows on uninterruptedly, it is true, but too often we are left in ignorance of the time occupied by its course. This must necessarily result in the production, in the mind of the student, of a sort of chaos of all the brave deeds, wise measures, and wonderful changes, of which he may have read, so mingled together as to be utterly useless, or all events constantly involving him in errors and anachronisms. The little work before us is one well calculated to remove this difficulty from the path of the historical student. It appears to have been compiled with great care, and the dates, as far as we have been able to verify them, are correct and well arranged. Mr. Haspel's labors have been voluminous, and the result is such as to be extremely creditable to himself, and useful to the public.

THE PEOPLE'S LIBRARY—EDITED BY J. M. A. ESTEY, AND C. T. POOLER.*

THIS is a book intended for general, or rather for universal reference, on all matters connected with art, science, history, biography and discovery; and judging from the first number, now before us, we are of opinion that it will be a highly valuable work. We are aware that books of this nature have been rapidly multiplied of late, a proof that the public in general is alive to their importance and usefulness. But those hitherto published are generally too high in price to be as widely circulated as they might be, with advantage to the world. This book is intended to remedy the inconvenience, and while the greatest care and attention are promised in its compilation, it will be published in such a manner, and on such terms, as will enable all who desire, to become possessors of it. The best authorities are named as those from which "The People's Library" will be selected, and it will further embrace "all the important improvements in the arts and sciences, notices of events in matters of history, discovery, biography," &c., that have, up to the latest dates, been made. The publication will be by monthly numbers, of thirty-two pages each, and will extend over several years.

* John M'Coy, Great St. James street, Agent. Price 5s. per annum.

THE OAK OPENINGS; OR, THE BEE HUNTER—BY JAMES FENNIMORE COOPER.

THIS, we believe, is the latest work of this very popular and successful author, and we almost hope, for his own sake, that it may be the last. He has certainly written himself out.

Let the reader compare, for instance, his "Pioneer" and the other "Leather Stocking Tales," with the Bee Hunter, the work before us, and he will find a sameness which almost, if not entirely, destroys its claim to originality. The same may be said of his "Water Witch" and "Red Rover," when compared with "Afloat and Ashore," and "The Pilot." There is, notwithstanding, a wonderful charm in all Cooper's writings, a charm which is not even destroyed by their sameness, or by the many fearful drawbacks in the shape of blunders and bad English. Of the blunders we may give the following instance:

"*L'Eau de Mort*, was the place called by the *voyageurs*, in a sort of pleasant travesty on the *eau de vie* of their distant but well remembered manufactures on the banks of the Garonne."

Now, who that has the slightest knowledge of the habits and character of the *voyageur*, is not perfectly aware of his total ignorance of the existence of such a river? His grammatical, or ungrammatical sins, although venial in the eyes of the ordinary novel reader, grate discordantly upon the ear of those who think while they read, and who believe that writers of eminence—among whom Mr. Cooper ranks—should not by carelessness or inattention, suffer the "pure well" of our language to be defiled. For instance, "a tree grown to *more* size," an expression used by Mr. Cooper, is both un-English and ungraceful, disfiguring the sentence of which it forms a part. And there are many such. Mr. Cooper, if he should write again, will, we hope, be more careful: sins like this are only sins of carelessness—but they *are* sins, and should be avoided.

DRINKWATER'S SIEGE OF GIBALTAR.

WE hail the re-appearance of this interesting work with something like the pleasure with which we welcome an old friend we have not seen for years. The siege itself, as well as its results, is one of the most important and interesting incidents in our history. As to how it sped, and how it ended, we must refer our readers to the work itself. It is for sale by Mr. John M'Coy and by Messrs. R. & C. Chalmers, of Great St. James Street.